ROLE OF SPONSOR MESSAGE ARTICULATION AND ACTIVATION

IN CREATING USER ENGAGEMENT: A SOCIAL MEDIA

PERSPECTIVE

A THESIS

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Abstract

For sponsors of sporting events, communications via digital platforms are aimed at involving customers to create positive responses in the form of short-term awareness and associations, as well as long-term trust and loyalty. However, there are limited works, particularly in social media domain, that examine this effect analytically or suggest a way to quantitatively measure the effects of sponsorship investments. We address this gap by looking into two critical aspects of social media communications namely, activation and articulation, as well as analysing their effect on positive user sentiment and electronic word of mouth. Additionally, we study the impact of sponsor's congruence with the event, as well as its social media presence (SMP), on creating user involvement. Using Twitter as an empirical context, this work proposes a robust social media metric that can capture the variables of interest, and provide objective behavioural data which can be used for performing analysis and generating results that are representative of real user behaviour in social media domains.

For analysis purpose we extracted Twitter data related to sponsors of four tennis grand slams namely, Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon Tennis Championship, and US Open. Results suggest that articulation and activation communications are important tool for generating favourable response and customer involvement at social media platforms. This study also explores how the effectiveness of sponsor's articulation approach and activation communications in creating user involvement vary according to event-sponsor congruence.

Finally, the work concludes with theoretical and managerial insights based on the findings. These insights will provide clarity and recommendations to sponsorship managers for engaging and involving customers on social media platforms during sponsored event.

Keywords: Articulation, Activation, Positive Sentiment, eWOM, TweetLDA, Functional Fit, Sport Sponsorship

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S. No.	Abbreviation	Explanation
1	SMP	Social media presence
2	eWOM	Electronic word of mouth
3	LDA	Latent Dirichlet Analysis
4	PLSA	Probabilistic Latent Schematic Analysis
5	POS	Positive emotion sentiment
6	NRC	National Research Council Canada
7	AUSOPEN	Australian open tennis championship
8	French Open	French Open tennis championship
9	Wimbledon	Wimbledon tennis championship
10	USOPEN	USOPEN tennis championship