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**VISUAL PROCESSING AND NEED FOR COGNITION CAN ENHANCE
EVENT-SPONSORSHIP OUTCOMES: HOW SPORTING EVENT SPONSORSHIPS
BENEFIT FROM THE WAY ATTENDEES PROCESS THEM**

INTRODUCTION

More than 30 years ago, an advertising scholar noted the «expanding scope of visual-imagery theory and research promises many future insights for advertisers. Visual-imagery theory and research (on the role of visual communications) ... may be the breakthrough perspectives for creating more effective advertising» (*Rossiter, 1982, p. 105*). Today, one may say the same thing for event marketers and sponsors as the advertising ecosystem – and the brand logos therein – moves more aggressively toward out-of-home venues, among them sporting events.

Although that call for efficacy was followed by decades of research for traditional advertising contexts, there remains a need to extend this thinking to measurement and process models for experiential (or «event») sponsorship-linked marketing. Global sponsorship spending is projected to reach \$57.5 billion in 2015, up 4.1 percent from 2014 levels, with 18.3 percent growth since 2011 (*IEG, 2015*). Given the substantial investments made in sponsorship, it is crucial to understand how sponsorship works from visual-processing and cognition perspectives.

The current research objective was to assess sporting-event attendees' visual-processing tendency and need for cognition to determine how these factors influenced their attendees' perceptions of the event and sponsor. Although visual processing refers to how people tend to process information via visuals (rather than words or hearing), need for cognition is a personality variable that relates to thinking. In psychology, need for cognition reflects the extent to which consumers engage in and enjoy effortful cognitive activities (*Cacioppo & Petty, 1982*).

There are two components of event sponsorship – exchange and leveraging:

- The exchange in event sponsorship links an event and a sponsor, where a sponsor receives the right to associate itself with the event in exchange for compensation or rights fees.
- Leveraging event sponsorship is collateral communication that (here, at the event), includes presentation of brand logos, products displayed, and banners and branded activities. In itself, sponsorship is not necessarily a visual tool; it is the on-site leveraging of sponsorship that often is visual for event attendees and media audiences.

Leveraging sponsorships with the sponsor's logo in signage and product displays at an event is an industry practice that may be part of larger integrated sponsorship arrangements at professional sporting events. Sport sponsors, for example, may leverage their brand onsite by placing their logo on the outfield fence in baseball, on hardwood courts in basketball, on the ice rinks at hockey games, and along the stadium paneling in football.

In many professional tennis sponsorships, the title sponsor's brand logo prominently appears in the doubles-alley portion of the net and on banners aligning the tennis court. For

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example, Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, and Kia strategize to put their automotive brand logos in the net at professional tennis tournaments around the world (e.g., the U.S. Open, Australian Open, and French Open). Placing the sponsor's logo near the center of action is one strategy to minimize the risk of a brand logo's being lost in cluttered events. To the authors' knowledge, however, this practice of embedding brands in ways that keep branding in the attendee's focal interest area has not yet been examined empirically in the sponsorship-linked marketing literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The nature of event communication has seen limited research (*Wakefield et al., 2007*). There has been a call for theoretical research examining how individuals' visualizing and thinking relates to their assessment of an event and sponsor (*Wakefield et al., 2007*). To understand the role of visual processing and need for cognition in event sponsorship evaluation, the current authors turned to visual-imagery theory (*Rossiter & Percy, 1978, 1980*).

Aspects of visual-imagery theory may be applicable to understanding the role of cognitively related individual differences for effective sponsorship and event marketing.

The current research focused on the two traits of visual processing and need for cognition. Although the marketer may not change «person variables» pertaining to seeing and thinking styles, these variables easily are addressed in communication development if better understood.

The authors tested a conceptual framework through empirical findings based on a sample of 185 attendees of a U.S. professional tennis tournament, using a field study based on a survey with psychometrically sound constructs that have been established in the literature (See *Methods*).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Visual processing is just one form of consumer information processing. Visual processing maintains spatial and size dimension in stimuli such as a brand logo (*MacInnis & Price, 1987*). Consumers tend to process brand logos and other visual information as a whole, instead of as parts of the visual information at a time. Visually processed information is holistic and distinct from semantically processed information; in semantically processed information, features may be independent or sequential (*MacInnis & Price, 1987*).

For sponsorship, visually processed information is important. Generally, brands want to be reinforced by pleasant visual imagery (*Rossiter & Percy, 1978*). Pleasant visual imagery can be a sufficient condition for visual reinforcement to occur (*Rossiter & Percy, 1978*). For a tennis enthusiast, attending a match involving professional world-class athletes competing on a sunny day represents a pleasant visual image.

Visual reinforcement is important in visual processing because an event attendee actively or passively sees the exposure of the sponsor without necessarily thinking about the event sponsorship. For sport-event attendees, brand logos are backdrops to the actual event action. This suggests low-level encoding into short-term memory and constant passive exposure to the brand. Visual processing may involve words or nonwords (e.g., a brand logo). Also, events range widely in the use of auditory sponsor cues: Golf and tennis are quiet whereas football and basketball may be cluttered auditorally, reducing the effect of any verbal brand communication.

Need for cognition reflects a need to «structure relevant situations in meaningful, integrated ways» and «understand and make the experiential world reasonable» (*Cohen et al., 1955, p. 291*).

Consumers who rate high in need for cognition expend more cognitive effort and recall more about messages than those who score low in need for cognition (*Cacioppo et al., 1983*). Drawing on the visual processing and need for cognition literature, the current study's conceptual framework illuminates the impact of visual brand placement in event sponsorship (See *Figure 1*).

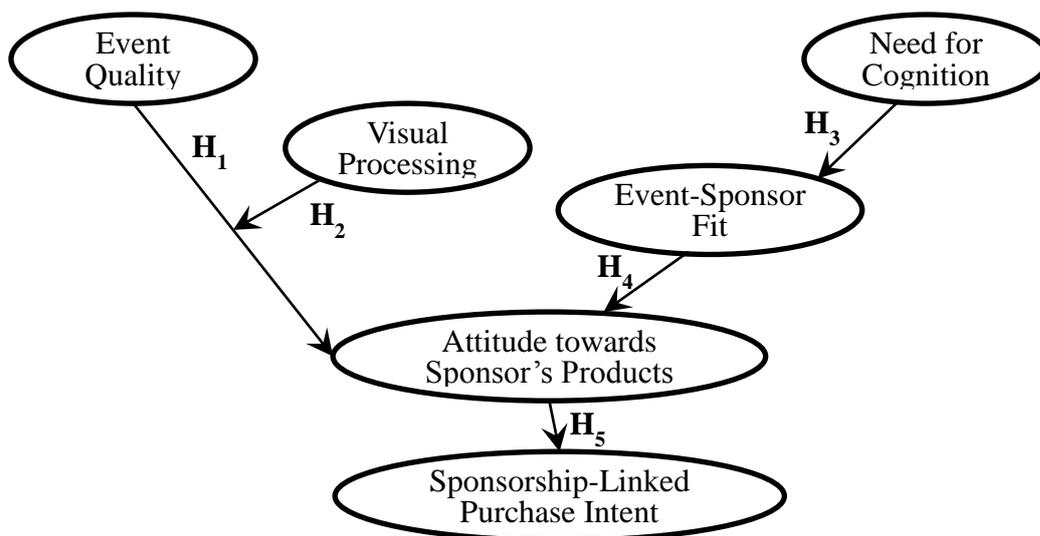


Figure 1 Hypothesized Model of Drivers of Sponsorship-Linked Purchase Intent

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Event Quality, Attitude, and Visual Processing

For the purposes of the current study, «attitude» is an individual's favorable or unfavorable evaluation of a particular company and its products.

The quality of the sponsored event helps to drive attitudes toward the sponsor and the sponsor's on-site products. Sponsorships enable brand representatives to interact with event attendees personally via on-site sampling, hospitality services, information booths, and other sponsorship-linked activities.

When a brand is associated with a sponsored event, some event linkages connect with the brand (*Keller, 1993*). In instances when attendees favorably view an event, favorable attitudes much more likely will be held toward the sponsor and, in turn, its products (*Alexandris et al., 2007*). Generally, it is accepted that image transfer flows from event to sponsoring brand (*Gwinner, 1997*). Thus, raised perceptions of quality regarding the sponsor's products ensue from the sponsor's association with a high-quality event (*Walker et al., 2011*). Hence,

H1: Event quality will be positively associated with favorable attitude toward the sponsor's products.

The aforementioned relationship between event quality and consumer attitude especially may be strong when the attendees are «visual processors» – people to whom psychologists sometimes refer as «visualizers». This is because visualizers may be more prone to notice the sponsor's involvement and backing.

Visual processors describe individuals whose mental images predominantly are portrayed in pictorial schemata. They have a disposition to construct visual images in their assessments of events (*Childers et al., 1985*). Similarly, research in consumer psychology has investigated the extent to which individuals' responses to visual images affect their assessments of advertisers. This is done by constructing mental images of events over and above the effects of any supplementary verbal information (*Edell & Staelin, 1983; Miniard et al., 1991*).

Visual attention operates through a visual-processing mechanism, in contrast to a higher-level encoding mechanism – such as what happens when a person reads and interprets a complex calculus equation. Symbols (e.g., words, logos, and pictures) are information in symbolic form – as messages that must be processed cognitively by means of learned pictorial schemata (*Scott, 1994*).

In the case of a sponsorship of a major sporting event, a brand logo represents a sponsor's brand image built and reinforced by advertising and product experience. The overall impression

of the consumption experience of a sponsored event determines attendees' perceptions of the event quality. Based on this discussion:

H2: Visual processing will be positively associated with favorable attitude toward the sponsor's products.

Cognition and Event-Sponsor Fit

Attendees interpret a sponsorship according to its «shallow meaning». This means that generally speaking, consumers go to the event to enjoy the match or game and not «to be advertised to». A shallow, meaning passive, interpretation is without any relative effort by the consumer unless he or she has reasons to elaborate further and consider other inputs to judgment (*Johar & Simmons, 2000*). When an attendee cannot solve any incongruity, the greater cognitive effort required for processing extremely incongruent information leads to unfavorable perceptions about the source (*Wansink & Ray, 1996*).

Event-sponsor fit is the extent to which an attendee perceives that an event and its sponsoring brand have a similar image, values, and a logical connection (*Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006*). Sponsorships with a greater fit with the event provide attendees with sense of cognitive consistency.

In event-sponsorship perception, need for cognition has been shown to be a predictor of perceptions of fit between the event and the sponsor (*Deitz et al., 2009*). Those with a higher need for cognition are more inclined, or perhaps driven, to think about how a sponsor links conceptually with an event. Individuals often strive to find organizing themes for information encountered, even if this information is a seemingly unrelated list of words (*Tulving & Pearlstone, 1966*).

As higher need for cognition positively relates to consumer efforts to structure information and enhance understanding (*Cohen et al., 1955*), higher need for cognition should contribute toward a more enhanced understanding of how the sponsor and event fit together (even if not intuitive or intended by the sponsor). Thus:

H3: Need for cognition will be positively associated with perceived event-sponsor fit.

Event-Sponsor Fit and Attitude

Fit has been modeled as a mediator (e.g., *Deitz et al., 2012; Wakefield & Bennett, 2010*). In the current study, event-sponsor fit serves as a mediator between need for cognition and an attendee's attitude toward a sponsor's products.

Scholars have concurred that event-sponsor fit leads to more positive attitudes toward the sponsor (e.g., *Ellen et al., 2000; Rifon et al., 2004*). If an event attendee perceives the sponsor and event to be congruent, this assessment more likely will be associated with favorable evaluations of the sponsor (*Becker-Olsen & Simmons, 2002; Pappu & Cornwell, 2014*). In turn, the attendees who perceive the sponsor as fitting with the event may have a more favorable attitude toward the sponsor's products.

H4: Perceived event-sponsor fit will be positively associated with favorable attitude toward the sponsor's products.

Attitude and Purchase Intent

Attitude toward the sponsor's products also is conceptualized as a mediator in the hypothesized model. Attitudes are positively related to intentions to perform a behavior (*Ajzen, 1991*); applying this finding to sponsorship research, positive attitudes toward the sponsor's products formed during interaction or seeing the products at the event should lead to higher sponsorship-linked purchase intentions. Consumers with unfavorable brand attitudes less likely would consider purchasing from event sponsors (*Koo et al., 2006*). Extending past research:

H5: Favorable attitude toward the sponsor's products will be positively associated with sponsorship-linked purchase intent.

METHODS

The authors of the current study tested their hypotheses with consumer-survey data collected at a weeklong women's professional tennis tournament. The event was a U.S. Tennis Association (USTA) Pro Circuit Event, with 64 professional tennis players in the draw. The venue for this professional tournament had a capacity of 1,500; the stadium court, where the feature matches were played, seated 300.

For attendees, the event areas included a hospitality tent, a food-and-beverage area by a pool, general admission seating, box seats, and VIP seating.

Sponsors can be either endemic or nonendemic. An endemic sponsor tends to be in the same (or similar) category or genre as the event. For instance, brands of tennis equipment (such as Penn, Wilson, or Head) are endemic to a tennis tournament. In many cases, however, the title sponsors are non-endemic, such as an automobile brand sponsoring sport.

Like many, if not most, sport sponsorships, the tennis competition that served as the anchor event in the current study offered a nonendemic sponsorship. The title sponsor, a luxury automobile brand, was the official vehicle of the event and provided cars that took players to and from the court. The sponsor had two vehicles (a sports utility vehicle and a sedan) on display near the court. The event also provided free valet parking that utilized the sponsor's autos. The title sponsor received event-naming rights and strategic corporate branding through all seven days of the tournament. Last, the title sponsor's logo appeared on all tournament printed materials, the front-cover advertisement on the tournament program booklet, the tournament website, and all tournament apparel and tickets.

The selected event was an appropriate context to study information processing in sponsorship-linked marketing for three reasons:

There was a defined title sponsor having used visual placement in the context (parking service, commons area) and at the heart of action (logo in the net, product display).

There were not any spillover effects from a previous sponsor that might have influenced attendees (*McAlister et al., 2012*). The title sponsor had been involved with this event since its inception, so potential confounding of results with past title sponsors was not an issue.

This particular event was not leveraged with auditory sponsor communications, such as announcements regarding the brand during the event-making for a cleaner focus on visual processing of a brand at an experience.

Field Research Procedures and Sample

Survey data were collected, not in a sponsor area but near the stadium court. Similar to other event-sponsor studies (*Irwin et al., 2003; Wakefield & Bennett, 2010*), several aspects of event sponsorship effectiveness were captured using intercept surveys of event attendees. The lead author trained and supervised a field-research team consisting of university undergraduate marketing students and students with master in business administration degrees.

The research team wore official volunteer shirts and badges to signify their role to attendees. The research team had a tent close to the center of action (i.e., the stadium court), with a table of laptops so the participant could take the survey at the tent. A few of the field-study participants requested paper surveys and could take a clipboard back to their seats. As incentives, participants received vouchers for a free fruit smoothie or frozen coffee beverage.

Overall, 185 attendees completed the survey. The nonresponse rate was approximately 15 percent, which was comparable to other sporting-event sponsorship field surveys (*Alexandris et al., 2007; Irwin et al., 2003*). The most common reason for – nonresponse was being in a hurry to get to a match.

Among other attendees' attributes,

- gender was nearly equally distributed (53 percent female);
- the median age was 40.7 years;
- more than half (53 percent) reported household incomes of more than \$100,000; 34 percent with incomes between
 - \$50,000 to \$100,000; and
 - 43 percent had a bachelor's degree; another one-third had a graduate degree.

Thus, participants were skewed toward middle and high incomes and were well educated – characteristics representative of professional tennis fans.

Measurement and Data Analysis

The authors used Likert-type scales (1 = «strongly disagree» to 7 = «strongly agree») to assess respondents' perceptions. Before conducting the field study, the survey instrument was pretested on 40 individuals to verify the suitability of terminology and clarity of instructions and scales.

Established scales were used (See Table 1 for the specific scale items, along with their reliability):

- The authors employed the visual subscale, referred to in the current study as «visual processing» (*McQuarrie and Mick, 1999*) by using six items from the style-of-processing scale (*Childers et al., 1985*).
- The scale assessing need for cognition measured an individual's tendency to engage in and enjoy effortful information processing (*Cacioppo & Petty, 1982*).
- Event-sponsor fit was measured with an established scale (*Speed & Thompson, 2000*).
- Attitude toward the sponsor's products was measured with items on sponsor product features and superiority versus competitor products because such considerations are key dimensions in other product-attitude scales established in the literature.
- To measure event quality, an established three-item scale (*Cronin et al., 2000*) was modified to capture event quality.
- To assess sponsorship-linked purchase intent, four items from an established scale (*Cornwell & Coote, 2005*) were used.

TABLE 1
Scale Items and Confirmatory Factor Analysis

	Lambda Loadings^a	Composite Reliability	Avg. Variance Extracted
Visual Processing		0.85	0.54
I like to picture how I could fix up a room if I could buy anything I wanted.	0.78		
I like to daydream.	0.73		
I generally prefer to use a diagram than a written set of instructions.	0.78		
It helps me to think in terms of mental pictures when doing things.	0.80		
My thinking often consists of mental pictures or images.	0.83		
There are some special times in life that I like to relive by mentally picturing how everything looked.	0.65		
Need for Cognition		0.89	0.68
Thinking is my idea of fun.	0.79		
I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems.	0.80		
I prefer my life to be filled with puzzles that I must solve.	0.71		
The notion of thinking abstractly is appealing to me.	0.84		
Event Quality		0.93	0.83
Thus far, the event quality is excellent.	0.84		
Thus far, the event quality is superior.	0.93		
This event, thus far, is meeting high standards.	0.90		
Event-Sponsor Fit		0.92	0.70
There is a logical connection between the event and this sponsor.	0.75		
The image of the event and the image of the sponsor are similar.	0.74		
The sponsor and the event fit together well.	0.90		
The company and the event stand for similar things.	0.83		
It makes sense to me that this company sponsors this event.	0.86		
Attitude toward Sponsor's Products		0.85	0.73
The sponsor's products on-site at the event indicate it as having many positive features.	0.84		
The sponsor's products on-site at the event indicate it as superior to competing products.	0.93		
Sponsorship-Linked Purchase Intent		0.93	0.78
When choosing brands and retailers, I choose those that sponsor this event.	0.90		
I would drive out of my way to buy from a sponsor of this event.	0.91		
When a new sponsor joins this event, I switch my buying to support them.	0.88		
I would choose to buy from a sponsor of this event even if the prices of competitors were lower.	0.83		

^aStandardized solutions

Measurement reliability and validity of the data were assessed via confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL 8.80. This analysis yielded the following results:

- $\chi^2_{(237)} = 392.94, p < 0.01$
- nonnormed fit index (NNFI) = 0.97
- comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.97
- incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.98, and
- root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.06

The limitations of the chi-square test of exact fit have led researchers to advocate measures for assessing fit (Tomarken & Waller, 2003). The NNFI, CFI, and IFI values exceeded the recommended cutoff of 0.95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The RMSEA value was more favorable than

the conventional threshold of 0.08 (*Browne & Cudeck, 1993*).

Construct measures of the hypothesized model yielded sound reliability and validity properties (See Table 1). Analyses provided evidence of convergent validity in each construct, with the parameter estimates ranging from 0.65 to 0.93. Discriminant validity was established, with each average variance extracted measure exceeding the 0.50 benchmark (*Bagozzi & Yi, 1988*). Finally, internal reliability was assessed through composite reliabilities, ranging from 0.85 to 0.93; all are above 0.70 (*Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994*).

RESULTS

The authors analyzed the structural model using two exogenous constructs and three endogenous constructs. There is evidence for the superiority of using structural equation models for small samples ($n < 200$) for models testing mediation effects (*Iacobucci et al., 2007*). This especially is true for studies involving relatively few constructs, constructs assessed with multiple indicators, and when the mediating relationship is part of a more complex nomological network (*Iacobucci et al., 2007*).

Goodness-of-fit statistics for the theorized structural model indicate the observed data are a reasonable fit for the hypothesized model: $\chi^2(130) = 257.93$, $p < 0.01$, NNFI = 0.97, CFI = 0.98, IFI = 0.98, and RMSEA = 0.07.

All five hypotheses were supported. Recall, H1 and H3 through H5 posited direct relationships, whereas H2 posited an indirect relationship. Results of the direct relationships were as follows:

- As predicted in H1, the posited relationship between event quality and event attendees' positive attitudes toward the sponsor's products was significant ($\beta = 0.35$, $t = 5.32$, $p < 0.001$).
- As predicted in H3, the attendee's need for cognition was positively associated with perceived event-sponsor fit ($\beta = 0.49$, $t = 6.52$, $p < 0.001$).
- In turn, as predicted by H4, greater event-sponsor fit strengthened the event attendees' positive attitude toward the sponsor's products ($\beta = 0.63$, $t = 8.19$, $p < 0.001$).
- Attendee attitude toward the sponsor's products (H5) had a positive effect on sponsorship-linked purchase intent ($\beta = 0.81$, $t = 8.30$, $p < 0.001$).

As for H2, visual-processing style was hypothesized to moderate the direct relationship between attendees' perceptions toward the quality of the event and attendees' positive attitude toward the sponsor's products. With this in mind, the authors grouped attendees who agreed or strongly agreed with statements used to assess visual-processing style.

Respondents were divided into two groups on the basis of this criterion for visual processing's seven-point scale:

- high visual processors (mean = 6.23; SD = 0.50; range = 5.67–7.0; $n = 59$) and
- low visual processors (mean = 4.80; SD = 0.53; range = 3.0–5.50; $n = 126$).

The multigroup comparison showed visual processors positively moderated the posited relationship (H2) with a significant difference in chi-square ($\Delta\chi^2 = 4.67$, $p < 0.05$). This process is consistent with the advice of methods experts in structural equation modeling (*Joreskog & Sorbom, 2006*).

DISCUSSION

The current research focused on individual cognitive and visual-processing differences in the context of sporting-event sponsorships.

It examined their respective roles toward building stronger consumer attitudes toward the sponsor's products and enhanced commitment to buy the sponsor's products. Although previous research had focused on heightening the attitude to the sponsoring brand in general, it had not investigated the importance of the sponsor's products and attitudes toward them as an event

sponsorship outcome. The current model, tested in a sport setting, can serve as a basis for other scholars to test in other events that are leveraged by visual communications.

Empirical support for the hypothesized model demonstrated that individual differences in visual processing and need for cognition played significant roles in how an attendee perceived the sponsor's products. Overall findings showed how attendees who rated the event as higher quality had a higher attitude toward the sponsor's products that were showcased at the tournament. That relationship was moderated by visual-processing style; that is, attendees who were visual processors showed an especially strong link from event quality to enhanced attitude.

Further, attendees who were high in need for cognition more likely would evaluate a non-endemic sponsor – such as the luxury automaker sponsor used in the current study – as fitting with the event, plausibly because they tended to elaborate or think about how the two fit more so than attendees who were lower in need for cognition. In turn, a better fit led to enhanced attitudes toward the sponsor's on-site products.

Ultimately, having a strong positive attitude toward the sponsor's products makes for higher sponsorship-linked purchase intent, the current study showed.

This research expanded on visual-imagery theory by bringing it into a new context of event sponsorship and showing how visual processing is important in event-sponsorship perceptions. Building on visual-imagery theory (*Rossiter & Percy, 1978, 1980*), the current authors assessed how individual characteristics of visual processing and need for cognition together explain the extent to which an event attendee processes the affiliation between the event and sponsor. Once achieved, events and sponsors then are anticipated to benefit directly from these associations.

The current study incorporated individual differences, such as need for cognition. In contrast to affect-based individual traits studies, which have dominated advertising and marketing literature, the present study examined individual traits and event sponsorship primarily from a cognitive perspective. As a symbolic form of information, brand logos must be processed cognitively. Brand symbolism consists of repeated promotion exposures and product experiences. This type of learning is common at sponsored events.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The current study's findings revealed how the manner in which event attendees visualize and think relates to their assessment of an event and sponsor – especially for those individuals who tend to be more visual and cognitive – will positively influence their level of appreciation for the event sponsors. Thus, given that many people are visual processors, both event venues and sponsors benefit by incorporating strategically placed visual elements (e.g., logos, product display) at the epicenter of action in sporting events.

This implication holds across a rich variety of sporting venues and events, as sponsors can seek logo placement near goals, backboards, bases, nets, and other places where attendees tend to look, to improve the likelihood that they visually process the event sponsor. The potential impact for brand-logo visibility is amplified when the sports activity is viewed online or via television.

The findings also elaborated on the importance of helping consumers visualize and cognitively understand the relationship between the event and the sponsor. Congruent elaboration especially is important in those instances involving nonendemic fit, which was the case in the current field study with a luxury automaker's title sponsorship of a professional tennis tournament. Here, an example of endemic fit would be the case of a sporting-goods manufacturer, such as Wilson, Babolat, or Prince sponsoring a tennis event. Consumers easily may see that these are leading tennis brands, and it makes sense to sponsor a tennis event.

The current empirically tested model results suggest that many consumers desire to understand why, and in what ways, the sponsor fits the event image. Perhaps this is because it makes the event and sponsor feel more credible. Or, perhaps, «seeing» the fit is more comfortable as it is cognitively consistent.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

There were two notable limitations to the current research:

- Field-study findings may hold only for tennis events and may not be generalizable to other sport sponsorships. Tennis tends to be a quieter atmosphere, thus there is less leveraging with sound, which may put a greater role on the visual communication elements.
- Despite extensive identification of the title sponsor throughout the event and on the field-survey instrument, the authors' use of a general sponsorship-linked purchase intent scale raised a potential confound for any respondents who may have been considering other sponsors than the title sponsor of the tested event.

In sum, the current study opens the door for future projects. The authors offer the following three considerations for future research:

- Investigate the process and/or outcomes of processing styles (i.e., visual, verbal, auditory) at live events versus televised events, or examine a televised event only. Eye-tracking methods would be appropriate for this venture. In the current study, the sponsored event that served as the research context was a live, nontelevised event. Although this allowed the authors to isolate the marketing communication, future work would apply and extend this model to a televised event.
- Test this model for multiple tiers of sponsors. In the current study, the sponsor of interest was the title sponsor. That said, there often is an array of sponsorship opportunities for brands; for new or growing brands especially, a title sponsorship financially may not be feasible. Thus, work on nontitle sponsorships seems important. Nontitle sponsorships, for instance, receive comparatively less visual placement as their title sponsor counterparts.
- Apply the current model to other contexts. This model could be tested in other sport or event contexts. One could argue, for example, that nonteam sports, such as tennis or golf, traditionally are quieter and may place different emphasis on visual brand imagery compared to team sports (e.g., baseball, football, basketball, hockey, soccer) that tend to encourage more vocal fan involvement than that in tennis.

Each is a ripe opportunity to extend the advertising, consumer psychology, and marketing communications literature.

Questions for your consideration

1. What research questions were investigated in the article? What scientific methods were applied to investigate each of these questions? Were the hypotheses formulated and reasoned correctly in the article? Please, explain your opinion.
2. Do you think there are differences between persuasion models used in sport sponsorship as opposed to those used in mass-media advertising? Please, substantiate your point.
3. How to measure sponsorship effectiveness (could you propose any metrics or indicators)? What impact sport sponsorship can have on the performance of sponsor's corporate brand and product brands?
4. Whether sponsorship as marketing communication tool has broad or narrow audience reach? What concepts of advertising reach / frequency do you know and what of them do you find relevant for sponsorship?
5. Brand attitude has a key role in sponsorship. Could you comment on the Expectancy-value Model of brand positioning?
6. How are the concepts of «sponsor» and «sponsorship advertising» interpreted in the Russian Federal law «On advertising»?
7. What type (or types) of advertising strategy in terms of 'type of involvement / type of attitude' would be suitable for sponsorship advertising for a luxury sport car brand?

