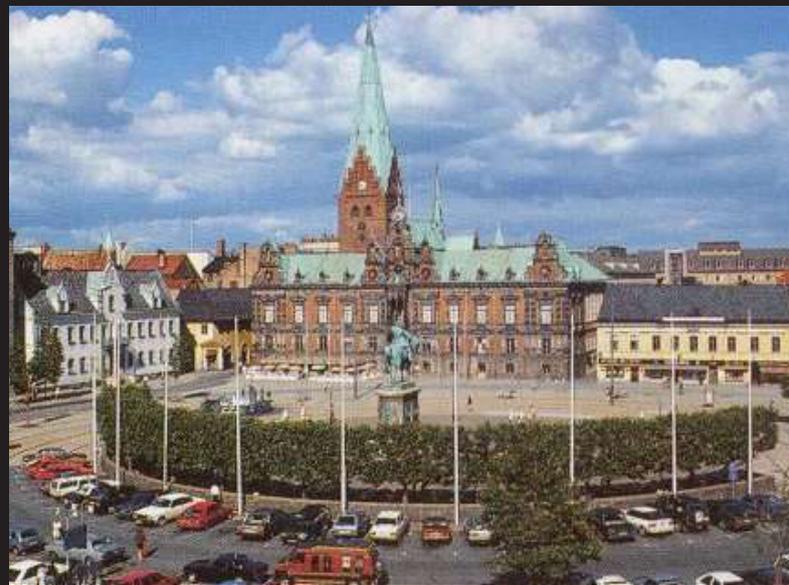


//Lunds University
International Marketing and Brand Management // **Master Thesis**
Spring 2009

Scoring Goals for Brand Identity



A comparative study of two sporting cities

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Abstract

Title	SCORING GOALS FOR BRAND IDENTITY: A comparative study of two sporting cities
Date of Seminar	2 June 2009
Course	BUS 808: Master thesis in international marketing
Authors	Erik Grafström, Coral Norbech, Andrew Wilson
Advisor	Jon Bertilsson
Key Words	Brand identity, city branding, sporting cities, major events, sponsorship
Thesis Purpose	This study aims to analyse the brand identity of Melbourne and Malmö using existing sponsorship and city branding theory. Consequently the contribution to academic theory will be assessing this current theory and its applicability to the unique context of cities that are aiming to position themselves as 'sporting-cities'.
Methodology	A qualitative research approached was adopted for this thesis. The primary data was collected through nine semi-structured interviews. Additionally a document analysis was conducted to gain background information on both the case study cities.
Theoretical Perspective	Within the sponsorship realm, the theories of image transfer, corporate branding, congruence and sponsorship-linked marketing were used to analyse the sport brand identity of the cities. Furthermore, the Brand Box Model was used (and consequently adapted) and the notion of coherence and coordination within a city was utilized to assess sport brand identity of the case study cities.
Empirical Data	A comparative case study was conducted between Melbourne, Australia and Malmö, Sweden.
Conclusion	This study provides support for the theories of sponsorship-linked marketing and corporate branding, but only partial support congruence and image transfer in the sporting city context. Furthermore a city aiming to position itself as a 'sporting city' should strive for a combination of representational and functional brand qualities and to do so, requires coherence and effective communication throughout its structure.

To begin, we would like to thank our supervisor, Jon Bertilsson, for his mentoring and encouragement. Through his positivity and passion for helping students flourish, we were inspired to test our limits and grow, not only as academics but as people. His guidance has played a vital role in the creation and production of our thesis.

We would also like to give special thanks to our interviewees. We appreciate you lending us a piece of your time. Without your assistance and openness, our thesis would not be a success.

Finally, we would like to thank our families for their lifetime support, continuous belief in our goals, ambitions, and dreamed accomplishments. You are the 'can' that keeps us positive, motivated, and inspired.

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acknowledgements

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// This chapter presents the literature surrounding brand identity, city branding and sponsorship. Furthermore it is problematized that there is a lack of research at the point where these concepts meet.

1.1 Introduction

Think about different cities around the world and surely some images and associations conjure up in your mind.

Think of *London* and perhaps images like culture, the Royal family or Big Ben spring to mind?

New York: the 'ultimate city', the city that never sleeps, cosmopolitan?

Paris: the city of love, art, romance, elegance?

Rome: history, religion, architecture, the Colosseum, the Pope?

Sydney: the city in the 'land down-under', the Opera House, the sun and surf?

Berlin: wartime history, 'the Wall'?

These images and associations which give cities a certain identity have evolved from various origins: historical or cultural events, the people and their way of living, iconic architecture or natural beauty. Although in many cases these identities (or personalities) have developed over hundreds of years, long before the concept of marketing was developed, they still serve as powerful brand images in today's modern society and are consequently utilised by marketers in order to promote their city.

In current marketing literature, destinations (countries, regions, cities) are often considered to be like consumer products in order to apply marketing theory to them (Bennett & Savani, 2003; Boo *et al.*, 2009; Smith, 2005). Bennett and Savani (2005) suggest that in our increasingly globalised world and with the ‘substitutability’ of cities (or ‘urban locations’ as they describe them) that destination branding was inevitable. In other words, cities need to establish differentiation, develop a competitive advantage and market themselves just like any firm seeking to remain profitable in their given industry (Coulter 2008).

< sport reimagining has become the focus of many cities in recent years >

Given the global nature of sport and huge economic impact associated with hosting major sport events, “sport reimagining” has become the focus of many cities in recent years (Smith, 2005). In other words, cities are looking to add ‘sport’ to their list of brand traits.

Sport is “the beneficiary of high levels of loyalty” (Smith *et al.* 2006:252) and “has a natural connection to with branding,” (ibid:252). Consequently many firms have invested heavily in order to associate themselves with (or sponsor) sporting events and communicate their message to the passionate loyal fans. Commonly, one would think of consumer products (as opposed to the city hosting the event) when talking about sponsorship of sports. For example Bennett *et al.* (2009) have written about Mountain Dew’s sponsorship of action sports and the way in which it impacts on the sales of their product. Alexander (2008) investigated the relationship between SAB (a Welsh beer brewery) and the Welsh national rugby team and concluded that a good match between the brand values of the sponsor and sponsored provides a good platform from which to communicate brand values.

As mentioned, cities compete fiercely for the ‘sport-dollar’ and consequently want to position their ‘product’ as one that consumers associate with sport. Smith (2005) makes an important distinction when he writes:

“Most large cities will utilize sport to some extent in promotional literature and other tourism marketing activities. However, sport reimagining involves a more comprehensive approach, where sport is used as a central theme of reimagining efforts.” (218)

Given the lack of current research, the focus of this thesis will be the way in which cities incorporate ‘sport’ into their brand identity. More specifically, given that the focus of current sponsorship research is based around ‘for-profit’ firms, this

study will be conducted from the perspective of assessing whether the existing theory is applicable to a not-for-profit altruistic entity such as a city. In this thesis, any reference to a 'sporting city' assumes Smith's (2005) definition as above. That is, a sporting city is one that adopts sport as the central theme of its brand identity.

The following section describes the branding paradigm highlighting the concept of 'brand identity' which forms the over-arching theme for this study. Relevant literature regarding city branding and sponsorship is then discussed which brings to the fore the lack of research of cities that brand themselves as 'sporting cities'. The theoretical chapter then presents the literature about sport (event) sponsorship and sets up the theoretical framework for this study.

1.2 Literature Review and Problem Formulation

1.2.1 BRAND IDENTITY

Branding is a relatively new concept within the marketing context. A brand does not refer to a product or service, but rather those elements, both tangible and intangible that "gives the product meaning and defines its identity," (Kapferer, 2004:5). Essentially a brand is what creates differentiation and separates something from being just a commodity. (Alexander, 2008, Kapferer, 2004, Roy and Cornwell 2003, Biel, 1993). Keller, one of the most influential authors in branding research, has defined a brand as "a set of mental associations, held by the consumer, which add to the perceived value of a product or service," (10, 1998). This value is created for consumers by taking the 'risk' out of a purchase to the extent that they have pre-conceived expectations and know what they are going to receive for their money. Consequently, the benefit for firms is that consumers are willing to pay a price premium for this, which has positive effects on their bottom line (Kapferer, 2004).

Within branding literature there is a raft of terminology and, in some cases, debate over definitions and different interpretations of the same words. For the sake of this particular thesis one clear distinction should be understood: the perception of a brand as held in the mind of consumers will be referred to as 'brand image' as opposed to the internal branding efforts of a firm which will be referred to as 'brand identity'. (Aaker, 1991).

As explained by Shiva (2005), a large amount of the branding research focuses on brand image (in many cases also known as brand equity) and the way in which consumers perceive a brand and its values. Furthermore, according to Kholi *et al.* (2005), research has focused on the relationship between brand identity and brand image. Far less research focuses on the creation of brand identity. Presumably, this is because a positive brand image is the desirable end result of

a strong, well-communicated brand identity. In other words, brand image, which sits in the mind of consumers, is what drives sales and profitability. According to Aaker (1996) and Kapferer (1997) in Hosany *et al.* (2006), brand image is an imperative part of successful and powerful brands. However, as related by Shiva (2005), both brand identity and brand image are essential for creating a strong brand. In a practical sense, brand managers work hard on brand identity because that is what is within their control, but essentially they are striving to achieve improved brand image. Kapferer (1998) argues the importance of brand identity:

“What does the notion of identity have to offer that the image of a brand or a company or a retailer doesn’t have? After all, firms spend large amounts of money measuring image.

Brand image is on the receiver’s side. Image research focuses on the way in which certain groups perceive a product, a brand, a politician, a company or a country. The image refers to the way in which these groups decode all of the signals emanating from the products, services and communication covered by the brand.

Identity is on the sender’s side. The purpose, in this case, is to specify the brand’s meaning, aim and self-image. Image is both the result and interpretation thereof. In terms of brand management, identity precedes image. Before projecting an image to the public, we must know exactly what we want to project. Before it is received, we must know what to send and how to send it,” (98-99).

As one can see from the previous quote, brand identity is needed in order to convey brand equity. The empirical research of this particular study focuses on the analysis of the creation of brand identity as opposed to the more commonly researched analysis of brand equity.

Although not as thoroughly analysed as brand image, there is still an abundant amount of research on brand identity. Brand identity is a vital tool for companies when marketing a product or service. According to Bogart & Lehman (1973), brand identity creates the illusion that, when comparing similar products, one product is different, or even better, than another. This illusion is vital in the competitive world of selling.

To further explore the concept of brand identity, Shiva (2005) explains that the company is responsible for creating the product that creates brand identity; that brand identity is how a company seeks to identify itself and its products or services. According to Park *et al.*, (1991) a brand’s identity (or concept, as termed by Park) is its abstract meaning that originates from the specific product or service features and the firm’s effort to create an attached significance to these features.

Currently, the majority of brand identity literature is committed to product-bound limitations. Perhaps this is because services are difficult to assess in terms of brand identity due to their unique characteristics of perishability, intangibility, inseparability, and heterogeneity, according to Hosany *et al.* (2006). However, brand identity expands past the boundaries of product-bound, and even service-bound, companies. As continued by Hosany *et al.* (2006), forms of brand identity are encompassed by entertainment identities, sports, politicians, and even pop stars. Although research is scarce, cities are also in the business of creating brand identity.

< Cities attempt to improve or change their brand identity the same way a company might go about improving the brand identity of their products >

1.2.2 CITY BRANDING

The empirical research of this particular study specifically focuses on the brand identity of cities as opposed to the more commonly researched brand identities of consumer products and service firms.

According to Bennet & Savani (2003), most cities seek to establish a brand identity. In the context of this study, as previously mentioned, cities are regarded to as products since they offer leisure, shopping, and housing to residents as well as land, labour, and infrastructure to businesses. With this in mind, it is feasible to understand how cities develop brand identities, similar to products or services of profit companies.

“In the same way that large companies sometimes overall or completely replace their images and relaunch themselves as fresh corporate brands, so too have many cities sought to establish completely new brand identities. (Bennet & Savani 2003: 71).

Cities attempt to improve or change their brand identity the same way a company might go about improving the brand identity of their products. There are several benefits for the city in creating a positive brand identity. An effective brand identity will appeal to government officials, attract investors, potential residents, and visitors, create civic pride, and distinguish the city from competing cities or other locations (Bennet & Savani 2003: 71).

Although it has been argued by some that a city can be considered like a product, it must be remembered that this simplification is just for the sake of applying marketing theories to them. In actual fact, they are extremely complex and

intricate 'organisms' and to ignore this would be somewhat naïve. Cities cater to the masses and have thousands, even millions of stakeholders; its rate payers, the local residents who frequent the city to shop and socialise, the businesses and employees looking to earn a living and tourists that travel from around the globe to visit the destination. As touched upon earlier, a city is not in operation in order to make a profit per se, but rather an altruistic entity that aims to 'profit' all of its stakeholders in some way.

Most literature searches for 'city branding' produce results which should more specifically be labeled 'destination branding' literature as it is framed within the tourism context (Boo *et al.*, 2009; Smith, 2005). Tourism certainly generates significant economic activity and consequently this research would be of particular interest to those charged with the responsibility of promoting the city (or destination) to potential tourists, but by no means is the sole consideration when it comes to 'city branding.' This could perhaps be likened to a consumer goods firm only focusing on, and basing decisions on, on their biggest market segment perceptions and satisfaction. Although these are certainly important considerations, it would be negligent of that firm not to also consider issues such as overall profitability and shareholder wealth, diversification to reduce risk, employee satisfaction and product development/innovation (for example). A city does not only brand itself to attract tourists. It is also to attract potential investors, businesses and infrastructure development, in order to generate employment and economic benefit for local businesses and rate payers, create a safe and enjoyable environment for residents and perhaps even secure the right to host a major sporting event.

Although tourism is not the focus of this study, certainly the 'destination marketing' literature provides some good theory given its ability to assess the brand of a city (destination).

However, a majority of these studies (like the sponsorship and branding studies presented below) are taken from the consumer perspective. As previously discussed, Smith (2005) assesses potential tourists and their awareness of sport marketing efforts of different cities. Likewise, Boo *et al.* (2009) investigate the way in which tourists evaluate the brand of a destination. One of the very few studies that adopts an internal perspective is by Bennett & Savani (2003). Their focus is however, specifically looking at destinations that have made a deliberate effort to 're-brand' their area and the communication process involved in doing so. They, too, reinforce the notion that too little attention is paid to brand identity, that is, the way in which entities go about forming their brand identity, rather than the retrospective assessment of this effort in the minds of 'consumers'.

There are several different types of brand identities and ways to develop brand identities for cities. As briefly discussed in the introduction of this thesis, cities can develop a brand identity of love and romance, history and architecture, or even

sport. Although research on the brand identities of cities is scarce, it is available for cities such as New York City (Bennet & Savani 2003), Paris (Dimanche 2002), and London (Kleinman 2009).

1.2.3 SPONSORSHIP

As has been presented above, the specific focus of this study is cities that create a sport brand identity and position themselves as a 'sporting city' and to do so, sponsorship is one of the primary marketing tools.

Sport is an activity that has very positive associations. As a way of using leisure time it aids to health and well-being. Competition sport at the local level binds communities. At the professional level it evokes passion and national pride. Whereas previously sport was an amateur recreational activity, nowadays, in the modern market economy (with increasing disposal income and leisure time) it has grown into a multi-billion dollar business culminating in massive global events such as the Olympic Games and World Cups in various sports. As the business of sport continues to grow around the globe, so do the commercial opportunities associated with it.

The International Events Group defines sponsorship as:

“...a cash and/or in-kind fee paid to a property (typically a sports, entertainment, non-profit event or organization) in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that property” (IEG Glossary and Lexicon, 2001).

An important clarification needs to be made in regards to the concept of sponsorship and the fact that it provides the opportunity to “exploit commercial potential” associated with an event. Given that a city council is in fact a not-for-profit altruistic organisation the above definition may not seem applicable in this study. However, as discussed earlier, a city can now be considered similar to a profit driven firm in that it needs to position itself in a competitive market place. Although the city is not seeking to profit itself, it is however attempting to generate economic benefit for its taxpayers and local businesses. Consequently, the investment of cities into sport activities is considered as a sponsorship for the sake of this thesis.

Businesses are continually trying to find new ways to cut through the clutter and effectively communicate their brand message to the market (Roy and Cornwell, 2003). Quester and Farrelly (1998) suggest that sponsorship is one of the more recent tools adopted by companies in order to build their brand.

“Due to the proliferation of leisure events in today’s society, the awareness and opportunity for corporate event sponsorship is at an all time high.” (Gwinner, 1997). But what is it that companies try to achieve through sponsorship? Essentially companies want to associate their brand with a particular event in order to achieve an image transfer that creates positive associations in the mind of the consumer and consequently ‘builds’ the brand. Gwinner (1997) claims brand awareness is achieved by exposing it to as many consumers as possible and that sponsorship is an excellent way of doing this. Quester and Farrelly (1998) suggest the best brand promotions are those that create or reinforce a positive association to a brand in the consumers mind and sponsorship of appropriate sport events is a good tool to do this. They state that “a positive attitude toward the event becomes associated with, or transferred to, the brand,” (ibid:543). They go on to assert that sponsorship is a ‘softer’ and potentially more persuasive means of communicating a marketing message than traditional, crude advertising. Moreover, the ‘non-verbal’ nature of sponsorship enables it to transfer national boundaries because it utilizes the emotion and passion associated with the sport event rather than relying on language to communicate with consumers. Another aspect of sponsorship that makes it an attractive communication tool for brand managers is the fact that it enables them “to identify and target well-defined audiences in terms of demographics and lifestyles” (Roy and Cornwell, 2003: 377).

< ...companies want to associate their brand with a particular event in order to achieve and image transfer that creates positive associations in the mind of the consumer and consequently ‘builds’ the brand >

Having established the aim of sponsorship and argued why it should be a good branding tool, two questions seem to dominate the objectives of investigative research into sponsorship: 1. How do you measure it’s value, that is, how can you assess its direct impact on companies profits? 2. How do you measure the effectiveness of a sponsorship campaign from a brand building perspective? Following is a review of a variety of studies that attempt to answer these questions.

In terms of assessing the economic benefit of sponsorship unfortunately it seems no definitive (or universally accepted) resolution has been achieved to date. As Miyazaki and Morgan (2001) highlight, the United States General Accounting Office attempted to assess any profit or loss recorded by the U.S. Postal Service with respect to their sponsorship of the 1992 Olympic Games and concluded

that it was “unknown”. Roy and Cornwell (2003:377) state that world wide corporate sponsorship of events grew 12% in 2001 to a value of \$24.4 billion, of which 67% were sport events. Given the extraordinary amount of corporate dollars being invested in sponsorship around the globe, it is no wonder that this economic phenomena has received extensive research. In particular researchers attempt to quantify the return on investments in order to justify the large amounts of money spent on this form of market communication.

Miyazaki & Morgan (2001) have adopted an event study analysis (traditionally used for finance research rather than marketing), which analyses the value of company shares before and after a specific event. They conclude that contrary to many critics, Olympic sponsorship does indeed provide value to participating companies in terms of share value. Cornwell *et al.* (2005) also use the event study method in order to analyse official product sponsorship announcements with similar results. It is ascertained that these announcements have a positive effect on shareholder wealth and furthermore, the product-event match (or congruence) is positively related to the change in stock price.

< Given the economic benefits they bring to a city, major sporting events attract a very competitive bidding process from potential host cities. >

Given the economic benefits they bring to a city, major sport events attract a very competitive bidding process from potential host cities. These bids alone cost millions of dollars to compile, for example it is estimated that the London 2012 Olympic Games bid cost \$25.5million (London: GamesBids.com). Although there is some debate as to the best way of assessing the impact, it is generally agreed that hosting major sporting events does provide significant economic benefit for the host city (Kasimati & Dawson, 2008). However, with careful thought and appropriate partnerships, a city can also use them to develop their brand identity.

Quester and Farrelly (1998) point out that it is quite common for firms to measure their sponsorship deals in a similar fashion to traditional paid advertising by quantifying media exposure. However they correctly point that this does not take into account that the objective of sponsorship is more than just media exposure and does not capture any change in attitude, positive associations and effects on brand equity in the minds of consumers. “What is often missing in the literature on sponsorship evaluation is the importance of emotion, involvement and brand association, in the process through which the audience/sponsor connection is made.” (Quester and Farrelly, 1998:543). This statement is particularly relevant to this study given the focus is on the way non-profit entities build their brand

identity. The literature around branding aspect of sponsorship is presented in more detail in the following chapter as it forms the basis of the theoretical framework for this study.

The focus of most of these sponsorship studies such as the ones mentioned above is on commercial organizations looking to increase profitability through brand building. However, quite often one of the major sponsors of a large event is the local government of the city that is hosting the event. Usually there is a government department or bureau (such as Tourism Victoria in Australia) that is charged with the responsibility for marketing and promoting a city or destination. But given the not-for-profit nature of these organizations and the fact there is no direct goods or services they sell, assessing a sponsorship deals becomes all the more difficult. Smith (2005) provides some insight into how cities can use professional sport in a re-imaging process. He suggests, similarly to Roy and Cornwell (2003) that a sponsorship is more of a co-branding exercise where partners experience some kind of image transfer and the success is dependent on the compatibility of event and city. He gives the example of the natural image of Australia's Gold Coast does not sit well with the Indy Car race is hosts annually. Although this provides some insight to the way in which cities brand is affected by congruence of city-event brand, the study focuses on attracting potential tourists to certain city rather than the creation of a 'sporting city' brand identity.

One of the few studies which adopts an internal focus (that is, the data is collected from within the organization) is by Cornwell *et al.* (2001) and analyses managers' views of their sponsorship activities. They conclude that, from the perspective of managers, active involvement from managers into sponsorship activities can make the deal more effective in differentiating a brand from competitors, that idea of sponsorship-linked marketing is supported as an important concept, and to a lesser extent, the longer the sponsorship deal, the more impact it has on the brand.

What we do know from extensive previous research (as summarized above) is the concept of brand image and brand identity and its applicability to (normal) profit driven firms. It is generally accepted that effective branding leads to increased profitability because of consumers' willingness to pay a price premium for the 'added-value' that is associated with a specific brand. We also accept that nowadays, cities too (which are not-for-profit altruistic organizations) find themselves having to compete in a global market place to remain economically viable. This particular scenario has received far less attention, although some studies do exist. A different body of research tells us that nature of sport, and more specifically sponsorship of major sporting events, provides a valuable opportunity for firms to strengthen their brand (this concept is discussed extensively in the subsequent chapter). However, it is the junction of all these concepts where research is virtually non-existent. That is an analysis of the way in which not-for-profit organizations position themselves from an internal perspective. Or in this

particular study, how cities that adopt sport-specific brand identities in order to differentiate themselves.

Hence, the empirical research of this study focuses on the analysis of sporting cities. In particular the investigation will explore:

- > How cities establish a sport brand identity?
- > How is this identity maintained or strengthened?
- > How successful has the branding effort been in differentiating the city (as a sporting city)?

1.3 Purpose & Limitations

This thesis intends to use two case studies in order to analyse the sporting brand identity of two specific cities. Melbourne, Australia, has been chosen as a benchmark city as it has been assessed as the world's 'Ultimate Sport City' by ArkSports Limited (2006). In contrast, Malmö, Sweden has been identified as an emerging sport city due to its recent sponsorship activities and investments in new stadia. Specifically, this study aims to analyse the brand identity of Melbourne and Malmö using existing sponsorship and city branding theory. Consequently the contribution to academic theory will be assessing this current theory and its applicability to the unique context of cities that are aiming to position themselves as 'sporting-cities'.

1.4 Outline of Thesis

Following chapter 1 is a discussion of the theoretical framework which includes a presentation of sponsorship and city branding theory. The thesis then continues into chapter 3 with a discussion of methodological approaches used to obtain qualitative data, both empirical and secondary. To continue, chapter 4 presents relevant background and a situational analysis of the two case study cities: Melbourne and Malmö. The thesis will follow with an in depth analysis of the interviews and accompanied documents. Finally, the researchers conclude with a discussion of the results of the research findings and conclusions are presented.

CHAPTER 1:

CHAPTER 2:

Theoretical Framework

CHAPTER 3:

CHAPTER 4:

CHAPTER 5:

CHAPTER 6:

// This chapter presents specific city branding and sponsorship theories. These form the theoretical framework used to interpret the brand identity of the two case study cities.

Thus far, the growing body of research around branding has been presented, and more specifically brand identity – that is, the efforts of a company internally in order to give their product or service added value and meaning (an identity) for the consumers. Subsequently current literature about city branding and sponsorship was discussed. To date, this research has focused on profit driven firms as opposed to not-for-profit altruistic organizations such as city councils, which, as has been explored above, now need to compete in a competitive global ‘city-market place’ (in order to attract their share of investment and economic wealth opportunities). The focus of this investigation is cities that differentiate themselves on the basis of being a ‘sporting city’. Following is a discussion of the relevant theory surrounding this topic, which will form the theoretical framework for analysis of this particular study.

The current theory about sport sponsorship is presented as this is the predominant marketing tool used to create a ‘sport’ identity. Subsequently, a model for assessing brand identity of locations (cities, countries, etc.) is explained. Although there has been significant research on each of these topics in isolation, it is the intersection – where destination marketing, sponsorship of sport, and (sport) brand identity creation meet – that lacks current research. Hence, the current theories will be presented in their own right and consequently through this study, it will be concluded that they are either:

- (a) Applicable to this specific context;
- (b) Somewhat applicable, but modifications required;
- (c) Not applicable, and perhaps contradictory to this particular context.

2.1 Sport Sponsorship

As discussed previously in the literature review, sponsorship research tends to fall into one of two categories. Either it looks at the direct economic impact of the sponsorship or the way in which it contributes to building a brand. Within in the confines of the latter category, Alexander (2008) surmises that the research around branding through sponsorship can be categorised into three main areas:

1. **Recall** – how readily consumer remember which brand was partnered with which event (given the consumer perspective of this research objective, it will not be applicable to this particular thesis)
2. **Image transfer** – referring to the extent to which the image of the event is transferred to and adopted by the sponsoring brand
3. **Corporate branding** – building the corporate brand, as opposed to specific product or promotional messages which are best communicated through traditional advertising.

One overriding conclusion across these three areas is that of ‘congruence’ or ‘fit’ between sponsor and event. Generally it is agreed that the better the fit between the two the more effective the sponsorship (Clarke et. al., 2009; Alexander, 2008’; Cornwell et. al., 2005; Speed & Thompson, 2000; Quester & Farrelly, 1998; Gwinner 1997). Gwinner (1997) suggests congruence can either be on a functional/practical level (for example the consumption of a sponsors product might occur simultaneously with the event, such as a sport drink) or a ideological/sociological level (where the image, or perhaps the target market segment of sponsor and event correlate).

Roy and Cornwell (2003) study the effect of existing brand equity of the sponsor on the perceived congruence of sponsor and event. They are able to confirm using schema theory that existing brand strength will effect consumers’ perception of the match and appropriateness of the match between sponsor and event. Furthermore the closer this perceived match, the more positive are the resulting attitudes of consumers towards the sponsor. The implications of this are that organizations should carefully select events that are congruent with their own operations either in terms of related product use or target market. In addition they suggest that sponsorship is probably most effective in terms of brand building for market leaders and warn against using sponsorship (at least in isolation) to new and companies and those with low brand equity.

Quester & Farrelly’s (1998) article on “Brand association and memory decay effects of sponsorship” is an example of a study that falls under the ‘recall’ heading. They look specifically at the Formula 1 Grand Prix in Australia and conclude that the closer the sponsorship is associated with the main event (opposed to

peripheral events on lead up days to the main race), the closer the connection between event and sponsor activity (congruence) and location issue impact the effectiveness of the sponsorship. Interestingly they discovered that repetition over several years had little impact in terms of brand recall.

Gwinner (1997) presents a model to explain the mechanisms by which brand image may be impacted by sponsorship. He proposes that an events image is created by particular aspects of the event: 'event type', 'event characteristics' and 'individual factors' and suggests that "an event's image is represented by a particular market segment's overall subjective perceptions of the activity," (ibid:148). It is this image that is then transferred to a sponsors brand dependant on a range of moderating variables: 'degree of similarity', 'level of sponsorship', 'event frequency' and 'product involvement'.

Alexander (2008) assesses the use of sponsorship as part of overall brand strategy and is representative of 'corporate brand' studies within the sponsorship research. He asserts that if sponsorship is placed at the heart of a firms branding strategy it "has the ability elevate a corporate brand above the advertising noise that exists in the consumer environment," (ibid:348). Moreover, he concludes a close match (congruence) between brand values of both organizations provides a good platform to communicate brand values making sponsorship a "powerful method of conveying corporate and organisational identity," (ibid:348).

< Sponsorship-linked marketing is "the orchestration and implementation of marketing activities for the purpose of building and communicating an association to a sponsorship," (Cornwell, 2005:41). >

Another important concept that will be assessed in terms of its applicability to city branding is that of 'sponsorship-linked marketing'. Cornwell (2005:401) defines sponsorship-linked marketing as "the orchestration and implementation of marketing activities for the purpose of building and communicating an association to a sponsorship." Farrelly et. al. (1997) put this concept in the context of the sporting domain by suggesting it is the "deliberate attempt to utilize sports sponsorship as the foundation for the selling proposition and the basis on which marketing activity is developed" (170). Cities, in contrast to consumer brands, offer an extremely diverse 'product offering' in terms of things to see and do (consume). Hence, it is hypothesised that this concept is particularly relevant for cities wanting to position themselves as sporting cities.

In brief, the sponsorship theory presented covers the areas of:

- > Sponsor-event congruence
- > Recall
- > Image transfer
- > Corporate branding, and;
- > Sponsorship-linked marketing.

These theories (with the exception of recall as it is solely based on consumer perceptions) will form the lens through which the sponsorship activity of cities is observed.

2.2 City Branding

Apart from analysing the sponsorship activities of cities, city-branding theories will also be applied to the cities in order to assess the way in which this had helped build up its brand identity.

A particularly useful study taken into consideration throughout the analysis of interview data was “The differences between branding a country, a region and a city: Applying the Brand Box Model,” by Caldwell & Freire (2004). The study is of an exploratory nature and seeks to understand the differences in the brand identities of cities versus countries.

“[this research study] asks whether there is any difference in branding distinct types of destinations – what are the differences between branding a country, a region, or a city?” (Caldwell & Freire 2004: 50).

Although Caldwell & Freire (2004) are mainly focused on the differences in branding cities and countries, their study is still of interest to this particular thesis because of the proposed use of the Brand Box Model. The brand box model, as explained by Caldwell & Freire (2004), was originally developed by de Chernatony and McWilliam (1989) and was originally used for products; both physical and service. As shown below in Figure 1, Caldwell & Freire (2004) have adapted the brand box model to measure the brand identities of cities versus countries:

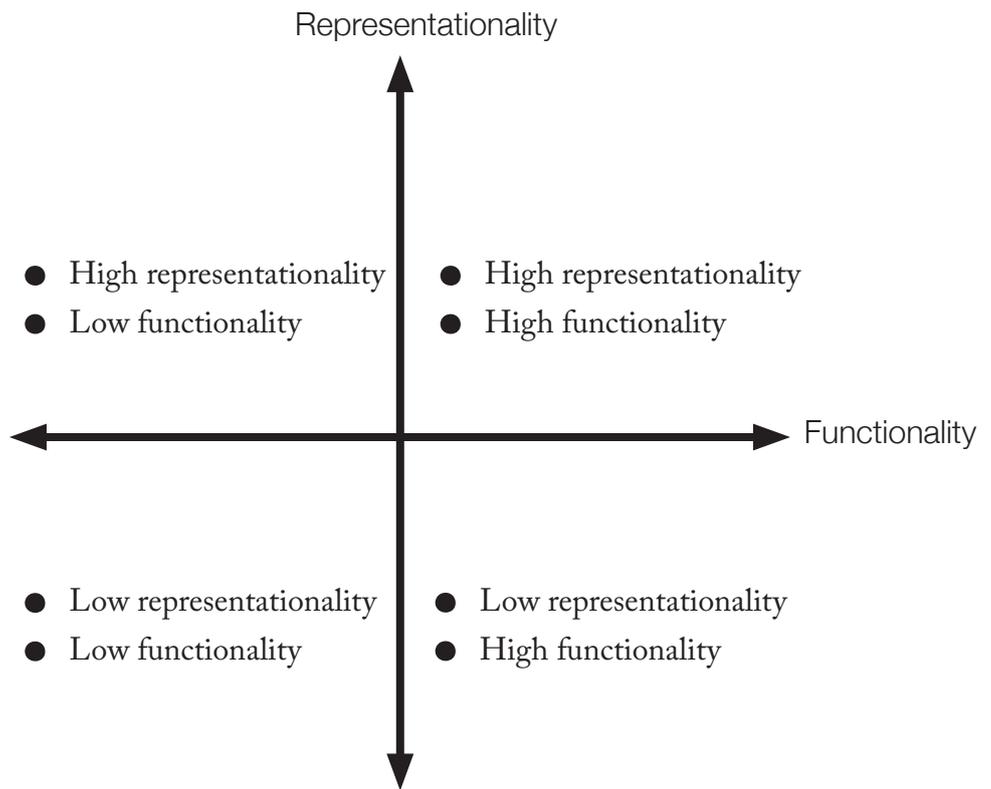


Figure 1: De Chernatony's Brand Box Model.

As represented above, the study concludes via analyzing two characteristics of cities or countries: representationality and functionality. As explained by de Chernatony & McWilliam (1989),

“The representational dimension...measures how fashionable a destination is. In this sense fashion may be a strong variable influencing the evaluation of a [country] or a city...and is characterized as having ‘value-expressive’ aspects whereby people choose to visit a place to display their own self-concept,”(2004: 50) whereas “functionality captures the consumers concern for the place (for example, weather, beaches, mountains and sky, museums, shops, and so on),”(2004: 50).

In other words, representationality refers to the reputation and societal-created status of the city or country in focus. A representational characteristic can be applied to a place in which people might say, “been there, done that” with regards to the respective place. Functionality, on the other hand, refers to the attitude of the individual consumer with regards to the respective city or country, without consideration of the place’s reputation or representational characteristics.

The researchers hypothesized in which quadrant cities, as well as countries, would fall. In order to come to a consensus as to which quadrant cities belong in and which quadrants countries belong, Caldwell & Freire (2004) adapted measurable

attitude statements as originally studied by de Chernatony & McWilliams (1989). De Chernatony & McWilliam's (1989) original study measured brand identities through analysing common themes of the brand's representationality and functionality. The adapted model, takes into consideration the same general themes as de Chernatony & McWilliam (1989), however adapts the attitude statements to be more relevant to the identities of cities and countries. As one can see, the adaptations made by Caldwell & Freire (2004) encouraged the same attitude as de Chernatony & McWilliam's (1989) statements, however the adaptation makes the attitude statement applicable for the measurement of brand identity of cities. For example,

“The brand says something about its owner,”— de Chernatony & McWilliam (1989).

as compared to the adapted version:

*“[Destination] somehow defines the people who travel there,”
— Caldwell & Freire (2004).*

It is clear from the following quotations that, although the wording has changed between the original and adapted versions of attitude statements, the purpose and overall idea remain the same. With the adaptations, it is possible for Caldwell & Freire (2004) to analyze the data from a city or country point-of-brand identity-view.

Perhaps most important and relevant to the confines of this thesis are the results of Caldwell & Freire's (2004) study with specific regards to in which quadrant the brand identity of a city falls. According to Caldwell & Freire (2004), cities

*“have higher scores in the representationality dimension when compared to countries [and] countries will score higher in the functionality dimension when compared with regions and cities.”
(50).*

Essentially, the results of Caldwell & Freire's (2004) study state that cities would fall into the 'high representationality, low functionality' quadrant of the brand box model. This implies that the brand identity of cities is developed through the respective city taking an active role in promoting and marketing specific tourist attractions or points of interest for fellow travelers. According to the study, the respective city will focus less on what the entire country has to offer, or functionality, and will try to highlight it's specific points of interest; with regards to destination marketing and building city brand identity.

While analysing the data collected from the interviews of both Melbourne and Malmö representatives, the researchers take into consideration Caldwell & Freire's (2004) use of the brand box model as well as their conclusions that a city's brand identity is made up from a high representationality and low functionality point-of-view. The researchers look to either support, adapt, or disprove Caldwell & Freire's (2004) conclusion.

Another important notion asserted by Bennett & Savani (2003) is the importance of a coordinated and inclusive approach, and good communication across all relevant departments and organisations, if the branding efforts of a city are to be successful.

The theory suggests that successful branding (or in their specific study, reimagining) of a city requires:

"...the development of a shared vision and control across seemingly unrelated activities..."

...the use of integrated marketing communications (i.e. ensuring that all the agencies involved in the rebranding process are communicating the same message)...

...a round table of brand strategists, analysts and implementers (internal and external) brought together from the outset to share understanding." Bennett & Savani (2003).

This paradigm will be taken into consideration when assessing the success of the brand identity of the two cities under observation.

In brief, the city branding theory presented covers:

- > The brand-box model
- > Coherence and coordination of the city.

As argued throughout these first two chapters, there is still little empirical evidence of research into the way in which a city can form a sport brand identity through sponsorship of major sporting events. Consequently, as suggested above, this study aims to assess the applicability of current sponsorship and city brand identity theory in this specific context adopting an internal perspective.

Following is a discussion of the methodological approach adopted to collect the data for this study.

CHAPTER 1:

CHAPTER 2:

CHAPTER 3:

Methodology

CHAPTER 4:

CHAPTER 5:

CHAPTER 6:

// This chapter presents the methodological approach adopted in this thesis and the specific research methods used to collect the data for this study.

3.1 General Approach

As work with the study of analysing cities sporting identity, a methodological outlook develops. As previously discussed, research directly concerning the sport brand identity of cities is scarce. Due to this scarcity, this thesis is conducted with an inductive approach. The researchers feel an inductive approach is most appropriate in order to avoid structural limitations, such as a hypothesis. Furthermore, as explained by Bryman & Bell (2007), an inductive approach allows for flexibility in aim and approach; evolving as the research progresses.

The researchers are guided by a social constructionist epistemological view which allows the researchers to operate in a socialist epistemology, as explained by Gubrium & Holstein (2001). This is the most appropriate epistemological view to the qualitative and openness of the innovative research. Furthermore, according to Easterby-Smith (2004), a social constructionist' aims to invent, works in a reflexive design, uses conversation as a research technique, and seeks to conclude with a further understanding of the initial research proposition. As explained by Alvesson,

*“Reflexivity aims to inspire a dynamic, flexible way of working with empirical material and escapes a simple theory/method divide.”
(Alvesson 2003).*

In line with Alvesson (2003), the researchers intend to use a somewhat reflexive design in order to not only allow for flexibility throughout the research process but also to allow for creativity and flexibility during the analysis of empirical data. The previous explanations of the social constructionist view are also helpful for the researchers since previous research in this specific field, as explained, is scarce.

3.2 Research Design

It is noted that researchers with a social constructionist approach tend to use qualitative investigative techniques and methods, which allow the study to creatively evolve. With this in consideration, the researchers use strictly qualitative techniques in this study. A qualitative research design, instead of using quantitative methods, was concluded upon because the researchers believe that, in order to analyse the sport brand identity of specific cities, a data collection of thick, in-depth analysis is needed. Since quantitative research tends to be more surface data spawned over a large population it was concluded that it was neither appropriate nor useful for this particular study. Furthermore, as explained by Malhotra & Peterson (1996), using a qualitative research design allows the research to approach unexplored problems without preconceived notions about the conclusion of the research study. In accordance, the researchers believe that using a flexible research design, via qualitative methods, allows the researchers to be open-minded, while continuing to regard to the specific research questions and goals, throughout the research process.

3.2.1 SECONDARY DATA: ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

An analysis of publicly available documents will be undertaken in order ascertain sponsorship expenditure by the cities under observation. Bryman and Bell (2007) suggest documents provide a vast and important source of information for the qualitative business researcher. Both Melbourne and Malmö have open policies in terms of making council proceedings and reports available to the community.

3.2.2 PRIMARY DATA: INTERVIEWS

Following the document analysis, several interviews were conducted with representatives from both the sponsors (the city) and sponsored (sporting organisation/event) of the researched cities: Malmö and Melbourne.

Case Studies

The research is conducted within the confines of 2 cities: Malmö and Melbourne. As expressed by Eisenhardt & Graebner (2007), building theories via case study designs is one of the best uses of qualitative research. It should also be noted that the two case studies will be analysed in a comparative design, which, as explained by Bryman & Bell (2007), exemplifies the logic of comparison since it implies a greater understanding of social phenomena built by the comparison of two or more case studies. This research argues that using a comparative case study design to conduct semi-structured interviews is perhaps the most appropriate method of qualitative research for this specific research since it not only allows the two case studies to be compared side-by-side but also continues to allow for innovation and creativity to flourish throughout the design and implementation of the research.

< this exploratory research remains flexible in order to allow for creativity and the development of theory. >

Qualitative Interview Design

As previously discussed, this exploratory research remains flexible in order to allow for creativity and the development of theory. However, the researchers have chosen to take into consideration Kvale's seven stages of interviewing not only to assist the researchers in organizing their time but also to help the researchers to prepare for the respective upcoming stages as the thesis progresses. The stages include thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying, and reporting (1996:88). While guiding the interview preparation via Kvale's seven stages, the researchers have also taken into consideration Rubin & Rubin's (1995) three types of interview questions: main questions, probing questions, and follow-up questions. The three types of questions were found a vital tool in the preparation of interview material and the development of pre-determined goals of each interview. Prior to each interview, a list of 10-12 questions was prepared and was used as tools to help steer the interview and encourage the interviewee into deeper conversation. These pre-prepared questions also helped to keep both the interviewee and interviewers on topic and on course with the researcher's intentions of gathering relevant data to use for analysis of and theorizing of the research questions.

Semi-Structured Interviews

As previously discussed, the interviews will take place with qualitative research design. The choice of using a qualitative research design was concluded upon because, as previously explained, this research is of an exploratory nature and, according to Gubrium & Holstein's (2001), a qualitative design is preferred among researchers when their respective research is concerned with establishing common themes (2001). As this research is rather innovative and fresh, our analysis looks to establish and examine common themes found between the sport brand identity of the two cities studied.

Specifically, the research uses semi-structured interviews in order to allow a holistic approach to be developed. Using semi-structured interviews, compared to other types of interviews such as structured interviews or non-structured interviews, is the most appropriate type of interview in order to answer the specific research questions. Semi-structured interviews give enough structure to allow the researcher to guide the interviewee towards giving relevant information while it is unstructured enough to allow for the collection of rich data that is unachievable via structured interviews. It was concluded that using a non-structured interview would not provide enough 'backbone' to guide the interviewee and collect relevant data. As stated by Bryman & Bell (2007), a semi-structured interview allows for flexibility while still guiding the interview to ensure the retrieval of quality data from the interview being conducted. Furthermore, using semi-structured interviews allows the researchers to gain a deeper insight into the cities' intentions regarding the development of brand identity, which allows the research questions to be thoroughly analysed and concluded upon. As concluded by the researchers, semi-structured interviews are the most appropriate type of interview in order to analyse the sport brand identity of the cities in focus.

Cultural Blindness

With a deliberate aim to eliminate cultural blindness, at least two of the three researchers were present at each interview, with the exception of interviews conducted in Swedish; an issue which is addressed below in the limitations section. The researchers for this study are Swedish male aged 26, an American female aged 24 and an Australian male aged 28. As mentioned by Östberg (2009), ideally a qualitative interviewer would remove 'cultural blindness' by taking themselves out of their own cultural context, enabling them to question any assumptions being asserted by the interviewees. Specifically for this research, an example might be local sport knowledge that may seem obvious to a citizen of a particular city or country but may be a foreign concept to outsiders. Given the diversity of the group the potential of this occurring has been negated as far as possible, allowing for more valid and 'unbiased' interviews to be conducted.

Telephone vs. Face-to-Face

As previously mentioned, interviews were conducted with city and sport affiliates from Malmö, Sweden, and Melbourne, Australia. Since the researchers currently live in Sweden, interviews conducted with affiliates from Melbourne were conducted via Skype (internet phone service) calls. In order to ensure the cooperation of the respective individuals with whom the researchers conducted Skype telephone interviews, the researchers attempted to develop trust with the interviewee by using the first few minutes of the interview for general conversation rather than requesting information, as suggested by Groves (1979 in Gubrium & Holstein 2001). The researchers also used this technique to help reduce an asymmetrical power structure between the interviewee and the interviewer. The researchers believe, through implementation of these conversation-encouraging techniques, the interviewees felt comfortable and somewhat chatty, as if they were talking to friends rather than being interviewed. The overall interview environment was informal and relaxed, further allowing the interviewers to overcome any asymmetrical power structures that previously existed. Through employing the previously discussed techniques, the researchers are confident the Skype call interviews were a success and are satisfied with the data received from these specific interviews.

The interviews conducted in Malmö, Sweden were all face-to-face interviews; hence strict adherence to usage of the previously discussed techniques was deemed unnecessary. However, the techniques were still found to be useful; especially allowing for general conversation at the start of the interview since the reduction of asymmetrical power was also helpful in face-to-face interviews.

Although the beginning questions of the interviews were usually the same, such as ethical clarifications (as described below) as well as general introductory questions, the beginning of the Skype interviews differed quite substantially from the face-to-face interviews. During some of the Skype interviews, static and bad-connections resulted in unexpected delays as well as connection termination. However, these issues were resolved within the first five minutes of each interview. Understandably, these problems were not faced during face-to-face interviews.

Also a noted difference in the face-to-face interviews compared to Skype interviews was the relaxation and comfort-levels reached by the interviewers (and perhaps the interviewee). During face-to-face interviews, the interviewers were offered coffee and encouraged to sit down and relax. This was not the case with Skype interviews. It was also noted by the interviewers that the lack of eye-to-eye communication due to Skype interviews was an issue that had to be overcome by more verbal communication. Instead of making eye contact and the nodding of heads, the interviews had to use strictly verbal clues when communicating with the interviewees. However, as discussed in the next paragraph, Skype interviews were not seen as too much of an obstacle since the Australian culture is naturally

friendly and outgoing allowing the interviewers, as well as interviewees, to easily relax into conversation.

The researchers took note of some cultural differences with regards to interviewing Australians and Swedes. The Australian interviewees were easily relaxed and open to conversation. It was observed by the researchers that the Swedes were more apprehensive. It is hypothesized, by the researchers, that this is due to cultural differences in levels of general openness or due to the language barrier that the Swedes had to use English, a second language (in 2 of the 5 Malmö interviews).

3.2.3 INTERVIEW SPECIFICS

As previously discussed, interviews are conducted with both case study cities: Malmö and Melbourne. All interviews are conducted during the months of April and May, 2009.

At the beginning of each interview, the interviewee was specifically asked if they would like the researcher's to refer to them as anonymous or use their real name. They were also asked if they would like their specific position and respective company to remain anonymous. The researcher's made a point to ask this question at the beginning of each interview in order to gain an informal consensus. Most of the interviewees requested to see the rough draft of the data presentation and analysis before allowing the use of their respective names, titles, and companies. In three of the interviews with Malmö city representatives, the interviewees immediately agreed to the usage of the 'real' information. However, in one of the interviews with a Melbourne representative, the interviewee requested to remain anonymous. One interview with a Malmö city representative immediately agreed to the usage of her 'real' information. It was also noted that, with this question, the interviewees seemed to feel a bit more relaxed as their private anonymity was available if requested.

Also at the beginning of each interview, the interviewee was told that the specific topic of the research would remain unknown to the respective interviewee until the interview was complete. This, as explained to the interviewees, was to avoid an influence of the research topics into the interviewees' responses and conversation. Once the interview was initially concluded, the interviewers explained to the interviewees that the research is pertaining to the analysis of cities that have developed, or are developing, a sport brand identity for themselves. This technique was found to be extremely effective to avoid swaying interviewees' responses. Once the research topic was explained, some of the interviewees continued with previously discussed topics although their discussion was noticeably different in that it was specifically directed toward sport.

Seven to ten questions were prepared in advance to each of the semi-structured interviews. Some questions were general inquiries regarding the city and the respective interviewee's view of the city. Other questions were more specifically targeted toward the respective interviewee, such as questions regarding the interviewee's professional position and company. However, it should be noted that the pre-prepared questions were just used as a guide. Questions were asked, spontaneously, as they related to the respective conversation or they helped to guide the interviewer to further elaborate the respective conversation topic. This technique, suggested by, Rubin & Rubin (1995) proved to be fruitful since an abundant amount of rich data was collected during every interview.

Melbourne

In order to analyse the way that Melbourne creates its brand identity through sponsorship of sporting events, four appropriate participants were selected and interviewed. Two of the participants were connected to the city and spoke from the 'sponsor' perspective and the other two were from the sport industry and represented the 'sponsored' perspective.

Interviewee: Daniel Lynch

Date of Conducted Interview: April 21st, 11am.

Location of Interview: N/A – Skype Call

Duration of Interview: 53 minutes

Language: English

Perspective: Sponsored, within sport industry

Brief: CEO of TEAMelbourne which is an organisation partly funded by the government which aims to promote sport throughout the community.

Interviewee: Karen Gilbert

Date of Conducted Interview: April 23rd, 4pm

Location of Interview: N/A – Skype Call

Duration of Interview: 31 minutes

Language: English

Perspective: Sponsor, within the city

Brief: Program Manager Events Sponsorship working for the City of Melbourne within the 'Events Melbourne' department.

Interview: Anonymous

Date of Conducted Interview: April 28th, 11am

Location of Interview: N/A – Skype Call

Duration of Interview: 46 minutes

Language: English

Perspective: Sponsored, within sport industry

Brief: Project Manager in the 'Community Tennis department' within Tennis Australia (TA). TA is a non-profit organisation that is the governing body for Tennis in Australia and incorporates the Australian Open tennis grand slam (Tennis Australia, nd).

Interview: John Pandazopoulos

Date of Conducted Interview: May 12th, 4:30pm

Location of Interview: N/A – Skype Call

Duration of Interview: 45 minutes

Language: English

Perspective: Sponsor, within the city

Brief: Former state Minister for tourism in Victoria, a position which he held from 2002 – 2006 (John Pandazopoulos, nd). Within his portfolio was 'Tourism Victoria', a statutory body charged with the responsibility for promoting Victoria and Melbourne as a destination.

Malmö

In order to analyse the way in which Malmö is building up its brand identity as a sport city, five in-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted. Three of these interviews were with relevant representatives from the City of Malmö giving the 'sponsor' perspective; the other two were representatives for the 'sponsored' perspective.

Interviewee: Carina Nilsson

Date of Conducted Interview: May 7th, 2pm

Location of Interview: Malmö City Hall, August Palms plats 1

Duration of Interview: 36 minutes

Language: English

Perspective: Sponsor, within the city

Brief: An elected politician, is the Deputy Mayor for 'Culture and recreation directorate'.

Interviewee: Christian Schlyter

Date of Conducted Interview: May 6th, 2pm

Location of Interview: Malmö, Leisure, Recreation & Sport Administration

Duration of Interview: 45 minutes

Language: Swedish

Perspective: Sponsored, within the sporting industry

Brief: He works for the City also within the Department of Leisure, Recreation and Sport Administration, his position of Project Manager and budget is funded (sponsored) by the city to oversee the staging of the upcoming U21 European football championships in June 2009.

Interviewee: Peter Eriksson

Date of Conducted Interview: May 7th, 11 am

Location of Interview: Conoctica, Malmö Arena

Duration of Interview: 73 minutes

Language: English

Perspective: Both sponsored, within sporting industry, and sponsor, within the city.

Brief: Peter Eriksson, whose previous professional career provides relevant insights for this thesis. He worked within the exhibition industry for about 15 years and is now an independent consultant for City of Malmö and region Skåne (in addition to his full-time position as Managing Director for an IT company called Conoctica).

Interviewee: Per-Olov Bergqvist

Date of Conducted Interview: May 14th, 10:30 am

Location of Interview: Malmö, Leisure, Recreation & Sport Administration

Duration of Interview: 52 minutes

Language: Swedish

Perspective: Sponsor, within the city

Brief: Per-Olov Bergqvist works directly for the City within the Department of Leisure, Recreation and Sport Administration as Event Manager. Also a member of MINT group.

Interviewee: Johan Hermansson

Date of Conducted Interview: May 14th, 1:00pm

Location of Interview: Malmö Tourism

Duration of Interview: 52 minutes

Language: English

Perspective: Sponsor, within the city

Brief: Johan Hermansson works for Malmö Tourism, an organisation funded by the City of Malmö, as Event Manager. Also a member of MINT group.

3.2.4 RELIABILITY & VALIDITY

This thesis, does not adhere to restrictions and limitations of statistics or 'hard' data. Instead, this thesis, as with most qualitative research studies, looks to achieve reliability through the researchers' systematic methodology and overall integrity with regards to the research matter; an idea that is explained by Silverman (1993) as well as Alvesson & Sköldböck (1994).

In order to ensure an utmost standard of reliability and validity in this thesis, the researchers use Bryman & Bell's (2007) four criteria (of reliability and validity) as a guide. The four criteria are: credibility, or internal validity, transferability, or external validity, dependability, and objectivity. The researchers aim to achieve credibility, or internal validity, by respondent validation. To ensure that information gathered has been correctly quoted, all of the interviews were recorded with the Dictaphone function on a MP3 player or on cameras. The researchers provided those interviewed with specific accounts of the researched findings. These findings include analysis of interviews as well as final conclusions of the overall thesis. This will ensure the researchers are presenting an appropriate correspondence between the perspectives of those interviewed and the findings of the researchers. This thesis strives to achieve external validity, or transferability, through the guidance of Guba & Lincoln (2000) by developing a thick analysis of how the specific case-study cities attempt to create a sport brand identity via sponsorship of sport. The researchers anticipate this thesis will serve as an introductory database of sport-identified cities and can be transferred for the comparison of and use with other research studies and findings. In order to ensure the dependability and reliability of the research proceedings and findings, the researchers are continuously audited by an advising supervisor; throughout the research formulation, empirical data collection, data analysis, and final conclusions. This ensures the researchers are following proper procedures throughout the research process. Finally, the researchers seek to achieve objectivity by being conscious of keeping personal values and research findings separate. However, one must note that achieving total objectivity is perhaps impossible. With this in mind, while constantly striving to achieve objectivity, the researchers can ensure they have acted in an honest, academic faith and have attempted to achieve as much objectivity as is realistically possible.

3.3 Limitations

As with all research, there are limitations that had to be accepted by the researchers. This thesis was researched and written within a time frame of ten weeks. If time permitted, more interviews from each city could have been conducted, producing a larger pool of data to work with. The researchers were also restrained by monetary limitations that resulted in having to conduct the Melbourne interviews via Skype phone (instead of face-to-face). As discussed

above, a range of techniques were adopted in order to ensure the quality of the data obtained during these interviews. However, ideally all interviews would have been conducted face-to-face, which, according to Bryman & Bell (2000) is the most effective technique and enables the researcher to maintain a rapport with respondents.

An additional constraint of the data collection was that of language. Of the three researchers, two can only speak English, whereas one speaks both English and Swedish. It was decided that if the Swedish interviewees requested the interviews be conducted their native language that this would be conducive to obtaining richer data. In this situation the researchers felt that it was best that only the Swedish speaker conduct the interview so as to not make the interviewee feel uncomfortable and neglecting the non-Swedish interviewees.

CHAPTER 1:

CHAPTER 2:

CHAPTER 3:

CHAPTER 4:

Background

CHAPTER 5:

CHAPTER 6:

// This chapter presents the findings of the document study and provides a situational analysis of the two case study cities.

4.1 Melbourne - The Benchmark Sporting City

Melbourne is Australia's second largest city with close to four million inhabitants (ABS) and is the capital city of the state of Victoria. Quester & Farrelly (1998) suggests that a fervent love of sport grips the population of Australia, and Smith et al. (2006) claim that sport "has become pivotal to the nation's sense of identity." This has led to a highly developed and professional sport industry in Australia to the point where the Federal Government have produced a policy document called 'Backing Australia's Sporting Ability' (Australia 2001) which aims to support a more professional sport industry and ensure sustained sporting success at the elite level. The opening lines of the foreword read:

"AUSTRALIANS HAVE ALWAYS counted themselves among the great sports loving peoples of the world. Our success and enjoyment of sport are part of the Australian identity and one reason why our life style has become the envy of the world."(Australia, 2001)

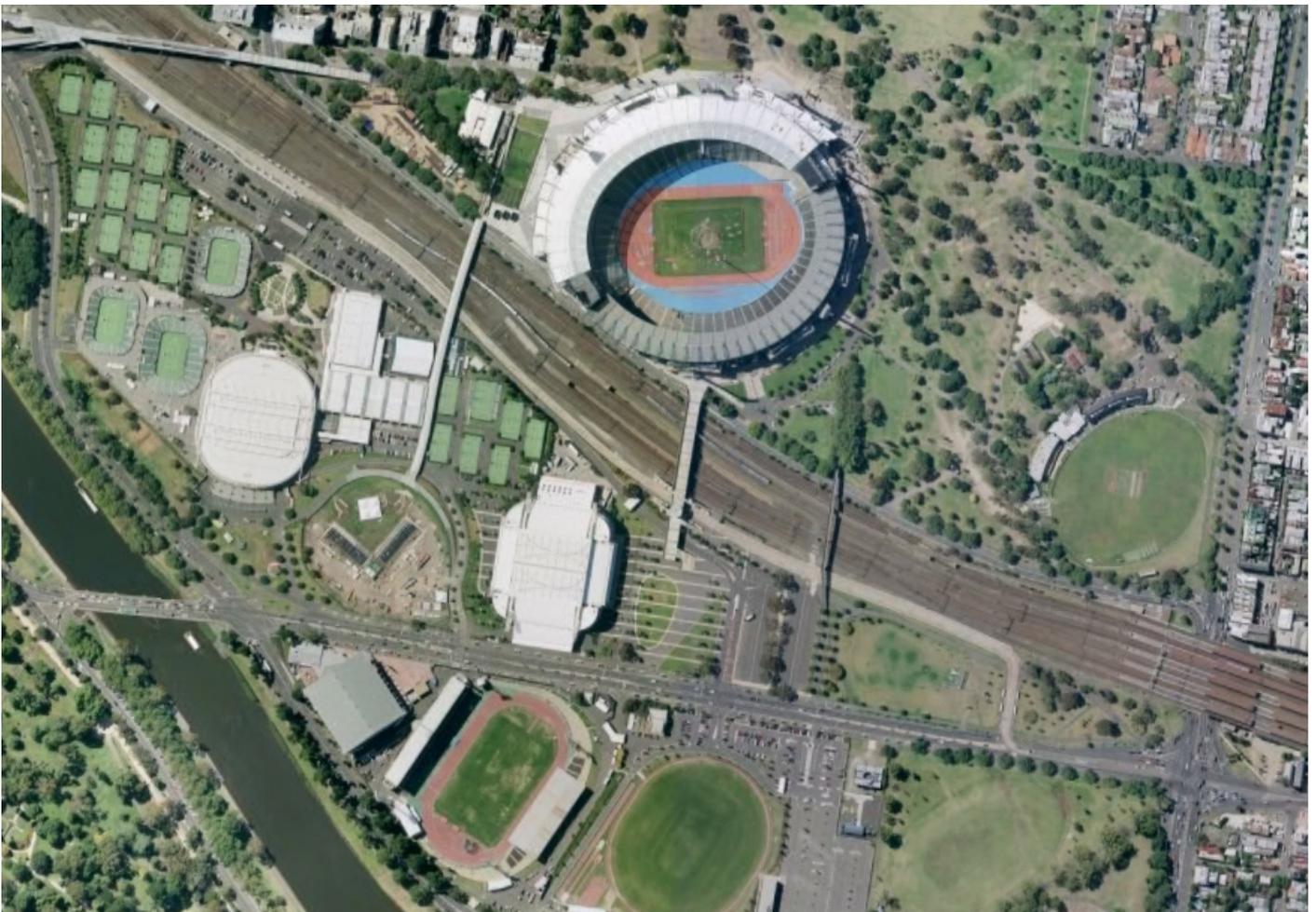
Melbourne has been chosen as the benchmark sporting city case study with good reason. The Economic Intelligence Unit has twice voted it as the 'worlds most livable city' and was voted the world's Ultimate Sporting City in a study conducted by ArkSports consulting firm (2006). The objectives of that research were to (1) gauge industry awareness of global cities as locations for the staging

of major sports events and (2) measure and compare successful sports event host cities. (ArkSports 2006). “The study said Melbourne had an ‘unparalleled track record reputation’ for its sporting events, while industry heads praised its ‘versatility, stadia, city atmosphere and local passion for all sports’.” (The Age). Steve Bracks, the Victorian state Premier at the time the results were released was quoted as saying “The world is acknowledging what we already know – that Melbourne is the sport capital of the world... This year’s [2006] Commonwealth Games was just the latest in a long list of world-class sporting events staged in Melbourne – a list that stretches back to the 1956 Olympics and beyond.” (Herald Sun).

4.1.1 MELBOURNE’S SPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND EVENTS

Melbourne’s world class stadia include the Melbourne Cricket Ground (with a capacity of 100,000), Etihad Stadium (56,000), Rod Laver Arena (15,000), Hilsense Arena (10,500) and the new Melbourne Rectangular Stadium currently under construction (31,000). Other venues include Flemington Racecourse (130,000) and Albert Park (100,000+). Melbourne is home to nine of the 16 Australian Football league teams and the five games played in Melbourne each weekend

Google Earth image of Melbourne Cricket Ground and Melbourne Park Precinct



during the season attract an average of 40,000 spectators (Smith, 2008). In addition to this, Melbourne is host to many annual international events such as the Australian Open tennis grand slam tournament held in January, the Formula 1 Grand Prix in March, the Rip Curl Pro surfing competition, the Melbourne Cup horse race in November and the Boxing Day test match (cricket). In recent years it has also hosted hallmark events such as the 2007 FINA Swimming world championships, the 2006 Commonwealth Games and co-host of the 2003 Rugby World Cup.

< The Marketing and Events Committee planned to spend a total of \$A2.9million on event sponsorship. >

4.1.2 OVERVIEW OF CITY OF MELBOURNE SPORT SPONSORSHIP

An investigation into funding of these major events by the City of Melbourne is best summarized in the City of Melbourne Sponsorship strategy 2007 – 2010. Of particular note, the Marketing and Events Committee planned to spend a of total of \$A2.9 million on event sponsorship in the 2007-08 financial year. The most significant beneficiaries of this funding were AFL Grand Final week (\$A250K), the Melbourne Cup Carnival (\$A150K), Australian Open tennis (\$A120K) and the Formula 1 GP (\$A100K).

Another element of Melbourne's sporting industry that is relevant to this study and requires explanation is the unique organization called TEAMelbourne.

“TEAMelbourne is a world first alliance of Melbourne's premier sporting clubs working together to strengthen business, memberships, partnerships and community relationships. The five founding member clubs, each with a unique affinity with Melbourne, have a passion to set the standard for excellence both on and off the sporting field whilst leveraging Melbourne's position as the world's sporting capital,” (TEAMelbourne).

As an organization, TEAMelbourne wants to be “globally recognised as a world leader in sport, entertainment and community” (TEAMelbourne). Among other things, some of its key objectives are to act as a gateway to Melbourne's sporting clubs, sporting events, entertainment and attractions. But in addition to

this, it aims to be a source of education, community outcomes and grass roots development of sport participation.

TEAMelbourne was made possible partly through the financial support of the Victorian government. Steve Bracks, the Premier of Victoria at the time of TEAMelbourne's launch in 2007 was quoted as saying,

“TEAMelbourne is a brilliant new concept that will see Victoria's elite sports clubs join forces to boost Melbourne's brand as the sporting capital of the world, across a diverse range of high-profile sports. Our highest profile sporting organisations are casting aside their inter-sport rivalries in a revolutionary approach to bettering their own codes, and the overall status of sports in this great sporting city,” (TEAMelbourne)

Given the huge public interest and subsequent media attention of sport in Australia, many firms have been very keen to utilise sponsorship opportunities and establish relationships with particular sport events in order to gain a competitive edge within their industry (Quester & Farrelly 1998). The focus of this thesis, however, is the investment by government. With so many firms queuing up to associate themselves with and provide funding for major events why does the local government feel compelled to spend such a large amount of public money on these events? Certainly there is research that provides evidence of the economic impact of these events. For example in the Council Report (31 July 2007) the Marketing and Events Committee claim that the 2006 AFL Grand Final injected \$A36 million into the local economy, the Melbourne Cup carnival provided \$A419 million of gross economic activity and the Australian Open \$A241.6 million. In the same report it is suggested that the sponsorship “played an integral role in shaping the city, attracting tourists and raising the profile of Melbourne nationally and internationally. Melbourne's global reputation as a Sporting Capital can also be attributed to the role the City of Melbourne plays.” This claim is however, unfounded, and it is this notion of sport influencing a city's brand identity that will form the crux of this study.

4.2 Malmö – The Emerging Sporting City

Malmö is Sweden's third largest city and the municipality of Malmö had 280,801 citizens in 2008, which makes up an area of 156 km². Malmö is a coastal city and was one of Sweden's most influential trading and industrial cities, whereas now Malmö is presently considered a service city. (Erlandsson. 2009) Malmö is also an emerging tourist destination. The number of tourists visiting Malmö in 2007 was 1.2 million; the number is estimated to have grown in the last 2 years.

4.2.1 MARKETING

An extensive marketing plan, called Mötesplats Malmö (Rendezvous Malmö), was adopted in 2004. The plan outlined extensive goals of making Malmö an event-destination city. Included in Mötesplats Malmö are plans to establish and further develop the city's cultural exhibitions, leisurely offerings, sporting events, and business conferences. The organization that prepared and is implementing Mötesplats Malmö is known as the 'MINT group.' This is an informal group that handles the coordination and organization of issues regarding Malmö's Market-Information Trade & Industry-Tourism as well as the respective municipalities involved.

As explained in Mötesplats Malmö, and outlined below, some of the most important strengths and weakness identified in the marketing plan for Malmö in 2004 are:

Strengths:

- > Malmö is a small city with large city influences a broad offer in culture-, leisure- and sport events of high quality.
- > Large, neighbouring cities, such as Copenhagen, contribute to Malmö's connectedness to continental Europe.
- > Malmö's infrastructure, such as the Öresunds Bridge, the new Metro and two close international airports, allow for easy and convenient travel to and from Malmö.
- > Malmö is a complement to the much larger city Copenhagen on its own conditions.

Weaknesses:

- > The lack of larger arenas and the delayed renovation of the existing arenas, exhibition buildings and other cultural infrastructure.
- > Malmö's reputation with it's citizens as a 'boring' city.
- > Lack of a coordinated strategy for both the city and external stakeholders.

As previously stated, the strengths and weaknesses presented above are excerpts from Mötesplats Malmö, which was written in 2004. With this in mind, it should be noted that much could have changed in the five years since the plan was produced, but to date there is no official document that supersedes Mötesplats Malmö. Examples of investment in infrastructure are the building of the new arena, new stadium, and the renovation of the older sport facilities. [translated from Swedish](MINT-gruppen. 2004).

4.2.2 THE DESTINATION MALMÖ

A small amendment of events from Mötesplats Malmö was outlined via Samverkan med arrangers- och besöksnäringen i Malmö” (Cooperation between the arranger- and Tourism Industry in Malmö) (2007). As the report explains, the company Destinationssamverkan (Destination Cooperation) Malmö was created as a result from the 2004 marketing plan for the city of Malmö. Apparently, Malmö realized the need to develop a line of communication between its external stakeholders and the municipality. Consequently, Destinationssamverkan Malmö was formed in 2007. Included in the company are representatives from both the city and as well the trade & industry sectors. The company aims to act as an information forum for the respective stakeholders as well as attracting new events and exhibitions to Malmö. With the help of Destinationssamverkan Malmö, the MINT group believes they can adequately handle the rapid development of Malmö as an event city.

4.2.3 MALMÖ AND SPORT

Within the municipality of Malmö is the Fritidsförvaltningen (‘sport, leisure, & recreation administration) department. One responsibility of this department is to create leisure activities for the citizens of Malmö. In accordance, the department administers a large portion of the public municipal sports facilities and recreational areas. It is also in charge of the research and development of leisure and sport activities as well as improvements of the sport related facilities. Furthermore, Fritidsförvaltningen is in charge of planning and executing larger sport and leisure events that take place in Malmö (Malmö stad 2008).

In order to organize and execute leisure and sporting events, Fritidsförvaltningen works in collaboration with three other organizations: Malmö Turism (the tourism department), Gatukontoret (the department of street maintenance) and Kulturförvaltningen (the Culture department). It should be noted that the aforementioned departments are also part of the MINT group.

Sport Facilities

Malmö has a variety of sports facilities, including hockey rinks, tennis courts, golf courses, both indoor and outdoor swimming pools, football, rugby, and lacrosse fields, as well as several other sporting fields. Also in Malmö are newly renovated sporting facilities Baltiska Hallen and Malmö Stadion.

To continue, a brand new indoor arena, Malmö Arena, opened in November, 2008. (Om Malmö Arena. 2007). Malmö Arena is the second largest arena in Sweden and was priced around 1 billion SEK (appx. 95,000 euros) (Nationalencyklopedin. 2009). Malmö also opened a new soccer stadium, Swebank Stadion, in April

2009. This stadium is interestingly located in the city center, next to an older soccer stadium, Malmö Stadion. (Dan Ivarsson. 2009)

Google Earth image of Malmö Stadion prior to Swedbank Stadium construction



Computer generated image of Swedbank Stadium



This concludes the background section, which presented the document analysis and aimed to give the reader a brief situational analysis of the case study cities.

CHAPTER 1:

CHAPTER 2:

CHAPTER 3:

CHAPTER 4:

CHAPTER 5:

Results & Analysis

CHAPTER 6:

// This chapter presents an in depth analysis of the results of the interviews from Melbourne and Malmö guided by the theoretical framework.

5.1 Melbourne

Cornwell et al. (2001) and Farrelly et al. (1997) both discuss the importance of the concept of 'sponsorship-linked marketing' in creating a successful sponsorship campaign. Essentially, the conclusion is that managers need to fully embrace the partnership in marketing activities and take an active involvement in the partnership for it to really generate brand differentiation.

In 1999 the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of the City of Melbourne recognised the city's distinct capability of hosting sport events and wanted to capitalise on this unique asset. Consequently Karen Gilbert was appointed as Program Manager Sport Marketing and then Program Manager Events Sponsorship within the 'Events Melbourne' department. She verifies this during the interview:

"The CEO decided that given Melbourne had quite a strong reputation in sport, that there should be someone working within the City of Melbourne, working closely with sporting events. I am now part of a whole branch which is called 'Events Melbourne' which has about 30 employees."

In the ten years since her appointment:

"The city has really grown and come alive... Compared to other cities, Sydney [for example] has the harbour bridge which is quite spectacular... but we offer a whole variety of experiences, from all the events that we host, the shopping, the dining, nightlife, arts and culture"

Throughout the interview with Karen, the passion and pride in her city is quite evident, and not least when she mentions the title of ‘Ultimate Sporting City’. Interestingly this patriotism is even evident in the TA respondent, who has only been living in Melbourne for five years. Before moving to Australia, his impressions of Australia was “one big desert,” but now speaks glowingly of his adopted city:

“Melbourne is a sensational city. There is a reason why it has won ‘Most Livable City in the World’ a couple of times.

Melbourne is one of the major event cities in the world. The number of events that are hosted in this city is unbelievable. Every week there is another event on.”

Similarly to Karen, the TA respondent points out that Melbourne does not have any real landmarks like the Sydney harbour or the Great Barrier Reef – Melbourne’s ‘landmark’ is its events. To emphasise the governments commitment to this positioning he points to the formation of the ‘Victorian Major Events Company,’ which is an altruistic company funded by the government, established simply to attract major events.

It is clear from the Melbourne interviews that the professionals within the industry all have a clear understanding of the positioning of Melbourne’s brand. This would indicate a city with a well thought out and well communicated brand message.

John, MP and former Minister for tourism, when talking about the development of the ‘10 Year Tourism and Events Strategy’ emphasises the importance of getting ‘buy-in’ from all the relevant players within the industry. This consultative process really seems to have created a useful document, as it seems to have the whole industry united in their vision and communicating a consistent message. This certainly supports the notion of Bennett & Savani (2003) in that a coordinated approach that integrates all relevant agencies is one of the keys to the complicated process of creating a consistent brand identity for a city.

Interestingly though, rather than a sole focus on sport, all the respondents make reference to variety and the diversity of experiences that Melbourne has to offer.

*“We offer a variety of experiences, from all the events that we host, the shopping, the dining, the nightlife, arts and culture.”
Karen.*

John spoke about the complimentary nature of many of Melbourne’s diverse events on offer. It is worth mentioning that John did not speak extensively about the

sporting events during the interview. However, when asked about the importance of sporting events to Melbourne's reputation his response was, "We accept that it is a given core part of our tourism package". This highlights the complexity of a city and the fact that, unlike a product, cannot adopt such a narrow, defined brand. It needs to represent many things for a variety of people.

It would seem, however, that the passion for sport in particular runs much deeper than a well-communicated, well-implemented strategic plan. All respondents make reference to the deep-rooted love of sport of Melburnians and importance of sport as part of their 'cultural glue.' This point is also confirmed through the literature presented in earlier chapters.

The TA respondent points to the fact that Melbourne was established post-Industrial revolution and were pioneers of the 8+8+8 concept, that is, people for the first time were able to work for eight hours of the day, sleep for another eight and had eight more to use as they please (leisure time). This leisure time was held very dearly by Australians, and in particular Melburnians. However, as a newly developed colony, there was not a great deal to do. Consequently, sport formed an extremely important part of their lifestyle and culture and typically Saturday afternoons meant football.

Daniel points out that sport, through the achievement of elite athletes, the passion of fans and enthusiasm to attend and support events, in conjunction with world class facilities makes sport a real point of differentiation for Melbourne.

Karen, from the City of Melbourne, when asked what differentiates Melbourne as a sporting city suggests "...the passion of the people. People show up to event after event. They just don't seem to be able to get enough of sporting events."

It is evident that Melbourne is the beneficiary of a long history of sport well before it was an intrinsic element of brand image. This seems to be one of the keys to the success – rather than trying to force an identity onto a city, they have harnessed and strengthened what apparently emerged organically. Had it not been for a well thought out strategies this could easily have dissipated.

5.1.1 IMAGE TRANSFER

On the whole, it appears that the concept of image transfer is not specifically applicable to Melbourne's city branding. It just seems like a case of the more traditional theories of branding whereby you use any means to get your brand (logo) to reach as many people as possible. Gwinner (1997) suggests "Brand awareness is achieved by exposing the brand to as many potential consumers as possible" and that "sponsorship activities present multiple opportunities for achieving awareness objectives."

“If it is an international broadcast event it would be our preference to have the Melbourne bookmark logo in appropriate places.” John.

However, Gwinner (1997) goes on to suggest that striving for this objective neglects the idea of carefully selecting an event based on its characteristics and asserts that an appropriate match between organisation and sponsored event will aid ‘image transfer’ between the two, and ultimately influence the effectiveness of the sponsorship.

Within Gwinner’s (1997) proposed model one of the first considerations (in terms of assessing an events image) is ‘event type’, eg. sports, music, art, etc. It is fair to say that Melbourne does consider event image from this top, generic level. John spoke of the process by which the city establishes its brand identity. It is certainly not a case of a marketing team behind closed doors establishing some brand values to communicate to the public. “What does the market tell you your strengths are? And you work off those strengths.”

The respondent from Tennis Australia suggested sport has always been a part of Melbourne’s cultural ‘glue’ and sporting events serve as a platform to sell the city.

“Values of the cities are sold through its events. For example, Australian Open is “one big party”. The fun, easy going nature, giving people a fair go, laid back nature is demonstrated.”

Melbourne made the decision to put money behind the ‘type’ of events that had already built up its reputation, but stopped short of going through the process of fully mapping out event image in order to match it with brand identity as Gwinner (1997) suggested would maximise sponsorship benefits for a profitable organisation. Presumably, this is because the nature of cities is that they don’t have one specific target market, they want to appeal to the masses and have something to offer everyone. Certainly, as TA respondent suggested, events provide an opportunity to portray the style and nature of the city and its people. However the idea of a really narrow and specified brand identity to appeal to a particular market segment is not what a city is trying to achieve.

5.1.2 CORPORATE BRANDING

It would seem that the city and government bodies are most concerned with the branding at the ‘corporate’ level lending support to this element of the theoretical framework. As John discusses, Melbourne previously had a range of different

logos that communicate an inconsistent message to the market. They have now created a single generic logo for the city with the aim of it being representative of Melbourne, but applicable across all industry sectors. Tourism Victoria is the organization that is charged with the responsibility of administering that logo and ensures consistency in its use.

One could draw comparisons to company and product level branding in this scenario. Melbourne provides the overarching (corporate) brand identity and logo, and allows individual companies (event companies, education providers, etc) to utilise this brand whilst promoting their own 'product', ideally creating a consistent and recognisable Melbourne identity.

< The identity of the city was not decided by a marketing department and forced upon the city; in fact, the contrary is true, those people had to discover what it was that made Melbourne... Melbourne. >

5.1.3 CONGRUENCE

As was touched upon above in regard to image transfer, it would seem that the congruence between event and sponsor is at a higher, more generic level. The Tennis Australia respondent, similar to John, states that Melbourne's assets (sporting history, infrastructure, etc) was already in place which makes it easy to commercialise. That is, before a marketing team was employed to summarise and communicate the 'Melbourne message', its distinctive elements were already evident. The identity of the city was not decided by a marketing department and forced upon the city; in fact, the contrary is true, those people had to discover what it was that made Melbourne...Melbourne. So it was the long list of major events, in particular sporting events, which were deemed distinctive elements of the Melbourne experience. The study by Alexander (2008) of a beer company and the Welsh national rugby team goes through a matching process of personality traits of the two organizations to ensure a good 'fit'. Certainly the Melbourne interviews provide no evidence that a city goes to this extent in order to match the events it sponsors with the brand identity of the city.

John provides some indication that event 'type' is a relatively important consideration. The general rule adopted during the sponsorship decision process for an event staged in Melbourne is that there should be a \$10 return on every dollar invested. The Australian Masters golf tournament however, does not achieve this type of return, but golf is deemed an important sport for a

certain segment of the market and subsequently the government is still willing to sponsor that event. A theme that came across in all of the Melbourne interviews was that of the diverse yet complimentary calendar of events in order to appeal to all tastes. The impressive list of major sport events really came through as the key differentiating factor, yet Melbourne does not limit itself to one unique selling point. Hence it could be argued that congruence, with a lower degree of detail than sponsorships by profitable firms, is somewhat relevant in the case of Melbourne.

5.1.4 SPONSORSHIP-LINKED MARKETING

Of all the sponsorship theory presented in the theoretical framework, sponsorship-linked marketing seems most relevant to Melbourne. The interview with Karen from the City of Melbourne was particularly insightful in this regard.

Melbourne city council actively invites different organizations (and also advertises) the different sponsorships they offer. Karen indicated each year the Events Melbourne Brand sponsor 100 – 120 events; of which somewhere between a quarter to a third are sporting events. Applicants have to complete a comprehensive application package demonstrating how it fits with Melbourne's objectives and the benefits it will bring to the city.

The main focus of Melbourne's sponsorship is to benefit the ratepayers whose money is being spent. Hence, in managing the sponsorship agreements, the aim is to drive traffic into the city and increase spending at local businesses. Although still an important aspect of the sponsorship, the exposure of Melbourne, the brand, to the national and international audience appears to be a secondary concern (This is due to the leading role of the State Government and Tourism Victoria play in the exposure of the Melbourne brand to the national and international audience). This said, the Melbourne logo appears on the courts during the Australian Open, AFL Grand Final, the Melbourne Cup track etc.

Sponsorship spending is made as transparent as possible given it is the ratepayers' money being spent – they have the right to know how their money is being used (to benefit them). With this in mind, City of Melbourne never sponsors the 'ticketed' component of the event. Their money is used to organise add-on events in order to drive additional traffic into the city that would not have otherwise occurred. A prime example is the AFL grand final. The City of Melbourne works with the AFL to deliver 'grand final week' rather than sponsoring the game itself on the Saturday. This involves player appearances, the 'live site' where those who cannot get tickets can still watch the game and the parade, which attracts over 80,000 spectators. Effectively Melbourne has turned a football game on Saturday into a weeklong festival. This is exactly what Cornwell et al. (2005) and Farrelly et al. (1997) refer to in their discussion of sponsorship-linked marketing.

AFL Grand Final, Melbourne Cricket Ground



Australian Open Final, Melbourne and Olympic Park, Rod Laver Arena



Rather than simply handing over some money and ‘hoping for the best’, the sponsor utilises the partnership by entrenching it in their marketing activities and gain as much leverage as possible from the deal. Karen makes mention of some of the techniques adopted by the city to really utilise their sponsorship in a strategic manner:

“During the Australian Open we do a whole restaurant promotion. It’s a very quiet time of the year in January for city restaurants because a lot of people are on holiday and they’re not coming into the city. So, anyone with an Australian Open ticket gets a whole range of offers at a range of really top city restaurants.”

This exemplifies a well thought out sponsorship strategy which links the sporting event to other experiences on offer within the city, specifically designed to benefit the restaurant sector that traditionally experiences down-time in business over the summer months. This also further verifies the coherence and cooperation of the various departments within the city and industry sectors.

Given Melbourne is the benchmark city; these examples demonstrate the effective implementation of sponsorship-linked marketing activities and how this can really increase the value (return on investment) from a sponsorship agreement. In Karen’s words, the main aim of Melbourne’s sponsorship of events is to “activate the city”.

5.1.5 BRAND BOX MODEL

A point that was suggested by both the TA respondent and Karen from the City of Melbourne, but is also reinforced in the Victorian “10 Year Tourism and Events Strategy” is that of Melbourne’s unique experiences as opposed to its landmarks. Comparisons are made between the Sydney Opera House, Ayers Rock, and the Great Barrier Reef (all in other parts of Australia), with the events in Melbourne. As John simply states:

“It’s a major element of the brand and a natural competitive strength. We are the ones that have the history of the Melbourne Cup, the AFL Grand Final, Australian Open and the Boxing Day test... It is a strength that we owned.”

Interestingly this contradicts the findings of Caldwell & Freire (2004) who suggest that cities generally fall in the ‘high representationality, low functionality’ quadrant of the brand box model appealing to the idealistic nature of humans. The

Melbourne brand identity is built up with a calendar of major events, which is more practical and experientially based. Based on the data collected for this research, it would be fair to place Melbourne in the 'low representationality, high functionality' quadrant.

5.1.6 COHERENCE AND COORDINATION OF THE CITY

The theory, of Bennett & Savani (2003), that brand identity is positively affected by good communication and cooperation may seem relatively obvious. However it is effective implementation that is the challenge for cities in this area. The responses from the Melbourne interviewees indicate Melbourne is performing quite well in this aspect. As discussed earlier, the government commissioned the '10 Year Tourism and Events Strategy,' which provides a clear consistent policy for the industry. Karen from the City of Melbourne makes mention that they work very closely and always talk with Tourism Victoria (the State marketing body) in regards to events sponsorship. Furthermore, in regards to industry collaboration, she states:

"A lot of [other] city's events come in and they have to deal with the different areas, different bodies, whereas we all come together and there are different committees set up around events. We have a team which is set up to approve events in the city where all the authorities... come together and help with the approval process."

The City of Melbourne website which outlines the criteria for event sponsorship states that applications will be assessed based on their proven ability to benefit Melbourne across a number of its 'Key Objectives'. Some of which are: build reputation, promote location and raise profile. Hence, it is evident that the sponsorship money is at least somewhat invested for branding reasons. However, this said, the local government seem to be more focused on coordinating the industry and the development of sport at the community level more so than maximizing brand opportunities. The City of Melbourne does this via Parks and Recreation Team through the Active Melbourne Program and the development and management of many of the sporting grounds and facilities in the city. The city council tries to make the major sporting events 'accessible' to as many people as possible through their sponsor-ship linked marketing activities. As John suggests, the state government is primarily focused on uniting all the sectors of the industry, utilising the sporting venues, maximising opportunities, coordinating activities and getting cooperation around pricing in order to make it as affordable as possible. In a sense this could be viewed as 'product development'. And as argued earlier, one could consider the city as providing the corporate brand and the individual events (and/or organizations) can apply it to their 'product'.

5.1.7 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS ABOUT MELBOURNE

In general it appears that Melbourne, the 'Ultimate Sporting City' had an asset already in existence that was recognised by the industry and capitalised upon. The city itself also saw commercial opportunities in this distinctive asset and consequently chose to invest heavily in order to ensure these major sporting events can continue to operate, but also to leverage the public interest to benefit the city economically and, consequently, use these events as a platform to communicate their brand to the public.

The interview with Daniel, the CEO of TEAMelbourne was particularly enlightening in this regard in that the government supports an innovative sporting organization, which, at its core, promotes sport to the community, but additionally reinforces Melbourne's sporting brand identity. This also highlights how developed the sport industry in Melbourne is. The first striking thing is the very existence of TEAMelbourne. A 'world first' alliance of 5 professional sporting clubs, leveraging off each others strengths in order to diversify what the clubs had to offer sponsors, community and corporate partners. From the interview, it was found that the main focus, and selling point to investors (government departments and member clubs) is its reach into the community. However, at the elite level, there is also a raft of opportunities to cross-sell memberships and package deal as well as an abundance of corporate entertainment packages. All of which serve to involve the community in sport, entertainment and community events that Melbourne has to offer.

TEAMelbourne was made possible when an opportunity arose as a result of surplus funds budgeted for by the state government for the 2006 Commonwealth Games staged in Melbourne. Rather than reallocate that money, the government decided to re-invest back into a sport initiative and saw the TEAMelbourne concept and its member clubs as an excellent conduit to grass roots level sport. According to Daniel, they wanted to further "activate" Melbourne and "really get it moving". This demonstrates a heavy commitment and the importance placed on sport within Victoria, and Melbourne specifically. One of the main aims was to unite Melbourne and be represented as one in order to really drive community involvement. This reach into the community is viewed as succession planning for sport within the state.

In addition to the conduit to the community (seemingly the major focus of the TEAMelbourne concept) it also serves as a platform to the public for entertainment opportunities and unique corporate package offerings for local people, interstate and international tourists. The sponsorship from Tourism Victoria (a state government entity) was seen as an opportunity to showcase to international tourists what was offered in Melbourne. The aggregated database (which includes the five member clubs and also other affiliated organizations) totals over 1.2 million contacts. This makes for a very powerful marketing tool

which allows TEAMelbourne to promote Victoria to Victorians, but also spread the word beyond Australian shores demonstrating to potential international travelers the excitement, energy and myriad of major events going on in Melbourne.

Further evidence that demonstrates the government's support of attracting major events to Melbourne in order to reinforce its brand identity is the formation of the Victorian Major Events Company.

This concludes the analysis of the interviews of Melbourne, the benchmark-sporting city. The section below presents the interviews from Malmö, the emerging sporting city.

5.2 Malmö

In order to analyse the way in which Malmö is building up its brand identity as a sport city, five in-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted. As previously described, Malmö was traditionally considered a working-class city. Most of the interviewees regarded the opening of the bridge between Malmö and Copenhagen as one of the most significant occurrences that opened the doors to the city and made it considerably more accessible to Europe and the rest of the world. Carina suggests that the building of the bridge to Copenhagen helped Malmö excel; stating that "Malmö changed and grew up and Landskrona [a nearby city that also lost its shipbuilding industries] goes down." Christian suggested the opening of the bridge created, what he referred to as the "ketchup effect". That is, for a long time there is little interest or acknowledgement, but, all of a sudden, there was (and is) a lot of interest in Malmö because of its accessibility. This, in combination with the new stadium and arena, makes Malmö a considerably more attractive city for event organisations to stage events and subsequently Malmö started receiving preference over the bigger Swedish cities of Göteborg and Stockholm. As explained by Christian:

(Translated from Swedish): *"Many chose Malmö before Stockholm and Gothenburg; to host their events. Due to the new hockey arena with concerts, Malmö arena and because we have a football arena that can host concerts it opened the door for the really big arrangers".*

The new stadiums (the indoor Malmö Arena and the Swedbank Stadium) are both financed by non-governmental/city investors. While the city of Malmö did not have a direct hand in financing, they did guarantee the loans and sold the land for extremely low prices in order to make these constructions feasible. Carina specifically references the financing of the Malmö arena:

“[The city] let him buy or rent something, I’m not sure, the area and then we [Malmö] get money so we can build something.”

The previously discussed events helped to make Malmö’s identity noteworthy as well as helping Malmö to become a potentially lucrative city to host larger scale international events. As expressed in other interviews, Malmö has become a growing option to host sporting events due to their recent investments in infrastructure.

Many of the interviewees talk about risky, courageous, and often controversial decisions implemented by certain politicians, within Malmö, that directed Malmö’s monetary funds in various directions; consequently redirecting the focus of the city’s identity. The interviewees implied that the risks taken by these politicians had a direct impact on the changing of Malmö’s brand identity from an industrial city to an event and developing sporting city. As explained by Christian, this change in identity has only developed in the past 8-10 years. The freshness of Malmö’s developing identity implies that Malmö is inexperienced and perhaps a bit naïve in the development of a sport brand identity, especially when compared to this thesis’s benchmark city, Melbourne. Johan also believes the change, regarding Malmö’s developing sporting identity, most likely happened 8-10 years ago.

5.2.1 IMAGE TRANSFER

Similar to the situation with Melbourne, it is evident that, at a generic level, the city brand experiences an image transfer. The most significant image transfer for Malmö however, which became evident through the interviews, was that the city has shifted from an industrial to a service oriented city by the fact that it is now capable (through infrastructure) and willing (through financial management) to host and sponsor major sporting events. As explained by Carina,

“I was born in Malmö and at that time it was heavy industrial city...[now Malmö] has changed really much. I think the decision of building the bridge to Copenhagen [had an impact].”

This is in contrast to Melbourne, which has the history of hosting events over a long period of time. With this established reputation Malmö is able to focus on specific “events types” (Gwinner’s (1997) proposed model for image creation and image transfer in event sponsorship which it can ‘own’ and consequently build and define the city’s sport brand identity more specifically.

Having said this, there is certainly an awareness within the city that once Malmö has further established itself as a sport event city, it really needs to look at its particular strengths so it too can 'own' certain events and create a differentiation in the market. Peter states:

“Region Skåne and the City of Malmö has defined within sports golf, horse riding, sailing and handball as strategic important areas for them to work with.”

The previous quote is further supported by Per-Olov. However, Per-Olov also notes that Malmö is interested in developing their identity, however there are several structural factors that must be taken into consideration before continuing to develop:

“We look at to the youth cultures, should we continue with skate competitions or should we look at X-game competitions, or should we look at sports that are within our structure?”

He goes on to point out that football and ice-hockey (the biggest arena spectator sports) are not included as strategically important as these sports are common throughout the country and do not provide Malmö with the opportunity to differentiate itself. Other sports, he suggests, are “profile areas” and are based on the region and the city. Per-Olov also recognises these profile sports and implies that these specific sports received more attention from both the city and the public after Malmö hosted an America's Cup stopover in 2005.

5.2.2 CORPORATE BRANDING

As suggested by Alexander (2008) sponsorship can be seen as a good means to build the overarching corporate brand, as opposed to communicating more specific sales related messages (usually best served through appropriately targeted advertising).

“The city paid 5 million a year for 10 years to have the ‘Malmö’ into the name Malmö Arena... If you try to expand your name and your brand people must hear it. Very important. When you have a sport on the radio, and they say ‘back to Lila Arena’, that’s not good for Karlstad. If they say back to Malmö, Malmö Arena, that’s a good commercial.”

This certainly supports the traditional theory around branding as outlined above, in that it is important to communicate the brand name to as many people as possible. The approach explained by Johan, adopted by Malmö also supports Alexander's (2008) theory of using sponsorship to build the generic corporate brand. There is a contradiction because of the newly built 'Swedbank Stadium' where the city did not capitalise on the opportunity to gain brand exposure with the naming rights of that facility. When questioned about this, Johan stated that this deal occurred before he was involved with the city and was not sure of the details behind this decision. However, he suggested:

“From my point of view the best way of naming also the stadium would be ‘Malmö Stadium’ and ‘Malmö Arena’. Of course this would be the easiest way to package the destination of Malmö”

5.2.3 SPONSORSHIP-LINKED MARKETING

It can be expected, as the city is currently developing its sporting identity, Malmö's sponsorship-linked marketing strategies might not be as sophisticated and organized as that of Melbourne's. Throughout the interviews, this was found to be the case. It is believed that, regarding sponsorship-linked marketing, Malmö exhibits a limited and somewhat generic use of marketing techniques. Malmö seems to lack a centralized organization with clear, common goals, which, in turn, would facilitate Malmö's ability to capitalize on sporting events.

As described in the interview, with Per-Olov, Malmö facilitates numerous sports and sporting events. However, instead of building a strong strategic plan based around sponsorship, as suggested by Cornwell et al. (2005), Malmö seems to sponsor events on an ad-hoc basis. Regarding the sponsorship decision process, Per-Olov explains, “it almost always comes down to a single person with contacts.” Peter, while describing Malmö's decision-making process of hosting the American Cup, further verifies Malmö's lack of sponsorship-linked marketing strategies.

“The decision was made on a standard feeling...but it wasn't strategically right to do it” “The problem was that the timeframes were too narrow because the decision to run Louis Vuitton Cup was made 7 months before it was supposed to be done...”

It was just a big hassle and people didn't understand why.”

It is clear from the previous quotes that Malmö's decision-making process, regarding sponsorship or hosting of sporting events, is decentralized and unorganized. Especially when compared to Melbourne, it is clear that Malmö is

not aligned with sponsorship-linked marketing theory, which is perhaps resulting in erratic decisions and non-profit maximizing sponsorships.

As previously mentioned, Malmö is a developing sporting city. Perhaps one of the most progressive, and interestingly most recent, sponsorship-linked marketing decisions was to appoint Christian to oversee U21EC. Included in Christian's appointment, and most applicable to this discussion, was Christian's responsibilities in 'dressing' Malmö, arranging activities outside the sporting matches, and organizing a 'live-site' for fans. As described by Christian,

[Translated from Swedish] *"My main mission is to market U21EC in the City and in the region. I will do several campaigns I will make the arrangement visible to everyone, in newspapers, on webpage's, etc. I will dress the city and there will be planned side evens and particularly a Fan Zone, which is an area we have planned for Gustav Adolfs Torg [square in Malmö]."*

Although it is respectable of Malmö to commit the time and resources to making the U21EC a profitable sporting event for the city, when compared to Melbourne, Malmö's commitment is still at a deficit. One would expect the same level of dedication from any city, including non-sport oriented cities, when sponsoring a sporting event. Malmö should continue to improve its sponsorship-linked marketing strategies since, as previously discussed, the sponsored events are at the heart of the (sport-related) marketing activities of the city. As Peter states: "You need to be proactive and say 'no, we're not into that, we're into this'." Obviously, Peter agrees that Malmö should prioritize its sporting events, as well as other event offerings, in order to maximize its identity exposure as a sporting city.

5.2.4 CONGRUENCE

The theory of congruence suggests a well-thought out matching process between event and sponsor. Given the discussion above, regarding Malmö's ad hoc decision making and lack of planning, there was no evidence of congruence in the Malmö case study.

5.2.5 BRAND BOX MODEL

At this stage it would seem Malmö is not in a particularly strong position using the brand box model to assess its brand. Although, as discussed, it is certainly working on its ability (through new infrastructure) and reputation of hosting sporting events, it is still quite a long way off from the 'functionality' of a city such

as Melbourne. Likewise, in terms of representationality, it certainly does not have the same status and recognition attached to it as many European cities located in relatively close proximity. The capital of Denmark, Copenhagen is literally 'just over the bridge' and other cities such as Paris and Berlin are only a short flight away. At this point in time, Malmö would be situated in the bottom left quadrant of the model: low representationality, low functionality'. Certainly though, it would seem that Malmö has recognised its weaknesses (as described in Mötesplats Malmö) and its effort to construct appropriate infrastructure in order to make it a more viable proposition for event organisers would seem to be headed in the right direction. If these plans are implemented and executed successfully it is expected that Malmö will improve dramatically in the functionality element. This would be in line with Melbourne, the benchmark sport event city and presumably the correct area to focus on.

During the interview with Johan, it was evident that he was aware of Malmö's relatively small size and subsequent capabilities meaning that the city will be spending its money as sensibly as possible rather than trying to secure events that are beyond the city's means:

"We are a very very small city in the European or in other view. And that could be a weakness for us in competing for the big events...European Championships and World Championships and the Olympics are growing so they can only be hosted by world cities."

"It could be a strength for us in all the events that are coming just under, beneath the big events... There are a lot of women events, handicap events, young events like U21, like junior hockey, and in that case a city like Malmö could be the perfect city."

"When I talk to event makers they find that sort of angle a very nice way of looking and making the event successful."

Although Malmö has been assessed as being low in both elements of the brand box model, if the city pursues the functionality element, by targeting and attracting appropriate sized and strategically chosen events, it is feasible that Malmö could create a niche for themselves and create a strong consistent brand image.

5.2.6 COHERENCE AND COORDINATION OF CITY

One rather glaring deficiency of Malmö that became evident during the interviews was the lack of coordination and unity of the various politicians and city officials, and their respective departments. As suggested by Bennett & Savani (2003) one of the keys to creating a strong brand identity is open communication channels

between all agencies and individuals involved in the city branding process. This ensures all parties are communicating and working towards a consistent message. From the Melbourne interviews it was evident that the respondents were all saying very consistent things about what Melbourne, the brand, stood for and it appears that the key points of the strategic plan have resonated with the industry professionals. In contrast, it is evident that Malmö's departments and other agencies are disjointed and simply 'not talking' each other. Peter highlighted this lack of communication and cooperation:

"There's a lot of questions of who is doing what?"

"At the moment, Malmö and Skåne are portioning out some money, a little bit here and a little bit there, without a clear idea... but I want, I know they have high ambitions and they will get somewhere."

"Should all the different sports start their own organization? I mean, that should be centralized because it's the same issues, it's the same kind of work...you need to anchor division, and the roles for the different stakeholders, clearly and they must understand their role and what they're supposed to do, and what to expect from them and so on. But today, you know, I think it's like islands...not knowing what the other one does. I mean, they are getting there but it takes a while."

As one can clearly see, Malmö is perhaps too decentralized, especially compared with the collaboration evident in Melbourne. The 'islands' in the previous quote are referring to the different, disconnected, divisions of stakeholders and city representatives that are involved in the cities sporting and events planning.

Christian further emphasizes the lack of organization and need for centralization when discussing the issue of cooperation between Fritidsförvaltningen, Malmö Turism, Kultur Förvaltningen and Gatukontoret when saying "the dream would be if we four could sit and work under the same roof". When asked on the topic of integrating the different departments Per-Olov states:

"We are not there yet, at the moment we have to find different ways to cooperate and the key term is to cooperation".

Although the lack of centralization is a problem, it is evident from the previous quotes that Malmö is aware of the disjointedness. It can be inferred that this realization initiated the formation of the MINT group as well as the Destinationsverksamhet Malmö. These two groups are focusing on creating a harmonious, centralized organisation that would oversee sporting events in Malmö. The researchers have

noted that these groups have yet to gain traction within the industry as the groups are still in their infancy stages of development. This issue is unquestionably one that needs to be addressed by Malmö if the city is to reach its potential in terms of becoming a strong sport city. Without a concerted effort to rectify this situation, the lack of coherence will continue and people will certainly be 'pulling' in different directions and working with different agendas.

This concludes the analysis of the interviews of Malmö, the emerging sporting city. Following there is a discussion comparing the two cities and their branding/sponsorship activities. Finally, there will be a general discussion regarding the overall applicability of the theories presented.

CHAPTER 1:

CHAPTER 2:

CHAPTER 3:

CHAPTER 4:

CHAPTER 5:

CHAPTER 6:

Discussion & Conclusion

// This section draws together the results and compares both cities and in doing so, addresses the research questions of this thesis. Additionally, the sponsorship and city branding theory used to analyse the cities will be assessed in terms of its applicability to this specific context.

6.1 Discussion

As stated from the outset of this thesis, the empirical research of this study aimed to explore:

- > How cities establish a sport brand identity?
- > How is this identity maintained or strengthened?
- > How successful has the branding effort been in differentiating the city (as a sporting city)?

To do so, two case study cities, Melbourne and Malmö, were chosen. Melbourne was identified as the benchmark-sporting city (because of the results of the ArkSport 'Ultimate Sporting City' survey 2006) and given the relatively recent development of new sporting infrastructure, Malmö was chosen as an emerging sporting city.

From the two case studies it became evident that Melbourne is indeed quite a developed city with a lot of expertise in the area of staging major sporting events in comparison to Malmö. Probably the most striking difference is the timeframe that the two cities have adopted a sporting identity. Many of the Melbourne interviewees refer back as far as the 1956 Olympics in terms of the cities history as a location for hosting major sporting events. Malmö's history,

on the other hand, was described as an industrial city with little recognition or desire to host sporting events. Most of the interviewees suggest the opening of the bridge to Copenhagen in 2000 (which dramatically increased its accessibility and 'opened' it up to the rest of Europe) as the turning point of the city. Hence, it is only within the last decade that Malmö has attempted to position itself as a sporting city. Furthermore, one of the fundamental differences between the two cities is the decision making process behind the establishment of a sporting city. The data for Melbourne indicates a long history and love of sport to the point that it forms a key element of the local culture. The locals are passionate about sport and fervently support their teams in large numbers every weekend. Due to this, Melbourne has developed world class sporting infrastructure for its 'own' use, which is easily adapted and capable of hosting major international sporting events when opportunities arise. Consequently one could suggest that Melbourne's sport brand identity occurred organically and evolved through the love of sport of the locals. As the need for cities to brand themselves arose, the various marketing departments (and agencies) went to the market to establish what people considered made Melbourne distinctive. What they discovered was a unique element of the Melbourne experience was that hosting major sporting events. Subsequently this pre-existing feature was framed within the marketing/branding context in order to capitalise on this unique selling point of the city. In contrast, Malmö is very new to the major sporting events 'game'. The data from the emerging sport city suggests that Malmö's decision to re-brand itself as a sporting city was made based on the evidence of the economic benefit and branding opportunities associated with hosting major events. Whereas Melbourne's history as a sporting city appears to have come about from organic development of hosting sporting events, Malmö's decision to re-brand the city seems much more a business interest.

< Melbourne's history as a sporting city appears to have come about from a natural evolution of hosting sporting events, Malmö's decision to rebrand the city seems much more a business interest. >

Following is a consideration of the theoretical framework applied to the two case study cities for this study and an assessment of the theory's applicability to this specific (city branding) context.

In brief, the sponsorship theory used in this study formed four headings: sponsor-event congruence, image transfer, corporate branding, and sponsorship-linked marketing. Congruence is one of the overarching themes of many sponsorship

studies (Clark et al. 2009, Alexander 2008, Cornwell et al. 2005, Speed & Thompson 2000). In the commercial context it is suggested that a strong sponsor-event match, either at a functional or ideological level, increases the effectiveness of the sponsorship. This matching process is less applicable to cities because cities are so complex (in comparison to a consumer product, for example) and don't really have a specified target market. In addition to this, the congruence theory in the traditional (profitable firm) context, assumes that the sponsoring company will only sponsor one (or at least very few) event(s). Consequently, this produces the situation where a careful strategic decision needs to be made. This exclusive 'putting all your eggs in one basket' situation is not true for a city. At a very generic level, a city aiming to position itself as a sporting city might give preference to hosting a sporting event over, say, a cultural event. And needless to say, cities need to look at certain events and match the logistics of hosting that event with its capabilities (infrastructure, size of event, etc) as well as appropriate public interest to make it a success. However, this certainly is not the detailed brand matching process that is referred to by Alexander (2008). It is therefore reasonable to argue that this theory of congruence is only somewhat applicable to the city branding context.

Image transfer, likewise, is only somewhat relevant to city branding. The concept of 'attaching meaning' is an abstract notion, even in the 'simple' context of a consumer good. Think about the Mountain Dew example used by Bennett et al. (2009) referred to in the introductory section of this thesis. The core product is simply a carbonated drink similar to many others. But through the sponsorship of action sport events, it has acquired meaning and is now considered as the 'action sport drink'. This added value, or image transfer, consequently makes the drink more desirable to action sport fans and additionally the sponsorship deal allows Mountain Dew direct access to this particular segment of the market.

Now thinking about this concept in relation to a city. As discussed above a sporting city aims to attract a range of events to appeal to a wide variety of interests and does not attempt to selectively focus on specific market segments. As the TA respondent suggests, certainly the values of the city can be sold through a sport event by the manner in which it is staged. But this notion of acquiring a particular image as a consequence of the image of the sponsored event is not entirely applicable to a city in the same way as a consumable good or service.

< ...the values of the city can be sold through a sport event and the manner in which it is staged. >

As Alexander (2008) suggests, “sponsorship is a potentially powerful method of conveying corporate and organisational identity” (348) and that it “has the ability elevate a corporate brand above the advertising noise that exists in the consumer environment” (348) and consequently should be positioned “at the heart of a corporate branding strategy” (348). From the analysis of the interviews, this notion of ‘corporate branding’ through sponsorship of events is evident for both cities and is directly applicable to the city branding context. Interestingly, a city does not ‘own’ any products to which it can apply its brand (unlike a profitable firm, for example, a car manufacturer placing the company name on all the different models it produces). In the sporting city context, the city itself does not usually operate the event. Therefore, it must look to sporting bodies that actually organise the events and enter into a sponsorship agreement that allows them to communicate their brand. Melbourne has adopted the approach that they need a single corporate logo design, which is representative of the whole city and is applicable to all industries and business sectors. To ensure its consistent use, Tourism Victoria have been charged with the responsibility as ‘gate keepers’ of the logo and subsequently a strong corporate brand is conveyed. As was revealed through the interviews, the City of Melbourne is very supportive of sporting events in order to reinforce their position as a sporting city and ensures logo placement during the events in order to reinforce their corporate brand. Malmö likewise are aware of the corporate branding opportunities as evidenced by their sponsorship of the ‘Malmö Arena’. Certainly this is a step in the right direction, but Malmö still has room to further leverage from their sponsorship arrangements. This goes back to the theory presented by Alexander (2008) that the sponsorship should be embraced by the sponsoring organization in order to fully utilise its worth and to achieve the maximum benefits.

This leads onto the idea of sponsorship-linked marketing, the final sponsorship related theoretical concept used to analyse the cities under observation. This too, has particular relevance in the city branding realm. As presented in the literature review, there are two predominant considerations when it comes to events sponsorship for a city. Apart from branding opportunities, there is also the direct economic impact to the city. Although both are important in their own right, given a city is spending taxpayers money, it is the economic impact that is of primary concern. John indicated that the general rule of thumb for an event in Melbourne is that it should have a \$10 multiplier effect. That is, for every dollar invested by the government, it should produce a \$10 return. Melbourne, the benchmark-sporting city utilises the concept of sponsorship-linked marketing in order to maximise their return on investment. Once a sponsorship deal is in place, the marketing team goes about designing a range of add-on events and strategically planned promotions in order to drive extra traffic into the city and increase spending at local businesses. In other words, the city embraces the ‘sponsorship’, and ‘links’ its ‘marketing’ activities to the event. This also provides more opportunities for people to get involved in the event, generating public

< Malmö would benefit greatly by observing the strategies adopted by Melbourne when it comes to fully utilising the opportunities associated with sport event sponsorship. >

interest and making the events as accessible as possible to the public. This is one area where Melbourne was particularly strong and this really reinforces and strengthens the sporting city brand identity. Malmö however has not had the long history of hosting events and consequently has not had as much experience in designing these types of activities. Malmö would benefit greatly by observing the strategies adopted by Melbourne when it comes to fully utilising the opportunities associated with sport event sponsorship. For example, Melbourne's promotional activities during the Australian Open which drives additional traffic to the local city restaurants during a traditionally quiet period of the year.

Now follows a discussion of the branding theory used, and its adaptation for a sporting city perspective. In brief, the city branding theory presented covers:

> **The brand-box model**

> **Coherence and coordination of the city**

As previously discussed, it was discovered by the researchers, through the interviews and analysis, that both of the two studied cities, Melbourne and Malmö, contradict the findings of Caldwell & Freire (2004) which believed that cities are in the 'high representationality, low functionality' quadrant. It was concluded by the researchers that Melbourne most likely belongs in the 'high representationality, low functionality' quadrant while Malmö is sitting in the 'low representationality, low functionality' quadrant.

Referring to previous discussion, it was concluded that the original brand box model Caldwell & Freire (2004) is only somewhat applicable to sporting cities. In order to make the brand box model a useful application for not only this specific study but also for all cities aiming to develop a sport brand identity, this thesis creates an adopted brand box model, shown below.

The researchers suggest adding a third dimension to the diagram that refers to the 'perfect sporting city.' To put it simply, this city has created a perfect sporting brand identity. The perfect sporting city is found to be extremely functional as well as representational. Tourists, from both the city's country as well as internationally, will visit this city for its sporting events and culture: a true 'been there, done that' sporting tourist destination. Furthermore, this city will be extremely functional in that consumers living near or in the city have a high regard for it's sporting events



Figure 2: Case study cities plotted on Caldwell & Freire's adapted Brand Box model. Dotted line indicates direction sporting cities should be aspiring.

and culture. Essentially, people live in this city not for its beautiful scenery or good shopping, they live in this city because of the sporting culture and activity.

As one can see from the adapted brand box model, Melbourne is close to the perfect sporting city. As previously mentioned, it is believed that Melbourne belongs in the 'high representationality high functionality' quadrant for the original brand box model. Melbourne has a relatively high representationality and high functionality when compared to the average city. However, on the adapted brand box model, it is felt that Melbourne has a lower representationality and lower functionality, when compared to the 'perfect sporting city'.

As concluded by the researchers, Melbourne has a slightly lower functionality than that of the 'perfect sporting city.' Melbourne, when examined from a general perspective, has an extremely high functionality in that it is known for its events and lively culture, including sports, arts, and entertainment. Although Melbourne has been identified as the ultimate sporting city, there is always room for improvement to approach the theoretical 'perfect sporting city.'

It is also concluded by the researchers that Melbourne has a lower representationality factor than that of the 'perfect sporting city.' As previously explained, the 'perfect sporting city' is visited by both domestic and international tourists because of its experiences on offer and its ideological representationality. Perhaps Melbourne has room for improvement in order to compete with cities that exhibit high representationality. The unique aspect of a sporting city is that

its (representational) landmarks are in fact its sporting events (functional). In order for Melbourne to become the 'perfect sporting city,' its sporting identity must be so strong that tourists flock to the city just to experience the sporting 'landmark' and enjoy the sporting events and culture Melbourne has to offer.

As previously discussed, Malmö was found to be in the 'low representationality, low functionality' quadrant of the original brand box model. In order to be applicable in the adapted brand box model, Malmö was placed in the same quadrant as Melbourne and the 'perfect sporting city.' Malmö was concluded to have a somewhat lower functionality and a much lower representationality than that of the 'perfect sporting city.'

As previously discussed, Malmö is just a developing sporting city and is not expected to have the functionality of a sporting city such as Melbourne. However, Malmö's rapidly advancing infrastructure and progressing sponsorship-linked marketing techniques allowed the researchers to recognize Malmö's potential growth in the functionality sector of the brand box model. Malmö has obviously recognized and are capitalizing on their developing sporting identity. Given their recent investment regarding infrastructure and sponsorship activity, it is predicted that Malmö has the potential, in the next decades, to develop a functionality similar to that of Melbourne. Malmö's present functionality, however, is obviously far from the functionality of the 'perfect sporting city.'

Interestingly, Malmö was found to have a significantly lower representationality than not only the 'perfect sporting city' but also than that of Melbourne. Perhaps due to its proximity of major European cities (such as Oslo, Stockholm, Paris, and Berlin), Malmö is being overshadowed. Presently, tourists do not flock to Malmö as a tourist destination, especially not for sporting events. However, as previously explained, the bridge connecting Malmö to Copenhagen has opened up several opportunities to build Malmö's sporting identity. If Malmö continues to capitalize on this connection to continental Europe, it could very well become a major tourist destination. As mentioned in the analysis, Johan explained that Malmö should capitalize on the niche of minor sporting events. Instead of competing for world class sporting events such as the Olympics or the World Cup (which are usually reserved for major cities), Malmö should look to host smaller sporting events, such as women's sports or young events. Combined with the opportunities created by the bridge to Copenhagen and connection to continental Europe, Malmö has the potential to drastically improve its representationality.

To conclude the brand box model discussion, neither Melbourne nor Malmö have achieved as high functionality and representationality as achieved by the theoretical 'perfect sporting city,' as shown in the adapted brand box model. However, it is confidently concluded by the researchers that Melbourne is extremely close to the 'perfect sporting city.' Furthermore, it is concurred that Malmö has the potential, in the next few decades, to radically improve its sporting identity

in terms of functionality and representationality to become closer to Melbourne and, hence, closer to the 'perfect sporting city.'

Bennett & Savani (2003) provide us with the theory that successful city branding involves "the development of a shared vision and control across seemingly unrelated activities...the use of integrated marketing communications (i.e. ensuring that all the agencies involved in the rebranding process are communicating the same message)... a round table of brand strategists, analysts and implementers (internal and external)."

The two main ideas of this theory are that, firstly, good communication means the city will be consistent in their brand message, and secondly, good collaboration will enable the city to work efficiently towards common goals. Although this notion does seem somewhat obvious, the results of this thesis certainly provide support for this theory. It may very well be a case of 'easier said than done' because as discovered through the Malmö interviews, although the respondents indicated an awareness of this concept, the implementation and execution was still not evident. Certainly the MINT group is a step in the right direction however, as mentioned above, MINT group is only an informal 'forum' group with no authority to execute decisions.

< ...the cooperation and collaboration within Melbourne allows for an efficient, streamlined process when it comes to staging events. >

Close collaboration and open communication has seen Melbourne develop a strong sporting brand identity because it has all the whole industry working in the same direction. This means that the brand message is understood by everyone and is communicated consistently. Additionally, the cooperation and collaboration within Melbourne allows for an efficient, streamlined process when it comes to staging events. As mentioned by Karen, Melbourne has a committee that is responsible for and has the authority to make all the necessary approvals for the logistics of an event. Malmö on the other hand lacks this kind of cooperation across the different bodies in order to simplify the process and capitalize on the potential benefits of staging an event. The communication across the industry could also be improved. An open 'round table' discussion and with all relevant agencies and personnel and to identify key strategic areas where they can build a distinctive competitive advantage would benefit Malmö. It is suggested that Malmö should develop a comprehensive, long-term plan, including sporting priorities and sponsorship-related goals and visions. This plan should be used while compiling bids for sporting events (when competing with other cities). Once an event has been secured, the city should invest appropriate resources and plan how to best exploit the commercial potential of the event to benefit the city; from an economical perspective (across as many sectors as possible) and

incorporate it into marketing activities and utilise it to strengthen brand identity.

Adopting the theory of Bennett & Savani (2003) would indicate that choosing to focus certain sports, which have appropriate levels of public support, would really assist in the brand building process. In order to ensure successful implementation of this branding process, there should be agreement amongst all parties and a defined communication and reporting protocol to ensure all relevant people are abreast of necessary information. Given the accomplishment of Melbourne in this area and its status as the ultimate sporting city (and the comparative struggle of Malmö), this study supports Bennett and Savani's (2003) theory that coherence and coordination within a city has an impact on its brand identity.

6.2 Conclusion

As intended, this thesis used two case studies in order to analyse the sport brand identities of Melbourne and Malmö. In order to properly analyse the cities' brand identities, the researchers were guided by the questions as stated at the beginning of this chapter.

To begin the research, previous branding theories were extensively outlined in order to provide a framework for this study and establish a niche area of branding theory that has perhaps been overlooked. The researcher's then continued by delving into relevant sponsorship and city branding theories. Nine semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with representatives of the respective cities, from both the sponsor point-of-view as well as from the sponsored point of view. Upon obtaining and analysing retrieved data, the sponsorship and city branding theories were then re-examined with regards to applicability of sporting cities and their respective developed sporting identities.

Of the sponsorship theory, 'Sponsorship-linked marketing' and 'corporate branding' were found to be specifically applicable in the sporting-city context, whilst 'image transfer' and 'congruence' were somewhat applicable at a generic level. The researchers adapted the brand box model to make it relevant to this study. However, the 'perfect sporting city' would rate highly in both categories. Finally, support was provided for Bennett & Savani's (2003) theory that a city that communicates effectively and collaborates to achieve common goals will improve brand identity. As an overall conclusion, Melbourne has always had a long history of sport and it established its identity organically whereas Malmö has recently decided upon developing a sporting identity for economic, social, and branding benefits. Both cities are looking to attract new sporting events, while maintaining their event schedule, in order to reinforce and further improve their images as sporting cities. Finally, Melbourne was assessed as the appropriate benchmark city, extremely close to the 'perfect sporting city,' whereas Malmö is just beginning to establish its sporting brand identity. As discussed, Malmö has

several improvements and adjustments to make in order to be considered an elite sporting city. However, as shown in the analysis and discussion, Malmö has not only the potential but also the resources and is developing the infrastructure to do so. If Malmö uses Melbourne as an example, especially considering Melbourne's coordination of industries and usage of city sponsorship, it is suggested by the researchers that Malmö has potential to vastly improve its brand identity as a sporting city.

6.3 Further Research

Regarding options and suggestions for further research studies, the researcher's feel there are several routes one could take including:

- > Using one sporting city, analyse the city's sporting brand identity compared to it's brand equity
- > Analysing other cities such as Toronto, Paris, London, or Sydney
- > Using the same cities: focus on one applicable theory, such as the adapted brand box, marketing-linked sponsorship, or the effects on corporate branding.
- > Further analysis of Malmö

One option for further research is to compare the brand identity of one city, Melbourne for example, with Melbourne's brand equity. This would be extremely interesting to see if the city's intended brand identity is transferred successfully to create the intended brand equity, which is measured from the citizen's point of view. It would also be interesting to note if the existing theory and literature pertaining to brand equity is applicable, or somewhat applicable, to the brand equity of sporting cities.

Another option for further research is conducting the same-framed research, as well as similar methodology, with different cities. Cities such as Toronto (another sporting city as suggested by Daniel from TEAMelbourne), or Paris, London, or Sydney (high ranking sporting cities in the ArkSports survey 2006). It would be interesting to note if these cities are similar to Melbourne in terms of culture, infrastructure, as well as organizational structure.

The third option for further research is to focus on one applicable theory and try to expand upon the applicability of the respective theory as well as possibly adapting the theory, as needed, to ensure it's applicability to sporting cities.

Finally, it would extremely interesting to conduct a follow-up study on Malmö regarding the development of it's sport brand identity. It is suggested the study take place at least five years, if not longer, from the date of this particular thesis.

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