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distribution strategies of licensed products in Turkish football

F. Uztug¹

¹*Anadolu University, Faculty of Communication Sciences, Eskisehir, Turkey*

ferruhuzt@gmail.com

A quick glance at football in Turkey will reveal that the football industry has developed rapidly during the last three decades. Turkish football revenues have reached 525 million € in 2007-2008 football season. Istanbul clubs (Galatasaray, Fenerbahçe, and Beşiktaş), as called Three Biggest, has received a significant portion of these revenues and licensed product sales are considered as an important revenue item. The basic aim of this paper is to examine distribution strategies of licensed products in Turkish football, especially Istanbul clubs.

Distribution Strategies in Turkish Football Market

A sport product is a good, a service or any combination of the two that is designed to provide benefits to a sport spectator, participant or sponsor (Shank, 2002). This definition of product includes goods and service. Services such as watching a football game are being produced by the players and consumed by the spectators simultaneously. However when you purchase a pure good such as a sport shoes, they must be produced by a manufacturer, sent to a retailer and then sold to. This is formal channel of distribution. This paper focuses on sport goods and formal distribution channels of three biggest in Turkish football.

The number of channel levels involved can describe distribution channels. Each layer of marketing intermediaries that performs some work bringing the product and its ownership closer to the final buyer in a channel level. Channel 1 called direct marketing channel, has no intermediary levels. It consists of a company selling directly to consumer. Channel 2 called indirect marketing channels, has two or more intermediary levels like retailer, wholesaler or jobber. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2000; Berkowitz et al., 1997). Indirect marketing channels have become more important for sport goods in sport marketing. Especially retailing is a common strategy for Istanbul clubs for selling their licensed products in Turkish football.

It can be said that franchising strategy is another common strategy which have used widely for three biggest in Turkish football. Franchising idea has been around since the beginning of the century, but it caught on especially in food retailing only in the 1960s. In a franchising arrangement an independent business person agrees to sell the products or services of a parent company, use its name, and adopt its policies in exchange for an exclusive territory (Kotler, 2000; Rachman, 1994). Also franchising is an arrangement where by a supplier or franchiser grants dealer or franchisee, the right to sell products in exchange for some type of consideration. The franchiser may receive some percentage of total sales in exchange for furnishing equipment, buildings, management know-how, and marketing assistance to the franchisee. The franchisee supplies labor and capital operates the franchised business and agrees to abide by the provisions of the franchise agreement (Pride and Ferrell, 1997).

Conclusion

Istanbul clubs, as called Three Biggest, are trying to build up a modern and functional marketing

management systems in Turkish football. They started product selling with uniform in 1980s. However, recent years we can see that they have extended their product range. Three Biggest, use similar strategy and tactics for selling their licensed products. They introduced Stores (Galatasaray Stores, Besiktas Stores and Fenerium) by their foundation of marketing company. Then they have used franchising and retailing systems for distribution strategies. In additionally, they have used corners in widely shopping stores. Istanbul clubs' marketing strategies are based on Istanbul, however targeted all Turkey regions. Especially they have targeted relatively big cities in terms of economic and social infrastructures. We can say that, Turkish supporters that lives in Europe potential are not used effectively. But we have seen that they have projects that targeted Euro-Turkish supporters. Three biggest usually go to European countries such as Germany, Holland, Austria for preparing period of the session. So they play many matches for Euro-Turkish supporters. During the periods, their mobile selling trucks create selling points. This tactics also used in Turkey, especially before their displacement matches. Apart from all those mentioned, internet has new marketing opportunities for all marketing context in Turkish football. Istanbul clubs used this opportunities in a similar way since a few years. They give a link and direct to shopping web sites, which are famous online shopping web sites. In additionally, some Fan clubs and Supporter associations' web sites have links for on line shopping sites.

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