



ACTIVATIVE FINANCIAL SERVICES 2017

SPORTS MARKETING, SPONSORSHIP ACTIVATION & PARTNERSHIP LEVERAGE

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Welcome



worldwide sponsor

everywhere you want to be

#everywhere

Welcome to 'Financial Services': the latest in our series of category-specific sports sponsorship creative briefings.

This report identifies, explores and analyses the key strategies, tactics, themes and trends and showcases best practice campaigns and award-winning work across the finance category – from banks and insurers, to credit cards and the payments sector.

The aim is to help clients stay ahead of the evolving landscape: to broaden and deepen their understanding of how brands are responding to the challenges and leveraging the opportunities in the financial industry and to learn from some of the world's best work.

This kind of insight is increasingly vital as the financial industry's approach to sponsorship and sport has changed significantly over the last decade.

This transformation accelerated after 2008's financial crisis: when brash, bold bank sports sponsorships – like RBS' Williams F1 partnership – were axed amidst budget cuts and the sector switched to more publicly palatable alliances (often in arts, culture, education and community).



The transition is ongoing.

Consider rugby as an example: a sport traditionally associated with financial sponsorship. 2017 has seen several high profile rugby rights-holders – from the 6 Nations to the Premiership – struggle to find new headline partners. Aviva and RBS/Natwest's one-year renewals of their Premiership Rugby and 6 Nations title sponsorships are widely believed to be the result of the rights-holders failure to sign replacement partners at a mutually agreeable price/

package. Banks just aren't in the position they were in 2003 when RBS originally invested heavily in a blockbuster 6 Nations rugby partnership as a vehicle to boost brand unity after a period of rapid growth, merger and acquisition.

That's not to say the finance sector sports sponsorship mega-deals have melted away. Far from it!

After all, payments sector goliaths Visa and Mastercard (who describe themselves as 'technology' not 'financial' brands) both continue to invest heavily in flagship global sports properties. The former is both a FIFA partner and an IOC TOP partner (it's PyeongChang 2018 campaign launched at the end of October marking 100 days to the start of the Winter Olympics), while the latter is a sponsor of the IRB's Rugby World Cup and of UEFA (see p17).

While big bank brands still back a vast array of heavy-weight international properties (think global golf and bank sponsors such as HSBC and RBC) and major national rights-holders (such as Bank Of America/MLB or Barclays/Premier League), the strategies, approaches, themes and objectives are all rapidly evolving and this report's case



studies showcase some of these key trends.

It doesn't just explore brave, innovative and original activation, but also reflects the stand out work shaping the financial sector sports sponsorship space: campaigns that illustrate the category's key themes and messages, reflect its challenges and objectives and the work that is driving its evolution.

We believe you'll find plenty of ideas, insights and inspiration and look forward to December when we'll share the next series report - 'Drinks'.

Overview > Trends, Tactics & Tech



Overview

Marketers in the finance space face a significant set of challenges: from the ongoing need to rebuild trust, the continued importance of establishing numerical competence, to balancing messages about security with the younger generation's thirst for experimentation, as well as rebuffing disruption from new category fin-tech challengers and crypto currencies, and reacting to new technologies and socio-cultural change within the restraints of rigorous regulation, rigid structures, legacy systems and a category culture that fears risk.

Plus, the intersection of sports sponsorship and the finance industry is more susceptible to possible 'money-centric' brand backlash than it once was.

After all, some of the biggest global rights-holders are beset with financial scandals (think of the IOC and FIFA bribery and corruption cases), while several sports stars (from Messi to Mourinho) are mired in tax avoidance cases.

It's also important to understand that while all sports fans know they and their sports need financial services, many of them also feel that money is ruining the team they love.

Financial marketers who don't, or won't adapt and evolve to meet these challenges are surely doomed.

Numbers > Sports Can Showcase Statistical Skills

One finance category marketing messaging theme that remains a sector constant is demonstrating numerical competence and statistical skills.

It remains a key pillar of the category's sports sponsorship activation as financial partners continue to activate their rights by using sports statistics to showcase property-relevant knowledge and understanding (for

fan engagement) and generate game-relevant insights (via fan utilities) – thus illustrating their own numerical expertise.

Here banking brands often compete with the B2B sponsorship work by business and tech consultants like Accenture (think of its RBS 6 Nations match data analysis activation), Deloitte and Dimension Data (such as their live analytics apps at the Tour De France) and IBM (like its AI data 'SlamTracker' tool at the tennis grand slams).

Demonstrating numeric skills and data proficiency through meaningful sports statistics analysis, tools and campaigns remains a classic finance category sponsorship activation approach (eg Standard Chartered's Liverpool FC 'The Power Of Numbers' on p13 or Mastercard's UEFA Champions League '12th Man Report' on p17)

Values > Is The Era Of 'Trust' Ending?

The primary values-based objective for financial marketers and partnership professionals over the last decade has been re-establishing 'trust'.

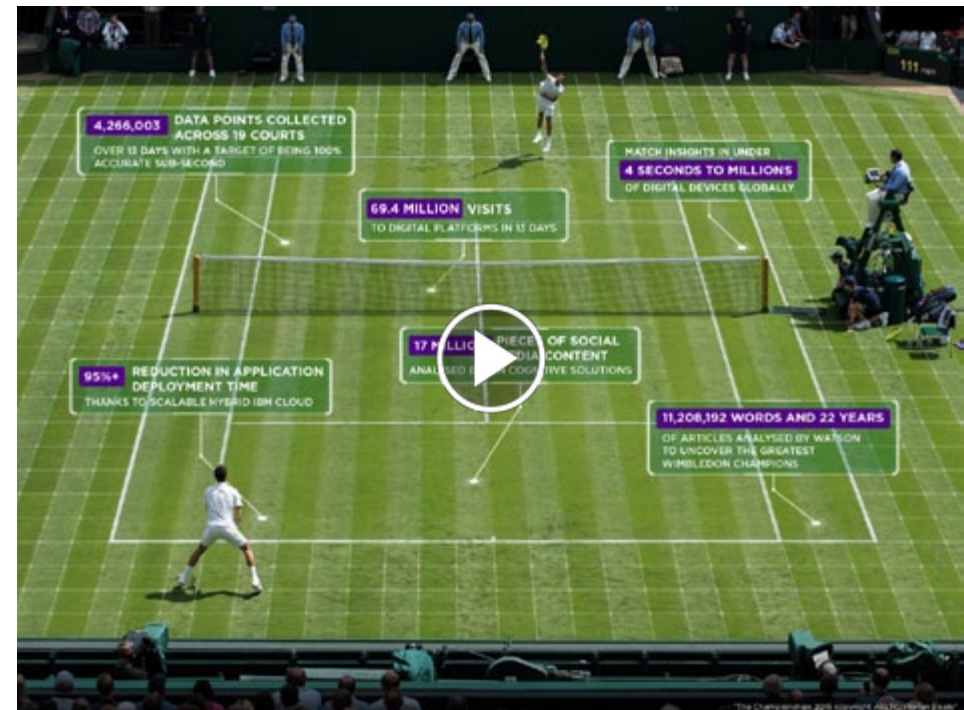
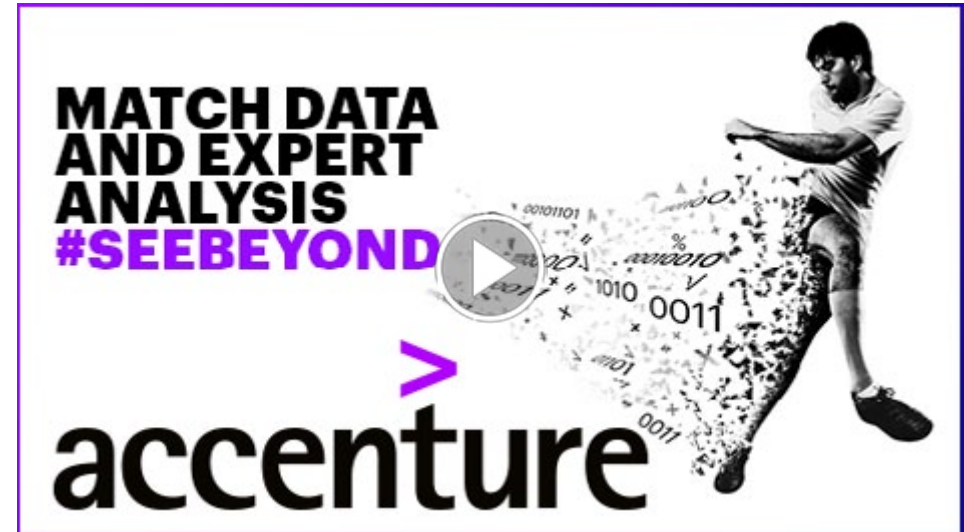
10 years on from the 2007/8 crisis, the relationship between finance brands and consumers remains largely broken and many established banking brands are still trying to rebuild consumer and societal trust.

In fact, Edelman's '2017 Trust Barometer' still shows the finance industry remains the most distrusted sector of all, while media and customer conversations are still dominated by negative perceptions of the industry.

Raising brand 'trust' metrics in the financial services sector remains notoriously difficult in so many markets.

Little surprise then that so many bank brand marketing and partnership teams remain focused on rebuilding relationships, generating positive consumer engagement and sentiment and rolling out trust messages.

Trust led activation increasingly manifests itself not simply in ad messaging, but through omni-channel, multi-touchpoint marketing across digital, mobile and traditional platforms, plus a more experiential and conversational approach to both physical branch spaces and social media initiatives.



Thank You



BARCLAYS
#YouAreFootball



There is not only more emphasis on personal engagement experiences (eg Bank of America's #MLB-MemoryBank initiative) and improving the holistic, longer-term customer journey, but also on purpose, cause, community and education commitment (eg the Visa/NFL 'Financial Football' programme on p24 or the Aviva/Premiership Rugby 'Tackling Numbers' project on p27).

Yet, despite relative North American and European economic stagnation, there are now some signs that the 'trust above all else' era is finally coming to a close?

Interestingly, in March 2016 when Barclay's title sponsorship of the Premier League was coming to a close as the 2015/16 season drew towards a climax, the bank's agency Havas Sports & Entertainment Cake said that its Premier League partnership activation approach of creating meaningful fan experiences based on the UK's 'love of football' has raised Barclays' brand trust by 28% against an objective of 10%.

Barclays, which has sponsored the Premier League since 2001, is no longer the title sponsor but does remain the banking partner of the Premier League until the end of the 2018-19 season.

Some banks clearly feel that a sense of pride is returning to their brands and are beginning to use sports sponsorships to move on from trust and diversify into other values-led activations based on issues such as community and diversity.

Examples include the 'No Boundaries' inclusivity and diversity campaign activating NatWest's new partnership with the England and Wales Cricket Board (see p30) and CommBank's new Cricket Australia work (on p34).

New Customers, NextGen & Millennial Marketing

Whether boosting bank brand sentiment through positive engagement, community education programmes, or looking beyond trust to other values-based themes like diversity, more campaigns now typically have an emphasis on the next generation and

younger demographic groups.

The perception remains that banking brands value attracting new account holders over prioritising existing, long-term loyal customers who often feel endlessly targeted by up-sell/cross-sell financial service marketing initiatives.

And yet, despite an abundance of ads for new customer offers and switch incentives, coupled with the avalanche of price comparison commercials and aggregator website campaigns, inertia and a lack of education means most people stay with their banks.

Inertia means low churn rates as existing customers are hard to shift, so financial service providers are shifting the sports marketing spotlight onto future generations and the next wave of potential customers with activations aimed at younger demographics and grass roots initiatives.

Consider the National Bank Of Australia's AFL activations like 'Mini Legends' (see p37) as a fine example.

Of course, one key segment sees bank marketing and partnership teams increasingly focused on cracking the communication codes of successfully engaging with millennials and their lifestyles.

This is a demographic segment keen on innovation for its own sake and for bank marketers this means balancing security with experimentation.

The sector is seeing a rise in activation tactics based on customization, flexibility mobile tools and utilities, data visualization, gaming and interactive content, immersive experiences and new technologies.

Interactive Content

Interactive content, particularly in the lifestyle space, is a key part of the solution when it comes to engaging with younger demographics and while many financial brands are a bit behind the curve when it comes to innovative content marketing, some are rushing to catch up.

Beyond the sports sponsorship space, for example, November 2016 saw Santander Bank launch a new content marketing strategy aimed at connecting with millennials who may be a couple of years away from applying for loans through lifestyle led digital content.

Running under its 'Prosper & Thrive' umbrella idea and hubbed at the site thehub.santanderbank.com,

dozen articles are published per month on three core topics - 'saving up', 'mastering debt' and 'living life' - and range from 'summer staycations' to 'budget weddings'.

Plenty of other bank brands are activating through interactive content – particularly with a focus on education. Finances can be complicated, so banks are teaching and educating customers and future targets through workshops, digital utilities and by curating and visualising data.

In the sports sponsorship space examples include Visa's 'Financial Football' and Aviva's 'Tackling Numbers'.

This trend stretches beyond sport too: for example, the Society of Grownups (an arm of Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company) closing its physical locations to focus on free online financial literacy courses in order to more effectively resonate with its younger audience.

These digital classes last less than half an hour and also offer free downloads, while the site also features a blog and tools to help guide financial decision-making.

There is no digital 'hard sell' linked to MassMutual either – so this is a pure content marketing play.

This trend in the finance category is also seeing a rise in innovative tech tie-ups too.

Liberty Mutual, for example, recently launched a 'Master This' joint partnership with HowStuffWorks and Amazon's Alexa to provide educational content via the voice-activated home gadget: users are able to ask Alexa to "open Liberty Mutual" and then access educational kits on topics like 'how to prepare for a hurricane' or even 'questions to ask your car mechanic'.

Immersive Experiences

Experimentation resonates with this millennial, born-digital millennial generation, so some banks are launching innovation labs and experiences spaces to showcase their future-forward efforts to the public to offer experiences and generate buzz.

America First Credit Union's 'American First Innovation Center' in Salt Lake City (Utah), for example, is designed to test new technology and get real-time consumer feedback.

This space is not a bank branch as many would recognise one: it features range from on-demand hologram conferencing with off-site experts, to real-time polling about what's important to each customer, and new teller

cash-recycler machines to test

While in the sports sponsorship space, there are plenty of immersive on-site and at-stadium examples of this experiential activation approach: such as the high-tech immersive gaming experiences offered up by American Express at the US Open (see p41) and ANZ at the Australian Open (see p44).

Mobiles & Apps

More finance category customers than ever are using mobile banking: 49% of millennials, 31% of Gen X, and 16% of baby boomers (according to the 2017 JD Power Retail Banking Survey).

Younger demographics typically favour a 'self-serve' approach to their financial affairs and this is spearheaded by financial transactions across smartphone apps: an area of explosive growth as mobile banking overtakes branches and desktops as the most popular way to pay, bank, insure and invest.

Bank of America recently deployed 3,800 'digital ambassadors' to its branches to help customers to make the most of the bank's online and mobile services through 'in-person digital demonstrations' and 'mobile app hand-holding' and to generally put a human face onto a digital and mobile experience.

The sports sponsorship space is awash with examples of mobile and app-based activations aimed at engaging younger customers: such as Mastercard's Australian Open 'Tap Tennis' mobile gaming initiative.

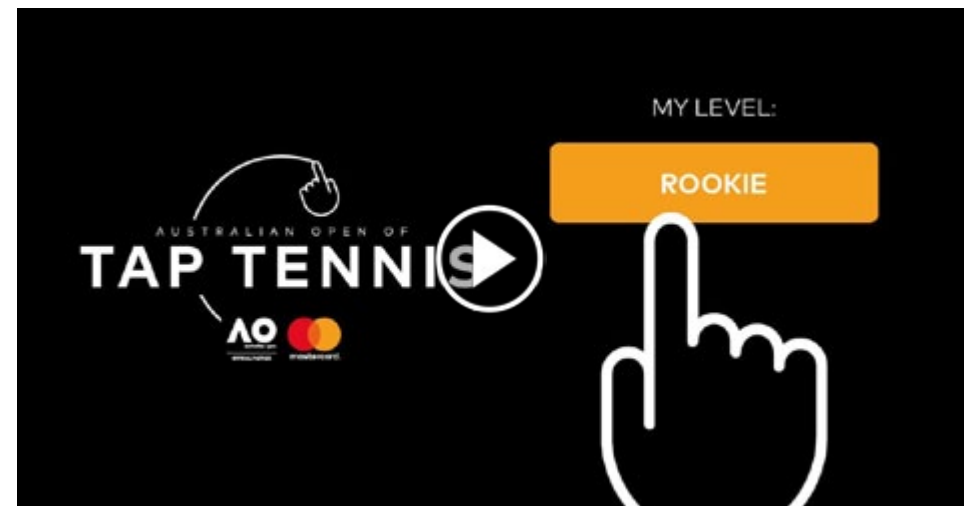
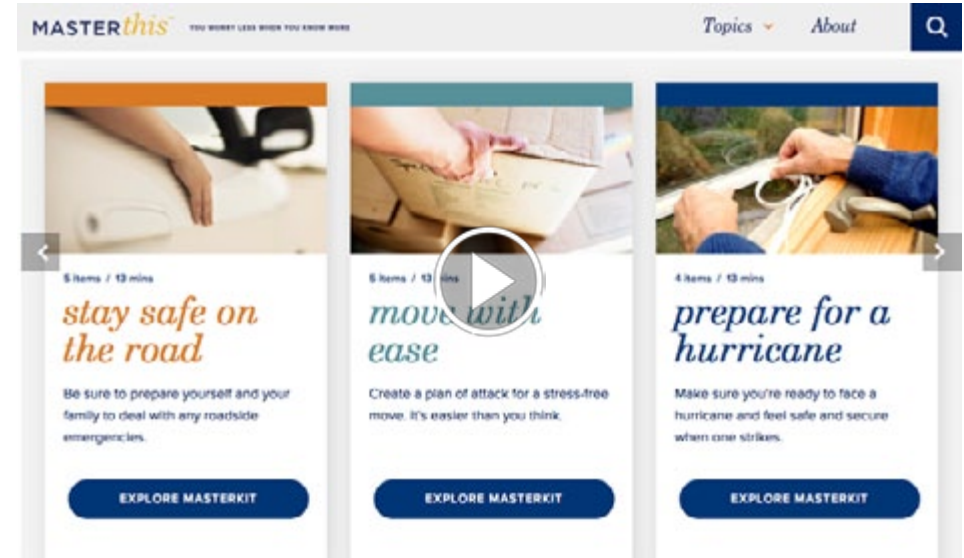
Leading Edge New Tech

A range of new technologies (like biometric logins, mobile alerts, AI and bots) and new competitors (such as fin-tech start-ups, digital share dealers, Bitcoin and Blockchain) are entering a financial sector that is ripe for disruption.

Indeed, in some markets like the UK, governments are actively encouraging new, challenger entrants (such as Atom and Modem), so incumbents must evolve or die.

Little surprise then that financial brands are experimenting with leading edge technologies in their sports sponsorship activation/.

2015/6 saw an avalanche of leading edge virtual reality activations rights across the marketing landscape







and the financial sports sponsorship space was no different.

Early-mover, stand-out examples of this trend range from AIG's Rugby World Cup 'Haka 360' activation around its All Blacks partnership, Visa's NFL VR work ranging from activating around the 'Draft' to leveraging team alliances like those with the New England Patriots and Bank Of America via 'Travel Inside The Game', to its work with 'Chicago Bears' and the award winning Standard Chartered 'Anfield 360' campaign.

In 2017 such experimental activations evolved from virtual reality to augmented reality with initiatives such as Mastercard's 2017 MLB World Series 'SU2C AR App Message'.

Plus there are an increasing number of activations revolving around artificial intelligence, bots and drones: one notable example of the latter from 2017 was Standard Life Investments 'Drone Kick' strand of its British & Irish Lions campaign.



Best Practice Case Studies

**FINANCIAL
FOOTBALL**

VISA



'The Power Of Numbers' Standard Chartered Liverpool FC

Standard Chartered's digital/social campaign commemorating the 125th anniversary of Liverpool Football Club is a classic 'numbers-themed' finance brand sports activation called 'The Power Of Numbers'. To commemorate Liverpool FC's 125th anniversary, Standard Chartered, the principle club sponsor whose logo adorns the men's team shirts, is rolling out a season-long, content-led campaign highlighting a series of significant numbers in the club's history. At its core, this activation is a season-long celebration that takes Liverpool fans on a journey through the numbers that 'make the club so special'.



The activation aims to help supporters understand the meaning behind the significant numbers in Reds history and showcase the shared values of LFC and Standard Chartered.

'The Power of Numbers', conceptualised by agency Octagon's APAC team and produced by Milkmoney, debuted in August 2017 with a series of short films and supporting set of digital/social content. Fronted by club legends and current stars.

The hero film features current manager Jürgen Klopp, Liverpool icon Steven Gerrard, legendary striker Ian Rush and other current first team players and former stars exploring which club-relevant numbers are important to them.

Other films include a Gerrard-led 'Number 8' captaincy video, a 'Number 90' film on game changers and 'Number 1' spot on record breakers.

"Having set a high bar last season with Inside Anfield - SCB's award winning virtual reality tour of the legendary stadium on game day - we knew we had to follow up with something even more emotionally engaging for fans. And at the same time ensure the bank was playing a relevant and complementary role," explains Aykan Azar, managing director SEA/Japan, Octagon.

"A keen understanding of - and appreciation for - the power of numbers is crucial for both football clubs and banks, so the concept was one we instantly knew would resonate with fans and customers alike"

Karen Fawcett, group head of brand & marketing at Standard Chartered said: "Liverpool FC have had some phenomenal players and moments during their 125 year history that have contributed to them becoming one of the most successful English football clubs of all time. This special anniversary is a great opportunity for us to celebrate that success with them."

Comment

For so many banking and finance marketers around the world, marketing has often been built around numbers and demonstrating statistical skills and numerical abilities and this is a fine example.

In addition, this numbers campaign also links

to some of Standard Chartered's other Liverpool activation pillars - including its cause and community 'Seeing Is Believing' campaign with 'Number 64: Hear The Kop Roar'.

Standard Chartered's main club sponsorship deal with Liverpool FC runs from 2010 to 2018 and, as well as shirt branding, its primary partner rights package inventory includes perimeter boards, player imagery, archive footage, co-branded merchandise, digital branding, social media access, hospitality, mascot appearance, player appearance and former player/ambassador access.

Its core objective is to build brand awareness, deliver new customers and reward existing clients not just via domestic, UK activation but more importantly to engage with its primary Asian, African and Middle Eastern consumer base.

This means much of its work is developed from the challenge that 99% of Standard Chartered's audience (customers and targets) will never visit the Anfield home of the club.

The use of new technology in immersive storytelling is one of the primary tactics employed by the sponsor to overcome this barrier and to leverage the remoteness of the overseas fans into a strength of the financial brand's activation.

A prime example of this approach was its 'Inside Anfield' project in 2016: which used virtual reality technology to bring fans closer to the club.

Essentially this was an innovative, immersive, multi-platform campaign that aimed to take an Anfield locker room tour to 63 different locations as the physical home of the virtual experience led by a 360-degree virtual reality film.

Operating under the banner 'Football is Better Together' the bank used the Liverpool FC partnership to demonstrate 'how life is better when you are connected with the things you love most'.

As well as Liverpool FC, Standard Chartered sponsors a series of 13 different marathons and running races around the world, plus individual sports stars like blind athlete, Henry Wanyoike and his running partner Joseph Kibunja (as part of its 'Seeing Is Believing' avoidable blindness cause campaign), as well as youth sports such as its youth rugby programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong.





**GAME
CHANGERS**

THE 12th MAN REPORT

'12th Man & Madness/Priceless' Mastercard UEFA Champions League

May 2017 saw UEFA Champions League sponsor Mastercard launch an expansive pan-European activation based on 'passionate fan support' to leverage spiking soccer supporter interest around club football's biggest annual showpiece – the Champions League Final. Linked by the #MadnessOrPriceless hashtag, this multi-phase campaign included a supporter statistics '12th Man' report, a video-led partnership with Copa90 exploring the TIFO phenomenon, plus TV spots, media alliances and digital and social assets often urging football fans to 'let us know how far you'd go for your love of football'.



11%
OF FOOTBALL FANS
INSIST THEY COULD NOT
DATE THE FAN OF A RIVAL TEAM

BRITISH FANS ARE CONSIDERED
THE MOST PASSIONATE



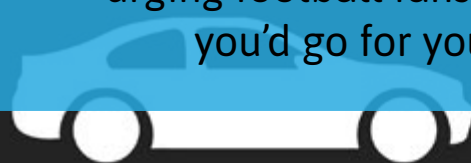
6%

UKRAINIAN FANS
GIVE UP A LOTTERY
WIN TO WATCH THEIR
TEAM IN THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL
(EUROPEAN AVERAGE 13%)

WHEN DO WE CHOOSE OUR TEAMS?



LONGEST DISTANCE TRAVELLED TO WATCH YOUR TEAM



4
HOURS

5
HOURS

Mastercard's 2017 Champions League Final activation began in late May (ahead of the 3 June clash between two of the world's biggest football clubs - Real Madrid and Juventus) when the payments brand published its '12th Man Report': a European survey of 10,500 football fans that explores just how far fans will go to support their team.

The report researches everything from how much money supporters spend and the distances they travel, to social factors such as sacrificing relationships and the first time they saw a live game.

The supporter survey found that European soccer supporters believe that British football fans are the most passionate of all.

The first question on the report asked which fans are perceived to be the most passionate: based on (positive) definitions like as atmosphere created, commitment made and dedication to away support.

The result was a comprehensive victory for British fans: almost a one-third (32%) of all respondents said it was British fans who are the most passionate.

The UK supporters came out ahead of Spanish fans (16%) and Italian fans (12%).

Other UK football fan findings include 11% of Brits admitting that they could not date a supporter of their football team's rivals, while 10% said they'd cancel their honeymoon to watch their team play in the UEFA Champions League Final, with 25% admitting to taking 'unsolicited' leave from work and 20% saying they miss a close friend's birthday to attend an important game.

British fans are also amongst the youngest committed club supporter starters: with 36% saying they had already become fans of their team by the age of 10.

While the overall average age across Europe for first becoming a fan was 13-years-old, it is the Portuguese who are the youngest starters of all as they have chosen a club allegiance at seven-years-old.

But British football lovers are a bit cheap when it comes to coughing up cash to support their club. Despite the Premier League's every inflating

ticket prices, the most money British football fans have spent on attending a single game averages out at £343: well below the Turks (£608), Russians (£553), French (£475), and Spanish (£465).

British fans also lag behind some European supporters when it comes to distances travelled to watch a game. UK fans average travel time is just 4hrs 13mins, around half the period spent travelling by Polish fans (8hrs 24 mins).

Indeed, only 31% of Brits have supported their team abroad, compared with Spanish fans (61%) and Italian fans (56%).

Other stand-out findings include:

> Dutch fans (41%) are the only European fans who prefer to watch their team on TV rather than in stadia.

> Italian fans have the best 'home town' support, with 46% stating they support their home town club - more than any other country in Europe.

> Romanians are considered the biggest glory hunters - with over a quarter (26%) confessing that they support their team due to their success.

> 66% of Ukrainian fans would rather see their team in the UEFA Champions League final than win the lottery.

> Turkish fans win no fans for romance, with one in five confessing that they would cancel their honeymoon for a UEFA Champions League ticket.

The survey's results were promoted via a branded infographic amplified right across the UEFA payments partner's digital and social platforms across the continent.

Ryan Giggs, Mastercard's ambassador for the UEFA Champions League, commented: "I have been very fortunate to play all over the world during my career, but it comes as no surprise to me that British fans are considered the most passionate. Those European nights were among the best of my life, and the travelling support always played a huge part."

While Ann Cairns, Mastercard's President of International Markets added: "The Champions League has created so many memorable moments in football, but it's also the supporters who help create that magic. Our sponsorship of the tournament encapsulates this priceless sporting spirit."





The survey, carried out for Mastercard by Mortar, spanned 10,500 respondents across 16 European countries (UK, Germany, Spain, France, Netherlands, Italy, Turkey, Russia, Sweden, Portugal, Greece, Ukraine, Romania, Israel, Czech Republic and Poland).

This research report strand was followed up a partnership with Copa90 in the form of a video-focused strand that set out to offer fans and consumers everything they need to know about TIFOs.

TIFO is the Italian term for the phenomenon of supporting a sport team and TIFO is an umbrella word for choreography and displays of support by fans in the stands.

This phase was spearheaded by a central film, launched on 30 May, exploring the global story of one of football's greatest expressions.

Mastercard is also running a series of Champions League Final 2017 media alliances based on fan stories and asking the question 'what kind of a fan are you?: such as one with The Telegraph in the UK.

As well as a series of big match offered service partnerships with brands like Deliveroo (feed the fans with £5 off your first 2 orders at Deliveroo with Mastercard GET CODE), Hotels.com (celebrate the madness of the UEFA Champions League Final Cardiff 2017 and receive 10% off when booking with Hotels.com, thanks to Mastercard. BOOK NOW) and Priceless.Cities (enjoy more exclusive offers with Priceless Cities and your Mastercard. Start exploring today).

Throughout this year's tournament, Mastercard has been exploring the theme of fan passion through a range of activations including: '#MadnessOrPriceless - How Far Would You Go For Your Team?' (launched in February 2017),

'Two Rivals In One T-Shirt For A UEFA Champions League Game' (from March 2017), as well as player-led 'Priceless Surprise' initiatives such as ' Gianluigi Buffon

Gives These Young Fans A Priceless Surprise'.

Comment

As well as the above activations, Mastercard's other showpiece Champions League leverage programme includes a classic match ticket competitions, as well as its long running 'Priceless Mascot Experience' (see <https://uk.mastercard.com/ucl/closed>): this programme has included strands from 2013, 2014 (see case study), 2015/2016, as well as the 2017 programme.

(Interestingly, Buffon also starred in perhaps the stand-out strand of Mastercard's 2016 #MadnessOrPriceless UEFA Champions League activation programme).

Mastercard, one of seven top tier UEFA Champions League sponsors (alongside Gazprom, Heinenken, Nissan, Pepsi, Sony and Unicredit), is a long-time sponsor of the world's top club competition.

Mastercard also sponsors the 2017 UEFA Women's Champions League Final.

As part of its umbrella objective of getting cardholders closer to the things they love, Mastercard has an extensive partnership portfolio across the sport, entertainment and arts landscape.

Amongst its major alliances are tie-ups with The PGA Tour and The Open Championship, Major League Baseball, the French and Australian Open tennis tournaments, North American sports teams such as the Dallas Cowboys, the Green Bay Packers, the Toronto Maple Leafs and Montreal Canadiens, the UK motor sport Goodwood Festival Of Speed, food festivals, music events like The GRAMMYS and The BRIT Awards, plus theatre's Olivier Awards, spaces like Carnegie Hall, Sydney Opera House and the Dubai Opera House, to arts companies such as the New York City Ballet and the Singapore Repertory Theatre, musicians such as Lang Lang, as well as its location-specific Priceless Cities partnership programme.





'#MLBMemoryBank'
Bank Of America
Major League Baseball

In April, at the start of the 2017 Major League Baseball season, the league's financial partner Bank of America launched a new phase of its #MLBMemoryBank activation with a hero 'Baseball Is Back' new season spot posted on the MLB's video platform. #MLBMemoryBank is an initiative that began in 2015 and is designed to celebrate the national pastime and the passion it inspires by 'honouring fan memories' and 'helping them create new ones'. Like other bank sports sponsorship activations, it capitalises on a game built on statistics and records, but adds a more human engagement pillar in the form of 'memories'.



Major League Baseball®

favorite memory at

www.bankofamerica.com/MLBmemorybank

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The 'Baseball Is Back' film marked the start of the third season of the bank's multi-platform activation which primarily runs across digital and social media.

Hubbed around a microsite (at <http://bofa.com/MLBmemorybank>) and spanning social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, the programme has three primary objectives: to demonstrate its shared passion for baseball with the game's fans, to boost engagement and sentiment on social media and to drive overall favourability for the brand.

To drive engagement, the brand's team and its baseball ambassadors visit baseball markets across the country, surprising fans with MLB merchandise and tickets while creating shareable video and social content (in harness with agency Hill Holliday).

This kind of video content rolled out through the 2017 season including two films that capitalised on the increased conversation around Autumn (playoff) baseball: September's 'Pederson Surprise' (which saw LA Dodgers star Joc Pederson host Special Olympians on a VIP Dodgers Stadium experience) and October's 'Mo Memories' (which saw Mariano Rivera share his bullpen skills with Vastle Hill Youth Baseball team).

#MLBMemoryBank sees the bank use its MLB rights to create contextually relevant messaging across multiple platforms - from its own standard channels, plus the MLB's platforms, as well as partnerships with spaces such as Snapchat - to provide immersive experiences, to provide a platform to share and make memories, to give away World Series tickets (and generate 3,660 social media mentions in a day).

The origins of the campaign lie in the Bank Of America and MLB marketing teams visiting ballparks across the country and asking fans to share their own memories off game, while also highlighting iconic moments throughout baseball history through archive material.

The sponsor and the league then responded to fans who posted and shared their passionate game memories using the #MLBMemoryBank hashtag with unique MLB experiences and prizes

(ranging from MLB.tv subscriptions and jerseys, to regular season experiences and Postseason VIP tickets) to ensure Bank of America helped fans create new memories.

In addition to the videos and the fan created social content, other activation series from this three-season programme have seen the sponsor leverage Snapchat to further drive engagement.

The bank and MLB created a Snapchat Story on the official MLB account that asked fans in New York to create their own personal favourite Post-season moments in a series of videos.

A call to action then directed fans to screenshot an art frame of World Series tickets and tweet this along with their favourite baseball memory using #MLBMemoryBank for the chance to win the tickets.

This Snapchat strand saw more than 6,000 screenshots, 3,208 Twitter entries and 131,000 Story opens: in the two days around the campaign there were 3,660 mentions of #MLBMemoryBank on Twitter, representing the largest spike of the season.

Another activation strand saw brought the #MLBMemoryBank 'Vault' (and some baseball legend appearances) to New York City and Los Angeles to surprise dozens of fans with incredible prizes.

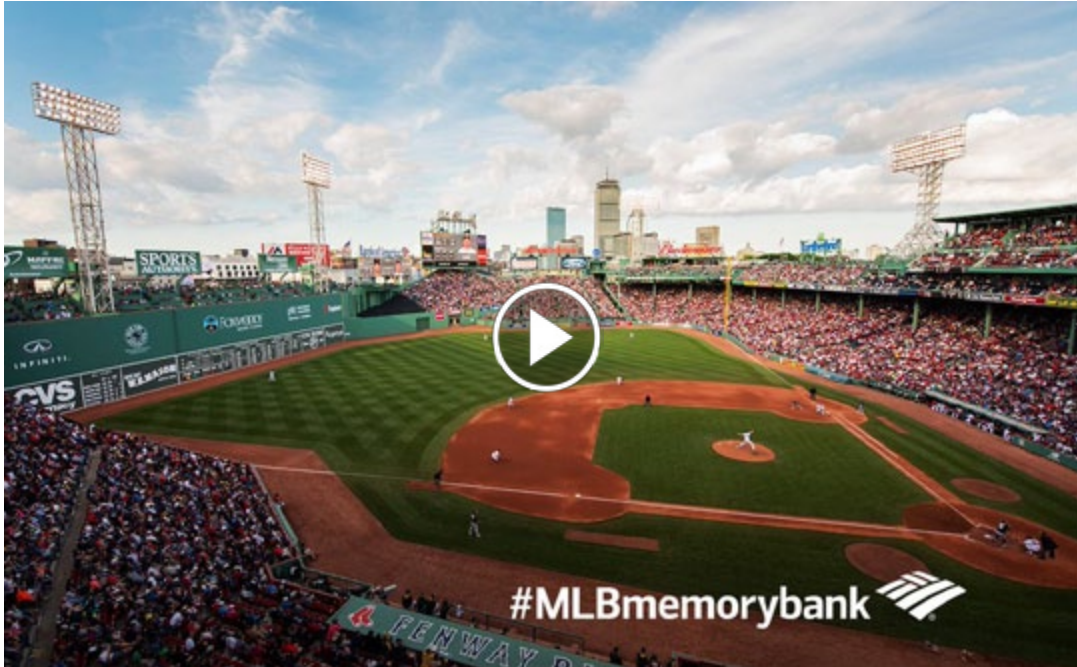
While in 2016 some of the campaign's stand-out strands ranged from an October 'Undercover Teacher' hidden camera stunt starring Baltimore Orioles All-Star Adam Jones disguised as a teacher in a Baltimore public school (and was followed by a subsequent class VIP trip to see the Orioles in action), to a real fan film featuring 'The Reckmeyers' (a married couple who have been making baseball memories since 1952) and a summer-long 'Player Memories' online video series featuring first baseball memories from several star players.

Comment

In finance sector marketing, it is a well established sports sponsorship strategy to capitalise the statistics and records side of the game: but this Bank of America programme frames this within the context of fan memories and delivers it via blend of experiences and social media engagement.







Orioles memories worth sharing

Bank of America and Major League Baseball are teaming up to celebrate the best Orioles memories, starting with yours. Tell us about the time you hung on every pitch, saw a moon shot homerun, or even tasted your first ballpark hot dog. View other fan memories and share your own by using [#MLBmemorybank](#).

Share your memory



Giants memories worth sharing

Bank of America and Major League Baseball are teaming up to celebrate the best Giants memories, starting with yours. Tell us about the time you hung on every pitch, saw a moon shot homerun, or even tasted your first ballpark hot dog. View other fan memories and share your own by using [#MLBmemorybank](#).

Share your memory



This activation also addresses the finance sector's challenge that social media users are usually not kind to banks.

It aims to establish a more positive social connection with consumers through baseball.

In terms of social media results, last season the campaign generated more than 56 million social impressions and 13 million video views – these kind of figures are rare amongst giant financial institutions.

As Charles Greenstein, SVP of global sponsorship marketing executive for the Bank of America explains: “#MLBmemorybank sees us use our MLB assets and rights in a different way. We pivoted from prior CSR marketing efforts to become more fun, authentic and more fan-centric.”

As well as its MLB sponsorship, other properties in its sports portfolio include being the title partner of the Chicago Marathon, the title sponsor of the Bank of America 500 NASCAR playoff race in Charlotte and a legacy partner of 2018 Special Olympics USA.

The bank also partners with dozens of cultural organizations. It is a founding partner of the Smithsonian ‘Museum of African American History and Culture’ in Washington DC, a global partner of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, an education partner of The Met, a season sponsor and music exchange programme supporter of Carnegie Hall, a premier partner of the San Francisco Museum Of Modern Art and serves as the main sponsor of around 10 art/museum exhibitions each year.

'Financial Football'

Visa
NFL

Visa's National Football League (NFL) 'Financial Football' programme spans the country and is spearheaded by a video game: a fast-paced, interactive, NFL-themed gaming experience. The game, available in English and Spanish and as a free app or via the payments brand's Financial Football online hub, combines the structure and rules of the NFL with financial education questions of varying difficulty to create an innovative, fun approach for helping children and adults learn about money management. The game comes with an overview, objectives, teaching notes, discussion framework and activity exercises.

FINANCIAL FOOTBALL



Visa's football-led education programme teaches students of all ages about key saving, spending and budgeting concepts and the game element helps educate through the wise use of credit in preparation for game play: just pick an age level - 'Rookie', 'Pro' or 'Hall of Fame' - and download the modules.

To score points, players simply need to answer money management questions: wrong answers and penalties cost each team yardage.

Financial Football forms the foundation for Visa's nationwide financial education initiative with the NFL and NFL Players Association.

Hubbed around a bespoke online platform at www.practicalmoneyskills.com/financialfootball, Financial Football has been played as an education tool in classrooms right across the USA,

On the ground, Visa works with the NFL (typically in tandem with star players from local teams) and both federal and state financial and education organisations to use the game as a focal point to help students sharpen their fiscal skills.

For example, in early October 2017 the brand teamed up with NFL Pro Bowler, Super Bowl champion and Eagles' strong safety Malcolm Jenkins, the Pennsylvania Department of Banking and Securities and the Pennsylvania Department of Education on a Pennsylvania Financial Football initiative spearheaded by the game (and by Jenkin's sharing his own personal money management experience).

Visa distributes the Financial Football program to every public high school and middle school in 49 states and the District of Columbia: that's complimentary copies of the game to around 30,000 schools.

First launched back in 2006, each new iteration of the game is launched by a star player. For example, back in 2013 it was New Orleans Saints Quarterback Drew Brees who allied with Visa to unveil the latest release of Financial Football.

The game is an NFL-led core pillar in Visa's umbrella 'Practical Money Skills for Life': a free, comprehensive financial literacy program founded back in 1995 and now available in 16 languages and 42 countries.

Comment

The use of gamification to activate the flagship educational programme within its NFL activation is part of the wider finance sector trend for using sports sponsorships to generate youth targeted, immersive and content led cause and community initiatives that consolidate the brand's values and numeric skills.

The global payments technology company, which connects consumers, businesses, financial institutions and governments in more than 200 countries and territories to digital currency, has sponsored the NFL since 1995. Its current deal, which was renewed in 2014, runs through the 2020 season.

It is the league's exclusive payment services sponsor and its sponsorship package spans a wide range of benefits: including access to the Super Bowl, the NFL Pro Bowl, the NFL Draft, and the NFL International Games.

This enables the brand to use the partnership to connect to Visa cardholders and drive value for financial institution clients, merchant partners and shareholders.

A key element of this Visa NFL partnership revolves around building a better fan experience 'by infusing best in class technology that enhances the viewing experience' and each season Visa develops innovative, new ways to achieve this objective.

This not only includes the Financial Football game and educational programme, but also spans activations linked to specific services/products ranging from a Super Bowl Sweepstakes (contactless, card usage and loyalty), through Super Bowl 'Perfect Party Play' planning guides and 'Race To Kickoff' (Visa Checkout), to its 'NFL Draft Virtual Fitting Room' (technology positioning).

Its NFL alliance is just one of Visa's major sports sponsorships.

Among the other blockbuster properties in its portfolio are an IOC TOP partnership for the Olympics/Paralympics and a sponsorship of the FIFA World Cup, as well as market-specific deals like its tie-up with the US Ski/Snowboard teams and a line-up of property-relevant athlete ambassadors.



FINANCIAL FOOTBALL^{HD}



DREW BREES
Quarterback, New Orleans Saints



NFL PLAYERS





'Tackling Rugby' Aviva Premiership Rugby

Fronted by a set of engaging, rugby-themed content assets, Aviva kicked-off the start of the 2017 Premiership Rugby season in May 2017 by continuing its 'Aviva Tackling Numbers' education programme targeting seven to nine-year-olds. To start the season and continue to engage the young demographic, some of the sport's biggest stars tackled the big questions via mini-fan interviews and a season ticket giveaways celebrating Aviva's seven years of title sponsorship. This lead-in work sees Aviva continue to use its title sponsorship of English Premiership Rugby to run an innovative and engaging numbers led education programme.

A young girl with dark hair tied back, wearing a blue t-shirt with yellow accents and a yellow tag with the Gilbert logo, is smiling and holding a white and yellow Gilbert rugby ball. The background is a blurred outdoor setting, likely a sports field.

GILBERT



The initiative uses rugby as a platform to make learning about numbers fun, exciting and rewarding.

At the core of the initiative is an on-line programme, available to download for free, which integrates interactive classroom mathematics lessons with practical, number-based rugby games in order to develop the next generation's financial numeracy and maths skills.

The brand's programme is delivered primarily through the 12 English Premiership Rugby and ties in some of England's biggest rugby stars (as well as teachers and even government ministers).

The activation includes plenty of direct Tackling Numbers' digital and social content across YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

For example, this May 2016 spot called 'Aviva Tackling Numbers Challenge - Saracens v Exeter Chiefs' leveraged the Aviva Premiership Rugby final and featured Gareth Steenson, Henry Slade and Jack Yeandle of Exeter Chiefs against Will Fraser, George Kruis and Jamie George of Saracens.

While the previous 2015 'Aviva Tackling Numbers' promotional material included a spot starring Harlequins stars Danny Care, Nick Evans and Paul Doran Jones taking on a team of seven to nine-year-olds in a sum contest.

The 2015 programme also came to life at Bishops Perrin C of E Primary School in Twickenham where Premiership Rugby players Danny Care, Nick Evans, and Paul Doran Jones did maths with the kids and participated in the Aviva Tackling Numbers maths challenge with the kids.

Comment

When Aviva and Premiership Rugby made the surprise announcement in August 2017 that the insurer had extended its Premiership Rugby title sponsorship for a further year (after seven successful sponsor seasons), the insurance brand was quick to

state that the deal would allow it to continue its Tackling Numbers programme.

"After a thrilling end to last season and a great summer of rugby, we're incredibly excited to be extending our partnership with Premiership Rugby until the end of the 2017-18 season", said Aviva's Tom Daniell, Retail Marketing Director.

"The extension gives us the opportunity to continue working with Premiership Rugby and the 12 clubs on our community initiatives, notably the Aviva Tackling Numbers programme and the Aviva Community Fund, both of which make such a valuable difference to communities and families across the country.

"With record numbers of both attendances and live TV audiences, the league is going from strength-to-strength and we're very much looking forward to the upcoming season."

If statistics are a good measure, then the programme has been a success as, in the last three seasons, a total of 1,357 teachers have downloaded the Aviva Tackling Numbers lesson plans.

Based around a digital hub, Aviva 'Tackling Numbers' targets lower Key Stage 2 children across 550 primary schools and has engaged 27,000 kids.

Following the first year of Aviva 'Tackling Numbers', results show the programme's success as, after taking part:

- > 20% of children described themselves as "really confident in maths"
- > 83% of parents saw increased maths importance awareness in their kids lives
- > 91% of teachers recommend it
- > 80% of teachers rate it as effective in teaching national curriculum numeracy
- > 70% of parents say that their child's enjoyment of physical activity has increased
- > 26% increase in the proportion of kids who do sport outside of school compared
- > 73% of teachers will continue to use the programme's resources in the future



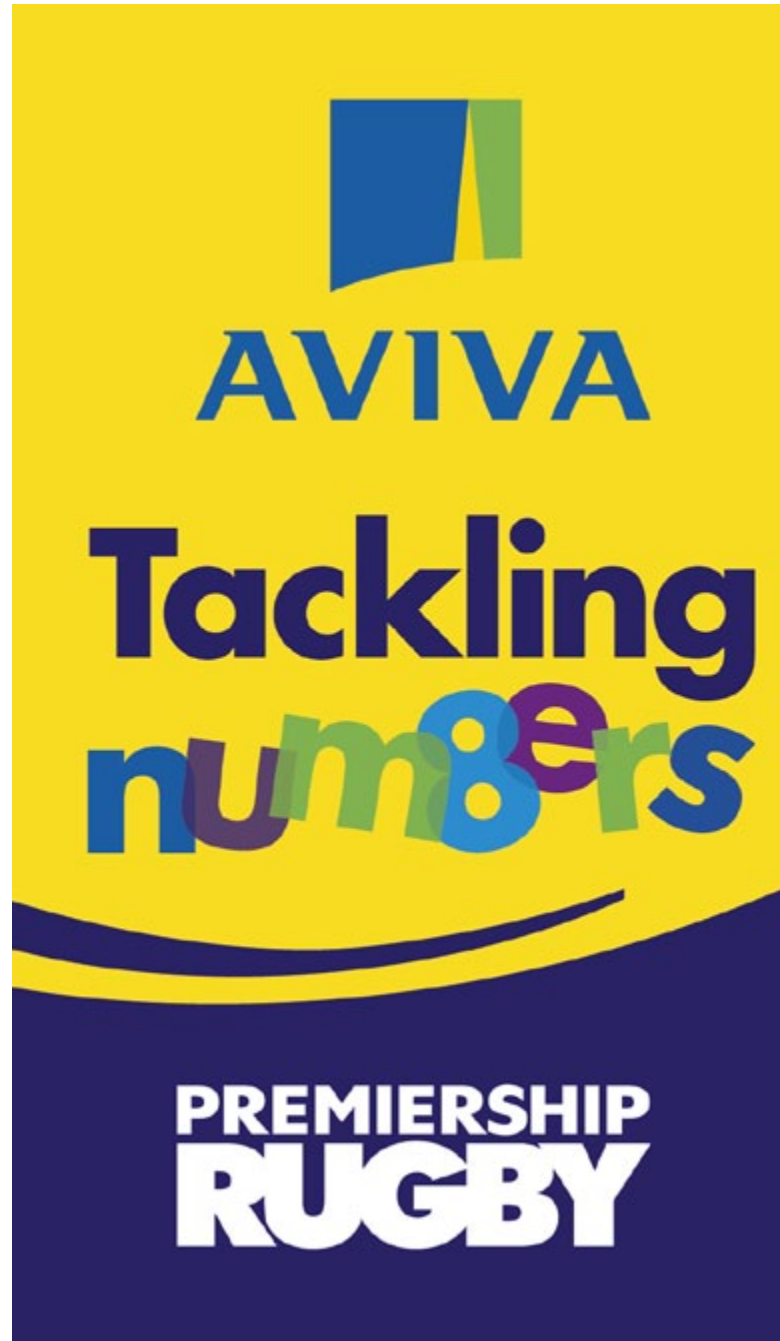
Of course, the Aviva renewal is widely believed to be the result of the league failing to sign a replacement partner at a mutually agreeable price/package.

Premiership Rugby isn't the only property owner in the sport to find itself in such a position.

Little surprise perhaps considering that product categories typically associated with the sport of rugby - like banks and financial services brands - are not in the same position as they were back in 2003 when RBS paid handsomely for its blockbuster 6 Nations rugby partnership in order to unify its brand following a period of rapid merger and acquisition.

Will we see the 6 Nations follow the Premiership (and before them the FA Cup) and take back control of its title and be 'sponsor free' after failing to find a satisfactory sponsor.

In addition to its Premiership Rugby title sponsorships, other deals in the UK brand's sports partnership portfolio include a long running tie-up with Norwich City FC and previously the insurer had a major partnership with UK Athletics which ended in 2012.





'No Boundaries' NatWest ECB

In May 2017 NatWest further extended its long running association with cricket in the UK by becoming a principal partner of the England And Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and the bank celebrated the alliance with a campaign focusing on diversity called 'Cricket Has No Boundaries'. The RBS owned bank, which believes that 'pride' is now finally returning to the brand (after the 2008 crash), is rolling out a cricket campaign that looks to promote and showcase diversity and inclusion. The initiative aims to celebrate 'modern' cricket and to link the sport's values to its own brand and its own commitment to diversity.





The campaign uses authentic, genuine examples of the diverse range of those who participate in cricket throughout England and Wales and communicates this with work based around powerful imagery.

The activation's launch creative was primarily led by an outdoor poster campaign that aimed to celebrate cricketing inclusion and inspire people to participate via billboards featuring inspirational messages that utilise inspirational figureheads such as Ebony-Jewel Rainford-Brent, the first black cricketer to play for the England women's team.

The practical strands of the initiative are amplified with in-stadium messaging, events and experiences at cricket grounds across England and Wales through the summer season which invite fans to get involved with the project.

The campaign, which is backed by several England stars, was unveiled at an 8 May launch event which included a player Q&A session.

The initiative is built around a bespoke NatWest digital hub at https://cricket.natwest.com/no_boundaries.htm while in addition to the PR and media launch work the campaign (developed in harness with M&C Saatchi Sport & Entertainment) is also being activated via an immersive, at-ground virtual reality experience at selected games.

It is being amplified across both NatWest and the ECB's digital and social platforms with all ad executions, creative assets and online content pieces linked through the #NoBoundaries hashtag.

The campaign emerges from recent ECB research which shows how cricket continues to be played and enjoyed by people from all walks of life right across the UK: for example, 30% of recreational cricketers are of South Asian heritage, 5% are registered disabled and the last 15 years have seen an eight-fold increase in the number of cricket clubs offering women and girls cricket.

It also runs in tandem alongside NatWest's new partnership with Chance to Shine (<https://www.chancetoshine.org/>): the ECB-backed charity which uses cricket to increase aspiration, promote social cohesion and create opportunities for young people in communities and schools across the country and which aims to use cricket to help create job opportunities for inner-city youths.

NatWest has become Chance to Shine's first ever Official Partner and this tie-up aims to further reflect the bank's own values and commitment to fairness and inclusion.

The RBS banking brand will provide funding and support to the charity to extend its reach and expand the impacts of its programmes.

"We've been supporting cricket since 1981, so we're delighted to extend our partnership to become the principal partner of the ECB," said NatWest Chief Marketing Officer David Wheldon.

"Diversity, inclusion and doing the right thing are extremely important to us and that's why we're partnering with the ECB as we work together to make sure it's a sport open to anyone and everyone.

"We're bringing this to life through the 'Cricket Has No Boundaries' campaign and we're delighted to become the ECB's principal partner, working with them to make cricket even more accessible to all," adds ECB CEO Tom Harrison (of NatWest's new Principal Partner role).

"NatWest have been one of cricket's biggest supporters over the course of four decades, putting their weight behind a range of competitions and programmes. This new partnership will see us working even more closely together, with NatWest our Principal Partner supporting cricket from grass roots to international level. They have a deep knowledge of the sport, a respect for its traditions and the drive to help us to further develop cricket as a game for

everyone,” he adds.

Ebony Rainford-Brent, Director of Women’s Cricket at Surrey County Cricket Club and the first black female cricketer to play for England, also added: “Cricket has made great strides to broaden the range of people accessing the sport. The NatWest partnership is a fantastic way to ensure this great work continues.”

Following the 2008 financial industry led downturn and a series of NatWest scandals, the bank now believes that pride is returning to its brand and this partnership aims to consolidate the turnaround.

In mid 2016, Wheldon drove a major NatWest rebrand which featured real, genuine staff in its adds and invited consumers ‘to hold it to account for its actions – whether good or bad’ and the signs are that the campaign achieved some level of ‘restoring internal pride’

“Our staff have had to suffer a lot from the reputational damage we inflicted due to the sins of the past, but the campaign has started to restore some internal pride. It now feels like we’re moving towards optimism as a brand,” admits Wheldon.

The 8 May announcement that NatWest was extending its 36-year association with the sport by become the ECB’s principal partner aims to further drive this process.

Translating the inclusion facts and the idea of diversity from the sport to the marketing arena, admits Wheldon, still has a “long way to go”, but he points to campaigns such as Sport England’s award-winning #ThisGirlCan (see case study) to demonstrate the potential success of similar initiatives.

“If I look at the marketing team I had when I arrived, there was not a single direct report who was a woman. Now my team has a 50/50 split for male and females, and the business has a vibrant LGBTQ and BAME community. I guess the agency sector has always had a better balance but client side is

catching up quickly when it comes to having a more diverse voice,” he explains.

“We have a really long heritage with cricket. By putting our new 3D logo back on the England team’s shirts and aligning with a diversity message that ties into our new “We Are What We Do” slogan this feels like a slam dunk of a campaign.”

Probably our favourite NatWest cricket campaign of all time is the Michael Vaughan fronted ‘Secret Cricketer’ stunt from back in 2011.

As the new 2017 cricket season accelerates into top gear, this campaign follows hot-on-the-heels of the recent ECB youth-aimed ‘All Stars Cricket’ participatory programme.

Comment

Inclusivity at the heart of this NatWest/ECB partnership

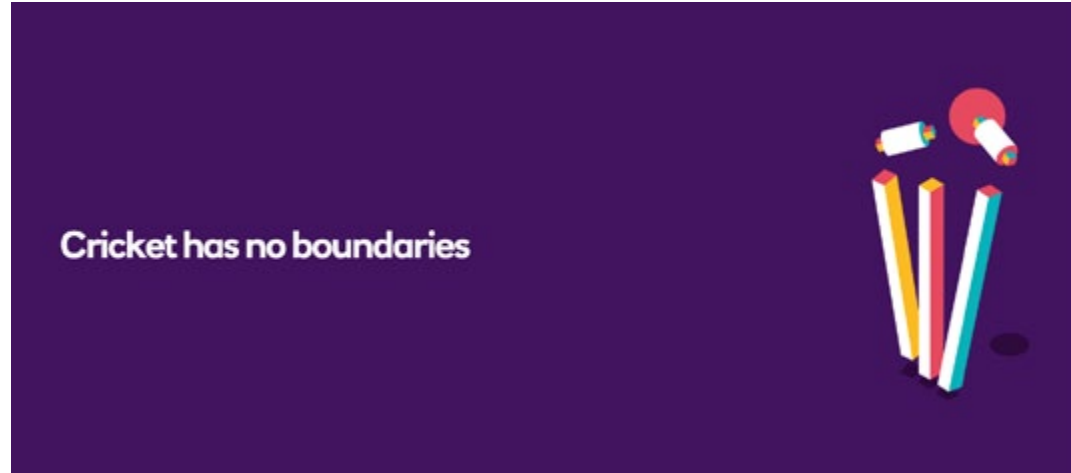
NatWest’s partnership with the England and Wales Cricket Board underlines a broader shift by the sports marketing industry to create sponsorship deals that have deeper roots in local communities.

The bank is placing diversity and inclusion at the centre of a marketing push to promote cricket as a sport for everyone.

David Wheldon, chief marketing officer at RBS Group, believes it is the first time that a sports sponsorship activation has focused solely on inclusion as a marketing message. The partnership launched this week with a blind cricket match.

The work includes an outdoor ad campaign by M&C Saatchi that will break in July and the bank will partner Chance to Shine, a charity that uses cricket to provide opportunities for young people. Zenith handles media.

The brand’s commitment to cricket will help the sports marketing industry start associating corporate sponsorship with real fans rather than just the “prawn sandwich brigade”.





“I think grassroots activity will increase,” Wheldon said, pointing to the “apparent disconnect” between football’s Premier League and the push by clubs to reconnect with communities.

He explained: “In our case, this is a community activity and it is linked to communities; we make the balance start there [at a grassroots level] and then push the work outwards.”

NatWest launched a TV ad in September last year with the slogan: “We are what we do.” It was part of a campaign inviting consumers to make NatWest accountable for its actions.

The RBS owned NatWest banking brand uses sponsorship to interact with staff, customers and communities across the group by building partnerships with ‘worthy’ events, organisations and individuals.

The self-stated umbrella objective behind its partnerships is to offer ‘support and benefit in ways that truly make a positive difference’.

As well as its ECB, T20 and community-focused, cause-led CricketForce partnerships and programmes, in the sports space it is also a sponsor of the Rugby Football Union (which includes a matching RugbyForce programme),

Beyond sport the bank is also a supporter of The Southbank Centre, The Prince’s Trust Enterprise Programme, the Entrepreneurial Spark scheme, Citizens Advice, the ‘Friends Against Scams’ initiative with the National Trading Standard body, plus it is the headline of the British LGBT Awards.



'Levelling The Playing Field'
CommBank
Cricket Australia

As the Australian and England women's teams begin the 2017/18 Ashes series, Commonwealth Bank (CommBank) leverages its evolving partnership with Cricket Australia with a 'Levelling The Playing Field' commitment that blends one of the country's biggest gender equality, diversity and inclusivity cricket-led campaigns with the single largest financial investment in women's sport in Australia. This major new initiative reflects the bank's belief 'that cricket is a sport for all' and its objective for 'cricket to be the most inclusive sport in Australia'.



The multi-platform campaign, developed with agency M&C Saatchi Sport & Entertainment, is led by a flagship TV spot called 'Levelling The Playing Field'.

This hero spot is amplified socially across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, where the sponsor continues to activate around its rights and to promote the women's game with match-relevant content.

The campaign promotes CommBank's increased support for diversity and community cricket programs: over three years the financial brand is investing (Aus) \$15m into cricket for women and other diversity initiatives that it hopes 'will bring a greater mix of players onto the pitch and into the limelight'.

One strand of the CommBank and Cricket Australia initiative to change the way Australians see women in sport is via an investment enhancing the broadcast experience for viewers of the historic, first Ashes day-night Commonwealth Bank Women's Ashes Test on 9 November.

This means that fans will be able to experience the live stream in full HD, courtesy of broadcast quality equipment and a highly experienced production team, for the first time in the women's game.

Plus, an all-female commentary team - including former Australia stars Mel Jones and Lisa Sthalekar, and former England stars Charlotte Edwards and Isa Guha - will provide expert insights of the on-field action.

As well as these blended marketing and financial moves to boost women's cricket, CommBank is also championing inclusion in the sport by supporting All Abilities and multicultural players.

The strands of this joint CommBank and Cricket Australia initiative include:

- > Funding for Australia's national disability teams and get them access to the same high-performance support that other elite representative cricket teams receive.

- > Commissioning a tour by Australia's Indigenous women's and men's squads of England in 2018 to commemorate the renowned all-Aboriginal team tour of England in 1868.

- > Jointly funding with Cricket Australia the \$1 million Growing Cricket for Girls Fund

- > CommBank has provided more than one million dollars in grants, sponsorships and cricket gear to 395 to local cricket clubs around the country over the last five years.

"We've supported the Australian Women's Cricket and development teams since 1999 but last year, we shifted the focus of our partnership with Cricket Australia to create more opportunities for our players at both the elite and grassroots level," commented CommBank's acting chief marketing officer Monique Macleod.

"We are particularly focused on strengthening the foundations of cricket for women, Indigenous players, players with disabilities, and at local clubs across Australia."

"Cricket is an integral part of Australian culture and society. We have a shared vision with Commonwealth Bank and believe Australians deserve equal opportunity to take part in the game at all levels," outlines M&C Saatchi Sport & Entertainment managing director Jamie Gilbert-Smith.

"There's truth in the saying, 'you can't be what you can't see' and we're delighted that through our work with Commonwealth Bank and Cricket Australia, we'll be playing a part in levelling the playing field and giving all Australians the inspiration and means to get involved in the national game."

Comment

This Ashes activation, campaign and commitment follows on from CommBank's work earlier in June when it rolled out its first major activation since shifting its core Cricket Australia (CA) partnership to the women's team with an initiative timed to leverage rising interest around the current ICC Women's World Cup.

The 'How Much Do You Really Know About Australian Cricket?' campaign was spearheaded by a set of Q&A led spots, launched ahead of the tournament on 25 June, which came in both 50-second versions and 15-second cut-downs.

The campaign highlighted the fact that the Commonwealth Bank Southern Stars are the current ICC T20 and 50-over World Cup champions





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Entries close <date>

Winner Announced on <date>

and were the number one ranked team in the world and all ad iterations and campaign assets aimed to drive viewers to the bank's digital cricket hub at www.commbank.com.au/cricket

CommBank has supported women's cricket for the last 18 years and its previous four year CA deal, which was announced back in May 2013, included name sponsorship rights to the Australian Test team (including on-kit logos) whilst playing at home and for the home test match series.

Over the last 28 years CommBank has backed CA from the grassroots game to the elite men's team - most recently as the top tier platinum partner of CA.

The partnership spanned the elite men's team and home test series, the women's team, the Commonwealth Bank Cricket Academy, plus Cricket Victoria, the Australian Country Cricket Championship, the national indigenous tournament called The Imparja Cup, as well as the award winning, grassroots CommBank Cricket Club initiative.

The new deal and the switch focus and support follows on from other similar recent partnerships in Australia between big brands and women's sport: such as Netball Australia's alliances with Telstra, Suncorp and Samsung and several commercial partners backing the AFL's new women's league.



'Mini Legends'
National Australia Bank (NAB)
AFL

Late August 2017 saw a new commercial from the National Australia Bank (NAB) spearheading the second stage of its charming, participatory 'Mini Legends' activation as the Australian Football League's finance partner began drafting the next generation of young AFL look-a-like stars. The campaign, which is being developed in harness with creative agency Clemenger BBDO (Melbourne), marks the climax of the '2017 NAB Mini Legends Draft': an initiative which saw around 550 of Australia's best young sports star look-a-likes compete with one another for a place on the bank's own mini AFL (marketing) squad.



NAB MINI LEGENDS



The initiative began back in early summer with a public call-out for children to start in this year's campaign. Parents were simply asked to submit a video audition of their kids 'emulating their favourite footy player'.

The lucky winners now front the next phase of the campaign and include a mini Dustin Martin, mini Moana Hope, mini Nic Naitanui, and mini Eddie Betts.

They all star in the hero launch TV commercial (which rolled out on 17 August), and across print, digital and social channels (both on the brand's platforms, and across the AFL's own channels).

The thinking behind the NAB Mini Legends programme is driven by the bank's commitment to support all levels of the AFL – from grassroots to professionals – spanning the kids, players and fans of AFL and the AFLW.

It also dovetails with the sponsors support every weekend at NAB AFL Auskick centres throughout Australia.

"Following the success of last year's campaign, we're very excited to bring it back with a few new twists," comments NAB general manager of brand experience Michael Nearhos.

NAB chief marketing officer, Andrew Knott, also says he's excited to see the second round of NAB Mini Legends come to life.

"We're excited to be launching our next NAB Mini Legends campaign that captures NAB's support of footy at all levels. Through our partnership, we back kids as they play their first game of Auskick right through to the big time, whether that be in the AFL or the AFLW."

Clemenger BBDO Melbourne creative director Rich Williams added that the level of Mini Legends interest has been fantastic: "The response was incredible. The campaign really brings to life everything that's great about the game. We hope to continue

to inspire the next generation of AFL and AFLW stars through this activity."

Williams was on the Clemenger BBDO team working for NAB's Knott, Nearhos, head of group brand Faycal Ben Abdellaziz and brand & sponsorship communications manager Sue Brailsford, that included chief creative officer Ant Keogh, creative chairman James McGrath, fellow creative directors Ant Phillips, Luke Thompson and Rohan Lancaster, plus planners Sam Mackisack and Ryan Smith, producers Sonia von Bibra, Jess van Rosendaal, Michael Travers, Ella Huang, head of CRM Gayle While, as well as group account director Ben Knighton, account director Freya Page, project director Atlanta Panton, account manager Joel Morgan and project manager Tania Babiolakis.

Production was handled by Revolver, the director was Stephen Carroll, the producer Tobias Webster and the executive producer Pip Smart, plus DOP/cinematographer Stefan Duscio.

Post production was by The Butchery & The Refinery, music production Level Two Music and sound by Flagstaff.

This campaign follows in the footsteps of NAB's 2016 'Mini Legends' initiative.

Mini Legends was initially launched in August 2016 with a campaign spanning TV spots, online films and digital games that revolved around 18 young footie players (in the brand's 'Ausickers' programme) – each bearing an uncanny likeness to a well-known AFL player.

A hero launch commercial was supported by individual films focusing on individual stars and their mini-mes (such as Mini Caleb Daniel being given a VIP tour of the Kennel by her favourite player and a 'Guess The Mini Legends' game).

Then in Autumn 2016, NAB celebrated the AFL season climax with a bespoke Snapchat Lens enabling users to become 'Mini-Legends' for the Toyota AFL Grand Final.



This enabled fans to turn themselves into one of the AFL stars from both teams playing in this year's Grand Final: either the Western Bulldogs' Caleb Daniel or the Sydney Swans' Lance Franklin.

The lens ran on Grand Final Day itself only and to get involved fans simply need to download Snapchat and find the NAB Mini Legends Snapchat Lens.

Comment

This Mini-Me creative idea has become a trend in recent years as more sponsors run activation focusing on how kids are inspired by dreams of being just like their heroes and becoming the next big star.

Other notable Mini Me marketing initiatives range from rights-holder campaigns like 'Mini Team Sky' and the European Tour 'Little Interviews', to other financial sector sponsors such as Medibank's 'We Play' for the Australian Open.

The bank's core approach to the property is a commitment to 'grow the game': whether commentating on the biggest match of the year in 10 languages or encouraging fans to #fanshake.

NAB has been a partner of the AFL since back in 2002 and since it began sponsoring the youth-focused Auskick programme in 2006 it has focused on youth engagement and the grassroots game.

Each year it provides over 170,000 young kids across the country with the opportunity to learn and develop fundamental footy skills with the supporting objective of promoting healthy kids lifestyle and ensuring the 'footy champions of tomorrow' can realise their potential.

This focus has seen NAB also sponsor the NAB AFL Academy and the NAB AFL Rising Star, while earlier in 2017 NAB also became the naming rights sponsor for the NAB AFL Women's competition.

The NAB's support of the AFL's 'Rising Stars Program' sees it back the league's

key talent identification and development pathway that operates from the grassroots through elite level.

It is also the title sponsor of 'The NAB Challenge': which aims to bring footy back to its roots and give fans the chance to see how their team is shaping up for the season ahead and for some, it's a rare chance to enjoy live AFL action in their own backyard.

As well as the AFL, other major properties within NAB's sponsorship portfolio include its partnership with the Football Federation Of Australia (where activations span the muddy boots of the AIA Vitality MiniRoos to sponsoring the global Socceroos), as well as a major music sponsorship with Live Nation (which includes providing access to exclusive tickets to events).





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'Ace The Open' American Express US Open (Tennis)

Through August and September 2017 American Express activated its US Open rights through an 'Ace The Open' tennis leverage programme spearheaded by an immersive virtual reality/artificial intelligence gaming experience. This on-site 'Air Tennis' participatory game aimed to create a better experience for tennis fans in the form of a live gaming installation that blended VR and AI with a set of responsive technologies (including air haptics and motion capture systems). It didn't use any physical tennis equipment and instead saw fans take on an AI opponent by simply using their hands and body to return the ball.



The experience was customised to each player through a Kinect motion sensing device that captured each player's body shape and built a 'virtual skeleton' to tailor the experience to their height and position.

When it's time to hit the ball, the game delivers a blast of air out of one of the five tubes – two to the left, two on the right and one up top – whenever the ball hits their hand

Fans thus test their skills against an AI opponent on a life-sized large screen that serves them a ball from across a digital tennis court.

As player's hitting streak increases, the balls 'catch fire' and move faster with the goal to get the highest average streak in two minutes.

In total there are eight bays for fans to play in simultaneously in a branded, on-site structure built specifically for American Express by Momentum Worldwide.

"We really constructed and designed the experience to create that level of spectator engagement, as well as to provide as many fans with the opportunity to play, which is why we created multiple bays so we could get as many fans experiencing the specialness of it as possible," Deborah Curtis, vp, global experiential marketing at American Express, said.

"For us it's about, what are the different dimensions that make that talent special? Also, [what are some] things that are important and instrumental to our brand? One of the things that we talked to Venus about is the fact that she's an entrepreneur and her life blends between being a tennis pro, her personal life and her new businesses. We are also in the business of supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs, so we were very excited to bring her interior design business into the design of our card member club experience," Curtis said.

The immersive game is held within the 'US Open American Express Fan Experience' at the US Open venue – the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center.

Other elements of the on-site leverage programme included an 'American Express Ace Toss': a fun and interactive on-site photo experi-

ence that sees iPhoto technology capture fans going through the entire motion of a serve from the perspective of the ball and gives fans a digital photo to commemorate the moment and share on their personal social networks.

The tournament partner also ran its own 'Guest Info Hosted by American Express' utility activation strand: built around three guest information booths located within the grounds to help fans navigate their way around (with help from large touchscreen ground maps).

Additionally, AMEX partnered with tennis superstar Venus Williams to give fans an opportunity to get a closer look at her life. From how she gets ready for the Open to a closer look at her life outside of tennis, fans get to understand Venus Williams in a deeper level.

The TV commercials in this series, which debuted on air in mid August 2017, included 'Quality Control' and 'Ready'.

These spots and clips were also amplified socially by both the brand and the player and both Amex and Venus Williams also teamed up for an 'Ace The Open with Venus Williams' two-part social content series on American Express-owned social channels that gives fans a unique look into how the US Open champion gets ready to Ace the Open.

Other US Open Amex activation strands included a set of exclusive benefits for card members including:

> American Express Card Member Club: in collaboration with Venus Williams and V Starr Interiors, a space for card members to relax and benefit from a set of complimentary services (such as phone charging, massages, food and drink etc).

> American Express Radio Live at the Open: these radios, exclusively for Card Members and distributed via Amex booths, bring fans closer to the tournament through live commentary and updates from ESPN.

> US Open Card Member Offer: members can enroll their eligible American Express Card to get \$20 back after they spend \$100+ in one or more transactions on-site at the US Open.

> American Express Section within US Open App: for the first time, Amex had a dedicated section within the USTA's mobile US Open App where eligible Card Members can enrol in the US Open Card Member Offer, unlock an Amex Map View of the grounds and learn about everything American Express is offering throughout the tournament on-site.

"At American Express, we are dedicated to providing memorable experiences for our Card Members, and the US Open continues to serve as the perfect platform for us to engage tennis fans in new and exciting ways through premium access and benefits," said Deborah Curtis, Vice President, Global Experiential Marketing and Partnerships, American Express.

"We're thrilled to continue our partnership with Venus Williams - a Card Member, champion and entrepreneur. From delivering a newly designed Card Member Club influenced by Venus herself to a multi-sensory tennis activation, we think that we are delivering services that will truly elevate the US Open experience."

Comment

As a tech-led, member-focused credit card brand (rather than a banking one), which partly competes with pure tech businesses such as Visa and MasterCard, it is little surprise so much of American Express' sponsorship activation is focused on showcasing cutting edge technology and blending it with member experiences.

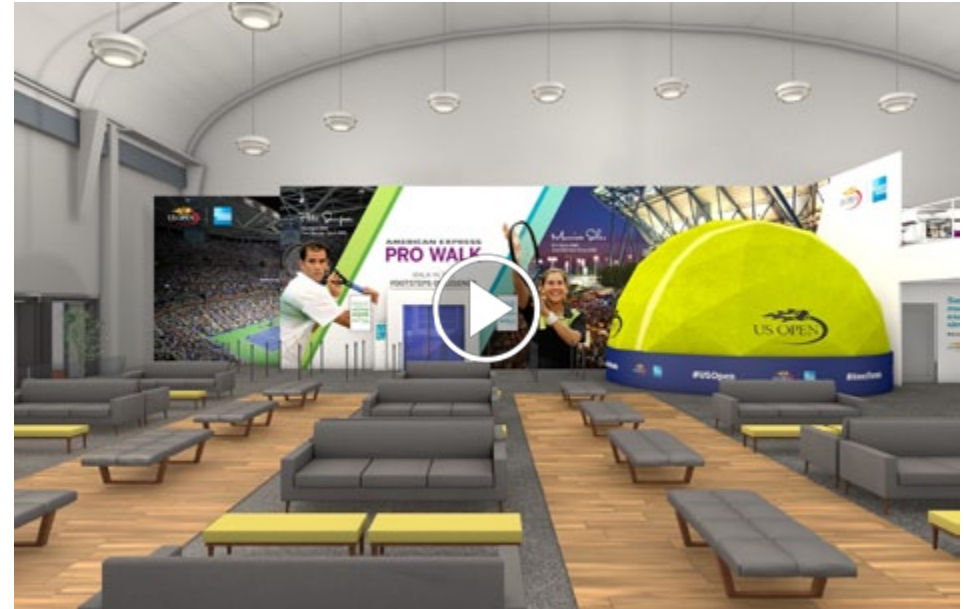
This 2017 tech tennis game is another well-rounded, integrated US Open activation programme from American Express - and it isn't the first time the brand has used VR in its tennis tournament activation.

It follows in the footsteps of American Express' 2016 US Open leverage work which included the inventive 'Pro Walk' AI & VR immersive experience, and its on-site virtual tennis experiences at the 2015 US Open called 'You vs Sharapova'.

As well as the US Open tennis, American Express has an extensive partner portfolio of sport, fashion, arts, culture and travel partnerships and event alliances around the world.

These are often based around offering members/card holders exclusive or enhanced access and/or experiences via its 'Invites' programme.

These range from being a sponsor of the NBA (on TNT) and the US Golf Association, to a principle partner tie-up with the English Premier League club Brighton & Hove Albion, plus an extensive set of arts and culture alliances such as New York and London Fashion Weeks, The (UK) National Theatre, as well as several film, food and music festivals.





'Breakpoint' ANZ Australian Open

Tennis fans at the 2017 Australian Open experienced the excitement, thrill and constant movement of playing a dynamic, energetic tennis on-site game in a virtual world of obstacles and goals called 'ANZ Breakpoint'. This large format digital virtual reality experience, developed in partnership with Deloitte Digital for the Australian financial group, was set-up in the Grand Slam Oval (something of an entertainment hub for tennis fans) and made available to those attending the tournament in person. 'ANZ Breakpoint' was a vast, 54-square-metre interactive installation.



The activation built on ANZ's current 'mobile payments' campaign which runs under an umbrella theme of encouraging users (and players) to 'keep moving' and overcome obstacles in order to achieve success.

One key objective for the activation was to leave a memorable impression of the ANZ brand and the experience starts as soon as a player enters the immersive space.

To start playing the game, fans simply picked up what looked like a normal tennis racket and began playing the immersive interactive game.

The game saw multiple players compete simultaneously and also aimed to provide an enjoyable, highly watchable spectacle for those waiting in the queue.

"ANZ Breakpoint centred on three 18 square metre projected booths, creating an experience designed to be as immersive for the individual players as it is for the audience," explains Daniel Cheong-See, national creative director at Deloitte Digital.

"Fans play the game intuitively - swinging furiously to keep up with the bombardment of digital tennis balls - whilst trying to smash through any obstacles in their way," adds Deloitte Digital motion lead Rob Weir.

Familiar to many Australian sports fans, the voice of Craig Willis guided the player through the gameplay as the experience aimed to capture the #KeepMoving message of the umbrella ANZ campaign.

At the end of each game, players were rewarded with their score and the opportunity to strike a victory pose for the camera: each then received a video of their experience via email which they could share through their own social channels.

The initiative was not only promoted on site at the tournament itself, but also amplified across digital and social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The experience was launched at the beginning of the Australian Open on 16 January 2017 and run through the tournament until 29 January.

This was just one central pillar in a comprehensive ANZ's Australian Open activation programme

that also included a ticket giveaway, a Snapchat Lens initiative, support for ANZ's tennis ambassador Novak Djokovic, bringing Apple Pay to the tournament and promoting the new service with tennis legend Henri Leconte, as well as offering priority services and experiences on-site for ANZ customers.

A further strand of its 2017 tennis activation is its ongoing title partnership of the ANZ Tennis Hotspots primary school kids tennis programme which links to the Australian Open itself by enabling a lucky few programme participants to play at on the major courts of the Melbourne tournament venue during the Australian Open.

It was back in 2014 that ANZ became a sponsor of Tennis Australia's fast-growing, children's starter program - ANZ Tennis Hot Shots.

First launched in 2008, the grassroots Hot Shots is now one of the most popular sports programs for primary school children in Australia, with more than 500,000 children experiencing the program in the past 12 months alone.

As well as working with Deloitte Digital on Breakpoint, ANZ has also worked on its Australian Open activation and connected umbrella campaigns with ad agency TBWA and sports and entertainment agency Octagon.

With more than 1000 fans each day queuing for up to 45 minutes each to play, the VR game was a major draw at the event.

Comment

Indeed, ANZ, which has been a major sponsor of the Australian Open since 2010, has produced several notable engaging and exciting brand experiences at the Grand Slam Oval since it first signed its partnership deal in 2009.

This year's programme follows on from last year's ANZ activation built around a series of Novak Djokovic fronted spots and the sponsor's admirable and innovative #HeadbandForGood cause campaign.

ANZ is an Associate Sponsor of the Australian Open: the Melbourne hosted tournament is held annually in January is perhaps Australia's biggest yearly global sports property and is known as the



Grand Slam of the Asia Pacific.

In addition to its strong Australian heritage, it has widespread appeal as regional event across New Zealand, the Pacific area and Asia.

After initially penning three-year partnership in 2009, ANZ extended its Australia Open sponsorship for a further five years in January 2014.

ANZ is the Official Bank of the Australian Open and, along with Rolex and Jacob's Creek, it is one of three second-tier associate sponsors of the event that sit beneath main sponsor Kia.

ANZ primarily uses its sponsorship of the event to target consumers in Asia. Indeed, 2017 saw ANZ run Chinese-language displays in its allocated courtside branding slots – especially when Chinese star Li Na took to the court.

Overall, ANZ tends to take a holistic approach to sponsorship and doesn't see partnerships playing a separate role from marketing.

It aims to leverage its sponsorship across all touch points and its structural marketing and sponsorship strategy sit together in its global marketing team.

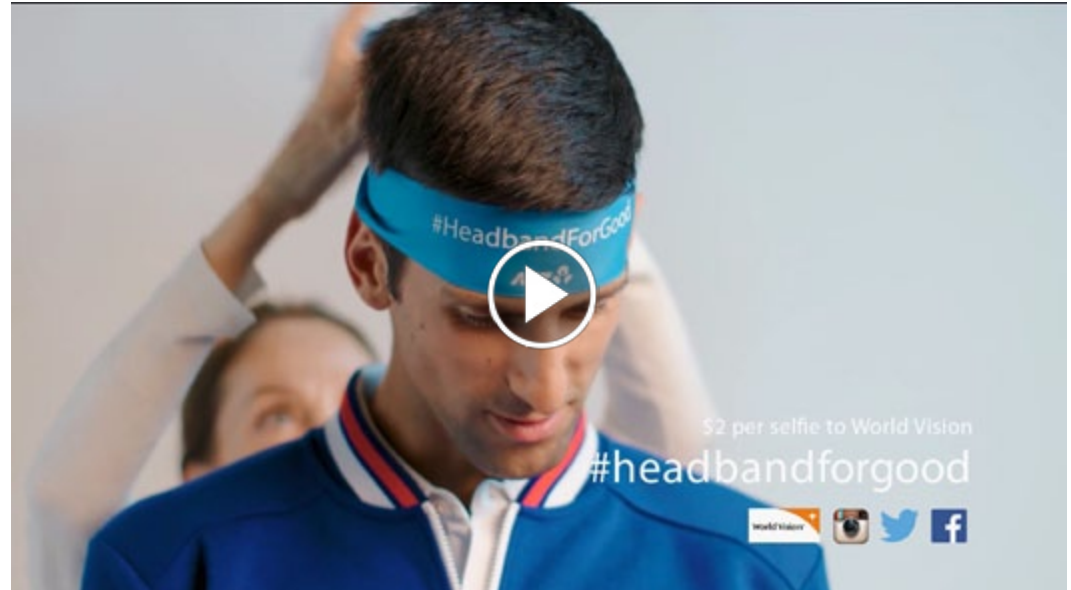
As well as its Australian Open sponsorship, in tennis the banking brand also backs the Shanghai Rolex Masters and it uses these 'international' properties to both drive preference and consideration and build awareness in newer markets.

The thinking behind the alliance is that growing popularity of tennis across Asia makes the Australian Open sponsorship a good way to connect with its key targets in new markets.

Other 'regional' properties in its portfolio range from the ANZ cricket series and a partnership with New Zealand Cricket, plus the ANZ Championships (netball) and these objectives behind these property partnerships are more focused around customer and employee engagement and the introduction of market-specific products/services.

While 'local' sponsorships – such as Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras and Sydney Now lifestyle festival – are more focused on building local relevance.

ANZ also claims to only partner with groups and organisations that reflect its own brand values and communicate these to our existing and potential customers in a meaningful way.





'Various'
Creative Showcase
Campaign Snapshot

AIG 'All Blacks - NZ Rugby Union'
Legal & General 'Not A Red Card'
NatWest 'RugbyForce'
Standard Life Investments 'British & Irish Lions'
AIA 'Tottenham Hotspur'
BMO 'Toronto FC'
SwissQuote 'Manchester United'
RBC 'Team RBC Golf'
HSBC 'World Golf Championships'
ASB 'Emirates Team New Zealand'
Capital One 'NCAA March Madness'
JP Morgan Chase 'Curry v Williams'





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