



SUSTAINABLE SPONSORSHIP

Creating lasting commercial and social impact

Corporate Citizenship co-hosted an event with sister agency CSM on 25th April 2018 with guest panellists Seb Coe, *Chairman of CSM Sport & Entertainment*; Liz Nicholl, *CEO of UK Sport*; Justin King, *former CEO of Sainsbury's* and Martin George, *Customer Director at Waitrose*. Moderated by Corporate Citizenship CEO Neil Davy, the evening's discussion focused on identifying how sport and business can co-create authentic partnerships that create lasting impact for businesses, brands and rights holders alike. Key themes that arose from the discussion:

- Sponsorship should always be authentic. It must align with the values of the organisation so that it feels real for the both consumers and colleagues alike.
- Although measurement is key in evaluating partnerships, the connection to consumers' hearts should be front of mind.
- There's an opportunity for both businesses and rights holders to better understand the others' priorities; closer collaborations can open-up more innovative, flexible and impactful partnerships.
- Future partnerships are likely to tackle systemic issues such as environmental concerns or physical inactivity, those traditionally seen as the responsibility of the government.
- We can anticipate the emergence of unusual and atypical alliances and partnerships in the future, potentially involving multiple businesses, including direct competitors.



The responsible business and sustainability agenda is moving beyond the CSR department and proliferating into different business functions. Those in marketing and operational teams – as well as boards – are waking up to the opportunities.

70%

of millennials¹ say they chose to work with companies whose values reflect their own

1 in 5

state they would choose to stay in a solely profit-driven company for more than 5 years²

206%

purpose-driven brands have outperformed the stock market by 206% in the past 10 years³



So whilst interest in these issues is growing, so too is the disconnect between consumers and brands. According to an Edelman study,⁴ 60% of the public do not trust corporates to do the right thing, with 70% believing that social media doesn't do enough to stop dishonest behaviours.

Sponsorship can play a role in bridging this gap. It can play a meaningful role in re-building trust and authenticity. But the current model needs to evolve.

A lack of imagination may be the root cause based on the old-fashioned concept of what sponsorship looks like. Often, ad hoc community activity is based on the tradition on what the CEO has a passion for. However, the London 2012 Olympics created a template for more advanced thinking. This set the stage for brands to reflect the world in which we live in and play an active part in solving social and environmental challenges. When brands and sponsors begin by co-creating the brief and not the solution, a true understanding of the business and where it wants to go can be formed. There are huge opportunities for sponsorship to leverage the power of brands to engage audiences in sport and beyond.

Integrity and authenticity is what matters most to consumers. Being in tune with how they think, feel and behave ultimately motivates them. So brands must be more thoughtful in what is it they are trying to achieve alongside the commercial results. As fan expectations shift, studies⁵ indicate that 75% of consumers would boycott a brand if it conflicted with their own values. The digital age has meant people now have more clarity to get their voice heard. Therefore understanding the role sport plays in people's lives and aligning sponsorship with the values of an organisation shows a commitment to excellence and working together, where the message of integrity and authenticity comes much more naturally.

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75%

of consumers would boycott a brand if it conflicted with their own values



“

Telling the story in a way that shows it's absolutely consistent with your brand values... that matters to your customers... I think has a massive role to play in re-establishing trust.

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- Martin George



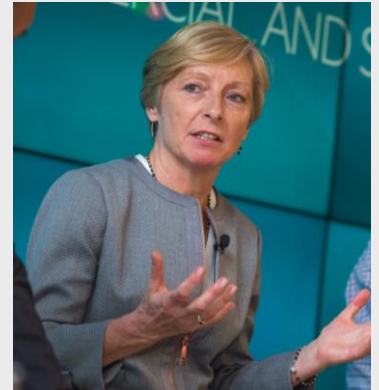


Few things beyond sponsorship are better placed to enable companies to engage authentically with stakeholders

It demonstrates to consumers that you're on their side and using the power of sports to tell a story that is consistent with brand values helps to reinforce and re-establish that trust.

General pessimism over the future has meant consumers more than ever are looking to align themselves with brands they believe fit in more with the world they want to live in. As such, young people in particular increasingly believe they can move the social and political dial by working for or with a progressive company rather than government or other institutions⁶

Sport can be one platform for achieving lasting impact. It's a vehicle to reach common goals and demonstrate a commitment to excellence and equality. It can engage people passionately, internally and externally, to showcase collaboration in truly bringing together business and sport.



“
Sponsorship is much more powerful if you can align the values of the business with the sport.”

- Liz Nicholl

References:

1. PwC, “[Workforce of the Future](#)” 2017.
2. Deloitte, “[The 2017 Deloitte Millennial Survey](#)” 2017
3. Havas, “[Meaningful Brands](#)” 2017
4. Edelman report “[Edelman Trust Barometer](#)” 2018
5. EY “[Shopping with a Purpose](#)” 2016
6. Deloitte report “[Navigating the Future of Work](#)” 2017

About Corporate Citizenship

Corporate Citizenship is a global management consultancy specialising in sustainability and corporate responsibility. Established in 1997, Corporate Citizenship’s internationally diverse teams are based in London, Melbourne, New York, San Francisco, Santiago and Singapore. The teams have delivered and completed projects in more than 45 countries, advising Fortune 1000 and 50% of FTSE 100 companies, whilst also working with small and medium-sized companies. With a clear pro-business agenda, Corporate Citizenship works with clients to achieve their commitments to responsible business behaviours and sustainable practices.

London
Holborn Gate,
5th Floor
326-330 High Holborn,
London WC1V 7PP
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)20 7861 1616

Melbourne
20 – 22 Albert Road
South Melbourne,
VIC 3205
Australia

T: + 61 (3) 9993 0452

New York
440 9th Ave
17th Floor
New York,
NY 10001
United States

T: 1-212-226-3702

San Francisco
2 Embarcadero
Center, 8th Floor
San Francisco,
CA 94111
United States

T: 1-415-656-9383

Santiago
Av. Kennedy 5735
Oficina 1503
Santiago
Chile

T: +56 (2) 3224 3569

Singapore
2 Science Park Drive
Ascent Building, 02-06
Singapore
118222

T: +65 6822 2203