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Brand Creation in International Recurring Sports Events

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Abstract

Although recurring sports events are held more frequently and by a larger number of cities than one-off events, little research has examined the branding process within recurring events. This paper addresses this gap by examining the brand creation process for international recurring sports events. Based on Parent and Séguin's (2008) model for one-off sports events, a comparative case study of the Alberta World Cup (Canada) and World Cup Drammen (Norway) cross-country ski events was conducted. Findings included similarities (leaders' skills/value-based actions, induced event experiences, and institutional experiences) and differences (branding/marketing efforts, recognition of the sport, and nature of the event (success, media coverage, geographic location, and history/impact). An expanded model of event brand creation is proposed, which can be applied to both one-off and recurring sports events in small and large North American and European cities.

Keywords: Brand, recurring sport event, comparative case study, international

1. Introduction

Researchers have identified numerous benefits associated with sport brands, such as emotional attachment from fans, increased spectator masses and merchandise sales, and stronger sponsorship interests (Couvellaere & Richelieu, 2005; Gladden, Irwin, & Sutton, 2001; Parent & Séguin, 2008; Ross, 2006). Further, most researchers have focused on the external issues, such as effective sponsorship alignment (e.g., Gwinner & Eaton, 1999; Koo, Quartermann, & Flynn, 2006) and consumer motives (e.g., Funk, Filo, Beaton, & Pritchard, 2009). There has been insufficient attention devoted to the brand builders (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2007) and even less to the organizing committee (OC) of sports events. Parent and Séguin (2008) are an exception, studying the brand creation for one-off international sports events.

Events are often divided into categories, such as mega, major or local, based on subjective interpretation (Emery, 2001). However, Emery defined a “major” sports event as “a sports event that receives national or international media coverage as a result of the calibre of competition, and one in which a minimum of 1,000 spectators are present at the event” (2001, p. 92). Although Parent and Séguin (2008) have examined a larger international one-off sports event (e.g., over 2,000 athletes and 160,000 spectators attending), the branding process of smaller international recurring sports events has yet to be examined even though more cities can typically host such events. Communities in general are increasing their interest in hosting events to obtain recognition (Chalip & Costa, 2005). However, events pose considerable challenges for sport managers: they are intangible, unpredictable, short-lived, subjective in nature, and produced and consumed at the same time (Couvellaere & Richelieu, 2005; Gladden et al, 1998; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). It therefore makes it more difficult for OCs to build a strong brand and quality event to satisfy stakeholders’ needs (cf. Parent, 2008; Parent & Séguin, 2008). The degree to which a high quality event can be achieved is

strongly affected by the organizers' relationships with various stakeholders (Parent, 2008). Stakeholders are individuals or groups who can affect the organization or be affected by its actions (Jones, 1995). Examples of stakeholders in a sport event include: the community residents and sponsors, media (local, national, and international), various levels of government, the organizers' paid staff and volunteer base, delegations, and sport organizations (locally, nationally, and internationally) (Parent, 2008). For organizers to be able to effectively build a brand for their event, they need to be aware of factors that are likely to have an impact on the brand process. A "good" brand will allow the event to be seen as desirable by stakeholders, such as sponsors and ticketholders, thereby allowing the organizers to garner resources from these stakeholders (cf. Parent, 2008).

Thus, the purpose of this paper is to examine the brand creation process for international recurring sports events. To do so, we take, as our starting point, Parent and Séguin's (2008) model and use the International Ski Federation (FIS) Cross-Country Alberta (Canada) World Cup 2008 and the FIS Cross-Country World Cup Drammen (Norway) 2008 as case studies. This paper thereby fills a gap in the literature by 1) examining a smaller sports event in two different countries and in smaller cities; 2) examining recurring sports events; and 3) testing Parent and Séguin's (2008) model. Findings could support and extend Parent and Séguin's model, making the revised model applicable to one-off and recurring sports events in small and large North American and European cities. Recurring event organizers have time to fine-tune (or even reconstruct) their brand from one year to the next; however, the event must still be perceived by the rights holders (the parent organization, typically the international federation) as successful to have the chance to host the event again.

The paper begins with a presentation of the theoretical framework. This is followed by a description of the methods. The results are then presented and discussed. Finally, concluding remarks and future directions are provided.

2. Theoretical Framework

To examine the event branding process, a further description of key theoretical concepts is needed. The following provides an overview of brand knowledge. The one-off event brand creation model developed by Parent and Séguin (2008) is described, as well.

2.1 Brand Knowledge

Brands are suggested to be the greatest asset of a company (Aaker, 1991). Within marketing, this concept is widely studied (e.g., Aaker, 1996; de Chernatony, 1999; Kapferer, 1997; Kotler & Keller, 2006). Brand equity refers to successful brands and is made up of awareness, associations, perceived quality, and loyalty assets (Aaker, 1996). This added value helps organizations differentiate themselves from others and establish a competitive advantage (Kotler & Keller, 2006; Shank, 2005).

Gladden, Milne and Sutton (1998) built on Aaker's (1996) conceptualization of brand equity and constructed a cyclical model in a team sport setting where team-related (e.g., star player), organization-related (e.g., entertainment package), and market-related factors (e.g., geographical location) are believed to function as equity antecedents. These authors further argued that brand equity results in marketplace consequences, which affect marketplace perceptions. In turn, these perceptions are believed to influence the initial antecedents through a feedback loop.

Ross (2006) subsequently presented a cyclical framework for spectator-based brand equity for sport teams. Similar to Gladden et al. (1998), he proposed three antecedents to brand equity: 1) organization induced (marketing mix); 2) market induced (word-of-mouth and publicity); and 3) experience induced (actual consumer experience). These antecedents are believed to influence brand awareness and association, which, again, have consequences for the marketplace. Marketplace perceptions are further believed to affect the antecedents through feedback. Whereas Gladden et al. based their framework on models developed for

physical goods, Ross (2006) emphasized service-oriented principles and the characteristics of spectator sports. A limitation of both approaches is that they merely focus on sports teams. Brand antecedents for teams may differ from events, as teams are considered more enduring than event organizations (Couvelaere & Richelieu, 2005; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Venable, Rose, Bush, & Gilbert, 2005).

Spectators are not left with a physical product after watching an event; rather, they are left with perceptions and memories (cf. Berry, 2000). Urde (2003), from an organizational perspective, emphasized how brands are in continuous interaction with the identity of the consumers and that of the organization. As for the internal process, he underlined the importance of the organization's mission, vision, and values. Following the same line of thought, Ulrich and Smallwood (2007) presented the term "leadership brand" and described how organizations should ensure that their employees become committed to the organizational values. As they explained, "leadership brand is an extension of an organization's brand or identity because it shows up in the behaviours and results of leaders throughout a firm in a manner that bridges employee and customer commitment" (p. xi).

2.2. Event Brand Creation Model

Parent and Séguin (2008) examined the branding process within a sport event setting and proposed a brand creation model for one-off events comprised of three referents: 1) the leadership group; 2) the context of the event; and 3) the nature of the event. Within the leadership group factor, three skill sets were highlighted:

- Political/network skills: these include building and managing relationship with different internal (paid staff and volunteers) and external stakeholders (government/political and others), managing the power plays, or wheelings, and dealings of these stakeholders, and managing these stakeholders needs. Thus, proper networking is critical, as is having the network base within the host region;

- Business/management skills: these include the typical strategic planning, human resource management, financial, and communication skills; and
- Sport/event skills: these include your technical sport skills and your event hosting technical skills.

These three sets of skills comprise the antecedents to what is known as the OC leadership group, as there is often more than one person holding leadership positions within an OC. The leadership group, hereafter referred to as the OC, then creates a brand for the event. As part of this process, the context (referent #2) moderates the initial creation of the brand. The context factor refers the regional and/or national setting, where the organizers of the respective event operate. The event brand's creation is also dependent on the nature of the event (referent #3), which includes the sport's recognition in the host region, as well as the presence or absence of a worldwide brand for the sport. This worldwide brand is created by the rights holder or parent organization of the sport/event, usually an international federation (IF).

According to Parent and Séguin (2008), once the brand is created, it is communicated to the event's internal and external stakeholders. This can be done through direct communication on the part of the OC or through the media. The stakeholders subsequently reflect images/perceptions of the brand back to the OC, again, either directly or through the media. This feedback loop allows the OC to make final adjustments to the brand and complete the brand's creation.

Together with previous research on branding (e.g., Gladden et al., 1998; Ross, 2006; Urde, 2003), Parent and Séguin's (2008) framework will serve as the basis for understanding the brand creation process in international recurring sports events.

3. Method

A comparative case study using two case settings was undertaken to examine the brand creation process for OCs of recurring sports events (Eisenhardt, 1989).

3.1 Case Study Settings

The cases were chosen based on the researchers' accessibility and case comparability (same event, different countries). This comparability allows for analytical generalizability and a reflection on the applicability of the findings to other settings. First, the two cases in this paper, the Alberta World Cup and World Cup Drammen, fulfill the major sports events definition criteria. Second, although FIS essentially appoints the national sport organizations (NSOs) (e.g., Cross Country Canada [CCC] and The Norwegian Ski Federation [NSF]), which then choose the local host sites, the OCs and, more specifically, their leaders represent the focal organizations that manage the respective events.

Cross-country skiing in Canada holds a weak position compared to typical North American sports, such as ice hockey. In 2006, Devon Kershaw was the first Canadian male athlete to win a cross-country skiing World Cup race in more than 15 years (Rutherford, 2009). Moreover, when Alberta hosted the World Cup in 2005, it had been ten years since the circuit had last paid a visit to North America (FIS, n.d.). Norway, on the other hand, is considered the cradle of cross-country skiing (Gotaas, 2004; Visitnorway.com, 2008). Since its tournament introduction in 1982, up until 2010, the nation has hosted 54 World Cup events. Further, the sport represents the second most practiced activity among Norwegians (Statistics Norway, 2009). Together, these national and sport aspects allowed for the researchers to compare and contrast the recurring events' brand creation process.

3.1.1 Setting 1

The Alberta World Cup, in Canmore, Alberta, Canada, was held for the second time in 2008. The town of around 17,000 residents is situated east of Calgary at an elevation level of 1,309 meters (Tourism Canmore, 2008). Natural parks, exceptional wildlife, and the

towering Rocky Mountains are characteristic of this region.. The OC's main reason for hosting the World Cup was to raise an awareness of the sport and create a home court advantage for their athletes. The events found a home in a \$26 million upgraded version of the Olympic trail system (Alberta World Cup, 2008a), which is situated in a provincial park (Muir, 2009). The mountainside, known as "The Three Sisters," created exceptional background scenery for the television images. The 2008 event featured 125 male and 86 female athletes (Hatcher, 2008). Over 20 countries were represented and, during the five day event, athletes competed in four race formats: pursuit, classic sprint, freestyle interval start, and freestyle sprint (Hatcher, 2008). Yet, the number of spectators was very low (estimated at 7,000) and was mainly constituted by dedicated fans and acquaintances of the skiers.

The Foothills Nordic Ski Club and the Canmore Nordic Ski Club jointly hosted the World Cup. Although there were nine individuals who formed the OC, it was a fully volunteer-led event, with roughly 350 people involved (Alberta World Cup, 2008b). The average age of the volunteers was estimated by the event organizers to be around 50-60 years old and volunteer effort to be roughly 250,000 dollars a year. The OC had a broad network consisting of stakeholders from a regional to an international level. The event did not receive live broadcast on regular, domestic television, but it was seen live on Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's (CBC) digital service. This was partly due to the fact that the committee made a conscious decision not to spend money on advertising, instead relying on word-on-mouth. As for international attention, the event was carried live and tape delayed in England, Norway, Germany, Russia, and Italy (CCC, 2008).

3.1.2 Setting 2

The city sprint World Cup in Drammen, Buskerud, Norway, was held for the sixth time in 2008. Their first event, in 2003, was undertaken as a pilot project. The original organizer, Otepaa, Estonia, had to cancel because temperatures were too cold, and Drammen

seized the opportunity to be a substitute and use the event as a vehicle to enhance its city reputation. “The River City” is located close to the capital, Oslo, and has approximately 62,000 inhabitants. The sprint attracted entertainment seekers from the walk-by traffic in addition to dedicated ski fans. The number of spectators in 2008 was estimated by the local police and the event organizers to be around 25,000 people. The event had 61 female and 72 male athletes participating, representing 19 nations (FIS, 2008).

Konnerud Sports Club was the main event organizer, but had a partnership with Drammen Municipality and Byen Vår Drammen AS. Similar to the Alberta World Cup, various stakeholders were represented. The Royal King and Crown Prince were some of the prominent guests that attended the events in Drammen. Ten individuals formed the OC. About 400 volunteers, ranging in age from 10 to 85 years old, worked at the 2008 event (World Cup Drammen, 2008a; World Cup Drammen 2008b), representing over 13,500 hours of work (Kihle & Eskerud, 2008). The World Cup received broad exposure, including onsite TV commentators from Sweden, Italy, Finland, Slovenia, in addition to the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK on race day. NRK presented 2.2 hours of live coverage (World Cup Drammen 2008c). The organizers used several marketing tools, and over 80,000 households received a World Cup Magazine prior to the event, encouraging them to take part in the happening (BVD, 2008). Table 1 offers an overview of the two case settings.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

3.2 Data Collection

To build the comparative case study, data were collected from fifteen interviews, as well as a total of 46 archival documents related to the events’ and the sport’s position in the two settings. Using a triangulation strategy, a common practice in case studies, the aim was to confirm or cross-validate findings between data sources (Creswell, 2003). Committee reports, as well as independent material, such as newspaper articles and tourism brochures,

are examples of the archival material investigated. It was regarded as secondary data, providing background information to better understand the OCs and their context.

Semi-structured interviews with 10 organizing committee members and 5 stakeholders functioned as the primary data. As the study mainly examined the organizers' perspective as they built the brand (following Parent and Séguin, 2008), it was not deemed necessary to conduct an equal number of interviews with OC members and stakeholders. The sampling strategy followed a combination of purposive and snowball sampling (Andrews & Vassenden, 2007; Small, 2009). Key individuals, such as the OC leaders, were purposively chosen because of their particular knowledge base. As well, these individuals recommended other interviewees whom they saw as relevant for the study. This resulted in the addition of participants not initially included, which could help create a nuanced picture of the studied issue. All interviews, except for one, were conducted by the second author on a face-to-face basis. Due to time and geographical constraints, one interview was conducted via Skype. Data collection ended when saturation was reached. Table 2 provides an overview of the interviewees' position and the interview method.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

The interviews lasted, on average, 48 minutes. A tape recorder was used, with permission from the participants. This helped to foster a conversational relationship (Rubin & Rubin, 2005) and created a more dynamic dialogue. Notes were taken throughout the interviews to ensure that non-verbal and contextual meanings were captured (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009). These data were also included in the analysis. The interview guide, adapted from Parent and Séguin's (2008) version and adjusted to this setting, was based on a structured outline, but also included open-ended questions. Examples of the interview guides are provided in the appendix. Interviews related to the Alberta World Cup

were conducted in English, whereas interviews concerning World Cup Drammen were conducted in Norwegian to avoid language barriers.

3.3. Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and the Norwegian quotes used in the paper were translated into English as conscientiously as possible by the fully bilingual second author. Back translation was done to ensure accuracy. The 175 singled-spaced pages of transcribed text, as well as the archival material, were analyzed with the use of the qualitative data analysis software, MAXQDA 2007. Collected data were pattern coded and cross-case analyzed. First, passages related to Parent and Séguin's (2008) model were highlighted (e.g., passages referring to one of the three referents). Emergent themes (e.g., media coverage, geographical location, and success) were also highlighted (Creswell, 2007). This allowed for both deductive and inductive coding. Next, highlighted passages were modified into manageable themes (also known as pattern coding). This was done for each setting, which in turn made up the basis for the cross-case analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989). The comparative aspect helped us to see the applicability of the findings to other, similar settings and to deepen the authors' understanding of the issue studied. It also allowed for the Parent and Séguin (2008) model to be tested in two different settings. At this level, data from the two cases were compared on particular aspects (e.g., event history and impact). To do the comparison, tables were used to help structure the analysis. The analysis was then discussed between the authors, with agreement obtained on all points. The resulting analysis or higher-order themes (cf. Corley & Gioia, 2004) constituted the results which are presented below.

3.4 Trustworthiness Procedures

To enhance trustworthiness of the study, several principles were incorporated. First, the process of triangulation and, in particular, using multiple sources of evidence (interviews and archival material) was employed to enhance "the development of converging lines of

inquiry” (Yin, 2009, p. 115). Second, a chain of evidence was maintained. This meant linking the case study questions, protocol, and citations within specific evidentiary sources, using a database (MAXQDA 2007), and employing the case study report (Yin, 2009). Third, quotes remained verbatim, and transcripts were sent to the interviewees for verification and to seek clarification on certain passages. Finally, results were presented at an international academic conference to obtain peer feedback, which was very positive.

4. Results

Findings illustrated that a committed and passionate OC, together with event experiences and institutional affiliations, represented similar brand affecting factors in the selected cases. Additionally, differences were discovered related to the leaders’ skill composition and branding efforts, the national recognition of the sport, and the event history and impact. These created a more complete picture of the branding process at a World Cup level. The following presents these aspects, using a similarity/difference approach.

4.1 Similarities in the Events

In this section, we present the leadership antecedents that are also found in Parent and Séguin’s (2008) model, as well as additional factors found: value-based actions, induced event experiences, and institutional affiliations.

4.1.1 Leaders’ Skills and Value-Based Actions

The leaders’ behaviours in this study support Parent and Séguin’s (2008) leadership antecedents: political/networking skills, business/management skills, and sport/event skills. However, we also found value-based actions, as described below.

4.1.1.1 Political/Networking Skills

As the Official Chair of the Alberta World Cup notes, the variety of stakeholders means that there are many interests to meet and politicking to handle: “There’s lots of

different politics, lots of different interests, right, so you have to listen and observe and understand what that is and react to that.”

There was much ongoing negotiation for organizers, and this depended on several stakeholders. To illustrate, the Alberta World Cup was held in a provincial park, which naturally included close intervention with the provincial government. World Cup Drammen, on the other hand, was held in the city centre, which naturally included close collaboration with the municipality, as the streets were temporarily closed and bus routes were altered. Fortunately for the organizers, the events were located in fairly small cities, in which the leaders had good connections to the local stakeholders. The value of having an OC with complementing skills was underlined in relation to the networking aspects:

In sum, I believe that those who have run this have had the necessary connections to make it happen, both in relation to the International Ski Federation, the Norwegian Ski Federation, sponsors, collaborators, athletes, leaders, not to mention media....And if you don't have those contacts and that network, then you don't really have a chance. (Chief of Marketing and Finance, World Cup Drammen)

4.1.1.2 Business/Management Skills

Most non-profit organizations rely heavily on a volunteer force that cannot be directed by monetary bonuses or punishments. This was also the case for the OCs in the present study, as is captured in the following quotation from the Official Chair of the Alberta World Cup: “It’s much easier to tell employees, ‘you’ll do this or else I’m gonna fire you’; for volunteers, you can’t do that. You have to always be encouraging.” The Chief Secretary of World Cup Drammen credited the way their President made his appreciation of the volunteers highly visible. It resulted in a NRK-documentary that showcased the work done by volunteers in relation to the 2007 event. The documentary was broadcasted on television to 441,000 Norwegians immediately prior to the 2008 event (World Cup Drammen, 2008c).

Empowering the volunteers through role clarification was further underlined by the Chief of Marketing and Finance of World Cup Drammen as a way to build the volunteers' emotional attachment:

What is very important is that you will be given responsibility and authority in relation to the role that you are going to carry out. People grow when they take on responsibilities and they must be given the opportunity to have such accountability, because then they make sure to be accountable.

In the Alberta World Cup, empowerment through job rotation was stressed: "And that was one of the reasons why they moved the chiefs around to different positions, from the first one to the second one, so people in the chief positions actually had a broader range of experience" (Coordinator of Volunteers, Alberta World Cup). Despite similar volunteer management, the organizers' marketing orientation in each case varied, which will be discussed in the section 4.2.1.

4.1.1.3 Sport/Event Skills

During their event history, the leaders in both settings committed themselves to high standards with regard to course preparation and snow quality, and by wanting to improve themselves technically. When the FIS Race Director was asked what he saw as unique for the two events, he replied: "Unique? They are unique in the sense that both are hungry to do it better." This was further supported by a sponsor of World Cup Drammen: "I think the most important thing the leadership group does is to make a new event every year, and not just a copy of the old [version]..." Learning from other events was also a specific strategy for both OCs:

We have been to other events to observe how they do it, including World Championships. But what has probably been most instructive for us has been the beach volleyball in Stavanger, the World Tour there. We [the two OCs] have

collaborated closely and found out that we are more similar than we are distinct....It's about the same, to get an uplifted atmosphere at the arena and get the audience enthused and all this. (President, World Cup Drammen)

4.1.1.4 Value-Based Actions

One element that was singled out early as a key element in both cases was the event organizers', especially the leaders', commitment and passion for the event, the sport, and associated and inherent values. The FIS Race Director explained: "For me, the event lives when the [leaders] have the fire and the spirit to do the events....In the case of Drammen and Canmore they are really dedicated to do it." The value-based actions went beyond commitment and passion; they were associated with an inherent understanding and belief in the OC's values. As data were analyzed, it became apparent that the OC members had an inherent understanding and relatively similar understanding of their core values, which, in turn, were embedded in their actions and decisions. The Alberta World Cup members valued a high standard of event execution and a Western theme, and their leaders followed up on this as they strived to attract volunteers who possessed unmatched race technical expertise and as they placed the cowboy graphics on every poster. One of the core values articulated by World Cup Drammen members was the concept of financial restraint (i.e., not spending more money than you have) and this clearly affected their decision-making processes:

It has functioned as a framework condition that we at all times had to take into consideration in our decision-making processes....There's a lot that I, as a Chief of Competition, wanted to go through with, maybe have another tribune....We talked about lots of ideas like that, but it hasn't been an [easy national] economy to go through with such purchases and therefore we dropped it.

Data analysis further revealed that the stakeholders' reflected appraisals and images fit well with the OCs' desired images. These analogous perceptions can be explained

by the OCs' abilities to turn their values into behaviours through their ways of planning and executing the events. Table 3 provides a summary of their value-bases perceptions.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

4.1.2 Induced Event Experiences

As our findings highlight, individuals' experiences during an event determine their impressions of the overall event. During data analysis, it was apparent that personal experiences throughout an event shape to a large extent that individual's impressions of the event. This is reflected in the following quotation by a World Cup Drammen sponsor: "when an event and a happening is so positive, you make your own impressions of it....After all, that is what's important, it's kind of my experience and how I perceive it that matters."

The event organizers also supported this view. According to the Chief of Competition for World Cup Drammen, it is the individual's own impressions that determine their interest in identifying themselves with an event:

People have to be able to take a stand about "is this good or bad?" on their personal ground, and then you have branding. Personally, I find it very difficult to do so for a one-off event, but you might build up an image and an expectation impression that I believe is good. Branding to me is what people's subjective perceptions of the product are, and they do not have the ability to do so before they have seen [the event].

4.1.3 Institutional Affiliations

The OC's connection with overarching organizations proved critical in the branding process. Both team and event brands are shaped on the basis of their institutional environment, including legal frameworks (Couvellaere & Richelieu, 2005; Foreman & Parent, 2008). The long term FIS World Cup calendar is titled a "draft," implying that changes are

likely to happen (FIS, 2009). Otepaa (Estonia) had to cancel in 2003 and, at that point, World Cup Drammen was a stand-in host. Their position as a regular World Cup host was by no means secured after the event, and the Chief of Competition for World Cup Drammen described the tough competition between potential event hosts:

If Drammen had put on a poor event in 2003, we wouldn't have been on the 2004 calendar. I believe it's that simple. In international elite sport, and this is about top performance equal to those competing out on the course, it's a fierce competition to be event hosts and you cannot afford to fail.

The insecure hosting future also frustrated the organizers of the Albert World Cup, particularly in relation to event brand building, as the Official Chair noted:

Our first breakthrough was 2005, but there was no promise for 2008. There was [a] "we think we'd like to do it", but there was no promise from FIS, so we had to go back and pretend almost [that] we were brand new again... For an organizer, I think it's frustrating; I would rather have a contract or an agreement and say, "we know you are gonna come every other year, every three years, or whatever."

Another emerging theme was that both OCs experienced power struggles with their respective NSOs; an OC member from the Alberta World Cup stated: "We have a saying in Canada, saying you have your hands tied behind your back... I'm completely limited." In most cases, the NSO controls television rights and sponsorship agreements. The Alberta World Cup OC managed to obtain a major sponsorship deal, but since CCC had not given permission to sign the agreements first, they would not accept it, resulting in the OC receiving little to no funding from it, while the national organization obtained most of the capital. The national representative, however, did not perceive any sponsorship conflict: "We [the CCC], in fact did the agreements and the organization was quite comfortable with the

signing of and delivering of the entitlements that were built into the agreement” (CCC Marketing Director).

In Norway, Holmenkollen was undergoing construction work in 2009 to prepare for the 2011 FIS Nordic World Ski Championships. Consequently, they could not host the regular 30km and 50km events, which would follow two days after the sprint in Drammen. Because of the close proximity between the cities, it has not been a problem given the short time between events. However, when the latter event was moved to Trondheim (600 km north of Drammen), World Cup Drammen lost the 2009 sprint event to Trondheim. NSF’s justification for this was travel distance and time issues for athletes and media. Several athletes were disappointed with the solution and did not see travelling as a problem, since they are quite used to this, especially during the Tour de Ski (Grennæs, 2008).

4.2 Differences in the Events

In this section, we discuss noted differences between our two settings regarding: branding efforts and marketing orientation, recognition of the sport, and nature of the event (including success, media coverage, geographical location, and event history and impact).

4.2.1 Branding Efforts and Marketing Orientation

The most visible differences between the two cases were the elements making up their event brands. The Alberta World Cup used a cowboy look. In 2005, they brought in The Calgary Stampede and in 2008, they followed the western style by handing out cowboy hats to the athletes. Their logo illustrates The Three Sisters (mountains) shaped like a cowboy hat, with skiers skiing on the hat brim. For World Cup Drammen, the logo illustrates a colourful globe with white skis headed to Norway, but the organizers seemed to have a pragmatic view on its function: “The logo implies that we have an ownership to the event, and it symbolizes what the World Cup in Drammen is” (Chief of Marketing and Finance). Additionally, the city

was appointed as the host only five weeks prior to their first event, so the logo had to be created quickly.

The different brand elements, such as the logo, colour choices, and slogan, were not, however, found to be critical for the branding processes when compared to marketing orientations. The Alberta World Cup did not have a marketing person in the leadership group, mostly because of their conscious decision not to spend money on advertising. Further, their focus on word-of-mouth communication did not seem to have attained a well-managed “buzz”. This is reflected in the Chief of Stadium and his wife being surprised when they visited the town’s administration office one week before the event: “Talking to the front desk staff, they indicated they didn’t know anything about what was going on... It’s not an area that is necessarily in my opinion looked at as seriously as it should be.”

For World Cup Drammen, the leadership group had a Chief of Marketing and Finance as part of the OC. Additionally, they used a verbal communication strategy that likely raised the expectations among the residents, as the OC connected their event with the unique experience of a folk festival. At a press conference prior to the 2003 event, they expressed that they were expecting over 20,000 spectators, which would help create the folk festival feel, as noted in the following quotation:

I’m not really sure why I said around 20,000 [spectators]...People who read and hear this, they believe it. Those who were close [at the press conference] were more reserved, they wouldn’t really believe it. Nevertheless, this was how it turned out, and it’s certainly all those people who create the folk festival. (President, World Cup Drammen)

4.2.2 Recognition of the Sport

Early in the analysis, it became evident that the nations’ different recognition of the sport was the most influencing and, perhaps, uncontrollable element. When asked about the

recognition of the sport, a typical response from Alberta World Cup members was: “Cross-country skiing is hardly a back-page sport” (Chief of Competition), meaning that it barely makes it to the back page, let alone to the front page of the newspaper. Even the FIS Race Director questioned its position in Canada: “Even for a marketing consultant, to sell the sport in Canada, I am not sure if he is able to do so”. For World Cup Drammen, a rather contrasting comment was provided:

The position of cross-country in Norway is totally unique. Personally, I have a background from track and field...which is a worldwide sport with 215 nations participating. Cross-country skiing is a mini-sport with 10-15 nations participating. It's almost crazy how strong the position of cross-country skiing is in the sport nation of Norway. (Chief of Marketing and Finance)

4.2.3. Nature of the Event

While not specified in Parent and Séguin's (2008) article, findings from this study indicated that aspects of success, media coverage, geographical location, and event history and impact represent subcomponents of “the nature of the event” referent. As discussed below, they functioned as catalysts for World Cup Drammen, but further constrained the branding process for the Alberta World Cup.

4.2.3.1 Success

Athletes achieving success was emphasized by the Albertans as vital for their event brand:

It has been critical for us that Beckie [Scott] won in 2005 and Chandra [Crawford] won in 2008. It sets up the excitement in the community; it's what keeps our volunteers motivated and what keeps our sponsors motivated. (Chief of Competition, Alberta World Cup)

For World Cup Drammen, whose national athletes have claimed 180 Olympic medals within cross-country skiing (IOC, 2010; Vancouver2010, 2010), they were more focused on delivering fair competitions at a high technical standard, as the World Cup Drammen Race Director noted:

...it would be a shame if the organizers were blamed because someone who really should not win won. We don't want that. We want to create as fair and equal conditions as possible for everyone. It is actually more important that there are fair and equal conditions rather than perfect conditions for a short period of time, and this is something the athletes notice right away.

4.2.3.2 Media Coverage

When athletes are performing well, their sport is likely to attract national television exposure (Gladden et al., 1998). The event in Drammen received live coverage. For the Alberta World Cup, the case was quite different, and their Chief of Timing linked this to the sport's national standing:

[The] Canadian Broadcasting Corporation did broadcast the tape, which they received for free...but they didn't come back and say "well, we'll pay you for it next time", you know, so, we're talking here about perceptions overall in terms of the sport in Canada.

Even though the Alberta World Cup received media attention in Europe, it did not seem to affect the Canadians' recognition of the event: "Calgary did not know what was going on up here....There was also very little recognition from the newspapers and the media that there was an event going on" (Chief of Timing). Not having a market-oriented person to feed media with news stories and features concerning the event did not improve its recognition either.

In Parent and Séguin's (2008) model, the event brand is transmitted through the media to external stakeholders. This study's findings, however, indicate that media also affect the event brand, as the course is designed in cooperation with the media to make it television friendly. Additionally, media appear to have taken an active part in the development of new competition formats, such as the city sprints: "TV makes it so that they perhaps have to organize it differently, and make it more exciting and interesting...not to mention that World Cups now are being situated in towns, in town centers, that is genius" (Sponsor, World Cup Drammen). The actual location of the event was another factor, and is further described in the next section.

4.2.3.3 Geographical Location

The convenience of letting the event come to the spectators, rather than the other way around, increases the event's attractiveness among fastidious spectators. The Alberta World Cup was situated two kilometres from the town centre and, although this distance is not great, it is far enough to lose spectators merely interested in being entertained. The organizers did offer happenings in the town centre, but this was not well linked to the sport event according to the Chief of Competition for the Alberta World Cup: "It's great that the athletes enjoy Canmore, but it's more important for us that we find ways for our spectators to enjoy themselves, and this is an area we have not yet solved."

The organizers of World Cup Drammen had an easier job of attracting curious fans who wanted to get a glimpse of what was happening in the town. This high attendance level was also believed to be related to the city size:

In a city the size of Drammen, the sprint is big enough to turn into a great happening for the city. If it was in Bergen or Oslo, where so much else is going on, then it would drown and you probably wouldn't be able to create the same enthusiasm. (NSF Representative)

4.2.3.4 Event History and Impact

In 2008, World Cup Drammen hosted its sixth event in six years and, as such, it has become a regular part of the city's environment and yearly happenings. Also, it has built up a large spectator base that is familiar with the event and knows what to expect for their next attendance. For the Alberta World Cup, its event history is shorter, having only hosted the World Cup three times (as of 2010) in six years..

Along with the other events in Drammen, it appears that the city has been able to enhance its identity positively. The organizers expressed that they had experienced a change in the residents' attitude, with residents taking increasing pride in the World Cup event and their hometown. The following quote, by the President of World Cup Drammen described this aspect: "Not only have you created a brand, but you have also created an identity for a city. Drammen was different before 2003 than it is today." The events in Alberta do not seem to have had the same impact on the city of Canmore. Besides their short event hosting history, this might be associated with the region's many unique sporting sites. As stated by Shank (2005, p.166), "the lesser the competition for spectators' time and money, the more likely they will be to attend your sporting event." Unfortunately for the Alberta World Cup, their neighbouring city, Calgary, hosts more recognized events, such as alpine World Cups and the Calgary Stampede. This entertainment offering has functioned as a major constraint for the Alberta World Cup and, together with the sport's low recognition in Canada, it is evident that the Alberta World Cup had, and still has, a much greater challenge of branding their event than World Cup Drammen. It was also suggested by the Official Chair that the Albertans are accustomed to having international events held nearby: "It's all the same, because we're spoiled in Canada. We get anything we want. It's like TV; I just switch channel, so I know if I wanna see cross-country skiing I can just go to Canmore."

5. Discussion

This study aimed to examine the brand creation process for international recurring sports events. One of the primary results is that findings, overall, support Parent and Séguin's (2008) three skill sets (political/networking, business/management, and sport/event) as essential leadership antecedents. What emerged from the data was a fourth key antecedent, namely, value-based actions. These value-based actions stemmed from the leaders' commitment and passion, as well as from the embeddedness of the OC's values. Researchers have pointed to the connection between organizational values/culture and identity, stakeholders' perceptions (e.g., de Chernatony & Harris, 2000; Scott & Lane, 2000; Urde, 2003), and core values and (service) brand building and management (e.g., Chen, 2010; de Chernatony, Drury, & Segal-Horn, 2004; First & Khatriwal, 2010; Thorbjørnsen & Supphellen, 2011; Zhang & Bloemer, 2008). Our findings support the impact of core values on the brand creation process. This element is not found in Parent and Séguin's (2008) model; however, findings from organizational research might help frame the present findings. Seen from an organizational perspective, "living" the organization's values is key for brand development (de Chernatony, 1999; Ulrich & Smallwood, 2007; Urde, 2003). We therefore suggest that event OCs would likely benefit from having a strong organizational culture, which will, in turn, assist in the brand creation process.

Although identity distinctively characterizes an organization (Albert & Whetten, 1985), one should also bear in mind that it is a social construction (Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000; Scott & Lane, 2000). In a sport event setting, this implies that the OC can affect the stakeholders' initial perceptions. It also means that the stakeholders' impressions affect the identity of the event and of its OC (Parent & Foreman, 2007). Based on our event experience findings (section 4.1.2) and the notion that the strategic construction of the sport brand only happens after its identity is shaped (Richelieu, 2004), we argue that induced event experience

is a referent for the brand creation process. This supports Ross's (2006) emphasis on experience-induced elements for spectator-based brands. Unlike one-off events, where the final brand must be created before event execution has been undertaken (Parent & Séguin, 2008), it appears that recurring event members can initiate reconstruction and fine-tune activities after event execution and before their next event. This is a contribution of this study.

Given that values and culture seem to be linked to both organizational identity and brand, it is reasonable to view brand and organization identity as being more closely related within the broader sport setting than for these two events only. As these concepts may not be mutually exclusive, we suggest that the literature and definitions associated with these concepts be reviewed with the aim of integrating them, which therefore becomes a contribution of this paper.

Regarding institutional affiliations, we support Parent and Séguin's (2008) contention that the international federation (IF) represents an important factor because of its overarching role as brand safety provider. We also found the national sport organization (NSO) to be central in the brand creation process because of its authoritarian power and mode of operation. Thus, unexpected changes can stem from both the IF and NSO. We therefore modify Parent and Séguin's (2008) model from IF to the broader institutional affiliation factor.

Key differences between the two sport settings were identified, which help in the greater understanding of the brand creation process for international recurring sports events. First, there were differences regarding branding efforts and marketing orientations. The differences in the logo, in the emphasis on a marketing person (or lack thereof), and in the desired feel of the event illustrate the need for organizers to combine a market-led approach

(i.e., employing advertising and communication strategies and having a dedicated marketing person) and an inside-out approach (i.e., embracing an organizational culture among the members) (Bjerke & Ind, 2007). A narrow focus on either one of these factors would likely be insufficient to reach a strong brand delivery. Second, we found that the degree to which the nation recognizes the sport results in greater ability (or difficulty) in selling the sport and its event to the media and ultimately to the general public (as potential spectators). The sport's recognition reinforces Parent and Séguin's (2008) nature of the event referent, but is also associated with the context. Third, findings from this study indicated that aspects of success, media coverage, geographical location, and event history and impact represent subcomponents of "the nature of the event" referent, which were not mentioned by Parent and Séguin. The Norwegians' success in the sport makes it more appealing for organizers and stakeholders to associate themselves with the sport and, perhaps, to place less emphasis on results. Although success is one of the least controllable antecedents to brand equity (Couvellaere & Richelieu, 2005; Gladden et al, 1998), it is easier to attract people when the national athletes are star attractions of the event (Shank, 2005). Moreover, whereas Parent and Séguin note that the media will communicate brand messages between the OC and its stakeholders, we find that the coverage of the event by the media is part of the nature of the event and therefore of the brand creation process. This supports Emery's (2010) contention that the media are now a core part of the sport event management process. In addition, according to Parent and Séguin, the effect of the organizers' skills is moderated by the context factor. Findings in this study support this, but also indicate that the actual venue location (notably within the city core) and size have a direct impact on the event brand.

Elements such as success and media coverage are, however, found in team brand research (Gladden et al, 1998; Richelieu & Pons, 2006). This is logical, as research regarding team branding is done in a context of repeated (recurrent) events (i.e., the individual league

games or matches). Thus, we find a link between recurring sport event branding and team branding. Further, success, media coverage, geographical location, and event history and impact are also related to the context referent, as well as the media factor (Parent & Séguin, 2008). For example, according to Parent and Séguin (2008), the effect of the organizers' skills is moderated by the context factor. Findings in this study support this, but also indicate that the actual venue location and size have a direct impact on the event brand. As it was beyond the scope of this study, future research could further examine the interrelationships between the referents and their individual factors.

The preceding discussion allows us to extend Parent and Séguin's (2008) model in order for it to be more applicable for international recurring sports events (see figure 1).

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

First, findings indicated that an organization's core values represents an important element that, together with the three skill sets described by Parent and Séguin (2008), evidently affected the OCs' actions and thereby event brands. Based on this and general value-based brand research (e.g., Ulrich & Smallwood, 2007; Urde, 2003), it is likely that core values not only play a vital role for recurring events, but also for organizers in other event settings. Second, findings indicated that induced event experience elements, together with the context, have a moderating effect on the organizers' transmitted images and the final event identity and brand. Third, the nature of the event factor appeared not only to be linked to IFs, but also the NSOs, as they choose the local event hosts and often control sponsorship agreements. Yet, since the local events are the showcase for the sport, both nationally and internationally, they appear to have a bidirectional relationship with the overarching institutional organizations. Finally, the media factor is altered to have a reciprocal effect on the event brand. Media often have a say in the outline of the course design, which represents a visible part of the brand. Further, media are largely beyond the OC's control, as they notice

perceptions from external stakeholders and further communicate this out to the public without consulting the organizers first.

From a theoretical standpoint, we therefore provide three additional aspects (core values, induced event experience elements, and institutional affiliations) that affect the event branding process. Our extended brand creation model is one that can be applied to both small and larger cities in different countries (North American and European), as well as to small and larger international one-off and recurring events. We hope that our revised model will help to explain the recurring event branding process and thereby build the sport event literature, as well as the branding literature. Given the number of similarities between our revised model and Parent and Séguin's (2008) model, there is also an implication of finding greater managerial similarities between one-off and recurring sports events than perhaps previously assumed. In addition, findings underscore the interconnectedness between brand identity and organizational identity, and they suggest that the concepts are more synonymous than theorists within the two perspectives would indicate. Organizational aspects appear to have a greater impact on the event brand process than concrete brand elements (such as logos, colour choices, and slogans), which supports research done from a service-oriented perspective (e.g., Berry, 2000; Ross, 2006).

From a practical standpoint, the ability for event organizers to assess factors identified in this paper gives them the capability to more effectively manage the process. By doing so, they are also more likely to remain or strengthen their position as event host. Moreover, findings highlight that, even though event hosts must be successful in their first attempt at hosting the event, they have some leeway in terms of refining the brand should the event organizers have the opportunity to host the event again. This paper further assists parent organizations of international recurring sports events (IFs and NSOs) who now have a deeper understanding of their crucial role as brand identity and safety providers for local event

organizers. The importance of the media, both for coverage and for transmitting brand messages, cannot be stated enough.

6. Conclusions and Future Directions

This study applied Parent and Séguin's (2008) framework to sports events of a recurring nature, and insights gained from the similarity/difference discussion related to the selected cases were used to inform the framework. Findings unveiled, and thereby supported the authors' notion, that the leadership, context, and nature of the event function as key components in the branding process. Together with the leadership's political/network skills, business/management skills, and sport/event skills, the organization's core values represent another key antecedent, which determines the leaders' actions and behaviours regarding the brand creation process. However, the leaders' effect on the event brand was moderated by induced event experience elements, in addition to the context. It also became evident that institutional affiliations with the respective NSO strongly affect the branding process. Although the OCs studied assessed several of the abovementioned factors, their event brand processes were, and still are, largely determined by the sport's national stance and the mode of operation of the parent organization (IF/NSO) related to the nature of the event factor. As suggested by Parent and Séguin (2008), and further supported by findings in this study, a deeper understanding of barriers to international sports event branding is needed. Today, the FIS is striving to present a more united sport; but until they manage to establish a brand on which the organizers can build their identity, the various World Cups will continue to display vast discrepancies.

In contrast to the brand creation process for one-off sports events, it appears that recurring event organizers can allow themselves time to refine their brand after event execution and before their next seasonal happening. While this can give a (perhaps false) sense of security, they still need to produce a successful event in their first attempt, as the

competition to host such events is fierce and the long term event schedule (at least for the FIS) is by no means final.

Future research could apply the same concepts to other sports to see if these findings are representative of the recurring event setting or if other factors need to be included. For example, while not emphasized in this study, the Alberta World Cup allocated some of its sponsorship money to disabled skiers in the province. As well, community involvement has been found as part of a sports team's branding approach (Richelieu & Pons, 2006); however, whether or not this is the case for event brands remains to be studied. Future research could be conducted through surveys to multiple events/contexts in order to test the relationships proposed in this paper's model. It might also be fruitful to explore the entire branding process from antecedents, to event brand, to outcomes of having a brand, in order to achieve a more complete picture of the branding process, including creation and management. This could be done using a similar methodology to the one presented here.

This paper mainly followed an organizers' perspective. Consequently, a possibility for future research is to follow a spectator perspective and explore their point of view, particularly related to event experience elements. It would also be interesting to include the top athletes' perception on event branding. After all, they are the ones who compete in such events for a living. Other stakeholders' (e.g., governments) perspectives could also be examined to complete the picture. Interviews with the different stakeholders would allow this information to be garnered.

Finally, it would be important to explore the relationship between event branding and destination branding (Chalip, Green, & Hill, 2003; Chalip & Costa, 2005). One emerging topic from the present analysis, which was beyond the scope of this paper, was sport event tourism. Although it may be difficult to determine a direct link, several of the interviewees mentioned that Drammen had experienced an increased number of visitors after they started

hosting the World Cup. Recurring sports events' role in destination branding and their effect on peoples' intention to visit ought to be explored further both qualitatively and quantitatively.

In conclusion, although there are a few notable differences which must be considered by event brand managers, we find many similarities between hosts of the same event in different countries, as well as between one-off and recurring sports events. This could facilitate brand managers' efforts. From a theoretical standpoint, the fact that Parent and Séguin's (2008) model has been applied in Canada and Norway in large and small towns for both aquatic sports and cross-country skiing allows us to suggest that our revised model can serve as a basis for other single-sport recurring events, as well as one-off events in North America and Europe. The extent to which the revised model can be applied to multi-sport events and those in other continents remains to be examined.

7. References

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8. Appendix

8.1 Interview Guide for OC Members

1. What was your role in relation to the event?
 - i. Follow-up: Which involved?
 - ii. For how long have you been involved in event organizing?
 - iii. What was / is your motivation /reason behind this participation?
2. In your opinion, who was/were the leader(s) in this event?
 - a. If more than one person identified: Do you think it is a problem or an advantage to have more than one person as leader of the OC? Why?
 - b. What aspects (traits, skills, qualities, etc.) do you consider as part of leadership?
3. How did leadership influence the OC in terms of:
 - a. Its structure
 - b. Ability to access resources and stakeholders (e.g., sponsors, governmental individuals)
 - c. Financing (sponsorship, ticket sales, and fundraising)
 - d. Should the mayor be directly involved in the OC If so, why? If not, why?
4. Name 3 words that come to mind when you think of the image of your event (regarding organizers, the event itself, its audience).
 - a. When would you say the official brand got unveiled? (e.g., logo presented)
 - b. What, in your mind, differentiates your event from other World Cup events?
 - c. Did the event build on a pre-existing brand?
5. Did the organizing committee have a vision? Mission? Values? How did this influence your role in the event?
 - a. If existing: what was the importance of the leader(s) in creating these images of the organizing committee?
6. What are some challenges for an OC when creating a brand? What would you recommend to solve these?
 - a. Do you consider the OC for a World Cup event as an enduring (permanent/stable) or temporary organization, and why?
 - b. In which aspects would you say that branding a World Cup event would differ from the branding of one-off event, such as World Championships?
7. What were the influences of your marketing policies on the OC's ability to generate marketing revenues?
 - a. How was the event positioned and presented to potential sponsors?
8. What are the key differences between "sponsorship" and "corporate support"?
 - a. What role did leadership play in formulating sponsorship decisions?
 - b. What role(s) did pre-established relationships between the OCs members and the members within the corporate community play in gaining sponsor/corporate support?

c. How does leadership influence the event's promotion to stakeholders and their desire to associate themselves with the event?

9. What are your thoughts around the importance of internet marketing communication in terms of:

- a. Providing relevant information (event logistics, ticket procurement, event schedule, entertainment opportunities, parking, weather)
- b. Providing images and multimedia to promote and attract individuals to the event (sponsors & spectators)
- c. Did the organization have a web site before the event in 2008?

10. What are your thoughts around the importance of including other, minor events, such as concerts, into the overall sporting event?

11. How was return on investment measured by the OC and stakeholders?

12. What would you recommend for the leadership and sponsorship of future similar events?

13. Is there anything else you would like to mention, anything that I should have asked but did not?

8.2 Interview Guide for Stakeholders

1. What was your role in relation to the Alberta World Cup in 2008?

- i. Follow-up: Which involved?
- ii. For how long have you been involved in this type of event?
- iii. What was / is your motivation /reason behind this?

2. How do you perceive the position of the sport and the World Cup in Canada?

3. How did you learn about the event and its organizing committee?

- a. Who initiated contact?

4. In your opinion, who was/were the leader(s) in the event?

- a. If more than one person identified in each: Do you think it is a problem or an advantage to have more than one person as leader of an organizing committee? Why?
- b. What aspects (traits, skills, qualities, etc.) do you consider as part of leadership?

5. How did leadership through the organizing committee influence

- a. The relationship with you as a stakeholder
- b. Your perceived outcome of the sporting event

6. Name 3 words that come to mind when you think of the image and reputation of the Alberta World Cup (regarding organizers, the event itself, its audience).

- a. Would you distinguish between image and reputation?
- b. What do you believe differentiates the event from its competitors?
- c. How would you define a brand?
- d. When would you say the official event brand got unveiled?

7. As a stakeholder, were you aware of the organizing committee's vision? Mission? Values? How did this have an impact on your perception of the event?
 - a. What was the importance of the leader(s) in creating your perceptions?

8. What are some challenges for an organizing committee when creating a brand? What would you recommend to solve these?
 - a. Do you consider the organizing committee for a World Cup event as an enduring and stable organization or temporary organization, and why?
 - b. In which aspects would you say branding a World Cup event would differ from the branding of one-off event, such as World Championships?

9. What role(s) did pre-established relationships between you and the organizing committee members play in gaining your (subjective) support of the events?
 - a. Did leadership influence your desire as the overarching stakeholder to be associated with the event? How? How come not?

10. Communication is often singled out as a key factor in branding. What are your thoughts around the importance of internet marketing communication in terms of:
 - a. Providing relevant information (event logistics, ticket procurement, event schedule, entertainment opportunities, parking, weather)
 - b. Providing images and multimedia to promote and attract individuals to the event (sponsors & spectators)
 - c. Were you familiar with the organizers' web site before the event?

11. What are your thoughts around the importance of including other, minor events, such as concerts, breakfast tents etc., into the overall sporting event?

12. What recommendations would you give to future sport organizing committees in relation to branding initiatives?

13. Is there anything else that you would like to mention, or anything that I should have asked but did not?

Table 1

An overview of the Alberta World Cup and World Cup Drammen.

	Alberta World Cup	World Cup Drammen
Initiative to host	Raise awareness of the sport Create home court advantage	Pilot project first time Enhance city reputation
Event record per 2010	3 in total	7 in total
Race format 2008	Interval start, pursuit and sprint (classic and freestyle)	Sprint (classic)
Size of OC	9 individuals	10 individuals
Volunteer base	About 350 people	About 400 people
Spectator estimate	About 7,000	About 25,000
Spectator groups	Fans	Fans and entertainment seekers
Event type (setting)	Traditional, scenery based	Urban, city based
Media coverage	Minimal domestic exposure	Live domestic exposure
Marketing actions	Word-of-mouth and community awareness	Promotional initiatives

Table 2

Interviewee position and interview method.

Event	Position	Interviewee	Method
Alberta World Cup	OC top management	Official Chair	In-person
		Chief of Competition	In-person
	OC middle management	Chief of Competition Secretary	In-person
		Chief of Stadium	In-person
		Chief of Timing	In-person
OC lower management	Coordinator of Volunteers	In-person	
Stakeholder	CCC Marketing Director	In-person	
	External Marketing Director	Skype	
World Cup Drammen	OC top management	President	In-person
		Chief of Competition	In-person
		Chief of Marketing and Finance	In-person
	OC middle management	Chief Secretary	In-person
Stakeholder	NSF Representative	In-person	
	Sponsor	In-person	
Both Events	Stakeholder	FIS Race Director	In-person

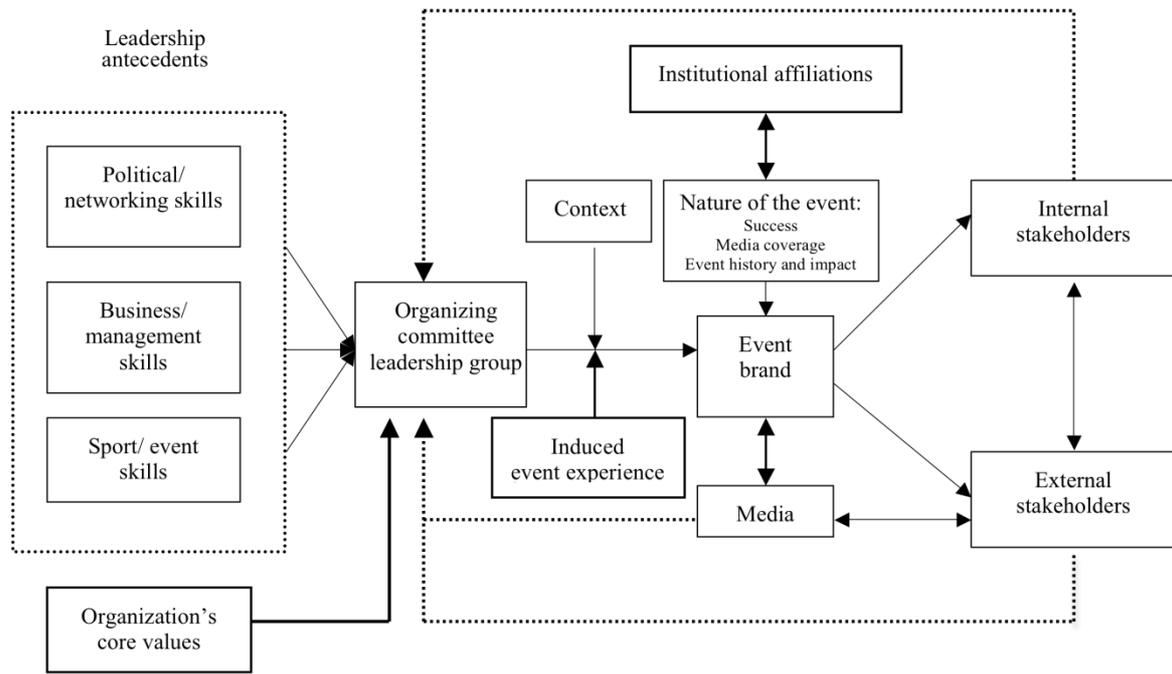
Table 3

Value-based perceptions among OC members and stakeholders.

Event	Value base	Perceived by OC members	Perceived by stakeholders
Alberta World Cup	Vision/mission	Desire to bring future World Cup to Canada	Run World Cups for a long time
		Raise the visibility of the sport	Allow Canadian skiers to excel at an international stage
	Core values	High standard of execution and commitment to the Western brand	
	Image	Exceptional standard, exceptional scenery and Western	Well-organized, mountains, and Western style
World Cup Drammen	Vision/Mission	Create a folk festival and enhance the city reputation	Create atmosphere
	Core values	Professionalism, financial soberness, and bring resources to the club	
	Image	Folk festival, well-organized and city pride	Lots of spectators, professional, and important part of the city's development

Figure Caption

Figure 1: Brand creation model for international recurring sports events.



Legend

- ▶ Impact on
-▶ Feedback