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Primjena sportskog sponzorstva kao alata odnosa s javnostima za stvaranje prepoznatljivosti brenda

Sažetak

U današnjim uvjetima, neminovno je za proizvođače da budu jedinstveni, da postanu brendovi koji su poznati i prepoznatljivi. Dan za danom, ideja stvaranje brenda dobiva više važnosti u društvima koja se brzo razvijaju i mijenjaju. U ovom području, gdje je natjecateljska atmosfera neizbježna i kad se nalazimo usred tržišnog umrežavanja, važno je biti drugačiji. Biti drugačiji je jedino moguće stvaranjem brendova proizvoda i zadobivanjem lojalnosti potrošača štiteći te brendove. Nije potrebno biti proizvođač; već dati vrijednost proizvodu, unaprijediti ga i učiniti jedinstvenim. Prava prodaja i jedinstvenost u sektoru je jedino moguća pod ovim uvjetima.

U ovom istraživanju, nakon teoretskog istraživanja interneta i odnosa s javnostima, analizirani su mrežni oblici i sadržaji glavnih sponzora Svjetskog košarkaškog prvenstva 2010, utvrđeni su rezultati njihove komunikacije i došlo se do rješenja.

Ključne riječi: mediji, OSJ, sport, sponzorstvo, brend, stvaranje brenda

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Sports sponsorship applications as a public relations tool for creating brand recognition

Summary

In today's conditions, it is inevitable for the producers to be unique, to become brands that are known and recognised. Day by day, the concept of branding gains more importance within fast developing and changing societies. In this era, where competition atmosphere is inevitable and we are just in the middle of the marketing network, it is important to be different. Being different can only be possible with branding products and sustaining the customer loyalty by protecting those brands. It is not needed to be the producer; but also to bring a value to the product manufactured, to elevate it and make it unique. Real sales and being unique in the sector can only be possible under these conditions.

In this study, after the theoretical study of the Internet and public relations is made, the website forms and contents of the 2010 World Basketball Championship Main Sponsors are analysed, their communication breakdowns are determined and solutions are developed.

Key words: media, PR, sport, sponsorship, brand, branding

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Introduction

Change of the balances in the world that started with globalisation and homogeneity of everything brought along differentiation. Homogeneity became so intense that uniform customers started to come out as a result of communication activities carried out by multinational companies. The customer who faces a communication bombardment started to consume without knowing what and why he consumes. Such fast changes that bring along innovations every time, create several negative impacts next to positive ones. Along with the creation of brand recognition, the customer preferences are made over the same brands. Protecting the brand can only be possible by creating a portfolio of loyal customers and consistency of all the brand-related strategies and behaviours. Nowadays, these activities are developed through marketing strategies and supported by communication activities. In this intense competition and communication environment, companies try very hard to communicate in order to attract the customers, create awareness and most importantly to sell the product. Companies carry out several communication activities such as social responsibility campaigns or sponsorship along this process in order to support the marketing mix personnel. Although the sponsorship activity which has various types is preferred according to the field that the companies want to take place in, sports sponsorship takes a leading place among these preferences. Sports sponsorship enables companies to raise the awareness they aim regarding their level of recognition while it helps to create loyal customers on the other hand.

Place and Importance of the Brand within Integrated Marketing Communication

Integrated marketing communication aims to communicate with customers within the body of brand management. In a brand management process which takes place under integrated management communication requires a monocentric analysis of the marketing and communication decisions. The effectiveness of tools used in brand management varies according to the goal of the promotion activity or the result that is aimed

to be accomplished. In this study, the focus is made on the title of public relations.

Brand in terms of Public Relations: Today's conditions of competition require a synergy created by the unification of such applications as publicity, public relations, personal sales, sales promotion, etc.

Public relations have a key role within integrated marketing communication. Marketing's goal of convincing and the raising importance given to corporate reputation increases the key role of public relations in this field. It is possible to group the activities of public relations within marketing communication under two main topics as corporate public relations (CPR) and marketing public relations. "When corporate public relations work for turning the corporate identity into corporate image/reputation and bring trust and understanding to the company through communicating with the target group, marketing public relations integrate certain goals as the product image or sales continuity with customer satisfaction and loyalty¹. "Corporate recognition and image activities which are within the activities of corporate public relations and which are the main criterion to lead integrated corporate communication activities of corporate recognition and image activities that all the target groups have regarding the organisation make corporate public relations an indispensable element of integrated public relations."²

"Marketing oriented public relations concept can be explained as the strategic support of public relations to the organisation for achieving its marketing goals with the most basic expression." Marketing oriented public relations is positioned in two different forms as proactive MPR and reactive MPR³. "Proactive MPR is integrated with other promotional tools in order to bring positive outlook, newsworthiness and reliability to the product. Public relations which completely sticks to the marketing goals of the company and which is carried out on that basis is an approach that prefers attacking to defending and watching for marketing-related opportunities to solving problems. Proactive MPR is used as an additional power to publicity, sales development, personal sales and direct sales, after-sales services and other marketing communication elements. As to

¹Nurhan Babür Tosun, "Pazarlamada Halkla İlişkiler Yeterli Düzeyde Kavranabildi mi?" Marketing World, No: 82, July-August 2000, p.36.

² Yavuz ODABASI, Postmodern Pazarlama Tüketim ve Tüketici, İstanbul: Kapital Medya, 2004, p.129-130.

³Thommas Harries, "How MPR Adds Value to IMC", Public Relations Quarterly, Vol: 38, no:2, Summer 1993), p.14

reactive public relations, it takes action on the basis of all external factors in such cases as changes in the market, changes in consumer behaviours, changes in government policies or conditions of competition. These are usually negative changes. Hence, the action is taken with such purposes as regaining the destroyed reputation of the company. Reactive public relations is used for overcoming crisis or problems.”⁴.

Today, public relations is used not only for its management function but also as a marketing tool. The difference of public relations from other marketing components as an important criterion is its cheapness, the opportunity it gives for reaching the specific target group and its strong reliability. “According to the results of a study made by marketing managers, $\frac{3}{4}$ of companies benefit from marketing oriented public relations and this application has a strong effect on creating brand awareness.”⁵.

As a result of economic and technological developments, production is no longer a problem and this case is one of the factors that causes intense competition. Multiplication of similar products that serve for the same goal and the raise regarding the awareness and knowledge level of consumers, brought the necessity of creating a brand and ensuring its loyalty to the agenda. For this reason, marketing public relations which mainly involves brand image creation within its task definition is one of the most important elements of integrated marketing communication nowadays. Indeed, the main objective is the use of public relations strategies in order to achieve the marketing goals.

“Marketing oriented public relations aims to influence product sales by creating customer satisfaction and the fields it is used may be listed as follows:”⁶.

- Positioning the company as the leader and expert of the sector,
- Ensuring belief and trust among customers towards the company,
- Offering new products to the market,
- Making people become interested in the product,
- Leading the attention to the brand and the message in intense publicity environments,

⁴Füsun Kocabaş, Müge Elden, Serra İnci Çelebi, Marketing P.R., Ankara: MediaCat Yayınları, 1999, p.83-117.

⁵Filiz Balta Peltekoğlu, Halkla İlişkiler Nedir?, İstanbul, Beta Publisher, 2004, p. 40-43.

⁶Bozkurt Güvenç, İnsan ve Kültür, İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi Publisher, 1999, p.123-125.

- Creating stories about the product and the service,
- Measuring the effectiveness of sales development campaigns,
- Strengthening brand image with sponsorship programmes,
- Developing activities that will make the target groups think positive about the product and the service.

It is observed that both the images of the brand and the organisation are transferred to a positive direction, the values related to brand equity and the rates of brand loyalty increased and positive developments occurred in raising internal and external customer happiness thanks to public relations applications.

Evaluation of Brand from Three Different Perspectives

Such activities as sponsorship, direct marketing, e-trade and package are also used in brand management under integrated marketing communication next to publicity, public relations, sales development and personal sales applications. sponsorship are also used in such cases as strengthening brand image, brand positioning, creating brand awareness and developing brand image.

Identification of a brand with an activity and appearance of its products as representatives of a certain life philosophy can be made possible with sponsorship. Today, sponsorship is indispensable both for events that can be organised with immense budgets and people who attend those events. Sponsorship is not an application that consists of rules and principles by itself but a completion of techniques that exist under the body of public relations. As already known, sponsorship is not an unilateral or unreturned aid. All the sponsorship activities are applications with certain goals, planned and organised in advance. Because sponsorship is a business arrangement between the supporter and the supported ones serving benefits of both sides in order to reach determined goals⁷.

It helps the sponsoring organisation to be appreciated and to create company - hence brand recognition and awareness and even brand adoption by the society later on. In this context, sponsorship activities held on the right time with the right strategies can be very useful for companies to reach their goals.

⁷Metin, Kazancı. Kamuda ve Özel Kesimde Halkla İlişkiler, 7th Editioni Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 2007, p. 371-372.

Brand Recall and Recognition in terms of Awareness

Awareness is to mention being informed about the existence of a case, a concept or an object in the brain and mind through the information received. Awareness is a case which can be told within mental processes where imaginary or abstract thinking is necessary.

Being aware and having awareness are very essential for producers of today. It is very important for the existence process of a brand that branded products are perceived by consumer groups and non-target groups as well and their awareness is raised. In this sense, brand awareness process is an indispensable step for all producers. A consumer who ends up in the preference phase prefers the product he is aware of between two products having similar values in terms of quality and price. Therefore, creating the brand awareness in the eyes of a customer is a critical strategy which shall take place in the preference phase of the brand⁸.

Brand awareness concept is the power of traces that a brand has in the consumer's mind. According to the studies carried out in this context, it can start with mainly knowing the name of the brand as the first step of brand awareness and advance to being aware of all details concerning that brand. Awareness is a pre-condition for developing perceptions and ideas towards a brand. Brand awareness is defined as the brand's capability of being selected among a product category given to the consumer to remember the brand⁹. That is why, the very first process of existence of a brand can actually be rendered possible by positioning it in human mind.

The concept of awareness is a precondition for creating an image in consumer's mind towards the brand. In this phase, brand awareness levels used in measurement of awareness are studied under the titles below¹⁰;

- Brand recognition
- Brand recall
- First brand in recall

⁸Steven P. Brown & Wyane D. Hoyer. "Effects of Brand Awareness on Choice for a Common, Repeat-Purchase Product", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol 17, September, 1990, p.141.

⁹ A. Isıl KARPAT, *Marka Yönetimi Güçlü ve Başarılı Markalar İçin Temel İlkeler*, İletişim Publisher, 2004. p.37.

¹⁰A. David A Aaker. "Measuring Brand Equity Across Products and Markets". *California Management Review*, V: 38, No:3, Spring 1996. pp. 114-115.

- Brand dominance
- Brand knowledge
- Brand belief

For the levels that belong to brand awareness, specifically brand recognition and brand recall come in the first place. Brand recognition which is one of the main concepts under brand awareness is achieved when the consumer has sufficient level of knowledge to categorise the brand.

The significant difference between being aware of and recognising a brand is that after a consumer receives general information related to the brand, he goes beyond this recognition, carries the data about that brand to a conceptual dimension and reaches the level of awareness¹¹. The existence process of brand-related information in consumer's mind develops according to the past experiences of a person. If this process can be created within a consumer, it means that the brand is recognised by him. Brand recognition is known as a concept directly related to the brand's visual tools such as the colour, size, form, package, logo or symbol.

Brand recall which is another essential concept that brand awareness involves is defined as the sufficiency to use formerly obtained information about a brand when any related hint is given. Together with recognition and recalling components, brand awareness concept is led to the process of being preferred with such kind of data created in minds. Brand awareness is an important concept as it involves the first data that may appear about a brand.

The attitudes and behaviours towards a brand are patterns of awareness that occurred according to the former data received about that brand. In this sense, it is not possible to separate brand awareness from the concepts of attitude, behaviour, recalling and recognition.

Brand recall is a fact that can be realised through the concept of awareness. During the positioning, especially the brand name shall be given after making the right selection so that a brand that is newly entering the market can create awareness. If a new brand enters the sector under a formerly used or well-known brand, it is much easier to ensure remembrance of a brand and it's acceptance by the consumer¹².

¹¹ Steven P. Brown, & Wyane D. Hoyer, "Effects of Brand Awareness on Choice for a Common, Repeat-Purchase Product", *Journal of Consumer Research*. Vol 17, September, 1990, p.141.

¹² Leo Bogart & Charles Lehman, "What Makes a Brand Name Familiar?". *Journal of Marketing*

Therefore, awareness increases the recognition possibility of any brand and helps it to enter the market. Because the recognition that will take place after awareness is the prior and permanent step for a brand. Sometimes, it may happen that brand awareness is raised not necessarily with remembrance of the brand's name and this can be possible by recognising that brand primarily. A consumer who recognises the brand might not have the necessity of bringing a data to his mind regarding its remembrance. In this sense, the importance of brand awareness regarding communication shall not be forgotten.

Brand recognition and recall can be expressed as the two different types of brand awareness. Brand recognition which is one of the two sub-components of brand awareness occurs within the customer during the sales while brand recall is a concept that occurs and exists in the presales stage. Both can create brand aware at the same time or may represent brand awareness separately by themselves in different times.

Sponsorship activities have a significant importance in brand recognition and recall. Sponsorship activities maintain an essential place among public relations activities.

Relation Between Sponsorship with Public Relations

Sponsorship became a communication tool that increased its importance throughout the time and started to be used and preferred by several organisations and institutes. Companies benefit from various communication tools in order to promote their own products or branded products and position them within a wide range of products and brands. It is necessary to study the aspects and relations of marketing, publicity, social responsibility and public relations of sponsorship activities within the framework of integrated marketing communication. In order to limit this study, only the public relations aspect of sponsorship will be analysed.

Relation Between Sponsorship – Public Relations: Public relations involve communication activities carried out by companies to establish, sustain and develop mutual trust and understanding with diverse target groups such as customers, potential customers, opinion leaders and financial organisations

in accordance with the goals determined¹³.

Sponsorship offers companies the opportunity to express their sensitivity towards social issues by supporting education, research and arts. Thus, this contributes to reinforce the reliability that public relations try to develop among the target group and raising good will over the target group is primarily a very important element in public relations projects. Thanks to the good will created among the target group and media via sponsorship activities, public relations activities are also published in the media. Hence, companies who take place in public relations projects as sponsors, contribute to improve the image of their company as well.

Improving the brand and company recognition is among the main goals of sponsorship. In another sense, sponsorship activities contribute to recognition and placement of companies or brands within a society. The first rule of reaching the target group in sponsorship activities is the coherence between the activity and the target group. When the right sponsor comes together with the right event, it takes the attention of the media and opens the company or the brand the way to it.

The company can have a high and positive image within the society along with the success that comes after being able to promote itself. Still, the first impression over the society about the brand or the company is very important. That company or brand may be recalled and recognised anymore in parallel with this impression. Sponsorship activities are held with the goal to raise awareness.

One of the prior benefits of sponsorship regarding public relations aspect is strengthening the brand and company image. The image concept is a process which occurs in minds upon the processes of recall and awareness of a brand. Sponsorship activities may improve the images of brands in a positive way or in cases that do not end with success, this image may be influenced in a negative way.

The process followed through establishment of the brand image is more complicated than establishment of recognition. Any sponsored activity has a character that gathers series of behaviours or values over the perception of its own spectators/audience. Sponsorship empowers the prestige of a brand or company, improves and strengthens its size, financial activity and international status. Keeping the possibility of

¹³ Aydemir Okay, *Halkla İlişkiler Aracı Olarak Sponsorluk*, İstanbul, Epsilon Publisher, 1998. p.27- 28.

changes in the image throughout the time in mind, necessary innovations and changes shall be realised with systematically developed communication activities taking the existing image into consideration.

Since sponsorship is an event based communication model, its access to the target group is much easier. This access is actually very important as it supports sales within the marketing network. The brand which supports sponsorship gains attraction this way and helps to create positive behaviours within the target group.

Companies who wish to achieve their formerly determined communication and marketing goals and catch the common fields of interest with their target groups shall determine their fields of sponsorship. The sponsorship activities carried out by companies in general can be studied under the topics of sports sponsorship, culture-arts sponsorship, social sponsorship and adventure-travel sponsorship but this study will only focus on sports sponsorship.

Sponsorship activity which was intensely increased its usage in 80s has again announced its name and became preferred by several organisations via sports sponsorship for the first time. The most significant and first examples of sponsorship usually took place in sports field. Sports sponsorship is known as the first field among the most popular and supported ones in Turkey and the world as sports have access to a wide range of target groups.

Sports Sponsorship: Sports sponsorship still takes the largest place among all the sponsorship types both in terms of number and amount. It is so much popular as sports may address the target groups in the world without any age limit or feeling of belonging to a certain life style. Especially companies or brands who wish to have their products or services promoted and to establish a link with a certain image feature carry our sponsorship activities in this field with diverse contributions depending on the size and scope of the activity. The field of sports is an area that ensures communication with target groups, that can be understood all around the world and speaks the same language.

It is an indispensable source for organisations who wish to be known or promote their brands via sponsorship. Sponsoring such a field that can be followed and perceived from all around the world only creates an advantage for organisations. However, another important detail here is that sponsorship ensures effective communication next to raising brand awareness and having the potential of changing the target group's opinion

about the brand. Behind the corporate image created by sponsorship, it surely raises the awareness about that brand and increases the sales. It is determined that the value and awareness over the brand increased 50 percent after sponsorship.

Sports sponsorship gives the opportunity to reach various groups as well as the international platform and this makes it a frequently preferred field of sponsorship. This way, the target group and all the other audience can concentrate on the sponsor and his name. It is for sure that this case supports the strengthening of awareness.

Relation Between Brand Awareness and Sponsorship

During the sponsorship activity with a brand, increase in the level of awareness is directly related to the consumption values of the target group. Consumer consumption values are grouped under five different topics as the functional value, social value, emotional value, knowledge value and utility value of the brand¹⁴. Companies who are determined to sponsor shall analyse all consumption values about their target group and make their decision in line with it.

At this point, what matters is that companies shall understand the way the consumer perceives the brand over five consumer values and set their goals in that direction. The main objective in sponsorship is to make associations of the brand. Sponsorship is to stimulate the brand organisation and announce the existence of new products and technologies to the target group in creating an event-related experience for them. In this sense, the link to be established between the brand and the target group during the activity gains importance. In case there is a transition between the sponsoring company and the life standards and values of the target group, then the desired link will be established automatically between the brand and the target group¹⁵.

Thanks to the event experience, the target group will obtain more detailed information about the target group, brand and the event and reach a different position. Another experience that the sponsorship events offer

¹⁴Nigel, Pope. "Consumption Values, Sponsorship Awareness, Brand and Products Use". *Journal of Product and Brand Management*. Santa Barbara. Vol 7, Number 2, 1998, p.2.

¹⁵ David, Aaker. *Brand Leadership*, New York: Free Press Publication, 2000, p.204.

to the target group is the feeling of being a family and a team. Especially in periodically organised events, the target group having that experience will always participate in those events and feel itself more as a part of that brand. This will create the customer portfolio that is loyal to the brand and feels that he belongs to it.

Throughout the time, the customer who identifies his identity with the brand's identity will be able to see that it will become a life style to use that brand. One of the most important factors that makes the brand present in the eyes of the target group, turns it into a life philosophy and style is sponsorship events. Sponsorship will create brand-related awareness and the continuity of these activities will have a positive contribution over creation of customer loyalty.

Before raising awareness, it is necessary to create certain associations about the brand among the target group. It is possible to develop awareness in a reliable way only after those associations and this can be speeded up and placed in mind with the strength of perceptions. It is important that brand associations are created thanks to sponsorship activities so that other concepts can be developed after.

The brand loyalty that will occur upon brand associations, the awareness developed as well as the image created and maintained after that may always change according to the individual functioning of the perceptions of people. The main idea is that a company can create associations related to its brand by sponsoring an event it selects according to the character and identity of its brand. Upon these associations, raising the level of awareness regarding the brand contribute to development of a positive or negative image of the brand occurred in the course of time.

In this sense, sponsorship raises awareness towards a brand and even helps with the development of all other brand-related perceptions and opinions. These perceptions may be positive or negative. How much the event sponsored reflects the brand is considered an essential process in the success of the result.

The Effect of Sports sponsorship Over Brand Awareness

The details contained by sports sponsorship in a general context as the second one of the concepts that constitutes the starting point and basis of this study also introduced the phases of becoming aware of a brand. From this section on, companies who enabled brand awareness through sports sponsorship are analysed. In the the conclusion section, these points and main ideas they reach will be mentioned in details.

Companies contribute to the processes of being aware of brands via sports sponsorship activities. Among other sponsorship fields, sports sponsorship has a privileged place. Sports sponsorship contain commercial concerns. However, beyond financial expectations, sponsorship activities carried out in sports field meet an essential need within the society. When organising sponsorship activities, the reason why companies prefer to be recalled with such activities is beyond promoting their names only, it is also for taking place in things that can create a benefit for the society. In this sense, companies that carries out sports sponsorship creates a strong impact on ensuring the awareness level towards their brands.

In the global life, we live in a world of communication where information bombardment is dominant over life and infinite number of brands, publicity and visuality exist. Awareness occur upon a certain process and thus the brand is positioned. As a result, brand awareness is known as the first contact or introduction of a consumer with the brand, that happens mentally at first and becomes concrete later on. In this context, it will satisfy the needs in the sports field and contribute to the awareness processes of brands via these sponsorship activities.

The sponsorship activities in the sports field influence the development of awareness processes of brands. This influence process takes place only in line with the effect they can make over perception. The sports sponsorship carried out help the brands they support to be perceived fast, thus they increase the awareness on the side of the target groups.

As stated in the article of Nigel Pope, all the sponsorship activities shall be continuous as this continuity can only ensure an increase in the sales graphics after awareness is created towards the brand. Because of the nature of awareness, two points regarding the brands shall be important; consumers must absolutely be informed about the sponsorship activity organised and aware of the brand carrying out sports sponsorship. In

sports sponsorship activities, the groups that follow the activity have perceived those brands and have a certain awareness towards those brands. As noted by Pope as well, companies who carry out sports sponsorship activities shall make them permanent in order to be found reliable by their target groups. In this context, the level of trust and awareness towards sponsoring brands can be very high.

Objective and Method of This Study

The objective of this study is to analyse the formal features involving the accessibility, general outlook and utility of the websites of the 2010 World Basketball Championship sponsors, in order to determine the way they use their websites to introduce their corporate identities. In addition, upon determination of the due diligence of the websites of these companies, the facilities are also mentioned regarding how the websites can be used effectively and how the companies can introduce themselves better to their target groups.

The sports companies are also involved in the samples given. The companies selected according to judgemental sampling are involved in this study for their strong recognition and large scope of target groups addressed thanks to their former promotion activities. In order to bring a limitation to the study, the event selected is preferred because of involving both sexes and taking place in Turkey as an international event since sports activities have a very large scope and contains sex differentiation.

At this point of the study, the data required regarding the features to be contained by the websites used by Esrock and Leitchy, Kamat, Gürcan is questioned in analysing the websites of the selected companies. (Esrock and Leitchy, 2000: 332; Kamat, 2002:35-38; Gürcan, 2003: 90-99).

The websites analysed within the framework of the content analysis realised in this study are assessed with the "Evaluation Criteria Form" between 21st-23rd October 2010. In addition to the "Evaluation Criteria Form" that constitutes the first form where web sites are analysed, a second form will also be mentioned where the level of effectiveness regarding the use of websites for the recognition and promotion activities of companies is assessed.

Findings of the Study

The sponsor websites are analysed within the framework of accessibility, outlook and utility stated in the “Evaluation Criteria Form” and the title of this analysis is determined as “Formal Features”. The title that consist of the outcomes of the second form is determined as “Findings Regarding Recognition and Promotion Activities”.

Findings of Formal Features

In the first form of the study, the first title in the analysis of the formal features of the website is “Site Accessibility”. When the site accessibility of the websites concerned are analysed, it was concluded that the sites are in a very good position in terms of site accessibility and the duration of downloading. As for the 4,5,7,8,9,13 websites, lack of site map is found negative and it was perceived as a site that is difficult to use by the target group. On the other hand, presence of a site map in order websites is found positive.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria Form Regarding the Formal Features of Web Sites

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Site accessibility																		
Site accessibility	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Duration of Downloading of the Site	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Site Map	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
General Outlook																		
General Outlook of the Homepage	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Usability of the Homepage	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Colour Use in Pages	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Background Colour	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Coordination Between Pages	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Turkish Character Support	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Page Length	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Page Margins	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Photo Usage in																		
Promotional Activities	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Operability of Buttons on the Page	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Number of Visitors	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Site Usability																			
Font Usage and Easiness to Read	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Access to Other Links Through the Homepage	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Link Between Pages	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Site Search	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Access to Archives Opportunity	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+
Possibility to Make a Research over Word, History, Event	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Page Print-out Opportunity	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Language Selection Option	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Beko (1), Champion (2), Molten (3), Mondo (4), Ovi Nokia (5), Sinalco (6), Tissot (7), Zepter (8), Garanti (9), Intersport (10), Mercedes-benz (11), Turkcell (12), Türk Havayolları (13), Ulker (14), Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği-TOBB (15), Efes (16), TAV (17), Tuttur.com (18)

When the “General Outlook” which is the second title in the form is assessed, it was concluded that the general outlook used, the usability and the colours used are designed in a certain coherence in the websites. When the Background colours used in the websites are analysed, it was observed that warm colours were used. In the websites of foreign sponsors, there isn't any Turkish character support. Photos are used in all websites to support promotional activities. Certain buttons of the 3rd, 7th and 8th companies are not active. Absence of the number of visitors on the websites of the 9th and 14th companies are considered negative while its presence on the websites of other companies is considered positive.

“Site Usability” is assessed as the third title in the form. The use of fonts in sufficient size and a readable style creates site usability. It is considered reliable that the links in all the websites are active. Absence of the opportunity to access the archive in the 15th company is perceived negative. Again, existence of a search button in all websites brings an advantage compared to other competitors. It enables the visitors in the target group to benefit from this service. Language option on the websites of all the companies analysed within this study is considered positive on the target groups' side.

Findings of Recognition and Promotion Activities

The second part of the study consists of the analysis of the websites regarding recognition and promotion activities. The study carried out under the title of recognition and promotion is composed of two parts, where the first part is called recognition and involves finding out the demands, complaints and expectations of the target group. The second part is called promotion. This part consists of learning the way the companies analysed demonstrate their tools and corporate identities.

When the websites of the sponsors are analysed, no surveys regarding the recognition of the target group are found. Contact options such as telephone , fax and e-mail exist in the websites of the sponsors. Again, there is a complaint and request line in all the corporate websites. Despite being so well equipped in recognition tools, it is considered negative that no sms-wap services exist on the websites. In respect with the recognition activities, it is important that all the websites save their number of visitors.

When corporate websites are analysed within the study, it is observed that the corporate history exists in all sites. The histories are given in details. It is observed within the study of the websites that CVs and photos of the executives are not demonstrated. Again, any information regarding the organisational structures of the companies are not given. The organisational charts on the websites take an important place in the presentation of the companies.

Vision and mission that are mentioned under the title of promotion exist in all the websites studied. Emblem and logo which are important tools for positioning of the corporate identity among the target group exist in all the websites. No information is found regarding the events to be organised or attended. Likely, no online magazines or newspapers are found in the websites. No brochures, e-books or press releases to influence the target group were presented. Again, no news archives published in the media were encountered.

Table 2. Evaluation Criteria Form Regarding the Recognition and Promotion Activities of Web Sites

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Recognition																		
Survey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Telephone, Fax, E-mail	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Complaint and Request Line	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Information	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Message to the General President and the Board of Directors	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Sms –Wap	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Number of Visitors	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+
The Number of Times it is Visited by Using the Same IP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Presentation																		
History	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
CVs of and Photos of the Managers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Intercorporate Commissions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Organisation Chart	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vision	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Mission	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Emblem	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Logo	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Campaign Announcements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Online Magazine and Newspaper	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brochures	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Activity Reports	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
E-Book	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Newsletters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Press Archive	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Picture and Photo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Activity Calendar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contact Address	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Dealers	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Events	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Membership Form	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Newsgroup and Forum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Campaigns Realised	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Poster	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Information regarding the Fields of Interest	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

There aren't any photos that press representatives can benefit from. There are no activity calendars. All the websites contain contact information. Again, information regarding the branches of the companies is also present on the websites. All the websites have membership forms. No news groups or forums are present on the websites. No information regarding the announcement of the former sponsorship activities could be found. No posters of the previous activities were encountered. All the websites contain information regarding their fields of activity.

Discussion and Conclusion

When the findings of the study are reached, the conclusion is that the websites of the 2010 World Basketball Championship main sponsors are not used effectively in terms of public relations and promotional activities. Technological means shall also be used next to traditional tools of public relations. Public relations workers wish to use e-public relations effectively within the framework of the activities that aim to reach the target group through various tools. Website applications take place among main communication tools in e-public relations. The biggest advantage of websites comes from being interactive and direct when communicating. Internet's being an interactive mass communication tool is determined as a factor that shall never be forgotten by companies that carry out sports sponsorship.

It is also determined that the activities regarding recognition and promotion of the target groups in the websites analysed are insufficient. This insufficiency shall be eliminated. On the other hand, in the analysis of website accessibility, it is considered positive by the target group that all the websites are fast and easy to access. It is observed that the websites are not sufficient in terms of sitemaps and this shall absolutely be fixed. By means of language selection, all the websites have language option buttons and this is considered positive in terms of addressing multinational target groups.

When websites are analysed in terms of offering multiple communication opportunity, they shall benefit from such facilities as newsgroups and forums. Besides, they shall be used as an essential tool in announcing their coming activities to the target group. Companies shall

consider their websites a planned corporate communication strategy. The websites and promotional activities prepared in consideration with all these things will increase the awareness towards the companies and contribute them to strengthen their corporate images.

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