

# Digitalisation of merchandising in football clubs

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# 1 - Context

- Prospective work on mobile marketing communication (MMC) in football clubs
  - Participate in the debate about a paradigm shift between old and new media
  - Where is the added value ?
  - Implication for marketing strategies with the case of some innovative G14 football clubs

## 2 - Mobile entertainment market worldwide

Console gaming driven (32 B € [*Informa & Kangas, 2003*])

- \* Consoles & devices: 22 B € (~73 M € devices)
- \* Pocket & pc games: 8,7 B €
- \* Online, mobile & interactive television devices: 893 M€

What will the consumer look like in the future ?

- Typical consumer “21 years old male” -> boys’ culture
- Community “games” trend
- Mobile phones becoming a central “life organizing” tool for teenagers and young males

## 2 - Mobile entertainment market in Europe

European ME market is highly fragmented: number of mobile operators is still large but there will be fewer in some years

- Immature market: no mass market adoption in Europe (contrary to Asian markets)
- Teenagers use more and more mobile phones for fun and games than for communication
- New mobile lifestyle based on your identity
- “Parent-free zones” (mobile and internet)
- A promising concept: “Anywhere, anytime, anything”



**vodafone**  
**live!**

With Vodafone *live!* your mobile becomes a newspaper, and a sports reporter. Access the latest games, ringtones, and downloads right at your fingertips. So grab your mobile and jump into Vodafone *live!*

**MOBILE ESPN** ON MOBILE ESPN THIS WEEK

LEARN SHOP MANAGE

One Touch Access to All Things Sports.  
It's like ESPN in your pocket.

→ Play the Demo

Mobile ESPN interface showing a menu with options: MENU, TOP, SPORTS, NEWS, SCORES, COLUMNS, TEAMS, ESPN VIDEO, WHAT'S ON, ALERTS, DAILY LINE. A callout box titled "Sideline & Menu" says: "Easily navigate the important sports features available with Mobile ESPN. → Learn more"

MLB SEA 4 OAK 5 Final

**SHOP MOBILE ESPN**

→ Online  
→ Find a Retailer Near You  
→ Find a Mobile ESPN Kiosk

**BEST BUY** **Sprint**

**THE NEW SAMSUNG ACE™**

A sleek, Bluetooth enabled, compact flip phone. It's a sports fan's dream. Buy NOW and receive a free

**SANYO MVP NOW FREE - ACT NOW!**

The first phone designed specifically with the sports fan in mind.

→ Switch Now

- New media in the « infotainment » paradigm is technologically driven

- Location based paradigm VS network based paradigm

- Live VS on demand

- Next generation devices fitting some sports (sailing)

- Consequences the marketing of football clubs in the future

# **3 – Main ideas and method**

## **The new media paradigm:**

- Interactivity**
- Process of optimal experience (key figures, 3D animation, angles on demand...)**
- Network navigation based on customers' needs (information feedback)**
- Research barriers (demand and offer side)**

## **3 – Main ideas and method**

- **New media can enhance sports' fans' identity**  
(« brand in the pocket » > multimedia merchandising)
- **New marketing paradigm in football clubs' strategies**  
(O2O marketing)

### **3 semi directive interviews:**

- **EU Commission Competition Unit, Media division**
- **French Cycling Tour TV rights director**
- **President of French Basketball League**

## 4 – Discussion

The concept relies on fans' loyalty & their willingness to pay

Football clubs have advantages over other branded products:

- Peculiar product (Neale, 1964) / cinema
- Peculiar consumer : brand loyalty and allegiance
- Brand longevity : lifetime support cycle is nearly perpetual)
- Wide target audience (socially and geographically)

## 4 – Discussion

- **Basic product was the game for a long time : part of TV rights in clubs' budget is decreasing**
- **Peripheric product: « infotainment » (new media)**

**Example of infotainment devices in football club based on MMC**

<b>Club</b>	<b>Text alerts</b>	<b>Ring tones</b>	<b>Wallpapers</b>	<b>Games</b>	<b>Highlights</b>
	Halftime score	Crowd chants	Players'	MU Pinball	Best goals
MU	red and yellow cards, players' news	MU bands	Logo		and classics

# 4 – Discussion

## Added value of MMC for sports' fans and clubs

### Traditionnal marketing

- Firm based management
- Centralised
- Physical system
- Unidirectionnal

### MMC

- Wireless information based
- Decentralised (consumer becomes a producer: Youtube)
- Network externalities

### Added value

- Ubiquity and on demand flexibility
- Less constraints than TV and PC: infotainment is not broadcasting (ex: transport)
- Social and geographical segmentation
- O2O marketing is more efficient

# **5 – Some trends for the next decade**

## **Link between supporterism, new media and new marketing paradigm**

### **Football clubs have 5 main goals:**

- Work on network externalities to promote virtual fans' communities**
- Raise brand names awareness at different level  
(« Think global act local », substitution)**
- Transform viewing share from the basic product into virtual merchandising (« infotainment » paradigm)**
- Maximize the fans' experience by partnerships based on lifestyles  
(Reebok CEO's future vision)**
- Build a fans' database to enhance network externalities**

## 6 - Barriers to overcome

- Strong competition with pay TV operators (risks of cannibalism)
- Immature market (no mass market adoption, only early adopters: core fans)
- Fragmented markets (high costs on the offer side)
- Emerging trend: (Nokia N-Gage) portable consoles instead of "mobile phone" ?
- Still some technological limitations (processors, storage capacity...) associated with a high level user culture (usability transport)
- What business models for converging devices ? Sharing costs in order to promote technological devices ?

Thank you for your attention

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