

## Europe vs North America: Fundamental Differences in the Field of Sport Marketing

Michel Desbordes, University Marc Bloch, Strasbourg  
Christopher Hautbois, University Paris South  
Francois Vasseur, University Paris South and Bouygues Telecom  
Rimi Duchemin, Amaury Sport Organisation

### Session 13: Marketing Workshop (75-minute)

Friday, June 1, 2007

8:00 AM - 9:15 AM

Sport marketing in Europe, and particularly in France, is a recent research field compared to what was developed in the US since the 1970's. Therefore, the temptation is big to import the models developed in North America and to apply them without adaptation in Europe. The objective of this symposium is to demonstrate that sport marketing is applied in a particular context and that some cultural and structural specificities explain why some sport marketing models can not be transferred on the European market. To illustrate our research program, three contributions of French academics and practitioners involved in sport marketing in Europe will be developed.

Presentation 1 : Sport events as a way of increasing urban promotion : a study of three French sport events.

This communication is based on the hypothesis that today sport is an efficient way of promotion for urban areas. The growing importance of this tendency drives to a specific field of research connected to sport and urban marketing, quite new in France. Local government bodies specially use to communicate through sport events. Thanks to 3 different kinds of sport events (exceptional, recurrent, regular), the objective of this communication is to analyze three of the possible strategies that public managers can lead in order to promote their area.

First, three sport events have been selected : "24 Heures du Mans", one stage of the "Tour de France" and the candidature of Annecy for the "2018 Olympic winter games". For each sport event, the method is based on qualitative interviews done with local public managers for sport strategies or organization event team. An analysis of a documentary corpus is added to these interviews.

- i. The "24 Heures du Mans" event is connected to a local tradition in motorized sport. Finally, this sport event is a complementary strategy with professional others local sports (basketball and soccer)
- ii. Welcoming a stage of the "Tour de France" is financially, for the city, the best ratio of public investment and media exposure
- iii. For Annecy, a medium size city, organizing the 2018 OG is considered like the most efficient way to be known on the international stage.

Presentation 2 : Mesuring the effects of Sponsorships on brand's relationship: The example of the sponsorship of a French cycling Team

The evaluation of sponsorship impact is without doubt, the area where sponsorship research has progressed the most over the past few years. Many sponsorship researches have primarily focused on awareness and brand image to build corporate strategies. Those objectives are the most obvious and are naturally more studied than the others.

But variance of sponsors objectives is really large and depends on many factors, such as sponsorship area and activity, as well as sponsor industry.

Bouygues Telecom is the third mobile operator in France. Its communication's strategy is focused on "being the French consumers' favourite communication brand" and the customers relationship management (CRM) is essential. Bouygues Telecom is an important sport sponsor since 1997 and has been the main sponsor of a French cycling Team since 2005. This study examines the cycling sponsorship impacts on brand attachment, which is a major part of brand's relationship as a component of an "emotional fidelity". Lots of marketing and social sciences researches underline the new role of this "relational marketing" to help companies to keep their customers for a long term relation.

We report the results of a quantitative survey carried out during the Tour de France 2006 on 721 event spectators. Those results point out the factors which can help to develop brand's attachment, such as nostalgic connections or perceived values between the team and the sponsor. A causal model with sociodemographic and psychographic variables has been tested. On the one hand, we would demonstrate brand's attachment can be viewed as an essential sponsorship effect and objective. We would try

## 2007 North American Society for Sport Management Conference (NASSM 2007)

to give elements to evaluate this impact on the other hand.

Presentation 3: Why the NBA and the NFL can not be applied to cycling? The example of success and failure of the UCI Pro Tour.

Before 2005, the organization of cycling races was particular because every big Tour (Tour de France, Vuelta, Giro) was organized by a different local private organizer. This was a problem for the UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale of International Cycling Union) that had almost no power on them and no financial nor marketing control. For example, an international sponsor had no guarantee

Therefore, the UCI decided to change the system in 2005 and to introduce a new system that obliged the teams to participate to more races (that increased a lot the budget for a season) and to sign longer sponsorship contracts. The aim was to give more financial security and visibility to the managers of the teams.

"The UCI ProTour groups together the best races, the biggest teams and the best riders in the world. It is an international circuit with an individual ranking, a team ranking and a country ranking. UCI ProTeams have all obtained a UCI ProTour licence, giving them the assurance and obligation of taking part in all the UCI ProTour races. Only teams who respect a series of very strict criteria - sporting quality of their team, respect of ethics, legal and financial compliance - can benefit from this right. By ensuring the professionalism of all those involved, the UCI ProTour gives top level cycling greater stability and helps to improve the quality of the racing. 14 teams currently have a sponsor until 2008 and some for even longer, guaranteeing a degree of stability never seen before in cycling. New sponsors have signed up this year and others have expressed an interest for the future". Source : [www.uciprotour.com](http://www.uciprotour.com) (last access on October 31st 2006).

The changes have been huge through the introduction of the UCI pro Tour. The will of the UCI was to take the control of the races and therefore to have the power of leading a new marketing : this was supposed to lead to a similar system of the NBA or the NFL, which are very powerful leagues that have a big marketing and financial control on their product. Our communication illustrates these changes through 20 qualitative interviews lead during the 2006 Tour de France among the UCI, the teams involved, the sponsors and the organizers of cycling races. It concludes that cultural diversity, local management, power control and historical differences explain why the system was slow to implement and has not given impressive results for now. Cycling is now much more expensive for sponsors, but the visibility of the brands was not improved.

### References

- Baade R. (1996). Professional sports as a catalyst for metropolitan economic development. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, vol. 18, n°1.
- Chema, T. (1996). When professional sports justify the subsidy. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, vol. 18, n°1.
- Daniels, M.J., Norman, W.C., & Henry M. (2001). Estimating income effects of a sport tourism event. *Annals of tourism research*, vol. 31, n°1.
- Desbordes, M. (2006, Eds.). *Soccer and marketing : an international perspective*. London, Elsevier, 544 p.
- Lacoeuilhe, J. (2000). L'attachement ... la marque : proposition d'une ,chelle de mesure. *Recherche et Applications en Marketing*, n°15, 4, 61-77.
- Meenaghan, T. (2001). Understanding sponsorship effects. *Psychology & Marketing*, 18(2), 95-122.
- Speed, R. (2000). Determinants of Sport Sponsorship Response. *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science*, 28(2), 226-239.
- Walliser, B. (2003). An international review of sponsorship research : extension and update. *International Journal of Advertising*, 22, 5-40.