

**We The North: A Longitudinal Examination of The Millennial Sport Consumer**

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**Friday, November 3, 2017**  
**8:00-8:50 AM, Washington Ballroom**

**50-minute poster presentation**  
**(including questions)**

This longitudinal research examines consumer interest, motivation, and behaviour – as well as the potential legacy and industry impact – of the millennial sport consumer, relative to a diverse cosmopolitan city. The project assimilates ongoing investigation with regard to the lasting impact of sport on sport consumers and non-sport consumers alike, and extends an ongoing line of research exploring sport consumer behaviour within the Canadian sport consumer landscape. Major sporting events such as the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup, and the NBA All-Star Game, provide a unique and important opportunity to explore the specific impact of events on local communities, and represents a valuable means of identifying and exploring sport's impact on socio-cultural place and identity. This presentation, through a marketing focus, examines consumer behaviour throughout four major Games, with the intent to better understand the consumer impact of the event for the host city, and specifically reveal consumer trends within a multicultural and millennial context.

Consumer behavior has received considerable focus in sport marketing scholarship over the past thirty years (e.g., Kim & Trail, 2010; Funk, Mahony & Ridinger, Sloan, 1989; 2002), with specific interest in identifying the motivation behind consumers' intent to attend sport events (e.g., Funk, Beaton & Alexandris, 2012; Madrigal, 2006; Trail & James, 2001) as well as the factors which restrict spectator participations (e.g., Crawford & Godbey, 1987; Trail, Robinson & Kim, 2008; Zhang et al., 1997). Within this literature, a growing body of research into the role team and fan identification play in determining sport consumer behaviour has emerged (e.g., Bodet & Bernache-Assollant, 2011; Kim, Trail & Magnusen, 2013; Trail et al., 2012), and this ongoing research examines this understanding around a diverse multicultural lens, examining consumer behavior related to millennial sport consumption.

The research methodology of these studies followed a pluralistic, mixed methods design. Upon completion of a critical literature review of event management, economic impact, and consumer behaviour literature, a multi-dimensional survey questionnaire was designed. The sample identified consisted of three regions throughout the city, including communities immersed in hosting related sporting events, providing a cross-sectional perspective of the effects and implications of event hosting across the city. In total, over 1,500 millennials completed the survey instrument over four events. The collected survey data was inputted into SPSS and analyzed with specific interest in exploring the motivations and interests of consumers/spectators across demographic and psychographic segments, providing added insight into the consumption habits and sport spectatorship of the millennial sport consumer. The results of these combined studies, in this longitudinal presentation are important for stakeholders in sport, and can help assist in better understanding the awareness and interest of local sport consumers (and non consumers) in major events hosted locally. In particular, this study contributes unique insights into the multicultural and millennial profile with regard to sport consumption, and offers important implications for leading sport marketing strategy.

**References**

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