

Values at sports events – networking, a thought for operators, sponsors and the general public

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Within the “Live Communication”, events have become an effective tool of communication for B2B, as well as B2C, B2E and B2P. The success of sports events depends on the cooperation with sponsors with the aid of volunteers, the behavior of the audience, and the public acceptance (public sector, population).

Especially the emotionalization of products and/or services can be accomplished sustainably with sports events. The interest in visiting sports events had been high in the years of 2012 to 2015 according to the “Allensbacher Markt- und Werbeträgeranalyse” (AWA). Thus, about 3.5 Million German speaking nationals, starting from 14 years, visit a sports event “once a week”. Once to three times a month it amounts to approximately 7 Million people.

For financing sports events the operators have to rely on the ticket revenues as well as on sponsors. Those, on the other hand, have economic interests in their engagements. In this mélange of interests, it may happen that the desired quality of sports events is or becomes unattractive for one of the target groups. It would reduce the risk if the operators had intimate knowledge of the diverse interests and could exert influence on them. Therefore, a long lasting event history would be more probable. The most important target group is the so-called primary target group, the athletes, they are the “core of events”. Second priority is sponsors, spectators and affected residents.

The research question at hand focuses on the analysis of various interests and the consideration of how to synchronize them.

All studies, so far, have always observed the three mentioned actors separately. Even though, according to the sport-value-framework (SVF) of WORATSCHEK/HORBEL/POPP (2014) the value of sports events is only achieved by co-creation processes. Deviating from the Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL), next to the producer of values (event manager, organizations) the consumer is not exclusively seen as the “user” of values, but as a significant part of added value in a network.

Beyond that, the motives and reviews of spectators have been investigated empirically. (STOLLENWERK, 1996). Until now, there are no insights on the perception of the value of sports events by the affected residents (PREUß, 2011) as well as the joined impact of the three actors on their perception.

The fact that sports events do not take place or that sports events are discontinued after a few times might be due to investigation of singular causes, mostly the lack of or leaving of sponsors. The preparation and development of the sports product “event” requires a more dimensional attention and consideration.

In the assumed unison of sponsor’s interests, viewers and affected residents (e.g. referendums, especially with the

application of the city of Munich for hosting the Olympic Games 2022 and Hamburg for hosting the Olympic Games 2024) could the key for sports events be to establish specified, maybe even permanent, destinations. The research combines the theoretical insights of SDL and SVF with the irritation theory by LUHMANN (2011), focused on sports events. In the broadest sense, also in terms of conservation of resources, it would conceivable to develop a “sportevent-atlas”, which depicts the achievement of the above mentioned interests of certain sports and their events.

The research object is still a young sports event, taking place for the 4th time in 2016, the ATP Challenger in North Rhine-Westphalia. Since 2014 our research team has observed the tournament. The observation has been focused on two of the three mentioned actors (sponsors, audience).

This year we would like to continue our existing surveys among the sponsors and audience and additionally we would like to interview the affected residents.

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