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Differentiation of Social and Cause-Related Marketing in Professional Sport

Jennifer Renee Pharr
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, pharrj@unlv.nevada.edu

Nancy L. Lough
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, nancy.lough@unlv.edu

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Differentiation of Social Marketing and Cause-Related Marketing in Professional Sport

Abstract

Several studies have focused on cause-related sport marketing (CRM), yet few have examined social marketing in sport. The purpose of this study was to show how both are unique strategies employed in sport to achieve corporate social responsibility. A qualitative content analysis was utilized to analyze the outreach programs of the NBA, NFL, NHL and MLB as described on each website. A directed content analysis was used to categorize outreach programs as CRM, social marketing or other community outreach based on five variables that differentiate each strategy. Forty three programs were evaluated. Twenty two (51.2%) were categorized as social marketing, eight (18.6%) as CRM and thirteen (30.2%) as other community outreach. Social marketing programs were identified significantly more than CRM. The findings demonstrate how the major leagues have embraced the use of social marketing strategies to demonstrate corporate social responsibility.

Keywords: social marketing, cause-related marketing, corporate social responsibility

Introduction

Since the early 2000's, a growing body of literature has examined corporate social responsibility in sport (CSR) (Babiak & Wolfe, 2006; Babiak & Wolfe, 2009; Bradish & Cronin, 2009; Breitbarth & Harris, 2008; Sheth & Babiak, 2010; Smith & Westerbeek, 2007; Walker & Kent, 2009; Walker & Kent, 2010). Similarly, several studies have focused on the benefit of cause-related marketing (CRM) for sport organizations (Irwin, Clark & Lachowetz, 2010; Irwin, Lachowetz, Cornwell & Clark, 2003; Kim, Kim, & Kwak, 2010; Lachowetz & Gladden, 2003; Lachowetz & Irwin, 2002; McGlone & Martin, 2006; Roy & Graeff, 2003). Yet few studies have examined social marketing in sport (Bell & Blakey, 2010; Lough & Pharr, 2010). Surprisingly, the link between CSR and CRM has not been clearly articulated. Some authors have inferred that CRM is a tactic or strategy to achieve CSR (Roy & Graeff, 2003). Meanwhile, social marketing has emerged as a direct strategy to demonstrate social responsibility. Yet most scholars have overlooked the use of social marketing in sport or inaccurately labeled social marketing campaigns as cause related marketing.

The lack of sport marketing research regarding social marketing presents an opportunity for investigation. In 2003, Roy and Graeff briefly mentioned social advertising in the context of identifying the benefits of CRM. More recently, Irwin, Irwin, Miller, Somes and Richey (2010) inaccurately used CRM to describe the *NFL Play 60* campaign. In this paper, we will demonstrate that a more appropriate depiction of the *NFL Play 60* would have defined it as a social marketing campaign. As Lough and Pharr (2010) recently illustrated, CRM and social marketing are two distinct marketing strategies. The need to clearly identify each approach as unique has become more apparent with the recent increase in social marketing campaigns used in

the sport industry. The primary purpose of this study is to show how both CRM and social marketing are unique strategies employed in sport to achieve corporate social responsibility.

Storey, Saffitz and Rimon (2008) used five variables to differentiate social marketing from commercial marketing. Lough and Pharr (2010) expanded this model to include CRM, thus creating a multi-tiered marketing model. In their model, commercial marketing, social marketing and CRM were differentiated by 1) locus of benefit, 2) outcomes/objectives sought, 3) target market, 4) voluntary exchange and 5) marketing perspective. For the purpose of this inquiry, these five variables will be used to 1) analyze CRM and social marketing campaigns employed by the top professional sport organizations in the U.S., 2) highlight the differences between these two unique marketing strategies and 3) to present a conceptual model explaining the relationships between corporate social responsibility, cause related marketing and social marketing.

Social marketing and CRM each have a unique (different) locus of benefit, objectives/outcomes sought, target market, voluntary exchange and marketing perspective. Because of this, it is important for sport marketers to understand the difference between the two marketing strategies and how each can be utilized to achieve corporate social responsibility objectives.

Social Marketing

Social marketing dates back to the early 1960's and was first defined by Kotler and Zaltman in 1971 as the design and implementation of programs used to increase the acceptability of social ideas which involves the four P's (price, product, placement and promotion) of

marketing. Social marketing was further defined as the application of “commercial marketing technologies to the analysis, planning, execution and evaluation of programs designed to influence the voluntary behavior of a target audience in order to improve their personal welfare and that of their society” (Andreasen, 1995, p. 7). Social marketing has been used extensively in the health promotion branch of public health as a means to improve health and prevent disease in the target market. Examples of social marketing in public health include programs focused on increasing physical activity, increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, anti-smoking/smoking cessation, and sexually transmitted disease prevention (Grier & Bryant, 2005). Thus, social marketing employs unique strategies for purposes such as addressing social and health related issues.

Several commercial marketing strategies must be applied for social marketing to succeed. These include exchange theory, audience segmentation or target market, competition, the four Ps (price, place, product, promotion), consumer orientation and evaluation of the marketing campaign (Grier & Bryan, 2005). Compared to commercial marketing, social marketing tends to be more relational rather than transactional and the cost/benefits tend to be less tangible (i.e. improved health). In commercial marketing, money (price) is exchanged for a product or service. In social marketing the cost (price) is more likely to be the intangible cost of time and/or the psychological discomfort that comes from making a behavior change (i.e. the discomfort of nicotine withdrawal). The benefit (product) of social marketing is more likely to be intangible, such as improved health or reduction of disease. The loci of benefit of a social marketing campaign are individuals who need to change their behavior and society at large. The primary outcomes/objectives sought are behaviors that increase personal and/or social welfare and/or health (Storey et al., 2008).

Secondary outcomes/objectives of social marketing include improved brand equity, brand awareness and brand loyalty because consumers of the brand supporting social marketing initiatives often benefit from the feeling that their support of the brand made these initiatives possible (Lough & Pharr, 2010). The target market for social marketing campaigns encompasses individuals and groups in society in need of making a behavior change. Just as in commercial marketing, the target market should be segmented by psychographics and demographics to create an effective marketing campaign. The voluntary exchange, as mentioned previously, tends to be less tangible (time, discomfort, improved health) in social marketing. Similarly, both economic and non-economic costs and benefits must be weighed by the target market. The marketing perspective of social marketing includes an acknowledgement of: 1) the intangibility of the costs/benefits, 2) the intangibility of the competition (i.e. competing with the desire to be physically inactive), and 3) economic factors like purchase power tend to be less important.

Two published articles have evaluated social marketing in sport. One examined Nike's *Gamechangers* social marketing campaign (Lough & Pharr, 2010) and the other examined European Football Associations Championship for Women in 2005 (EURO 2005) (Bell & Blakey, 2010). Lough and Pharr (2010) incorporated commercial, cause-related and social marketing into a multi-tiered framework and suggested that social marketing could be a means for sport marketing to connect with the target market on a higher level on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Bell and Blakey (2010) analyzed the use of social marketing in the EURO 2005. They found that the social marketing campaign created awareness of women's football, persuaded and motivated girls and women to participate, and facilitated opportunities to continue the behavior change of increased physical activity. Table 1 illustrates how the five variables of social marketing can be evaluated with EURO 2005 as an example. Despite the paucity of published

work examining the use of social marketing in sport, there have been several studies that have researched the use of cause related marketing in sport.

Cause Related Marketing

In 1999, Adkins defined cause-related marketing as “activity by which businesses and charities or causes form a partnership with each other to market an image, product or service for mutual benefit” (p.11). In one of the earlier studies examining motivations to engage in CRM, Ross, Stutts and Patterson (1991) found nearly 50% of consumers reported they had made a purchase because of their desire to support a cause, most were willing to try a new brand because of a cause-related promotion, and the majority demonstrated the ability to recall a cause-related advertisement. Documented benefits of CRM programs include an enhanced company image (Rigney & Steenhuyson, 1991), positive publicity (Nichols, 1990), a differentiated image (Shell, 1989), and favorable attitudes by consumers about sponsoring companies (Ross et al. 1991). Cause-related marketing has also been shown to have a positive influence on consumers’ perceptions of corporate reputation after a company has engaged in unethical behavior (Cone & Roper, 1999).

Pringle and Thompson’s (1999) conceptualization of CRM was “as a strategic positioning and marketing tool which links a company or brand to a relevant social cause or issue, for mutual benefit” (p.3). They also suggested CRM is a more integrated marketing strategy as it is supported by marketing budgets, not more limited philanthropic budgets. To be successful in cause related sport marketing (CRSM), a number of conditions are necessary such as: identifying a cause that resonates with consumers and sponsoring organizations; complete and genuine organizational commitment to the cause; evidence of a tangible (e.g.

monetary, personnel) transfer to the not-for-profit; and promotion of the CRSM program (Lachowetz & Gladden, 2003). Accordingly, the degree to which the conditions are met will establish the outcomes. Yet, if the consumer perceives a superficial commitment to a CRM program, the benefits most likely will not be realized. Without authenticity and commitment, negative image associations could develop, and therefore diminish the brand image or loyalty. According to Hoeffler and Keller (2002) CRM programs effect brand image in two ways: 1) enhancement of the consumer's self image; and 2) enhancement of aspects of the organization's brand personality (i.e. human characteristics associated with the brand). For these reasons, a sport organization must ensure the cause selected resonates with their target market (Quenqua, 2002), is consistent with the image or belief system of the partnering organization, and is congruent with the values of the sponsoring organization and the values of the cause (Lachowetz & Gladden, 2003).

Consumers need to be educated about what causes actually do (Welsh, 1999). Therefore, the sport organization needs to publicize their involvement with the cause, and include educational messages about what the cause accomplishes. In essence, limited involvement by the organization will not result in the desired benefits. A successful CRSM program can create or further an emotional connection between the consumer and the sport league/event/team/athlete (Lachowetz & Gladden, 2003), but only if consumers perceive an authentic connection.

Using the five variables that differentiate CRM from social marketing (Storey et al. 2008) the locus of benefit in CRM is the charity / cause and the business that partners with the charity or cause. The outcomes/objectives sought from this partnership are: 1) increased donations or purchase of products with part of the proceeds going to the charity/cause, 2) improved brand image for the business partner or its product, and 3) increased brand loyalty or brand switching

for the business partner or product. The primary focus of CRM is the benefit to the charity/cause and the business partner with a secondary focus in the benefit to society (i.e. earlier detection of breast cancer through the support of the Susan G. Komen Foundation). The target market of CRM tends to be more affluent and concerned with cause related issues. As mentioned previously, the target market must be segmented by demographics and psychographics to determine which cause-related relationship will be seen as genuine by the target market. Voluntary exchange in CRM is more tangible as money is donated or exchanged for products with proceeds (or portions of proceeds) supporting the cause. In the marketing perspective of CRM, the product tends to be a mixture of tangibility (a physical product) and intangibility (a good feeling from making a donation), competition is more tangible and economic factors such as purchase power tend to be more important than with social marketing. An example of CRM in sport is the Lance Armstrong Foundation's *Livestrong* campaign (Lough & Pharr, 2010). Table 1 illustrates how the five variables can be used to identify *Livestrong* as a CRM campaign. Irwin, et. al (2003) mentioned CRM as a subset of corporate social responsibility. Yet, most scholars have only inferred a relationship between CRM and CSR, without clear articulation of how the relationship is manifest. The following section will further examine the relationships between CSR and sport.

Corporate Social Responsibility in Sport

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can be described as the obligation or intent of a corporation to be ethical and accountable to not only the stakeholders but to society as well. Ullman (1985) further described CSR as “the extent to which an organization meets the needs, expectations and demands of certain external constituents beyond those directly linked to the

company's products/markets" (p 543). CSR is not exclusively about philanthropic giving. As Bradish and Cronin (2009) pointed out, it should be a holistic business approach that incorporates both social and economic factors into the practice of social responsibility.

Although CSR has been the focus of academic research in business for over thirty years, CSR in sport has only recently received the attention of academic researchers (Babiak & Wolfe, 2006; Babiak & Wolfe, 2009; Bradish & Cronin, 2009; Breitbarth and Harris, 2008; Sheth & Babiak, 2010; Smith & Westerbeek, 2007; Walker & Kent, 2009; Walker & Kent, 2010). While some of the sport specific research has focused on providing an overview of CSR in sport (Bradish & Cronin, 2009; Godfrey, 2009) others have examined the use of CSR during specific events or with specific sport leagues (Babiak & Wolfe, 2006; Breitbarth & Harris, 2008; Walker & Kent, 2010). Babiak and Wolfe (2006) suggested that CSR activities associated with an event such as the Super Bowl may help to lessen some of the criticism surrounding such a large event and may enhance the image of the NFL as a league that cares. Breitbarth and Harris (2008) examined the role of CSR in European football and suggested "increased awareness and integration of CSR into football business fosters the competitiveness of the game and creates additional value for its stakeholders" (p. 180). Additionally, they created a conceptual model that demonstrated how CSR can help to foster financial, cultural, humanitarian and reassurance value.

Smith and Westerbeek (2007) studied sport as a vehicle to achieve CSR. They found the unique aspects of sport that make it well suited for corporate social responsibility include: mass media and communication power, youth appeal, positive health impacts, social interaction, sustainability awareness, cultural understanding and integration and immediate gratification benefit. Other studies of sport CSR have identified categories of CSR currently employed by

sport organizations such as the NBA, NFL, NHL and MLB (Sheith & Babiak, 2010; Walker & Kent, 2010). Categories included: 1) philanthropic, legal, economic and ethical (Sheith & Babiak, 2010) or 2) monetary charitable event, non-monetary charitable event, volunteerism/community outreach, event to honor meritable work, community appreciation, and social awareness programs (Walker & Kent, 2010). More specifically, these categories could be described as either CRM, social marketing or other community outreach.

In a review of the sport marketing literature, there was little reference made to CRM as a strategy for achieving CSR and no mention of social marketing as a means to demonstrate CSR. Yet, CRM and social marketing can and should be strategies through which social responsibility is demonstrated and/or communicated. Increasingly, sport organizations have utilized social marketing campaigns to realize CSR goals, although little research about social marketing in sport has appeared in the academic literature. Yet the label cause-related marketing has consistently been used to define the marketing related activities attributed to corporate social responsibility in sport. Thus, the goals of this paper are to 1) analyze and categorize CRM and social marketing campaigns being used by the top professional sport organizations in the U.S., 2) highlight the differences between these two unique marketing strategies and 3) to present a conceptual model explaining the relationships between corporate social responsibility, cause-related marketing and social marketing.

For the purpose of this inquiry, the five variables previously discussed were used to analyze and categorize CRM and social marketing campaigns being used by the NBA, NFL, NHL and MLB. A directed content analysis was employed in this study and the following section describes the methodology. Our discussion then highlights the differences between the two unique marketing strategies and utilizes the analysis to present a conceptual model

explaining the relationships between corporate social responsibility, cause-related marketing and social marketing.

Methods

A qualitative content analysis was employed to analyze the outreach programs of the NBA, NFL, NHL and MLB as described on each website. Qualitative content analysis is an approach that has been used to empirically and methodologically analyze texts within the context of communications (Mayring, 2000). This methodology can be used to put text into categories for analysis which helps in the understanding of the phenomenon being studied. A qualitative research design is preferred when questions about ‘what’, ‘how’ or ‘why’ a phenomenon exists rather than ‘how often’ or ‘how many’ are asked (Green & Thorogood, 2009).

The approach to a content analysis can be conventional, directed or summative. For the current study, a directed content analysis was used. As Hsieh and Shannon (2005) illustrated, a directed content analysis should be used when “theory and prior research exists about a phenomenon that is incomplete or would benefit from further description” (p. 1281). The purpose of a directed content analysis is to validate or extend a conceptual theoretical framework. Previous research or an existing theory (theoretical framework) can be used to pre-determine the variables of interest and the initial coding scheme and categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Categories are given an operating definition based on the previous research/existing theory.

For the purpose of this study, the theoretical framework presented by Lough and Pharr (2010) that defined and differentiated social and cause-related marketing was used. The

categories: locus of benefit, objectives/outcomes, target market, voluntary exchange and marketing perspective, with their operating definitions were used to identify programs engaged in by the NFL, NBA, NHL and MLB as CRM, social marketing or other community outreach. For the purpose of this study, only programs engaged in at the league level were analyzed. Programs that individual professional teams engaged in were not analyzed. This decision was made to insure consistency (i.e. comparing league to league versus league to individual team) and trustworthiness of the data. **Trustworthiness** of a qualitative study is established through credibility, dependability and transferability. Credibility of a study is enhanced by selecting the most appropriate method for data collection, an appropriate sample for the analysis and suitable measuring units (categories or themes) that cover the data. Credibility is also enhanced by including representative examples from the analysis and reporting agreement between coders.

Programs were identified on the websites for each professional league. For the NBA, programs were found under the NBACares area of the NBA.com website. The programs of the NFL were located on the “In the Community” section of NFL.com. NHL programs were found in the Community portion of the NHL.com website. The programs analyzed for MLB were located in the MLB Community page of the MLB.com website. For each program that one of the professional leagues was involved in, the information about the program presented on the website was evaluated to determine the five variables previously discussed: locus of benefit, objectives/outcomes, target market, voluntary exchange and marketing perspective. Based on this evaluation, each program was then classified as CRM, social marketing or other community outreach. Previously presented operating definitions of the five variables as they relate to CRM, social marketing or other community outreach were used in the evaluation.

Data Analysis

To reduce research bias, two researchers independently coded the data. The coders had been trained in the same manner and understood the operating definitions of each of the five variables and of CRM, social marketing and community outreach. Reliability of the coding was checked during the process. Estimates of inter-coder reliability revealed that there was agreement between coders 97% of the time with program classification. With this directed content analysis/qualitative research to establish the categories, the only quantitative data analysis that could be performed was a comparison of frequencies and proportions of the classifications of programs used. The proportions of CRM, social marketing and other community outreach were calculated to determine the usage of the three types of programs. This information was calculated for each league and for all leagues in general. To determine if there was a significant difference between use of the three program classifications, a 95% confidence interval for the proportions of CRM, social marketing and other community outreach was calculated. The confidence interval was not calculated for each league because the sample size was not large enough to make the confidence interval meaningful. Although the complete matrix was too lengthy to present in this article, an abbreviated matrix is found in Table 2 and examples from the matrix will be used throughout the discussion.

Results

Categorization of CRM and Social Marketing Campaigns

The categorical evaluation of the various CRM and Social Marketing initiatives that the NBA, NHL, MLB and NFL are engaged in is illustrated in Table 3. In total, forty three

programs were evaluated. Of those programs, twenty two (51.2%) were categorized as social marketing, eight (18.6%) as CRM and thirteen (30.2%) as other / community outreach. Social marketing programs were identified significantly more than CRM based on a 95% confidence interval. Each league was then analyzed separately. The results from this analysis can be found in Table 4. For the NBA, thirteen programs were evaluated and the categorical analysis showed that seven (53.8%) were social marketing, four (30.8%) were CRM and two (15.4%) were other community outreach. The NHL had three programs that were analyzed and the results indicated two (66.7%) programs were categorized as social marketing while one (33.3%) program was categorized as CRM and no programs were categorized as other / community outreach. Twelve programs of the MLB were evaluated with six (50%) as social marketing programs, two (16.7%) as CRM and four (33.3%) as other / community outreach. The NFL had the greatest number of programs with fifteen. Of the fifteen, seven (46.7%) were determined to be social, one (6.6%) was cause and seven (46.7%) were other / community outreach.

Of the forty three programs analyzed for all four leagues, the majority (51.2%) were categorized as social marketing, while only 18.6% were categorized as CRM. Based on this study, the major leagues were more involved in activities designated as community outreach (30.2%) than CRM initiatives. Yet, social marketing programs were identified significantly more than either CRM or community outreach.

Discussion

CRM and Social Marketing Differentiation

One of the most interesting findings from this study was that campaigns which have traditionally been thought of as CRM were categorized as social marketing based on the five variables. The NFL's United Way campaign serves as a good example. The objective/outcomes sought and the voluntary exchange of the NFL's *Live United* campaign exemplify the difference between CRM and social marketing. The objectives/outcomes sought by the partnership were a) to make a difference through community volunteer work, outreach and involvement, b) to communicate the importance of volunteerism and community service and c) to inspire others to serve their communities. The voluntary exchange identified involved the intangible cost of time to participate in community service and volunteer work. In this example, the NFL's *Live United* campaign would have been categorized as cause-related marketing if the stated goal was to raise money for the United Way, yet their objectives clearly demonstrate an effort toward changing behavior of fans. The stated outcomes: "to make a difference" through involvement, to "communicate the importance of volunteerism" and to "inspire others to get involved", led to the categorization of the current NFL program as a social marketing campaign. Similarly, the investment required was more one of time than money. In essence, the NFL players are actively serving as role models for community involvement and service, with the stated goal of encouraging similar behavior among fans. Thus, a long standing program believed to be cause-related marketing, was in fact recognized as social marketing.

The findings from this study highlight the differences between CRM and social marketing campaigns used by professional sport organizations to achieve corporate social responsibility. For an example, the NFL's *Play60* can be compared to their *Crucial Catch* (breast cancer awareness) campaign. As a true cause-related marketing campaign, the NFL supports the fight against breast cancer by creating awareness about the importance of annual breast cancer

screening for women and holds auctions with proceeds to benefit the American Cancer Society (ACS). The beneficiaries are both the cause (ACS) and women who heed the message. The Crucial Catch campaign raises money through the purchase of NFL auction items with proceeds going to the American Cancer Society. Strategic marketing aspects of the campaign include pink water bottles, pink game apparel and pink coins, all seen throughout the NFL season during games.

In contrast, one of the most high profile social marketing campaigns is NFL's *Play 60*. With the stated objective/outcome sought as "inspire kids to get the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day", the emphasis on changing behavior is clear (NFLrush.com). The voluntary exchange is the intangible cost of time and discomfort for kids/parents (target market) to become and stay physically active. The marketing strategy includes TV, print and internet ads for the NFL Play 60 Challenge, along with "exciting and engaging curriculum for schools and classrooms to use to inspire exercise" (NFLrush.com). In this example, the NFL is *not* working to raise money to combat childhood obesity, which would classify it as cause related marketing. Similarly, the exchange sought is *not* one of money for products or services. Instead the exchange required is more personal on the part of effort made by those in the targeted group, who need to engage in the behavior the NFL is promoting through the Play 60 campaign. The target goal of encouraging an active and healthy lifestyle links well with the NFL's image as the premier professional sport in the U.S. One can easily see how authors such as Irwin, et al, (2009) would refer to the NFL's social marketing campaign to get kids physically active, as a "cause" related marketing effort. Sport marketers need to understand and distinguish between the two strategic approaches, to insure effectiveness when utilized.

The two campaigns could easily be labeled incorrectly, if not categorized to demonstrate the unique benefits, objectives, voluntary exchange and marketing strategies. Yet, the significance of this analysis is not limited to mere categorization or labeling. Clarification and understanding of these two strategic approaches can be utilized to assist in our understanding of the corporate social responsibility efforts in which major professional sport organizations have engaged.

CRM, Social Marketing and Corporate Social Responsibility

For decades, the community outreach arms of professional sport organizations were viewed as strictly philanthropic oriented aspects. Yet, as the marketing of sport has grown increasingly more sophisticated, the need to strategically integrate community outreach with marketing objectives has become more aligned. As Walker & Kent (2009) illustrated in their conceptual model, philanthropy serves as one arm, along with community involvement, youth education and youth health. All four arms converge to achieve corporate social responsibility. Through the analysis and categorization exemplified in this study, social marketing would be attributed to both youth education and youth health. CRM would be placed in line with philanthropy, while community outreach would link directly with the community involvement icon. The connection of CRM, social marketing and community outreach with CSR is illustrated in our conceptual model presented in Figure 1.

Andreasen's (1995) definition of social marketing connects it most directly with corporate social responsibility as social marketing campaigns are specifically designed to improve the welfare of society and its citizens by influencing voluntary behavior. As Bradish and Cronin (2009) suggested, "sport will continue to play an important role in social change" (p.

696). The critical direction of the role sport plays in social change can be strategically directed through both social marketing and CRM campaigns. Although the use of social marketing and CRM as vehicles to achieve CSR have been well recognized in business marketing literature (Kotler & Lee, 2005), prior to this study the connection had not been clearly delineated in sport marketing literature. In Kotler and Lee's work, six aspects of citizenship behavior were identified as means by which businesses could demonstrate CSR. Of these six aspects, social marketing and CRM stand out as the two marketing specific strategies. Similarly, results from this study indicated that within the major sport organizations, social marketing was identified 51.2% of the time, followed by CRM at 18.6% and community outreach at 30.2%. The similarity between Kotler and Lee's model and these findings suggest a good fit of CRM and social marketing with CSR as depicted in Figure 1.

Marketing Implications

With documented benefits of CRM programs including enhanced company image (Rigney & Steenhuyson, 1991), positive publicity (Nichols, 1990), and favorable attitudes by consumers about sponsoring companies (Ross et al., 1991), cause-related marketing is designed to create a positive influence on consumer's perceptions of the sport organization. In times of scandal and negative publicity, the sport organization's reputation can be improved through CRM. With major professional sport organizations represented by players, coaches and officials who may unfortunately engage in unethical behavior, there remains a clear need for targeted communication to offset negative image connotations. These targeted efforts have also served to enhance corporate image, often times portraying the organization as a "global citizen". The NBA's *Nothing but Nets* (Table 3) CRM campaign demonstrates the organization's commitment

to the health and social welfare of people in Africa. Such strategic approaches in sport illustrate the type of citizenship behavior needed to achieve CSR according to Kotler and Lee (2005).

Consumers have increasingly high expectations for organizations to demonstrate corporate social responsibility and to address public issues. Social marketing can increase consumers trust in companies that work to address public issues. Chang et al. found that consumer's perceptions of service quality increased while their perceptions of risk decreased, thereby establishing greater trust in companies engaged in social marketing. Additionally, social marketing resulted in favorable attitudes toward the firm and its products (Chang et al, 2009). Yet, prior studies have shown that consumers lack awareness of CSR initiatives (Dawkins, 2004), and marketing regarding public/social issues most often is not well received (Schultz & Morsing, 2003). Thus social marketing is a way to communicate organizational CSR initiatives that could be perceived positively by consumers. In business marketing literature, social marketing initiatives have been associated with marketing differentiation strategies (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001), building brand equity (Hoeffler & Keller, 2002), and enhanced consumer loyalty (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003).

The true benefit of both marketing approaches stems from the link between the company or brand to a relevant social cause or issue. Pringle and Thompson (1999) conceptualized such strategic positioning and marketing tools as the means to achieve a mutual benefit. In this case, the mutual benefit extends toward a demonstration of social responsibility by the sport organization. Fortunately, social marketing and CRM are more likely to utilize marketing budgets, not be held to the more limited philanthropic budgets. Thus the growing need to demonstrate social responsibility appears to have resulted in access to more resources, through

corporate partnerships / sponsorships and initiatives to create social change. Simultaneously, sport organizations have increasingly engaged in activities to build their image as “good citizens”. All four of the sport organizations studied invested in both cause related and social marketing initiatives aimed toward demonstration of corporate social responsibility.

[Add marketing implications, brand equity, engagement]

[Add limitations and future directions]

Conclusion

As demonstrated through this study, the major leagues have embraced the use of social marketing strategies to achieve marketing objectives. Ironically, the attention paid to cause-related marketing may have directed scholarly work towards a lesser utilized strategy, yet one often associated with corporate social responsibility. The focus on CRM appears to have prevented prior recognition of the use of social marketing in sport. Similarly, the inaccurate representation of CRM, when more accurate depiction would label specific marketing strategies as social marketing, has confounded our understanding of sport organizations efforts to demonstrate corporate social responsibility. More research is needed to determine best practices relative to CSR among sport organizations and in particular, the use of social marketing and cause-related marketing to achieve corporate social responsibility. Additionally, more research is needed to understand the impact of social marketing, cause-related marketing and corporate social responsibility on sport consumer behavior.

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Table 1 – Comparison of Social and Cause Marketing

	Social Marketing	Social Marketing example: Euro	Cause Related Marketing	CRM example: Livestrong
Locus of Benefit	Individuals in target market Society at large	Girls and women living in the communities where the tournament was hosted	Cause group or association Supporting corporate partner	Lance Armstrong Foundation (charity / cause). Nike (the supporting business partner)
Objective/ Outcomes	Behaviors that increase personal and/or social welfare Norms, values, knowledge and attitudes addressed to the extent that they inform behavior decision	An increased awareness of women’s football. An increase in the number of girls and women participating in football or sport in general. A raised awareness of health issues associated with physical inactivity	Purchase or donation behavior Attitudes towards the image of the brand, corporation or product Consumer loyalty / Brand switching	Donations to the LAF Purchase of Nike branded <i>Livestrong</i> apparel, shoes and equipment with 100% of proceeds going to LAF A positive image, enhanced brand, and possible brand switching to Nike
Target Market	Tends to be less affluent, more diverse, more in need of social services, harder to reach	Girls and women living in the communities where the tournament was hosted.	Tends to be more affluent and concerned with cause related issues	Active, sports fans who are connected to cancer as a cause
Voluntary Exchange	Includes weighing of economic and non-economic social costs and benefits Tends to be intangible Cost = time Benefit = improved	Cost: time to participate in festivals, workshops, attend a game or play football. Benefit included an increased understanding of	Includes weighing of economic and non-economic costs and benefits Tends to be a mix of tangible and intangible	Money (tangible) is donated to LAF to support the cause (intangible) or money (tangible) is used to purchase <i>Livestrong</i> apparel (tangible).

	health	women’s football and the associated health benefits.	cost/benefit	
Market Perspective	<p>Products and services tend to be less tangible</p> <p>Competition tends to be less tangible and more varied</p> <p>Economic factors like purchase power tend to be less important</p>	<p>Marketing included the use of posters, festivals, campaigns at schools, road shows, participation opportunities and ticket give-aways.</p> <p>Competition exist with other events in the community that compete for the participants time</p>	<p>Products tend to be a mix of tangible and intangible</p> <p>Competition tends to be more tangible and categorical</p> <p>Economic factors like purchase power tend to be more important</p>	<p><i>Livestrong</i> must consider the mixture of tangibility and intangibility of the voluntary exchange.</p> <p>The competition that exists from other causes (i.e. Susan G. Komen)</p>

Adapted from Storey et al., 2008 and Lough & Pharr, 2011

Table 2 – Abbreviated Matrix for Categorizing Professional Sport Organization Programs

Professional Organization / CSR Initiative	Locus of Benefit	Objectives / Outcomes	Target Market	Voluntary exchange	Marketing Perspectives / Strategies	Classification
NFL						
United Way	Communities Families Children United Way	To make a difference through community volunteer work, outreach and involvement Communicate the importance of volunteerism and community service Inspire others to serve their communities	NFL fan 120 million viewer each week of the NFL season	The intangible cost of time to participate in community services and volunteer work	NFL Live United initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National advertising campaign • Features one player from each club • Billboards, signs on buses, phone depots, on-line and in print ads, national television PSA • Hometown Huddle – NFL player, coaches, wives and staff participate in a variety of community services activities 	Social
A Crucial Catch	Women American Cancer Society	Support the fight against breast cancer Creating awareness about the importance of annual screening Auctions with proceeds to benefit the America Cancer Society	NFL Fans Women	Money to purchase NFL auction items with proceeds going to the American Cancer Society	NFL Sponsored Crucial Catch campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pink water bottles • Pink game apparel • Special K-balls • Pink coins 	Cause
NFL Play 60	Youth Adults	Inspire kids to get the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day Encourage an active and health lifestyle	Youth Parents Schools	Intangible cost of time and discomfort to be physically active	NFL sponsored: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV, print and internet ads • NFL Play 60 Challenge - exciting and engaging curriculum for schools and classrooms to use to inspire exercise 	Social

Table 3 – Categorical Classification of Professional League Programs

Professional Organization / CSR Initiative	Classification	Professional Organization / CSR Initiative	Classification	Professional Organization / CSR Initiative	Classification	Professional Organization / CSR Initiative	Classification
NBA/WNBA		MLB		NFL		NHL	
NBA/WNBA FIT	Social	Baseball Tomorrow Fund	Outreach	United Way	Social	Hockey is for Everyone	Social
Basketball without Borders	Social	BAT Baseball Assistance Team	Cause	Teacher of the Year	Outreach	Hockey Fights Cancer	Cause
NBA Green Week	Cause	Boys and Girls Club	Outreach	NFL Youth Education Towns	Outreach	NHL Green	Social
Read to Achieve	Social	Breaking Barriers in Sports and Life	Social	Play It Smart	Social		
HP Digital Assistance	Outreach	Pitch, Hit and Run	Social	A Crucial Catch	Cause		
Coaches for Kids	Social	RBI – Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities	Social	Pro Bowl Outreach	Outreach		
Nothing but Nets	Cause	Roberto Clemente Award	Outreach	Super Bowl Outreach	Outreach		
Vaccines for Teens	Social	Rookie League	Social	Know Your Stats about Prostate Cancer	Social		
Ninemillion.org	Cause	Help Take a Stand Against Cancer	Cause	Play Safe! Health and Safety Series	Social		
Get Tested	Social	Team Greening	Outreach	NFL Play 60	Social		
Get Caught Reading	Social	Urban Youth Academy	Social	Recharge!	Social		
Breast Health Awareness	Cause	Drug Free Campaign	Social	One World	Social		
Inspiring Women	Outreach			Student All Star Program	Outreach		
				Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award	Outreach		
				Community Quarterback Award	Outreach		

Table 4 – Proportions of Social Marketing, Cause Marketing and Community Outreach

	Total Programs N, %	Social Marketing N, %, (95% CI)	Cause Marketing N, %, (95% CI)	Community Outreach N, %, (95% CI)
All Leagues	43, 100%	22, 51.2%, (36.2-66.1)	8, 18.6% (7.0-30.2)	13, 30.2% (16.5-44)
NBA	13, 30.2%	7, 53.8%	4, 30.8%	2, 15.4%
NHL	3, 7.0%	2, 66.7%	1, 33.3%	0
MLB	12, 27.9%	6, 50%	2, 16.7%	4, 33.3%
NFL	15, 34.9	7, 46.7%	1, 6.6%	7, 46.7%

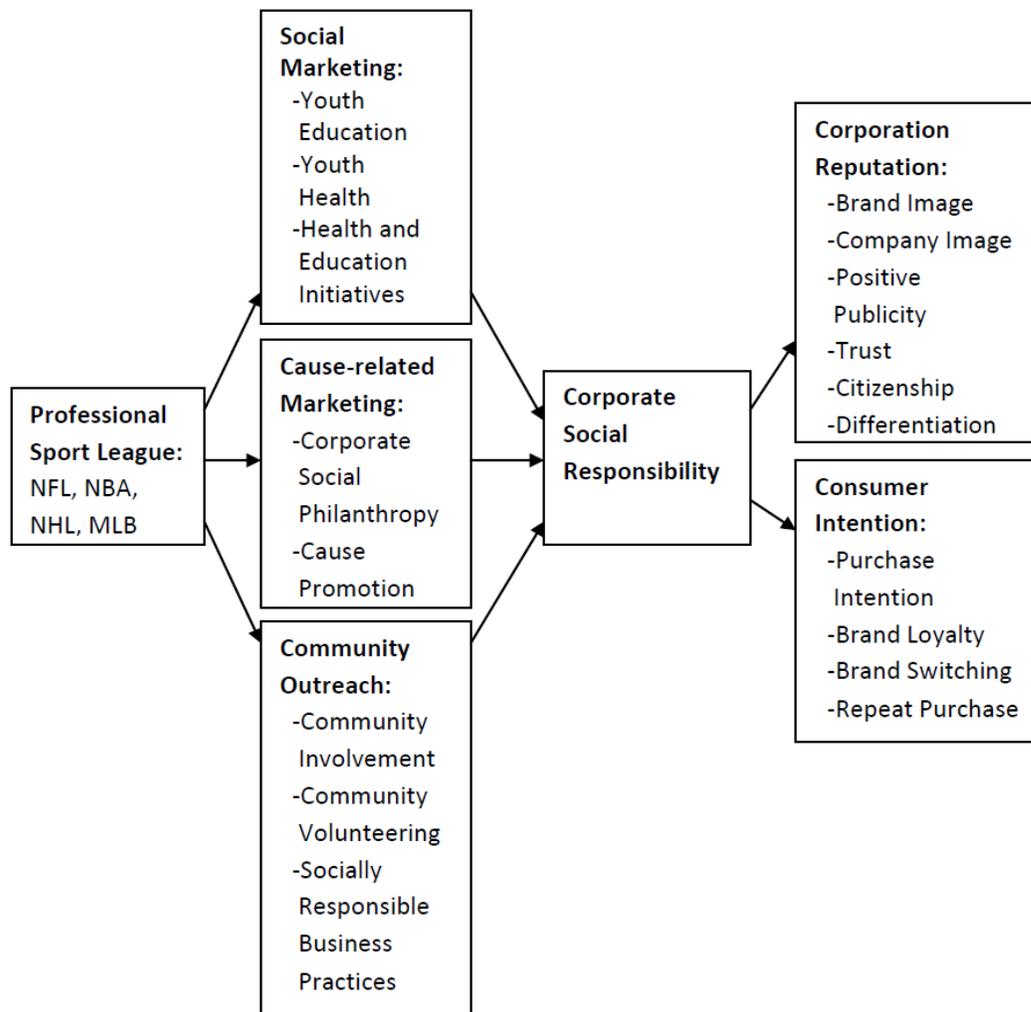


Figure 1 Conceptual Model. Adapted from Kotler & Lee (2005) and Walker & Kent (2009)