

Who else is Going for Gold?

Sponsors join athletes aiming for the podium

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The bar was set on August 12, 2012 – and it was set high.

The numbers were: 3.6 billion, 100,000, 500 and 220.

To set the context, according to the IOC Marketing Report for the London 2012 Games, the global reach was 3.6 billion, with over 100,000 hours of content on more than 500 channels across 220 countries. Those figures do not include the 1.9 billion digital video streams on 170 websites or the 2,700 hours of live or on-demand YouTube content (generating 59.5 million views from 64 territories). The historical context is even more dramatic: the 1948 London Games reached ~500,000 people, most within a 50-mile radius of the city with ~60 hours of content.

It takes someone strong
To make someone strong.

Predictions for who will be crowned the fastest man and woman on earth aside, a sure prediction is that audience reach will not be the central challenge for those sponsoring the forthcoming Games. The challenge will be to manage *frequency of exposure* to *optimize efficiency*. If you are planning to sponsor a large event with significant audience reach, be prudent in your choice of media packages. A package that delivers lower frequency can maximize value of your investment.

Whether you are watching the athletes go for gold, or trying to determine which sponsor will win the Olympics, here are a few key media mantras, pooled from all of our work, to which we will be paying attention. And even if you are not a 2016 Olympic sponsor, the mantras could apply the next time you invest in an event sponsorship.

Synergy, just like in synchronized swimming, creates stronger brand impact: as frequency will be high, the risk of communication “wear-out” during the Olympics is also high. A pool of synergistic ads helps avoid wear-out and can generate stronger branded attention in market. Not unexpectedly, it helps if the ads have an Olympic theme, like P&G’s ongoing “Thank You Mom” campaign and Samsung’s “The Chant” which introduces the world to Margret Rumat Rumat Hassan, a South Sudanese athlete able to compete under her country’s flag now that the IOC has recognized South Sudan.

Ensure each brand gets to the finish line: if you plan to divide a corporate sponsorship across two or more different brands, make sure there is sufficient media weight to support each endeavour.



Samsung’s “The Chant” starring Margret Rumat Rumat Hassan

Content comes in a lot of packages! Think beyond TVC (TV commercials), and even digital, to reinforce reach and brand impact. A few ways top Olympic sponsors have and are planning to extend their brand experience include:

P&G Family Home (London 2012)

Stocked full of P&G brands, these locations allowed athletes and families to find a home away from home. The beauty salons helped them shine in the spotlight.

Samsung

Samsung Galaxy and Gear VR Headset users in the USA will be able to experience 85 hours of Virtual Reality programming on NBC stations during the Rio 2016 games.

McDonald’s

McDonald’s “*Embody Spirit of Friendship*” campaign (Rio 2016) will bring 100+ children from 18 countries to Rio to participate in the Opening Ceremonies and to experience the games. Of course, athletes, families and spectators will be able to eat at McDonald’s restaurants on site, including a Dessert Bar (first of its kind).

Nissan

Nissan plans to launch its 2017 Nissan GT-R in Brazil in 2016 as part of its Olympic Sponsorship.

Product placement may not be the underdog after all. Working with a major tennis tournament sponsor, we uncovered that it was the athletes' usage of the brand on-court and on-screen during pre and post-match press conferences that contributed to sponsor recall and reinforced emotional connections with the brand. Nike and Adidas will be ever present as athletes compete to win. Even brands like Ralph Lauren (Team USA), Stella McCartney (Team GB), Lacoste (Team France) will be sure to win favour as athletes proudly display their team uniforms.



Finally, if you are not participating in the Games, it might be in your best interest to get out of the race. That is, if you have chosen to save your advertising and sponsorship budget, it might be best to save your media spend as well.

Brands that compete against the Olympic broadcasts generally see declines in recall because the alternate exposures under-deliver on typical audience numbers, with reduced reach. So even if you are still in the game, perhaps you should negotiate for better media value in competing broadcast channels.

Now that the European Championships are over, and Portugal has welcomed home the victors, the countdown to the Opening Ceremonies has begun in earnest. On adweek.com the ads of the day are taking on a very Olympic flavour: "We're the Superhumans" released by Channel 4 in the UK (Ad of the Day, July 15) is already teasing the 2016 Paralympic Games in very uplifting and joyous way while Gillette's "Pretty isn't Perfect" (Ad of the Day, July 18) approaches the athletes' sacrifices from a much darker tone. With the PR opportunities growing in the next few weeks, we will be watching closely to see how everyone approaches the run-up to the Opening Ceremonies. Let the Games Begin!

