Profiling Contemporary Sports Sponsorship Objectives

Dr Leah Donlan
University of Central Lancashire, England
LDonlan@uclan.ac.uk
# Literature Context: Sponsorship Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate</th>
<th>Empirical assessments of important sponsorship objectives:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>• Image <em>(Witcher et al, 1991)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>• Awareness <em>(Thwaites, 1993)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>• Hospitality <em>(Quester, 1997)</em></td>
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<td>Relational</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Hartland, Skinner & Griffiths, 2005)

Importance of measuring sponsorship effectiveness against objectives *(Abratt & Grobler, 1989)*
Research Questions

• **Research Aim:** To identify the most commonly cited objectives pursued by sports sponsors and to explore factors influencing these objectives

• What objectives are commonly being pursued by major sports sponsors worldwide?

• Are there differences in sponsorship objectives pursued by:
  - Sport?
  - Sponsorship type?
  - Sponsor product category?
Methodology

• Content analysis of press releases/articles to identify stated objectives by sponsors

• **Sample:** Sport Business International top 30 monthly sponsorship deals (January 2007 – September 2008) *plus* selected UK and Olympic sponsorships (sample size 402 sponsorship deals)

• Cross-tabulations and chi-square tests to examine differences in objectives pursued
### Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Image</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeting Market Segments</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Relations</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Coverage</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objectives pursued/ Sport:
$$\chi^2 (42) = 88.827, \ p = 0.000$$

Objectives pursued/ Sponsorship type:
$$\chi^2 (42) = 77.752, \ p = 0.001$$

Objectives pursued/ Product category:
$$\chi^2 (7) = 20.886, \ p = 0.004$$
Discussion

- Image = most commonly sought objective

- Business-to-business sponsors pursue different objectives from consumer-focussed sponsors
  - *B-2-B*: image, community relations, showcasing product
  - *Consumer-focussed*: image, awareness, targeting market segments

- Difference in profile of objectives pursued through different sports
  - Community relations and showcasing product important for Olympic sponsors

- Objectives differ according to sponsorship type
  - Venue sponsorship primarily used for community relations and awareness
Future Research

• Research forms part of a wider multi-method, multi-stage project exploring sponsorship objectives, measurement of sponsorship effectiveness and the development of a sponsorship evaluation tool

• Interviews with sponsors and rights holders

• Questionnaires amongst sponsors

• Results of press release analysis, interviews and questionnaires to inform development and empirical testing of sponsorship evaluation tool
References