



SportBusiness International's monthly take on the 20 most influential people or companies within specific sectors of sport...

THE WORLD'S 20 MOST INFLUENTIAL SPONSORS

Modern sports would not be possible without these companies and some of these brands would not be where they are without sports. SportBusiness names the sponsors that continue to shape the way we follow our sports even after the worst recession in 80 years.

Coca-Cola

Long-term deals with FIFA and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) guarantee Coca-Cola a massive global sporting platform every two years. And in World Cup years like 2010, there's extra exposure through the Winter Olympics. After February's Vancouver Games, Coca-Cola turned its communication efforts to its biggest-ever World Cup marketing campaign, rolled out in around 170 countries. The company is also a partner of the inaugural Singapore Youth Olympics and the Delhi Commonwealth Games this year and earlier this year signed a deal with UEFA worth \$17.5m, extending its involvement to include Euros 2012 and 2016.

Nike

The leading sportswear brand was not a FIFA World Cup official sponsor, but grabbed the largest chunk of the buzz leading up to the tournament with the Hollywood-style TV ad 'Write the Future'. Directed by Academy Award-nominee Alejandro González Iñárritu and starring some of the world's top (Nike-sponsored) footballers, the film broke viral records on the internet with 7.8m views. The brand also pulled off another advertising coup by dressing up a skyscraper in downtown Johannesburg, South Africa, with a giant interactive LED screen displaying real-time support messages posted on social networks.

McDonald's

With a similar global reach and awareness, McDonald's pursues much the same sponsorship strategy as Coca-Cola. A partner of the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup, McDonald's also renewed its sponsorship of the European Championship this year, a partnership that dates back to 1992. The deal for the 2012 and 2016 editions also covers a series of other UEFA competitions and includes integrated broadcast sponsorship rights.

adidas

Adidas' \$70m, 10-year deal with French Ligue 1 club Lyon and the extension of its agreement with UEFA for the European Championship ensure the apparel brand will continue to be one of the world's top sports sponsors in the coming years. But it's adidas' partnership with FIFA that has kept the company in the headlines this year. Its viral World Cup 'Star Wars' campaign and controversy over the official Jabulani ball meant the brand captured the highest share of online buzz by the end of the second week of the tournament.

Barclays

The Premier League's international reach ensures many outside the UK are familiar with its title sponsor. And the bank's agreement to increase the fee it paid England's top-flight clubs from £65.8m to £82.25m over the next three-season period, suggests the deal offers value for money. Barclays is also anxiously waiting for the opening of the NBA team New Jersey Nets' new home in 2012, having reportedly spent \$400m for its naming rights over 20 years. Also in the US, the British financial company will take over NFL's credit card sponsorship from Bank of America as of September.

Anheuser-Busch InBev

Through its Budweiser brand, Anheuser-Busch has been a long-standing partner of the FIFA World Cup. But the South Africa edition was the first after the US brewery was acquired by Belgium-based multinational InBev and, with a larger portfolio, the company broke the Budweiser "exclusivity" to target specific markets by using the tournament as a platform to advertise brands like Brazilian beer Brahma. During the World Cup it also emerged that AB InBev was conducting an audit to assess the 300 sports sponsorship agreements it has. InBev's not looking to cut expenditure, just how to spend it better, so expect

to see the company in the top 20 again next year.

PUMA

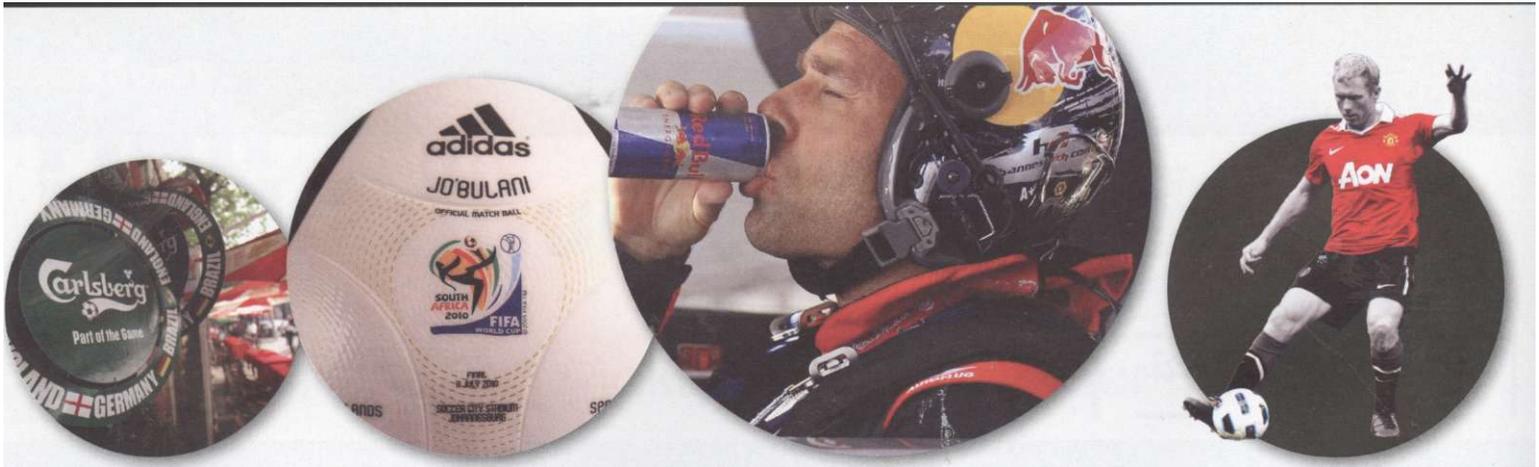
Long-associated with Africa due to its links with 12 football federations (see pp. 16-17) - this year's World Cup in South Africa was always going to be the perfect stage for the sportswear brand. But the company didn't stop there and is also striving to get the most out of its relationship with Usain Bolt, the PUMA-endorsed Jamaican sprinter who is one of the most-celebrated athletes of the age. PUMA is using the Olympic champion to promote its new 'Animagical' fragrance and has launched a Bolt-designed clothing line.

Procter & Gamble

When some of the big guns were withdrawing their sports sponsorship commitments last year, Procter & Gamble went in the opposite direction and threw serious money at a number of valuable properties. Applying what it learned in the five years since acquiring Gillette - a lifelong partner of the Major League Baseball and sponsor of several other sports - the consumer goods manufacturer tied a series of high-profile deals, including a \$15m agreement with the US Olympic Committee for the 2010 Winter Games and the 2012 London Olympics. A similar contract with the National Football League was also signed to guarantee exposure for several of the company's brands.

Staples

Long term commitment is supposed to give Naming rights deals a better chance of succeeding. But office supply chain store Staples took it to another level last year when it signed what was said to be the first lifetime deal of this kind. The company has named the Staples Center, home of NBAs Los Angeles Lakers and NHL's Los Angeles Kings, since its opening in 1999, initially paying owner AEG\$116m for a 20-year contract.



In 2009, it chose to use a tenth year option to extend the deal forever for a further \$100m.

AON

The US financial giant looked at the results insurance company AIG had achieved through sponsoring English Premier League club Manchester United and liked what it saw. When AIG, badly affected by the credit crunch and bailed out by the American government, decided not to renew the partnership, AON stepped in and paid the all-time record fee for a football shirt deal - £80m over four years. AIG wanted to take advantage of United's massive fan base in Asia to further its presence in this market - AON will take note of that - but both club and new sponsor will walk hand in hand in the US, a region that United hopes to dominate and where AON wants to attract more customers.

Mercedes-Benz

The German automaker's withdrawal from the ATP Tour after an 11-year partnership did not indicate Mercedes was trimming down its involvement with sport. Since the end of its relationship with the ATP, Mercedes has bought 2009 Formula One championship winning team Brawn F1 and inked the first naming rights deal for a Chinese arena. For an estimated \$150m, Mercedes will name a venue built in Shanghai by entertainment firm AEG in collaboration with the National Basketball Association for ten years.

Visa

For years credit card companies Visa and MasterCard shared the two biggest international sporting events, with the former partnering the Olympics and the latter sponsoring the FIFA World Cup. It all changed in 2006, when Visa ousted MasterCard from the World Cup by striking a deal for the 2010 and 2014 editions, paying an estimated \$150m over eight years. The benefits of being the exclusive credit card at World Cup venues was evident when

figures showed foreign Visa card spending in the build-up and during this year's World Cup was up 70 per cent on the same period in 2009, reaching \$312m.

Pepsi

The beverage multinational was one of the three non-World Cup affiliated companies to appear among the top 10 brands with the highest share of online buzz in a study by NM Incite covering the first two weeks of the tournament. Pepsi might not be a FIFA official sponsor, but spent considerable sums signing endorsement deals with top-footballers Lionel Messi, Thierry Henry, Kaká, Frank Lampard, Andrei Arshavin and Didier Drogba, who featured at the brand's World Cup television ad campaign. Pepsi also supports teams and leagues, having sealed recent agreements with the US Major Leagues in Baseball and Soccer, additionally paying \$8m to be a cornerstone sponsor at the New York Giants' new stadium.

Samsung

In 2010, the South Korea-based conglomerate reinforced its association with the Olympic movement - of which it is a TOP partner at least until 2016 - by launching a Winter Olympic Games phone app and viral campaign, and setting up a pavilion in Vancouver. In addition, it signed agreements to sponsor the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay and the inaugural Youth Olympics in Singapore, as well as the Indian team at the Asian Games. Football was not cast aside, though, and Samsung renewed its shirt sponsorship with English Premier League club Chelsea and supported the Africa Cup of Nations in Angola.

Carlsberg

The Danish brewer may have failed to renew its shirt sponsorship with English Premier League club Liverpool, but kept the ball rolling by signing with UEFA as an official sponsor of the European Championship for the seventh

consecutive edition in 2012.

Carlsberg supports a number of national football teams (including England), clubs and competitions, maintaining an involvement with football that dates back to over 30 years and that. Carlsberg rubbed shoulders with Nike and Pepsi as the only non-World Cup affiliated brands to be among the top 10 companies with the highest share of online buzz in the first two weeks of the World Cup, according to NM Incite.

Volkswagen

The German carmaker is gradually building up a sports property portfolio that follows the recipe set by the major players in the industry, focusing on football and Olympics. Besides German Bundesliga team Wolfsburg, which the company owns, it has struck deals with Bundesliga contender Werder Bremen, the Brazilian football association, the North American Major League Soccer and the Swiss Cup. Olympic-sponsorship was covered by an agreement with the organising committee for the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games.

MasterCard

The credit card giant refused to go down without a fight after its FIFA deal ended and it was replaced by rivals Visa in 2006. After a year-long legal battle, the company and the governing body eventually reached a \$90m settlement and MasterCard has been using this cash to diversify its sponsorship strategy ever since. It has spent on golf (the Champions Tour PGA tournament in Hawaii, the European Tour and the Dubai Desert Classic), rugby union (the 2011 World Cup in New Zealand and the UK-based Barbarians team), tennis (the Australian Open), basketball (the Baltic league) and football's Saudi Premier League.

bwin

The Austrian-based gambling operator has led the peloton of betting companies as sports sponsors, having teamed up with Spanish La Liga club Real Madrid

and Dorna Sports, the organisers of MotoGP. Previous partnerships included Italian Serie A team AC Milan; German Bundesliga sides Borussia Dortmund, Werder Bremen and Bayern Munich; English Premier League giants Manchester United; Argentinean Primera Division club Boca Juniors and the Portuguese Liga. Its recent master stroke was a \$10m naming rights deal with Italy's Serie B, to be rebranded Serie Bwin for the next two seasons.

Emirates

A €60m agreement with Italian Serie A club AC Milan for the next four seasons means Spain is now the only one of Europe's top five leagues not to have a team sporting the Dubai-based airline's logo. The company supports Hamburg in the German Bundesliga. Paris Saint-Germain in the French Ligue 1 and English Premier League's Arsenal has both the Emirates shirt sponsorship and a naming rights for its stadium. But the situation might change soon, as chief executive Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed al-Maktoum hinted at a partnership in Spain as a possible promotional strategy for the company's new flights to the country. Emirates said its sponsorship of this year's World Cup was "worth every cent" and it is hoping for the same result at the 2011 Rugby World Cup.

Red Bull

The energy drink brand's approach is innovative, versatile and fresh. If it can't find an ideal property, it creates one. Five years after acquiring the Jaguar F1 team and renaming it Red Bull Racing, the team is well in contention for both the drivers' and constructors' championships in 2010. Four years after buying the MLS franchise MetroStars and turning it into the New York Red Bull, the franchise is now primed for a dream season, having signed Thierry Henry and opened a brand new 25,000-seater stadium, the Red Bull Arena.