

Sample solution Exercise 4:

Case Study: Attitude transfer/sponsors of the Snowboard World Cup in Innsbruck

Task #1

Which brand profited more from the sponsorship of the World Cup as regards overall attitude?

To get a visual impression of how overall attitude has changed (with respect to the two brands under consideration), you can see the figures in the MS Excel data file. Below, we describe the differences in effects between attendees and non-attendees.

ATTENDEES:

For **Bogner**, there is a change in the overall attitude among attendees comparing the evaluations before versus after the event ($t_0 = 2.2$, $t_1 = 2.8$, $+0.6$). Using t test, statistics, we can show that the change is significant ($t(299) = -16.7$, $p < .001$). (To calculate the statistics, you may use a statistic software program, such as SPSS, SAS, and R).

For, **Interalpen Hotel Tyrol**, there is a positive change in overall attitude among those who attended the event ($t_0 = 2.3$, $t_1 = 2.6$, $+0.3$). The change is again significant ($t(299) = -9.4$, $p < .001$).

NON-ATTENDEES:

The sponsorship of the Snowboard World Cup did not have any positive effect on the attitudes among non-attendees. For Bogner, there was even a significant negative effect ($t(299) = 5.6$, $p < .001$), while there was no significant change for Interalpen Hotel Tyrol ($t(299) = 1.2$, $p = .23$). You can see the means of the overall attitude ratings in the MS Excel data file.

→ Comparing the results between both sponsors, we can state that Bogner profited more from the sponsorship of the World Cup than Interalpen Hotel Tyrol. (To provide statistical evidence for differences in effects over time between brands and groups, a mixed ANOVA was conducted. ANOVA yields the proposed three-way interaction.)

Task #2

Which of the five associations increased most for each of the two brands?

In what follows next, we first report the results based on an inspection of the diagrams (that you were asked to generate; see MS Excel data file). On the next page, we provide the statistical evidence for the significance of the effects.

BOGNER:

For Bogner, there is a positive change in all five associations, comparing the evaluations before versus after the event. They experienced the largest increase in the association of being a “dynamic” company (+1.2). The attributes “youthful,” “strong,” and “exciting” were evaluated more positively as well, but to a lesser extent (+0.9, +0.4, and +0.3, respectively). There was no change in the attribute “sporty.”

→ One explanation for the strong increase in the association of the company to be “dynamic” could be the nature of the sponsored event, as snowboarding might be associated with the dynamic movement of the contestants.

INTERALPEN HOTEL TYROL:

The greatest change of the associations occurred with regard to the items “exciting” and “dynamic.” Attendees evaluated these associations more positively after the event versus before the event (+0.5 and +0.4, respectively). The association with “sporty” changed only slightly (+0.2). The associations “youthful” and “strong” changed only marginally (+0.1 and +0.1, respectively).

In non-attendees, there was either no change in associations or a decrease in associations with regard to both brands, one exception being the item “strong” with respect to Inter Alpen Hotel Tyrol.

→ To conclude, it was certainly effective for Bogner to sponsor the event as regards attitude transfer, because changes in attendees’ (vs. non-attendees) associations are positive. The greater changes in the individual (as well as overall) associations for Bogner (vs. Inter Alpen Hotel) may have several reasons (e.g., greater level of sponsorship, better activation of the sponsorship – factors that relate to the sponsorship; and fit between the sponsor and the sponsored property – factors that relate to the brand). However, there was also a significant attitude transfer for Inter Alpen Hotel Tyrol. Therefore, the sponsorship of this event helped the company transfer associations from the sponsored property to the brand, and the (overall) attitude towards the brand has changed in a favorable way.

→ Another implication that can be made based on single item analyses is that brands should be most interested in changes of these associations, which the sponsor wants to improve. For example, if the attribute “dynamic” is the most important association for the brand attitude towards Bogner, the sponsorship is proven to be effective.

→ One possible interpretation of the study’s results is that the sponsorship is more effective for Bogner because of a high sponsor-event fit. Task 4 will deal with this question.

STATISTICAL EVIDENCE:

The data can also be analyzed using statistical methods that go beyond descriptive statistics (looking for significant changes in the means of the associations).

Paired t-tests were performed to compare the change in the associations before versus after the event. As a results of the paired t tests, there were significant results for Bogner in the change of the means of the association “dynamic” ($t(299) = -14.2, p < .001$), “youthful ” ($t(299) = -14.6, p < .001$), “exciting” ($t(299) = -6.0, p < .001$), and “strong” ($t(299) = -5.6, p < .001$). The change in means of the “sporty” association (over time) was not significant. With respect to the Inter Alpen Hotel, there was a significant change in the association “dynamic” ($t(299) = -4.8, p < .001$), “exciting” ($t(299) = -8.7, p < .001$), and “sporty” ($t(299) = -3.0, p = .003$).

Again, one may conduct mixed ANOVAs to look at the data in more detail. A 2×2 mixed ANOVA with group as between-subject factor (attendees versus non-attendees) and time and brand as within-subject factors yield more detailed results that are not discussed in further detail here.

Task #3

What are the conclusions for the two sponsors based on the results with regard to both overall attitude and single items?

OVERALL ATTITUDE:

The improvements in overall attitude towards the sponsors can only be seen among attendees (but not in non-attendees) of the event. This means that sponsorship of the specific event can indeed be an effective way to improve brand attitude. In the case of **Bogner**, the sponsorship was particularly important, because the non-participants even downgraded the brand. Potential reasons for a downgrade may be a transgression (e.g., norm violations, such as unethical working conditions for employers in developing countries) that has been made public. The sponsorship helped the brand be perceived in a more positive light by profiting from the associations that consumers had with the sponsored property (and hence the brand). In the case of **Interalpen Hotel Tyrol**, there was no change in brand attitude from the perspective of non-attendees.

SINGLE ITEMS:

Bogner's results suggest that the sponsorship particularly helped Bogner to be perceived more dynamic and more youthful (beside "exciting" and "strong"). For Bogner – as a more traditional brand – this development can mean that younger people will become interested in the brand and will likely become customers. Bogner experienced no increase in the perception of the "sporty" attribute. As Bogner is a sports brand, this could be due to the fact that the brand is already well-known as a sports brand and therefore the association of being "sporty" did not increase as much, although they sponsor a sports event. (Also, the brand may not be as closely related to increasing sports performance compared with other brands.) On the other hand, this might imply that Bogner communicated the association not sufficient enough during the event (as regards other items than the attributes of "youthful," "dynamic," as well as eventually "exciting" and "strong").

The **Interalpen Hotel Tyrol's** results are not as positive as Bogner's results. There are no changes in the associations "youthful" and "strong". The other associations changed positively. If the attitude associations of "youthful" and "strong" are important for the brand's positioning, the brand may focus on these associations in their sponsorship campaign to a larger extent.

Task #4

What would you change in the design and in the survey to answer the question of whether perceived fit between the sponsor and the sponsored entity influenced the results that were found in the study?

To analyze whether perceived fit between the sponsors and the sponsored entity influenced the results, the following changes could be made:

Methods:

- To investigate whether perceived fit influenced the results, this variable has to be included in the study design. For example, interviewees could be asked to rate the perceived fit on a 5-point rating scale. The study should include sponsors with low-fit to the events and a sponsor with a high-fit. (The brands Bogner and Interlpen Hotel Tyrol would then only be considered as a high-fit and low-fit brand, respectively, if there were statistically significant differences in the ratings between the two brands, controlling for potential confounding variables.) In the previous units, we have discussed several options of how to measure fit, and one option may be used in the study (e.g., assessing overall fit, functional or attitude-based fit, etc.).
- To improve the quality of the study, further confounding variables should be taken into account. For example, it could be controlled for whether participants knew the sponsor before the event or not. This is important because effects could be different if individuals have already heard of a brand or not. Also, the study may control for exposure at the event or via the media (that may be different according to the level of sponsorship).