

# The game of sports marketing 6661

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



## The Game of Sports Marketing

The business of sports is one of the fastest growing industries in the country. All over the world, many people participate as players and spectators in a variety of sporting activities, creating opportunities for the marketing of a company's goods and services. An important part of the business of sports is sports marketing, which revolves around understanding consumer behavior and motivating target markets to purchase goods and services. Sports marketing at Clemson University has many different aspects ranging from sports and technology and sport law to sponsorship and sports economics.

“ Sports marketing is simply any sales or publicity-related activity associated with an organized sporting event (or events), its personalities, or the celebrity lifestyle of its participants” (Schaaf 22). There are two components of sports marketing: the marketing of sport and marketing through sports. Marketing of sport consists of the actual marketing of a particular sport such as football or baseball. This includes, but is not limited to, signage, endorsements, print media, broadcast media, billboards, and news media. Examples of marketing through endorsements are Michael Jordan wearing Nike shoes or John Elway drinking Coors Beer. Any type of media that mentions a team or athletic organizations is an example of marketing through the use of media. There are also many other ways of actually marketing or promoting the sporting event.

Unlike marketing of sports which consists of marketing before and after a particular event, marketing through sports consists of marketing or promoting a particular product at a sporting event or in conjunction with a

sporting event. This includes, but is not limited to, signage at the stadium, promotions during event, and free give-a-ways. Every professional team or athlete participates in some kind of marketing or promotion. Not only do the “major leagues” participate in the marketing process but so do the smaller, “minor leagues” do as well. Every athletic organization, big or small, needs sports marketing for its survival. Sports marketing is needed because it helps the athletic organizations obtain profit, which is needed for survival.

“For a promotion to be successful, it must be profitable. And to be profitable, it must enhance some, if not all, of the following goals: 1. Paid attendance, 2. Corporate tie-ins, 3. Sponsor value, and 4. Media coverage” (Helitzer 317). Promotions must increase the number of people at the event, or paid attendance, it also must enhance corporate tie-ins, which are signs or give-a-ways at the stadium. Sponsor value, or the value perceived by the sponsor must also be enhanced along with media coverage. Media coverage is enhanced by sending the local or national media sources bulletins about the events or by having press conferences. A strategy that a sports marketer must use is to stagger the promotional gimmicks throughout the event. If one staggers the promotion, then the audience is always aware of the event and looking out for the promotions.

Another objective of sports marketing is creating sales. “The modern sports marketer is charged with one simple responsibility: to increase the sources of revenue” (Westerbeek 6). This includes obtaining more sponsors and also getting more spectators at the event. No longer is attendance enough to support a sports organization; the sports marketer must find ways to

increase the number of sponsors and availability of sponsorships. Baseball and football organizations around the world are building new stadiums to increase room sponsorships, luxury boxes, and entertainment areas. The Atlanta Braves have built a new stadium, Turner Field, which is more like an amusement park than the traditional baseball stadium. They have added games, restaurants, and bars to attract fans, which help the team become profitable. The new age of sports marketing is here, it is one that is all about one thing: greed for more money. The athletic organizations are never satisfied with any level of profit. They are always in search of ways to make more money.

“ Sports marketing is one of the most difficult tasks here at Clemson University,” states John Seketa. Here at Clemson University, the Athletic Department is responsible for marketing to the athletes, marketing corporate products to the fans, and marketing the event itself. Clemson must market to the athletes so that it can continue to have a successful program and continue to recruit champions. This includes things like Vickery Hall, “ the number one athletic enhancement facility,” its locker room and other facilities, and the coaches. Vickery Hall plays an important part in Clemson’s recruiting process. It helps a student succeed while in school at Clemson University. Other crucial recruiting tools are the facilities here on Clemson University’s campus. Coaches and administrators try to convince athletes that they will have the opportunity to play and practice with best equipment and facilities. The coaches play an important role in the marketing of Clemson’s Athletic Department.

John Seketa is responsible for the marketing of the products to the fans. He says, “ the timing of the actual marketing may be one of the most crucial times during the game.” The time an advertisement goes up on the mega-screen is crucial because a corporations wants to make sure as many people as possible see the advertisements. Seketa’s job is to please all corporate customers who participate in the marketing to the fans. Corporate customers include Coca-Cola, BI-LO, Hooters, and Naturally Fresh. They provide the money needed to support the Athletic Department in return for signs and advertisements at the game. Another aspect of Seketa’s job is to market the event so attendance at all events will increase.

Some of my experiences with this process include hanging up signs downtown and passing out schedule cards. While working for John Seketa for a year and a half, I have learned what it takes to market an event of Clemson’s caliber. It takes hard work and long hours. Without John Seketa, Clemson would be a less profitable athletic heritage.

As you can see, sports marketing involves more than just making sure people attend the events; it involves a strategic plan to assure the success of the whole event.

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