

ISSUE 19 > 2011



ACTIVATIVE

> PLATFORM

platform

the sponsorship magazine



Olympics special

Activation, engagement and strategy – but where’s the love?

Celebrity Big Brother

Where product placement fits with sponsorship

Football Focus

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About this issue...



Returning to the sponsorship industry after a pretty long absence, I was curious to see what had changed. Some of the old faces were familiar, many of the old chestnuts were still being debated. But beneath the surface I discovered a different undercurrent: rights owners and sponsors are keen to explore new ways of using sponsorship, traditional models are being challenged, while the digital era and public sector spending cuts are creating new opportunities.

This is what I hope to cover in Platform. As a monthly we won't be writing about news as it happens, but we will be monitoring trends within current affairs and looking at the implications for sponsorship. We will look at sectors where it has rarely, if ever, been used until now and discuss what that means for the industry. This issue covers a range of topics, from the Olympics to neuroscience, the arts to football. The aim is to do so in a way that provides 'added value' to readers, something that they won't be able to get anywhere else.

And we'll be packaging it in a new, easier-to-read, stylish format which will emerge over the coming months. I hope readers will bear with us as we test the waters, and that you'll provide us with feedback and feature ideas. Here's to the future!

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Platform is published by Sponsorship News Ltd.

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Publisher Catherine Hawkins

Editor Louella Miles

Advertising & Subscriptions Jacqui Lugar

Design The Brand Foundry

Subscription Rates

UK £199

Europe £219

International (outside Europe) £229

Back copies: £12.00 each

ISSN No: 2045-0168

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Brands miss Olympics buzz

Pride, excitement, frustration social engagement:

brands need to work harder to capture the cultural zeitgeist of 2012 and demonstrate more emotional awareness in the run up to the Olympics. This is what consumers told Platform and Promise, a leading co-creation consultancy.

Despite the ticketing disappointments of London 2012, the magic of the Olympics is difficult to destroy. Londoners especially are proud that the spotlight will be on them, and there is a sense that Britain has “already won” in being the host. However, there is also scepticism: the sense that the Games have corrupted their spirit in the quest for money.

The actions of the larger sponsors have done little to counter this feeling as yet. Many are perceived as being lazy – publicising the 2012 logo widely, yet not helping people taste or get a ‘trailer’ of the excitement that is yet to come.

Some brands are showing promise. The emotional pull of Visa’s TV commercial is skilful. British Airways’ ‘They Will Fly’ campaign touches an emotional, aspirational nerve; and at least links the Olympics to what the brand itself actually sells. Not so though Lloyds TSB – which is doing well in terms of Games awareness by putting the rings on the back of ATM receipts, but whom consumers find difficult to link with the Games in any meaningful way. BMW has cleverly bridged this gap by linking its precision engineering message with that of the finely tuned training of athletes on its Olympics

mini-site. Here you can follow the training regimes of famous names like Rebecca Adlington, if you know it’s there.

But where are the sponsors – or indeed, other brands – telling us what we’re going to get out of the event, and all that surrounds it?

The Olympics are not just about sport. Indeed, seeing as most people didn’t get tickets, for many it won’t be about sport at all. Here in the UK, the party to end all parties is being thrown – and as yet we are missing the glittering hostess. Consumers feel that no-one is taking responsibility for making sure they have fun over the Olympic period. Even awareness of local councils’ budgets for festivities is disappointingly low.

We believe in the ability – and necessity – of using everyday people (consumers) to help solve businesses challenges. So it was to a group of eight Londoners that we put the question, “What would you do if you were in charge of an Olympics campaign?”

Interestingly, the creations were overwhelmingly anti-‘big brand’, with our consumers envisaging solutions for smaller, ethical initiatives featuring local food produce; or British brands that

have a more obvious connection to sport, or consumers could see being useful during the Games, such as Buxton water. Such idealism indicates that large brands are being perceived as intruders, with little direct relevance to a major sporting event, and audiences find it difficult to justify them having the Olympic logo on their billboards.

Blockbuster sponsorship of the likes of McDonald’s and Coca-Cola was eventually understood by consumers, when pushed. What they needed was an explanation of how brands are helping: reassurance that large amounts of money are being spent isn’t enough. When cynicism is rife, transparency – and proof that sponsorship makes a difference – is a hygiene factor for communications.

For many, the Games will be fantasy football crossed with a Eurovision party: a few stats, plenty of flags, and even more drinks. There’s a more obvious role for big brands here, like Cadbury’s. But where are the other light-hearted, sociable campaigns like theirs? Vibrant and inventive brands should offer more ways to engage.

Thea Bowden
www.promisecorp.com

What should brands be doing?

1 Mirror people’s feelings. Capitalise on the high emotions of carnival chaos – the world being turned on its head – and the frustrations and excitement that ensue. Brands that empathise with what real people will be doing (in the pub, in the park, in the unusually heavy traffic) will come across as connected and human. Pride is still also currently under-leveraged: whether patriotic or not, Britain is coming together next year and no-one is celebrating this.

2 Make an explicit link to what your brand does for the Olympics, in its widest sense (i.e. the festivities and the country, as well as the Games themselves). People struggle to figure out what the benefit is to local communities or to them personally: there is a general feeling that it will be good, but when pressed, no-one knows why. Let people know you will still be there even when the spotlight goes off in 2013.

3 Entertain the Olympic underbelly. What will you do for those who will be skiving off work, partaking in office sweepstakes, hanging out at the grounds without tickets, or even who will be leaving the country and sub-letting out their London pads? (Remember the phenomenon of the Royal Wedding getaway?) Get involved in other spaces where people can watch the Games in their local communities. And don’t forget the ‘anti-theme’. Perhaps not one for sponsors, but a ‘just good enough’ or ‘couch potato’ message could work well, and achieve cut-through in a sports-saturated marketplace.

4 Spot the ‘moment’ and actions of the country and react quickly. Few brands maximised the cultural capital of the vuvuzela at the South African World Cup as well as they should have. Likewise the stories that are most recalled about Olympic Games are human and emerge at the last minute: think ‘Eric the Eel’ from Sydney 2000, the Equatoguinean competitor who learnt to swim just eight months before the Games.

5 Go viral. The worlds’ first truly digital Olympics has so far proved disappointing in this field. Create content which can be shared, contributed to and owned by users on different platforms to get your brand out there. It can be naughty and fast – both ideal for capturing the mood and peoples’ attention.



Celebrity Big Brother: who benefits most from association?

TV programme sponsorship is a slightly strange beast. In a medium where analysis is possible to the nth degree and control of coverage, delivery of target audience and peak share is all important, sponsorship exists in an area where many of the usual rules don't apply.



You can't put an overt sales message in there, timelengths are limited, coverage builds much slower than conventional spot campaigns and frequency can be huge. Generally the success – or otherwise – of an association seems to come down to subjective measures such as whether a link was established between the brand and programme.

It does, however, give brands without sufficient budget for conventional campaigns a way of accessing mass audiences. At the end of February another option came on the scene: paid-for product placement became legal in the UK TV market. Nescafe's Dolce Gusto coffee machine was quick to take advantage.

Since then there's been a degree of confusion over exactly whom clients,

agencies and broadcasters should talk to, how to price it and how to measure it. Ultimately, these points have meant very slow take up: at the Edinburgh Festival it was revealed only six deals have been done.

Ironically, the channel-hopping nature of today's viewer means that the largest audiences are to be found through in-programme presence as, once a break is cued, the viewer sees a sponsorship ident, often a trailer and only then the ads themselves. A show such as X Factor can lose up to 20% of its audiences once the ad break is well underway.

The return of *Celebrity Big Brother* to TV, moving from its previous home on C4 to the Richard Desmond-owned Channel 5, was heavily hyped within the ad world.

There was talk of multi-million pound sums being asked for to sponsor the show as O2, Carphone Warehouse and Lucozade had done in the past. Also murmurings of potential placement deals from supermarkets and all manner of brands.

In reality, CBB did have a sponsor – skincare brand Freederm – as well as placement and partner brands, plus others who used it to launch new creative. The format has lost viewers in recent years through a combination of wear out and scandal but there is still a large group of hard core fans who blanked out three weeks of their diary to watch the events unfold.

As the programme was bound to create much online discussion and news coverage in general, we set our Echo Sonar research system to work tracking the mentions of the main brands. Interaction and comment is certainly not to be mistaken for a measure of commercial success (35 million views and counting on YouTube for Old Spice's '...I'm on a horse' ad, though the exact effect on sales is clouded by price promotions) but the presence of several brands, plus the rabid fans, got us interested in what would be noticed, discussed and mentioned.

We analysed social media and online news mentions of the brands featured: Freederm, Lidl, Domino's Pizza, the film *Fright Night*, Lucozade and social media

site Whoozaround. Starting with the headline sponsor, Freederm, detections were minimal and not hugely positive. The Guardian's live blog for the final commented "9.02pm: IT'S STARTING! I won't miss the Freederm ads, if I'm honest". Association is one thing, but wear out another. Freederm's website featured a link through to a Facebook competition to win eviction night tickets: 31,000 people like the page, 1.7 million watched the show. Perhaps not the best return.

The most commented on product was the film *Fright Night*. Used as a reward for the housemates completing a task, the number of mentions for this was almost as many as for all the others combined. Behind this lay a full campaign of bespoke TV copy, press ads, VOD and social media, all pushing a competition allowing viewers to enter the house. What we have here is a fully integrated campaign that linked with the show and used a range of traditional and new media.

Next came Domino's Pizzas, the partner for *Eviction Night*. There were merchandising promotions for pizza and Coca-Cola every Friday and the function of ordering a pizza through the Facebook site as well as being able to vote through that site for the first time. Northern + Shell also aired conventional advertising across its portfolio.

Third in the list was Lidl. A late entry to the fray, Jedward were rewarded with a trolley dash for the other inmates round the local store. Whether this was a direct deal



with Channel 5 is unclear but it certainly got a few keyboards tapped. Aside from a diet that would cause Jamie Oliver concern, the odd bulletin board discussion tended to descend into the merits of various supermarkets. There's no link to CBB on its website so it looks like it got some free publicity which hopefully made up for the mess the twins made in the store.

Lucozade got a little coverage by launching its new ad in the show. By catching the audience early in the series there would still have been a bit of 'appointment to view' about it but beyond that, those covering the spot buying were

media industry papers. Finally came whoozaround.

Now, the social media network world is always going to be a fairly tough nut to crack for new entrants. By having the official play-along game entwined with answers found by watching the show the hope was to hang on to the show's coat tails. Sadly, little interest appears to have been generated in coverage and even looking at Google Insights returns 'not enough volume to display graphs'.

It's a small sample, but one taken from a show where the audience pay attention and woe-betide anyone who messes with the

format. @BBUKBoycott even started a Twitter feed to boycott brands in CBB until until Channel 5 reintroduced the live stream: the ones mentioned directly were Domino's, Freederm and Lucozade.

The most mentioned brand was *Fright Night*, yet it doesn't appear in the boycott call. Is that because it was interwoven into the show rather being 'associated' with? It's impossible to tell but it does seem that such an approach (using new and old media) delivers a stronger result than pure sponsorship.

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The long tail, the short head and the big nose: three Olympic sponsor strategies

Legacy! Less than a year to go and it seems we can't escape messages about the enduring Olympic benefits for future generations. Indeed, for some London 2012 sponsors it seems almost compulsory to focus on the lasting Olympic contributions to business, culture, economy, regeneration and sport.

Yet though London's legacy vision may have won it the Games, that doesn't necessarily mean all rights holders should fixate on what comes after. It might be fashionable in marketing to champion long-lasting engagement, but what about the 'before' and the 'during', as well as the 'after'?

Surely different levels of sponsorship need different strategic priorities?

Stressing the significance of post-Games patrimony may be appropriate for the IOC's global TOP (The Olympic Partners) sponsors. After all, they have 10-year-plus contracts sealing long term relationships with the Olympic movement. Coca-Cola's links, for example, date back to 1928. But for most LOCOG sponsors, this Olympics is a one-time deal. Once the flame is extinguished on 12 August (Olympics) and 9 September (Paralympics), the conversation will immediately switch from London to Rio 2016. When the Games are over LOCOG brands will lose the advantages they held in the build up to London.

Of course, for those non-official brands planning ambushes or just advertising it is less about the 'before' or the 'after', but about concentrating firepower 'during' the Games.

Is a three-way strategic split emerging when it comes to activating around the Olympics? With TOP sponsors leading post-Games investment (The Long Tail), ambushers and advertisers spiking during the games (The Short Head), and LOCOG brands dominating pre-Games expenditure (which we'll call The Big Nose)?

The 'short head', of course, refers to the established marketing strategy that dominated the industry for decades: focus on a few immediate mass-market blockbusters. But one size no longer fits all. Contemporary thinking champions alternative approaches such as the 'long tail'. Popularised by Wired editor Chris Anderson, the term suggests brands will achieve future commercial, cultural and communication success through ongoing low-volume niche engagements rather than immediate short-term mainstream hits.

While 'short head' approaches seem likely to remain favoured by London 2012 guerrilla brands and mainstream advertisers, few Olympic sponsors remain exclusively focused on this approach. Indeed, most seem increasingly concerned with Anderson-esque low-volume fragmented interactions and conversations.

As his strategy predicts, Olympic sponsors thus far have placed user-driven innovations, multiple niches and social networks at the heart of their activation: from consumer-creation and consumer-generation, through crowd-sourcing and crowd-casting, to digital downloads, peer-to-peer and viral marketing. But unlike Anderson, it's not the post-Olympic 'tail' that seems the main priority for LOCOG sponsors, but rather the pre-Olympic 'nose'.

What comes before the games begin is vital and the fact that so many LOCOG sponsors began activating so early suggests they understood this from the off. For example, Activative monitored BT, Lloyds TSB and EDF roll out Olympic ad-related work back in 2008, BA in 2009 and Cadbury's in 2010.

Of course, this is about maximising value: after all, Olympic sponsorships aren't cheap. The cost of LOCOG rights have not been officially released, but media reports suggest an investment of anything from £40m (British Airways) to £80m (Lloyds TSB). So sponsors must pull out all the stops to ensure they get the most for their money. For LOCOG sponsors this means maximising pre-Games consumer conversations and engagements. The earlier they start the better.

Even LOCOG initiatives that seem to be about post Games legacy are often really front-loaded pre-Games campaigns. These include the talent development programmes such as BA's 'Great Britons', BT's 'Big Voice' and 'Coaching For Life' and Lloyds TSB's 'Local Heroes'. How many of these programmes have the long-term lifespan and ongoing investment that legacy programmes like Barclays' global 'Spaces for Sport' have?

Researchers and the media are already analysing which LOCOG sponsors have been the most successful in this pre-Games period. This summer, one year before the opening ceremony, OnePoll carried out a research project for Marketing to see which sponsors have successfully managed to engage with consumers during the 'big nose' phase, while Promise undertook a similar qualitative research project for Platform (pages 4/5)h.

The public was given a full list of sponsors to choose from and asked which sponsors they most associate with London 2012. Of the LOCOG sponsors it was Cadbury (Official Treat Provider) and Lloyds TSB (Official Banking and Insurance Partner) that topped the poll with 20.6% and 17.5% respectively.

Unsurprisingly, all three sponsors have adopted many of the tactics Anderson outlines, particularly when focusing on the niche and developing relationship rather than transactions, and applied them to their pre-Games work.

Cadbury's 'Spots v Stripes' initiative is not a headline-grabbing, unified, mass campaign, but a multi-niche initiative that attempts to connect to anyone anywhere. Based on the idea that while the Olympics is about blockbuster elite performance, the Olympic spirit is about inclusive participation and celebration, it developed Spots v Stripes as a joyful, social idea to get more people playing sport.

Promoted across a wide range of media

platforms, anyone can sign-up and play any game they like to try and generate as many points as possible for their team (spots or stripes). These aren't limited to mainstream sports like running and swimming, or to 'toilet roll unwinding' and 'balloon bellyflop' (as illustrated in the ATL creative), but any and every eclectic, niche game.

Industry opinion has been mixed, yet participation statistics are been impressive. In 2010 more than 7.4m people played 700,000 games. This led to brand preference rising 5% with Cadbury moving from the top 12% to the top 4% of UK brands. Sale figures look good, too. The Challenge Bar became the country's top selling bar in its first week on the shelves, while the The Big Race Bar is also ahead of sales targets and has become the company's second most successful new product launch since Wispa in 2007.

Lloyds TSB's pre-Games 2012 work has also applied classic Anderson approaches to its 'For the journey' big idea. Built around a mission statement that aims to inspire/support young people and businesses on their journey to the Olympics/Paralympics and beyond, the focus is less about the national mainstream now, but on local communities and the future. Furthermore, consumer-creation and crowd-sourcing has featured in much of its work – whether that is its initial Local Heroes scheme, its work with School Sports Week, its SME Tender Advisory programme, or its Torch Relay nomination campaign.

Again, initial results look good, with the bank connected with 5m children by providing a wide variety of teaching resources, inspiration and ideas for National School Sport Week (in association with the Youth Sport Trust). Its Torch Relay campaign has already seen 30,000 plus nominations for torchbearers, while it is also supporting 1,000 Local Heroes with funding, equipment and coaching.

In the final year before the Games it will be fascinating to see if anyone else can catch up with those brands which started so early. And after the torch has long left London, it will be interesting to see whether charts tracking comparative Olympic sponsor expenditure over time may reveal whether a three-way strategic split has emerged.

Jeremy Edwards

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Testing times

The Cultural Olympiad could prove the cynics wrong: it may actually deliver on promises made in the original Olympic bid: to showcase all that is great about British arts and culture, says Natalie Melton.

Set this against a background of savage funding cuts to the arts and it will have exceeded its original remit. It won't just have given a much-needed lift to a sector facing a very uncertain future. It could also provide the platform for them to be viewed as a serious contender for significant sponsorship spend from a broader portfolio of brands. The question is: will the arts rise to the challenge?

Focus on the few

The Cultural Olympiad itself has long enjoyed the support of culture stalwart BP, and in recent months BT and Panasonic have come on board to support specific aspects of the programme. Yet that's just three out of a potential pool of 25 sponsors, with little indication that many more will commit to supporting the Cultural Olympiad.

This may not endanger the official projects themselves, but it does mean that some will lack the budget to sufficiently market or promote what they are doing to a wide audience. Take the Bus Top project, a major public art commission for London. It consists of a series of digital screens mounted on the tops of buses which can be programmed with different art works to entertain top deck bus passengers.

It's an official project of the Cultural Olympiad, so restricted to which commercial partners it can attract. And with more than six million journeys on buses every day, it has the potential to reach a significant audience in a playful, participative and interactive way. The irony here is that, by creating a new temporary outdoor media property across London, it would in many ways have made an attractive proposition to ambush marketers

who, by their very nature, are more likely to take risks in their approach to brand engagement than official sponsors.

And while no-one would dare call it ambush marketing, there are a number of major non-Olympic brands who have signed significant sponsorship deals with key cultural institutions. Just think Mastercard and the South Bank Centre, with a three-year partnership specifically around the Summer Festival, and Barclays and its partnership with The National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. Both will capitalise on the significant profile of these venues and their already sizeable tourist footfall during the summer, which will no doubt increase significantly next year.

Philanthropy focus

Those lower down the food chain, smaller arts bodies already facing significant

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funding challenges, now put specific activity for the Olympics on the 'nice to do' list rather than the 'need to do'. Generating sponsorship from business is not a fundraising priority, particularly now that business resources are tight and the emphasis from government is firmly focused on philanthropy as the growth area for arts funding.

Which is a shame, because one of the interesting elements of the Cultural Olympiad has been the focus on collaboration, on grand ambition, and scaling up activity to ensure that significant audiences can enjoy some of the extraordinary work on offer. Much of what's being programmed is outdoors, free and accessible to a broad audience. This goes some way to remove the charges of elitism and expense that are often leveled at the arts, and make many sponsors dismiss the arts out of hand.

Harriet McDonald, who works on commercial partnerships for the Mayor's Office, feels that despite this the arts still have a way to go to sell themselves better to sponsors. The potential for exciting sponsorships may be there but, in her experience, rights owners often lack a commercial appreciation of what a brand wants. Few brand or sponsorship managers, meanwhile, really have the time

to unpick and repackage an offer to ensure that they are getting what they want out of a deal.

Collaborative need

So, a question: if larger institutions increasingly showcase and platform the work of smaller, less-well known bodies, could they not also lend their expertise and their credibility to develop sponsorship pitches for the arts that are large and ambitious, and would bring smaller organisations into the fold? Their brand profile would boost interest from businesses, as would their commercial acumen and understanding of what a brand wants from partnership. They would also gain a national footprint by being able to partner with regional organisations – whether a series of local theatres, galleries or museums.

It's unclear who might drive such an initiative, which would create a real step change in the cultural sector's ability to attract corporate sponsorship. Arts & Business, which has traditionally fulfilled the role of strategic agency for brokering partnerships, faces its own uncertain future as a result of funding cuts.

The DCMS did designate 2011 the 'Year of Corporate Philanthropy', with a commitment to encouraging more

investment from the corporate sector to the arts, but has been predictably big on promises and low on delivery (although a DCMS spokesperson has promised new announcements 'shortly').

Any initiative to increase investment in the arts is welcome, but an exclusive focus on the philanthropic ask at the expense of seeing them as a viable commercial proposition for brands is worrying. CSR and charity budgets are invariably smaller than a company's marketing spend. So are the arts being encouraged to focus on a smaller piece of the corporate pie at exactly the time they should be aiming to ask for more?

What is clear, from talking to various sponsorship professionals, is that while in so many ways the arts currently offer brilliant opportunities for brands – great content; loyal audiences; growing numbers; relatively low cost – only a few have the commercial acumen to capitalise on their creativity and secure sponsorship of significant value in this tough economic climate.

Olympics or no Olympics, the arts need more expert support to be able to get out of the starting blocks.

Natalie Melton

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Barbican push for 2012



As the UK's most international arts venue, the Barbican Centre is pulling out all the stops for 2012 with a programme of globally-recognised names. Based in the City of London, just a short journey from Stratford's Olympic site, it's making a major contribution to the Cultural Olympiad and the London 2012 Festival.

Already confirmed are: London's first major Bauhaus exhibition for over 40 years; The New York Philharmonic and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam in residency; a new adaptation of a Botho Strauss play starring Cate Blanchett and the UK premiere of Philip Glass and Robert Wilson's Einstein on the Beach with choreography by Lucinda Childs.

The Barbican is also a partner of The World Shakespeare Festival, and is collaborating on a major Pina Bausch season with Sadler's Wells.

"We want to create amazing experiences for as many people as possible in

2012 and beyond" says Barbican director of audiences and development, Leonora Thomson. "This includes our sponsors. Whether companies are looking to create unique experiences for customers or develop brand awareness, our programme presents exciting, international opportunities that represent great value."

This autumn the Barbican will announce even more performances to its artistic programme, with projects ranging from UK theatre, Middle Eastern dance, a major international orchestra and an incredible Latin American music event.

The Barbican already has a significant presence in east London communities. Along with its ambitious arts programme, expect the Barbican to deliver off-site commissions and wide-ranging education and learning initiatives. This work adds to the options available to sponsors at the Barbican.

Brain power

The subconscious can reveal the truth about a sponsorship's effectiveness - and how it can deliver better value - but only if you know the right way to go about it, says Daphne Mavroudi-Chocholi.



The challenge for marketers, in this age of heightened demand for ROI, is to deliver cost-effective results and potential savings - in both monetary and corporate reputation terms. So the ability to tease out in-depth data about a sponsorship's effectiveness before making a major investment has to be a no-brainer.

Neuromarketing offers a path to these potential savings, measuring the brain's subconscious responses to literally anything and everything that the five senses can take in. It can be defined as the application of advanced neurological knowledge for marketing purposes.

Ask - and the answer ye shall receive may be inaccurate

The brain's complexity is stunning: 100 billion neurons (brain cells) communicating in milliseconds to produce unmatched feats of perception and comprehension. Its versatility is equally astounding: constantly taking in and processing stimuli from all five senses, while keeping you upright and moving, talking, eating, laughing.

Harnessing this data, studying the brain, its structures and its functions, is the realm

of neuroscience. As the 21st century unfolds we are gaining understanding of the brain at an exponential rate. This has led to breakthroughs in learning how and where specific brain processes occur. Three of these neural functions are vital to marketing success, which is why they form our primary NeuroMetrics: Attention, Emotional Engagement, and Memory Retention.

Why are these three key? Because unless you are paying attention to a stimulus, you will not become emotionally engaged. If you are not emotionally engaged, you are not likely to remember it. And if you do not remember it, you are unlikely to purchase the brand, product, or service (or view the entertainment content) that is being offered.

The role of the subconscious

Your brain takes in about 11 million bits of data every second, but your conscious mind can only process about 40 bits of data a second. That is a selection ratio of only 0.000004%. So, you can see from this simple math that the vast majority of what you experience and respond to every second of your life is concentrated in your subconscious - NOT your conscious mind.

As human beings, we are designed not to be able to access our subconscious through our will. If we could, we would be paralysed by the sheer ocean of information flooding into our brains, and unable to comprehend, much less act, on it.

That's why traditional consumer research methods such as surveys and focus groups are fundamentally flawed in their ability to

tease out accurate and, therefore, reliably actionable information. The fundamental neurological fact is: when you ask someone to recall what they felt and what they remember about something they experienced, *in the process of formulating a response the brain actually alters the original data it recorded at the time it experienced the stimulus.*

So, all good intents aside, respondents to conventional consumer research techniques simply cannot supply reliably accurate answers. What marketers get through articulated consumer responses is not necessarily what the brain initially registered and responded to. When significant sums are going to be committed to launch a new brand, product, package

design, ad campaign, or sponsorship, that uncertainty poses risks.

Robin Wight, the president of Engine and the author of *"The Peacock's Tail and the Reputation Reflex: The Neuroscience of Art Sponsorship"*, expressed his view on the subject this way:

"...If you ask people a question in a focus group research, they will answer from the front of their brain, whereas the middle of their brain makes the decision. So, that is a big challenge and difference, it is very hard to get people (to) change their mind. There is a new learning from brain science in which we understand the challenges, some ways to overcome (this) and also some new ways to measure advertising."

We listen to the brain

The brain can tell you the truth about what it experiences. But you must 'listen' to it at the split second it registers and responds to a stimulus.

At NeuroFocus we use EEG (electroencephalography) technology to measure brainwave activity across the full brain. It is the most widely-used technology in leading neuroscience laboratories worldwide - and has been for several

decades.

EEG sensors, placed around the scalp, capture the minute electrical signals that the brain inherently produces. We apply high-density arrays of them to capture brain activity at up to 2,000 times a second per sensor. Combined with sophisticated eye-tracking technology, these measurements deliver the most comprehensive and temporally-accurate picture of how the

brain responded to anything that the five senses experience.

The sheer volume of data collected is massive. A typical neuromarketing study of a 30-second TV advert will encompass 5 billion data points; and the computational processing power that we employ to cleanse, process, and analyse that ocean of information will total 40 billion data points.

Fading tickers and flaming backgrounds

A study we did for ESPN shows how neuromarketing can cut through the complexities of corporate sponsorships and pinpoint which specific elements are most effective.

The cable TV sports network tasked us with discovering how effective the on-air sponsorships of two different car companies were for a basketball game

telecast, in both a pre-game environment and during the actual game itself. It also wanted, for comparative reasons, to know how well sponsorships for two other companies performed on a competitive cable network, during another basketball game.

Each of nine sponsorship elements were tested and analysed across all seven of

NeuroFocus' NeuroMetrics. The combined Primary scores gave us at an overall Effectiveness number, and we also derived three additional metrics from them: Marketplace Performance Indicators of Purchase (or viewing) Intent, Novelty, and Awareness.

During the pre-game segment, measurements were made of nine specific

on-screen executions on ESPN where the sponsor's name and/or logo were presented during the program. A total of seven separate executions were measured on the competing cablecaster's program.

We compiled an overall assessment of the successes and 'missed opportunities' for each of these program sponsorship elements, and delivered a final summary of evaluations and recommendations for both

the pre-game and half-time programs. To show just how specific those recommendations can be, the following are a sample:

ESPN	Competitive Cable Channel
Alter the lighting around the sponsor's name and reduce the flame/smoke to avoid the subconscious 'visual masking' effect.	Separate the sponsor's logo by shifting it to the left, while moving the semantic content to the right—the brain prefers this visual layout.
Render the sponsor's name in the ticker title in pop-out format.	Revise the number of visual elements associated with the sponsor's name and the show title from 5-6 to just 2, to improve subconscious perception.
Reduce the static logos on the desk front to just two.	Align more of the audio intro with the video to improve audio-visual synchrony, which the brain seeks and expects.
Change the color of the sponsor's name in text for the pop-out effect.	Reduce the speed of the animation for the sponsor's logo.
Avoid multiple moving elements as they create a subconscious 'change blindness' effect, causing the sponsor's logo to be ignored.	Insert vertical separation between the sponsor's title and the scores.
Add rotating/whirling animation to the sponsor's logo on the desk front.	Occlude the sponsor's logo in the background slightly to improve subconscious effectiveness.
Reduce the number of animated monitors to one set, and eliminate the constant motion on the rear monitors to prevent 'repetition blindness'.	

Value Delivered

Clearly, attempting to capture viewers' split-second responses to each of these sponsorship elements after the fact, through surveys or focus groups, would be an exercise in futility—if not a direct road to a nervous breakdown for the poor researcher.

In contrast, neurological testing (our

preferred phrase for neuromarketing) captured those precise responses at literally the instant that viewers' brains were reacting to the stimuli, in such depth and detail as to make the results truly illuminating.

For ESPN, the ability to document to its advertisers the varying degrees of effectiveness of different on-air

sponsorship executions delivered a unique competitive advantage. For advertisers, this ability to measure a matrix of sponsorship applications provides greater understanding of the effectiveness of each element and the sponsorship as a whole and greater control over and accountability for sponsorship outlays.

Neuromarketing and ambush marketing

A vexing problem – or an opportunity, depending on which side of the issue you're on – is so-called 'ambush marketing'. How effective is it for companies who practice it? How damaging is it to companies who are authorised sponsors?

Neuromarketing is ideally and uniquely suited to tease out accurate answers, because consumers' responses are captured at the early precognitive stage, before the answers they give to

conventional forms of marketing research are distorted by factors such as education, language, ethnic and cultural influences, and more. As the London Olympics approach, ambush marketing is an issue at the forefront for sponsors and non-sponsors alike.

Neurological testing can decipher the degree to which consumers identify, at the deep subconscious level, a brand with an event. The same sophisticated

methodologies can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of a celebrity spokesperson, or the relative effectiveness of sponsorship messaging across multiple media platforms – a core aspect of many modern sponsorship programs.

To explore those aspects, we conducted internal studies on sponsorships for both the Beijing and the Vancouver Olympic Games.

For Beijing's summer Games we wanted to learn:

Which specific sponsor brand attributes did viewers associate with the Olympics overall?

How effective – or not – were specific sponsor and non-sponsor adverts that aired within the Games? Were these adverts primed by the Olympics content?

Did adverts featuring Olympic-specific creative content fare better with viewers than non-Olympic-themed executions? Or vice versa?

For the Vancouver Games we sought to discover:

How effective was Visa's corporate sponsorship, executed across three different platforms: traditional TV, the Internet (website), and social media (Facebook page)?

How effective was the celebrity voice-over for the campaign?

How well were key marketing messages and core brand attributes conveyed across these multiple platforms?

The results of these studies provided a deep dive into the core dynamics of major sponsorships, for different categories of client companies, in different mediums, with different individual elements.

Conventional research methods cannot

define sponsorship effectiveness in this manner, with this accuracy. They leave unanswered questions. Neuromarketing, by contrast, gets to the heart of a sponsorship because it measures what people don't say. And why would a sponsor want

anything less?

Daphne Mavroudi-Chocholi

Senior director of client services at NeuroFocus Europe, a Nielsen Company

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Success = longevity?

As Budweiser celebrates its new partnership with the FA Cup, we asked Roger Titford what makes for an effective English football competition sponsorship.



When the question of sponsorship of English football competitions is raised the first names that come to my mind are the Watney Cup and the Texaco Cup. Not only does this show my age (in recalling short-lived tournaments from the 1970s) but more significantly the importance of the sponsor's originality, empathy and trophy.

These two competitions were additions to the football calendar, unique in design and had 'fit' with the sponsors' product: beers for cheers for high goal-scoring and petrol for the long mileage required by an Anglo-Scottish tournament. They did not last more than a few years because they were too much of an additional burden on the fixture list and they had little or no TV support.

For examples of true longevity in competition sponsorship one could do worse than look at senior non-League football. Back in the days of amateurism these leagues bore a remote, classical imprint – the Isthmian, the Athenian, the Delphian. Now the sponsoring brands tie in far more closely with the working lives of the players and supporters: Jewsons, Rymans, Toolstation, Unibond etc. Rymans' (a retail stationer) has a sponsorship involvement for 14 years whilst Unibond (a DIY brand) recently ceased a record 16 year involvement with the Northern Premier League. Their place was immediately taken by Evostik, their direct rival in several product fields. This type of 'vampire' sponsorship, following on from a direct competitor, is not unique with Autoglass and Auto Windscreens both sponsoring what was the Associate Members Cup. That competition has also been sponsored by LDV Vans, Leyland DAF, Sherpa Van and Freight Rover, all successor names from the same company.

From a consumer perspective these switches of branding will almost inevitably be confusing. But at this lower level of football competition the benefits of sponsorship are more about generic status-building and developing trade relationships through hospitality.

At the higher level, the bigger five English competitions, if you like, sponsors will expect more direct engagement with their brand. As an alert reader may already have picked up I am approaching this topic more from the perspective of a life-long football fan than from a career-long marketing man,

though professionally I have been involved in a number of sponsorship decisions.

In assessing the longevity effect of sponsorship, and in place of extensive research, I set myself the task of spontaneously recalling all the sponsors of Football League, the Football League Cup, the Premier League, the FA Cup and the Conference since 1982, a not unreasonable task for a one-time member of the Association of Football Statisticians!



I got most of them but fewer than I thought I would. The ones that tended to pass me by were shorter-lived sponsorships (less than 5 years) by UK brands in the middle-distant past: the Worthington League Cup, the Endsleigh League, the FA Cup sponsored by Littlewoods. Four years was the most common length of deal, accounting for six of the 21 deals. Four years is also now the length of the cycle of the TV deals that underlie the finances of so much of the game. Another five sponsorships lasted less than four years, six carried on for five or six years and just four for seven or more years. However, for me and perhaps many others, it takes this long for the sponsor to really stick to the competition and in your mind: the Nationwide League (eight years), the Carling Cup (nine years), Barclays/ Barclaycard Premiership (ten years) and the GM Vauxhall Conference (11 years). Moreover, each of these brands has a reasonable fit with the style and status

of the competition they sponsor and more so than Coca-Cola which divided its efforts by sponsoring the League and League Cup separately for six years each.

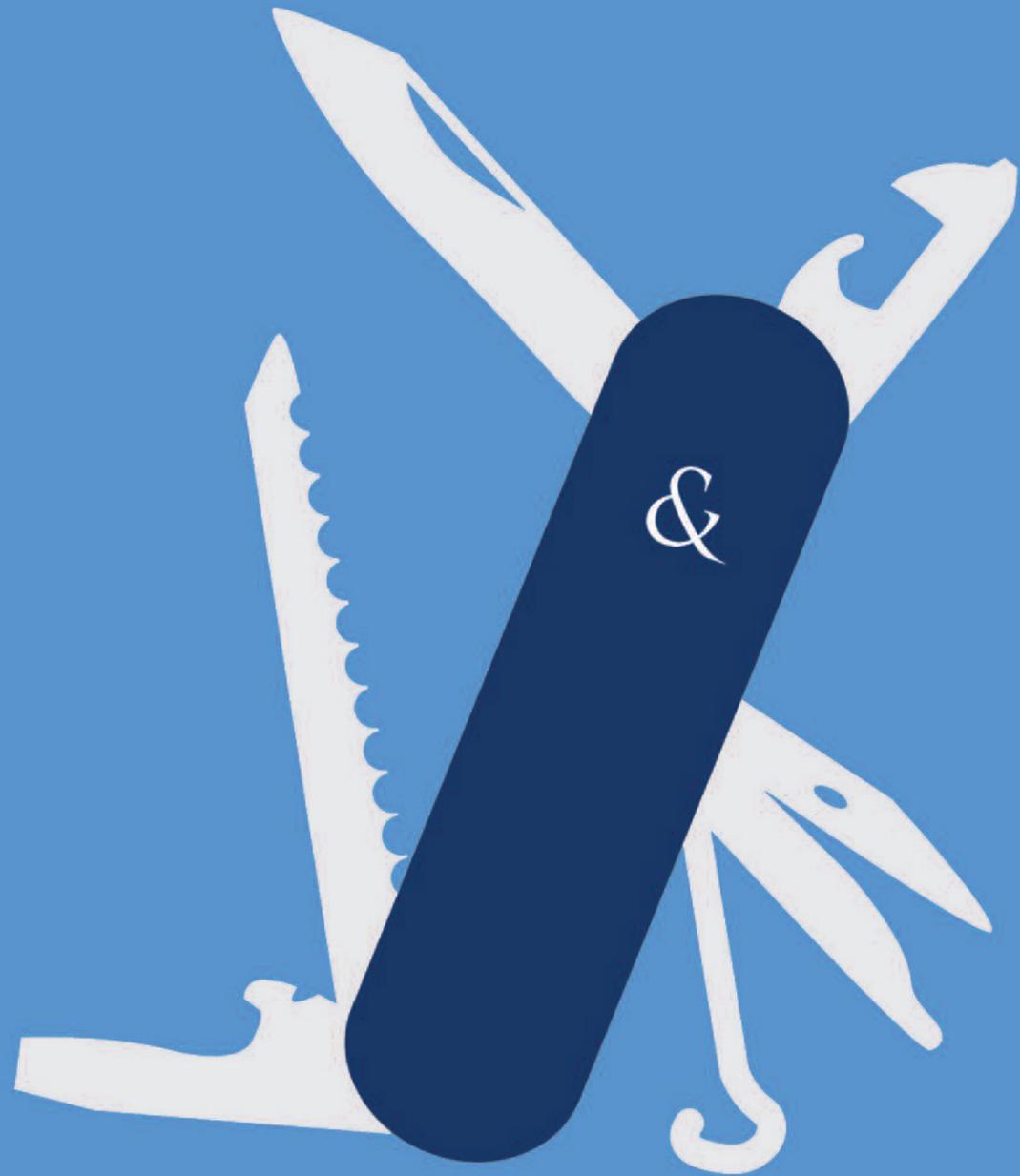
After a certain length of time marketing objectives have (or have not) been achieved and marketing people move on and the question is raised – do we continue to sponsor this event? If the sponsor is in it simply to raise status or create awareness for a new brand (Endsleigh, E-On come to mind) then a short-lived sponsorship is likely to be on the cards.

If the sponsor's chief executive is in it on a personal whim (I have known this with major shirt sponsorships) then it lasts as long as the chief lives. Elsewhere the decision to stop can be more difficult. Again on shirt sponsorships one Japanese company travelled on an increasingly expensive journey because, to stop, they felt, would mean losing face. Based on the crude analysis above I would hypothesise the relative year-by-year return diminishes after three years and only begins to rise again as you get close to ten years – rather like many executive jobs! Sponsorship of existing major English football competitions began in 1982 with the Milk Cup (League Cup). Its money has helped sustain the game through years of lean and fat. What it has done for its sponsors in return is harder to judge. All but two (Today newspaper, Rumbelows stores) are still in business, which is a start. It has added to the status and profile of sponsoring brands and doubtless acted as an important business lubricant. Where it has connected with fans as consumers I am rather less sure.

As both a season ticket holder at my club and a Barclays and Nationwide customer I would have imagined some benefit might have inevitably come my way over the last decade or so – but no. As a nPower customer I now have a convoluted opportunity to acquire a voucher worth £45 to acquire a shirt with another sponsor's name on it. But no-one seems to be offering me the real deal – extra football – as Watneys and Texaco once did.

Roger Titford

Senior qualitative research partner at Further Thought



Farrer & Co specialise in providing all aspects of sponsorship advice and work with organisations in the sports, museums & galleries, charities, media and private banking sectors.

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www.farrer.co.uk

Global slant

If the average term of an English soccer sponsorship is just four years, we asked William Fenton of The World Sponsorship Monitor, what do models look like on the international stage?

TWISM
THE WORLD SPONSORSHIP MONITOR

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IFM Sports Marketing Surveys
quality research for management action

Research from The World Sponsorship Monitor (TWISM), published by IFM Sports Marketing Surveys, backs up Roger Titford's findings that average soccer sponsorships are of four years duration. When looking at 1,135 new deals reported around the world in the last five years TWISM found an average of 3.75 years.

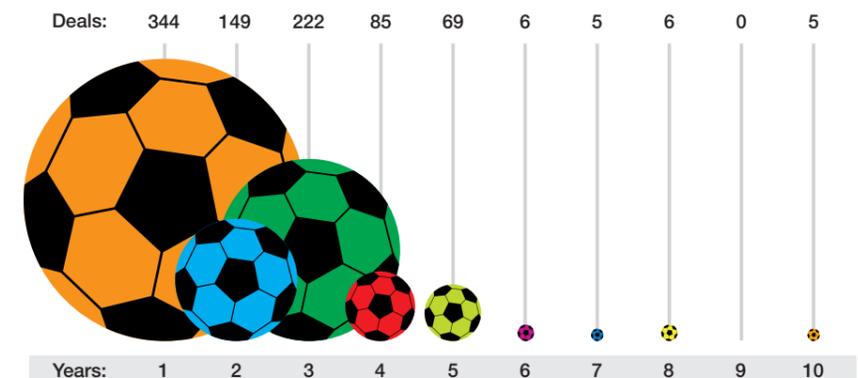
Clearly most sponsors prefer to commit to a year, perhaps with an option to renew, but a good proportion do have the confidence to invest for three years expecting a better return by building up the sponsorship over time.

There are no great differences between the UK and the rest of the world either as the profile of the columns in the two charts shows except that the proportion of 3 year deals is higher in the UK.

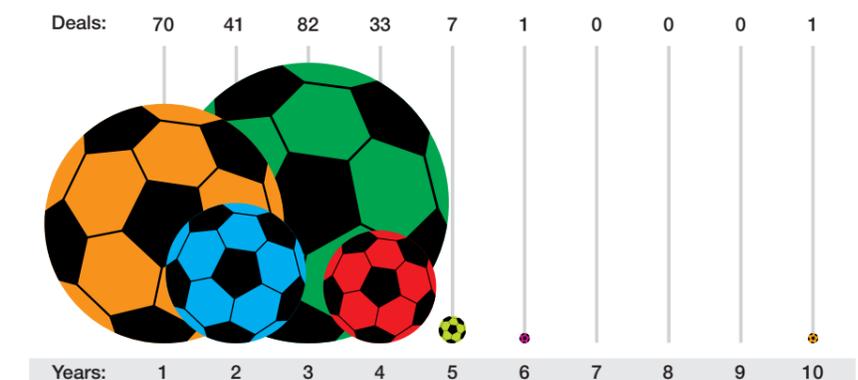
Roger Titford's thoughts on the type of sponsors in UK soccer are backed by an analysis of the top 20 industries choosing to enter into soccer sponsorship over the last five years. Gambling sponsors have been especially active during this period with beer and soccer proving an enduring synergy.

www.theworldsponsorshipmonitor.com

Soccer Worldwide 2005 – 2011
Reported Numbers by Duration of Deals



Soccer UK 2005 – 2011
Reported Numbers by Duration of Deals



Top 20 Industries Choosing Football Sponsorships Since 2006

Clothing (Sports)	47	Energy/Power/Gas/Electricity	8
Gambling/Lottery	32	Financial Services (Insurance)	7
Drinks (Beer)	20	Information Technology	7
Drinks (Soft Drinks)	15	Couriers/Freight	6
Cars/Automotive	14	Construction	4
Airlines	13	Drinks (Mineral Water)	4
Financial Services (Other)	11	Financial Services (Banking)	4
Retail Stores	11	Government Authority	4
Agency/Consultancy	10	Telecommunications	4
Travel	10	Watches/Timing	4



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People on the up

Each issue we hope to feature a short interview with an individual who is making - or has made - their mark on the world of sponsorship. We kick off with the Tate's deputy head of corporate development: Ilona Harris.

Ilona and her team are responsible for raising revenue from the corporate sector and she stewards a team of account managers in the successful delivery of sponsorship and membership at Tate. Her nine years in arts sponsorship began at English National Opera before moving to the Royal Opera House.

Biggest headache?

The speed of the economic downturn.

Highlight to date?

O2 sponsored English National Opera in 2004 and, as part of that, sponsored the company performing 'Ride of the Valkyries' at Glastonbury. One hundred musicians and a cast of singers descended into muddy Pilton early on Sunday morning. We were on at 11am and were following the Pilton town band: in short, not the prime time festival slot.

None of us knew what to expect but were all blown away when over 50,000 people turned out to see us, some wearing ball gowns and DJs, many with champagne bottles and flutes. The most unusual thing was the quiet. Glastonbury audiences, usually seen singing at the top of their lungs, jumping around and playing crowd catch with giant inflatables, were pin drop silent, listening, watching and totally into the opera on stage.

To mention two others: the Deloitte Ignite festival at the Royal Opera House (still going on every September, free tickets available direct from the ROH). This was the first time the ROH and Deloitte had done something like this - a takeover of the theatre with weird, wonderful and always

interesting things - performance, film, comedy, installation all sorts. It was amazing to see thousands of people treat the theatre as their own and get to see it from top to bottom. Working on that project was a real pleasure and working with the ROH2 team who produced it, a real privilege.

Finally the Tate Movie Project at Tate, supported by BP. This project has been running for the past two years, and was my first sponsorship project when I joined. The project aim was to have kids work with Aardman animation to create an animated film: every scene, character and prop in the film drawn by kids. BP, with a 20 year history of support for Tate, got involved and from there the project took off. One of the many great moments was the premiere with some of the kids who contributed. When Andy Akinwolere from Blue Peter called out their names, they went what can only be described as a bit mental.

Music vs visual art?

Without intending to sound trite, I do think that all art is a sort of stimulus and each is not only desirable but necessary.

Twitter vs LinkedIn vs Facebook?

I'm a limited user of social networks but on the whole I use Facebook for friends, LinkedIn for professional purposes while Twitter is for people with too much time on their hands.

iPhone vs BlackBerry?

I'm more a BlackBerry person but could be a late adopter. Either way, I think there's no substitute for talking to people so anything that promotes more direct contact, either on the phone or in person, would get my vote.

Worst moment?

Realising I had six tickets for a group of ten, five minutes before they showed up. This was at the Royal Opera House and I was looking after a corporate group. It was a sold-out show and for a second my heart did actually stop. When it re-started, this did become possibly the best moment, roping in colleagues to hunt down ANY spare tickets and by the time the curtain went up, actually having the client not only seated but in the seats they should have had in the first place, with them being none the wiser. It confirms that a bit of charm and a bottle of champagne can go a long way.

Dress-up style?

Probably more for others to comment, but I would say slightly 50s and, of course, given the industry I work in, a little bit arty.

Dress-down style?

Ubiquitous jeans and t-shirt.

What don't you leave home without?

My keys.

Essentials for a desert isle?

If I can't take people, which would mean I was on holiday rather than a castaway, I would say music, so I could hear the voices of others, and limitless paper and pens to maybe write the book everyone says we all have in us.

You will die happy if...?

I'd said yes more often than I'd said no.

Done deals

Our quick and easy guide to who's doing what to who in the rights market.

ENDORSEMENT

HI-TEC Sports signs world no.1 squash player Nick Matthew

Length of deal: Long term
Type of deal: Endorsement
Rights holder: Nick Matthew
Sponsor: HI-TEC
Sector: Squash
Sponsor industry: Sports clothing and footwear brand



Manchester City's Aguero signs Puma deal

Type of deal: Endorsement
Rights holder: Sergio Aguero
Sponsor: Puma
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Sports clothing and footwear brand

BADMINTON

Lebara Mobile strengthens badminton ties ahead of Yonex BWF World Badminton Championships, London 2011

Length of deal: 1 event
Type of deal: Official mobile network partner
Rights holder: World Badminton Championships
Sponsor: Lebara Mobile
Sector: Badminton
Sponsor industry: Mobile phone service provider

Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Champagne to toast on court success at the Yonex BWF World Championship, London 2011

Length of deal: 1 event
Type of deal: Official champagne supplier
Rights holder: World Badminton Championships
Sponsor: Heidsieck & Co. Monopole
Sector: Champagne
Sponsor industry: Alcoholic beverages

Redbull signs up to give Badminton Wings

Length of deal: 1 event
Type of deal: Official supplier
Rights holder: World Badminton Championships
Sponsor: Red Bull
Sector: Badminton
Sponsor industry: Energy drinks

Citroën to drive badminton in England

Length of deal: 2 major championships
Type of deal: Official car partner
Rights holder: World Badminton Championships
Sponsor: Citroën
Sector: Badminton
Sponsor industry: Automobile manufacturer

EVENT

Body in Balance announces sponsorship of The Yoga Show and the Good Health Show

Length of deal: 28 – 30 October 2011
Type of deal: Official event sponsor
Rights holder: The Yoga and Good Health Show
Sponsor: Body Balance
Sector: Health and fitness
Sponsor industry: Fitness, health and wellness programming

SAILING

World Match Racing Tour agrees exclusive partnership with Garrard

Length of deal: 3 years
Type of deal: Official jeweller of the Tour
Rights holder: World Match Racing Tour
Sponsor: Garrard
Sector: Sailing
Sponsor industry: Jewellery makers

TENNIS

Highland Spring unveiled as new sponsor for LTA Mini Tennis

Type of deal: Extension – Official water supplier
Rights holder: Lawn Tennis Association
Sponsor: Highland Spring
Sector: Tennis
Sponsor industry: Mineral water distributor

ATHLETICS

Glasgow 2014 signs first sponsor

Length of deal: 3 years
Type of deal: Official law firm for the games
Rights holder: Glasgow 2014
Sponsor: Harper Macleod
Sector: Athletics
Sponsor industry: Legal firm



Spar extends athletics sponsorship deal

Length of deal: 4 years
Type of deal: Main sponsor
Rights holder: European Athletics
Sponsor: Spar
Sector: Athletics
Sponsor industry: Supermarket

RUGBY

Alan Day and Saracens rugby club announce partnership

Length of deal: 1 year
Type of deal: Motoring partnership
Rights holder: Saracens
Sponsor: Alan Day
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Automobile retailer

QBE announces Glasgow Warriors

Sponsorship
Length of deal: 1 year
Type of deal: Official insurance partner
Rights holder: Glasgow Warriors
Sponsor: QBE
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Business insurance

Wales Rugby League new sponsorship deal

Length of deal: 3 years
Type of deal: Official partnership
Rights holder: Wales Rugby League
Sponsor: Town & Country
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Commercial media

Elite Insurance adds firepower to Saracens

Type of deal: Official shirt sponsor
Rights holder: Saracens
Sponsor: Elite Insurance
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Insurance

Plusnet to sponsor rugby league Four Nations

Length of deal: 1 season
Type of deal: Official sponsor
Rights holder: Four Nations Rugby
Sponsor: Plusnet
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Broadband provider

Ulster Rugby signs exclusive agreement with Air Charter Service

Length of deal: 1 season
Type of deal: Official travel partner
Rights holder: Ulster Rugby
Sponsor: Air Charter Service
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Aviation company



HSBC sponsors Hong Kong rugby teams

Length of deal: 1 season
Type of deal: Principle and co-title sponsor for the season
Rights holder: Hong Kong Rugby Football Union
Sponsor: HSBC
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Banking and investment

Swalec continues to power up grassroots rugby

Length of deal: 4 years
Type of deal: Extension
Rights holder: Welsh Rugby Union
Sponsor: Swalec
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Energy company

SSE joins RFU in three-year deal

Length of deal: 3 years
Type of deal: National community partner
Rights holder: Rugby Football Union
Sponsor: SSE
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Energy company

O2 extends Ireland rugby sponsorship

Length of deal: 5 years
Type of deal: Shirt sponsorship
Rights holder: Irish Rugby Football Union
Sponsor: O2
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Telecommunications



LV= announces four year sponsorship of LV= Cup

Length of deal: 4 years
Type of deal: Title sponsorship
Rights holder: Rugby Football Union
Sponsor: LV=
Sector: Rugby
Sponsor industry: Insurance, retirement and investment funds

HORSERACING

Cheltenham Gold Cup switches to Betfred

Length of deal: 1 year
Type of deal: Naming rights
Rights holder: Cheltenham Gold Cup
Sponsor: Betfred
Sector: Horseracing
Sponsor industry: Online gambling

HOCKEY

Investec brings prize money to Women's Hockey League as part of new sponsorship deal

Length of deal: 1 season
Type of deal: Six-figure deal
Rights holder: Women's Hockey League
Sponsor: Investec
Sector: Hockey
Sponsor industry: Finance & asset management

Investec to sponsor British Women's

Hockey teams
Length of deal: 5 years
Type of deal: Capital investment
Rights holder: England and Great Britain Women's Hockey teams
Sponsor: Investec
Sector: Hockey
Sponsor industry: Finance and asset management

WRESTLING



Cage Rage UK announces new sponsor

Length of deal: 1 event
Type of deal: Headline sponsorship
Rights holder: Cage Rage UK
Sponsor: MMA Sports Nutrition
Sector: Wrestling
Sponsor industry: Sports nutrition

FOOTBALL

AirAsia is the official partner of QPR

Type of deal: Official club partner
Rights holder: Queens Park Rangers
Sponsor: AirAsia
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Airliner

Best Buy becomes latest Everton sponsor

Type of deal: Official technology partner
Rights holder: Everton Football Club
Sponsor: Best Buy
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Electricals retailer

Arsenal FC and Bettson Online Gambling Sign Sponsorship Deal

Length of deal: 3 years
Type of deal: Official betting partner
Rights holder: Arsenal FC
Sponsor: Bettson
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Online gambling

Fulham FC scores first solar energy sponsor

Length of deal: 2 years
Type of deal: Official solar energy sponsor
Rights holder: Fulham FC
Sponsor: Canadian Solar
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Solar energy company

William Hill becomes new sponsor of the Scottish Cup

Length of deal: 3 years
Type of deal: Title partnership
Rights holder: Scottish Cup
Sponsor: William Hill
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Gambling



DHL delivers for Manchester United on the training pitch

Length of deal: 4 years
Type of deal: Official training kit sponsor
Rights holder: Manchester United
Sponsor: DHL
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Global express delivery

Lucozade earns another international call-up

Length of deal: 4 years
Type of deal: Official drinks supplier
Rights holder: The FA
Sponsor: Lucozade
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Energy drinks

Fulham Football Club and EA Sports form partnership

Length of deal: 2 years
Type of deal: Official video game partner
Rights holder: Fulham FC
Sponsor: EA Sports
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Video games

Manchester City FC agrees betting partnership deal with Mansion Group

Length of deal: 2 seasons
Type of deal: International betting partner
Rights holder: Manchester City FC
Sponsor: Mansion Group
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Gambling

Lotus and Norwich unite

Length of deal: 5 years
Type of deal: Seven figure sponsorship
Rights holder: Norwich FC
Sponsor: Lotus
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Automobile manufacturer

Blues announce EZE Group Partnership

Length of deal: 1 season
Type of deal: Official entertainment, travel and leisure partner
Rights holder: Birmingham City FC
Sponsor: EZE Group
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Travel and leisure

Citroën extends Arsenal FC sponsorship

Length of deal: 3 years
Type of deal: Official automotive partner
Rights holder: Arsenal FC
Sponsor: Citroën
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Automobile manufacturer

Flybe kick starts two-year sponsorship deal with Newquay AFC

Length of deal: 2 years
Type of deal: Official shirt sponsor
Rights holder: Newquay AFC
Sponsor: Flybe
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Airliner

Blackburn Rovers announces shirt sponsorship deal with Prince's Trust charity

Length of deal: 1 season
Type of deal: Official shirt sponsor
Rights holder: Blackburn Rovers
Sponsor: The Prince's Trust
Sector: Football
Sponsor industry: Charity

ICE HOCKEY

Sponsorship boost for Elite League

Length of deal: 1 year
Type of deal: Official legal partner
Rights holder: Elite League
Sponsor: RAPID Solicitors
Sector: Ice hockey
Sponsor industry: Legal firm

MOTORSPORT



Red Bull extends Renault engine deal for five years

Length of deal: 5 years
Type of deal: Extension
Rights holder: Renault
Sponsor: Red Bull
Sector: Motorsport
Sponsor industry: Energy drinks

Renault Sport UK announces Certina Deal

Length of deal: 2 years
Type of deal: Official timing and watch partner
Rights holder: Renault
Sponsor: Certina
Sector: Motorsport
Sponsor industry: Swiss watchmaker

AWARDS

Asahi Beer to sponsor the Whatsonstage.com Awards

Length of deal: 1 event
Type of deal: Awards sponsor
Rights holder: Whatsonstage.com Awards
Sponsor: Asahi Beer
Sector: Awards
Sponsor industry: Alcoholic beverages

Castrol EDGE partners with Autosport Awards

Type of deal: Title sponsorship
Rights holder: Autosport Awards
Sponsor: Castrol Edge
Sector: Motorsport
Sponsor industry: Oil and automobile lubricants

CYCLING

Skoda gears up for the Tour of Britain

Length of deal: 1 year
Type of deal: Official car partner
Rights holder: Tour of Britain
Sponsor: Skoda
Sector: Cycling
Sponsor industry: Automobile manufacturer

BROADCAST

Sony Pictures signs two-year exclusive sponsorship deal with Cartoon Network

Length of deal: 2 years
Type of deal: Sole theatrical partner
Rights holder: Cartoon Network
Sponsor: Sony
Sector: Broadcast
Sponsor industry: Consumer electronics

CHARITY

Outdoor lifestyle brand Merrell extends partnership portfolio

Length of deal: 1 year
Type of deal: Extension
Rights holder: Breakthrough Breast Cancer
Sponsor: Merrell
Sector: Charity
Sponsor industry: Outdoor lifestyle brand

CRICKET

Chorley Cricket Club bags alternative hat-trick

Type of deal: Not disclosed
Rights holder: Chorley Cricket Club
Sponsor: Chorley Building Society
Sector: Cricket
Sponsor industry: Banking

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Thoughts of the day...



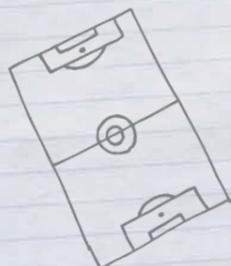
As an agent I have been asked for many things in my time, but to seek a sponsor for a dwarf-throwing contest is a new one for me. Still, building on the notoriety of a certain episode in a Queenstown bar, there are moves afoot to go for a higher profile for the 'sport'.

Now, political incorrectness aside, I can envisage a few problems. Throwing dwarfs is illegal in quite a few countries, the insurance for setting up a contest can be high, too, and what brand is going to want to put its name alongside? No, scrub that, maybe I'm being too pessimistic. I can actually think of quite a few alcoholic beverages which might be prepared to take a punt.

Then, I suppose, it's a case of managing expectations. You know the scenario: the rights holder gets a taste for notoriety and success and thinks it can ask for a king's ransom. Well, they say, the dwarf-throwing team in the Premiership gets £m, let's go for £500,000 in the Championship.

But life's never that simple: a sponsor might ask for a whole heap of conditions to be met. Branded colour-co-ordinated protective clothing, tie-ins with Lord of the Rings, merchandising ready for the Christmas sales rush, perimeter board advertising, rounds at breakfast to cope with broadcaster demands (and who wants to imbibe that early?) might just be there for starters.

So maybe the solution is to seek alternatives, ones that might be more appealing to sponsors. I'm sure the anti-pc brigade could help. Let's go for a top ten list of politically incorrect sports. Who might be a taker for:



1. A 50-metre dash balancing tray of cocktails on boobs
2. Female televised mud wrestling by weight
3. Squash with surgically enhanced penises
4. Nude unicycle racing
5. Parliamentary women's football team
6. Limbo competition for giants
7. Head shrinking competition
8. Granny land speed record
9. Grandpa electric buggy F1 competition
10. Naked boob sleigh



Spot the deliberate mistake here: the Parliamentary women's football is currently under discussion. Finding a sponsor for that should be a doddle. But as for the rest? Let's think vertically here. A bra manufacturer for number one, and maybe Weight Watchers for number two? After all, I'm sure it could be a good calorie burner. Not sure about number three, but there again could be a natural for a cosmetic surgery clinic. And as for nude unicycle racing, why not a bicycle company or a naturist magazine? Number five has already been dealt with, but kit by members' favourite tippie might be an option. Duck house manufacturers and porn channels could be on the cards, too.

Now, limbo: that's easy. Look no further than a certain tinned sweetcorn brand. Head shrinking? Well, Simon Cowell might be up for linking the X Factor with it. He could even be a candidate to appear. The Granny and Grandpa contests? These are already taking place on our roads today. Just yesterday I was nearly mown down by one coming out of a subway. So maybe one of those 'no win - no fee' lawyers. And as for the naked boob sleigh, let your imagination run rife.

Strangely, us Brits tend to be pretty cautious when creating competitions or setting up teams. More's the pity. Imagine the creativity needed to team up sponsor with rights holder in some of these.

In the US, by contrast, their past is catching up with them. Teams whose names were previously taken for granted are now having a rethink. Teams like Cleveland Indians, Washington Redskins, Tampa Bay Devil Rays, Washington Bullets, Atlanta Braves, Chicago Blackhawks, and the Kansas City Chiefs. Doesn't take a genius to spot a theme, here.

So let's drink a toast to Mike Tindall. At least he's providing a bit of variety to a jaded sponsorship man.



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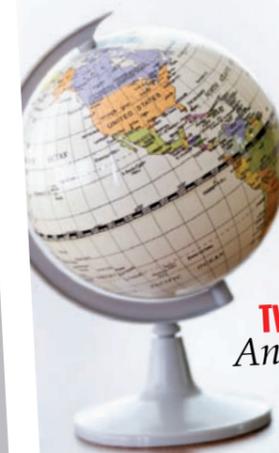
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