What’s in it for Me? An Investigation of North American Professional Niche Sport Sponsorship Objectives

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Sponsorship funding often represents a significant portion of a niche sport property’s operating capital. Considering professional niche sport properties often solicit the same corporations as mainstream professional sport properties, intercollegiate athletic departments, even arts or music festivals, professional niche sports must understand how their properties can effectively help potential partners achieve their corporate objectives. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to identify the objectives sponsors deem important when evaluating professional niche sport sponsorship opportunities within North America. To address this purpose, responses from 32 organizations that had sponsored niche sports were analyzed to identify which objectives they found most important. Findings from the current study indicated that niche sport sponsors placed a relatively high level of importance on increasing their corporate awareness, specifically within a particular target market. Niche sport sponsors also look to enhance their company’s image, and enhance community involvement through their sponsorship.

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