

WHITE PAPER

Presented by
Partnership Group – Sponsorship Specialists™

Measuring Results

Brent Barootes

How does a brand measure results? When companies invest in sponsorship marketing plans, be it millions of dollars with the Olympics or a local charity investment, how can they tell if they succeeded? How can they tell if they should re-invest?

These are age-old questions. Too often, the answer is that you can't. Some (the unformed) say that sponsorship cannot be measured like traditional media, that you cannot measure results. That's crazy! In fact, when we at the Partnership Group - Sponsorship Specialists™ work with our brand clients, they can tell exactly how they measured up. They can measure against sales, against employee engagement, recruitment, brand recognition, traffic, or a thousand-and-one other metrics. That is why they are successful.

Traditional ad agencies talk about GRPs and CPM. They try to transfer that into the PR world to "earned and unearned media" numbers. I'm sorry, but the fact that my logo appeared somewhere so many times does not make my phone ring off the hook. Those numbers are for ad and PR agencies to justify their retainers and fees. In my view, they do not measure success—they measure how effectively the agency got my name out there. To me, success is based on achieving goals and objectives. Impressions may be part of a goal, but if they *are* the goal, you have a problem.

Sponsorship is about measuring against quantifiable metrics. What is the sales goal? Did we achieve it? Our goal was to get our employees to feel better about working for us... was that achieved? With our clients, we set the goals, then create the metrics to measure the goals, and then at the end of the sponsorship (or in the middle), we measure for success.

A few months back at the Olympics, you could measure the fact that 12% of online conversations about Coke mentioned the Torch Relay in which they were a partner and 5% of Samsung conversations did the same. I once was told that, at the World Juniors (hockey) in Edmonton recently, Hockey Canada saw an amazing spike in Facebook friends and conversations. That's great, but what was the outcome? What are Coke and Samsung trying to achieve? I presume the answer is sales, so where are those results? And for Hockey Canada, how many of those Facebook fans are active today? What has your brand really accomplished?

We know that the goal for several Olympic sponsors is revenue generation and market penetration. Most of these big brands can (and do) measure results, and that is why they are still there. But when it comes to the local theatre company sponsorship or charity walk, how do we measure success?

Goals are critical. As a car dealer or pizza shop, how many more cars or pizzas do you hope to sell based on your investment? Or how many new employees do you hope to recruit? Once you know those numbers, you can build a sponsorship program with the property to assist you in developing success. Then you can also measure success. The formula is simple. It is not about earned or unearned media and GRPs. It is about tangible goals and outcomes.