



Editorial



Academic concepts in the mainstream

It is often said that in Europe sports marketing is barely into its second decade; in North America, the discipline is more mature in terms of both business and research. What has been achieved in the past ten years is staggering: a massive expansion of the industry, more common interest between academics and practitioners, and, not least, more academic journals.

So it is worth considering how marketing agencies, sponsors and organisations such as the IOC now talk about ambush marketing or CRM as if these methods had always been prominent in sport. Many have forgotten the origin of such concepts and the great deal of research and modelling undertaken by academics to help understand the issues. Ambush marketing, for example, has been studied in numerous academic journals for more than 20 years by Tony Meenaghan, now Professor at University College Dublin and a member of our editorial board. He highlighted the problem years before it was of interest to the majority of rights holders, sponsors or marketing agencies.

I am proud, therefore, to introduce this edition of the *Journal* as an example of the links between academics and practitioners. The papers here focus on a range of consumption and consumer behaviour related issues. The first three develop our knowledge through empirical findings; the conceptual article that follows provides a foundation for further research.

Portlock and Rose examine whether ambush marketing is losing its relevance to consumers. They consider the development of 'parallel event marketing' and how this may supplant outdated notions of ambushing or guerrilla marketing. The research focuses on viewers' consumption of a major sporting event. Interestingly, the results point to consumers knowing of, and recognising, non-official brands without negative impact on official sponsors or upon the event itself.

Consumers seek and acquire sporting goods that they believe meet a number of needs. Han and Kwon

investigate the moderating effects of brand name and country of origin on the perceived value of ski products and show that consumers do place an emphasis on both these factors.

Theysohn, Hinz, Nosworthy and Kirchner examine the potential of football clubs and federations to develop customer loyalty programmes through official supporters clubs. By studying 'willingness to pay', they posit that there are financial opportunities for clubs.

Uhrich and Koenigstorfer look at the potential for atmospherics to enhance the in-stadium experience and develop a series of research questions. The results could prove useful tools for practitioners in developing the consumer experience in sport.

This issue is a good example of the way the *Journal* should continue to develop as a peer-reviewed, internationally sourced publication, with very high quality, commercially relevant research and great diversity of research methods. Our goal is to promote and explore sports marketing through the different approaches (quantitative, qualitative, case studies) and to spread this work worldwide, always involving new academics and industry practitioners.

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