



Sports & Sports Sponsorships in digital media – Growing Challenges

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Abstract : *There are heavy transformations in sporting sector as sports have been come under the corporate flagship. It has become impossible to even think of organizing sporting event without a sponsoring agency sponsoring it. Nowadays sporting activities are being referred to as consumer preferences Brands have become fan linked & each fan's preferences are being counted. Hence sponsorship industry has become more expandable with marketing tangibility strategies running into make sporting activities a grand success. Sports are a means to a marketing end. Unfortunately, in too many cases, the decision to sponsor a sport and subsequent decisions on the structure and components of the sponsorship can be made with little study of the tangible business effect the decision can have. Additionally, sports marketing sponsorships require a significant people commitment to make the event effective.*

Keywords: *Sports, Sports Sponsorships, digital media, Growing Challenges*

Introduction- "Without sponsorship, sports people can't compete, musicians can't play and art can't happen"

Jasper Donat (CEO of Branded FIRM), Sports sector is a growing industry where there are ample opportunities for expansion of this sector. Sporting activities are now dependent on sponsorships as there is a growing commercial interest in hosting sporting activities. Nowadays sporting activities are being referred to as consumer preferences. Brands have become fan linked & each fan's preferences are being counted. Hence sponsorship industry has become more expandable with marketing tangibility strategies running into make sporting activities a grand success. The implications for the sponsorship industry mainly revolve around the growing centrality of outlay on supporting events that are aligned with consumers and their preferences, so as to subliminally

incorporate the brand to their mind and drive commitment. This can be achieved through more tangible Marketing presence, such as music festivals, art or sports events, and conferences.

The sooner Marketing managers realize and acknowledge the significance of sponsoring an event and the opportunities that derive from doing so, the more their impact reports will bear fruit. The implications for the sponsorship industry mainly revolve around the growing centrality of outlay on supporting events that are aligned with consumers and their preferences, so as to subliminally incorporate the brand to their mind and drive commitment. This can be achieved through more tangible Marketing presence, such as music festivals, art or sports events, and conferences.



The sooner Marketing managers realize and acknowledge the significance of sponsoring an event and the opportunities that derive from doing so, the more their impact reports will bear fruit. the city based franchise model has been become very popular in India with there is Indian premier league IPL Other sport such as Kabbaddi , hockey badminton football tennis etc are also following the league system.

The league system -This league system has enhanced the commercial prospectus of the sporting events. There is expansion in sporting sponsorship activities sports like kabbaddi , kho kho , Badminton , shuttle cock , foot ball are finding sponsored support. Companies from big companies such as banks and insurance firms, textile giants, industrial hub etc offer sponsorship to grassroots sport organizations.

Cause-related marketing -Companies realize this idea of cause-related marketing, where people are more likely to deal with companies that give back to the community. This idea being a key pillar of the organization's corporate social responsibility as they want to be perceived as responsible citizens. Essentially companies realize that sponsoring grassroots sports clubs could be valuable, but like all businesses they

are looking for opportunities that can benefit them back.

Sponsors are looking for ways that sponsorship will benefit them. sports club need to prove it to them that their money is going to be put to a good use. sports clubs can offer them with opportunities that can't be found, because what makes their club special are the aspects that can leverage to potential sponsorships to help their club.

Women's sports need to receive the same attention before we can see a change in their popularity. It is a vicious cycle. Sponsors and media want to be associated with the best athletes, while viewers want to watch sports at the highest professional standard. The demand for more women participation on television Media / Mass communication , newspaper and in the newsrooms to encourage the next generation of great female athletes to involve in all sectors of sporting events.

Corporate bondage- As shown in this chart the benefits of promotion of sporting activities include several advantages creation of a corporate bondage , identifying with a team , aligning with a product , planning a market expansion & it helps research on fan behaviour .





The considerations-

1. The creation of a relationship between sport and a corporate brand should be beneficial to both parties.
2. Aligning with an athletic / sporting team is an excellent method of increasing brand awareness.
3. Associating a product or service with a sport can reap huge benefits.
4. A sport offers continuous advertising opportunities for drinks , energy foods , accessories , sporting web portals, techno applications , instant energy products etc.
5. Fans these days are very athletic & they follow their team sincerely hence sponsoring agencies need not find a new database of fans.
6. Fans act as a inter linkage between sponsoring agency fan club , team his favorite star is playing They create their own circle of fans such as family friends colleagues etc.
7. Sponsor companies can also reinforce awareness among target markets by sponsoring additional soccer events and clinics,
8. sports as a corporate decision provides a positive return on investment. Sponsors enjoy a wide range of benefits, which includes Raising brand awareness and developing brand preference in the marketplace, Creating positive PR and raise awareness of organization as a whole Provide attractive context for

your products or services Provide events for promoting your good relations with clients, sport involves

1. gold medals, silver medals bronze medals
2. medallions for individual best performances
3. world records tallying
4. championship cups
5. Mementos ,
6. team shields
7. and global awareness. A leading brand can benefit greatly by associating with such excellence. Sponsoring an international athletic entity of USL PDL caliber adds value to a company's brand proposition.

There is an intense competition among companies and brands to sponsors sporting events. Often there is little differential between products in terms of quality, content or price. To make a brand stand out from the crowd a sponsor can use sport to create a unique position in the mind of the consumer. The sports sponsors wish to support activities that are enjoyable and memorable for audiences and participants, and provide occasions to build brand value.

Media coverage-

Top of the list on most sponsor requirements is media coverage . Sporting events such as season openers, sponsored giveaway nights, community interaction, and playoff games, power off situations create opportunities for exciting and interesting newspaper photographs and television images showing sponsor logos on shirts or



banners. Such exposure creates brand familiarity for consumers. When the logo stands out from competitors, that means increased sales from consumers who are looking to spend money.

While there are several corporate sponsorship mediums (e.g. event, music, entertainment) sponsoring professional and collegiate sports activities can be a fun, exciting venture for a corporation. Choosing the correct sports and constructing (and negotiating) the most advantageous sponsorship packages is a combination of art and science. Sports marketing is needs to be treated as any other strategic. Sports marketing should be treated like any other strategic marketing initiative.

Benefits of corporate investment in sports -A sport as a corporate pronouncement provides a constructive return on venture. Sponsors of sporting events enjoy a wide range of benefits, which includes

1. Raising brand awareness
2. developing brand preference in the marketplace,
3. Creating positive PR
4. raise awareness of organization as a whole
5. Provide attractive context for products or services
6. Provide events for promoting good relations with clients

Challenges- Sports are a means to a marketing end. Unfortunately, there are several challenges.

1. As seen, the decision to sponsor a sport and subsequent decisions on the structure and components of the sponsorship can be made

with little study of the tangible business effect the decision can have.

2. Additionally, sports marketing sponsorships require a significant people commitment to make the event effective.
3. There have been several companies simply write the check and provide the creative materials, then not fully leverage the sales and visibility opportunities that are available.
4. Most effective sponsorships require hands-on nurturing to gain maximum effectiveness while it is absent in majority of corporate sponsorships.

Conclusion- Thus there is a growing strategy making for sponsoring sporting activities. But not all sponsoring agencies promote sports consistently. There have been several shortfalls in sponsoring sometimes the will of the company outweighs the interest of the playing team. Sports should offer loyalty entertainment passion It should create a friendly environment. It sports never should bargain with boundaries, demographics, nor gender issues.

References