

chapter

3

Studies of Sport Consumers

KNES 452 – Lecture 2

Objectives

- To recognize the many questions that sport marketers must ask about their consumers
- To appreciate the many different sources available for analysis
- To understand the strengths and weaknesses in many published studies of sport consumers

Basic Topic: The Scientific Exploration of Sport Fandom

- **DEFINING AND CLASSIFYING SPORT FANS**
- **Sport Fans and Sport Spectators**
- **Same or Different**

- **Sport Fans**

- Individuals who are interested in and follow a sport, team, and/or athlete

- **Sport Spectators**

- Individuals who actively witness a sporting event in person or through some form of media (radio, television, etc.)

Direct & Indirect Sport Consumers

- **Direct sport consumers**
 - One's personal attendance at a sporting event
- **Indirect sport consumers**
 - One's exposure to sport through some form of mass media
 - Television, Radio, or the Internet

- **Direct sport consumer**
 - Spectator
 - A part of the sporting environment
 - Opportunity to impact the event
 - Attend the Super Bowl in person
- **Indirect sport consumer**
 - Watching the same contest on television
- **Different impact on one's response to the event**

Lowly and Highly Identified Sport Fans

- **Wide variations in their level of involvement with, and interest in, the contest**
- **What are the examples of:**
 - Lowly identified sport fans
 - Highly identified sport fans

- **Lowly identified sport fans**

- Not wear apparel that signifies their allegiance to a particular team
- Rarely yell or clap in response to the actions of the athletes
- Seem more interested in talking to their friends than watching the game

- **Highly identified sport fans**

- Dressed (maybe even painted) in their team's colors
- Actively root and yell for their team.
- Attempt to distract the opposing players
- Boo loudly when an official's call goes against their team

Questions That Must Be Asked

- Who are my past, present, and future customers in terms of demographics and psychographics?
- Where do my customers live?
- How have my customers been exposed to my product and advertising?
- How and why did they become involved with my product?
- Why have they been committed to my product?

Formats Where Information Can Be Reported

Three areas in which research can be reported

- Published newsletters, such as *NCAA News*, which provides periodic excerpts from its annual participation survey
- Internet databases, such as the Sports Business Research Net (SBRnet), which contains archives of multiple studies, including the annual participation report of the National Sporting Goods Association
- Public documents, such as the annual *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, published by the U.S. Census Bureau, which includes a large section on recreation and leisure

Types of Sport Studies

- **Irregular (hit or miss) vs. regular (annual or periodic) in frequency**
- **Narrow or broad in the scope of industry segments of populations it considers**
 - Irregular narrow studies
 - Irregular broad studies
 - Regular narrow (limited) studies
 - Regular broad studies

Irregular Narrow Studies

- They are often commissioned by a team, a league, or a sponsor.
- They tend to focus on consumer demographics (e.g., age or income), media or product consumption (e.g., favorite television station or fast food), and sometimes consumer attitudes (e.g., rating of concessions).
- Although most of them are proprietary and remain unpublished, some are printed and distributed either to inform constituents or to attract sponsors.

Irregular Broad Studies

- Ex) [Harris Poll](#) to examine the sport and fitness activities of American adults.
- They require significant investments of time and money.
- Corporations with sport interests have occasionally funded such research.

Regular Narrow Studies

- Even the best irregularly conducted studies are limited in value. They can't help the marketer discover emerging trends in the ever-changing environment.
- An effective marketing information system must include regular, consistent studies with questions that allow for **trend analysis**.
- Large-scale trends can be found in the surveys and reports of organizations such as the NCAA and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), which publish annual statistics on participation.

Regular Broad Studies

- These studies use a national probability sample that measures participation and purchasing habits of sport consumers and assists in trend analysis. (ex. [NSGA](#))
- A number of firms and trade associations do similar research on long-term lifestyle trends with **large national samples**, but their reports are often disseminated only to clients (proprietary research) and can be very costly.