

A Marketing Communications Analysis of the Czech Handball Federation

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Bachelor Thesis
2016



Tomas Bata University in Zlín
Faculty of Humanities

Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně

Fakulta humanitních studií

Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur

akademický rok: 2015/2016

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

Jméno a příjmení: **David Polášek**
Osobní číslo: **H130150**
Studijní program: **B7310 Filologie**
Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk pro manažerskou praxi**
Forma studia: **prezenční**

Téma práce: **Analýza marketingové komunikace Českého svazu házené**

Zásady pro vypracování:

Definování cílů práce a použitých metod zpracování práce

Průzkum literárních pramenů a zpracování teoretických poznatků problematiky marketingové komunikace sportu

Analýza současného stavu marketingové komunikace ČSH

Návrh doporučení pro zlepšení marketingové komunikace ČSH na základě výsledků analýzy

Zhodnocení projektu z hlediska jeho implementace do praxe

Rozsah bakalářské práce:

Rozsah příloh:

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**

Seznam odborné literatury:

Beech, John G., and Simon Chadwick. 2007. The Marketing of Sport. Harlow: Prentice Hall/Financial Times.

Beech, John G., and Simon Chadwick. 2013. The Business of Sport Management. Second edition. New York: Pearson Education.

Mullin, Bernard James, Stephen Hardy, and William Anthony Sutton. 2014. Sport Marketing. Fourth edition. Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics.

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Sluka, Tomáš. 2007. Profesionální sportovec: Právní a ekonomické aspekty. Vydání 1. Praha: Havlíček Brain Team.

Vedoucí bakalářské práce:

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Ústav managementu a marketingu


Datum zadání bakalářské práce:

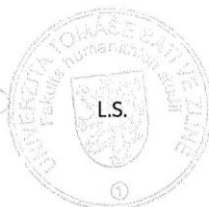
13. listopadu 2015

Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce:

6. května 2016

Ve Zlíně dne 7. ledna 2016


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ABSTRAKT

Cílem této bakalářské práce je provést analýzu marketingové komunikace Českého svazu házené, se zaměřením na Extraligu. V teoretické části je úkolem provést rešerši literárních pramenů se zaměřením na marketing a marketingové komunikace se zaměřením na sportovní odvětví. Dále jsou zde popsány metody postupu analýzy marketingové komunikace. V praktické části se autor zaměřuje na analýzu samotnou, kde pomocí poznatků z teoretické části provádí analýzu a srovnává poznatky s obdobnými sportovními odvětvími. Na základě výsledků praktické části jsou navržena řešení dané problematiky, včetně jejich reálného použití v praxi.

Klíčová slova: Marketing, Marketingové komunikace, Média, Digitální marketing, Online marketing, Sport, Házená, Český svaz házené

ABSTRACT

The goal of this bachelor thesis is to make a marketing communications analysis of the Czech Handball Federation with particular focus on the Extraliga. In the theoretical part, the task is to make a research of the literature specialized on marketing, marketing communications and marketing of sport. Furthermore, the methods of working out of the analysis are described. In practical part, author focuses on the analysis, which is made by using the knowledge from the theoretical part. In addition, this knowledge is compared with other sports in the similar branch. Based on the results of the analysis, suggestions of recommendation are made with respect of its feasibility.

Keywords: Marketing, Marketing communications, Media, Digital Marketing, Online marketing, Sport, Handball, Czech Handball Federation

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Mgr. Ing. Barbora Haltofová, who kept me motivated in whole process of writing the thesis with her priceless personal attitude. In addition, I would also like to thank to my family for understanding of this time-consuming thesis.

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INTRODUCTION

In 21st century, sport is not just matter of physical performance of the athletes who are driven by vision of success. Maybe more important affairs happen in backstage of big matches, races and events. But those two situations have some similarities. Either athlete or sport entity could lose his/her/its race, both on the pitch or backstage.

According to interview with Daniel Novotný, reputation of the Czech Handball Federation was decreased, because of the lack of financial resources, what could be well connected with marketing communication activities of the CHF. Especially, the federation pays lack of the attention on mass media and digital marketing. (iDnes.cz 2016)

According to design of the biggest sports internet media websites, handball in Czech Republic is rated as one of the minority sports together with other ball games like volleyball or basketball. Nevertheless, handball is probably the least popular sport in this competition in spite of long and successful tradition of this sport in history, when Czechoslovakia won the World Championship in 1967. Thanks to HC Dukla Praha, handball in CR had also European reputation among the team sphere. (The-Sport.org 2015) (iDnes.cz 2016)

The situation could be improved by using basic sport marketing communications means and knowledge, which should have great impact on the federation as a whole. With respect of the sports nature, creation of deep marketing communications analysis is the goal of this bachelor thesis. In order to achieve reliable marketing communications analysis, means of marketing communications were used with caution of particular environment of handball environment.

On the end of this thesis, author displays suggestions of improvement with respect of the low cost strategy of the CHF in order to achieve feasible solution of current situation. Fortunately, CHF is open to co-operation during the creation of analysis part. Thanks to these occasions, output of this thesis should be the first step for better tomorrows of Czech handball.

METHODS AND GOALS OF THE THESIS

The goal of the theoretical part is to make a research of literary sources of the marketing and marketing communications. In following chapters, marketing and marketing communications are compared with sports environment, where the some elements are different.

The goal of the practical part is to make an analysis of the marketing communications of the Czech Handball Federation with deeper focus on the top handball league in Czech Republic, namely Extraliga. Based on research of the situation of Czech handball and Extraliga in media and websites, the author did a research of online and digital media. In some cases, handball is compared with other sports from similar popularity, namely it is basketball and volleyball. Some parts of the research are also based on interview with chief marketing officer of Czech Handball federation, Mr. Daniel Novotný. Overall, some deeper information is received from author's personal experience as a registered handball player.

In the following chapters, author suggests recommendations, which could improve the current situation of the Czech Handball Federation, especially in Extraliga. These recommendations would be useless if the Czech Handball Federation would not take these recommendations into practice. Therefore, the mentioned suggestions were created with respect of limited financial resources of Czech Handball Federation, and also with respect of requirements from Daniel Novotný.

I. THEORY

1 MARKETING

1.1 Marketing Generally

In 2016, people live in age driven by technology. Not only people's lives are driven by technology, but even the marketing field of study is influenced by this development. According to Kotler (2010, 4-5), marketing has developed to the third stage of its lifetime, where consumer will be still the most important element of marketing, but its relationship between consumer and institutions changes root and branch. (Armstrong and Kotler 2015, 32-35)

When the word "marketing" was used for the first time at the beginning of the 20th century, Henry Ford came up with "business" idea where objective was to sell the cheapest thing to as much people as possible. Kotler called this age "Marketing 1.0". Through the years, when business world grew up, idea of cheapest product, which is sold to as much consumers as possible, was replaced by "consumer-centric" marketing, where consumer became the most important element of the business. This following age is called "Marketing 2.0." (Kotler 2010, 4) (KnowThis.com 2016)

According to Kotler (2011), most of the businesses and institutions use these two mentioned stages of this field of study. Back to the reality, technology has had great influence on development of Marketing and allows Kotler to use term "Marketing 3.0", what is most recent "age of marketing". Unlike the distinctions between 1.0 and 2.0, 3.0 has a same basis like 2.0, but in addition, 3.0 respects consumer as human being who has "*heart, spirit and mind*". Additionally, social media play significant role in this development, because it represents place, where people can express their feelings, ideas, thoughts, experiences, and basically everything that they want to share with other people or intuitions. Society is deeply influenced by creative people who allow the others to be different, to be individual. And if organizations want to succeed in this age, they have to recognize how to touch mentioned three key elements of consumer. Also, their objectives must be higher than they were in the past. Vision and think big - that is the key to success in modern world. (Dahl 2015, 1-5) (Kotler 2010, 4-5)

1.2 Marketing Communications

Marketing communications are defined as a plan of company which has six parts. Those are advertising, sales promotion, events, personal selling, public relations (PR) and direct marketing. Beech, Chadwick (2007, 222-223) add two more parts to this mix in order to

respect sports nature, it is Relationship marketing and atmospherics. However, they did not implement events to their marketing communications mix in sport (SIMCM).

According to mentioned sources, marketing communication is a way how to catch consumer's attention in order to communicate with him, therefore, offer our product to him. In addition, regular marketing communications mix has five basic parts (advertising, personal selling, public Relations, direct marketing and sales promotion), what is the basic structure of the marketing communications. But in this thesis, this basic mix is already "*upgraded*" to its adjusted version with respect of sports environment. Therefore, the mix is described in the chapters below. (Foret 2011, 229-233)

2 SPORTS MARKETING

2.1 Uniqueness of Sports Marketing

In comparison with chapter above, sport marketing has its uniqueness that must be respected in order to be successful. Sports marketing must be viewed as a unique discipline of marketing. It has some features which no other product/service could have. Even though many of the marketing techniques are very similar or even the same, sport area is still unique. (Beech and Chadwick, 2007, 4-5)

As Beech John and Simon Chadwick write in the very begin of *The Marketing of Sport*, this field of study has many differences among the sport environment. They claimed that paying for another social activity is not the same thing as paying for ticket for sports match. It is often more complicated than marketing in general, because of the more complex relationship of provider (federations, organizations, management of sport leagues) and customer (people, organizations, companies). Both main sources (*The Marketing of Sport* and *Sport Marketing*) are mentioning importance of element of unpredictability. Fact that results of matches, contests or other events are unpredictable is absolutely crucial for sport marketing. Therefore, this feature is typical and unique for the sport. Such feature is unpleasant for marketers who have to face these challenges connected with this matter of fact. Unpredictability is not just about results of particular football match, but for example, football match has wider range of results like course of the match, weather conditions, or atmosphere on the stadium. All these elements have a great impression on the marketing success. If some of the players do some act of fair play, it could broadcast by television channels around the world, therefore, the player and his team will get higher popularity. But these acts of players are absolutely spontaneous and no marketer can be praised in cases of potential marketing success.

(Mullin et al. 2014, 21) (Beech and Chadwick 2007, 5)

When the match, event, or contest ends, the marketer's job is done. That's one of the most wide-spread myths of sports marketing. Job of people involved in marketing activities sometimes starts years before events, and it could have long-term impact. For example, at Olympic Games in Nagano 1998, organizers make a deal with NHL officers for allowing participating of NHL players. Thanks to this deal, Nagano 1998 is often called "Tournament of Century". Of course, this nickname is the most popular in Czech Republic which won the hockey tournament. Even most recent Olympic Games in Sochi and London are great examples of great impact of sports events. Both cities recorded a high

boost of tourism in following months and years. These events have impact not only on tourism, but on sport overall. (iDnes.cz 2011) (Děkanovský 2008, 140-141, 144-157) (Sekot 2003, 11-13) (The Telegraph 2013)

Organizations want to satisfy consumer's wants and needs. That is well known definition of marketing. In the sports nature, there are also many other relationships which are involved in process. For example, Czech Handball Federation "(CHF)" is connected with fans, league, business partners, national team, state, or teams. Of course, CHF do not have to fulfill wants and needs of all this participants, but CHF is highly influenced by them. It must be taken into consideration in process of making marketing communications.

In the most recent marketing books, customers are presented as a most important element of successful enterprise. Sports environment boost this idea rapidly. Federations, organizations, teams, or companies with sports clothing and hardware are dependent on their customers, and maybe more importantly, on their fans. All these participants are often declaring how important their fans are, some of them (even players) are affirming that the reason of what they do and how they performance on the pitch are fans. Sure, this can be seemed as a marketing technique in order to make their fans loyal. Wherever the truth is, fans are seemed as a key element in sports environment, and their loyalty could be seemed as a long-term goal of such organizations. Fans are inconsiderable part of spectator's number of the game or the match which their favorite team is playing. In times of great results, fans are proud of their team and they are not afraid to show that on social networks, and they spread positive vibes about their team. But every coin has two sides. Fans could boost team's marketing efforts but it is two-edged sword that could hurt hard. Every bad decision which can upset the fans is serious problem with respect of amount of people who like or love their team. (Mullin et al. 2014, 182) (Beech and Chadwick 2007,) (Kotler 2010, 51-57) (Stein and Evans 2009, 161-165) (Plzenskydenik.cz 2016) (sport.akualtne.cz 2014)

See and be seen. It could be alpha and omega of marketing success, which marketers trying to reach. There are not many areas, if any, which have better positions in "be seen" than sports branch overall. In almost every media, written or spoken, there is a sport section that provides a customer with recent information from many branches of sports world. And they do that absolutely "for free" in most cases. It could lead sports marketers to underestimating the given power, but the truth is that It is absolutely necessary for the teams or organizations to take an advantage of this feature a use as well as possible. (Mullin et al. 2014, 11) (Beech and Chadwick, 2011) (Stein and Evans 2009, 165)

Visit a sport match at the stadium is not just about performance of the teams on the pitch. Marketers of sports brands with equipment, clothes and fashion clothing are involved in process too. Many book sources describe sport as physical activity with significant effect on society that could be both positive and negative. This deeper understanding of the sports environment is crucial for marketing communications, where marketers and society meet each other. On one hand, element of sport influences society but sports environment is also influenced by society. Thanks to high influence that sport has, this function of sport is strongly important in the development of society. Besides the others, the high influence is reached by enormous amount of place which sport gets in TV, internet, newspapers and other mass media, which provides customer with huge amount of information from matches or events. (Stein and Evans 2007, 153-154, (Beech and Chadwick 2009, 11)

2.2 Marketing Communications in Sport

Even if the sports teams or organizations have a great means for persuading people to go to the stadium, to buy merchandise, or just to watch the games, it is absolutely necessary to deliver these means to the right customer in the right way. Beech and Chadwick suggest that most useful technique in this field is Sport Integrated Marketing Communications Mix “(SIMCM)”, which respects uncertainty and specific features of sports business. Talking about Integrated Marketing Communications Mix “IMCM”, there are not many distinctions between SIMCM and IMCM. What often differentiates SIMCM and other sports marketing activities from general marketing is unique product, which is described in previous chapter 1.2.1. (Beech and Chadwick 2007, 213-214)

In this particular field, it is necessary to build long-term relationship with a customer who will become loyal to the club or organization, in other words, they want to transform customer to the fan. Traditional communication model have to be extended for a specificity of the sports business, where it is crucial to have a feedback from the recipient. The response from the customer does not have to be positive always, but it is important to have all kinds of feedback. In fact, having a 100% of positive feedback is unlikely. Generally, Beech and Chadwick (2007, 223-225) summarize that making a good contact with a customer and building good image of the brand is essential for marketing success. (Dahlén, Lange and Smith 2010, 278)

2.2.1 Relationship Management

The means of the SIMCM have their own hierarchy that is built on its importance for the sports marketing nature. Author of this hierarchical classification puts relationship management (*RM*) on the first place because of the mentioned specific nature of the sports product. Authors think that build a strong relationship with customer is crucial in this “business”. Therefore, they claim that it is even more important than sales in the way. This kind of relationship is often long-term or even lifetime process, where, in ideal case, customer is absolutely loyal through the years and feels himself as a part of the organization, what is reflected on his behavior during rising-prices times. In these times, customer or fan sees no problem in buying these things from club, because he feels that he is helping his favorite club. Furthermore, this kind of devoted fan could have positive effect (from organization’s perspective) on his relatives, who can be as devoted and loyal as much as he is. Therefore, the effect from this fan/customer is doubled, tripled etc.

Sports nature is also unique in some elements in this relationship making, because behavior of customer is affected by history, tradition and feelings to the club or sport, what could makes building a good relationship easier in particular way. Of course, other non-sport products and services have their tradition and history as well, but in this area, it is even more important. Fans, who become loyal and devoted, provides customer with qualitative feedback, which has significant importance and should be checked by organizations carefully in order to achieve maximal happiness of the fan, who is crucial for sustainability and development of the organization/club. For these reasons, there is no doubt why is *RM* placed on the first place of the hierarchy. (Beech and Chadwick 2007, 222-232) (Foret 2011, 229-232)

2.2.2 Advertising

For regular people, advertising is the most visible element for the mass, who thinks that this is how the marketing looks like, but it is just a tip of the iceberg. On the other hand, there is no doubt that advertising is one of the most important elements of the successful marketing strategy or communications. For the start, what distinguishes advertising from other elements of SIMCM is a fact that it is almost always paid. Nowadays, people accept advertising as part of the sports business because they know how important it is for the organizations. Most of the people are witnesses of the advertising in TV, internet, or outside every day in these forms. This most visible component of SIMCM has big power and it has effect on many people, what is the goal of organization in order to sale a tickets

or gain the publicity and popularity. On the other hand, some sort of people may be distrustful about advertising for its biased approach. (Beech and Chadwick 2007, 225-226) (Egan 2015, 172-177) (Dahlen, Lange and Smith 2010, 280)

2.2.3 PR Publicity

When organizations finally gain some attention of people, in this moment, it also has attention of media, which want to provide information to society what is absolutely crucial for the organizations. Sports organizations have a unique relationship with media, where they get a lot of place to express their attitudes or comment their situation and many more. Without a doubt, media are important place for all clubs/organizations/federations, but it is even more important for those members, whose financial situation is not good enough to waste money on expensive communication channels where they could express their stand. Place, which they get in media, is crucial for them because it is for free in most cases, but they have to use this place very carefully, because their statements are the most visible in these media. For this reason, it is necessary to have a good relationship with media, which helps their club. (Beech and Chadwick 2007, 226-227) (Egan 2015, 216-220)

In case of local sports organizations, the most important are their local media. All mentioned reasons are arguments why all members or senders of message must pay maximal attention to relationship with media, journalist and everything related with these. It is important how senders deliver their message, because according to their behavior in media, customers make their own picture of them. (Beech and Chadwick 2007, 227)

2.2.4 Personal “Selling”

Sports members can put maximal efforts to be visible, but if their customers do not feel like part of them, it often could not be enough because of this feeling. In most of the companies, personal contact is often used to support sales and to make direct contact with a customer. As it was already said, sales often are not objectives of the organization. Therefore, personal contact with audience in sports field has to be different with respect to the sports product. In general, customer has to feel that he is part of the organization and that he is important for them. The best way to achieve this goal is to make a personal contact with players or other people from the organization. For example, top players of the club often become role models for the audience who love them. There are more ways how to make this contact with the audience. Thanks to the events, where people can get signature of the players or events, where people just meet their role models, audience has

feeling of being appreciated by their club. (Beech and Chadwick 2007, 227-229) (Egan 2015, 278-284)

In contrast with advertising, two-way communication is happening in personal contact, what is beneficial for both sides. According to Beech and Chadwick, there are three levels of loyalty of the customers. Organizations' objective is to achieve maximal number of customers on level 3 who are devoted to them with all benefits for both sides again. Customers on level 1 are customers, who just take advantage of limited offers for lower prices and then never come back again. Those on level 2 are people who get some benefits after visiting match or event and there is a bigger chance that these people achieve level 3. Institutions try to maintain relationship with customer after personal contact via emails, messages, limited offers etc. This component of the hierarchy is time-consuming, but very effective in terms of getting new devoted customers and maintaining current customers/fans. Personal selling is displayed in commas in headline on purpose, because other non-sports sources do not take sport environment into consideration. (Beech and Chadwick 2007, 227-229) (Egan 2015, 278-284)

2.2.5 Sponsorship and Licenses

Nowadays, many teams or clubs use their name or the name of the stadium for advertising purposes. It is not surprising, because these licenses are expensive. Then, it is an essential source of financial resources, which all these "Generali Arena", "O₂ Arena" or "Gumárny Zubří Aréna" generate. Speaking about licensing, the case of arenas is not rare. Organizations can also sell their licenses for TV rights to boost their revenue from the match. (Beech and Chadwick 2007, 230-231) (AC Sparta Praha 2016) (O2arena.cz 2016) (BB&T Center 2016)

Almost all clubs, teams or federations can only run their business thanks to their sponsors, who provide them with a highest amount of money or any other kinds of advantages. Although sponsorship is a core of sustainable sports business, it suffers from criticism by society who does not like its persuading form of expressing. Nobody can really blame them, because if you take a look on most popular sports in USA (NBA, MLB, NHL, and NFL), sponsorship or advertising is one of the first things that people can notice. But if people want to see best players of the world, they have to accept financial demandingness of their wants. In other words, sponsorship is not philanthropy. Sponsors expect that they will receive some value for their invested money. People can see advertising on the ice, on the floor, on players' jerseys, in the names of the events or

contests, rankings, and on many other places that one could even imagine. (Beech and Chadwick 2007, 231-232) (TheRichest 2016)

2.2.6 Digital and Online Marketing

Technology goes hand in hand with progress of mankind. Digital world is one of the milestones of technology progress. For example, other milestones were printing, radio or TV, which are still representatives of mass media. Nowadays, digital marketing is essential for most of the companies and Czech Handball Federation is not an exception. (Kotler 2010, 3-8)

Even business world must respect this progress. Therefore, digital marketing “(DM)” have taken its significant place in plan of marketing communications. Online and digital world is a mainstream of these days, what is important fact for marketers who can meet their customers online in real-time. This discipline of marketing could be used as a tool for improving relationship between company and consumer in their long term relationship, which is crucial not only in marketing communications of the CHF. One of the advantages that digital marketing offers is creating new markets, because using technologies provides you with 3.5 billion potential customers. This number is amount of users of the internet that still grows, which means that importance of DM grows as well. To realize how much internet population has grown, an example is putted. In March 2000, there were 304 million people. Some people think that it is crucial to know the technologies for doing digital marketing. That’s not true. It is still marketing and knowledge of your customers is necessity and key breakpoint. Then, DM helps to build a strong brand or to create an idea. (Ryan and Jones 2012, 2-8) (Charlesworth 2015, 1-3) (Internet Live Stats 2016)

Most of the companies already catch this kind of new trend, and according to statistics, their spending of costs still grows. It might be also effect of “*Web 2.0*”, what is the most recent description of digital field. Best way to explain term Web 2.0 is to give an example. Web 2.0 is composition of newest trends of online and digital marketing like social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), new video distribution channels (YouTube, Vimeo). One of the few media channels, which have stayed alive from Web 1.0, is e-mail marketing, which is described in details below. All that information about new Web 2.0 seems great, but there are also other elements, which grow up together with Web 2.0. (Charlesworth 2015, 292-293) (Funk 2013, 208-212)

There is also a new type of consumer, sometimes called Consumer 2.0, who has more power in choice, sharing and communication. These new approach among the consumers

could be both beneficial and negative. Consumer 2.0 is not afraid of his own attitude and he is willing to share his ideas and apprehension with his surroundings. In history, sometimes it was hard to measure effectiveness of marketing campaign or new product. Nowadays, people, who are somehow connected with brand, react immediately after the start-up of new marketing activities. Thanks to this approach of Consumer 2.0, it is much easier to manage marketing communications. On the other hand, if society has power of choice, it could be demanding for marketers to come up with product/service that fully satisfy society's needs because consumers can compare more products or services than ever before. But in case of successful satisfying their needs, companies could build a strong brand or create new ideas, and they can deliver these ideas to their customers easily. (Ryan and Jones 2012, 13-15) (Charlesworth 2015, 22-28)

2.2.7 Website

One of the first contacts between company/federation/entity and customer is usually made through the website of the business. Sometimes, the website is replaced by Facebook fanpage, but in other cases, and also in case of the CHF, website is still center of action. When any customer or fan of any Czech handball team wants to see match schedule, results or statistics, his only option (at least in statistics) is to visit their web. The power of company or, in this case, federation is in their absolute control over the website. But this advantage must be used well. Some subjects are based on thought that their website is irreplaceable and they do not pay necessary attention to its planning, design or layout. Maybe in other cases, owners build their website according to their thoughts and ideas. There is nothing wrong with having own idea, but during creating new website, attention must be paid to satisfying customer's needs.

Before establishing the website, federation has to think about customer's goals at the website. What are they looking for? Why did they come? How they can find us? After answering these questions, federation can build their useful website. First of all, it must be easy to find the page which customers are looking for. For this reason, content should be related to the searched keywords. In addition, using hashtags and key words could not hurt. Modern applications like Google AdWords or Seznam Sklik could help to highlight one's page in list of random websites. Therefore, the website should pop out on the first place on the list. When customers finally visit the web page, they probably always have an object of interest. It could be schedule of matches, statistics, bio of players, videos, photos, articles, contacts and probably many more things. The task of the creator is to design a website,

where target customers will have easy access to their visiting goals.(Ryan and Jones 2012, 37-44) (Dorčák 2012, 59-64) (Charlesworth 2015, 242-247)

2.2.8 Social Media Marketing

When considering making the social media marketing, the most important thing is to give ear to customer, who is also a fan of the social media website. Course of event on the social media web page is depended on consumer, who is the source of the inspiration for the posts on social media. Fortunately, this kind of media is probably the most interactive one medium, which allows the owner of the page to adjust his behavior on the page in very short period of time. It is essential to know that consumers on the social media sites are not typical audience, or in deeper thoughts, it is not audience at all. They are active part of the environment where the owner and the consumer are supposed build an important relationship. Importance of the social media boosted in age of the Web 2.0, where the interaction of the business (or federation) and customer is crucial. Basically, it could be said that the consumers manage the course of the event on the website. From owner's point of view, it is important to give the fan only that kind of content, which fan wants. In detail, the owner has to build a strong relationship with the most active fans on the website. These fans are the most important for the owner, because they give the owner the most reliable feedback, what is helpful for building the future of the page. (Dahl 2015, 146) (Funk 2013, 2-3)

2.2.9 Email Marketing

This marketing tool is used on personal level of a communication, where the contact between company and customer is very close. In order to build reliable commercial email message, some of the rules must be taken into consideration. The commercial message has to show only reliable, well-designed information, which customer wants. Nowadays, people ignore the unwanted email messages without any regrets, and if the customer receives the email which is annoying, it is likely that he will never open the email message from the same sender. On the other hand, if people like the emails from the sender, they will probably always open the message. In addition, it is interesting for Czech Handball Federation that this kind of marketing is very cheap one. (Ryan and Jones 2014, 178-203) (Kirš and Harper 2010, 24-39)

2.2.10 Branding

In case of branding, it seems little bit disputable if the federation needs to be recognizable in some situations. From the negative point of view, branding in sports industry is probably more complicated than in the other spheres of economic world. In case of knowledge of the brand, the federation could use regular means to gain high knowledge of the brand, but in perception of the quality, federation is depended on the physical performance of the teams in Extraliga, or national teams. If those teams produce unsatisfying results, it is hard for the federation to improve the quality of the brand. On the other, the most important element of branding for the CHT is to obtain loyalty of the handball consumers. This is probably the most important thing for the federation. In order to receive more creditability, the federation could use special programs for the consumers to show the appreciation of their loyalty. (Aaker 2003, 8-23)

2.3 Summary of the Theoretical Part

Based on the theory of marketing communications, some differences between regular marketing and sports marketing could be seen. According to mentioned information, sports products has unique features like the stronger emotional aspect of the customers, important social purpose for society, higher importance of the customer relationship management, or different position in media than other entities. Difference approaches among the sports marketing is often mentioned in this thesis on purpose, but on the other hand, marketing of sport also has a lot of similarities with regular marketing, mainly in the online marketing.

In the analysis part, highlights of the theoretical part are used in context of the Czech Handball Federation, or more specifically, in context of the Extraliga. In first part of analysis, product of handball is described in order to realize, what is typical for this sport. Then, a situation of the handball in Czech media is displayed with comparison of other ball games.

Later on, suggestions for improvement are introduced in following chapter using the knowledge from the theory of sports marketing communications. Without any doubt, theoretical part is useful in the analysis and suggestions, but in some cases, author also respects specific environment of Czech handball, which is based on interview with chief marketing officer of the CHF, or based on personal experience.

ANALYSIS

3 MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS ANALYSIS

The goal of the analysis part is to make deep research regarding Czech handball, the Czech Handball Federation and Extraliga. In the analysis, only those means, which are useful in specific environment of handball, were used. Whole “*Marketing Communications Analysis*” part is also the source of suggested recommendations, which are displayed in following part.

3.1 Product

One of the products of Czech Handball Federation is Extraliga, which is main target of this analysis. Regarding handball, it is the highest Czech league re-established in 2005, when Interliga (Czechoslovak highest league) was cancelled. 12 teams from whole country takes place in this league that is played from September till May. The CHF is an administrator of league and it is accountable for its operations. In contrast with recent years, the league has no general partner, which could be included in name of the league. In past years, main general partners were always part of the name, for example Zubr Extraliga, Tipgames Extraliga or Triglav pojišťovna Extraliga. Because of this occasion, Extraliga is dealing with lack of financial sources, which goes hand in hand with financial situations in the teams. In history, some of the players were professionals, but nowadays, most of the players are amateurs or semi-professionals. In the past, top Czech or Czechoslovak teams where playing European leagues on regular basis, because their playing level and financial assets were good enough to compete with other European teams. (iDnes.cz 2015) (Český Svaz Házené 2009) (iDnes.cz 2012)

To be more general, the CHF has control over the sports product that is powerful in its natural features. Handball is fast, highly physical sport with high demands on physical preparation. Handball is most popular in Germany, Denmark, France, Scandinavia and former Yugoslavia. Therefore, it is mainly European sport. Taking look at winners of all World Championships, there is no winner from different continent. In addition, Czechoslovakia were rather successful in 50s and 60s, therefore, Czech handball has famous history to look at. (Český Svaz Házené 2009)

3.2 Position of Extraliga and Czech Handball in Media

3.2.1 Internet Media

In media, handball has not good status at all. In recent years, it is beneficial that this sport is in a bundle with other ball games played in arenas, namely it is basketball, volleyball and sometimes floorball. Otherwise, handball would have weaker position, because it is less popular than basketball and volleyball. Some of the biggest Czech sport news websites (sport.idnes.cz, sport.cz, isport.cz) place handball to rather secondary sports. At idnes.cz/sport, handball is located in section “Halové” (sports played in arenas) together with basketball, volleyball and floorball. This website is also main source of information about Czech handball in competition with another Czech sport news websites. (iDnes.cz 2015)

For next example, one of the mainstream sports portal (Sport.cz) do not even allocate handball to individual section. Handball is just part of the “Míčové sporty” (Ball games) category, what is subcategory of section “Ostatní sporty” (Other sports). To make it worse, in recent days of analysis (20 April 2016), there is not even one article about Extraliga or Czech handball overall. (sport.cz 2015)

At isport.cz, handball is placed on quite long list of sports to the section “Další sporty” (other sports). After clicking at its individual section, reader cannot see any articles related to Extraliga. At least, there are some articles about HC Dukla Praha (in connection with their performance in Challenge Cup), or older articles about Czech national team, but it is desperately insufficient. (isport.cz 2015)

These three examples are typical representatives of internet news, but there is also one particular project which is dedicated only to handball, namely it is Házet nás baví (HNB), which works mainly on Facebook page under the same name, and it also works on website hazetnasbavi.cz. This non-profitable project serves articles from handball, including Extraliga, Interliga (top Czech-Slovak women league) and world handball either. It is interesting that the CHF co-operated with HNB in past, but this co-operation is no longer existing. This situation is described in more details in chapter of suggestions. And last but not least, Extraliga has its own website, but this issue will be described in details in another section. (Házet Nás Baví 2015)

3.2.2 Television and Live Streaming

Česká televize, main representative of TV mass media, plays crucial role in marketing communications of Extraliga, because it is only TV station which offers live streaming of matches in the league. According to interview with the chief marketing officer of the CHT, Mr. Daniel Novotný, ČT offers 25+3 matches in season.

On the other hand, live streaming of matches is provided by tvcom.cz in form of internet streaming. Tvcom.cz works on different format of streaming, where every club can use their services (place on the web) to stream their match live. Therefore, it is used mainly for purpose of secondary sports like basketball, volleyball, floorball and many others. (tvcom.cz 2015)

3.2.3 Social Media

In the theoretical part, there was mentioned importance of social media in recent marketing communications, where it is absolutely necessary to stay in touch with customer. Hence, it looks silly not to have accounts on social media. Notwithstanding, Extraliga is one few “businesses” that have not individual account on the most used social media in Czech Republic. Absence of Facebook or Instagram account is something what markedly affects the reputation. A consequence of absence of social media accounts are described in another section.

3.3 Website Analysis

3.3.1 Extraligahazene.cz

Thanks to absence of social media accounts, what is mentioned above, importance of a website gains rapidly. The website is the only center of action, because it is a place where the CHF meet their customers, sponsors, and partners. With some exaggeration, it is a shop window of the league, where fans can get all the information about the league or their favorite club. Potential partners, who are essential for the league, might get interested in supporting Extraliga thanks to the perfect website. But in fact, new website of the top Czech handball league has not aspects of the perfect “business card”. (Házená Extraliga 2015)

3.3.2 TV and Live Streaming

From perspective of a customer, website extraligahazene.cz does not offer all the required information, and there are quite many elements, which make the website rather

unsatisfactory. In case of new customer, who wants to found out where he can watch matches of the league online or in TV, there are disturbances, which lead to confusing situation and make bad impression on the customer, visitor, or fan. In fact, there is a direct link to all matches which will be played or those matches which was already played. But new visitor of the website probably has no idea about provider of live handball matches. By clicking on “TV COM” button in upper bar, visitor is redirected to handball section at tvcom.cz. It is at least disputable, if heading “TV COM” is sufficiently predicative. (Házená Extraliga 2015)

3.3.3 Photo Gallery

Another confusing situation can happen even to visitor, who knows the league and website itself. Portraying a situation where visitor of the web is also visitor of some recently played match, interesting situation can occur. If the visitor wants to see some photos from the game, his first steps would probably lead to photo gallery, where one could predict that this is the place where pictures could be situated. In a real situation, visitor will be disappointed one more time. In photo gallery, which is placed also in upper bar, there are pictures captured in particular matches, but there is no order of the matches. There are random matches from a random rounds, and even after seek through all of the 6 pages of photo gallery, there are no photos from recent matches of play-off rounds, which are playing in time of this analysis. (Házená Extraliga 2015)

Looking more in depth, the visitor can use another way to watch some photos from particular match. In right-middle bar, there is a list of matches, which are played in recent round. Under every match, there are 2 icons, which stands (or at least they should) for photos and video from the match. Surprisingly, after clicking on the camera icon, visitor is redirected to the page with online streaming of the match in written form, which has nothing to do with photos. In consequence, this icon is highly confusing. At least the icon of another camera, meaning the camera for recording, does its function. After clicking on it, visitor is redirected on page of the match at tvcom.cz, where he can watch live streaming or record of the match. (Házená Extraliga 2015)

3.3.4 Video Gallery

If photo gallery was the only problem, a situation would be quite simple and easy to solve. Though, right beside the photo gallery, there is another problematic section of the website, leading to disrupting the visitor. This problematic section is video gallery. One would expect that co-operation of the CHF and tvcom.cz will lead to full gallery of videos or

highlights from already played matches. But nothing like this is happening here. This is a fact which is not so hard to understand, because most of the matches are uploaded at tvcom.cz. Nevertheless, visitor might expect some other videos, including interviews with players, some fragments from played games, or any other video material related to Extraliga. In fact, after visiting video gallery section, the visitor might seem a bit shocked from absence of any video material. Without any exaggeration, there is nothing to see in video gallery, but blank space. This is another bit of puzzle of poor impression that is made on the website. Notwithstanding, only way how to watch videos from played matches is to click on the icon of camera on the middle-right bar, as it was mentioned in last paragraph. (Házená Extraliga 2015)



Figure 1: Website layout (Extraliga házené 2016)

3.3.5 Statistics

Those two mentioned sections are probably the worst problems, which need to be fixed, but photo and video gallery are not the only reasons for visitor to check the website. Fans of a club, mostly, want to see some additional information about matches, meaning that they look for statistics of the match, players, and teams. In these terms, extraligahazene.cz provides the visitor with statistics focused on players and teams, but design of the statistics is rather confusing and does not seem professional, or in other words, their design could look much customer-friendly. For example, after clicking on statistics about number of


saves by goalkeepers, only too much concise information shows off. There are only 3 basic facts. These are name of a player, team of the player, and number of saves. It might seem enough for this statistics, but if the website of volleyball Uniqa Extraliga is taking into consideration, strong differences might be seen. First of all, whole design of cvf.cz/extraliga-muzi/ catches much more attention than website of handball. According to picture, other big differences are visible on the first sight. On the volleyball website, all the individual statistics are visible on one page, because only top 5 players of each category are displayed, and, if visitor wants, some more information could be seen after clicking on “VÍCE” (more). Furthermore, players, who are leading each category, are displayed by name and their season photo. All these aspects make better impression on the visitor, who could get more professional feeling from the website. When mentioning visitors, it must be taken into consideration that visitor could be both fan/supporter of the club, or partners, who are somehow connected with idea of supporting whole league. Therefore, make a good impression is alpha and omega. (Házená Extraliga 2015)

Úspěšné zákroky brankářů

Statistické údaje jsou za všechna odehraná utkání v sezoně

Extraliga 2015/2016		
Jméno	Klub	Počet zákroků
Daniel Rangl	HC Dukla Praha	984
Tomáš Petržala	HC Dukla Praha	944
Josef Kučerka	TJ Cement Hranice	452
Jiří Bavlnka	Handball KP Brno	439
Artur Adamík	HK FCC Město Lovosice	397
Marek Žingor	KH Kopřivnice	347
Jakub Lefan	HCB OKD Karviná	339
Radek Motlík	Talent M.A.TPlzeň	304
Milan Malina	HC Zubří	297
Michal Baránek	Tatran Litovel	263
Vít Pyško	SKP Frýdek-Místek	219

Naši partneři



Extraliga Play-out 11-12 - rozpis

KH Kopřivnice : HC Zlín
7.5. 17:00

KH Kopřivnice : HC Zlín
8.5. 17:00

HC Zlín : KH Kopřivnice
14.5. 17:00

HC Zlín : KH Kopřivnice
15.5. 16:00

Tabulka střelců

Milan Škvařil	Talent M.A.TPlzeň	154
Vojtěch Petrovský	SKP Frýdek-Místek	151
Tomáš Řezníček	HC Zubří	137
Michal Tonnar	Talent M.A.TPlzeň	136

Figure 2: Handball statistics (Extraliga házené 2016)

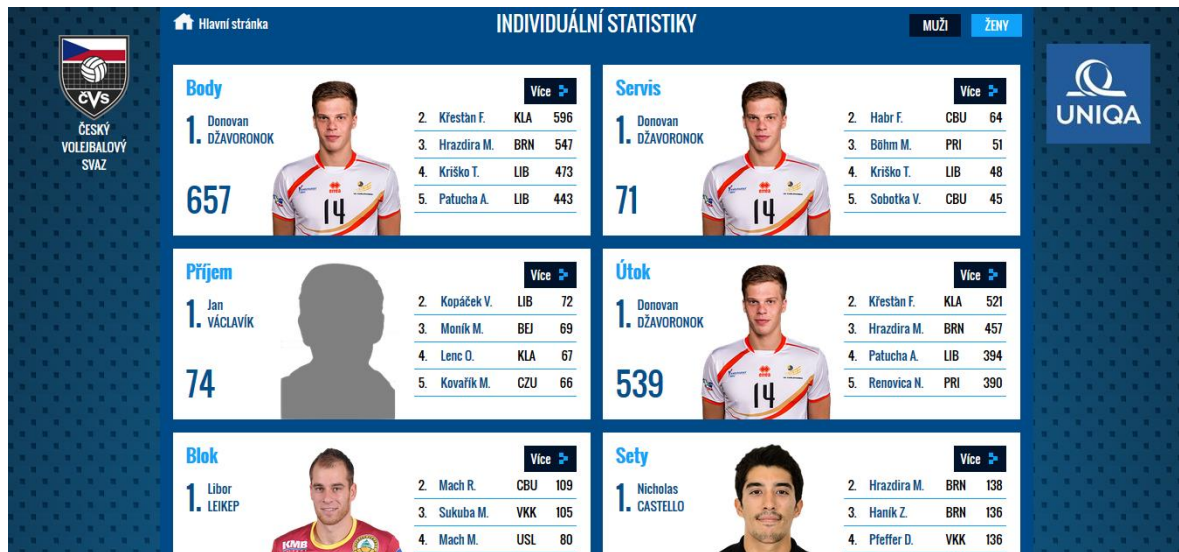


Figure 3: Volleyball statistics (UIQUA extraliga muži 2016)

3.3.6 Interactive Banners

Probably no professional league could exist without financial and material support of sponsors and partners. The logos of the sponsors are often displayed through the interactive banners on the website, printed on the jerseys of the players, or it is a part of the name of the league. In relation with website analysis, interactive banners takes plays on most of the professional league websites. In case of extraligahazene.cz, sponsors and supporters are displayed on right bar over the match schedule. Basically, there are two blemishes about those logos of the sponsors. In 2016, not having high definition version of logo is beyond all understanding, what is another element which makes this website shoddy. Also it is not possible to click on the logo, because theses logos are not hypertext links. (Házená Extraliga 2015)

3.3.7 Contacts

From sponsor's point of view, there is another barrier which makes it harder to make a supporting deal. In the section, where all important contacts on the CHF should be, blank is completely blank. If sponsor wants to support the league somehow, he does not get any contacts at this webpage, but he is forced to search contacts on the CHF at different website, namely chf.cz. (Házená Extraliga 2015)

3.4 Customer Relationship Management

In business like this, meaning managing a professional top league requires good Customer Relationship Management, because if there are no visitors in arenas, if there are no people,

who are passionate about the sport, it is meaningless to do business like this. The CHF has tremendous advantage in long tradition and successes of Czech Republic in handball. Some other sports, which are popular in last years, do not have this advantage, because, for example floorball is quite young sport. (Český Svaz Házené 2009) (IFF 2016)

With this background, it is necessary to take care of customer as much as possible, but in fact, handball supporter in Czech Republic probably feels like unwanted part. Author of this thesis has already described sloppy webpage of the Extraliga, but situation is even worse. Regular fan or supporter of any club has no reliable place to express his attitude, because there is no Facebook page, or comment section on the web, which would allow him to do it. In practice, handball community use discussion forum at hazena.pb.cz. (The Czech Handball Server 2016)

At least, in recent days of making the analysis, The CHF calls for action on Facebook page Czech Handball Team, which primary works as an information channel related to Czech national teams but it also contents information from Czech handball overall (including Extraliga or Interliga). More specifically, the federation asks people to express their attitudes and feelings about current situation in Czech handball overall. Notwithstanding, this step was also did in sloppy way. Account of CHT calls for action through the making of new Facebook event, where people are allowed to leave the comment, or vote in questionnaire, but number of invited people is hard to understand. Officially, CHT Facebook page is followed by 4,658 people, but only 25 people are interested in this event, 4 people are invited to this event, and 0 people officially clicked on “Going”. It means that if people did not see the post of the event, most of them probably do not even know about this event, where they finally have a chance to speak up. (Facebook 2016)

3.5 New Management of the CHF

In previous chapters, the CHF was main agent of action, but what is hiding in this name of the federation, and who are the people in executive was not said yet. In Czech Handball Federation, there is always president of the institution, who is responsible for choosing new employees including Chief Marketing Officer, PR specialist, and others. From 2001 to 2013, president of the federation was Jaroslav Chvalný, who was replaced by Aleš Pospíšil in 2013. Aleš Pospíšil ended his function in 2016 before his end terms of office. In February 2016, officers of the CHF elected Radek Bendl, former general secretary of the

CHF, a president. Shortly after his election, new chief marketing officer was named. Current CMO of the CHF is Daniel Novotný. (iDNES.cz 2016)

3.6 New Marketing Strategy for 2016 - 2020

All three candidates (Radek Bendl, Jaroslav Chvalný, Zdeněk Mička) in 2016 election agreed that the CHF needs better marketing strategy in following years. According to Daniel Novotný, new marketing strategy should start in July 2016, when teams start to prepare for next season. (iDNES.cz 2016)

One of the projects of new marketing team is project “*Házená není pro šampóny*” on Future Bakery portal, where anybody can share his ideas for improvement of Czech handball. Based on these ideas, the CHF wants to finish new marketing strategy in June 2016. It is hard to analyze current situation, because the situation is changing every day of this analysis. The project “*Házená není pro šampóny*” ends 30 April 2016, it is going to be one of the last chances for people to get involved to the strategy planning of the federation. In spite of that, this campaign is not well shared. There are only two reliable references related to this campaign. First one is an article at website chf.cz, and second one is post on Facebook page of Czech handball team, what is link to the article. (Future Bakery 2016)

New marketing strategy is still in the phase of creation, therefore, it is hard to deeply analyze this strategy. Anyway, thanks to interview, chief marketing officer of Czech Handball Federation agreed with co-operation with the author of this bachelor thesis.

3.7 Házet Nás Baví Project

The author of this bachelor thesis is not first person who realize that handball in Czech Republic needs to be improved. In 2012, Hana Kaczkowská and Lukáš Tuček established new website hazetnasbavi.cz and also Facebook page Házet nás baví (HNB), which has become very popular among Czech handball community.

Nowadays, there are 7 different Facebook pages, which are supervised by HNB. These pages differentiate according to their focus in handball community. “Core” page of HNB has 5,126 followers, what is even more than Facebook page of CHT, what is the only official page created by the CHF. Thanks to this amount of people who likes their core page, HNB is crucial distribution and information channel between handball in Czech Republic and customers, who are searching for additional information from Czech and international handball. This project has another 6 pages with thousands of people (sure,

most of them are probably also fans of core page), where people can also find much more information from local/international/national handball than anywhere else.

According to information from Hana Kaczkowská, none of the members of HNB is paid, not even Miss Kaczkowská herself. This project is clearly based on voluntary job of people who are not careless in terms of Czech handball. HNB has become a partner of some handball events and camps. Thanks to it, the project is a well-known project in handball community including players, fans, or officers, who also co-operate with this project. (Házet Nás Baví 2014)

3.7.1 Co-operation of CHF and HNB

One of the great steps towards to improvement of Czech handball was agreement between the CHF and HNB. With growing popularity of HNB, the CHF realized that this project might be advantageous for both sides. In fact, CHT Facebook page was originally created by Hana Kaczkowská, who was also administrator of the page, which gained 3,500 in short period of time. According to Hana Kaczkowská, co-operation was quite closed one and advantageous in all aspects. Therefore, it was shocking that this co-operation ended after just half year after its establishing, because new PR manager of the CHF Vít Chalupa decided to. There was no rational explanation of this situation, when Miss Kaczkowská was released from position of the administrator of CHT Facebook page during one of national matches of women. Thanks to occasions, relationship between the CHF and HNB is absolutely cold, but new management of Czech Handball Federation might be new impulse to continue in this co-operation, which might be helpful for both sides. (Email conversation with Hana Kaczkowská, 2016, in appendix)

3.8 Branding

The sport, which has not so big support of society, has to have at least great branding, which specifies its features. In example of Czech handball, big clash between could be seen. If somebody says “*Extraliga*”, “*Interliga*”, or “Czech Handball Family”, people should connect these terms with some specific brand. Not surprisingly, Czech handball has no specific brand. Handball community in Czech Republic is divided into different website, portals, and projects. This problem is most visible in case of websites, what is the place where people could acquire all the important information, but in fact, information channels are divided too. Information about the Interliga, as well as the information about federation, is available at chf.cz, where customer is forced to decide, which information he

wants at very begin of the visit. As it was already said, home page of the Extraliga is extraligahazene.cz, which is not designed at all. Main information from both Czech and world handball is available on hazetnasbavi.cz and its seven Facebook pages. Basis for community of the handball is hazena.pb.cz, where people are accustomed to go to express their attitudes, but nowadays, this website works more like an “underworld” of Czech handball. Community of the Czech handball is rather small, and that is good reason to be united. Unfortunately, reality is different. (Český Svaz Házené 2016) (Házená Extraliga 2016) (The Czech Handball Server 2016)

There is basically nothing that would connect different sites regarding handball. CHT has its own logo, Extraliga has different logo, and Interliga is whole different story, because it has no logo. Creating of the same brand should be one of the main goals of new marketing department of CHT. (Házená Extraliga 2016)

3.9 Promotion

A basic question is who is responsible for promoting matches in the Extraliga, where teams are already providing their fans with promotion information. But for example, in German Bundesliga, probably the best national handball league, management of the league promotes the matches, videos, photos, and all additional information on their Facebook page. They do it throughout casual graphic layout without any unnecessary information, and without any high amounts of financial sources. It sounds easy to put just preview of matches on the Facebook page, or put the results there. In fact, it requires minimum effort, but the consequences are remarkable. (Facebook 2016)

4 SUGGESTIONS

4.1 Improving of Position in Media

In case of mass media (TV, internet media, printed media), acquiring better position in media is not just matter of top quality product. At lower stages at sport, where the handball is located, providing media with reliable information is a basis of improving handball position. It seems obvious that representatives of media are not able to attend every handball match in the Extraliga. Website of the Extraliga, or its PR department, should provide media with as much information as they can in order to fulfill sport pages in media. There is no doubt that amount of place, which handball can get, is depended on quality of the product. Application of suggestions in next chapters could help to improve reputation of the CHF.

Talking about a social media, the situation is little bit different, as it was said in the chapter including Házet Nás Baví project, HNB provides Czech handball community with high amount of information from both Czech and world handball. The goal of new management of the CHF should be making a new deal with HNB project. The CHF and HNB have the same goal. They want to improve situation in Czech handball, and there is no need to not co-operate in terms of social media at least. Fortunately, during making this analysis, there are already some negotiations between the CHF and HNB, which will lead in partnership hopefully. (Házet Nás Baví 2016)

4.2 Activity on Social Media

The social media are – without any doubt – big black hole in the marketing communications in the CHF. In this suggestions part, some improvements of social media management are displayed in order to boost popularity of Extraliga on Facebook and Instagram. Before start of the season 2016/2017, the CHF should create new accounts on Facebook and Instagram, where they will provide community with match information, photos, video, and many other materials from backstage of the matches. First of all, single account of the Extraliga shall be created in order to strictly differentiate the information regarding course of events in the Extraliga. In addition, the CHF shall also create an Instagram account, where the information should correspondent with information provided at Facebook account. But in addition, the CHF shall respect different nature of the Instagram,, and therefore, use it in right manners. In terms of suggestions, Instagram should not be just another social media to promote the Extraliga or any other events. It also

should picture everyday life of handball players, officers, backstage, and maybe others. This social media website offers casual place for expressing the “magic of the moment” as well as the place for commercial purposes. With help of the applications for sharing Instagram posts, CHT could work as a “*broker*” between other Instagram accounts, which offer interesting information regarding handball, and customer, who do not want to waste his time to follow all accounts with handball material.

4.3 Reconstruction of the Website, or New Website

Probably the biggest and the most visible problem in marketing communications of the CHF is their website regarding Extraliga. Extraligahazene.cz should be the business card of the league. It should catch attention and gives the feeling of a professional league. What is wrong with this website was already described, and there are a lot of things that shall be improved. First of all, the federation has to decide between two ways of improving the website. A Reconstruction or a creation of the website will be first step on the journey to improvement. Considering all the problems regarding website, the CHF should create brand new website. But with consideration of low financial resources, a reconstruction of the current website seems more convenient.

As Daniel Novotný indirectly said in interview, the CHF is concerned about broadcasting of the league matches, what could boost their reputation as well as their independence on tvcom.cz. In current season 2015/2016, the CHF pays six-figure amount of money to tvcom.cz for broadcasting matches of the Extraliga. This could be one of the first steps on the way of improving the website. Thanks to the implementation of broadcasting service, the CHF would get highly interesting place for advertising, which might attract new potential sponsors and partners.

Big part of the problem regarding website is located in galleries, which are not updated for a long time. In case of the photo gallery, all photos, which are used in articles, shall be placed in the photo gallery, where the layout of the photos must be changed as well. A photos should be sorted according to the round, team, or date. Icons in the match bar on the right side of the website shall work perfectly and intuitively, what might be reached by connecting photo gallery and the icons together.

Interactivity goes hand in hand with video material, which the CHF does not offer nowadays. Instead of empty video gallery, administrator of the website should include videos from the matches, from the backstage, or any other material, which might be interesting for the fans, who want to see more than the matches itself. The administrator

does not have to create the videos by himself, but every team in Extraliga should have one employee, who would be supposed to record the videos from the backstage. This kind of employee should also be in connection with administrator of website and Facebook/Instagram page. Thanks to these improvements, customer could get high amount of backstage info, and he could feel more like an insider.

Overall, single elements at the website are not well connected together, this includes statistics, icons, profiles of the clubs, or bio of the players. The statistics shall be improved from visual point of view. For example, every player should have his own profile photo in jersey of his club, which, in most of the cases, taking picture of their players before the season. In addition, some icons do not work unfailingly, and the profiles of the clubs are incomplete. It is just matter of time and work, because there are not any big financial costs for repairing these problems.

From sponsor's point of view, two major things might be repaired in order to look more professional in making a new deal with partners. The contact section has to be filled with all important contacts on the CHF in order to be easier accessible for potential partners. Also the banners, where sponsors have their place to promote themselves, shall be presented in high resolution. (Házená Extraliga 2016)

4.3.1 Direct E-mail Communications

Another thing, which could make better relationship between the CHF and customer, is e-mail newsletter, which might have more functions than just informative purpose. But first of all, it should be the most important direct information channel between the league and the customer. Few days before the next round of matches begins, the customers shall receive e-mail with all important facts about the next round, summary of the most important posts on Facebook and Instagram, which he might miss. This new place for a marketing communications could be also used for promoting the sponsors and partners of the league. The customer could subscribe his e-mail newsletters via registration on reconstructed website, or through the Facebook.

4.4 Events

It is hard to say, if the matches played in league are events which are created by the CHF or particular hosting team. Nevertheless, some additional events might be created by the CHF during the season. Thanks to the second best handball league in Czech Republic, there is prove that "Match of the Stars" could successful project, which might attract both

customers and sponsors. An event like this might attract a lot of fans, who are attracted in the Extraliga, which offers particular amount of high skilled players, players of Czech national team, or former internationals. The match could be played as a contribution of the teams from west and east, or the teams from Bohemia and Moravia. (Český svaz házené 2015)

4.5 Branding

As it was said in theoretical part, it is hard for the CHF to have any influence on performance of the players, therefore, quality of the output is unpredictable. From the positive point of view, Czech handball has traditional community, which could be nice basis in process of creation the trustworthy brand. Tradition, history and clear values shall be the key points of branding of CHF.

Either, the federation should work on merger of Czech handball community. Course of events should happen on the one central website, which shall unite other websites like hazetnasbnavi.cz, hazena.pb.cz, extraligahazene.cz and chf.cz into one trustworthy website, which will be designed with respect of customer's needs and wants. At this website, whole design should evoke the feeling of professional league and reliable information portal with respect of traditional values and successful history of Czech handball.

5 IMPLEMENTATION INTO PRACTICE

After considering all the aspects of the analysis, and after the interview with the chief marketing officer, implementation of the suggestions must take place in this bachelor thesis. Every suggestion putted in Chapter 4 was taking into consideration from the point of view of the feasibility. Therefore, all the suggested improvements should be applicable in short period of time. More specifically, all the recommendation could be used before the season 2016/2017, when the CHF will have a new chance for the boosting of a reputation of the Extraliga.

Some of the mentioned recommendation will be probably taken into consideration of the CHF. Both CMO of the CHF and author of this bachelor thesis are aware of the difficulties of the marketing communications of the Extraliga and Czech handball overall.

Based on this bachelor thesis, Daniel Novotný is opened for next co-operation with author of the thesis in order to improve the situation in Czech handball. This co-operation regarding creation of new working team, which will help with marketing activities of the Czech Handball Federation. In May 2016, there are still negotiations about this form of co-operation.

CONCLUSION

This bachelor thesis proved that the basic elements of marketing communications should be adjusted in sports environment, where sports product has different requirements among the marketing communications. The Czech handball environment also has to be respected as a unique element, where some of the means could not be used, because of the limited financial situation of the Czech Handball Federation.

In theoretical part, aim of the chapters is to get the information in the marketing, and more specifically, in the sports marketing. Based on used literature, different sources have different attitude about the marketing of sports. Basically, all of the sports marketing literatures mention the uniqueness of the sports product and environment, what have to be taken into consideration during the process of making marketing communications strategy. However some of the elements of regular marketing communications work perfectly even in sports environment. For example, digital marketing has basically the same principles.

In the practical part, a deep analysis was made in order to realize which parts of the marketing communications of the Czech Handball Federation are the most problematic. Results have detected that the CHF has the biggest problems in their digital communications, which is out of the date. On the other hand, with new management of the CHF, there is another chance to start from the bottom. But the recent situation in the Czech handball is not good at all. As Daniel Novotný claimed in the interview, next four years are probably last chance of the CHF for rescue of the Czech handball.

Based on the analysis, important suggestions were made in order to improve the current situation. From the negative point of view, there are a lot of problems which have to be sort out. But from the positive perspective, the CHF is open to co-operate with author of this bachelor thesis in terms of the marketing communications. Therefore, the goal of this bachelor thesis was successfully accomplished. Overall, this bachelor thesis might be the first step on the journey of big change.

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APPENDICES

PI Rewritten email communication with Hana Kaczowska, owner of
 hazetnasbavi.cz.

APPENDIX P I: AN EMAIL COMMUNICATION WITH HANA KACZKOWSKÁ, 19-20 MAY, 2016.

Dobrý den, vážená paní Kaczkowská,

v rámci mé bakalářské práce se zaměřuji na marketingovou komunikaci ČSH (především v rámci extraligy). Pro tuto problematiku je pro mě velice důležité slyšet názory zainteresovaných osob, proto bych Vám rád položil pár otázek týkajících se právě marketingové komunikace.

Společným cílem by pak měl být návrh na zlepšení právě této oblasti marketingu, ve které má dle mého ČSH jisté mezery. Pokud Univerzita Tomáše Bati svolí (běžně to v těchto případech nebývá problém), celá BP bude poskytnuta svazu, s cílem zlepšení MK.

Ve vašem případě mám méně otázek, o to víc jsou však důležité:

- 1. Jednala jste vy, případně někdo jiný, v rámci projektu Házet nás baví se svazem o případné spolupráci?*
- 2. Je práce na projektu Házet nás baví pouze dobrovolná?*
- 3. Jaká je časová náročnost udržování webu a účtů HNB na sociálních sítích?*
- 4. Pokud můžete, stručně pojmenujte problémy současné marketingové komunikace svazu.*

Závěrem mi dovoluji Vám poděkovat za Váš čas a úsilí, které věnujete projektu HNB. Budu se těšit na odpovědi a případnou spolupráci a přeji hezký den.

S pozdravem,

David Polášek

Dobré ráno, pane Polášku,

nejprve musím přiznat, že mě Váš email zaskočil. Marketingová komunikace ČSH vs. HNB, to je dlouho skřípajícím tématem. Nevím, zda víte o historii spolupráce ČSH a Házet Nás

Baví, nicméně bych se nerada pouštěla do toho, co je historií, ubírá mi to energii a chuť do práce pro házenou.

- *Jednala jste vy, případně někdo jiný, v rámci projektu Házet nás baví se svazem o případné spolupráci?*

HNB s ČSH, po volbách v roce 2013, více než rok úzce spolupracovalo. Spolupráce spočívala mimo jiné v tom, že jsem se po založení facebookového profilu Czech Handball Team stala správcem této stránky a dovedla ji až ke skoro 3.500 fanouškům. V té době jsem informace na facebookové stránce rozdělovala tak, aby prvotní informace o českých reprezentačních týmech vždy vycházela ze svazové stránky Czech Handball Team, teprve odtud jsem následně sdílela informace přes HNB dále k fanouškům.

Spolupráce skončila cca půl roku po tom, co přišel na svaz nový PR manažer pan Chalupa, který za 3 měsíce od svého nástupu nebyl schopen zvednout telefon zavolat mi, představit se a domluvit na spolupráci. Když jsem několikrát skrze Karla Nocara kritizovala špatné články na svazovém webu, které po nástupu pana Chalupy byly plné faktických chyb (sloučené statistiky několika týmů, špatné výsledky zápasů atd.) přišla první schůzka s panem Chalupou, na které místo aby se řešil web svazu a fb stránka Czech Handball Teamu, řešilo se HNB a rozhovor, který jsem udělala s reprezentantkou Michaelou Borovskou po jejím porodu, kdy už bylo jasné, že se vrátí na palubovku Mostu, ale i reprezentace. Podle pana Chalupy takové články na HNB a nikde jinde nemají co dělat, což já si absolutně nemyslím. Pak přišlo ještě několik ataků z jeho strany a nakonec mé odebrání ze správců Czech Handball Teamu v půlce reprezentačního zápasu žen, kdy o mém odvolání nevěděl nikdo, tedy ani exekutiva svazu, byla to čistě aktivita pana Chalupy. Bohužel jeho kamarádké vztahy s určitými lidmi z vedení svazu zapříčinily ukončení spolupráce ČSH a HNB.

- *Je práce na projektu Házet nás baví pouze dobrovolná?*

Jak se to vezme, pro občasně pomocníky, kteří jsou ve správcích HNB je to práce čistě dobrovolná. Pro mě osobně je to práce na plný úvazek, za kterou však nepobírám žádné finance. Máme sice pár sponzorů, ale ti se nám starají o finanční stránku spojenou s provozem webu. Zbylé prostředky, kterých opravdu není moc, jsem investovala do mládežnických turnajů, s jejichž pořádáním pomáhám.

- *Jaká je časová náročnost udržování webu a účtů HNB na sociálních sítích?*

Ten, kdo někdy na sociálních sítích pracoval ví, že zde práce nikdy nekončí. Sociální sítě nejsou jako web, který otevřete a informace tam visí. Na sociálních sítích se informace objeví a v obrovském množství dalších informací, také během chvíle zanikne. Proto je potřeba sociální sítě neustále sledovat a vyhledávat informace, které jsou pro české fanoušky zajímavé.

Co se týče webových stránek HNB, tam je to o něčem jiném. Webové stránky jsme zřídili z toho důvodu, že některé rozhovory a zajímavosti si zaslouží větší pozornost.

- *Pokud můžete, stručně pojmenujte problémy současné marketingové komunikace svazu.*

Z mého pohledu je to spíše nekomunikace. Máme skoro tři měsíce po volbách a opět se nenašel nikdo, kdo by zvedl telefon a řekl, pojd'me si sednout k jednomu stolu....

Po volbách už proběhla i reprezentační akce, na které opět nebyl fotograf, neudělalo se žádné pořádné promo, vytisklo se pár plakátů, ale to nám haly opravdu nenaplní.

Pořád každý říká, že musíme házenou dostat mezi lidi, ale jak, když se na pořádání reprezentační akce vyčerpá dotace města, ale přitom se v tom městě o akci nemluví. Jeden leták na dveřích haly to nezachrání. Nepořádáme soutěže pro fanoušky, nechodíme na besedy do škol, nezapojujeme reprezentace do charitativních projektů.

Stejně tak to nezachrání arogance a příkazy. Podíváme-li se na sociální sítě v jiných zemích, jsou plné fotek a videí, co se dělají při přípravách týmů, fotí se i samotní hráči a fotky pouští mezi lidi. U nás je to bohužel jinak. Na Czech Handball Teamu se nesmí objevit fotka z reprezentační přípravy, kdy si po celodenním tréninku pečou ženy buřty u ohně, prý je to nevhodné. Já mám ale jiný názor, to je právě to, co lidé chtějí vidět,

Chyba je podle mého názoru prostě v komunikaci jako takové, musíme více pracovat na propojení hráčů s okolním světem. Je hezké mít články o průběhu zápasu třeba na iDNES.cz, ale takových článků je z fotbalu a hokeje mnohem větší množství, nemůžeme si tedy myslet, že právě ten o házené bude někoho zajímat.

Nevím, zda Vám mé názory a poznatky nějak pomůžou, opravdu si myslím, že téma marketingové komunikace je v ČSH běh na dlouhou trať a pokud vedení svazu nezmění přístup k samotnému hnutí, nemůže začít fungovat ani marketingová komunikace ven z hnutí.

Hezký den a držím palce při snaze o zviditelnění české házené.

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