

IMAGING

The use of sponsorship to enhance a corporate image nationally and/or within the community in which the event takes place.

The public perception of a company can be influenced significantly (both positively and negatively) based on the selection of event involvement. For example, with the recent worldwide focus on the environment, corporations have tried to select relevant issues to their business and attempt to address them in a positive light. However, if focus on the issue results in an emotional response from the public, the impact can be negative on corporate image. Of note, Procter & Gamble has had to be particularly conscious of the public perception of solid waste management as it pertains to diapers, whereas the actions of oil companies have been under scrutiny due to massive oil spills like the Exxon Valdez incident.

Sponsorship can be used to meet varying image objectives:

- Create or enhance a certain image of a product or brand.
 - e.g.: Gucci sponsors polo to create an upscale image whereas Timex ties into more sporty/active lifestyle oriented events (i.e., waterskiing).
 - e.g.: Petro-Canada recently sponsored the Jane Goodall series of animal books creating an image of goodwill and environmental caring.
- Improve or develop community relations and presence in the community.
 - e.g.: Petro-Canada sponsors local softball teams across Canada creating an image of community involvement and goodwill.
- c) Change of image.
 - e.g.: Canadian Tire wanting to be perceived as "more than just tires" committed to changing their image by creating and sponsoring the Canadian Tire International Pro Sprint series - a series of cycling races of which 5 are held in Canada with international racers.
- d) Differentiate from the competition.
 - e.g.: Gucci's association with polo differentiates itself from Timex sponsorship of waterskiing as a high end, more elegant dress watch vs. the utilitarianism of Timex.