

team marketing research

Team	Avg. Ticket	Pct. Change	Avg. Premium Ticket	Beer ²	Soft Drink ²	Hot Dog	Parking	Program	Cap	FCI	Pct. Change
New York Yankees ¹	\$72.97	76.3%	\$510.08	\$6.00 ¹²	\$3.00 ¹²	\$3.00	\$23.00	\$5.00	\$25.00	\$410.88	49.4%
Boston Red Sox ²	50.24	0.3%	162.82	7.25 ¹²	4.00 ²⁰	4.50	27.00	5.00	20.00	326.45	0.2%
Chicago Cubs	47.75	10.0%	239.43 ⁶	6.00 ¹⁶	3.00 ¹⁵	3.00	25.00	5.00	20.00	305.00	18.6%
New York Mets	36.99	8.6%	149.54	5.00 ¹²	3.50 ¹⁶	4.75	18.00	5.00	20.00	258.97	3.1%
Chicago White Sox	32.28	6.6%	64.98	6.50 ¹⁶	3.00 ¹⁴	3.25	23.00	4.00	13.00	224.11	4.4%
San Francisco Giants ²	23.28	-2.4%	64.23	8.75 ²⁰	3.75 ¹⁶	4.25	20.00	5.00	25.00	222.63	-1.9%
Los Angeles Dodgers	29.66	0.0%	222.38	6.00 ¹⁶	3.50 ¹⁶	5.00	15.00	5.00	16.00	221.64	0.0%
Philadelphia Phillies	31.10	10.0%	65.86	6.75 ²¹	3.75 ²⁰	3.75	12.00	5.00	15.00	219.90	10.2%
Washington Nationals ⁴	30.63	-7.1%	192.89	6.00 ¹⁶	4.50 ²⁴	4.50	5.00	5.00	15.00	215.52	-4.7%
St. Louis Cardinals	29.43	0.4%	64.38	7.00 ¹⁶	5.00 ²⁴	4.00	10.00	2.50	16.00	214.72	-1.2%
Houston Astros	28.73	3.6%	48.41	5.00 ¹⁴	4.25 ²¹	4.75	15.00	4.00	13.00	209.93	5.0%
Detroit Tigers	27.38	8.3%	69.74	6.25 ¹⁶	3.50 ²⁰	3.50	15.00	5.00	15.00	205.02	7.8%
MLB LEAGUE AVERAGE	26.64	5.0%	96.93	5.92¹⁶	3.44¹⁹	3.70	12.40	3.72	15.03	196.89	3.2%
Oakland Athletics	24.31	-3.4%	50.46	5.50 ¹⁴	2.50 ¹²	3.50	15.00	5.00	15.00	187.23	-1.8%
Seattle Mariners	25.53	0.0%	58.61	5.25 ¹²	3.00 ¹⁶	4.25	17.00	3.00	10.00	184.62	-5.1%
Cleveland Indians ²	22.12	-3.1%	61.62	5.50 ¹⁶	5.00 ²⁴	4.25	12.00	1.00	15.00	180.49	-1.5%
San Diego Padres	20.01	-27.0%	46.39	6.50 ¹⁶	4.25 ²²	4.00	4.00	5.00	16.00	172.04	-14.7%
Florida Marlins ⁵	19.06	2.0%	70.36	7.00 ²⁰	3.00 ²⁴	5.00	8.00	5.00	15.00	170.24	3.6%
Minnesota Twins	21.70	5.0%	119.41	6.50 ²⁴	4.00 ²⁰	3.50	6.00	2.00	15.00	169.81	7.4%
Toronto Blue Jays ³	19.10	3.5%	55.13	5.40 ¹⁴	3.00 ²⁴	3.80	12.00	4.00	15.99	166.39	4.4%
Tampa Bay Rays	18.35	6.5%	59.82	8.00 ²⁰	5.00 ²⁴	5.00	0.00	0.00	18.00	165.40	20.8%
Baltimore Orioles	23.42	-1.8%	42.86	5.00 ¹⁸	2.00 ¹⁶	2.50	8.00	5.00	12.00	163.68	2.4%
Kansas City Royals	19.38	13.3%	87.38	6.00 ¹⁶	4.00 ²²	4.00	6.00	5.00	12.00	161.52	6.9%
Colorado Rockies	19.50	0.0%	36.50	5.50 ¹⁶	3.25 ¹⁸	3.25	8.00	5.00	14.00	161.00	0.6%
Atlanta Braves ⁵	17.05	0.0%	44.98	6.75 ¹⁶	4.25 ²²	4.25	12.00	0.00	15.00	157.69	0.3%
Texas Rangers	19.41	6.8%	53.44	5.00 ¹⁶	3.00 ¹⁶	2.75	8.00	4.00	12.00	150.64	-0.1%
Milwaukee Brewers	20.98	5.5%	38.65	5.00 ¹⁶	2.25 ¹²	2.75	8.00	0.00	12.00	145.92	3.1%
Cincinnati Reds	19.19	-1.1%	62.06	5.00 ¹²	1.00 ¹²	1.00	12.00	4.00	15.00	144.76	-8.6%
Los Angeles Angels	20.05	-3.5%	62.06	4.50 ¹²	3.00 ¹⁶	3.00	8.00	3.00	6.99	141.18	-2.0%
Pittsburgh Pirates	15.39	-9.9%	42.67	4.75 ²¹	2.50 ²⁰	2.50	10.00	5.00	12.00	135.06	-4.1%
Arizona Diamondbacks	14.31	-10.3%	60.70	4.00 ¹⁴	3.50 ²⁴	2.75	10.00	0.00	7.00	114.24	-29.8%

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 or is classified by team as premium) 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. Teams have a say in what seats are considered general or premium.

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.

¹Yankees' 2009 figures were compiled through TMR research and outside sources. The Yankees' 2008 numbers are from old Yankee Stadium.

²Team restructured seating categories or made retroactive changes to 2008 prices. Some of the 2008 numbers used do not match up with previously reported figures.

³Prices for the Blue Jays are converted to US dollars and comparison prices were converted using the current exchange rate of \$.80USD=\$1 CAD. The 2008 exchange rate was \$1 USD = \$1CAD. 2008 figures were changed to reflect new exchange rate.

⁴Washington Nationals information was obtained through the team's Web site in 2008, resulting in several errors. The team corrected those errors for 2009 and retroactive changes were made. Both the average and premium tickets in 2008 were dramatically off. The 2008 numbers that were used to compare 2009 prices are \$32.98 and \$192.98.

⁵The Atlanta Braves and Florida Marlins did not respond to the survey. Information from their respective Web sites and 2008 team-supplied surveys were used to calculate 2009 numbers.

⁶The Cubs' premium seating listed here does not include the season tickets they auction for CBOE section, and the club seats previously listed in premium, along with the bleacher box seats, were moved to general seating for 2009, and retroactively for 2008. In 2008, 70 premium season seats were auctioned for prices between \$16,000 and \$32,400, according to the team. The Cubs would not release average figures for last year's numbers or this year's auction prices. The Cubs also auction off a limited amount of premium seating for single games.

2009 mlb fan cost index

Average ticket price up 5 percent to \$26.64; Total FCI rises 3.2 percent to \$196.89

Welcome to 2009, when a playoff team with a fairly new, well-received stadium charges \$38.65, on average for “premium” seats and a team that missed the playoffs last season, but is opening a new mega-stadium, charges \$510.08, on average, for its “premium” seating.

The two teams, the Milwaukee Brewers and the New York Yankees, are obviously in two very different markets, and it’s probably not a coincidence this year’s big-money free agent, pitcher C.C. Sabathia, left the Brewers for the Yankees and a pile of money.

Of course, the Brewers, and their average general ticket prices of \$20.89, are not the story. The Yankees and the cross-town Mets can pay big bucks to free agents because both opened new stadiums with the requisite major price increases commensurate to playing in the biggest sports market in the world, albeit during the worst economic downturn in recent history.

The Yankees’ average ticket at the new Yankee Stadium is an eye-popping \$72.97, and the Mets charge 36.99, on average, for their non-premium seats at Citi Field. Both increases helped the average ticket go up 5 percent in 2009, to \$26.64.

The league’s **Fan Cost Index is up 3.2 percent to 196.89**. The Fan Cost Index (FCI) measures the cost to take a family of four to a sporting event.

The Yankees’ ascendance to the top of the FCI and ticket rankings breaks two long streaks by the Boston Red Sox. The Red Sox have had the most-expensive average ticket since 1996, and have topped the FCI charts since 2001.

Ten teams show overall average price decreases, and another six have either stayed flat or are up less than 1 percent.

Several teams are offering cheaper concession items, and nearly every team has some kind of value meal proposition. The Cincinnati Reds (\$144.76 FCI) has \$1 soft drinks and \$1 hot dogs.

If you take the Mets and Yankees out of the equation, this year and last year, and the average ticket for the other 28 teams (\$23.07) would be up just .09 percent. So the New York teams, who certainly help their peers’ bottom lines with impressive road attendance, are worth about \$3.67 to the total average of the league.

The Mets’ overall ticket price is lower than some might expect because they classify a large amount of seating as “premium,” as the seats come with extra amenities or private club access. About 48 percent of the Mets’ premium seating is priced at \$125 or less, with prices topping out at \$495.

About 31 percent of the Yankees’ high-priced premium tickets sell for \$135 or less, according to TMR research, with prices famously topping out at \$2,500 for some front-row season tickets.

As for the entire league, the overall FCI is up, on average, but 12 teams have lower totals this season, compared to last year.*

The Yankees have overtaken Boston (\$50.24, up 0.3 percent) and the Chicago Cubs (\$47.75, up 10 percent) for the priciest average ticket. (Some of the Cubs’ priciest club seats were moved from the premium category to the general category this season.)

The cheapest average ticket belongs to the Diamondbacks, for the third straight season, at \$14.31, a 10.3 percent drop from last year.

The D-Backs have, by far, the cheapest FCI in baseball at \$114.24, a 29.8 percent drop from last year.

Three years ago, the team did a “strategic analysis of our organization and market and discovered that the Phoenix metropolitan area had the lowest per capita income among the 26 metro areas that have an MLB team,” said Shaun Rachau, the team’s Vice President of Communications. Arizona cut costs all over Chase Field to stay even with its market, which had a per capita income of \$35,010 in 2007.

“We are focused on providing the best fan experience in all of sports,” Arizona President and CEO Derrick Hall said. “We realize that a large part of that experience is affordability and pricing. To be the most affordable ticket in the game for the third-consecutive season is a point of pride for us, as is our push to lower all averages within our cost index, be it tickets, merchandise, or concessions.”

The Pittsburgh Pirates, on the cusp of their 17th straight losing season, which would set several ignominious records, have the next-cheapest ticket at \$15.39, a 9.9 percent decrease. The cost to take a family of four to PNC Park is down 4.1 percent to \$135.06.

The Los Angeles Angels remain baseball’s best bargain. The reigning AL West champions dropped tickets 3.5 percent to \$20.05 and its FCI is at \$141.18.

The woebegone San Diego Padres welcome their new owner with a 27 percent ticket decrease, dropping down to \$20.01. Their FCI (\$172.04) is down 14.7 percent.

The Tampa Bay Rays are one of 13 non-New York teams to raise prices by 1 percent or more, and it’s not a surprise. After turning its first winning season into a surprise World Series berth, the Rays bumped tickets 6.5 percent to \$18.35 and their FCI is up 20.8 percent to \$165.40. (The Rays still have free parking with four or more people in a car.)

The Phillies celebrated their first World Series title in 28 years with a modest 10 percent increase in tickets at \$31.10. Their FCI is up 10.2 percent at \$219.90.

Aside from the Yankees, the Cubs (18.6 percent to \$305), the Phillies (up 10.2 percent to \$219.90) and the Rays (up 20.8 percent to \$165.40) were the only other double-digit FCI increases.

TMR INSIDE LOOK: Opening up a new stadium doesn’t always mean ticket prices will keep increasing. Between 2001 and 2008, seven teams have opened new stadiums, and four have lower prices in 2009 than when the new parks opened.

In 2006, the average ticket at new Busch Stadium was \$29.78. This season it’s \$29.43. In 2004, the average ticket at San Diego’s Petco Park was \$21.41; this year it’s down \$1.40. And when PNC Park opened in Pittsburgh, the average ticket was \$19.45, \$3.49 more expensive than it is today. The Nationals dropped prices 7.1 percent this year after opening their park in 2008. The Phillies (\$26.08 in 2004), the Reds (\$17.53 in 2003) and the Brewers (\$16.22 in 2001) have all kept prices rising since their respective parks opened.

**TMR allows some teams to make retroactive changes to the previous year’s numbers, and occasionally corrects its own mistakes. The reconfigured 2008 average ticket price that was used is \$25.37, or 8 cents less than the previously reported number.*