

An Examination of the Moderating Effect of Team Identification on Attitude and Buying Intention of Jersey Sponsorship

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Abstract : In May of 2016, the Philadelphia 76ers announced that StubHub, the ticket resale company, will have advertising on the team's jerseys beginning in the 2017-18 season. The 76ers and National Basketball Association (NBA) became the first team and league which embraced jersey sponsorships in the four major U.S. professional sports. Even though many professional teams and leagues in Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America have adopted jersey sponsorship actively, this phenomenon is relatively new in America. While the jersey sponsorship provides economic gains for the professional leagues and franchises, sport fans can have different points of view for the phenomenon of jersey sponsorship. For instance, since many sport fans in U.S. are not familiar with ads on jerseys, this movement can possibly cause negative reaction such as the decrease in ticket and merchandise sales. They also concern the small size of ads on jersey become bigger ads, like in the English Premier League (EPL). However, some sport fans seem they do not mind too much about jersey sponsorship because the ads on jersey will not affect their loyalty and fanship. Therefore, the assumption of this study was that the sport fans' reaction about jersey sponsorship can be possibly different, especially based on different levels of the sport fans' team identification and various sizes of ads on jersey. Unlike general sponsorship in sport industry, jersey sponsorship has received little attention regarding its potential impact on sport fans attitudes and buying intentions. Thus, the current study sought to identify how the various levels of team identification influence brand attitude and buying intention in terms of jersey sponsorship. In particular, this study examined the effect of team identification on brand attitude and buying intention when there are no ads, small size ads, and large size ads on jersey. 3 (large, small, and no ads) X 3 (Team Identification: high, moderate, low) between subject factorial design was conducted on attitude toward the brand and buying intention of jersey sponsorship. The ads on Philadelphia 76ers jersey were used. The sample of this study was selected from message board users provided by different sports websites (i.e., forums.realm.com and phillysportscentral.com). A total of 275 respondents participated in this study by responding to an online survey questionnaire. The results showed that there were significant differences between fans with high identification and fans with low identification. The findings of this study are expected to have many theoretical and practical contributions and implications by extending the research and literature pertaining to the relationship between team identification and brand strategy based upon different levels of team identification.

Keywords : brand attitude, buying intention, Jersey sponsorship, team identification

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