Sport Information Technology as Sport Event Legacy: Cases in Korea

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Abstract

As we hardly avoid the umbrella of information technology in daily life, current mega sport events might not survive without the support of computer technology. Since the first computerized results system developed for the Olympic Winter Games, Squaw Valley 1960, the sport-mediating computer technology has turned its position from supporting events to mandatory (Payne, 2005). The official report of Squaw Valley 1960 wrote "For the first time in Olympic history, the hundreds of athletes from the various participating countries knew the results of their efforts and of their competitors' while the events were still in progress (Roobin, 1960)." But currently in the eyes of contemporary sport events the IT(Information Technology) are taken for granted.

Kang(2005) argued that sport industry grows with making sports derived value network. In this sense the field of IT could be considered as a sub-industry derived from the sports industry and the IT promotes the growth of sport industry. It is proven that IT advancements have enhanced athletic performance and induced wide participation from the public through media technology. Furthermore, adapting computer technology to operate sport events such as managing sport event participants, providing information to media, managing available resources, enhancing punctuality in scoring and timing, and so on, is expected to reduce the total cost in operating and make events more efficient.

However, ironically, as the IT intervention to the sport event increases the operation budget has risen. In Torino 2006, 26.61% of total operations expenditure was used (IOC, 2005) in IT field, and according to the bidding files of 2012 London Games, the expected technology expenditure take the top spot among other items followed by sports venue operations at USD 417 million (17% of expenditure), administration at USD 255 million (10%), transport at USD 198 million (8.5%) and Games workforce at USD 187 million (8%). One of the reasons why the IT expenditure is rising, even the technology reduces the managerial costs, is that the importance and usage of IT in the sport events has been rapidly grew and IT plays key role in sport events. On the other thought we might have is that IT may convergent the other event managing activities within the item and, furthermore host cities regards IT expenditure as a kind of domestic investment for the IT infrastructure. In this case we can say that IT expenditure remains long after event as infrastructural and intangible legacy(Cashman, 2005, Moragas, Kennett & Puig, 2003).

The purpose of this study, with these in mind, has two fold. One is to find the impact of IT on the mega sport events in Korea by comparing the technological trends and

sporting trends from 1980s to present. The other is to forecast the future of sport events considering IT developments. To accomplish the aims, the analysis of official documents and social statistics which related to 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, 1999 Winter Asian Games, 2002 FIFA Worldcup, 2003 Universiad, and the bidding file for 2014 Winter Games were used as secondary data. Furthermore the experience-based heuristic approach was performed as the researcher of this study had worked for all the sport events provided except for 1988 Games, and 2014 bidding committee.

The results of study are as follows,

1. IT values as sport event legacies can be found in a long term bases and the leave positive legacies if these were considered as national level infrastructure and aligned national information policies. Cashman (2005)'s 6 fields of legacies((1) economics, (2) infrastructure, (3) information and education, (4) public life, politics and culture, (5) sport, (6) symbols, memory and history economics), in a negative and/or positive way, needs to be considered as the time-wise factors. The legacies could be figured even after the events. In other words, IT legacies are not just remaining ones but lasting.

2. The trend of IT, as reflection of social phenomena, had gaps in IT adoptions to sport event in the past event, however, the gaps have been narrowed down recently.

3. It is expected that mutual dependencies of IT and sports will be increased and needed to redefine the correlation between sport and IT In the future. Sport could be existing ubiquitous and changed by the ubiquitous technology. Going beyond the internet era, it is also expected that the ubiquitous sport events will show up (e.g. u-Olympic, u-Worldcup, and u-Sport).

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