FACTORS AFFECTING DECISION-MAKING IN SOUTH AFRICAN SPORT SPONSORSHIPS

by

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Abstract

This study explores the theoretical construct of sport sponsorship and where it fits into general marketing and sport marketing theory. The direct expenditure in the local sport sponsorship industry is estimated at close to R2 billion compared to a world-wide figure of \$20 billion, however existing marketing literature is inconclusive about the role of sport sponsorship in the marketing mix.

After debating the contextualisation of sport sponsorship and sport marketing as theoretical constructs it was concluded that sport sponsorship is an element of the marketing communication mix as well as the sport marketing mix. It was also concluded that sport marketing could be regarded as an application field of marketing and should receive more attention among academics and practitioners.

The aim of the empirical part of this study was to evaluate the importance of certain factors that affect sport sponsorship decision-making in South Africa. Such factors are: the <u>relationships</u> between sport sponsorship objectives, leveraging the sport sponsorship through integrating other marketing communication mix variables into the sport sponsorship and measuring the effectiveness of sport sponsorships.

Two frameworks, based on these relationships, were proposed and their application to two sets of respondents, (members of the Association of Marketers (ASOM) and entrants to the 1999 and 2000 Raptor Award Competition - a national competition that awards excellence in sponsorships) were tested.

A descriptive statistical analysis of responses captured from questionnaires returned by ASOM-members led to the conclusion that they regard the components of the first framework as being important.

A qualitative analysis of Raptor Award entry forms and a correlation analysis of questionnaire responses from ASOM-members who sponsor sport indicated that relationships (or associations) exist between sport sponsorship objectives, integration of marketing communication mix variables into the sport sponsorship, and sport sponsorship evaluation - the second framework specifically implies the importance of such relationships.

A major finding was that sport sponsors set a wide-range of objectives and regard a wide range of measurement tools as being important but there is a tendency towards **only** focusing on utilising media coverage and awareness measurement tools. It was deduced that the second framework needs further refinement and should illustrate how sponsorship performance could be measured in terms of the desired effects specified in the sponsorship objectives set by sport sponsors. A revised model of sport sponsorship decision-making was subsequently proposed to serve as a basis for future research and development. It is envisaged that this model should stimulate more debate and research on developing other tools or techniques that can be used to measure sport sponsorship performance.

CURRICULUM VITAE

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Cornelius Hendrik van Heerden matriculated at the Hoër Seunskool Helpmekaar. He obtained the following degrees, all at the University of Pretoria: BSc(Agric)(Agricultural Economics) (1987); BCom(Hons)(Marketing Management) (1990); and MCom(Marketing Management) (1993).

Currently, he is a senior lecturer in Marketing Management at the University of Pretoria. He has read various papers at international and national conferences, published in accredited journals such as the International Journal of Bank Marketing, Communicare and the South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences.

In his thesis, Factors affecting decision-making in South African sport sponsorships, the candidate identifies the importance of sport sponsorship in the marketing communication mix. He develops a framework for research on sport sponsorship decision-making and uses the research findings as a basis to develop a model for sport sponsorship decision-making that may be used by sport sponsors to set proper sport sponsorship objectives, integrate (leverage) marketing communication mix variables into the sport sponsorship, and measure the effectiveness of the sport sponsorship.

This seminal study makes a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge in the discipline of marketing.

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