

BACHELOR'S THESIS

Sport Sponsorship

Case study of Audi

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of how companies use sponsorship of sporting teams as a strategic tool in their marketing program. In order to fulfil this purpose the research explores, describes and tries to explain companies' objectives with sport sponsorship, the selection of sponsorship objects and finally companies' evaluation of sponsorship activities. A case study of a company in the automobile industry is conducted where the aspects of their sponsorship of the Swedish alpine skiing team are studied. Several objectives with sport sponsorship can be identified. Furthermore, the study shows that companies go through a certain selection process in order to find a sponsorship that can convey their message. The research also revealed the useage of different evaluation methods when measuring sport sponsorship results. Finally, the research presents our conclusions and implications for theory, management and future research.

Sammanfattning

Syftet med detta arbete är att öka förståelsen för hur företag använder sig av sponsring av idrottslag som ett strategiskt verktyg i sin marknadsföring. För att uppfylla detta syfte så utforskar, beskriver och försöker denna uppsats förklara målen företag har med idrottssponsring, valet av sponsringsobjekt och slutligen företags utvärdering av sin sponsring. En fallstudie av ett företag inom bilindustrin har genomförts där vi har studerat företagets sponsring av det svenska alpina landslaget. Ett flertal mål beträffande idrottssponsring identifierats i studien, vidare visar uppsatsen att företag går igenom en process vid val av sponsringsobjekt som kan förmedla företagets meddelande. Studien visar även hur företag använder olika utvärderingsmetoder för att mäta effekten av sponsringen. Slutligen presenteras sammanfattningar och framtida tillämpningar för teorin, ledningen och förslag till vidare forskning inom området föreslås.

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1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we will start off by providing the background for the thesis. In the first section of the chapter the reader will be introduced to the concept of sponsorship. We will continue with a problem discussion concerning the area of our thesis. Finally the purpose for the thesis will be stated which leads to the research questions that we will try to answer.

1.1 Background

Today's successful companies all have one thing in common: they are strongly customer-focused and have all realized the importance of marketing (Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders & Wong, 1999). In order to satisfy or exceed customer satisfaction companies must creatively manage their marketing mix to gain a competitive advantage (Jobber, 2001; Kotler et al, 1999). Promotion, product, place and price make up the set of controllable variables for the company when formulating the marketing mix (Kotler et al, 1999).

Promotion is the way for the company to communicate with their target audiences through mass communication (Kotler et al, 1999; Jobber, 2001). In the past, the communication mix available for companies consisted of advertising, sales promotion and public relations, however sponsorship is now an additional tool available for companies to communicate with their target audiences (Vignali, 1997). Bennet (1999) suggests that sponsoring is an important tool of communication that seeks to achieve favorable publicity for a company or its brands in the minds of a certain target audience. At present, sponsorship is the world's fastest growing form of marketing (Dolphin, 2003).

1.1.1 Sponsorship

Sponsorship as a mean to reach customers has been growing rapidly over the past two decades (Meenaghan, 1991). The world wide expenditure on sponsorship has increased from \$2 billion in 1984 to \$24.6 billion in 2001 (Dolphin, 2003; Meenaghan, 1999).

Modern corporate sponsorship was until the 1970's mainly about donations to sport or cultural activities with no particular expectations of gaining anything in return (Jiffer & Roos, 1999). However, since 1980 sponsorship has become more professional and is now a case of give and take, to the benefit of both the sponsor and the sponsored (ibid). In other words, a market driven type of sponsorship has replaced philanthropic sponsorships and it has been accepted as business-related behavior (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). Dolphin (2003) claims that companies can use sponsorship as a strategic tool to reach audiences. Amis, Slack and Berrett (1999) even suggest that sponsorship, given the necessary attention, may be developed into a competence assisting the company to secure a sustainable competitive advantage. Therefore, more and more people are becoming aware of the advantages of sponsorship which in turn is leading to a demand for a more

professional approach to sponsorship from buyers, consultants, recipients, and sellers (Jiffer & Roos, 1999).

An all-encompassing definition of sponsorship is difficult if not impossible to make (Olkkonen, 2001). Different authors suggest different definitions of sponsorship depending on their view of the topic. However, they all have some similarities and most of them stress the mutually advantageous relationship between a corporation and a sponsored object that sponsorships offer.

Olkkonen (2001, p.311) makes a fairly simple definition of sponsorship in general and focuses on the mutual benefits that sponsorship creates:

“In general, sponsorship can be illustrated as a mutually beneficial business relationship between two parties being named as sponsor (usually companies) and sponsored (e.g. actors in the field of arts, sports, education).”

Jiffer and Roos (1999, p. 25) focus on the benefits the company may achieve with sponsorship and also mentions the importance of measurable objectives. This definition also brings up the mutual advantages created by sponsorships:

“Sponsorship is a business method for communicating and marketing which, in the short and long term, has the aim of contributing to the sponsor’s brand awareness and image, as well as increasing the sponsor’s sales. Sponsorship should benefit all those involved, and lead to a result that can be measured against pre-defined objectives.”

As mentioned earlier, most definitions focus on the mutual benefits that the sponsorship should create. The definitions also imply that the sponsor wants to be seen or associated with some kind of event or sport and in return also provide benefits for the sponsored. Sponsorship can be described as a “mute” or “non-verbal” medium, trying to target active participants, spectators and media followers (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998).

According to Behrer and Larsson (1998) event marketing and sponsorship are closely connected. Traditional sponsorship occurs when a company purchases access to exposure at the event and is always a deal between two parties (ibid). Event marketing on the other hand implies that the company uses the event as integrated communication at the event and outside the event (ibid). Traditional sponsorship and event marketing can be defined according to the sponsor's relationship to the arena where the event takes place and the event itself (ibid). Exhibit 1.1 presents a framework that can be used in order to determine whether one is involved in traditional sponsorship or event marketing based on the nature of the event and ownership of the arena. With a view to the classification presented in Exhibit 1.1, this study will focus on traditional sponsorship.

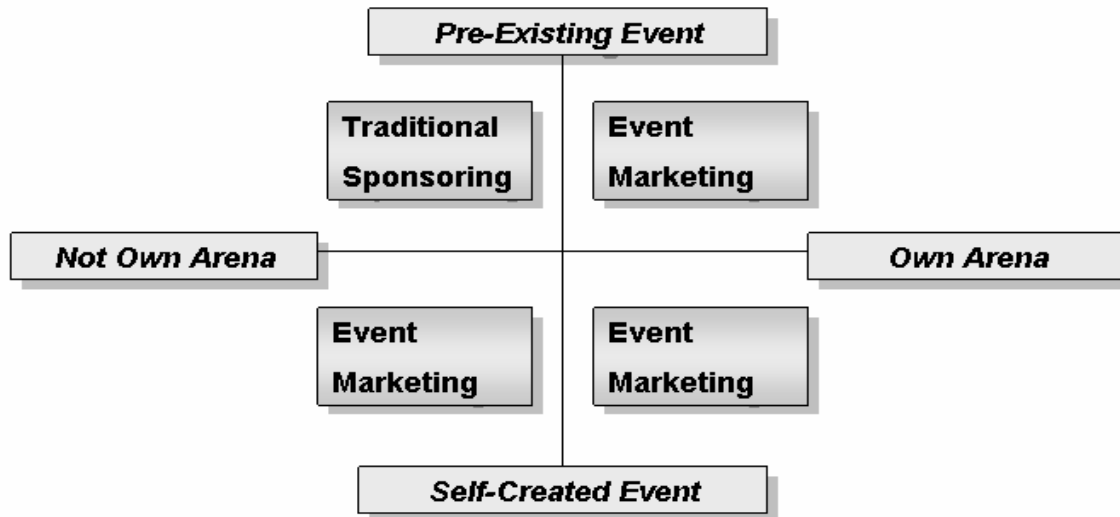


Exhibit 1.1: *Traditional Sponsoring Versus Event Marketing*
Source: Adapted from Behrer & Larsson (1998).

According to Grönkvist (1999) companies can choose to target their sponsoring on several different sponsoring objects such as culture, art, education or sports. Sport sponsoring is by far the most popular sponsoring object and accounts for over 75 % of the total sponsoring expenditures world wide according to Dolphin (2003).

1.1.2 Sport Sponsorship

Sport sponsorship has its roots far back in history and the first signs of it could be seen in the ancient Rome when Roman patriarchs sponsored gladiator games in order to win public esteem (Meenaghan, 1991; Shannon, 1999). Modern sport sponsorship experienced a substantial boost back in 1971, when the US government banned cigarette advertising on US television and radio (Shannon, 1999). Subsequently, sport sponsorship opened up new possibilities for keeping the cigarette brand names in front of the spectators and viewers (ibid).

In Sweden sport sponsorship was legitimized in 1978 and this led to clearer directives on how sport sponsorship should be handled by corporations (Grönkvist, 1985). At the beginning of 1980 sport sponsorship was professionalized in Sweden and the competence has increased significantly since (ibid). In 2002 sponsorship in Sweden accounted for approximately 2.8 billion Swedish crowns (more than \$ 350 million) (Sponsringsföreningen i Sverige, 2004). Out of the total sponsorship expenditures in Sweden sport sponsoring accounted for about 70% (Grönkvist, 1999).

The growing interest in professional sports around the world has contributed to the increased focus by firms on using sports as a means of reaching target audiences (Shannon, 1999). The sport industry was ranked as the eleventh biggest industry in the US back in 1995, and it is continuously growing throughout the world (ibid). During the

last two decades more and more companies have started to realize the potential to reach and communicate with their customers through sports in form of specific teams, athletes, events or tournaments (Jiffer & Roos, 1999). Dolphin (2003) suggests that the potential benefits for small businesses sponsoring small or regional events are impressive.

A definition of sport sponsorship is offered by the European Council (1981) and mentions the mutual advantages and includes the point that the sponsor wants to be associated with some kind of sport activity (Grönkvist, 1985, p. 13):

“Sport sponsorship is a mutually advantageous relationship between people or organizations in which the sponsor provides benefits for the sponsored in exchange for an association with a sport, events, facilities or sport participants.”

Sport sponsorship as a communication tool offers high visibility, extensive media coverage, the ability both to attract a broad cross-section of the community and to serve specific niches, and the capacity to break down cultural barriers (Burnett, Menon & Smart, 1993). Further, Morgan (2004) states that sport is often associated with great loyalty and engagement. Sport is also an important part of modern culture providing us with pleasure, passion and excitement, therefore marketers should pay more attention to it Shannon (1999) claims. Dolphin (2003) notes that sports spectators that are exposed to corporate messages under favourable conditions such as enthusiasm, excitement and enjoyment makes them more relaxed and receptive to the promotional message. Both Morgan (2004) and Burnett et al (1993) argue that if companies can transfer these positive feelings to their brands it offers great opportunities for companies to gain the loyalty that brands need if they want to connect with their consumers.

1.2 Problem Discussion

Although sport sponsorship is the fastest growing marketing tool, several authors suggest that there is a lack of existing research on how to implement sport sponsorship strategically (Vignali, 1997; Olkkonen, 2001). Other authors also suggest that the sponsorship research is an area that has been largely neglected and that the existing research seems to be rather scanty (Amis et al, 1999; Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Olkkonen, 2001).

Research within the field of sponsorship was launched in the mid 1980 and gained heavier interest in the early 1990 (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). However sport sponsorship has for a long time been characterized by a “gut instinct” for promoting something with a promising future (Vignali, 1997). Meenaghan (1991) suggests that there is a need to replace the “gut instinct” approach to sponsorship with a more rational management approach based on the results of scientific analysis among sponsoring firms. According to Olkkonen (2001) current sport sponsorship research is focusing on the measurement of the effectiveness of sponsorships on target audience. Sponsorship research also tries to explain companies’ objectives and motives of their sport

sponsorship (ibid). Authors also suggests that future research should investigate the strategic use of sponsorship and the integration of it in an overall communication plan, therefore qualitative and holistic research could lead to great insights (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998).

Dolphin (2003) claims that several companies sponsor events routinely as part of their promotional activities. Cornwell and Maignan (1998) also state that little research has investigated how sponsorship participation benefits a firm. Further, authors claim that sponsorship objectives tend to be vague and hard to identify and more research is needed (Dolphin, 2003; Javalgi, Traylor, Gross & Lampman, 1994).

Authors also suggest that existing research lack in understanding of the correlation between companies' stated objectives and the achieved results of sponsorships (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). Dolphin (2003) implies that sponsorship success is determined by whether or not objectives are achieved or not. Further, he suggests that by having measurable objectives it will be easier to answer the question if a certain sponsorship was a good investment or not (ibid). In addition he claims that it will also tell us whether to renew a sponsorship or not (ibid).

According to Jiffer and Roos (1999) the interest of sponsorship is growing among researchers. One area of sponsorship that has been getting attention is the selection process of who and what should be sponsored (ibid). Further, Dolphin (2003) suggests that future research should aim to explore whether there is an inconsistency and ambiguity in the selection of sponsorship activities.

Despite the rapid growth of sponsorship, several authors (Dolphin, 2003; Javaligi et al, 1994; Olkkonen, Tikkanen & Alajoutsijärvi, 2000; Cornwell & Maignan, 1998) agree that there is an inconsistency in the area of sponsorship effectiveness and note that more research is needed to determine how to measure the effectiveness of sponsorship. Dolphin (2003) has also noted that a number of researchers have documented a need for systematic approach to sponsorship management and evaluation. So far some tracking measures have been used to measure the awareness, familiarity and preference caused by sponsorship (McDonald, 1991). However, Cornwell and Maignan (1998) state that overall these investigations have been inconclusive.

As the above discussion implies the field of corporate sport sponsorship lacks empirical studies concerning objectives, selection and evaluation. Therefore, we find it useful to investigate how, in practice, companies deal with these issues. In view of the background and problem discussion provided above, the purpose of this study is as follows.

1.3 Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose with this thesis is

to gain a deeper understanding of how a company uses sponsorship of sporting teams as a strategic tool in its marketing program.

In order to serve our purpose we address the following research questions:

RQ 1: How does a company define its objectives in sport sponsoring?

RQ 2: How does a company select sport sponsoring objects?

RQ 3: How does a company evaluate the result of its sport sponsoring activities?

1.3.1 Demarcations

Due to time limitations we will focus our research on sponsorships from a company perspective and not from the sponsored athletes' perspective. The thesis will focus on a single Swedish company that is engaged in sport sponsorship. We will also limit the scope of the thesis to only cover the aspects of sport sponsorship stated in the research questions, while being aware that the subject extends beyond such limits.

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

Chapter one examines the background and problem discussion of our research area. The chapter ends by providing the purpose, research questions and finally the demarcations of the thesis. Chapter two presents existing theories and models relevant for our research and ends with a theoretical framework on which we will base our study on. In chapter three we will explain the methodology used in our thesis and also justify the chosen methods. Chapter four will present the collected empirical data from our case and also some brief background about our case company. Chapter five will provide an analysis of the collected data and compare them to the models and theories presented in the theoretical frame of reference in chapter two. In chapter six final conclusions and implications will be presented.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The previous chapter presented the background and problem discussion of our thesis and ended of by providing the purpose and research questions. In this chapter literature relevant to our study will be presented. The literature was selected based on their ability to answer our research questions. We will present literature connected to each research question under separate sections. Finally, a theoretical frame of reference will be presented.

2.1 Objectives for Sport Sponsorship

As stated in the previous section, the field of sport sponsorship lacks relevant research and authors have not reached clear consensus about several aspects of sport sponsorship. A critical aspect of a company's sponsorship process is the determination of its objectives, in order to have a successful sponsorship and be able to evaluate the results of the sponsorship effectively. According to Cornwell and Maignan (1998) the main objectives of a sponsorship is to either support corporate objectives (i.e. enhancing corporate image) or marketing objectives (i.e. increasing brand awareness). However, “spouse-driven projects” reflecting the personal interest of the sponsorship decision maker has long been associated with sponsorship (ibid). There can be little doubt that the personal agenda is still a factor in modern sponsorship decision making (Meenaghan, 1991). The objectives for companies to enter into a sponsorship vary somewhat from study to study.

Objectives according to Amis (1999)

Amis et al (1999) point out that a sponsorship should produce an outcome that matches well with the image that the sponsor is trying to convey. Any sponsorship should therefore produce an image which is so superior that it clearly differentiates the firm from its competitors (ibid). These authors also suggest that a sponsorship, managed carefully, can be developed into a competitive advantage for the company (ibid).

An example of corporate objectives for sponsorships is when Nike used Michael Jordan to promote their company (Amis et al, 1999). This was done in order to build pride into the company and also to develop the corporate culture (ibid). Providing a clear direction of where the company is heading and increasing the corporate morale may itself become a source of competitive advantage for the company (ibid). Amis et al (1999) state the following objectives as most important when firms enter a sponsorship project:

➤Increasing public awareness of a brand or company

Amis et al (1999) state that one of the most common objectives for a company entering into a sponsorship is to increase the public awareness of either the company or of a specific brand.

➤ *Changing or enhancing company or brand image and reputation*

Image and reputation can be seen as resources which enables a company to secure a competitive advantage (Amis et al, 1999). Sport sponsorship has, according to the authors, been proven to be an effective tool to either change or enhance company or brand image and reputation (ibid).

Objectives according to Cornwell and Maignan (1998)

In a survey conducted in New Zealand companies were asked to rank their most important objectives with sponsorship from most to least important (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). The authors point out that the ratings varied some depending on the type of sponsorship, however image and goodwill were objectives that dominated all types of sponsorships (ibid). The following objectives were listed starting with the most important:

1. Improving goodwill
2. Enhancing image
3. Increasing awareness
4. Improving profitability
5. Management interest
6. Staff recruitment

(ibid)

The survey also stated that small and mid-sized companies in small towns view sponsorship mainly as a tool to support their community and to establish community relations (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998).

Objectives according to Jobber (2001)

According to Jobber (2001) there are five principal objectives of sponsorship. These objectives are to gain publicity, create entertainment opportunities, foster favourable brand and company associations, improve community relations and create promotional opportunities (ibid).

➤ *Gaining publicity*

Jobber (2001) claims that sponsors try to sponsor projects that have a good chance of attracting news media and therefore offer publicity opportunities. Many sport tournaments are broadcasted internationally and reaches millions of people which means that the awareness level of a sponsor can shift drastically (ibid). Jobber (2001) also states that sponsorships can be an effective way of positioning brands in the marketplace.

➤ *Creating entertainment opportunities*

When a company sponsor an event or tournament they usually receive special benefits from the sponsorship Jobber (2001) argues. These special benefits could be VIP areas that the sponsor can use in order to strengthen the relationship with important customers (ibid). These benefits could also be used to reward successful employees (ibid).

➤ *Fostering favourable brand and company associations*

The third objective according to Jobber (2001) is connected to association. The objective is to associate an event or tournament with a brand or company and hopefully the positive attributes of the event will “rub off” to the company (ibid).

➤ *Improving community relations*

Another important objective that many companies have with their sponsorships is to improve their reputation in the community (Jobber, 2001). One example where companies are considered to be socially responsible is when they sponsor schools (ibid). In these kind of sponsorships companies can for example provide low cost computers and support community programmes in order to be perceived by the public as a caring company (ibid).

➤ *Creating promotional opportunities*

Jobber (2001) also claims that events and tournaments offer opportunities to promote brands, products and logos. Sponsors often take advantage of these opportunities and place their brands on products such as sweatshirts, bags and pens (ibid). The effectiveness of other promotional vehicles can also be improved by sponsorships, it may for example help customers remember the brand next time they see a television ad Jobber (2001) argues.

Objectives according to Dolphin (2003)

Dolphin (2003) suggests several objectives that companies might have for deciding to enter into a sponsorship. However, these objectives may vary from industry to industry (ibid). The following objectives were mentioned by Dolphin (2003):

- Enhancing corporate image
- Increase brand awareness
- Stimulate sales
- Corporate reputation
- Alter public perceptions
- Build relationships
- Create goodwill
- Enhance employee motivation

The first factor Dolphin (2003) mentions is the impact that sponsorships might have on the corporate image. Sponsorships might enhance the corporate image by influencing the impressions of the company or a specific brand held by a particular segment of the market (ibid). According to Dolphin (2003) increase of brand awareness accrues naturally from sponsorships. This might raise the profile of the corporate brand and thus increase the value of the brand (ibid). Sponsorships might also stimulate the sales of products or services according to Dolphin (2003). Further on, corporate reputation is an intangible value often focussed on by corporations (ibid). Sponsorship is an excellent way of

enhancing the reputation by giving back to the community in which the company operates in (ibid). Being associated with certain sponsoring objects might be a way for companies to alter public perceptions (ibid). Further, sponsorships might also build relationships between the company and its customers (ibid). Creation of goodwill and an increase in employee motivation are also objects that sponsorships might focus on according to Dolphin (2003).

2.1.1 The A-ERIC Model

Different authors have their own description of the phenomena of sponsorship and according to Jiffer and Roos (1999), the objectives that companies might want to focus their sponsoring on can be divided into four different categories. These categories are described by the authors in a model called A-ERIC which stands for association, exposure, relationships and integrated communication (ibid). According to the authors, this model can be used as both an analytical tool or when planning any kind of sponsorship activity (ibid). Jiffer and Roos (1999) state that the model also can be used when defining what sponsorships may consist of, and how it can be used as a strategic tool.

In Table 2.1 the best activities and most appropriate media for reaching certain sponsorship objectives can be identified.

Table 2.1: The A-ERIC Variables

Sponsorship	Association	Exposure	Relationships	Integrated Communication
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Feelings •Values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •TV •Newspaper •The event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The event as a meeting place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •TV •Radio •Printed Media •Internet
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Positive link activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Stadium advertising •Kit advertising •Opening/Closing ceremony •Prize Giving •VIP areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Invitations •Participations •Meeting “celebrities” •Kick-off theme •VIP areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Advertising •Sales promotion material •Sampling/sales •PR activities •Point-of-sale material

Source: Adapted from Jiffer & Roos (1999)

Association

Association offers an opportunity for the sponsor to create a desired association to a brand and it is considered the most important element in sponsorship. Sponsorship establishes a link between the event and the organization that is sponsoring the event. However, this also involves risk: if the event or team that is sponsored is unsuccessful people might hold the same perception towards the sponsor. The sponsorship can also be

a part of a theme that the sponsorship is built around. It can also be used as an internal activity in order to enhance the company image among the employees.

Exposure

Almost every sponsor wants as much exposure as possible for their logo, product or message. Several methods can be used in order to achieve the desired exposure. These methods usually consist of traditional advertising such as stadium advertising, clothing advertising or a logo in the event programme.

Relationships

A sponsorship offers opportunities for the sponsor to establish and maintain both internal and external relationships with important individuals and organizations. Many sponsorships offer benefits such as VIP sections of an arena where a company could invite key customers in order to make them feel valued and important. Sponsorships may also build a team spirit internally among the employees as they gain access to areas that otherwise would be off limit.

Integrated communication

Jiffer & Roos claim that sponsorship is not a media but a working method. The method consists of a communicator forming a message by considering the elements in the A-ERIC model. Further, an appropriate media is used as a channel to reach the intended receiver in order to get an effect, for example to buy a product. Products could also be sold at the sponsored event which gives the sponsor an opportunity to meet the customer face to face and communicate the product's benefits.

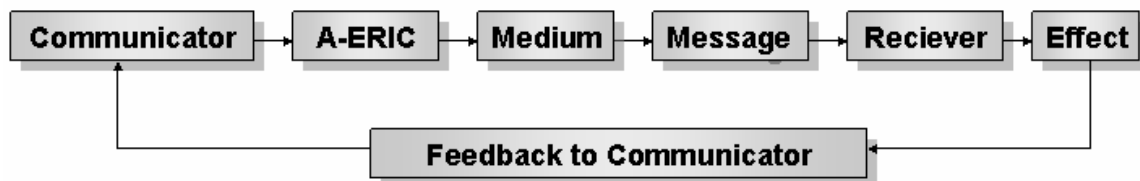


Exhibit 2.1: *The Sponsorship Communication Process*

Source: Adapted from Jiffer & Roos (1999).

As shown in the section above, several objectives for sponsorship has been provided by different authors. In table 2.2 we provide a summary of the most important and common objectives for sponsorships stated by different authors.

Table 2.2: *Different Authors Objectives' for Sponsorship*

Author	Stated objectives for sponsorship
Amis et al (1999)	Increasing awareness of:
	•Brand
	•Company
	Changing/Enhancing image and reputation of:
	•Brand
	•Company
Cornwell & Maignan (1998)	Improving goodwill
	Enhancing image
	Increasing awareness
	Improving profitability
	Management interests
	Staff recruitment
Jobber (2001)	Gaining publicity
	Creating entertainment opportunities
	Foster favourable brand and company associations
	Improving community relations
	Creating promotional opportunities
Dolphin (2003)	Enhancing corporate image
	Increase brand awareness
	Corporate reputation
	Alter public perceptions
	Build relationships
	Create goodwill
	Enhance employee motivation
Jiffer & Roos (1999)	A-ERIC model
	•Association
	•Exposure
	•Relationships
	•Integrated Communication

Source: Authors' own construction

2.2 Selection of Sport Sponsorship Object

Companies select their sponsoring target based on its fit with the company image and the lifestyle that the company wants to be associated with by its target customers (Simpson, 1999). They also have to consider the geographic reach of the sponsorship and the buying

habits of their target customers when choosing a sponsoring object (ibid). The timing of the sponsorship, whether it is year round, seasonal, or once only is also something that needs consideration when choosing a sponsoring object, especially if the sponsorship is a part of an overall promotional campaign (ibid).

Selection process according to Martin (1996)

Martin (1996) states that the image of the sport, and also the image and personality of the specific athlete is something that must match the image of the sponsoring company in order to have an effective sponsorship. The more similar the image is between the company and the sport the more positive the customer response will be (ibid). Martin (1996) also provides some steps that a company should go through in order to choose an appropriate sport or athlete to sponsor:

1. Determine the image of the product/company that is to be promoted through a customer survey.
2. Determine which sport has the closest matching image to the product/company by surveying customers.
3. Choose an athlete from the closest fitting sport. The athlete should also have a matching image and personality with the product/company
4. Consumer evaluation of different athletes endorsement of the product/company and choose the athlete that was evaluated most positively (ibid).

Selection criteria according to Jobber (2001)

Jobber (2001) suggest that a company which is trying to figure out what to sponsor should answer a series of questions in order to determine the most appropriate sponsorship object. The questions Jobber (2001) mentions are:

Communications objective

- What do we want to achieve with the sponsorship?
- Is our goal awareness or image, improvement in community relations or entertainment opportunities?
- Does the personality of the event lay in correlation with the desired brand image?

Target market

- What target group are we trying to reach?
- Does our customer base match the audience within the sponsored event or program?

Risk

- What are the associated risks for the sponsor?
- Could the event or program attract bad publicity?
- How would a termination of the sponsorship affect the image of the sponsor?

Promotional opportunities

- Do any potential sales promotions exist?
- Are there any publicity opportunities?

Past record

- What were the results for previous sponsors of the specific program or activity?
- If previous sponsors have withdrawn, what was the reason?

Cost

- Does the sponsorship opportunity give return of investment?

2.3 Evaluation of Sport Sponsorship Activities

The sponsorship quality and the quantity of people receiving the message are largely beyond the control of the sponsor (Meenaghan, 1991). Since sponsorship is only one part of the company's promotion mix it is difficult to separate the effects generated by the sponsorship, however that's a fact every sponsor has to accept (Grönkvist, 1999).

Many researchers argue that the methods of measurement are still in the early stages of its development and findings have been inconsistent among researchers. Scholars have not agreed upon any specific theoretical framework for measuring consumers' reactions to sponsorships (Cornwell & Maignan 1998).

2.3.1 Evaluation Objectives

In order to measure the results of a sponsorship, companies must know what they want to measure (Jiffer & Roos, 1999). The authors have argued that sponsors should set clear objectives to work towards in order to determine whether or not a sponsorship is successful (ibid). In the section below five different objectives mentioned by Jiffer and Roos (1999) for measuring the results of a certain sponsorship will be discussed, in other words: what to measure.

Exposure

Usually when a company launches a new product or brand or if they change the company logo they are in need to gain substantial exposure. Another reason to gain exposure might be to help other marketing activities. Repetition is one way of making people remember the product, brand or logo and by advertising in stadiums and using sponsorship as a promotional tool it will place a product, brand or logo in the mind of the consumer more effectively.

Attention

Sponsors may also strive for getting information about people's attention. This is also important during the launch of new products or brands or changes of a logo.

Knowledge/awareness

Sponsors also might want to know more about what the respondents (audiences, participants, TV viewers, customers) know about the company and its products/services. Sometimes basic knowledge is all that is interesting, for example how many people are aware of the company's logo after an event.

Attitudes

The target audience's attitude of the sponsor is an important issue. By monitoring a part of the target audience for a while it is possible to determine whether the sponsorship has been able to influence them or not. Changes in attitudes take a long time, a general rule is that it takes at least three years for a more noticeable effect to emerge.

Behaviour

Finally sponsors are interested in finding out if the sponsorship actually managed to alter the target audience's behaviour. This could be measured by changes in consumption patterns during the sponsored event.

Source: Jiffer and Roos, 1999

2.3.2 Evaluation Methods

Evaluations are currently done mainly through different kinds of observations, in form of personal interviews, telephone interviews or postal questionnaires (Grönkvist, 1999). These methods offer an evaluation of the created awareness (ibid). To be effective, all these methods demand stated quantifiable objectives to compare the results to (ibid). You have to know what you want to achieve with the sponsoring (ibid).

According to Grönkvist (1985) the easiest form of evaluating the effects of a sponsorship is a symbol-measurement method called "Day-after-Recall". Customers are surveyed through telephone interviews and asked what brand names they recalled. This is done the day after a sponsored event has been broadcasted on TV (ibid). In order to gain more qualitative results of the effects Grönkvist (1985) suggests in depth interviews in form of focus groups where the correlation between the sponsored and the sponsor is examined. This should be followed by a quantitative survey research in order to either confirm or reject the hypotheses gained from the focus groups (ibid).

Evaluation methods according to Cornwell and Maignan (1998)

Cornwell and Maignan (1998) provide a summary of some measurement methods available for companies discussed by some authors:

➤ Exposure-based methods.

This method consists of two main techniques. The first one is monitoring the quantity and nature of the media coverage obtained for sponsored events (ibid). This method has been used frequently by businesses but has also been heavily criticized by scholars (ibid). Cornwell and Maignan (1998) argue that media coverage is not the objective of

sponsorship and should therefore not be used when measuring the effectiveness. The second Exposure-Based technique is estimating direct and indirect audiences (ibid).

➤ *Tracking measures*

This technique is based on measuring the awareness, familiarity, and preferences that a sponsorship generated by doing a survey on the customers (ibid). This method has been most common in empirical sponsorship studies (ibid). Cornwell and Maignan (1998) investigated the recall of sponsors' ads, awareness of, and attitudes towards sponsor and their products in the surveys. However, the authors suggests that in order to gain a more accurate measurement of sponsorship effects, surveys should measure the association of sponsor with criteria such as friendliness, goodness, or closeness to the community (ibid).

➤ *Experiments*

Further on, the authors suggest that experiments are the only method to measure extraneous variables and thus the effect of a sponsorship (ibid). This could be done by measuring the recognition of a sponsor's ad during certain phases of a sporting event (ibid).

Evaluation process according to Jobber (2001)

Jobber (2001) claims that sponsorship objectives must be followed up with results in order to evaluate the success of a sponsorship. Further, Jobber (2001) suggests that an evaluation procedure can be used when companies want to know the effects of a certain sponsorship activity. The process consists of four steps:

1. Determination of the company's brand's present position in terms of pre-sponsorship awareness and image with the target audience.
2. The setting of sponsorship objectives.
3. Tracking to detect movements in customer awareness and attitudes towards the company/brand.
4. Post-sponsorship comparison of performance levels against initial objectives (ibid).

Evaluation methods according to Jiffer and Roos (1999)

Jiffer and Roos (1999) provide five different methods of measuring if a sponsorship has been successful or not:

➤ *Press monitoring*

This method is the simple and easy way of assessing the result of a sponsorship. Press cuttings are often showed to the sponsors by the sponsored to make them satisfied with their investment. There are also agencies that sponsors can hire to collect cuttings.

➤ *Television exposure*

The more television exposure a certain event generates the more valuable it will be for the sponsor, which is particularly true in sports. This method aims to measure airtime and television coverage of the sponsorship and give the sponsor two types of information sources. First, the sponsor will know how much broadcast time the event will be aired on

and what kind of channels and which countries the sponsorship will be exposed in. Second, the company will also be able to estimate the size of the audience that can be expected to view each channel. Based on the result of this method sponsors can calculate the cost for reaching each person watching.

➤ *SPINDEX*

SPINDEX is a method that is used for measuring the time obtained by each sponsor or purchaser of stadium advertising in all television broadcast and on all channels. The result of this method can be used to determine if a sponsorship is successful or not by comparing sponsorship investment with traditional TV advertisement. Sponsors should consider the nature of the sport they choose to sponsor. For example ice hockey is a very intense and fast sport with rapid and jerkier camera movements compared to football which is slower and offers the audience a wider field of view.

SPINDEX value is calculated with the help of four variables:

- Advertising time achieved through the TV broadcast.
- Number of times the advertisement was shown.
- Length of the broadcast.
- Number of viewers who watched the TV broadcast

The result from SPINDEX research gives the sponsor three levels of contact cost that will be helpful when comparing sponsorship investment with other advertisement investment.

- Contact cost per advertising second.
- Contact cost per TV viewer.
- Contact cost per SPINDEX point (cost per 30 second spot).

➤ *Market research*

Recently it has become more common to use market research in order to obtain information about the effect of sponsorship. This information is used by sponsors to make important decisions concerning marketing activities and associated investments in various media and marketing methods. The various ways of conducting a market research are the following:

Telephone interviews

Telephone interviews are mainly used when a sponsor want to measure the awareness level. This method is used when there is a lack of time, if sponsors want to follow up the effect of a broadcasted event they need to work fast. To examine a nation wide broadcasted event it is also most reasonable to use telephone interviews to access the information cheap and quickly.

Mailed interviews

Mailing questionnaires takes time and should therefore be seen as a along term method for measuring knowledge and attitudes. This approach could provide information about what attracts the interest of the target group and thereby make sure that the sponsor prospects the “right” area.

Omnibus surveys

This survey is a questionnaire that contains questions about different subject areas ranging from consumer habits to attitudes toward environmental factors. The authors suggest that this method and is a very cost effective way that can be used for measuring the effect of sponsorships.

In-depth interviews

With in-depth interviews the focus is on quality rather than quantity. Open questions are often used to gain as much information as possible. In the area of sponsorship this method is a favourable approach in order to understand the effect on relationships that the sponsorship generated.

Group discussions

Group discussions are a further development of in-depth interviews. Open questions are also used and the focus is on quality information. This discussion can generate new ideas for future sponsorship projects since it allows people to present their true opinions and make suggestions more freely.

➤ *Attitude surveys*

The purpose of attitude surveys in sponsorship is mainly to find out changes in the public eye towards the sponsor. One benefit that drives many companies to get involved in sponsorship is to create goodwill and the attitudes survey investigates if this is really the case for a specific sponsor.

Source: Jiffer and Roos (1999)

2.4 Theoretical Frame of Reference

In this chapter we have so far presented literature connected to our area of research. From the collected literature we have chosen the theories most relevant to serve our purpose and answer our research questions. Those theories will form a theoretical frame of reference that we will rely on when analysing our collected data. We will also rely on our frame of references when conducting our interview guide. The most relevant theories for this thesis will be presented for each of our research questions separately.

2.4.1 Objectives for Sponsorship

The objectives for companies to enter into a sponsorship agreement vary from study to study as explained earlier in this chapter. We decided to utilize a mixture of the objectives mentioned by several authors in our thesis. The most relevant objectives for this study mentioned by Amis at al (1999), Cornwell and Maignan (1998), Jobber (2001), Dolphin (2003), and Jiffer and Roos (1999) in the literature will thus form our frame of reference for research question one. The stated objectives will be presented in table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Objectives for Sponsorship

• Increasing awareness/recognition of corporation or brand (Amis et al. 1999; Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Dolphin, 2003)
• Enhancing corporate or brand image (Amis et al. 1999; Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Dolphin, 2003)
• Creating goodwill (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Dolphin, 2003)
• Management interests (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998)
• Fostering favourable corporate and brand associations (Jobber, 2001; Jiffer & Roos, 1999)
• Improving relationships (Jobber, 2001; Jiffer & Roos, 1999; Dolphin, 2003)
• Gaining exposure/publicity (Jobber, 2001; Jiffer & Roos, 1999)
• Employee motivation (Dolphin, 2003)
• Staff recruitment (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998)
• Improving profitability (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998)
• Creating entertainment opportunities (Jobber, 2001)

Source: Authors' own construction

2.4.2 Selection of Sport Sponsorship Object

We have chosen Martin's (1996) four step process and Jobber's (2001) questionnaire as a frame of references in order to answer research question two, because we believe these theories covers important aspects of the selection process of sponsorship object.

Martin's (1996) Four Step Process:

1. Determine the image of the product/company
2. Matching the company image with a sport or athlete.
3. Choose an athlete from the closest fitting sport.
4. Consumer evaluation of different athletes endorsement of the product/company and choose the athlete that was evaluated most positively.

Jobber's (2001) questionnaire deals with important criteria that need to be considered when determining which sponsorship to select. This model is very valid in order to answer our second research question.

Jobber's (2001) Questionnaire:

- Communications objective
- Target market
- Risk
- Promotional opportunities
- Past record

➤ Cost

2.4.3 Evaluation of Sport Sponsorship Activities

Regarding the measurement of a sponsorship’s effectiveness we will rely on the different methods provided by Jiffer and Roos (1999). The authors gave an exhaustive discussion of the available methods and also covered most of the methods discussed by the other authors. The following methods were mentioned by Jiffer and Roos (1999):

- Press Monitoring
- Television exposure
- SPINDEX
- Market research
- Attitude surveys

Since the methods of measurement presented above does not discuss the different stages of the evaluation process we will also apply the stages mentioned by Jobber (2001) in our frame of reference. Jobber (2001) mentions the following steps when evaluating a sponsorship:

1. Determination of the company’s brand’s present position in terms of pre- sponsorship awareness and image with the target audience
2. The setting of sponsorship objectives.
3. Tracking to detect movements in customer awareness and attitudes towards the company/brand.
4. Post-sponsorship comparison of performance levels against initial objectives.

Exhibit 2.2 explains graphically the emerged theoretical frame of reference and illustrates how the research questions are connected to each other.

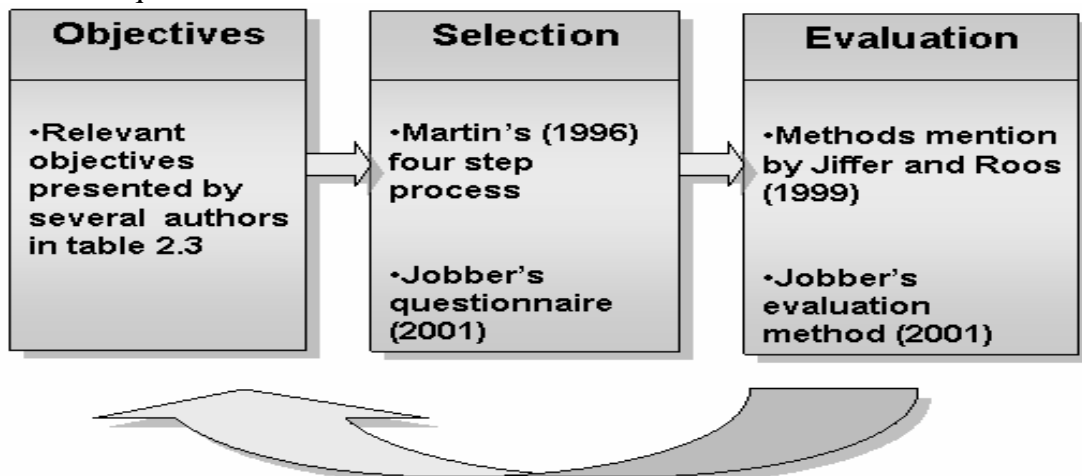


Exhibit 2.2: Illustration of the Theoretical Frame of Reference

Source: Author’s own construction

3 METHODOLOGY

The previous chapter presented relevant literature and theories within our field of study. In this chapter we will present the methodology we have adapted in our research. The chapter will serve as a roadmap of how we have approached our study. An explanation of the selected research methods will also be provided. The chapter will end off by discussing the reliability and validity of our thesis.

3.1 Research Purpose

Research can be divided into different categories of studies (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2000). The different types of studies mentioned by the authors may be categorised into: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory studies (ibid).

Exploratory studies

This type of study aims to explore what really is happening and to seek new insights (Saunders et al. 2000). Further, the authors state that there are three principal ways of conducting exploratory research: a search of literature, talking to experts in the subject or conduct focus group interviews (ibid).

Descriptive studies

Descriptive studies try to portray an accurate picture of persons, events or situations according to Saunders et al (2000). This could be a part of an exploratory research since it is important to have a clear picture of the phenomena that you are trying to collect data on (ibid).

Explanatory studies

Studies with an explanatory approach establish casual relationships between variables according to Saunders et al (2000). An example of this is when the empirical studies are compared with pre-existing theories on the subject (ibid).

Our thesis is partially exploratory since we are trying to explore our purpose to gain a deeper understanding of how companies use sponsorship of sporting teams as a strategic tool in their marketing program. We have also searched for literature and performed an interview in order to fulfil our purpose wich further justifies the exploratory purpose. Our study is also descriptive for the reason that we will describe the data that we have collected from our case. Finally our study is also partly explanatory since we will compare the collected data with theory and also draw conclusions from our findings at the end. However some general conclusions will not be drawn from this thesis.

3.2 Research Approach

According to Denscombe (2000) there are different ways of approaching academic research. In the following section we will examine the differences between a qualitative and a quantitative approach to research. Further, we will explain how we have decided to approach our study.

3.2.1 Qualitative Versus Quantitative

Denscombe (2000) claims that the definition of qualitative versus quantitative research explains the researchers approach to the study. Saunders et al (2000) state that it may be problematic to draw a clear distinction between qualitative and quantitative research. However, some differences between the two approaches can be discovered (ibid). According to Yin (2003) the best approach for a researcher to use depends on the purpose of the study and also on the formation of the research questions.

In quantitative research, numbers are considered to be the central part of analysis Denscombe (2000) claims. The quantitative research approach aims to measure phenomenon and transform the results into numerical values (ibid). The observed phenomena are therefore analyzed in quantifiable units and are often associated to analysis instead of explanation (ibid).

According to Denscombe (2000) words are considered to be the central part of analysis in a qualitative approach to research. This approach to research aims to transform the observations into words instead of numbers (ibid). Qualitative research is usually associated to the explanation of certain phenomenon and it is usually done in small scale studies (ibid).

Based on the previous discussion we decided to use a qualitative approach to our study. Since the purpose with this thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of how a company uses sponsorship of sporting teams as a strategic tool in its marketing program we believe this approach suits our purpose best. Further, the posed research questions will also provide answers that cannot be quantified or measured in numbers. Thus, a qualitative approach gives us a chance to consider and analyze several variables and thus gain a deeper understanding of our area of research.

3.3 Research Strategy

Both Yin (2003) and Denscombe (2000) state three major research strategies: experiments, surveys and case studies. Yin (2003) also mentions archival analysis and history as additional research strategies. The researcher can decide which strategy to use by examining the following three conditions:

1. The type of research question asked.
2. The degree of control an investigator has over actual behavioural event.

3. The degree of focus on contemporary opposed to historical events (ibid).

Table 3.1: *Relevant Situations for Different Research Strategies*

Strategy	Form of Research Question?	Requires Control of Behavioural Events?	Focuses on Contemporary Events?
Experiment	How, why?	Yes	Yes
Survey	Who, what where how many, how much?	No	Yes
Archival analysis	Who, what, where, how many, how much?	No	Yes/No
History	How, why?	No	No
Case study	How, why?	No	Yes

Source: Yin, 2003, p. 6

Since our research questions are only “how” questions this leaves out surveys and archival analysis as a research strategy. Further, our study does not require any control over behavioural events, hence experiments will not be suitable as a strategy for our thesis. Our research will focus on contemporary events, and this condition excludes history as a strategy for our research. Therefore, according to Yin (2003) the most appropriate research strategy for this thesis will be a case study.

Case studies aim to gain an extensive knowledge about a single case or a small number of cases (Saunders et al, 2000). According to Denscombe (2000) the main advantage with this approach is that the researcher gains a rich understanding of the context of the research. Yin (2003) states that this approach has considerable ability to answer “how” questions and can be used successfully in both single case studies and multiple case studies. Since we want to gain a deeper knowledge of our research area a case study is the most appropriate strategy to choose.

3.4 Data Collection Method

According to Denscombe (2000) data can be collected through four different methods: questionnaires, interviews, observations or documents. Yin (2003) on the other hand mentions six different sources for collecting data: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observations, and physical artifacts. Table 3.2 summarizes the different data collection methods and the strengths and weaknesses associated to each method mentioned by Yin (2003).

Table 3.2: Six Sources of Evidence: Strengths and Weaknesses

Source of Evidence	Strengths	Weaknesses
Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Stable</i>: can be reviewed repeatedly • <i>Unobtrusive</i>: not created as a result of the case • <i>Exact</i>: Contains exact names, references, and details of an event • <i>Broad coverage</i>: long span of time, many events, and many settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Retrievability</i>: can be low • <i>Biased selectivity</i>: if collection is incomplete • <i>Reporting bias</i>: reflects (unknown) bias of author • <i>Access</i>: may be deliberately blocked
Archival Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Same as above for documentation) • Precise and quantitative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Same as above for documentation) • Accessibility due to privacy reasons
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Targeted</i>: focuses directly on case study topic • <i>Insightful</i>: provides perceived causal inferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bias due to poorly constructed questionnaires • Response bias • Inaccuracies due to poor recall • <i>Reflexivity</i>: interviewee gives what interviewer wants to hear
Direct Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reality</i>: covers events in real time • <i>Contextual</i>: Covers context of event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming • <i>Selectivity</i>: unless broad coverage • <i>Reflexivity</i>: event may proceed differently because it is being observed • <i>Cost</i>: hours needed by human observers
Participant Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Same as for direct observations) • Insightful into inter-personal behavior and motives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (same as for direct observations) • Bias due to investigator's manipulation of events
Physical Artifacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insightful into cultural features • Insightful into technical operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selectivity • Availability

Source: Yin, 2003

In our study we have decided to use interviews as the method for collecting primary data for our research. Yin (2003) defines interviews as guided conversations where the researcher will ask the respondent questions in a fluid rather than a rigid way. According to Denscombe (2000) interviews may be conducted if the researcher needs deep and detailed data from a few respondents. Further on, interviews are a flexible way of collecting data and it focuses directly on the case study topic (Yin, 2003). Based on this discussion we believe that an interview will suit our study best. Since the purpose of our study is to examine how a company uses sponsorship of sporting teams as a strategic tool in its marketing program we believe that detailed and deep information about a corporation will serve our purpose best.

Yin (2003) and Denscombe (2000) mentions three types of interviews and defines the different nature of them as: open-ended, focused, or surveys. Focused interviews gives

the interviewer a chance to control the interview and the topics that are discussed at the same time as the respondent is given a chance to speak unreservedly about his thoughts and insights of the topic (Denscombe, 2000). The answers are of an open end character and the emphasis is on the respondent describing his views on a certain matter (ibid). Although the interview may possess a conversational manner Yin (2003) claims that the interviewer still follows a set of questions from the case study protocol. Since most of our interview questions are rather complex and more thorough explanations are wanted, we believe that a focused interview will suit our research best. Further on, most of our questions are of an open end character which further supports the use of a focused interview. This type of interview also gives the respondent a chance to talk freely about the topic and us a chance of asking follow up questions when needed. The interview will follow the interview guide provided in Appendix B.

According to Denscombe (2000) the most common way of conducting a focused interview is through a personal interview between a researcher and a respondent. There are several advantages with this approach: they are fairly easy to arrange, since the collected data originates from one source it is easy for the researcher to trace certain ideas to specific respondents, and the interview is relatively easy to control (ibid). Based on the discussion above, we have decided to conduct a personal interview in order to serve the purpose of our thesis.

Yin (2003) states that the use of a tape recorder when conducting an interview gives the researcher a chance to interpret the information more accurately. According to Denscombe (2000), the use of a tape recorder also gives other researchers a chance to easily control the collected data. Therefore, we have decided to use a tape recorder when conducting our interview. The respondent was informed about the usage of a tape recorder and had no objections. Besides recording the entire interview we will also take notes during the interview. In order to prepare the respondent for the interview and what kind of questions to expect, we will e-mail a shortened version of the interview guide five days in advance to the respondent. Since our case company is based in Södertälje we were not able to conduct a face-to-face interview with our respondent, due to lack of time and geographical distance. Therefore, we decided to conduct a telephone interview. The interview was conducted in Swedish since it is the mother tongue of both the respondent and the researchers. We have also had the opportunity to send our respondent some follow up questions through e-mail after the telephone interview in order to gain additional data for our research.

3.5 Sample Selection

In order to answer our research questions it is important to choose a representative case study object. When we took our demarcations into consideration we found that a larger company operating in Sweden within an industry that needs to be seen by a wider audience and who also conduct sport sponsorship towards a sport team would fit our study. With that in consideration we decided that Audi Sweden fulfils our profile perfectly. Furthermore, the importance of a strong brand is very important in the car

industry (Haag 1999). Audi is a well known company and devote a substantial amount of resources into promotional activities. We also knew that they sponsor the Swedish alpine skiing team and that they have been awarded for this sponsorship, and we thought that made them an interesting case to study. Audi Sweden won the price "Gyllene Hjulet" ("The Golden Wheel") for their sponsorship of the Swedish alpine skiing team in 2003 (Sponsringsföreningen i Sverige, 2004). A good contact was established with Audi and they responded to our requests and e-mails very quickly, which also motivated our choice of company.

Denscombe (2000) states that the researcher should chose to interview someone who exist in a relevant position or someone who can contribute with a unique perspective to the research. We contacted the Public Relations Manager, Mr. Marcus Thomasfolk, at Audi Sweden and asked him for whom within Audi Sweden to contact with our questions. Mr. Thomasfolk recommended us to take contact with Mr. Niklas Henning who is responsible for Audi Sweden's sponsor and event activities.

3.6 Data Analysis

According to Yin (2003) researchers often start researching without knowing how to analyze the data. To solve this problem, investigators should choose a strategy for investigation (ibid). Yin (2003) proposes three general strategies when analysing data: relying on theoretical propositions, thinking about rival explanations, or developing a case description (ibid).

The first strategy means that the researcher follows theoretical propositions that led to the case study (Yin, 2003). Objectives and design of the case study are based on those propositions that in turn reflected a number of research questions, reviews of the literature and new hypothesis or propositions (ibid). The second strategy involves defining and testing rival explanations (ibid). And the final strategy involves developing a descriptive framework for organizing the study (ibid). However, Yin (2003) claims that this study is less preferable compared to the two previous strategies. In this study we will use the first strategy since we followed theoretical propositions that led to this study and from which our research questions and literature review emerged.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994) data analysis consist of three concurrent flows of activity. These three stages are: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (ibid). The data reduction stage helps the researcher to sharpen, sort, focus, discard, and organize the data so that final conclusions can be drawn and verified (ibid). Next step is data display where the researcher displays the reduced data in an organized way so that conclusions can be drawn more easily (ibid). In the final phase the researcher draws his conclusions about the research and states what his findings really means (ibid). Miles and Huberman (1994) claim that this is done in the following steps: noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, casual flows, and propositions.

We will follow these steps by reducing the data and present it in chapter four. In chapter five we will perform a within-case analysis of the reduced data where we compare the data to previous theories of the subject. Finally, in chapter six we will draw our conclusions and state the findings that this research revealed.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

It is important to take reliability and validity into consideration when conducting a scientific research in order to establish its quality (Thurén, 2000). Reliability means measuring things correctly, if several investigators arrives to the same conclusions then the reliability is high (ibid). Validity explores whether researchers have investigated what they set out to investigate and nothing else (ibid). According to Yin (2003) four different tests can be done in order to establish the quality of any empirical social research. Yin (2003) also states that these tests are especially relevant for case studies. The four tests are summarized below:

- *Construct validity*: establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied
- *Internal validity*: Establishing a casual relationship, whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships.
- *External validity*: establishing the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized.
- *Reliability*: demonstrating that the operations of a study can be repeated with the same results (Yin 2003, p. 34).

Yin (2003) also presents several tactics that can be used when dealing with these tests that should be applied throughout the conduct of the case study and not just at the beginning. On the next page these tactics are presented in table 3.3.

Table 3.3: *Case Study Tactics for Four Design Tests*

Tests	Case Study Tactic	Phase of research in which tactic occurs
Construct validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use multiple sources of evidence • Establish chain of evidence • Have key informants review draft case study report 	Data collection Data collection Composition
Internal validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do pattern-matching • Do explanation-building • Address rival explanations • Use logic models 	Data analysis Data analysis Data analysis Data analysis
External validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use theory in single- case studies • Use replication logic in multiple-case studies 	Research design Research design
Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use case study protocol • Develop case study database 	Data collection Data collection

Source: Yin, 2003, p. 34

Multiple sources of evidence is preferable when conducting case studies in order to increase the construct validity but due to time limitations we were only able to conduct a single case study. In order to increase our construct validity we tested our interview question on some of our fellow students and also with our supervisor before conducting our interview to make sure our questions were understandable. Further, we consulted relevant people within the organization in order to get in contact with the person most suited to answer our questions. To further increase the construct validity we sent our questions to the respondent beforehand so that he could prepare for the interview. We also used a tape-recorder during the interview so that we could verify and double-check the answer afterwards. In addition to a tape recorder, we also took notes during the entire interview in order to further increase the construct validity. Since Swedish is the mother language of both the respondent and the researcher the interview was conducted in Swedish. Therefore the interview questions were translated into Swedish. After conducting the interview we translated the data into English again which could have caused some translation errors which could reduce our construct validity. The choice of conducting a telephone interview decreases our construct validity since we cannot analyse the nonverbal language like gestures and expressions of the respondent. However, we e-mailed our composed data chapter to the respondent after the interview in order to make sure we had not misinterpreted any of his answers.

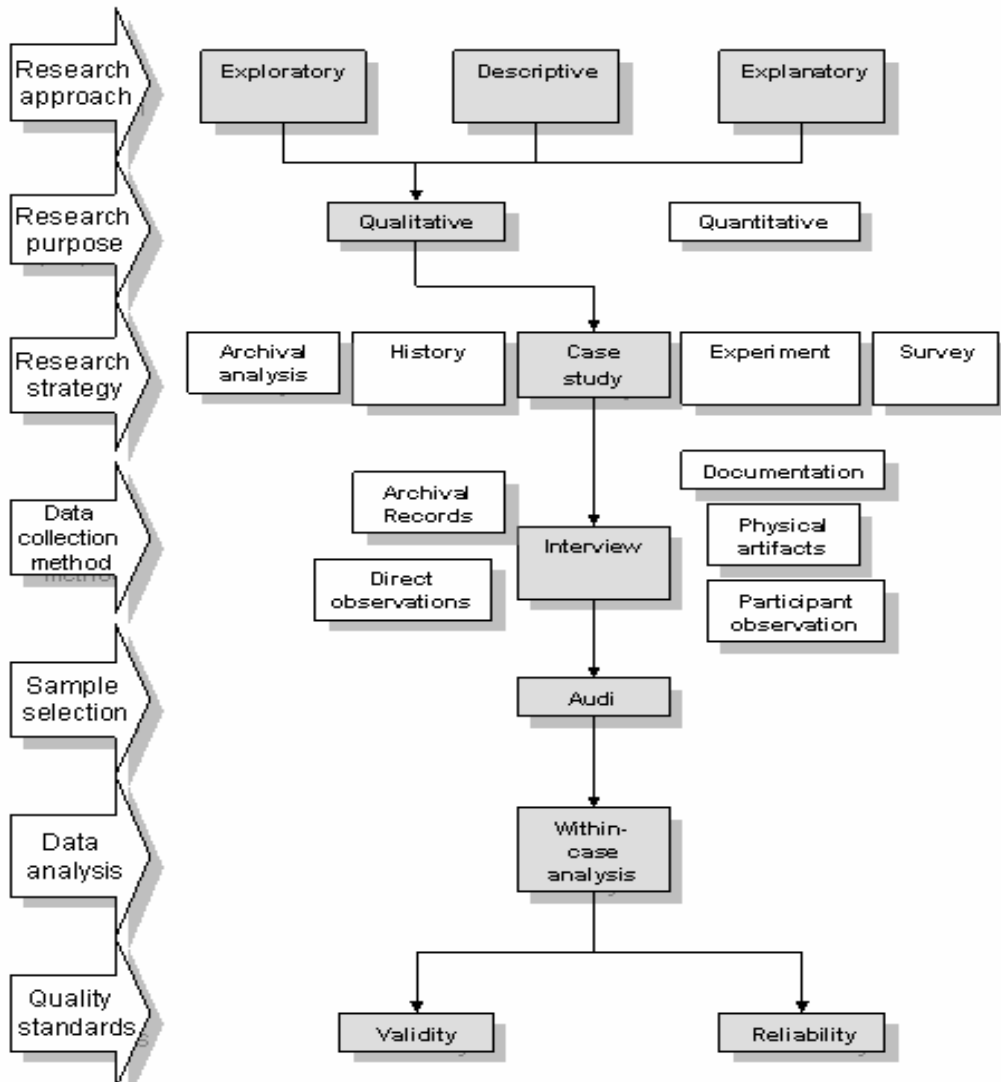
When comparing the empirical data to our conceptual framework we used pattern-matching in order to increase the internal validity. We compared the collected empirical data to the theoretical frame of reference. Our external validity should be seen as rather low since we conducted only one case study and replication of this study is impossible to perform. No generalizations can be drawn from this study.

We have not used a case study protocol nor have we developed a case study database which lowers our reliability. However, we have put effort into presenting where we have found our theory and data, which questions we have asked and to whom. We have also explained the employed methodology in a very thorough manner and have also added both the English and Swedish interview guide in Appendix A and B. These factors increase our reliability slightly. When conducting the interview we were careful of not asking any leading questions or in any other ways try to bias or influence the respondent. We have also presented the collected data for the respondent to make sure we have interpreted his answers correctly, and we also asked additional questions through e-mails.

3.8 Outline of Research Methodology

To summarize the methodology applied in our thesis exhibit 3.1 provides a graphical outline of the methodology chapter.

Exhibit 3.1: Graphical Outline of Research Methodology



Source: Authors' own construction

4 EMPIRICAL DATA: CASE STUDY OF AUDI

Chapter three presented the methodology used in our thesis. In this chapter we will present the empirical data for our thesis that was collected through an interview. First, a brief introduction and some background of Audi Sweden will be provided. The following part will present the data collected for each research question separately.

4.1 Background

Audi AG is a car manufacturer originally established 1909 in Germany by August Horch and is today owned by the Volkswagen Group in Germany. Audi Sweden is a subsidiary to the Swedish Volkswagen Group, which in turn is wholly owned by the Volkswagen Group in Germany. Worldwide the company has about 50 000 employees while Audi Sweden employs approximately 25 employees. During 2003 Audi sold nearly 770 000 cars worldwide and had a turnover around 22 billion euro. In Sweden Audi sold 10 893 cars during 2003, this represents a market share of 4.2 percent. Since our case is based on Audi Sweden the following data presentation will only focus on that company, however Audi Sweden will be referred to as Audi from now on in our thesis.

According to Mr. Henning, responsible for Audi's sponsor and event activities, Audi allocates approximately 15 % of their total marketing budget into sponsoring and event activities. 90 % of that money is spent on sponsoring or events dealing with sports of some kind. Audi is currently involved in two major sport sponsoring programs and several smaller sponsoring programs. The two larger sponsoring projects are the sponsoring of the Swedish touring car championships STCC, and also the sponsoring of the Swedish alpine skiing team. The decision to sponsor alpine skiing was made by Audi AG in the early 1990. Further, Audi AG made recommendations to Audi's subsidiaries in alpine skiing nations to sponsor alpine skiing within each nation. The following data presented will focus on Audi's sponsoring of the Swedish alpine skiing team.

4.2 Audi's Objectives with Sport Sponsoring

Audi's decision to sponsor sports was a strategic decision made by the company's headquarters, management interest was not a main consideration when choosing to sponsor alpine skiing. The ultimate goal with the company's sponsoring, as with any promotional activity, is to increase sales in the long run. However, the company has more specific objectives with their sport sponsorship.

Audi feels that alpine skiing is an excellent sport to sponsor since it stands for many of the values that Audi want to communicate to the public. The company has several objectives with their sponsoring. According to Mr. Henning one of their main objective is to gain exposure in all kinds off media, such as television and lifestyle magazines, to a

reasonable cost. The type of media depends on which car model they are promoting and which target group they want to communicate with.

Another objective for Audi to sponsor sports is to gain association. They want people and especially their target group to link Audi cars to things that characterize the sport they are sponsoring. Our respondent claims that there is a link between alpine skiing and Audi cars, such as the importance of a good grip under tough weather conditions for the car and the skiers grip in the hill. In a broader perspective, Audi simply wants people to associate alpine skiing with their company. Furthermore, Audi also want to be associated with something winning and successful. However this is not something they feel that they can control, since it is up to the athletes to perform well in their sport.

Our respondent claims that the alpine skiing sponsorship is a foundation of the communication platform that several other promotional activities and communication is built on. The company uses alpine skiing as a theme in their advertising by showing cars driving down a slope in order to boost the promoted image and present the attributes of their cars in a favourable manner. This theme can be seen in all kinds of promotional activities done by the company. This sponsorship campaign is a way of legitimizing good grip and other features promoted to the public through other types of promotional activities.

The company also uses sponsoring as a way of building relationships with retailers and their sellers. By using famous alpine skiers they can attract retailers to get involved in relationship building activities. They invite retailers to skiing tournaments and to exclusive skiing trips and arrange meetings with skiing stars in order to build long lasting relationships.

Mr. Henning discusses the importance of the image of the sport, however it is not mentioned as one of their main objectives to enhance or change the image of the company through their sponsoring. Instead he stresses the importance of a matching image between the sport and the image the company wishes to communicate. Therefore, Audi's sponsoring can be seen as a means to correlate the company image to the image associated with alpine skiing.

Motivating current employees, creating goodwill, or recruiting new employees is not mentioned by our respondent as some of the main objectives with their sponsoring activities. However, Mr Henning does mention goodwill as an important part of the sponsoring. He claims that goodwill is part of the association objective and can be the result of sponsoring activities.

4.3 Audi's Selection of Sport Sponsoring Object

The initiative to sponsor objects of a smaller scale is often taken by the one who wishes to be sponsored. However when deciding on a larger sponsoring campaign, Audi looks for a suitable sponsoring object and contacts them. The company seeks sports that attracts

the attention of Audi's target groups and also sports that are practiced by the target group Audi wants to communicate with. The larger sponsoring campaigns are usually based on directions from Audi AG headquarters in Germany since they want to communicate a similar message in several countries.

The process of selecting a certain sport to sponsor starts with evaluating what models Audi wants to promote and what target group they intend to promote it to. The target markets needs, desires, and interests are also considered. Further, the image that they want to communicate to the target group is established. Sports that match the desired image and attract the attention and interest of the target group are then considered. The final decision to sponsor a larger campaign is a strategic long-term decision and it is made by the management in cooperation with the marketing department.

Thus, there are two main and important criterions for a certain sponsoring object that Audi considers when deciding on a sponsorship. First, the importance of the sponsored sport to match the image that the company wants to communicate and be associated with is considered. Second, the sport has to attract the attention of the desired target group.

Audi believes that alpine skiing and Audi Quattro, which is their four-wheel-drive series, correlates in a good way. They claim that the needs of the target group interested in alpine skiing matches what Audi has to provide. This target group demands cars that are good and safe on winter roads to give them a safe transportation to the mountains. This matches perfectly with what Audi wants to communicate with their Quattro-series. Alpine skiing and the image and message that Audi wants to communicate correlates on areas such as: transportation, winter, grip, snow, and bad roads. Further on, the demographics such as age and income group of Audis target market matches with the audience and participants of alpine skiing. They also believe that alpine skiing communicates an attitude and a demand for Audi cars among a younger audience.

Audi carefully evaluates and considers the risks before entering into a sponsoring project. The company believes that the main risk with sport sponsoring is the possibility of a sponsored athlete being caught with doping. To reduce the probability of being associated with an athlete being caught with doping Audi chooses to only sponsor teams and no individual athletes. Another risk considered before choosing a sponsoring object is the possibility of the sponsored to perform poorly and therefore fail to attract the intended media coverage.

Yet another factor to consider before choosing a sport to sponsor is the current or previous sponsors of the intended sponsoring object. Audi do not want to enter into a sponsorship if a main competitor is or has been sponsoring the sport or team earlier. They believe it will take a too long time before the publics will associate the sport or team to Audi instead of the previous sponsor.

4.4 Evaluation of Sport Sponsoring Activities at Audi

The measurement of the effects of a sponsorship campaign is a highly complex process. Therefore, Audi employs a specialized agency to measure the effects of their sponsoring activities continuously. When receiving the results of the measurements Audi handles the evaluation of the results and compares them to the stated objectives for the sponsoring campaign. Due to confidential reasons Audi does not want to further explain how the comparison between stated objectives and actual results is done.

Mr. Henning emphasizes the importance of consistency in the measurement methods of the effectiveness. The data has to be comparable with previous years data in order to successfully define the effectiveness of a sponsorship and to determine if the company is doing things right.

Audi measures the effectiveness in several different ways in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of how well they have performed their sponsoring. The company considers the amount of TV exposure that a certain sponsorship has received, and for how long their brand has been showed in a certain broadcast. This is compared to the cost of buying regular TV commercial time. Further, the company is interested in attitudes, feelings and thoughts about Audi among their audiences. These are investigated through interviews, focus groups and surveys. In addition to the audiences' perceptions of the company, Audi also continuously measures the return on invested capital on sponsorships.

Audi has used the same measurement method of sponsoring campaigns since 1988 and are currently satisfied with it. However they claim that improvements could possibly be made but the importance of consistent data from year to year makes it difficult to change the method of measurement.

Audi stresses the importance of measuring the effectiveness of any sponsoring campaign in order to examine the return of money put into a certain campaign. However they claim that it is rather difficult to measure direct effects of certain sponsorships since it is usually a complex buy to purchase a new car. Therefore the effects of a certain campaign might not result in increased sales right away. The company also state that the measurement of changes of image and how the company is perceived by its target markets are difficult to examine correctly.

5 ANALYSIS

The previous chapter presented the collected empirical data for our thesis. In this chapter we will analyze the empirical data and compare it to the theories presented through our conceptual framework. According to Yin (2003) this strategy is called pattern matching. We will look for similarities as well as differences between theory and the collected data. Since our thesis is a single case study, a within case analysis will be performed. The data will be analyzed and presented for each research question separately.

5.1 Objectives with Sport Sponsoring

As stated in the literature chapter several suggestions of sponsorship objectives are mentioned by different authors within the field of sponsorship. However, the most frequently mentioned objectives were summarized in our frame of reference. In table 5.1 a comparison between Audi's objectives in sport sponsoring and objectives as discussed in the literature will be presented.

Table 5.1: Comparison of Sponsorship Objectives

Objectives stated by Audi	Objectives stated in theory
<u>Main objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing awareness/recognition of corporation or brand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain media exposure • Foster association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing corporate or brand image • Creating goodwill • Management interests
<u>Other objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering favourable corporate and brand associations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship building • Enhance the effect of other promotional activities • Promote a certain image • Increase profitability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving relationships • Gaining exposure/publicity • Employee motivation • Staff recruitment • Improving profitability • Creating entertainment opportunities

Source: Authors' own construction

Audi's two main objectives with their sponsoring are to gain media exposure and to foster association, these objectives match well with the literature. Audi states that with all their sponsoring activities they wish to gain some sort of media exposure for their brand. This correlates to several authors' statements that media exposure or publicity is one of the main objectives for companies to enter into a sponsorship activity (Jiffer & Roos, 1999; Jobber, 2001). To foster association and make their audience correlate Audi to alpine skiing is also one of the main objectives with Audi's sponsoring of the Swedish

alpine skiing team. They want to be associated with something successful and winning and hope that the sponsoring will create this image among the publics. According to Jobber (2001) and Jiffer and Roos (1999) companies entering a sponsorship hope that the positive attributes of the sponsored will “rub off” to the company or brand.

Our respondent emphasizes relationship building as one objective with Audi’s sponsoring. Audi mainly focuses on building relationships with their dealers and their sellers. This is done through inviting the dealers and their sellers to skiing trips, skiing tournaments and meetings with alpine skiing stars. As stated in the conceptual framework Jiffer and Roos (1999) and Dolphin (2003) also mentions relationship building as one of the objectives companies might have with their sponsoring. The authors claim that relationship building with customers, dealers, employees, and with the community is something that sponsoring activities might foster (ibid).

Additionally, Audi states that the sponsorship serves as a foundation that several other promotional activities are built on. Alpine skiing is used as a theme in Audi’s printed advertising as well as in their broadcasted advertising. The sponsorship of the Swedish alpine skiing team enhances the overall promotional theme. This objective of having the sponsorship activity as a base to build other promotional activities on is not mentioned by previous literature.

Furthermore, one of Audi’s objectives is to promote a specific image to their publics through their sponsoring. They want to correlate the image of alpine skiing to their company. Enhancing corporate or brand image is also mentioned as a very crucial objective with sponsoring activities according to several authors (Amis et al, 1999; Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Dolphin, 2003).

According to our respondent improving the profitability is something that all promotional activities wishes to do, however it is not one of the specific goals of Audi’s sponsoring. Cornwell and Maignan (1998) also state that increasing profitability is one possible objective with sport sponsorships as mentioned in the conceptual framework. Objectives such as increasing awareness or recognition of a brand, creating goodwill, management interest, employee motivation, staff recruitment, and creation of entertainment opportunities are not mentioned by our respondent as being one of the objectives for Audi’s sponsoring of the Swedish alpine skiing team. However, these are all mentioned as possible objectives in the literature. Although, Mr. Henning does talk about the creation of goodwill as a factor connected to the association objective and that it is hard to define it.

5.2 Selection of Sport Sponsoring Object

As stated in our theoretical frame of reference we will rely on Jobber’s (2001) questionnaire and also on Martin’s (1996) four step process when answering research question two. Table 5.2 provides a comparison between the sponsorship selection process of Audi and Martin’s (1996) four step model and Jobber’s (2001) questionnaire.

Table 5.2: Comparison of Sponsorship Selection Process

Audi's sponsorship selection process	Martin's four step process	Topics in Jobber's questionnaire
1. Evaluate what models to promote	1. Determine the image of the product/company	➤Communication objective ➤Target market ➤Risk ➤Promotional opportunities
2. Determine the target group by identifying their needs, desires and interest	2. Matching the company image with a sport or athlete.	
3. Establish the desired image for the car model	3. Choose an athlete from the closest fitting sport.	
4. Choosing a sport that matches the image of the product and catches the interest of the target group	4. Consumer evaluation of different athletes endorsement of the product/company and choose the athlete that was evaluated most positively.	

Source: Authors' own construction

Audi begins the selection process with a certain car model in mind and then, based on the specific model, they determine the target group. In the second step Audi determine the target group's desires and needs. In Martin's (1996) four step process, however, the first step is to determine the image of the product or company. Jobber's (2001) questionnaire also brings up the importance of the image of the product even though he does not mention where in the process this takes place. In Audi's third step they evaluate the company image and the desired image of the specific car models in order to find a sponsorship that can convey this image. The company have taken great effort in finding a sport that match the attributes of their product, such as the importance of a good grip in tough weather conditions which is important both for the car driver and for the alpine skier. Martin's (1996) four step process lies in align with Audi's approach and states that the company image should match the image of the sport or athlete in order to get a clear connection between the characteristics of the sport and the features of the company's profile.

Furthermore, Audi is reluctant to choose an individual athlete to sponsor. Today the company only sponsor teams and not individuals due to the risk off individuals being caught using drugs and thus give the company a bad reputation. Jobber (2001) agrees that sponsorship should take risk into consideration when selecting a sponsorship object but does not mention the risk of sponsoring individual athletes. Martin (1996) states that an athlete should be chosen within the specific sport a company wants to be associated with. Audi finish their selection process by choosing the sport and team they want to sponsor. In Martin's four step process evaluations of individual athletes is the final step when selecting a sport sponsorship object (ibid).

Audi is aware of the importance of sponsoring a winning team because a winning team attracts more media coverage than a losing team and also gives positive associations. Furthermore, Audi hopes that if a team wins it can “rub off” on the company’s image as a winning image. Jobber (2001) also put emphasis on communicating a desirable image as a major factor influencing the decision on which sport to sponsor. He also identifies the importance of evaluating the promotional aspect of a sponsorship such as publicity opportunities (ibid).

It is also important for Audi to not get involved with a sponsorship where a main competitor already sponsors or has been sponsoring the object recently. The company feels that it would take to long time before the audience would associate the sport with Audi if they already associate the sport with another car brand. Jobber (2001) points out that a potential sponsor should find out the results of previous sponsors and why they have withdrawn but he never mentions the importance of who have been sponsoring a certain sponsor object previously.

Another important aspect that Audi considers is what the sponsorship investment will generate, because in the end it is all about selling more cars. Therefore the cost of the sponsorship must be seen from a long term perspective since not everyone in their target audience are about to purchase a new car in the near future according to our respondent, but next time they buy a car it will hopefully be an Audi. Jobber (2001) agrees with this statement as he brings out the importance of examining the cost of a sponsorship and return on the investment in his questionnaire.

5.3 Evaluation of a Sport Sponsoring Activity

Audi employs a specialized agency to handle the evaluation of their sponsorship activities. However the evaluation of the results of the measurements are handled by Audi themselves. The specialized agency measures the amount of time Audi’s logos has been shown in TV and compares that to the price of buying regular advertising time in TV. This method is what Jiffer and Roos (1999) refer to as SPINDEX, and it also has some similarities with the method referred to as Television exposure by the authors (ibid).

In addition to the SPINDEX measurement Audi’s specialized agency also measures attitudes and feelings about the company among their target market. The methods used for measuring this are surveys, interviews, and focus groups, which are all methods mentioned by Jiffer and Roos (1999) as market research methods or attitude surveys.

Press monitoring is not mentioned by our respondent as one of the measurement methods by Audi. Although the theories presented in our conceptual framework state that this might be one measurement method for measuring the effects of sponsorships. Further on, Audi also measures return on invested capital, which is not mentioned as one of the measurement methods by neither Jiffer and Roos (1999) or by Jobber (2001).

As stated in the literature chapter and in the conceptual framework, Jobber (2001) discusses four steps in the evaluation process of a sponsorship. Table 5.3 compares Audi's evaluation process to the steps presented in the literature by Jobber (2001) when evaluating the results of sponsorships.

Table 5.3: *Evaluation Process Comparison*

Jobber's sponsorship evaluation process	Audi
1. Determination of the company's brand's present position in terms of pre-sponsorship awareness and image with the target audience.	Yes (corresponds with theory)
2. The setting of sponsorship objectives.	Yes
3. Tracking to detect movements in customer awareness and attitudes towards the company/brand.	Yes
4. Post-sponsorship comparison of performance levels against initial objectives.	Yes

Source: Authors' own construction

When comparing Audi's evaluation process to the steps discussed by Jobber (2001) several similarities can be traced. Before deciding on a certain sponsorship activity Audi determines what image they want to promote to the specific target group for a specific car model. When the appropriate image is established the company looks for suitable sponsorship activities. Since Audi is constantly measuring the awareness and thoughts about their company among their target group, they possess a knowledge about the brand's current position in the minds of their target group. Jobber (2001) states this as being the first step in the process of evaluating the sponsorship. Audi has several different objectives with their sponsorship depending on the target market. The objectives are clearly stated before the sponsorship activities are launched. These activities by the company correlate clearly to Jobber's (2001) second step in his evaluation process. As mentioned earlier, Audi measures the attitude changes among their target group through interviews, focus groups, and surveys. This activity is comparable to the third step in the evaluation process mentioned by Jobber (2001). Further on, Audi constantly compares the evaluated results against the established objectives, which correlate to Jobber's (2001) fourth step of evaluation. However, our respondent did not want to explain the comparison of results against objectives in further detail, due to confidential reasons.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The previous chapter analyzed the empirical data by comparing it to the literature presented in the conceptual framework. In this chapter we will draw some final conclusions and provide answers to the research questions stated in chapter one. This will serve the purpose of the thesis which was:

“to gain a deeper understanding of how a company uses sponsorship of sporting teams as a strategic tool in its marketing program”.

The chapter will end off by providing implications for management, theory, and further research.

6.1 How Does a Company Define its Objectives in Sport Sponsoring?

Our research revealed that Audi has several objectives with their sponsoring of the Swedish alpine skiing team. However some of the objectives are of a greater importance, whereas other objectives are of a subordinate nature. The primary objectives with Audi's sponsoring are to foster association and to gain media exposure.

To foster an association between alpine skiing and the company, as well as being associated with something winning seems to be of main focus for Audi. The company also believes that sponsoring alpine skiing fosters positive associations of the company among their target market. Alpine skiing responds well to the image Audi wants to be associated with and also stands for many of the features such as good grip and transportation in winter climate that Audi also hopes to be associated with. Therefore alpine skiing enhances both the image the company wants to be associated with and also legitimizes and promotes the features they want their products to be associated with.

Gaining exposure in all kinds of media is also one of the key objectives that Audi has with their sport sponsoring. Being exposed in both national and international media is of high importance for an international company like Audi. Sponsorship of alpine skiing reaches the intended target market and attracts their attention in a very effective manner. The characteristics of Audi's target market matches very well with the characteristics of the audience of alpine skiing. Therefore, exposure in the same setting as alpine skiing is an excellent way for Audi to reach their target market.

All the stated objectives so far supports the existing theories about companies' objectives with sponsoring stated in our theoretical frame of reference. It seems that the objectives mentioned in theory are fairly general and that many of the objectives mentioned by Audi can be compared with the ones mentioned in our conceptual framework, even though

they may not have stated the exactly same definitions as the theory for all their objectives.

Audi also mentions that their sponsoring is used as a base for building other promotional activities on. The integration of alpine skiing to the sponsorship serves as an enhancer and legitimizes the message communicated through other promotion tools. Alpine skiing is used as a theme that can be identified in several different settings in their promotion mix. This objective is not mentioned in the previous literature within this field of study.

The following points summarize our findings concerning the objectives that a company has with their sport sponsorship:

- A company would pursue several significant objectives with sport sponsorship while a wide range of subordinate objectives also exist.
- A highly significant objective of sport sponsorship is to foster association between the sponsored and the sponsoring company.
- Media exposure is a very significant objective for a company's sport sponsorship activities
- Sport sponsorship serves as a base for a company to build other promotional activities on.

6.2 How Does a Company Select Sport Sponsoring Objects?

Both in theory and in our collected empirical data we have found that companies go through a process by following certain steps in order to select a final sponsorship object. A strong link has been found between our empirical data and theory concerning the matching of the image of a product or company with the image of a sponsorship object. Audi supports the theory that companies want to convey a message as effective and clear as possible. In Audi's case they emphasize the connection between important aspects of skiing and driving that they hope that the target market can comprehend.

Further on, Audi points out that consideration must be taken of who the current sponsors are and who has been sponsoring the same object in the past. Sponsoring the same object as a competing company is or has been sponsoring may send confusing signals concerning the link between the sport and the company image. The theory does not cover this perspective on sponsorship, it only mentions previous results and why recent sponsor have withdrawn. Audi's primary goal with their sponsorship is not to get people aware of their company. Since they are already a large and established brand in the automobile industry they are more concerned with what people associate Audi to in their minds. This might explain the careful consideration of previous sponsors in order to communicate the right image.

Selecting an individual athlete to sponsor as the theory suggest does not lie in correlation with Audi's sponsorships. The company only sponsor teams and justify this decision by stating that the risks of sponsoring individuals is too high. If an individual athlete is caught with doping or engaged in other unethical behavior their reputation is likely to be damaged and cause bad publicity which probably would affect the reputation of the sponsor. It appears that this precaution from Audi have been done recently due to the increased revealing of sport practitioners who have been using drugs in order to increase their performance.

Our findings regarding research question two leads to the following conclusions regarding the selection of a sport sponsoring object:

- When selecting a sponsorship object great consideration should be taken to how the image of the sponsorship object correlates with the company or product image.
- A company avoids sponsoring objects where a main competitor already is or have been sponsoring.
- Selecting an individual athlete to sponsor involves higher risk compared to sponsoring a team.

6.3 How Does a Company Evaluate the Result of its Sport Sponsoring Activities?

Measurement of the effectiveness and the result of a certain sponsorship activity are of great importance for Audi. They stress the weight of knowing if a certain sponsorship is delivering the desired results or if they are doing things wrong. Most of Audi's sponsoring campaigns are big campaigns with large financial investments required. Therefore, the company want to be sure that the investments are producing the desired outcome and gives a return on the invested capital.

Audi believes that the evaluation process and the methods for evaluating are highly complex, and thus employs a specialized agency in order to gain access to professional competence for measuring the results of sponsorship campaigns. Since the sponsoring of the Swedish alpine skiing team is a very extensive sponsoring activity Audi evaluates several different aspects of the sponsorship results in order to gain a comprehensive view of the result of the campaign. They use methods such as SPINDEX, marketing research, and attitude surveys which all supports the existing theory of measurement of sponsorships mentioned by previous authors. However, previous literature does not suggest the usage of several different measurement methods simultaneously.

Audi stresses the importance of consistency of the measurement methods from year to year in order to be able to compare the results from one year to another. Therefore the company has been using the same measurement method for more than ten years and follows certain established steps when evaluating their sponsorship campaigns. This

supports Jobber's (2001) sponsorship evaluation process which also stresses the importance of following some established steps when evaluating a sponsorship activity. However, the literature does not stress the importance of using the same methods from year to year in order to simplify the comparison of results from previous sponsoring activities. Although this demand for consistency has a draw back since it might be a factor restraining the development of new and even more effective measurement methods for evaluating the results of sponsorship activities in the future.

Evaluation of the results of a sport sponsorship activity is a very complex process. The objectives with sponsorships often deal with image and attitudes and other intangible features which make them very difficult to measure. Further on, since Audi operates in the car industry which represents complex buys for the customer, the result of increased or decreased sales can only be measured in a long perspective. These facts significantly complicates the measurement of sponsorship activities.

The main conclusions regarding the evaluation of a certain sponsorship activity that our case revealed are summarized in the points listed below:

- Measurement of the results of a sponsorship activity is an important factor for a company engaging in sport sponsorships.
- A specialized agency may be employed in order to get access to professional competence for measuring the results of a sponsorship campaign.
- The result of a sponsorship is measured through several different methods simultaneously in order to gain a comprehensive view of the results of a certain sponsorship.
- Consistency of measurement methods from year to year is very crucial in order to be able to compare the results of a sponsorship to previous sponsorship activities.

6.4 Implications

In this section we will present implications and recommendations for managers working for companies involved in sport sponsoring activities. We will also present implications for theory and for future research within this field of study.

6.4.1 Implications for Management

One important aspect for managers to consider when using sport sponsorships as a strategic tool in the communication mix is the importance of clearly stated objectives. The stating of clear objectives simplifies the selection between different sponsorship objects and assists the company in the selection of the most appropriate object to sponsor. It is easier to search for a suitable sponsorship object if the company knows what they

want to achieve with their sponsoring. Stating clear objectives is also crucial if the company wishes to evaluate the results of the sponsorship correctly. Further on, it should be mentioned that a certain sponsorship might affect the outcome of other promotional activities. Therefore, the sponsorship should be viewed in a broader perspective and be integrated into the overall communication plan of the company.

Our study illustrates that companies go through a certain process consisting of several steps when they select a sponsorship object. One major step that the manager of a sponsoring company must have in mind is how well the characteristics of the sport correlate with the desired image of the company or its products. Companies should avoid sponsoring objects where a main competitor is or has been sponsoring, in order to avoid confusing the customer about what to relate the sponsored object to. Sponsorship of individuals involves a greater risk concerning the use of drugs and other negative behaviors that may harm and alter the sponsor's reputation among the public.

Managers must also realize the importance of evaluating the result of a sponsorship activity. Many sponsorships might be an important part of the communication mix involving fairly large investments. Thus, it is essential to determine if the invested money delivers the expected results. However, measuring the effects of a sponsorship correctly is a complex task, therefore outsourcing this activity to a professional agency might be a relevant recommendation.

6.4.2 Implications for Theory

Our overall purpose with this case study was to gain a deeper understanding of how a company uses sponsorship of sporting teams as a strategic tool in its marketing program. We have examined how a company motivates, selects and evaluates their sport sponsorship activities. This study is exploratory since we have gained a deeper understanding of the research area that we wanted to explore. This study has also been descriptive since we have described the collected data concerning motives, selection process and evaluation of sport sponsorship. Further, our study was also explanatory in view of the fact that we analyzed the data and draw conclusions from our findings. Previous research has been done in the area of sport sponsorship however not on this specific case according to our knowledge. The findings of this research support the existing theory stated in our conceptual framework on most aspects. However, our case study presented that there are some aspects in practice that are not presented in previous theory. Using sport sponsorship as a base to build other promotional activities on is not mentioned in previous literature. Furthermore, the importance of finding out present and previous sponsors and their impact on the image of future sponsors is something our case study revealed. Our research also pointed out the risks of sponsoring individual athletes. Also the usage of several different measurement methods simultaneously is something our case study revealed, although not mentioned in the previous literature. These findings thus, form our contribution to the existing theory within this field of study.

6.4.3 Implications for Further Research

During the progress of our thesis several interesting paths of possible research topics have arisen. However, it has been beyond the scope of this study to further investigate all these topics more thoroughly. Therefore, we recommend future research to explore these topics more carefully:

- Since this study only involved a case in the automobile industry we recommend that more research be done in other industries.
- A study involving a larger sample could deepen the understanding of sport sponsorship and also increase the validity of our findings.
- Risk was found to be an important aspect when evaluating sport sponsorship, therefore a more comprehensive study could examine the methods used for evaluating risk with sponsorship investments.

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APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW GUIDE (ENGLISH)

Part A: General Information

1. Company name:
2. Name and position of the respondent:
3. Respondents time within this company:
4. Number of employees:
5. Year of company establishment:
6. Products/Services:
7. Organizational chart:
8. Annual turnover (SEK):
9. Industry:
10. Business mission:

11. What proportion of your marketing budget is designated for sponsorships?

12. What portion of your total sponsorships goes to sport sponsorships?

13. Please identify the sport sponsorship activities that the company is currently involved in:

Part B: Objectives with the Sponsorship

1. Why did your company chose to sponsor sports in particular?

2. a) What are your main objectives with your sport sponsorship?
b) other objectives?

3. Why do you think sport sponsorship is the right method for reaching the mentioned objectives?

4. a) Rate the relative importance of the following objectives with your sport sponsorship on a scale from one to five (1=low importance, 3=medium importance, 5=extremely important).

Objective	Rate 1-5	Motivation for rating
-Increasing awareness/recognition of corporation or brand		
-Enhancing corporate or brand image		
-Creating goodwill		
-Management interests		
-Fostering favourable corporate and brand associations		
-Improving relationships		
-Gaining exposure/publicity		
-Employee motivation		
-Staff recruitment		
-Improving profitability		
-Creating entertainment opportunities for target groups		
-Other objectives:		

5.a) What aspect/feature of your sponsorship object do you want your target audience to associate to your company?

b) -Why?

6. a)In what media do you want your sponsorship to generate exposure in?

b) -Why?

7. a) Do you use your sponsorship as a way of establishing and strengthen the relationships with the company's publics?

b) If so, which relationships (strategic customers, suppliers, internal relationships, others)?

c) In what way do you think sport sponsorship will strengthen the relationships?

8. a)Do you use sponsorship as a way of enhancing the impact of other promotional activities such as advertising?

b) If so, in what way is the sponsorship correlated to other promotional activities (a certain theme)?

9. Is there anything you would like to add according to your sponsorship objectives?

Part C: Selection of Sponsorship Object

1. Does your company take the initial contact to your sponsoring object or are you contacted by the sponsored?

2. a) What are the most important criteria for the sponsorship object that you consider when deciding on a sponsorship?

b) Why is that so important?

3. Please describe your company's process of a certain sponsorship from the decision to sponsor something to the follow up of the sponsorship?

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

(Additional steps may be added if needed)

4. How would you describe the process that your company goes through when selecting a certain sport to sponsor?

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

(Additional steps may be added if needed)

5. a) Is it important that the image of the sponsored sport correlates with the corporate image?

b) If so, how do you determine the image of a certain sport?

c) How would you describe the correlation between the image of the Swedish Alpine skiing team and Audi's corporate image?

6. a) Is the link between the sponsorship and your company's products important when selecting a sponsorship object? (i.e. Alpine skiing vs. Cars)

b) If so, why?

c) If not, why?

d) How would you describe the correlation between Alpine Skiing and cars?

7. a) What is the primary target group that your sponsoring is trying to communicate with?

- b) Secondary?
- c) Other important target groups?

- 8. a) Do you evaluate the risks when selecting a sponsorship object?
- b) If so, what kind of risks?
- c) How are your company prepared for managing those risks?

- 9. a) Do you examine earlier sponsors and why they might have withdrawn from the object you are considering on sponsoring?
- b) If so, what would your company's reasons be to enter that sponsorship anyhow?

- 10. a) Do you discuss return on investment when deciding on a sponsorship project?
- b) If so, what are the return demands for approving a sponsorship?
- c) Do you see the sponsorship as a long- or short term investment?

11. Is there anything you would like to add to the discussion about the selection of a sponsoring object?

Part D: Evaluation of sponsoring activities

- 1.a) Does your company measure the effect of the sponsorship?
- b) If no, do you have any future plan of evaluating the sponsorship? Why, why not?

- 2. a) Do you hire an agency to measure the effectiveness of your sponsorship or do your company perform the evaluation?
- b) Why?

- 3. a) Are you pleased with your current evaluation method?
- b) Why or why not?

- 4. Please describe the steps you go through when you evaluate your sponsorship

Step	Activity
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

- 5. What do you measure when evaluating the sponsorship (i.e. sales or customer perception of your Company/brand?)

- 6. a) Do you compare the results of the sponsorship with the established objectives for the sponsorship?
- b) If yes, how?

7. Which of the following methods, if any, do you use when evaluating your sponsorship?

Method:
Press Monitoring
Television exposure
SPINDEX
Market research
Attitude surveys
Other

8. Describe earlier and present experience with the evaluating methods you have used for measuring sponsorship?

9. In what way do you think you could improve your measurement, if any?

10. Is there anything you would like to add concerning measurement of sponsorship?

11. Is there anything you would like to add concerning the future of sponsorship?

Thank you for your cooperation!

APPENDIX B - INTERVJU GUIDE (SWEDISH)

Sektion A: Allmän information

1. Företagets namn:
2. Respondentens namn och befattning:
3. Respondents tid inom företaget:
4. Antal anställda:
5. År då företaget grundades
6. Produkter/service:
7. Organisations schema
8. Årlig omsättning (SEK)
9. Industri:
10. Affärsidé

11. Hur stor del av företagets marknadsföringsbudget är avsatt för sponsring?
12. Hur stor del av den totala sponsrings budgeten går till idrotts sponsring?
13. Vänligen definiera vilka idrotts sponsrings projekt som företaget för närvarande är verksam i:

Sektion B: Företagets mål med sponsring

1. Varför valde ert företag att sponsra just idrott?
2. a) Vad är era huvudsakliga mål med er idrotts sponsring?
b) Övriga mål?
3. Varför tror ni att idrotts sponsring är den rätta metoden för att nå de uppställda målsättningarna?
4. Vänligen värdera den relativa betydelsen av följande mål med eran idrotts sponsring från en skala från ett till fem (1=låg betydelse, 5=väldigt viktigt)

Mål	värdering 1-5	Motivation värdering:
-Öka medvetandet/igenkännandet av ert företag/varumärke		
- Förhöja företags/varumärkes image		
- Skapa goodwill		
- Företagsledningens personliga intressen		
- Generera fördelaktiga företags/varumärkes associationer		
- Förbättra relationer		
- Generera exponering/publicitet		
- Motivera anställda		
- Rekrytering av nya medarbetare		
- Öka lönsamheten		
- Skapa underhållning för mål grupper		
- Övriga mål:		

5. a) Vilken bild/kännetecken av ert sponsrade objekt vill ni att er målgrupp ska associera ert företag med?

b) Varför?

6. a) I vilken typ av media vill ni att er idrotts sponsring ska ge uppmärksamhet i?

b) Varför?

7. a) Använder ni idrotts sponsring för att upprätta och/eller stärka relationen mellan företaget och dess målgrupper?

b) Om ja, relationen till vilka målgrupper? (viktiga kunder, leverantörer, interna relationer, övriga)

c) På vilket sätt tror ni att idrotts sponsring kan stärka relationerna?

8. a) Använder ni idrotts sponsring som en metod att stärka effekten av övrig marknadsföring så som t.ex. reklam?

b) Om ja, på vilket sätt är sponsringen kopplad till övrig marknadsföring? (t. ex. speciellt tema)

9. Är det något du skulle vilja tillägga angående mål med idrotts sponsring?

Sektion C: Val av sponsrings objekt

1. Tar ert företag den första kontakten med de sponsrade eller blir ni kontaktade av potentiella sponsrings objekt?

2. a) Vad är det viktigaste kriteriet hos ett sponsrings objekt som ni beaktar vid val av sponsring?

b) Varför är just det så viktigt?

3. Vänligen beskriv företagets process vid sponsring av ett särskilt objekt från beslutet att sponsra något till uppföljningen av det valda sponsrings programmet.

Steg 1

Steg 2

Steg 3

Steg 4

Steg 5

(Lägg till ytterligare steg vid behov)

4. Hur skulle ni beskriva processen ert företag går igenom när ni väljer ut en speciell idrott att sponsra?

Steg 1

Steg 2

Steg 3

Steg 4

Steg5

(Lägg till ytterligare steg vid behov)

5. a) Är det viktigt att den valda sportens image överensstämmer med företagets image?

b) Om ja, hur fastställer ni den valda sportens image?

c) Hur skulle ni beskriva sambandet mellan det Svenska alpina landslagets image och Audis image?

6. a) Är förbindelsen mellan det sponsrade och företagets produkter viktigt vid val av sponsrings objekt? (t. ex. Alpin skidåkning – Bilar)

b) Varför, varför inte?

c) Hur skulle du beskriva sambandet mellan alpin skidåkning och bilar

7. a) Vilken är den primära målgruppen som er sponsring vill kommunicera med?

b) Sekundär?

c) Övriga viktiga målgrupper?

8. a) Utvärderar ni riskerna med ett sponsrings objekt innan val av sponsring?
 b) Om ja, vilken typ av risker?
 c) Hur är ert företag förberett att hantera de nämnda riskerna?
9. a) Tar ni hänsyn till ett visst sponsrings objekts tidigare sponsorer vid val av sponsring?
 b) Om ja, varför väljer ni att ändå sponsra de objektet?
10. a) Diskuterar ni avkastning på satsat kapital vid val av sponsrings objekt?
 b) Om ja, vad är avkastnings kraven för att ni ska välja att sponsra?
 c) Ser ni sponsring som en långsiktig eller kortsiktig investering.
11. Är det något du skulle vilja tillägga angående val av sponsrings objekt?

Sektion D: Utvärdering av sponsrings aktiviteter

1. a) Mäter ert företag effektiviteten av sponsrings projekt?
 b) Om nej, har ni några planer på att göra det?
 c) varför?
2. a) Anlitar ni en utomstående organisation för att mäta effektiviteten av sponsring eller sköter ert företag mätningen?
 b) Varför?
3. a) Är ni nöjda med ert nuvarande sätt att mäta effektiviteten?
 b) Varför, varför inte?
4. Vänligen beskriv stegen ni går igenom vid utvärdering av sponsring

Steg	Aktivitet
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

5. Vad mäter ni då ni mäter effektiviteten av er sponsring? (t. ex. kunders uppfattning av ert företag, försäljning)
6. a) Jämför ni resultatet av er sponsring med de uppställda målen för sponsrings aktiviteten?
 b) Om ja, hur?

7. Vilka av följande metoder, om någon, använder ni vid utvärdering av er sponsring?

Metod:	
Press Monitoring (övervakning och sammanställning av artiklar etc.)	
TV exponering (hur många som ser sändningen)	
SPINDEX	
Marknads undersökning	
Attityds granskning	
Övrigt:	

8. Beskriv era tidigare samt nuvarande mätmetoder för mätning av er sponsring.

9. På vilket sätt tror ni att ni kan förbättra er mätning av sponsring?

10. Är det något du skulle vilja tillägga angående mätning av sponsring?

11. Är det något du skulle vilja tillägga angående framtiden inom sponsring?

Tack för din medverkan!