



Editorial



2012: a challenging and exciting year

This will be another incredible year for sport and particularly for sports marketing. Two major events are taking place, Euro 2012 in Poland and Ukraine and the 2012 Olympics in London, the so-called European heart of sport business.

These two events are particularly interesting because both faced significant problems in their preparation stages. The collaboration between two countries to deliver an optimal soccer event on time has proved difficult for Poland and Ukraine. The number of new facilities that had to be built and the need to modernise the transport systems were big issues. In London, the biggest challenge to be overcome was the cost and financing of the Olympics, particularly in a period of such economic uncertainty. The underestimation of costs, which helped to win the approval of politicians, local people and the IOC, is also something that sports managers will have to reflect upon for future Games.

Of course we can focus on sports marketing, merchandising, TV rights, catering, social media but let's not forget that the events themselves, the actual matches or competitions, are still the *raison d'être* of a club, a league, a federation or even an international organisation. Top-level professional matches also set a standard for amateur football; and the event becomes a showcase for the organisation that can leverage it for communication and recruitment. Indeed, without the event, there is no sports marketing.

In 2012 we can certainly expect the globalisation trends across sport to continue. Leagues and investors sometimes look for new markets, such as India and the efforts to develop football there, to counterbalance markets that have probably reached maturity, such as those for soccer in Europe or basketball in North America.¹

What are the key factors for the successful launch of a sport in a country? Is it possible to succeed without local stars? Can consumers embrace a sport where they have no cultural connection? If we look at baseball in Japan or Cuba, the NFL in Europe and the NBA in China, we see great examples that show that this expansion is possible.

Finally, in this issue you will see a new editorial board in place for the *Journal*. Many thanks to all who have helped our publication to grow and to become considered among the best in our field. I want to welcome incoming members and look forward to an exciting year ahead.

Enjoy this issue and I hope you will continue to extend the quality and excellence of our journal by submitting, reviewing and reading the articles we publish. Thank you for your interest and support as we continue our own globalisation and accept submissions from all over the world.

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1. See: http://soccer.net.espn.go.com/news/story/_/id/1009200/indian-football-set-to-get-its-own-ipl?cc=5739