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**Impact of Ambush Marketing on
Sponsor Identification**

By

**Dr.Seema Gupta
Satish Pandey**

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Please address all your correspondence to:

Dr.Seema Gupta
Faculty
Indian Institute of Management Bangalore
Bannerghatta Road
Bangalore 560 076, India
Phone : 91-80-2699 3469
Email: seemag@iimb.ernet.in
Seemagupta2006@gmail.com

Satish Pandey
Associate Professor
Mudra Institute of Communications (MICA)
Shela
Ahmedabad – 58
Email: satish@mica.ac.in

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Abstract

Due to increased clutter, media fragmentation and intense competition companies are exploring alternate media, which helps them to differentiate. Sponsorships worldwide have been on the rise. The rising fees make sponsorships an expensive proposition for companies. This has led to marketers adopting creative ways for associating themselves with the event without paying for the sponsorship fees. This practice, known as ambush marketing poses challenge of potentially reducing the effectiveness of sponsorship. The present study investigates the impact of ambush marketing on sponsor identification using recall and recognition measures in the context of the event ICC Cricket World cup 2003. The findings revealed that while sponsorship has been effective vis-a vis ambushing in generating recall and recognition, ambushers have been more effective than companies who were neither sponsors nor ambushers in creating association in the minds of target audience. The study also revealed that sponsorship alone is not sufficient, rather leveraging sponsorship by advertising in media, promotions related to event and advertising using footage and imagery related to event thereby implying association with the event are critical for maximizing the effectiveness of sponsorship.

Impact of Ambush Marketing on Sponsor Identification

Introduction

Till 1980 sponsorships and event marketing were in their infancy with only few companies practicing them to build their brands. Practitioners as well as academicians interest in the field was almost non-existent. No publications were tracking sponsorship, no schools were teaching it and no market research was measuring it. But with skyrocketing ad rates, fragmentation of mass media, emerging delivery systems such as cable TV, ever growing niche markets, clutter in traditional media and pressing need to differentiate, the growth of alternative media seemed inevitable. From electronic music festivals in the U.K. to cricket in India to Aboriginal theatre in Australia, sponsorships in all countries have grown as a result of marketer's need to tether their products and services to something meaningful.

Sponsorship has been outpacing the growth of measured media and sales promotion. Sponsorship has been defined as "a cash and /or in-kind fee paid to a property in return for access to exploitable commercial potential associated with the property". The most active users of sponsorship allocate an average of 16 percent of their overall marketing budgets to sponsorship. In the earliest days, sponsorship was almost exclusively the domain of sports properties. In 1984, 90 percent of all sponsorship dollars went to sports. While sports continues to command the lion's share, the demand of corporations for a new and better way of communicating with their key audiences has benefited every type of sponsorship. In 2003 in North America, out of total sponsorship spending of \$ 10.2 billion, sports accounted for \$7.08 billion (69%), entertainment tours \$871 million (8%), festivals & fairs \$769 million (7%), causes \$922 million (9%) and Arts \$608 million (6%). The amount spent to leverage deals relative to the fee paid continues to nudge higher. For 2003, the average ratio of activation dollars to rights fees was 1.7 to 1 compared with 1.5 in 2002 and 1.2 in 2001 (Ukman, 2004).

Commercial sponsorship has increased because corporations have found that, through sponsorship they can achieve new levels of exposure at low costs than with traditional advertising methods. Multinational corporations have found sponsorship to be an appropriate means of communicating with consumers in an array of markets across a broad cultural, ethnic and social spectrum. As sponsorship becomes increasingly expensive, the investments needed to become associated with major sporting and cultural events are growing. This growth has led to various sponsorship designations, particularly entitlement, becoming sought after commodities among potential sponsors. As a result of the creation of exclusive categories of sponsorships and because of budget and/or political limitations, many corporations are not afforded the opportunity to associate with major national and international sport events. Corporations who are unable to gain official affiliation with major events, or who chose not to pursue affiliation, seek to develop alternative strategies that will provide them the benefits of association without any actual formal association. One such strategy is ambush marketing. The IEG defines ambushing as "a promotional strategy whereby a non-sponsor attempts to capitalize on

the popularity or prestige of a property by giving the false impression that it is a sponsor” (Ukman, 2004).

A number of different approaches to ambush marketing have been noted in the marketing communication literature. Variations of this strategy include: a) running commercials around the event b) event theme related advertising (images of bat, ball, famous cricketers, stadium etc in a cricket world cup event); c) being an official sponsor of the event broadcast; d) aggressively leveraging a lower-tier sponsorship; e) purchasing local advertising inserts during the event broadcast; f) major contests or promotions that coincide with the event using related themes or tie-ins; g) sponsoring athletes, who are themselves part of the event, that provide brand association/exposure by wearing licensed apparel and /or appearing as endorsers in advertising aired around the event and h) creating special opportunities such as giving away licensed souvenirs or trips to the event, running congratulatory ads or creating imaginative tie-ups (Derbaix et al, 1994; Meenaghan, 1994, 1998; Sandler & Shani, 1989; McDaniel & Kinney, 1998; Tripodi & Sutherland, 2000).

A stream of research papers has identified legal recourses to the practice of ambush marketing. A coherent and cohesive commercial rights protection program needs to be developed, which covers three essential areas of 1) Protecting event mascots and logos via trademark registrations and hence controlling intellectual property rights; 2) Controlling the event venue and locality by keeping it clean of any signage, advertising, promotions and concessions on perimeters, stands, public areas, bars & eating areas including the airspace above, though for certain events like marathons and yacht races this is difficult to achieve; 3) Control of participants, sponsors, media, merchandisers, suppliers to ensure prohibitions against sublicensing, unauthorized use of images etc. (Townley, Harrington & Couchman, 1998). Sports are conducted within a multilevel and competitive business structure, making the application of antitrust laws difficult. A consistent and analytical approach that can be applied to myriad antitrust issues is needed. Thorne, Wright and Jones (2001) explored how exchange relationships provide a unit of analysis to transcend various sporting interests that are involved in antitrust questions. Crow and Hoek (2003) argue that marketers need to consider ambushing in legal terms- as either passing off or breach of trademarks. They suggest more explicit documentation of rights available to sponsors and reduction in the range of sponsorship packages.

Meenaghan (1994) argues whether ambushing is an immoral or imaginative practice. Sullivan & Murphy (1998) have used four ethical perspectives-utilitarianism, duty-based ethics, stakeholder analysis, and virtue ethics to provide a framework for the debate on the ethics of ambush marketing. Ambushing was first thought to be a somewhat devious, unethical tactic and an unfair marketing practice. However recent work has recognized its place as a legitimate marketing strategy. Meenaghan (1996) points out that many former perceived transgressions are now seen as legitimate sponsorship opportunities. He also says that ambushing is a ‘continuum of situations’ with marketers employing various means of associating with the event. Graham (1997) argues that ambush marketers have

become increasingly clever and stealthy in the planning and execution of their activities. Legal boundaries are stretched to their limit while great care is taken to avoid violations.

While most of the research that has been quoted above is largely analytical and based on secondary data, primary research is very scant. Some researches have investigated consumer attitudes toward ambush marketing. Consumers are largely indifferent to ambush marketing and provide little support for the view that the practice is unethical, unfair or annoying. Interestingly the attitudes were found relatively consistent across varying levels of stated involvement with the Olympic games in terms of volume of viewing consumption. A high level of consumer confusion regarding the contribution of different categories of sponsors was found (Shani and Sandler 1989, 1992, 1998). Results of study by Lyberger & McCarthy (2001) demonstrated that a significant number of respondents do not oppose ambushing practices and are not disgruntled by companies that engage in ambushing.

While there is a lot of debate in literature about consumer apathy towards ambush marketing, strategies adopted by companies, ethical issues and legal recourses, there are very few empirical studies, which examine the impact of ambush marketing on sponsorship effectiveness. Research has in the main concentrated on the Olympic games (Crimmins & Horn, 1996; Flanagan, 1993; Kinney & McDaniel, 1995; Performance Research Inc., 1992; Sandler & Shani, 1989; Shani & Sandler, 1992). Some of these studies have used recall and recognition tests to identify sponsorship communication effectiveness. In the published research, image and sales effects have not been used to compare the success of official sponsors and ambushers. Crimmins & Horn (1996) argued that the persuasive impact of sponsorship on consumers can be described as a combination of 1) strength of the link that is created between the brand and the event; 2) duration of the link; 3) gratitude felt due to the link and 4) perceptual change due to the link. They compared successful sponsorships with unsuccessful sponsorships for Olympics to arrive at some conclusions and suggestions about how to improve sponsorship performance. They drew inference that those sponsorships were more effective which were able to explain to the target consumer how to interpret the connection between the brand and the sponsored property. This study gave wonderful insights into parameters for success in sponsorship, but did not throw much light on the impact of ambush marketing on sponsorship effectiveness. It only measured the strength of the link, which the authors operationally defined as "exclusive awareness", i.e. the percent of the target that recognize the link between the sponsoring brand and the event minus the highest percent who mistakenly believe there is a link between a non-sponsoring competitor and the event. The larger the proportion of the target that recognizes that the brand is the sponsor and its competitor is not, the stronger is the link. The study did not analyze whether the competitors were ambushers or not and why some of these competitors had significantly high recall and recognition.

Sandler and Shani (1989) dealt more specifically with the comparison in performance of sponsors versus ambushers for Olympics. They analyzed whether sponsors were able to achieve higher levels of awareness than ambushers. This paper also highlights the comparative performance of 'ambushers' against 'others' (who were neither sponsors nor

ambushers). The findings revealed that only for certain product categories, were the correct official sponsors identified more than non-sponsors (i.e. ambushers and others). Findings also indicate that ambushers did not gain the desired benefit of the “ambush” when compared to firms not employing an ambush strategy.

Both the above researches have been done on the event “Olympics” and were done more than a decade ago. Hence there aren’t sufficient empirical researches to justify whether ambush marketing is only a fear that exists in the minds of sponsors or is the fear real? Moreover Sandler and Shani (1989) did not explain an intriguing finding of their study that ambushers did not do any better than ‘others’. If ambush marketing is creating an association between the event and the ambusher, then ambushers should not only challenge the sponsors but also do much better than ‘others’ (non sponsors and non ambushers) in awareness measures. Hence a question arises whether ambush marketing is pitted only against sponsors or is it a threat to other brands/companies also, who pay a price for being ethical. Another contextual factor, which might have serious implications on the findings of the research, is that all the sponsorships in Sandler and Shani’s study were not equivalent in terms of rights obtained and fees paid. Official sponsors included those of the U.S. team (e.g. United Airlines), the Winter Games (e.g., IBM), or participants in the new worldwide sponsor program, labeled T.O.P. for “The Olympic Program” (e.g. The Coca-cola) (Sandler & Shani, 1989). In a major global event like Olympics, rights issue is often complex. In Olympic Games, for instance rights can be sold in the following hierarchy: The Olympic Program (TOP), Olympic Games Organizing Committees (OGOCs), National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and the National Governing Bodies (NGBs). This arrangement permits the sale of sponsorship rights by different bodies at different levels. At an international level, the Olympic Games are sold on a global basis under TOP, however each NGB such as the U.S. Track and Field or Gymnastics team also owns or sells various rights on the national level. An inevitable consequence of the different levels of property rights is conflict between competing sponsors that may each have legitimately paid for particular rights. During the 1992 Olympic games, Eastman Kodak was an official Olympic sponsor, while Fuji mounted an advertising campaign based on its sponsorship of the U.S. track and field team.

Sponsor Identification

A survey about the 1998 Winter Olympics sponsors yielded alarming results. Eleven of the 20 brands most often identified, as worldwide sponsors of the event were not in fact sponsors. For example, whereas 50% of the respondents correctly identified United Parcel Service (UPS) as an Olympic sponsor, 40% mistakenly credited Federal Express. These results are far from unusual (Crimmins & Horn 1996). Event sponsors have expressed concern about public confusion regarding event sponsorship. This concern is evident in the increasing number of commercial studies that track sponsor identification. Millman (1995) and Meenaghan (1994), published recommendations on how to increase the chances of proper identification. Proper identification usually is perceived as a necessary condition for achieving the image objectives that most sponsors assign to sponsorship activities (Stipp and Schiavone 1996).

The processes underlying sponsor identification, surprisingly, are poorly understood. It is assumed widely by practitioners that sponsors are identified through pure recollection, that is, access to a memory record of event-sponsor association (e.g., Crimmins & Horn 1996). However, extant theorizing on constructive memory processes suggests that there may be more to sponsor identification than sheer retrieval of the original event-sponsor association (e.g. Loftus, Feldman and Dashiell 1995; Schacter, Norman and Koustaal 1998). As with other type of marketing communications, sponsor identification may involve a substantial degree of construction. Johar & Pham (1999) examined how two major heuristics, 'brand-event relatedness' and 'market prominence' operate in constructive sponsor identification. Findings indicate that sponsor identification is biased towards brands that are prominent in the market place and semantically related to the event. The effect of relatedness on sponsor identification seems stronger and more robust than those of prominence, which appears to be invoked only for large events.

Intrigued by the findings of limited research done in ambush marketing and sponsor identification, the authors intend to study the impact of ambush marketing on sponsor identification. It will help the academic community to answer the question whether the fear of ambush marketing exists only in the minds of sponsors or is the fear real. We propose to study the impact of ambush marketing in the context of an event other than Olympics to gauge its prevalence in other sports. This study will also investigate whether ambush marketing adversely impacts not only the sponsors but also the companies that were neither sponsors nor ambushers. Based on discussion and review of literature above, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Ambush marketing will influence sponsor identification such that recall and recognition will be higher for ambushers than sponsors.

H2: Ambush marketing will influence sponsor identification such that recall and recognition will be higher for ambushers than others (who are neither sponsors nor ambushers).

'Others' are defined here, as those companies who cannot be classified as either sponsors or ambushers in association with a particular event.

The Present Study

For this study, the event 'ICC Cricket World Cup 2003' was selected, as cricket is the most popular sport in India and being the biggest cricket tournament in the world, the event attracts huge sponsorships. Cricket boards of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya jointly organized the ICC World Cup 2003. Survey method of data collection, using questionnaires was deployed. Pepsi, Hero Honda, LG, Hutch, South African Airways, Set max and DD sponsored this event. Each of these companies allocated different marketing budget for sponsorship activation and created their own advertising campaigns.

Methodology

Measure:

Sponsor identification was measured using 'recall and 'recognition' measures. For free recall data, respondents were asked the open question, "Name the brands that you think are sponsors of ICC Cricket World Cup 2003?" Respondents were asked to name as many brands as they could recall immediately and field interviewers recorded responses. For collecting recognition data, "category, brand and event prompt" were used. For each of the six-product/service categories, four brands were presented before the respondents. In each of these four brands groups, one was the sponsor and the other three were competitors including ambushers and others (neither sponsors nor ambushers). The key question for the respondents was: -

"Which of the following brands do you think are sponsors of ICC Cricket World Cup 2003?"

1. (a) Samsung (b) Videocon (c) LG (d) BPL
2. (a) Coke (b) Mountain Dew (c) Pepsi (d) Thums Up
3. (a) Kawasaki Bajaj (b) TVS (c) Hero Honda (d) LML

Sample:

The respondents selected for this study were viewers of World Cup matches broadcasted by the national broadcasting channel 'Doordarshan' (DD) and the official broadcaster, SET MAX (a division of Sony Entertainment Television). To control the impact of time on the cognitive processes of respondents, all respondents were approached within a specific period (April 15-30, 2003), after approximately one month of the closing of the event. The data on demographic factors (age, gender, educational qualifications) and match viewer ship were collected for all respondents.

Data was collected on a representative sample of 527 people from 8 representative cities of India (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Chennai, Lucknow, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad). All respondents had satellite cable connection in their household and watched ICC World Cup matches on TV during its telecast. Trained student volunteers administered questionnaires on respondents personally on one-to-one basis. For ensuring proper representation of respondents across three age groups and two gender groups, purposive sampling was used. The demographic profiles of respondents have been given in table-9 (a-e).

For the purpose of this study brands/companies were grouped into three categories:

Official Sponsors: Pepsi, Hero Honda, LG, Hutch, South African Airways, Set Max and DD were the official sponsors of the event. Since South African Airlines is not operating in India, hence it did not advertise the sponsorship. Set Max was the official broadcaster of the event whereas Doordarshan (DD) had the terrestrial telecast rights. Other than Set Max and DD, who were the media sponsors, the other sponsors (Pepsi, Hero Honda, LG and Hutch) were official global partners.

Ambushers: Although there are number of strategies which can be adopted by ambushers as discussed earlier, in this event four strategies were found to be predominantly used by companies for doing ambush marketing- 1) High Advertising expenditure that coincides with the event; 2) Deliberate promotions related to the event; 3) Themed Advertising, i.e. advertising implying association with the event by using televised footage and images (e.g. cricket stadium, bat, ball etc.) and cricket players and 4) aggressively leveraging the lower tier sponsorship . Table 1 identifies the ambushers of this event and the strategies used by them.

Airtime purchased by brands during world cup, was used for identifying top 20 advertised brands (table 2 & 3). TV & Print advertisements that appeared during the world cup were analyzed for identifying companies undertaking deliberate promotions related to the event and for identifying advertising implying association with the event by using the event theme.

Others: Those which fell in neither of the above two categories.

Table-1

S. No	Category	Sponsors	Ambushers	Ambush Strategies	Reference
1	Soft Drinks	Pepsi	Coca Cola	Running ads during the broadcast of the event; was 4th largest advertiser	Purchased 25016 seconds on television (table-2)
2	Consumer Electronics	LG	Samsung	Team Samsung campaign featuring Indian cricket players; was large advertiser on Setmax	Spent 11.9 crores on Set max and Sony channels (table-3)
3	Motorbike	Hero Honda	Bajaj	Ran ads during the event, was 5 th largest advertiser	Bajaj purchased 19349 seconds of airtime on television (table-2)
4	Television Broadcasting	SET MAX, Doordarshan (DD)	ESPN-Star Sports	Broadcasting match analysis and short commentaries during match intervals. Ran contests & promotions related to the event.	Was recognized by 63 respondents as a sponsor (table-4)
5	Mobile Telecom	Hutch	Reliance Infocomm	Broadcasting "Sahwag ki maa" campaign featuring Indian cricket star Virendra Sahwag; was the 2 nd largest advertiser	Purchased 52505 seconds of airtime on television (table-2)
6	Airlines	South African Airways	Air SAHARA (Airline Brand of SAHARA INDIA PARIVAR)	Aggressively leveraged its sponsorship of Indian cricket team. Because of non-competing clause Sahara could not promote Air Sahara brand during the event. Hence it promoted its project Ambi Valley during the event and had brand name and logo on teams clothing. It ran congratulatory ads	Was recognized by 152 respondents as sponsors (table-4)

				on every victory of Indian cricket team.	
7			Fair & Lovely	6 th largest advertiser during broadcast of event	Purchased 18675 seconds on TV (table-2)
8			BPCL-Mak engine oil	Themed advertising showing cricket stadium and also advertised heavily during broadcast of event	Purchased 14083 seconds of airtime on TV, was 13 th largest advertiser (table-2)
9			Mountain Dew	10 th largest advertiser during broadcast of event. The ads were based on humor and did not depict any imagery related to cricket.	Purchased 14815 seconds of airtime on TV (table-2)
10			Thums up	Heavy advertising during broadcast of event though ads were not related to event.	Purchased 16321 seconds of airtime on TV (table-2)
11			BSNL Cell One	Heavy advertising during broadcast of event	Purchased 14676 seconds of airtime on TV (table-2)

Results

Table 4 represents frequency distribution of recall and recognition data for various brands identified by the respondents as sponsors of the event 'ICC World Cup 2003'. Recall was highest for the brand Pepsi (76%), followed by LG (65%) and Hero Honda (42%). Recognition data also followed a similar pattern. It was highest for Pepsi (82%), followed by LG (75%) and Hero Honda (71%). South African Airways had low recall (18%), quite understandably as it is not operating from India, but when respondents were aided with listing of the brand name, its recognition rose sharply to 57%. Set Max was a media sponsor and hence not recalled by many consumers as a sponsor, (recall 10%) but recognition was very high at 84%. Since majority of the respondents of the study had access to cable television, the recall & recognition of Doordarshan, the terrestrial broadcaster was very low at 0.4% & 12% respectively. Among the product sponsors Hutch had the lowest recall of 4.55% but recognition was much better at 24.7%. Table-5 & 6 represent comparative analysis of recall and recognition data for 'sponsors', 'ambushers' and 'others' for the six product categories. Three brands (Reliance Infocom, Coca Cola and Samsung) had significantly high recall among the ambushers. Recall and

recognition were highest for the product category of Soft Drinks, followed by Consumer Electronics and Motorbikes.

Impact of Ambush Marketing on Recall of Sponsors

To statistically determine the effect that ambushers had on sponsorship awareness, the number of correct sponsor recall were compared with the number of recall of ambushers as sponsors. The results for recall and recognition were aggregated. To clarify, we give an example: Suppose a respondent recalls 4 brands in total as sponsors, out of which 2 were 'sponsors', 1 was 'ambusher' and 1 was 'other' then the 'sponsor recall score' is 2, 'ambusher recall score' is 1 and 'other recall score' is 1. In this study across the overall sample an average of 2.34 'sponsor recall score' was obtained (out of maximum 7). In comparison, 1.65 'ambusher recall score' was obtained. A paired t-test analysis showed this difference to be significant ($t=7.135, p<.01$) Hence ambushers did not do as well as official sponsors regarding recall of sponsors.

Another area of analysis is whether ambushers did any better than brands, which were, neither official sponsors nor attempted ambushing. 'Others recall score', i.e. recall of companies that were neither ambushers nor sponsors was 1.44. This score was found statistically different from the 1.65 for ambushers ($t = 3.415, p<0.001$). This implies that ambushers got the benefit of ambushing in terms of better recall when compared to brands not employing an ambush strategy (table-7).

Impact of Ambush Marketing on Recognition of Sponsors

To determine the effect that ambushers had on sponsorship recognition, the number of correct sponsor recognition were compared with the number of recognitions of ambushers as sponsors. Across the overall sample mean 'sponsor recognition score' was 4.10 out of a maximum 7. In comparison, mean 'ambusher recall score' was 2.03. A paired t-test analysis showed this difference to be significant ($t=23.396, p< 0.001$). Hence ambushers did not do as well as official sponsors regarding recognition of sponsors.

Another area of analysis is whether ambushers did any better than companies, which were, neither official sponsors nor attempted ambushing as far as recognition is concerned. 'Others recognition score' was 1.47. This difference was found statistically different from the 2.03 for ambushers ($t = 9.191, p<0.001$). This implies that ambushers got the benefit of ambushing in terms of better recognition when compared to firms not employing an ambush strategy.

Strength of link (Association)

Companies often want to know the extent to which a brand has effectively borrowed an event's image. This 'strength of link' is best measured by the formula: 'Percentage of target market which recognizes the link between the sponsoring brand and the event' minus 'percentage of target market which mistakenly believe there is a link between a non-sponsoring competitor and the event. The larger the percentage that recognizes that a

brand is a sponsor and that its competitor is not, the stronger is the link. Successful link between a brand and the event can be defined as a level of target awareness of the sponsorship that is at least 10-15 percentage points higher than the nearest competitor (Crimmins & Horn, 1996). In the present study, we identified Coca Cola, Samsung and Bajaj as the nearest competitor of Pepsi, LG and Hero Honda respectively. On applying the above formula, we found that the link was strongest for Pepsi (53%), followed by LG (43%) and was weakest for Hero Honda (36%). Hence for all the three sponsors the link was successful as it is much more than 10-15 percentage points as per criterion mentioned by Crimmins & Horn (1996). Only for the sponsor 'Hutch', the link was not successful as the recall of Hutch is much less than the recall of its nearest competitor 'Reliance Infocomm'. This could be interpreted as 'negative link' as the competitor gained more percentage points than the actual sponsor.

An attempt was made to determine if there was any relationship between demographics (age, gender and education) and correct sponsor identification. Similar to the findings reported by Sandler and Shani (1989) age and educational level did not account for differences in ability to correctly identify sponsors. In this study even gender did not correlate with correct recall and recognition of sponsors whereas Sandler and Shani (1989) in their study had found this variable to be significantly correlated with correct sponsor identification.

Discussion

Though ambushing is a menace and a threat to sponsorship, but sponsorship if managed well can build brand awareness. As is evident from this study, ambush marketing has not had significant adverse impact on sponsor identification as recall and recognition of sponsors has been much more than that of ambushers. Out of seven sponsors, only one sponsor (Hutch) had recall rate lower than that of ambusher (Reliance Infocomm). Hence our findings do not support the first hypothesis- that ambush marketing will influence sponsor identification in a manner that recall and recognition will be higher for ambushers than sponsors. These findings are in contrast to the findings of earlier research (Sandler & Shani, 1989) in which in only four out of the seven product categories studied were the correct official sponsors identified, more than the non-sponsors (i.e. "ambushers" and "others").

What could be the reasons for the difference in findings? Have the sponsors become more marketing savvy? Does this imply that sponsorship as an element of marketing communication is coming of age? Are sponsors becoming more mature and understanding the medium much better than what it was 15 years ago, when the earlier study was conducted and hence are able to exploit its potential? Closer examination of the two studies indicates that sponsorship is evolving and marketers are learning from mistakes of the past. In the previous research (Sandler & Shani, 1989) the two sponsors whose identification was less than the non-sponsors, were not major advertisers on the Olympic telecast. In the present study, all the sponsors purchased advertising time around the broadcast of the event (table 2). Some of the factors, which could have contributed to sponsors emerging as winners are:

- There seems to be direct correlation between advertising spend and sponsor identification. Pepsi had the highest recall among all the brands and was also the highest advertiser. Reliance Infocomm (Recall 129) and Coca Cola (Recall 121) were the 2nd & 3rd largest airtime buyers and had tremendous recall as sponsors even when they were not the official sponsors. Whereas Reliance Infocomm purchased 52505 seconds of airtime on television, Hutch purchased only 15005 seconds of airtime even though it was a sponsor. Low advertising expenditure and thereby failure to communicate the sponsorship sufficiently to the target audience is probably the major reason for low identification of Hutch as sponsor. This might indicate that to achieve any benefits from being a sponsor it is necessary not only to sponsor an event such as the Olympics but also to heavily advertise the fact that they are official sponsors. Buying the rights to be an official sponsor, in reality, may only be buying a license to spend more money! (Sandler & Shani, 1989). Another study by Crimmins & Horn (1996) found that sponsors who invested advertising time on the games were far more successful in building a link with the Olympics than those who did not make that investment. Of the official Olympic sponsors who ran advertising on the Olympics, 64% succeeded in creating a link in the consumer's mind between the Olympics and their brand. Whereas among official sponsors who did not run advertising on the Olympics, 4% - just one sponsor, succeeded in creating a link between the Olympics and the brand. The one sponsor who succeeded without advertising on the Olympics was *Sports Illustrated*, a sponsor that is its own media vehicle (Crimmins & Horn, 1996). If the brand wants consumers to know about its sponsorship, the brand must take responsibility for communicating its sponsorship. It is a mistake to assume that the event, organization or media will communicate your sponsorship for you and generate consumer impact. If the brand cannot afford to spend to communicate its sponsorship, then the brand cannot afford sponsorship at all (Crimmins & Horn, 1996).
- Advertising implying association with the event by the use of event imagery aids sponsor identification. In our study most of the big advertisers used event related advertising, but careful analysis reveals marked differences in the form and style in which the relationship of the brand with the event was conveyed to the consumer. In some cases, the meaning of the link between a brand and an event seems direct, as in the link between athletic shoes and basketball. Even though the meaning seems straightforward smart sponsors are quick to reinforce and embellish the natural interpretation and let us know that the wearers of the sponsoring brand are capable of remarkable feats (Crimmins & Horn, 1996).

Seiko is a good example of a company whose link with the Olympics lends itself to natural interpretation. But Seiko did not assume that the consumer would discover natural interpretation. They led the consumer by the hand. In the voice-over of their television advertising, Seiko tells consumers:

"We must have no loyalties. We can take pity on no one. We have no sympathies, no prejudices. We root for no one. We are the clock, and we stand behind

everyone who races to greatness in the games of the 25th Olympiad. We're Seiko, the Official timer. Seiko, the measure of greatness."

Seiko's advertising communicated not only that Seiko was the official timer for the 1992 Summer Olympics but also explained that Seiko's designation of Official Timer meant that Seiko provides the precise, unerring, unbiased accuracy the Olympics require.

In most sponsorship, the meaning of a link between a brand and an event is not natural, logical or obvious. In these cases explicitly and repeatedly defining the meaning of the sponsorship for the consumer becomes critical (Crimmins & Horn, 1996).

In the present study, Pepsi had a link, which was direct, and based on functional similarity. Pepsi is a soft drink that can be used to quench thirst and revitalize oneself during drinks break in the cricket match. Pepsi launched a limited edition Pepsi Blue, a new flavor in blue color as blue was the color of the Indian cricket team and its commercial featured international cricketers and used humor appeal to depict India's emergence as the winner of the tournament. They had several campaigns during the event. In one of the campaigns, top international cricketers like Jonty Rhodes, Naseer Hussain and Carl Hooper were shown grimacing in pain, when Shane Warne enters the dressing room. On passing by a Pepsi vending machine Shane Warne inserts a coin but when nothing happens, infuriated he gives a solid whack on the machine and hurts himself only to be carried on a stretcher. An Indian kid then walks in and puts the power source of the machine and after drinking Pepsi pulls out the power and looks around to see if anyone saw him. Pepsi's advertising has always been hailed as very creative, entertaining and likable and the advertising copy during world cup was very refreshing and established explicitly the link between Pepsi and Cricket World Cup. Combining this with heavy advertising budget, Pepsi was able to communicate its association with the event repeatedly and thus got highest recall and recognition among all brands.

Hero Honda two months before the event had an advertising campaign for its model 'Hero Honda Ambition' showing several promising Indian cricketers who are talking about what they will do when they become captains of Indian cricket team. Sourav Ganguly, captain of Indian team then asks his boys if they are ready, pointing towards a row of 'Hero Honda Ambitions'. The voiceover then says, "Hero Honda-Team Ambitious". Sourav then ends with, 'see you in South Africa'. This ad thus establishes link between the brand and the event and conveys that just as Indian cricket team is ambitious about winning cricket world cup, the brand also stands for the drive of ambition and ignites the fire of achievement in its riders. But other than this variant, Hero Honda has several other models namely- 'Hero Honda Karizma', 'Hero Honda Pleasure', 'Hero Honda Splendor' and the advertisements for these brands depicted mostly the meaning conveyed in the brand name and were not related to the event nor

implied any indirect association with cricket. Not clearly communicating to consumers how they should process the association of brand with the event for all its product variants could be one of the reasons for relatively low recall of Hero Honda as compared to other sponsors.

Another sponsor LG had several products like television, refrigerator and washing machine. Since there was lot of controversy just before the event about the contracts players had signed with various companies and thereby dispute between International Cricket Council (ICC) and Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), LG came up with "Cricket First" campaign which showed different international cricketers wearing sweatshirts inscribed with other cricketers names and ends with Ravi Shastri sporting a Boycott tee and mouthing in a Yorkshire accent, "Everything else is rubbish. It's got to be cricket first". In another ad for LG Projection theatre, a guy is happy watching match on television where India is playing and the crowd outside the house also jumping in joy with an India for world cup banner. The voice over says: Bring home the stadium. LG Xcanvas Projection Theatre. These ads clearly communicate that LG supports the cause of Cricket and viewers of LG television can get real life like experience. But LG had several other products like mobile phone, refrigerator etc for which advertising during the event was not related to cricket world cup. Hence LG and Hero Honda though advertised heavily but their advertising got diffused with multiple product brands that they have and for all products it was difficult to imply association with the event.

Hutch's ad campaign was also related to the event wherein Rahul Dravid goes for an excellent drive, turns around to see that shot replayed a number of times. Voice over says, 'video replays of the world cup on your Hutch and Orange GPRS phone'. But this ad was not very memorable and it could not communicate effectively to consumers about Hutch sponsoring the event, which could be one argument for low recall of Hutch. This ad was probably associated more with the player 'Rahul Dravid' than the event 'ICC World Cup 2003' by the audience.

Taking stock of the advertising campaigns of ambushers, Reliance Infocomm had an ad featuring popular Indian cricketer, Virendra Sehwag who gets a call on his mobile from his mother urging him to play hard for the country. Inspired by the call he leads India to victory. This ad was aired very often in the world cup event and there were instances when the ad was shown immediately after Sehwag got out, which led to media and the audience mocking at the ad campaign. This perhaps coupled with heavy advertising exposure led to Reliance having higher recall rate (25%) than the sponsor (Hutch, 5% recall). Another ambusher (Samsung) had a campaign called "Team Samsung" which featured several cricketers and attracted lot of criticism in india for attempting ambush marketing and was sued by the sponsor (LG) for misleading the consumers to believe that Samsung was the sponsor of the event and for using cricketers in its advertisements. Post event analysis shows that all the negative publicity only helped Samsung as 22% respondents recalled it as sponsor of the event. Although,

after being alleged as ambusher in media, Samsung's campaign was modified and faces of team Samsung's members in the ad were shown in the dark shadow.

Analysis of advertisements of sponsors and ambushers reveals that those who explicitly used event theme related advertising and implied association with the event, got the benefit of confusing the consumer about who the sponsors were and had better recall and recognition than those who did not have event related advertising.

- Johar & Pham (1999) found that sponsor identification is biased towards brands that are prominent. Prominent brands are not only more accessible in memory, they are also perceived as perhaps more plausible sponsors of events that require significant resources. Such a reasoning process is likely to result in prominent brands getting disproportionate credit for event sponsorship, even if less prominent brands also are retrievable from memory. Pepsi and Coca Cola because of their high share of voice are prominent brands, and cater to masses and hence have wider appeal. Pepsi and Coca Cola purchased heavy advertising time on the broadcast channels, which increased their prominence and aided retrieval. Reliance Infocomm and Samsung also got the benefit of being prominent brands and had high recall as sponsors even though they were not official sponsors.

Schema theory of advertising when applied to sponsorship situations can offer some perspective on identification. Sports or event sponsorships are used to target consumers who value a sponsored property, for example, the Olympics (Crimmins & Horn, 1996; Schrieber, 1994). Consequently, these audiences are likely to have well developed schemas related to special events, from attending them in person and/or viewing them on television. Such schemas might also contain product categories that are typically part of fan's sport or event experience (e.g. beer or snack foods). As part of their event schemas, consumers may also acquire sponsorship memory structures that contain brands or product categories that they come to associate as traditional sponsors through repeated exposure to arena signage or other sponsorship related promotions over time. Therefore it is possible that event schemas create different expectation in terms of the conventions people associate with different sponsorships (McDaniel, 1999). Gwinner (1997) equated image transfer from the event to the brand with the transfer of image of celebrities to the brands that they endorse. McDaniel (1999) also argued that consumers possess schemas about sporting events just as they possess schemas about celebrities. Effects of image fit on consumers' responses to sponsorship are expected to be similar to the match-up effects of a brand with a celebrity. The greater the image fit between the sponsor and the event, the more it is likely that the schema held in the consumer's memory will be stimulated, thereby allowing incorporation of ideas about the sponsorship activity with existing schemas (Koo, Quarterman and Flynn, 2006). A consumer who perceived the sport sponsorship activity, as fit with his schema would assimilate that information into existing schema for the brand, thus strengthening the brand (Koo et al 2006). But, in many situations, consumer information processing is limited,

and decisions and judgments are based on simplified product cues and symbolic associations such as corporate image (Koo et al 2006). The consumer when involved in an event stores a lot of information about brands associated with the event either consciously or unconsciously and transfers attributes of the event to those brands. In this way, brand schemas are built in consumer's memory over a period of time. Now, whenever, the consumer is asked to recall about the sponsor associated with the event, he retrieves information from his memory through elaborative process, verifies the retrieved information with the present cues related to event and brand and recalls correctly or incorrectly. In this process, ambushers and other brands which have been successful in establishing either strong or weak associations with the event interfere with the information related to sponsoring brands, thus, causing confusion in the cognitive map of the consumer. Pepsi has been associated with cricket in India for quite some time and are known for cricket related ads and aggressive marketing. They have also been using cricketers in their campaigns. Moreover Pepsi has functional similarity with the event as soft drinks are used during the drinks break. The brand also has image similarity as both Pepsi and cricket in India stand for youthfulness, entertainment, fun, and liveliness. Coca-cola is also a heavy advertiser in India and sponsors sports and other events. Hence the schema theory might have aided higher recall of Pepsi as sponsor and also for Coca Cola even though it was an ambusher.

- Factors influencing recall may be classified into five groups (Walliser, 1994): Conditions of exposure, product, message, target characteristics, and sponsorship integration. There is considerable evidence that recall increases as a function of duration of exposure to sponsors, previous brand awareness of sponsors, message length and design, socio-demographic variables of spectators (e.g. age), and spectator involvement with the event. With regard to the integration of sponsorship and other communication tools, an increase in awareness scores was observed when sponsorship is used in conjunction with broadcast sponsorship (Lardinois, 1998, 1999), or classical advertising (Eilander 1992, Du Plessis 1997, Quester and Thompson, 2001).
- Sponsor identification has been higher for product categories which are for masses like soft drinks as compared to product categories which are for certain segments like consumer durables for middle and upper classes and motorbikes predominantly for males. This is because the target segment for products meant for masses is much wider and hence gets better recall and recognition from respondents. Ambush marketing on the other hand has been equally effective irrespective of the product category of the brand. While Coca Cola, a low involvement product, had high recall rate, Reliance Infocomm and Samsung, high involvement products also had high recall as sponsors. This finding is contrary to the inferences drawn by Sandler and Shani (1989) that for products prompting increased information processing, such as high-involvement products, ambushing might be a better alternative than sitting on the sidelines and keeping a low profile. Ambush marketing might be an inappropriate strategy for low

involvement products as such products are likely to benefit more from sponsorship strategy, since peripheral cues such as the five ring Olympic logo may be more influential Sandler and Shani (1989). Effectiveness of ambush marketing is more a function of advertising budget, indirect association with the event by themed advertising, promotions related to the event, brand prominence & creativity in communications rather than the nature of product category (low involvement v/s high involvement).

Our findings support the second hypothesis that 'ambushers' have been more effective in gaining identification as sponsors than 'others', who upheld business ethics and did not attempt to imply any association with the event even indirectly. This finding is in contrast with the finding of Sandler and Shani (1989), who concluded that ambushers did not gain the desired benefit of ambush marketing when compared to firms not employing an ambush strategy. Since the primary focus of the consumer is on event and not brands, it is natural that they will get confused about sponsorship and ambushers will stand to gain more than 'others' from the scenario. Does this mean that in this era of high decibel levels of noise, brands that shout louder and reach their target audience by whatever means- fair or foul will benefit in terms of increased connect with the consumer? Ambush marketing hence is a threat not only for sponsors but also hurts the business interests of competitors who because of high rights fees or exclusivity given to sponsors are unable to be a sponsor and choose to be on the sidelines by not resorting to ambush marketing. Until and unless the regulatory framework governing ambush marketing is made stringent, more and more of these 'others' will get converted into ambushers, propelled by fierce competition.

A number of scholars have expressed their views regarding consumers' apathy towards ambush marketing. Lyberger and McCarthy (2001) found in their study that a significant number of respondents do not oppose ambushing practices and companies that engage in ambushing do not disgruntle consumers. They also supported Meenaghan's (1996) views that event owners should protect interests of their sponsors by educating consumers about "real sponsors".

In order to give context to the study's findings it is important to note its methodological limitations. The study though had almost equal number of respondents across the demographic factors, was based on purposive sampling and particular event and product categories. This may be kept in mind before generalizing the findings. The study is based on survey method, which does not allow for control of variables as is possible in case of experimental research. Hence it is difficult to isolate the effects of intervening/extraneous variables like fit, ad spend, ambush marketing, theme of advertising, product category, brand prominence and relatedness on dependent variables like recall and recognition. Moreover the research is based on real event, which posed limitation to the number of brands for which the impact of ambush marketing could be measured.

Issues of memory based identification and constructive identification may raise questions as to whether identification is an appropriate measure of the effectiveness of sponsorship communication. Specifically, is proper identification really necessary for achieving the

image enhancement objectives that most sponsors pursue? This question requires further investigation. On the one hand, many practitioners believe that proper identification is necessary for higher order goals of image enhancement or increase in sales of sponsors; on the other hand recent studies suggest that learning from sponsorship-type communication may take a more implicit form (e.g., Pham and Vanhuele 1997; Pracejus 1998).

Limitations of present study raise a number of research questions for researchers interested in sponsorship research. What could be the impact of ambush marketing when the sponsors are not prominent brands? What is the most effective way to ambush? Does ambush marketing lead to higher order benefits like image enhancement or increased brand loyalty? What is the relationship between sponsorship awareness and brand preference? Does the issue of ambush marketing and sponsorship matter to the consumer? However, it is observed that most of sponsorship studies are conducted in context of sports events and the term 'ambush marketing' has also been interpreted in context of sports events sponsorship but we believe that more research studies on sponsorship effectiveness need to be conducted in context of other types of events such as Miss World, Miss Universe, Academy Awards, Cannes Film Festival and India Fashion Week etc. to investigate if ambush marketing practices and processes are any different in such events.

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Table-2
Brand Advertising Time during Event Broadcast

Brand	Airtime on SetMax & DD (in seconds)
Pepsi	76259
Reliance Infocom	52505
Hero Honda	28724
Coca Cola	25016
Bajaj Bikes	19349
Fair & Lovely	18675
Thums Up	16321
Pepsodent	15057
Hutch	15005
Mountain Dew	14815
BSNL Cell One	14676
Close Up	14261
Mak Engine Oil	14083
Clinic All Clear	12845

(Source: Exchange4media.com, as on April 11, 2003)

Table- 3

Srl No.	Brands	Spend (Crs)	No of Spots	Av. Spt. Dur (s)	GRPS	
					Norm(20s)	Actual
1	Pepsi	24.1	779	26	4865	3773
2	Reliance Ind Mbl	21.5	451	40	4968	2505
3	Hero Honda	14.3	487	25	3086	2516
4	Samsung Electronics	11.9	509	20	2714	2782
5	Bajaj Bikes	8.6	316	23	1954	1717
6	Fair & Lovely	8.2	218	31	1424	905
7	Coca Cola	8.2	319	21	1821	1697
8	Clinic Shampoo	7.2	274	22	1403	1281
9	Bharat Petroleum	6.7	358	16	1513	1938
10	Mountain Dew	5.5	194	24	1594	1347
11	Cadbury's	5.5	195	24	1649	1402
12	Close Up	5.4	332	14	1149	1685
13	LG CDMA	5.3	148	30	1414	946
14	Thums Up	5.2	248	18	1075	1226
15	Hutch	5.0	192	21	1289	1200
16	Asian paints	4.9	201	20	1275	1251
17	BSNL Cellone	4.8	260	15	1188	1541
18	Pepsodent	4.8	184	22	848	788
19	Toyota Corolla	4.5	126	30	1255	838
20	Samsung Mobiles	4.4	123	30	1136	760

Total Spends Rs 239 crores across 84 brands

Table-4

Recall and Recognition Data for Selected Brands included in the questionnaire

S. No.	Brands	Free Recall		Recognition		Product/Service Category
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
1	Pepsi	402	76.28	437	82.92	Soft Drinks
2	LG	344	65.28	395	74.95	Consumer Electronics
3	Hero Honda	222	42.13	376	71.35	Motorbike
4	Reliance	129	24.48	315	59.77	Telecommunications
5	Coca Cola	121	22.96	111	21.06	Soft Drinks
6	Samsung	114	21.63	157	29.79	Consumer Electronics
7	South African Airways	95	18.03	298	56.55	Airlines
8	SET MAX	54	10.25	443	84.06	TV Channel
9	Air Sahara	38	7.21	152	28.84	Airlines
10	Kawasaki Bajaj	34	6.45	91	17.27	Motorbike
11	Videocon	31	5.88	59	11.20	Consumer Electronics
12	TVS	28	5.31	85	16.13	Motorbike
13	BSNL	25	4.74	88	16.70	Telecommunications
14	Hutch	24	4.55	130	24.67	Telecommunications
15	Mountain Dew	24	4.55	76	14.42	Soft Drinks
16	Airtel	19	3.61	55	10.44	Telecommunications
17	Thums Up	7	1.33	31	5.88	Soft Drinks
18	LML	5	0.95	12	2.28	Motorbike
19	BPL	2	0.38	9	1.71	Consumer Electronics
20	Air India	1	0.19	22	4.17	Airlines
21	British Airways	0	0.00	18	3.42	Airlines
22	Zee	1	0.19	10	1.90	TV Channel
23	ESPN	3	0.57	63	11.95	TV Channel
24	DD	2	0.38	61	11.57	TV Channel

Table-5

Brands Recalled as Sponsors by Product Category

Product Category	Sponsors	Ambushers	Others	Total
Soft Drinks	402 (Pepsi)	152 (Coca Cola 121)	0	554
Consumer Electronics	344 (LG)	114 (Samsung 114)	33 (Videocon)	491
Motorbike	222 (Hero Honda)	34 (Bajaj 34)	33 (TVS 28)	289
Airlines	95 (South African Airways)	38 (Sahara Airlines 38)	1 (Air India)	134
Telecommunications	24 (Hutch)	154 (Reliance Infocom 129)	19 (Airtel)	197
TV Channel	54 (Set Max) 2 (DD)	2 (ESPN)	1 (Zee)	59

Table-6

Brands Recognized as Sponsors by Product Category

Product Category	Sponsors	Ambushers	Others	Total
Soft Drinks	437 (Pepsi)	218 (Coca Cola 111)	0	655
Consumer Electronics	395 (LG)	157 (Samsung 157)	68 (Videocon 59)	620
Motorbike	376 (Hero Honda)	91 (Bajaj 91)	97 (TVS 85)	564
Airlines	298 (South African Airways)	152 (Sahara Airlines 152)	40 (Air India 22)	490
Telecommunications	130 (Hutch)	403 (Reliance Infocom 315)	55 (Airtel)	588
TV Channel	443 (Set Max) 61 (DD)	63 (ESPN)	10 (Zee)	577

Table-7

Sponsor, Ambusher and Others recall score

	Total	Sponsors	Ambusher	Others
N	508	487	281	195
	19	40	246	332
Mean	3.71	2.3429	1.6584	1.4410
Median	3.00	2.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Std. Deviation	1.80	1.0846	.9008	.7532
Minimum	1	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	8	6.00	5.00	6.00

Statistical Significance of Recall data for Sponsors, Ambushers and Others

S. No.	Sponsor-Ambusher	Sponsor-Others	Ambusher-others
t- value	7.15	8.08	3.415
Significance	.000	.000	.001
Degree of freedom	262	185	129

Table-8

Sponsor, Ambusher and Others recognition score

	Total	Sponsor	Ambusher	Others
N	527	520	450	281
Missing	0	7	77	246
Mean	6.57	4.1019	2.0267	1.4662
Median	6.00	4.0000	2.0000	1.0000
Std. Deviation	2.00	1.2929	1.2625	.7698
Minimum	1	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	18	7.00	7.00	4.00

Statistical Significance of Recognition data for Sponsors, Ambushers and Others

S. No.	Sponsor-Ambusher	Sponsor-Others	Ambusher-others
t- value	23.39	25.881	9.19
Significance	.000	.900	.257
Degree of freedom	442	275	.000

Frequency Data for Recognition of Sponsor, Ambusher and Others

Table-9
Demographic profile of respondents

(a) Age

Age Group (years)	Sample
15-25	181
25-35	190
35-45	156
Total	527

(b) Gender Distribution: Male = 285, Female = 242 (Total = 527)

(c) Education

Qualification	Sample
Undergraduates	75
Graduates	207
Post-graduates	143
Professionally qualified	98
Total	523

(d) City

S. No.	City	Sample
1	Delhi	50
2	Mumbai	147
3	Chennai	99
4	Kolkota	54
5	Bangalore	54
6	Hyderabad	47
7	Ahmedabad	23
8	Lucknow	53
	Total	527

(e) Match viewership data as reported by respondents

Average number of matches viewed by an average respondent = 16.5 matches
(Match viewed means watching the Live TV telecast of the match for average 2 hours duration)

S. No.	Number of matches	Number of respondents
1	0-10	246
2	11-20	119
3	21-30	69
4	31-40	33
5	41 and above	44
	Total	511