

The commercialization of sport: A challenge to the traditional organization of sport?



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Starting out – basic assumptions:

1. One often combines the commercial aspects of sport to the elite-sport-discussion where sport becomes entertainment for the audiences/crowd. However, in participation-based '**sport for all**' we also see a process of commercialization.
2. To understand the commercial success in participative based sport activities, one must understand the difference between the many diverse logics of sport (exercise vs. elite sport).

Leisure – fun & health



Aesthetic



Competition



Traditional approach to the commercial sport for all:

Commercial success in sport is often accompanied by the idea of serious threats to the **core values and credibility** of sport as a driver of social, cultural and educational progress.

Why is this?



My thesis – a PhD-study

3 different disciplines:



**The history
Understand**



**The size and scope
Describe**



**Evaluation
The politics**

Key question:

How is the commercial participative sport culture challenging the traditional organization of sport in associations?



1900 -1970

**Traditional sport activities
organized in voluntary sport
associations**



1970 - 2009

**Exercise activities organized
by others - including the
commercial sector**



2015?

The struggle for members/customers

– who will organize members in the future?



The commercial sport for all characteristics

Question 1: Where do we see commercialization in sport for all?

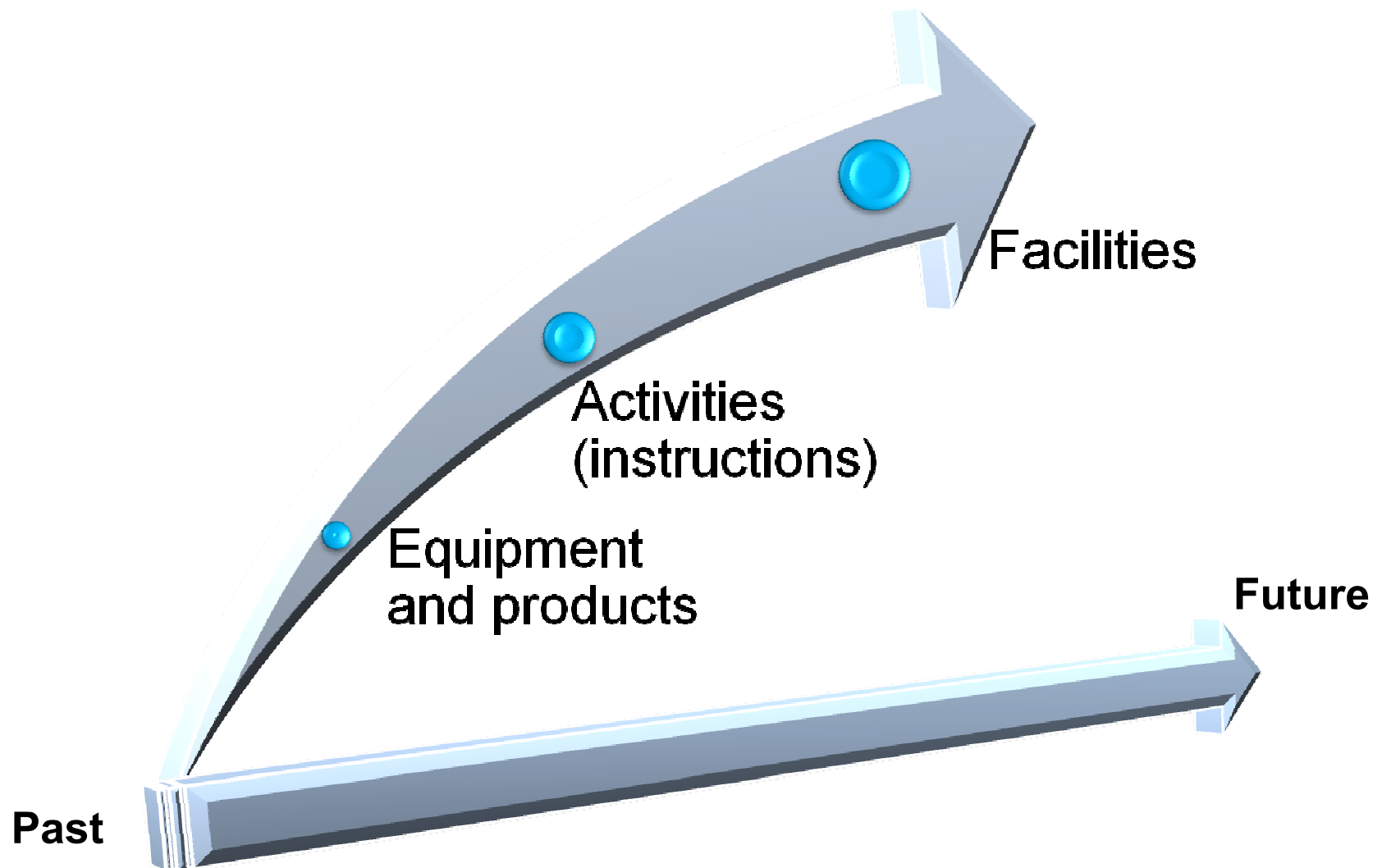
Question 2: What is commercialization and where does it come from?

Question 3: What are the criteria of the commercialization process?

Question 4: What is the logic of commercialization?



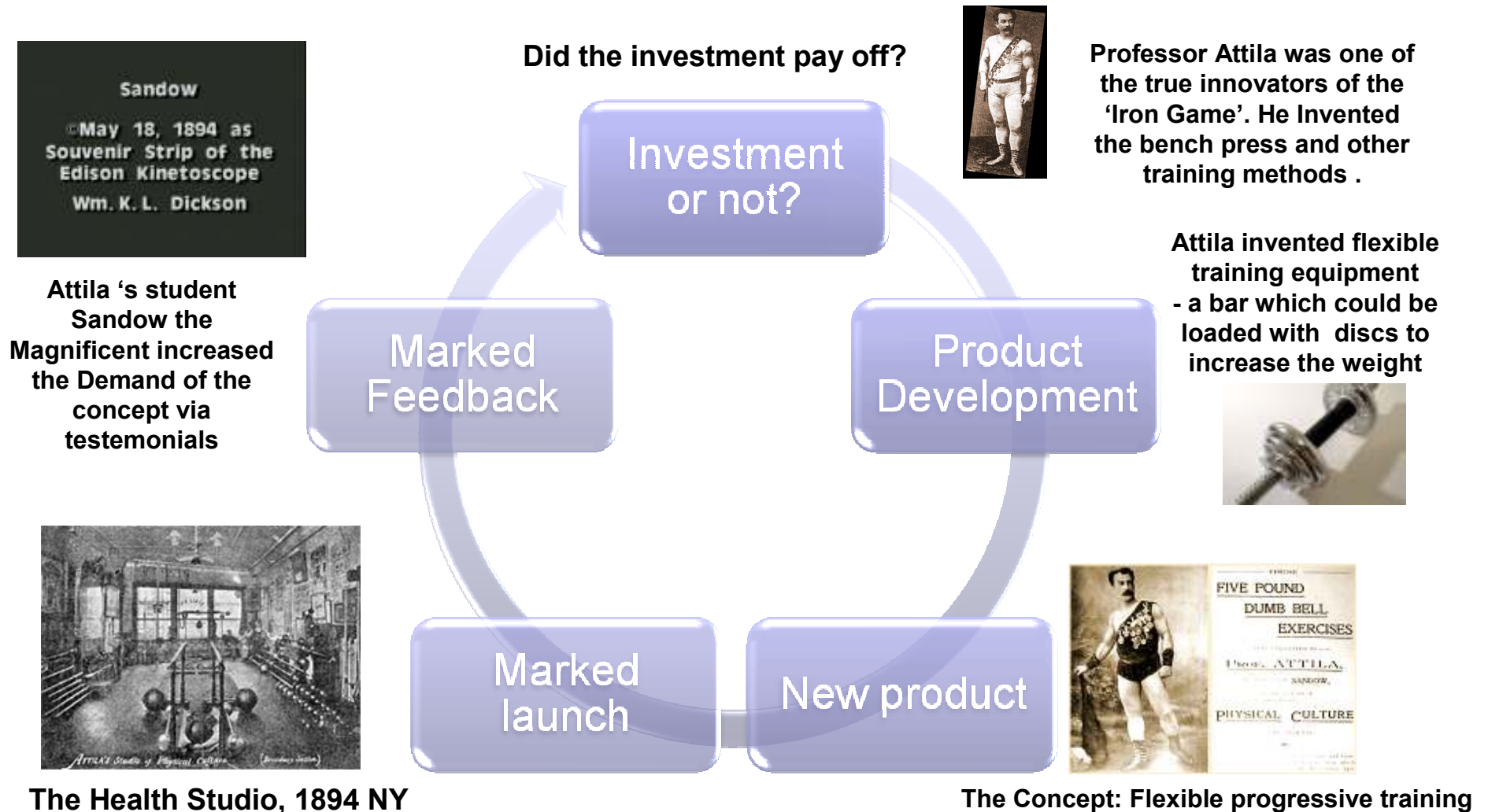
Where do we see **commercialization** in the sport for all-field?



Where do we see **commercialization** in the sport for all-field?



One early example of commercialization – from bodybuilding to the gym



What are the criteria of the **commercial** sport for all activities?

The activities that have success in turnovers and members are:

- activities that are easy to arrange
 - individual activities
- activities where the individual can choose when, where and how to “play”
 - flexibility in organization
- activities that do not demand specific techniques or motor skills
 - easy to start activities



When activities reach the mass consumer

If this three criteria are met, the commercial 'sport for all' can result in the process of commercialization.

Huge commercial success on the market:

Golf – easy-to-play par 3 holes

Fitness activities - easy to start activities

But also tendencies to commercial activities in:

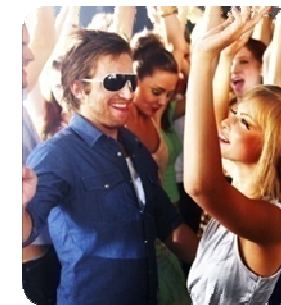
Swimming – 586 facilities in Denmark

Bowling – 122 facilities in Denmark

Squash – 196 facilities in Denmark

Nordic walking – walking becomes a sport

Dancing – commercial discos



What is the logic of commercialization



THE LOGIC OF 'PAY & PLAY'

Easy to organize -
individual sport activities

Organized individual sport



Playing-logic

Individual sport and exercise



Working-logic

The fun of the activity
itself - culture

Organized sport on teams

The out-come of the
exercise - health

Exercise on teams

Not so easy to organize
- team sports

Why is it important to understand this process of commercialization?

1. The Nordic voluntary sport sectors are challenged by a commercial sector, where activities are produced, organized and sold to the customer on a marked.
2. The core values of the voluntary sector are under pressure, i.e. the voluntary principles itself.
3. Members are becoming customers.
4. Product development will continue - presenting new activities to new customers.
5. Somehow the marked seems more sensitive to changes in demand – and it can also create demands by brining new products to the marked.

Questions?



Thank you for your attention