

**Describing the business decision-making process for evaluating
cricket sponsorship proposals**

by

AJ Coetzee
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SUPERVISOR: Prof. L.R. Jansen van Rensburg

ASSISTANT SUPERVISOR: Mr. A. Meintjes

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ABSTRACT

One of the major challenges facing cricket unions today is getting adequate funding; on the other hand, one of the challenges facing businesses are the hundreds of unsolicited sponsorship proposals they receive annually. This study investigated the business decision-making process for selecting sponsorship proposals, specifically to contribute to the cricket unions' understanding of the formal selection process that the sponsorship proposal goes through.

The primary objective of the study was to determine the degree to which businesses follow the decision-making process when selecting a sponsorship opportunity. The research study was based on a descriptive research design. First, a theoretical discussion of sponsorship within the marketing communication mix was conducted to illustrate that a sponsorship is a product that the business must purchase, and therefore they use the decision-making process to choose among different sponsorship opportunities. The business decision-making process was discussed in further detail for selecting sponsorship proposals.

Primary data was collected by means of a web-based questionnaire. A convenience sample was used to distribute the questionnaire to sponsors of the sixteen cricket unions in South Africa. The nature of a sponsorship relationship is rather sensitive; therefore a complete list of all the sponsors could not be compiled. A total of 39 respondents participated in the study. The sample was not representative, and therefore the results are only valid for those respondents who participated in the study.

The results indicated that respondents were most likely to set product/brand/service objectives and media objectives for their sponsorships. All the sponsorship objectives are equally important to the respondents from the medium and large sponsors, except for guest hospitality objectives which are deemed more important by large sponsors than the respondents from medium sponsors. With regard to decision-making criteria, respondents found positioning/image criteria as very important during a sponsorship decision. The role-players identified by the respondents who most frequently participate in the

decision-making process are the marketing manager, public relations manager, CEO or owner. With regard to the degree to which businesses follow the decision-making process, it was found that large sponsors are more likely to follow a fairly formal evaluation process than medium sponsors.

It is recommended that cricket unions need to focus on the decision-making criteria and objectives that are deemed important by sponsors, and that they should also include these aspects in their sponsorship proposals. With regard to medium and large sponsors, cricket unions should focus on providing large sponsors with more guest hospitality opportunities; they must also prepare their proposals for a formal decision-making process as compared the less formal approach followed by medium sponsors when reviewing sponsorship applications.

Recommendations for future research include that a similar study should be conducted with a large sample size, to be able to identify if statistical significant differences do exist for different size sponsors. A probability sample should be used, to be able to obtain data that is representative of the entire population. The limitations of the study, such as financial and time constraints, prevented from achieving all the recommendations for future research set out above.

OPSOMMING

Een van die grootste uitdagings waarmee krieketunies deesdae te make kry, is om toegang tot voldoende fondse te verkry; insgelyks word ondernemings jaarliks gekonfronteer met die uitdaging van honderde ongevraagde borgskapaansoeke. Hierdie studie het ondersoek ingestel na die ondernemingsbesluitnemingsproses wat gevolg word wanneer borgskapaansoeke oorweeg word, met die doel om spesifiek 'n bydrae te lewer tot krieketunies se begrip van die formele seleksieproses waaraan die borgskapaansoek onderwerp word.

Die primêre doelstelling van die studie was om die mate waartoe ondernemings die besluitnemingsproses volg te bepaal wanneer hulle 'n keuse maak ten opsigte van 'n geleentheid om 'n borgskap te bied. Die navorsing is gebaseer op 'n beskrywende navorsingsontwerp. Eerstens is 'n teoretiese bespreking van die idee van borgskap gebied soos dit binne die kommunikasie-mengsel geplaas word om sodoende aan te dui dat 'n borgskap 'n produk is wat 'n ondernemings moet aankoop, en waarvoor hulle 'n besluitnemingsproses neem om 'n keuse te maak tussen verskillende borgskapgeleenthede. Die besluitnemingsproses is fyner beskryf spesifiek met verwysing na die keuse van borgskapaansoeke.

Primêre data is ingesamel deur middel van 'n webgebaseerde vraelys. 'n Gerieflikheidssteekproef is gebruik om die vraelys aan borge van die sestien Suid-Afrikaanse krieketunies te besorg. Die aard van 'n borgskapverhouding is heel sensitief; dit het daartoe gelei dat 'n volledige lys van alle borge nie saamgestel kon word nie. Altesaam 39 respondente het aan die studie deelgeneem. Die steekproef was nie verteenwoordigend nie, en daarom kan die resultate slegs as geldig beskou word ten opsigte van die respondente wat aan die studie deelgeneem het.

Die resultate het daarop gewys dat respondente meesal geneig was om produk/handelsmerk/diens- en mediadoelstellings vir hul borgskappe te stel. Alle borgskapdoelwitte word as ewe belangrik beskou in die oë van respondente wat medium en groot borgskappe verteenwoordig het, met die uitsondering van gasvryheidsdoelwitte wat as meer belangrik beskou is deur die groter borge

teenoor die mediumgrootte borge. Met betrekking tot die besluitnemingskriteria is gevind dat respondente kriteria wat te make het met posisionering as uiters belangrik beskou wanneer 'n keuse gemaak word om 'n borgskap toe te staan. Die rolspelers wat deur respondente aangewys is as diegene wat tipies deelneem aan die besluitnemingsproses is die bemarkingsbestuurder, die hoof-uitvoerende amptenaar of die eienaar. Met verwysing na die mate waartoe ondernemings hou by die besluitnemingsproses is bevind dat groter borge meer geneig is om 'n redelik formele evalueringsproses te volg as mediumgrootte borge.

Daar word aanbeveel dat krikeetunies moet fokus op daardie besluitnemingskriteria en –doelstellings wat volgens borge belangrik is, en dat hulle hierdie aspekte ook in hul borgaansoeke moet insluit. Wat mediumgrootte en groot borge betref, moet krikeetunies groter borge nader met meer gasvryheidsopsies; hulle moet borgaansoeke verder saamstel op so 'n wyse dat dit 'n meer formele besluitnemingsproses tydens borgskap seleksie kan deurstaan as wat die geval sou wees met groot borge.

Voorstelle vir verdere navorsing sluit in dat 'n soortgelyke studie onderneem kan word met 'n groter steekproef, sodat die navorsing kan bepaal of statisties-beduidende verskille bestaan ten opsigte van borge wat groter en kleiner is. Verder moet 'n ewekansige steekproef gebruik word, omdat dit die navorser in staat sal stel om data te verkry wat die hele populasie verteenwoordig. Die beperkings van die studie – veral finansiële en tydsgewys – het die navorser weerhou daarvan om die voorstelle soos hierbo uiteengesit, te kan aanspreek.

LIST OF KEY TERMS

- **Business decision-making**
- **Sponsorship**
- **Sponsor**
- **Property**
- **Sponsorship proposal**

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