

# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COMMUNICATION: AN ANALYSIS OF PROVIDING MATERIAL BUSINESS SPORTS FIFA WORLD CUP 2010

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## Abstract

### Aim of paper and research question

This study focuses on the use of the communication of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on the Internet as a means of promoting greater transparency of suppliers of sporting goods companies present at the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Also outlined several opportunities this field offers for companies seeking to communicate ethically and effectively with stakeholders.

The main objective is to describe and explain, using content analysis through websites, social and environmental practices related to some of the most important international suppliers of sports equipment that were part of the last FIFA World Cup held in South Africa in 2010. We also aim to analyze social issues specific to the event as well as the commitment of these companies, especially Adidas (official sponsor of the Cup) and Nike, illustrating the importance of participation and engagement of these organizations in the biggest sporting event in the world and other social actions developed by them.

### Literature Review

Currently, the socially responsible behavior associated with good corporate governance practices are essential to enable the company to generate wealth and value for all stakeholders and ensure their survival on a sustainable basis.

The CSR in the sport is viewed with fresh eyes, especially from the nineties, when one of the largest corporate scandals in the field of human rights came to light. Several media outlets have criticized Nike, for the company had subcontracted the manufacturing of its products to companies and countries where the prevailing low wages, working conditions were poor, and many human rights

were trampled. Nourishing these scandals, the criticism came to public opinion - miniscule wages in Indonesia, the employment of children in Cambodia and Pakistan, poor working conditions in China and Vietnam - have sullied the reputation of the corporation (Locke, 2003).

CSR initiatives in the sports sector gained considerable ground in recent years. Many sports organizations have taken responsibility in areas where CSR is key to the dissemination of fundamental values, such as health promotion and physical activities, social and cultural enrichment, violence prevention, education, justice and humanitarian aid. This "corporate engagement" describes the range of a firm commitment to the market or a specific event, including financial commitment as a sponsor and social responsibility activities and market development (Hopkins, 2007).

## Methodology

This study is based on a literature review and content analysis of web documents and reports from the official websites of the seven suppliers of sports equipment at the last FIFA World Cup 2010 held in South Africa, and is therefore assuming websites that were created with the purpose of presenting the different actions of organizations for different audiences and its stakeholders, as clear evidence concerning the terms of CSR (Esrock & Leichty, 1998). We analyzed the existence and content of the following items: Specific Channel of Social Responsibility, Code of ethics, Social Balance, Mission, Vision, Values, Sustainability Report, Foundation and activities and social actions directly related to the event.

## Results and Conclusions

Companies like Nike and Adidas use in an exemplary way the Internet as a means of disseminating CSR, clearly demonstrating its concern with the CSR and image of its products in society. Available on their Web sites with text Mission, Vision, Values, sustainability reports, CSR specific channels and activities of their foundations and joint actions with other agencies (eg UNICEF). Moreover, companies like Umbro and Joma are lacking information regarding the activities and social activities available on their websites.

The results show that, from the year 1990, several stakeholders have pressed suppliers of sports equipment since the negative repercussions of cases of child exploitation (the most famous was the case of Nike), demanding changes from the garment sport industry worldwide and the sports managers in terms of their social performance. This pressure, which is also directly related to the expectations of the global community, in turn, led to the social policies of these organizations, as well as practices and outreach strategies, transforming the Internet today in one of those main channels. Thus, contributing to better engagement and communication with different stakeholders (especially customers).

References:

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