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OP firm develops NFL's Vikings mascot

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Fans of the National Football League's Minnesota Vikings have Overland Park-based Creative Consumer Concepts to thank for developing the team's first official team-owned mascot, Viktor the Viking.

C3 CEO Bob Cutler said the Vikings approached the firm soon after Zygi Wilf became principal owner of the team in 2005; Wilf's brother, Mark, worked with Cutler for the United Jewish Communities.

Viktor the Viking, a muscle-bound, blonde-haired and mustachioed character resembling the team's logo, made its debut at the team's exhibition home opener at the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome in Minneapolis.

Cutler declined to reveal how much the contract with the team to develop the mascot was worth but indicated that it wasn't a significantly high price.

"I refer to these opportunities as 'portfolio pieces,'" Cutler said. "The honor of doing one of the NFL's 32 team mascots was pretty cool."

Cutler said the team developed Viktor the Viking as its first fully branded mascot after several failed attempts at different concepts.

"They had a bunch of misadventures, one being a purple dinosaur," he said.

Vikings officials indicated that they were after a mascot concept that would resonate with the team's younger fan base.

"We want a mascot that appeals primarily to our young fans, yet appeals to our traditional fan base as well," Bryan Harper, marketing manager for the Minnesota Vikings, said in a written statement. "C3 inspired us to create more than a costume, but to create a branded character that has a life outside the stadium."

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