


Chapter 9

Small-Scale Sports Event Marketing Using New Marketing Concepts and Communication Tools

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ABSTRACT

Small-scale sporting events are often characterized as local activities limited in size, support, and resources. However, they fulfill an integral social role in the vibrant lives of local communities. Sports events also attract visitors as participants and spectators, benefitting the local economy and supporting tourism activities. To deliver successful events, coordinated marketing activities should be developed in a cohesive marketing plan. Every sports organization can implement effective marketing tools to increase the visibility of their event and enhance satisfaction among a variety of key stakeholders. This chapter outlines a manageable plan of marketing activities that will improve the odds of a successful event.

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CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After completing the chapter, the reader should be able to:

- Understand the process of sports marketing applied to small-scale events.
- Adopt a systematic approach to conceptualizing and creating a sports marketing plan.
- Define relevant marketing goals and objectives to be achieved along a timeline.
- Understand the distinction between strategy and tactics, and coordinate an integrated marketing plan designed to achieve event objectives.

INTRODUCTION

When we mention ‘sports marketing,’ a variety of prominent global sporting identities usually come to mind; the Olympic Games, FIFA World Cup, the NFL Superbowl... depending on your sports of choice. Big sports events also attract big brands. The likes of Nike, Adidas, and Reebok, for example, fuel marketing exposure of sports events with substantial sponsorship support and advertising budgets. Professional sports marketing activities leverage high-profile players and big brands to attract large audiences (Robinson & France, 2011).

While professional sports benefit from big budgets, amateur sporting events actually attract the majority of participants around the world. In addition, even greater numbers of family, friends, and fans add to the overall audience and exposure of an event. Flow-on effects provide important income opportunities for local businesses, especially in the hospitality and restaurant sectors. Research has indicated that small-scale sports events not only benefit the community, but also support sustainable development of local tourism activities (Gibson, Kaplanidou, & Kang, 2012).

In the overall development and delivery of sports events, the topic of sports marketing is often applied across a wide range of related activities. The principles and tools of sports marketing represent the essential knowledge sports marketers need to successfully promote events, matches and activities to relevant participants and fans. Developing and implementing effective marketing plans requires a framework of marketing tools and techniques focused on ‘customer needs’ (da Silva & Las Casas, 2017). Key concepts and components under the broad umbrella of sports marketing include:

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