

EMPOWERMENT MODEL CONSTRUCTION OF TAIWAN PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL MARKETING STRATEGY, PUBLIC RELATIONS MEDIA AND CONSUMER RELATIONSHIP

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Abstract

Background and literature

Several empirical studies showed that fans are always being the key factor that influences professional sport business (Lee, 2005; Liu, 1999; Shih, 2010; Wang, 2001). Some research also indicated that the most important thing for running the professional sport was to exactly understand fans participation behavior and satisfaction (Chen, 2003; Huang, 2010). In addition, public relations (PR) strategy has become the 5th P of marketing strategy. It has been verified that sport organization could achieve success through PR (Gaschen, 2000; Pghl & Bates, 2008; Sutton, 2006). With this in mind, the operation of strategic marketing plan, public relations media and positive consumer relationship of professional sport organizations can effectively enhance sports fans satisfaction and viewing intention and increase competitive advantages as well. As an iconic sport, Chinese Professional Baseball League (CPBL) played a crucial role in sports industry. While facing external environment challenges and competition from the same trade, CPBL cannot neglect the importance of planning an ideal marketing and public relations strategy that closely connected to consumers. Thus, the understanding of CPBL consumer behaviors becomes an important research topic as it helps to analyze the influence of marketing strategy and public relations media on the fans.

Purpose

From this perspective, the purpose statement of this study aimed to construct an empowerment model of Taiwan professional baseball marketing strategy, public relations media and consumer relationship based on the interpretation of actual practice of Taiwan professional baseball marketing strategy, its public relations media, the consumer spectator status and consumer behavior.

Methods: In order to achieve the purpose of this study, qualitative and quantitative researches were adopted. In-depth interview was one of the main methods to collect data from CPBL and teams; interviewees included secretary general of CPBL and team managers. Supplemented questionnaires survey was also used along with convenient sampling. Subjects were collected from on-site spectators during the CPBL regular season in 2012. The data collection also considered game locations and competitor matchups to ensure that the subjects who were surveyed were representative of the population. A total of 420 questionnaires were distributed, and 381 effective respondents were collected with a 90.71% valid return rate. In addition, Logistic Regression analysis was used to construct an empowerment model.

Results

The results were as follows: 1. On-site spectators of CPBL were mainly students, aged 21-30, college graduated, single, monthly income below NTD10,000 (330 USD). However, the overall satisfaction and viewing intention for CPBL was very low. 2. The degree of CPBL consumer's perception and identity toward marketing strategy and public relations media greatly varied. In terms of the perception part, "place" got the highest score, while "public relations media" was the lowest. Regarding to the identity part, "promotion" got the highest score, while "price" was the lowest. 3. Based on the in-depth interview, the operation of CPBL marketing strategy needed to be revitalized; the practice of public relations media had to be implemented solidly; CPBL and professional baseball teams could extend market segmentation and product differentiation to activate sport marketing strategies. 4. The fit of Logistic Regression model for CPBL marketing strategy, public relations media satisfaction and viewing intention was appropriate. Product, promotion and public relations media were the key factors that influenced consumer satisfaction; place and price were the crucial factors that affected consumers' intention to watch sport events.

Conclusion

CPBL should discuss and formulate its marketing and public relations media strategy according to consumer characteristics and should raise consumers' perception and identity toward CPBL so that consumer satisfaction and viewing intention can be enhanced effectively.

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