

A CASE STUDY OF SPORT MARKETING STRATEGY OF MERCURIES TAIWAN MASTERS INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT 2012

Noah Yang Hsu
Aletheia University, Tamshui, Taiwan
viennanoah@yahoo.com.tw

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The Mercuries Taiwan Masters Invitational Golf Tournament has successfully been held over 26 years without any interruption, making it one of the oldest golf games in Taiwan. Golf games in Taiwan normally do not attract enough spectators to watch them, unless there are world renowned Taiwanese star players, such as Yani Tseng, participating the game. Consequently, most of the golf tournaments wouldn't be able to sustain because of no sufficient incomes from spectators and from sponsors. MTMIGT managed to survive but also facing challenges of lacking viewers. The founder and the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the event, Mr. Ong, has a great vision for the tournament. He sees the city of Tamshui where the game is played since the first year with great potential in its cultural diversity, magnificent river and mountain landscape. Mr. Ong believes one of the best ways for the tournament to last or to be meaningful is to mingle the game with the local cultures, making the event one of the most sensational episodes in town.

Luckily chosen by Mr. Ong and his team, the Department of Sport Management at Aletheia University was honor to be its partner and took the responsibilities of making and implementing the sport marketing plan for the total prize of US\$600,000 game in 2012. The author of this research was the chief designer of the tournament's marketing work. And the marketing result was quite phenomenal for the year of 2012 with the increase of spectators of more than 1,500. That was greatly attributed to the successful sport marketing strategies developed especially for the tournament by the author. Now, while thinking its marketing strategies for 2013, the author is reviewing the process of 2012 and trying to report his experiences and discoveries in this case study. Literature reviews showed that in recent years some golf tournaments are in great needs to find spectators as well as sponsors, but the two are normally goes hand in hand. Without enough spectators, sponsors are not enthusiastic in engaging sponsorship.

The aim of this study was to examine the environment, vision, mission, and marketing objectives of the golf tournament, and also the sport marketing strategies to cope with the challenges and opportunities in its operating environment. This research was using literature review, data collection, and depth interviews with the founder and managers of the tournament. According to the progress of this research, an approximate of 4 propositions should be able to discover. Furthermore, the research result is going to present the entire sport marketing proposal of 2012 and compare it with the found propositions and most of all, the actual marketing performances of the game in 2012. Therefore, the research is meaningful in its implications and learning in at least 3 different ways:

- 1-It provides evidence that academy can work with industry, theory and practice can be linked.
- 2-The practical achievement of the marketing was great enough to be discussed.
- 3- The well documented case can be a teaching material for future learning.

Discussion was given based on the marketing objectives set by the founder of the tournament and the sport marketing strategies developed by the author. The conclusion was clear. The huge success of attracting more spectators than before were because of careful analysis was taken in the first place, and the knowledge of the author in understanding the local market as well as the vision of the game founder. Sport tourism was also taken a big role in developing the positioning for the golf tournament, and it worked.