

## **Chapter 9 (pp. 121-138)**

# **New media development and strategies for mega events: The Olympics and FIFA World Cup**

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## New media development and strategies for mega events: The Olympics and FIFA World Cup

The Olympic Games (International Olympic Committee; IOC) and Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup (World Cup from hereon) are the most consumed mega sport events on earth. Like governing bodies, leagues and teams in mass-consumption sports, the IOC and FIFA have developed a range of sophisticated new media tools and strategies to enhance and extend event reach and engagement. The interactive tools available to the IOC and FIFA evolve rapidly, with dramatic shifts in technological capabilities emerging through each two (summer and winter Olympic Games) and four-year cycle (World Cup). Therefore, the tools that the IOC, FIFA and stakeholders use to engage with a range of stakeholders shift and develop from event to event.

The genesis of the Olympic Games and World Cup have seen both assume status as iconic events, which garner significant global interest and viewership. With the emergence and evolution of new media technologies FIFA, and the IOC, have access to a complex, challenging and productive playing field through which they seek to increase global interest, viewership, and engagement. In this chapter, we explore the synergies, differences and issues in relation to the new media strategies used by the IOC and FIFA during the delivery of the Olympic Games and World Cup, respectively. We outline how the philosophy of Web 2.0 has led to both organisations implementing new media strategies and practices that premise the importance of *consumer engagement*. In this sense, we discuss the IOC and FIFA's use of new media for relationship marketing (cf. Filo, Lock, & Karg, in press). Our objectives are as follows:

1. Define and outline the characteristics of new media
2. Present a framework for new media communications
3. Summarise how the Olympic and World Cup events use new media and digital strategy
4. Delineate issues and practice for new media strategy for these events

## **New Media**

Media are instruments or means of communicating information to the general public. Traditionally, this involved a one-to-many approach, where consumers retained minimal control in the communication process. As a result, sport organisations built relationships with media providers to retain control over their message to the general public (Pritchard & Funk, 2006). On one hand, sport relies on the consumer reach and profile afforded by media coverage. On the other, media organisations use the mass-popularity of sport to drive audiences, readership, advertising revenues and sales (Lefever, 2012). Now, unlike the traditional media model, event stakeholders have access to a range of platform and tools that facilitate more interactive communications: New media.

New media refers to the use of technologically developed or digital platforms that transmit information on demand and in real time (Shilbury et al., 2014). The immediacy of new media content has democratized content creation, which is a significant departure from the now antiquated 'one-to-many' media model. New media facilitates a socialist 'many-to-many' communication framework, which empowers consumers as value creators. This shift has influenced organisational operations, control of information, and the experience and resources required to effectively communicate prior to, during and after the Olympic Games and World Cup. Now, in addition to building relationships with media agencies, organisations try to develop relationships with a range of other stakeholders due to various origins of event related digital content.

Conceptually, new media complements existing sport marketing ideas and traditional communication principles. However, it derives from philosophically different tools and processes, which include: real time interactivity, high volumes of content, customisability, user control and dialogic interaction, and consumer engagement (Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013). The focus on user control, dialogic interaction, and consumer engagement focus co-creation of content, which aligns with service-dominant logic (S-D; Vargo & Lusch,

2004; 2008). Detaches consumers from purely economic definitions of supply and exchange, Vargo and Lusch (2004) argued that organisations and consumers *co-create* value. Therefore, skilful approaches to new media strategizing seek to engage consumers in the process of contributing and sharing content, comments, images, videos and feedback – in addition to organisationally driven content.

Engaged consumers play a far greater role in creating and co-producing content. Brodie et al., (2011) argued that engagement relies on consumers being cognitively involved in the process of interacting with new media, regardless of type. As cognition strengthens, consumers start to care about contributing content (affect) which, in turn, drives positive content-creation behaviours for organisations. This triad, therefore, acts as the engine room for the development of brand – consumer, brand – brand, and brand – stakeholder relationships (Filo, Lock, & Karg, in press).

New media channels and strategies generate activities that drive cognitive, affective and behavioural engagement, which address a series of brand communication objectives. These include revenue generation (e.g., ticket or merchandise sales), event awareness/exposure (e.g., Facebook likes), consumer feedback, brand building, event information, operations and logistics (Shilbury et al., 2014). The immediate and customised nature of new media also provides opportunities to create efficiencies in the aforementioned activities, or to enhance the live spectator or media experience, by gathering and acting on feedback provided via new media communication.

### **Characteristics of New Media**

Before looking at new media strategies and implementation for each event, we initially consider the specific dimensions of new media as they apply to the Olympic Games and World Cup. Boyle and Haynes (2004), Lefever (2012) and Shilbury et al., (2014) outline varying dimensions of new media. Here, we discuss four new media themes in the mega sport

event context; 1) digitisation; 2) distribution and convergence; 3) control; and, 4) interactivity and engagement.

## **Digital**

The concept of ‘digitisation’ refers to information conveyed using numerical or binary codes; however, we focus on digital strategies to create, manipulate and distribute content that can be automated, represented and measured numerically, and shared or reproduced in multiple formats (Billings & Kim, 2014; Manovich, 2001; 2003). Neuman (1991) outlined the following differences between traditional and new media:

- Focus on interactivity and participation
- Immediacy of communication speed
- Ability to reduce geographic distance
- Increased distribution and volume of content
- Interconnectivity of content
- An ability to reach mass audiences.

Given the advantages of new media, digital technologies are prominent sources in the acquisition, distribution and storage of information. As such, the increasing prominence of new media tools has eroded conceptual boundaries between forms of media, leading to commonalities in the design and infrastructure media organisations use to deliver sport content (Lefever, 2012). In the modern setting, digital content options provide mega-events with different business models, an array of channels, less defined parameters of control and regulation, more choices and a more active role for consumers (Galperin & Bar, 2002).

## **Distribution (Channels) and Convergence**

Historically, large sport events have relied heavily on mass media distribution for the transfer of event content and information. Traditionally, the IOC or FIFA provided content rights to a media partner, who – often in exchange for a financial return – secured the rights to the event for a particular region. New media now allows the IOC and FIFA to usurp these

traditional channels and partnerships, by distributing and managing their own content.

The transition from terrestrial, to cable/satellite services, to internet protocol television (IPTV) and digital platforms (Galperin & Bar, 2002) has given governing bodies and event organisers' new capabilities to [co] create and distribute content through a range of channels. For example, traditional rights-buying media channels such as NBC (North America) or the BBC (UK) may distribute content for a region or market via their terrestrial or cable channel(s), internet or IPTV channels, and other extensions such as mobile applications (apps). Concurrently, a rights owner – in this case the IOC or FIFA – may produce and host competing or complementary content through their own internet channels, including globally accessible social media sites or accounts (i.e. You Tube, Facebook, etc.). In this sense, content distribution occurs via multiple channels, facilitated by a network of organisations, platforms and technologies that produce and deliver content.

In sum, new media provides diverse options for the IOC and FIFA to distribute content – using multiple channels – to an array of stakeholders. These tools operate in conjunction with traditional media outlets and channels owned by the events – as rights holders. This emulates other pertinent sport examples, where organisations own, provide and produce content, and consumer communications (e.g., Ultimate Fighting Championship, Major League Baseball Advanced Media, Australian Football League Media). The digitisation of content (being easier to store, transfer, upload and access) distributed via new media provides additional portability and flexibility for the IOC, FIFA and event stakeholders.

## **Control**

Traditional media forms – via media management or PR functions - provided greater control over the timing and nature of published stories than new media models (Shilbury et al., 2014). The speed and openness of the new media landscape – and the variety of sources (from mass media to actions and followings of individual athletes or bloggers) – make it

increasingly difficult for the IOC and FIFA to monitor and control messages distributed through new media channels. Illustrating the issue of control, at Sochi 2014, the official account @sochi2014 accrued under 300,000 followers, while a publically generated account set up to mock issues with facilities, venues and delivery: @sochiproblems, amassed more than 330,000. This highlights the issues the IOC and FIFA face in controlling the message emerging from the Olympic Games and World Cup, respectively.

With organisations and stakeholder networks of mega events producing their own content, and consumers accessing a range of sources from official rights or non-rights holders, governing bodies need to monitor a range of new media sources and content to stay abreast of the actions of other agencies. This includes potential ambushing brands, nonofficial media organisations, bloggers, and consumers. This is particularly valuable to protect the event brand, organising body, host location, sponsors or partners.

The issue of control also extends to key event stakeholders, such as athletes. Much like organisations can use social media for direct and unfiltered communication, athletes use social media to develop and maintain their personal brands (Hambrick et al., 2013). Athlete engagement adds different perspectives, interactivity and relationship building with fans in real-time. A pertinent example emerged as the ski and snowboard conditions worsened during the Sochi 2014 games, prompting athletes, such as Shaun White, to publically criticize the Olympic facilities. Control of athletes and non-official partners – most prominently through the IOC's regulatory efforts around the 2012 London and 2014 Sochi games illustrates the emergent desire to police and control new media platforms due to the speed at which undesirable content spreads.

### **Interactivity and Engagement**

The advent of the World Wide Web revolutionised marketing communication. Early websites and internet platforms involved static presentation of information with little interactive content. Although iterations of Web 1.0 facilitated interactive capabilities;

engagement relied on individuals retaining sufficient IT literacy to participate (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The innate philosophy of 'Web 2.0' re-envisioned the internet, shifting focus towards interactivity and ease of use. This philosophical change shifted the media and commercial landscape for the marketing and communications programs undertaken by the IOC and FIFA. Now both organisations place a greater focus on interactivity and participation through collaborative exchanges of digital and new media content. This eventuality is driven by the interests of the event organisers, stakeholders and consumer demands and interests.

Through new media, both the IOC and FIFA provide content, services and products with increased flexibility for customisation (i.e., users control much of their experience) and collaboration. *Interactivity* consists of dimensions including: *user* control; responsiveness; real-time connectedness; and personalisation/customisation (Shilbury et al., 2014). Each of these dimensions move considerably beyond the one-to-many boundaries of traditional mass media communications. The participatory and interactive nature of social networking sites, user-centred design, blogs and forms, video sharing sites, interactive applications and gamification facilitate new levels of engagement (Filo, Lock, & Karg, in press). Under the tenant that consumers work with each other and organisations to create value (Vargo and Lusch, 2008), mega-event organisers can reap great value from the results of encouraging consumers to make choices to shape their experience through the social integration and communication inherent in new media.

### **A framework for new media communications**

We have established that the advent of new media has led to operational and philosophical changes in the communication and marketing activities of the IOC and FIFA. Not surprisingly, given the scope and resources of both organisations, the events have adapted to use and execute a wide and varied range of new media tools and initiatives. These



activities are driven by a variety of relationships with stakeholders. Both organisations new media behaviour also stems from the open nature of the digital environment (i.e., marketers can observe other brands and organisations' approach). The observation of 'best practice' and 'legitimate strategy' lead organisations to mimic accepted practices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), which leads to considerable homogeneity in the actions and tools used by the IOC, FIFA and other sport organisations.

Prior to examining the tools and actions of the IOC and FIFA, we outline the core stakeholders' involved in the network of each event. Within this, we explore the network of both organisations alongside the components in the sport/media complex described by Lefever (2012); consisting of sports organisations (in the mega-event case represented by multiple levels), media, sponsors and partners and the public. Table 1 displays the major bodies and organisations involved in the network and delivery of each event. The IOC network is more complex than FIFA's due to its international governance structure and the presence of 26 Summer Olympic sports (with 302 contested events at London 2012) and seven Winter Olympic sports (with 98 contested events in Sochi 2014).

The most recent iteration of the World Cup, in contrast, included 31 teams, playing in 12 stadiums featuring a relatively static transmission and content site (FIFA, 2015). The Summer and Winter Olympic Games comprise a much more diverse offering. For example, coverage of a 42km marathon versus table tennis in a fixed venue create very different challenges and opportunities for event organisers in terms of broadcast and content. Other differences include the: diversity of the sports; number of network relationships with stakeholders; and variety of venues in which competition occurs. As such, the challenges for management, control and governance are more complex for the IOC; however, the pool of partners and audiences are similar based on scope and global distribution.

**Table 1****FIFA and IOC Organisational Networks**

	<b>FIFA World Cup</b>	<b>IOC Olympics</b>
<b>International Event Rights Owner and National Body Representation</b>	FIFA	IOC plus over 200 National Olympic Federations/ Commissions
<b>Sport Specific Organising bodies</b>	200+ National Federations of Football (NGBs/NSOs)	(Multiple) International Sport Federations and National Federations of each sport (NGBs/NSOs)
<b>Host Body</b>	Organising bodies (WCOC) and host cities	(Single) Local Organising Committees (OCOGs)
<b>Commercial partners</b>	Brands, Sponsors and Partners Broadcasters and media	Brands, Sponsors and Partners Broadcasters and media
<b>Audience</b>	Local and Media Consumers	Local and Media Consumers

We focus during the remainder of this chapter on the strategic and operational use of new media to communicate with consumers. Given new media is a part of the promotional or integrated marketing communication mix, The IOC and FIFA work to achieve outcomes including awareness, interest, engagement, desire, or sales/commercial. Organisers may also seek to leverage, enhance or protect a range of other programs and activities to assist organisational efficiency, reporting and data led outcomes. Yet, they are beyond our scope in this chapter given our dominant focus on consumer activities.

The use of new media and broadcasting opens up the Olympic Games and World Cup to a vast audience. Karg and Lock (2014) stated that the “average capacity of the 2014 World Cup stadiums was under 54,000, with a total capacity of approximately 644,000 across all stadiums for the entire tournament” (p. 28). Aside from its physical in-ground audience, the World Cup attracts television viewership exceeding 3 billion. The story in London 2012 was similar. Approximately 80,000 attended the opening ceremony, while the television audience exceeded 900 million (Reuters, 2012). These disparities in live attendance and global interest

spark a need for the IOC and FIFA to operate strategically to engage the vast majority of consumers that cannot attend matches or live sites using new media.

### **Development of new media and marketing**

The suite of new media tools at the disposal of the IOC and FIFA evolve drastically in the two and four-year cycles between the Olympic Games (summer and winter) and World Cup. Digital presence at events first emerged in the 2008 Beijing Olympics and, then, the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. Record levels of digital integration and interactions have ensued since, with recent renditions of Olympic Games commonly referred as the ‘digital’ games. The IOC media guide notes the relevance and applicability of digital, mobile, computer and technological platforms (phones, devices and internet). However within these categories, new tools emerge at a bewildering rate adding complexity to, and blurring distinctions between, existing categories. The new media tools outlined below provide a cross-section of the current techniques used across three areas: 1) Broadcasting and content platform extensions; 2) Social media and networking; and 3) Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and other New Media and Engagement Tools in which we also include game and reward based activities, e-commerce, and event enhancement activities. The tools within each category satisfy different organisational objectives and consumer needs and are typically integrated to achieve broader campaign or organisational objectives. The emergent tools and activities used to leverage interactivity and satisfy the objectives of mega event organisers’ are discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

The outcomes of the various tools move beyond traditional communication functions and seek to increase event reach and commercial outcomes while also attaining operational and managerial outcomes. Technologically sophisticated and underpinned by strategy, tools allow mega events to develop and implement scaled and cost effective marketing and media strategies that significantly enhance the impact and consumption of the event beyond the

physical limitations of traditional media outlets (Karg & Lock, 2014). While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide coverage of all elements, we categorize and explore new media options for the Olympic Games and World Cup to assess the objectives of using different tools to achieve communication outcomes.

### **Broadcasting and Content Platforms**

Traditional broadcasting methods have evolved alongside the forms of content communication available. The nature of broadcast agreements see traditional broadcast platforms complemented by a number of additional channels, live streams or mobile applications. Evolving internet functionalities provide a range of alternate broadcast options for consumers, which include new and innovative distribution systems (Turner, 2012). Prime examples of internet driven distribution include internet protocol television (IPTV) and mobile channels delivered to computers and handheld devices such as tablets and smartphones. The use of such platforms provide an array of new opportunities for the IOC and FIFA to converse with consumers and, more specifically, for consumers to access event content.

The IOC and FIFA manage broadcast partnerships in a similar manner, providing host broadcast feed(s) that are sold to rights holding broadcasters (RHBs) in various international and regional markets. In both cases, broadcasting agreements generate the largest share of commercial revenue programmes for both events (more than four times that of other streams in some cases), and have undergone substantial growth in recent cycles of broadcast deals. Augmentations include an increased variety of content, customised viewer experience options and new distribution channels for consumers, which have moved beyond the limitations of terrestrial or linear television viewing.

The IOC have increased levels of broadcast content through the creation of Olympic Broadcasting Services (OBS) in conjunction with new distribution channels for coverage and information. In Sochi 2014, OBS produced a 101% increase in global coverage in

comparison to the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. In addition, this more than doubled the number of broadcasters and digital channels used to deliver content. In London 2012, there was an increase of 60% in coverage hours relative to the 2008 Beijing Games. Also facilitating the huge increases in broadcast coverage, agencies such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) aired 24 HD channels during the 2012 London Olympics, while NBC streamed every event and medal ceremony in the US via a combination of its website and additional channels.

Recent events have seen the total hours of Olympic Games broadcast on digital platforms usurp traditional channels. Sochi 2014's 60,000 content hours represented the first time global digital coverage share exceeded television or linear hours (IOC, 2014). Illustrating how pervasive internet coverage and viewing apps have become; London 2012's, broadcast partners distributed more than 190 billion streams to over 150 websites and digital platforms (IOC, 2012). This resulted in 8.5 billion page views and 1.5 billion video views from 620m users over the games duration (IOC, 2014). Platforms like YouTube have played a crucial role in this expansion. In 2012, the popular video sharing site broadcasted live and on demand content from London to 64 countries. One particular strength of coverage delivered via YouTube was its delivery to markets without an official or exclusive broadcast provider, providing the IOC with considerable benefits and flexibility to generate awareness and interest in emerging markets. Countries, including India, Iran, Pakistan, Cameroon and Kenya, had access to 11 simultaneous high-definition broadcasts in addition to news and highlights, which resulted in nearly 60 million streams during the Games (IOC, 2012).

Overall, the increase in Olympic broadcast numbers capitalises on the huge volumes of content generated by the diverse sporting competitions included in the Games – much of which occurs simultaneously – to provide platforms for transferring, managing and distributing information to various markets and customisable broadcasts to consumers via multiple platforms. While the World Cup generates less content (a maximum of three games

a day and clashing or overlapping schedules only in the final round groups stages), the event still capitalises on the spectrum and sophistication of broadcast options to offer integrated consumption opportunities for viewers. Broadcast options include apps, live streaming and on demand mobile coverage via PC, tablet, mobile or connected TV demonstrating scope for viewers to engage with the content and platform of their choice. In addition, second screen capabilities and the option of customised and interactive features (i.e., favourite team selection to personalise content) of broadcast content have seen the IOC and FIFA augment website and application offerings. Each quadrennial cycle since the first event websites in the 1990's have broken records for page views and unique visitors. This in itself has necessitated and facilitated development of a range of IOC and FIFA owned sites, micro-sites and apps that seek to extend the event beyond its focussed duration.

These platforms provide an extension for the event to provide news, scores, features, updates, promotions, stories and social media integration. In this sense, websites and apps act as a conduit between event content and consumers. The 2014 FIFA World Cup provided consumers with a range of second screen experiences to drive real-time interaction with game statistics, replays or other forms of content. Apps delivering on this mandate included those developed by FIFA, and official partners seeking to capitalise on their broadcasting partnership. Second screen behaviour, and the interactivity it affords, is an effective engagement tool in sport television programming due to the inseparability of production and consumption. For consumers', this provides access to greater volumes of content, portability, choice and flexibility through on-demand, additional views and other options.

While these sites and platforms get prominent traffic 'in-event' for replays, ceremonies or to stream niche events; such platforms allow organisations to build interest and branding outcomes beyond traditional broadcast windows. For example, the 2012 Olympic torch journey – not considered a mainstream broadcast event – was launched and promoted through secondary channels and live internet streams as part of the Olympic story. Similarly,

the launch of the FIFA World Cup match ball and mascots long before the event kick-off helped to promote a narrative leading up to the 2014 tournament in Brazil. FIFA promoted the two pre-tournament campaigns using integrated approaches across multiple platforms.

Demonstrating the plethora of in event and supporting digital products necessary for a mega event, the most recent summer Olympics saw over 70 digital or online products or sites developed (Miah, 2014). Each provided coverage of a 'secondary' content area such as promoting education campaigns and programs around the Games, the torch relay, mascots, legacy, ticketing, travel and social platforms. These secondary content areas exist in addition to those created to report the core news and results of the games (Miah, 2014). Distribution of such content seeks to expand the aspects of the Games that people consume to drive education and involvement. Likewise, FIFA has invested in multiple sites, apps and digital products to enhance the major and periphery aspects of the World Cup.

### **Social Media and Networking**

In addition to broadcasting; social media and networking offer another major source of evolution and activity – facilitated by new media. Social media are defined as: “new media technologies facilitating interactivity and co-creation that allow for the development and sharing of user-generated content among and between organisations (e.g. teams, governing bodies, agencies and media groups) and individuals (e.g. consumers, athletes and journalists)” (Filo, Lock and Karg, in press). Given the increasing value attributed to digital media and its role in relationship marketing initiatives, new forms of information sharing are increasingly important. As part of the focus on digital content, within an integrated communications mix, organisations dedicate increasing attention and resources to social media. Through social media, governing organisations and events seek to distribute innovative communications to generate attention and drive consumer engagement in a cost effective format.

The social media category includes multiple formats; however, the central category is *social networking* where “companies or individuals ... communicate, collaborate or be in community with each other” (Klososky, 2012 p. 42). Given the global attention garnered by the Olympics and the World Cup, engagement and communication outcomes are sought using various networking and microblogging platforms. These include Twitter, Tumblr, and Facebook, alongside region specific offerings, such as Weibo (China) and VKX (Russia). Much of the content shared by event organisers and partners’ promotes aspects of the event, while seeking to generate consumer interactions. The IOC and FIFA operating multiple accounts, each focused on different aspects of the event (for example, separate social media accounts and strategies for different components of the event and the governing body). Video (e.g., YouTube) and photo sharing sites (e.g., Instagram) as well as more general news or content sites (e.g., Reddit) provide rich engagement platforms for consumers, journalists and media organisations, athletes, NGBs/NSOs and brands. Also, the engagement with consumers through these platforms leads to event organisers receiving content, photos and video developed by consumers driving exposure and interaction.

Noting the role of consumers in the generation of event related content, online communities and fan forums are encouraged. Either official or un-official in nature, queries and information can be shared on a range of topics. Such activities have marketing implications, and are increasingly used to cultivate interaction, real time information and content sharing, hence leveraging the advantages of convenience, accessibility and near-instantaneous communication. In addition, these forums generate useful feedback for organisations on satisfaction or dissatisfaction, future products and price sensitivity.

Overlapping the above, events or rights holders may seek to drive or foster social media interactivity through specifically designed platforms. For example, the Olympic Athletes Hub website and app amalgamates athletes’ social media accounts into a newsfeed which consumers can search by name, country, sport, discipline or event. Outlining the



interactive aims of this platform, an IOC social media manager noted the aim of “fans connecting with athletes, athletes connecting with athletes and the IOC (becoming) a platform of sorts connecting everybody together” (Laird, 2012). Therefore, through the design and implementation of skilfully designed platforms to amalgamate athlete social media accounts, the IOC generate engagement between multiple stakeholders.

Likewise, FIFA sought to bring fans together through their online forum ‘The Club’, primarily around the World Cup. This initiative illustrates how commercial activity can also be leveraged, as sponsors seek linkages with consumer engagement activities. On the World Cup side, Hyundai utilised ‘The Club’ to offer chance for fans to name a team bus representing their country. Likewise for the 2012 Olympics, Visa used Facebook and custom applications to create, share and view ‘cheers’ for more than 60 Team Visa athletes around the world.

An overall premise of social media use by mega events is the encouragement of interaction above consumption, and its use provides a focused case on the integrated way that people use various media, including social tools. In emergent examples, social media provides an efficient vehicle for the IOC, FIFA and networked organisations to communicate, engage and share content. This reflects the convergence and overlap of new media platforms, with a number of social media platforms providing additional engagement around the event or a second screen experience to integrate social and broadcast consumption and link physical and virtual experiences of consumers. Mimicking social media use globally, the IOC and FIFA aims to lead and generate conversation, communication and content sharing to extend consumption and enhance consumers’ propensity to watch broadcasts. However, while engagement - which is often cognitive and intangible (Karg & Lock, 2014) - emerges as the central theme of social media, commercial activities (e.g. sales and promotions, advertising revenue) can be driven through social media tools.

## **CRM and other New Media and Engagement Tools**

While the dominant focus of new media is on the social and broadcast activities described above, and sources of integration between them, there are a number of additional tools and categories of the new media mix that the IOC and FIFA mega events activate to add value to commerce or operations. The following section provides coverage of these, looking at examples of CRM or direct marketing, e-commerce, and game and reward based activities in mega events.

CRM platforms, such as databases, are often integrated with loyalty programs, online memberships, social channels or forums through new media initiatives to drive sales (e.g. ticketing) and engagement outcomes. FIFA and the IOC use the development and utilisation of commercial databases and direct marketing approaches in the lead up to, during and post-event phases. Alex Balfour, head of new media at LOCOG described “data generation (was) a very key driver” of IOC new media efforts for London 2012 noting an “opportunity to get closer to customers and generate revenue, especially for things like tickets and merchandise” (McElhatton, 2009). By the end of the 2012 Olympic Games, the event database amassed over 500 million contacts, providing a resource to record, track and communicate information with consumers. From this base, the event can communicate with ticket buyers, develop customised merchandise offers, disseminate promotions or rewards, and produce communications that seek to amplify event reach. Outcomes may be directly in relation to the event, or for targeted communication outcomes at global, event, sport, or country/regional levels. For example, isolating consumers or followers of a potential sport may have sporting or commercial benefit for a specific national body or sport federation post-event. In addition, the database doubles as a source of data and feedback, where organisations can track consumer patterns and insights to improve processes or outcomes relevant to the event or to generate prospects and contacts for future offerings. Such databases also provide a useful and attractive asset for partners and sponsors to leverage the value of commercial arrangements.

In the context of mega events, characteristics of new media provide a ripe opportunity to add value and efficiency for e-commerce outcomes. Merchandise and ticketing functions in particular have been enhanced by the speed, customisability and data capabilities of new media, with a greater ease and functionality in their execution. Such functions – ticket purchase in particular – can be integrated with data analysis to aid sales processes or with social media activity to aid building of community and engagement outcomes. In addition, feedback mechanisms to aid and inform user experience for governing organisations and event organisers can be leveraged through data mining and analysis of consumer activity. Further, new media through the use of apps and communication courses can provide direct assistance to aid navigation, engagement with the venues and host site and enhance the experience at event locations. Apps and use of emergent technology such as that leveraging location based identification and interaction with consumers represent further opportunities for new media enhancement.

Linked to this, game and rewards based interactions have been used by mega event organisations to engage consumers and leverage the events – both live and for those following remotely. Recent examples have seen these capitalised by event organisers as well as across the network of organisations. Media and sport organisation have developed versions of fantasy sport or promotional competitions where players predict or ‘tip’ sporting outcomes related to major events. Likewise, broadcast and media partners develop interactive experiences for consumers, aligned with social and gamification features to enhance connection with an event, and to deliver benefits to multiple stakeholders. As an example, a Canadian consortium of broadcast partners created a 2012 Olympic platform designed to encourage the exploration and sharing of site content. Consumers could undertake a number of activities including puzzles and quizzes, and share their own content aligned with the games and broadcast online. Gamification tools including point systems, ladders and badges were used to track and reward consumption, with social and sponsor integration included in

the experience to facilitate revenue for the organisation (Gigya, 2015). More widely, and under the premise of service dominant logic, these activities seek to increase consumer engagement and the co-creation of value.

CRM and engagement tools in this latter group are less prominent than for broadcast or social, which are commonly accessed or utilised by a greater number of the Olympic or World Cup audience, and are therefore more visible in discussions or observations of new media. However, their use in a new media context represents unique or new ways of using direct marketing and engagement strategies, which demonstrate where new media can enhance business practice and outcomes associated with mega events.

### **New Media Issues and Challenges**

Overall, many of the new media strategies and examples above represent a need for ongoing strategic transitions for the IOC and FIFA in the ongoing delivery of mega-events. Governing and organising bodies spend significant resources on developing and enhancing their new media approaches, seeking to develop outcomes not only during the event, but benefits before and after the events as well. Operationally, there is a need for developing and refining organisational structures and capabilities to meet the needs for effective new media functions, as well as strategies and policies to leverage and protect business outcomes. The scale and ephemeral nature of the two events discussed here demonstrate some homogeneity in approaches to new media strategy. This applies to broadcast and social strategies, in particular, given both are publically consumed and generally quite similar across sport and new media. In these examples, both events use similar structure and resources in media distribution and likewise to communicate in the social and direct marketing spaces.

The major divergence in the IOC and FIFA approaches stems from the scope of each event and the level of complexity present in the network of the IOC. The numerous sports and high number of events in the Olympics creates a need to cater for a) more content and

channels required to provide coverage of the event; b) a more diverse audience base; and c) collaboration across organisations and stakeholders. This includes managing relationships and coordinating efforts with national governing bodies (as FIFA does on a smaller scale) alongside the production of content across a diverse suite of activities with varying consumer demands and reach.

Aspects of distribution and control are shifting the symbioses between media and sport. The proliferation of media channels and options challenges the symbioses and intersections of sport and media (Lefever, 2013). A prominent shift in the new media age is that organisations can increasingly create their own channels (Miah, 2014), with many organisations involved in multiple phases of content production and dissemination. This is evident for both the IOC and FIFA, where distribution channels have become much more complex with the emergence of digital technology and the expansion of new media. Such developments question the role of new and social media compared to the traditional media role. There have been suggestions that distribution via social media (i.e. highlights and up to date information released on digital channels prior to events being shown on delay on terrestrial broadcasts) could impact broadcast numbers and, in turn, the amount of rights fees paid for mega-events (Billings & Kim, 2014). The full impact of this scenario is unknown, but will continue to be an issue, particularly in markets and time zones not aligned with the major event.

There are a number of challenges and positives associated with the transition towards new media, particularly evident when considering the four aspects of new media introduced earlier in the chapter. Of these factors, the digital and interactive components produce advantages for mega events as platforms that encourage and facilitate increased participation and engagement. As a result, and particularly attributable to social media tools, the ability of consumers to co-create narratives and content with event organisers is flourishing. With the enhancement of interactive elements, Miah (2013) notes that new media has served to

‘democratize’ the narrative of Olympic media coverage, with the consumer led contribution and sharing of discussion “creating a richer set of views for audiences to consume” (p. 107).

The role of multiple stakeholders in the co-creation of content challenges the level of control mega events and organisers have over their content and message. Here, there is an increased need to monitor and, where necessary, control and protect the reputation of events and its partners. These efforts are made increasingly complicated given the characteristics of new media and digital technology, where many-to-many communication tools and the speed of dissemination ensure that negative stories can spread quickly and damage reputations of stakeholders and events. Olympic and World Cup events of the past and future have been the subject of negative stories and public narratives related to political protests, human rights, venue development costs and safety standards, aspects of national identity and the heavily handed social media policy of event organisers. Each of these topics have garnered negative attention.

In addition to negative press, both events must undertake and implement programs that protect their partners and sponsors from ambush marketing, a job made more difficult in the new media space. As well as working with host city legislations, events and organising bodies have taken significant steps to enact codes and regulation to protect official partners and their rights. Sponsorship and commercial partners are the source of large revenue streams, with the IOC noting that long-term marketing programmes enable the IOC to guarantee sustainability of the Olympic Movement and the Games (IOC, 2012). As such, partnership efforts around the games are heavily protected – seen most recently by efforts in London 2012 and Sochi 2014 which set new standards about what non-official businesses, as well as athletes could do, say and promote. New media provides instant and wide reaching platforms for organisations and athletes to communicate with fans, so digital technology has largely increased the complexity and effort mega-events need to undertake to protect partners.

The current new media context also provides implications for the development of message content. Most prominent here is an increased need for efficiency and an ability to cut-through the mass amount of official and unofficial content communicated around mega events. This is particularly relevant given the complexity of managing stakeholders for mega events such as the Olympics. Given new media stakeholders include international and national sport organisations representing large and small sports, athletes, organising committees, partners and consumers, there is a necessary focus on message creativity and clarity alongside timing and positioning to overcome the clutter of competing messages and organisations during major events.

Finally, the continuing development of mega events has perpetuated increasingly high demands on the requirements for host cities and organising committees in terms of facilities, technology and physical infrastructure to adequately deliver new media content and initiatives during the event. Mega events require substantial infrastructure including bandwidth capacity and access through to data management, security, storage and transfer. These require a range of physical and virtual infrastructure that are multiplied by the depth of content and diversity of individuals (e.g. fans and journalists) and organizations co-creating new media outcomes for event stakeholders. Likewise, the human and technical skills to develop and deliver new media programs – and the integration of new media activities with other organisational and marketing functions – provides an important and complex structural issue for mega events. Such issues are arguably of greater complexity for events like the Olympics and World Cup given the ‘nomadic’ nature of the events, with organising bodies and committees only existing in the years leading up to each event. As such, the infrastructure and human needs for digital or new media capacity represents a ‘prime focus for future organizing committees’ (Jessop, 2014) of major events in order to maintain the building blocks for new media strategies and outcomes.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have defined new media; presented a framework of how FIFA and the IOC use new media tools and explored some basic differences in implementation between the two events. Homogeneity in new media approaches drives definite similarities in terms of the broadcasting and social media functions of both organisations. However, innovation in terms of the campaigns used and the nature of the respective markets of each event creates variations. The Olympic Games experiences far more complexity in the management of new media strategies than the World Cup, purely because of the variety of sports and events it includes. However, this creates opportunities for the production of broadcast content using new technologies, social media platforms to enhance consumer engagement, and CRM initiatives to grow the IOC's participant sports after the event concludes.



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