

Sportainment : changing the pace of limited-overs cricket in South Africa

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study is to document and analyse Standard Bank of South Africa's sponsorship of Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket as a case study of effective cricket, stadium and broadcast sponsorship activation.

Design/methodology/approach – An in-depth case study methodology is employed, drawing on quantitative and qualitative data.

Findings – The main conclusion is that a partnership approach to sponsorship and the creative use of multiple sponsorship activations contributes to the achievement of sponsorship objectives.

Research limitations/implications – The study is limited to one case of a large-scale sponsor of a major international sport. As such, it has limited generalisability to dissimilar sponsorship situations.

Practical implications – The case documented and analysed suggests that sponsoring organisations may increase their return on sponsorship investment through the adoption of a partnership approach to sponsorship.

Originality/value – The study answers the call of Irwin, Zwick and Sutton, Chadwick and others to significantly increase the researching of sports marketing theory and practice outside traditional Western markets. It documents the creative leverage of a new cricket format that has received no attention in the academic literature, although the 20-over game continues to enjoy widespread and strong sponsor, media and fan support.

Keyword(s):

Sports; Marketing strategy; Sponsorship; Cricket; South Africa.

This study addresses the need to deepen the understanding of sports marketing in an emerging market context. The in-depth case study of Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket explores the strategy, execution and results of the successful launch of a new cricket format in South Africa. As such, it contributes to the theory and practice of sport marketing, especially sport event sponsorship. Schwarz and Hunter (2008, p. 251) highlight the “lucrative” nature of tournaments and championships sponsorships, given the opportunity for media and advertising exposure related to

the event. This study documents the effective use of a partnership approach to sponsorship (Meenaghan, 2002) and the creative use of multiple sponsorship activations to achieve the sponsorship's objectives.

Aim of research

The purpose of this study is to document and analyse Standard Bank of South Africa's sponsorship of Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket as a case study of effective cricket, stadium and broadcast sponsorship activation. Cornwell *et al.* (2005, p. 36) argued that activation or “collateral communication” is key to achieving the desired consumer impact through sponsorship. Fahy *et al.* (2004, p. 1024) suggested that sponsorship could serve as a source of sustainable competitive advantage through the use of “unique combinations” of “inimitable resources”. This study thus explored the partnership approach to sponsorship and creative use of multiple sponsorship activations to achieve the sponsorship's objectives.

The business of sport

This study is located within the business of sport, which is a significant economic sector at the individual, organisational and national levels and is an important contributor to economic activity and wealth creation.

Globally, companies increased their investment in sports sponsorship from 2003 to 2005 by 29 per cent to an estimated US\$ 2.4 billion (Howard, 2005). This investment has been part of the larger global sponsorship industry estimated at around US\$28b in 2004 (IEG, 2004). In South Africa, direct expenditure on sports sponsorship increased from R 207 million in 1991 to over R 1 billion by 2000 (BMI Sport-Info, 2001). A more recent study by BMI SportInfo confirmed the continued increase with the industry being valued at R 2.6bn, with an additional R 2.2bn spent on leveraging those sponsorships (Sport and Recreation South Africa, n.d.).

Schlossberg (1991) suggested that the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics significantly boosted sports marketing and has been credited with initiating the trend of formal sports marketing, thus turning athletics into a sponsored business. This Olympics was the first to be run totally with private sponsorship revenues and, unlike previous Olympic cities, generated a profit (Shannon, 1999).

In addition to on-the-field competition by athletes and coaching staff, sports teams compete “off-the-field” for spectators, consumers, sponsors, media coverage and investors. As such, sports teams are increasingly becoming business entities with professional managers. These managers often consider the brand of their sports team as one of the most important assets of the sports club (Bauer *et al.*, 2005). They are thus increasingly becoming “preoccupied with their image” (Ferrand and Pages, 1999, p. 388), which has the potential to influence the behaviour of all stakeholders.

Global sports brands such as Manchester United, Real Madrid, and the New York Yankees have demonstrated the value of building powerful sports brands that extend beyond “on-the-field” performance. These sports brands thus allow a sports club to perform economically “somewhat independently of athletic success” (Bauer *et al.*, 2005, p. 497). In the 2003/2004 season, for

example, Real Madrid received 64.3m Euro in merchandising revenue, including 1.5 million shirts sold outside Spain (Davila *et al.*, 2007). More recently, the top 20 football clubs' collective revenues grew by 11 per cent to 3.7bn in 2006/2007, with Real Madrid becoming the first club with revenue above 360m (Jones, 2008).

Researching the business of sport

Shannon (1999, p. 519) categorised the sports marketing industry into two related categories: the “marketing of sports”, which includes marketing sporting events and equipment to spectators and participants, and “marketing with sports”, which includes the promotion of non-sporting products at sporting events and the use of athletes to endorse non-sport products and services. Shannon (1999, p. 519) suggested that both categories provide “rich” opportunities for future research and that it was time that the academic marketing discipline “woke up to the fact that industry-specific research is both valued and needed” (Shannon, 1999, p. 524).

Shannon's (1999, p. 519) “marketing with sports” categorisation also relates to the broader sponsorship literature. Cornwell *et al.*, (2005, p. 21) defined sponsorship in terms of a fee paid to a property in return for “access to the exploitable commercial potential” associated with that property. Olkkonen and Tuominen (2006, p. 64) suggested that sponsorship has the potential to develop and promote brand awareness with “strong, favourable and unique associations”. Daellenbach, Davies and Ashill (2006, p. 73) highlighted the shift that has taken place within sponsorship from a “philanthropic activity conducted at the whim of the CEO” to a “highly integrated market-oriented activity”.

This shift has also been noted in the arts sponsorship literature. McNicholas (2004, p. 59) argued that a “new type of strategic partnership has emerged”, replacing the previous “transaction relationship”. McNicholas (2004, p. 59) suggests that this shift has been characterised by a “fusion or synergy between arts and business core values”. Although arts sponsorship has received some academic focus, Olkkonen and Tuominen (2006, p. 66) recognised that “most sponsorship knowledge has been derived from sports” and that sports sponsorship has become “the benchmark for sponsorship research and management”.

Chadwick (2005, p. 7) argued for the theoretical relevance of researching sports marketing when he stated that sports marketing is distinctive from other forms of marketing in that “sport and the activities surrounding it are based on uncertainty of outcome”. He went on to define sports marketing as “a process through which a contest with an uncertain outcome is staged, creating opportunities for the simultaneous fulfilment of objectives among sport customers, sport businesses, participants and other related individuals, groups and organisations” (Chadwick (2005, p. 7).

Although significant strides have been taken in the area of sports marketing, Irwin *et al.* (1999, p. 315) lamented about the limited amount of research on important sport marketing-related questions, especially given the “pivotal position” occupied by marketing within the sports business. Couvelaere and Richelieu (2005, p. 24) suggested that “a lot of academic work remains to be done on brand equity in professional sports”. Recognising that sport marketing and sponsorship is growing in importance as an academic research domain, Chadwick (2006, p. 297)

encouraged sports marketing researchers to explore questions of “what sport brands are, how they are built, developed and extended and how they are managed”.

Recently there have been calls to acknowledge the diversity of sport, and the different cultural context and marketplaces within which it is consumed. Introducing the special edition of the *International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship* focused on the Spanish influence on sports marketing, Chadwick (2007a, p. 205) argued that “it serves as a helpful counterpoint to the Anglo-American view of sports marketing that has increasingly dominated the way in which academics and practitioners have addressed emerging issues”.

Clarke and Mannion (2006, p. 23) also suggested that sport brands have only recently begun to realise the “vast opportunities” that non-typical fans provide for increasing revenues and fan bases. The authors discussed the efforts of the Houston Rockets National Basketball Association (NBA) franchise to attract new supporters from the significant Asian American population in Houston, Texas, including the selection of Yao Ming as a centre player, a Mandarin version of their web site, a weekly Mandarin radio show, and cultural sensitivity training for all staff. Researching sports marketing theory and practice from different socio-economic and geographic perspectives may thus help the global sports industry to learn and explain developments taking place in other contexts (Chadwick, 2007b).

The business of sport, including sport event sponsorship, is thus a rich area for academic research. It is also an area that has been dominated by contributions from developed economies. This research thus addresses the need to include an emerging market perspective to our understanding of sports marketing.

Methodology

Given the descriptive nature of this research, a single case study design was used. Yin (2003, p. 13) defined a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. The “uniqueness and complexity of the case, its embeddedness and interaction with its context” (Stake, 1995, p. 16) are important reasons for this research study. Stake (1995, p. 17) also suggests that a case study design is best when “issues are not simple and clean, but intricately wired to political, historical, and especially personal contexts” and that “all these meanings are important in studying cases”.

Stake (1995, p. 74) argues that researchers “reach new meanings” about cases in two strategic ways – the “direct interpretation of the individual instance and through aggregation of instances until something can be said about them as a class”. In addressing this question of single and multiple cases, Yin (2003, p. 42) provided strong rationale for a single case design when it is a “revelatory case” that enables the researcher to describe and analyse a situation that reveals deeper information about the phenomenon.

Construct validity establishes the “correct operational measures for the concepts being studied” (Yin, 2003, p. 34). To meet the test of construct validity, a study must “select the specific types of changes that are to be studied” and “demonstrate that the selected measures of these changes

do indeed reflect the specific types of change that have been selected” (Yin, 2003, p. 35). The change under investigation in this study is the sports event sponsorship of the Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket series. Following Yin's (2003) suggested tactics to enhance case study construct validity, this study employed multiple sources of evidence, maintained the chain of evidence, and had key informants review the draft case study report.

Yin (2003, p. 32) argued for “analytic generalization” of case study findings, as opposed to generalising to a given population. He stated that in analytical generalisation, “the investigator is striving to generalise a particular set of results to some broader theory” (Yin, 2003, p. 37). In this way, Yin (2003) was echoing Znaniecki's (1934, in Robinson, 1951, p. 812) argument that “analytic induction” is a “special and *certain* way of proving that the generalizations to which it leads will apply to all instances of the phenomenon under study, whether they have been examined or not” (Robinson, 1951, p. 812, emphasis in the original). Johnson (2004, p. 165) incorporated these views when he suggested that induction refers to the “process by which observers reflect upon their experience of social phenomena and then attempt to formulate explanations that may be used to form an abstract rule... which can be extrapolated to explain and predict new or similar experiences”. The broader theory relevant to this study is sports event sponsorship.

Yin (2003, p. 8) argued that a “case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence”. He highlighted six major sources of evidence, the following four of which were used in this study:

1. Documentation: sponsorship reports, press articles, and speeches were reviewed and analysed.
2. Archival records: attendance figures and data were reviewed and analysed.
3. Interviews: a combination of open-ended conversations and focused questioning interviews were conducted with multiple respondents in the sponsoring organisation and sponsored property.
4. Direct observations: the researchers had access to directly observe the sponsorship team at a number of games in the Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket series as well as interaction with fans, media commentators and other stakeholders.

In order to converge multiple lines of inquiry, Yin (2003) suggested data, investigator, theory and methodological triangulation. To ensure data source triangulation, key informants were interviewed on numerous occasions to check data consistency. Methodological triangulation was ensured through the use of multiple data sources (Stake, 1995).

Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket

This study addresses the need to deepen the understanding of sports marketing in an emerging market context of significant cultural diversity. The in-depth case study of Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket explores the strategy, execution and results of the successful launch of a new cricket format in South Africa.

Standard Bank of South Africa (SBSA) is a leading financial services provider in South Africa. Established in 1863, the organisation serves both individual (retail) customers and corporate clients, and is Africa's largest bank (in Assets and Market Capitalisation). SBSA is part of the Standard Bank Group, which is present in 17 countries across Africa and 37 globally. In 2007, SBSA shifted their brand positioning to a proposition of “Inspired.Motivated.Involved”.

SBSA has been a sponsor of cricket in South Africa since 1997. In order to revitalise domestic cricket, which was suffering from declining crowd attendances and reduced interest, SBSA and Cricket South Africa (CSA) launched the concept of 20-a-side cricket format in April 2004. As a shortened version of the one day game of cricket, the 20-over concept involved a three hour match with limited overs, and resulted in a game that was “action-packed, fast and furious, boundary-bashing, seam-splitting” (Standard Bank, 2007, p. 1) version of the game. This new shortened version of the game was called the Standard Bank Pro20 series and offered “a colourful alternative, a way perhaps to persuade a public swamped by entertainment options that cricket might still have something to offer on a Friday night or Sunday afternoon” (Williams, 2006, p. 1).

The Standard Bank Pro20 series was a four-week domestic cricket tournament, played between six CSA franchises (provincial unions), with 18 scheduled matches receiving live game time and broadcast activation support from the commercial and public broadcast media partners, SuperSport and the South African Broadcasting Corporation.

Objectives of the partnership

The stated objectives for SBSA in investing in Pro20 cricket was to build on their existing high levels of association with cricket in South Africa and demonstrate, to their chosen target audience, that their brand was progressive and able to constantly evolve. Specifically, the organisation wanted to shift the positioning of their brand within the youth market in South Africa, to enhance their appeal and relevance (Standard Bank, 2007). Given their traditional involvement with cricket, SBSA also wanted to partner CSA to develop a new cricket experience that attracted new audiences to an exciting new format of the game. Through internal marketing campaigns and sport hospitality, the organisation viewed the investment as an additional opportunity to engage stakeholders, clients and staff in cricket activities.

Sportainment

The premise of the new format of the game was that this series was changing the way cricket was traditionally played and viewed, not only as a sport but also as a form of entertainment (Craig, 2007). New elements were also added off the field to complement the excitement and thrill that was happening on the field. This combination of exciting cricket and the off the field entertainment elements made Standard Bank Pro20 cricket unique. The phrase coined in South Africa to capture the essence of Standard Bank Pro20 cricket was Sportainment – the combination of sport and entertainment.

The inaugural Standard Bank Pro20 series was a huge success, and has been followed by a second series in March/April 2005, a third in January/February 2006, a fourth in February/March 2007 and the most recent in March/April 2008.

In 2005, based on the success of the first two seasons of domestic Standard Bank Pro20 series, Standard Bank of South Africa announced they would be making an additional investment in the international version of the Standard Bank Pro20 cricket game. This international extension of the successful domestic formula in South Africa set benchmarks globally. As the clear leader and innovator of this format of the game, the inaugural Twenty20 World Cup was hosted in South Africa in September 2007. It was widely accepted that the award of this prestigious international event by the International Cricket Council (ICC) was strongly influenced by the successful launch and sustained growth of Standard Bank Pro20 cricket. CSA President, Norman Arendse expressed this sentiment in his comments that the Twenty20 World Cup marked:

... a first for cricket – the first time this format of the game will have been played on a truly global scale... Thanks to Standard Bank the shorter form of the game has caught the imagination of many cricket spectators and new fans to the sport (Standard Bank, 2007, p. 2).

Pillars of experience

The Standard Bank Pro20 cricket series was designed to enhance at least two of the three identified pillars of experience, including the cricket experience, stadium experience and broadcast experience. These three pillars were interlinked and together provided an integrated sportainment experience.

Cricket experience

The innovations to the game of cricket were achieved through a partnership between SBSA and CSA. These included the introduction of dugouts for players on the side of the field, to increase the visibility of players for stadium and broadcast audiences. This innovation also increased the pace of the game, facilitating quicker changes in batsmen. Team kit designs were enhanced to be more visually appealing and current. This enhancement extended to the, traditionally conservatively and plainly dressed umpires, who received a more colourful, informal and relaxed kit. Umpires were also transported onto the field by branded vehicles. A significant rule change to encourage a more expansive batting style was the introduction of a free hit for a no ball.

Stadium experience

Given the positioning of the Standard Bank Pro20 series as a “fast and furious” version of the game, a number of off-the-field entertainment elements, linked directly to the on-the-field action, were designed. Chief among these were the Standard Bank Pro20 Hard Hats, distributed to spectators as head protection against the significant number of fours and sixes expected in the new “boundary-bashing” format. Branded Hard Hats were distributed in team colours and became collector's items, even appearing at non-cricket sport events.

To enhance the experience of the youth target market, a dunk tank was introduced at the side of the field that would “dunk” children into a tank of water whenever a four or six was struck. Additional mobile broadcast cameras were used to capture regular crowd shots for display on large screens in the stadium.

For the International Pro20 cricket series, additional enhancements included professional dancers on podiums within grandstand areas who entertained crowds whenever a boundary was hit. This was supported by an elevated DJ booth that provided a high-energy soundtrack to the game and fireworks at key scoring moments of the game. Traditional horizontal digital advertising boards were also replaced with wider vertical Power Towers at various points around the stadium. These were used to communicate positioning messages, images and sounds that paralleled the on-the-field action.

Broadcast experience

In close partnership with the satellite commercial broadcaster, SuperSport, Standard Bank Pro20 cricket introduced a number of untested initiatives to leverage the cricket and stadium experience for live ball-by-ball viewers. Commentators were relocated from the media suite and commentary boxes to the grandstands, where they were able to interact directly with spectators during breaks in the game. By providing the fielding captain with an earpiece and lapel microphone, the commentators were also able to link directly to the thoughts and opinions of players at key points in the game. Live interviews were also hosted with outgoing batsmen after each wicket. Heart-rate monitors were even attached to certain players in the game to provide broadcast viewers with an additional insight into the action on the field.

Integrated marketing campaign

Standard Bank Pro20 cricket was successfully launched to the South African public through an exciting and visually powerful non-traditional national marketing campaign. The campaign elements of all four series and the international games had messages of entertainment, show business, and action-packed fun.

The above-the-line and below-the-line communication executions used to leverage the sponsorship included a strap line of “It's wicket cricket”, developed for the inaugural series, and used again for the second series. By the beginning of 2006 the line had evolved to “Xperience it!” This strap line was used for the third and fourth domestic series, as well as the International Standard Bank Pro20 cricket matches. Mega-billboards were placed strategically around the country, with promotional television advertisements flighted at 40 Forecourt Television Network sites at high-traffic petrol filling stations. A national radio activation strategy comprised a five-week campaign on the popular youth station 5FM titled “Are you game? Gimme tickets”. This strategy included on-air and ground promotions and stunts for supporters to win tickets to their regional games. The activation used the sportainment elements unique to the Standard Bank Pro20 cricket, including finding eleven strangers to start their own Standard Bank Pro20 cricket squad, testing the strength of the hard hats, making 50 watermelon hard hats for fans, and teaching morning rush-hour motorists the new rules of the game.

A comprehensive below the line campaign was initiated at the beginning of each domestic series at 96 traffic intersections nationwide. The campaign used approximately 385 promoters to distribute 200,000 fixtures flyers; as well as to hand out 35 100 flyers at ten university campuses. Promotional activities were also held at 26 nightclubs and 87 shopping centres.

A dedicated online environment was created at www.standardbankpro20.co.za to enable access to information on the series, fixtures, franchises, event activities, rules, broadcast enhancements, ticket info, live news and scores.

A total of 137 strategically selected SBSA branches were used to promote each Standard Bank Pro20 cricket game. The selected branches received A4- and A2-sized decal stickers for branch windows and hanging mobiles that mimic broken and smashed windows – the “result of fast and furious cricket action.” To promote Standard Bank Pro20 cricket, SBSA used its branch network on match days, with front-line staff wearing the branded Hard Hats on the day of the game. Staff incentives in the first series were managed through the Standard Bank Group's intranet with a competition for each game in the series.

A PR and media kit of images was distributed to the media prior to each game. Dedicated syndication services, including photographic and editorial, were in place to cover all matches, and to drive coverage and awareness of the Standard Bank Pro20 cricket. Additional media coverage was generated through key events, such as the inaugural twenty-over international game in South Africa, the presentation of a Hard Hat birthday cake to South Africa's captain, Graeme Smith, on the day before the Standard Bank Pro20 cricket International against Pakistan, and the wearing of the internationally-recognised red ribbon by Indian and South Africa players on World AIDS Day.

Delivering on the objectives

The Standard Bank Pro20 cricket series fulfilled all stated objectives. In terms of brand association with cricket in South Africa, independent research conducted by Millward Brown found that SBSA had the highest awareness of cricket sponsorship (82 per cent), compared to Castle Lager (25 per cent) and MTN (30 per cent), who were involved in longer versions of the game. Cricket South Africa research supported this view, finding that 36 per cent of all sports fans spontaneously responded that Standard Bank was the sponsor of Pro20 cricket.

Standard Bank Pro20 cricket contributed to a sudden growth in the cricket fan base in South Africa, particularly among the youth and Black supporter groups. The Black market, which has traditionally not supported cricket, comprised 25 per cent of the Standard Bank Pro20 cricket fan base. Black adult cricket spectators increased by 3.7 per cent, compared to an increase of Black spectators of 1 per cent for other top sports. Young (12 to 18-year-old) spectators increased by 140,000. These positive indicators also manifest in the desired brand positioning shift and market share for Standard Bank within the targeted youth market. Deputy Editor of The Wisden Cricketer, Edward Craig suggested that the new format of the game “seems to have cut the rubbish out of cricket, digested it, packaged it and delivered it to an audience that realises it wants it” (Craig, 2007, p. 1).

For Cricket South Africa, Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket has reversed a steady decline in stadium attendances for domestic cricket. Figure 1 highlights the decline in average seasonal attendance per region from 28,459 in the 1996/1997 season to 7,935 in the 2003/2004 season.

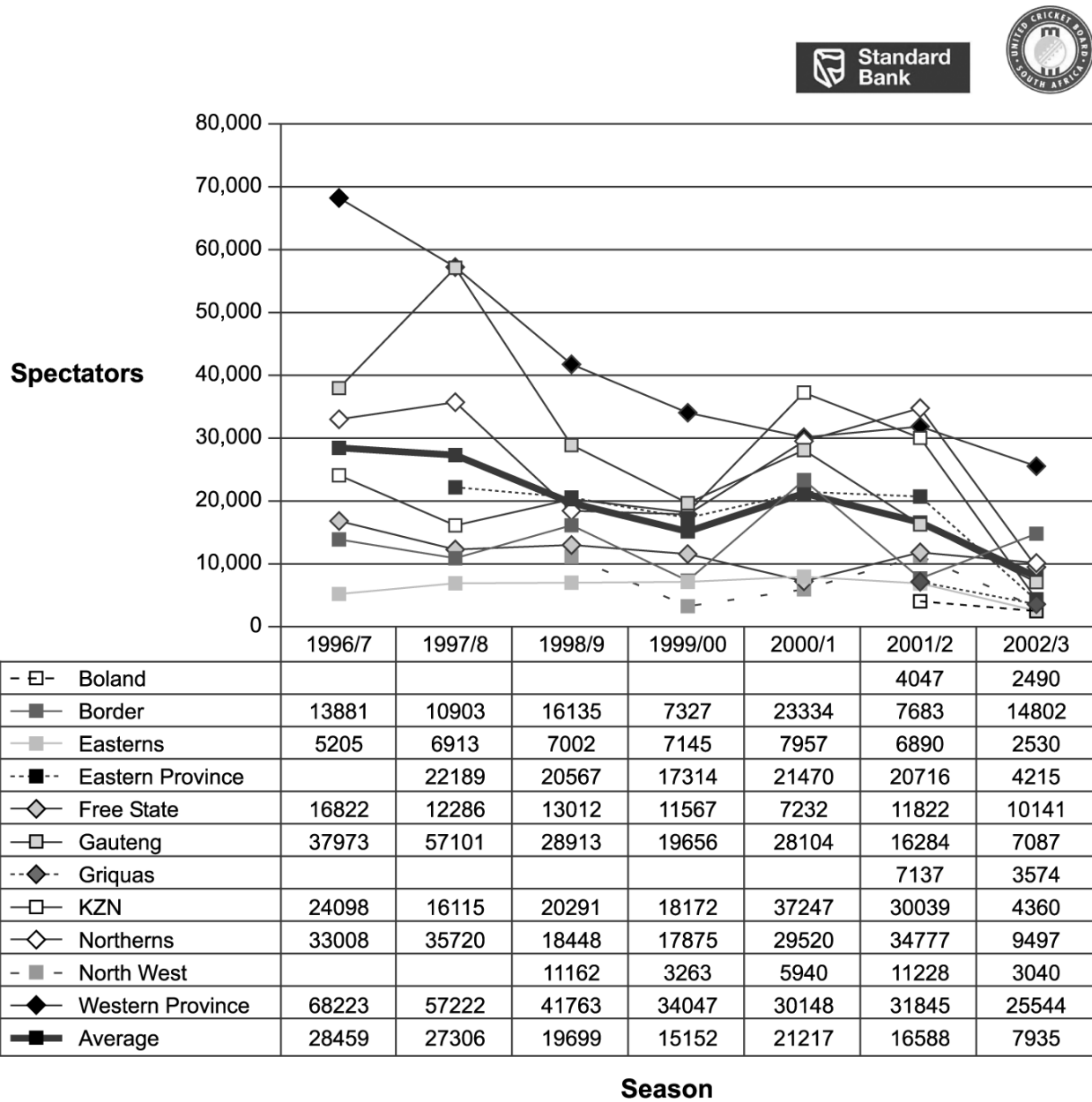


Figure 1 Domestic cricket attendance figures per season (1997-2003)

In comparison, average crowd attendances for Standard Bank Pro20 cricket grew from 9,656 in the first year to 12,490 by 2007. This included 306,807 spectators watching 34 completed games in the first two seasons of the newly launched format. As can be seen from Figure 2, total spectators grew to 318,655 during the 2006 and 2007 series. During these two series the 18 Standard Bank Pro20 games attracted 39,000 and 33,000 more spectators respectively than the 38 one-day 45-over cricket series. According to CSA Chief Executive Gerald Majola, the

“record attendance figures confirm our predictions that it would be an exciting appetiser to the inaugural ICC 2007 Twenty20 World Championship” (South African Press Association, 2007, p. 1).

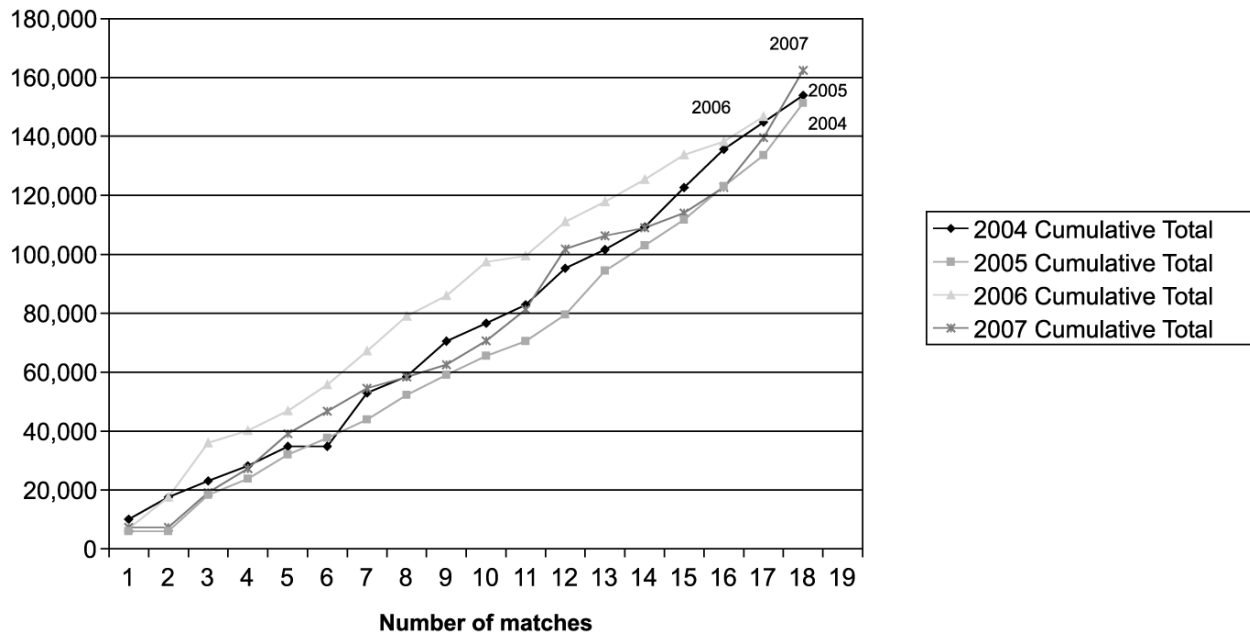


Figure 2 Standard Bank Pro20 Series – cumulative attendance analysis

Cricket South Africa research indicated that 37 per cent of cricket fans had been to a domestic Standard Bank Pro20 cricket match since 2004, compared to 22 per cent who had been to a 45-overs domestic game. A total of 42 per cent of cricket fans were also found to “often/always” watch Standard Bank Pro20 cricket on television. Majola was also quoted as suggesting that the Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket series raised the standard of the domestic game (Bryden, 2005).

Results

The research found evidence of a partnership approach to sponsorship. The stated objectives of the sponsor, Standard Bank, were the same as those of the sponsored property, Cricket South Africa, and the broadcaster, SuperSport. All three partners in the tournament thus shared the same goals and shared equal responsibility for the achievement of these. The three partners formed a team that made decisions jointly and thus acted together in the design and execution of the tournament.

The research also found evidence of creative sponsorship activation, using the sportainment concept of three integrated experience pillars. The three pillars of the cricket experience, stadium experience and broadcast experience reinforced each other to create an innovative sponsorship activation that contributed to achieving the sponsorship objectives.

Management implications

This study demonstrates the value of viewing a sport sponsorship as a partnership, not just a hand-over of financial resources. Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket was designed and executed through close collaboration between the sponsoring organisation, the sport rights-holder, and the satellite broadcaster. By conceptualising the strategy as a set of three interrelated pillars of experience, each partner was able to contribute to and benefit from the success of the new format. The study also highlights the benefits to a sports brand, like Cricket South Africa, when the sponsoring organisation sets out objectives that are strongly in the interests of the game. Managers responsible for building the brands of sport right-holders should thus attempt to work collaboratively with sponsoring organisations, by sharing the strategic objectives of the sport and inviting sponsors to contribute to the development of the sport.

Managers of sports brands could thus reflect on how they might involve their existing and prospective sponsors in the development of the game. They could also question how their organisation's processes and structures are designed to encourage open and honest dialogue and working between senior members of their organisation and sponsoring organisations. These sports brand managers could also consider what the next innovation in their game might be that will dramatically enhance the experience of existing supporters and appeal to large groups of non-supporters.

From the perspective of the sponsoring organisation, this case study demonstrates how a brand can shift its positioning within a given customer segment and translate this into greater market penetration. The study also considers the effective use of multiple sponsorship activations to achieve the desired "image transfer" (Meenaghan, 2002, p. 7) from Standard Bank Pro20 Cricket to Standard Bank. Managers facing similar challenges should thus design sports marketing investments that are meaningful and connected to the target market in question. These investments should be closely aligned with the desired positioning of the sponsoring brand. Relevant prior and post positioning studies should be included in the strategy to measure the brand shift that has occurred.

Managers of brands marketing through sport could thus consider the extent to which their sponsorship objectives are aligned to the strategy of their organisation. They could also reflect on the measurements that would need to be put in place to track the results of their investment and the different communication methods available to better reach their chosen target market more effectively. These sponsorship managers could also question how they and their teams can adopt more of a partnership approach in order to develop the sport to the benefit of all.

Further research

This study has contributed an emerging market perspective to the research of sports marketing. Specifically, it has explored the launch of a new 20-overs cricket format in South Africa. As part of the globalisation of cricket, further research of sport event sponsorship in India and North America would enhance the understanding of this phenomenon. There is some evidence, for example, that the broadcast experience pillar described here was adopted by the Indian Premier League (IPL) competition in early 2008. The IPL, and the recently announced International

Champions League, that have invited players from other countries to participate in domestic teams, may impact the cricket experience pillar and introduce additional sponsorship activation challenges and opportunities.

Research of sport event sponsorship would also be enhanced by describing and analysing other cases within other sports. There is some evidence, for example, that Standard Bank's other sport and art sponsorships do not share the same partnership approach, which may impact the opportunities to creatively activate the sponsorship to achieve the objectives.

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