## SPORTS RELATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

AHMET GÜLÜM

Sports Related Marketing Communicantions Ahmet Gülüm

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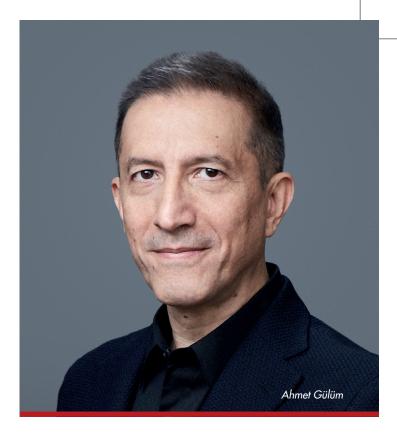
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## SPORTS RELATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

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Ahmet Gülüm spent 10 years of his 23-year-long professional volleyball career at Galatasaray Sports Club, where he was the team captain for 9 years. In addition to the Turkish Championships and World Championships he won throughout his sports life, he was proud to wear the national jersey 158 times and served as a captain in the University, Army, and A National Teams.

After his sports career, he contributed to volleyball and the countrys sports in a larger sense as manager. He pioneered the introduction of beach volleyball to Turkey in 1991. He was head of the team that organized the Turkish Beach Volleyball Championship for seven years and the FIVB Beach Volleyball World Tour for three consecutive years. Afterward, he chaired the Turkish Volleyball Federation and the Turkish Volleyball Foundation and took part in the World Beach Volleyball Council. He founded and chaired the Marketing Commission of the European Volleyball Confederation. As a member of the Turkish National Olympic Committee, he contributed to the Olympic movement in Turkey.

In 2001, he founded Sportsnet, Turkeys first and only sports related marketing communication agency. Sportsnet has grown into a group of companies operating in different areas of service. Group companies include Allsports, Turkeys most rooted event agency, VO2, the countrys first sports related digital communication and content agency, as well as sportsty, broadcasting Turkey's most diverse

Olympic sports content to audiences. He blazed a trail in Turkey's sportsbroadcasting with sportstv's sportstvkadın project. The Turkey representation of Octagon, the world's number one sports agency, was undertaken by Sportsnet Group. Ahmet Gülüm also took part in the International Executive Board of Octagon.

Under the direction of Ahmet Gülüm, Sportsnet Group created the concept of Sports Related Marketing Communication and introduced it to the literature in this field. The group has carried out communication activities and sponsorship campaigns of organizations such as İzmir 2005 Universiade, held in Turkey since 2001, the 2010 World Basketball Championship, the Erzurum 2011 Winter Universiade, F1, MotoGP, UEFA, FIFA, and FIBA. He has contributed to the management of many sponsorship activities of large clubs such as Barcelona, Manchester United, and global institutions including the NBA, WTA, and ATP in the international arena. He implemented sports sponsorships and sports related marketing communication campaigns of Procter&Gamble, Gillette, Orkid, Head&Shoulders, TEB BNP Paribas, Turkish Airlines, Koç Holding, Beko, McDonalds, Bayer, Avis, TJK, Milka, Turkcell, and numerous other brands. The Brand & Sport Summit event, the only and most significant sports and brand meeting of Turkey, as well as the Gillette Milliyet Athlete of the Year Awards, estructured since 2016, are organized anually by Sportsnet Group.

Ahmet Gülüm founded the Sports Sciences and Technology College (BilgiSpor), the Sports Management Department of Istanbul Bilgi University, in partnership with the then-owner of Bilgi University, Laureate Education. He lectures on sports related marketing communication in BilgiSpor and at the educational programs of different universities. He continues his academic endeavors by lecturing at Marka Okulu. Among his books are, "Bir Top Yeter" and "Panoda Yer Yok", in which he shares his experiences in sports related marketing communication.

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As of the early 2000s, a series of developments began to occur in the field of sports in Turkey as investments of sports ownership were transferred to brand communications through sponsorships and were allocated to brand management needs. This book presents the dynamics of this process and how an initiative with no prior precedent to speak of has been able to bring the incredible power of sports to brand value.

Since I've spent half of my life immersed in sports and dedicated the other half to communications, my discourse on the market at the field has always been supported by scientific data and real life experiences. Throughout my life, neither sports nor communication have proven me wrong. I have witnessed both right and wrong practices in both fields. I have experienced extraordinary cases, striking incidents, and unconventional events. I have seen just as many people fail for taking a wrong turn when the right course of action was obvious, as others guaranteeing success by adding creativity to rational analyses. I often realize that both of these two courses of action are still prevalent in the world of sports and communications. My observations are often markedly different from those of others following these two sectors. This can primarily be attributed to the fact that I stand at the intersection of a multilateral field. Every one of the brands, international organizations,

public authorities, federations, clubs, star athletes, communications agencies, and fans -as primary consumers- involved in this world consider themselves as primary role-players. Therefore, those attempting to establish a relationship among different groups assume a broad range of responsibilities and need multidimensional knowledge. After all, just as in any other structure, the management of this chaotic establishment has its own theories and practices. This also illustrates such examples.

My life as an athlete, which actively began in 1971, was the most important element that changed my view of the world and determined my stance in life. I began playing volleyball at a very young age; I wore the national jersey 158 times. As an economist interested in communications, my professional life also commenced with sports. When pioneered the introduction of beach volleyball to Turkey, I realized that a new branch could grow very rapidly in a short time and attain economic value. In 1996, I was elected president of the Turkish Volleyball Federation. During my post, I established and chaired a Marketing Commission at the European Volleyball Confederation. I also became the second man in this field at the International Volleyball Federation. For four years, I dedicated twenty hours of my day to sports management voluntarily and without any extra financial gain. My primary motivation in this endeavor was to make up for Turkey's shortcomings in sports. This process not only involved the most important experiences of my life but also enabled me to witness the birth, growth, and development of Sportsnet Group.

The main reason behind my decision to leave the presidency of the Federation in 2000 was my recognition of sports as an immense industry. I began working on the integration of brands, as one of the most important elements, into the sports industry. Consequently, in 2001, I founded Sportsnet, the first sports related advertising and communications agency in Turkey.

I believe that the impetus Sportsnet brought to the sector and the transformation and development Turkey has undergone since 2001 have

The main reason behind my decision to leave the presidency of the Federation in 2000 was my recognition of sports as an immense industry.

greatly contributed to the world of sports. In addition to creating more than \$800 million in resources through brands in the sports industry, the countless equations designed for the integration of sports and markets, as well as the firm establishment of certain concepts were all completed during this period. We brought to life many ideas at the basis of which lie the assets sports added to my life. Generating both social and commercial gain, this initiative also supported what I consider to be my natural mission to make sports accessible to different audiences. Entering the field of sports broadcasting, one of the most important prerequisites for the development of alternative sports, was also an important milestone.

Sports is one of the largest industries in the world. The portion remaining outside the mainstream sports industry is a tool to educate large masses in developed countries. Sports is one of the most effective tools of education not only in the sense of a performance race, but also as a healthy platform through which societies can consume their energy. Sports has another very important function. Future concerns of the youth is among one of the most important problems of developing countries. I believe sports is a critical key in solving this problem. As the most recent example of the investments we have made in this regard, BİLGİSpor was a very special initiative affirming the sincerity of the science-based movement principle Sportsnet had been underlining from the onset. BİLGİSpor is designed as a four-year sports management undergraduate program established in cooperation with Istanbul Bilgi University to train human resources specialized in sports management and equipped with contemporary and universal information, one of the most significant shortcomings of the sports industry in Turkey. The need for an institution of higher education becomes more evident as students continue to graduate. Prospective sports managers are trained by the most valuable experts of this field and form the executive staff that shapes the sports industry. Hence, Turkey's first and only higher education institution in subjects such as sports related marketing communication and property management was brought to life with the initiative of Sportsnet Group.

Sports is one of the most effective tools of education not only in the sense of a performance race, but also as a healthy platform through which societies can consume their energy.

Competent young managers joining the sector thanks to BİLGİSpor amalgamate the scientific perspective with the sports industry and add momentum to development by taking an active role in the international integration of sports clubs and federations Pursuing the values sports holds for the country's youth for twenty years and strictly adhering to its principles, Sportsnet Group is striving to develop the habit of doing sports in all alternative fields. The mission and the responsibility television channels sportstv and sportstvkadin hold are better understood with each passing year. The popularity of the new broadcasting approach we brought to the industry has been a driving force for us as well, and has evolved into sportstvPLATFORM in the digitalization process. Among these meaningful developments is the Brand&Sport Summit, a first in its field, which epitomizes our investments and initiatives towards scientific codes of the relationship between brands and sports. Having become the most important sectoral summit meeting in a few short years, the event carries crucial messages for the future and brings the sports world together as a focal point of idea generation and sharing.

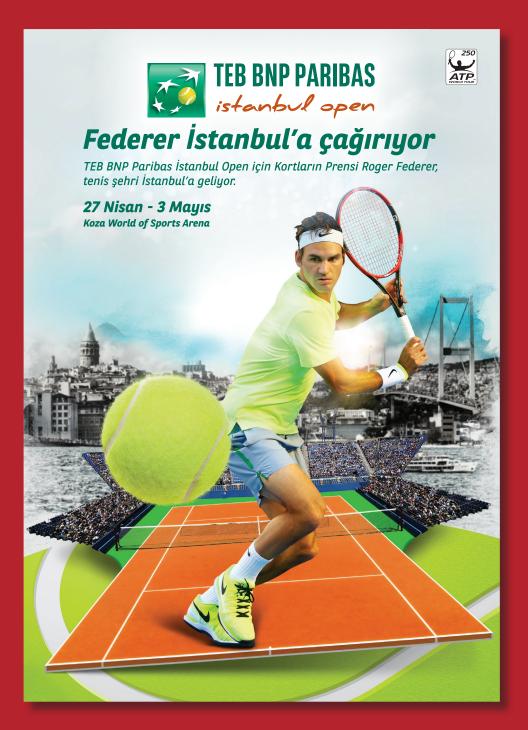
It would have been impossible not to mention the pandemic that broke out during the writing of this book. In recording these unprecedented times, I find it critical to recognize the sport's industry's reaction to the pandemic despite the setbacks in other fields.

I must say that many obstacles, challenges, conflicts of interest, and external factors stood in the way of our efforts to introduce modern and universal values to the sports industry, a bundle of unpredicted and unresolved problems in Turkey. I am confident that Sportsnet Group's experiences on this complex racetrack, as well as the mentality it seeks to instill, will inspire sports and communications idealists in many other countries. Finally, I would like to thank all of my colleagues, who have contributed to the preparation and writing of this book, and the valuable business partners, federations, and brands with whom we have collaborated in the projects I have mentioned. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude as much to readers,

as I do to everyone who graciously shared with me their knowledge, experience, and opinion.

Ahmet Gülüm SPORTSNET GROUP PRESIDENT

# Roger Federer in Istanbul Legendary tennis star and brilliant athlete Roger Federer's participation at TEB BNP Paribas Istanbul Open was a good example of sponsor, federation, and agency cooperation.



When Sportsnet was founded in 2001 as a sports related marketing communications agency, the entire team confidently and firmly answered the question posed at the top of this section with: Yes, if there is a ball, we can create a microeconomy from it. A ball is all we need.

In a very competitive market, the stakeholders in the sector would not welcome the fact that this agency, set out to purely deal with sports related marketing communications, could take a slice from the advertising cake. However, rather than snatching customers from the existing market, the strategy of this new entity was to introduce well-articulated concepts that would lead to the realization of value adding projects for the sports industry in Turkey and to define its area of expertise as a new segment in the industry, thus establishing currently nonexistent economic relations.

In a country where the relations among the public sector, sports, and brands are weak and less than rational, we were convinced that what needed to be done –but was not being done– could be interpreted as an opportunity.

Turkey entered the 2000s with the prospect of being integrated into globalization and becoming a full member of the European Union. After a series of economic and political crises, a transformation took place in the financial structure and a favorable environment was created for foreign capital-driven growth. Turkey and Istanbul were cited as being the shining stars of the Middle East; as an attractive and vibrant market emerged for global brands, local entrepreneurs began seeing branding as a magical trend.

The first five years Sportsnet experienced in this climate led to a success story, which demonstrated the efficient results of the synergy between the sports industry and marketing communications. Although the biggest accomplishment in this story seemed to have come from being among the top fifteen advertising agencies dealing with only sports related projects, the real success of Sportsnet was its great contributions to the advertising and sports marketing industries as their youngest member.

The primary contribution was to instill the concept of sports related marketing communications into the minds of local participants. The two splendid components of sports and communications influenced and fed each other, increasing the number of their meeting points and cooperation styles and becoming the reason for Sportsnet's existence.

In 2009, with the self confidence of having proven its claim, Sportsnet published a book that described the concept of sports related marketing communications and revealed its potential for expansion through case studies. The title of the book reiterated the initial claim, and its content

provided the supporting evidence: Bir Top Yeter (A Ball Is All We Need).1 The assertion that "a ball is all we need," which gave birth to Sportsnet, was based on the power attained by two concepts through history: sports and communications. The synergy that these two forces could create seemed bright enough to illuminate the future. All indications from the past, the journey of sports and communications over time, and the time frame we were in, provided a



clear enough field of vision. The other steps that needed to be taken were obvious to me. In the happiness of seeing the difference created by the fact that these have come to fruition, I can safely say that we are doing everything "just for the sake of sports." In our language, this phrase refers to seeing sports as a task that is undertaken without expecting anything in return. However, it has a very different meaning to me. We see that we grow richer in every sense of the word and our quality of life is improved when sports assumes the well-deserved and rightful place in our lives. As long as there is sports, the rest will just follow.

## Global Brand of Basketball The adventure, which started with the sponsorship of the Turkish Basketball League, spread to Europe and everywhere in the world where basketball exists.



At the end of the nineteenth century, the initial theoretical explanations regarding various societal developments, including people management, associated abundance and growth with the development of division of labor and communications opportunities. Communications in general was like the magical formula of social organization. Communications would perform the dispatch and regulatory functions of the message, and its circulation would manage the relations between the central body and its surroundings.

First, the need for a medium to convey the message was born. The central body created the media to disseminate data according to its needs. In the twentieth century, it assigned the strategic role to the media, hence creating the concept.<sup>2</sup> As possibilities evolved, the domain and functions of communications varied. It was seen that even societies could be transformed by the transfer of information. As communications became a power not only for the managerial center, but also for institutions and individuals, it evolved into a means to express the energy resonating from being alive.

These qualities, gained by communications in its evolution, were more prominently seen in another area. Since the Neolithic Age, sports has existed with its values and norms. As communications increased its impact around the world, sports became one of the elements of social

change. While it was a cultural behavior, it was also becoming globalized at great speed. Moreover, while there was no mention of globalization in any platform, sports was touring the world, stopping at nothing.

Emerging through sports, physical performance was also gaining economic and political importance in proportion to its power to create a supranational influence. Not only did it create a new working class through professionalization, but for many other masses, it also became a means for production and consumption. It never lost its credibility in the process of changing from a form of personal entertainment into a global industry, and gained a voluntary, democratic, disciplined, and peaceful identity. Moreover, it touched on all the senses and emotions, promising spiritual and physical health. Humankind had not been able to invent anything quite like this phenomenon, which would satisfy individual instincts while fulfilling mass needs in such an intricate way. Sports was able to accommodate the conflict between present and future objectives and maintain the power of its unique strength for drama.

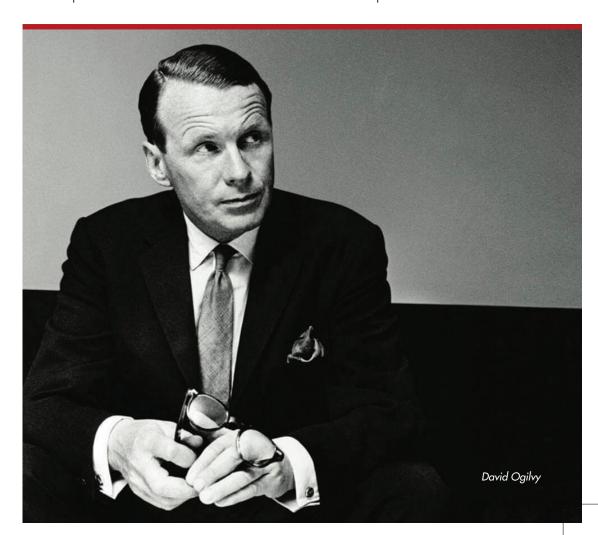
While sports and communications were feeding off of and blending with each other, thus embracing societies, the evolution of another discipline continued. Psychologist Walter Dill Scott was one of the earliest advocates of uniting advertising with academic theory. In a book he published earlier in the century, Scott predicted that every important initiative required a theoretical basis and that this field of profession also needed science.<sup>3</sup>

Although literature on advertising was created with books suggesting promotional practices for business professionals, for a long time, no thought was given to having departmental subjects at universities. When the sum of money spent on communications with the consumer grew, and there was a need for differently equipped human resources, our perception of advertising changed.

Starting with journalism, communications was considered a scientific discipline after the second half of the twentieth century. Communications faculties were established; advertising, public relations, and visual communications departments emerged. Researchers such as A.C. Nielsen, George Gallup, Arch Crossley, and Daniel Starch played an important

role in making the field scientific by establishing corporations and increasing their activities. The disciplines of statistics, metrics, marketing, and psychology became the tools of communications. However, unlike many industry related scientific disciplines, the theory of advertising was not written by scientists. The first theoreticians of this discipline would be the extraordinary creative personalities who were working in this field—the advertising geniuses—including J. Walter Thompson, David Ogilvy, and Bill Bernbach. Successful results were being obtained by practices contrary to the previously held theory, so humankind was now witnessing the birth of a changing field in which academic perspective chose to stay as an observer.

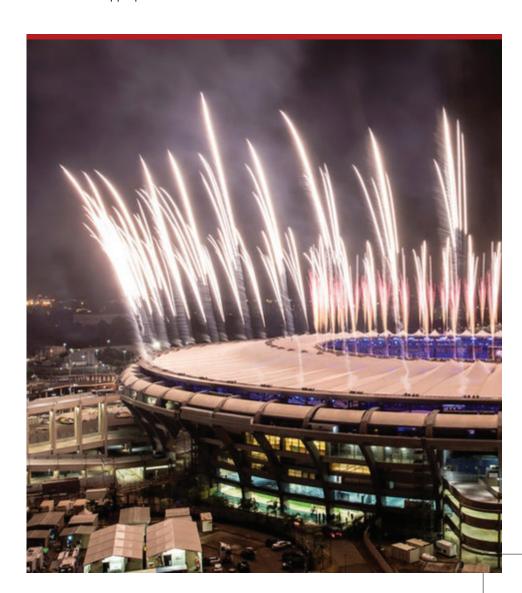
Most of the technological developments after the 1950s were aimed at achieving economic gain. The economic thinking on efficiency and fair share in production relied on individual wealth and free consumption.



These objectives were possible only if the product could be offered to wider markets, which meant that advertising would also shine.

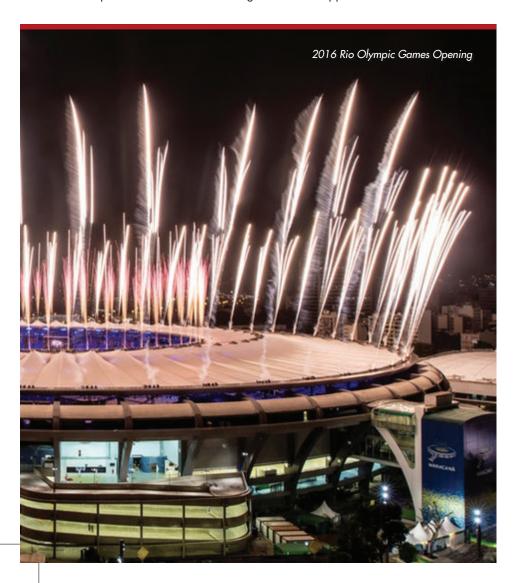
Individual wealth began increasing the importance of personal preferences in people's small worlds. It was now possible to live by working less or to maintain a life outside of business. An individual could pursue other interests, could attend to them personally ... hobbies, travel, arts, and of course, sports. The development of communications and sports thus ran intricately parallel.

In a letter written in 1710, Joseph Addison, one of the pioneers of advertising, referred to his profession as a great art, claiming that it was the most appropriate method discovered to hunt the reader.<sup>4</sup> More



than two and a half centuries needed to pass to demonstrate that many beautiful things could go unnoticed and would thus disappear without advertising. Those involved in advertising to gain a share of the market and media bodies generating the largest portion of their revenue from advertising were both in the middle of the commercial mainstream, but had not produced any idea on the role sports would play in this equation. Sports was an area of interest all on its own and did not require advertising. There was no problem of financing as the stands were full and the show went on.

The intense demand for information forced mass media to deliver sports to its audiences. This was followed by the advertisers using the sports field as an advertising medium to appeal to the consumers in

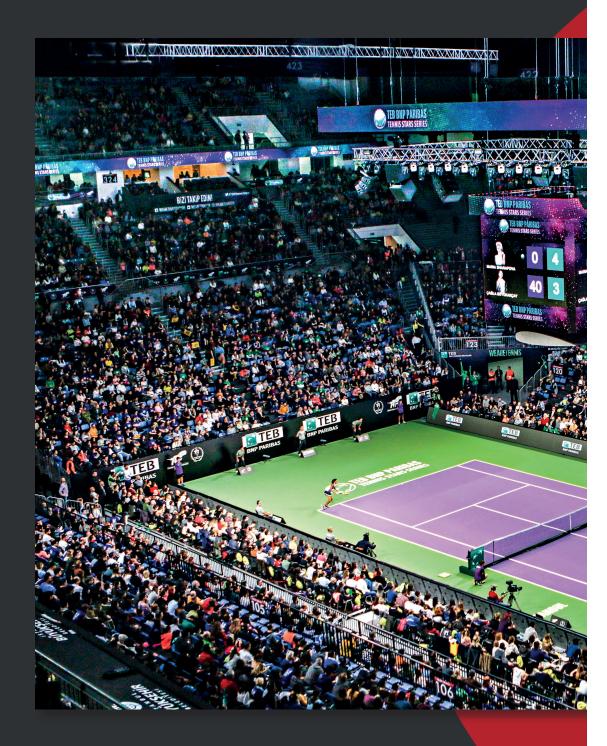


Today, a sporting event anywhere in the world may cause tens of thousands of people to change countries and hundreds of millions of others to be pinned to their TV screens.

the stands. Star athletes who had gained worldwide success and had millions of fans became brand ambassadors. As intricate relationships began to emerge between communications and sports, the need to direct these relationships became inevitable.

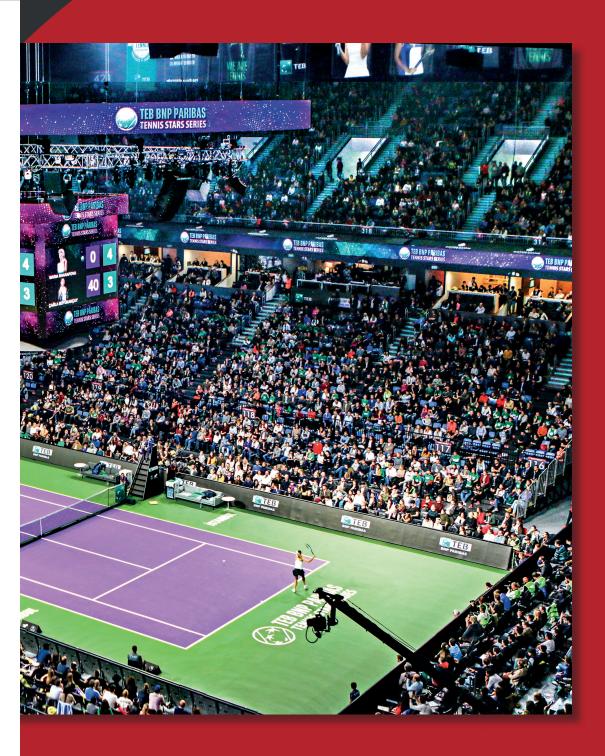
Today, a sporting event anywhere in the world may cause tens of thousands of people to change countries and hundreds of millions of others to be pinned to their TV screens. The bond of loyalty between sports events and sports fans could not be expected to remain a simple relationship. The concept of sports marketing was first born to keep the tie between the parties in this relationship at a satisfactory level. Marketing was already intertwined with communications, but although sports and communications had similar functions in social development, their management styles bore no resemblance to each other. It would be unexpected for an advertiser to play sports or for an athlete to have advertising experience. Another element seemed necessary in order for the synergy to come into full being. Indeed, the need for sports related marketing communications was first born in the domain of the advertiser.

The promise of being associated with sports, being preferred by athletes, and contributing to sports performance was the key to connecting with larger masses for brands producing sports products. However, the was always a doubt on which way to turn the said key, as the psychology of sports masses was often volatile. A simple score difference could have a detrimental effect on advertising strategy. On one hand was the advertiser aimed to score an incredible goal with the money he had invested and on the was the athlete concerned with shooting that goal. Money could establish a relationship between these two through methods of sponsorship, but what would be the place in this equation for the audience member, who sometimes spent the last dime in his pocket to watch the journey between the ball and the target? Since the theory of advertising could not answer this question, we needed to gain experience to understand how the value of sports could be transformed into brand value.



#### The Sharapova Effect

"Can a tennis match fill the country's largest hall?" The answer to the question was answered by TEB Tennis Stars Series. Not a single seat was left empty.



Alternative approaches brands have been searching for in communications have developed continuously since the emergence of the concept of sponsorship. Consequently, brands have increased their areas of investment and created powerful platforms in communications, which are still being used. The fact that more than 80 percent of the global sponsorship volume, exceeding \$60 billion,<sup>5</sup> is sports related<sup>6</sup> and follows an upward trend offers an idea on the movement of sports-based capital circulation.

Sponsorship investments have fueled conventional communications, based on the advertisers' expectations on returns. Sports related advertising spending alone has a distinct economic value of more than \$120 billion. Considering all components of today's sports industry, this creates a business area of \$620 billion in total annual added value.<sup>7</sup> In addition, this industry is consistently growing faster than total global revenue, in areas including naming rights, special foodstuffs, live broadcast tenders, and merchandising products. In this mixed bag of relationships with tangled crossovers, the prominent stakeholders include clubs, leagues, federations, sponsoring brands, and broadcasters that hold ownership rights.

From a narrower point of view, one quarter of global advertising spending is related to sports. In trigger moment marketing effect measurements, sports event broadcasts are brands' first preferred area, with a rate of 61 percent. Nine of the seventeen social events that brands added to their media plans in 2016 were sports broadcasts, and the top three included Euro Cup (55 percent), Olympics (35 percent), and Wimbledon (35 percent).

By 2021, the volume of sports and surrounding industries increased from \$1.6 trillion to \$1.7 trillion as the pandemic pushed people to do more sports. 82% of all sponsorships in the world came from sports sponsorships, with a figure exceeding 53 billion dollars. Another significant data is that one fourth of the global communication expenditures, which made a leap in digital with the effect of the pandemic and reached a size of 700 billion dollars, consisted of sports sponsorship and advertising expenditures around the sponsorship.

Today, global sports investments made by countries have exceeded 200 billion dollars annually. Sports betting exceeds 400 billion dollars when only legal players are taken into account. When the annual hot money sponsorship, broadcast, ticket and merchandising revenues in professional sports are taken into account and the investments of the clubs are added, the sum reaches 500 billion dollars. Although the pandemic



has experienced a decline of more than 30 percent, gyms constitute a market of 75 billion dollars. The increasing need to do sports at home during the Covid-19 lock-downs has increased the sportswear, footwear and material industries of 320 billion dollars to 475 billion dollars. When all of this comes together, a \$1.7 trillion industry emerges ahead of the health sector generating \$1.1 trillion a year, and immediately follows the automotive industry, which has annual revenue of \$1.8 trillion. Ranked 13th in United States the sports industry is far ahead of



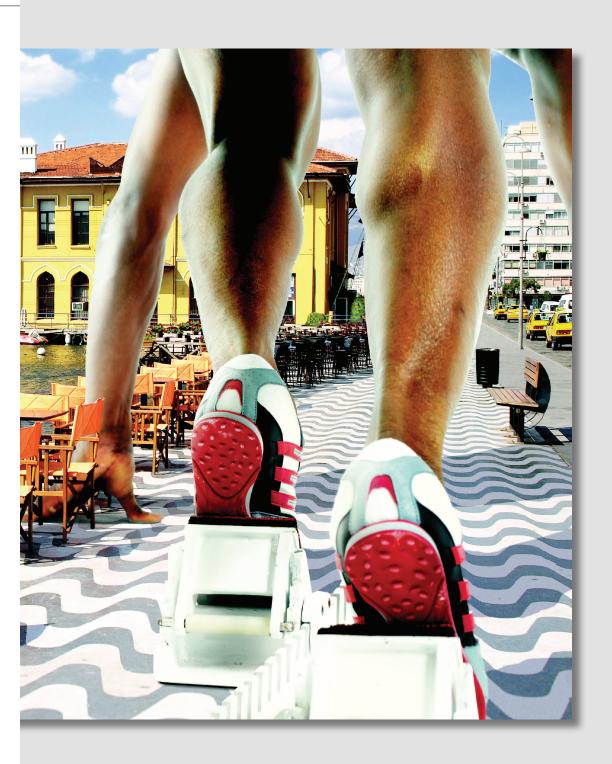
industries such as advertising, steel, healthcare, and music and generates a value seven times larger than that of Hollywood.

Regardless of its field, capital movement at such a scale is a key factor in determining international economic data; therefore, it is only natural that the expectation from investors to structure their spending based on solid scientific and intellectual foundations has been on the rise over the past quarter of the century. The sports economy and the expected return on investments are at such a scale that the era of voluntary effort, social benefit, or pure support for the sake of social responsibility seem to be athing of the past. Aside from possessing the ability to use traditional media as productively as possible, sports, for communications professionals, has now become a field in which brands are at play alongside atheletes. Moreover, compared to other channels, sports has the ability to touch on emotions and be permanent, which indicates that the marginal benefits yielded by brands' integration into sports cannot be overlooked.



#### **Giants Meet in Izmir**

The most important stars of the Olympics and sports history begin their international adventures with the Universiade. While Izmir hosted the future giant names in 2005, an effective campaign ensured that the stands were filled in the summer heat.



### IV. SPORTS RELATED MARKETING SOLUTIONS

Since marketing communications can be described as a form of competitive behavior for every brand, and sports as a form of energy exchange in a goal-oriented competition, the convergence of these two forces must be defined intricately. At first glance, the most eye catching part of this point of connection was sports sponsorships, which constituted 80 percent of the total sponsorship cake. This point of convergence displayed a great synergy between sports and communications, which directly interacted with and nurtured one another, and was thus open to innovative approaches.

Meanwhile, sports continued to be the only fair competition that survived in the new world order, in which physical resources of the world were gathered in major countries. A bare-footed Jamaican, who outpaced everyone, was able illustrate how humankind could achieve global success with their own values against overly ambitious nations using a huge part of the resources. In addition, communications was collaborating increasingly with science-based action, minimizing its share of error and risk.

Sports sponsorship and sports marketing stood out as two widelyaccepted key concepts arising from these two components, but failed to cover the variety of activities that could be reached with sports and communications. This shortcoming was particularly evident in Turkey, a country in the process of rapid growth -despite certain fluctuations- and global integration, where the aforementioned concepts lacked sufficient analyses, study, and a well-developed plan. Though it may have seemed that work was in progress to shape these concepts for the future, Turkey was one of the few countries where sports policies were managed by governments. This led to the repetition of many mistakes and waste of time, delaying the reforms that would help capture the spirit of time.

According to public opinion Turkey's lack of international achievements in sports was one of its most important inadequacies. Turkey was hardly successful in the Olympic Games, particularly in team sports. There was a cultural problem regarding collective success. Yet, the governments had prioritized the establishment of sports facilities with a view to making up for this shortcoming.

All social data pointed that Turkey's greatest advantage in the near future was her young population of twenty million. This meant that the country was sitting on a time bomb, since channeling the youth in the right direction and helping them discharge their energy depended on the modernization, as well as rational and planned management of the



sports industry. One one hand, the country's economic resources were growing, while on the other, companies were growing and building brands, and foreign capital investments were ontherise. This created a very favorable climate for adding new values to sports and for increasing the services to be provided through sports.

The solution of underlying cultural issues depended on planned and scientific efforts. In fact, Turkey appeared to be successful only in scientifically studied sports; these were limited to basketball and volleyball. There was no lasting success even in football despite the large funding it received. It had become necessary to explore the reasons behind the less than desirable results received in individual sports such as weightlifting and wrestling in which Turkey once shone. The picture was clear: the success achieved through individual strength in the past was now only possible with athletic and technical competitors.

The most important source of the problem was that the entire sports world was managed under a single title, was responsive to only the popular sports, and relied on performance. Therefore, sports was unable to meet the goals of a healthy lifestyle. The slow spread of the association between a healthy way of life and sports -which could easily be established by playing football on synthetic turf, running, working out in the gym, or walking- in society at large epitomized a lack of communication. In developed countries, people engaged in sports for at least one hour per week accounted for 47 percent of the population. Turkey's ranking far below this rate demonstrated that individuals lacked information about the well-being of their own bodies. In other words, there was a similar problem in healthcare policies. In brief, sports needed to have a place in human life and be done consciously. Overly active in sports management, governments first had to develop policies to help masses to gain the habit of practicing sports and adopting its culture.8

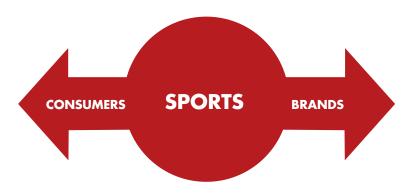
This critical perspective constituted the core of the idea to look for investment opportunities directly outside public resources. So, could an advertising agency be the catalyst of this transformation?

All social data indicated that Turkey's greatest advantage in the near future was her young population of 20 million.

It was certain that as the power of creating qualitative perception continued to bring brands together with sports, there would be a need for discipline and regulation in this relationship. The industrialization of sports and the connection of different industries with sports had given birth to sports marketing as a basic concept, but this concept had such a broad definition that all activities related to marketing and sports were articulated under the same heading.

Sportsnet began sharing its view on the fallacy of this definition through various publications. The error was in addressing sports related activities of brands under the heading of sports marketing. Sports marketing meant the marketing of a sporting activity. A sporting element or proprietor could be marketed to two different audiences. One was the consumer, and the other was the brand. The product being marketed could be a club, a sports organization, or even a league; the consumer and brand were included in this equation—the first by buying tickets or licensed products and the latter by securing the right to give its name.

#### SPORTS MARKETING Inside Out



Sport Related Marketing Communication Philosophy The sponsorship of the customers brand in this position to the sports property is not called "Sports Marketing," but called "Sponsorship". However, this term is not sufficient either.

At this stage, "Sports Related Marketing Communication" comes into play, which is an outside-in movement for sports.

## SPORTS RELATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION SPORTS RELATED SPORTS

Although it could not be completely isolated from the general marketing field, the concept of sports marketing, which means defining marketing principles with the spirit of sports, was not scientific, and it had to give rise to a segment in the methodologies employed by the communications field. Sports was primarily characterized by being both personal and global at the same time. For the globalization of sports markets, it was enough to have access to the mass communications channels. Sports marketers were witnessing the magnitude of the mass effect, but they could also see that they could not predict the personal impact. Each sports consumer derived a different level of satisfaction and experience from sports, creating a major risk area for marketing investment. Therefore, rather than ending up with irreparable results, some brands opted to stay away from sports. Accordingly, the communications professional's role was to remove the unpredictability of sports outcomes from being a disadvantage and utilize these results as a selling point. This interpretation thus formed the conceptual basis of sports related marketing communications.

The marketing relationship in this filed was established by proprietary owners or sports marketing agencies. Sports marketing agencies were expected to carry out this economic traffic by adding brand management knowledge and sports expertise to these relationships. Well-equipped with the know-how on turning ownership into product, as well as when and at what cost it could marketed, these companies were very active across the world. Fans wearing the jersey of the team they supported were now regarded as consumers rather than fans. It was possible to open Manchester United stores in Bangkok, which was one of the farthest points from the United Kingdom, and Ferrari boutiques in Singapore, which did not have a racetrack, while National Basketball Association (NBA) products could be ordered via Internet from Namibia, which did not have a basketball team. In the early 2000s, the trend

in this market showed an increase in the effectiveness of sports marketing agencies.

The concept of sports related marketing communications played a role in drawing attention to a special field in this tangle of relations: A brand's engagement in sports related communications activities in line with its needs. This endeavor did not exactly overlap the concept of sports marketing because when a brand was associated with a sporting property, it would not necessarily practice sports marketing. Furthermore, sports marketers were not able to solve the issue of a nonsports related product or brand image's benefit from sports. Therefore, such endeavors could best find definition in sports related marketing communications. Considering the categories in academic literature, this definition could be made as follows: Sports related marketing



communications—the use of a sporting good for the purpose of marketing communications in accordance with the interests or needs of the brand.

The communications agencies that assumed such a role had to have the ability to integrate the sensitive balances and scientific data of sports with the disciplines of marketing science. Sportsnet was established as a company that distinguished itself from advertising agencies in the industry with is unique strengths, operating in an activity area limited to sports, and defining itself as a sports related communications agency.

In the event of a sporting event, the control of marketing over the system would no longer be established by traditional marketing methods.



Prerequisites such as spontaneity, being prepared for any new developments, and the readiness of crisis management desks to interfere the workings of the system at any given moment were to be fulfilled. The relationship between on-field sports rules and off-field commercial values would be managed by specialized human resources in both areas. Therefore, marginal sources would be transferred to the sports industry, and it would be possible to achieve a nationwide transformation in a platform that could expand from the social sports culture to the individual sports activity, from designing the sports market to sports management education.

The target and the claim might have seemed too big for a new advertising agency, but Turkey was such a country of sudden and rapid transformation in many areas and hopes of stable growth and integration into the world was at the top of her agenda. A year earlier, Galatasaray had won two European Cups for the first time in the country's socccer history, and the number of fans exceeded 20 million. On the other hand, the club was at the brink of bankruptcy, while the global profit of NBA's merchandising products had neared \$3 billion the same year. All this and more this that this transformation was inevitable for Turkey.9

## We are women, we do it sportstvkadın comes first out of all initiatives of sportstv, which includes content tailored exclusively for women.



Spor yapan kadınlar güçlü olduklarını hissediyor, kendilerini başarılı buluyor, spor sayesinde özgüvenleri artmış, mutlu ve stresten uzak olduklarını düşünüyorlar. Türkiye'de artık spor yapan ve sporla ilgilenen kadınlara özel bir spor kanalı var. Pilates'ten yogaya, CrossFit'ten spor modasına, çocuklar için spordan sağlıklı beslenmeye kadar her şey, "Türkiye'nin ilk ve tek kadın spor kanalı sportstvkadın'da.

sportstvkadın yayında.





















SportsnetGroup
Sports Related Marketing Solutions

The idea of specialization in sports related communications meant the creation of an unprecedented segment within the industry, based on the accurate analysis of data on Turkey and the world. As a person who had assumed national and international responsibilities in sports and experienced the need for such an area of service, <sup>10</sup> I shared with TBWA network, which was in the process of restructuring globally, the project of creating a method to be used not only in Turkey but also across the entire world. As a former national athlete who had a professional career in marketing and who had served as president of the Turkish



Volleyball Federation, president of the Marketing Commission at the European Volleyball Confederation, and vice president of the Marketing Commission at the International Volleyball Federation, I was making a proposal to one of the largest global communications networks to solve the congruity problem at the junction of sports and communications.

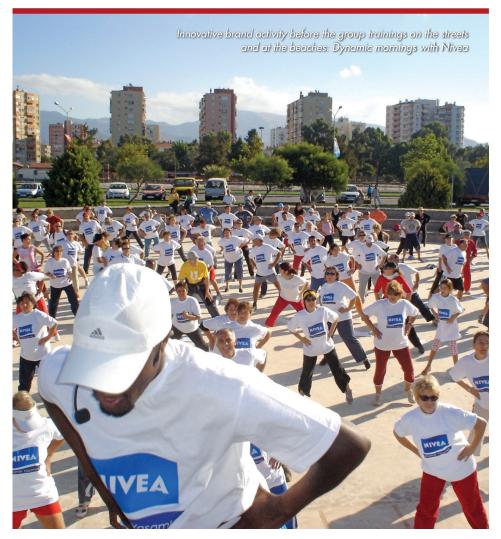
My friend Cem Topçuoğlu, with whom we founded Sportsnet and whose shares I took over in 2005, embraced this proposal while establishing TBWAs Istanbul office and worked hard to persuade the central management. A former athlete himself, he also believed in sports orientation.

The project was enthusiastically received by the TBWA network management. It seemed possible to add a specimen of sports related advertising concept and creative practices to different segments and areas of specialization in countries developed in communications. My meeting with Jean Marie Dru, who was at the time the most influential manager of the TBWA global network, was quite stimulating. A similar development in the field of health communications had been experienced in the United States and was beginning to spread to the

rest of the world. As in the health sector, sports was an area with its own language, rationale, and dynamic, daily developments. The biggest obstacle for an agency of this caliber would be brand names and to come between brands and their marketing agencies, since market conditions and the agreements made between clients and their agencies did not condone such a move.

Founded in 2001, the first four years of Sportsnet was





spent facing many challenges. We went through numerous multilateral processes of persuasion. We challenged the conventional communications methods and the norms for conventional marketing behaviors. The corporate model we formed was shaped in line with the world of sports rather than market traditions. Customer relations, as well as the strategic and creative work of the communications projects we had undertaken were executed by Sportsnet. Meanwhile, field organizations were managed by Allsports, productions by Match, and promotions by SportsM, all of which were separate entities we had co-founded. The distribution of tasks and specializations was designed as a small model

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of the current Sportsnet Group. The first work we undertook within the the wheels of the unproductive system succeeded in proving us right and made a difference.

Running uninterruptedly from 2001 to 2005, Nivea ile Dinamik Sabahlar was the first of its kind. The program, which allowed television viewers to start their day by doing sports in front of the television, gave innovative promotional exposure to the brand. At the core of the strategy was the integration of women and sports and the combination of fieldwork with broadcasting. This was the first commercial film for a sports club to be broadcast in Turkey, and it was viewed by the Arçelik volleyball team communications planning unit. Subsequently, a long haul and multifaceted collaboration was established with communications giant Turkcell, which enabled us to prove our presence in the sector.

In my book titled, Panoda Yer Yok: Spor Odaklı Pazarlama İletişimi, Kavramlar ve Vakalar (Sports Related Marketing Communications, Notions & Facts), I recalled a symbolic example of the change of the initial mentality that started with Sportsnet.

"It was before the 2002 FIFA World Cup in South Korea and Japan. Marking a first in its history, the Turkish National Soccer Team had made it to the finals for third place in the world. The Turkish Football Federation was the official sponsor of the team and was often forced to cajole brands and use personal contacts for contribution. At the time, various brands chose to enter the sports platform by following the prevailing global trends. Turkcell, a brand which maintains the largest marketing communications budget and the market leader for GSM services in Turkey, was one of these companies. In 1998, they had signed a license agreement with the then Ministry of Transportation for twenty-five years. In 2000, it was listed simultaneously in the Istanbul and New York stock markets, which was the first time a company had achieved this in Turkey. It was investing in the local Caucasian markets and was building a regional leadership vision. When one of the brand managers, Tülin Karabük, visited Sportsnet to establish a sports related marketing communications concept, she expressed her belief that Turkcell needed to initiate activities on the sports platform and asked the agency to guide the company. When the available data, research results, the needs of the brand, its market position and the future projections were taken into consideration, football was undeniably at the forefront as an investment option. Its strength in accessibility to a wide audience and its influence on the target masses were in accordance with Turkcell's needs and future projections. When a strategy was formulated based on these assessments, all the developments were evaluated and it was predicted that the national football team would achieve a resounding success in the FIFA World Cup. The current team members and those who previously attained club successes were an important element of this projection. When the global football atmosphere was examined, Turkey's competitive strength could be witnessed."

At that time, Turkey was rendering impressive successes and had attained the chance to compete in the 2002 World Cup. With respect to these developments, the sponsorship infrastructure had not been completed and unprofessionally established in what was the only official body, the federation.

This situation could have created a lucrative opportunity for Turkcell. Therefore, the idea for Turkcell to be the national team sponsor was born, and it was ready to be presented to the federation. During that period, there was a strong bond between the Turkish Football Federation and Digiturk, which was also connected to the same holding as Turkcell. Digiturk CEO Ertan Özerdem and Tülin Karabük visited the then head of the federation, Haluk Ulusoy, to discuss matters relating to Turkcell's request to be a sponsor. The sponsorship was being devised according to the position of the logos on the press conference billboards. No hierarchy or pricing system had been established between the sponsors. Ulusoy responded to the demand for sponsorship by stating that the billboard in the press conference was completely covered by the logos of the sponsors and that no further sponsors were accepted. The head of the federation was simply stating that he would be pleased by Turkcell's sponsorship but that there was no place to include its logo. This response proved that during that period, sponsorship was perceived

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as logo placement. The federation needed more sponsors and brand names wanted to contribute, but the billboard in the press conferences proved an obstacle.

We had not spoken to Turkcell management about what we could do under such circumstances. At that meeting, I told them that a concept sponsorship could be conducted. When no one quite understood what I had just said, I suggested an impromptu idea: "How about National Team Official Communications Sponsorship?" Puzlled looks were exchanged. "What is an official communications sponsor?" asked Ulusoy. "The Turkcell logo will not be placed on a billboard or in any other place. The federation will only approve Turkcell as the official communications sponsor of the national team. We will communicate this idea and will provide support to the federation and the team." When they heard this, everyone paused. I said, "It does not need to be on a billboard. Turkcell will simply use the national team in its communications with the understanding that it is their official communications sponsor." The president of the federation expressed that this would not cause any problems and that we could do anything that we wished. Everyone was excited, and the concept of an official communications sponsorship was conjured up in that meeting. Until then, no brand name had renounced its sponsorship rights and started a new sponsorship deal in a different segment through this method. Therefore, a path was cleared for the idea of an official communications sponsorship. With its strength in communications and a powerful campaign, Turkcell was able to reach its intended place in the sports industry.

As a result, Sportsnet began managing a strategically-designed sponsorship negotiation during the World Cup. Although its logo was not on the billboard, Turkcell was the most highly perceived sponsor of the national team through an effective communication strategy. During the campaign that run while the World Cup games were still on, adds reflecting all three possibilities of the outcome were prepared for the first time in Turkey such that the public's reaction and social emotions were reflected in media day by day. The communications budget of the

brand was just as effective as creative work in creating the perception that Turkcell was the national team's strongest sponsor. The outcome was striking. Despite the absence of its logo on jerseys and the billboard, Turkcell was the first brand to spring to mind after the championship as the national team sponsor, outscoring all other brands.

After this success, the concept of official communications sponsorship spread to the national basketball team and the project designed back then facilitated the transfer of large resources to Turkish sports and continued to support Turkcell's brand leadership position.

In 2005, Sportsnet decided to continue on its own as a legal entity, parted ways with the TBWA network, and began to write its success story with the functionality of its services provided since its first year. In a short time, it became second the organization to provide the largest economic input to the world of national sports after the public sector and facilitated the transfer of \$50 million to sports by advertisers. By the time the company reached its eighth year, this figure was doubled.

When renowned brands formerly uninterested in sports as an area of communication due to the volatility of the field began reaping satisfactory results from the communication model Sportsnet created, the same signature began to appear in all leading sporting events in Turkey. It became evident in the first five years a breakthrough was made in the field of communications. The field was gaining a foothold and Sportsnet cemented its position in the market.

While rationalizing the brands' perception of sports was the most critical part of the task, Sportsnet's continual focus on creating a sports related human resources since the organization's establishment was gaining significance as well. The fact that many professionals trained at Sportsnet assumed important management positions in the sports sector demonstrated that the sports administration sector was moving in conjunction with communications. Sportsnet created a segment by using the advantages of having a sports related past before becoming involved in communications and proved itself by playing hard and fair

The segment created by Sportsnet was not limited to sports related marketing communications.

in a platform with delicate and unique balances. It was only natural for Sportsnet to name this segment: sports related marketing communications.

The segment created by Sportsnet was not limited to sports related marketing communications. While the private sector's sponsorship contributions to sports were increasing noticeably, Turkish sports lovers were presented new areas in sports, and the existing fields were placed in the limelight more often. There were already valid reasons for advertisers to invest more confidently in sports. The articulation of these reasons and the formulation of the process triggered the start of the negotiation process. In developed economies of the world, brand names were inclined to spend far more on communications than on sponsorship expenses. This resulted in real returns, freeing sponsorship from being a burden for the brand. This was the initial equation of the formula Sportsnet customized for Turkey. Since funding provided by the state was at the head of the resources allocated to sports, the source of public resources needed to be efficiently transformed into productivity. The second leg of the equation was to find, through the private sector, ways to support to the state, which built fields and stadiums and funded the federation. Even though the state did what it could, the only way to create audiences was through communications. Brand names were thus going to cover the cost of communications. Therefore, Sportsnet and its customers began to experience how productively sports related marketing communications could be used in Turkey while minimizing risks. Over the years, we found the opportunity to prove that coupling the sports marketing element with a communications element can create a brand name, reposition an existing brand, give a positioned brand a foothold in the market, and springboard the image of a brand.

## Forever Part of an Unprecedented Story

Sportsnet Group enjoyed the pride of being part of every step of the journey as Sultans of the Net rewrote the history of volleyball in Turkey. A congratulatory message was also published when they earned the right to participate in London 2012.



In Turkey, communications and marketing were accepted as academic fields and combined with scientific data in the 1990s; therefore, until then, no data was used except the limited market research available. Departments such as radio, television, journalism, marketing, and public relations structured at the increasing number of schools of communications in line with the tools and media of this field facilitated the interaction between the sector and the academic infrastructure and interdisciplinary science of communication. From now on, a communications professional, the ideas and ways of expression born out fields such as sociology, political science, anthropology, history, art, philosophy, and linguistics would hold a fresh meaning for the communication professional.<sup>12</sup>

The development and transformation of sports in the course of history also allowed it to possess a critical power of communication. The Olympics and the European and World Championships were making a bigger impact on the tourism industry. Based on these developments, it was evident that nations lagging in sports not only would also be faced with a chain of other consequences. Turkey was not much different both with respect to academic approach to sports sciences and to public behavior.

In many countries, the state's monitoring, supportive, and encouraging role in investment in and services provided for sports was assigned to local administrations, private or corporate organizations, and volunteers, whereas in Turkey, the state's centralized role still prevailed. Many European countries took sports clubs and other organizations as examples to restructure their system across settlements of varying sizes in conjunction with planned yet participatory, autonomous and democratic federations, which ultimately led to the efficient use of human power and success. In Turkey; however, starting with financial sources and investments, the federation managements were still under the auspices of the political power and that inevitably led to a vicious cycle.

Similar to other areas, the updating and rationalization of sports organization and restructuring in Turkey began as late as the 2000s, during the process of adaptation to the European Union. While a number of legislative regulations were made and soon bore fruit, the necessary restructuring of sports education or sports management was not completed in the 2000s. The pains of democratization and transparency initiatives in Turkey remained prevalent for sports clubs, federations, and other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The fact that even the oldest clubs could take positive strides after being subjected to pressures from international organizations meant that the public sector was not the only one to blame for the problem.

A basic data comparison between Turkey and other countries with solid sports infrastructure, sustainable success in certain sports areas, and a heightened sense of sports-awareness revealed that in 2004, there was a profound gap to be overcome. Luxembourg had 120,000 athletes in a population of 378,000, Turkey had 574,000 licensed athletes in a population of 66 million, and Germany stood out with 24 million athletes in a population of 80 million. Considered the most practical way to build sports habits from the ground up in primary education across developed nations, physical education was six hours per week, whereas in Turkey, it was reduced to one hour and did not even serve its intended purpose. It

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Yet, the association of modern day sports with science did not date far back in developed nations either. Brought to fore in the 1970s in England, the efforts to have the disciplines of physiognomy and psychology provide scientific contribution to sports education led to the emergence of certain formulas in the 1980s. The objective was not much different from experiments or research conducted earlier and prioritized the improvement of athletic performance. England's third rank in total medals given in the London Olympics in 2012 was seen as the outcome of 40 years of diligent work. The England case showed that a sustainable national success beyond exceptional individual achievement could only be made possible by ensuring that the connections between public policies, structuring, organization, and operation were based on a scientific foundation.<sup>15</sup>

In the 1990s, there was a radical change in the way the world viewed sports. Seen as an event performed by some and watched by others throughout history, sports was increasingly becoming part of urban life. Apart from being an industry growing at an unprecedented rate, it was both acting as a pushing force of globalization and becoming accessible to people from all walks of life. National leagues were infiltrating the international market; the National Basketball Association, Premier League, and La Liga were growing into brand names. Meanwhile, the sports marketing sector was skyrocketing, the big sponsorships were creating new monetary resources, and FIFA was stretching itself into new sports sectors ranging from simulation game consoles to football schools. Like our urban culture, sporting activities were becoming a part of daily urban lifestyle and were becoming equated with healthy living. In a world that associated vacation with inactivity, hotels were now equipped with gyms, neighborhoods had biking and jogging courses, and TV channels aired morning shows starting the day with aerobics for viewers. With tools and equipment, accessories, and clothing came a completely different innovation period for sporting goods. As a result, the scientific approach could not solely focus on athletes' performance because the topic was branching out, gaining depth, and building layers.

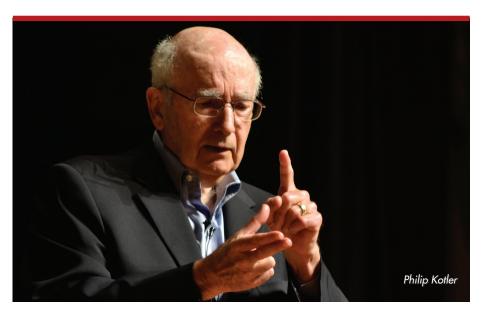
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Many scientific branches such as governance, sociology, communications, marketing, law, medicine, and economics were being added to the exceedingly growing sports industry. New areas of expertise, different experiences, and theories emerged. As in every scientific approach, the fundamental need in this field was the inclusion of measuring methods and databases. Regardless of one's place in the industry, success depended on correct perception and productive relationships. Studies with well-developed methodologies in late twentieth century could now serve a sports related world.

Despite the differences between the rules for competitions in sports and those of economics, the research methods that determine the balance of demand and supply and consumer behavior can be perceived as a means to collect data for sports. As new research techniques produced different levels of awareness from specific to general or from superficial to profound, it became possible to collect both openly expressed and unspoken or unnoticed data. As a result, each measurable data pertaining to a constantly growing and value-generating sector, gained particular importance.

In the 2000s, the sports industry was now included among development criteria in evaluating a country's position on the world scale. Evolving into an important element of a country's economic progress, as sports became an increasingly growing and complex industry, its financial output as well as its social benefits, began to come to fore. Different equations were being formulated between sports and people, and these equations were generating more than one unknown. Thus, research data would no longer be utilized in determining a country's position alone. On a stage upon which the consumer took the lead, commercial sports products, athletes, professional and amateur organizations, brands, broadcasting, and publications would form a giant mix.

Similar to many other countries, numerous academic research studies on sports were conducted and published in Turkey in the 2000s. Hence, the lack of scientific literature on sports was quickly overcome. Academic publications soon emerged, field studies followed suit, and new departments were created in educational institutes. This situation



improved the value of data relating to the sports industry in Turkey. A firm believer in the value of theoretical approaches, the Sportsnet Group sponsored the Turkish translation and publication of *The Elusive Fan: Reinventing Sports in a Crowded Marketplace* by Irving Rein, Philip Kotler, and Ben Shields (2006) in 2007 through *MediaCat*, a leading publishing house of marketing and communications in Turkey.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, the science of marketing communications was also generating new concepts. Among these was a concept called permission marketing, set forth by Seth Godin. Working particularly on the intensity of messaging channels consumers were exposed to due to the constant development of communication tools, Godin was pointing to the problems associated with the receiver's ability to comprehend and retain all these inputs. This mathematically measurable problem posed a serious threat in the eyes of communications professionals. Permission marketing pointed out the importance of preparing consumers to perceive the relayed message, and it argued that technological advancements could serve as the key to solving this problem. Introducing a fresh approach to classical marketing, the concept envisaged the idea of obtaining permission from consumers to communicate with them and creating a platform for volunteerism. It was observed that permission marketing completely altered the profitability of the brands and, in the least, it

As another important concept, attention economy, came into play at a point where sports related marketing communications and permission marketing communications overlapped.

could measure the interest in and response to a given campaign. Target groups designated by different characteristics also helped shape the campaigns. Consumers were naturally drawn closer to the campaigns prepared in line with their own interests. The Internet became the most convenient environment to implement permission marketing. When the development of technologies collecting consumer data and determining the target masses to which the message would be sent with semantic interpretations began to collaborate with customer relations management (CRM) applications, there were no obstacles left between the message and the primary target groups. Ensuring the quality and permanence of perception made significant contributions to marketing activities. In this context, sports was seen as a very favorable platform that allowed for unlimited permission marketing. It was not difficult to surmise that the perception channels of the consumer who focused on a sporting activity were fully open in that direction and closed to all other issues. This meant being fully open to the message. 17

As another important concept, attention economy, came into play at a point where sports related marketing communications and permission marketing communications overlapped. In the stage of attracting the consumer's attention, which constitutes a significant part of the objectives of advertising, creating the drama and the agenda with respect to sports had made it easier to reach the target. Sports events periodically attracted societies, small and large masses, and social segments, creating an effect of intense focus with the agenda and the emotions they generated.

While emphasizing the transformation of the consumer's map of perception when exposed to advertising messages in the twenty-first century, neuroscientific studies also argued that that unconscious perception was far more effective than logic-based consumer behavior.

The reality that the new world of marketing had to acknowledge was as follows: not only big events such as the World Cup or Olympics but also clubs, athletes, and social, cultural, and educational institutions hold an important place in the perception map of the consumer. The new consumers make a purchasing decision not only in terms of price,

quality, or performance but also in terms of the culmination of their entire life experience. In this case, brands responding to the collective experiences of the masses discover a shared meeting ground in almost every society. This shared space happens to be sports.<sup>18</sup>

While there was countless data proving that sport is the platform that best meets the needs of brands' visibility, retention, and recall, it was not enough to determine how the concept of sports should be used in communications. It was not sufficient to allocate resources needed to benefit from the advertising investment and to sponsor a sporting good. At this stage, strategy, creative solution, and content based message delivery began to come into play. The repetition and sustainability of the purchasing decision required stimuli to stir the emotions. That stimulating effect was also considered to be the raison d'être of sports related marketing communications.

Our focus at Sportsnet Group has been on academic research and scientifically compiled data from the onset. We have shaped communications strategies according to these inputs and developed action plans with scholarly diligence. In addition to the research carried out by official institutions, companies, and universities, we also closely monitored and interpreted the trends of the global sports industry.

Since sports related marketing communications not only covered the popular concept of 360-degree marketing communications with all its practical and scientific disciplines, but also added to the mix the unique culture, language, behavior, and characteristics of sports, it was obliged to operate with a full grasp of the existing dynamics of sports. Apart from the traditional media into which a brand channels its marketing communications in consumption activities, sports has been interpreted as a channel in its own right. This channel has its own characteristics:

- Ensure that the brand touches the consumer.
- Transmit messages at a time when the consumer's mind is open.
- Encourage the consumer to identify with the brand as a natural extension.

While there was countless data proving that sport is the platform that best meets the needs of brands visibility, retention, and recall, it was not enough to determine how the concept of sports should be used in communications.

- Establish an emotional connection between the consumer and the brand.
- Have consumers to accept the brand as part of life.

Conventional methods could not be enough to manage a medium that could establish such a multilateral and multidimensional relationship because sports could be effective only when used with its own dynamics and methods. The most effective package of methods developed so far had been shaped by bringing the marketing and sports spirit together and putting that combination into service according to the brand's rationale. In short, it was not possible to obtain productive results without using concrete and up-to-date data.

After I was elected president of the Turkish Volleyball Federation in 1996, I decided to appoint two legendary female volleyball players, Selcan Teoman and Deniz Dosdogru, who are our board members, as managers of our national teams. Selcan and Deniz began working on a clear and critical decision we made for female and male athletes, respectively: to host a large international organization to make Turkish volleyball leap forward.

I had identified this need after years of experience. experience of many years. In each international organization I participated in, I realized that the host country's chances of achievement increased, which, in turn, allowed the host country to lunge forward in sports. This was obvious enough to make generalizations for almost all branches. In order to help Turkey gain this advantage, we needed to undertake a significant and meaningful organization, but we had to choose between men's and women's volleyball. At that stage, I asked Selcan Teoman and Deniz Dosdogru to conduct comprehensive research on which of our teams would be more successful if we could manage to undertake such an organization in the early 2000s.

The men's and women's national teams were subjected to a multidimensional analysis and, after a very long and challenging process, we received the results. Under the current conditions, it did not seem possible for our men's team to rank high in the European or

World Championships in the short term. The findings of our technical director Coach Herrera supported this data. As for women, there was at least light at the end of the tunnel. The only problem was that we didn't have enough native players to play as number four and setter's diagonal position due to the malexecution of the foreign player rule in the past. Technical analyses indicated the possibility that a potential Russian player, who could not play for her own national team due to her young age, would potentially fill this gap. Hence, changing the nationality of this player could jumpstart success.

There were many problems and obstacles that such an attempt would create. I ignored the warnings and decided to start the necessary process to put Natalia Hanikoğlu, who was already married to a Turkish volleyball player, on the national team.

Once this obstacle was overcome, our goal became clear. We made serious preparations and took action to hold the European Women's Volleyball Championship in Turkey. After an extended period of teamwork and struggles, it was up to the persuasiveness of my presentation at the European Volleyball Confederation meeting in Madrid. Eight countries, particularly Germany and Russia, applied for the finals, and they were very serious competitors for us. As the federation, our activities in the last three years, especially in broadcasting, were appreciated by the European Volleyball Confederation. In the presentation I made that day, I made a great effort to impress the general assembly by explaining that Turkey deserved this and pointed to the potential importance of Turkey in the development of European volleyball with figures and data. In the end, it was decided to hold the 2003 finals in Istanbul at the Abdi İpekçi Sports Hall, and we succeeded in returning from that meeting with a decision of approval. We had been able to turn a decades-long, yet unrealized dream into reality.

When I decided to leave the position of president of the federation after 2000, I felt relieved to have achieved an important goal. However, it did not turn out as I had hoped; the new federation management took office in 2002 and declared that it did not want to undertake

As I watched these developments with a smile on my face, Tankut Turnaoğlu, a P&G senior executive, called to tell me that there was something he wanted to consult with me upon the recommendation of Cem Topçuoğlu. In our meeting, he said the following:

-After making product oriented communication for the Orkid brand, we checked if we could develop a sports related project, and we were inclined to be a sponsor to women's volleyball. However, the head of the federation said that they had no chance in the European Championship. What do you think?

It was unbelievable. The future of a branch in a subject the infrastructure and philosophy of which we had established and developed for years, and made into a concrete target was officially overlooked and ignored due to technical lack of foresight and vision problems. As a person who knows all the developments and the whole background of the story, I clearly told him the following:

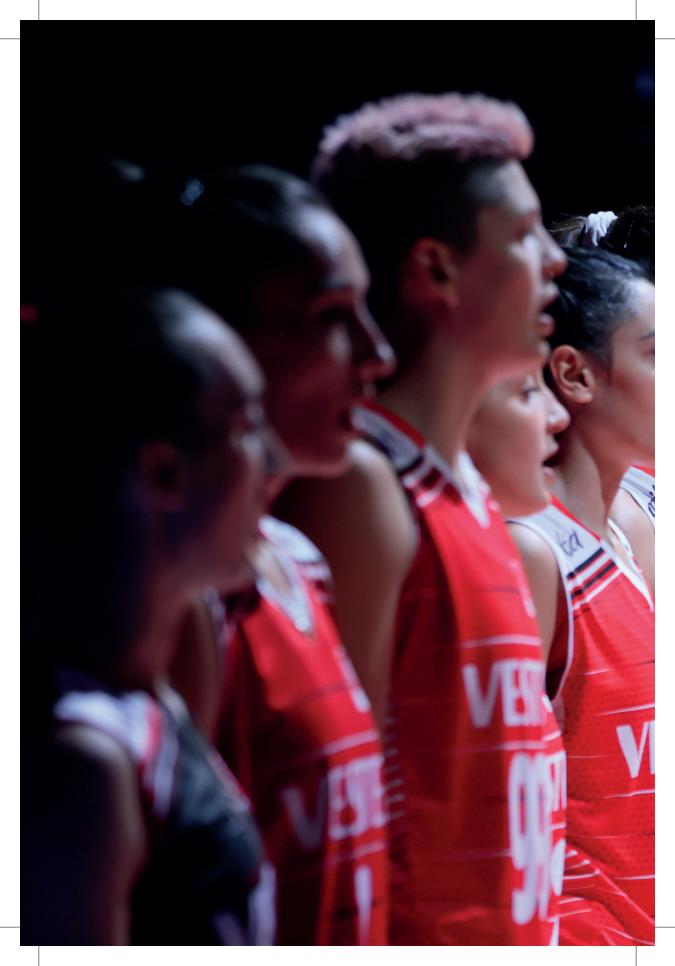
Women's volleyball is the biggest women's movement in the history of the Republic of Turkey and is about to make one of its most significant leaps. That is crystal clear. I -definitely- see and believe that our women's national team will play in the final of the European Championship this year. There is no better investment opportunity for your brand.

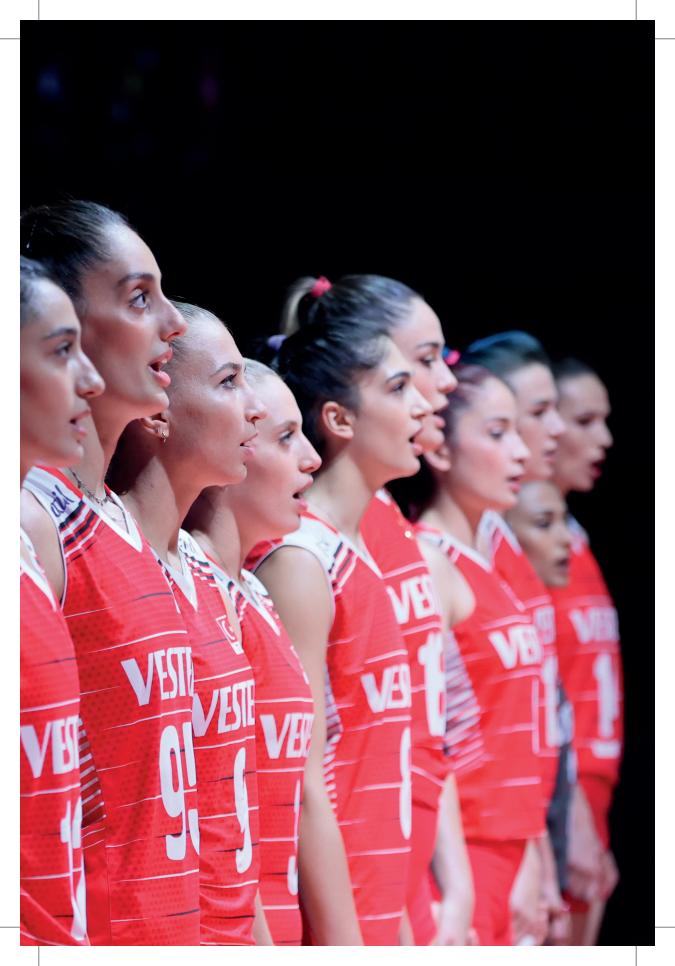
Tankut Turnaoğlu trusted me, believed in my predictions, and Orkid became the first big sponsor in the history of this team. We even convinced the fans, one by one, who did not want a women's sanitary pad brand to be associated with the national team. Although this cooperation was highly debated, the resulting mutual success was

indisputable. Sportsnet created the concept of Sultans of the Net (Filenin Sultanları) and wrote the first chapter of a massive and long running story. The national team started the finals like a storm. The team showed an excellent performance despite the sudden death of their coach Deniz Esinduy at that time and the arrival of Reşat Yazıcıoğulları as the new coach. Natalia Hanikoğlu also showed an outstanding performance in that championship and the national team made history for the country's volleyball by being the runner-up in Europe. Orkid, breaking new ground in this field, carried the sponsorship relationship to above-the-line advertising campaigns and communications, and became the co-author of the history of the Sultans of the Net (Filenin Sultanları).

The two projects we designed for Procter & Gamble (P&G) are particularly important in illustrating the mentality we brought to the relationship between sports and brands. The first was the sports communications concept of the Ariel brand. The approach we brought to the market in Turkey not only received general acceptance, but a larger budget was allocated to make it more widespread, and it was put in place under the title of Thank You, Mom. We began to experience the advantages of working with a global giant like P&G when we saw the international repercussions of the project. The model we developed, in addition to being used in more than twenty nine countries outside Turkey, was the basis for the P&G global Olympic campaign. The other was in the same group, the Olympic Mothers project, designed according to the Turkish scale. The data we have enabled us to shape all communications activities in this category, starting with the national communications strategy for P&G.

I remember doing the first research on the sports market in 2003. Our decision to invest in research was inevitable because the topics focused on by the current market research made by brands produced data that was far from connecting the data to sports. Each of our research studies in the following years gave us signs that would create social benefits and allowed us to create new brand collaborations while reassuring the sponsors.





In 2009, we continued to obtain the data we needed with our own resources through the Automobile Sports Awareness Survey conducted by Synovate. The demographic nature of the work was designed in parallel with the demographic characteristics of the segment dealing with motor sports, identified in the screening study carried out at the end of 2009, and included evaluations of consumers actively involved in automobile sports. The data revealed that the fifth most important branch was automobile sports, the most interest given by a large margin to Formula 1, and that the activities in this field were mostly viewed on television. The data revealed by this research also showed that distancing from the center had a distinguishing effect from other sports branches. The main elements separating automobile sports from tennis, football, and basketball emerged as innovation, technology, adventure, danger, and courage. Looking at the subbranches, it became clear that these elements, which are associated with general automobile sports, were more differentiated in the track subbranch and 32 percent of the consumers wanted their children to be actively involved in go-karting.

In 2011, we designed another important research study and gathered remarkable findings. The research we conducted together with Millward Brown, using examples representing Turkey, revealed that the interest in football was at 88 percent while for sports it was at more than 90 percent. We found that the interest in different sports had reached its highest level in history. Many sports branches seemed to have a value greater than 10 percent.

We did another study that revealed the state of the sports culture and society in Turkey in 2014 and demonstrated society's need for sports broadcasting through scientific data. 19 The research moved ahead with the belief that sports played an important role in the lives of children and that adopting it as a habit at an early age would be the only way to solve certain problems. The research primarily focused on two basic issues related to mothers living in Turkey. The first issue was determining the current state of mothers' knowledge, interests, and desires about sports; the second was to produce supportive information to make strategic planning in this direction. The information needed to improve the status-quo and draw out a road map to popularize sports culture

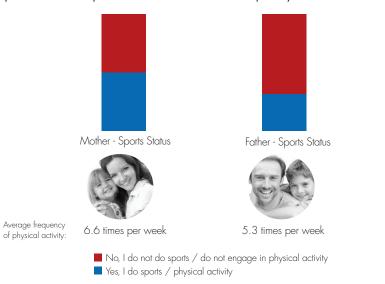
was only possible through identifying the most effective contact points in reaching the mothers of different profiles. Thus, the evaluation of the contents of the messages to be given to the mothers in different profiles could be made, and the communications and actions to be taken could be determined for regional and provincial administrations we were planning to work with. That was not our only goal. With the data at our disposal, we would have a few things to day to the brand names.

The CAPI (computer assisted personal interviewing) method was opted in quantitative research techniques used for the Olympic Mothers project for P&G; face to face interviews were conducted with households in addition to a two-month fieldwork. Mothers aged 25 to 45 years who had sons and daughters between the ages of 5 and 13 and who were from the socioeconomic groups AB, C1, C2, and D were used as samples. Research results regarding the number of people who play sports and are sports-conscious in Turkey once again detected very low levels and demonstrated that physical activity was usually done with the municipality's free sports equipment located in the neighborhoods or in the parks. Only 3 percent of participants had a private gym membership. While 43 percent of interviewed mothers were engaged in sports and physical activity on a regular basis, this activity was mostly confined to walking, and this was done in day to day activities such as taking children to school or going to the market. Mothers who did water sports, jogged, and exercised at home and in sports centers constituted only 10 percent of the cohort in Turkey. Based on this data, almost 90 percent of mothers in Turkey did not do sports on a regular basis. Another striking fact was that fathers' activity levels were even lower than those of mothers, and fathers stayed away from taking part in regular sports. Considering that nearly 11 million children are between 5 and 13 years of age n Turkey and that this demographic group constitutes 15 percent of the total population, there existed a huge pessimistic outlook for the future of this large and very important segment, since their mothers' and fathers' influence on them was so dismal.

In the scope of the research, children aged 5 to 13 years old regularly had a very low rate of taking part in sports. Only 29 percent of girls

and 45 percent of boys regularly engaged in sports or physical activity. In contrast to adults, boys were involved in activities more than girls. According to the results of the study, football activities were performed mostly by boys (31 percent) and water sports were performed by girls (8 percent).

A careful study into the reasons behind the majority of children's involvement in regular sports in Turkey and only football's identification as a sport revealed that mothers did not look deeply into any branch of sport their children could pursue. The children's willingness and the parents' own experiences were considered a priority when it came to



directing their children toward a certain branch of sports. The opinions and recommendations of experts such as health professionals, sports teachers, and pediatricians came next.

The low level of sports activity among children and adults alike and the mothers' lack of awareness on he physical, mental, and social benefits of sports could not be accepted as the fate of society. Before determining the action plan to be developed with respect to this issue, the differences between the personal characteristics of mothers and their attitudes toward children's sports were examined and the results were categorized into three groups:

Group 1 did not differ from the others in any characteristic and was not aware of the benefits of sports. Representing a considerably large 39 percent segment in Turkey, people in this group believed that if their kids did sports, they could fall behind their school work, they get physically hurt, or were not strong enough to play sports.

Group 2 represented 46 percent of what could be defined as "traditional" mothers, living mostly in the Central and Eastern Anatolia regions. They regarded sports as an activity to lose weight and keep fit. This group was also unaware of the benefits sports could provide for their children.

Group 3 was identified as "modern" mothers who were aware of the benefits of sports, as well as the positive motivation and discipline that it would add to daily life, and considered sports necessary for a healthy life. This group, mostly living in big cities and in the western regions of the country, remained rather small with respect to the whole.

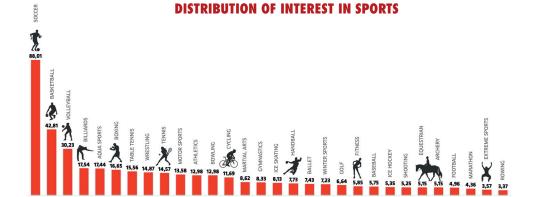
The results of the research showed that it was of vital importance for public health campaigns to raise awareness on taking part in sports throughout the country for the sake of public health. It would be beneficial to vary the communications activities on the basis of regions and different groups, and it would be necessary to explain in schools to children and to parents the positive results of doing sports in daily life. Schools needed to tell children that they would be able to spend energy when they did sports, which, in turn would have a positive impact on their schoolwork. Traditional mothers, who considered sports an activity for weight loss only also needed to be informed about other benefits of sports.

In 2016, in order to access new and updated data on the sports industry in Turkey, we felt the need to have Nielsen conduct a new and more extensive research. Measuring society's level of interest in sports and testing the accuracy of generally-accepted views in Turkey, the Türkiye'de Spora Ilgi (Interest in Sports in Turkey) was not only of interest for group companies, but concerned individuals

Both research results and sports related marketing communications literature show that sports sponsorship can be designed not only as a brand image but also as a demand enhancer.

and organizations, as well. We thus decided to publish the research in the form of a book, and the data was shared with the public via this publication in the fifteenth year of Sportsnet.<sup>20</sup> While this research investigated the levels of following, liking, habit, interest, and consumption of the sports branches and organizations, it also revealed in detail the data related to the media following of sports. The study was conducted by using a quantitative research approach and face-to-face, computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) data collection technique. The interviews were completed using a roughly 20-minute long questionnaire. 1528 people reporting their involvement with sports were interviewed. We were familiar enough with the data to predict the results, but we still did not make any concessions from our principle to rely on data in our actions. Each result proved us right and was turned into a public opinion-creating messages that also grabbed the media's attention.

When the level of interest was analyzed according to gender in the studies on the target group with some level of professed interest in sports, it was observed that the level of interest was higher among the male subjects compared to females and that a lower level of interest was more common among women.

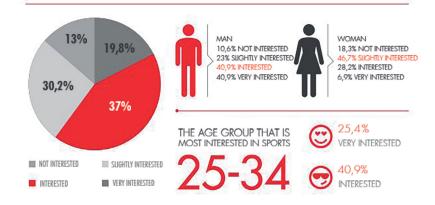


SOURCE: Millward Brown "Sports Research in Turkey"

## **SPORTS INTREST SURVEY**

The study was conducted by using a quantitative research approach and faceto-face, computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) data collection technique. The interviews were completed using a roughly 20-minute long questionnaire. 1528 people reporting their involvement with sports were interviewed. We were familiar enough with the data to predict the results, but we still did not make any concessions from our principle to rely on data in our actions. Each result proved us right and was turned into a public opinion-creating messages that also grabbed the medias attention.

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The common outcome of many research studies on the effect of sponsorship in sports indicates that the interest level of sports related brands is in direct ration with their familiarity. The growing increase in events organized by brands withsports marketing communication in their communication strategies also supports the importance of this area. Sports sponsorship in Turkey is a field of opportunity geared towards creating more value than existing competitors.

For sponsor brands, the most important factor with respect to demand for sports is the level of interest the target mass shows for the sports branch that creates a mass environment. Although the rating level of an event is presumed to be the most important criteria for the brand, the perpetuity of this ratio still depends on the sports culture in that mass. Studies reveal that the intention to purchase during a sporting activity

without questioning price/quality parity prevails in consumer groups equipped with sports culture. A market segment with these characteristics shows categorical sensitivity in terms of creating customer loyalty.

Both research results and sports related marketing communications literature show that sports sponsorship can be designed not only as a brand image butt as a demand increaser as well. The effective use of the resources allocated to sponsorship and the rational explanation of the parameters in the pricing phase of the sponsorship are also a part of this construct.

When it comes to sports, another notion that arises in the mind of the consumer is the feeling of gratitude arising from the support of sports activities watched relatively less and fall into the interest area of groups that can be defined as marginal. In these cases, it is possible to get very effective emotional results even if large masses are not reached. These findings must be seen as an element that should be included in the sponsorship design of companies that use the brand as a differentiation tool, not as a means of sustaining a promotion.

The ratio of those who are interested in sports and follow sports branches, the reasons for their interest, and their motivation to watch it on location are shaped by emotional relationships. The interest in sports in Turkey has very different dynamics, and the data changes year to year. Great advancements can be achieved with important successes or unique stories in sports. We are faced with a world of sports where the perception can be easily affected, the agenda is shaped by television broadcasts, and public policies can change rapidly. Despite the high level of national participation in the European Football Championship and the Olympics, a display of unsuccessful results affects the outcome of research. It appears that while the extraordinary events of the summer of 2016 weakened regular sports viewership, it nonetheless strengthened its social aspects.

Although the 2016 Interest in Sports in Turkey research did not paint a different picture compared to the research conducted over the years with respect to the level of interest in sports, it did reveal that the big surge between 2005 and 2010 had slowed down. While the percentage of those less interested or not interested in sports was above 50 percent until the 2010s, there was a significant increase in interest in sports in this segment. It can be said that this increase was mainly due to the intense interest in sports to maintain a healthy lifestyle and achieve weight loss.

Once exceeding 40 percent in earlier studies, men who were once very interested in sports seem to decline in number. While the decrease in international achievements and being a host country in global sports organizations are listed among the main reasons for this result, it appears that the changes in the fan structure of clubs lead to a decrease in the percentage of fanatical supporters.

Football is still the most dominant sport in Turkey and male domination still prevails. While 86.1 percent of men are interested in football, this rate drops to 49.2 percent for women. As the largest, most popular, and most consistently watched organization of this branch, Spor Toto Super League is followed continuously by 63.4 percent of the public. The effect of the Spor Toto Super League becomes more evident when we consider that two global organizations of the same branch, namely, FIFA World Cup and the European Football Championship are followed by 11.3 percent and 14.7 percent, respectively, and that the largest sports organization Olympics is followed by 10 percent from

### **REGULARLY WATCHED SPORT ORGANISATIONS**

When the sports organizations are examined, it is seen that the Turkish Football League ranks in the first place.



AN IMPORTANT ORGANIZATION FOLLOWED REGULARLY IN TURKEY SPOR TOTO SÜPER LİG

%63,4 OF THE PEOPLE SAY THEY CONTINUOUSLY FOLLOW THIS ORGANIZATION



THE RATE OF CONTINUOUS FOOTBALL LEAGUES
FOLLOWERS IN EUROPE IS 18.5%



THE RATE OF PEOPLE FOLLOWING CHAMPIONS LEAGUE AND THE EUROPEAN LEAGUE IS 18.3% the beginning to the end. This situation indicates the importance of the competitive nature of the league atmosphere, which evokes different emotions and creates perpetuity and socialization.

When we examine the avenues in which sport is followed, the first avenue for those who are at least somewhat interested in sports are the television channels. Among the viewing population, 91.1 percent of people watch TV to access sports and 32.4 percent watch at least one match per week.

When sports programs are added to this, the percentage of those who follow sports on TV every day increases to 38.9 percent. Online sports viewing takes second place, ahead of newspapers and social networks.21

# It's Not a Question of Betting Horse breeding of our country, structured around the Turkey Jockey Club is a phenomenon that goes beyond the hippodromes with its social activities and employment. This fact was explained in the campaign that came to fore with the slogan " It's Not a Question of Betting."



# VII. HORIZONIAL CORPORATE STRUCTURING

Things did not end when the first advertising agency integrated sports into the marketing communications mix and provided service in only sports related areas, because creating such a segment in the sector required reinterpreting all the unique components of that segment. Now there was a sports related advertising agency, but the advertising agency function was not sufficient to cover the mix of marketing communications. All components of this new segment had to be reinterpreted.

The headquarters of the conglomerates that control the disciplines of marketing communications science were, as always, in the United States, the largest slice of the economy cake. Almost all advertising agency networks spread over the world were seen as competing against each other, but the clusters were not more than five, and they belonged to these holdings. While communications conglomerates at the top of the executive position were originally financial players that determined the advertising disciplines in the world and influenced their networks, the change in the structure of the communications sector could not be independent of their point of view. An integral part of advertising agencies throughout the history of the modern industry, the media purchasing unit, for example, was restructured by the media purchasing companies that were connected to these networks in the recent past. Similarly, starting from public relations agencies, production, below-

the-line, and digital communications were undergoing a restructuring process. This clustering in the function and discipline categories would eventually give rise to media purchasing companies as the most powerful organizations in the communications sector.

From a marketing perspective, it would have been inevitable for growing industries distinguished from the general organizational approach to have their unique theories and for the market structures to restructuring themselves accordingly. The reflection of the same development in sports led to the emergence of the concept of sports marketing. The sports industry in the United States gave birth to sports marketing agencies, which became widespread as entities operating in different disciplines. However, their activities were not limited to just sports marketing. University sports, branch specializations, and the perspectives on all levels of basketball had long become the natural extensions of the \$200 billion sector in the United States. Therefore, the market structure in the United States entailed sports marketing agencies that utilized a wide range of consultancy and business to business (B2B) service networks. The sports industry was designed by sports agencies even before advertising and had a mature system. A careful look at the equivalent of this structure in Turkey revealed a sector dominated by the advertising networks in the United States; however, it was impossible to talk about a specialization in sports.

In the 1950s, Turkey's perception as a market by international marketing companies, led brands considered global during that period to invest in production plants in Turkey and establish retail networks. The first major foreign capital initiative of the products and private sector that met the basic food and hygiene needs gave birth to marketing networks, advertising, and advertisers. Although its scale is different compared with those in the big economies, the advertising sector in this country was created by legendary personalities. The doyens of this profession came to fore once advertisers with an international marketing network entered the market at a time when the word "global" was not even used. Next came the divisions, foreign partnerships, and participation in international networks. Copywriters known for their intellectuality did not possess a deep knowledge of communications and marketing, but

the sector began to demonstrate its powers once wordsmiths showcased their creativity and television entered daily life.

Change was inevitable. As advertisers shifted from patronage to partnerships, from authoritarian management to pluralistic mechanisms, and from being local to multinational, advertising agencies redefined the concept of complete service. The existing market data was also reevaluated and new professions were created.

Operating in a developing fragile economy, Sportsnet has tried to adapt to these conditions since its early years by striving to integrate the reinterpreted principles of 360 degree marketing communications with a sports focus. Eliminating the obstacles that would prevent sports investments from turning into brand names depended on the communications strategist and the advertiser's complete grasp of the sports culture.

Much like the ways in which financial values established in the marketing communications sector created consolidation in international finance groups, similar formations were seen in the advertising world as well. International organizations had recognized that they could grow as they bought local brands, the securities market was functioning according to set rules, the dimensions of international trade were changing, new sectors were emerging, and the retail sector was becoming a sector in its own right. Foreign capital became the first solution for developing countries' need for capital accumulation. Companies were becoming multinational, and the nationality of capital disappeared. In short, the communications sector existed simultaneously with the opening of international brands to new markets and, during this process, sports became a very serious communications medium for brands.

While Sportsnet showed Turkey that sports related marketing communications could be used productively and with a minimized risk ratio, it monitored global trends and shaped its corporate structure according its observations. I expressed the basic mentality that we instilled into the team in those years as follows: "When sports is supported by the communications mix along with the marketing mix, it can create a brand, reposition the existing brand in the market, sustain the positioned brand, and even trigger a leap in the brand image.

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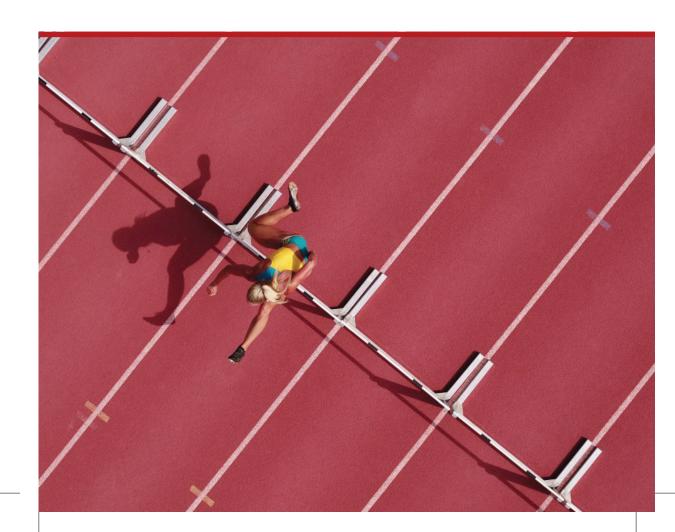
While sports marketers increase their effectiveness and strengthen their systems, sports related communicators should also create an integrated marketing communications mix with this perspective. By showing the effectiveness of brands, Sportsnet can not only build its first sports related advertising agency but can also prove its claim by creating a sports related marketing communications mix. Only if all the elements that make up this composition are sports related can we then attain the power to create brands through sports."

When incorporating the scientific disciplines of marketing communications into sports, adding the power and dynamism of sports to communications was not a simple operation. First, there was the need to be an athlete and a communicator simultaneously. The creative and strategic planning departments of above-the-line (ATL) communications and below-the-line (BTL) groups needed to work in harmony, under the same roof, and human resources of both groups had to share a common identity.

Promotional and marketing tactics, which are one of the sports specific building blocks, had to be managed within the same structure. We had to also include sports related public relations in this structure. The ability to manage the sporting activity from A to Z required the inclusion of productions in the system. Furthermore, sponsorship management, which is the lifeblood of sports related communications, had to be remodeled in all its details. Sportsnet became a corporation in these different service areas and turned into the Sportsnet Group while creating its horizontal structure. This necessitated our constant investment in order to produce faster and more effective solutions in different sports areas. The first big investment in the field of sports was carried out in 2003 by incorporating All Sports, which organizes sporting activities to suit the marketing communications needs of brands. We did not consider All Sports merely as an event agency but carried it to a sports related BTL, experimental marketing, and sports marketing company position. The training and agency infrastructure we created in line with view closed a significant gap in the sector.

As brands invested in sports, the area of influence of sports was expanding. Add communications to this mix and every area we thought would draw "less interest" could become a focus of attention. Even

when tickets were sold out months before the game, provocative ads about a New York Knicks game could still continue to draw attention to Madison Square Garden because that basketball game could be watched not only from the arena but also simultaneously from anywhere around the world. Not only television channels but also sports teams' viewership became measurable and sports oriented television channels began to emerge. Eurosport, which has embraced almost every sports branch, created a sporting segment in television broadcasting, while NBA TV quickly became global. The system formed by the US National Basketball Association did not only make a basketball league a brand name, but it displayed a sports management model. NBA recruited sports stars from China, and after the United States and Europe, it included Asia into its system. After recruiting basketball players from around the world, including Turkey, it increased the viewership of what was now the global basketball ring.<sup>22</sup>



While there is countless data proving that sports is the platform that best meets the needs of a brand's visibility, recall and recollection, it was not enough to determine how the concept of sports had to be used in communications. It was not enough to designate the necessary resources to sponsor a sporting proprietor to benefit from advertising investments. At this stage, the strategy, creative solution, and content-based message transmission features of sports related marketing communications began to come into play. The repetition and continuity of the decision to purchase required stimuli to stir emotions. That stimulating effect was also the reason for the existence of sports related marketing communications. The group became a spokesperson for the Olympic principles, the honoring of personalities dedicated to sports, and the critical attitude of public opinion on sports.

The 1990s in Turkey was marked by many specific developments. One of these was the introduction of private sector television broadcasting. In the following years, this change led to significant outcomes in terms of sports broadcasting, which I must address under different headings. Hence, what we have done so far with respect to sports broadcasting within Sportsnet and what we are doing now can be better understood.

## THE IMPACT OF TELEVISION ON LIFE

A chronological analysis of social behavior, different outlooks on life, and processes of social change in Turkey reveals that a specific era stands out as a period of transformation. While there was a serious change in the '90s, the establishment of private television broadcasting played a pivotal role; over the past twenty years, television broadcasting was under state monopoly and was guided by public opinion. This resulted in a broadcast designed by the state and even by governments. Turkey had not been able to take strides in TV broadcasting the same way it had kept pace with the rest of the world in radio broadcasting. Nonetheless, national television broadcasting that began in the 1970s with only a single channel followed by a second channel, had soon spread nationwide. The closed economy and society had suddenly met the outside world through television, which became a medium of focus

for a large part of society. suddenly met the outside world through television, which became a point of focus for a large part of society.

Broadcast illegally at first as of 1991, private television channels came to life as a product of the liberal economic approach of the period and became widespread by demonstrating that they understood the language and demands of the society better. This change turned viewers, who had been nothing more slaves to the screen until then, into customers and content was produced in response to their demands. Initiating a debate on the boundaries of public broadcasting in particular, this development led to the questioning of the directive broadcasting policies of the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), a subsidized public institution. The same development brought a completely new dimension to advertising. The communications sector broke out of state control and found a new field of creativity. This is how Turkey advanced to the level of a communicating society. For these reasons, it is necessary to underline the change experienced in the '90s.

# SPORTS AND SPORTS BROADCASTING

I must note that television and sports broadcasting have a very special place in my personal life. When I look back on my active sports life, I can easily say that I have enough experience to make a meaningful analysis. The great impact sports broadcasting has on the sports industry is also the most significant parameter of this analysis.

The year was 1987. While TRT's broadcasts were still partially black and white and to some extent in color, I was a national team athlete in the World Inter-Army Volleyball Championships held in Ankara. We won the final match against Italy and became the world champions. I was chosen the best setter and received the trophy as the team captain. As we sung our national anthem, my face was on the screen for several minutes. For the following month, I was almost unable to walk on the streets because a sports broadcast that had been able to unite Turkey under a single channel, had made me a star people recognized and stopped on the street to congratulate. The success of the Army National Team not only made me famous but also escalated interest in volleyball.

At the time, the matches in which I played for Galatasaray would be sold out, and thousands of people would be left standing outside.

As TRT started broadcasting other branches of sports such as basketball, ice skating, artistic gymnastics, and athletics attracted attention and their respective viewers began to increase. The Olympic sports atmosphere I longed to experience could be created due to a single channel in the entire country. The extraordinary success of one Turkish athlete was leading the entire society to focus on that branch of sports. TRT's view of sports broadcasting was on a par with the universal Value of sport. Even those who shared these values with limited opportunities took their share. I witnessed the transformative influence of television on people. I cannot go without expressing my sincere respect to the idealistic professionalism of the late Kenan Onuk, who managed and directed sports broadcasting at TRT during that time.

There was another transformation with the introduction of private channels. Football could have been the only product for the new actors of the market focusing on giving people what they wanted. They ignored all the other branches and set their sights solely on football. The identification of sports with football both in the sense of an industry and general perception led to a collapse in all other sports branches. Volleyball, for example, was unable to find a place on the screen and quickly lost its share in the industry.

There is a symbiotic relationship between sports and television broadcasting in the world. Technological developments regarding broadcasting are always experimented in the field of sports. The reason for this is that scattered interests can all be clustered in a single group when it comes to sports. The same is also true in Turkey. During this period, the concentration of private channels on football pushed TRT to compete in the same direction causing amateur branches to suffer extensively. I spent the final years of my sports career playing in front of empty bleachers. A branch that could not market itself would fail to survive. This is how I began to address this issue in different settings and deal with the problems of the local sports industry. That year, the first solution I found was to introduce beach volleyball to Turkey.

My national teammates Kenan Bengü, Dünya Baltacıoğlu, Metin Görgün, and I were to bring this organization together with the brands and ensure that it would have screen time on television. Beach volleyball was a summer activity and because it had sex appeal, it could find a place in the broadcasting stream and attract brand names. Similarly, I started to produce sports programs on channel Tele10 and ensured the screening of volleyball on television each week. With a serious approach to production, I continued to produce programs on Star TV, and in a few years, I saw beach volleyball become a popular branch. This experience confirmed the accuracy of my insight. Television would be the most important catalyst for the development of the industry.

The broadcasting of beach volleyball on television had made this branch incredibly popular. It was even more popular and widely-viewed than indoor volleyball. Seen as the architect of this development, I was nominated and elected as the president of the Turkish Volleyball Federation with the support of many different segments as we left the first half of the 1990s behind. When I became president in 1996, the only volleyball broadcast on TV was the Presidential Cup final. It was a \$13 million industry, with 26,500 licensed athletes. The international ranking for our men and women was thirtieth. My criterion for success was very clear: to provide live volleyball coverage on television.

For this purpose, I began looking for resources and reaching out to brands to invest. At the end of my four year term, there were 156 live broadcasts, a \$90 million industry, and 50,000 licensed athletes. Women's and men's volleyball had set their sights on ranking tenth in the world. In merely four years, I had proven the effect of television as as a powerful weapon. More importantly, the federation recognized the impact television had on the marketing of a sports branch. When I left my post voluntarily in 2000, I had personally established that television was inarguably the number one solution partner in the marketing of sports ownership.

Following the establishment of Sportsnet in 2001, I set out to do an analysis of sports broadcasting in Turkey based on this observation.

A very large and problematic picture emerged. Television was behind

Television would be the most important catalyst for the development of the industry. Televisions was behind the inequality created by football, which still continues today.

the inequality created by football, which still continues today. The broadcasting media of that period had been engaged in sports streaming, but merely broadcasted based on demand. Moreover, the focus was not even on football. Sports broadcasting was considered to comprise the matches of the three major clubs. This situation continued for years. The matches of the teams outside the three major clubs were not even considered significent, and were given only minutes' worth of screen time. In the football industry, this led to a stark inequality, and since these matches were not broadcast each week, minor teams could not even get advertisement on their jerseys. Apart from the fact that they lacked marketing exposure, the football players' concentration and chances of standing out were negatively affected by this situation. Yet, during the same period, the branding of European leagues had begun. Turkey seemed to have limited itself to the branding of the three clubs.

Those who wish to understand the systematic effects of television broadcasting on branding can examine the UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) Champions League. This league is one of the best examples of how a proprietor in the world can be restructured through television broadcasting. The transition from the Champion Clubs' Cup to the Champions League increased the value of this organization a hundredfold. The new design put forward by the Swiss Team Marketing company is a television oriented structure, which is an initiative that aims to grow the industry and has succeeded at that.

In those years, some channels were established in Turkey for commercial purposes. As the country's first pay channel in 1999, Cine 5 launched the Supersport channel to broaden its entertainment package and became the first medium to broadcast certain European leagues. The aim was not to spread sports awareness or to grow the industry but to attract more customers. In 2002, we rented this channel and launched the first ever unencrypted sports channel through the Cine 5 platform, under the direction of Ilhan Uzundurukan, vice president of the sports department at Sportsnet Group. We renewed our corporate identity, including not only the paid broadcast policy but also the logo, and with the young team at Supersport, we broadcast mostly local content. Many branches of sports, from equestrianism events to swimming,

Those who wish to understand the systematic effects of television broadcasting on branding can examine the UEFA Champions League.

became viewable. Sponsorship agreements with big brands showed that the future of the project was bright, and offered us our first experience in sports broadcasting. Expected to meet an important need in Turkey, Supersport had a short lifespan. The general elections had created great political rivalry and television was their biggest weapon. Sold to another group after a period of about six months, the channel drifted away from sports. The first move to create a movement toward a sport oriented medium thus lost its frequency. The majority of the young people who had their first experiences there at the time are the key actors in sports broadcasting today.

As we we developed sports related marketing communications and built collaborations with brand names at Sportsnet, we became convinced that we needed to move forward with a television channel. Doğan Media Group, Turkey's largest media group at that time, approached us with a project. They wanted to create thematic channel packages broadcasting from satellite without a password and one of these would be a sports channel. In 2006, we launched Turkey's first fully accessible sports channel D-Spor through our collaboration with Doğan Media Group guided by the vision of Murat Saygı, who was the head of Doğan TV at the time. Our goal was completely in line with our original philosophy and we now had a channel that included all alternative sports branches.

Soon, D-Spor physically moved into Sportsnet. All the studios relocated to the company and we established a production company named Match to provide the content needed for investment in the channel. We had designed D-Spor as a channel in which people could find sports related content free of rating concerns that directly affect the broadcasting policy of the mainstream channels. Thus, we were the first channel to broadcast sports branches such as volleyball, equestrian competition, tennis, and motor sports. Despite the attention it was bound to receive, football was treated equally and only the top league games were aired. There was a possibility to brand First League, which included old and reputable clubs and determined, a year before the league began, which ones would play in the Super League. We turned this idea into a project and, much like Super League, contributed to

the emergence of a new sports proprietor first sponsored by Türk Telekom followed by Bank Asya, and began regular broadcasting. In the ensuing years, TRT purchased the broadcasting rights by paying 28 times the original value. Inviting to all viewers, but not concerned with appealing to everyone at all times, the visual arrangements, graphics, and promotional streams for this television channel were also designed by Sportsnet.

In 2010, new conditions emerged, requiring Doğan Media Group to change its venture strategy and shut down D-Spor. At the same time, new sports channels were being established. We had to make a decision in light of the developments. We created a new strategy without digressing from the Sportsnet ideals. We were a handful of people determined to form a platform that would bring sports to the screen, and were far ahead of the starting point. Having brought many sports branches to the screen, being aware of the secrets of broadcasting, and having a sincere commitment to an ideal were priceless assets. The people to address the genuine needs of a sports channel in Turkey were the only ones equipped with these assets. After a long evaluation and analysis based on the conditions in Turkey, we made a decision, which entailed major financial risks: acting alone and continuing our path with the possibility of combating obstacles along the way. Although available data did not provide any certainty, it showed that the climate was suitable for such an investment.

Established in 2010, sportstv Television and Radio Broadcasting Inc. was the new force that would initiate the process of bringing its own field, which was already an industry in the rest of the world, to the necessary standards. Thus, the night of D-Spor's final broadcast witnessed a rare transformation in the history of television broadcasting. On the eve of July 1st, just around midnight, the D-Spor channel, which we took over with all staff and frequencies, appeared on screens as a brand new sports channel called sportstv. At midnight, without any broadcast interruptions, sports fans across the screen were delivered a brand new sports channel with its graphic display, logo, and broadcast content. sportstv took over the sports viewers at once. In October 2011, we were broadcasting on all platforms that could be viewed on television.

The idea of setting up a television channel in Turkey entirely for sports was intended to eliminate the existing relevant shortcomings of the media system. Each one of the mass media outlets broadcast sports because it was of interest to viewers. The media was shaped not according to the rules of sports but by the rules set by its audience. Although the media spared a lot of time and space for sports, it did not intend to increase interest in sports and create public opinion, but aimed to benefit from the great interest in sports instead. This cycle caused viewers to identify football as the only definition of sports. However, advertising, which is the sole source of income for media outlets, was a cake that would expand when the public's interests increased and diversified. Instead of increasing sports' contribution to advertising revenue, the tendency was to stick to football, which could not be a sustainable and rational attitude in terms of broadcasting.

While the application of communications principles to the sports field had the potential to provide marginal input to the general economy, the lack of a different attitude even in public media was an obstacle to specialization in sports communications. Although public sector investment in sports broadcasting was one of the ways to allow maximum input to the economy through each amateur sport that received communications support, there was no improvement in this area; in fact, compared to the 1980s, there was a decline in this area. As Sportsnet team committed to creating a segment in communications, we believed that an important threshold could be overcome by eliminating the shortfalls in media.

The birth of an independent media body dedicated to promoting sports created an opportunity for sports broadcasting to make the leap. Until that time, sportstv was the largest, most difficult, and most essential bridge ever established between sports and communications.

Having designed a new communications model, overcome the barriers between brands and sports by adopting this model to market conditions, introducing all sides to new concept, amalgamating the business area with scientific data, and proving, through productive results, its views once considered controversial for Turkey, Sportsnet Group would

The birth of an independent media body dedicated to promoting sports created an opportunity for sports broadcasting to make the leap.

demonstrate once again that it had a full grasp of sports related marketing communications in the broadest sense.

It would not have been possible for the sports industry to produce cumulative benefit merely through public investment, central government decisions, and self-yielding demand. While Sportsnet Group made countless contributions to the industrialization of sports, extending from sports property rights, financial management law, brand management to sectoral segments, event design, and creating financial resources, it also launched the sportsty television channel, a project that seemed impossible at the time.

When sports broadcasting was viewed as a product, the mass as consumers expected quality content and broadcasting as part of customer satisfaction. The educational level of majority of viewers was the average in Turkey and their primary demand was to watch sports other than football. As the major outcome of biased broadcasting, fanaticism and its violent repercussions on the sports field disturbed every segment of society. Another development worthy of note was the international success achieved both on individual and team levels. Every extraordinary success was also increasing the interest in that branch.

It did not take long for sports to become one of the most important news and commentary materials for the new media. While all news sites had sports related content, many digital sources reported only sports. Social networking platforms continued the same trend, with many world renowned athletes' social media accounts attracting millions of followers.

A group of sports communicators who had spent most of their lives as athletes, analyzed the impact of sports on the masses, had experience in sports management, and gained fruitful results through the relationships established among different elements of the sports industry

and its stakeholders, were thus engaged in a new experience in 2006. Even when there were no broadcasters of football leagues other than Super League, we were the ones who named League A, brought it to the screen, introduced it to sponsors, and earned it copyright value.

It did not take long for sports to become one of the most important news and commentary materials for the new media. While all news sites had sports related content, many digital sources reported only sports.

We were the first ones to broadcast women's and men's volleyball, women's basketball, tennis, and horseback riding. Once we completed the mission we undertook on behalf of sports broadcasting, the value and significance of an original sports channel became more evident. The integrated structure of the Sportsnet Group, which managed brand investments on continuous rise in Turkey's existing sports industry, had been completed. sportstv was now set out to strengthen the systematic relationship among the segments that share the value created by sports.

At the core of our self-confidence was once again data from the recent past. The reciprocal feedback relationship between the sports industry and sports broadcasting became more apparent, especially with advances in broadcasting technology. All innovations of the broadcasting industry were presented to the consumer through the sports context. In technological leaps such as the first live broadcast, the first broadcast in color, and the first 3D broadcast, the content that broadcasters preferred in reaching wider audiences was always sports. Sports was the only force that could simultaneously direct the focus of the largest masses on the same point in the launch of a new technology. Sports had the only content that could bring together more than 3 billion people of different cultures and languages, with no other point of intersection. The two main factors that determined sportstv's broadcasting philosophy were the



desire to address sports as a resource for content in its widest and most effective form and fill a gap in this area in Turkey. The type of channel sportstv would mold into was determined by the critical decisions taken in the light of these ideas.

Set out to ensure that sports was not only watched but also played and enjoyed and seen not only as a single branch but as a whole, this channel became the first regular broadcaster of sports events never broadcast before. For the first time, the football minor leagues, women's and men's volleyball leagues and national games, women's basketball league, local and international tennis tournaments affiliated with WTA, ATP 500 level tournaments; horse racing; rally, track, and off road championships; karting, and ice hockey were all brought to sports fans by sportstv.

A review of the sports content brought to the masses through television broadcasting revealed that all sports proprietors were growing and developing. This development would be in direct proportion to the audience's interest in the content. With the viewer as a source of demand and as a consumer in the broadest sense, brands using different tools, especially sponsorships, also became involved in this equation.

sportstv chose to tackle the core of the problem while formulating ways to determine and reach the target audience. The channel not only had to find ways to reach genuine sports fans, but also create a new sports audience, in other words, its own fan base as well. To this end, first the means of access were identified, then the potentials were analyzed to identify the profile of the target audience. As a result, the following strategic approaches were utilized to create the sportsty fan base:

• To undertake the mission of complementing the missing functions of the public broadcaster, which failed to show an inclusive approach to sports, and to create mass demand for viewing amateur sports branches.

- To increase the popularity of sports events of global interest that have limited access in Turkey.
- To develop an innovative understanding of programming, train specialized human resources, and make a difference in the presentation and interpretation of sports broadcasting.
- To achieve the firsts in this segment by satisfying the ideal audience profile, for which sports is a lifestlye, with rich and in-depth content.

We were convinced that, once we reached these goals, a noteworthy leap would occur not only in Turkey's sports broadcasting but both among the sports-viewing masses and in the efficiency of the private sector dedicated to sports investment. In fact, most of the objectives of the first five years were reached as of the second year. Since its inception, sportstv's mass audience, broadcasting coverage, and the relationship it built started to show improvement. The most concrete evidence of the initiative's success was seen in the fourth year of broadcast. In November and December 2014, sportstv became the TV channel to receive the most advertising among all channels, and it ended the year as the twentieth place holder in this category. At the end of its fifth year, it once again received d the highest number of advertisement per second and reached a meaningful result with respect to ratings.

sportstv's most important difference in the eyes of the audience was its studio broadcasting. Unprecedented in Turkey and rarely encountered in its international counterparts, while the studio based broadcasting method brought an additional 30 percent to total costs, it was the first factor that a difference in the perception of the viewers.

The studio's position in broadcasting was to lend a central focus to the screen where consecutive competitions were watched because the basic need in Turkey was the creation of a platform of conversation that would give visible sports the opportunity to express themselves.

At the end of its fifth year, it once again received d the highest number of advertisement per second and reached a meaningful result with respect to ratings.

Through the sportstv studios, more than a hundred sports branches were featured every week, and each branch found a platform to speak. At the end of the first five years, sportstv, which allowed more than fifty federation presidents to express themselves, used the advantage of owning the studio to its full extent to sustain its philosophy.

In the channel's mission to shed upon on an unnoticed potential in Turkey, a privileged place was reserved for its human resources that had never appeared television, was equipped with sports related communications know-how, and trained within the organization. The sportstv staff, selected from hundreds of candidates who regularly responded to the call made at the end of the summer, grew a little more each year, and the organization trained staff to meet not only its own needs but also the needs of the entire sector. The intensive training programs conducted with renowned names in sports broadcasting in Turkey first catered to sportstv's needs and eventually began to fulfill the demands of other organizations for well-trained staff.

The fact that each branch had a network of relationships within itself led sportsty to approach each sports branch as a community, which required a profile analysis. Using scientific methods, these analyses revealed perceptions and potential consumer profiles for sports branches in Turkey according to different criteria, and broad range of data from age breakdown and gender, to adopted values and level of education were obtained, classified, measured, and interpreted. With the adoption of tactics to maximize community satisfaction and development, a broadcast framework was developed.

In light of this perpective, sportstv created a very important database with respect to brands in previous years. As the consumer masses reached by both national and international sports organizations became

clearer with respect to their quantitative and qualitative features, they began to hold a greater meaning for brands. The inclusion of social media responses in the system as feedback allowed the data pool to grow richer. This way, sportsty, which offered exclusive access to communities, developed a new communications tool for brands. The

11 W

100 K NUMBER OF FAN RUNNERS AT 41 ISTANBUL

500 K

37 K

Age Running Fans

40.0%

5.0%

15.0%

5.0%

15.0%

5.0%

15.0%

5.0%

5.0%

5.0%

5.0%

5.0%

5.0%

5.0%

5.0%

5.0%

5.0%

**Platforms** 

Running Fans

40.0%
25.0%

5.0%

A B C1 C2 DE

Socioeconomic Status

Gender Running Fans

0.9%

Social Media Covarage

1.711.305







RUNNING MARATHON COMMUNITY IN TURKEY

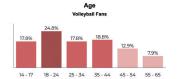
77V

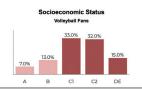
5.6 M

21 M

FANS SAY THEY WATCH
EUROPEAN LEAGUE REGULARLY

2.6 M







**Platforms** 

Social Media Covarage

1.290.481 views







VOLLEYBALL COMMUNITY IN TURKEY channel was able to create many special programs in collaboration with brand management, opened a new field of communications with consumers, and brand identity strengthening strategies welcomed a new solution partner.

Expanding through the contributions of sportsty, the concept of content marketing began creating stories in which consumers were able to find details from their own lives, as well as a special content that directly engaged viewers. These creative programming processes, in which sports stories and training videos were prioritized, found a privileged place in the communications mix, as they provided a basis for creating functional brand associations. Combining project programs with the concept of content marketing, sportstv informed viewers about the tournaments with information screens that supported the sponsorships from organizations and contributed to the relationship established by brands with the sports branches. For example, the relationship between the slogan "Winning begins in the head" for Head & Shoulders and EuroBasket 2015 was cited as the best example of Facebook's golden rules in the assessment of global social media use.

Thus, in the past ten years, many brands have had the opportunity to address their consumers through sportsty screens in very different formats. The collaboration between the brands that identify sports related marketing communications as the basic strategy and the medium that serves as the final link in communications with the target audience became an efficient shortcut for reaching the masses within the complex media planning network and sportsty rose to an unrivaled position in creating brand-oriented content.

The creative results of rationality-based collaborations, as well as their positive impact on viewership rates, were also widely available on social networks. In 2016, when the TV channel preferences of sports viewers were surveyed, it appeared that sportstv had maintained, with a 10.2 percent rating, the strong performance it had established since it began broadcasting five years earlier. When sports viewers were asked about their favorite channels, the results indicated that sportstv was one of the rare channels that gave the same result with respect to its share

of viewership. Virtually all viewers enjoyed the broadcasting policy of the channel. When asked about the frequency of watching the channels on a weekly basis, sportstv was in first place, with an average of 4.26 days per week. Considering that sporting events and sports related programs were followed, on average, three days a week, sportstv appeared to have a higher cut above the average rate of following among those who were most interested in sports.<sup>23</sup>

The results of the research also pointed to something else: The place of women in society and their level of interest in sports as the ones to raise future generations. It was time to establish a television channel focused directly on women in Turkey and cater to their needs. sportstvkadın was brought to life with this idea and was implemented as a segment channel. Just as the male-dominated and undimensional view of sports was being abandoned around the world, sportstvkadın chose to be the pioneer of this trend in Turkey, and much like sporting goods marketers, it began to bring equality to the ever increasing female element in sports.

The new era that began with sportstvkadın saw, in Turkey, the adoption of the quickly growing global trend to eradicate prejudices. The male dominated, unidimensional, score-focused, and competitive sports approach seen both in daily life and everywhere else where sports were performed, came to be replaced by a new and different understanding. As all sports institutions, virtually all brands investing in sports and fans began seeing women as one of the most important constituents of sports, and as sports brands released products for women, color and fashion trends had a profound impact on sports brands, a huge market focusing on women and sports was formed. Considering that 43 percent of the consumers of industries such as sporting goods, sports centers, and sports foods are women, it sports foods are women, it was inconceivable for Turkey was inconceivable for Turkey not to be caught up in this wave. Sixty two percent of fitness applications on smartphones and 48 percent of household sports equipment were being used by women, and since 44 percent of branded product purchases of major leagues in the United States such as the National Football League, National Basketball Association, and Major League Baseball were made

by women, a new perspective on sports was being rendered. In this perspective, the fact that women gave more importance to the values that surrounded sports than men did, played a pivotal role.

The rapid increase in the participation of women in sports and in viewing habits over the past few years was the guarantee for this investment. The rapid increase in both participation and viewership made Turkey Europe's leading nation in female viewership of football with a solid 62 percent.

Sportsnet Group had completed its horizontal organization with sportsty and established the medium for sports related communications. The concept of incorporation was designed to meet all the needs of the market. Allsports also supported Sportsnet's communication campaigns for brands through field events and launched many firsts in the sector with its events and organizations. Providing pioneering services to brands and companies that it helped specialize in sports activities within the direct marketing sectorandcreating and implementing sports activities on the field according to the target audience and communications strategies of the brands brought the distinction Sportsnet deserved over time.

Founded in 2010 as Turkey's first and only sports related digital communications agency, VO2 by sportstv was another important element that allowed campaigns to reach the right audience through the right channels and meet the demands of the period. In 2015, the group brought Octagon, the world's No. 1 sports agency, to Turkey and incorporated it into its organization. Operating in sports marketing, sponsorship management, talent consulting, research, events and entertainment Octagon began to add value to the Turkish sports industry by collaborating with Sportsnet, Turkey's first sports related advertising agency.

Continuing its activities as an independent unit with the expansion of the corporate structure, the human resources department works toward attracting employees with satisfactory knowledge and sports related lifestyles instead of providing direct in service training. The structure, which sees performance evaluation, motivation increase, and budget follow up as indispensable elements of institutionalization, adopts the predisposition to sports culture as the main determinant when creating human resources. Thus, a team of communicators who follow current sports events and are interested in different branches are spread to all the companies of the group. Different levels of in service training are carried out by the group leaders on a daily basis. This model of human resources has consequences that reduce employee circulation because employees' special interests are part of their work. The synergy that emerges from the combination of a comfortable work environment that creates creativity and working in a field related to sports leaves behind yet another important stage in achieving the goals of the organization.



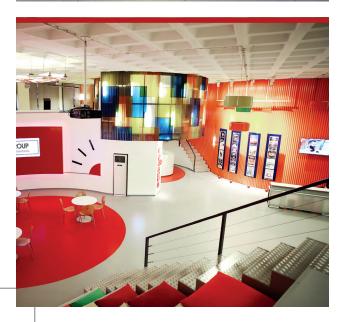


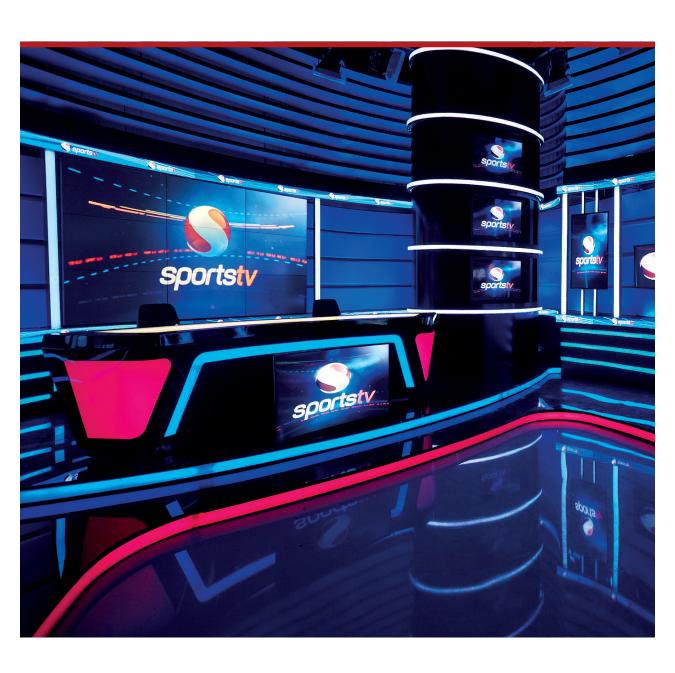


















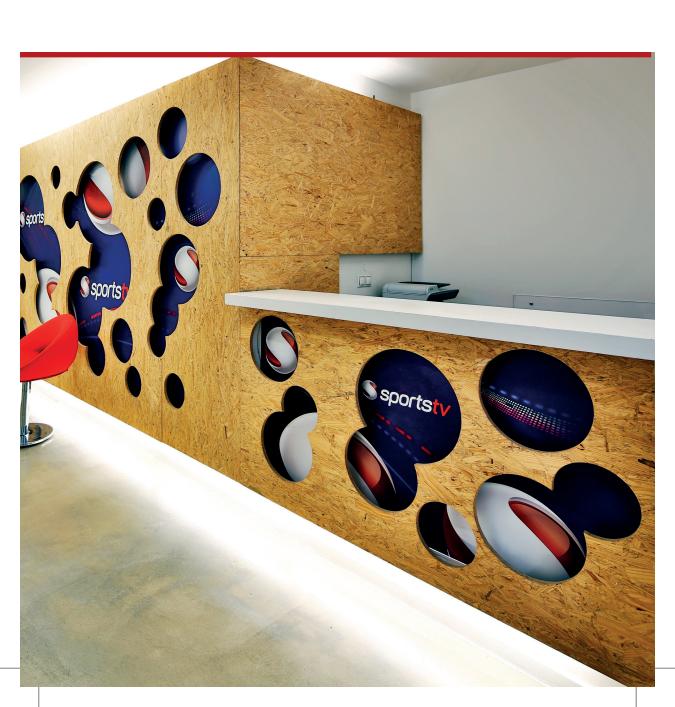












In order to compensate for for what we regarded as a shortage in managerial staff in sports management, Sportsnet Group started an initiative in 2015 with BİLGİSpor, a four year sports management undergraduate program jointly conducted with Istanbul Bilgi University. The undergraduate program commenced in the 2015-2016 academic year with the aim of meeting the needs of the growing sports industry in Turkey in recent years and providing a new vision for young people who wished to partake in this industry. Geared towards educating sports industry professionals for the world of sports on a par with international standards, the program was not designed merely to train managers for sports institutions but rather took the changing and developing needs of the industry into consideration. Students participating in the program have the opportunity to specialize in areas such as sports communications, sports proprietor management, and facility management. In this way, professionals who have experience and knowledge in both fields can be trained for brands and agencies operating in the field where communications science intersects with the sports world. Students are also trained in how to build sports proprietors and how to unite them with sponsors. Having graduated its first class in 2020, the higher education institution is preparing to shape the sports industry by educating future managers. With renowned names of the sports and academic worlds on the faculty, BİLGİSpor aims to train qualified managers for management levels in the sector and provide human resources that can facilitate international integration to sports clubs and federations. Naturally, it aims to develop the relationship between the sports industry and science and serve as the meeting point of the two segments. BİLGİSpor's privilege as the only higher education institution in Turkey to provide education on issues such as sports related marketing communications and proprietor management has enabled the program to attract a highly qualified students from its first year. onwards. The call for academic acceptance I set forth in my article published in a book I co-authored on new marketing trends in 2016 was also brought to life by the Sportsnet initiative.<sup>24</sup> As early as the first two years, students of BİLGİSpor had the opportunity intern in big organizations such as the UEFA European Football Championship or Euroleague, and as they prepare to graduate, employment opportunities that will allow the to take their first professional leap are already lined up.

One of the most effective tools that created a better understanding of Sportsnet Group's sports related marketing communication at a universal level was the Brand & Sport Summit the group has been organizing since 2017. Bringing together brand names and sports in Turkey and sharing the latest developments in sports related marketing communication, the event has hosts sports communication experts, representatives of important brands investing in sports, and special names from authorized institutions of the sports world. At the Brand & Sport Summit, participants discover great communication opportunities for brands created by the sports industry and the most successful examples in sports communication in Turkey and across the globe. At Brand and Sport Summit, experts of their respective fields explain how the sports industry has increased its sphere of influence through the development of new technologies, reveal the secrets of the institutions that make the best use of this platform, whose content and viewing value are increasing on a daily basis, explain how the stars of sports create and manage their brands and ow the unique reach and perception power created by sports in the broadcast world is used. Carrying these sessions to the digital platform during the pandemic helped avoid any possible disruptions.







#### SPORTSNET GROUP

## sportsnet creativeagency

A sports related marketing communications agency with a majority of its staff from the sports world, consisting of names that have provided important services to Turkish sports; Turkey's largest, most experienced, and highly creative 360-degree marketing communications agency, with marketing communications specialists, an experienced creative team, and trailblazing names when it comes to sponsorship and media utilization.

## allsports

As Turkey's most important sports events organization, the company brings to the field many national and international sporting events, creates special sporting events for brand names, and provides opportunities for brands to connect with their target audiences.



This agency produces online and offline content appropriate for the communications concepts of brands and institutions. Furthermore, as its structure enables it to implement, report, and manage the entire process, in addition to being Turkey's first and only sports related digital agency, VO2 is the leading authority in content marketing and content development.

## octagon

In 2013, Octagon was selected as the best sports agency in the world. It has a 27 year history of working with BMW and 22 years with Master Card. Since 1983, the company has served many global brands in the most elite sporting events, such as the Olympics and World Cup. Octagon has 68 offices and more than 800 employees in 22 countries, a \$3 billion sponsorship portfolio, a \$2 billion player contract volume, an average of 13,000 events per year, and it has managed communications for global stars like Stephen Curry and Michael Phelps.



This television channel has set milestones for Turkey by undertaking the task of objective sports broadcasting and has become the central medium for the group's contributions towards the betterment of sports culture in Turkey.



As the first and only television channel affiliated with sportsty, which has assumed the mission of popularizing sports in Turkey, sportstykadın broadcasts programs directly addressing women in light of the market data.

#### **National Team All the Way**

Representing Turkey in international organizations, the National Football Team creates a spirit of unity that no other phenomenon in Turkey can achieve. McDonald's supported this spirit with its special products.



# VIII. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The most important reason behind my decision to write this book was to make a prediction that would answer the question in the title of this section. The answer is intuitively obvious. The dimensions that the sports industry will reach in the 2020s and how its relationship with brands will be shaped are quiet evident for me. It is not that my eyes see better than those of others. I have been following the data uninterruptedly for the past twenty years, and anyone observing market trends would agree with me. Nevertheless, I must say that even the most intuitively obvious things needs a helping hand to save time in getting there.

First, it is necessary to keep in mind the following data: sports and anything sports related produces a total value of \$1.7 trillion annually. In recent years, while the traditional media outlets have been rapidly losing value, the global sponsorship cake has continually grown. Sponsorships account for 23 percent of the global communications pie. Sports sponsorships, which constitute 82 percent of all sponsorships, tend to be increasing their share. This share increased to \$51 billion in 2017. The economic value created by sports related marketing communications is more than twice this amount at \$135 billion.

Nowadays, emotional reactions and deep secrets of the human brain can be analyzed through neuroscienti!c methods Thanks to the information we have acquired, we also know that sports has an effect that triggers several functions of the brain at once.

Over the years, the world of communications has sought to find ways to reach each consumer. The fact that sports is the only phenomenon that can unite people of different cultures, religious beliefs, lifestyles, socioeconomic conditions, languages, and sexes has never changed.

Nowadays, emotional reactions and deep secrets of the human brain can be analyzed through neuroscientific methods. Thanks to the information we have acquired, we also know that sports has an effect that triggers several functions of the brain at once. As research in this area is put forward one study after another, it is clear that watching or doing sports stimulates neurons in different centers of the brain and is an important factor in the formation of conscious behavior. The human brain focuses on watching sports to the maximum degree. Emotional responses increase and mirror neurons are activated above a normal range. The concept of brand preference (Brand Salience) introduced by Australia-based Neuro-Insight shows that there is a buying decision mechanism based on the measurement of these responses. The attention, memory, enthusiasm, and loyalty that arise from four different centers of the brain are activated many times more than normal with sports. When the brain's reactions to the advertisements of LG Electronics and Panasonic brands in Australia's cricket matches were analyzed, this fact appeared: Panasonic's broadcasts between the matches were watched 45 percent more carefully than those of the other media outlets and were equally efficient in terms of memory, enthusiasm, and loyalty. In addition, during the match, Panasonic ads lost 31 percent interest. This example gives a very important message to brands advertising through sports. Whatever you do, you cannot cut between the game on the field and the audience, but you can draw them in without distracting them from the field.

Another fact that research shows is that sponsorships are very effective in allowing masses under a bombardment of advertisements to differentiate the brands. Sports sponsorships provide three and a half times more brand awareness than traditional advertising. The reason for this is that the initial image perceived while our brain enjoys

a short respite during its focus on a topic is actually the owner of the sporting event. Sponsorships also increase the emotional loyalty to the brand, creating the environmental impact on competitive brain functions.

With all this in mind, the overall structure of the media makes it easy to predict how the world of advertising and communications will evolve.

Australia based company Neuro-Insight, measures brain's reactions in 4 major areas with a measurement unit called Brand Salience.

### "Brand Salience"





#### **Panasonic**

KAYNAK : Neuro Marketing and Sports / Neuro Insight

LG Electronics sponsors cricket and thus opted to use the cricket content in its TV commercials, whereas Panasonic used a product-based advertisement during commercial breaks.







The brain reacts very differently to each advertisement. The parts of the brain associated with memory, emotions, attention, and attachment escalated by 45% compared to normal levels during the LG advertisement, whereas during the Panasonic advertisement, the numbers declined by 31%.

The branding campaign for the Turkish national women's volleyball team is a good example for explaining the concept of valuable perception. Calling the womens volleyball team "Sultanlar" (Sultans) created a strong perception that became permanent.

There is a story behind every sporting event. Behind this story is a humane, dramatic, and persistent force. We call the emergence of this force a valuable perception. We have numerous data and observations that sports based perception is much more permanent and concrete than any other perception in the mind. I believe this too will be measurable soon.

The branding campaign for the Turkish national women's volleyball team is a good example for explaining the concept of valuable perception. Calling the women's volleyball team "Sultanlar" (Sultans) created a strong perception that became permanent. The media has called the team by this name since the campaign. Even the name of the women's volleyball league today is the Sultans League. In this example, the valuable perception mechanism was triggered, similar to how the perception that the national team communications sponsor is Turkcell still continues even after more than 15 years.

It is possible to cite similar examples, but the important thing to understand is how the creation of perception is done. The success of campaign creativity has always played an important role, but the real share is still in the power of sports. The concentration of watching sports brings the mind to a single point of perception, especially between the intense message bombardment and brand complexity in today's lifestyle. In this case, valuable perception emerges as a new concept that should be underlined when describing the effect of sports. This concept is particularly relevant to brands that are thinking about what to replace the relatively diminishing advertising activity with. How can sports, which is a constantly renewed, exciting, and a dynamic vehicle, benefit brands more efficiently? How will the relationship between brands and sports develop in the near future? I would like to answer this question with my two different personas.

#### The Advertising Industry and Its Social Processes

My information sharing sessions with the other players in the sector and my analysis based on my observations while on the board of directors of the Advertisers Association allows me to make some predictions on this subject.

When I try to understand the advertising industry by looking back, as I have done in this book, I see that advertising cannot be separated from social life and sociology. While analyzing Turkey in particular, the time before and after the 1980 military coup should be regarded as two separate periods. The economy of the pre-1980, which tackled closed and spiraling problems, had its own climate of initiatives, which has little relevance today. In the following period, economic policies, having been liberalized out of necessity, entered the process of adapting to the world conjuncture. One of the most exciting developments in the process of expanding outward was branding, which was rising to prominence in line with the general world trend. In this process, first an exports based industrial production prevailed, followed by the idea of accessing the added value brought by branding. Two important outcomes were observed in the markets, driven by companies, growth, and newborn sectors: The birth of the possibility for growing companies to expand through consolidation with the markets and branding. This gave rise to new forms of relationships. This relationship brought together entrepreneurs from two different sectors. The first of these was the business people who gained commercial success in the process of discovering the branding processes but stayed away from communications. The other type of business people were bon vivant, well-read advertisers equipped with universal values and world culture.

This relationship between advertisers and bosses was based on mutual exchange and sustenance. The advertisers needed the budget; the bosses needed the social culture. A positive production and a vested interest for both parties arose from this encounter. Both sides achieved tremendous results. The need for fewer brands and more branding brought great mobility to the market. While the boss segment improved its social status through cultural exchanges, creative, adroit, and clever advertisers polished their professional careers. This process created rich agencies and strong brands.

Although there were many communications mishaps, the institutionalization and patronage management with respect to brands deteriorated as time elapsed, yielding fruitful results. Corporate communications teams were established, and the one-to-one relationship between the boss and the advertiser weakened. As brand management

became professional, advertisers' dominance over the brand decreased. Eventually, the friend-of-the-boss type of advertiser was disappearing and the agencies were beginning to weaken. This was an evolution to be experienced, and things were falling into place. Whatever was happening in the world, Turkey, as a nation integrated with globalization, was also experiencing the same development.

Those who read Nike's branding story witness a similar example of this process. In the United States, Nike co-founder and president Phil Knight, Michael Jordan, and Wieden+Kennedy partner Dan Wieden had moments where they co-wrote a screenplay for an advertisement. These stories show just how new the professional field of communications discipline really is.

The agency profile, which expanded its service areas in the early 2000s, assuming functions such as production, public relations, and media purchasing, was bloated as much as possible. Then came the period of dissolution. Media planning, acquisition, and BTL structured into separate companies. We can now see that service segmentation was an intermediate formula in the recent period. For example, Ogilvy's name emerged in numerous companies, but now we have only OgilvyOne. The situation to be read today is that advertising cannot continue on a single strategy. The main factor that triggers fragmentation and integration in the advertising industry is the Internet and the world of digital communications, which have entered the pool of communications channels.

The following analogy describes how I see the impact of the Internet on communications: a meteorite hit the Earth, which was travelling in its own trajectory out in the universe, and its entire course was blown out of proportion. All traditional communications channels experienced a Big Bang, and the resulting new order created chaos. Now, communications channels are still breaking apart and multiplying, with new stars born every instant. In such an environment, even Formula 1, one of the most powerful brands of the recent past, does not know which channel to show itself on and to whom. Today, there is deep uncertainty as to which communications channel a brand should use, regardless of its level of recognition. Today's main problem is this uncertainty. While

advertising agencies, or indicate to brands whom they need to work



with. Advertising agencies began to question their position when Deloitte received an award considered the crown of marketing creativity, in Cannes.

Models are changing. The needs and expectations of companies are also changing. This background is one of the clearest indications that the advertising world will take a completely different turn. The most important capital that a new generation of advertising agencies have is the big data related to brands. An accurate analysis of this data can clearly show the problems brands face and hints at ways to solve them. Today, when we look at the global communications sector, we see that there are many different names compared to five years ago:

Firm	Worldwide	Revenue
1.	Accenture Interactive	\$4.4 billion
2.	Young & Rubicam Group	\$3.6 billion
3.	PwC Digital Services	\$3.3 billion
4.	McCann Worldgroup	\$3.2 billion
5.	IBM iX	\$3.0 billion
6.	BBDO Worldwide	\$2.6 billion
7.	Deloitte Digital	\$2.6 billion
8.	Publicis Sapient	\$2.4 billion
9.	Dentsu (Japan)	\$2.4 billion
10.	DDB Worldwide	\$2.3 billion

Source: Agency Network

The reason for the success of the new players is that they have enough information about the advertiser to almost change the direction of the communications brief. The brief for the needs identified by brand management in the traditional agency brand relationship is now imposed on brand management by the new generation agencies. Here is the picture: In the next five years, advertising agencies that have swollen egos and have pushed the limits of creativity will lose their value all over the world. Those who want to stay in this sector will have to rethink where to find the customer and how to construct the relationship. The advertising world is on the verge of a tremendous quake, and the rules set by giant networks have lost their validity.

We are living in an age where everything we know about advertising will be redefined.

These companies, which until today have looked at the markets from an investor's point of view, are now wise advertising agencies. They are the new players of the sector with their creative teams and digital capabilities. The competence in bringing the problem to a clear and fast solution has changed the supply demand mechanism in the brand agency relationship. R/GA is an example of this new model in the sense that it produces projects focused on direct profit maximization for brands. There is also the creation of technology that will provide a market advantage for a brand by developing a strategic product, establish connections between the digital culture and the product, and increase its benefit function. In a sense, the company sees its customer as a brand only; it imposes even the product, which will stick on the brand. Materials, culture, innovation, technology, and design are no longer the subjects of the industrialists but rather of the new generation of communicators. The global expansion of R/GA has reached eighteen countries, and its employment has reached to two thousand employees from twenty different countries. The agency has been a pioneer in gathering design and marketing, the web, mobile communications, social media, retail, product development, brand value growth, and business consulting services, as required by the era. Established within the agency, R/GA Ventures has jointly invested in eighty nine new ventures, while Macquarie Capital Venture Studio has become a platform that embraces innovation in every field.

This new model also utilizes an innovative strategy to expand globally. It collects all its talents into the one center, carries out its global service from a central point, and manages customer relations from the countries it is located in. I find it worth following closely the business model developed by the new generation agencies, which offer the transformation and the speed needed today, because in a way, we have started to experience the future. Perhaps we can say that communications has become a real business for the first time in the history of the sector. The fact that Accenture is now the largest agency in the world cannot be explained otherwise.

#### THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE MEDIA

The media is also taking its share of this extraordinary transformation. The authority of the central media, resulting from its broad viewership and ability to create public opinion, is being undermined. The focus on the limitations of the communications channels is gradually weakening. Directive forces are dismantling. The greatest impact of developing technologies on communications channels has been the disintegration of the media. Now, the consumer has the main power. No one has to stick to the time and place determined by media for content they want to watch, as was previously required. The person decides what, where, when, and how to watch. Habitual broadcasting has no means of survival. In developing countries, this process may take a little longer to complete, but even those markets need to know that they can live by dismantling. The most important reason for this change is that the circulation, strength, and speed of data are increasing every day. As roaming capacity increases, visual content is liberated.



The result of this irrepressible fact will, in turn, result in a break from the general channels and bring about broadcasting based on individual content streaming. In short, all media rationales around the world need to undergo fundamental changes. The future has never been so clear. Consumer access channels for brands will change as the consumers' preferred content is received through different tools and in the way they want.

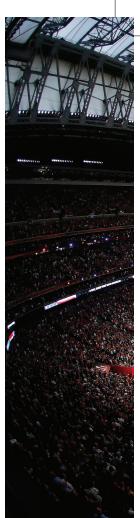
In this structure, only one type of content will be an exception: It will be sports once again. Only sports will be the content that can determine the time when and channel where it will be watched. This situation will elevate broadcasting rights as in no other field.

Nowadays, since it is impossible for any technological development to not be interested in sports content, any media that shows no change will be unlikely to be able to keep sports. In this case, there are two routes. The first route is for the owners of sports proprietors to become media. The Premier League administration, for example, will make a decision to announce that it will not sell its broadcasting rights to anyone. It will carry its video content to the online devices of end users over the Internet. Unlike IPTV, it will use the open Internet, and unlike web TV, it can be viewed on the television screen; that is to say, it will make broadcasting and advertising marketing from its own over the top (OTT) platform. Thus, it will increase its revenues by establishing direct contact with the audience without any intermediaries.

The other route is for digital media to be the primary media. Today, 1.4 percent of all television broadcasts in the world focus on sports, while for social media, that ratio is close to 50 percent. This data clearly shows how the balance between the old and new media is shifting. Today, as Facebook receives sports broadcasting rights, we will also see other social networks like YouTube, Amazon, and Google behave in a similar manner in the coming years. They will cooperate with brands, which see the masses they accumulate as consumers, attract competition with e-sports derivative applications, and equip the digital world with the elements of sports.

Recently, we have witnessed the violation of the rights of sports broadcasting by Periscope, which allows individual broadcasting. In Turkey, especially in the pirated Super League match broadcasts, some precautions were taken due to lost revenue. Since Periscope can intervene in these broadcasts with its own technology in only 40 minutes, access to the application was completely denied during match hours. I think there are several different lessons that can be learned from this case:

- Media fragmentation will continue as fast as possible. The classical media order will not be sustainable.
- As mobile technologies lead to the violation of rights, owners will turn to safe and supervised avenues to prevent loss of income.
- Digital media channels will act in collaboration with proprietary owners to prevent pirated broadcasting or will build their own platforms.



#### The Near Future of the Sporting Industry

For many of us, this story, which seems like a disaster scenario, includes an immortal and ever strengthening superhero: sports.

Sports is the only platform that acts like a magnet, collecting particles around itself in this chaotic environment caused by this impact. If the Super Bowl in the United States or the national team match in Turkey can have 45 percent of the viewership, then sports must be seen as the world's most influential tool for viewer consolidation. I am also certain that the power of this content will never disappear. Even when we talk about the possibility of a third world war in the spiral of anti-elitist policies, political segmentations, chauvinist politicians, large masses are ignoring these developments, watching their television screens or meeting at the sports stands, watching a sporting event, sharing the same feelings, and experiencing a common value. Therefore, I continue to view the sports platform, which we are in and invest in, as the most important phenomenon that exists.



Therefore, Sportsnet feels prepared for the near future with its formula for communications and the consumer brand relationship. With all our strength, we defend the consumers, brands, and sports triangle, and redefine the place of sports in the communications mix with scientific data every day. We invite individual brands to this vision and convince them with data-based analyses. We present to them the efficient opportunities for return provided by sports to brand names and have them benefit from this blessing.

In today's world order, sports will take on the leading role again in every development in and around the advertising sector. Anyone who wants to better perceive this can easily access abundant data. For example, while the Oscar ceremony, which has shown to be the platform that allows the most people to interact through social networks at the same time, generates 25 million instant interactions, the FIFA World Cup score creates 350 million instant interactions alone. The

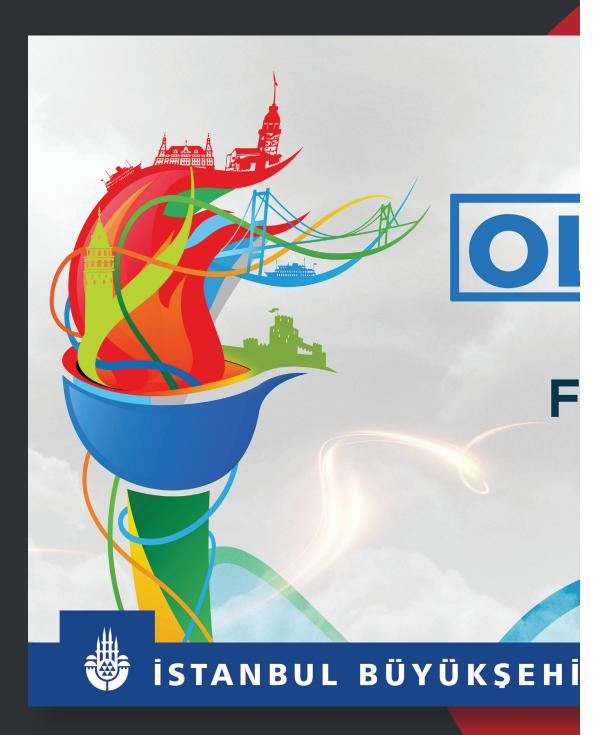
World Cup has united the planet by breaking all records around the world. In the last organization, 3.4 billion of the 7.6 billion world population followed at least one match. The final match reached 1.1 billion viewers. Especially in Europe and Asia, all the records were broken. Although the US and Chinese teams did not take part in the cup, the records were smashed in these countries too. England's matches following its group matches reached 87 percent viewership rate. FIFA's official online media channel, where its broadcasts are distributed, reached 23.3 million hours of download time. This figure was twice that of Brazil 2014, and FIFA generated \$6.1 billion in revenue, 10 percent higher than its forecast. Even though the national team of Turkey did not reach the World Cup, there was a viewership rate between 15 percent and 30 percent in the country. During the cup, the matches outperformed all other content, including elections.

By 2021, while the world's sports and media were dealing with the pandemic, we didn't see any decline in audience demand. More than 70 percent of the people who stayed at their homes due to the pandemic started doing physical exercises at home. More than half of this audience said they would continue physical exercises once the pandemic was over.

Tokyo 2020, which was held a year late, broke all the records in streaming and social media, despite the significant decrease in TV ratings in general. When we look at the ratings in countries such as the USA, Australia, England, and Germany, it can be seen that the sports habits of the viewers around the world have changed. In these countries, the rate of people watching Tokyo 2020 on digital platforms was close to 50 percent.

The Turkish reflections of the interest in sports also appeared in the Euro 2020 rating figures. Although we did not perform well, the competition reached 15 million people on TV. Adding digital feedbacks, close to 30 million people watched the competitions on their screens.

In the past twenty years, sports has progressed gradually and has taken the strongest place in all communications platforms imaginable. The very important characteristic of humans that are achieved through sports—such as competition, the satisfaction of defeating and gaining superiority over the opponent, which is a completely human phenomenon—are leading the world in this direction. We will continue to move in this field, which we believe will create great opportunities, with a scientific frame of mind. I would recommend anyone who reads these lines to think in this manner.



#### **Istanbul Prepares for the Olympics**

At the important launch, where Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality made a declaration of will for the Olympic candidacy, the philosophy of Olympism was explained all over the city.

# LIMPIZM

## BİR YAŞAM FELSEFESIDİR

HİR BELEDİYESİ



Sportsnet was established as Turkey's first and only sports related marketing communications agency in July 2001. Over the next twenty years, the group has offered opportunities no other source could provide and has presented national and international event opportunities. I can summarize some of them as follows:











#### Turkcell Turkey National Team Official Communications Sponsorship

In Turkey, with the model developed in 2002, the meeting of brands with sporting proprietors was instigated, representing a revolutionary initiative.

#### Sultans of the Net (Filenin Sultanları)- Orkid

In the European Championship held in our country, sponsorship cooperation was established between Orkid and our Women's National Volleyball Team. The concept of Sultans of the Net (Filenin Sultanları), which still continues, was born from this campaign.



#### İzmir 2005, Universiade Summer Games

Turkey's first and largest Olympic organization was given 360-degree live event management and communications services.



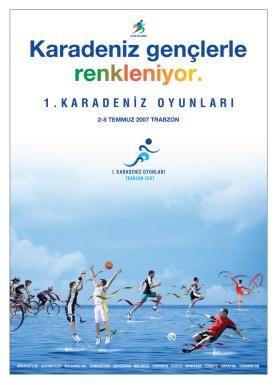






David Beckham and Rıdvan Dilmen were brought together in the local campaign created and conducted for the brand.









#### Trabzon 2007, Black Sea Games

All corporate and communications activities of the event were managed.

#### Erzurum 2011, Universiade Winter Games

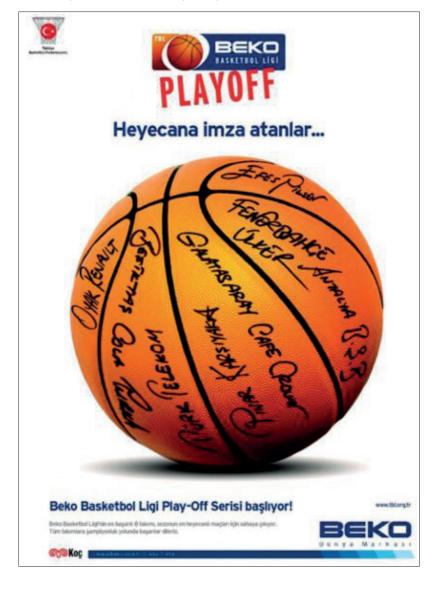
We provided 360-degree communications and event management services to this international winter sports organization, the first of its kind at this level in Turkey.





#### Beko Basketball League Sponsorship

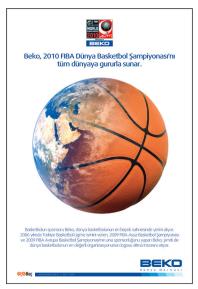
Beko decided to invest in basketball and became the sponsor of the Beko Basketball League, which was the beginning of a two way productive process. After seven years of work, the brand became the sponsor of the 2009 European Basketball Championship and the 2010 World Basketball Championship. In 2013, Beko, under the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) partnership, managed its sponsorship relationships with the German, Italian, Russian, and Lithuanian basketball leagues. Afterward, Beko, the sponsor of Spain 2014, increased its basketball investment and managed relations in other European and world championships.



#### 2010 World Basketball Championship

In addition to the sponsorship of Beko and Adidas, management of the fan zones was undertaken during the event.





#### Eurobasket 2011

In addition to Beko's EuroBasket 2011 sponsorship, the brand's international campaigns were conducted.



In 2007, the launch campaign of the first NBA store in Europe was undertaken.







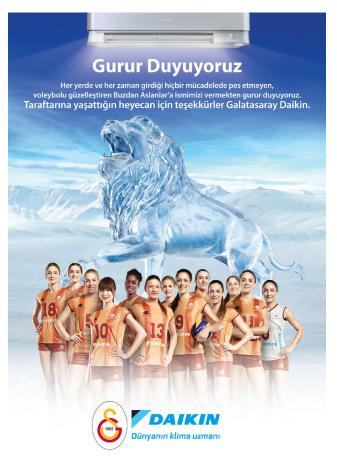
#### **Adidas**

At the 2010 World Basketball Championship, an interactive campaign was prepared for Adidas to strengthen fan relations.



#### The Lions of Ice

With three valuable players from Galatasaray basketball, volleyball, and football teams, Daikin women's volleyball team sponsorship theme campaign was conducted.

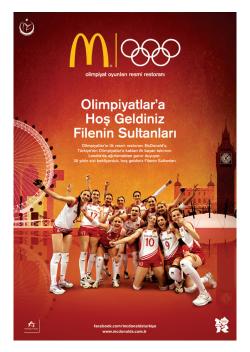


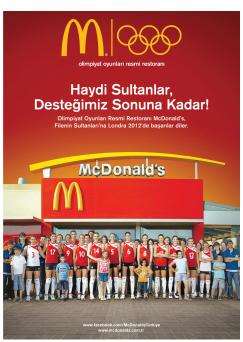






For one of the sponsors of the Olympics, McDonald's, a campaign was conducted to form a relationship between the brand and the Turkish national women's volleyball team.





#### WTA Championship

While carrying out the integrated communications campaigns on behalf of TEB, the name sponsor of the TEB-BNP Paribas WTA World Tour End of Season Championship, which was held in Istanbul in 2011, 2012, and 2013, we also managed the brand's tournament communications work and implementations during this period.





#### TEB-BNP Paribas Istanbul Cup

TEB-BNP Paribas was brought together with the WTA Istanbul Cup organization after the WTA events, and since 2014, all tournament related communications activities of TEB have been carried out.



TEB was the name sponsor of the TEB-BNP Paribas Istanbul Open tennis tournament held between 2015 and 2018, and the communications strategy and creative activities relating to this tournament was held for TEB. In addition, during the tournament, field activities were planned around Garanti Koza Park to strengthen the bond between TEB and the sport of tennis.

#### TEB-BNP Paribas Tennis Stars Series 2017

A concept and format to enrich TEB's tennis sponsorship communications efforts were identified, and two world famous tennis players, Martina Hingis and Pat Cash, joined this structure. The TEB-sponsored organization, organized for the first time in Turkey, was shaped in every way, and in addition to the communications work, the event hosted by the Ankara Sports Hall was managed.



#### Thank You Mom

Designed for Ariel and spanning 29 countries, the brand's sports communications concept formed the basis for the global infrastructure strategy of Thank You, Mom, the Procter & Gamble (P&G) global Olympic Games campaign.



### Head & Shoulders–International Basketball Federation Cooperation

In 2014, a key role was played in the sponsorship agreement signed between one of P&G's leading brands Head & Shoulders and one of basketball's leading world authorities, FIBA, which led to bringing



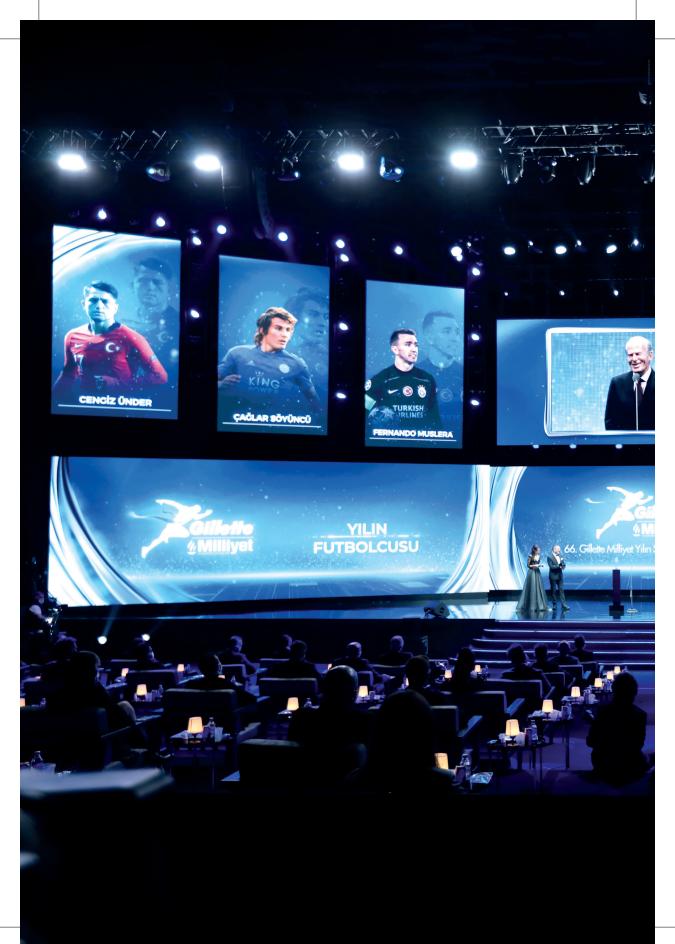
together for the first time in Turkey a global brand name with a global proprietor. The idea of the campaign, with its media budget, made noise around the world. For EuroBasket 2015, the communications strategies for 3x3 organizations and 360 degree creative campaigns were prepared for Head & Shoulders Europe. With high participation, the field activities' 3x3 tournaments turned into a campaign that created stories from the streets to shopping malls. In addition, communications strategies and 360 degree creative campaigns were created in the scope of Head & Shoulders, Turkey's EuroBasket 2015, and the 3x3 organizations. The brand Head & Shoulders Turkey joined the sponsors of the Basketball Super League with the phrase, "The Sponsor of Confidence," which would provide it an advantage in its communications. In addition to these efforts, there were communications strategies and 360 degree creative campaign work being coordinated in the scope of the Turkish Basketball Federation 3x3 organizations.

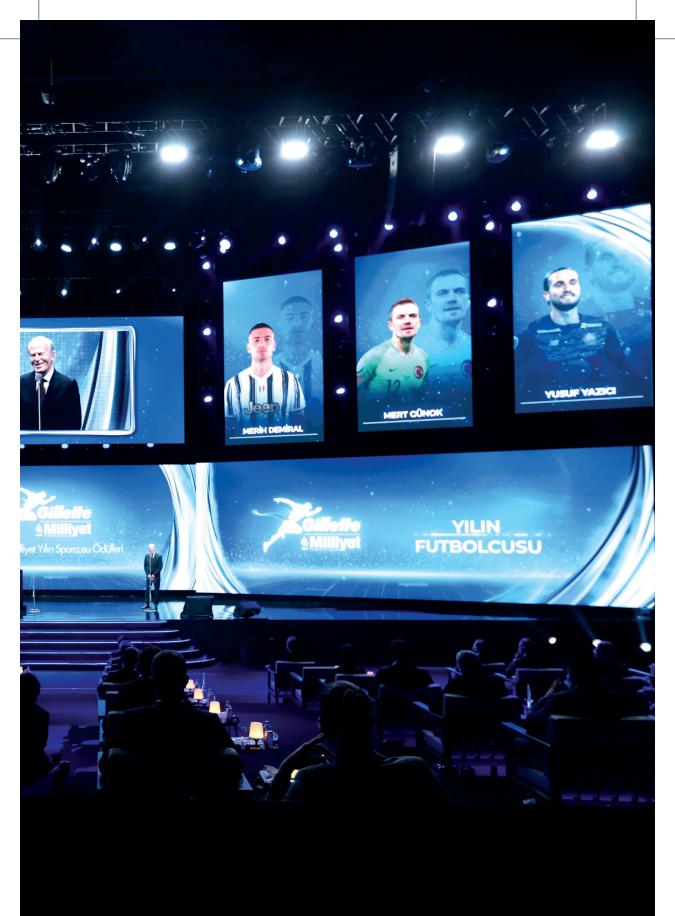
### Gillette Milliyet Athlete of the Year Awards

The 62nd, 63rd, and 64th organizations of the world's longest running sports awards project, the Milliyet Athlete of the Year Awards, were undertaken under the sponsorship of Gillette, bringing together two well established brand names; and in the past two years, we supported the awards night with visual show productions.









# Daikin National A Side Football Team Sponsorship

Within the scope of procurement sponsorship, Daikin and the National A Side Football team were brought together, and the "National Team Air Conditioning Professional" concept was devised. During EURO 2016, with its expert spectator hashtag, Daikin created a social media setup in its Turkey account. With just 22 tweets, more than 10 million accesses were made.



# Turkish Airlines EURO 2016 Sponsorship

With regard to this topic, the worldwide sponsorship communications activities of Turkish Airlines, one of the global sponsors of EURO 2016, commenced.



The Olympic Mothers movement, which is a P&G Turkey corporate communications project, had all its strategies, communications strategy, and communications tasks prepared.





# P&G Baku 2015 European Games

All the communications strategy, creative communications, and fieldwork of the P&G brand, which was the official sponsor of the Baku 2015 European Games, were prepared for broadcasting in the Caucasus and Europe.









# P&G 2016 Olympic Games Exhibition

Before the 2016 Rio Olympic Games, for P&G, the Olympic Games Exhibition was opened to visitors, featuring valuable objects and pictures from the International Olympic Committee and Turkish Olympic Committee (TMOK) archives, providing interactive Olympic experiences to the participants.

### TEB-BNP Paribas Tennis Stars Series 2017

At the TEB-BNP Paribas Tennis Stars Series events in 2017, a tennis player who was one of the world's most famous and with an exemplary career, Maria Sharapova, was brought to Turkey. Before the event, certain scenes of a commercial were shot in New York with the former world No. 1 Russian player. The exhibition match played between Çağla Büyükakçay and Maria Sharapova at the Sinan Erdem Sports Stadium was watched by 16,108 spectators and was recorded as being the tennis match in Turkey with the highest number of viewers.



### **AVIS**

Fenerbahçe is one of the most influential biggest non-governmental organizations of our country; an organization that makes its presence and power felt not only in stadiums and halls, but also in every segment of society, in every area in Turkey. The Avis brand was chosen to work with for the club's most valuable sponsorship medium, its uniform sponsorship. Throughout the many years of working together, AVIS's ATL communication, field events, digital and social media activities were carried out by Sportsnet Group. Particularly the work done on social media for sponsorship received awards from international institutions.



The pharmaceutical industry in Turkey cannot make its voice heard due to advertising restrictions. Food additives that are not considered drugs also have difficulties in communication because they cannot overcome medical perceptions. In order for Supradyn, one of Bayer's brands, to overcome these difficulties, we prepared campaigns first with the Sports Federation for All, then with the Turkish Basketball Federation and the Turkish Volleyball Federation. Sports is the best platform to create the perception of health.



### TRT Spor Yıldız

The vision we put forward with sportstv attracted the attention of TRT, which is the biggest media power in Turkey. As a result of a long process, a new sports channel was created. Every detail, from corporate identity to broadcast philosophy, was prepared by Sportsnet Group. We worked with international agencies for corporate identity.



### McDonald's

When McDonald's, the biggest fast food chain in the world and one of the biggest sports sponsor's in the international arena, decided to move from a global approach to a more local one approach by reviewing its sports related marketing communication strategy after withdrawing from its sponsorship of the Olympic Games, we talked to the brand to the brand management to convey the opportunities of sports. Thanks to the visionary approach of the brand team, we embarked on a project with the Turkish Football National Teams, Turkey's largest sports property. We re-evaluated the communication needs of the brand using our previous experience with the brand on Women's Volleyball National Team and Big Match projects. As the result of long and detailed studies, we designed the' National Burger' concept.

While the conditions caused by the pandemic were easing, the project, our special campaign for Euro 2020, which became the center of attention of all sports fans, immediately became a huge success. Distinguished from the

bravery and success related campaigns of other brands, our communication strategy distinguished itself. Due to our extensive experience, product communication was based on the values of the national team and was not based on sportive success. With this approach, the campaign achieved very good results. After the Euro 2020, we put Turkey's most successful international team, the women's national volleyball team, at the center of our sports related marketing communication strategy.







The Thank You Mom project, where Sportsnet Group has many contributions both globally and nationally, was also carried out to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games with P&G. Global brand management team followed a success oriented attitude with a global approach and shot a movie with Alejandro Gonzalez Innaritu in 2021 just like in 2009. Sportsnet Group, like all of P&G's Thank You Mom projects in Turkey, designed a strategy and adapted it to Tokyo 2020 with an authentic feel and with a local touch which explains how sports impact family life. Thanks to the bold approach of Tankut Turnaoğlu, who influenced P&G's global sports vision, the global movie was played on digital platforms, while a high amount of media purchasing budget was allocated for the local movie prepared by Sportsnet Group. Thus, the TV commercial starring the world and European champion gymnast İbrahim Çolak and his mother and the works surrounding it allowed us to complete one of the most effective communication campaigns of the Olympics. The relationship between sports, mothers and family was once again underlined and presented to the public.



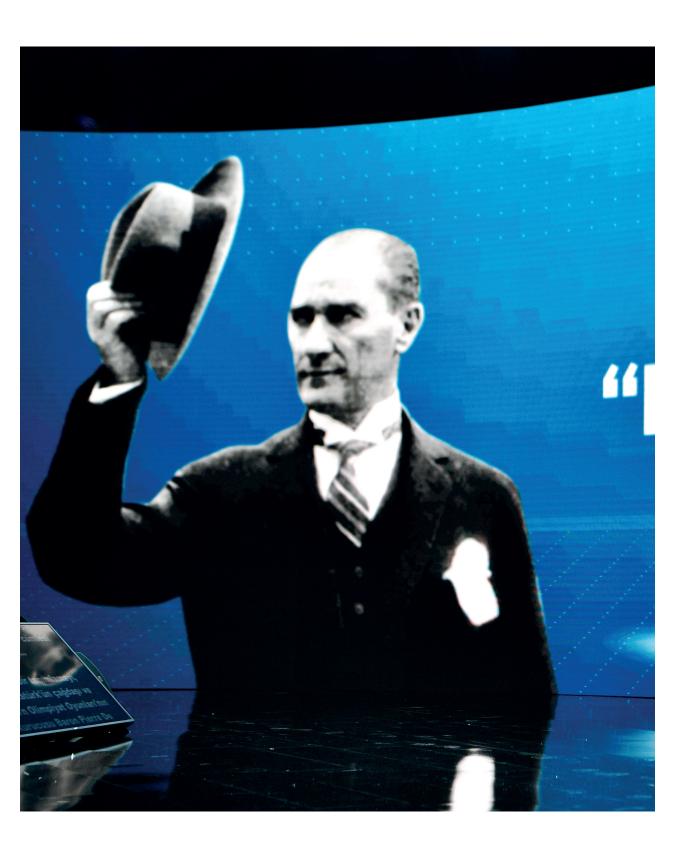
# Istanbul's Candidacy for the Summer Olympics

Throughout its twenty-year-long history, Sportsnet Group has organized many different events to improve the current sports habits of Istanbul residents, which is one of the most populous cities in Europe and has a significant young population. According to the latest archaeological findings, the city has a history of more than 8000 years and has been one of the jewels of world civilizations throughout time. We have worked with various brands and brought together the projects of sports federations with the public. However, despite our efforts for a long time, we have not been able to convince the local governing bodies of Istanbul to take sports seriously and with a proper vision. This drawback has changed with the 2019 local election. Ekrem Imamoğlu, the new Mayor of Istanbul (IBB), who had participated in many sports branches during his youth, decided to closely follow the work on this issue and as a result of long meetings, presentations and brainstorming sessions with the new local government, we have come came to an agreement on the "Istanbul Sports Strategy" and expedited our work. The most important step in coalescing the whole city on to the same goal was to bring up the idea of hosting the Olympic Games, which Turkey has been pursuing for a long time but could not, in our opinion, act with the right strategies.



In order to spread the sports culture across Turkey's largest city, we brought together the sports units and subsidiaries of İBB, Istanbul Youth and Sports Directorate, Spor Istanbul, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Sports Club and all components of belonging to the municipality that can contribute to sports, around the same goal. The strategy, which positions hosting Istanbul 2036 Olympic Games at its center, was presented to the public with a magnificent ceremony and Ekrem İmamoğlu personally called all related institutions to initiate the candidacy process. He also emphasized the importance of sports and Olympic philosophy for human and social life. There were important names from the sports and political world in attendance. The mayor quoted Ataturk "The idea of physical training should be parallel to the training of the mind". He also, reiterated the words of Sinan Erdem, one of the strong advocates of Olympic philosophy in Turkey, "The Olympics are not built with stones and marbles, but with people."







# **Tokyo 2020 Hopes**

P&G continued its effective communication in Tokyo 2020, which we met a year late due to the pandemic. The concept of "Thank You Mom", which has appeared with different campaigns for more than 10 years, is united with hope.



yarışacak milli sporcularımıza başarılar diliyor, 34. yılımızda 34 Olimpik sporcumuza destek vermenin gururunu yaşıyoruz.

"Annem için... O her şeyin en iyisine layıktır."









Regardless of the subject, books written in 2021 will must inevitably address a common issue. The COVID-19 epidemic, which adopted the popular slogan "Nothing will be the same", naturally affected the sports industry. This effect was felt especially in the first months of the year in which there was an environment of panic and uncertainty. The difficulties faced by leagues, media owners, advertisers and athletes, the cancellation of most of the global sports sponsorship deals representing a fifty billion dollar industry, the vacant grandstands meant that all accounts of for this industry was in turmoil. Of the approximately \$20 billion invested by brands in sports related communications in 2019, 85 percent were attributed to sporting events during the year. Sports related digital advertisements, such as official league pages and fan sites, were also worth close to \$1.2 billion. The withdrawal of all these resources from the market due to the pandemic meant that the system was halted.<sup>25</sup> There was also a fear that when people were locked in and got used to a sedentary lifestyle, their sports habits would decline. In the early days of the lockdown, people who spent their weekends watching sporting events encountered summarized broadcasts. Not being able to see the athletes who were symbols of health, individual development and heroism on screens, stadiums and halls was one of the most upsetting developments in the first weeks. Those who were familiar with

sports and athletes to some extent, and those who had breathed in the sports atmosphere anticipated knew that this hopeless course would change very quickly.<sup>26</sup>

Sport is the most organized phenomenon in the world and has provided international discipline in the most accurate and democratic way. Looking at the chronology of the pandemic measures and observing the transition to new norms, the superiority of sports in adapting to changing conditions can once again be observed. The sports industry adapted the quickest to the pandemic after a two-month mandated suspension. The sports mind, which includes many emotions and notions regarding life, as well as the motive for "survival instinct", has manifested athletes who ran have run for victories from long-lasting injuries throughout history, teams that have recovered after relegation and won trophies, and technical cadres who wrote inimitable stories by learning from their mistakes. That is why, from the very first day, it should not be a surprise that the first community to response to the pandemic with a "there is a way out" frame of mind was the sports community.<sup>27</sup>

In the first weeks of the pandemic, we encountered the following amusing and uplifting news: Rakuten Monkeys, one of the Taiwan Baseball League teams, launched a virtual fan concept by placing five hundred robot dummies in the stands. Olympic champion and world record holder marathoner Eliud Kipchoge compared the pandemic to a running track with numerous slopes and stated, "We will continue our life in a positive way as we do in such races. Therefore, we can finish the race much better." NBC Vice President Jenny Storms stated that her hope was is to understand the positive power of sports in difficult times and added "It is important how we respond to this situation by innovation and thinking differently, how we can support society through sports, and how we can create a lasting and permanent impact." Lutz Pfannenstiel, Sporting Director of Fortuna Düsseldorf, explained that he saw the pandemic as a great chance for football to return to more realistic price values and that there was an opportunity to return to humility and sustainability. In Czechia, the match between Sparta Prague and Viktoria Pizen was

watched by fans in cars in an open-air cinema with a giant screen. In the days of pessimism, similar news from the sports world gave an air of hope, while new norms were discussed.<sup>28</sup>

After the first hopeful news, new regulations, proposals for solutions and postponements arrived. Many leagues around the world were canceled as their final weeks approached. Ensuring continuity in sports depended on the completion of the leagues whose champions were undecided, and by taking measures to deal with the pandemic. Many organizations, especially the Champions League and NBA, decided to complete their leagues by implementing radical measures and solutions. The IOC and UEFA, on the other hand, saw delay as the most appropriate solution for two giant organizations in the summer of 2020.<sup>29</sup>

In fact, 2020 was a candidate to be a historic year for sports for both Turkey and the world. The Champions League final was to be played in Istanbul, twelve countries in Europe were to experience UEFA Euro 2020, Tokyo was going to host the Olympic Games, followed by Paralympics. All management institutions of sports, especially the IOC and UEFA, gathered quickly, and meetings were held with broadcasters and sponsors. Measures to be taken were discussed with the host countries. Projections were made, numbers formed in the past, especially after the world wars, were examined. It was determined that sports and large organizations had always emerged stronger from such crises. Sports was overcoming crises with the hope it provided humanity during the most difficult times and beyond. In the words of IOC President Thomas Bach, after the pandemic, the light at the end of the tunnel were to be the Olympic Games and sports. Postponement decisions were made with this in mind. Although the 2020 sports year largely moved to 2021, the year of disasters was nevertheless a noticeable year in the history of sports related marketing communications. It was a very disconcerting year in terms of various infrastructures, but it brought to the table issues which needed to be discussed for the betterment of humanity. When we consider all the information and data we obtained during this process in the context of the general world and sports ecosystem, it seemed seems plausible to make the following analysis:

- First of all, it was observed that many systems established by superpowers, which have been recognized worldwide, were paralyzed and faced administrative weaknesses. Wrong decisions taken in crisis management and their outcome revealed a general lack of preparation for the consequences of the pandemic. This unpreparedness caused knee-deep injudicious problems for both individual countries and for the world globally. Even giant global organizations such as the World Health Organization, the United Nations, the United States or the European Union were shaken, bringing dystopic scenarios to mind. It was observed that Europe, which is regarded as the cradle of civilization and science, did not learn their lesson from the epidemic experiences that were thought to have been locked in the depths of their past. Italy and Spain in particular showed lagging reflexes, falling behind many developing countries. The economic and human impacts of the pandemic showed that existing structural institutions were not prepared for such a situation and had difficulty responding.
- Within this general framework, it was seen that the institutions that put emergency scenarios into action most effectively under pandemic conditions were sports organizations. With the consistency in their managerial decisions and the ability to act quickly, they were quick to ensure the continuity of their systems. We experienced the first examples of this in the above-mentioned large organizations, which have global following. Without wasting any time, decisions were implemented, clear statements were made, and as if a previously made protocol was being implemented, the 2020 sports year was transferred to the following years. Sports owes these reflexes to its democratic structure and its rules for fair competition. No dissent was heard from countries, teams, technical staff and athletes, from the largest to the smallest. Experienced athletes, some of whom were about to experience the latest successes of their careers, also welcomed the decisions. The motivation to attract attention and become famous by making negative statements about the measures to be taken in the pandemic, which we sometimes see even among scientists, was rarely encountered. The sports world managed the pandemic with great maturity. I guess there will be no objection to

the claim that crisis management, which otherwise should have been witnessed in the main health organizations, was successfully implemented in sports.

- It seems that the biggest problem experienced by the sports ecosystem has been is the loss of sponsorship revenues. When 2020 data is released, it will be seen that the income generated by sports related marketing communications will have dropped for the first time. This was the biggest controversy of the year. The distribution of rights between property owners and investors had to be negotiated with a fair settlement. There were activities that were canceled or continued without spectators and content with decreasing or increasing ratings, and the common view of the parties was to update the contracts rather than destroy the established network of relationships. Thus, there was no exit from the system and the only loss was only in decrease in revenue. There has been no irreparable damage in the ecosystem, as there was a certain cost reduction. In 2020, sponsors preferred to take part in sports and chose not to withdraw, except from organizations belonging to sectors such as airline transport and tourism, which had great difficulties throughout the pandemic. They saw the effects of being part of the world of sports, which gives people hope and excitement in the most difficult times. Financially, the biggest problem was that it was not possible to generate funds to replace the ticket revenues. When we examine the figures of the twenty richest football clubs in Europe, the situation can be understood more clearly. Giant clubs closed 2020 with 8.2 billion euros in revenue. This represented a 12 percent decrease compared to 2019. There was a loss of 937 million euros in revenue due to matches that could not be broadcast on time. On the other hand, 257 million euros were lost from ticket revenues. Sponsorship revenues grew by three percent, demonstrating the strength of sports related marketing communication.

- International sports organizations ensured that the system suffered minimally with the decisions they took and by delegating the precautionary measures to national entities. Umbrella institutions took action immediately and designed how their organizations could be sustained under pandemic conditions. It should be emphasized that there was no public intervention in any of these bodies. It was once again seen how the independent existence of the sports ecosystem gained flexibility. With this striking experience, it has been proven that each branch in sports has the potential to be restructured according to its own physical characteristics. For example, tennis is relatively closed to physical contact, while taekwondo requires direct contact, so different precautionary measures were developed for the pandemic. Therefore, some events were canceled, while others switched to their new norms without further delay. The general attitude was that the organizations, which were highly anticipated by the masses, would be continued and shared through digital media, even without spectators. Thus, organizations in many branches, especially in the NBA, EuroLeague, national football, basketball and volleyball leagues, found a way not to deprive anyone with the new rules. Matches were played without controversy as they took measures to prevent the athletes from being affected by the pandemic and to maintain the existence of their career. When looking at the world of sports, it can be seen that the losses were at a minimum. The athletes were not in the risk group with their young and healthy form. Also, there were no losses among the technical staff, who were at risk due to their age, even though they were always involved in the action. The sports world, which abides by rules, procedures and protocols, and attaches importance to individual and corporate discipline implemented its precautions in the best possible way. As a result, we can say that the sports ecosystem successfully passed this exam, even if there were some insufficiencies and mistakes along the way.

- One of the consequences of being homebound was the increase in the sports games watched and the need to watch sports more than usual. This led all players in the sports industry, sports audiences and advertisers, who were thinking about how to protect their brand value and awareness, to look forward to the near future. It was once again seen that billions of sports fans were hungry for new content. In the

process that started with the NBA stopping the matches on March 11, other sports leagues inevitably did the same and many sports content disappeared. Nielsen's research on this period in the USA revealed striking data. The first of these data showed that in March 2020, the viewing time of those closely tied to watching sports increased by ten percent and that the daily viewing duration increased by about twenty minutes. The second striking data was that since the announcement of the COVID-19 pandemic, all mobile device users spent approximately twenty minutes more per day viewing sports, while this increase was approximately eighty percent among sports fans. Despite the suspension of sports programs and live sports content, the passion for sports prompted television viewers to seek out sports content, and this was detected by the brands.<sup>30</sup> Sports became the most consumed content in the digital broadcasting world as organizations came back to life through the precautions taken immediately afterwards. The Michael Jordan documentary The Last Dance, released by Netflix with perfect timing, underlined this surprising trend with its numbers. The world of sports, thought to be very dependent on live content, reinvented documentaries, sports movies and focused broadcasting. Although the consequences of the pandemic will become clear throughout 2021, it seems that sports will come out strong in this process.

- The most important effect of the pandemic on sports was experienced in the small world of individuals. I personally witnessed a public service announcement by the BBC at a time when restrictions on daily life were most intense, advising: "The danger is growing. Please don't go out into the streets. Just go out to meet your basic needs and play sports." This warning was a reminder of how sports could add value to people's lives. This unprecedented event reminded many individuals every day of the relationship between sports and the immune system and that sports was a shield that protected the human biological defence mechanism. As a result, the rate of individual sports activities in front of the screen increased by seventy percent. Despite all the marketing and communication activities carried out so far, even the masses that were yet to meet who have not met the pilates ball, yoga mat or taking ten

thousand steps a day have introduced sports into their daily lives thanks to the pandemic. The sports marketing sector, which gained momentum with countless publications, mobile applications and sports equipment, also revived itself thanks to individual consumption. Another data was that those who were newly included in the sports ecosystem declared that they would continue their activities at a rate of more than 80 percent after the pandemic. The most striking aspect of this trend was that the reaction by these people was entirely voluntary, without influence. No communication was made by states, institutions or brands regarding exercising in the early days of the pandemic. No serious call to do sports was heard from any health institution, especially WHO. When people naturally did not go outside, they decided to do sports to protect their physical and mental health. They realized that individual development and health depended on sports. The fact that sports for health will increase its share in sports related marketing communication must also be meaningful for brands that invest in this field. Because it directly concerns the future investments of and opens new doors for brands, which deal with individual health, and which combine the benefits of sports with their own promises.

As a result, we have a clear picture to show despite all the uncertainties that the pandemic has created for public institutions, owners, and investors:

- The pandemic process will reveal very positive and permanent results in terms of recreational sports activity and healthy life setup. This area is also important for public health.
- Changes in lifestyles have also changed the relationship between the consumer and the media. Increasing viewing rates can be seen in streaming channels. The decrease in the viewing rates in linear channels is accelerating.
- Sports media still remains an extraordinary power force in terms of value and meaning. The sharing of sports content free of charge and using all access channels makes OTT an increasingly interesting media platform.<sup>31</sup>

- The rate of watching sports content on social media, which is already very high, has reached its peak. In 2020, the Champions League's social media following rate was found to be three and a half times that of traditional media.
- Sports will continue to be the most powerful content of the next decade. No platform without sports will survive the loss of income.
- Observations during the pandemic process gave rise to data that reinforced the thesis defended by this book and supported our theory: The pandemic process allows every element in the sports ecosystem to draw new truths for itself. The power of sports, which is not sufficiently evaluated in market economies outside the Anglo-Saxon world, continues to offer brands great opportunities in terms of business development and communication investment. All professionally managed sports properties also increase their chances of growth and expansion as they adapt to this culture.

This book was written to explain the importance of sports as a communication tool and to convey the unique power of sports once again. Unfortunately, this time, the epidemic that emerged during the preparation stage of the book reminded us of its importance and power. Despite all the difficulties, life and sports continue. I hope that what is described in this book will contribute to a better understanding of the place of sports in business literature and provide an analytical look at this massive field.

# David Beckham Doesn't Miss a Goal The first advertisement shot with a global sports star in Turkey was the David Beckham movie, which was brought to life for Gillette's Goal campaign.



At the heart of Sportsnet Group's founding philosophy is the belief that the development of sports in a country is not due to individual talents but to planned and scheduled investments. The dimensions of a healthy sports industry can be determined by three sources:

# Public Authority

The sports industry could have existed primarily through the state's policies toward sports. Even when looking at sports for purely social benefit, the state had to take into account market conditions and act in conformity with commercial rationality. The right creation of this field would provide a permanent economic benefit, and sports would appear as an inevitable area of investment for the state.

### Brands

It was unthinkable for brands, which have the most important say in the management of sports in developed economies and create one of the largest global sectors by taking advantage of the freedom created by state policies, to exist and invest in an irrational and semicompetitive environment. In the group of countries where Turkey is included, as the illegal flow of resources was barred from entering the sports industry, the resources owned by brands multiplied.

### Sectoral Coordination

Because of Sportsnet Group's public authority and the relationship network it formed between the brands and the sector–thanks to its inclusive activities over the past seventeen years–the impact of sports has increased noticeably. Communications was put into practice in every dimension, and many areas that were not expected to attract attention became the focus. Sportsnet Group's biggest contribution to the sports industry in Turkey has been the most invisible one. It not only conducted commercial dealings but, with a mediator role for parties and with lobbying activities, it also made mention at every opportunity of the notion that in the sports industry in Turkey, the biggest provider of resources should not be the state but the brands.

I think that one of the most valuable findings from the Sportsnet Group experience is defining the development phases of the sports sponsorship structure. Since this definition leads the institutional experience to a theory, I think it can make a significant contribution to the literature. After centuries of evolution, sponsorship has gone through three major phases in the past quarter century:

# Brands are not satisfied with investing then waiting for returns.

This first phase was that brands were not content with sponsorship initiatives to increase awareness but started using innovative methods to increase productivity.

### • Brands see sports proprietors as vehicles.

The second phase entailed addressing sponsorship investment as a subject of communication and the announcement of collaboration in the highest possible volume and frequency.

# • Brands turn to profit oriented sponsorship investments.

Today, we are in the third phase. Brands are not only engaged in sponsorships for awareness and perception management but are also investing to create sales and are involved in profit focused sponsorships. In addressing these three phases, sports related marketing communications has contributed significantly to the development of brands as well as to the sports industry. Brands now set up special departments related to sponsorship management, subject their field of activity to scientific analysis and evaluate the data they have obtained, and embark on investment. In companies investing in sports sponsorship, this function, whose active management is carried out by special departments, is in a position where professionals are rewarded with yield based premiums. You need to do that wherever you are in the world.

Now, a new phase is emerging. Constantly expanding bandwidth, the enormous data transfer power of 5G, the increased capacity of mobile devices loaded with computer functions in themselves, and the transformations that all these changes will in turn create in both digital and traditional media require us to evaluate accurately and take steps accordingly. When I look at all this evolution, I sense that, in the next stage, especially the telecommunications sector and organizations in different fields will establish sports related business partnerships. I can summarize the foundations of this intuition as follows:

- The power of consumer relations created by sports gains economic significance when moving in tandem with the proprietors.
- The potential presented by sports related marketing invites designers, product developers, and manufacturers to take action with their proprietors.
- The parallel increase in job opportunities and the income needs
  of proprietors (e.g., sports clubs) requires parties to develop active
  partnership formulas as well as rational collaborations and requires
  staff who can achieve these.
- If the concept of sponsorship turns into business partnerships, multilateral profit maximization can be attained.

The despair of brands related to advertising communications is increasing ever so deeply every passing day with the fragmentation of the media. The brands' reflex is to establish one to one communications with the consumer through the new media. At this point, there are new concepts that stand out:

### • Big Data

Since each brand will have to create its own data, by creating new bridges with the consumer, it will create categories that will enable the brand to recognize who it is dealing with.

### Data Engineering

Data engineering, which is considered among the new professions of the near future, will gain importance. Collecting and sorting data according to brand specific needs will become one of the corporate expertise issues.

### Data Translation

Thus, data translators will be required to analyze the consumer group and segments that the available data will address and to determine if they can be reached with the same messages.

### Consumer Law

The methods of consumer rights protection will be constantly updated according to changing conditions, and methods of data collection and protection with consent will be developed.

The ecosystem of sports must continue to question itself constantly in the upcoming future. We will inevitably encounter a search for new constructs, such as the European Super League, that have become quite disappointingly obsolete in a very short while. If the value of Real Madrid remains below five billion USD while the market value of Netflix soars to 225 billion USD with 240 million subscribers, there appears to be a grave problem of valuation and income distribution that demands serious questioning. Insightful and in-depth analyses of this kind will help identify the problems, diagnoses will trigger the search for solutions, and shared wisdom will pave the way of new and rational paths.

Of course, time will tell how much of what I am saying proves true. To date, we have seen in our data-based examinations that our insights are consistent. Therefore, I take heed of the things Sportsnet Group has done in Turkey, and I am pleased to share this experience.

# **Sports On Our Mind** The launch of Radyospor was shared with the public through effective visuals.



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