

The interplay of team identification and perceived sponsor sincerity on the sponsorship articulation-fit relationship

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Abstract

Previous literature on sponsorship-linked marketing shows that articulation messages explaining why and how sponsor and sponsee fit together lead to more favorable attitudes toward the sponsor brand. However, results from some studies do not entirely support this finding, suggesting that important variables affecting the sponsorship articulation-fit relationship may have been overlooked. Addressing this gap in the literature, we show that consumer responses to sponsorship articulation are moderated by fan's level of identification with a sports team. That is, fans high in team identification respond differently to various types of articulation messages whereas fans with lower team identification levels do not. Furthermore, we demonstrate that messages highlighting how fans and sports team benefit from the sponsorship deal elicit thoughts of sincerity which in turn evokes reciprocity and more favorable attitudes from highly identified fans.

Keywords: *Sponsorship; Articulation; Team Identification*

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