sport marketing

"A life for sport, and sport for life": A multimedia interactive product to promote sport activities among teenagers

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Aim of paper and research questions

To celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, father of the evolution theory, the Master Degree in Sport Management of the University of Florence proposes to debate the evolutionary relationship between life and sport, building a multimedia interactive application titled "A life for sport, and sport for life".

Sport is for everyone and it is an opportunity to learn about and to deal with other people. Sport means emotion, enjoyment, fun, passion, participation, socialisation. However an increasing number of teenagers between 14 and 19 years drop out of sporting activities (around 80% in Italy). Nevertheless the teenagers are very interested in using *new media* (web site, mobile phones, video games, forum, blog, chat, etc.).

The content of this new product "A life for sport, and sport for life" has grown from the partnership between the Master Degree in Sport Management and the "Fondazione Museo del Calcio", and affiliated to the Technical Football Center, the Italian Football Federation and Rotary International, it is aimed at jointly promoting a *Premium Challenge* among Italian teenagers.
By posting information linked to the multimedia interactive product's content on a blog, teenagers have the opportunity to express their own life and sport experiences using different "languages" (writings, images, video, etc.). The purpose of the joint project is to stimulate young people toward an online cultural debate about the role of sport in streaming their private and social life.

Research design and proposed data analysis

The multimedia interactive product has been built through a qualitative process that includes six steps:

1. Brain storming
A team of students and researchers discussed "sport and evolution". In light of the brain storming, the research group decided to focus on how young people (0-29 years, male and female) manage the evolution of their own life in relation to sport.

2. Ethnographic observation
Two different demographic target segments were selected and observed in order to enlighten life evolution and the role of sport in it:

- Males and females 0-14 years;
- Males and females 14-29 years (Student/Employed/Unemployed; Occasional sport person/ Professional athlete/Disabled person).

Using video cameras, pictures, interviews, etc. teams observed the *persona* doing everyday activities such as shopping, making decisions, engaging in sport and physical activity, connecting with other people (family, friends, etc.). The *persona* were also observed performing tasks related to the use of the new media to watching a game on TV/web, seeking sport information, purchasing tickets or merchandising, etc.

3. User scenarios
Teams described each selected *persona* in his/her environment. Then they presented and discussed the ethnographic material built from direct observation and from the Internet. The collected images' analysis (video, markers, post-it, collages, etc.) has been crucial to understand the key aspects of each *persona* story, able to play an important role in the relation between sport and life.

4. Creating Powerpoint slide demo
Teams created 12 PowerPoint Stories:

- 7 resulting from ethnographic observations;
- 5 resulting from Internet search on sport champions' lives.

5. Building the multimedia interactive product
"A life for sport, and sport for life" is a multimedia interactive representation of some evolutionary life paths related to the sport practice. The key choices that mean the evolution of each persona's life related to sport are structured within an *interactive map* created using Adobe Flash Player. Each story is summarised in one or two minutes and has been represented by linking each PowerPoint demo to the "key variables" on which is built the interactive application.

6. Launching the competition among high school students
To promote the new multimedia product, an online *Premium Challenge* among Italian high school students was launched. By accessing the blog, teenagers can download the interactive video and then post their own experiences related to sport using their preferred creative "languages" (writings, video, pictures, etc.).

Discussion of progress
The multimedia interactive product "A life for sport, and sport for life" displays 12 *persona* stories emphasising the role of sport in the evolution of young people' private and social life. The stories describe how the environment can influence sport participation: in cases of accidents, lack of affection, anorexia, bulimia, drugs, etc. teenagers can be passive spectators, or become professional athletes, finding their reaffirmation through practice and competition. Sport activity is very helpful to rediscover individual body and mental relation in a social context.

The relation between sport and life does not show "a unique recipe". The 12 sketched *persona* stories just present a few real situations in order to draw teenagers' attention to the role of sport in their life.
The blog linked to "A life for sport, and sport for life" intends to attract young people to express their own experience. The *Premium Challenge* aims to stimulate teenagers towards a "creative and multimedia discussion" by focusing on their own life related to sport experience. The blog

is an important opportunity to disseminate the significant role played by sport in the evolution of the youngest towards adult roles.

The best contributors to the blog will be rewarded with an *Experiential Premium*: winners will spend a day meeting the coach of the Italian World Champion Football Team Marcello Lippi, at the Technical Football Center in Coverciano.

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