

consumers. However, the unique nature of sport consumer behaviour requires additional understanding for how sport differs from other business products and services. Research that examines experiential consumption reveals that individuals perceive and weigh some consumptive experiences differently than others (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). For example, products like detergent, mustard, movies and banking can be perceived as important, but sport experiences differ in terms of the value and meaning consumers ascribe to them (Pritchard & Funk, 2006). This is due in part to the unique nature of sport and events.

Unique Aspects of the Sport and Event Product

A discussion of the unique aspects of sport products, events, and services appears in the Sport Marketing text by Mullin, Hardy, and Sutton (2007). The authors describe how marketing sport and related event products and services differ from traditional marketing in terms of 10 aspects and are worth reviewing to understand the unique nature of sport consumer behaviour:

1. Sport organisations must compete and cooperate:
 - Sport franchises in the English Premier League such as Manchester United and Chelsea must cooperate with each other for the success of the league; while at the same time compete for resources and market share. Marketing activities by Coke and Pepsi do not follow this approach.
2. Sport consumers are experts:
 - Managerial decisions such as player acquisition and strategies in sport do not go unnoticed and the sport consumer often considers himself/herself an expert on running the company. Marketers for Dell computers rarely communicate detailed design and technological information and rarely have radio talk shows devoted to company operations.
3. Supply and demand fluctuates:
 - Sport participation opportunities can be determined by the environmental factors such as climate. Marketers offer outdoor sports such as football and baseball in warmer months, while basketball is offered in colder months.
4. Sport is an intangible product:
 - While sport equipment is easy to understand, selling the benefits received and needs fulfilled from watching or participating in a sport event are hard to pinpoint. Marketing vicarious achievement, socialisation, and escape at a sport

event is more challenging than colour, size, and material for Addidas.

5. Simultaneous consumption:
 - Many sport products are produced and consumed at the same time. In recreational leagues, participants create the game product and if an opposing team does not show up the product is not produced or consumed. In spectator sport, spectators create the atmosphere found at games. Marketing such experiences is difficult when the game does not happen or is over.
6. Social facilitation via sport:
 - Sport is consumed in the presence of others. Less than 2% of spectators attend games by themselves and bikers and runners often ride in groups. Marketers for Frosted Flakes cereal or Cheer detergent rarely have to consider how their product created opportunities for socialisation.
7. Inconsistent nature of the product:
 - A major attraction to sport is its inconsistent nature and the outcome is uncertain. Often, a sport team or individual athlete has a chance to beat an opponent in competition and the action that occurs during competition will be different. Marketers for Toyota do not desire inconsistency in performance of its vehicles as consumers find no joy in wondering whether their car may breakdown.
8. Lack of control over the core product:
 - Sport marketers have little control over the core product. Managers make trades, the league controls rules and regulations, and athletes get hurt. Marketers for Sony rarely have to worry about whether materials in the plant will be available to make their cameras.
9. Reliance on product extensions:
 - Much of the sport experience involves elements not related to the core product. Consumers are entertained through halftime and pre-game promotions, music, and various activities. Marketers often attempt to sell the spectacle that surrounds the event more than the actual competition.
10. Consumer vs. industrial nature of sport:
 - Sport is both a consumer product and an industrial product. A Liverpool football game is consumed by spectators and the London Marathon by participants, while at the same time businesses are using the event to promote various products via sponsorship opportunities.

The 10 unique aspects of the sport event product highlight the need for sport marketing actions that build upon traditional marketing