

European Football Marketing and Brand Recognition in America

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Aim

The aim of this research is to examine the effectiveness of European Football marketing efforts in America by measuring the brand recognition of selected clubs from the five biggest leagues in Europe (English Premier League, La Liga (Spain), Bundesliga (Germany), Serie A (Italy), and Ligue 1 (France)). Viewership patterns of Americans are also examined to determine which leagues they follow from those listed above as well as Champions League and Europa League.

The purpose of this research is to determine the brand recognition of European Football clubs and their corporate sponsors in America, and what people currently living in the United States see as effective promotion of European Football in America. It also produces a series of categorical data to compare results across different participant categories.

Research Design

The design of this research is nonexperimental survey research relying on volunteer and snowball sampling methods. The researchers developed a website to host the questionnaire which includes a form submit button so that data can be collected anonymously and directly in a .csv format after which the results are analyzed using R. This study is nationwide having been distributed through email, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Individuals representing all ages, countries of origin, and gender have been included. Participants are encouraged to pass the survey along to other interested parties.

Participants in the study are asked a few brief categorical questions (time spent per week watching European Football during league seasons, length of time they have been watching European Football, and overall opinion of the effectiveness of European Football marketing in America) followed by a visual exercise that measures one's ability to identify 36 club logos and 18 corporate sponsor logos using drop-down menus. The clubs included in the study are: AC Milan, Ajax, Arsenal, Atletico, Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Benfica, Besiktas, Chelsea, Dortmund, Everton, Fenerbahce, Feyenoord, Galatasaray, Inter Milan, Juventus, Leicester City, Liverpool, Lyon, Manchester City, Manchester United, Marseille, Monaco, Montpellier, Napoli, Nice, Paris Saint-Germain, Porto, Real Madrid, Roma, Schalke, Sevilla, Tottenham, Valencia, Villarreal, Wolfsburg.

The questionnaire is broken into four parts. The first part measures viewing patterns and the overall opinion of participants as to the effectiveness of European Football marketing in America. The second part is a visual exercise where participants are asked to identify clubs based on club logos using drop down menus. Club logos were photoshopped to remove identifying information such as club names. The third part is a visual exercise where participants are asked to match corporate club sponsors with their appropriate club based on corporate logos using drop down menus. The fourth part asks participants to classify themselves in six different categories for analyzing trends and patterns in the data. The categories included are (1) frequency with which they play the EA Sports FIFA video game, (2) age, (3) gender, (4) region of origin such as Europe, South America, America, etc., (5)

Twitter usage patterns and, (6) region of the United States the participant currently resides in. There are five regions included in the study - Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest and West.

The study was officially launched on March 20, 2018. As of March 30, 2018, we have received 411 submissions. The overall goal is to receive 1,000+ submissions from all over the United States. This number looks attainable. Data collection will end the last week of April. Many professors who received an invite from the researchers chose to use it in their sport marketing classes as an exercise which continues to bolster numbers.

Results

- European Football brands are recognized more by Americans in the Northeast, Southeast and West regions than in the Midwest and Southwest Regions.
- English Premier League has the highest viewership patterns and brand recognition of any European Football league in America.
- The major brands of Barcelona, Real Madrid, Manchester United, etc. are recognized by many Americans who indicate they do not watch European Football.
- Corporate club sponsor logos are not recognized by most Americans.
- Americans who play a significant amount of the EA Sports FIFA video game can identify a significantly higher number of clubs than those who do not play.
- A significant number of Americans indicate that they use Twitter regularly to follow sports.
- All regions are participating in the study producing high *n* counts in each for final analysis thus producing a balanced pool for comparison.

Implications

Conducting this research allows sport marketing practitioners to understand the attitudes, viewership patterns, and brand reach of European Football clubs. It can help them develop marketing strategies by identifying populations who receive their marketing messages as well as identifying markets where European Football is hoping to continue to grow by capturing new fans.