

Research of Specifics of Advertising in the Sports Sphere: Regional Aspect and Effect of Collaboration

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Abstract

Background: Advertising in the information society increases the sphere of its influence, forms patterns of social thinking. The research is aimed at identifying the specifics of advertising in physical culture and sports at the regional level. **Methods:** We used theoretical analysis of advertising study trends (socio-cultural approach), identifying specifics of its application in physical culture, analyzing the relationship of its commercial and social components. Theoretical provisions were confirmed by the analysis of secondary data of sociological monitoring of physical culture and sport spheres in the Sverdlovsk region conducted with the authors' participation in 2010-2013 and the results of the expert semi-formalized interview. **Findings:** Advertising of sporting goods promotes involvement of different population groups in physical education. Advertising of major sporting events makes an important political effect, positioning a specific region or a country as a whole. Experts polling in the field of regional physical culture management revealed the potential of investigated communicative tool. Running an advertising campaign which involves idol athletes tends converting passive interest in the sport into practicing sports activities. The choice of sport specificity in the region is largely influenced by advertising messages. Analysis of sport preferences allowed defining the specifics of the various social groups, municipalities that allows increasing the efficiency of advertising communications in the community to solve many of its problems. It has become obvious that the impact of advertising potential is used discretely, to a greater extent it is directed at announcing and supporting sport events rather than shaping the values of a healthy lifestyle. It is necessary to investigate the mechanisms of using advertising as a way to counter the deviant and addictive behaviors. **Application/Improvements:** Consideration of the regional characteristics and development of sports areas requires a common conceptualization of sports information space aimed at promoting healthy lifestyle attitudes at the individual level and in society as a whole.

Keywords: E-Learning, Mobile Programming Environment, Java-based Interpreter

1. Introduction

The urgency of research on the role of advertising is stipulated by the high degree of its impact on all spheres of modern society, which determines the need to analyze the specifics of its application in a particular public sphere.

“Advertising acquires the status of a public institution that affects not only economic but also social aspects of the development of society”¹

The degree of stability of the society (social organization, political order, economic institutions) affects the selection of specific communication technologies and defines their specific implementation. Classical theories of the information society proceed from understanding that in today's digital society crucial impact on the status and development of cultural processes is exerted by information flows and communication technologies: propaganda, PR, GR, advertising.

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Problems of communication organization in the information society was developed in the fundamental concepts of M. McLuhan,² A. Toffler,³ and others. Theoretical provisions of these authors serve as methodological foundations for researching communications of regional communities. It is natural that their studies are successfully republished in Russia both in translation and in the original language in recent years.

These authors' works focus attention on the issues of socialization and identification in advertising society, forming the cultural space of the individual. Advertising determines not only the acquisition of certain goods or services, but also the norms of behavior rules, stereotypes of social thinking are transformed. The tradition of the analysis of advertising as a social and cultural phenomenon, and not just a marketing tool is continued J. Bryant,⁴ J. Baudrillard,⁵ E. Fromm,⁶ determining advertising as a functional institution of the consumer society. Advertising creates an image of a modern man, a set of orientations and attitudes that should be followed in order to be accepted in certain groups.

It appears that this theoretical provision has become even more important in the 21st century. However, at the regional level the potential of advertising in the sports field remains unimplemented and insufficiently researched.

In English literature the problems of sports advertising are presented widely enough, however, generally modern authors study it from the view of promoting sporting goods.⁷⁻¹¹

In a broader context – in terms of sports advertising influence on society and personality – it was studied in the late 20th century, in particular, by H. Stipp,¹² D. Des Thwaites, R. Anguylar- Manjarrez and C. Kidd¹³, Jüratė Banyte and co-authors¹⁴, etc.

Studies of advertising influence on the elements of determination of person's social behavior, such as individual's needs, interests, values, motives, attitudes in terms of Russian society is still relevant, as they have a significant impact on the socio-cultural space of the modern city as a whole, and what is especially important for the development of society, on the younger generation and youth's health-saving practices.¹⁵

2. Concept and Research Methods

In recent years, throughout the entire world there is a steady tendency of promoting the role of physical cul-

ture in the society as a powerful and effective means of physical education of a comprehensively developed personality and a way of preventive solutions to problems of deviant behavior in its various forms: extremism, alcoholism, drug addiction, gambling and others. Fashion for a healthy lifestyle, active leisure, systematic physical exercise is clearly seen especially among young people. This social phenomenon is confirmed by conducting annual international and national sports events and competitions, in which the number of participants is constantly increasing. For example, in the Lyzhnya Rossii [Ski Track of Russia], which is held annually since 1982 and is designed for a wide range of ski enthusiasts in the period from 2002 to 2013, the number of participants has grown from 50 thousand to 1.5 million people.¹⁶ Such mass sports activities also include the ongoing "Cross of Nations" held in Russia from 2004, Boston Marathon – in the US from 1897, London Marathon in Great Britain from 1981. Of course, the Olympic Games, World Cups, European Championships and many other events which aim to promote a healthy lifestyle are international mass competitions, uniting large numbers of people as participants and spectators. Any mass sports event is certainly in need of adequate information support, an important component of which is advertising. Advertising in sport has settled in the post-Soviet society for long and firmly, however, there are not so many works devoted to its impact on regional communities, and most of them are made by marketers in connection with the promotion of specific sporting goods and services.

The aim of our study was to identify the specifics of advertising in the sphere of physical culture and sport at the regional level. While investigating the problem, we used methods applied in sociology – theoretical analysis, secondary analysis of sociological data obtained during the regional sociological monitoring "Sverdlovsk region residents' opinion of physical culture and sports", held in 2010-2013,¹⁷ the results of experts' survey by semi-structured interview (interview guide method), the analysis of sports-related posts in social networks.

3. Results

Traditional notions about physical training are associated with its assessment as part of the general culture. "Since culture encompasses all kinds of human activity, his thoughts and feelings, mind and will, it is an inherent

part of human existence, no sphere of life – is it economy or politics, family or education, art or morality, leisure or sports – is possible without culture”.¹⁸ It seems necessary to emphasize the differences of the concepts used: physical education (mass sports) is an integral part of the whole human culture, upbringing and education of people, preparing their employment,²⁷ and sport (a synonym – high performance sport) is a special activity, constantly aiming at a good result, orientation to an active overcoming of a rival, high prestige of sporting victory, the need to fight at international sporting events.

In contrary to the large sport, mass sport or physical education is a “sport for all”. In fact, this is an opportunity that gives everyone the possibility to realize the inherent right to participate in sport, which is declared in the Olympic Charter. Mass sport has great potential because of its significant impact not only on the personality formation, the development of physical and mental qualities, but also the quality of life itself. It should be emphasized that the mere fact of physical culture as a mass phenomenon acts as a factor in the development of general cultural content of high performance sport, as it widely promotes the idea of the value of human ability, the idea, the reality of meaning of which may be temporarily lost for an athlete in the course of a competitive struggle (especially in the framework of the most prestigious competitions) in certain circumstances.²⁰ Physical culture and sport are interrelated, therefore, in the context of cultural and social history are considered inseparable from each other and have a common tendency of development. Since ancient times to the present day, they play an important role in educating the younger generation. However, in different periods of society development a different degree of attention is given to them, due to the level of culture development. High performance sport and mass sport in the social aspect have another dimension: they can and should be studied as a “metropolitan” and “regional” phenomenon. If the first one acts as an indicator of physical education and sport condition throughout the state, the second one functions as the same indicator in the region and at the same time – as one of the indicators of the fundamental bases of the national sports activity. This division has sound conventional justifications and can be traced at all stages in the development of physical culture and sports. We mention only two points: first, all known ancient Greek poleis of the Russian Black Sea coast had stadiums (Phanagoria, Gorgippia, etc.); secondly, the well-known fact that when the regional team in a par-

ticular sport is transferred into the top national division, a noticeable surge of public attention occurs regarding this kind of sport and enthusiasm for it in this area. This phenomenon, in particular, was noted in respect of Ural, Yekaterinburg football club, which joined the Russian Premier League in 2013.

The problem of changes in the culture is one of the basic and fundamental problems, because it is addressed to identifying the objective laws of social development and culture. Determining the vector of development is the basis for building evidence-based policy in the field of culture in all its forms and directions. The development of physical culture as an important social phenomenon in the framework of the social system, the way of man’s self-realization and the mechanism of formation of a healthy lifestyle, is also determined by the objective laws of social development. However, this area of community activity also has, so to speak, “ups and downs” from the middle of the 20th century till Perestroika [Soviet Restructuring] – the prime of sport and physical culture: it includes active sports spreading among the students, the emergence of such famous competitions like the Kozhanny Myach [Leather Ball] and Zolotaya Shayba [Golden Puck] in 1964, holding important international events in Russia: the 1973 summer Universiade and the 1980 summer Olympic Games in Moscow. The vector of culturological component development at that time was clear: the USSR sport was a tool of political and ideological influence and it spread by “descending” vertical – from the center to the periphery. It defined the content and all that is now called social advertising in sports: posters, television spots, audio bumpers for radio and so on. We take the following example: football march²¹ composed by Matvey Blanter is included in the golden fund of the sports culture, in the public consciousness it is strongly associated with sports victories of Soviet football, and today is played at each local stadium before the start of official matches of the Russian championship.

The perestroika period and the collapse of the Soviet Union were marked by the fall of sports positions, including the international sport arena. Currently, we can note that the sport is actively developing among children and young people in Russia generally. This is evidenced by opening numerous sports clubs in the most popular kinds of sport; the emergence and development new sports such as workout, parkour among youth, the successful holding of the Sochi Winter Olympics and Formula 1 race in 2014 for the organization that a significant number of young

people were engaged; an active participation of young people in preparation for the 2018 FIFA World Cup and others.

In the post-industrial or information society the development of sport and physical culture in combination and relation of traditional knowledge and innovative technologies and techniques becomes necessary. After all, if the experience and knowledge accumulated for decades are added by modern technologies and material components, then it is possible to bring high performance sport and physical education to a new level.

Since modern society is defined, by convention, as the information society, then information flows have a decisive impact on the state and development of cultural processes. The forms of communications are not only changed in the process of cultural development, but they also become a significant factor in the cultural and social changes. Advertising is usually associated exclusively with commerce, but social advertising has recently been becoming more common in our country. The role of social advertising in modern society cannot be overestimated, since it is aimed at drawing attention to the vital problems of society. We believe that the mission of social advertising is in the humanization of society and the formation of moral values necessary for society. In many countries, this kind of advertising is the most important tool of state information policy (and in Russia, as has been shown above, a considerable experience in this field was accumulated in the Soviet period). Social advertising is often opposed to commercial advertising. Commercial advertising frequently provokes the consumption of socially dangerous goods: tobacco, alcohol, or just excessive, uncontrolled individual consumption. However, it should be noted that commercial advertising aimed at addressing certain topical problems of society also performs the function of social advertising. Most clearly it is manifested exactly in sports sector: while advertising sporting goods or activities not commercial, but social (such as youth involvement in physical education classes) or political (such as the positioning of the country, region) effect can be obtained to a greater degree. Advertising in the sports field is a confirmation of the relationship of commercial and social spheres – it cannot be a general division of advertising into commercial and social. It can be classified into commercial, sports and commercial.

Subdivision of advertising in sport into types is of great importance, since it can be accompanied by material

and moral stimulation of sports advertising as a socially significant phenomenon by providing certain benefits and equating to social advertising. A certain difficulty in determining the type of advertising in sport may occur in the case if the sponsor produces several types of products, including goods of sporting and “applied” purpose or incompatible with the traditional sport values: tobacco and alcohol.

The types of sports advertising include advertising of sports competitions, a particular kind of sport, sports organization, federation, committee, a certain club, a team, or a certain athlete, physical training (active lifestyle), sports media.

The types of sports and commercial advertising are: sports apparel, footwear and equipment of “not exclusive” brands, manufacturers of “dual” purpose goods. So those kinds of sports advertising, which today are used by specialists, namely, on the edge of sports arenas, on sports uniform, as well as including corporate sponsorship in the name of the competition titles, etc. are in fact forms of advertising in sports, and depending on the advertised goods (services) they may belong to different types and kinds.

Obviously, in terms of typology of advertising in sports, the major part of this “sport” advertising must be classified as a commercial type, although the options when these types of advertising have a social or socio-commercial nature are not excluded. Thus, for example, advertising of a sponsor of sporting events, producing products or services of unsportsmanlike nature, will be referred to commercial advertising in the sports press. At the same time an announcement or a report of a sports event or a sports holiday, placed in any media, must be attributed to sports advertising.

There is no doubt that all types, kinds and forms of advertising in sport are sufficiently linked, and it is often difficult to separate them from each other. Thus, the main purpose of a sports magazine may not be the development of sport, but making a profit, i.e. a purely commercial interest. On the other hand, advertising of the magazine itself, including that in any other media, will be referred to sports advertising.

Definition of its objectives can contribute to identification of the type and nature of advertising in sport. Thus, the purpose of commercials is to obtain profits and strengthening the position of firms and companies in the market of goods and services through sport. The task of sports and commercials advertising is the expansion of

sales of dual-use goods with simultaneous promotion of health and fitness movement and an active lifestyle. Finally, the purpose of sports advertising in an environment where physical education and sport cannot be fully funded by the state is to maximize the attractiveness of sports activities and sports organizations for sports consumers and potential investors in the sport. At the same time, a necessary condition for the existence of the sport is preserving its traditional values: the unpredictability of results, honesty, uncompromising stand in the fight, etc.

4. Discussion

Currently, experts have different opinions on transformation of competitions into sporting events or shows. However, upgrading sports spectacularity objectively enhances its competitiveness with other components of the entertainment business in the battle for the consumer: variety show, cinema, television, etc. Today, the existence of sport depends on its spectacularity, which is a powerful factor in attracting not only passive consumers (fans), but active participants in the process of physical culture and sports.²² Spectacularity of any sporting event is caused by two main factors: the unpredictability of the result and the preservation of internal intrigue until the last minutes of the match, as well as an additional impact on the psycho-emotional sphere of the main consumers of sport – fans.

The lack of analysis of the ever-changing needs of the population in the area of physical education and sport does not allow domestic sports leaders to give the correct prediction for the future and take the necessary measures to promote necessary goods, services and activities to the market.

The solution to this problem is complicated by the inability of the leaders to constantly improve sports spectacularity and especially physical culture events, which can be considered a specific form of sports advertising. Meanwhile, most of the innovations: a time-break in tennis and volleyball, the playoffs and the rule of “golden goal” in hockey and football, the introduction of the short sprint in skiing and swimming, rapid chess, etc., are not so much a concession to TV, but reflect today’s needs in enhancing events spectacularity. A significant promotional effect gives the competition a preliminary announcement of prizes and awards, which will receive winners. In this respect, both the “one-off” event – the presentation of the 2014 Sochi Olympic medals, and

traditional ones, for example, the representation of the Gagarin Cup in the Continental Hockey League (CHL) and the like are indicative. Thus, in 2016 CHL Cup was displayed in one of the largest shopping malls for two days in Yekaterinburg. Anyone could get acquainted with the history of the League, almost instantly and free of charge get their photos with hockey attributes against the background of 19-kg silver Cup. The sponsor of the event was one of the brewers.

The benchmark of administrative activity in the sports field is sociological information enabling to develop information strategies and create optimal social technologies for familiarizing various population groups with active physical training and mass sports based on the analysis of the main trends, problems and contradictions in the development of physical culture and sports in the regions. This is particularly significant as an important factor of counteraction that were in Russian society for a long time, of negative trends worsening health of the population, especially of young people.²³ Meanwhile, the preservation and development of physical activity is an essential prerequisite of a healthy lifestyle, harmonious physical development of a man.

Given the fact that the increase in the number of citizens regularly engaged in physical culture and sports, is also an important target benchmark of federal and regional target programs for the development of physical culture and sports, and an indicator in reporting by authorities governing physical education and sports, the most important task of sociological research is to identify trends in this share. According to sociologists, the ratio of those who participate in sports activities in an organized way and those who do it on their own is 4 to 3. The main forms of organized activities are training in sports sections, in health groups, participating in the team training, in the competitions. Morning exercises, participation in hikes can be predominantly attributed to self-sport activities. Today, the introduction into the everyday practice of electronic sports watches, bracelets and other gadgets that enable to control a person’s own motor activity becomes a fashion trend. People, especially youth, who listen to the doctors’ opinion propagandized in advertising who believe that a person should make not less than 8,500 steps per day to maintain an appropriate physical form.

The distinction between *active* and *passive* forms of physical education and sports seems very relevant and useful. Among the latter one the interest in the sport information and participation in the movement of sports

fans, fan clubs can be highlighted. Mentioning about fans, fan clubs and fan movement shows the conventionalism of the proposed distinction: sustainable unions of sports fans with their subculture, with their special attitude to sport and semi-sport life have been already established and are developing. Therefore, the distinction is not so much according to the degree of active participation, as to whether a person is involved in some form of physical education, sports activities, either directly or indirectly. The conventionality of this distinction manifests itself in the fact that the active-mediated activity, as a rule, is combined with at least an active direct activity or acts as a powerful incentive for it. Therefore, we believe it is necessary to explore also passive forms of sports activity (“I am interested in information about the sports”, “I attend sporting events and activities as a fan”, “I watch sports on TV” and others) within the framework of sociological analysis simply because it is on this part of society that sports advertising is oriented. In addition, the passive forms tend to turn into active in alternation of different types of advertising campaigns, bringing in their idol athletes. As a result, commercial advertising with their participation gets a prolonged social effect. A striking example of the influence of advertising of the Olympics in Sochi on the regional community is the spread of this brand style among the youth. The analysis of social networks accounts showed that brand-new Olympic clothing in the “patchwork” style, first demonstrated at the All-Russian Olympic torch relay, and then, during the games, being as a form of Russian Olympic team and volunteer groups’ forms, has now become a fashion brand for the broad civic circles of the Sverdlovsk region, and especially young people.

Based on the analysis of the need in the field of sport a list of both organized and self-learning physical culture and sports was composed, which are of particular interest to the population of the Sverdlovsk region, and is subjected to a sociological study. The latter was carried out on the basis of the definitions of sports in the Law of the Sverdlovsk region “On physical culture and sport in the Sverdlovsk Region” as of 10.07.2012, which clearly delimited and defined “type of sport”, “military-applied and service-applied types of sport” and “national types of sport”:

- *type of sport* is a part of sport, which is recognized in accordance with the requirements of federal law as a separate sphere of social rela-

tions, having the relevant rules established in the federal law, learning environment, employed sports equipment (excluding protective outfit) and accessories;

- *military-applied and service-applied* types of sport are types which are based on special actions (including practices), related to the implementation by the military and employees of some federal executive authorities of their duties, and which are developed within the framework of one or more federal executive bodies;
- *national sports* are types of sport, historically formed in ethnic populations that have socio-cultural orientation and develop within the Sverdlovsk region.²⁴

It is clear that the priorities in the development of various sports at the regional and municipal levels are formed for years and decades. They have also been developed in the Sverdlovsk region, including both sports and teams in competitive sports acting in favor of the Sverdlovsk region: Olympic (summer and winter) sports; mass types of sport that are traditional for Middle Urals; popular ones (especially in teenagers and young people’s environment). Totally, according to the regional Ministry of Physical Culture, Sports and Youth Policy, there are 96 sports federations in the region representing 101 types of sport. Of these, 29 sports are identified as priority, mostly they are Olympic disciplines.

The interest in the sport is usually differentiated. Even at the level of mass sports, not to mention about high performance sport, specialization is required. And although sports history is replete with examples of outstanding athletes who changed one sport for another during their sports career or were successful in several sports, the selectivity (the choice of sport for the further improvement) is the general rule. It is obvious that this choice is determined by various factors: from fashion and prestige to the coach or school or university teacher’s ability to discern a future record-breaker or champion in a common teenager. To a large extent the choice is determined by the impact of advertising messages. The research methodology involves the study of summer and winter sports. Respondents were asked to assess the interest in them, based on two corresponding lists, although this distinction is very conventional. The criteria for winter sports was the need for snow or ice cover and low (negative or close to zero) temperature, although today the technique

allows engaging “winter” sports in other seasons (skating, skiing, ski jumping on artificial turf etc.). The same concerns summer sports. For example, chess and checkers were referred to them, though it is clear that we should speak of them as a year-round occupation.

The emergence of a number of commercial shows with the participation of high-skaters caused the renaissance of spectators’ interest in the sport and as a consequence – an increase in many parents’ desire to enroll their children in the figure skating section, confirmed by the real increase in the number of young athletes, recorded now both in the country as a whole, and in the Sverdlovsk region. The interest in skiing and ice hockey (see Table 1) is traditionally high. If we talk about biathlon, we can note that increase in the interest in this sport, remarked in 2011, is rather related to its active advertising on television. A promising trend is presented by a growing interest in snowboarding and skiing.

Among the five priorities of summer sports football is in the first place. And it is not just about the resurgence of interest in it, but it also reflects the events widely covered in the media related to the preparation for the 2018 World Cup in Yekaterinburg. The analysis allows determining the specifics of various social groups, municipalities that will increase the efficiency of advertising communications in society.

It is necessary to note the high degree of importance of expert assessments about the prospects for development of methods and ways to solve problems in this area. Heads of relevant institutions at the regional level (the Ministry of Physical Culture, Sports and Youth Policy of the Sverdlovsk region, the Ural Olympic Academy, the University Sports Union) and the heads of several regional sports projects are unanimous in the opinion of a relatively high social importance of advertising in the sphere of physical culture and sports, and the lack of its potential implementation. In their view, advertising only provides support for sports activities, while conceptualization of its use in the creation of social and cultural space, the transfer from sub-cultural sphere in society is necessary. Vice-President of the Russian Student Sports Union notes that “*it is necessary to increase the information space and technology of sports advertising to attract young people’s attention to take part in mass sports activities*”. Experts point out difficulties in implementation due to the mechanisms of interaction between the federal center and the regions. Coordinator of the Cross-Fit Association states that “*to ensure the financial and information sup-*

port of regional and municipal events the documentary evidence of their importance by various studies is required, that is very expensive and difficult”. Given the nature and specifics of regions, the development of relevant areas of sports, a common concept of the information sport space creation is necessary at the federal and the regional levels.

Investigations allow revealing the specific problems and improving the efficiency of the system of organization and management in the sphere of physical culture and sports, as the focus of researchers are people themselves – their motivation to be engaged in these activities, their satisfaction with them, their assessment of the conditions and infrastructure for training, interest in information about sports, attitude to major international sporting events, especially the 2013 Universiade, the 2014 Olympic Games, the 2018 FIFA World Cup, the 2019 Universiade, as well as the prevalence of physical culture and sports. Sociological analysis allows determining the specificity of different social groups, peculiarities (positive and negative) that are inherent to the various municipalities – it is peculiar information, with the help of which sports advertising can or should be developed.

5. Conclusions

Thus, advertising in sports has a number of specific features. First of all, the traditional division between commercial and public service in this area is not always actual, as a social component may be significant in commercial advertising. Besides the sports activity has a huge social

Table 1. Interest in winter sports (in a ratio of those who responded *.¹⁷

Types of sports	2010	2011	2012	2015
Figure skating	< 1	39	36	36
Ski sports	18	30	29	23
Hockey, ball hockey	11	27	26	31
Biathlon	< 1	25	29	35
Snowboard	8	15	15	24
Mountain skiing	–	15	16	21
Speed skating	10	11	11	14
Sliding sport	–	3	5	5

* The sum exceeds 100% because one respondent could give several answers simultaneously.

role. The second feature is the specificity of advertising. On the one hand, the basis for the development of an advertising campaign in the sports field are studies that reveal the established needs in various sports of particular groups. On the other hand, physical culture and sport are an essential activity of society for its preservation and transmission of cultural values, that is, sports advertising generates these needs at the individual and the state levels:

- maintenance and promotion of healthy lifestyles;
- preventive solutions of deviation problems;
- self-realization in high performance sport;
- achievement of success in the sports career;
- recreational sphere;
- development of physical, psychological and moral and volitional qualities;
- international cooperation;
- positioning of the country in the international political and sporting arena.

Above mentioned specificity of sports advertising can and should be used for the development of sports activity and a healthy lifestyle values at the regional level. Sports advertising can be an effective tool for the implementation of targeted programs, youth projects in this field, greatly increasing their attractiveness and, as a consequence, effectiveness.

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