

## Despite defeat, the sky's the limit for Cards, stars

By **Craig Harris** - Feb. 3, 2009 12:00 AM

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Despite a heartbreaking Super Bowl XLIII loss, the Arizona Cardinals and two key players, [Kurt Warner](#) and Larry Fitzgerald, are expected to reap financial rewards this off-season.

"There is a tremendous opportunity for the Cardinals to set a foundation for the next decade if they implement this properly," said sports-marketing expert and NFL consultant Marc Ganis. "The Cardinals, unlike many other teams in the NFL, have a lot of upside potential."

Ganis, president of Chicago-based SportsCorp Ltd., has consulted for one-third of all NFL teams. He said a Super Bowl victory would have brought an abundance of riches for the team, but he said the Cardinals still should be able to sell more suites in addition to radio-broadcast and stadium sponsorships for the 2009 season. He also said quarterback Warner and [wide receiver](#) Fitzgerald have the most to gain.

Marketing agents for Warner and Fitzgerald said Monday that significant endorsement offers have been made, and a book and possibly movie deal are in the works for Warner. The quarterback also is slated to appear at a Get Motivated Seminar in Honolulu the day after he plays in Sunday's Pro Bowl.

"He will have a multitude of appearances and promotional opportunities," said Rob Lefko, president of Chicago-based **Priority Sports and Entertainment**, which represents Warner. "But he only has so much time. . . . He's looking for time to decompress and spend time with his wife and seven children."

Lefko declined to say which companies have made offers to Warner, but he said going into the Super Bowl, the quarterback had deals with Nike, Got Milk, Home Depot and Walt Disney.

Ganis, meanwhile, said teams like the Cardinals that finish second usually don't see a big increase in business during the off-season, but he said because the Cardinals traditionally have not had a large number of sponsors (they currently have 40), there is room to expand.

And, he said, even though the Cardinals have sold out [University of Phoenix Stadium](#) for the past three seasons, the Super Bowl run will allow the team to increase prices for premium seats.

"The economy is a bit scary right now, but the best seats will see a double-digit (percentage) increase," Ganis said.

Yet, he warns the team needs to be careful not to raise prices for upper-level seats, which are much less expensive, in order to appeal to a wide fan base.