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# Supporters or Customers? Fandom, Marketing and the Political Economy of Dutch Football

Joke Oppenhuizen and Liesbet van Zoonen

*In this essay we examine how Dutch football supporters perceive their clubs in terms of social and cultural values. This question is framed in the context of the financial predicaments of Dutch football that have forced clubs, among other things, to adopt commercial branding strategies to generate more income. With values being a core element of branding, supporters' perception of their clubs' values is vital to the acceptance and success of these strategies. Our data from a survey among 365 Dutch supporters of different clubs show that supporters hardly differ in terms of their own individual value patterns. In terms of how they perceive their clubs, supporters of the big top clubs differ significantly from supporters of smaller, average clubs: the former value success and tradition for their clubs, whereas the latter appreciate the sociability and leisure associated with their clubs. We conclude that the relative lack of variability in the value associations of supporters of small clubs will limit their successful deployment of branding strategies and we discuss these outcomes in the context of the political economy of the sector as a whole.*

## Introduction

In this essay we examine how Dutch football supporters perceive their clubs in terms of social and cultural values. This question is framed in the context of the changing political economy of the sector, which has produced enormous financial predicaments, in particular for smaller regional teams. Most Dutch football clubs are in a tight financial corner and have been forced to develop commercial strategies to generate more income. Yet, most supporters prefer not to discuss their clubs in terms of commercial strategies. They tend to believe that football discussions should be about victory and defeat on the pitch, about sports values instead of economic values like financial profit and loss. According to King, the economic transformation of football

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has led many clubs to think of their grass roots not as 'supporters' but as 'customers'. [1] When supporters are treated in this way, the fans' relationship with the club changes from a social and emotional tie into a purely economic one. According to both King and Lee, this generates one of the biggest tensions in today's professional football. [2] One well-known example is the conflict between Manchester United and its supporters about the proposed sale of the club to media tycoon Rupert Murdoch. Protests from the fans and other pressure groups forced the British government to block the takeover. [3] But supporters are rarely that successful. When Amsterdam football club Ajax sold star player Zlatan Ibrahimovic to Juventus in 2004, the board was overjoyed but the fans were not. They claimed that the sale was one cause of Ajax' collapse in the 2004–2005 season, whereas the club directors were pleased to be able to close the financial year in the black. One of the ways in which the supporters expressed their criticism was a parody on the club's joint promotional campaign with its main sponsor, ABN-AMRO bank. On a number of fan-run websites, the slogan 'Het begint met ambitie' (It starts with ambition) was changed to 'Het begint met geld' (It starts with money).

The tension between commercial discourse ('customer') and sports discourse ('supporter') is a result of the changed political economy of professional football. Although it looks like big business, football as a whole is not. The sensational transfer



Figure 1 Supporter protest.

fees and huge sums paid for television rights have created a widespread impression that the professional game is an incredibly healthy business that should be subject to normal economic regulation. In fact, however, only a handful of top international clubs can really budget in millions of pounds and euros – and many of them are reliant upon flows of capital from wealthy owners; people like Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi (AC Milan), Russian tycoon Roman Abramovich (Chelsea) or Thailand's prime minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, who recently tried to buy 30 per cent of the shares in Liverpool FC for the Thai people. The greater part of professional football clubs lack the support of such millionaires and have to lead a far more modest existence. The majority of those in the Dutch premier league ('Eredivisie') and first division have trouble achieving the balanced books they need to retain their playing licence from the Royal Netherlands Football Association (KNVB). The local and provincial government support, which they once found relatively easy to obtain, has been cut off by European legislation that defines it in breach of free market conditions. So, more than ever before, PFCs have been forced to find alternative sources of income. One of these is often thought to come from brand strategies that position clubs as products in the commercial marketplace.[4]

### **Football Brands and Supporter Values**

For the Dutch PFCs too, branding has become the magic word of 2005.[5] Transforming the club name into a strong brand has become regarded as an essential precondition for sound financial management. A strong brand attracts sponsors, bonds supporters and provides free publicity. Only Ajax and Feyenoord, two traditional Dutch top teams, have so far succeeded in developing promising branding strategies, according to commercial experts, and adapted their internal and external communications accordingly.[6] Both, for example, collaborate with their main sponsors on external communications and make sure that they are conveying the same values. For both Ajax and ABN-AMRO, the key notion is 'ambition'. At Feyenoord and its main sponsor, Fortis (another banking group), the word is 'decisiveness'.[7] Other Dutch PFCs are trying to work with the strategies of commercial communication but often fail the resources. Many of them have somebody who looks after press contacts – although not always on a full-time basis – but not someone to organize their internal and external communications. Most have only enough money to fund a small office staff, relying on volunteers to do much of the work.

Another problem of branding strategies is that they are often simply seen in terms of making more money, without articulating 'branding' with the wider identity and fan constituency of the club. Thus, in Dutch football too, so-called 'modern' branding strategies have estranged traditional fans, with the tension between commercial discourse and sports discourse reaching breaking point. That happened, for instance, to Ajax in the late 1990s at the time of its stock-market flotation and move to a new stadium, the Amsterdam Arena. The club's positioning at the time, as a commercial business providing entertainment for all the family, alienated its traditional supporters which, after some time, forced Ajax to fall back on its image as a traditional Amsterdam

football club. Although business operations did not change, communication did. The club gave its most fanatical group of supporters, known as the 'F-side', its own section of the stands again – as at the old ground – and allowed graffiti in the stadium. And a former player who supposedly would better symbolize the traditional 'Ajax feeling' replaced a chairman with no background in football.

To achieve a successful brand strategy in football, then, it is essential that the communications about the club ('the brand') match the supporters' experience of the team. Marketing research has shown that social and cultural values are key to product differentiation.[8] Consumers have been seen to base their preferences for many types of products and brands on the basis of such value distinctions.[9] Outside of the commercial product sector, values have also been identified as distinctive to, for instance, audiences and readers. Studies have looked at the way television programmes and channels use values to position themselves among the many available alternatives.[10] In the magazine market, values also are major mechanisms to brand particular titles and sustain communities of readers.[11] Values are similarly important to the branding of Dutch football clubs. As we have mentioned, Dutch top clubs use values to position themselves, with Ajax' core value being 'ambition' and Feyenoord's 'decisiveness'. Also, various international studies show that 'tradition' is a key value for supporters in their experience of a club. Any change to a logo, strip, stadium or name invariably leads to fan revolts.[12] Thus, if football clubs want to use branding in a way consonant with their supporters' expectations, that gives rise to three questions: What are the values of their supporters? What values do these supporters ascribe to their club? What is the relationship between personal values and the values supporters ascribe to their clubs?

This study examines these questions on the basis of a survey among 365 supporters of seven Dutch professional clubs, three of them consistently ranking in the top and subtop of the *Eredivisie* (the Dutch premier league), four other ones historically struggling for sportive and financial viability (see Table 2 for details). More specifically, the following research questions are posed.





- RQ1: What values do football supporters find important in their own lives?
- RQ2: What values do football supporters ascribe to their club?
- RQ3: What is the relationship between personal values and the values supporters ascribe to their clubs?

The answers to these questions are discussed in terms the potential of branding strategies for different kinds of clubs, and the consequences for the political economy of the Dutch sector as a whole.

## Method

The research questions have been answered by using the WaardenMonitor (Value Monitor). This measurement instrument was developed in cooperation with the Dutch magazine publisher VNU/SANOMA and is based upon research conducted by Oppenhuisen.[13] It works with six value dimensions that were compiled from an iteration of

**Table 1** Value Dimensions of Value Monitor

	BONDING (+)		(-) FREEDOM
1	Relationship		Achievement
2	Social orientation		Individual orientation
3	Traditional values		Leisure values
4	Security		Challenges
5	Family life		Independence
6	Conformism		Going your own way

qualitative and quantitative analyses of people's statements concerning everyday values (see Appendix 1 for extensive description). The six established dimensions have been shown to adequately summarize people's understanding and assessment of everyday social and cultural values. All six value dimensions reach from a pole of 'bonding' values on the one hand to 'freedom' values on the other.

The *relationship* – *achievement* dimension contrasts family and peer relations with ambitions and advancement. The *social* – *individual* dimension covers the distinction between finding care for others important or caring for oneself and one's own health. *Traditional* versus *leisure* values are about social standing and status on the one hand and enjoying oneself and relaxation on the other. *Security* and *challenges* involve a desire for (material) safety against seeking challenges and boundaries. *Family life* in terms of having children is in opposition with *independence*, understood as doing what you want without the interference of others. And finally, the sixth value dimension maps the contrast between *conformism* and *going your own way*. This Value Monitor has been tested intensively and successfully applied to studies of the branding of magazines and television channels.[14]

In the research field, the Monitor consists of a questionnaire divided into sections asking about values, and sections registering background values. In the value parts the respondents in our study were asked to indicate, on a ten-point scale, how important each of 48 values, which belong to the six dimensions of Table 1, is in their life (see Appendix 1 for detail). After that, these 48 values were listed again and the respondents were asked to mark with an 'x' those that they believe apply to their club. In the background sections, we asked four questions to generate a 'club involvement index', on a 5-point scale, and a number of social and demographic details. The surveys were conducted by students of Communication Science of the University of Amsterdam as part of the preparatory work for their Master theses. They found respondents at stadium exits, in supporters' homes and through supporters' associations. The research covered 365 supporters of seven clubs (see Table 2). [15]

The results of the survey were analysed through SPSS. Each dimension encompasses four values on the bonding side and four on the freedom side. The scores for the four on each side were added up and then the total for the freedom side subtracted from that for the bonding side. This generated a score for each respondent in each dimension, covering both their personal values and their value associations with the club. A

**Table 2** Clubs Researched and Number of Respondents

(Semi) top clubs	Ajax (150)	Amsterdam-based club. One of the leading three that compete for the national title. Success periods: 1970s with Johan Cruyff, 1995 winner of Champions League, 1996 finalist). Many players in the Dutch national team. Historic rival of Feyenoord.
	Feyenoord (35)	Rotterdam-based club. One of the leading three that compete for the national title. Success periods: early 1970s, 1994 winner of Europe Cup II, 2002 winner of UEFA Cup. Many players in Dutch national team. Historic rival of Ajax.
	Roda JC (44)	Based in Kerkrade, strongest team results in southern part of the Netherlands. Constant presence in Dutch premier league, often among first five. Five times Dutch cup finalist, two times winner. Modest presence in European games.
Regular clubs	Sparta (33)	Rotterdam-based club with a long and strong history (from 1888). 2002 first degradation ever from the premier league, past five years continuous financial problems.
	Excelsior (31)	Small Rotterdam club, commuting between premier league and first division. Financial problems resulted in structural technical cooperation with Feyenoord.
	MVV (34)	Maastricht club, most southern city of the Netherlands. First division club in precarious financial situation. Saved a number of times by funding from the city council.
	Fortuna Sittard (38)	Based in Sittard, south of the Netherlands. Best year 1957, second place in premier league, winner of Dutch cup. Continuous financial crisis.

negative score for any dimension reveals that the respondent attaches more importance to the freedom values and a positive score means that the bonding values are more significant. T-tests were used to assess the differences between the clubs and supporters surveyed.

## Results

Of the 365 respondents 302 (82.7 per cent) were male. Their median age was between 20 and 30 years old; 60 per cent of the respondents were younger than 30. A third of the respondents followed higher education, some 43 per cent had a medium education, while 23 per cent were lower educated.[16] Most of them considered their commitment to their club as high or extremely high, and 59.7 per cent attended more than 16 games of their team. Although there are no statistics about the general profile of Dutch football supporters, the image that they are mostly young men fits with the composition of our respondents group.

### *What Values do Football Supporters find Important in their own Lives?*

Two types of difference can be found in the value patterns of supporters: differences of kind (supporters have contrasting values), or differences of degree (some supporters



**Table 3** Supporters' own Value Patterns

	Bonding/freedom	Ajax	Feye.	Roda	Spart.	Excel.	MVV	Fort.
1	Relationships (+)/ Achievement (-)	1.7	3.7	2.1	1.9	2.9	3.1	2.2
2	Social (+)/ Individual (-)	-2.4	-2.6	-2.3	-2.2	-1.9	-2.0	-2.6
3	Traditional (+)/ Leisure (-)	-2.4	-3.0	-1.7	-2.1	-1.8	-0.9	-1.7
4	Security (+)/ Challenges (-)	-0.6	-1.1	-1.3	-1.9	-1.9	-1.0	-0.9
5	Family (+)/ Independence (-)	2.5 <sup>a</sup>	-1.4 <sup>b</sup>	0.5	-1.6 <sup>b</sup>	0.9	0.0	-1.1 <sup>b</sup>
6	Conformism (+)/ Own way (-)	-2.4 <sup>a</sup>	-5.3 <sup>b</sup>	-1.8 <sup>a,c</sup>	-5.1 <sup>b</sup>	-3.5	-3.7	-2.2

<sup>a, b</sup>Significantly different from the dimension score of the supporters of the other clubs, assessed using Analysis of Variance with Bonferoni test,  $p < 0.05$ . Maximum values: -36 till +36. Reading example: On dimension 6, the scores of the Ajax supporters are similar to the scores of the Roda supporters (both have an 'a' superscript) but different from all the other ones. The scores of the Feyenoord supporters are the same as those of the Sparta-supporters (both have a 'b' superscript), but different from all the other ones. The scores of the Roda supporters are the same as those of the Ajax supporters, but different from those of Feyenoord and Sparta, and the three other groups.

adhere more or less strongly to the same values). Both types of difference are rare when it concerns supporters' own values. Their patterns hardly differ from club to club. Significant differences were observed only on the dimensions of 'family life/freedom' and 'conformity/independence' some (see Table 3).

Table 3 shows that supporters of the seven football clubs do not differ from each other on the first four dimensions: all the supporters value relationships more than achievement in their own lives, as the plus scores on the first dimension in Table 3 indicate. They also consider their personal pleasure (individual orientation) more important than accommodating others (social orientation), which is indicated by the minus scores on the second dimension in Table 3. Similarly, all supporters adhere for themselves more to leisure values than to traditional ones (dimension 3). They also seem to prefer challenges to material security and would rather go their own way than conform (dimension 4). The only significant differences between supporters occur in the fifth dimension *family life – independence*, and in the sixth dimension *conformism – going your own way*. In the dimension *family life – independent* the score of Ajax supporters contrasts sharply with the scores of supporters of Feyenoord, Excelsior and Fortuna because Ajax supporters express support for family life instead of for their own independence. This difference appeared to be related to the Ajax respondents containing more 30 to 40 year olds than the other groups. In the sixth dimension *conformism – going your own way* we find a difference of degree between the supporters of Feyenoord and Sparta who show significantly higher scores than the other supporters in their preference for going their own way. Roda supporters also differ from the other respondents in the relatively low score they give to going your own way. This difference could not be related to differences in background variables.

#### *What Values do Football Supporters Ascribe to their Club?*

There are many more differences between the supporter groups when it comes to the values they ascribe to their own clubs. If we compare the scores on the six value



dimensions, we see that on four out of the six dimensions supporters see different values in their clubs.

On the first dimension of *relationships* versus *achievement*, we see that supporters of Feyenoord and Roda, a top and semi-top club respectively, attribute achievement as a core feature to their club. Ajax supporters are undecided as to whether their club stands for relationships or achievement, while the supporters of the four other clubs see their clubs as representing relationships. Among the latter four there are some differences in degree, rather than in kind.

On dimension 2, no significant differences between the supporters' interpretations of their clubs values were found; they all attribute an *individual* orientation instead of a *social* one to their clubs.

When it comes to the clubs standing for *traditional* or *leisure* values, the scores on dimension 3 show that Feyenoord supporters have the strongest association with their club as representing tradition, followed by the Roda supporters. Ajax supporters are not very outspoken and differ only from Feyenoord. The other four groups associate their clubs with leisure values.

On dimension 4, *security* versus *challenges*, all supporters, with the exception of the Roda ones, attribute challenges to their club. The differences between the supporter groups in this respect, are differences of degree, rather than in kind.

Dimension 5, *family* or *independence* values, did not produce significant differences between supporter groups, nor did the dimension result in very high scores. This suggests that this dimension is not a very relevant one for the way supporters think about their clubs.

The sixth dimension of *conformity* as opposed to *going your own way* also shows differences in degree between supporter groups instead of differences in the kinds of associations. All groups think their club stands for going your own way, but Feyenoord supporters have the strongest associations of them all.

In sum, we can say that dimension 1 (*relationships* – *achievement*) and dimension 3 (*tradition* – *leisure*) evoke contrasting value associations between supporter groups. Feyenoord and Roda supporters clearly attribute achievement and tradition values to their clubs, Ajax supporters resemble them but are not very outspoken, while the

**Table 4** The Supporters' Value Associations with their own Club

	Bonding/freedom	Ajax	Feye.	Roda	Sparta	Excel.	MVV	Fort.
1	Relationships (+)/ Achievement (–)	0.0 <sup>a</sup>	–1.0 <sup>b</sup>	–1.0 <sup>b</sup>	1.0 <sup>c</sup>	0.3 <sup>ac</sup>	1.3 <sup>c</sup>	0.8 <sup>c</sup>
2	Social (+)/ Individual (–)	–2.9	–0.7	–0.3	0.3	–0.6	–0.6	0.1
3	Traditional (+)/ Leisure (–)	0.2 <sup>a</sup>	1.5 <sup>b</sup>	0.9 <sup>ab</sup>	–0.5 <sup>ac</sup>	–0.3 <sup>ac</sup>	–0.4 <sup>ac</sup>	–0.3 <sup>ac</sup>
4	Security (+)/ Challenges (–)	–0.1 <sup>a</sup>	–0.9 <sup>b</sup>	0.1 <sup>ac</sup>	–0.7 <sup>bc</sup>	–0.1 <sup>bc</sup>	–0.9 <sup>b</sup>	–0.4 <sup>bc</sup>
5	Family (+)/ Independence (–)	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.2	–0.2	0.5
6	Conformity (+)/ Own way (–)	–0.3 <sup>a</sup>	–1.4 <sup>b</sup>	0.0 <sup>ac</sup>	–0.7 <sup>abc</sup>	–1.1 <sup>b</sup>	–0.8 <sup>abc</sup>	–0.3 <sup>ac</sup>

<sup>a</sup>, <sup>b</sup>, <sup>c</sup>Significantly different from the dimension score of the supporters of the other clubs, assessed using Analysis of Variance with Bonferoni test,  $p < 0.05$ . Maxim values: +4 till –4.

supporters of the more average teams ascribe relationship and leisure values to them. Dimension 4 (*security – challenge*) and dimension 6 (*conformity – going your own way*) produce differences in the intensity but not in the kind of associations that supporters have with their clubs, although both Ajax and Roda supporters do not score very clearly. All other supporter groups definitely associate their clubs with seeking challenges and going your own way, with Feyenoord evoking the highest scores among its supporters.

If we look at Table 4 to find out which value dimensions induces the highest score for the clubs separately, we see that for Ajax this is individualism (–2.9), for Feyenoord it is tradition and going your own way (1.5 and –1.4, respectively), for Roda it is achievement and tradition (–1.0 and 1.0 respectively), for Sparta, MVV and Fortuna it is relationships (1.0, 1.3, 0.8) and for Excelsior it is going your own way (–1.1). In more general terms, we see that the (semi) top clubs, Ajax, Feyenoord and Roda, call forth images of tradition and achievement, while the average clubs, Sparta, MVV, Fortuna, conjure up ideas of relationships and leisure.

Table 4 also shows that Feyenoord is the club whose supporters most often differ from the other supportersgroups: out of a maximum number of differences of 36 (6 dimensions  $\times$  6 clubs), Feyenoord supporters diverge 15 times from the other supportergroups, Roda is second with 13 differences, then come Ajax (10), Excelsior, Fortuna, MVV (6 each) and Sparta (5). Feyenoord thus evokes the most particular associations among its supporters of the seven clubs researched here. As for the question which supporters differ most often from each other in the way they perceive their club, these are Feyenoord and Ajax supporters: they show significant differences in four out of six of the dimensions: Table 4 shows that Feyenoord supporters do not associate their club with different values as much as the Ajax fans, but that their associations are much stronger.

#### *What is the Relationship between Personal Values and Club Value Associations?*

No statistically significant relationships were found between the values supporters find important in their own lives, and those they ascribe to their club.

### **Discussion**

We have found almost no differences between the value patterns of the supporters of the clubs surveyed, but there are significant differences between the values they associate with their clubs. The supporters of the (semi) top clubs primarily associate their clubs with achievement and traditional values, whereas the others think of their clubs in terms of relationships and leisure values. Feyenoord fans are the most clear-cut in ascribing associations to their club, especially tradition, and differ most often from Ajax supporters – albeit only in the intensity of the value associations and not in the direction of them. There are no contrasts in the perception of top teams and the average clubs with regard to individual orientation, seeking challenges and going your own way, merely differences in intensity of the association.

If we feed these findings back into the original discussion about the significance and potential of brand strategy for professional football clubs, then we have to conclude

that branding is most likely to succeed for the semi (top) clubs Ajax, Feyenoord and Roda JC. This is because they alone seem to evoke a unique value experience among their supporters that distinguishes them from other clubs. Of these three clubs, Ajax and Feyenoord have been working on their branding for some time. This leaves the question whether it has been possible to create a strong brand because of intense supporter bonding with the club and its strong sports position and tradition, or is it the strong brand strategy, which has resulted in supporters of these clubs ascribing clear-cut and unique values to them?

The smaller, average clubs seem in a more difficult position when it comes to transforming themselves into brands. All the supporter groups of these teams rank the value set 'relationships' highest for their club (with the exception of Excelsior). Therefore, these clubs will have fewer opportunities to distinguish themselves from other clubs on the basis of a unique value set. Clubs like Excelsior and Sparta differ little in the values they evoke, and are operating in the same market (Rotterdam). The same applies to MVV and Fortuna Sittard, both of which serve the same region, the south of Limburg. The fact that, none the less, differences between these clubs are often deeply felt may therefore have more to do with geographical location and historical sentiment than any real difference in value associations. In terms of brand strategy, such a local and historical positioning does provide a clear means of identification but at the same time it automatically restricts the club's appeal to a relatively small local market. In Dutch football, there is only one team whose specifically regional character and positioning has enabled it to attract national popularity: Heerenveen in Friesland – 'everybody's second favourite club'.<sup>[17]</sup> Most local clubs, though, are not large enough to give their club a national image.<sup>[18]</sup> As this study suggests, to extend the local market, a brand strategy based upon unique value evocations is not likely to succeed because these clubs do not seem to evoke distinct values. Other means will have to be found.

For the financial viability of the football sector as a whole, our conclusion is relatively bleak: as we discussed in the beginning, an all-out commercial branding strategy will always be contained by supporters' sentiments who feel such commercial discourse is opposed to soccer goals and interests. Within these general confines, branding only has a reasonably good chance of success for those clubs which are already in a fairly strong position. The smaller clubs seem to lack both the unique image and the financial resources needed to build a strong brand. As a result, the incorporation of branding strategies as promoted by the Dutch soccer association might have a counterproductive effect by reproducing and fortifying existing financial inequalities in the sector.

## Notes

- [1] King, 'New directors, customers and fans'.
- [2] Ibid.; Lee, 'Grey shirts to grey suits'.
- [3] Brown and Walsh, *Not for Sale*.
- [4] Pierpoint, 'Heads above water'.
- [5] For example, KNVB, *Beleidsplan Betaald Voetbal 2005*.

- [6] De Bruin, 'Branding in het betaald voetbal'.
- [7] Ajax/ABN AMRO: 'It starts with ambition'. Feyenoord/Fortis: 'All good decisions have one thing in common – they are taken at the right moment'.
- [8] Van Raay and Antonides, *Consumentengedrag*.
- [9] For example, Reynolds and Gutman, 'Laddering Theory, Method, Analysis and Interpretation'; Gutman, 'A Means-end Chain Model Based on Consumer Categorisation Processes'; Vinson, Scott and Lamont, 'The Role of Personal Values in Marketing and Consumer Behavior'.
- [10] For example, Ellis, 'Scheduling: The Last Creative Act in Television?'; Oppenhuizen, 'De kijker ziet het verschil, is de zenderprofilering hiermee een feit?'; Spangenberg *et al.*, *Socioconsult, Publiksonderzoek Zenderprofilering NOS Kijk- en luisteronderzoek*.
- [11] For example, Oppenhuizen, *Een schaap in de bus? Een onderzoek naar waarden van de Nederlander*.
- [12] See Brown and Walsh, 1999.
- [13] Oppenhuizen, *Een schaap in de bus? Een onderzoek naar waarden van de Nederlander*.
- [14] Ibid. Oppenhuizen, 'De kijker ziet het verschil, is de zenderprofilering hiermee een feit?'.
- [15] The selection of clubs is neither exhaustive nor representative, since the students were allowed to formulate their own questions and follow their own preferences within the context of working with the Value Monitor. The club selections are therefore the result of the following specific Master's dissertation topics:
  - *What values bond or divide the professional football clubs in Limburg* (Roda JC in Kerkrade, Fortuna in Sittard and MVV in Maastricht)? (Hut, 2004.)
  - *What values bond or divide the professional football clubs in Rotterdam* (Feyenoord, Sparta and Excelsior)? (Van der Zouwen, 2004.)
  - *What values bond or divide Ajax and its partners* (sponsor, city, stadium)? (Van der Eijden, 2004.)
- [16] We categorized the Dutch data into 'Higher education' involving academic and professional studies; medium containing atheneum, gymnasium and advanced vocational training; 'lower' referring to high school and vocational training.
- [17] Pijffers, *Het Heerenveengevoel*.
- [18] See Perkins, 2002.

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## Appendix 1 Methodological Detail

The Value Monitor is based upon research conducted by Oppenhuizen (2000). She first interviewed 20 typical Dutch people, covering 22 different events that occur in most daily lives. These events were presented to the respondents using photographs and then further clarified with additional questions. For example, respondents were asked 'Why do people want children?', 'Why do people send their children to school?', 'Why do people go on holiday?' and so on. The interviews were transcribed and values appearing in the interviews were identified, based upon the definition of a 'value' as 'a state or way of behaving that people strive to achieve' (Oppenhuizen, 2000, p.87). This produced a total of 1,372 different values, which could be brought back to a final list

Dimension	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Bonding</i>	<b>Relationships</b> Close friendship Having family ties Having a partner Companionship Having ambitions Professionalism Advancement Achievement	<b>Social orientation</b> Listening to someone Being responsible Considering others Being helpful Enjoyment Being carefree Having fun Being healthy	<b>Traditional values</b> National pride Being esteemed Being proud of yourself Proving yourself Enjoying yourself Being creative Being relaxed Having time	<b>Security</b> Feeling safe Owning possessions Security Feeling secure Challenges Being spontaneous Seeking your boundaries Having an opinion	<b>Family life</b> Having children Consideration Caring for others Shaping someone Being alone (voluntarily) Freedom Doing what you want Having no problems	<b>Conformity</b> Life as it should be Being liked Status Courtesy Having ideals Not conforming Having fighting spirit Believing in yourself
<i>Freedom</i>	<b>Achievement</b>	<b>Individual orientation</b>	<b>Leisure values</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Independence</b>	<b>Going your own way</b>

of 160. These were then presented in pairs to a panel of just over 2000 people, who were asked to mark – on a 10-point scale – the extent to which each pair corresponded or differed. These differentials were placed in a matrix and subjected to principal component analysis (PCA). That revealed six distinct dimensions:

The monitor consists of a questionnaire divided into a number of sections. In the first part the respondent is asked to indicate, on a ten-point scale, how important each of the 48 values is in their life. After that, the 48 values were listed again and the respondent was asked to mark with an 'x' those that they believe apply to their club. Each dimension encompasses four values on the bonding side and four on the freedom side. The scores for the four on each side were added up and then the total for the freedom side subtracted from that for the bonding side. This generated a score for each respondent in each dimension, covering both their personal values and their value associations with the club. The formula for this calculation is:  $(\omega_1 + \omega_2 + \omega_3 + \omega_4) - (\omega_5 + \omega_6 + \omega_7 + \omega_8)$  = individual score for a dimension, where  $\omega_1$ – $\omega_4$  are the bonding values and  $\omega_5$ – $\omega_8$  are the freedom values. A negative score for any dimension reveals that the respondent attaches more importance to the freedom values and a positive score means that the bonding values are more significant. Averages of the individual dimension scores for each club were then calculated. The dimension scores for the supporter values ranges from –36 till +36 with 0 in the middle, because the maximum score is  $(4 \times 10) - (4 \times 1)$ . The dimension scores for the club values ranges from –4 till +4 with 0 in the middle, because the maximum is  $(4 \times 1) - (4 \times 0)$ .