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International Marketing Reports
Suite 10, 33 Chapel Street
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TQ11 0AB
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 1364 642 224
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Abstracts

Exploring saturation levels for sponsorship logos on professional sports shirts: a cross-cultural study  91
Andrey G. Mikhailitchenko  Dennis H. Tootelian  Galina N. Mikhailitchenko
The study extends the research on visual imagery in advertising to sports marketing. The results suggest that excessive on-shirt advertising is wasteful for sponsorships and harmful for team image. However, a strategy of moderate advertising increases the brand recall rate and does not harm the team’s image. From a managerial perspective, this study highlights the risks of excessive use of sponsor logos and provides a framework for determining the optimal level of on-shirt advertising for professional teams.

A demand analysis for the Chinese Professional Baseball League 1990-2008  106
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The Chinese Professional Baseball League (CPBL) experienced a rapid decline in attendance after the mid 1990s. In this study, the market demand drawn upon economics is used to discover the causes of variation in CPBL attendance from 1990 to 2008. The ordinary least squares is employed for model estimation. From this model, empirical evidence reveals that a homogenous sport substitute (Taiwan Major League, TML), the Major League Baseball (MLB) effect and game-fixing scandals in CPBL negatively influence CPBL attendance. Additionally, real income is found to negatively affect CPBL attendance, making CPBL games an inferior good. The proposed model accounts for approximately 91% of variation in CPBL attendance between 1990 and 2008.

Road cycling event preferences for racing cyclists  116
Daniel J. Larson  Doyeon Won
Despite persistent levels of participation in cycling, little research has been undertaken in the context of competitive cycling event management and marketing. This study explored participant preferences using conjoint measurement and plausible market segmentations. Results of the survey conducted at three southeastern US cycling events (N=199) suggest that travel distance has primacy across nearly all segment groups and differences in recreational specialisation in cycling are reflected among other preferred attributes.

The relationship between real sports and digital adaptation in e-sport gaming  132
Andreas Hebbel-Seeger
The relationship between institutionalised sport and its digital adaptation is significantly influenced by technological advancements. However, this has not been a process that has developed in a linear fashion. On the contrary, it has been formed from diverse, parallel and to some extent opposing processes. In this paper, the relationship between institutionalised sport and the digital adaptation in digital games, virtual environments and augmented reality are analysed using concrete examples.

CIMA: a marketing revolution in Mexican Olympic sports  144
Francisco Guzmán  Ivar Sisniega-Campbell
This paper recounts how the Mexican National Sports Commission approached the creation and development of an Olympic sponsorship programme (CIMA). The lessons garnered are organised following Cornwell’s (1995) model of sponsorship development. This paper provides a linkage between theory and practice and is written from the perspective of the sponsored entity; it thus provides both theoretical support for sponsorships and a case study that is contrasted to sponsorship theory.
Editorial

2012: a challenging and exciting year

This will be another incredible year for sport and particularly for sports marketing. Two major events are taking place, Euro 2012 in Poland and Ukraine and the 2012 Olympics in London, the so-called European heart of sport business.

These two events are particularly interesting because both faced significant problems in their preparation stages. The collaboration between two countries to deliver an optimal soccer event on time has proved difficult for Poland and Ukraine. The number of new facilities that had to be built and the need to modernise the transport systems were big issues. In London, the biggest challenge to be overcome was the cost and financing of the Olympics, particularly in a period of such economic uncertainty. The underestimation of costs, which helped to win the approval of politicians, local people and the IOC, is also something that sports managers will have to reflect upon for future Games.

Of course we can focus on sports marketing, merchandising, TV rights, catering, social media but let’s not forget that the events themselves, the actual matches or competitions, are still the raison d’être of a club, a league, a federation or even an international organisation. Top-level professional matches also set a standard for amateur football; and the event becomes a showcase for the organisation that can leverage it for communication and recruitment. Indeed, without the event, there is no sports marketing.

In 2012 we can certainly expect the globalisation trends across sport to continue. Leagues and investors sometimes look for new markets, such as India and the efforts to develop football there, to counterbalance markets that have probably reached maturity, such as those for soccer in Europe or basketball in North America.¹

What are the key factors for the successful launch of a sport in a country? Is it possible to succeed without local stars? Can consumers embrace a sport where they have no cultural connection? If we look at baseball in Japan or Cuba, the NFL in Europe and the NBA in China, we see great examples that show that this expansion is possible.

Finally, in this issue you will see a new editorial board in place for the Journal. Many thanks to all who have helped our publication to grow and to become considered among the best in our field. I want to welcome incoming members and look forward to an exciting year ahead.

Enjoy this issue and I hope you will continue to extend the quality and excellence of our journal by submitting, reviewing and reading the articles we publish. Thank you for your interest and support as we continue our own globalisation and accept submissions from all over the world.

Professor Michel Desbordes, Editor
Email: mdesbordes@iscparis.com

Editorial board

Editor  Professor Michel Desbordes

ISC School of Management, Paris, France & University Paris Sud 11, France
Tel +33 (0)1 69 15 61 57 Fax +33 (0)1 69 15 62 37  mdesbordes@iscparis.com

EDoTROL PANEL

Wladimir Andreff
Université Paris I, France
andreff@club-internet.fr

Artemisia Apostolopoulo
Robert Morris College, USA
apostolopoulo@rmu.edu

Kathy Babiak
University of Michigan, USA
kbabiak@umich.edu

Dr Carlos Barros
Instituto Superior de Economia e Gestao
Portugal
cbarros@iseg.ulisbo.pt

Dr Sue Bridgewater
Warwick Business School, UK
Sue.Bridgewater@wbs.ac.uk

Matt Brown
University of South Carolina, USA
MTBROWN@mailbox.sc.edu

Prof Simon Chadwick
Coventry University, UK
simon.chadwick@coventry.ac.uk

Dr Laurence Chalip
University of Texas at Austin, USA
lchalip@mail.utexas.edu

Prof Dae Ryun Chang
Yonsei University, Korea
drchang@yonsei.ac.kr

Chen-Yueh Chen
University of Taiwan
chenyueh@hotmail.com

Prof Bettina Cornwell
University of Oregon, USA
btbc@uoregon.edu

Nigel Currie
BrandRapport, UK
ncurrie@brand-rapport.com

Geoff Dickson Ph.D
AUT University, New Zealand
geoff.dickson@aut.ac.nz

Prof Harold Dolles
University of Gothenburg, Sweden
harald.dolles@handels.gu.se

Dr Jan Drengner
Technische Universität Chemnitz, Germany
drengner@wirtschaft.tu-chemnitz.de

Dr Francis Farrelly
Monash University, Australia
francis.farrelly@rmit.edu.au

Prof Frank Go
RSM, Erasmus University, Netherlands
fgo@rsm.nl

Paolo Guenzi
Università Bocconi, Italy
paolo.guenzi@idabocconi.it

Christopher Hautbois
Université Paris Sud 11, France
christopher.hautbois@u-psud.fr

Dr Jrg Henseler
Nijmegen School of Management
Netherlands
joerg@ijhenseler.com

Adrian Hitchen
Sponsorometrics, UK
adrian.hitchen@lineone.net

Youngjin Hur
University of Central Missouri, USA
youngjin.hur@gmail.com

Craig Hyatt
Brock University, Canada
chaytt@brocku.ca

Jeffrey James
Florida State University, USA
jjames@fsu.edu

Paul Kitchin
University of Ulster, UK
pj.kitchin@ulster.ac.uk

Hyungil Kwon
Chung-Ang University, Korea
hkwon@cau.ac.kr

Dr Heath McDonald
Deakin Business School, Australia
heath.mcdonald@swin.edu.au

Tony Meenaghan
University College Dublin, Ireland
tony.meenaghan@ucd.ie

Yue Meng
Bournemouth University, UK
ymeng@bournemouth.ac.uk

Dr Frank Pons
Université Laval, Canada
frank.pons@fsa.ulaval.ca

Dr Pascale Quester
University of Adelaide, Australia
pascale.quester@adelaide.edu.au

Dr André Richelieu
Université Laval, Canada
andre.richelieu@mrk.ulaval.ca

Prof Frank Pons
Université Laval, Canada
frank.pons@fsa.ulaval.ca

Dr Francis Farrelly
Monash University, Australia
francis.farrelly@rmit.edu.au

Dr Dave Snyder
Tomkins Cortland Community College
ProfD.Snyder@gmail.com

Prof Sten Söderman
Stockholm University, Sweden
sod@fek.su.se

Dr Nicola Stokburger-Sauer
University of Mannheim, Germany
nicola.stokburger-sauer@ubik.ac.at

David Stotlar
University of North Carolina, USA
david.stotlar@unco.edu

Marijke Taks
University of Windsor, Canada
mtaks@uwindsor.ca

Prof Tracy Taylor
University of Technology, Sydney, Australia
Tracy.Taylor@uts.edu.au

Bjørn Walliser
Université de Nancy, France
bjorm.walliser@univ-nancy2.fr

Darlin White
Brock University, Canada
dwhite1@samford.edu

Prof Herbert Woratschek
University of Bayreuth, Germany
hj.woratschek@uni-bayreuth.de
Exploring saturation levels for sponsorship logos on professional sports shirts: a cross-cultural study

Keywords
shirt sponsorship
advertising
brand recall
sponsor logo
clutter

Executive summary
This study explores the influence of shirt sponsorship advertising on different attitudinal variables reflecting team and brand equity in cross-cultural settings. Three major patterns of on-shirt advertising were identified: the logo-free or ‘clean’ approach practised in the National Hockey League (NHL); the restrained approaches used in the American Hockey League (AHL) and the Russian Kontinental Hockey League (KHL); and the unrestrained approach typical of the majority of European hockey leagues.

A cross-cultural sample of respondents from North America and Europe was used for testing the influence of intensity of on-shirt advertising on three variables: attitude towards the team; team-related purchase intention; and sponsor brand recall rate. The study also addressed the issue of cross-cultural differences between the fans and explored the peculiarities of how tested effects work in North America and Europe.

Abstract
The study extends the research on visual imagery in advertising to sports marketing. The results suggest that excessive on-shirt advertising is wasteful for sponsorships and harmful for team image. However, a strategy of moderate advertising increases the brand recall rate and does not harm the team’s image. From a managerial perspective, this study highlights the risks of excessive use of sponsor logos and provides a framework for determining the optimal level of on-shirt advertising for professional teams.
The postulated patterns were tested with a succession of ANOVAs. The negative influence of a greater numbers of logos on the hockey players’ shirts on attitude towards the team and team-related purchase intentions proved to be significant for both the US and the Russian samples. The results also demonstrated a significant and abrupt fall in brand recall for shirts with a high level of advertising intensity.

Inverse links between the number of sponsors’ logos on the team jersey and attitude towards the team and team-related purchase intentions worked differently in the two cultural samples; however, the inverse link between the number of sponsors’ logos on the team shirt and brand recall did not reveal significant cross-cultural differences.

The results have theoretical and managerial significance. From a theoretical perspective, the study expands the existing research in use of imagery in advertising by extending it to sports marketing and testing it in two highly distinct cultural environments. The results provide additional evidence in favour of non-linear rather than monotonic patterns for the effect on brand attitude and brand purchase intentions. The study also provides insights into how an increased level of intensity of logo advertising diminishes the effectiveness of the imagery.

From a managerial perspective, the results demonstrate that excessive advertising (i.e. more than two logos on a shirt) is harmful to team image and wasteful for sponsors. However, the study also provides evidence that team-related purchase intentions do not significantly reduce when a hockey shirt carries two logos rather than no logo. Fans’ attitudes, willingness to attend games and watch their team on TV and intentions to purchase team merchandise do not substantially decrease with the use of two logos on the shirt. The traditional trade-off between earnings from sponsorship deals and losses from the team’s decline in attractiveness is not dramatic or perhaps does not even exist. Therefore, moderate advertising (i.e. no more than two sponsor logos) does not lead to a loss of team identity or reputation.

**Introduction**

With the dynamic growth of the sports industry over the past decade, and the increased globalisation of sports competition within and between countries, business-to-consumer marketers have committed more effort to assessing the pros and cons of sponsorship logos on players’ shirts and to evaluating the effect this has on team image and sponsor brand value.

The purpose of this study was to explore theoretical and empirical links between the intensity of shirt advertising and team-related and brand-related customer intention, in cross-cultural settings. The study analysed shirts of ice hockey teams in the US, western Europe and Russia to study the potential impact of team and sponsor logos on consumer image and purchase intention.

Those working in business-to-consumer marketers in the sports industry wish to optimise the advertising load on players’ shirts, to strike a reasonable balance between short-term financial goals associated with earnings from sponsorship and the long-term goals of not alienating the fan base and thereby enhancing the reputation of the team and its future financial value for owners and investors. This study continues the stream of research in the sports marketing and sponsorship literature that explores the influence of sponsorship advertising during sport events on sponsor-related consumer attitudinal variables and brand equity (Richelieu & Pons, 2006; Robinson & Bauman, 2008; Dekhil, 2010).

Practitioners often express concerns about the negative impact of “boundary-less” advertising, especially sponsorship logos on sports shirts, on the team’s image (Ryan 2004). However, little research has been done to investigate, quantify and put into a testable framework the process of this influence. Various recommendations on the reasonable limits of this type of advertising in the sports business-to-consumer marketing are based on manager intuition and experience rather than on well grounded research findings. This study develops the integrating model that could explain the relationships and validate this framework in cross-cultural settings.
Theoretical framework

The Associative Network Theory
The overriding theoretical framework for this study is Associative Network Theory. We use it for conceptualisation of the constructs and the relationships between them. The theory suggests that information is stored in the long-term memory as a set of linkages between concept nodes (Anderson & Bower, 1973). At the time of retrieval, memory cues activate corresponding nodes. In case of an information clutter, the phenomenon of competing nodes takes place.

The Associative Network model has been applied in scholarly studies of sports marketing. It is the foundation of research in sponsorship-linked marketing that was defined by Cornwell (1995) as the “orchestration and implementation of marketing activities for the purpose of building and communicating an association to a sponsorship”. The Associative Network perspective is developed in studies related to brand associations in team sport (Gladden & Funk, 2001, 2002), team identification (Wakefield, 1995), fan loyalty (Funk & James, 2001) and psychological commitment to the team (Kwon & Trail, 2003).

Attitudes towards the team and team loyalty
Based on the tenets of Associative Network Theory, Funk and James (2004) proposed a model of the “fan attitude network”. In this model, the process of psychological internalisation of a team results in attitudinal consequences such as fan loyalty. Kaynak, Salman and Tatoglu (2008) developed a model of brand associations in professional sport. According to this model, memory associations, together with behavioral and attitudinal factors, compose a multidimensional construct of team loyalty.

The association with the team leads to team-related intentions such as attending events, purchasing team apparel and merchandise, etc. (Carlson & Donovan, 2008). Parker and Fink (2010) deepen this perspective by delineating between attitudinal characteristics of fans who are highly identified with the team and those with low identification. In the sports industry, consumers are predisposed to achieving a desired “self-concept” by consuming the products that provide symbolic meanings (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000). Attitude towards the team is a powerful factor antecedent fans’ purchase intentions. Therefore, promoting a positive team identity is a major marketing communication goal of a professional sports club (Trail, Anderson & Fink, 2000).

Associative Network Theory and advertising clutter
The term ‘clutter’ describes the level of advertising and other material within a medium (Speck & Elliott, 1998). According to the Associative Network model, under the conditions of high clutter, the number of associative links in memory increases and the retrieval likelihood for each individual piece of associated information decreases. As new responses are learned to existing stimuli, the stimuli lose their effectiveness for retrieving old responses (Anderson, 1983).

However, the effect of clutter on visual advertising stimuli is far from unidimensional. Associative Network Theory suggests that distinctive information is more resistant to being forgotten as a result of clutter because it is easier to retrieve (Eysenck, 1979). Sponsorship logos are to one of the imagery-evoking tools that have strong brand association, and the recall decay caused by clutter depends not only on the level of competitive interference, but also on the strength of brand associations and attitude towards the brand. Dahlen and Rosengren (2005) found a difference in competitive interference effect for strong and weak brands. Burke and Srull (1988) found that in case of competitive interference, consumers’ abilities to recall distinctive brand information conveyed in an ad is influenced by the product class to which the ads belonged. Keller (1993) showed that the degree of similarity of competing brands could affect recall of communication effects of an ad. Kent and Allen (1994) documented the moderating effect of brand familiarity on the clutter-recall relationship.
Study positioning

Though brand attitude and brand recall effects of advertising clutter are well explored in the literature, there is still a gap in the extension of this research to sports marketing. Specifically, there are no studies to date that explore both team-related and advertised brand-related outcomes for the intensity of sponsorship logo advertising. The simultaneous investigation of these two potentially conflicting outcomes makes it possible to more precisely analyse the trade-off between them. This study aimed to fill this gap by investigating both team loyalty and brand recall results of on-shirt advertising in one integrated model. Another contribution to the existing literature that we intend to make with this research is through validating this model in cross-cultural settings.

Hypotheses

The first two hypothesised effects are based on the concept of brand dilution built on the basis of the Associative Networks model (Pullig, Simmons & Netemeyer, 2006). The blurring dilution effect occurs when information about the different brands is confounded in the consumer’s mind. We suggest that the same confounding effect takes place relative to team image when the team logo is accompanied by sponsors’ logos on the advertising communication carrier (i.e. the hockey shirt). However, not all categories of team fans are influenced by this logo clutter in the same way. The literature distinguishes “spurious” from “true” team loyalty (Backman & Crompton, 1991; Mahony, Madrigal & Howard, 2000).

‘Spurious’ loyalty is characterised by a sports spectator who does not possess a significant positive attitude but who nevertheless watches games on an ongoing basis. By contrast, ‘true’ loyalty occurs only in cases where there is an existing strong positive attitude towards the team. We hypothesised that logo clutter and its subsequent blurring effect would negatively affect the attitude towards the team since the fan audience of any team includes spuriously loyal fans whose brand associations are weak, and these fans depend on a variety of external factors and their loyalty is susceptible to decay (Gladden & Funk, 2001). Therefore:

H1: The number of sponsors’ logos on the team shirt will be inversely related to the attitude towards the team (i.e. more logos result in more negative attitudes).

The next construct considered explores team-related purchase intention – i.e. fans’ practice of buying products and services from a favourite club brand in addition to the ones they already purchase or own (Ngobo, 2004). Brand equity of a sports club is proven to be positively related to sales of team-branded products and club merchandise (Apostolopoulou, 2002). Brand equity of a sport club, in turn, is conceptualised in the Team Association Model (TAM) as a sum of external perceptions that include team logo and team colours (Gladden & Funk, 2001, 2002; Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer & Exler, 2008). Thus, we hypothesise that in the case of logo clutter, blurred team associations will lead to weaker brand equity and subsequently to declining team-related purchase intention. Therefore:

H2: The number of sponsors’ logos on the team shirt will be inversely related to team-related purchase intention (i.e. more logos result in lower levels of purchase intention).

The third hypothesis focused on the influence of on-shirt advertising on consumer recall of the advertised brand. Brand recall depends on the “share of mind” attached to the particular brand (Kent & Allen, 1994). Advertising-generated brand recall is conditioned by the intensity and depth of the message processing in the consumer mind caused by the advertisement (Campbell & Keller, 2003). Based on the conceptualisation offered by the Associative Network model (Anderson, 1983), we suggest that advertising clutter caused by multiple logos on the shirt will result in lower brand claim recall. Therefore:
H3: The number of logos on the team shirt will be inversely related to the sponsors' brand claim recall rate (i.e. more logos result in lower rates of brand claim recall).

Hypotheses four, five and six focus on cross-cultural issues and are rooted in the prior research related to different information processing patterns between Westerners and Easterners. For the sake of simplicity we schematically classify Russian audiences as Easterners based on the results of Hofstede's (1980, 1983) research. In terms of a West-East delineation, the US and Russia belong to distinct cultural clusters across a variety of dimensions: individualism, masculinity, long-term orientation, power distance and uncertainty avoidance.

The studies in the field provide evidence in favour of differences existing between Westerners and Easterners in terms of the way they process conflicting pieces of information. Bagozzi, Wong and Yi (1999), Choi and Nisbett (2000) and Ng (2010) documented that under conditions of absence of strong motivators for processing large volumes of information (i.e. low-motivation conditions), Easterners have a greater tolerance for ambiguity that leads them to incorporate information from opposing perspectives in their judgments. Based on the above, it would be logical to argue that 'team reputation-multiple logos' contradiction will be stronger in the US than in Russia, and respectively, the negative influence of sponsorship logo clutter on attitude towards the team will differ between the two cultures: Therefore:

H4: The inverse link between the number of sponsors' logos on the team shirt and attitude towards the team will be stronger in the US and weaker in Russia.

H5: The inverse link between the number of sponsors' logos on the team shirt and team purchase intentions will be stronger in the US and weaker in Russia.

Aaker and Sengupta (2000) found that in low-motivation conditions, Westerners tend to pay more attention to selected pieces of information, whereas Easterners consider the multiple pieces of information provided. Cousins (1989) shows that while processing the information, Easterners consider both dispositional traits and contextual cues while Westerners tend to be driven more by dispositional traits. Ng (2010) argues that unlike Westerners, who zoom in on a particular aspect, Easterners are chronically more likely to disseminate their information processing effort across varied perspectives. Accordingly, it would be reasonable to suggest that clutter caused by multiple front-of-shirt logos will lead to a greater negative influence on brand recall in the US than in Russia. Therefore:

H6: The inverse link between the number of sponsors' logos on the team shirt and brand claim recall rate will be stronger in the US and weaker in Russia.

Methodology

The existing research also demonstrates somewhat different patterns for dealing with information clutter. For crowded information space, Easterners scrutinise information in greater detail and pay greater attention to pieces that are more diagnostic (Aaker & Maheswaran, 1997; Aaker & Sengupta, 2000). Based on this, we hypothesise that the clutter caused by multiple on-shirt ads will turn Russian fans away from purchasing team-related merchandise to a lesser degree than their US counterparts. Therefore:
Intensity of on-shirt advertising
After reviewing the shirts of several hundred clubs and national hockey teams in the US, Canada, Russia, Sweden, Finland, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Germany, Slovakia, Latvia, Italy and France, three major patterns in hockey shirt advertising were defined.

**Logo-free approach**
This approach is used in the NHL and is characterised by the presence of only the franchise logo on a shirt. It reflects the high degree of NHL control over marketing and brand strategies of teams in the league, which, according to Richelieu & Pons (2006), is characterised by “a centralised management and a one-size-fits-all brand platform”.

**Restrained approach**
The second approach can be called ‘restrained’ or ‘moderate’. It is practised by the American Hockey League (AHL) and the Russian Continental Hockey League (KHL). This approach is characterised by a moderate number of sponsorship logos on hockey shirts, with the team logo being dominant.

**Unrestrained approach**
The third approach is typical of most major European ice hockey leagues, except the Russian KHL. There are no limits to the number of sponsorship logos on a shirt. Usually the team’s own logo is overwhelmed by sponsor logos and is hardly distinguishable.

**Sampling**
The sample represents the two largest markets in hockey. The US has 24 of the 30 NHL teams and the majority of teams in the minor leagues. Russia has 21 of the 24 KHL teams as well as minor league teams. Samples were drawn from university student populations in a city in upstate New York and in Moscow.

Students represent an important and powerful segment of the fan audience in the US and in Russia, both short-term and long-term. The use of student samples allows for better controls for such variables as education and age that influence relationships in the fan-team-sponsor triangle (Kinney, McDaniel & DeGaris, 2008). A common concern about the use of student samples in a cross-cultural study was addressed by achieving the maximum possible sample homogeneity (Douglas & Craig, 2000).

Both cities have professional hockey teams that are popular in the local community and belong to leagues that exercise a moderate approach to on-shirt advertising (i.e. AHL in north America and KHL in eastern Europe). These US and Russian cities have similar socio-demographic characteristics, territories and populations. Their educational institutions have similar profiles and they are approximately of equal size. Both samples include graduate students aged between 23 and 37 years. Finally, participants were screened to ensure that they were fans of their local team. The total number of valid responses was 84 for the US and 96 for the Russian samples.

A within-between subject (mixed) research design was applied. This choice is preferable to pure between subject design (under which each respondent would examine only one type of shirt) because it has higher statistical power with a moderate sample size. All variables except the manipulated one are kept constant so the variance is not related to differences between respondents' demographic or other characteristics. However, this design has the disadvantage of a carryover effect. Therefore, the testing procedure was designed to mitigate this effect by offering various kinds of shirt for examination to each respondent at a time.

**Stimulus design**
Three fictitious shirt designs were created, based on existing shirts of both hockey teams: Shirt A had no sponsorship logos, Shirt B had two logos and Shirt C had 12 logos. Students in both American and Russian clusters evaluated the shirts of only their teams. The
Logos on professional sports shirts

logos on the experimental shirts belonged to well known worldwide brands. The logos also represented brands from various industries, including banks, insurance companies, car manufacturers, food and drinks companies, pharmaceuticals, furniture manufacturers, clothing, worldwide retailers, telecommunications and e-business.

Procedure and measurement
The experiment had two stages that were performed at a one-hour interval. Stage 1 took place at the beginning of the session; Stage 2 at the end of the session. For both audiences, the time between the stages was filled by the usual lectures.

Stage 1
Respondents were asked to examine the A, B and C designs of their hockey team’s shirt. They were then asked to imagine that their team would wear the design of Shirt A shirt next season, and to answer questions measuring their attitude towards the team (3 items, 1-7 bipolar scale, adapted from Mackenzie and Lutz, 1989) and team purchase intentions (3 items, 1-7 Likert scale, Carlson & Donovan, 2008). Immediately after that, they completed the same questionnaire for Shirt B and then Shirt C.

Stage 2
For this stage, brand recall was measured for Shirt B (the restrained approach, typical of AHL and KHL, with two sponsorship logos) and for Shirt C (unrestrained approach, typical of most European leagues, with 12 sponsorship logos). For both the US and Russian samples the participants were randomly assigned to one of two treatments. Half of the respondents were given the pictures of Shirt B and half, Shirt C. Design A was excluded from the second phase of the experiment since it did not have any sponsorship logos. Students examined the advertisements and completed a short questionnaire comparing hockey with other kinds of sport (i.e. football and basketball in the US, soccer and basketball in Russia). This questionnaire served as an attention break between the two parts of the experiment.

Following this, a brand recall test was performed in which respondents were given a list of 100 worldwide brands and were asked to identify those that had been represented on the shirts they had seen.

Reliability and validity issues
For reliability assessment, Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained. The reliability estimates (.98 for attitude towards the team and .88 for team-related purchase intention) were considered acceptable based on Nunnally (1978) criteria. The convergent validity of the measures was assessed by examining the correlation among the scales’ components, and the item-item correlation coefficients were tested for significance.

The evaluation of discriminate validity was made based on a simple factor test performed for the two closely related constructs: attitude towards the team and team-related purchase intention. Two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were extracted explaining 92.7% of the variance. The discriminate validity was demonstrated by obtaining a clean factor structure as expected by the theory, following Podsakoff and Organ (1986), and providing the evidence that these factors do not overlap conceptually (Table 1).

Results
The patterns postulated in H1 to H6 were tested with a succession of ANOVAs. An ANOVA for mixed factorial designs followed by the post-hoc tests was used for testing the main effects in hypotheses 1 and 2 and interaction effects in hypotheses 4 and 5. The negative influence of the number of logos on the shirts on attitude towards the team and team-related purchase intention proved to be significant for both the US and Russian samples. The interaction effects were also significant (see Tables 2 and 3).
Logos on professional sports shirts

**TABLE 1**  The Rotated Component Matrix (varimax rotation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSTRUCT</th>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>COMPONENT 1</th>
<th>COMPONENT 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE TEAM</td>
<td>PLEASANT</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FAVOURABLE</td>
<td>0.958</td>
<td>0.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIKE</td>
<td>0.957</td>
<td>0.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEAM-RELATED PURCHASE INTENTIONS</td>
<td>ATTENDING EVENTS</td>
<td>0.256</td>
<td>0.919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BUYING MERCHANDISE</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>0.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WATCHING ON TV</td>
<td>0.251</td>
<td>0.915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2** Two-way repeated measures ANOVA test statistics for main and interaction effects related to attitude towards the team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>TYPE III SUM OF SQUARES</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>MEAN SQUARE</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>SIG.</th>
<th>PARTIAL ETA SQUARED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNIFORM</td>
<td>950.238</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>475.119</td>
<td>325.997</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIFORM COUNTRY</td>
<td>59.222</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29.611</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.317</td>
<td>0.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERROR (UNIFORM)</td>
<td>518.847</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>1.457</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 3** Two-way repeated measures ANOVA test statistics for main and interaction effects related to team purchase intentions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>TYPE III SUM OF SQUARES</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>MEAN SQUARE</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>SIG.</th>
<th>PARTIAL ETA SQUARED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PURCHASE</td>
<td>6556.598</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6556.598</td>
<td>636.853</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURCHASE COUNTRY</td>
<td>52.931</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>52.931</td>
<td>5.141</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERROR (PURCHASE)</td>
<td>1832.566</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>10.295</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 1** Model of advertising communication through shirt sponsorship
A plot of the differences between the two samples shows that the influence the number of logos on the shirt had on attitudes towards the team was more linear in the US sample. Russian fans demonstrate higher tolerance to design B with modest logo advertising, but are less tolerant to design C with overcrowded advertising (see Figure 1).

A graph of the influence of the number of logos on the purchase intention demonstrates a smaller gap between designs A and B among both the US and Russian samples (see Figure above). However, the post-hoc test results revealed that these effects do not hold for all levels of treatment. While the attitude towards the team goes down from level A to B and then to C, the purchase intentions on levels A and B are not significantly different (see Table 4).

Hypotheses 3 and 6 (i.e. brand recall related main and interaction effects) were tested by obtaining the ratios between the numbers of exhibited and recalled...
Logos on professional sports shirts

A two-way ANOVA revealed the significance of the main effect that a logo-dominated shirt complicates brand recall. But it did not reveal a significant interaction effect, which means that this complication is the same among US and Russian samples (see Table 5).

The results demonstrate an abrupt fall in brand recall among shirts with a high level of advertising intensity. When there are only two logos on a shirt, the expected recall rate is 100% (2 of 2 recalled) in more than half of cases. However, if a company logo is displayed on an overcrowded shirt, in most cases the expected recall rate is not more than 17% (see Figures 3 and 4). The summarised results are:

H1: The number of sponsors’ logos on the team shirt will be inversely related to the attitude towards the team (i.e. more logos result in more negative attitudes). This is supported.

H2: The number of sponsors’ logos on the team shirt will be inversely related to team-related purchase intention (i.e. more logos result in lower levels of purchase intention). This is partially supported. The difference between ‘moderate’ design B and ‘overcrowded’ design C is significant at the .05 level. The difference between logo-free design A and moderate design B is insignificant.
H3: The number of logos on the team shirt will be inversely related to the sponsors’ brand claim recall rate (i.e. more logos result in lower rates of brand claim recall). This is supported.

H4: The inverse link between the number of sponsors’ logos on the team shirt and attitude towards the team will be stronger in the US and weaker in Russia. This is partially supported. The interaction effect holds for the difference between A and B, but not A and C.

H5: The inverse link between the number of sponsors’ logos on the team shirt and team purchase intentions will be stronger in the US and weaker in Russia. This is partially supported. The interaction effects pattern is the same as for Hypothesis 4.

H6: The inverse link between the number of sponsors’ logos on the team shirt and brand claim recall rate will be stronger in the US and weaker in Russia. This is not supported.
Logos on professional sports shirts

Discussion

Theoretical implications
From a theoretical standpoint, the results are consistent with previous research on the effects of advertising clutter (Speck & Elliott, 1998) and effectiveness of visual imagery-intensive advertising tools (Babin & Burns, 1997). It builds on the research that investigates the issue of competitive interference in advertising from the perspective of the Associative Networks model (Burke & Srull, 1988). The results indicate the differences across countries in terms of the relationship between the intensity of on-shirt advertising and team-related attitudinal characteristics. The study develops existing research in the field by extending it to a sports marketing context and testing it in two cultural environments. It also shows how the level of intensity of logo advertising has diminishing effects for imagery.

The results document a decrease in favourable emotional reaction towards the team shirt with an increase in the number of sponsorship logos placed on the shirt. The same results were obtained for team-related purchase intention and brand recall.

However, in terms of team-related purchase intention, the findings did not demonstrate significant differences between the levels of shirt advertising with the ‘clean’ shirt (Shirt A) and the ‘moderate’ design (Shirt B). In this respect, the results provide the additional evidence in favour of non-linear rather than monotonic patterns for the effect of advertising stimuli on brand attitude and brand purchase intention as documented in some studies in consumer behaviour (Unnava & Agarwal, 1996; Vakratsas & Ambler, 1999; Cleveland & Laroche, 2006). The existing research tends to explain these patterns by convex advertising-response function (Taylor, Kennedy & Sharp, 2009) and subsequent brand attitude wear-out effect (Homer, 2009).

Managerial implications
From a managerial perspective, the study tested the two-way effect of on-shirt logo advertising: the influence on team image and team-related purchase intention, and the influence on brand recall. The first effect is of primary importance to professional sports club owners and the second is important primarily for sponsoring companies. The results demonstrate that excessive advertising is harmful to team image and wasteful for sponsors. Therefore, the findings question the efficiency and effectiveness of an unrestrained approach to on-shirt advertising, as practised in some hockey leagues.

A much more complicated issue is the trade-off between the logo-free and the moderate approaches to on-shirt advertising. The results demonstrate that attitude towards the team suffers even when a hockey shirt bears only two logos, but the interaction effect suggests that in Europe this effect is significantly less.

With respect to team-related purchase intention, the negative effect of exhibiting two sponsorship logos on a team shirt versus not having them at all was found to be insignificant among both US and Russian fans. Therefore, fan attitude, willingness to attend the team’s games, watch the team on TV and buy team merchandise does not suffer substantially by having as many as two logos on the shirt. The traditional trade-off between earnings from sponsorship deals and losses from a decline in the team’s attractiveness is either not dramatic or perhaps does not even exist.

Overall, the results of the study suggest that excessive front-of-shirt advertising in hockey is detrimental in both the US and Russia. However, moderate advertising (i.e. no more than two sponsor logos) does not lead to loss of a team’s identity and reputation, especially for a Russian fanbase.
Limitations and future research

The study has certain limitations. With respect to the sample, in order to generalise results across North America and Europe, the research should be replicated in Canada and several European countries (e.g. Czech Republic, Sweden, Finland, Switzerland and Germany). Although students represent an important and powerful segment of the fan audience in each of these countries, other socio-demographic segments should be investigated. Another limitation is related to between-within subject (mixed) research design and the possible carryover effect. In future research, increasing the sample size for the between subject design may be applied without a risk of losing statistical power of tests.

One more limitation is related to the fact that only one kind of sport (ice hockey) was explored in the study. For developing and validating the findings, follow-up studies in other sports are desirable. The proposed relationships should be empirically tested in popular sports such as football, basketball, baseball in North America and soccer in Europe. Future research can be complemented by considering additional constructs reflecting franchise equity, advertised brand value and advertisement quality (e.g. attitude towards the brand, brand use, advertisement awareness, and vividness of the advertisement).

Additionally, the impact of the number of sponsorship logos should be compared between teams that have very significant existing brand equity (e.g. New York Yankees) and those whose brands do not have a strong and longstanding value. Finally, it is recommended that further research investigate whether the results could be projected onto other carriers of sponsorship advertising in the sports industry, including broadcasting, team websites, in-arena advertising, and team souvenirs and merchandise.

Biographies

Andrey G. Mikhailitchenko is an assistant professor in marketing at California State University, Sacramento, and has 15 years of practical experience in business-to-business marketing in a number of industries, including the sports industry. He has published in many journals and presented papers at the World Marketing Congress, Academy of Marketing Science Conference, Conference on Historical Analysis and Research in Marketing.

Dennis H. Tootelian is a professor of marketing and director of the Centre for Small Business in the College of Business Administration, California State University. He has published around 100 articles dealing with all facets of business, and his academic research has appeared in such journals as the Journal of Marketing, Journal of Retailing, Journal of Business Research and many others.

Galina N. Mikhailitchenko is a senior researcher at the Psychological Institute of Russian Education Academy and a lecturer at the Moscow Medical Institute of Social Reabilitology. She has published in the Journal of Business Research, Advances in Consumer Research and numerous journals in Russia. Her research interests include consumer psychology, behavioural economics, cross-cultural psychology, and childhood education.
References


A demand analysis for the Chinese Professional Baseball League 1990-2008

Keywords
Chinese Professional Baseball League
attendance
Major League effect
game fixing
demand analysis

Executive summary
Baseball is popular in many countries around the world and is undoubtedly the most popular professional sport in Taiwan. The Chinese Professional Baseball League (CPBL) grew consistently since being founded in 1990, with a 9% average annual growth rate of attendance until 1996. A rapid decline in attendance occurred, however, during the late 1990s and early 2000s. The regular season attendance peaked at 1.65 million in 1995 but fell to just 0.3 million in 2000. The CPBL reached its lowest attendance in 2000 with the average of 1,676 spectators per game. Although the demand for Major League Baseball (MLB) has been investigated, few researchers have focused on the Asian professional sports market (e.g. Lee, 2006). This paper is the first to investigate attendance in the CPBL using annual

Abstract
The Chinese Professional Baseball League (CPBL) experienced a rapid decline in attendance after the mid 1990s. In this study, market demand analysis is used to discover the causes of variation in CPBL attendance from 1990 to 2008. The ordinary least squares (OLS) is employed for model estimation. From this model, empirical evidence reveals that a homogenous sport substitute, Taiwan Major League (TML), the Major League Baseball (MLB) effect and game-fixing scandals in CPBL negatively influence CPBL attendance. Additionally, real income is found to negatively affect CPBL attendance, making CPBL games an inferior product. The proposed model accounts for approximately 91% of variation in CPBL attendance between 1990 and 2008.

Chen-Yueh Chen
Associate Professor, Department of Athletic Sports
National Chung Cheng University
9-1, Alley 13, Lane 649, Sinjhuang Road
Sinjhuang City, 242, Taipei, Taiwan
Tel: + 886 953 333 447
Email: chenchenyueh@hotmail.com

Yi-Hsiu Lin
Associate Professor, Department of Sport Management
Aletheia University, Taiwan

Yen-Kuang Lin
Assistant Research Fellow, Office of Research and Development
Taipei Medical University, Taiwan

Peer reviewed
league data from 1990 to 2008 along with demand analysis. More specifically, a demand model is used to investigate the causes of variations in CPBL attendance.

A variety of factors could affect the demand for a professional sport. The dependent variable in the present study was annual league attendance data to specify market demand for CPBL attendance. From the perspective of model parsimony, however, four factors that affected professional sports attendance were included in the current study based on previous literature: real income; a homogenous sport substitute (Taiwan Major League, TML vs CPBL); talent migration (Taiwanese baseball players in MLB); and game-fixing scandals. Results demonstrate that a homogenous sport substitute (TML), the MLB effect and game-fixing scandals in the CPBL negatively influence CPBL attendance. Additionally, real income was found to negatively affect CPBL attendance, making these games an inferior product. These exogenous variables accounted for approximately 91% of variation in the demand of CPBL.

Originally, the authorities of CPBL blamed the decline of league attendance on the existence of TML and game-fixing scandals. This study confirms the argument empirically; the existence of a sport substitute for CPBL and bribery of players and coaches did have a detrimental impact on the league's attendance. The market size for baseball in Taiwan cannot sustain two professional baseball leagues. Additionally, game-fixing scandals seemed to undermine the quality of the CPBL games as well as the fans' trust in the league.

In addition to the existence of a sport substitute for CPBL and bribery of players and coaches, the MLB effect also led to a decrease in league attendance. This finding reveals that talent migration reduces interest among CPBL fans regarding their home-nation baseball league. The MLB effect in the Korean context presented by Lee (2006) was confirmed in this study.

The current empirical study demonstrates that Asian countries, including Korea and Taiwan, face decreasing interest in their home-nation baseball leagues due to the MLB effect. Finally, the current study identified CPBL games as an inferior product. Although it is still unclear in the literature if baseball is a normal or an inferior product, the current findings add to the discussion.

Introduction

Baseball is popular in most places in the world and is undoubtedly the most popular professional sport in Taiwan. The Chinese Professional Baseball League (CPBL) grew consistently since being founded in 1990, with a 9% average annual attendance growth rate until 1996. However, during the late 1990s and early 2000s, a rapid decline in attendance occurred. The regular season attendance peaked at 1.65 million in 1995 but fell to only 0.3 million in 2000. The CPBL reached its lowest attendance in 2000 with an average of just 1,676 spectators per game.

Game attendance provides one of the major sales revenues for professional sports (Chen, Stotlar & Lin, 2009). Fluctuations in game attendance imply variations in ticket sales, which warrants the attention of professional franchises. Understanding attendance variation also has business and academic implications. From the business perspective, understanding the factors that drive the variations in game attendance provides valuable information for more effective decision-making in terms of developing sport management and marketing plans. Additionally, most previous studies regarding game attendance have concentrated on individual characteristics along with cross-sectional data to analyse game attendance (Wells, Southall & Peng, 2000; Zapalac, Zhang & Pease, 2010). The current study, however, explores the market-level or aggregate-level variables that influence game attendance, employing time-series data based on economic theory. From the academic point of view, this is worthy of sports management and marketing researchers’ efforts. Although the demand for Major League Baseball (MLB) has been investigated, few
researchers have focused on the Asian professional sports market. Accordingly, the need for the present study is justified not only for adding literature to the domain of sports management but also for deepening sports managers’ understanding of why game attendance fluctuates from an economic standpoint.

A greater understanding of the market demand for CPBL tickets may come from a critical look at five variables impacting attendance levels. Among the aggregate-level variables associated with MLB attendance levels, ticket price and real income are the most common economic variables. Moreover, homogenous substitutes may affect market demand. Talent migration is another issue. An increasing number of Asian baseball players have been recruited by the MLB franchises, which could decrease baseball attendance in home nations. Due to the significant potential for market growth in the Asian sports industry and Asian players’ outstanding performance in baseball games, talent migration has become a topic which warrants the attention of sports management researchers. Finally, game-fixing scandals account for some of the variations in CPBL attendance. At the onset of attendance declines in the late 1990s, Nixon and Frey (1996) argued that game-fixing actions such as bribery could lead to attendance losses. From an economic perspective, game-fixing scandals, analogous to exogenous demand shocks, could adversely influence sports market demand because of diminished spectator trust in competitive authenticity. Therefore, the current study is used to explore the negative impacts of game-fixing scandals on game attendance an area mainly implied in previous research.

Based on the above reasoning, this paper includes four variables that affect CPBL market demand: real income; existence of homogenous substitutes; MLB effect; and game-fixing scandals. Ticket price was excluded from the model in the study due to the difficulty of data collection, which will be addressed in a latter section. More specifically, this paper presents an investigation of attendance in the CPBL using annual league data from 1990 to 2008 and a demand model to investigate the causes of variations in CPBL attendance. The paper proceeds as follows. In the first section, a brief overview of the CPBL is presented. A literature review makes up the second section, providing a knowledge base of the demand for professional baseball. The third section includes a description and rationale of the factors included in the proposed demand analysis model. In the fourth section, the formal empirical model and data are presented. The final section includes empirical results and conclusions.

A brief overview of the CPBL

The CPBL was established in 1990 with four original professional baseball teams. Three more teams joined the league later, two teams in 1993 and one in 1997. However, one of the seven teams dropped out in 1998, and two more followed in 1999. The current league has comprised four teams since 1999. The CPBL season runs from March to October, overlapping that of the MLB season. During the season, the CPBL games were divided into first and second half divisions, each division finishing with a champion team. These two teams then played for the national championship title.

In the first seven years, the CPBL created a considerable fan base. As the quality of CPBL games improved and the Taiwanese National Baseball Team (Chinese Taipei) won the baseball silver medal in the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, MLB scouts started to search out Taiwanese baseball players with star potential. Since 1999, several Taiwanese baseball players have been signed by MLB franchises. Chin-Feng Chen and Hong-Chih Kuo were signed by the Los Angeles Dodgers, then Chin-Hui Tsao by the Colorado Rockies. In 2000, the New York Yankees signed Chien-Ming Wang.

Following Chin-Hui Tsao’s MLB debut in 2003, the Taiwan national media televised the MLB games, attracting Taiwanese fans’ attention. Among all the Taiwanese baseball players, Chien-Ming Wang was the
most popular. Due to his popularity, the Yankees’ games, both regular- and post-season, were televised in Taiwan. Furthermore, once he became a starting pitcher, his appearances served as a valuable commodity for Taiwanese broadcasters. Collecting 38 wins during the 2006-07 season, Wang’s pitching appearances resulted in a high TV rating for MLB games. He drew further attention from Taiwanese fans due to his nomination as one of Time Magazine’s 100 most influential figures in the world.

Literature review

Previous demand studies for MLB include the work of Demmert (1973), Noll (1974) and Scully (1989), which focused on the economics of the sport. In recent studies associated with the demand for MLB, researchers have shifted their attention to the effects of labour strikes (e.g. Matheson, 2006; Schmidt & Berri, 2002, 2004) and new stadiums (e.g. Coates & Humphreys, 2005; Poitras & Hadley, 2006; Zygmont & Leadley, 2005). Additionally, the relationship between competitive balance and game attendance in MLB has attracted researchers’ attention (e.g. Schmidt & Berri, 2001). For example, Soebbings (2008) investigated the relationship between competitive balance and regular season average attendance in MLB, using the actual to idealised standard deviation ratio, which confirmed the uncertainty of outcome hypothesis. In the Korean context, Lee (2006) found that within-season competitive balance strongly influenced Korean Professional Baseball League (KPBL) attendance.

Some researchers have focused on the relationship between price-setting and demand for MLB games. There was a consensus that spectators of all team sports were highly unresponsive to changes in ticket price, implying that the demand for team sports was price inelastic (e.g. Burdekin & Idson, 1991; Fort & Quirk, 1996). Fort (2000) even suggested that “inelastic ticket pricing for team sports has been a recurrent finding for nearly thirty years” (p. 10).

Moreover, Ahn and Lee (2007) found that MLB professional team owners were likely to set ticket prices at games for which attendance demand was price-elastic if the intertemporal elasticity of substitution for games was small and/or if attending games was due to habit-formation. Consistent with previous studies, Coates and Humphreys (2007) demonstrated that attendance demand was price inelastic, drawing data from the National Basketball Association (NBA), the National Football League (NFL) and MLB.

Other factors have proved to have both positive and negative impacts on game attendance. Several researchers also have shown that team winning percentage impacted MLB attendance (Knowles, Sherony & Haupert, 1992; Rascher, 1999; Schmidt & Berri, 2006). DeSchriver and Jensen (2002) suggested that both current and previous year winning percentages were positively related to attendance. Another area of research focused on team roster turnover, which proved to have a negative impact on MLB attendance. Specifically, Kahane and Shmanske (1997) found that for each percentage point increase in the turnover of the team’s composition, attendance fell by about 0.7% after controlling for price, income, population, team quality, league, year and the stadium effects. Using Korean data, Lee (2006) empirically investigated other factors that might influence market demand in Korea, such as income, talent migration (Korean baseball players in MLB) and sport substitute (hosting World Cup soccer). Lee indicated that income positively correlated with KPBL attendance while talent migration and substitutes negatively correlated with KPBL attendance.

In summary, the factors that could affect the market demand (attendance) of sports included labour strikes, new stadium development, competitive balance, price-setting, team winning percentage, team roster turnover, real income, talent migration and sports substitutes. This study is intended to bring attention and understanding to the previously neglected Asian professional sport market. Using CPBL league data, this study has the potential to provide empirical
information associated with Taiwanese professional sports, income elasticity for demand and the homogeneous sport substitute effect on the demand of Asian professional sports. Furthermore, the impact of talent migration is an interesting factor that has been investigated only in the Korean context. Due to similar cases of talent migration in Taiwan, the MLB effect on CPBL market demand warrants researchers’ attention to determine whether or not the MLB effect also influences CPBL attendance. Finally, the current study addresses the lack of empirical research relating to the effect of game-fixing scandals on CPBL attendance. The following section presents the variables in the current study in a more detailed manner.

Factors included in the demand analysis empirical model

Based on the preceding review of literature, a variety of factors could affect the demand for a professional sport. The dependent variable in the present study included annual league attendance for the purpose of specifying market demand for CPBL attendance. From the perspective of model parsimony and the practical issue of data availability, only four readily available variables that are believed to affect professional sport attendance were included in the current study: real income (TML vs CPBL); talent migration (Taiwanese baseball players in MLB); and game-fixing scandals.

The first factor included in the empirical model is real income. Like Korea, Taiwan is located in Asia. Asian countries faced turbulent macroeconomic conditions in the late 1990s. Although the impact of economic turbulence in Taiwan was not as severe as in Korea, variations in the macro-economy existed in Taiwan during this timeframe. Additionally, real income was found to positively impact market demand of KPBL games in the Korean context (Lee, 2006). Since Taiwan and Korea are both Asian countries with a similar recent economic history, real income was considered to be a factor that might account for the market demand of CPBL.

The second factor used in the model is the homogeneous sport substitute, TML for CPBL. TML, established in 1997 and terminated in 2003, was another professional baseball league in Taiwan. The decrease in annual average attendance of CPBL between 1997 and 2003 might be attributed to the existence of two professional baseball leagues; that is, sports consumers had two alternatives for baseball games from which to choose, TML and CPBL. This option could have led to a decline in CPBL demand. Therefore, the homogeneous sport substitute, TML for CPBL, was viewed as a factor that might account for market demand of CPBL.

The third factor in the current model is the MLB effect. This refers to the effect on CPBL attendance of the performance of native Taiwanese players who have moved to MLB teams. Similar to Korean player recruitment by MLB teams, several outstanding Taiwanese players, such as Chin-Feng Chen, Hong-Chih Kuo, Chin-Hui Tsao and Chien-Ming Wang, joined MLB franchises after 1999. The success of these Taiwanese players in MLB began to draw the attention of many CPBL fans to MLB games. As in Korea, this attention resulted in Taiwanese broadcasters airing MLB games nationally, drawing from the CPBL fan base. Previous researchers (e.g. Lee, 2006) have demonstrated that the MLB effect was negative. Lee found that an increase in innings pitched by Park (a Korean pitcher in the MLB) resulted in a decline in attendance for the KBPL. He went on to suggest that other Asian counties may encounter the MLB effect. Furthermore, MLB games are of better quality than CPBL games. Accordingly, the MLB effect was regarded as a factor that might impact market demand of the CPBL.

In addition to real income, sport substitute and the MLB effect, the decline in CPBL attendance might have been fuelled by a fourth factor, namely game-fixing scandals. Bribery of CPBL players and coaches resulted in underachievement of the teams, causing CPBL fans to lose confidence and trust in the authenticity of the competition in CPBL games.
Whenever game-fixing scandals occurred, they always attracted the media’s attention, which proved detrimental to CPBL attendance. Game-fixing scandals are viewed as an exogenous shock for the market demand of CPBL. This perspective is similar to Davis’ (2008) finding, which suggested that the construction of a new stadium served as an exogenous shock impacting professional sports attendance. For these reasons, game-fixing scandals in CPBL were thought of as a factor that might explain the market demand of the league.

Although ticket price was a factor in the literature review on demand, ticket price for CPBL was not included in the current empirical model for several reasons. First, no relevant ticket price information was provided on the official website of the CPBL. Despite contacting CPBL staff, no further information was obtained. Moreover, some of the franchises in the CPBL had left the league, further preventing data collection of price information. Additionally, when CPBL encountered detrimental impacts due to game-fixing scandals, the league distributed free tickets in order to boost game attendance. This reaction caused difficulties in accurate calculations of ticket price effect on attendance. As a result of the aforementioned problems, ticket price could not be included in the current model.

**Empirical model and data**

**Model**

Given that the annual league-level data covered 19 years (from 1990 to 2008), a parsimonious regression model comprised of standard demand determinants, such as real income, homogeneous sport substitute, the MLB effect and game-fixing scandals, is presented as follows (Equation 1):

$$\ln \text{ATT} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \ln \text{INCOME} + \beta_2 \text{SUB} + \beta_3 \text{MLB} + \beta_4 \text{GFS} + \epsilon \tag{1}$$

The dependent variable, ATT, is the CPBL annual average attendance per game. The annual average attendance per game is used as a dependent variable in the current study because the number of regular season games varied across time. The natural logarithm of annual average attendance per game is utilised in the present analysis in order to facilitate the income elasticity computation. Specifically, $\beta_1 (\frac{d \ln \text{ATT}}{d \ln \text{INCOME}})$ represents income elasticity (i.e. the percentage change in annual average attendance per game) with respect to a percentage change in real income.

INCOME is measured by real per capita GDP. SUB is a dummy variable for homogeneous substitute; that is the existence of the other professional baseball league TML, which existed from 1997 to 2003. From 1997 to 2003 there was another professional league, TML, competing with the CPBL for market share. Therefore, the data associated with the variable SUB between 1997 and 2003 were coded as 1, and 0 otherwise. The MLB effect is measured by the total innings that Tsao, Wang and Kuo pitched in a single MLB season (from 2003 to 2008). Although Chin-Feng Chen’s first MLB game was in 2002, he was released from the Dodgers and finally returned to Taiwan in 2005 due to lack of performance. Therefore, he is excluded from the MLB effect in the current study.

Finally, GFS is a dummy variable for the seasons in which game-fixing scandals occurred and gained media attention nationally. The CPBL seasons that had negative coverage by the national media included 1996-2000, 2005, 2007 and 2008, in which the variable was coded as 1, and 0 otherwise. By doing so, it is assumed that the game fixing scandal only affected image and attendance of the CPBL in that year. Some may argue that scandals seem to have a medium – or long-term effect on the image or attendance of the CPBL. However, there are two reasons to believe that the negative effect of scandals is short-term. First, baseball has been the so-called ‘national sport’ of Taiwan, implying that most Taiwanese have held firm attitudes towards baseball even though something negative occurred in the league. Furthermore, nationalism has played a critical role in supporting the sport of baseball. International baseball tournaments including World Cup baseball

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games and annual baseball competitions among Japan, Korea, Taiwan and China have often activated nationalism, which in turn has attracted spectators to the CPBL games. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the game-fixing scandal had a short-term effect in the current study.

Data
The sample consisted of data for the period 1990-2008, including 19 observations. The data on annual average attendance were obtained from the official website of the CPBL. Real income data were acquired from the Taiwanese government official statistical database. Data associated with the MLB effect were gained from the MLB official website. The rest of the data in the current study were obtained from Taiwanese newspapers such as United Daily, China Times and Apple Daily.

Empirical results
The Durbin-Watson statistic (1.884) for the proposed model revealed no evidence of autocorrelation of the error terms because the 5% critical values were 0.90 and 1.83. Similarly, the test statistics for Godfrey’s serial correlation test for autocorrelation with lag 1, 2 and 3 were 0.084 (p=.77), 0.501 (p=.78) and 0.516 (p=.91), indicating no evidence of autocorrelation. Moreover, no violations of assumptions were revealed from analyses of residuals. Thus, the regression model, Equation 1, estimated by ordinary least squares (OLS) was adequate. The R² in the current empirical model is 0.911, meaning that about 91% of the variation in CPBL attendance can be accounted for by real income, a homogeneous sport substitute (TML), talent migration (MLB effect) and game-fixing scandals. The OLS estimation results are reported in Table 1.

The estimated coefficient of INCOME contradicts previous empirical results (e.g. Lee, 2006). Income elasticity of demand is estimated to be negative (β₁ = -0.58) and significant at the 5% level, indicating that CPBL games are an inferior product. Although some argue that sport is a normal product, others suggested that baseball is an inferior product (Li, Hofacre & Mahony, 2005). For example, Feehan, Forrest and Simmons (2003) proposed that soccer was a normal product while Cairn (1990) argued that basketball and Australian-rules football are normal products but hockey is an inferior product. Delving into the fan-base structure of CPBL showed that students were the major customers for CPBL. The relative increase of consumption of CPBL games from students is lower than the relative increase of the overall income level in Taiwan, making the CPBL games an inferior product. Thus, the fact that CPBL games are an inferior product may be explained by the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>OLS ESTIMATION</th>
<th>T VALUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>lnINCOME</td>
<td>-0.580*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB</td>
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<td>GFS</td>
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<tr>
<td>R²</td>
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<td>0.911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADJUSTED R²</td>
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<td>0.866</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: CPBL=Chinese Professional Baseball League; OLS=ordinary least squares; INCOME=real per capita GDP; SUB=Taiwan Major League dummy variable; MLB= Tsao, Wang and Kuo pitched in MLB in a season; GFS=game-fixing scandals dummy variable.

*p < .05.  **p < .01.
fan-base structure of CPBL.

The next estimate concerns the sports substitute effect of TML on CPBL attendance measured by SUB. The TML is shown to have a negative effect on CPBL attendance, as expected; the estimate coefficient for SUB is -0.627 and is significant at the 1% level. Since the TML was a homogeneous sport substitute for the CPBL, this result coincides with the case of KPBL attendance in the presence of World Cup soccer (Lee, 2006).

Furthermore, the estimated coefficient of MLB is -0.002 and is significant at the 5% level, indicating that there is a negative MLB effect on CPBL attendance. Although the estimated coefficient of MLB appears to be limited, this finding is consistent with the empirical result of Lee (2006). The negative MLB effect implies that the strong MLB performances by Tsao, Wang and Kuo made CPBL games less attractive, resulting in decreased CPBL attendance. The finding in the current study coincides with the phenomenon that Taiwanese players playing in the MLB games have been attracting media attention and causing high TV ratings in Taiwan, which makes the CPBL games less attractive. Moreover, it is interesting to examine soccer in Europe. Migration of soccer players in Europe is common and does not seem to harm the interest of fans for their home leagues. This may be due to the approximately equal soccer skills and marketing capabilities among these nations. As a consequence, migration of soccer players in Europe does not seem to diminish the home league interest of fans. Migration of baseball players from Taiwan to the United States is less common, however. Only the most outstanding players get the opportunity to play overseas. Nationalism has been driving Taiwanese fans to support players who play in MLB by watching the games. Players are usually viewed as the ‘pride of Taiwan’ when they play well in the MLB. Additionally, the MLB global marketing strategies have attracted Taiwanese fans for years, enticing Taiwanese to watch MLB games, resulting in a decreased base of viewers for the CPBL.

Finally, game-fixing scandals (GFS) turned out to have a significant effect at the 5% level on CPBL attendance with an estimated coefficient of -0.198. The current empirical result implies that when game-fixing scandals happened in the CPBL, league game attendance declined. Researchers in this area have suggested that such cheating behaviour is likely to occur when the following exists: a large underground betting market; a low detection rate for cheating; low player wages; marginal prizes for winning individual contests; and the loss of sporting glory when players deliberately under-perform (Forrest & Simmon, 2003; Preston & Szymanski, 2003). The current findings suggest that many CPBL fans chose not to go to a game due to such cheating behaviour.

Conclusion

This paper examined the determinants of market demand for the Taiwan CPBL. The exogenous variables with respect to the CPBL market demand such as real income, homogenous sport substitution, the MLB effect and game-fixing scandals, were included in the empirical model. Results demonstrate that a homogenous sport substitute (TML), the MLB effect and game-fixing scandals in the CPBL negatively influence CPBL attendance. Additionally, real income was found to negatively affect CPBL attendance, making these games an inferior product. These exogenous variables accounted for approximately 91% of variation in the demand of CPBL.

Originally, the authorities of CPBL blamed the decline of league attendance on the existence of TML and game-fixing scandals. This study confirms the argument empirically. The existence of a sport substitute for CPBL and the bribery of players and coaches did have a detrimental impact on the league’s attendance. The market size for baseball in Taiwan cannot sustain two professional baseball leagues. Additionally, game-fixing scandals seemed to undermine the quality of the CPBL games as well as reducing the fans’ trust in the league. In order to fully eliminate the game-fixing scandals of CPBL, it is
Chinese professional league baseball

strongly recommended that the authorities should take actions to increase the detection rate of cheating behaviour. This recommendation follows Preston and Szymanski’s (2003) argument that cheating behaviour was demonstrated as more likely to occur when there was a low detection rate. Meanwhile, increasing CPBL players’ salaries might be another remedy for alleviating the effect of game-fixing scandals on CPBL attendance.

In addition to the existence of a sport substitute for CPBL and bribery of players or coaches, the MLB effect was another cause for a decrease in league attendance. This finding reveals that talent migration reduces interest among CPBL fans regarding their home-nation baseball league. The MLB effect in the Korean context presented by Lee (2006) was confirmed by this similar case in Taiwan. The current empirical study demonstrates that Asian countries, including Korea and Taiwan, face a decreasing interest in their home-nation baseball league due to the MLB effect. Finally, the current study identified CPBL games as an inferior good. Although it is still unclear in the literature if baseball is a normal or an inferior good, the current findings add to the discussion.

Finally, limitations of the current study should be noted. First, there are only 19 annual data points in the current study due to the difficulty of data acquisition. Failure to include ticket price in the current empirical model is another limitation. Both limitations result from practical issues of data availability. Even with these two limitations, the current study provides valuable empirical findings regarding the impact of talent migration of sports players, game-fixing scandals, homogeneous substitutes and real income on professional baseball game attendance in the promising Asian market.

Biographies

Chen-Yueh Chen is an associate professor in the Department of Athletic Sports at National Chung Cheng University in Taiwan. His research interests include sport consumer behaviour and sports management.

Yi-Hsiu Lin is an assistant professor in the Department of Sport Management at Aletheia University, Taiwan. Her research interests include sports public relations and sports marketing.

Yen-Kuang Lin is an assistant research fellow at Taipei Medical University in Taiwan. His research interests include longitudinal data analysis and multivariate statistical analysis.

References


Road cycling event preferences for racing cyclists

Keywords
- cycling
- racing
- event
- attributes
- preferences

Abstract
Despite persistent levels of participation in cycling, little research has been undertaken in the context of competitive cycling event management and marketing. This study explored participant preferences using conjoint measurement and plausible market segmentations. Results of the survey conducted at three southeastern US cycling events (N=199) suggest that travel distance has primacy across nearly all segment groups and differences in recreational specialisation in cycling are reflected among other preferred event attributes.

Daniel J. Larson
University of Georgia

Doyeon Won
(corresponding author)
Department of Sport and Leisure Studies, Yonsei University
50 Yonsei-ro, Seodaemun-gu, Seoul 120-749, Korea
Tel: +82 2 2123 6191
Email: dwon@yonsei.ac.kr

Executive summary
Cycling event promoters often have control over several event attributes that can help them to tailor their event to participant preferences. In order to determine the most desirable mix of attribute levels, we conducted a conjoint analysis using salient event characteristics for racing cyclists. While conjoint analysis has been used to study consumer decision-making and improve product marketing (Green & Srinivasan, 1978) and to uncover recreation and leisure preferences (e.g. McFarlane, 2004), it has rarely been used in a competitive sporting event or cycling context (Morey, Buchanan & Waldman, 2002; Oh, Ditton & Riechers, 2005). In summary, this study aimed to (a) investigate the relative importance of cycling event attributes using conjoint analysis, (b) identify market segments based on cycling event attributes, and (c) explore the effects of recreation specialisation on prioritised cycling event attributes.

Data (N=199) were collected at three cycling events in three southeastern US states. The event selection was reviewed by a panel of cycling experts (N=4) to ensure the events were of typical size and scope. Study participants completed a questionnaire that included 11 demographic items and nine...
recreational specialisation items. It also included ratings of 16 event scenarios that differed in the following attributes: travel distance, entry fee, overall prize purse offered, course type and series affiliation. The event attributes and their levels were established with the feedback of the panel of expert cyclists, each with 10 or more years of competitive cycling experience.

The conjoint results of all responses revealed that travel distance (60.6%) was regarded as the most important road racing event attribute followed by prize purse (16.7%), entry fee (9.3%), series affiliation (8.9%) and course type (4.5%). Among the attribute levels examined in this study, the idealistic cycling event would be a race that is located within a one-hour driving distance, requires an entry fee of $20, is held in residential or rural areas, is affiliated with local or state point series and offers a total prize purse of $13,500. K-means cluster analysis was conducted to segment cyclists who had similar attribute preference patterns and it revealed two ('distance-bounded' and 'distance-bounded payoffs-count') or three ('distance-bounded', 'points & fees' and 'prize') plausible clusters with different ideal event profiles. To examine the effects of recreation specialisation on the prioritised event attributes, a cluster analysis was conducted on individual scores of behavioural, cognitive and affective involvement in cycling. The results suggested three clusters: (a) ‘highly specialised’, (b) ‘non-behaviourally specialised’ and (c) ‘less specialised’. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed a significant main effect of cycling specialisation on travel distance: F(2, 196)=4.79 at p < .001; and prize purse, F(2, 196)=8.96 at p < .001.

The results of this study highlight the event attributes that matter most to competitive cyclists and establishes differential preferences based on recreational specialisation. Additionally, the cluster analysis which established ‘distance-bounded’ and other ‘value-sensitive’ groups offers a new avenue of investigation and creates a potential market segment for practitioners.

Road cycling event preferences for racing cyclists

When one conjures up images of what sports marketers do for work, the vision is quickly filled with big league professional sports, selling tickets, understanding fan behaviours and selling ancillary merchandise. Less frequently considered are sporting activities that involve individual participants paying registration fees and associated expenses to engage in organised sports competitions. In the US, millions of Americans take part in these ‘participant-based’ activities in unstructured recreation and leisure contexts as well as within organised events. These events can range from golf tournaments to club tennis to endurance sports such as running, triathlon and cycling. What sets all of these apart from the traditional vision of sports marketing is the focus on the participants as consumers instead of fan/spectator-consumers. The sport of cycling is one such realm for participant focused marketing.

More than 35 million Americans participate in cycling and nearly five million of them do so more than 110 days per year (National Sporting Goods Association, 2009). Additionally, retail sales in the US bicycle industry have consistently been estimated at over five billion dollars annually in recent years (Bicycle Retailer, 2007). Cyclists ride on roads, off road and on purpose built facilities such as velodromes and BMX tracks. The overall enthusiasm and frequent participation spills naturally into substantial competitive cycling pursuits. The most popular form of cycling competition is road racing. In 2008 there were more than 39,000 licensed road racing cyclists and over 2,600 competitive road cycling events in the US alone (USA Cycling, 2008). A vast majority of these events are at a local ‘grass roots’ level and rely extensively on the revenue generated by participant fees for survival and profit. Additionally, the increasing attraction of participants allows for the effective sale of sponsorship properties to bolster event revenue. Because of this compounded importance of attendance to event revenue, it is
critical that the promoters of cycling events maximise the attractiveness of their event(s) to their potential race participants. Cycling event promoters very often have control over a variety of event attributes that can help them tailor their event product to participant preferences. In order to determine the most desirable mix of attribute levels, we conducted a conjoint analysis using salient event characteristics for racing cyclists. While conjoint analysis has frequently been used to study consumer decision-making and improve product marketing (Green & Srinivasan, 1978) and to uncover recreation and leisure preferences (e.g. Haider, Anderson, Beardmore & Anderson, 2004; McFarlane, 2004), to date it has rarely been used in a competitive sporting event (Oh, Ditton & Riechers, 2007) or cycling context (Morey, Buchanan & Waldman, 2002).

Recent recreational participation studies have established that participants' self-reported level of involvement, recreational specialisation, is related to consumption patterns, decision-making and activity preferences (Stebbins, 2001; McFarlane, 2004; Thapa, Graefe & Meyer 2006). Identifying not only event attribute preferences, but also how these preferences vary across potential attendees' degrees of sport involvement, can guide managers and marketers in event design and promotion.

Literature review

Event attributes
Intuitive behaviour determines how consumers consider the distinct characteristics of a product or service when they are deciding whether or not to purchase/consume. The settings of sporting events and recreational participation should lead to similar decision-making. Even in this setting of ‘experience’ goods, while far removed from standing in a market examining ‘hard’ goods to purchase, consumers do typically have some information about their product options and will presumably integrate at least some of this information into their decision-making process.

There have been numerous studies concerning the importance of product attributes for the marketing of spectator sporting events. For example, Madrigal (1995) investigated an overall model of fan satisfaction at women’s college basketball; Sutton et al (1997) studied fan identification in professional sports; Kelley and Turley (2001) specifically discuss event service attributes; while Zhang (1995, 1997, 2003) and Trail (2000, 2001) extended the frontier of spectator sports consumer research with structural equation modeling and rigorous scale developments.

However, all of these studies primarily focus on psycho-social consumption motivations for spectators and related measurement issues and they do not address many controllable event attributes beyond basic discussions of service quality. While these studies in general focus on the spectator and service quality for professional sports, there are many more sporting events held annually that are participant focused with vastly different attributes. These events have the added feature of many manager-selected attributes that can significantly alter the event attractiveness to consumers (participants). This would clearly distinguish them from spectator sports and the fixed core product where the competitive event itself is rightly considered to result from an exogenous (to the marketer) stochastic process.

Little or no research has focused on competitive event selection for competing participants or their event attribute preferences. Oh et al’s (2005) study of competitive fishermen’s event choices is the one notable exception, but most of the other research has focused on either the attributes of event-tourist destinations or the attributes for recreational consumption. Several examples from the event tourism literature include: Jago and Robin (1998) attempting to create a framework for comparing ‘special events’ and their various attributes for attendees; Chalip and McGuirty (2004) examining the bundling of sporting events with a tourist destination’s attributes and other area events; and Chalip and Costa (2005) considering the possible synergies between events and a destination’s brand. None of these studies focused on the event attributes as
choice variables for the event manager, even though some of the event managers in the contexts they were considering might have control over at least some event characteristics that could matter significantly to potential attendees. Generally, the focus was on tourism and visitor bureau implications. As far as recreational participation was concerned, Won and his colleagues examined sport participation attributes in golf (Won, Hwang & Kleiber, 2009) and skiing (Won & Hwang, 2009) and their studies analysed the recreational participation visitor. These activities were not based on a specific event or competition. The participants in a single stand-alone competitive event could presumably have substantially different concerns compared to these recreational visitors.

The event attributes for competitive cycling events is one context where event promoters and marketers can control many important event attributes in order to create the most desirable bundle in their event product for participants. Many attributes of the core participant experience have flexibility that we do not see in many other sport contexts. For example, there is not much a manager can do to easily change the condition of a stadium, football field, basketball court or even the expected outcome of the competition, but in cycling competitions, there is wide variability in potential race courses for cycling events as they are selected and created on a short-term basis using public roadways. The terrain and ‘character’ of a race, and ultimately the expected competitive outcomes, can have wide variability based primarily on an event promoter’s choices. These choices can include whether an event has a rural or urban setting, as well as changing the event’s ‘reach’ based on its proximity to major population centres. Additionally, cycling event promoters can choose the structure of their competition’s stakes. This can be through the size of a prize purse offered and/or through the types of championship affiliations that are featured. Carefully choosing among these event characteristics can help event marketers attract more participants, which will concurrently maximise participant fee revenue and create a more attractive event to sell to potential sponsors.

Multi-attribute theory
Among all of the possible product attributes that affect a purchase decision, a consumer is ultimately moved to consider the most relevant features in order to converge on a decision. In order to do this, there must be an internal calculation whether fine or coarse to result in a valuation of an item. This ‘cognitive algebra’ was first thoroughly explored by Anderson and Zalinski (1988, p. 191-192) in their discussion of multi-attribute theory. While some critics of this type of theory might cite automatic processes or a consumer’s inability to adequately process product attributes as undermining this rational consideration, the case of event choices might not be seriously affected by some of these issues. For example, the important event attributes a participant may consider are largely available well in advance of the event decision, allowing more than enough time for this ‘cognitive algebra’ to take place. Although uncertainty, automaticity and computational limitations will never be completely eliminated for consumers, potential sport event participants might arguably consider the trade-offs against their preferences and reach a more calculated decision than a rushed ‘spot’ purchaser would in a busy supermarket. Given this context in which relatively informed decisions are common, conjoint analysis can offer tools for marketers which are consistent with established multi-attribute theory.

Conjoint analysis
Beginning with the seminal paper by Luce and Tukey (1964), statisticians and mathematical psychologists have begun to apply conjoint measurement to formulate axioms of combination among investigated variables for model estimation. Following further theoretic and algorithmic developments, the techniques have fully made their way into consumer research (Green & Wind, 1975). These measurement concepts moved from first being used in private industry marketing decisions to further applications in outdoor recreation and some sports settings. Essentially, any contexts with multi-attribute decisions have the potential for conjoint application (conditional on
important assumptions and requirements of the instrument). For example, Haider et al (2004) used the measurement technique to examine preferences for trail users of Jasper National Park in Canada. As previously mentioned, Won and Hwang (2009) and Won and his colleagues (2009) applied conjoint measurement in their multi-attribute investigations of skiing and golf respectively. Finally, Morey et al (2002) produced the most closely related sports investigation to this study in their conjoint measurement of the preferences of mountain bike trail users in North America. Again, essentially all of these investigations were in the domain of recreation and leisure.

This current study is unique in that it considered a single competitive event context. The most similar previous application to this current single event preference investigation was conducted by Oh et al (2007) as they considered tournament management practices for fishing competitions and their participant preferences using conjoint analysis.

With the ability and time to consider a purchase, conjoint analysis can offer a researcher or marketer the opportunity to decompose the ‘part-worths’ or relative importance of multiple product attributes. This goes above and beyond measurements of individual attribute importance weights. For example, if we were attempting to analyse the preferred attributes of new cars, we may find that consumers generally prefer large cars to small cars, and we also may find that consumers prefer a more fuel efficient to less fuel efficient cars. But understanding the relative importance of each attribute and the personal trade-offs consumers make among a product’s many attributes is not possible with this type of ‘one at a time’ measurement. Through conjoint analysis, these internal trade-offs can be revealed through an analysis of the ‘packages’ of attributes consumers prefer. These ‘revealed preferences’ among attributes also offer more practical information for the car sellers/marketers. In contrast to the one-at-a-time methods, conjoint analysis presents product attributes to decision-makers in the form of bundles or packages of attributes for their consideration. By judging a requisite number of combinations of attributes, the consumer essentially expresses their own differential weighting or relative importance of each of a product’s main characteristics. Conjoint techniques allow for this to be done in an extremely efficient manner, i.e. consumers need to see only a subset of all possible combinations. Based on the results of conjoint analysis, marketers can not only change product attributes to make the overall bundle more attractive to buyers, but can also make calculated trade-offs in production decisions, i.e. which attributes are worth investing or divesting in.

In the current study, we can see that many attributes present in cycling events are similar to the automobile example in that it is clear that someone would prefer more/less to less/more along a scale of our event attributes. For example, with a traditional one-at-a-time analysis, we would be likely to find that participants prefer a nearby event with a low entry fee to a more distant and more expensive alternative. But these findings would lack any information about how the participant might make ‘trade-offs’ among these attributes when making an event selection. The conjoint application allows us to combine and ultimately compare the relative importance of these major product attributes.

**Recreational specialisation**

Conjoint analysis can also be valuable in conjunction with recreation, leisure and sport participation. Recreational specialisation emerged from leisure research that sought to account for differences between extremely involved participants and those that might be characterised as occasional participants in a leisure endeavor (Bryan 1977, 1979). The important distinction made by Bryan (1977) was that sport participants are not necessarily homogenous and there is ‘within-sport’ variability of involvement. McIntyre and Pigram (1992) developed a construct of ‘recreation involvement’ with multiple domains, particularly behavioural and affective, which was later expanded to include cognitive components. Beginning with a study of ‘vehicle campers’ in Alberta, Canada (McFarlane, 2004), researchers expanded the
recreational specialisation framework to include these distinct cognitive, behavioural and affective measures of recreation specialisation (Needham, Sprouse & Grimm 2009; Won, Bang & Shonk, 2009).

Some first formulations of the subsequent recreational specialisation construct emphasised the development through various stages of involvement (Ninomiya & Kikuchi, 2004; Scott & Shafer, 2001) and much research has been aimed at modelling these progressions and/or determining the extent to which they exist. Regardless of whether this development takes place, understanding the relative proportions and differential preferences of different specialisation levels of participants can inform management and marketing decisions in aggregate. In the case of cycling event promoters, the controllable event attributes can be adjusted to serve one, multiple, or all of the levels of participants of an expected mix of potential event attendees. Conjoint analysis potentially offers one of the best avenues to discovering their event characteristic preferences.

Purpose of study
This study was to investigate the relative importance of cycling event attributes using conjoint analysis to identify the ideal cycling event profile, identify market segments based on cycling event attributes and explore the effects of recreation specialisation in cycling on prioritised cycling event attributes.

Methodology
Sample and procedure
Data (N=199) was collected at three cycling events in the southeastern US. The event selection was reviewed by the panel of cycling experts (N=4) to ensure the events were of typical size and scope. There were no significant group differences between the samples at three events. Of the 199 respondents, 182 were male (91.5%) and 172 were White/Caucasian (86.4%). The average respondent’s age was about 35 years old (SD=11.03), with average reported household income of $97,579 (SD=71,690, Median=90,000).

An intercept sampling method was utilised at the three cycling events. Road cycling participants were asked to participate in this study on a voluntary basis. Study participants were asked to complete a paper-and-pencil questionnaire that included 11 demographic inquiries and nine recreational specialisation items, as well as ratings of 16 cycling event alternatives.

Instrument
Conjoint scenarios
A set of cycling event alternatives that differ in the attributes travel distance, entry fee, overall prize purse offered, course type and series affiliation were generated using the SPSS design function. These five important attributes were established using the feedback of the panel of expert cyclists, each with 10 or more years of competitive cycling experience (N=4). Using a Delphi method, the experts agreed that these five chosen attributes would be the most important for participants considering attending a competitive cycling event. Using these five event attributes, 16 event scenarios, each with varying levels, were generated for the respondents to rate on an 11-point scale from 0 (not at all likely to attend) to 10 (very likely to attend). Each attribute had three possible levels associated with it: travel distance (1, 4, 7 hour driving distance), entry fee ($20, $35, $50), prize purse ($1,500, $7,500, $13,500), course type (urban, rural/residential, industrial/corporate) and series affiliation (national, local/state, none). These were also generated under the guidance of the expert cyclists.

Results
Road cycling event preferences
Table 1 reports the utility scores and relative importance scores of each racing event attribute. The conjoint results of all responses revealed that travel distance (60.6%) was regarded as the most important
road racing event attribute followed by prize purse (16.7%), entry fee (9.3%), series affiliation (8.9%) and course type (4.5%). For the racing cyclists in this study, the importance of travel distance to a racing event was 3.6 times more important than the second most important factor, prize purse ($60.6/16.7 = 3.6$). Compared with the least important event attribute, the importance of travel distance was 13.5 times more important than that of course type. If driving distances for multiple racing events are identical, the importance of the prize purse will be paramount.

Among the attribute levels examined in this study, the ideal cycling event would be a race that is located at a one-hour driving distance, requires an entry fee of $20, is held in a residential area, is affiliated with a local or state point series and offers a total prize purse of $13,500.

**Table 1**

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<tr>
<td>NATIONAL</td>
<td>0.1678</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL/STATE</td>
<td>0.2228</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT FOR POINT</td>
<td>-0.3906</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COURSE LOCATION</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.3513</td>
<td>4.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITY CENTRE</td>
<td>-0.0487</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESIDENTIAL AREA</td>
<td>0.1969</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDUSTRIAL AREA</td>
<td>-0.1483</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.774</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Relative importance scores are based on a group-level (aggregate) analysis

**Market segments based on preferences**

K-means cluster analysis was conducted to segment cyclists by similar attribute preference patterns. Recognising that cluster analysis can be somewhat subjective in terms of the selection of K segments, two and three group analyses were conducted (sample size prohibited further segmentation of the sample). The sample size of 199 was consistent with a three-cluster
consideration, as Schneider and Roberts (2005) suggested having fewer numbers of clusters in an exploratory analysis, while smaller samples could undermine the appropriate application of cluster analysis. Problems with smaller samples could arise both from large within group variance and exceedingly limited degrees of freedom. While there is no rule of thumb regarding cluster sample sizes, we must see group clusters that have enough cases per cluster to be meaningful (Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011). As each cluster has sizeable cases and they are conceptually meaningful, it was concluded that the information from the cluster analyses would be helpful to communicate better with a particular market segment.

To begin, K-means analysis with two market segments revealed two clusters with different ideal event profiles (see Table 2). For both segment 1 and 2, the most important attribute was travel distance. However, for segment 1 (N=96), the importance of travel distance was significantly greater than the summated importance scores of the other four event attributes, as the importance score of travel distance was more than twice that of the summated importance scores for all of other four attributes (70.1% vs. 29.9%). Thus, cluster 1 was named ‘distance-bounded.’ For segment 2 (N=103), the

---

**TABLE 2** Summary statistics of cluster preferences: two clusters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLUSTER</th>
<th>MEAN VALUES (RELATIVE IMPORTANCE: %)</th>
<th>CLUSTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TRAVEL DISTANCE</td>
<td>PRIZE PURSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: DISTANCE-BOUNDED</td>
<td>70.05</td>
<td>6.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: DISTANCE-BOUNDED</td>
<td>29.57</td>
<td>22.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF CLUSTER DIFFERENCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F VALUE</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>428.15</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: df (1, 197) for each attribute, **bold** type indicates statistically significant (p < .01) differences across groups.

---

**TABLE 3** Summary statistics of cluster preferences: three clusters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLUSTER</th>
<th>MEAN VALUES (RELATIVE IMPORTANCE: %)</th>
<th>CLUSTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TRAVEL DISTANCE</td>
<td>PRIZE PURSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: DISTANCE-BOUNDED</td>
<td>73.13</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: POINTS &amp; FEES</td>
<td>17.77</td>
<td>14.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: DISTANCE-BOUNDED</td>
<td>38.11</td>
<td>23.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF CLUSTER DIFFERENCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F VALUE</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>286.09</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: df (2, 196) for each attribute, **bold** type indicates statistically significant (p < .01) differences across groups.
Cycling event preferences

Table 4: Recreation specialisation in cycling: means and standard deviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIALIZATION ITEMS</th>
<th>SAMPLE</th>
<th>BY SPECIALIZATION GROUP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=199</td>
<td>LESS SPECIALIZED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFFECTIVE (α=.72)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1. CYCLING IS ONE OF THE MOST ENJOYABLE THINGS I DO.</td>
<td>4.75 (0.58)</td>
<td>4.42 (0.95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2. CYCLING IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME.</td>
<td>4.71 (0.58)</td>
<td>4.42 (0.89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3. CYCLING SAYS A LOT ABOUT WHO I AM.</td>
<td>4.15 (0.96)</td>
<td>3.71 (0.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4. I FIND A LOT OF MY LIFE IS ORGANIZED AROUND CYCLING.</td>
<td>4.19 (0.83)</td>
<td>3.76 (0.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COGNITIVE (α=.87)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1. I AM ABLE TO CHOOSE APPROPRIATE CYCLING STRATEGIES DURING RACING.</td>
<td>3.88 (0.91)</td>
<td>2.79 (0.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2. I HAVE ADEQUATE KNOWLEDGE IN CYCLING TECHNIQUES AND RULES.</td>
<td>4.22 (0.80)</td>
<td>3.32 (0.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3. WITH THE KNOWLEDGE I HAVE ACQUIRED, I AM ABLE TO CYCLE VERY WELL IN ANY SITUATION.</td>
<td>4.06 (0.80)</td>
<td>3.08 (0.75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4. I AM A VERY CONFIDENT CYCLIST.</td>
<td>4.23 (0.79)</td>
<td>3.47 (0.89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEHAVIORAL (α=N/A)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1. HOW MANY DIFFERENT CYCLING EVENTS HAVE YOU ENTERED ANNUALLY?</td>
<td>22.22 (17.72)</td>
<td>9.92 (7.59)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: bold type indicates statistically significant (p < .01) differences across groups.
Recreational specialisation

Examining the recreation specialisation item responses, three distinct groups emerged (see Table 4). Based on the profile of relative importance of each of the three measured domains (cognitive, affective and behavioural), they were named: 'less specialised', 'non-behaviourally specialised' and 'highly specialised'. ‘Less specialised’ defined individuals clustered at the lowest levels of specialisation across all domains. They would be the most infrequently participating, least motivated and least knowledgeable. The ‘non-behaviourally specialised’ individuals had higher levels of cognitive and affective involvement with the sport but did not report a pattern of frequent participation. In contrast, the ‘highly specialised’ group stood apart from the other two groups in terms of behavioural history, as they reported participating in nearly four times as many events annually. ‘Highly specialised’ participants reported participating in almost 40 events annually (M=38.67, SD=14.07), while the ‘less specialised’ and ‘non-behaviourally specialised’ participants reported attending about ten events annually (M=9.92, SD=7.59; and M=9.97, SD=6.57 respectively). This behavioural history was coupled with affective and cognitive levels similar to the ‘non-behaviourally specialised’ group.

Comparing these three specialisation groups using the conjoint analysis individual level scores, travel distance proved to be the event attribute with the highest relative importance but was also statistically different among the three groups. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed a significant main effect of cyclists' recreation specialisation in cycling, Wilk's $\lambda=.88$, $F(10, 384)=2.56$, $p=.005$. Of the four other event attributes, there were variations in the conjoint importance ratings of the remaining preferences but only the differences in ‘prize purse’ ratings were statistically significant across the three groups (Table 5). Post-hoc analysis using Tukey's procedure for ‘travel distance’ and ‘prize purse’ revealed that mean importance for ‘travel distance’ was greater for the ‘less specialised’ individuals than for the ‘highly specialised’ individuals, while the mean importance for ‘prize purse’ was smaller for the ‘less specialised’ individuals than for the other two groups.

### TABLE 5 Results of individual-level conjoint analyses based on cycling specialisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHOICE FACTORS</th>
<th>CYCLING SPECIALISATION LEVEL</th>
<th>DIFF.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LESS SPECIALISED</td>
<td>NON- BEHAVIOURALLY SPECIALISED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATIVE IMPORTANCE (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISTANCE</td>
<td>57.11 (1)</td>
<td>51.39 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIZE PURSE</td>
<td>9.80 (5)</td>
<td>12.07 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POINT SERIES</td>
<td>11.84 (2)</td>
<td>14.86 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEES</td>
<td>9.95 (4)</td>
<td>10.76 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>11.29 (3)</td>
<td>10.91 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIFF (= MOST – LEAST)</td>
<td>47.16</td>
<td>40.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: **bold** type indicates statistically significant ($p < .01$) differences across groups.
Cycling event preferences

Market simulation
The conjoint analysis also allowed for a direct translation of potential attribute changes into measures of utility by using the consumers' revealed preferences that the conjoint analysis generates. By considering the ordinary least squares (OLS) estimation equation, the conjoint analysis generated a prediction equation for the sample consumer's utility and the expected effects of product attribute changes can then be calculated. Table 6 illustrates some examples of this by holding the course and distance attributes constant (likely constraint for event marketers) and considers changes in prices (entry fees) and payoffs (prizes and points). The results suggest that a manager of a 'city centre' event targeting participants, and an average travel distance of four hours, can specifically consider the changes in event attractiveness (utility) that might result from entry fee changes, a change in prizes offered or the offer of different series ranking points.

For example, beginning with the base case, a manager could increase the overall utility of participants by dropping a point series affiliation and increasing their prize purse. This information could help an event manager decide whether to pay for a series affiliation, i.e. if it costs more than $6,000 to register their event for a local points series then the manager would be better off putting those funds into the prize list than spending it on the series affiliation. Several other combinations are shown in Table 6.

Discussion
The results of this study highlight the event attributes that matter most to competitive cyclists in the southeastern US and uncovers some of their differential preferences based on recreational specialisation. The recreational specialisation results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CYCLING EVENTS</th>
<th>CONSTANT</th>
<th>DISTANCE</th>
<th>PRIZE</th>
<th>FEES</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>UTILITY*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>-5.32</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>6.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 HRS)</td>
<td>($7,500)</td>
<td>($20)</td>
<td>(LOCAL)</td>
<td>(CITY CENTRE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>-5.32</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 HRS)</td>
<td>($7,500)</td>
<td>($20)</td>
<td>(NFP)</td>
<td>(CITY CENTRE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (BASE CASE)</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>-5.32</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>5.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 HRS)</td>
<td>($1,500)</td>
<td>($20)</td>
<td>(LOCAL)</td>
<td>(CITY CENTRE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>-5.32</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 HRS)</td>
<td>($7,500)</td>
<td>($50)</td>
<td>(LOCAL)</td>
<td>(CITY CENTRE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>-5.32</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>4.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 HRS)</td>
<td>($1,500)</td>
<td>($20)</td>
<td>(NFP)</td>
<td>(CITY CENTRE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>-5.32</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>4.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 HRS)</td>
<td>($7,500)</td>
<td>($50)</td>
<td>(NFP)</td>
<td>(CITY CENTRE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>-5.32</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 HRS)</td>
<td>($1,500)</td>
<td>($50)</td>
<td>(LOCAL)</td>
<td>(CITY CENTRE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>-5.32</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 HRS)</td>
<td>($1,500)</td>
<td>($50)</td>
<td>(NFP)</td>
<td>(CITY CENTRE)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Utility* = Constant + U(Distance) + U(Prize) + U(Fees) + U(Points) + U(Course)
here reiterate past findings that point to significant differences among recreation participants based on their levels of cognitive, affective and behavioural involvement. Additionally, the cluster analyses, which established ‘distance-bounded’, ‘distance-bounded payoffs-count’, ‘points & fees’ and ‘distance-bounded prize seekers’ groups, offers new avenues of investigation and creates some potential market segments for practitioners to target in the future.

‘Travel distance’ emerged as a primary choice attribute among nearly all of the participant segments. From a sports governance perspective, this points to the importance of fostering event access by growing the number and density of events available to the general population, i.e. how far any participant has to travel is nearly always a primary concern for their decision-making. On a micro level, an event organiser with the ability to choose an event location that is close to a large population centre or within reach of several can help them ensure sustained interest in their event(s). Additionally, event organisers can work to identify participants from distant locations and offer incentives or discounts for participation. This can be accomplished through cycling member databases that all event organisers have access to. Filtering their participant data by distance from the event can be used to send specific offers to potentially distance-bound participants. The recent integration of online event registration by USA Cycling for event promoters has given them the capability to directly incorporate differential price discounts for remote participants to mitigate the clearly important travel time costs (USA Cycling, 2010).

‘Prize purse’ was next on the list of importance for respondents overall. Additionally, the ‘highly specialised’ participants are also much more concerned with the prize list. This is one element of the event promotion that has a clear, simple cost for an event manager to consider. While it would be more worthwhile to consider how responsive the number of participants is to prize purse changes, from this conjoint analysis we can make a direct comparison between the prizes offered and potential investments in other event attributes (see previous market simulation examples, Table 6). Operationalising participant segments that are sensitive to prize purse for target marketing is however much more challenging. Although the K-means analysis suggests there is a segment of the participant population that cares exceedingly about price, being able to communicate and/or cater to this segment is difficult if not impossible. Work on the ideal prize purse to incentivise participation and effort in sports competition has been more in the realm of economic contest theory and sports economics (e.g. Lazear & Rosen, 1981; Zyzanski, 2003), and while the theory of the design of the contest/prize structure can say something about the incentives and effort generally, it does not address or attempt to capitalise on the ‘lumpy’ nature of the market for participants. Further research could focus on the ‘prize elasticity’ of participation generally and within these specialised segments to reveal the trade-offs for prize purse investment. The most use these results have for practitioners is in a comparison of event attribute investments, i.e. the common currency of utility for their potential consumers.

Probably the most promising area for investment and potential gains for cycling event marketing practitioners is the point-series affiliations. This is evident through the responses of the ‘less specialised’, ‘non-behaviourally specialised’ and ‘points and fees’ market segments. These groupings all rate series points as their second most important event attribute. While series affiliations sometimes require small investments by event promoters, they often come with little or no cost. In many cases, the only costs borne by event managers are those of small amounts of communication, planning and administrative paperwork. Event series are often organised and run by outside groups or sports governing bodies. These series affiliations are not only low cost enhancements to an event, but they are also particularly salient with the participants that have the most potential for increasing their participation behaviour levels. For example, within the two lower recreational specialisation groups, which comprise more than
57% of the sample, respondents reported participating in just under 10 events per year, while the ‘highly specialised’ participants report participating in almost 40 events per year (M=38.7). Point series affiliations have the potential to enhance the attractiveness of one’s event and increase these groups’ lower overall levels of participation.

‘Entry fees’ was consistently one of the attributes rated lowest in revealed importance. It was one of the two lowest in all explored sub-groups and segments with the sole exception of the ‘points & fees’ cluster. Interestingly, this cluster, which expressed that price (entry fees) was second most important of the five attributes, was less concerned about the monetary rewards of the actual event prizes. It was also relatively unconcerned about travel distance and was primarily concerned with the non-monetary accolades.

The ‘course location’ was never a primary concern for the preference ratings. While it did show some importance in the preference ratings, the coefficients for ‘course location’ in the estimated utility function were relatively small compared to the other event attributes. They also showed minimal variation between the three attribute levels. For example, while the ‘rural/residential’ selection was preferred to the other locations, the difference in total utility for the consumers to ‘industrial’ or ‘city centre’ locations was half the range of the next attribute levels (points series). Additionally, none of the market clusters or segmentations that would be practical for marketing efforts differentially preferred course selection over other event variations. At best, it showed a mid-level of importance (third) for ‘less specialised’ participants. To add to this tepid level of importance to consumers, changing event courses can often have large and unpredictable costs. Nevertheless, these results show that event managers should understand that participants do generally prefer rural/residential event locations and any opportunities to access these sites for low (or similar) costs to the other alternatives should be capitalised upon.

### Limitations

Green and Srinivasan (1978) cautioned that researchers must be attentive to questions of reliability and validity in conjoint application. While the importance of ‘travel distance’ was ubiquitous as a primary choice attribute among nearly all of the participant segments, when using conjoint analysis, it is important to guard against subjectivity in initial variable selection. Therefore, the dominance of this factor should be scrutinised. Specifically, the choice of levels of this variable on the measurement instrument could be reconsidered to determine whether participants were really very sensitive to travel distance or whether the presented levels were over-inflated and dominating the internal calculus for some subjects. Many participants were highly sensitive (averse) to the seven-hour travel scenarios and still to a great extent the four hour options. This might suggest a ‘rule of thumb’ problem (i.e. ‘I would never travel to an event more than four hours away’) that could perhaps overshadow or even cut short any trade-off calculus conjoint analysis assumes for the other attributes. Although it might increase the required scenario cards in the research instrument, finer distinctions, i.e. more levels included, might be more useful for practitioners and improve the validity of the instrument. For example, an event organiser’s selection of their event location might be limited to options in much smaller increments than the three hours of travel included in this study. It could be the choice of one side of a metropolitan area or another, or it may be choosing from 20 minutes to an hour closer or farther away from a large metropolitan area. Although the short travel distance preference is clear from the levels we have chosen in this design, we may be sacrificing important information about trade-offs among the other variables that could potentially be captured with less extreme and/or more variable choices for travel distance. While the panel of experts (highly experienced cyclists) selected the levels of travel distance based on common distance choices
they have faced when traveling to competitions, less involved participants might have a much narrower upper boundary and some sensitivity to smaller increments.

Additionally, considerations of an event's start time, competition duration, day of the week and single or multi-day outings were not incorporated in the instrument or conjoint items. These factors could presumably interact with the distance considerations a potential participant makes, e.g., a competitor's evaluation of an event's distance might be significantly altered if the entire outing could be contained in one day (no overnight stay) and/or the event were immediately adjacent to other event(s) the day before or after. This is something that should be considered and/or incorporated into future measurements. Therefore, the dominance of this distance consideration for participants warrants its own inquiry.

Practitioners must also use caution when making decisions based on these findings. Other event attributes outside of the model can undermine the predictive power of the decision information. Specifically, drastic changes in outside factors, variation in close substitutes to cycling and increased competition from alternative events may all play a role in participant choices to attend or not. Nevertheless, insofar as a practitioner can compete with nearby events and/or substitutes along the lines of these revealed preferences, the findings can prove valuable to marketing managers.

Regarding the generalisability of these findings, the data collection was limited to participants of three cycling events in the southeastern US and might not accurately represent the participant and events in other portions of the country or for that matter, international events/participants. However, the use of the Delphi panel feedback from US cycling experts from diverse parts of the country might have helped mitigate some of these concerns (as representative of US cycling events). Their expert feedback and strong consensus about event representativeness and attribute priority is a piece often missing from many marketing inquiries. While more study is warranted with a more diverse sampling of events to confirm these specific findings, we do feel these results illustrate the general usefulness of these conjoint tools for both researchers and practitioners.

While the replication of improved conjoint measurements within the sport of cycling using a larger sample in broader contexts (e.g., US and international) can help uncover more general knowledge about cycling event consumers, these techniques could also clearly be employed by marketers in other participant-based event contexts such as running, triathlon and adventure racing.

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Biographies

Daniel Larson completed his PhD at the University of Georgia in August 2011 and has an MS in exercise and sport science and a BS in management from the University of Florida. He is a former cycling event promoter, coach and professional team manager. His research interests are in sports economics and participant sport governance, event management and marketing.

Doyeon Won is on the faculty in the Department of Sport and Leisure Studies at Yonsei University. His graduate education includes a MS in sports management from the University of Michigan and a PhD. from Ohio State University. His current research interests include services marketing and consumer behaviour in sport.
Cycling event preferences

References


The relationship between real sports and digital adaptation in e-sport gaming

Keywords
- e-sport
- virtual worlds
- sport event
- augmented reality
- computer gaming

Abstract
The relationship between real sport and its digital adaptation is significantly influenced by technological advancements. However, it is not a process that has developed in a linear fashion. On the contrary, it has been formed from diverse, parallel and to some extent opposing processes. In this paper, the relationship between real sport and its digital adaptation in computer games, virtual environments and augmented reality will be analysed using concrete examples.

Executive summary
The relationship between real sport and its digital adaptation was originally one-sided. Initially real sports types and events were used as a template for creating virtual gaming environments. The process became two-way through the use of digital techniques to enhance the coverage of real sporting events on TV.

Today, contact with the virtual world in the context of sports is still ambivalent. On the one hand there are symbiotic characteristics such as virtualisation increasing the value of real players, clubs and sponsorships. For example, both the former Skateboarding World Champion Tony Hawk and the current Snowboarding Olympic Champion Shaun White are best known by the wider public for the digital games named after them. Their testimonial might, for example, be in the form of a cover picture and/or their name on the respective digital sports games’ packaging. Niche and extreme sports in particular, appear to have discovered new marketing and communication opportunities in the virtual world through this route.

In addition digital adaptation offers real sport venues new possibilities for ticketing and relationships with target groups, especially for merchandising and cross-selling. On the other hand the relationship between real sport and e-sport is perceived as competition...
when it comes to restricted resources of assets, spectators and sponsorships. In this paper, the relationship between institutionalised sport and the digital adaptation of sport is highlighted using concrete examples. Possible surplus values and problem areas are identified and there is analysis of the positive effect on the marketing and staging of sporting events.

The relationship between institutionalised sport and digital adaptation is significantly influenced by technological advancements. However, this is not a linear development in which technical developments simply enhance gaming potential. The analysis shows a series of diverse, parallel and to some extent opposing processes, in which digital and real world sport impact each other.

From functional adaptation to realistic simulation

The adaptation of sport and types of sport within digital media is not new. Since the early 1970s, commercial consoles were marketed which, when connected to a television, provided an interactive gaming experience. From the beginning they have been based on actual sports. In 1972 the company, Magnavox, offered twelve external storage devices (cartridges) containing games collections of ten sport-based programmes such as table tennis, skiing, basketball or shooting (Weiss 2007: 268ff.; Wolf 2008: 50f) for its Odyssey TV console.

“The …gaming module however contains no programming code, but rather merely connects the circuit of the console in a different way. Ultimately all games are made up of white rectangles (...). In order to alleviate the minimalistic game play, Magnavox supplies an individually configured overlay for the screen which depicts the playing area and theme of the game.” (Lange 2006: 3)

The increasingly widespread popularity of the home computer swiftly uncovered the potential for digital gaming. To date, the observational interdependence between the development of hardware and the utilisation of such resources with regards to computer games essentially dates back to the start of the 1980s. The period heralded the introduction of TV screens running CGA graphics soon followed by the higher resolution Enhanced Graphic Adaptor (EGA)
In 1984, the first digital game to offer an adaptation of a major sporting event was introduced. The event was the Olympic Summer Games with the adaptation running on the Commodore 64 (C 64). With the Olympic torch burning, little 'pixel-men' could be sent running down a track with rhythmic clicking or compete in a high diving competition in a virtual swimming pool. Control of the game was achieved using a standard keyboard (figure 1). Up to eight players could compete against one another simultaneously over eight disciplines: pole vault, relay, sprinting, gymnastics, shooting, high diving, swimming and rowing. This provided a cross-section of events from the real 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles (Mertens & Meißner 2002: 137).

Today, digital sports games are becoming much more lifelike. First, technological advancements have led to more photo-realistic visualisation and simulation of movement (figure 2). Second, alternative interfaces are being developed offering greater motoric potential than the traditional means of control such as the keyboard, gamepad or joystick.

The control of virtual gaming activity is also possible using large-format input devices, in particular for dancing games (e.g. Konami’s DanceDanceRevolution), which uses a movement sensitive controller (e.g. Nintendo’s Wii) or works by means of video supported detection and interpretation of the real movements of the gamer (e.g. Sony’s Eye Toy or Microsoftxcccxc Kinect).

These interfaces have enabled adapted and real movements to become more realistic. In place of a tennis racket in a real tennis match, the gamer instead holds a controller which is handled in the same way as the real sports equipment (figure 3).
The real-world staging of sport as matter for adaptation

However adaptation in digital gaming is not limited to sport types as subject matter or exterior forms of movement as elements of control. Adaptation also includes aspects of media enhancement and media-supported staging of sport (e.g. Horky 2001: 117ff; Schwier & Schauerte 2002)

This extends to such aspects as depicting the playing surface of certain sports, using camera guidance, perspective and even shifts between different camera positions thus offering a similar experience to the broadcast of sport on TV. Indeed modern games also include action replays, slow motion clips of important moments, the overlay of statistics and computer generated commentary in the style of live commentary.

The adaptation of sport is now also based on the organisation and staging of digital gaming as 'e-sport':

“e-sport is the competitive playing of computer and video games in a multi-player mode. This can be found either on the internet or locally (during a large organised event). (...) e-sport means: professional players compete in strictly regulated competitions” (Topalov 2007: 4)

With the introduction of staging and the creation of events, the industry effectively has a calendar, which is identifiable to potential stars. Competitive action is accessible independent of the location but is nevertheless ‘emotionalised’ and created into an experience via the use of media (light, sound and video technology). It is interesting to observe what Schauerte (2008) describes as the current state in the “development of the relationship between sport and media”:

“The simple coding of sport in victory and defeat... has changed itself into a dramaturgic element in the implementation of marketing strategies of sport media complexes, the impetus of which is determined by economic targets” (Schauerte 2008: 100)

Lamprecht and Stamm (2002) talk about ‘mediasport’ in the context of this phenomenon, in that:

“It comes down to the sporting exertions of a few exceptional athletes, whose peak performances will be staged as an entertainment offering for the masses” (Lamprecht & Stamm 2002: 133)

Thereby, in e-sport the value of a competition increases with its perceived meaning in the case of winning a competition. While different international organisations vie for the favour of players and fans, the actual situation in e-sport resembles various ‘real’ sport types such as snowboarding, dragon-boat racing or boxing:

“Up to now, e-sports can be compared to the boxing world, when talking about titles, rules and standards. Many tournaments in e-sports claim for the same (or similar) titles” (Salice 2010: 85)

Despite the similarities outlined, e-sport has nonetheless, with few exceptions, very little connection to the substance of the traditional understanding of sport.

In 2010 in the top division of the European e-sport League (ESL), the Pro Series, titles such as Counterstrike, CS: Source, Star Craft, Call of Duty, Quake or Dawn of War, provide competitive action.

In FIFA 10, for example, the game is themed on a real-world sport, in this case football, whereas the racing game Trackmania resembles actual motorsport content.

When e-sport is staged as an event and is subject to media exploitation, a convergence to organisational and communicational structures of real-world sports is unavoidable as per Müller-Lietzkow (2007). But at the same time, it is this specific convergence which itself leads to restructuring:
“Digital games as media enable further new degrees of exploitation via additional elements of performance comparisons in a competition, e.g. via broadcast of games on the internet and television. The consequence is, as in traditional sport, that there are stars, advertisements, journalists and reports etc. The games’ manufacturers react to these in the same way as the suppliers of leagues - thus actions are enabled through structure and vice versa” (Müller-Lietzkow 2007: 239).

The competitive element, the training-dependent chances of success, the organisation of a competition within a league enterprise and the staging of activities brings e-sport closer to institutionalised sport. In fact, several national sports governing bodies regard e-sport as a form of sport: e.g. Brazil, China, Korea and Bulgaria (Topalov 2007: 4). The German Olympic Sports Confederation, however, refuses to recognise e-sport. One reason is the lack of physical activity. Given the greater skills now being required to control games’ interfaces, it is an argument which will be more difficult to hold in the future. However at present, despite projects intended to vitalise obese youths via movement-sensitive digital games (e.g. Baranowski 2008; Lampert et al. 2009), the exertion of digital games cannot be seen in a context comparable to physiological adaptation processes (e.g. Graves et al. 2007; Sohnsmeyer et al. 2010; Kliem & Wiemeyer, 2010). This is significant because of the traditional understanding of sport’s role in providing physical exercise, which serves to maintain the body’s health. However e-sportsmen do not just train in front of the screen. A study from ESL (Electronic Sports League) found that, in comparison to the average population, e-sportsmen are also active sportsmen in the original form of the word: “just 5% of e-sportsmen do not do any sport whereas the rest do: high performance sportsmen (8.5%), those in a sports club (25%) or those in a gym (60%)” (cited by Luttmann 2007: 71). But this should not overlook the fact that prolonged game-playing in darkened rooms in front of flickering monitors accompanied by artificial lesser-motoric movements is not a healthy way of living. Real physical exercise is less a continuation of the digital game and more a necessary compensation. For e-sportsmen with professional expectations it is simply training. Daniel Schellhase, multiple World Champion in the e-sport discipline FIFA was quoted in an interview in 2007 as saying: “My body has to be fit so that I can concentrate in a long e-sport competition. Therefore I play football for a club” (cited by Grohé 2007: 74). However, without these physical compensations, they [Dennis and Daniel Schellhase, e-sport team] would have lost the desire to play FIFA anymore. “It was mutually fruitful” (ibidem).

The integration and interdependence of real sport and virtualisation

E-sport became part of the official cultural framework of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing through American e-sport promoter GGL Global Gaming. Its Odyssey game was also used in context of the 1st Youth Olympic Games. In Singapore in 2010, a virtual value became integrated into the communication and marketing of a real-world sporting event. There was equal ambition to inform about the event and to bridge the communication gap between the activities and the participants in the live event and the global target group. For this reason, sporting venues were virtualised, sports types simulated and virtual communication spaces created (figure 4).

Sport has been used to help market technical innovations that have no direct connection to the sports world (e.g. in Germany, mobile broadcasting in respect of the 2006 FIFA World Cup, HDTV in respect of the athletics World Championships in 2009 or the 3D live broadcasts of the 2010 FIFA World Cup). The reason for this is the extraordinary suitability of sport as a subject for media output including via virtual platforms. Thus sport achieves its identity through visualisation and aesthetic and emotional content (e.g. Schierl 2002). With this in mind Twinity constructed...
its Football Fan Location for the FIFA 2010 World Cup with numerous activities and attracted new members through its communication to the outside world.

Similarly, selected sports from the 2010 Winter Olympics (luge, bobsleigh, ski-jumping, curling and biathlon) were depicted in an Olympic village at the request of the German community in the virtual world Second Life. The objective here was also to promote interactive and competitive offers (see figure 5).

The integration of virtual worlds into the communication of sporting events rarely or never available to live spectators has been significant. Examples of such events include the Paris-Dakar Rally and the Volvo Ocean Race, a round the world sailing race. Spectators are now offered event content in the form of a photo-style map depiction with integrated tracking of the participants. They can also receive information such as weather and wind data and the ability to adjust the scale and perspective (from a basic view at variable distances to an apparent three dimensional visualisation courtesy of a free-moving camera) It is also possible to follow the action via an animated review function (see figure 6).

The new communication dimension offers applications, which extend the visualisation of sporting events around the interactive elements: the users are not only able to passively follow the event at a distance, but are able to place themselves actively in the virtual event whilst virtually participating in a sort of mirrored contest with the possibility to measure up against others and compare ‘real’ scenarios.

Such an active participation in a real sporting event creates a surplus value in event communication, as not only will a different quality of communication be achieved, but it also appeals to large user groups. 92,000 players from 191 countries registered for the game in the latest edition of Volvo Ocean Race 2008/2009.

The high acceptance of virtualised sports competitions therefore leads to an integration in the opposite direction: During the German sailing event Kieler Woche in 2009, the software Virtual Skipper became the first virtual boat class to be integrated into a real sailing regatta: 174 skippers registered for the 75 qualification races, 8 semi-finals and 6 finals (Lubowski 2009) (see figure 7). The makers of multi-sport online games Empire of Sports adhere to both sides of fruitful integration; on one side real sport and

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**FIGURE 4** Screenshot from the virtual world of Odyssey (singapore2010.sg).

**FIGURE 5** Screenshot of the biathlon competition as per the German community in the virtual world Second Life.
sporting events and on the other, virtualised sport. In
the MMORPG (Massive Multiplayer Online Role Play
Game) the players slip into the roles of virtual athletes
and compete against one another in six sports (skiing,
tennis, bobsleigh, football, basketball and athletics).
The performance of the virtual athletes is reliant on
the condition of training which is developed within the
digital sports arena and also serves as a means of
exchange of communication for the user.
Thereby sports and sporting events become more
integrated in terms of communications. This should
pay dividends to real world sports and could, for
example, initiate a consumer connection between real
clubs (such as FC Barcelona) and the virtual world. In
an interview at the launch of the platform in 2008,
Christian Müller, marketing director for EOS outlined
this interdependence:

“Right at the beginning we will connect real and
virtual events with athletes and sporting
organisations. This produces thrills and the events
profit from the attention of the gamers. We even
anticipate that some types of sport will become
more popular through Empire of Sports as the
population will gain a better understanding of the
sport itself” (Gee 2008: 82).

It is yet to be proven whether the digital adaptation of
traditional sports actually benefits the real sport. But,
for example, adaptation can make it easier to
understand rules and can offer insight into the tactical
dimensions of sport and thus lead to more active or
passive participation in real world sport.
A transfer between traditional sport and digital
adaptation is common in e-sport marketing. In
particular, there is a demand for personal testimonials
from popular sportsmen and women for digital games
titles. Examples include Rick Nash, who, in 2007
became ice hockey world champion with Team
Canada. During the tournament he was not only
nominated for the All-star Team but was also voted as
the most valuable player of the World Cup. In the
following year, shortly after his appointment to captain
of the Columbus Blue Jackets, an ice hockey team in
the NHL (National Hockey League), he was used to
provide a testimonial for the sports title NHL 2009 by
publisher Take 2 interactive. Similarly the sporting achievements of Magdalena Neuner, were used by Hamburg games producer 49 Games for a testimonial to promote Biathlon 2009. In 2007 Neuner became the youngest ever three times world champion and in the following season was the youngest ever World Cup winner.

In the context of digital sports games, real athletes authenticate the proximity to reality of products. At the same time the athletes allow themselves to be seen as icons, which influences the socio-cultural characterisation of digital games: the consumer becomes a model athlete in contrast to the often quoted characteristically prejudiced archetype of a computer or video game player who is presented as overweight, pallid and spotty (Lischka 2002; Muller 2009: 102).

The extraordinary aesthetic of virtualised sports was embraced by the Dutch agency, Post Panic in 2004 with a TV advert for Nike Brand Design EMEA. In the production called ‘Look good be bad’, footballer Roberto Carlos appears in a testimonial for the Nike football product line. However, neither Carlos nor the action sequences were realistically portrayed. Instead a virtual world was depicted, in which the testimonial as well as the real product, were integrated into the digital game (figure 9). The adoption of sports enhances the experience of digital gaming and transfers it to a real-world context. The benefit or specific value of real sports goods is conveyed in the analogy as levelling out (improvement in performance) of the digital game characters.

Real-world marketing of sport for the purposes of adaptation

The integration of advertising messages in sporting events is commonplace and expected. The same is true for sports marketing in the virtual environment. In comparison to other digital gaming genres, the related level of user acceptance in sports games is particularly high. Well known and familiar advertising formats are embraced as building blocks for realistic gaming scenarios. As there is a segregation of editorial and commercial content for digital gaming (ban on covert...
advertising or ‘plugging’, §4 no.3 UWG; concealment of promotional characters) a sports title is presented as an advertising medium when compared to other gaming genres: the use of clearly recognisable advertising space in the form of perimeter advertising boards etc. is not only conforming with the law, but is also accepted and even desired on a user site.

The integration of advertising content in gaming events therefore follows the acquisition of real-world formats more than the specific media possibilities. In a sporting context shirt sponsors, perimeter boards and product placement are evident in the form of branding on stadia, clothing and sports equipment (skis, skateboards, cars, boots, balls etc). An example is seen in Figure 10, a screenshot from the game FIFA 11 from EA Sports: product placement (ball, shoes, socks and shirts), shirt sponsorship and perimeter advertising boards. Real players sporting the kit of real-world clubs are shown (with names, crests and shirts). The game event is framed by an animated virtual crowd, who enhance the game with emotion and heighten the experience, as fans would at a real football match.

A problem concerning the integration of advertising content in digital gaming was initially the static, non-modifiable integration in the source code. As a result SIGA (static in-game advertising) can result in loss of control of the measurement of results and brand presence.

The technological connection of games consoles and the internet, linked with continuously increasing bandwidths, paved the way for more dynamic integration in the mid 2000s. DIGA (dynamic in-game advertising) allowing marketing messages to become campaign-orientated. Content is shipped once it has been differentiated according to continent, country or even region. Thus user-specific projection times, sizes and angles of inventoried advertising space are measured and can be charged to the advertising space buyer (e.g. Schonberg 2007; BVDW 2009).

“Thereby advertising clients are able to obtain, in addition to classic advertising, the placement of campaign based target-group accurate, country-specific and chronologically controlled In-Game-Advertising. Intermediary agents such as IGA Worldwide Inc. or Massive Inc take over the technological integration as marketer and mediator
and the control and delivery of the advertising together with the reporting” (Klein 2009: 15)

Dynamic in game advertising therefore allows a flexible integration of advertising content in a digital game. The advantage, in contrast to a static integration, lies in the differentiation in delivery of the contents according to region and/or individually specified user profile (rate of play; preferred genres; preferred characters, where applicable (real) age and gender etc). The technical requirement for this is the usability of the game via a terminal (PC or console), which is connected to the internet.

The adaptation of real-world advertising formats into digital gaming nevertheless throws open particular questions concerning the use of rights in different contexts; analogue as well as digital. Possible problems arise when the digitally targeted advertising content competes against existing sponsorship contracts. For example, individual actors and/or sportspeople are represented digitally endorsing a particular brand but, in real life, endorse rival or other brands.

"Then often the detailed depiction of the reality is stipulated in the contracts - and this does not make the individual marketing of the sports game any easier. On the contrary: at what point the publisher is actually allowed to capitalise on an advertising board himself in a computer game is quite unclear. An example is Konamis ‘Pro Evolution Soccer’: With all offline games, for example when a gamer plays against the computer himself, Konami market the advertising boards themselves. …With online games, when two gamers play against one another on the internet, it will be decided upon which platform the game is taking place. The rights for Playstation 3 are held by the agency Double Fusion, whereas the very same game played on a PC or Xbox will be marketed by Massive.” (Primke 2009: 36).

Conclusion

Sports have an identity developed through visualisation, aesthetics and emotion (Schierl 2002). The digital environment opens up new and advanced forms of depiction and interaction for sport. Such depictions do not develop from the simple transformation and structural adaptation from real to virtual world, but rather from taking original content and portraying it in different forms which react with and (can) enhance the real world (figure 11). This article demonstrates the interdependence between both sides: digitalisation not only changes the communication from and about sport, but also works equally in changing sport itself.

Biography

Andreas Hebbel-Seeger studied education, sport and German at the University of Hamburg where he initially worked at post-doctoral level at the department of sport science. He then gained a professorship in digital media at the University of Augsburg, institute for media and educational technology. Today he is a professor for media management at the Macromedia University of applied sciences and vice-dean at Campus Hamburg. His focus in research and teaching is on the use of digital media for teaching, learning and marketing purposes.
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CIMA a marketing revolution in Mexican Olympic sports

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Francisco Guzmán
Assistant Professor, University of North Texas
Department of Marketing and Logistics, College of Business
University of North Texas, PO Box 311396, Denton, TX 76203-1396, USA
Tel: +940 369 7966
Fax: +940 565 3837
Email: francisco.guzman@unt.edu

Ivar Sisniega-Campbell
Director of Sports and Operations, XVI Pan American Games Guadalajara 2011 & Former President, CONADE (Mexican National Sports Commission)
Tel: +52 33 3003 5120
Email: isisniega@hotmail.com

Abstract
This paper recounts how the Mexican National Sports Commission approached the creation and development of an Olympic sponsorship programme (CIMA). The lessons garnered are organised following Cornwell's (1995) model of sponsorship development. This paper provides a linkage between theory and practice and is written from the perspective of the sponsored entity; it thus provides both theoretical support for sponsorships as well as a case study that is contrasted to sponsorship theory.

Executive summary
In 1998 the Mexican National Sports Commission faced the challenge of creating and developing an Olympic sponsorship programme (CIMA) designed to increase the resources available for preparing Olympic athletes. The objective was to raise the historically low medal count for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. After months of legal negotiations with the federal government, the Commission was allowed to create a fund through which it could channel resources obtained through private sponsorships to increase the Olympic programme budget. This authorisation required the Commission to re-organise internally and to create two new functional areas to manage the project. One area was in charge of managing the fund and the other one was in charge of marketing and searching for potential sponsors.

This paper is a reflective commentary in which the lessons garnered from this experience are shared and organised in a framework following Cornwell's (1995) model of sponsorship development. Its objective is to provide guidance to sports marketers for optimising sponsorship relationships. The lessons learned evolve around the following concepts:
1) The importance of assessing the current internal market, competitor and environmental situation prior to establishing a sponsorship relationship.

2) The importance of planning and coordinating in order to match the objectives set by the sponsored entity and the sponsor.

3) The importance of demonstrating how a sponsored entity can respond to the corporate objective and deliver a positive return on investment.

4) The importance of understanding how the sponsoring partners will strategically link their values and/or images.

5) The importance of being flexible and willing to cater to the sponsors' particular implementation needs.

6) The importance of adopting a relational orientation throughout and beyond the duration of the sponsorship agreement.

The paper is novel in its approach as it is written from the perspective of the sponsored entity, rather than from the more commonly analysed corporate (sponsor) angle. The paper provides a linkage between theory and practice based on real life experience. The lessons can be summarised in two fundamental concepts: the importance of the business-to-business aspect of a sponsorship relationship and the importance of the sponsored entity adopting a market-driven approach.

Introduction

Sponsorships have traditionally provided an effective way for brands to reach their target market. Sponsorships can enhance brand awareness and establish or change a brand image by leveraging certain values associated with the sponsored entity (Copeland et al, 1996; Davies & Tsiantas, 2008; Henseler et al, 2009; Gwinner, 1997). Sports sponsorships can prove particularly valuable given the level of emotional connection between a person and an event or sports team (Cornwell, 2008; Madrigal, 2000; Santomier, 2008). The passion and level of involvement that consumers have with a sport or team can lead to a long-term profitable relationship between the sponsor and consumers, as sponsorships allow “a company to link itself to an object that constitutes a part of a consumer’s extended self” (Madrigal, 2000, p.22).

Since the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, sponsorships have grown more rapidly than other marketing promotional tools (Koo et al, 2006; Meenhagan, 2001; Tripodi, 2001). Consequently, so too has the infrastructure supporting sports sponsorships (Cornwell, 2008). Ultimately, a sponsorship is a strategic business-to-business relationship (Farrelly & Quester, 2005a); one in which all parties involved - sponsor, consumer and sponsored entity - expect to, and indeed should, benefit (McCarville & Copeland, 1994; Olkkonen, 2001; Braunstein et al, 2008).

Sponsorship is a corporate strategic activity influenced by the institutional and competitive environment in which the activity occurs (Berrett & Slack, 1999). It has evolved into a strategic tool optimal for positioning international brands competing in a global marketplace (Farrelly & Quester, 1997; Santomier, 2008). Sponsorships permit firms to extract value and enhance their brand equity at a variety of levels. As such, they can be considered a form of co-branding (Alexander, 2009; Motion et al, 2003). The values and success of a sports team allow brands to leverage their own values and augment or reinforce some of the associations that configure their brand identity (Chavanat et al, 2009; Keller, 2003; Miyazaki & Morgan, 2001). Congruence is thus considered crucial for achieving a proper strategic fit between the values of the brand and the values of the sponsored entity (Alexander, 2009; Braunstein & Zhang, 2005; Cornwell et al, 2005a; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Henseler et al, 2007; Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006). Currently, sports sponsorships
serve not just as promotional tools but also as integral parts of brand building programmes (Chavanat et al, 2009; Cliffe & Motion, 2005; Hoek et al, 1999; Gwinner & Eaton, 1999; Koo et al, 2006; Roy & Cornwell, 1999; Tripodi, 2001).

Sports teams all around the world generate millions of dollars in ticket sales, official apparel and other kinds of merchandise. For example, F.C. Barcelona signed a sponsorship deal with Nike until 2018 valued at 30 million Euros per year. According to a 2010 Forbes report, Manchester United is the most valuable sports franchise in the world, worth US$1.83 billion, followed by the Dallas Cowboys valued at US$1.65 billion. Plunkett Research Ltd estimated that in 2007, the U.S. sports industry was worth more than $410 billion.

Olympic marketing has likewise experienced tremendous growth during the last decade. The Olympic Partners (TOP) Programme, created in 1985 to develop a diversified revenue base for the Olympic Games, grew from $95 million for the 1985-88 Olympiad to $866 million for the 2005-08 Olympiad (International Olympic Committee, 2008). Given these market characteristics, the potential benefits of leveraging a brand with a sports sponsorship appear undeniable (cf. Cornwell et al, 2005a; Miyazaki & Morgan, 2001).

Within such a favourable environment for sports sponsorship, marketing national Olympic sports should represent a relatively easy task. Paradoxically, marketing national Olympic sports is far from easy. The purpose of this paper is thus to analyse sports sponsorships from the sponsored entity's perspective. Based on first-hand experience, we describe the challenges associated with marketing Olympic sports in Mexico during the late 1990s and how those challenges were tackled. Although the experience is more than 10 years old, we believe that the lessons derived are ever more relevant given the increasingly competitive sponsorship environment that sports entities face today. The discussion provides a linkage between theory and practice.

Background

On one hand, market orientation (Drucker, 1961; Levitt, 1960) refers to the role the marketing function should play in coordinating and managing each marketing activity that is responsible for satisfying consumer needs. On the other, it extends to the whole organisation the responsibility for creating and strengthening client relationships. Market orientation relates to a firm's entire business culture (Lambin, 1997). Historically, sponsorships were generally treated as a form of patronage or philanthropy. In the mid 1990s, sponsorships became more market-oriented (Cornwell, 1995). Since, sponsorships have been analysed from two perspectives: from the business aspect of the relationship; and from the consumer outcomes generated by the relationships.

Sponsorships as business relationships

Given their nature as strategic business-to-business relationships, sponsorships will be enhanced and more easily implemented when all parts involved share a business orientation (Arthur et al, 1997; Henseler et al, 2009; Olkkonen, 2001; Papadimitriou et al, 2008). Although this might appear self-evident from a business standpoint, for organisations such as professional sports teams, it may be less apparent to sponsored organisations whose raison d'être is non-business related. Olympic sports organisations frequently fit the bill and thus face tougher competition when in search of sponsorship revenue. It is thus crucial for the successful implementation of a sponsorship programme that both the sponsor and sponsored entity previously engage in strategic planning to outline the objectives of the relationship (Cornwell, 1995; Farrelly & Quester, 2005b; Papadimitriou et al, 2008; Tsiotsou & Alexandris, 2009).

Sports sponsorships have evolved into a form of exchange between a sponsor and a sponsored entity in which both parties pursue strategic goals (Amis et al, 1997; Farrelly & Quester, 2005a; McCarville & Copeland, 1994). Farrelly and Quester (2005a)
suggest that sponsorships involve multiple interactions and inter-relationships. They further argue that a relationship marketing focus permits the goals and objectives of the engaged actors to be harmonised. This is because the dimensions of the exchange and the roles and responsibilities of each relationship partner are clarified. Farrelly and Quester (2005b) suggest sponsorships should be viewed as co-marketing alliances. They argue that the success of such alliances depends on the commitment and interplay between each partner. Sponsored organisations tend to act opportunistically without recognising their role or responsibilities within the relationship, hence the development of a sponsorship is limited (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b). As a result, those sponsors seeking solid returns on investment can be disenchanted. The sponsored entity's lack of market orientation thus leads to a dysfunctional relationship. Therefore, responsibility rests on the sponsored entity to adopt a strategic view and to commit to building a mutually beneficial marketing alliance (Braunstein et al, 2008; Farrelly & Quester, 2005b; Olkkonen, 2001).

Olkkonen (2001) suggests that analysing sponsorships from a network approach permits managers to have a holistic picture of the relationship. In his view, it is necessary not only to assess what each party brings to the arrangement, but also to evaluate what resources and capabilities each party's network brings to the relationship. Sponsorships should be approached as a planned business investment that is usually relational in orientation (Cornwell, 2008). The unifying objective should be to establish a mutually beneficial relationship that procures a competitive advantage for a firm (Amis et al, 1997) and strengthens the sponsor's brand equity.

Sponsorships and brand building
Sponsorships can offer excellent opportunities for firms to connect with consumers in more meaningful ways than simple products can (Madrigal, 2000; McCarville & Copeland, 1994). Through sponsorships, a brand can extend its touch points with consumers in ways that increase awareness, complement or reinforce brand associations and enhance consumers' overall brand experience. As a consequence, sponsorships, as components of marketing communication strategies, have gained ground on traditional advertising (Cornwell, 2008; Gwinner, 1997; Papadimitriou et al, 2008). By increasing brand awareness, reinforcing or augmenting brand associations, or creating a more powerful brand experience that enhances brand loyalty, sponsorships can serve as an excellent conduit through which brand equity can be developed (Cornwell et al, 2005a; Keller, 2003; Motion et al, 2003; Papadimitriou et al, 2008; Santomier, 2008; Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006).

Increasing brand awareness is one of the most important reasons for firms to establish sponsorship relationships (Kinney & McDaniel, 1996; Meenhagan, 2001; Motion et al, 2003). Sponsorships “present multiple opportunities for achieving awareness objectives” (Gwinner, 1997, p.145). Cornwell et al (2005a) found that companies whose brands are relatively small players in the market benefit most in terms of awareness from a sponsorship and sponsorships should have a marginally larger awareness effect on lesser-known brands (Cornwell et al, 2005a). Still, most brand managers do not use sponsorships to launch new brands but rather to reinforce established ones (Cornwell et al, 2005b). Regardless of sponsor size, sponsorship effectiveness depends on corporations viewing their sponsorship relationships as strategic (Papadimitriou et al, 2008) and enacting a marketing programme that fully leverages the investment (Cornwell, 2008).

Associating brands to secondary sources of value as a means of reinforcing or complementing a firm's brand identity through commonality or complementarity (Hoeffler & Keller, 2002) is another reason why sponsorships have emerged as strategic tools for building a brand (Keller, 2003). The sponsored organisation's image, which can be distinct for different consumer groups, may become associated with the sponsoring brand image (Gwinner, 1997) and help firms achieve brand positioning goals.
(Alexander, 2009; Ferreira et al, 2008; Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). However, the probability of associating with an image that is incompatible with the firm's positioning and brand equity goals is always a risk. This is why congruence, or fit, has been identified as a key consideration for engaging a sponsorship relationship (Alexander, 2009; Cornwell et al, 2005b; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Motion et al, 2003; Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006). Fit can exist both at an image/emotional and a functional/rational level (Gwinner 1997). Functional based connections are likely to arise when the sponsor's brand is actually used in the event. Image based connections are likely to emerge when the sponsor's image is congruent with the image of the event (Gwinner, 1997). What may matter most, however, is whether consumers are able to make rational or emotional connections between the sponsor and the sponsored entity. To ensure fit arises within a sponsorship relationship, companies should measure consumers' perceptions and brand associations resulting from the value transfer achieved through sponsorships (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999).

Sponsorships can also serve as powerful mechanisms for creating brand experiences. Given the level of emotional connection consumers have with the sponsored entity, consumers' level of involvement can be high (Madrigal, 2000). When sports sponsorship outcomes were analysed, Tsotsou and Alexandris (2009) found that involvement and team attachment are the main factors influencing purchase intention and word of mouth. Each construct is likely to play an important role in the effectiveness of a sponsorship. Highly attached consumers appear more likely to develop a positive sponsor image. Because highly attached consumers of sports repeatedly congregate to cheer for teams they support and devote time to learning and watching the events that interest them, these opportunities may represent unique brand building moments for a sponsor. The provision of powerful brand experiences that allow for connecting the consumer, the sponsor and the sponsored entity, can prove invaluable for optimising a sponsorship relationship.

**Objective**

In order to illustrate the importance of the business aspect of a sponsorship relationship and the brand building effects it can generate, we recount how the Mexican National Sports Commission (CONADE) sponsorship programme was created based on first hand experience. Given our objective of linking practice and theory, we make a reflective commentary based on a single case study that leads to the discussion of the lessons learned from this experience. This approach allows for bridging qualitative evidence to mainstream deductive research and exploring a phenomenon under unique circumstances (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Sigelkow, 2007).

**Implementation**

The Mexican National Sports Commission (CONADE), now called the National Commission of Physical Culture and Sports, was created in December 1988 to promote and develop sports and physical well-being in Mexico. The total federal budget assigned to CONADE in 1988 was approximately US$50 million. These resources were channelled to the whole country via local state sports governing bodies as well as through the national sports federations and the collegiate sports organisations. From the total federal budget, approximately 10% was intended for the development of elite athletes: coaches' salaries, travel to competitions, athletes' monthly stipends, sports science specialists, uniforms, equipment and other related expenses.

With its creation, management of the Mexican Olympic programme became more complicated. While CONADE received the federal budget assigned to support Olympic athletes, two other institutions played an important role in Mexican Olympic sports. The Mexican Sports Confederation (CODEME), a non-profit organisation, which represents all of the national sports federations, organises and promotes sport through the national federations by registering all of the athletes affiliated with clubs, leagues, associations and federations. The Mexican Olympic Committee
(COM), the country's national Olympic body, which is affiliated to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and is governed by the Olympic Charter, promotes and develops the Olympic movement in Mexico.

On top of the institutional struggles, Mexico's Olympic results did not correspond to those one might expect from a country with a population of over 100 million and a GDP among the top 15 in the world. The best performance by a Mexican Olympic team was at the 1968 Olympics, hosted in Mexico City, when nine medals were won. The next best performance was in Los Angeles in 1984, when Mexico's total medal tally was six, although this was partially due to a Soviet bloc boycott. Mexico won only two medals in 1988, one silver medal in 1992 and hit rock-bottom in 1996 with only one bronze medal. Following this disappointing Olympic participation, the president of Mexico at the time, Dr Ernesto Zedillo, asked the Secretary of Education and the President of CONADE to present a proposal to reverse this negative trend and achieve better results at the Sydney Games in 2000. Using Spain's ADO (Olympic Sports Association) programme as a benchmark, CONADE set out to replicate the programme's success in Mexico.

Benchmark

The ADO programme was created in 1989 with the objective of improving the performance of Spanish Olympic athletes in Barcelona's 1992 Olympic Games. ADO is a sponsorship programme that is coordinated by the Spanish Olympic Committee (COE), the Spanish Sports Council (CSD), Spain's National TV Broadcasting Company (TVE) and different corporate sponsors. The programme originally allowed sponsoring companies to receive 90% of their investment in airtime in an almost monopolistic TV arena. The ADO programme is still functional and successful, despite the fact that the Spanish TV market has become more competitive. The programme has received almost 260 million in sponsorships since its creation and currently operates with a 51.3 million budget for the London 2012 Olympic Games (www.ado.es); Spain has obtained 106 Olympic medals since the programme launch, compared to the 27 medals obtained in the previous 88 years (www.ado.es).

Building a sponsorship programme

With the ADO programme in mind, CONADE explored the possibility of creating a programme that would address the budgetary deficit that inhibited the development of a strong Olympic programme. A first challenge was the fact that Mexican Olympic sports were supported by a small federal budget allocation. Given the nature of the Commission, any additional resources that CONADE obtained would go against the following year's assigned federal budget allocation. In 1996, less than a million dollars were designated to support Olympic sports. According to CONADE's estimates, an additional five million dollars per year were necessary to run a full-scale Olympic programme. To achieve this, a new fund called CIMA was established. CIMA was a special kind of public fund that could integrate monetary resources from both the government and the private sector without affecting the Commission's federal budget allocation. In Spanish, the letters in the acronym CIMA stand for ‘Mexico’s Commitment to its Athletes’ and the word cima translates into ‘summit’.

The fund's primary support was garnered with the support of Mexico's two main television networks, Televisa and TV Azteca. An arrangement was reached that allowed sponsoring companies to buy media from the television network of their choice. In return, the television network would provide the sponsors with the full amount of their investment in television advertising connected to the project and additionally contribute 50% of the sponsor's media buy to the CIMA fund.
The federal government then matched the sponsors' payments in order to double the amount of money available to run the programme. The recruitment of sponsors was challenging due to the poor results of previous Mexican Olympic teams. However, three companies, Telmex, Cervecería Cuauhtémoc Moctezuma and Omnitrition, took advantage of the funding scheme and, together with Televisa and TV Azteca, provided CIMA with approximately one million dollars each over a two-year period (1999-2000).

Results

The end result was Mexico's best performance since the 1968 Olympic Games. The team improved from only one medal in each of the previous two Olympics to a total of six medals, including the first gold medal ever won by a Mexican woman. Altogether there were 16 athletes or teams among the top eight finalists in Sydney. The success of the programme proved that Mexican athletes are just as capable of obtaining world class results if they are provided with the right support and training conditions.

The lessons learned from CIMA's sponsorship experience can be organised following Cornwell's (1995) six-step model of sponsorship development. Although this model was not originally intended to analyse sponsorships from the perspective of the sponsored entity, a sponsored organisation can benefit from its use as it helps to bridge the gap between the objectives of the sponsor and the sponsored entity.

1) Situation analysis

The economic and political situation in Mexico in the mid-1990s was favourable for the development of a more ambitious and inclusive Olympic sports sponsorship programme. Sports enthusiasts, and as a consequence businesses, were starting to pay attention to some non-professional sports given their positive results at international level. Fully backed by the country's president, CONADE's leadership was able to connect with potential sponsoring companies. Given that individual sponsorships could act as potential competitors to one of CIMA's corporate sponsors, it was important for the programme to become operational quickly. The commitment of all involved parties, together with a clear understanding of the market environment, became crucial to getting the programme started.

Lessons learned

As with any other aspect of business, a thorough assessment of the market, competitors and environment is paramount prior to establishing a sponsorship relationship. For the sponsored entity, this is a task commonly beyond its daily activities. It is the sponsored entity's responsibility, not only the sponsor's, to perform this analysis and to understand any sponsor-specific considerations prior to establishing a partnership.

2) Determining the sponsorship objectives

CIMA's sponsors had a clear idea of what they were looking for by supporting the programme. The programme, however, did not enhance these sponsorship relationships, given its self-serving nature. A product orientation inhibited CIMA's administrators from understanding the sponsors' objectives and from tailoring the programme in order to maximise each party's goals. In addition to focusing on its functional objectives, CIMA should have focused on establishing relational objectives with its sponsors. Instead, what CIMA offered was a set of pre-established benefits to all sponsors. Then, once the programme was running, additional efforts were made to cater to specific objectives. These efforts would have been more effective if CIMA had been more involved with each sponsor at an individual level from the start.

CIMA's board of directors met regularly to oversee the management of the fund and the programme's progress. The board's members included representatives of the three corporate sponsors, the two television networks, CONADE, COM, CODEME and the ministries of education and finance. From the start, it became clear that every party had its own...
objectives. The ‘good nature’ of the project made it difficult for CIMA’s administrators to comprehend why this happened. CIMA’s product orientation blinded its leadership and made them believe that as promoters of ‘the greater good’ they were deserving of support to develop Mexican sports.

Lessons learned
In order to maximise a sponsorship relationship, the objectives set by the sponsored entity should also cater to the sponsor’s objectives. Planning and coordination between the parties involved cannot be overstated. The sponsored entity must act as a relationship facilitator and a liaison between the sponsoring parties and their networks. In return for the sponsorship resources, the sponsored entity must become a relationship enabler prepared and structured to accommodate this new function.

3) Developing a sponsorship-related strategy
CIMA’s sponsorship strategy was limited to offering a set of marketing opportunities through the sponsorship package for brands to leverage their sponsorship investment. The major incentive offered was the media plan designed by the TV networks. Without this incentive, the programme would have failed. Sponsors were not offered any other way to connect in a profitable manner with their target market. Commonly, sponsoring firms support their sponsorship investment with up to five times the rights cost on other activities in order to fully leverage their support (Cornwell, 1995). CIMA’s media plan, which allowed sponsors to get 100% return on their advertising investment, made supporting the programme less expensive. Thus the rest of the sponsorship package became a bonus to their investments, allowing sponsors to further leverage their brand images.

Lessons learned
The sponsored entity must be able to demonstrate to potential sponsors that supporting a programme will help them reach their target market. It should also help sponsors to understand how the relationship will allow for their brands to be leveraged with the values and associations of the programme. When developing a sponsorship-related strategy, the sponsored entity must consider the return on investment for the sponsoring brand; thinking that the cause, event or sport ‘deserves’ corporate support is a mistake. Sponsorship relationships have become market-driven and sponsored entities must approach these relationships accordingly. Furthermore, firms have limited budgets for philanthropic activities, but have larger budgets for marketing activities. If a sponsored entity is able to present a business proposal that taps into the sponsor’s marketing budget, it will increase its chances to obtain the support. In summary, a sponsorship relationship must be founded on a strong business reason-why and a positive return on investment (ROI).

4) Creation of a sponsorship link
The sponsorship link is of the utmost importance in a sponsorship relationship as it allows the sponsor’s customers to understand the fit between the sponsor and sponsored entity. A sponsorship relationship that yields a positive ROI is most likely to be achieved if the brand’s customers understand this connection. Quite possibly this aspect was the most overlooked by CIMA administrators. The sponsorship strategy that was followed consisted in approaching the largest corporations in Mexico and asking for support. CIMA’s administrators never asked whether this association made sense for the brand. Is there a rational/functional or emotional/value connection between the potential sponsor and the programme? Will the company be able to leverage its brand values with CIMA either by commonality or complementarity? The approach followed was more philanthropic and product oriented than market-driven. Potential sponsors were not provided with any business rationale for supporting the programme other than to support the ‘greater good’ and benefit from the media plan. By understanding the potential sponsoring brands, and by tailoring the offer to resonate with their brand values, CIMA might have been more efficient and effective in recruiting sponsors.
Lessons learned

The sponsored entity must understand how the sponsoring partner will strategically link to its values or image and establish how the relationship will represent a solid return of investment to the sponsoring brand. It must therefore act as a potential co-brand and analyse all of the implications and benefits that the proposed relationship could have for the sponsor. The sponsored entity must be sure that a congruent fit, either at a functional or emotional level, exists between its property and the brand. In the case of no evident link with a potential sponsor, the sponsored entity can either act opportunistically and simply let the relationship evolve, or work together with the sponsor to establish a link that complements the sponsor's brand image. A more mutually beneficial relationship will be achieved if the latter approach is adopted.

5) Sponsorship implementation

As Cornwell (1995, p.21) states, “sponsorship is such a multifaceted, dynamic marketing tool that no attempt to enumerate general elements important to implementation would be sufficient”. The common approach sponsored entities adopt regarding sponsorship implementation is to offer a sponsorship package. CIMA, besides the media plan, offered some of the typical benefits of sports sponsorships such as: the right to use the logo of COM, which includes the Olympic rings; the right to use any of the Olympic athletes' images in order to promote their brand; the inclusion of their logos in all of CIMA’s communications; and sponsorship and hospitality benefits at sporting events. Although these benefits were not under-appreciated by the sponsors, they really did not make a substantial difference to them. Rather, the particular sponsor requests CIMA had to facilitate were determinant for each brand leveraging the relationship. Constant communication with sponsors and an organisational structure responsive to these requests were key success factors in facilitating the implementation of the brands’ sponsorship activities. While a prior and more thorough understanding of the sponsors' objectives would have been desirable, CIMA administrators learned that quickly catering to sponsors' individual requests yielded good results.

Lessons learned

The sponsored entity must be flexible and willing to cater to the sponsors’ particular implementation needs. Strictly adhering to the established sponsorship package limits the potential benefits for all parties. A relationship marketing approach is a must for maximising a sponsorship relationship. Hence, the sponsored entity should be structured in a way that it can respond to its partners' needs on an everyday basis. Although the sponsored entity's activities might be more static, its partners' activities are dynamic and follow the frantic and ever-changing pace of business. Quick and professional responses from the sponsored entity are thus crucial to keep the relationship afloat and on optimal terms.

6) Sponsorship evaluation

Besides the internal evaluation of the sponsorship relationship, which in the case of CIMA was measured by the number of medals won in the Sydney 2000 Games and the increased budget and support awarded to the Mexican Olympic athletes, the sponsored entity must help sponsors with individual evaluations to assess their ROI. Although this aspect of the relationship is usually handled by each brand and its agencies, adopting a transactional orientation once the sponsorship has concluded is a sure way to disenchant sponsors. After the Olympic Games in Sydney, CIMA made the mistake of thinking 'mission accomplished' and interrupted the communication with its sponsoring brands. The programme should have kept working in conjunction with the sponsors to facilitate not only the post-event promotion of the achievements, but also in recollecting all of the media mentions that occurred before, during and after the event. CIMA should have designated someone to collect all of these media mentions throughout the programme to build a dossier for each of the sponsors that facilitated the evaluation of their investments. As
a consequence of this lack of continuity and support for evaluating the sponsorship success, the renewal of the funding for the next Olympic cycle under a new administration was difficult to achieve.

Lessons learned
The sponsored entity must adopt a relational orientation throughout and beyond the duration of the sponsorship agreement. Even if it cannot be responsible for the evaluation of the sponsorship for each of its partners, the sponsored entity must continue to act as a partner to the sponsoring brands and facilitate any necessary information for the evaluation of their support. Although the sponsor might have a professional agency keeping track of all of the media mentions they purchase throughout the sponsorship arrangement, the sponsored entity should facilitate this process by keeping track of all of the 'not-purchased' media mentions that inherently occur as the programme develops. Something as simple as creating a dossier that summarises the sponsorship experience at the end of each sponsorship cycle can provide added value to the sponsor. This support and continuity might be a determinant factor for the renewal of the sponsorship relationship.

Conclusion
After critically reviewing the creation, development and execution of the CIMA sponsorship arrangement in Mexico, this paper has shed some interesting managerial implications on the development of a sponsorship programme from the sponsored entity's perspective. Two fundamental concepts have guided this analysis: the business-to-business aspect of a sponsorship relationship and the importance of adopting a market-driven approach for the sponsored entity. The fundamental reason that CIMA faced difficulties in 'selling' its sponsorship programmes can be explained by Levitt's (1960) Marketing Myopia. As passionate sports people who understood, believed and looked up to the Olympic principles, CIMA administrators fell into a product orientation trap. They had trouble understanding why companies 'weren't interested in such a wonderful programme'. Although the learning curve was steep, this product orientation was never completely overcome and as a consequence many marketing mistakes were made. On the positive side, the relational approach adopted helped overcome many of the difficulties created by marketing myopia. The programme was not only successfully sold and implemented, but was also a huge success in terms of its sports objectives. However, companies supported the programme based on their convictions and desire to improve the Mexican Olympic performance, not on business objectives. The support of the TV networks was thus vital to its success, as the media plan allowed the sponsoring brands to obtain a solid ROI.

Sponsorship of Olympic sports is a difficult task within the whole sports marketing arena given that the share of mind of Olympic sports compared to professional sports is still relatively low. A market-driven orientation and a business-to-business approach have been identified in this paper as crucial factors for any sponsored entity looking to overcome this challenge. The lessons presented might be common sense for many professional sports organisations, which view their operations more as a business. However, we believe that some professional and many non-professional sports, arts, educational and other not-for-profit organisations seeking sponsorship support still lack a more business-oriented approach for their sponsorship efforts and can benefit and learn from them. Despite our efforts to provide a reflective/critical commentary to the work done for CIMA, we acknowledge that a limitation of the approach undertaken for this analysis is the lack of an external point of view to provide a more critical perspective of how the programme was implemented and the results obtained. It is our hope that, given CIMA's success, the experiences and lessons shared from the Mexican Olympic programme provide guidance to other entities that seek to improve the quality and support of their athletic and sponsorship programmes.
Biographies

Francisco Guzmán is an assistant professor of marketing at the University of North Texas. His research focuses on branding and sustainability: public-private collaborations, sponsorships, corporate social responsibility, green marketing and strategic corporate brand building. He is a visiting professor both at ESADE in Barcelona and Tec de Monterrey in Mexico. He was the marketing director of CONADE from 1998 to 2000.

Ivar Sisniega-Campbell is the director of sports and operations of the XVI Pan American Games Guadalajara 2011. He was the President of CONADE from 1994 to 2000. He is a three-time Olympian in modern pentathlon and is currently president of the Association of Pan American Sports Confederations and vice president of the International Modern Pentathlon Union and the Mexican Olympic Committee.

References


The *Journal* welcomes the submission of academic and practitioner research papers, articles, case studies, interviews and book reviews. Submissions should aim to educate and inform and should ideally focus on a specific area that is pertinent to the subject matter of the *Journal*, as detailed below. In all instances, the editorial team seeks to publish submissions that clearly add value to theory and/or practice in sports marketing and sponsorship.

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The mission of the *Journal* is to bring together academics and practitioners in one forum, with the intent of furthering knowledge and understanding of sports marketing and sponsorship. The *Journal* interprets sports marketing and sponsorship broadly, to include:

- fans and customers
- individual performers and endorsers
- teams and clubs
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- events and stadia
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Research articles should normally be no less than 4,000 and no more than 8,000 words. Case studies of no less than 2,500 and no more than 5,000 words should be objective rather than promotional and should follow the following format: *Background / Objectives / Implementation / Results / Conclusion*. Interviews are welcomed, but should be discussed with the Editor. Book reviews should normally be less than 1,500 words.

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International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship
ISC School of Management, Paris, France & University Paris Sud 11, France
Tel: +33 (0)1 69 15 61 57
Fax: +33 (0)1 69 15 62 37
Email: mdesbordes@iscparis.com