

Chapter 5

A Case Study of Sport Marketing Strategy of Mercuries Taiwan Masters Invitational Golf Tournament 2012

Noah Yang Hsu
Aletheia University, Taiwan

ABSTRACT

The Mercuries Taiwan Masters Invitational Golf Tournament has successfully been held for over 26 years without any interruption. The Mercuries Corporation is the company that organized the event solely. However, golf games in Taiwan normally do not attract enough spectators to watch them, unless there are world-renowned star players participating in the game. Consequently, most of the golf tournaments would not be able to sustain because of no sufficient income from spectators and from sponsors. MTMIGT has managed to survive because of the support of its own corporation, but the event is also facing the problem of lacking viewers. Being noticed by the corporation, the Department of Sport Management at Aletheia University and its students earned their reputation as a group of hard working entry-level event volunteers for MTMIGT for many years. Because of this, the corporation contacted the head of the department in 2011 and invited them to work together on a larger scale. The Mercuries Corporation wanted the Department of Sport Management to plan the marketing works of the event, and the company would pay all of the expenses. After months of preparation and planning by the department, the 2011 MTMIGT and its surrounding sport marketing campaigns were staged with better results than its previous years. And the department thus successfully acquired the right of planning and implementing the event's marketing for 2012. This case study fully explores the cooperation between the MTMIGT and the department in 2012. The result as well as its process can be a reference for people in the sport industry and the academy.

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INTRODUCTION

The Mercuries Taiwan Masters Invitational Golf Tournament has successfully been held for over 26 years without any interruption, making it one of the oldest golf games in Taiwan (official website of MTMIGT, 2014). The Mercuries Corporation is the company that organized the event solely. However, golf games in Taiwan normally do not attract enough spectators to watch them, unless there are world renowned star players participating the game. Consequently, most of the golf tournaments wouldn't be able to sustain because of no sufficient income from spectators and from sponsors. MTMIGT managed to survive because of the support of its own corporation, but the event also facing the problem of lacking viewers. Over the years, the corporation does not satisfy this situation, and has been so eager to seek solutions. The founder and the Chairman of the corporation, Mr. Ong, has a great vision for the tournament. He sees the city of Tamshui where the game is played with great potential in its cultural legacy, magnificent river and mountain landscape. Also, the city's population is growing very fast. Plus the city is now the most popular tourism attraction in Taiwan, with visitors of more than 10 million a year. Mr. Ong believes one of the best ways for the tournament to last or to be meaningful is to mingle the game with the city's cultures. That is to link the game with the city, making the game to be well recognized by its citizens and making the game one of the most sensational local events of the year.

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The Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the environment, vision, and marketing objectives of the golf tournament, and also the sport marketing strategies to cope with the challenges and opportunities in its operating context. This study was using in depth interviews with the founder and managers of the tournament. The study also presented the sport marketing proposal of 2012, and most of all, the actual marketing performances of the game. Therefore, the study is meaningful in its implications in at least 3 different ways:

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

Conditions before Working with the Department

According to the first contact between the corporation and the department head in 2011, the CEO of the tournament, also a senior manager at the Mercuries Corporation, expressed specifically about his disappointment to the low participation of spectators over the years. In the year 2009 and 2010, the number of spectators had dropped to a

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