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## Sport Marketing in Islam, Muslim Countries and Communities

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Synopsis:

The question of sport marketing in Islam or "Islamic Sport Marketing" (if any) can be addressed in relation to how companies and brands (including top brands) adapt their marketing strategy to Islamic culture (and religious discourse). There is also the question (the challenge) of sponsoring mega and international sports events/competitions held or to be staged in Muslim countries (Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup is an interesting example). The host nation has to guarantee the interest of major stockholders in sport industry, including principal sponsors (such as Budweiser for FIFA), while promoting its cultural identity.

Abstract:

The topic of Sport Marketing in Islam and in Muslim Countries and Communities can be examined from at least two dimensions. First, in relation to Islamic ethics; or the questions of profit maximisation, common good, and the licit and prohibited in Islam (Halal and Haram). In this case, are concerned both non-Muslim sport organisations targeting Muslim and non-Muslim publics and Muslim organisations (or based in predominantly Muslim countries). There have been a number of recent incidents reported in the press about professional football players of Muslim background resisting, or expressing discomfort, to wear the club shirt sponsored by alcohol and betting companies, alcohol and gambling being Haram (unlawful) in Islam (1). There is also the question of sponsorship of mega and international sports events/competitions held or to be staged in Muslim countries (of course Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup is an interesting example). The host nation has to guarantee the interest of major stockholders in sport industry, including principal sponsors (such as Budweiser for FIFA), while promoting its cultural identity. The other dimension which is worth exploring is how companies and brands (including top brands) adapt their marketing strategy to Islamic culture or even adopt religious discourse to promote their product/ and brands among Muslim consumers. There is a growing business in Europe and in the Middle East of alternative halal products (e.g. halal beers) looking for their own share of the market, using

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sport as an opportunity to promote their brands (2) . With both dimensions, the general question regarding the existence of an Islamic marketing concept and approach, and thus the existence of an Islamic sport marketing, will be critically discussed.

References:

1- Newcastle United's Muslim players told wearing Wonga-sponsored shirts infringes Sharia law, The Telegraph (10 October 2012). Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/football/teams/newcastle-united/9598023/Newcastle-Uniteds-Muslim-players-told-wearing-Wonga-sponsored-shirts-infringes-Sharia-law.html>

2- Non-alcoholic beer is taking off among Muslim consumers, The Economist (August 3rd 2013), Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/news/business/21582531-non-alcoholic-beer-taking-among-muslim-consumers-sin-free-ale>