Leveraging brand development opportunities for sport event host cities & nations

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Place Branding

• a representation of identity
• building a favourable internal & external image leading to brand satisfaction and loyalty; name awareness; perceived quality; & favourable associations
• countries & cities compete for attention, respect & trust of investors, tourists, consumers, donors, immigrants, media & governments
• a powerful, positive place brand provides a competitive advantage
Brand South Africa

• Historically weak or incorrect image:
  - little awareness; lack of clear perceptions
  - Apartheid legacy (unfriendly, racist)
  - wildlife focus
  - “Brand Africa”

• Umbrella brand for cities, regions, destinations, companies

• Perceptions (often stereotypes) don’t change easily; need large event/experience to shift
Some challenges...

- **Leadership:** who takes ownership?
  - partnership; jointly developed & delivered

- **Authenticity:** does it reflect the true identity?

- **Communication:** congruent messages?
  - support, reinforce, enrich

- **Co-creation:**
  - dynamic, inclusive, collective
• “unique publicity platform”
• an opportunity to create or promote an image & re-brand a nation
• “agent of change” in terms of imagery & place meaning
• “catalyst, animator, image-maker, place marketer”
“It’s not about football – it’s about nation building (branding). South Africa has been chosen to not only stage the World Cup in 2010 but also to carry the hopes, dreams and aspirations of Africa and especially African football. This provides a golden opportunity to change perceptions about Africa and to influence public opinion around the globe.”

Dr. Danny Jordaan, CEO FIFA 2010 OC
Unique opportunities

- **Media profile**: a means to gain international visibility

- **Authentic cultural experiences**: build strong associations between people & places

- **Emotional and symbolic value**: sport stimulates an emotional heat between participants & audiences
“Now if you think, what it would cost to have 30 days, everyday, focus on your city and nation and the message is positive. What is the sum total of that? And what will it cost you if you want to achieve that through a marketing or branding plan?”

- 310,000 foreign visitors
- 15,000 journalists
- > 700,000,000 TV viewers watched the final
- 3,000 TV hours, 400 broadcasters, 217 countries
- New media; social media
From legacy to “sustainability”

“Legacies are great, you can leave a lot of legacies behind, but if you don’t actually sustain it then those are missed opportunities and not positive legacies. A lot depends on how you drive these things forward.”

Need to “build on the momentum”.

“Most countries spend a lot of time concentrating on the delivery. They’re so focused on the delivery and not what happens after”
Leveraging – key aspects

1. Managing the media
2. Mobilising internal brand equity
3. Co-creation & partnership
4. Global engagement
1. Manage the media

• “Media plays a huge role in the perceived ability of a country to host an event and the perception of the success of the event”.

• “First day of the World Cup… bigger than the inauguration of Barack Obama… the biggest (social media) event in history.”

“Having 18 000 journalists in the country who have now seen it for themselves for the first time has changed the kind of report writing about South Africa. A lot of reporting that was done internationally about South Africa was done by people who had never been here before, but now they have been to South Africa and the perceptions are different. They create perceptions and this has changed.”
“showed the rest of the world that we had much more than just our natural attributes”
- more urban imagery: “a dynamic, workable society” in “a vibrant urban setting that is relatively safe”.
- “world class infrastructure” & “technologically advanced”.

“showcased our cities as vibrant urban destinations that are working, that are dynamic and embracing and showcased the culture of the people”

showcase
“The BBC got a brilliant studio position. Every night you had Gary Linekar with Table Mountain in the background looking stunning.”

In London 2012: “we produced a broadcast guide...so we could help them show what we wanted to show in the background”.
• “The *media tours* really helped a lot. The journalists we hosted in the country a year before the World Cup really helped. The perceptions started changing.”

• “We were very *accountable* and very *available* for media and public questions. We were always *open* and frank. I think that was a great strength.”

• *Unaccredited media*
2. Mobilising internal brand equity

• “For decades people only saw images of violence and crime so it was important to highlight the fun, the **people** and not the wildlife.”

• The world saw “people celebrating in the street, people walking, people happy, people smiling”; “a fun, vibrant country that liked to party”

“It was a radical ratcheting up of South African pride levels & the engagement of South Africans with foreigners.”
But…

“I don’t believe we defined ourselves to the rest of the world. There was not one single-minded message. We didn’t define what we wanted South Africa to be known as”.

“We’re losing the institutional knowledge of how to deliver a major event. People are just disappearing into the city. We were developing a team that could deliver any project thrown at them.”
nation-making

“...It's really about defining who you are as a nation, mobilizing your country to buy into that concept, live it and project it out to the rest of the world so that they can understand who you are as a South African.”
“It's not about who you've been, but it's about who you would like to be”
3. Brand partnership

- Co-branding
- Stakeholders
- Government; public/private sector
- Rights holders
- Sponsors
- Tourism & investment

“The important thing we have learned from the WC is that the relationship between the sport & tourism industry is critical...”
4. Global engagement

“Hosting sport mega-events is a very important part of building a country brand along with its tourism offer, its investment track record, its return on investment, its national icons like Mandela and Tutu.

It’s an important part of it, and it’s also very important in terms of global integration. South Africa has had a lot of catching up to do in terms of integrating its global economy and being part of the globalised world. And sport is a great global thing, obviously pinnacly with the Olympics which remains 3000 years later as the forum of international competition and sportsmanship. Hugely, hugely important.

I don’t think one can really over-emphasise the importance of sport as a theme and mega sporting events as a focus for building that kind of re-branding and international engagement.”
• “the World Cup was indicative of what we can do in this country”

• SA is now seen as a “capable, serious player”.

- “demonstrated to the world that we have the capacity & infrastructure to host events and that we can host events safely”

• Hosting a mega-event gives a nation “a degree of credibility” and “positions it for global impact”.

positioned
“They are leveraging sport as a key pillar for growing the brand of the country but also growing its economic sustainability as well. From that flows how its people will flourish.

Hosting major sporting events does connect them to the rest of the world – it builds those bridges. Sport has been chosen strategically as one of the drivers for that.

They’ve got the FIFA World Cup in 2022. They’ll bid again for the Olympic Games. Just the process of bidding actually gains them exposure, very much so positively. And ultimately winning gets them on the map.”

“How many people can say they visited or even heard of Doha ten years ago, but now it’s firmly on the map. Sport has been a key driver in making that happen.”
Manchester “model”

• Position as a sports destination. “New Etihad stadium has established us as a sport city”.

• Mix of homegrown & major events. “We plan to continue to attract & create events. We’re not looking for mega-events for now, but we’re looking at sport as a driver.”

• “Our failed 2000 OG bid led to a focus of attention on Commonwealth Games bid. Many believe this successful event led directly to the successful London 2012 bid.”
Sport mega-events create opportunities for:

- **Global engagement:**
  - media attention
  - experience
  - authentic showcase

- **Brand development:**
  - awareness: new markets
  - knowledge/ authenticity: correct stereotypes & perceptions; reinforce realities
  - competitive differentiation

- **However, to maximise impact, you need:**
  - support of local residents
  - media ‘management’
  - post-event leverage strategy
Thank you

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