

THE BRAND PERSONALITY OF LARGE SPORT EVENTS

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Abstract:

This article presents the results of research on the brand personalities of big sport events such as the FIFA World Cup, the Tour de France cycling race and the Olympic Summer Games. The authors evaluate the brand personality of each of these sport events as a set of human characteristics associated with the given brand. The research uses the method standardized by the American author J. Aaker who specializes in brands. Forty-two (42) traits of sport brands divided into 5 dimensions were evaluated in the research. The results gained by questionnaires were subjected to a detailed statistical analysis where each trait, forming the basic dimension of the brand, was evaluated using the statistical tools of arithmetic mean, mode, standard deviation and skewness. The results present traits describing positively the given brand for each sport event, as well as traits that do not describe the given brand. The authors then present a suggestion for action for each sport brand management to an improvement of the brand personality that can be used for a better understanding with the fans, spectators and public, for forming a communication strategy and for creating a brand value with the public.

Key words: *brand management, marketing strategy, sport event*

Introduction

Sport branding is currently an actual topic of sport marketing, and the expression of its identity is a crucial factor for business practices in the sport field. The factors determining the sport brand are formed by:

- the fan platform – a sufficient number of fans both at home and at the international level, their purchasing power and license sphere,
- history of success – long-term and extensive success has influence on the growth of the sport brand value,
- communication strategy of the brand – ways of communication of the brand toward the general public maximizes its financial value (i.e. communication strategy during the top soccer championships),
- brand value – specific values defined for the sport brand and attractive to the public (i.e. Manchester United: “the theatre of dreams”),
- athletes in the position of stars – connecting the past and the present they provide splendor and desire to be connected with the brand,
- regulated deficiency – it influences the growth of the brand value (i.e. regulated access to the championships, fewer teams in the championships, etc.) (Čáslavová, 2003, 2006, 2009; Schilhaneck, 2005).

Evaluation of these factors is visible mainly in major European soccer clubs (Manchester United, Real Madrid, and Bayern Munich) or in professional sport teams such as Ferrari F1, McLaren Mercedes, etc.

There are four methods used in the research of brand identity which can help companies to clarify and differentiate the brand: the view of the brand as a product, the view of the brand as a company, the view of the brand as a person and the view of the brand as a symbol (Aaker, 2003).

The conception of the brand as a product is determined by the customer’s associations with the particular product or product category. For the brand associated with the company, the customer focuses mainly on the values connected with the company’s employees, the company’s culture, values and programs. The brand personality is judged as a specific person (*friendly, competent, trustworthy*, etc.) and it is important how the customer views this “person”. The symbol brand is based on the presence of the symbol when building the brand. If the symbol is elevated into the position of a permanent component of the brand identity, it shows the potential strength. An example would be the symbol of the Olympic rings for the Olympic Games.

According to J. Aaker, brand personality is defined as a set of human characteristics associated with a brand. Why is it so important to view the brand as a person? When consumers think about a brand, the human characteristics that they associate with this brand help them to create and form a relationship with the brand (Guzman & Paswan, 2009) (e.g. sport event). Such a relationship between a consumer and a sport event can be further used in the field of sport marketing, specifically through secondary sport products related with the sport events. A positive attitude to the brand personality traits of sport events can not only influence the content and way of sport events' promotion but also their complex marketing strategy. Furthermore, it also has an indirect impact on the creation of new financial sources.

The purpose of this article is to identify brand personality traits of the previously mentioned sport events that are perceived either positively or negatively by consumers. This analysis can be further used for a modification of current or the creation of new marketing strategies, especially concerning fans, spectators and general public. In connection with the sport events, it mainly concerns organizers of these sport events, i.e. national and international sport federations, their marketing departments as well as independent marketing agencies.

We used the view of brand as a person to evaluate the brands of big sport events, for the reason that fans and spectators in sports evaluate their relationship toward the brand based on the perception of the sport event as attractive, dynamic, fun, etc. Thus they evaluate the brand personality as a set of human characteristics connected with the given brand. There is no doubt that the brand personality is used and communicated for a better understanding with fans, spectators and public, for creating a communication strategy, and for creating the brand value with the public.

Three sport events of world significance were chosen for this research: the FIFA World Cup, the Tour de France, and the Olympic Summer Games. We mainly concentrated on the brand of the Olympic Summer Games as there has been a constant discussion both in the Czech sport and general public around the possibility of holding the Olympic Games in Prague and the subsequent candidacy application of Prague for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020. The discussion and the approach of the public towards this issue showed the view of the brand personality of the Olympic Games and an evaluation of the economic impact on public finances.

We chose these events for the following reasons:

- they are events of world significance and supra-national character and they have their own economic and marketing potential;

- they are sport events that have a specific relation for the Czech Republic: soccer is one of the most popular sports for the general public in the Czech Republic (Čáslavová & Janák, 2007);
- cycling belongs to the group of 10 most popular sports, following soccer and ice hockey, and the Tour de France sport event's general sponsor, Skoda Auto, is economically the most important company in the Czech Republic;
- they are the most suitable brands to be compared with the brand of the Olympic Summer Games.

Methods

The selection of methods for evaluating brand personality plays a very important role in the aspect of detailed research and an evaluation of personality traits of particular brands. There are various ways and methods of measuring brand personality that strive to analyze brand personality most accurately. However, it is very important that the method used shows the difference between the researched sport events and outlines the reasons and possible implications for the brand position in the sport market.

For the current research we chose the method that was verified for the brand personality measurement by Jennifer Aaker (1997) in the United States.

Brand personality measurement is a very complicated matter because the brand personality cannot be easily uniformly defined. Previously used methods tried to evaluate the brand personality with the help of a model dealing with human personality analysis. However, the problem was that the brand personality was very different from the human personality. Currently used methods take into account specific brand personalities and strive for objective evaluation, which is very important not only for the formation of brand marketing strategy, but also for overall strategic planning in the future (Aaker, 2003; Voeth & Herbst, 2008).

The mentioned methodology by J. Aaker creates a basis for a generalized spectrum of measuring the brand personalities. It involves a group of variables that were deduced in order to assure the most possible objectivity from:

- personality psychology,
- already existing variables used for measuring brand personalities,
- variables determined according to the association of consumers.

To ensure the validity and generalizability of this brand personality scale, the author used a sample of respondents respecting the five demographic dimensions – gender, age, household income, ethnicity and geographic location.

The author sent 1,200 questionnaires with a return rate of 55%. The subjects of the study were asked to use a five-point Likert scale to rate the extent to which the 114 personality traits describe 37

given brands. Primarily positively valenced traits were used because brands are typically linked to positive associations.

In order to prove that this method of measuring the brand personality is not dependent on the test brands or a certain population sample, another independent population sample and brands were used. The same demographic profile was used and 250 questionnaires were sent with the response rate of 72%. In comparison with the original 114 personality traits, only 42 carefully chosen traits and 20 different brands were used. The results underwent statistical analysis based on test-retest correlations and Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The test-retest correlations for each of the five factors were greater than .70 and Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each of the dimensions was equal or greater than .90. Thereby the reliability of the five brand personality dimensions was confirmed.

The result of J.L. Aaker's study was the formation of five factors (dimensions) that cover 42 carefully chosen traits that reliably and accurately represent these dimensions. The dimensions are as follows: *sincerity*, *excitement*, *competence*, *sophistication* and *ruggedness*. Each of these dimensions is represented by several chosen facets (15 altogether) that best describe this dimension, which means such facets that show the highest correlation regarding the particular dimensions. The brand personality framework is shown in Figure 1.

The particular facets represent the selected cluster of 42 traits and their value is dependent on the results of measuring these characteristics. These facets are always represented by two to three characteristics:

1. *Down to earth* – matter-of-fact (deliberate); friendly toward family; suburban.
2. *Honest* – honest; sincere (publicly accessible); proper.
3. *Wholesome* – wholesome; original.
4. *Cheerful* – cheerful; warm-hearted; affable (kind).
5. *Daring* – daring (risky); fashionable (stylish); exciting.

6. *Spirited* – spirited; calm (well-balanced); youthful.
7. *Imaginative* – imaginative; unique (typical).
8. *Up-to-date* – up-to-date (progressive); independent; of the day (modern).
9. *Reliable* – reliable; hard working; evocating a sense of security.
10. *Intelligent* – intelligent; technical; team spirit.
11. *Successful* – successful; able to lead people; self-confident.
12. *Upper class* – upper class; splendid; good looking.
13. *Charming* – charming; feminine; elegant.
14. *Outdoorsy* – outdoorsy; male; western.
15. *Tough* – tough; striking (prominent).

Since this framework can be generalized across product categories, it enables researchers of the brand personality theory to understand the symbolic use of brands in general and provides theoretical insights into when and why consumers buy brands for self-expressive purposes.

In order to define the dimensions, it is necessary to evaluate all 42 traits individually and then, according to the results, deduce the scores of these dimensions. The basic objective is not to determine the individual differences in how different people respond to single brands, but to identify the brand personality dimensions as perceived by consumers, as depicted in their minds. Thus the Likert scale was used to evaluate the traits instead of the semantic-differential scale. It is important to determine the extent to which a brand can be described by certain human characteristics rather than to determine when brands are associated with negative versus positive personality characteristics.

This measurement scale of brand personality can be used with particular groups of subjects which were confirmed by factor analysis on four sub-samples of subjects (females, males, younger subjects and older subjects). This analysis proved the similarity of the results of the four principal components both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The relevance of J.L. Aaker's theory has been proven by much empirical research and studies;

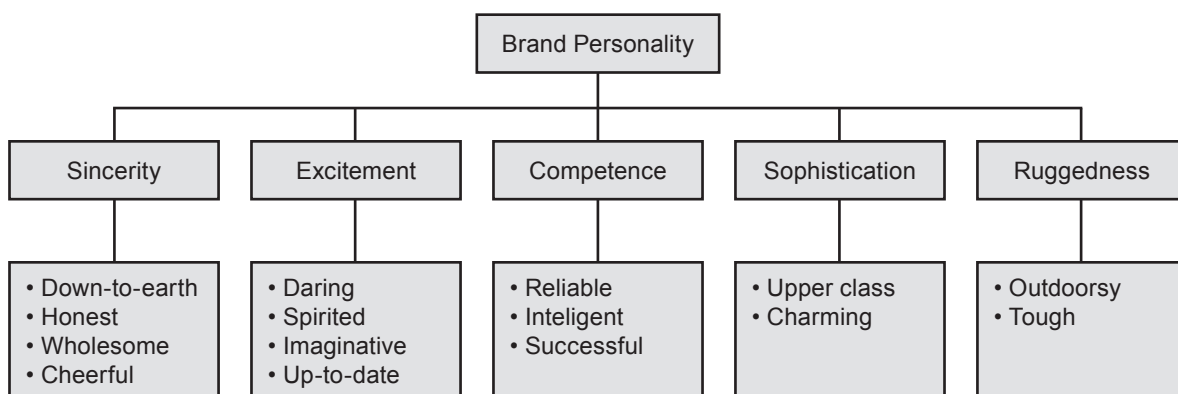


Figure 1. Structure of Brand Personality according to J. Aaker (1997)

therefore we considered this theory suitable for evaluating and measuring the brand personalities of big sport events. On this basis we consider the theory as a good foundation for brand personality analysis.

Subjects

A group of 296 university students, mostly 21-25 years of age, was used as subjects for this study. Less than 40% were male. As mentioned earlier, the validity of measuring the brand personality according to the J. L. Aaker method was confirmed for various groups of subjects. Hence this sample can be considered as representative for the Czech population.

Instruments and variables

The questionnaire used by Aaker was translated into the Czech language by the doctoral student J. Petráčková (2007) and presents the basis of this study. As the relevance of the J.L. Aaker's theory has been proven by many empirical research studies, we relied on the already verified reliability and validity of this method.

For the purposes of this research the method of written questionnaires was used, where the subjects evaluated particular personality traits using the five-point Likert scale, point 1 being *fully descriptive* and point 5 *not at all descriptive*. The results were subject to statistical analysis when each of the 42 personality traits forming the brand personality dimension was evaluated by arithmetic mean, mode, standard deviation and skewness.

Procedure and data analysis

We evaluated the results for particular brands of the mentioned sport events according to the basic dimensions: *sincerity* (characteristics: down to earth, honest, wholesome, cheerful), *excitement* (characteristics: daring, spirited, imaginative, up-to-date), *competence* (characteristics: reliable, intelligent, successful), *sophistication* (characteristics: upper class, charming) and *ruggedness* (characteristics: outdoorsy, tough) (Figure 1).

The results according to the dimensions were divided into dimensions describing the personality, dimensions that the subjects viewed neutrally and thus were not important for the brand personality development and dimensions that did not describe the personality of the given brand. In the dimension category, we evaluated the particular characteristics.

Results

The results of the present research are divided into several sections, whereas each brand is described by all the five brand personality dimen-

sions in order to provide a detailed view of the sport events' brand personality. Furthermore, we also present both a brief evaluation of the sport events' brand personalities and recommendations for further marketing development of the brands.

Brand Personality of the FIFA World Cup

Dimension of sincerity

As for the dimension of *sincerity*, authenticity is influenced negatively by many characteristics and thus its value is higher than the neutral value. It cannot be described as a dimension characteristic for the FIFA World Cup. The only traits of this dimension that were described as representing the FIFA World Cup brand personality were *sincere (publicly accessible)*, *original* and *cheerful*, because their average value was lower than 3 and the mode was 2 which means that most of the subjects marked these traits as brand-descriptive. This was also confirmed by the positive value of the skewness which was higher than 3 for all traits, thus confirming that most of the ascribed values were lower than neutral.

The value of the skewness showed how the values were laid out around the average. If the skewness is lower than zero, meaning in the negative numbers, it means that most of the values not equal to 3 are higher than 3. If the skewness is -2 and lower, it suggests that the given trait mostly does not describe the brand personality. On the contrary, a positive value of skewness higher than 2 means that the given trait rather describes the brand personality. If the skewness is in the -2 to 2 range, the distribution of values is very even in the group and we can specify the given trait as partly describing and partly not describing the brand personality.

The subjects had a neutral attitude towards traits such as *honest*, *proper* and *wholesome*. The traits *matter-of-fact (deliberate)*, *friendly toward family*, *suburban*, *warm-hearted*, *affable (kind)* were unambiguously marked as not describing the personality of the FIFA World Cup brand. Those traits had a negative influence on the personality of this brand and improvement in the eyes of public could have a very positive influence not only on this dimension but on the overall FIFA World Cup brand personality.

The traits *suburban*, *warm-hearted* and *affable (kind)* were marked as not describing the FIFA World Cup brand because they result from the character of this sport event and soccer as such, and thus their significance is not critical to the overall dimension. Therefore it is not necessary for the FIFA World Cup brand to pay more attention to these characteristics.

Dimension of excitement

Table 1 clearly shows that the dimension of *excitement* is a characteristic dimension for the FIFA World Cup brand personality because the overall average value is lower than 2.5 and that means that most of the traits of this dimension describe the personality of this brand. All the traits, except the two highlighted in grey, were marked by the subjects as describing the FIFA World Cup brand personality which is confirmed by the values in Table 1.

The trait of being *calm (well-balanced)* was marked as definitely not describing the FIFA World Cup brand personality. Its value for this sport event was very low because it was in contradiction with the character of this sport event. If the FIFA World Cup tried to stimulate it positively, it would probably have a negative influence on the *excitement* trait which is much more important for this brand.

The independent trait of the FIFA World Cup brand personality was marked as neutral by the subjects, but the opinions of many subjects varied and that is represented by a higher value of standard deviation (1.12). The reason why the FIFA World Cup brand was not marked unambiguously as independent in comparison with other sport events could be the fact that in many cases the result of the game depends on the referee's decisions. Even if the referee tries to be as objective as possible, subjective decisions in certain moments and possible, quite human, mistakes cannot be ruled out.

Dimension of competence

Table 1 shows that the dimension of competence is perceived as rather describing the FIFA World Cup brand personality. Even though it is not an unambiguous representation of this dimension of the FIFA World Cup brand personality, most of the traits of this dimension have a positive influence on the brand and thus the dimensions influence positively the whole dimension of the FIFA World Cup. All the features but three, highlighted in grey, were marked by the subjects as describing the FIFA World Cup brand personality, as confirmed by the values in Table 1.

The characteristic evocating a *sense of security* was marked as not describing the brand personality, but the value of this feature is insignificant for this brand because it is in contradiction with the character of this sport event. In principle, this contradicts the feature *daring (risky)* which is much more important for the FIFA World Cup brand personality.

Dimension of sophistication

According to the subjects' responses, i.e. because the average value was higher than 3, the dimension of *sophistication* partially does not describe the FIFA World Cup. The reason for this is that most

of the traits of this dimension were marked as not describing or only partially describing the FIFA World Cup brand personality. The only trait marked as describing the personality of this brand was *good looking* (Table 1).

Dimension of ruggedness

This dimension is perceived as describing the FIFA World Cup brand personality, and it is confirmed by the fact that four out of five traits forming this dimension had a positive influence on the FIFA World Cup brand personality. The only trait that was marked as not describing the FIFA World Cup brand was *outdoorsy*.

The typical trait for this dimension and thus for the overall FIFA World Cup brand personality was the trait *male*, and its average value was 1.54 which shows an absolute positive attitude of the public towards this trait. This is the only trait of this dimension that can be marked as characteristic of this dimension. Collectively, it is by no means possible to mark the FIFA World Cup brand as rugged.

Brand Personality of the Tour de France

Dimension of sincerity

The dimension of *sincerity* is perceived as partly describing and partly not describing the Tour de France brand personality according to the overall results. The reason is that most of the traits that are part of this dimension are perceived as partly describing and partly not describing this brand. The only trait that the subjects perceive as definitely not describing the Tour de France brand personality is *suburban*. This trait is in partial contradiction to the character of this global sport event and thus its influence on the Tour de France brand is insignificant. A similar conclusion is possible for the traits *warm-hearted*, *affable* and *kind*. Their value is minimal for the personality of this brand because these traits do not play almost any role in this sport event.

The only traits the subjects perceived as describing the personality of this brand were the traits *matter-of-fact (deliberate)*, *sincere (publicly accessible)*, *proper* and *wholesome*. The average value of these traits was around 2.5, the mode was 2 and skewness was always higher than 2, which shows a higher concentration of values describing a positive attitude. Even though these traits were marked as describing the Tour de France brand personality, they cannot be considered as characteristic for this brand.

Dimension of excitement

Table 2 shows that the dimension of *excitement* partially described the Tour de France brand personality. This attitude is non-descriptive because

Table 1. Results of measuring the brand personality of the FIFA WC

FIFA WC - Results of measuring brand personality								
Characteristic	Average	Mode	σ	Skewness	Indicator	Factor (dimention)	Average	σ
Down to earth	3.52	4	1.02	-3.29	Down to earth	Sincerity	3.195	1.003
Family oriented	3.51	4	1.04	-3.34				
Small-town	4.05	5	1.03	-5.66				
Honest	3.22	3	.89	-.15	Honest			
Sincere	2.55	2	.98	3.01				
Real	3.08	3	.91	.45				
Wholesome	3.27	3	.94	-1.47	Wholesome			
Original	2.64	2	1.03	3.25				
Cheerful	2.29	2	.97	3.53	Cheerful			
Sentimental	3.49	4	1.22	-3.96				
Friendly	3.53	4	1.00	-3.88				
Daring	2.12	2	.97	5.21	Daring	Excitement	2.473	.975
Trendy	2.41	2	1.06	3.65				
Exciting	1.94	1	1.12	8.09				
Spirited	1.78	1	.88	7.66	Spirited			
Cool	3.96	4	.89	-6.89				
Young	2.38	2	.89	2.93				
Imaginative	2.68	2	.97	1.93	Imaginative			
Unique	2.56	2	1.06	3.19				
Up to date	2.44	2	.99	4.00	Up to date			
Independent	2.95	3	1.12	0.76				
Contemporary	1.98	2	.77	3.90				
Reliable	3.25	4	.96	-2.18	Reliable	Competence	2.579	.939
Hard working	2.79	2	1.11	1.53				
Secure	3.91	4	.92	-5.80				
Intelligent	3.48	3	1.06	-1.98	Intelligent			
Technical	2.55	2	1.10	3.06				
Corporate	1.52	1	.76	11.57				
Successful	1.73	1	.76	5.79	Successful			
Leader	2.22	2	1.00	4.03				
Confident	1.76	2	.78	7.68				
Upper class	3.02	3	.88	-.54	Upperclass	Sophistication	3.128	1.045
Glamorous	2.79	3	1.28	1.10				
Good looking	2.22	2	.97	5.29				
Charming	2.92	3	1.09	0.74	Charming			
Feminine	4.30	5	.89	-10.11				
Smooth	3.52	4	1.16	-1.78				
Outdoorsy	3.84	4	.97	-3.81	Outdoorsy	Ruggedness	2.51	.976
Masculine	1.54	1	.84	13.18				
Western	2.50	2	1.20	3.45				
Tough	2.47	2	.93	2.03	Tough			
Rugged	2.20	2	.94	4.04				

Table 2. Results of measuring the brand personality of the Tour de France

Tour de France - Results of measuring brand personality								
Characteristic	Average	Mode	σ	Skewness	Indicator	Factor (dimention)	Average	σ
Down to earth	2.57	2	.88	4.44	Down to earth	Sincerity	2.997	.97
Family oriented	3.12	3	1.00	.05				
Small-town	4.08	4	.84	-6.50				
Honest	2.98	3	1.14	1.15	Honest			
Sincere	2.57	2	.99	2.13				
Real	2.55	2	.91	2.14				
Wholesome	2.46	2	.86	3.80	Wholesome			
Original	2.86	3	1.03	-.98				
Cheerful	3.19	3	.93	-1.57	Cheerful			
Sentimental	3.35	4	1.02	-2.07				
Friendly	3.24	4	.94	-1.72				
Daring	2.27	2	1.01	3.80	Daring	Excitement	2.705	1.04
Trendy	2.87	3	.98	-.30				
Exciting	2.60	2	1.14	2.21				
Spirited	2.72	3	1.10	1.14	Spirited			
Cool	2.94	3	1.13	.001				
Young	2.82	3	.94	-.54				
Imaginative	3.19	3	.97	-1.03	Imaginative			
Unique	2.51	2	1.12	3.38				
Up to date	2.73	2	1.00	.72	Up to date			
Independent	2.58	2	1.11	2.67				
Contemporary	2.53	2	.89	2.86				
Reliable	2.77	3	.95	1.68	Reliable	Competence	2.602	1.008
Hard working	1.96	1	1.03	6.31				
Secure	3.42	4	.97	-2.33				
Intelligent	2.61	3	1.01	1.93	Intelligent			
Technical	2.40	2	1.08	3.11				
Corporate	3.19	4	1.32	-1.87				
Successful	1.96	2	.85	4.48	Successful			
Leader	2.99	3	1.12	.34				
Confident	2.12	2	.87	3.61				
Upper class	2.42	2	.98	3.48	Upperclass	Sophistication	3.033	.954
Glamorous	2.79	3	.92	1.94				
Good looking	2.71	2	1.00	2.20				
Charming	3.17	3	.96	-1.24	Charming			
Feminine	3.99	4	.91	-4.52				
Smooth	3.12	3	1.03	.78				
Outdoorsy	2.55	2	1.05	3.63	Outdoorsy	Ruggedness	2.324	.992
Masculine	2.04	2	.91	4.21				
Western	2.49	2	1.08	4.24				
Tough	1.92	2	.90	6.51	Tough			
Rugged	2.62	3	1.02	1.11				

four of the traits of this dimension – *fashionable*, *calm*, *youthful* and *imaginative* – were marked as partially describing and partially not describing the personality of this brand and none of this dimension's traits can be marked as characteristic for the Tour de France brand personality. None of the average values of these traits were lower than 2.

Dimension of competence

In comparison with the dimension of *excitement*, this dimension of the Tour de France brand personality was perceived somehow better which was confirmed by the average value shown in Table 2. The only trait evoking a sense of security was the one influencing this dimension negatively. According to the ascertained values, the remaining traits, highlighted in grey, had a rather neutral influence on this brand personality. The traits evoking a sense of security and team spirit did not play very big roles for this brand and thus it is not necessary for the Tour de France to pay special attention to them. However, this is required by the trait *able to lead people*, as this is perceived as partially describing the personality of this brand. Potentially one of the reasons for this is that cycling is an individual sport. Based on the results in Table 2, we can say that in this dimension the average value of two traits was lower than 2 and thus they can be marked as characteristic for the personality of this brand. These were the traits *hard working* and *successful*.

Dimension of sophistication

This dimension of personality of the Tour de France brand was perceived as only partially describing the personality of this brand, similar to the dimension of sincerity. Three out of six traits forming this dimension – *charming*, *feminine* and *elegant* – were marked by the average value higher than 3. Only the trait *feminine* was marked as unambiguously not describing the personality of this brand, but the value of this trait was insignificant since this was clearly a male brand.

The traits *charming* and *elegant* were perceived as partially describing and partially not describing the personality of this brand. These traits were partially connected, and the motive for such an attitude among the subjects could be the high physical demand of this race and the focus on achievement without any side components. The Tour de France should pay more attention to these two traits.

None of the traits representing this dimension can be marked as characteristic for the personality of this brand because the average value of the traits that partially describe the Tour de France brand personality was either not lower than 2 or it was on this level. The Tour de France brand should therefore indispensably work on its sophistication.

Dimension of ruggedness

This dimension as a whole describes the Tour de France brand personality best, because the average value was the lowest of all the dimensions. All of the traits representing this dimension were marked as describing the personality of this brand and that is evident from the values in Table 2. The only trait where this attitude was not fully definitive was the trait of *striking (prominent)*. Should Tour de France want to influence this dimension positively, it should concentrate on supporting this trait.

The traits *male* and *tough* can be perceived as characteristic not only for this dimension but for the overall Tour de France brand personality. On the whole it can be said that the Tour de France is viewed as a rugged brand.

Brand personality of the Olympic Summer Games

Dimension of sincerity

Based on the results in Table 3, it can be confirmed that the dimension of *sincerity* and *authenticity* unambiguously described the Olympic Summer Games (OSG) brand personality, because the average value of this dimension was 2.249. With the exception of two, all the traits of this dimension were marked as unambiguously describing the OSG brand personality. The only trait marked as definitely not describing this brand personality was the trait *suburban*; however, it had almost no value for this global event.

The trait of *warm-hearted* was perceived by the subjects as partially describing this brand personality but its value was very low as it was for the previously analyzed sport events because it is in partial contradiction to the essence of many sport events.

Traits *proper* and *sincere (publicly accessible)* can be perceived as characteristic for this dimension and thus for the overall OSG brand personality which results not only from the average values but also from the other characteristics that describe them. On the whole it can be stated that the OSG brand personality is perceived as a sincere and authentic person and it is not necessary to try to change the perception of any of the traits.

Dimension of excitement

The dimension of *excitement* of the OSG brand personality is perceived as unambiguously describing the personality of this brand similar to the dimension of sincerity. Only two traits forming this dimension were marked as neutral. These were the traits *calm (well-balanced)* and *youthful*. An insignificant influence of the trait *calm (well-balanced)* was found at the other sport events as well and thus it is not necessary to strive for its

Table 3. Results of measuring the brand personality of the Olympic Summer Games

OSG - Results of measuring brand personality								
Characteristic	Average	Mode	σ	Skewness	Indicator	Factor (dimention)	Average	σ
Down to earth	2.32	2	.90	3.58	Down to earth	Sincerity	2.479	.9
Family oriented	2.40	2	.97	4.39				
Small-town	4.27	4	.84	-8.20				
Honest	2.37	2	.96	3.05	Honest			
Sincere	1.87	2	.83	5.46				
Real	2.03	2	.83	5.39				
Wholesome	2.21	2	.82	3.50	Wholesome			
Original	2.24	3	1.02	2.63				
Cheerful	2.31	2	.92	2.29	Cheerful			
Sentimental	2.65	3	1.11	0.95				
Friendly	2.60	2	.95	2.03				
Daring	2.23	2	1.05	4.52	Daring	Excitement	2.381	1.014
Trendy	2.35	2	1.00	3.24				
Exciting	1.88	1	.97	7.10				
Spirited	2.20	2	1.02	3.12	Spirited			
Cool	3.00	3	1.03	-1.33				
Young	2.79	3	1.03	.16				
Imaginative	2.50	2	.96	.95	Imaginative			
Unique	2.06	2	.95	4.46				
Up to date	2.39	2	.99	2.62	Up to date			
Independent	2.60	2	1.17	2.23				
Contemporary	2.19	2	1.00	3.93				
Reliable	2.35	2	.89	2.66	Reliable	Competence	2.173	.998
Hard working	1.93	2	.92	6.26				
Secure	2.93	3	1.16	-.07				
Intelligent	2.34	2	.97	3.78	Intelligent			
Technical	2.39	2	1.05	3.04				
Corporate	2.02	1	1.09	5.45				
Successful	1.57	1	.72	8.64	Successful			
Leader	2.19	2	1.02	3.95				
Confident	1.84	2	.82	6.26				
Upper class	1.95	2	.95	6.95	Upperclass	Sophistication	2.353	.912
Glamorous	2.07	2	.85	2.75				
Good looking	2.15	2	.94	4.76				
Charming	2.41	2	1.00	2.70	Charming			
Feminine	3.00	3	.82	2.90				
Smooth	2.54	2	.95	2.62				
Outdoorsy	2.69	2	1.09	1.73	Outdoorsy	Ruggedness	2.422	.996
Masculine	2.60	3	.86	.64				
Western	2.83	3	1.20	1.52				
Tough	1.98	2	.90	4.85	Tough			
Rugged	2.01	2	.93	4.42				

improvement. The trait *youthful* was marked as partially describing and partially not describing the OSG brand personality which is clear from the mode values and the average values as well as from a very low value of skewness. The reason for such an attitude is probably the fact that the OSG brand is a very traditional brand based on its tradition itself. Thus it is not necessary for it to be perceived as youthful.

Dimension of competence

The dimension of *competence* is clearly the most characteristic dimension of the OSG brand personality because its average value was the lowest in comparison with the values of other dimensions. All but one trait of this dimension had a very positive influence on forming this dimension, and thus on the overall personality of this brand.

The trait *evocating a sense of security*, the only trait that cannot be described as having an unambiguously positive influence, does not have a major impact either on the personality of this brand or on the other two brands and thus it is not necessary to stimulate it.

Dimension of sophistication

Table 3 shows that this dimension is perceived as unambiguously describing the OSG brand personality which is evident in the positive perception of the traits of this dimension other than the trait *feminine*. This trait is not a key element of the OSG brand personality and thus it is not significant for the brand to be perceived as *feminine* or *male*. In contrast to the FIFA World Cup or the Tour de France, the Olympic Summer Games are very neutral and everyone can find something interesting from a wide selection of options.

Dimension of ruggedness

The last dimension of the OSG brand personality is ruggedness. All of the traits of this dimension were perceived as rather describing the personality of this brand and the traits *tough* and *striking (prominent)* can be marked as characteristic. The perception of the traits *male* and *western* was not fully definite, and the value was not very high for this brand personality due to the already mentioned neutrality and global impact. Still, the OSG brand can be considered as rugged, based on the research results.

Discussion and conclusions

Dimension of sincerity of the FIFA World Cup

The reason why the FIFA World Cup was not described by the subjects as *matter-of-fact (deliberate)* and *wholesome* could be due to the fact that

this sport event is generally perceived as a very emotional and sensitive, where random chance and luck play a role. Thus these traits cannot be considered as crucial for the FIFA World Cup and their influence on the overall dimension of sincerity is insignificant.

Based on the analysis of the results regarding the dimension of sincerity, it can be assumed that the FIFA World Cup should concentrate mainly on supporting the traits of *friendly toward family, honest* and *proper*. There are several reasons why the FIFA World Cup brand might be described as *not friendly toward family*. One of them could be the way in which soccer games are perceived in the Czech Republic; namely, that it is fun, primarily for men, directly at the stadium and also on TV. Another reason could be the physical harshness of the games, which contain ruthless fouls and unscrupulous behavior of some players which consequently has a negative influence on the traits such as *honest* and *proper* as well.

Dimension of excitement of the FIFA World Cup

The dimension of *excitement* has a very positive influence on the personality of this brand and it can be said that it is the most important dimension of the FIFA World Cup brand personality because the overall average value of 2.473 was the lowest in comparison with all other dimensions of this brand. The only trait of this dimension that requires certain stimulation is the independent trait. According to the subjects, the most important determinants of these dimensions are *exciting, spirited* and *of the day (modern)* because the average value of these traits was below 2. These traits can be perceived as characteristic for this brand because they describe the brand mostly in comparison with all the other traits of this dimension.

Dimension of competence of the FIFA World Cup

There could be many reasons why this brand was not considered to be reliable. The most significant reason that the FIFA World Cup was described as not reliable is most likely due to the fact that random chance and luck play very important roles in this sport event and that the outcome of the game is unpredictable until the last minute and can change in the last second. On the other hand this is also one of the reasons why the FIFA World Cup is considered to be thrilling and very exciting.

The reason why this brand was not described as intelligent is most likely due to soccer players generally not being viewed as very intelligent people. Consequently, in connection to such an attitude in the minds of the public, the FIFA World Cup brand is perceived as not very intelligent. Such a connection is similar to connecting the

employee's behavior with the personality of a certain brand. These are called *direct determinants* which are established by real people who transfer their characteristics on to the brand. Thus the brand personality can be influenced directly from the heart of the company by various employees. In the case of the FIFA World Cup, it is the players who are in direct contact with spectators and can thus influence their attitude as regards the FIFA World Cup.

Based on the above conclusions, the FIFA World Cup brand should concentrate positively on the feature of intelligence because the unfavorable perception of the public has quite a negative influence on the personality of this brand. The FIFA World Cup is, in this dimension, best described as self-confident, successful and having team spirit. These traits can be perceived as characteristic of the FIFA World Cup brand personality based on the very positive view of the public and an evaluation lower than 2.

Dimension of sophistication of the FIFA World Cup

There may be many reasons why the FIFA World Championship brand is perceived as partially not upper class and partially not charming. One of the main reasons is again the connection to success as such and the often bad behavior of the players during the games and eventually outside the games. Based on theoretical knowledge, these influences can be ranked as direct determinants that have a fundamental influence on the brand personalities of sport events because the brands are symbolic.

The traits *elegant* and *feminine* have minimal influence on the FIFA World Cup brand personality because the brand is unambiguously male, therefore soccer cannot be considered as an elegant sport. Thus it is not necessary for the FIFA World Cup brand to concentrate on improving these characteristics.

Based on these results we can say that the trait *good looking* is the only trait of this dimension marked as unambiguously describing the FIFA World Cup brand personality. However, this trait had the average value of 2.22 and thus it cannot be marked as characteristic for the FIFA World Cup brand personality. All other traits showing significant influence on the dimension of sophistication need to be stimulated properly, so that they could be improved in the eyes of the public and thus lead to the improvement of the overall sophistication of the FIFA World Cup brand personality.

Dimension of ruggedness of the FIFA World Cup

The reason why the FIFA World Cup was not perceived as outdoorsy in comparison with the Tour de France and the Olympic Summer Games could be that the soccer games are not played outside in

the open but in stadiums. Such a connection with soccer games is logical but the outdoorsy trait is more important these days and the positive perception of the public is very important. Thus the FIFA World Cup brand should definitely focus on improving this trait in the eyes of the public.

Suggestion for potential actions leading to the improvement of the FIFA World Cup brand personality

Based on the analysis of the FIFA World Cup brand personality, it is possible to describe this brand as *modern, exciting, spirited, successful, self-confident* and *male* with a strong *team spirit*. These traits are hence characteristic of the personality of this brand.

Owing to this research, several insufficiencies displayed by the FIFA World Cup brand personality were identified. These insufficiencies consist partially of negative attitudes toward the following traits: *friendly toward family, honest, proper, independent, intelligent, upper class, charming* and *outdoorsy*. The brand should pay a lot of attention to these traits in its marketing campaign with the TV advertisement playing the major role. A suitable solution seems to be the usage of an important personality from the soccer world in TV advertisements. The emphasis should be on the fact that this person is generally considered as intelligent, proper and honest with having a sense for family. It would be ideal if this person had his/her own family. This advertisement campaign should not miss references to *fair play* and the need always to have a well thought out strategy, as these are the main attributes of a victorious game. Additionally, it would be useful to mention the facilities created at the stadium for families with children which make it possible to *enjoy* the soccer game. There could be various promotional events or fashion shows that are valued mainly by women or children's play areas corners both for small and bigger children. In this way it would be possible to stimulate positively the traits *friendly toward family, honest, proper, intelligent, upper class* and *charming*. These traits are connected to each other. Mainly, the traits *intelligent, upper class* and *proper* have many common determinants, so that it is possible to influence them with similar or the same instruments.

One of the ways to influence positively the independent trait is the usage of video recordings when the main referee is not sure about a certain decision or if the team captain asks for it. Of course, the usage of such recordings is limited; however, they could help to make decisions in a more objective way and thus lead to the improvement of the independence trait of the FIFA World Cup brand personality.

As already said, the trait *outdoorsy* is very important for the personality of this brand and thus

the FIFA World Cup should not forget to focus on this trait in the marketing strategy. TV advertisements should be oriented toward bringing attention to those aspects in which the FIFA World Cup is definitely outdoorsy and emphasize them. The previously mentioned suggestions should help the FIFA World Cup brand to improve the perception of its brand personality and thus increase its value. However, the basis of the marketing strategy should be those traits that are characteristic for this brand and the brand should build its image upon them.

Dimension of sincerity of the Tour de France

The reason why the *friendly toward family* trait is perceived as partially not describing the Tour de France brand personality could be the fact that this sport event is perceived more as an event for adults, mainly due to the physical demands and slowness. The subjects had the same attitude toward the trait *original*. The reason for such an attitude could be the tradition of the Tour de France with not many recent changes or innovations. The last trait marked as partially not describing the Tour de France brand personality was the trait *honest*. The Tour de France should focus mainly on problems with doping which has lately had quite a negative influence on this brand. This is probably the main reason why this brand was not marked as honest.

The traits *friendly toward family*, *honest* and *original* play very important roles in forming the overall brand personality of this sport event and it is for this reason that the Tour de France should pay a lot of attention to them. Their value is significant for the personality of this brand and their improvement could have a very positive influence on the dimension of sincerity and consequently on the overall Tour de France brand personality in the eyes of the subjects.

Dimension of excitement of the Tour de France

None of the traits from this dimension were marked as not describing the Tour de France brand personality but the subjects assumed a nondescript attitude toward four traits. The reasons for such an attitude toward the trait *fashionable (stylish)* could be that the Tour de France is based on extreme physical achievements, perseverance, and the colorfulness or diversity of the uniforms is very narrow. The range of fashion trends used is also very narrow in cycling. As far as the imaginative trait is concerned, it has a certain connection with the trait *original*. The Tour de France is perceived more as monotonous and not promoting many innovations, which results in perceiving the brand as traditional and conventional. That is one of the main reasons why this brand is not perceived as imaginative.

The Tour de France should focus primarily on supporting the traits *fashionable (stylish)* and *imaginative*. The traits *youthful* and *calm (well-balanced)* do not have much value for this brand personality because the Tour de France is a traditional brand that needs to be partially “unbalanced” and made exciting because it is a sport event. On the whole, it is possible to say that this dimension should be in the center of the Tour de France’s interest because it plays a very important role for this brand. The support of the previously mentioned traits that were perceived neutrally and other traits that form this dimension could be very beneficial to this brand.

Suggestion of potential actions leading to the improvement of the Tour de France brand personality

According to the research, the Tour de France brand is perceived as hard working, successful and a male person. These traits are characteristic for this sport event and thus the Tour de France should base its image on them

On the other hand, there are several traits which cannot be marked as describing this brand personality and they are still important for this brand. Based on the research results and the previously mentioned assumptions, these are the traits *friendly toward family*, *honest*, *original*, *imaginative*, *elegant*, *fashionable (stylish)*, *charming* and *able to lead people*. These traits represent certain insufficiencies of the Tour de France brand personality and they need to be stimulated by suitable means. A suitable instrument which could stimulate several traits at once would be the usage of a marketing campaign with the emphasis on TV advertisements. In comparison to the FIFA World Cup it is not necessary to build an advertisement around a famous personality. It would be more suitable to use, for example, interesting observations both from the past and the current Tour de France, edit them originally and eventually enrich them with something. Owing to this it is possible to show what the Tour de France is in reality and put emphasis on its merits. In this way it would be possible to positively influence the traits *original*, *imaginative* and *charming*. If the editing emphasizes the importance of cooperation within the scope of various teams, it is possible to influence positively the trait *able to lead people* as well. An appropriately chosen marketing campaign can partially influence the traits *fashionable (stylish)* and *elegant* even though it is not an easy matter for the Tour de France brand.

It is important for the Tour de France brand to concentrate on the traits *honest* and *friendly toward family* which are often connected. The biggest problem here is probably the connection with doping. The athletes who use prohibited substances indirectly damage the overall image of this brand.

It is possible to contribute significantly to the improvement of the Tour de France brand personality in the eyes of the public and sequentially increase its value through the previously mentioned suggestions which need to be supported. The emphasis of the marketing campaign and the overall long term strategy should remain within the traits that are marked as characteristic for this brand and the brand should build its constant long-term image upon them.

Dimension of excitement of the Olympic Summer Games

The traits *exciting* and *unique (typical)* are characteristic traits of this dimension and thus characteristic for the OSG brand personality. It is clear from the previously mentioned results that the OSG brand personality does not have to take any special steps to address this dimension. The reason is that the attitude of the public does not have a negative influence on any of the given traits of this brand personality.

Dimension of competence of the Olympic Summer Games

Similar to the previous dimensions of this brand personality, there is no need to take any steps to influence or support its particular traits. The traits *hard working*, *successful*, *self-confident* and *having team spirit* can be considered as characteristics for the OSG brand personality. Also, other traits of this dimension are perceived as unambiguously describing the OSG brand personality and thus this brand can be considered as competent.

Dimension of sophistication of the Olympic Summer Games

Not even this dimension of the OSG brand personality needs to be changed in any way. *Upper class* and *splendid* were marked as characteristic for this dimension and the OSG brand personality is, on the whole, perceived as sophisticated.

Suggestion of potential actions leading to the improvement of the OSG brand personality

Owing to the performed analysis of the OSG brand personality, we can state that the public definitely views the brand positively and this holds true for all the important traits. Of course, it is possible for the brand to concentrate on support of some traits which it considers important and which can be even stronger, but in the case of the Olympic Summer Games it is not necessary, in contrast to the FIFA World Cup and Tour de France.

Based on the research, the OSG brand personality is perceived as *proper*, *sincere (publicly accessible)*, *exciting*, *unique (typical)*, *hard working*,

successful, *self-confident*, *upper class*, *splendid*, *striking (prominent) with team spirit*. The brand should build on these traits and form its strategy accordingly, because its strength and uniqueness are built on these traits.

The brands of sport events have a very specific character and are perceived primarily as symbolic brands. Thus it is very important to adjust the chosen method of measuring the brand personality to the character of the target audience, i.e. to use the method of J.L. Aaker. This is based on the fact that not all traits need to be used when identifying the brand personality. Some of the traits used are in contradiction with the specific character of these sport events and their inclusion in the measurements partially distorts the particular dimensions and thus also the overall personality of the given brands. Elimination of such traits that have an insignificant influence on the brand personality can help in getting a clearer picture of the brand personality and thus to improve its identification.

The results of this research were also analyzed by the gender of the subjects and based on this analysis it can be confirmed that measurements of the brand personality are not dependent on gender because the values obtained are almost the same for the majority of the traits. Thus we can confirm the hypothesis that this method of measuring the brand personality can be used with samples from a certain segment of a population, as verified in the J.L. Aaker study (1997) by a factor analysis of four basic groups (females, males, younger subjects and older subjects). Consequently, this confirms the validity of the conclusions resulting from this research for the general public.

Next, it is also very important to consider particular traits and the general dimensions as they are perceived across various cultures. Some traits, even though described by the same expression, may not be understood in the same way across various cultures, so it is important to consider the national specifics and adjust this method of measuring the brand personality to them.

This research is very relevant to the Czech Republic, especially the presentation of the OSG brand because Prague may have the opportunity to host the Games in the near future. The Czech Olympic Committee and the partnering institutions dealing primarily with marketing should know the strong and weak points of the OSG brand personality and base the marketing campaign accordingly (Meffert & Burmann, 2002). There is a very good indication of very good conditions for building a strong OSG brand in the Czech Republic because, according to the results of this research, the personality of this brand is perceived very positively by the public.

Based on the analysis of the brand personality of the three previously mentioned sport events, we can identify their specific brand personality in the

Czech Republic as specified in the objectives of this research. The detailed analysis of all dimensions of the sport events' brand personalities enabled an identification of the traits that are characteristic for each brand. In order to provide a comprehensive view of the brand personalities, the traits that can be considered as the weak spots of these sport events were also identified.

The FIFA World Cup is seen as *modern, exciting, spirited, successful, self-confident and male with a strong team spirit*. However, also some insufficiencies were also identified that consist partially of negative attitudes toward the following traits: *friendly toward family, honest, proper, independent, intelligent, upper class, charming and outdoorsy*. Therefore the brand should adapt its marketing strategies according to these findings in order to form its personality in the desired way. Thus, the core of the marketing strategy should consist of those traits that are characteristic for this brand and the brand should build its image upon them.

Futhermore, the FIFA World Cup brand should concentrate on the traits that represent its weaknesses in its marketing campaign with TV advertisements playing a major role, where an important personality from the soccer world could be used. This personality should mainly personify the traits *intelligent, proper and honest* with having a sense for family. The independence trait could be strengthened by the usage of video recordings when the main referee is not sure about a certain decision or if the team captain asks for it.

According to the research, the Tour de France brand is perceived as hard working, successful and a male person and therefore the brand should base its image on these traits. Additionally, we

recognized certain insufficiencies, specifically in the traits *friendly toward family, honest, original, imaginative, elegant, fashionable (stylish), charming and able to lead people*. As some of these traits could represent an important part of the Tour de France brand personality, they need to be stimulated by suitable means, e.g. by specific marketing activities. The marketing campaign could be based on interesting observations both from the past and from the current Tour de France in order to show what the Tour is in reality and to put emphasis on its merits. In this way it is possible to positively influence the traits *original, imaginative and charming*. An appropriately chosen marketing campaign can also partially influence the traits *fashionable (stylish) and elegant* even though it is not an easy matter for the Tour de France brand.

The traits *honest* and *friendly toward family* are negatively influenced mainly by the connection of the Tour de France with doping. Even though the Tour de France struggles hard against doping, every year doping affairs occur during the event, which indirectly damages the overall image of this brand.

Based on the performed analysis of the OSG brand personality, we can state that the public has a very positive view of this brand. The OSG brand personality in the Czech Republic is perceived as *proper, sincere (publicly accessible), exciting, unique (typical), hard working, successful, self-confident, upper class, splendid, striking (prominent) with team spirit*. In contrast to the other two brands there were no relevant insufficiencies identified. The strength and uniqueness of this brand is built on the previously mentioned traits and its marketing strategy should therefore be formed accordingly in order to support the desired image.

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KARAKTERISTIKE OSOBNOSTI BRENDA VELIKIH SPORTSKIH DOGAĐAJA

Ovaj članak predstavlja rezultate istraživanja osobina brenda velikih sportskih događaja kao što su FIFA nogometno svjetsko prvenstvo, biciklistička utrka Tour de France i ljetne Olimpijske igre. Autori su vrednovali karakteristike brenda svakoga od navedenih sportskih događaja kao skup ljudskih karakteristika povezanih s određenim brendom. U istraživanju je korištena metoda koju je standardizirala američka autorica J. Aaker. U ovom su istraživanju vrednovane 42 osobine sportskoga brenda, podijeljene u 5 dimenzija. Rezultati dobiveni pomoću upitnika bili su detaljno statistički analizirani pri čemu je svaka karakteristika koja je formirala osnovnu dimenziju brenda bila opisana aritmetičkom sredinom, modom, standardnom devijacijom

i koeficijentom asimetričnosti. Kao rezultat ovoga istraživanja predstavljene su karakteristike koje pozitivno opisuju, ali i one koje ne opisuju određeni brend natjecanja. Autori također predstavljaju prijedloge za daljnje marketinške akcije za svaki od sportskih brendova koje bi unaprijedili osobine brenda natjecanja i koje bi mogle koristiti u boljem razumijevanju s navijačima, gledateljima i ostalom publikom, u formiranju komunikacijske strategije te pri zajedničkom stvaranju vrijednosti brenda s publikom.

Ključne riječi: *upravljanje brendom, strategija marketinga, sportski događaj*