

Servant Sustainship Education for Sports Professionalization

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ABSTRACT

The field of sports management and marketing is rapidly growing and there is a need to examine the environment and culture of sport professionalization within the sports industry. This article seeks to examine the extent of sports education for achieving professionalization in the world of sports activities. The research utilized a qualitative approach to data gathering. The data consisted of a review of literature which was analyzed resulting in the conceptualization of a curriculum model for sports education and professionalization. It was posited that sports professionalization was enhanced when specific sports curriculum was utilized to create effective sports programs. The research found that for sports management and marketing to continue generating new experiences, decision making, and problem solving, it required a sustainable sports curriculum. It is, therefore, important to identify sporting trends and create strategies to meet industry challenges. Sports professionalization can be ensured with a culture of servant sustainship™ (new terminology) approach to sports education - involving ethical strategies with best practices for sports professionalization. The model was created to develop sports education, with sport programs and curriculum utilized for effective sports professionalization. Sports professionalization must rely on shared servant sustainship purposes, values, and ethical rules of practice. This can be achieved with sports education built on the perspectives of management and marketing principles. Lastly, the study confirmed that sporting industries can gain a ethical competitive edge with a curriculum model for sports professionalization that capitalizes on innovative sports education.

INTRODUCTION

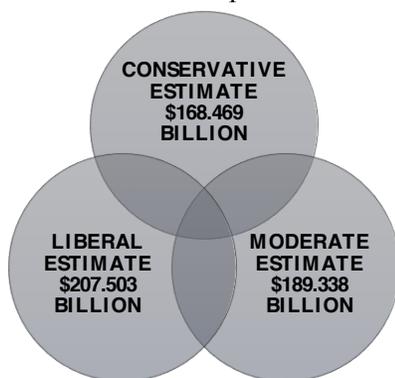
High profile sports from professional and amateur events are increasingly a popular source of entertainment and revenue. The economic dimension of sports has increased as a business phenomenon (Radicchi, 2007). Sports activities are a significant source of revenues and as a result, sports management is a profession that is increasing in popularity; and, the growth of sports as a major industry has increased the need for professional managers (Zagnoli & Radicchi, 2010). According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010) the job outlook is good for careers in athletic management, marketing, sales, public relations and is expected to see growth of 14% to 30% over the next decade. Research by Hums (2010) posited, as the sports industry continued to evolve, there was a need for sport managers to be good citizens in the industry. Today, there exists a spirit of sport and the business of sport. The issue of the conscience and commerce of sport management needs to be compatible and not in opposition to each other (Hums, 2010). This compatibility can occur with sports education for ethical sports professionalization.

SPORTS INDUSTRY

Blain (2002) defined the sports industry as the manufacturing of sports related ideas, goods, and services. This occurred through the combination of sports activities with business, mass media, politics, and technology. Sports activities are important environmentally, culturally, economically, politically, and socially within a local, national, or international setting (Blain, 2002). Sociologist Jay Coakley (2003)

characterized sports as activities involving gross motor skills, competition, and an organized set of rules. Gratton (1998) suggested that economic interest in sports extended well beyond the boundaries of professional sports. The playing of sports emphasized participation of organizers, players, and spectators worldwide. Internationally the sports industry seeks to maximize its economic profits and audience participation. Studies showing the growth of the sports industry from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, United States Department of Commerce (2006), along with Milano and Chelladurai (2006), showed it was a billion dollar industry from 2009 to 2010, see Figure 1.

Figure 1: Estimates of the Size of Gross Domestic Sports Product of the United States in 2005



Source: Milano & Chelladurai (2006)

The sports industry seeks to achieve these goals with cooperation from business, media, politics, and technology based on interdependence (Blain, 2002). According to Blain (2002), media and technology acted as the bridge linking business and politics in the sports industry. Media and technology representation of sports produced the marketing initiatives that facilitate consumption of sport related commodities; thus, sports activities are important agents of capitalism. In this context, business, mass media, politics, and technology have developed an interdependence relationship in the sports industry (Marqusee, 1999) (Rivenburgh, 2002).

Sports make money. However, sports are a complex activity encompassing spectacles like Olympic Games to informal stick ball on urban streets. In addition, a recreational jogger, a runner in the New York City Marathon (a competition with thousands of participants), and people watching the run on television - all participate in sports in some way. Thus, key issues in defining sports involved identifying criteria that separated games of skill from recreational activities. Another secondary issue involved identifying criteria that defined competition in a way to distinguish sports from exercises (Humphreys & Ruseski, 2009). The sports industry is the 11th largest in the United States, generating over \$240 billion per year, see Figure 2 (Kahn, 2000) (Alexander, Kern, & Neill, 2000) (Plunkett Research™, Ltd., 2010).

Figure 2: Sports Industry Overview in the United States

Sports Industry Overview	Amount	Units	Year/Season	Source
Estimated Size of the Entire Sports Industry, U.S.	414	Billion US\$	2010	PRE
Annual Company Spending Sports Advertising, U.S.	27.3	Billion US\$	2010	PRE
Major League Baseball (MLB)				
MLB League Revenue	6.8	Billion US\$	2010	PRE
National Football League (NFL)				

NFL League Revenue	7.8	Billion US\$	2010	PRE
National Basketball Association (NBA)				
NBA League Revenue (Basketball Related Income)	4.0	Billion US\$	2009/10	PRE
National Hockey League (NHL)				
NHL League Revenue	3.0	Billion US\$	2009/2010	PRE
Sporting Equipment Sales				
Revenues, U.S. Sporting Goods Manufacturers*	71.8	Billion US\$	2009	PRE
Retail Sporting Equipment Sales	39	Billion US\$	2010	PRE
Other Sports Industry Revenue				
NCAA Sports Revenue (Including Div. I, II and III)	0.7	Billion US\$	2009/2010	PRE
Other Spectator Sports Leagues	4.3	Billion US\$	2010	PRE
Racetracks	8.7	Billion US\$	2010	PRE
Golf Courses	19.8	Billion US\$	2010	PRE
Fitness & Recreational Centers	20.7	Billion US\$	2010	PRE
Other Amusement & Recreation	20.5	Billion US\$	2010	PRE
Other Revenues Associated in U.S. Sports Industry**	180	Billion US\$	2010	PRE

Figure 2 shows sports industry revenues by Plunkett Research®, Ltd. (2010) PRE = Plunkett Research Estimate (2010)

* Includes sporting goods equipment, fitness equipment, sports apparel, recreational transport items and athletic footwear.

** All other revenues, including peripheral revenue such as sports-related publishing, facility construction, food service, licensing, sponsorships, travel, gambling, etc., estimated at 43.48% of all sports revenue.

SPORTS MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Organizations and sports are no longer constrained by national borders. Managers in the United States have challenges from openness and intense underlying from fundamental cultural differences between domestic and international environments. Differences encompass traditions, history, religion, and values systems. Capitalism’s emphasis on profits, efficiency, and growth are generally accepted in the United States, but isn’t always popular in every place domestically or around the world. Many claim the American obsession with profits has created many ethical and legal problems. American business is seen everywhere with corporate sponsorships of special events and programs – such as sports programs, entertainment, education, and social causes – and this has brought a unique type of management and marketing strategy to sponsorships. In addition, the internet, television, and other media have brought the good and the bad of American entertainment, products, and behaviors to every corner of the local, national, and international globe. This global visibility requires cultural, political sensitivity, and understanding from sports leadership. Decision makers need to be aware of how their decision and actions will be viewed. Organizations must adjust their strategies to accommodate increasingly diverse views from local, national, and international community’s (Nath & Sudharshan, 1994) (Guyon, 2001) (Mia, Tang, Xi, & Liu, 2011).

The role of leadership and management is important to the success of the sports industry and field. Sports leadership and management ensure that organizational resources are deployed so that stakeholder's interests are taken into consideration and protected (Daily, Dalton & Cannella, 2003). Sports leadership deals with strategic issues that arise at the competitive or corporate level (or both). Sport management is concerned with the business aspect of sports. Sports management focuses on the business aspects of local, national, and international sports in accounting, culture, economics, finance, human capital, management, marketing, and information/technology. Sports managers are found on the local, national and international level, as well as marketing and promotions directors, academic services directors for student-athletics, corporate sales directors, directors for ticketing and finance, sporting goods sales representatives, intramural directors for campus recreation, facilities coordinators, athletic directors, compliance directors, athletic business managers, and fitness managers. Basically, areas of interest for sports management include the direction of sports management, management competencies, employment perspectives, leadership, sports and the law, personnel management, facility management, organizational structures, fund raising, and conflict resolution (Daily et al., 2003) (Sports-Management-Professional, 2011) (www.amanet.org, 2011) (www.naso.org, 2011).

High profile sports from professional and amateur events are increasingly a popular source of entertainment and revenue. As a result, the industry offers employment opportunities for management, marketing, and supervisory professionals at all levels of competition – local, national, and international. Employment for sports management professionals is found in academic institutions, major and minor league professional sports franchises, independent sports confederations (such as tennis and golf), sporting goods companies, and independent sports marketing and management consulting firms. In addition, sports management professionals can hold positions as promotion and development directors for sports teams and school athletics programs to plan, design, and implement promotional campaigns to increase ticket sales. Sports management professionals also negotiate sponsorships in which advertisers and sporting goods manufacturers have their ads or products featured at sporting events. Lastly, these sports professionals are liaison between teams and athletic departments and the news media. They prepare official publications, commemorative magazines, Web sites, press guides and releases, and organizes media days for athletes and coaches; athletes and coaches are made available to reporters, photographers, and broadcast media (Radicchi, 2007) (Sports-Management-Professional, 2011) (www.amanet.org, 2011) (www.naso.org, 2011).

Other responsible positions for sport management professionals include athletic directors and general managers to coordinate the activities of teams and athletic departments. Athletic directors and general managers are responsible for personnel decisions involving coaches, athletes, and support staff; and, they supervise employees who manage sports facilities. Another facet for sports is the live audience development, which has become a priority in both collegiate and professional sports (Zagnoli & Radicchi, 2010). In professional sports, athletic directors and general managers report to team owners. In the case of academic sports, athletic directors and general managers report to university trustees, chancellors, or school boards. Finally, another category of individuals that provide a variety of services to athletes and coaches are sports agents or sports representatives. They play a role in negotiating play contracts, coaching contracts, product endorsement fees; and, they provide financial, investment, legal, and tax advice (Sports-Management-Professional, 2011) (www.amanet.org, 2011) (www.naso.org, 2011).

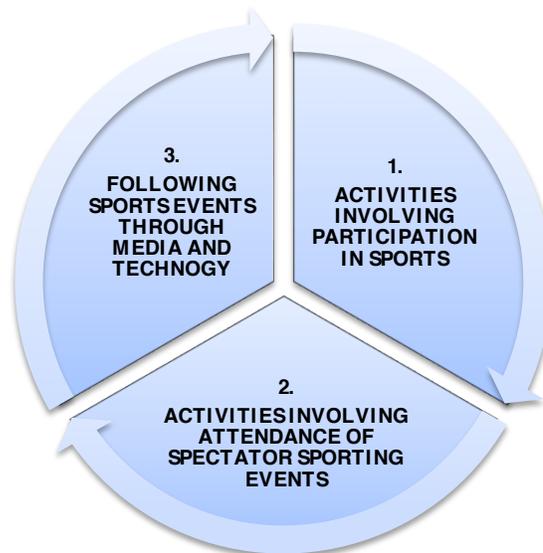
Marketing is about dealing with customers. The goal of marketing is to attract new customers and to keep and grow current customers. Successful organizations have strong market and customer focus. Successful organizations have well defined target markets and understand how to satisfy their customer base. These organizations build profitable customer relationships with customer value and satisfaction (Cierpicki, Wright, & Sharp, 2000) (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). Thus, marketing and the marketing process are crucial to the success of every organization. Marketing is about a process of planning and executing the conception of the four marketing “P” of product, pricing, promotion, and place. In addition, there is a

process of planning and executing the conception for distribution of new ideas, goods, services, organizations, and events to create and maintain relationships that satisfy individual and organizational objectives (Cierpicki, Wright, & Sharp, 2000) (Boone & Kurtz, 2006). The marketing process, by which organizations create value for customers and build strong customer relations, is designed around five steps: understanding the marketplace and the needs and wants of the customer; designing a customer driven marketing strategy; designing a marketing program that delivers superior value; creating profitable relationships and customer interest; and, creating value from customers to gain profits and customer quality (Cierpicki, Wright, & Sharp, 2000) (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008).

A starting point in a good business strategy is a market driven strategy. A market driven strategy depends on the market and the customers that make up that market. A market driven strategy provides a wide perspective of the company and its effective use of integrated activities and processes impacting customer value (Cravens & Piercy, 2009). Understanding the marketplace is to know customer needs, wants, and demands. Successful organizations learn and understand the customer who buys through consumer research and data. Customer needs, wants, and demands are met through market offerings with some combination of products, services, information, or experiences. Thus, market offerings are created to satisfy needs, wants, or demands (Cierpicki, Wright, & Sharp, 2000) (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008).

Sports market can be defined as having three components: 1) activities involving participation in sports; 2) activities involving attendance of spectator sporting events; and, 3) activities involving following spectator sporting events through some media and technology, see Figure 3 (Humphreys & Ruseski, 2009). Thus, the research showed that sports market were divided into three sectors involving: the advertising of sport and sports associations such as the NFL; the use of sporting events, sporting teams and individual athletes to promote various products; and, the promotion of sport to the public in order to increase participation (Lovelock, Reynoso, D’Andrea, & Huete, 2004). In addition, sports market involved products, services, including industry trends on identifying emerging brands and channels; determine market segmentation and opportunities for growth; and, targeted marketing development, promotional, and sales strategies (Lovelock et. al., 2004).

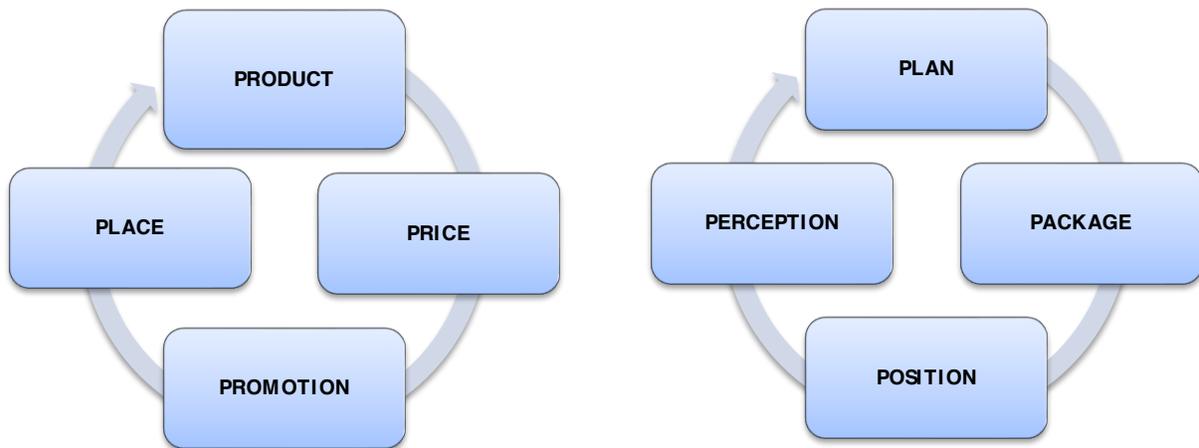
Figure 3: Sports Market Components



Source: Humphreys & Ruseski (2009)

Sports marketing follow the traditional four "P"s of general marketing: product, price, promotion and place (Cierpicki, Wright, & Sharp, 2000). However, another 4 "P"s are added to sports marketing, relating to the fact sports are considered to be a service. The additional 4 "P"s are: planning, packaging, positioning, and perception. The addition of the 4 extra elements was called the "sports marketing mix" (Beech, & Chadwick, 2006). The goal of sports marketing was to provide strategies for promoting sports or for promoting activities other than sports through sports. These marketing strategies followed the traditional 4 "P"s marketing mix of product, price, promotion, and place, along with the additional 4 "P"s sports marketing mix of planning, packaging, positioning and perception, see Figure 4 (Lovelock et. al., 2004).

Figure 4: Traditional Marketing Mix plus Sports Marketing Mix



Source: Cierpicki, Wright, & Sharp (2000), Lovelock et. al. (2004), Boone & Kurtz (2006)

Sports marketing is considered a subdivision of traditional marketing. Its focuses are on the promotion of sports events and teams, along with the promotion of other products and services through sporting events and team activities. Thus, it is a service in which the activities promoted can be both a physical product and a brand name (Cierpicki, Wright, & Sharp, 2000) (Lovelock et. al., 2004). Sports marketing can take advantage of athletes and teams; athletes tend to be brand loyal, and in turn, fans will be loyal to their favorite athletes and teams (Beech & Chadwick, 2006). In addition, sports marketing drive sports memberships – this represents the biggest benefits, in terms of sales and recognition, for companies, athletes, associations, leagues, and sports events organizers (NSW Government, 2011).

Lastly, good business strategy is a market driven strategy. This approach focuses on the market and the customers that make up that market. It provides a wide perspective for sports marketing and leads to effective use of integrated marketing activities and processes that will enrich customer value. Well planned, effective sports marketing and processes will help to understand the sports customer and the marketplace, leading to informed problem solving and marketing decisions to increase the company's, club's, organizer's, or association's performance (Cravens & Piercy, 2009) (NSW Government, 2011).

MODELS AND MODELLING FLOWS

Leedy and Ormond (2004) defined research as the systematic process of collecting and interpretation of information or data to resolve the problem that initiated the research. The general tools of research for models and modelling flows are computers and their software, techniques of measurement, statistics, and language (Leedy & Ormond, 2004). According to Arthur (2009), technology was a science activity of

known concepts and methods to given problems. Involved are design projects to fulfill a set of purposes – this means matching a purpose with a concept of structure that will meet it, and put together a combinations of components that will bring the structure to reality (Arthur, 2009). Information processing models have evolved since 1949. Modelling can be designed as an instrument based on information factors deemed important for innovation decisions and an analytical framework to understand organizational innovation. When modelling flows are applied in systematic they are effective information indicators for creating, analyzing, understanding, and managing new ideas (Blanchard, 2004) (Al-Fedaghi, 2009).

SPORTS EDUCATION

Sports and competitive success is an important part of American culture. Sports are a powerful socializing agent and sports teach not only physical skills but also values. Sports are particularly associated with education in the United States. Many junior high schools, high schools, and universities have organized sports. The most popular team sports in the United States are baseball, football, basketball, ice hockey, and soccer. These sports have large media exposure and are considered the preeminent competition in their respective sports not only in the United States, but around the world (National Federation of State High School Associations, 2007/2008) (Henslin, 2008). In the United States you have many students who participate in athletics programs operated by junior high schools, high schools, and colleges. When successful student-athletes leave high schools they often receive scholarships to colleges in recognition of their athletic abilities. High school and college sports have a loyal following equaling and often exceeding professional sports. College baseball, basketball, and football draw crowds and are a significant source of entertainment and revenue for their institutions (National Federation of State High School Associations, 2007/2008).

With the increasing financial complexities involved in sports, the highest level of education is needed to ensure sound and ethical levels of negotiations are presented over contracts, product endorsements, and entertainment and media rights (Petrick & Quinn, 2000). There is a need in the leadership and management of sports for educated professionals that have sports education involving accounting, business management, business law, economics, finance, human capital, marketing, and information/technology. However, in keeping with the spirit of sports and the business of sports, there needs to be a *servant sustainship*[™] approach to sports education in order to develop professionalization in the sports industries. According to Cook (2011), *servant sustainship*[™] is - meaning to answer with supportive purpose and practice. The issue of the conscience and commerce in sport management needs to be compatible and not in opposition to each other (Petrick & Quinn, 2000) (Hums, 2010).

Finding the balance between purpose and practice and finding compatibility between conscience and commerce should be desired at the top of an organization and its strategy. An organization's top managers play a significant role in the strategic management process: top managers are the chief executive officer (CEO), the top management team composed of chief operating officer (COO), chief financial officer (CFO), chief information officer (CIO), and other individuals who may have various titles in top management (Petrick, Shcere, Brodzinski, Quinn, & Ainina, 1999). Thus, by definition, they are ultimately responsible for every decision and action of every organizational employee.

Leadership has the responsibility to create a viable and valuable future for the organization. According to Coulter (2008), effective leadership consisted of six key dimensions: 1) determining the organization's purpose or vision; 2) exploiting and maintaining core competencies; 3) developing human capital; 4) creating and sustain strong organizational; 5) emphasizing ethical decisions and practices; and, 6) establishing appropriately balanced controls. In 1977, Robert Greenleaf created a new paradigm of management in his proposal that service should be a distinguishing characteristic of leadership. He believed that servant leadership would create better, stronger companies. Business leader's needed to raise the servant aspect of their leadership and built more serving institutions (Greenleaf, 1977). In

keeping with Greenleaf’s philosophy, a new concept in sustainability – *servant sustainship*TM, meaning to answer with supportive purpose and practice, should be adopted (Cook, 2011). Conceptually, servant sustainship must stem from the organization’s culture that supports a philosophy and perspective of doing what is right.

The suggested sports education degree program and course curriculum (Figure 6) will educate sports managers about the sports industry and field by providing industry specific training - sensitive to good proposes and practices. This sensitivity to good purposes and practices, along with the combination of broad-based and industry-specific skill curriculum, will lead to sports professionalization in the industry and field. The strategy for sports education success is to create and nurture institutions of higher learning in the process of performance-based learning to foster servant sustainship for sports professionalization (Bruken & Delly, 2002). Thus, to develop sports professionalization, we group sports education into the flowing broad categories of sports enterprise, sports marketing, and sports communication, see Figure 7.

Figure 7: Sports Education Categories



Source: Cook (2011)

One purpose of this paper was to increase the awareness of some of the professionalization deficiencies found in sports education, programs, and curriculum. Institutions of higher learning need to raise the servant aspect of their education and built more serving curriculum to support the philosophy of compatible conscience and commerce in sports management and marketing. In order to build a strong foundation of knowledge and professionalization in the field of sports business, servant sustainship education must examine the interaction between the world of business and sports. Servant sustainship sports education with programs and curriculum that makes the interaction between business and sports beneficial and professional for everyone involved in the sports industry. Institutions of higher learning must align sports education and sports professionalization with good purposes and practices.

The creation of servant sustainship education must come from higher, post-secondary, or third level of education which occurs at the university and college level institutions. Higher education, also called tertiary, third stage, or post secondary education is the non-compulsory educational level that follows the completion of a school providing a secondary education, such as a high school; colleges and universities are the main institutions that provide tertiary education (Pashler, McDonald, Rohrer, & Bjork, 2009) (Examples of Subjects, 2011). Academic discipline or curriculum is the branch of knowledge which is

formally taught. Examples of broad areas of curriculum include the natural sciences, mathematics, computer science, social sciences, humanities and applied sciences (Azeem, Gondal, Abida, Naz, Hussain & Munira, 2002) (Bruken & Delly, 2002) (Pashler, McDonald, Rohrer, & Bjork, 2009) (Examples of Subjects, 2011).

Rather than think sports are just games, academia must think of sports management and professionalization in the setting of serious entertainment and big business. Sports managers are crucial to ensuring that players, fans, coaches, organizers, and financial backers coexist peacefully and ethically in the sports industry and field. Sports education must develop servant sustainship curriculum to effectively market sports, plan events, and enter into the areas of sports publicity, coaching, and administration. What must be designed, developed, and implemented, is an interdisciplinary field of sports management education, which encompasses elements of: accounting, economics, finance, human capital, management, marketing, psychology, law, information/technology, and communications. This interdisciplinary field must educationally align with good purposes and practices for sports professionalization. A modern professional code of conduct – doing what is right – must be the result of a strong servant sustainship education and curriculum.

Today, the sports industry and field is the 11th largest in the United States and generates over \$240 billion per year and is a diverse, growing field, incorporating multiple sectors including: professional teams; public and private organizations; media and entertainment agencies; and facilities and events operations (Alexander et al, 2000) (Kahn, 2000) (Plunkett Research™, Ltd, 2010). Professional managers are needed in the industry and specific skills are employed in every sector of the sports industry; those skills would benefit from a servant sustainship approach to the competitive sports field, ensuring good purposes and practices (Cook, 2011). Thus, there is a need to create a degree program that is designed to train managers for advanced work in all sectors of the professional sports industry and field. The result is a broad-based but industry-specific sports program of study that reflects innovation performance learning within a servant sustainship curriculum.

The sports degree program should involve a rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum that critically examines the sports business and culture. The commitment should be to make positive changes in the way sports is managed – changes that include a servant sustainship approach for good practices and purposes to develop sports professionalization. Course curriculum to educate sports manager’s needs to be founded on a thorough understanding of the history and socioeconomic foundations of the field, with courses following in accounting and finance concepts, human capital, servant leadership, sports organization and management, psychology of sports, sports law and ethics, and a new concept by Cook (2011) - eVOLVING WEB WORLD™. The new concept of eVOLVING WEB WORLD™ is servant sustainship use of technologies. The outcome is the creation of a servant sustainship education model for professionalization, see Figure 5.

Figure 5: A Servant Sustainship Education Model for Sports Professionalization



Source: Cook (2011)

Specifically, the sports degree program must provide sports managers with organizational leadership and sports management and marketing skills needed to be successful in the sports industry and field. This comprehensive sequence is designed to train students in the basics of financial literacy specific to the sports industry as well as to provide a thorough grounding in and understanding of the macroeconomic concerns of the industry, see Figure 6. Sports leadership sequence requires completion in:

- ✓ servant leadership and management;
- ✓ facility and event superintendence management;
- ✓ and, intercollegiate athletics administration.

The sports marketing sequence requires completion of an introductory course in the science and theory of marketing followed by advanced courses in:

- ✓ sales, sponsorship, and sports marketing;
- ✓ sports media marketing;
- ✓ and, visual communications technology, sports business communication, and sports public relations.

Figure 6: The Sports Education Degree Program for Sports Professionalization



Source: Cook (2011)

SPORTS MEDIA

Radicchi (2007) suggested there was a significant relationship between sports enterprises and new media diffusion. Research by Santomier, Radicchi, and Zagnoli (2007) defined new media as any digital media production that is both interactive and digitally distributed and included, but is not limited to: broadband, HDTV, streaming audio and video, websites, wireless and mobile technologies, and interactive TV (iTV™). In addition, new media may also be defined in terms of the convergence of telecommunications, computing, and traditional media. A conceptual definition embraced a set of rapidly changing technologies; Rines (2000) referred to convergence as the ability of a single platform to process different sources of electronic information.

The sports degree program must provide a strong management and market oriented business model to enhance core media competences. New media play an increasingly critical role in influencing and shaping the sports business models. New media offers new opportunities to reach more consumers, increase revenues, and create value. The sports industry and field must be attuned to the complex, changing new media curve, and exploit opportunities to increase their strategic economic value, and adopt business

models that endorse specific competences related to new media (Radicchi, 2007). The integration of new media into the sport industry and field must be reflected in sports management. Therefore, sports education must have a strong element in its curriculum to address the challenges offered by new media.

SPORTING TRENDS

The growth of sports as a major industry requires well-trained professional managers. A well-rounded sports education with a focus on sport management and marketing skills is essential. Sports managers will need their skills to spot and understand trends in the sports industry. Sports trend now developing include:

- ✓ companies pulling dollars out of traditional media and invest in growing their communities, engaging their fans, and providing unique experiences in social media;
- ✓ growth of online video – eVOLVING WEB WORLD™ enables bloggers, fans, and athletes to connect easier and faster than ever before;
- ✓ social networks, with applications like Four Square™, are emerging as power players, and marketers will use disruption models to inform local markets, direct traffic, and provide on location calls-to-action with innovations that improve their products or services;
- ✓ Twitter™ and Facebook™ relevancy with personal athlete branding to offer up additional platform or value-add sponsorships;
- ✓ mobile for real-time interactions leading to increased fan interactivity;
- ✓ digital foundations in place for eVOLVING WEB WORLD™ with powerful cross-platform patterns for fan participation and rewards;
- ✓ media mix modeling by networks (ESPN™ and Univision™) for full value chain exploitation of offline-online integration;
- ✓ virtual choices for live audience development;
- ✓ improve cash flow as a result of social media efforts;
- ✓ more best practices with goals and specific measurable objectives; and
- ✓ refined business model for social web capabilities through eVOLVING WEB WORLD™ (Bower & Christensen, 1995) (Beech, Chadwick, & Tapp, 2000) (Blackshaw, 2010) (Peck, 2010) (Cook, 2011).

Thus, sporting trends show evidence of digital and social innovation to optimize all aspects of the marketing mix. This will create consumer conversations – consumers recommending, endorsing, or publicly bearing allegiance to their favorite sports and athletes - through social-media engagements.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the United States, sports activities are important culturally, economically, politically, and socially within a local, national, and international setting (Blain, 2002). The sports industry is the 11th largest in the United States, generating over \$240 billion per year (Kahn, 2000) (Alexander et al., 2002) (Plunkett Research™ Ltd., 2010). Sports management is concerned with the business aspects of sports with employment opportunities, both in the private and public sectors, for management, marketing, and supervisory professionals at all levels of competition (local, national, and international). In addition, sports management professionals are found in academic institutions, major and minor league professional sports franchises, independent sports confederations, sporting goods companies, and independent sports marketing and management consulting firms. The sports market is divided into three sectors involving; the advertising of sports and sports associations; the use of sporting events with sporting teams and individual athletes to promote various products; and, the promotion of sports to the public in order to increase participation (Lovelock et al., 2004). Sports marketing follows the traditional 4 “P”s of general marketing – product, price, promotion, and place – however, another 4 “P”s are added to sports marketing, relating to the fact sports are considered to be a service (Cierpicki, Wright, & Sharp, 2000). The additional 4 ‘P’'s are planning, packaging, positioning, and perception (Beech & Chadwick, 2006).

To address the issue of conscience and commerce compatibility in sports, a new concept – *servant sustainship*TM, meaning to answer with supportive purpose and practice, is recommended to further sports professionalization that supports a culture, philosophy, and perspective of doing what is right (Cook, 2011). It is recommended that sports degree programs should involve rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum that critically examines the sports business, culture, and professionalization. It is recommended that well-trained professional sports managers need to acquire performance based skills to spot and understand trends in the sports industry. Sports trends show that technological knowledge will be needed to create business models adaptable to the fast pace of an ever change eVOLVING WEB WORLDTM. Sporting trends show evidence of digital and social innovation that optimizes all aspects of the marketing mix. Thus, it is essential that all segments of the sports industry and field have working knowledge of the digital foundations for an eVOLVING WEB WORLDTM (Cook, 2011). Digital innovation, evolving from a web world that optimizes all aspects of technology must include sustainship culture, philosophy, and professionalization that cradle our world with good practices and purposes, see Figure 8.

Figure 8: eVOLVING WEB WORLDTM



Source: Cook (2011)

The purpose of the paper was to increase awareness of some of the professionalization deficiencies found in sports education. It is recommended, with the increasing financial, social, political, and cultural complexities involved in sports, the highest level of education is needed. It is recommended that servant sustainship education come from university and college level institutions. This will ensure sound and ethical standards of negotiations are presented over contracts, product endorsements, and entertainment and media rights in the sports world.

The sports industry, as a diverse and growing field, requires professional managers with specific skills that would benefit from a servant sustainship approach, ensuring good purposes and practices. This would keep with the spirit of sports and the business of sports - addressing the issue of the conscience and commerce compatibility. Cooperation and coordination, between the public and private sectors in the sports industry and field needs to be emphasized to achieve a culture that supports a philosophy of doing what is right. This approach will support compatibility for an ethical conscience in the commerce of sports. The outcome of the research on sports education and its degree program is the recommendation of a servant sustainship education model for sports professionalization - and specifically a rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum sequence that provides professionalization in sports business and culture.

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