The Sponsorship Motive Matrix (SMM): A Framework for Categorising Firms’ Motives for Sponsoring Sports Events

Terje Slåtten¹, Göran Svensson², Steven Connolley³, Cathrine Bexrud¹ and Tone Lægreid¹

Received: 15/05/2015 Accepted: 19/07/2016

¹Faculty of Economics and Organizational Sciences, Lillehammer University College, 2604 Lillehammer, Norway
²Professor, Kristiania University College, Oslo, Norway
³Doctoral student, Lillehammer University College, 2604 Lillehammer, Norway; e-mail: steven.connolley@hil.no
*Corresponding author: tel: 0047 920 40 829; e-mail: Terje.Slatten@hil.no

Abstract

Though there is a large body of literature and research on sponsorship of sports events, it seems that previous research on firm sponsorship of sports events has narrowly focused on sponsorship from a customer perspective. Consequently, research on sponsorship from a firm perspective is lacking. Specifically, it seems that no study has investigated and identified the main factors that motivate the sponsorship of sports events. This article begins with exploring
firms’ motives for sponsorship found in the literature, and identifies two fundamental pairs of contrastive orientations related to sponsorship motives: internal versus external motives and opportunistic versus altruistic motives. Next, we combine the four fundamental motivational orientations into a two-way matrix that constitutes a framework for categorising firms’ motivations for sponsoring sports events. We also explore and elaborate the framework more fully in a qualitative study. On the basis of empirical findings, we identify four general or ideal types of motivational categories that reflect the combination of firms’ fundamental and contrastive orientations related to sponsorship motives. The main or ideal types of sponsorship motivational categories are labelled “market”, “society”, “bond” and “clan”. The final framework, displaying firms’ four main categories or ideal types of sponsorship motives, is referred to as the Sponsorship Motive Matrix (SMM). We conclude with suggestions for future research and a discussion of the implications that can be drawn from the SMM framework.

© 2017 Varna University of Management. All rights reserved

**Keywords:** Event, Sponsorship, Business firms, Sport, Sponsor Motive Matrix (SMM).