



SOCCER SPONSORSHIP AND CORPORATE IMAGE BUILDING IN NIGERIA

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Abstracts: This paper focused on the mutual benefits that result from public relations activities in terms of soccer sponsorship in Nigeria. The followings are some of the benefits the sponsors and the sponsored acquire: they are mutual image enhancement, sales increment, community goodwill, product awareness creation and publicity. The paper admonishes individuals, companies, multi-national companies to continue to sponsor soccer sport in Nigeria.

Keywords: Soccer, Sponsorship, Corporate, Image Building.

Introduction

Soccer sport otherwise known as football game is a popular event that usually takes attention of football fans and millions of Nigerians. This event also creates avenue for companies, multinationals and corporate entities to create awareness of their products, services and image enhancement by sponsoring the event. Soccer or football in Europe is one of the most popular sports. It attracts a lot of people all over the world. Top teams attract thousands of people to stadia, millions more watch broadcasts on television and the internet. Soccer is a huge and rapidly developing business involving considerable amounts of money. Every soccer club needs money to develop, to buy new players and to hire experienced coaches. Professional soccer clubs, playing in national premier leagues and in international competitions, generate considerable revenues from broadcasting deals, ticket sales and merchandise, but almost all of them require sponsorship support. That is why most clubs seek to sign contracts with different investors, companies, to attract these funds. Companies in Nigeria that involve in sponsorship at one time or the other are MTN, Globalcom, Airtel, Coca cola, and many others. A large

part of such contracts are sponsorship deals with local or international companies.

Sponsorship as one of the elements of public relations deals on the prospectively mutually beneficial partnership between companies and soccer clubs thereby projecting the image of both. Such partnerships are usually based on buying a place for the company logo or advertising message on the club's kit or stadium banners in order to show it to thousands of fans who come and watch their favorite team's matches. Companies also use star players to endorse products and increase brand awareness. Each soccer club generally has several sponsors in kit sponsor, Sport broadcast sponsor and a shirt sponsor and sport wears. Sponsorship has become a form of exchange between the sponsor and the sponsored, with both parties seeking to achieve their own strategic goals (Farely & Quester, 2005). Sponsorship is a mutually beneficial cooperation where each company has its own commercial objectives (Jensen & Cobbs, 2014).

The Concept of Sponsorship in Soccer

Sponsorship is one of the elements of public relations and promotional marketing communication which undertake sponsorship of a special events to support corporate

Language, Literature and Communication Journal

An official Publication of Center for International Research Development

Double Blind Peer and Editorial Review International Referred Journal; Globally index

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objectives with the aim of enhancing corporate image, increasing awareness of brands, or directly stimulating sales of products and services. Sponsorship can be individual or joint; the event can be a one-time affair or a continuing series of activities. Sponsorship is distinct from patronage. Patronage is based on charity, an altruistic activity in which the patron holds little expectation of concrete benefit (Gross, Traylor, and Shiiman 1987). Sponsorship is a form of promotion, but it differs from advertising in that the medium and creative message are not tightly controlled by the sponsor. Sponsorships usually are not handled through conventional media (Gardner and Shuman 1987, Edafejirhaye, 2012). Instead, they involve the staging of an event around which advertising might or might not take place. Many authors in the field of marketing, Public relations and sports have all given different definitions of sponsorship. Esa (2010) defines sponsorship using the ICC code of sponsorship definition as :

Any commercial agreement by which a sponsor, for the mutual benefit of the sponsor and sponsored party, contractually provides finance or other support in order to establish an association between the sponsor's image, brands or products and a sponsorship property in return for rights to promote this association and/or for the granting of certain agreed direct or indirect benefits (Esa, 2010)

Lagae, (2005) defines sponsorship as a business agreement between two parties. The sponsor provides money, goods, services or technical know-how; in exchange, the sponsored party (individual, event owner or organisation) offers rights of associations that the sponsor utilizes commercially' (Lagae 2005, p. 35).

Shank (2009) regards it as investing in a sports entity (athlete, soccer, league, team or other social events) to support the overall organisational objectives, marketing, image building and products selling through promotional strategies (Shank 2009, p. 324).

Despite the fact that different authors gave different definitions, majority of them have some similarities and majority of them lay emphasis on the relationship advantage between an organisation and the sponsored object that sponsorship offers. On the strength of the above definitions, this paper defines sponsorship as promotional activities carry out by corporate organization in agreement with the sponsored entity to boost corporate image, sales of products and services in a particular season or event.

Soccer Sponsorship Objectives

Sponsorship is highly regarded for its perceived ability to accomplish certain objectives relating to overall corporate communications, such as enhancing corporate identity, awareness, or image building (Meenaghan 1991). Sponsorship may also enhance brand identity, awareness, or image. In the latter case, a direct sales objective is sometimes coupled with an event. As Meenaghan (1983, p. 47) observes: "In particular, marketing communications should be set in precise terms, budget levels should be established as a consequence of these objectives and the results should be evaluated in terms of the objectives laid down. The practical management of sponsorship...falls far short of this prescribed level of rigor in the setting of objectives and, by definition, in the formal approach to evaluation." Due to the fact that the field of sport sponsorship does not yet have a precise and exact conclusion, many authors and researches carried out are yet to give a clear concept on the whole objectives of sponsorship in sporting events.

A company's sponsorship success of an event is defined by its objectives and how well the end result can be evaluated and beneficial to the organization. According to Wladimir and Stefan (2006), there are two types of objectives which can be classified as direct and indirect objectives. In the direct objective 'the sponsor expects a rapid change in behaviour of its existing and potential customers'. While in the indirect objective the authors maintain that it is 'primarily for increased visibility to



both brands and products, contact with a particular segment of its client base and an enhancement of its image; alongside growth in sales are only a long-term goal'. The objectives of companies involvement in sport sponsorship varies from author to author.

Sponsorship objectives, according to Jobber (2007) states that there are five major principals of sponsorship objective. These objectives include creating promotional opportunities, improving community relations, fostering favourable brand and company associations, creating entertainment opportunities and gaining publicity. Items and products such as sweatshirts, pens and bags can have a company's logo in order to reach a wider audience for easy retention and recognition.

Community social responsibility is another reason why companies get involved in sponsorship. Sponsorship of schools can help boost the reputation of a company in its given community. This will give a caring and socially responsible image to the consumers (Jobber, 2007).

Fostering favourable brand and company associations. This objective is linked to association for a company or brand according to Jobber (2007). The point is meant for a company to associate itself with an event and hopefully, the positivity of the event can be relayed to their products as well.

Creating entertainment opportunities Jobber also argues that companies sponsor events not only for publicity but also to reach out to customers that are highly placed in various fields. Successful employees also benefit from this as they are highly rewarded when top celebrities participate in an organized event.

Gaining publicity Sponsorship provides a good platform to reach millions of audience worldwide where some of them are likely to become customers due to the publicity provided by various media coverage internationally which aids in facilitating this process. Jobber also believes that sponsorship of certain major events like football aids in drastically create awareness shifts for various products.

Sponsorship objectives as Amis (1999) points out that a sponsorship should produce an outcome that matches well with the image that the sponsor is trying to convey. Any sponsorship should therefore produce an image which is so superior that it clearly differentiates the firm from its competitors. This author also suggests that a sponsorship, managed carefully, can be developed into a competitive advantage for the company.

An example of corporate objectives for sponsorships is when Peak Milk used Kanu Nwankwo to promote their company product- Peakmilk during 2018 world cup. This was done in order to build image, increase sale, promote the brand offering and also to develop the corporate culture. Providing a clear direction of where the company is heading and increasing the corporate morale may itself become a source of competitive advantage for the company, Amis (1999) states the following as most important when firms enter a sponsorship project:

1. Increasing public awareness of a brand or company

Amis (1999) states that one of the most common objectives for a company entering into a sponsorship is to increase the public awareness of either the company or of a specific brand.

2. Changing or enhancing company or brand image and reputation

Image and reputation can be seen as resources which enables a company to secure a competitive advantage (Amis , 1999). Sport or sponsorship has, according to the authors, been proven to be an effective tool to either change or enhance company reputation or brand image Dolphin (2003) suggests several objectives that companies might have for deciding to enter into a sponsorship. However, these objectives may vary from industry to industry Here are some of them:

1. Enhancing corporate image
2. Increase brand awareness
3. Stimulate sales
4. Corporate reputation
5. Alter public perceptions



6. Build relationships
7. Create goodwill
8. Enhance employee motivation

The first factor Dolphin (2003) mentions is the impact that sponsorships might have on the corporate image. Sponsorships might enhance the corporate image by influencing the impressions of the company or a specific brand held by a particular segment of the market. According to Dolphin (2003) increase of brand awareness accrues naturally from sponsorships. This might raise the profile of the corporate brand and thus increase the value of the brand. Sponsorships might also stimulate the sales of products or services according to Dolphin (2003). Furthermore, he stated that corporate reputation is an intangible value often focused on by corporation. Sponsorship is an excellent way of enhancing the reputation by giving back to the community in which the company operates. Sponsorships might also build relationships between the company and its customers. Creation of goodwill and an increase in employee motivation are also objects that sponsorships might focus on.

Sponsorship objectives according to Jefkin (2000), there is no single corporate objective in the decision-making process about whether and what to sponsor. A couple of the objectives listed by the authors are quite the same as compared to other authors earlier mentioned. Several corporate objectives used by corporations were listed by the authors as:

1. To increase public awareness of the company, the product, or both
2. To alter or reinforce public perception of the company
3. To identify the company with the particular market segments
4. To involve the company in the community
5. To build goodwill among decision makers
6. To generate media benefits
7. To achieve sales objectives

8. To showcase unique product features, technologies, or advantages
9. To create an advantage over competitors, through association or exclusivity
10. To gain unique opportunities in terms of hospitality and entertainment
11. To secure entitlement or naming rights (Jefkin, 2000 p. 124).

Literature review

The topic of soccer or sport sponsorship and its effectiveness for sponsoring companies has been actively discussed since the 1990s. Generally, sponsorship is “an investment, in cash or in kind, in a sport property in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that property” (Smith et al., 2008, p. 387). In other words sponsors pay sport clubs or sport events in order to promote their products and services, and to get a return on their investment. Verity states that sponsorship may be more effective than different traditional advertising campaigns or other promotional activities (Verity, 2002). There are a number of objectives and benefits that corporations pursue when sponsoring soccer or other sport: overcoming cultural barriers, establishing relationships with media corporations, becoming involved with the community, increasing brand awareness and facilitating positive brand image, reaching new target markets, boosting sales and market share through brand loyalty, protecting against competitors, obtaining hospitality opportunities, and even improving employee morale or facilitating staff recruitment (Biscaia et al., 2013; Cornwell et al., 2005). However the major aim of sponsorship is usually an increase in company awareness and brand loyalty to improve company performance and to attract new customers and shareholders.

Cornwell and Maignan (1998) distinguish measurement of sponsorship effects as one of five main research streams in this area. The main difficulty in the evaluation of sponsorship is the differentiation of its effects from those of other advertising and promotional techniques



(Pham, 1991; Miles, 2001; Miyazaki & Morgan, 2001). Most empirical studies on measuring sponsorship effects are based on consumer surveys (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). However the researchers note that questionnaires can give biased results because of small samples and/or the self-selection of respondents (Sneath et al., 2006; Smith et al., 2008).

According to value-based management, market capitalization is one of the main indicators of company performance. Clark, Cornwell and Pruitt (2002) show sponsorship to have an effect on share price. The study shows that, overall, sponsorships were perceived positively by stock market investors. The event study done by Reiser, Breuer and Wicker (2012) provides evidence that sport sponsorship announcements positively impact stock returns, but this impact differs among sports and regions. Hanke and Kirchler (2013) find a statistically significant impact of the results at an individual match level of the seven most important soccer nations at European and World Championships on the stock prices of jersey sponsors. However, research based on stock market data entails the analysis of listed corporations, thus a self-selection bias can occur.

Cornwell et al (2005) used the Scholes–Williams standardized cross-sectional market model to test whether there is a change in stock prices connected with sponsorship announcements. They found no significant positive impact of sponsorship announcements on stock prices during the period of 11 days around the announcement date. On the other hand, further tests considering longer periods around announcement day revealed a positive influence of the official announcement date. Thus, there is an impact but not in the short term before or after the announcement but the impact itself takes place. Deitz, Evans and Hansen (2013) show a strong shareholder wealth effect connected with the date of official sponsorship announcement.

Some papers, such as Biscaia et al. (2013) and Smith et al. (2008), are focused on the analysis of consumer

purchase intention which is perceived as the most useful indicator of sponsorship effectiveness given its impact on future sales (Crompton, 2004). Smith et al. (2008) investigate the relationship between sport sponsorship and customer purchase intentions. Results show that fan passion and a perception of sponsor integrity can create purchase intentions. So purchase behavior is the link between sponsorship and company sales. Biscaia and co-authors (2013) examined the relationships between attitudinal and behavioral loyalty with sponsorship awareness and purchase intentions of fans of a professional soccer team. They found that sponsorship awareness significantly influences the attitude toward sponsors, and the attitude toward the sponsor was the strongest predictor of purchase intentions.

It is becoming more desirable to integrate the company brand directly into sport broadcasts rather than to use traditional TV advertising during commercial breaks (Jensen & Cobbs, 2014). According to their study, sponsorship exposure during sport events is necessary to create brand-awareness among people watching the event and it leads to the creation of brand equity which is one of the commercial objectives for most companies.

However, the influence of sponsorship on company performance can be negative. Investigating the link between sports sentiment and stock returns Edmans et al. (2007) found an effect from losing knockout matches in international tournaments. Norman (2012) also notes both positive and negative comments – some fans criticize frequent reminders of a sponsor during broadcasts. Before deciding on sponsorship, a company should take into account that becoming a sponsor means a certain transformation of marketing strategy and possible changes in key aspects of marketing expenditures (Cornwell et al. 2005). The costs of changing marketing strategy can have a significant negative influence on company performance.

Moreover, financial performance can be a determinant of major investment decisions, particularly the decision to



become a sponsor. Cobb-Walgren et al. (1995) show that companies which spend larger amounts of money on marketing achieve better brand recognition, brand equity and consequently have bigger returns on their investment which in turn, allows bigger marketing expenditure to be made. This logic may be applied to sponsorship as a part of marketing strategy (Cornwell et al., 2001). The bigger the budget is, the more money can be spent on sponsorship. Not every company is large enough or performs well enough to invest large amounts of money in non-traditional promotional strategies. Therefore, sponsorship decisions depend on financial strength (Gomes, 2001). Becoming a sponsor is an investment decision made by the company and there is a two-way relationship between company performance and its decision to sponsor a soccer club. Also, the studies of Love and Zicchino (2006) and Eklund (2010) on the relationship between investments and company performance show that earnings are significant determinants of investments.

Uses and Gratification Theory

This paper is hinged on the uses and gratification theory. The 'Uses & Gratifications' (U&G) theory focuses on factors influencing motives for use and outcomes for people's media-related behaviour (Newhagen & Rafaeli, 1996). This research tradition assumes that people's use of media is determined by the degree to which this use of media does indeed satisfy people's needs (Palmgreen, Wenner & Rosengren, 1985). This approach allows for investigation of motivational access and online skills, choice of applications and diversity, or lack of these among corporations. It can be assumed that sponsors of soccer events, just like any other user group, use the soccer event and the media strategically to boost their corporate image, sales of products and brand offerings awareness creation.

Soccer Sponsorship as Public Relations Marketing Tool

Profit making is usually a great concern of most companies due to the fact that their products and or services need to dominate over that of their competitors in the same field of business as they are. This is vital due to the fact that most products and services are quite similar in most instances and as such companies need to be creative in their marketing strategies so as to stand out from the crowd. Most companies' departments use various means of reaching out to both existing and potential customers to purchase their own products. Using soccer promotion as a marketing tactic is of essence, as companies need to get their brands, name, and their messages directly across to the consumers (Buhler & Nufer 2010, p. 98).

It is believed that advertising is an old form of communication and it is a well-known promotional tool but in recent times, consumers have been over-saturated with advertisement both on television and on the print media and majority cannot recall most of the commercials they come across. Over the years, marketers developed new means of promotional tools to reach out to the consumer markets with the likes of public relations, sales promotion, direct marketing, soccer sponsorship and product placement (Buhler & Nufer 2010, p. 98). As such, sponsorship can be linked to other forms of promotional tool.

Soccer Marketing

Sport is generally understood to include physical activities that go beyond competitive sports. Incorporated into the definition of sport are all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction. These include: soccer play; recreation; organized, casual or competitive sport; and indigenous sports or games.

During the past few decades, sport has developed from a relaxing weekend activity into a complex industry. This is evident from various phenomena. On the one hand,



sport is magnified daily in the media. Good examples of this is all the news concerning Samuel Eto Okocha, Kanu Nwankwo, Wayne Rooney, David Beckham or Tiger Woods.

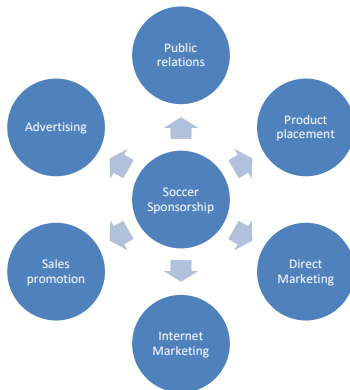


Fig. 1 Soccer Sponsorship is linked with other promotional activities (Adapted from Buhler & Nufer, 2010)

The speed with which all this happens demands creative and determined sports management. In an age in which consumers are flooded with information, it is essential for a brand to communicate distinctively. With an appealing sports project, brands can break through the immunity that consumers have developed to the innumerable advertising stimuli. Through a sports sponsorship project, a brand communicates information and avoids confusion with other competitors (Lagae 2005, p. 2).

During the last couple of decades, soccer or other sport amateurism has risen dramatically into a far more professional business and the level of entertainment that came along with this phase was quite rapid. The evolution which commenced in the United States has expanded rapidly around the world where many people now tend to make their favourite sporting activity as the primary means or making a livelihood. Most athletes are full time professionals with incomes from both sponsorship endorsements and contracts. A couple of the biggest

events that take place around the world include the Olympics, Nations Cup, World Cup or the Super Bowl. These events generate huge amounts of revenues for their respective organizers. Sports at either the amateur or professional levels are considered to be big business and as such, the organizers need to fully well comprehend the importance and basic principles of marketing. Companies would always want to see a return on their sponsorship investments; while the fans and spectators would want to see their respective club sides and team perform well by winning what is at stake in the whole tournament.

Mullin et al (2007, p. 11) defines sports marketing as ‘consisting of all activities designed to meet the needs and wants of sport consumers through exchange processes. Sport marketing has developed two major thrusts: the marketing of sport products and services directly to consumers of sport, and the marketing of other consumer and industrial products or services through the use of sport promotions’.

Mullin et al (2007, p. 17) recognizes four dimensions where the unique characteristics of sport marketing are quite obvious. These include product, market, finance and promotion.

Product

Sport as a product can be described as ‘any bundle or combination of qualities, processes, and capabilities (goods, services, and/or ideas) that a buyer expects will deliver want satisfaction’ (Mullin et al. 2007, p. 17). Marketers ought to understand that sport depends much on social facilitation. Either a fan or participant, sport concepts is highly based on individuals’ interaction with one another.

The true nature of sports is that it is a highly perishable commodity, one cannot purchase past games tickets. They are presold and no inventories are taken. The sport consumers are also the producers. Spectators to a sport event have already purchased their tickets well in advance and at the same time, they add the thrill and excitement around the event venue which contributes to the



atmosphere in the stadium which aids in producing the event (Mullin et al. 2007, p. 18).

Sports are quite inconsistent and unpredictable. Inconsistency and unpredictability are an important aspect of any sports marketing success. These two aspects create a sense of momentum and competition, which eventually raises the interests and expectations of the spectators. Sport marketers need to understand that there are quite a number of benefits that accompanies each different athlete as each is quite unique in his/her own way both on and off the pitch (Shank, 2009, p. 18).

The final feature in the sports product is the concept of core product. Here the top management in the leagues makes the rules while the team managers usually go for top athletes that are capable of delivering efficiently and effectively to the squad as a whole and not just their marketing prowess (Mullin et al. 2007, p. 19).

The Sports Market

There tends to be a high level of co-operation amongst many sport organizations with each other. Mullin et al (2007) states that sports organizations cannot exist in isolation, they need to co-operate. The co-operation main principle is to create a level of meaningful competition between the professional, amateur and intercollegiate sports (Mullin et al. 2007, p. 19).

There is a level of fluctuation in demand in the sports industry. Most form of sport has some annual life cycle that dictates demand. The commencement of the football league in England popularly referred to as the English premiership usually brings high level of expectations and hopes. Where fans are quite eager to know how well their teams are doing on the team table and the more points acquired, the more revenue such matches are able to acquire through the ticket and merchandise sales.

Sports has become quite embedded into our daily lives, most spectators find it as a way of life and some find it as an adrenaline booster to some extent. Soccer like other sports relates with some human attributes such as

religion, eating and drinking, sex and even politics (Mullin et al, 2007, p. 20).

Soccer Promotion

The level of media coverage on sport promotions has been on the rise, with many of the coverage focusing on both the athletes as well as the organizations themselves. Although this form of media coverage can be a 'double edged-sword' (Mullin et al. 2007, p. 22).

Soccer teams tend to get free publicity on a daily basis through different communication means either in the newspaper, on the radio, on the television and very recently on the internet, all these avenues pose a somewhat advantage in terms of merchandising and ticket sales as well as youth development program but could also have some drawback effects. It could lead to marketing departments becoming rather inactive as well as affecting the psyche of individual athletes who are made superstars suddenly. The media and sponsors usually require celebrities, athletes who can be identified as attractive in the behaviour both on and off the field of play. They are usually somewhat exploited in marketing purposes and are not so popular amongst members of their teammates.

Soccer Financing

The financing of soccer sports has some major features which makes it quite different from other types of marketing. The total cost consumers spend on sports products are invariably low when compared to the total costs paid by the consumer in relation to the sport product. Travel expenses, food and merchandise are all contributing to the total cost that is accrued to a consumer and are all controlled by someone else other than the core event organizer (Mullin et al. 2007, p. 21).

The indirect revenues costs are somewhat greater than the direct revenue costs such as ticket sales being the major source of revenue. This aspect is mostly the case in major professional sports with high level of followers. Indirect revenues mean media contracts and sponsorship money. The tendency to rely heavily on these indirect sources of



income is quite notable on most professional sports as attempts are being made to obtain sponsorship agreements and vital media contracts in the sports industry. Some sports organizations now rely much on the resources provided to them by wealthy benefactors, who in turn see these organizations as their own personal hobbies (Mullin et al. 2007, p. 21).

Chelsea Football Club can best illustrate this aspect. A wealthy Russian businessman, Roman Abramovich, owns Chelsea Football Club with a subsidized loan of £115m. Without the loan, the club would be unable to function and would have been in a liquidation state

(<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4219397.stm>). This demonstrates the special nature of sports as a business and illustrates the challenges sports marketers will have to face in its management aspect.

The Seven Keys of Effective Sponsorship

There are seven keys that lead to an effective sponsorship according to David Aaker and Erich Joachimsthaler (2000, p. 223). In order for firms to locate and manage successful sponsorships, these guidelines (figure 2) can improve the chances to manage effective sponsorship agreements.

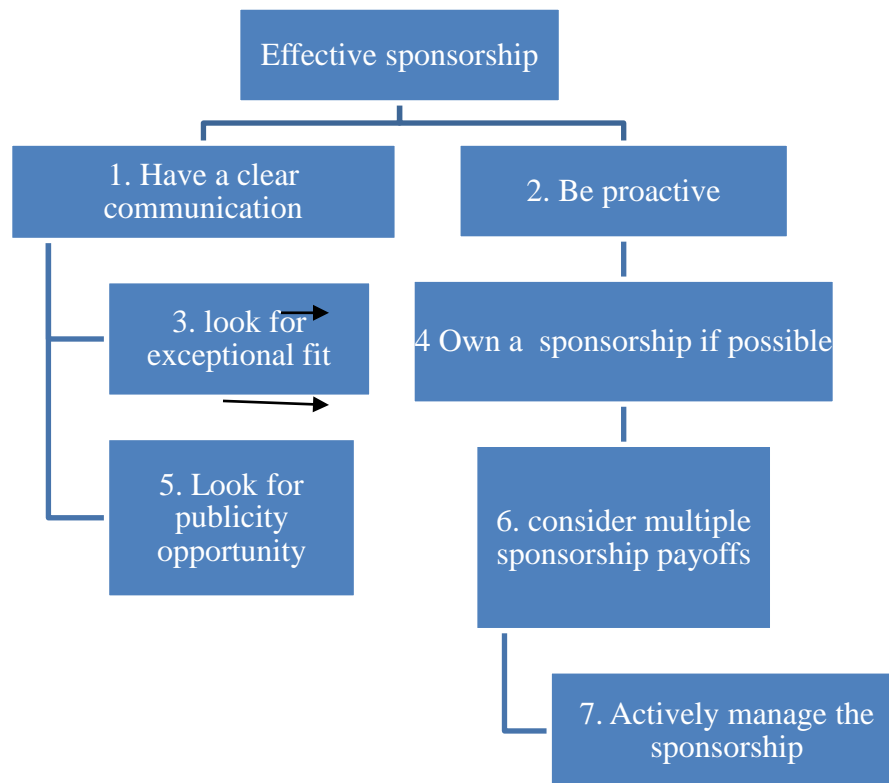


Fig 2. Seven Keys to effective soccer sponsorship.

Adapted from Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000 P. 223 and Oladunni, 2011 P.33.

From the above diagram, the company needs to first have clear communications objectives for the brand. A sponsorship strategy should be responsive to the



communication objectives of the brand. There are often three types of objectives: visibility/awareness, association development, and relationship development. Each of these could be an important driver of the sponsorship strategy. Having an understanding of the brand essence, the core identity, the extended identity and the value proposition are the initial points of having clear communications objectives; it also includes having communication priorities. Knowledge of the associations that are needed should drive the sponsorship strategy-not only the selection of sponsorships, but the way in which they are managed as well as being exploited (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000, p. 223).

In the second phase, the company needs to be proactive. The temptation in sponsorship is to simply choose from what is offered, especially since some firms get thousands of requests each year. Sponsorship selection, however, needs to be managed proactively by developing a set of criteria for the ideal sponsorship, then listing possible choices that score well on these criteria. Being proactive increases the likelihood that the sponsorship will be original and break out of the clutter. Scaling a wide variety of sponsorships as to their personality and matching those to the personality reflected in the communication task is often a helpful way to screen sponsorship options.

In the third phase, the company must look for an exceptional fit. An exceptional fit between an event and a brand is much better than a good and a forced fit. A lack of fit then again could be a significant failure. An exceptional fit is when the product can be demonstrated in a way that is integral to the core essence of the sponsorship.

In the fourth phase, the company should own sponsorships because of its cost effectiveness. As stated earlier, the key to success is to own the sponsored event or the exclusive right to sponsor an individual over time and not just for a brief moment.

In the fifth phase, the company needs to look for publicity opportunities because they are the marks of effective sponsorships. Publicity will make the task of achieving brand building objectives more effective and efficient. Also, an event or a product demonstration strategy within an event having publicity potential means that it has inherent interest.

In the sixth phase, it is vital to consider multiple sponsorship payoffs, as some sponsorships pay for themselves by creating exposure and creating and strengthening certain brand associations. The sponsorship however can achieve meaningful brand building objectives in other ways. For instance, by providing event experiences to key customers, by demonstrating new products, by mobilizing the organization for brand building, and by interjecting the brand into the event/customer bond. At this moment, a thorough evaluation of the sponsorship is beneficial..

The seventh and the last phase is to actively manage the sponsorship. An effective sponsorship does not just happen, certain goals need to be set, programs put in place to achieve the goals, and the results measured. Sponsorship ought to be considered as a co-branding experience, a co-brand needs to be created by consistently using a composite logo and actively creating brand awareness and associations. The co-brand is the ultimate asset from the sponsorship. Active management also means the involvement of the extended organization

Conclusion

When companies commit themselves to sponsoring certain activity, they should always have clear reasons and objectives for their actions. Sponsorship goals should always be linked to promotional objectives and in a wider sense to the marketing objectives of the organization (Shank 2009, p. 333). Shank (2009, p. 333) differentiates between direct and indirect sponsorship objectives. The direct sponsorship objective is expected to have an immediate impact on sales as well as impacting the level of the consumer behaviour. The indirect sponsorship



objective on the other hand is regarded as a long-term commitment, which requires a high level of generating awareness and company image before the companies can reach their set indirect objectives.

Sponsorship is a great way of conducting business on a more personal basis in order to create a certain level of goodwill. Through the aid of hospitality and entertainment, an amicable business environment can be created which in turn can boost a company's image positively (Mullin et al. 2007, p. 328). One of the most important aspects why organizations go into sponsorship deal is either to build the organizations image or to maintain a high level image. It is a two-way street for both the sports entity and the sponsoring organization whereby the latter, tends to associate itself or its brands with the positive images obtained by the unique personality of the sporting event (Shank 2009, p. 342). As a result of the unification, entertainment and the large crowd that soccer attracts in Nigeria, individuals, companies especially multi-national organizations should continue to sponsor and use it to build their corporate image, promote their brand offerings and boost product sales.

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