Secondary Advertising Effects: A New Perspective on Giveaway Items

Akira Asada, Texas Tech University  
Akiko Arai, Tokyo University of Science

Marketing - Consumer Behavior (Professional Sport)  
virtual asynchronous  
10-minute lightning talk (including questions)  
Abstract 2020-182  
Session: Consumer Behavior I

Sports teams give away promotional items such as T-shirts and bobbleheads to incentivize people to attend their games (Kelley, Harrolle, & Casper, 2014) and enhance the game-day experience (Yoshida & James, 2011). Sport management researchers have examined the unique roles these giveaway items play pregame and during the game; however, little scholarly attention has been paid to their postgame roles. After a sporting event, game attendees often take a giveaway item home and use it in their daily lives (e.g., wearing a T-shirt). By doing so, they expose the item to other people, who may then become interested in the item and talk about it. In this way, giveaway items can increase brand exposure and trigger word of mouth (Sernovitz, Godin, & Kawasaki, 2009). We call this post-event promotional effect of giveaway items the secondary advertising effect. The purpose of this research is to examine how people use giveaway items after sporting events and discuss how sports teams can create secondary advertising effects.

We conducted a survey using Amazon Mechanical Turk. We recruited 401 U.S. residents who had received a giveaway item at a sporting event in the preceding year. Of the 401 participants, 233 had received apparel, 164 had received memorabilia, and four had received both. We asked the participants who received apparel (a) how often they wear the item and (b) how often they talk about the item with others. For those who had received memorabilia, we asked (a) how often they show the item to others and (b) how often they talk about the item with others. They answered these questions by selecting one of five options: “Never,” “Rarely,” “Occasionally,” “Often,” or “Always.” Finally, we asked those who selected “Never” or “Rarely” why they do not regularly use, wear, or show the item to others.

Regarding apparel, 68.4% of participants said they wear the item, and 45.2% said they talk about the item with others at least occasionally, implying that apparel generates secondary advertising effects. The most common reason for not wearing a giveaway apparel was “The item is too small/large” (25.5%), followed by “The item is not fashionable” (24.5%). Thus, sports teams may increase secondary advertising effects by (a) providing various size options and (b) designing fashionable items. Regarding memorabilia, 47.1% of participants showed a giveaway item to others, and 40.6% talked about the item with others at least occasionally. Thus, memorabilia are less likely to create secondary advertising effects compared to apparel. This may be because many people (53.1%) keep memorabilia in private spaces (e.g., their bedroom). Participants also mentioned that they do not show the item to others because “The item is not interesting” (53.9%). Thus, sports teams may increase secondary advertising effects for memorabilia by (a) encouraging people to place items in public spaces and (b) designing items that reflect an interesting experience and identity. We will discuss more specific recommendations during the presentation.