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FACULTY OF HUMAN MOVEMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE
DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

THE PARALYMPIC BRAND AND SPONSORSHIP

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SUMMARY

Marsha-Gaye Knight: Paralympic Brand and Sponsorship

(Under the supervision of Benoit Seguin)

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the Paralympic brand in Canada and how the brand is leveraged by its sponsors and to increase the understanding of the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) as it relates to sponsor activation and motivations to partner with the brand. The aim of the study is to contribute to the body of research on the CPC brand and sponsorship and serves as a source of feedback on the brand from a sponsor perspective. With the growth the Paralympic movement globally, and specifically to this case in Canada, it is valuable to understand what makes the sponsors partner with the CPC and the benefits that they in turn gain from the sponsorship. The specificity of this research is to also focus and highlight best practices of CPC sponsors within the sponsorship landscape in Canada. The research questions that this study seeks to answer are: How is the Paralympic brand perceived in Canada? What are the motivations behind sponsoring the brand? How do sponsors activate around the brand? What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the Paralympic brand? The first question outlines how the Paralympic brand is viewed in Canada from the perspective of the CPC, their sponsors and Paralympians. The second question seeks to understand the reasons and motivations for the sponsors to partner with the CPC brand and how they measure the success of their objectives. The third question provides insight on the different ways in which the partners activate around the Paralympic brand and how it is leveraged for their corporate objectives. The fourth question seeks to evaluate the CPC brand and sponsorship platform to bring to light the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and strengths from the mentioned stakeholders.

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

The Paralympic brand is a developing sporting brand in Canada, it has been carving its niche in the sporting landscape and presenting itself a viable property with unique value to provide to sponsors. As the brand continues to grow and awareness of the Paralympic movement increases, not a lot of research has been conducted on the brand and its sponsorship practices. This thesis serves to provide research and education on the Paralympic Brand and Sponsorship in Canada.

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the Paralympic brand and its use by its sponsors and to increase the understanding of the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) as it relates to the brand and the overall sponsor satisfaction. The study contributes to the body of research on the CPC brand and sponsorship and serves as a source of feedback on the brand from a sponsor perspective. With the growth the Paralympic movement globally, and specifically to this case in Canada, it is valuable to understand what makes the sponsors partner with the CPC and the benefits that they in turn get from the sponsorship.

The literary review provides definitions of the key terms of the research, sponsorship and brand, giving key understandings of the two concepts and how they relate to the study. There is also review of sponsorship in Canada, which provides context on the Canadian sport landscape and practices and motives for Canadian partners to sponsor sport properties and why they find it most lucrative of other sponsorship options. The review continues by showing Olympic Sponsorship highlighting this piece sets the foundation for the Paralympic pivot as it relates to sponsorship and gives the background to sponsorship within the Olympic Movement. Showing how the sponsorship platform is set up and managed on the Olympic side gives a better understanding of the framework for the Paralympic sponsorship platform. The Olympic brand is also reviewed and it is important to note the value of the Olympic brand, what makes it that sought after property internationally and why it is the pinnacle sport brand that many others model. The review then gives the history of the Paralympic movement and how it has developed from its inception in 1948. It then provides insights on the Paralympic sponsorship and brand, what distinguishes it from the Olympic brand, how it has developed over time and how it builds and maintains its brand value to attract sponsors. The review ends with a look at the Paralympic Movement in Canada, the development of the movement, the property value base, the sponsors it has acquired and how the public preserves

the brand. Understanding the Olympic movement and its structures aims to provide context the Paralympic Movement and how its brand and sponsorship platform are similar and also different to that of the Olympic brand.

The research questions that this study seeks to answer are: How is the Paralympic brand perceived in Canada? What are the motivations behind sponsoring the brand? How do sponsors activate around the brand? What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the Paralympic brand? The first question outlines how the Paralympic brand is viewed in Canada from the perspective of the CPC, their sponsors and Paralympians. The second question seeks to understand the reasons and motivations for the sponsors to partner with the CPC brand and how they measure the success of their objectives. The third question provides insight on the different ways in which the partners activate around the Paralympic brand and how it is leveraged for their corporate objectives. The fourth question seeks to evaluate the CPC brand and sponsorship platform to bring to light the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and strengths from the mentioned stakeholders.

CHAPTER II- BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

2.1 What is sponsorship?

According to O'Reilly, Pound, Burton, Burnette & Seguin (2015), the term sponsorship refers to an organization (the sponsor) providing financial contributions (or products or services) to another organization (the sponsee) in exchange for the ability to promote its brands and its target group(s). (p.168)

The focus of this paper is to shed light on the area of sponsorship within the Paralympic movement in Canada and the value it brings to the organization of Canadian Paralympic Committee. According to Lagae (2005), sponsorship is considered to be a business agreement between two parties. The sponsor provides money, goods, services or know-how. In exchange, the sponsored party (individual, event or organization) offers rights and associations that the sponsor utilizes commercially. The idea of reciprocation echoes Sleight, who defines sponsoring as "... a business relationship between a provider of fund, resources or services and an individual, event or organization which offers in return some rights and association that may be used for commercial advantage...". (p.35)

Given that the Paralympic movement is within the realm of sport, there is an understanding that the nature of the sponsorships would be sport sponsorships. According to Lagae (2005), the term "Sport sponsorship" is linked seamlessly to the concept of sponsorship. Sport sponsorship can have different meanings depending on its context. It is "... any commercial agreement by which a sponsor, for the mutual benefit of the sponsor and sponsored party, contractually provides financing or other support in order to establish an association between sponsor's image, brands or products and a sponsorship property in return for rights to promote this association and/or for granting of certain agreed direct or indirect benefits ...," directly or indirectly arising from the playing of sport. Sport sponsorship includes the right to display a brand name and/or company logo on media carrier in a sporting environment. In recent years, sport is the area of sponsorship which has developed the furthest. Depending on the year being studied, the country and the definitions, the share of sports sponsorship within the sponsorship industry lies approximately between 50 and 70% of the total (p.39)

According to O'Reilly & Seguin (2009), the sponsorship of sports organizations is not a new phenomenon. In fact, it can be traced back to the ancient Olympic Games (dating back 3000

years), when wealthy patrons helped athletes in their training and supplied them with proper equipment, including chariots and horses. In return for their contributions to the Olympic Games, these wealthy Greek men gained not only goodwill and enhanced civic standing in the community and the state but also a variety of privilege including the rights to special seats. (p.225)

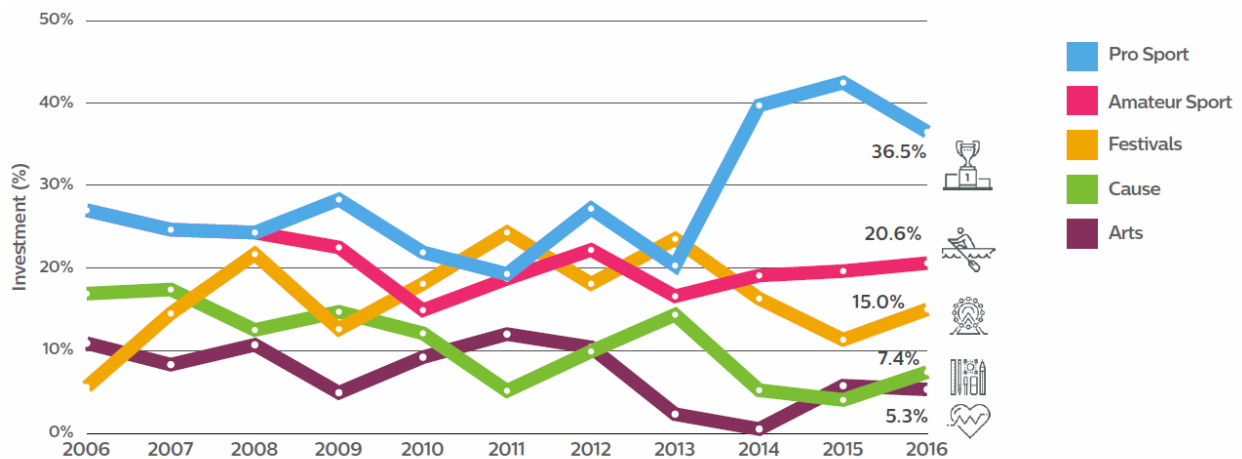
According to O'Reilly & Seguin (2009), there are numerous reasons why corporations choose the route of sport sponsorship to improve and expand their brand relations. Leveraging a sport environment to promote your brand, product or services is less intrusive and places more emphasis on a great experience. One advantage of sponsorship is that it can achieve a number of objectives simultaneously. Most often noted objectives of corporate sponsorship are:

- Identifying the company with a particular market segment
 - Generating media benefits
 - Achieving sales objectives
- Creating a competitive advantage through exclusivity (p.232)

2.1.1 Sponsorship in Canada

Sponsorship in Canada has been a growing platform over the past 15 years with most of the sponsors having an affinity to select sport sponsorship versus the alternative of philanthropy. Sport is more favorable compared to other sectors mainly due to the nature of the sport environment. Sport is a unifier it can bring people together for an experience that they can all be able to share in a positive atmosphere. Corporate sponsors see the value of being able to align themselves with these experiences to improve the associations or perceptions that current, future and potential consumers may have about their brand.

According to O'Reilly, Beselt, Degrasse (2017), sport leads in the categories that gain the most interest and support for sponsorship in Canada securing over 53% of the revenue share in comparison to the other categories which include: festivals, cause and arts. (p.27-31)



Canadian Sponsorship Landscape Study, 2018 (p.28)

According to O'Reilly, Seguin & Pegoraro (2007), many researchers suggest that sponsorship has its foundation in philanthropic giving. According to Wilkinson, the shift in attitude regarding sponsorship and philanthropy occurred when corporations began the search to receive a return on their donations. This has resulted in substantial increases in the amount of resources devoted to sponsorship. Sponsorship became decreasingly considered to be a form of social corporate behavior and increasingly considered to be an important promotional tool and business expense that ought to be justified. (p. 236)

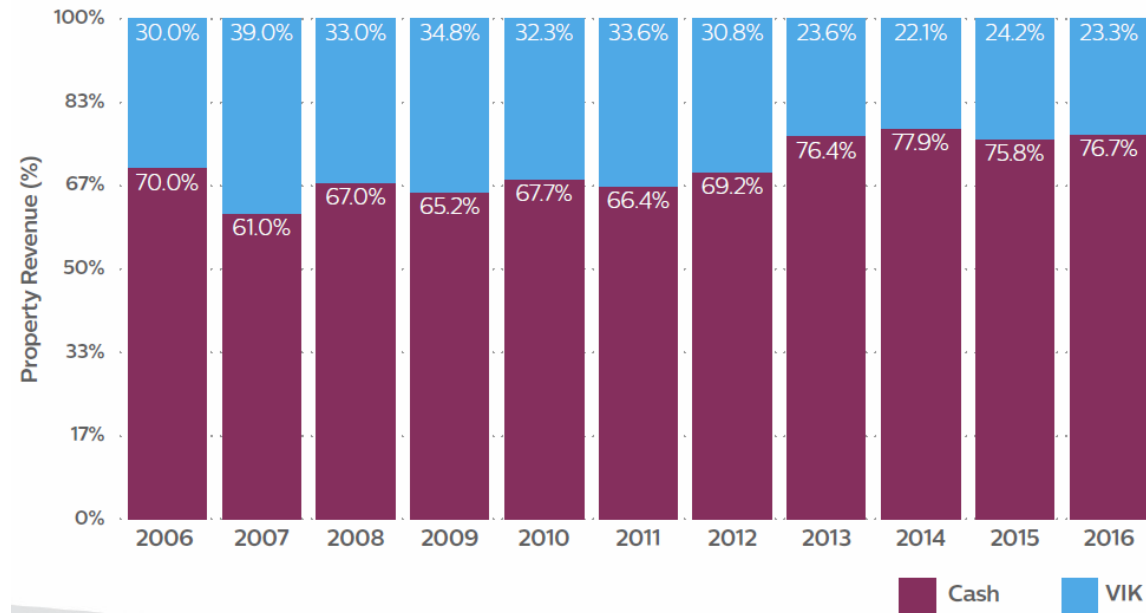
According to O'Reilly & Seguin (2009), with the shift made to make sponsorship a corporate tool to drive revenue, sponsors needed to ensure that when partnering with sponsorship properties corporate objectives would have been met. Sandler and Shani identify three main groups of objectives associated with sponsoring sports:

- Broad corporate objectives (image based)
- Marketing objectives (brand promotion, sales increase)
- Media objectives (cost effectiveness, reaching target markets)

With the vast number of options within the marketing world to be able to maximize profits and gain increased exposure, the area of sponsorship is dominant as it provides additional opportunities for partners leverage to ensure objectives are met.

- Increasing public awareness of the company, brand, or both
- Altering or reinforcing public perception, or image, of the company, brand, or both
- Gaining opportunities in terms of hospitality and entertainment (p.232)

There are two ways in which sponsors invest in properties which are cash and value in kind. With cash being the most popular form of investment, value in kind can take the form product and services depending on what the sponsor is able to offer



Canadian Sponsorship Landscape Study, 2018 (p.29)

Sponsorship is an investment that requires the purchasing of rights as well as the costs associated with activating the rights. The purchasing of Rights essentially allows the sponsor to be associated with the property and the ability to use brand assets under the direction of the property. Activation is the execution of the partnership and can take many different forms and is aimed at maximizing the relationship to ensure the corporate objectives are met. These are key factors in understanding the value of the property and what they would have to offer to a sponsor, knowing what you are able to offer and how you can meet their needs are crucial to building a good relationship. Sport organizations in Canada have been able to maximize their property value by being astute about understanding their business and being able to improve and develop in avenues that benefit their sponsors.

O'Reilly & Seguin's (2009) study found the following:

With the evaluation of the sponsorship properties in the Canadian sport market, there are key indicators that have been identified as best practices for sport sponsorship in Canada:

- Building relationships: this is identified as a MUST as a key success factor to the sponsorship programs. This can be accomplished through keeping regular contact, hospitality at events, and servicing all aspects of their sponsorship. Emphasis should be on building long term and meaningful relationships with more than one individual within the property.
- Understanding each other's needs and objectives: being able to understand the needs and objectives of the sponsor will assist in providing value by helping them to achieve their goals and prove that the investment made with the property did meet goals laid out.
- Professionalism: sponsors have high expectations that properties will deal with them in a professional and business-like fashion.
- Community involvement: sponsors do look for opportunities to leverage involvement sponsorship deals with the consumers.
- Quality of product/success: having a successful product helps to attract interest from fans and the media.
- Innovation and creativity- it has been proven that creativity is important, being to provide new ideas and solutions for partners to take advantage of to maximize their sponsorship spend.
- Sponsorship evaluation- property owners must evaluate all aspects of the sponsorship both tangible and intangible assets.
- Television/media support: essential to the successful sponsorship programs, sponsors and sponsees should spend time forging solid relationships with the media. The improvement of the media coverage and the growth in the audience translate to the increase in property value. (p.272-273)

2.1.2 Olympic Sponsorship

Barney, Wenn & Martyn's (2004), prior to 1984 the Olympic sponsorship programme aimed to capitalize on the Olympic trademark and symbol protection, COJO established the foundation for a vast expansion of marketing programs aimed at facilitating its goal of "self-financing the Games." Efforts included:

- Selling rights to official suppliers and sponsors,

- Exploitation of official emblems of the Games (including those purchased from Munich)
- Production of commercial publications
- Establishing numerous concession opportunities around Olympic venues

For the 1976 Olympic Games held in Montreal, the Olympic sponsorship platform had a very different structure and aim. With the structure of the marketing program at that time, the Olympic brand had signed agreements with no fewer than 628 companies, each for a fee of \$50,000 (CDN). Forty-seven companies were multinational in scope; forty-two of them were designated “official sponsors.” The total corporate sponsorship initiative netted revenues of barely \$5 million after the deduction of administrative and management costs, however, obviously only a small share of the monies needed to underwrite the cost of the Games. (p.155)

According to IOC research, that all shifted in 1984 where the power of media right and sponsorship established itself as a core pillar in the economic development and stability for the Olympic Movement moving forward. The 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles served as the stage where it was proved that corporate involvement was an avenue that if correctly regulated could be the stability for the International Olympic Committee. (<https://www.olympic.org/news/los-angeles-1984-an-indelible-legacy>).

According to Hill (1996), the Los Angeles Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (LAOOC) had been assigned to host the 1984 Games in the city. With all the risk involved in hosting and the political upheaval in the background the government and citizens of Los Angeles decided that they would not be supporting the Games. With no financial support from coming from the government and little support available from the IOC given their economic situation, the LAOOC embarked on a new assignment. This new direction would mean that all the financial support needed for the Games would have to come from private and or commercial entities. The LAOOC embarked on establishing the TOP programme that we know today, where they reduced the number of sponsors from hundreds to no more than thirty with a minimum subscription of \$4m and an ‘exclusivity program’: that is, not more than one company from any product category can be included in the list of sponsors.(p.165)

MacRury's (2014) study found the following:

The aims of the TOPs scheme are:

- to contribute to the independent financial stability of the Olympic Movement;
- to generate continual and substantial support through sustained, long-term partnerships;
- to provide equitable revenue distribution throughout the Olympic Family;
- to ensure the financial and operational viability of the Olympic Games;
- to prohibit the uncontrolled commercialism of the Olympic Games. (p.50)

Today Olympic sponsorship has become a blue print for many sporting organizations globally who model the TOP programme to improve revenue generation and preserve good business relationships. The TOP programme agreement is between an Olympic organization and a corporation, whereby the corporation is granted the rights to specific Olympic intellectual property and Olympic marketing opportunities in exchange for financial support and goods and services contributions. Olympic sponsorship programmes operate on the principle of product-category exclusivity. According to IOC (2017), under the direction of the IOC, the Olympic family works to preserve the value of Olympic properties and to protect the exclusive rights of Olympic sponsors. (p.10)

IOC's (2017) study found the following:

Olympic sponsorship programmes benefit the Olympic Movement in the following ways:

- Sponsors provides value financial resources to the Olympic family.
- Sponsors provide support for the staging of Olympic Games and the operations of the Olympic Movement in the form of products, services, technology, expertise and staff deployment.
- Sponsors provide direct support for the training and development of Olympic athletes and hopefuls around the world, as well as essential services for athletes participating in the Games.
- Sponsorship activation enhances the Olympic Games experience for spectators and provides the youth of the world with opportunities to experience the Olympic ideals at global and local levels. Sponsorship support contributes to the success of the

educational, environmental, cultural and youth-oriented initiatives of the Olympic Movement.

- Sponsors develop advertising and promotional activities that help to promote the Olympic ideals, heighten public awareness of the Olympic Games and increase support for the Olympic athlete. (p.10)

According to Lee (2005), in Olympics, there are no mere advertisers, there are sponsors. Sponsorship involves not only financial support of the revenue, but providing products and services, technologies, expertise and personnel to help on the organization of the Games. Revenue of sponsorship makes up about 32% of the total Olympic marketing revenues. The Olympic Games provide incomparable returns for the sponsors. They benefit from the marketing platform based on the ideals and values and increased opportunities from the company's showcasing, sales, community outreach programs and internal rewards. (p.2)

According to Payne's (2005) study found the following:

The success of the 1984 sponsorship model which has become the framework for the current TOP sponsorship model that the IOC implements, has led to the improvement of the Olympic brand. Taking it from a multiple rights and multiple access model and curtailing that down with the concept of exclusivity where there are fewer right holders who pay more to be associated with the brand and in turn secure specific categories that block out direct competitors. The TOP programme became the most successful global marketing programme in the world, establishing itself as the benchmark for sponsorship industry. It revolutionized the IOC's financial fortunes, bringing in the financial and promotional muscle of some of the world's greatest corporations. Yet, at the outset, no-one believed in the programme and it very nearly did not happen (p.102).

Experience suggests that successful sponsors share a number of characteristics. First, they have clear objectives and then build a programme to help achieve those objectives. They then regularly track progress and are not fearful of making mid-stream adjustments if things aren't going to plan. The sponsorship is integrated into their overall business objectives and way of doing business. It is fully supported from the top down. And, they understand the Olympic brand and what it stands for. (p.120)

2.2 What is a brand?

According to Aaker (1991), a brand is a form of identity for a product or service that provides that product or service with the ability to differentiate themselves from similar products or services within the marketplace. According to Aaker a brand is defined as the name, logo or outer outward symbol that distinguishes a product or service from others in its category.

A brand to many, is simply a logo or symbol or a visual identifier that is associated to the product or service, but there are other facets that are associated to a brand that help to define its identity.

According to Bodet & Seguin (2018) lectures, a brand is much more than a trademark. Brands are promises, ideas that live in people's hearts and minds. A brand can radiate values that people and organizations want to be connected with. The consumer choice at the point purchase or in this case with the Olympic Games brand, choice to partner has been influenced by everything that the brand stands for. Brands can create and drive preference and brands can add value to the bottom line.

Consumers establish an idea of the brand based on the consistencies that the brand does. When brands are able to create positive experiences, products or concepts then the consumers are more likely to positively associate with that brand. That positive association is able to develop into a relationship with the brand that can carry on for years and mature into brand loyalty. Likewise, if brands do not produce positive experiences, products or concepts they are able to develop negative brand associations with their audience. That negative association will shorten the timeline of brand loyalty and reduce brand equity.

Bodet & Seguin's (2018) lectures found the following:

Noting the influence that a brand possesses and how that association is able to affect selection based on the idea of association another definition of brand as it relates to influence is: a brand is a dynamic social construct created by its stakeholders and linked with product(s), service(s), organization or person, which has the ability to influence the market.

The strength of a brand lies in its ability to maintain its audience, capture new audiences and stay true to its core values. A strong brand is defined as a brand that:

- Is clear on its mission and purpose
- Understands and leverages its uniqueness
- Is clear on its target market
- Continues to build solid relationships with its community
- Is a total experience connecting at every consumer touchpoint

According to Aaker (1991), the establishment of a strong brand will give rise to strong brand equity. Brand equity according to Aaker are assets and liabilities linked to a brand name that add to or subtract from that product's value.

Bodet & Seguin's (2018) lectures have found the following:

There are three key aspects to brand equity:

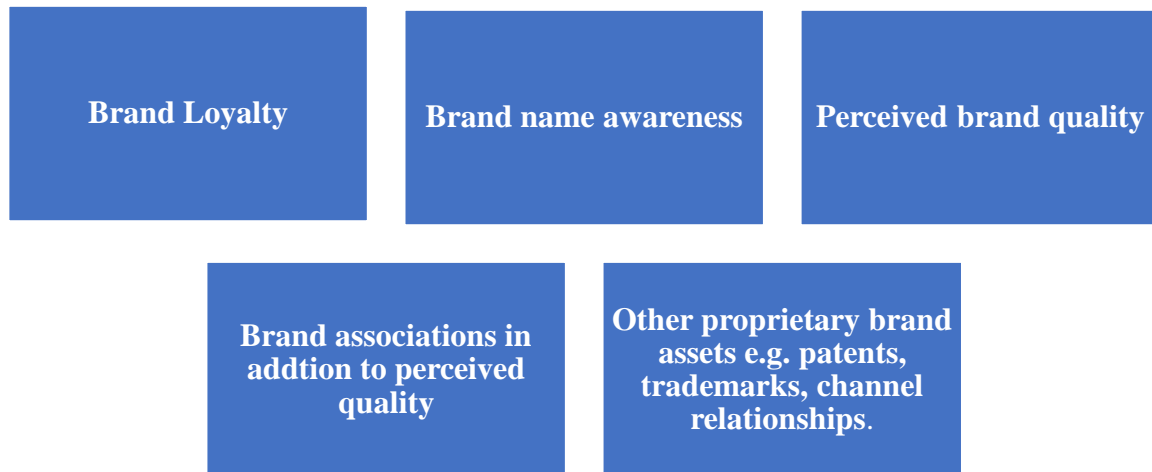
- The differential effect or differentiation, which is the most critical element;
- The brand knowledge based on experience and/or communication;
- The positive or negative impact on consumer/stakeholder response.

According to Aaker (1992), brand equity is defined as:

- A set of brand assets and liabilities
- Is linked to the brand's name and symbols
- Can subtract from, as well as add to, the value provided by a product or service.
- Provides value to customers as well as to a firm.

(Aaker, 1992)

Also, according to Aaker there are five brand equity assets that are the sources of the value created:

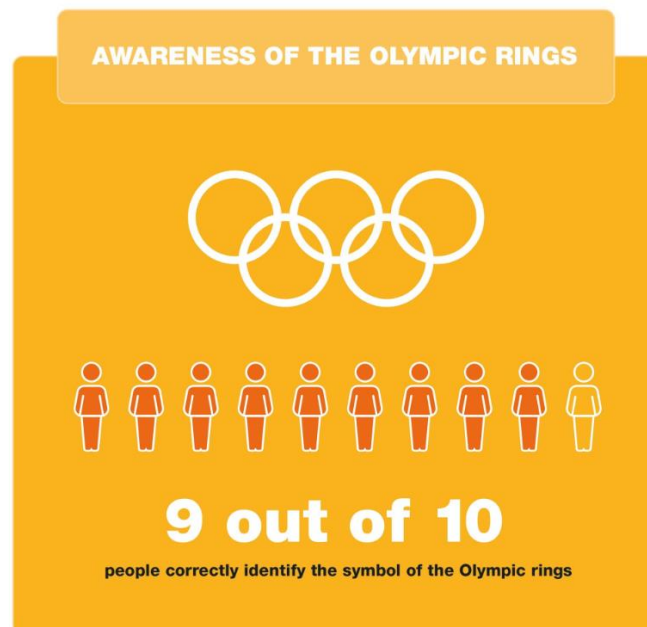


Brand equity model (Aaker, 1992)

Brand equity is an attractive element when it comes to successful partnership, as the value of the brand and the elements of its equity will make the partnership more enticing, especially for brands that are as established and traditioned like the Olympic Games. Partnering with brands with increased brand equity aims at transferring that high brand equity to the partner and as such increase their affinity to their audience.

2.2.1 Olympic Brand

The Olympic brand and sponsorship platform are arguably the most dominant and outstanding examples of effective brand use in the global sport landscape. Managed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) the Olympic brand boasts the most recognized symbol in the world being the Olympic rings, and also catalogues other symbols and traditions that have been around prior to the official establishment of the modern Olympics in 1896. According to Ferrard, Chappelet & Seguin (2012), the Olympic brand of five interlaced rings is recognized throughout the world as the symbol of the Olympic Games. The brand has been associated with the Games for more than 100 years, since Pierre de Coubertin founded the modern Olympics on a set of principles that endure to this day. (p.54)



(IOC, 2019)

What is it that makes the Olympic brand valuable? There are a few things that add to the value of the Olympic brand. According to Ferrand, Chappelet & Seguin (2012) the Olympic brand has established strong and valuable ties with a number of stakeholders, which has been nurtured over time and in turn adds value. Many might argue that it is the international recognition and global reach that the brand is able to provide, is a key component that adds to the value add that sponsors and stakeholders would seek. Another key aspect is perception, the Olympic Games is perceived high in brand quality because consumers believe that

winning an Olympic gold medal is the highest possible achievement for an athlete. The brand's high quality is reinforced by its stakeholders through the superior quality television broadcast, its association with multinational corporations that are global leaders in, the high price of the tickets, the much sought-after hospitality programmes offered at the Games, Olympic merchandising sold at premium price etc. (p. 57&59)



(IOC, 2019)

According to Dupreelle & Christoforides (2012), the Olympics has maintained contemporary relevance by having one foot in the future while keeping one in the past. Today, the Games preserve and celebrate three longstanding values: excellence, respect and friendship. These universal principles inform the Olympic ideal, to build a better world through sport, distinguishing it from every other sports and entertainment property and inspiring athletes, spectators, and viewers worldwide. The Olympics is the biggest international stage for sports and entertainment and is the most ideal-driven organization in the category. Together, these two qualities make the Games the most enviable sponsorship opportunity for major brands. (p.1-2)

Brands see the value of partnering with the Olympic brand as the global reach and recognition is great and it allows international brands access to global markets while providing exclusivity for the TOP brands in those markets. There are key elements that the

Olympic brand stands for and they have been highlighted with the Olympic values. In recent years, the IOC has condensed the Olympic values to three main concepts which are: Respect, Excellence and Friendship. The value commonality and alignment between brands helps to amplify the strength of both. Brand who seek partnerships do so with other valuable brands, in order to capitalize on an existing brand image or to improve how they are portrayed to their audience by partnering and activating with a brand with a better brand image or more brand equity.

According to Ferrand, Chappelet, & Seguin (2012), another important concept for the building of brand equity is “brand identity”, as defined:

A unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain.

These associations represent what the brand stands for and imply a promise to consumers from the organization members. Brand identity should help establish a relationship between the brand and the customer by generating a value proposition involving functional, emotional or self-expressive benefits. (p.57)

The brand equity of the Olympic brand lies with a few components as mentioned before with the history and traditions but in recent years, the brand has diversified to also include: the Olympic Games (both Summer and Winter), the Paralympic Games and Youth Olympic Games. These Games fall under the Olympic umbrella and add to the strength of the brand. Partners can benefit and leverage not only from the Olympic Games but also the additional Games under the Olympic brand.

The Paralympic Games is a brand that is under the Olympic umbrella and Youth Olympic Games is an extension to the Olympic brand, both have specific athlete audiences, the Paralympic Games are Games designed for parathletes with physical disabilities and the Youth Olympic Games are designed for youth between the ages of 14-18 years. These Games embody the values and principles of the Olympic Games while also serving their own visions as it relates to their specific athlete base. The next section provides a brief history of the Paralympic games along with key periods in its development. This is followed by a discussion on the Paralympic brand, sponsorship of the Paralympics and a short overview of the Paralympic movement in Canada.

2.3 The history and development of the Paralympic Games

According to the IOC (2019), The word “Paralympic” derives from the Greek preposition “para” (beside or alongside) and the word “Olympic”. Its meaning is that Paralympics are the parallel Games to the Olympics and illustrates how the two movements exist side-by-side (<https://www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/history-of-the-movement>)

According to Brittain, prior to World War II there is little evidence of organized efforts to develop or promote sport for individuals with disabling conditions, especially those with spinal injuries who were considered to have no hope surviving their injuries. Following the war, however, medical authorities were prompted to re-evaluate traditional methods of rehabilitation which were not satisfactorily responding to the medical and psychological needs of the large number of soldiers disabled in combat. (Steadward, 1992). According to McCann (1996), Dr. Ludwig Guttman recognized the physiological and psychological values of sport in the rehabilitation of paraplegic hospital inpatients and so it was that sport was introduced as part of the total rehabilitation programme for patients in the spinal unit. (p.7-8)

The Paralympic Games began life as an archery demonstrated between two teams of paraplegics from the Ministry of Pension Hospital at Stoke Mandeville and the Star and Grater Home for injured War Veterans at Richmond in Surrey. Perhaps more auspicious was the date chosen for the handover of the bus and the archery demonstration, Thursday, 29 July 1948, the exact same day as the opening ceremony of for the Games of the Fourteenth Olympiad at Wembley in London less than thirty-five miles away. Guttman later stated that the event was an experiment as a public performance, but also a demonstration to society that sport was not just the domain of the non-disabled. (p.9)

Brittain also noted, Dr Guttman’s “Grand Festival of Paraplegic Sport”, as the second incarnation of the Games were described, were held on Wednesday, 27 July 1949. Building upon much hard work done by Dr Guttman, his staff and the impact of various Stoke Mandeville patients moving to other spinal units around the country and taking their new found enthusiasm for sport with them the number of spinal units entered rose to six units (The Cord, 1949). A grand total of thirty-seven individuals took part in these Games and with

the exception of the archers from the Polish Hospital at Penley every competitor had, at some time, been a patient of Dr Guttman. (p.9)

According to the IPC (2019), these Games later became the Paralympic Games which first took place in Rome, Italy in 1960 featuring 400 athletes from 23 countries. Since then they have taken place every four years. In 1976 the first Winter Games in Paralympics history were held in Sweden, and as with the Summer Games, have taken place every four years, and include a Paralympics Opening Ceremony and Paralympics Closing Ceremony

(<https://www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/history-of-the-movement>)

2.3.1 Paralympic Brand and sponsorship

Park, Yoh, Choi & Olsen's (2011) studies found the following:

In 2001, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) signed an agreement securing the practice of "one bid, one city" suggesting that the staging of Paralympic Games is automatically included in the bid for the Olympics (IPC, 2011). The agreement represented the IOC's significant support for the Paralympic Games. The main part of the agreement allowed the Olympic Organizing Committee to manage both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The agreement called for sharing of revenue for broadcasting and marketing with the Paralympic Games (August 2003). This resulted in IOC payments to the IPC of \$9 million for the 2008 Games and \$14 million for the 2010 and 2012 Games. The final agreement (June, 2006) extended these agreements through to 2014 and 2016, increasing funding for the IPC *Gold & Gold, 2010*. (p.3)

According to Park, Yoh, Choi & Olsen (2011), since this joint sponsorship and management has been in place, the Paralympic Committee has experienced significantly less hardship in meeting its projected budgets, in part because there was no longer competition between the two events for corporate sponsors. More importantly, due to the combined organizational structure, the Paralympic Organizing Committees no longer needed to secure sponsors separately, since sponsorship for one event would thereafter imply sponsorship for the other. The new relationship established between the Olympic and Paralympic organizations has

contributed to the attraction of a larger number of audiences and greater media coverage.
(p.3)

Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris' (2002) study found the following:

However, some challenges linked to Paralympic sponsorship include:

- Many people are unaware of the Paralympic sport and do not know what exactly it is
- Low spectator numbers and limited TV audience. This has a negative impact on sponsorship since sponsors seek brand recognition and promotion through their sponsorship
- The timing of the Paralympics since they are happening exactly after the Olympic Games. Most sponsors who are also connected with the Olympic Games are committing a large part of their sponsorship and promotion budget either for their Olympic sponsorship contract or the necessary "leveraging" of the sponsorship through advertisements etc. Therefore, they don't have the necessary funds available. Although the Paralympic Games are an attractive event, in comparison with its Olympic counterpart it is unavailable that the Paralympics will be short of funding
- The disabled athletes believe that the community does not want to watch their sport on television or in the sporting venues (p.9)

According to Legg & Dottori (2017), although the Olympic brand is one of the most recognized in the world, the Paralympic brand has struggled to achieve the same level of recognition (*Kabitsis, Harahousou, & Kostaris, 2007*) and there remains confusion between the Paralympic and Special Olympic brands (*Fay, Burton, & Grevemberg, 2007*). (p.4)

According to CPC (2018), perceptions of the Paralympic Games and the Paralympic athletes is similar to 2016 (post-Rio) however strides have been made since 2015 (post-Sochi) in terms of agreement that the Paralympics represent a highly competitive sporting competition for elite athletes who happen to be physically disabled (79% agree, compared to 75% in 2015) and that Paralympics are a competition among some of the world's best athletes (71%, up from 62%). (p.6)

According to Legg & Dottori (2002), while little has changed since 2016 in terms of perceptions about the Paralympics Games and caliber of sports/athletes involved, there has been increasing agreement across measures since 2015 that the Paralympics represent a highly competitive sporting event involving some of the world's best athletes and disagreement that Paralympic sports are not as competitive as Olympic sports. (p.3)

According to Legg & Dottori (2017), the Paralympic Games have grown to become the second largest multi-sport event in the world behind only the Olympic Games (*Misener, Darcy, Legg, & Gilbert, 2013*). This growth can be demonstrated through the lens of the London 2012 Games, which saw most of the vents sold out as part of a record 2.2 million attendance figure, compared to the 1.5 million who attended the 1992 Games in Barcelona. In terms of social media activity and online traffic, the word "Paralympic" has also seen growth with 1.3 million tweets and the official website receiving 25 million visits during the 12 days of the London 2012 (*IPC, 2016*). (p.1)

According to Legg & Dottori (2017), thanks to widespread media coverage of Beijing 2008 and London 2012, the Paralympics have established themselves as the world's number one sporting event for the driving social inclusion" (*IPC, 2016b*). The IPC's marketing focus on celebrating the high-performance sporting achievements of its athletes this seeks to change to public perceptions of disability sport (*Quinn, 2007; Maika, 2015; Wolbring & Tynedal, 2013*). (p.1-2)

According to Legg & Dottori (2002), one of the major drawbacks for the Paralympic brand which had been a con of the IOC and IPC agreement is the constant and prevalent comparison between the two brands. This may be, in part, because the public compares Paralympic athletes to Olympic athletes (*Fitzgerald, 2012; Silva & Howe, 2012; Thomas & Smith, 2003*) resulting in perceptions of the Paralympics Games, Paralympic athletes, and disability sport in general as inferior, less legitimate, and easier to play. (p.3)

With major emphasis being placed on the growth of the Paralympic movement with the push of the media and the clout of the IOC behind the movement, it needs to be noted that that power of the Paralympic brand lies with its parathletes and value base. The powerful stories of resilience, perseverance and inspiration that the parathletes possess is something that wins

sponsors over again and again. The Paralympics are associated with many positive values and they are very strongly connected to social aspects.

According to the IPC (2018), the positive attributes include:

Inspiration	Excellence
Competitive	Respectful
Filled with passion	Inclusive
Global	Youthful
Diversity	Popular

These attributes are noted to resonate well with the millennial demographic which is a key demographic sponsor is wanting to connect with. (p.17)

Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002) study found the following:

Many sponsors underlined that apart from its character as a sporting event the Paralympic Games have and are something more. Being described as an “inspirational event” a “different event” an “event with a social dimension”, and an event with an “uplifting side” to it. As one sponsor outlined “the spectators of the Paralympic Games experience a different emotion when they finally got to it”. This parameter doesn’t necessarily mean something negative. It seems that the Paralympic movement can exploit sponsorship based on commercial characteristics but also sponsorship based on “the good cause perspective” being an event of weaker parts of the population that needs support. (p.8)

Most sponsors underlined that they supported the Paralympic Games in order to improve their image in the community. As a company they wanted to demonstrate to the community that they are a part of it by showing that the company is supporting it actively. Additionally, some sponsors stated that it was important for the right to be present in the community underlining that they are official partners with the Paralympic Games.(p.5)

Another often stated reason was the fact that the Paralympic sponsorship is a good supplement to the Olympic Sponsorship or as one sponsor representative expressed it, “it fits

nicely with the Olympics.” Many sponsors and specially sponsors who were also involved in the Olympic Games saw the Paralympic sponsorship as a good opportunity to supplement and enlarge their Olympic involvement and extent its time of use. By extending the period of the actual event from 16 to 60 days sponsoring companies had the opportunity to exploit their sponsorship in a better way and for a longer period. (p.5-6)

According to Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002), there are many motives that sponsors seek to partner with the Paralympic brand and those motives include but are not limited to costs, awareness, image and employee incentive:

- The companies saw the sponsorship as a chance to support the community with money, resources and services through the Paralympic Games. By this involvement they could demonstrate their support and responsibility on matter that are important to the community.
- Many sponsors representatives state that one reason was that their companies wanted to use the Paralympic Games for their employees through staff incentives programs. Sponsors tried to motivate and involve their employees through performance awards or guest speaking Paralympic athletes. The Paralympic Games and especially the Paralympic athletes were seen as very suitable to speak about motivational issues. Through this involvement many companies tried to achieve a positive climate with their employees were encouraged to organized and participate in fundraising events for a Paralympic Games. (p.6-7)

According to Park, Yoh, Choi & Olsen (2011), it has been suggested that the Paralympic Games have a considerable market potential for its corporate sponsors due to the following reasons. First, as indicated before, there has been a significant increase in the number of Paralympic Athletes and countries that have participated in the Paralympic Games. Approximately 4,000 athletes and 146 countries participated in the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games which held a total of 472 medal events. In addition, 4,200 athletes and 150 countries are expected to participate in the 2012 London Paralympic Games (*IPC, 2011*). (p.3-4)

Secondly, the media coverage of the Paralympic Games has been increased immensely in the recent Olympic Games. Previously, one of the biggest challenges of the Paralympic Games was a lack of media coverage; this situation led to difficulty in securing corporate sponsors. However, due to the recent growth and popularity of the Paralympic Games, the total broadcasting time and the number of viewers have been increased. For example, the

broadcasting time of the Beijing 2008 Summer Paralympic Games was 1,820 hours which represented a 200 percent increase compared to compared to the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games. Furthermore, the accumulative audience was 3.84 billion (*Gillis, 2011: IPC, 2011*). The media coverage of this most recent Paralympic Games. (p.4-5)

Thirdly, there has been an increase in the number of spectators attending the Paralympic Games. According to the IPC (2011), 1.82 million tickets were sold in the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games, and 1.2 million tickets were sold in the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Games. (p.5)

As there are positives with the Paralympic brand there are challenges that the brand faces as well. One noted difficulty that the Paralympic brand does contend with is the fact that the Paralympic Games are running alongside the Olympics that would affect Paralympic activation. The relation with the Olympic Games may have a lot of positive effects on the Paralympic Games but it also comes with some disadvantages. According to Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002):

- These are that the sponsoring companies have spent large resources on the Olympic Games and often have no budget to allocate to the Paralympic sponsorship activation. The fact that the Olympic Games being the biggest global event, is taking away all space in the public sphere leaving very limited time and coverage of the Paralympics. This overleap limits significantly the coverage of the economically and publicly “weaker” Paralympic Games. (p.8)
- The underutilization of the activation of the brand, which can come about due to the lack of planning and /or understanding of how to effectively activate partnership rights. This can be a missed opportunity for partners who have invested in use of the right and then not be able to market accordingly. (p.9)

Sponsors being profit driven do look at the return on investment (ROI) that the partnership with the property has to offer. They do have stipulated expectations that they set in order to reconcile and quantify that the sponsorship was in fact worth the investment.

According to Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002), the expected gains of sponsorship

- Companies seem to be interested in the improvement of their image in the community, wanting to tie close bonds with the community and underline that the company supports its endeavors.
- The companies try to take goodwill and inspiration out of the sponsorship. Companies try to improve their image by adopting a good cause and by showing that they are embracing such an “inspirational” and positive event as the Paralympics.
- Some companies try to shift the perception of their brand from a cold commercial image to an image of a responsible company that cares. Those companies wanted to leverage the Paralympic Games and Paralympians in seminars, speaking engagements etc.
 - o Many sponsors are trying to use the Paralympics to approach older people, families and schoolchildren since they are showing a big interest in the Paralympic Games and are also convinced by the whole idea of the Paralympic Movement. (p.7)

The key factors that would attract sponsors to the CPC brand and the elements of their sponsorship would include:

Attractiveness of Paralympic Sponsorship

- Paralympics have more than just a corporate perspective (in contrast to the Olympics)
- It is a very good proposition because of the relatively low cost
- There exist commercial but also community benefits
- The very positive attitudes of the Paralympians, which can be used by the company (p.7)

On the other hand, the Paralympic have also a number of unattractiveness characteristics:

- A relatively low spectator number
- Low TV viewing audience
- Low profile of the event
- Doesn't get external coverage
- Not much noise, not much hype about the Paralympics
- The Paralympic athletes believe that the public does not want to watch Paralympic sport (p.9)

2.3.2 Paralympic Movement in Canada

The Canadian Paralympic Committee is the governing body of Paralympic sport in Canada and was established in 1968 when the first Canadian athlete ever competed in the Paralympic Games in 1968 in Tel Aviv, Israel with only two wheelchair athletes. Toronto was then host of the fifth Paralympic Games, called the Torontolympiad, where athletes with visual impairments and amputee athletes competed for the first time ([Canadian Paralympic Committee, 2014b](#)). These Games incited the federal government to allocate funds to supporting sport for people with disabilities. Again, due to the increase in interest in elite disability sport, the Canadian Federation of Sport Organizations for the Disabled (CFSOD) was created in 1981 ([Canadian Paralympic Committee, 2013c](#)). Dr. Robert Steadward and Anne Merklinger, President and Executive Director, respectively, of the CFSOD at the time, were heavily involved in shaping the IPC, then the ICC. They presented a paper to the ICC suggesting that the ICC become the lead in developing and enforcing bidding and hosting policies, international rules, and agreements with organizing committees ([Bailey, 2008](#)). Steadward would go on to be the founding President of the IPC from 1981 to 2001 and was instrumental in uniting the different member organizations and strengthening the partnership between the IPC and the IOC, especially regarding funding, hosting, and even the use of the term Paralympic ([Bailey, 2008](#)). The CFSOD eventually became the Canadian Paralympic Committee. Following the lead of the IPC, the CPC is mandated to not only support Canadian Paralympic athletes at Games, but also lead the development of the Canadian Paralympic sport system through programs delivered by their member organizations ([Canadian Paralympic Committee, 2014a](#)).

Currently, the CPC is a non-profit, private organization with 25 member sports organizations dedicated to strengthening the Paralympic Movement. (<http://paralympic.ca/about-us>). The CPC brand currently prides itself on the platform that they engage with Canadians through inspiring content that focuses on athletic achievement and personal journeys (CPC, 2018). The CPC has noted that their strength does lie with their parathletes and the stories that they are able to share. The Canadian Paralympic Committee's vision is to be the world's leading Paralympic nation. Its mission is to lead the development of a sustainable Paralympic sport system in Canada to enable athletes to reach the podium at the Paralympic Games. By supporting Canadian high-performance athletes with a disability and promoting their success,

the Canadian Paralympic Committee inspires all Canadians with a disability to get involved in sport through programs delivered by its member organizations.

<http://paralympic.ca/about-us>

According to Legg & Dottori (2017), the growth of the CPC brand in Canada can be attributed to the development of the Paralympic movement locally and globally as well as the increased media exposure that Parasport has experienced in recent Games. At the SportAccord 2014, delegates reported that disability sport would have the greatest increase in relevancy in the future. The report also noted that the topic of disability sport's relevance was led by sponsor representatives, indicating that it is not just sport administrators, but the world's corporations that are beginning to take note of Paralympic sport. The responses in both situations were due to disability sport's ability to provide the best value proposition to meet sport's fragmenting consumption patterns among traditional media, new media, and its' particular ability to engage youth.(p.6)

According to Legg & Dottori (2017), Dottori et al (2014b) it is noted that while 75% of Canadians had a very positive sentiment towards Paralympians, this did not translate to a behavioral change such as investing time in the Movement or viewing Paralympic sport on television. (p.5)

According to the CPC (2016), with that in mind, it is important to note the impact that local Games have had on the Parasport landscape in Canada. the exposure that was garnered by the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and the 2015 ParaPan Games in Toronto did raise the awareness and increased the understanding of parasport for the Canadian population. It was in the best interest of the CPC to capitalize on the exposure provided by local Games to translate that into the growth of the Paralympic Movement in Canada. Surveys found that Canadians claimed familiarity of the Paralympic Games, the Canadian Paralympic Team and parasports in general has increased since 2015 (CPC, 2016). According to Legg & Dottori (2017), in a 2015 a Toronto ParaPan American Games Awareness Survey conducted for the Canadian Paralympic Committee, it was suggested that 82% of respondents agreed that the Paralympic Games represented a highly competitive sporting competition for elite athletes, who happen to be physically disabled. (p. 22)

According to the CPC study (2018), to keep that momentum going with the attention garnered by the Games hosted in Canada, the CPC has been investing the development of their parathletes and the broadcast of Paralympic Games and the expansion of the movement to social platforms and outlets. 53% of Canadians engaged, primarily by watching coverage on conventional TV (44%) or online (27%). More original hours on all platforms (TV, Digital, Social). Due to the increase in exposure to the Games the CPC has recorded an overall increase of broadcast viewership by +1M from the Sochi Winter Games. It is estimated that 10 million Canadians tuned in and over 1.1 million total page views were recorded. (p.22)

According to the CPC study (2018), the strength of the Paralympic brand in Canada lies with the parathletes and for them to be able to share their stories as well as be recognized as high performance athletes and not seen that less competitive than their Olympic counterparts. 46% strongly agree and 33% of Canadians somewhat agree that The Paralympics represent a highly competitive sporting competition for elite athletes, who happen to be physically disabled. (p.24)

According to CPC studies (2018), the CPC is earnestly aiming to shift the perception of parasport in the Canadian landscape. Changing the narrative of the brand being seen as a participation sport to that of a high-performance sport. The partnership with the Olympic brand can help and hinder the visuals of the CPC brand to its audience. Having many Canadians drawing a comparison to the Olympic brand which might have them see the CPC as less of a high-performance brand than the Olympic brand. Or on the other side of the coin could cause Canadians to see it as a high-performance brand due to its association with the Olympic brand. Studies also found that perceptions of the Paralympic Games and Paralympic athletes is similar to 2016 (in 2018, post Rio) however strides have been made since 2015 (post-Sochi) in terms of that the Paralympics represent a highly competitive sporting competition for elite athletes, who happen to be physically disabled (79% agree, compared to 75% in 2015) and that the Paralympics are a competition among some of the world's best athletes (71%, up from 62%). Canadians are also now more likely to disagree that Paralympic sports are not as competitive as Olympic sports because there are so few competitors (58%, up from 53%). (p.6)

According to CPC studies (2018), with the studies that have been conducted, the results have shown that four in ten Canadians indicate that they are familiar with the Paralympic Games, although fewer indicate they are familiar with the Canadian Paralympic Team CPC. (p.11)

The CPC defines its brand as ‘We engage with Canadians through inspiring content that focuses on athletic achievements and personal journeys’. The management of the CPC brand in Canada is taken from the lead of the global IPC brand. The CPC has guidelines that are followed from the IPC and they are specific brand guidelines that the CPC uses in Canada that is shared with their corporate partners that is reflective that the IPC brand guidelines. (CPC, Contact).

The IPC brand identity is heavily entrenched in the values of the organization. The IPC has identified a few key words that they believe are synonymous with the Paralympic brand and values:

Friendship
Respectful
Inspirational
Unique
Inclusive
Diversity
Innovative
Peace
Eye opening
Fair

(IPC, 2016, p.17)

According to the IPC study (2016), the IPC has identified their audience as persons who are well educated, have economic power and are often first mover to have new products. They have a high affinity to Social Media supports their modern and connected lifestyle. (p.19).

The Paralympic brand resonated highly with the millennials as brands that typically resonate with that demographic are brands that are authentic and display similar qualities. The associations that the Paralympic brand are very positive and are:

Determination
Disabled
Athletes
Sports
Competition
Inspiring
Courage
Brave
International
Strength

(IPC, 2016, p.17)

It appears that with the research information that is available, there are limitations on the research gathered and shared on the Paralympic Movement in Canada as it relates to the brand and how the sponsors activate around the brand. The power of the Paralympic brand in Canada has been improved in recent years and there has been research to support that but, not highlighting how that improvement has been achieved with the sponsors as well as the Canadian Paralympic Committee.

With the information that has been researched and gathered the focus is concentrated on understanding the Paralympic Movement in Canada solely and the sponsorship landscape in Canada on its own. Both these elements have been addressed in literature and additional research pieces and there has been a general understanding provided for sponsorship and brand as it related to the Paralympic Movement. This research aims to highlight the specific work that has been done within the Paralympic Movement in Canada as it relates to sponsorship and brand and the key learnings that are available.

An outcome of the research prepared is to highlight the best sponsorship practices and to provide key understandings as well as motivations of Canadian Paralympic Committee partners to sponsor and align with the CPC brand and the brand brings to the table and how its strength has evolved in recent years.

CHAPTER III- METHODOLOGY

A case study is used to provide an in-depth analysis of a case within its natural context and aims for depth over breadth ([Crowe et al., 2011](#); [Flyvbjerg, 2011](#)). By focusing on one single unit of analysis, researchers are able to delve deeper into specific areas within the case. In addition, a central tenet of case study methodology is the link between the unit of analysis and the context and environment in which it exists ([Baxter & Jack, 2008](#); [Crowe et al., 2011](#); [Thomas, 2011](#); [Yin, 1994](#)). Case studies account for real-life context and the effects of the environment surrounding the case, which makes it possible for a comprehensive approach to understanding a case ([Thomas, 2011](#); [Yin, 1994](#)). They are common in sport management research; this may be due to the practical nature of case studies and unique environments found in sport management. Cases can consist of sporting events (e.g., Parent & Séguin, 2008), sport teams (e.g., Richelieu & Pons, 2006, 2009), or sport organizations (e.g., MacIntosh & Spence, 2012). When researchers use any of these phenomena as a case in a case study, they expect that the case's context will be of utmost importance.

Within case study methodology, researchers have developed distinct ways of classifying different case studies ([Thomas, 2011](#)). [Yin \(1994\)](#) separated cases into three categories: descriptive, explanatory, and exploratory. As the name suggests, descriptive case studies are used to expose or describe a case or different points of view within a case and its context, whereas explanatory case studies are used to explain cause and effect relationships found within a case. Exploratory case studies can be used to investigate cases where the outcomes are unknown. They can eventually lead to developing hypotheses about a phenomenon. Furthermore, explanatory and exploratory cases can help generate new theories or expand previously established theories. The type of case should be determined based on the research questions and the purpose of the study ([Flyvbjerg, 2011](#)).

3.1 Data Collection

A key component of case study methodology is the use of multiple methods because it allows for a more holistic approach to answering the research questions, ensuring that all contextual factors are taken into account; thus, strengthening findings via triangulation of qualitative sources ([Baxter & Jack, 2008](#); [Patton, 2002](#); [Yin, 1994](#)). In order to explore the different perspectives of the CPC brand, a combination of archival research and semi-structured interviews was collected and analyzed.

3.2 Interview Guide

The interview guide that was used to conduct semi-structured interviews was a document prepared with the assistance of overseeing professors. The questions were prepared to gather the information necessary to ensure the purpose of the study was fulfilled by using questions that would provide the details to assist to fill the gaps in current research.

Three questionnaires were prepared to target a specific group as the questions asked were tailored to their area of the CPC brand and sponsorship eco system. The questionnaire targeted three specific research areas:

- *Canadian Paralympic Committee executive responsible for sponsorship/partnership:*

The executives from Canadian Paralympics were chosen to provide first hand information and experience having to manage the day to day servicing, account management and relationship building with the CPC partners.

- *Canadian Paralympic Committee sponsors*

CPC sponsors were chosen based on their heavy involvement with the CPC and its brand. They are the main players within the sponsorship platform and being able to gather why they partner, what they gain and their satisfaction with the CPC is key when exploring the purpose of the research.

- *Canadian Paralympians*

Canadian Paralympians might be seen as the direct beneficiaries of CPC sponsorships, it is valuable to understand what they know about and think of the CPC brand as well as the relationships that the CPC has partnered with.

The questions were designed to obtain open responses to questions that would probe the details of the Canadian Paralympic partnerships and understanding both the Paralympic and sponsor brands. Each questionnaire had a minimum of 10 questions that were segmented into sections focusing on the following aspects:

- Perceptions of the brand
- Motivation for partnership
- Relationships
- Activation
- Satisfaction

3.3 Semi-structured interviews.

Interviews involve two or more people conversing and thus, creating data ([Fontana & Frey, 2005](#)). They can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured, depending on the way in which the interviews are carried out. Data gathered from interviews are contextually based and rely on a good interaction between the researcher and the participant or participants ([Fontana & Frey, 2005](#)). A semi-structured interview format was chosen to allow participants and researchers the flexibility to further explore any interesting points that may arise throughout the interview. The interviews were conducted in person or by telephone for approximately 30 to 45 minutes and were digitally recorded for subsequent transcription for analysis. Transcriptions of the interviews were sent back to the participant as a method of member-checking the content. Interviewees had the opportunity to clarify and/or correct anything that was said during the interview, thus ensuring that interview content was methodologically sound.

Participants. Seven semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders of the CPC. Interviews were conducted until saturation was reached for the major stakeholders. Interviews were conducted with the Executive Director of partnerships with the CPC, four major CPC sponsor senior executives as well as two prominent Paralympians who are knowledgeable about the sponsorship relationships with the CPC and their sponsors.

The CPC is a viable sport property in the Canadian sport market place and has proven its worth for the last 10 years. The growth it has displayed shows the development of the Paralympic movement as it continues to validate itself as a worthwhile sporting opportunity which should be invested in. The lack of awareness and understanding of the CPC movement has significantly decreased over recent years, and that has been seen a great opportunity for growth for the CPC brand. The CPC prides itself on the heart of their athletes, noting that they overcome numerous challenges daily and can achieve greatness. They are keen to shift the narrative from that of “pity” to one of strength and inspiration and that is where the value lies for the brand and is then able to increase the support of sponsorship entities.

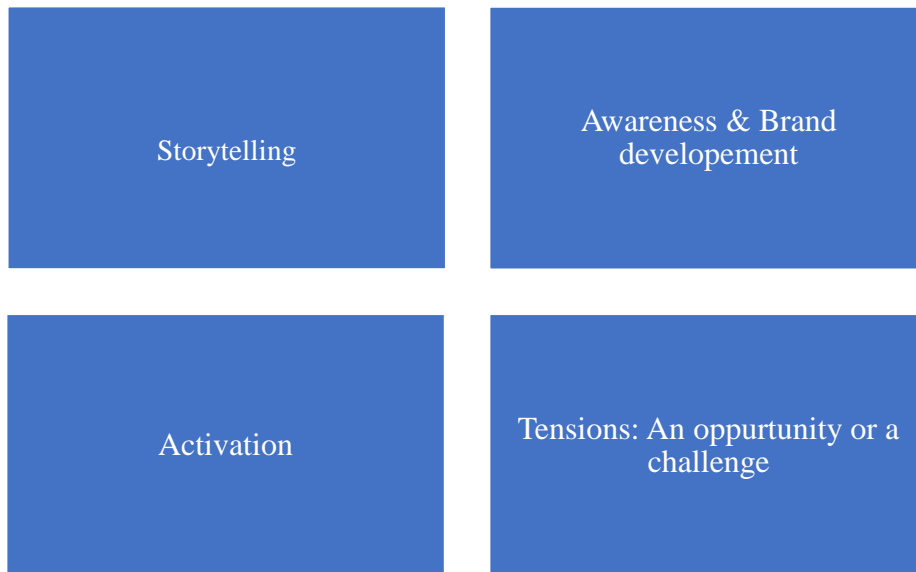
The CPC is not only bringing Paralympic sport to the forefront, but they are also pushing for the inclusion and awareness of people with disabilities in our society. To educate the population and provide mechanisms and opportunities for the disabled community to have access to sport, transportation and other resources that they need to thrive and empower themselves.

3.4 Archival research

Archival research requires the researcher to analyze documents relating to research questions to gain an understanding of the history and context of a phenomenon or an organization ([Edwards & Skinner, 2009](#)). Documents, such as CPC annual reports, strategic plans, and CPC and stakeholder websites, were reviewed to understand what the CPC brand represents according to those who are responsible for managing the brand and to shed light on current brand value co-creation relationships that exist. Compiling and analyzing reports from a National Paralympic Committee (NPC), such as the CPC, on how they promote and represent their brand would contribute to our understanding of the CPC’s vision for the brand. Additional documents, such as research done by external companies and organizations for the CPC, provided further insight on how the organization wants its brand to be perceived and how some of their stakeholders perceive the brand. For this research, archival material was important to provide context and triangulate information gathered during the semi-structured interviews, ultimately increasing the methodological rigor.

CHAPTER IV- RESEARCH FINDINGS

With the qualitative research that has been conducted around the Paralympic brand and sponsorship, where interviews and research has been gathered, noted themes have been deduced. These themes were the prevalent concepts that were present throughout the research and have been categorized accordingly. The themes are storytelling, awareness and brand development, activation and tensions: an opportunity or a challenge.



4.1 Storytelling

THEME	SUB-THEME	
Storytelling	<i>Awareness/brand development/Activation</i>	<p>Sponsor 1: “When I think about brand positioning their personal stories are so incredible and I think the athletes in a lot of ways their proud of their personal stories but they are too close to their stories to realise how amazing their stories are. They just want to concentrate on the sport. “Let’s just talk about whatever it is: hockey, basketball whatever.”</p> <p>The personal interest stories which is what I think everyone get really excited about the</p>

		<p>Paralympics for. When you talk to the athletes it is like whatever, the disability is the disability let me just talk about the competition.”</p> <p>Paralympian 1: “I think, it’s the same thing. I think they are getting to know if more because of the commercials and the stories that CBC and Petro Canada portray, a few newspaper articles as well. I think people love it, when they see it they love the sport and the stories and everything, I think people want to see more every time I talk about Paralympics people want to see more. The culture is starting to change from people seeing us for having a really tough time because of our injuries or sickness or whatever happened to us and now it’s shifting towards, they are athletes and they are working out twice a day and they are working hard, they are the same as Olympians. It’s kind of a mind shift that has been happening the past few years and it’s been great. Cause the Olympians go through things too, they have their ups and downs they have their challenges, they have death in the family, they also have their sicknesses and their injuries same as us. Like obviously one or two years of our life is pretty tragic, for me it was cancer some others it was car accidents stuff like that. It lasts like a year or two it’s part of our life, but we are still athletes like the Olympians at the end of the day. We study in the states we can play pro, it’s kind of the same we get the same opportunities but less</p>
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		because its less bodies its less people other than that we have the same goals.”
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Storytelling is an integral piece to the Canadian Paralympic brand. The stories that the athletes share about their personal experiences overcoming challenges with their disabilities or accidents that have led them to become Paralympians, are remarkable. These stories carry so much power, emotion and strength and can provoke interest of large audiences when they are able to reach a global platform. With the great emotional connectivity that these stories possess, the CPC has been able to leverage these stories as a marketing vehicle to raise awareness and educate the public about the Paralympic movement in Canada.

As noted in the literature, the strength of the Paralympic brand in Canada lies with the parathletes and for them to be able to share their stories as well as be recognized as high performance athletes and not seen that less competitive than their Olympic counterparts. CPC sponsors, who appreciate and see the value of the stories that the parathletes share have been vehicles that move the Paralympic message. Sponsors have been able to leverage their assets and resources to tell these stories in varying capacities all in the aim of the developing the Paralympic brand in Canada and being able to raise the awareness of it to the Canadian public. The CPC sees the ability to tell the Paralympians stories as a strength, “It is very much the emotional connectivity, overcoming obstacles and noting that we are still high performance.” (CPC Contact, 2018).

This notion has been well depicted in the 2019 Super Bowl commercial spot that was done by Toyota to establish and publicly solidify their relationship with the Paralympic movement. The commercial was captioned “Good odds” and it portrays the life story of Laura Woolstencroft who is a winter Paralympian and eight-time gold medalist in her event. Her story about being born with a disability and being able to overcome the obstacles she faced to become a renowned Paralympian is a story that was taken to a global stage. Toyota who is a global IPC sponsor had created a commercial spot to aired during the Super Bowl as they wanted to ensure that they obtained maximum reach and to solidify to the world that they were partners with the International Paralympic Committee. The Super Bowl property attracts millions of viewers annually. Not only did they select one of the largest sporting events globally to showcase this partnership, they also opted to go with the idea of

storytelling, which for the CPC brand can be deemed as the most compelling. This move by Toyota has been successful for a number of reasons, as it has raised the bar on the way that storytelling can be used within the Paralympic movement by its partners as well as it has garnered a new audience for the IPC as well as local NPCs and has brought the attention to the parathletes and the PyeongChang Games would were on the heels of starting in South Korea.

This video has millions of views on social platforms and has been an effective tool in raising the awareness of the Paralympic brand globally. The IPC on its own with its resources and allocation would not have been able to access the Super Bowl platform in order to have this story told. This is an example of the power of partnership, as Toyota had the resources and with the IPC having the compelling content, they were able to come together to make something monumental for the Paralympic Movement.

The idea of storytelling was chosen in this instance, to ensure that it would be impactful and provide that deep emotional connectivity which is synonymous with the Paralympic brand, and it proved to be successful. That commercial spot to date has over one million views It was the heart of Laura that appealed to the audience, it was her determination and also her bravery.

According to the CPC study (2018), a message that focuses on the inspiring, true story of a Paralympic athlete is most likely to encourage Canadians to tune in to the Paralympic Games when they're on (73%). (p.19)

It is important to note that CPC sponsors see the value in the stories and also incorporate them in as much of their marketing channels as they can. Sponsors want to ensure that they get the most of the Paralympic brand and not only have it leveraged during the Games period but throughout the non-Games years. The concept of storytelling provides that, as these stories can used to inspire and motivate all year round and speak to every Canadian in any capacity. The stories provide an avenue for the sponsors to connect consistently with the public in an authentic way.

It is noted from the literature that the words that are often associated with the Paralympic brand are:

Determination
Disabled
Athletes
Sports
Competition
Inspiring
Courage
Brave
International
Strength

(IPC, 2016, p.17)

These are attributes that sponsors would want to align with and as such they have chosen to activate with the method of storytelling so these powerful and compelling stories about parathletes and their journey can be shared.

In order for sponsors to acquire the stories the CPC along with sponsors organizes an event called the Media Summit which is held annually to collect these stories and prepare the parathletes for media interaction. The parathletes and their stories are notable and powerful assets for the CPC brand and one of the major contributors to the strengthen of their ties to the partners. The stories that the Paralympians share are those of triumph over adversity and being able to take circumstances and using sport to change the narrative. This is extremely appealing to emotion and it is that appeal that sponsors want to be tied to. Sponsors have noted that they too believe in the strength of the Paralympians and believe in their mission to showcase their athleticism and to raise awareness about the Paralympic Movement.

Noted by the CPC that a lot of their partners are interested in gaining content and are requesting this content as a means to also meet their goals. According to the CPC a lot of sponsors now want content, they actually want the athlete's story proprietary. So, the CPC

hosts an Athlete's summit, last one being held in January 2019, where (the CPC) brings 20 athletes in. These athletes will be competing in the upcoming Parapan Games in Lima, Peru and also the 2020 Tokyo Games and the objective is to basically do the "car wash" where the parathletes will spend 15-20 mins or 30 mins with our media partners in order to bring those stories out. The CPC allows their partners Canadian Tire, Petro-Canada and Toyota to come and be there and they get 15-20 mins to gather content with our athletes and based on the position, the brand position they want to use some of those stories to integrate within their marketing strategies. (CPC, 2019)

"The CPC in an effort to ensure that their partners able to gain access to these stories to share have, in conjunction with other stakeholders, prepared an annual summit. This is the Media Summit and the main aim is to highlight notable parathletes and provide them with the resources to improve their media skills and training while capturing their stories. These are the stories that the partners will share with their audiences which will also help to amplify the message that the CPC wants to share. This supports the idea that sponsors as well as properties are able both able to benefit from partnership. Having the CPC being able to provide the platform for partners to access the parathletes to have their stories shared and prepared by various outlets including the machine of social media, helps tremendously to elevate the awareness of the movement." (CPC, 2019)

"Since the start of the Summit in 2015, Sponsor 3 has been apart of the Face Summit where they have classes of athletes, averaging 55 that we have and bring them in to CBC building and over the course of a weekend, they fly in and drive on the Friday night. We have a meet and greet, with the athletes that are attending to get to know each other and also conduct one-on-one interviews with representative from CBC so athletes both Olympic and Paralympic get camera prepped and photographed and then they go back to enjoy the event. Strictly athletes and their guardians in attendance. Because so many athletes utilize that time in sport as an opportunity to help fund their journey by doing speaking engagements etc, so basically what we are doing over the 2 days is working on those skills plus we have fun along the way, we do some fun games etc. I would say that is a complimentary or an extension. It is because of the partnership, but specifically around the Face Program, for example. That's what sponsors try to do is leverage them assets all year round, as that is the biggest challenge that we all have as sponsors is the price tag cannot be for just 4 weeks any more, we need it to be 365 days a year, so how do we do that? Otherwise, why are they doing it?" (Sponsor 3, 2019)

According to Legg & Dottori (2017), paralympians are thus valuable tools to market Paralympic sport both on and off the playing field and it could be argued that the athletes are the most important “employees” of the marketing and sponsorship departments of the Paralympic Movement as they actively raise awareness and help forge emotional attachments with the public regarding paralympic sport. An implication of this is that Paralympic promotional activity which focuses on elite sport performance rather than “supercrip” themes, will be much more likely to be supported by their valuable commodity, Paralympic athletes. (p.19)

Sponsors understand the value of the stories that the paralympians share and the value that they bring not only to the CPC brand but also their own brand interests. Parathletes do understand the value that their stories bring to the table and they do know that they are the essence of the CPC brand, but they do not want their ability to be overshadowed by their circumstance. That is the fine line that has to be drawn when sharing the stories about the Paralympians.

Sponsor 1 agrees that the Paralympians stories add a great deal of value to Paralympic brand, “When I think about brand positioning their personal stories are so incredible and I think the athletes in a lot of ways are proud of their personal stories but they are too close to their stories to realize how amazing their stories are. They just want to concentrate on the sport. “Let’s just talk about whatever it is: hockey, basketball whatever.” The personal interest stories which is what I think everyone gets really excited about the Paralympics for. When you talk to the athletes it is like whatever, the disability is the disability let me just talk about the competition.” (Sponsor 1, 2019)

“The public is getting to know of more because of the commercials and the stories that CBC and Petro Canada portray, a few newspaper articles as well. People love it, when they see it they love the sport and the stories and everything, people want to see more every time I talk about Paralympics people want to see more. The culture is starting to change from people seeing us for having a really tough time because of our injuries or sickness or whatever happened to us and now it’s shifting towards, they are athletes and they are working out twice a day and they are working hard, they are the same as Olympians. It’s kind of a mind shift that has been happening the past few years and it’s been great. Cause the Olympians go

through things too, they have their ups and downs they have their challenges, they have death in the family, they also have their sicknesses and their injuries same as us. Like obviously one or two years of our life is pretty tragic, for me it was cancer some others it was car accidents stuff like that. It lasts like a year or two it's part of our life, but we are still athletes like the Olympians at the end of the day. We study in the states we can play pro, it's kinda the same we get the same opportunities but less because its less bodies its less people other than that we have the same goals.” (Paralympian 1)

Using media to tell the Paralympians stories isn't the only way that the stories are shared, the Paralympians with the help of the CPC are often invited to speak at speaking engagements, often at the request of sponsors.

There are other aspects where the emotional connectivity and high-performance aspirations are also able to benefit sponsors. Depending on the need of the sponsor and what their objectives might be, there are different ways in which the CPC brand is able to benefit them. With Pfizer who is solely a CPC sponsor, it is very much about employee engagement and employee pride, it's about building. Their audience is actually the government, so they showcase to the government what they actually do to support parathletes because they feel that will change, and it does, the perception of Pfizer with Government officials at all levels: provincial, federal and municipal. Being able to engage with their target audience with CPC the brand and what they have to offer with their parathletes has assisted with how they are perceived by the government officials. The stories and content which greatly appeal to emotion are able help soften or shift the perceptions that people might have of a large pharmaceutical company (CPC, 2019). Having the athletes come in and share their stories resonates tremendously with the employees as well as clients and officials in the case of Pfizer. The stories serve as a source of inspiration and hope help to build the morale of employees as well has improve the brand image of the organization to their partners and stakeholders.

As noted by Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002), most sponsors underlined that they supported the Paralympic Games in order to improve their image in the community. As a company they wanted to demonstrate to the community that they are a part of it by showing that the company is supporting it actively. Additionally, some sponsors stated that it was

important for the right to be present in the community underlining that they are official partners with the Paralympic Games or the Paralympic movement. (p.5)

The CPC is leveraging the storytelling tool to empower the movement and to raise awareness across the country and also to assist their partners to be able to meet their objectives. The idea of evoking empathy from the angle of charity or pity is not the reason for the Paralympians to share stories. Storytelling is used to be able to share the ideals of strength, perseverance and educate, giving the public a chance to learn and to appeal to the emotion to garner support.

4.2 Activation

THEME	SUB-THEME	
Activation	<i>Storytelling/brand development/awareness</i>	<p>Sponsor 3: “CPC has done a good job with differentiating themselves but at the same time trying to work with the COC to capture best practices with what does work and what doesn’t work, as you really don’t want to reinvent the wheel. There are some stuff that you can learn from the COC. What they have done is, they started something with the foundation called ParaTough Cup which I think has helped, basically trying to get the people, building awareness of people with disabilities in sport on as annual basis not just around Games.</p> <p>ParaTough Cup happens every year, they now have it in 4 cities across Canada and I think that is helping, it will slow not going to be fast and it is probably too focused and it goes back to the idea of you going to start somewhere. So even if we can start building the awareness internally it can start to go beyond and go on TV and other</p>

		<p>platforms, maybe it isn't today but maybe five years from now.”</p> <p>CPC: “We have a program with Canadian Tire- the Jumpstart program, so we launched the Parasport Jumpstart Fund and it's specifically for parents of kids with disabilities and helping them to get the kids integrated in sport. So, if you look at Canadian Tire and SportsChek it's all about what it takes, high performance and it's very much Olympic and Paralympic and it's about our athletes, but what we bring to the table different to the Paralympics is the whole “we all play for Canada” positioning and the Parasport Jumpstart Fund I don't know if you saw their commercials, but I encourage you to go have a look. There are 2 commercials 1 for Rio and 1 for PyeongChang and its all emotion. It's about, here is a dad bringing a son on the backyard rink on the sledge for the first time and the other one is kid in the wheel chair playing basketball across the street and then the next day they invite the kid in the wheel chair and they are all sitting down on their makeshift wheel chairs to integrate the neighbor. It very much talks about that emotional connection.”</p>
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According to Bodet & Seguin (2018) lectures, activation is a key part of any sponsorship, in order for sponsorship to be successful the activation has to be well utilized. Activation is defined as leveraging activities that encourage interaction with a sponsor or provide “added-value”. Activating the CPC brand can be done in different ways and the avenues that are chosen by the partners would be from the strategic standpoint that would generate the most return on the partners' objectives. According to O'Reilly, Pound, Burton, Seguin & Burnette

(2015), activation is crucial in implementing successful sponsorships. Without activation strategies, other marketing approaches would be more profitable than sponsorship (p.173).

As noted by Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002), two of the main reasons that companies have been known to partner with the Paralympic brand are:

- The companies saw the sponsorship as a chance to support the community with money, resources and services through the Paralympic Games. By this involvement they could demonstrate their support and responsibility on matter that are important to the community.
- Many sponsors representatives state that one reason was that their companies wanted to use the Paralympic Games for their employees through staff incentives programs. Sponsors tried to motivate and involve their employees through performance awards or guest speaking Paralympic athletes. The Paralympic Games and especially the Paralympic athletes were seen as very suitable to speak about motivational issues. Through this involvement many companies tried to achieve a positive climate with their employees were encouraged to organized and participate in fundraising events for a Paralympic Games. (p.6)

Utilizing the CPC partnership to appeal to the community and larger demographics as well as being able to improve the work morale or to improve brand image are the key factors that partners design their activation around. For CPC partners there are different ways in which they activate, and it is based on the nature of the partners' brand and the objectives that they intend to achieve.

- Employee Engagement
- Community Building
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Hospitality

4.2.1 Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is important to organizations who want to build a good rapport and morale with their employees. Providing and creating opportunities for their employees to access the sponsored property and to be able to experience the unique activations executed by both brands.

As noted in the research by Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002), many sponsors underlined that apart from its character as a sporting event the Paralympic Games have and are something more. Being described as an “inspirational event” a “different event” an “event with a social dimension”, and an event with an “uplifting side” to it. As one sponsor outlined “the spectators of the Paralympic Games experience a different emotion when they finally got to it”. (p.8)

Wanting to be able to share that experience with their employees means a lot to a sponsor and giving them the chance to witness firsthand the Paralympic events or initiatives for themselves brings about great employee pride and connectivity seeing the support that their company provides. Sponsor 2 who is new to the partnership with the CPC as well as the Paralympic Movement has spent the PyeongChang Games orienting themselves with the activation aspect of the partnership. “Sponsor 2 leverages their CPC partnership as an employee motivator, they have received positive feedback from staff and associates.

The Olympic and Paralympic partnerships create a powerful alignment of values. Through the power of sports, we will bring the world mobility solutions that bring diverse people of every background together. Sponsor 2 is excited to share a range of projects, products, and services that will bring their shared vision to life and inspire the world with the power of human mobility. (https://www.toyota-global.com/company/vision_philosophy/olympic_paralympic/)

For Sponsor 3, “more recently it has been employees that are going to Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. Two employees to the Olympic Games and two employees to the Paralympic Games.” (Sponsor 3, 2019). Being able to also get their employees engaged is an objective for Sponsor 3, when employees are able to support and are excited about the sponsorship it goes a long way for the organization and improves the employee morale.

The one thing that Sponsor 3 noted not to be a successful portion of the CPC activation, not being able to access the consumer. In the past Sponsor 3 has seen that not only with the Paralympic sponsorship but also with Olympic sponsorship as well that people don’t respond. Sponsor 3 found it more beneficial to focus inward and have the contests for our employees because they get way more excited.

According to Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002), many sponsors representatives state that one reason was that their companies wanted to use the Paralympic Games for their employees through staff incentives programs. (p.6)

4.2.2 Community Building

As noted in the literature by Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002), companies seem to be interested in the improvement of their image in the community, wanting to tie close bonds with the community and underline that the company supports its endeavors (p.7)

Sponsor 2 has taken additional steps to activate with individual parathletes on a local level and as such they have been able to forge a relationship with a noted Paralympian in the community. “In terms of activation, getting through the PyeongChang Games in 2018 was probably the key thing as a new partner as it has been a learning curve for us. But moving forward, how can we help our dealers to also activate the partnership and some of the dealers have jumped on board with actually sponsoring themselves to athletes. The example of Cindy Ouellette is one that comes to mind that I am aware of, we don’t always know what is happening on the dealer level but she does have a relationship with her local dealer in Quebec City.” (Sponsor 2, 2019)

According to Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002), the companies try to take goodwill and inspiration out of the sponsorship. Companies try to improve their image by adopting a good cause and by showing that they are embracing such an “inspirational” and positive event as the Paralympics. (p.8)

It appears that Sponsor 3 has different activation opportunities that leverage their brand initiatives specifically in the area of community building. Sponsor 3 engages on site level activation which they did for this last Games PyeongChang 2018. The premise of this activation was every time Canada would medal Sponsor 3 would give \$5000 to the CPC but Sponsor 3 started this initiative with the COC. “Whatever we do at site level it is done for both the COC and CPC and at the PyeongChang Games both teams had their medal records so that was great!” (Sponsor 3, 2019). Sponsor 3 wants to be seen as the brand that support Parathletes so this level of activation allows them to give back the Paralympic community in a big way while also encouraging them to compete at a very high level.

Sponsor 3 also mentioned the performance piece of their community building activation. With the FACE program athletes do really well from a performance perspective then they are featured on social media, but that is during the games. The rest of the year the focus that Sponsor 3 has is on storytelling and the athletes and their unique relationship with their coach. “With the activations programs the athletes are awarded ten thousand dollars and they share that with their coach. Five thousand goes to the athlete and the other five thousand goes to the coach, so it is the story telling and how they work together. Each one different.”

(Sponsor 3, 2019)

Sponsor 3 has done a great deal of leveraging for their partnership comprehensively with the CPC brand and been able to utilize different tools that have been proven to be effective for them when activating. They are a brand that believes in the Paralympic Movement and have taken the initiatives to design programs and avenues that can be leveraged for the full four years rather than within just the Olympic year. It appears that they have been able to effectively manage their brand with the CPC to ensure added value for both parties.

Sponsor 1 has a brand mandate to support the community and they have also made a commitment to support the Paralympic community with their sponsorship, and with the help of the CPC they have been able to activate that objective. As noted in the literature, some companies try to shift the perception of their brand from a cold commercial image to an image of a responsible company that cares. Those companies wanted to leverage the Paralympic Games and Paralympians in seminars, speaking engagements, foundations etc.

- According to Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris (2002), many sponsors are trying to use the Paralympics to approach older people, families and schoolchildren sine they are showing a big interest in the Paralympic Games and are also convinced by the whole idea of the Paralympic Movement. (p.7)

Sponsor 1 has supported Canadians in Sport and those are 2 things that are really important to their brand, “that as a Canadian company we really want to play up our support of Canada and the tagline ‘We all play for Canada’ use for the Olympics we carry it through to both. I think to validate what we have done around Jumpstart, and the \$50 million announcement was called ‘Play finds a way’ to be able to bring that CPC relationship to life and even another \$50m is a massive commitment, we are building fully integrated parks across Canada

so there is going to be 13 parks as part of the build we are investing money in the Parasport Fun which is a joint fund with the CPC, we're working with the CPC on coaching resources and the other barriers and issues in Parasport that we will be tackling together. This will be done by 2022. Parasport is a pretty small niche population.” (Sponsor 1, 2019)

Grassroots activation is important for the community as it lays the foundation for the future, Sponsor 1 being a community oriented brand has been able to activate that this level while leveraging the CPC brand, which in turn provides great exposure for Parasport to the youth in an impressionable demographic to start to build their appreciation and understanding of Parasport.

Sponsor 1 organizes an event called the Jumpstart Games and the Games are a community-based events for kids to come and try sport. And local stores are all independently owned, the owners of the stores in Newmarket ON, have 2-3 stores, those owners might pool money to host the day and work with the regional schoolboard to get the kids to come and then the kids would come and they would try different sports, let's say try hockey, baseball, soccer etc. And we have integrated Parasport into that, so even able body kids are getting that opportunity and I think that's another way to breakdown that barrier and build an appreciation of what these guys do.” (Sponsor 1, 2019)

This level of commitment to the activation of the CPC brand and the Paralympic Movement is intended to create long lasting waves within the community and to break down barriers for the children with disabilities while being able to educate the rest of the population how to be inclusive.

Sponsor 4, being solely a Paralympic sponsor has a different purpose when it comes to community building and activating their partnership. The partner aims to improve their brand image with clients and stakeholders by showcasing their sponsorship and support of the CPC. In doing so, Sponsor 4 will host events with government officials and have Paralympians come in to speak or attend. Having the Paralympians present to share their stories with the community brings the power of the Paralympic Movement to life and for Sponsor 4 to be able to show how they have support the movement provides the positive brand attributes from the CPC brand to flow to them.

Kabitsis, Harahousou & Kostaris's (2002) study found the following:

It is important for brands that their image is seen in a positive light within the community. There are many motives that sponsors seek to partner with the Paralympic brand and those motives include but are not limited to costs, awareness, image and employee incentive:

- The companies saw the sponsorship as a chance to support the community with money, resources and services through the Paralympic Games. By this involvement they could demonstrate their support and responsibility on matter that are important to the community. (p.6)
- Sponsors representatives state that the Paralympic Games and especially the Paralympic athletes were seen as very suitable to speak about motivational issues. Through this involvement many companies tried to achieve a positive climate with their employees were encouraged to organized and participate in fundraising events for a Paralympic Games. (p.5)

4.2.3 Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion is the very framework that the Paralympic movement was built on. Referencing the history provided in the literature by Brittain, Dr. Ludwig Guttmann recognized the physiological and psychological values of sport in the rehabilitation of paraplegic hospital inpatients and so it was that sport was introduced as part of the total rehabilitation program for patients in the spinal unit. (p.8)

It is that same concept of utilizing sport as a tool to bridge the divide that has Sponsor 2 motivated to be apart of the Paralympic movement. They are honored to be a Worldwide Partner of both the International Olympic Committee and International Paralympic Committee through the 2024 Games. Through their philosophy of Mobility for All, they aim to transform the way people move through the world. And in doing so, have created solutions to reduce the mobility barriers that limit human potential – from optimized public transportation system for large cities to individual solutions for people with physical challenges.” (Sponsor 2, 2019)

It appears that Sponsor 2 will be leveraging another aspect of their activation plan which showcases to the global community that they are able to bring improvement and that they support diversity and inclusion, as they are committed to creating solutions to the area of mobility. As they are appealing to the global community, they will activate in various ways to

be able to encompass their objectives. Activation can be multifaceted, and with Sponsor 2 they have chosen to leverage the parathletes to tell their stories through media as well as with employee engagement.

Another way to leverage their partnership and to be able to bring the idea of diversity and inclusion to the forefront for their employees and associates. Sponsor 2 has ongoing activations internally will always continue “to include the CPC as part of our associate meetings and dealer meetings, and the dealers actually love the partnership. When the partnership was first announced with our dealers in a dealer meeting and we brought on five athletes, three of which were Paralympians, I think that was one of the few times that we would get a standing ovation from our dealers. It is very exciting when our dealers are behind us as well. This resonates well with the decision makers internally to see the support come from the dealers to know that this will be an initiative that will be well backed.” (Sponsor 2, 2019)

Having the opportunity brings the idea of “Mobility For All” to life for Sponsor 2, they want to be able to be seen as a brand that helped to breakdown barriers of mobility and provided solutions that brought opportunities to segments of the community that normally would not be able to receive them.

4.2.4 Hospitality

This is an aspect of activation that most sponsors take advantage of to be able to leverage other goals and objectives. Being able to provide access to experiences that can shape and alter the understanding of the Paralympic brand while providing a memorable and brand connected memory.

Sponsor 3 describes their sponsorship level with the CPC as high. They support the broadcast, they own the rights to annual FACE Program the collaboration with the Family program, the brand points family program and also have the Games program. The Games program is the program where every Games Sponsor 3 supplies two tickets to very athlete who competes at a Paralympic Games and Olympic Games for every session that they compete in. “So, if they play wheelchair Rugby and they compete in 6 sessions and then go to the finals Sponsor 3 will get tickets to each of those sessions so that the athlete’s mom and dad will be able to come and watch them play.” (Sponsor 3, 2019)

This program was developed by Sponsor 3 for the 2010 Vancouver Games, where it was much bigger on home soil. Away games though, they still do the ticketing piece of it so that parathletes’ parents don’t have to worry about getting tickets. And the last time Sponsor 3 investigated with other international sponsorship execution for the Paralympic brand they were one of the only countries in the world that offers that opportunity. “Sponsor 3 is very proud of the fact that they provide this to the Paralympic athletes. And the internal team of the Sponsor 3 brand love that program.” (Sponsor 3, 2019)

The uniqueness of the ticketing activation is what is to be noted, as it was created from the idea that parents would want the opportunity to watch their children compete and it then blossomed over the years into a fervent activation for the brand. Sponsor 3 wants to be seen as an organization that supports parathletes and activation of this nature helps to reinforce that perception.

This aspect is a special touch and being able to ensure that the parathletes have their families present goes to the highlight that they support the parathletes but also Sponsor 2 is able to create a great experience for the parents that will have a positive connection with that brand moving forward based on that activation.

4.3 Awareness and Brand Development

<u>THEME</u>	<u>SUB-THEME</u>	
Awareness and Brand Development	Storytelling/activation	Sponsor 2: “The Paralympic brand it is new to us, so it as much a learning and discovery exercise as with any new partnership how does this work what does this mean for us, how do we align our brands, how do we align our values and what we stand for, how we make sure that we are both still relevant to the Canadian marketplace. I can’t say that we had research done on the Paralympic brand, because it was something that wasn’t initiated

		<p>in Canada, it was a global initiative and because of that affiliation it made a lot of sense for us to work with CPC and leverage their brand. And obviously it was something that they have been working on as well, they had a brand campaign “Greatness is rare” with PyeongChang and I think they have been trying to build their brand as well so for us it would be an opportunity on how do we align our brand. Basically, the way that we have explained the broader Olympic and Paralympic sponsorship is that they are, it’s all about mobility and for the IPC its about sport and for us its about the technology that we have in everything that we do, and about removing barriers/obstacles with mobility overall, whether they are social or technological.”</p> <p>Sponsor 3: “The other thing that they have tried to build awareness with is with the CBC and PT with one of their programs we are using it 365 as well is a program so we are on the road to the Olympic Games. Run every weekend on the CBC, it doesn’t have the huge audience, it gets bigger during the Games but also showcase our parathletes on that even though it is an Olympic program. So, I think that helps to build some awareness as well. And I think the other thing that that CPC is going to be doing moving into 2019 is they have got some key events coming up in Summer sports, wheelchair Rugby etc. and</p>
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		<p>what they are going to try to do, is to engage the sponsors more where we can help to support through our channels social etc. and showcase them and bring awareness. Social seems to be the direction that are going because broadcast is so expensive.”</p>
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According to Aaker (1992), the awareness of a brand is critical in all stages of the brand’s lifespan, and to be able to partner with a brand that offers to assist in raising, maintaining or improving your awareness is a good opportunity that should be well utilized. As noted in the literature, Aaker has five components when it comes to brand equity.

- Brand Loyalty
- Brand Awareness
- Perceived Quality
- Brand Associations
- Other Propriety

A brand with a long lifespan indicates its longevity, it can be deduced that a brand that has been operating for a number of years would have high brand loyalty, brand awareness and perceived quality, which would allow it to possess high brand equity.

There has been significant growth with the CPC brand over the last ten years. It has been noted by their partners and they are impressed with how the brand has expanded and started to solidify its identity in the Canadian sporting landscape. One thing that the partners have noted is the way that the IPC and the CPC have been able to leverage social media platforms to gain traction and share the stories of the Paralympians.

When it comes to branding, the CPC understands that they have work on their approach. According to Sponsor 2, “They (CPC) are not well known as their cousin the Olympics so I think they did a wonderful job with ‘Greatness is rare’ which was their PyeongChang incoming campaign, just to highlight how extraordinary it is for a Paralympic athlete to achieve the height that they do through sport. Lots of amazing work coming from the CPC

and they are a very lean organization and you really have to respect what they are trying to do in Canada and I know from some of the KPIs they have shared, that their brand is actually increasing in terms of familiarity and it's a good thing. They are doing well and as partners it is a perspective of ours to help them as well and make sure that they are included in everything that we want to do when it comes to activating for the Olympics and Paralympics. Even from how we talk about it as not just the Olympics but it is the Olympics and Paralympics together as an opportunity for us. And never forget that the Paralympics is an opportunity too.” (Sponsor 2, 2019)

The CPC brand has established itself within the sporting landscape in Canada as a viable and equitable property for sponsors to align. The value base that the brand shares is definitely a key component to what makes the brand stand out and it appears that sponsors appreciate that they are able to align with that brand that is synonymous with the values of:

- Inspiration
- Perseverance
- Strength
- Inclusion

Many Canadians would see these values as qualities that most if not all Canadians would identify with. Partners often find themselves appreciating the value sharing and image adjustment that can be acquired from aligning with a high value brand like the CPC. “For us, partnering with the CPC was the right thing to do- it is true, we were going to be hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games it only makes sense that we sponsor both cause in our head it's equal and it made sense for us. At the time the Paralympic movement wasn't as strong as it is today, it was pretty, I don't even think anybody knew about the Paralympic Games back in 2010, because we had never had it on our soil before. We had had Olympic Games in 1988 and we had had Montreal in 1976, Vancouver was the first one so they needed support for sure. So yes, being a Canadian company and we are out in Alberta head office, it made sense to help out.” (Sponsor 3, 2019)

As the CPC continues to grow the awareness of its brand, studies as noted in the literature have shown that intended engagement with the 2018 Paralympic Games was very positive, peaking at 66% of the Canadians that indicated that they planned to engage in some way, up from 60% at the outset of the 2018 Olympic Winter Games. (CPC, 2018)

However, it is important to note that overall campaign awareness was relatively low as it relates to the digital media campaign for “Greatness is Rare: Witness it” was most likely to inspire individuals to speak about the campaign to family and friends (37%) seek out Paralympic Games coverage (34%), and look for more information online (32%) (CPC, 2018).

It appears that the Canadian public has an interest in viewing the Paralympic Games itself but there might be less interest in the campaign content. Though the CPC has been trying to gain traction on social and other media platforms, they may take a while for the results to start affecting the interest of viewers who want to see the Paralympic events. According to Sponsor 3, “the CPC has done a good job with differentiating themselves. What CPC has done is, started something with the foundation called ParaTough Cup which it has seemed to help, basically trying to get the people, building awareness of people with disabilities in sport on an annual basis not just around Games. ParaTough Cup happens every year, they now have it in 4 cities across Canada and I think that is helping, it will slow not going to be fast and it is probably too focused and it goes back to the idea of you got to start somewhere. So even if we can start building the awareness internally it can start to go beyond and go on TV, maybe it isn’t today but maybe 5 years from now. The ParaTough Cup provides the sponsors with an additional opportunity to activate with the CPC brand, they are able to reach additional markets and to be entrenched in this new platform to be able to showcase their support of the Paralympic Movement in Canada. This is a huge motivator for this sponsor as they want to be noted as a brand that assists with the development of parathletes and the ParaTough Cup creates that additional opportunity.” (Sponsor 3, 2019)

The CPC has tried to build awareness with their brand by partnering with the CBC to develop content for one of their programs being used all year round, that program is the Road to the Olympic Games. “It is run every weekend on the CBC, it doesn’t have the huge audience, it gets bigger during the Games but also showcase our parathletes on that even though it is an Olympic program. So, I think that helps to build some awareness as well. And I think the other thing that that CPC is going to be doing moving into 2019 is they have got some key events coming up in Summer sports, wheelchair Rugby etc. and what they are going to try to do, is to engage the sponsors more where we can help to support through our channels social etc. and showcase them and bring awareness. Social seems to be the direction that are going because broadcast is so expensive.” (Sponsor 3, 2019).

The consistency and commitment of the CPC and its partners to distribute Paralympic content is to be noted. There has been a concerted effort on from all parties to elevate and leverage brand attributes to be able to raise the awareness of the Paralympic Movement. “The CPC brand is growing, especially since Rio I have seen like a huge increase. I think what a huge part of it was in Canadian Jumpstart and Canadian Olympic started doing commercials with Paralympians so that changed the whole movement I feel like. And in comparison, to Beijing which was my first Paralympic Game in 2008 that time there was barely anything and I was new too, so I wasn’t as much in the media but still. I look at big names like them, you wouldn’t see them that often on TV and now that CBC is covering Paralympic content on TV and on web platforms, it’s pretty huge. So obviously it is getting better and we getting way closer to the Olympic side, than we were ever before.” (Paralympian 1)

According to the CPC, “they are considered the brand love brand- because looking at their partners like Air Canada, Bell, Canadian Tire or Petro Canada, these are well known brands. They are not trying to build awareness; people know who they are. They are trying to improve the perception of the brand based on their association with us. Which will lead to at the end of the day more engagement, sales or other tangible returns.” (CPC, 2019)

As noted, there has been significant growth with the Paralympic brand and there has been great support rendered from the CPC partners to move the needle on the brand and increase the awareness of the Paralympic Movement.

4.4 Tensions: An opportunity or a challenge

<u>THEME</u>	<u>SUB-THEME</u>	
Tension: An opportunity or a challenge	<i>Awareness/storytelling</i>	Sponsor 2: “I think it’s a great alignment between Toyota and Paralympic brand in terms of mobility and it is removing barriers whether social or technological barriers of any sort. As Toyota, it is not just about being a car company, but how do we use our technology that we are working on to

		<p>improve the way that we move. So, it stems from the whole idea of our brand campaign “start your impossible” when you are free to move, anything is possible. I think it is pretty free range kind of expression you can define whichever way that you want it to but for a Toyota perspective obviously its about creating those technologies, creating those moments, not just technology but also in society what can we do to help people more freely.”</p> <p>Sponsor 1: “I think, and we speak to the CPC a lot about this and it is a chicken and an egg scenario when is comes to broadcast that, broadcast is really what drives the whole Olympic value and CPC just doesn’t get the broadcast support that the Olympics do and the response is “well, they don’t get the viewership that the Olympics gets so they don’t get the timeslots.” But if you don’t get the timeslots then you will never be able to get the viewership. We have talked to them a few times about how can we work together? Right now, we are in a tough cycle with Asian Games where the broadcast slots are not favorable with the time difference. But when you get them back into a Paris and Los Angles in time zones that are little friendlier, I think it will be interesting position to get the CBC to more of a priority on Paralympic broadcast.”</p>
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The tension that is constantly noted with the CPC is encompassed around whether there is an opportunity or a challenge when it comes to the Paralympic Movement being seen as high-performance sport. Due to the parathletes possessing disabilities, the area of parasport can be seen participatory rather than high-performance. Looking at the history of the Paralympic movement as noted in the literature, prior to World War II there is little evidence of organized efforts to develop or promote sport for individuals with disabling conditions, especially those with spinal injuries who were considered to have no hope surviving their injuries. Following the war, however, medical authorities were prompted to re-evaluate traditional methods of rehabilitation which were not satisfactorily responding to the medical and psychological needs of the large number of soldiers disabled in combat. (Steadward, 1992). The Paralympic movement was established to give disabled and injured individuals a space to be able to use sport as a mechanism to adapt.

Currently, the image of the Paralympic Movement has changed, and partnering with the Olympic Games has created an association with high-performance sport that the CPC intends to live up to. For the CPC that is a mandate of the organization and they want to ensure that their parathletes are seen in the light of high-performance sport. But there is a notion that not being seen in that light might have its advantages and disadvantages. When appealing to the public the CPC wants to have their parathletes garner the same respect as Olympians, but their perception may not be that way.

According to Legg & Dottori (2017), in a 2015, a Toronto ParaPan American Games Awareness Survey conducted for the Canadian Paralympic Committee, it was suggested that 82% of respondents agreed that the Paralympic Games represented a highly competitive sporting competition for elite athletes, who happen to be physically disabled. (p. 22)

Noting the disability, is what makes it challenging for the audience to see parathletes in the same light as Olympians. In an effort to have the connection to be made between Olympians and Paralympians the COC and CPC often prepare the same Team Canada materials for campaigns showing both Olympians and Paralympians together. 46% strongly agree and 33% of Canadians somewhat agree that The Paralympics represent a highly competitive sporting competition for elite athletes, who happen to be physically disabled. (CPC, 2018)

Sponsor 3 notes that they always make the effort to showcase both the Olympic and Paralympic athlete. “What we do is always run our Olympic and Paralympic ads (specifically a Para athlete and an Olympic athlete in the ad together) that we show them during both Games. So, we show a parathlete during Olympic and an Olympic during Para. It’s not one or the other because the Games have stopped, we are interchangeable on both. And I would have to say that most of the other sponsorships have started to do the same.” (Sponsor 3, 2019)

According to Legg & Dottori (2017) in the literature, Dottori et al (2014b) it is noted that while 75% of Canadians had a very positive sentiment towards Paralympians, this did not translate to a behavioral change such as investing time in the Movement or viewing Paralympic sport on television. (p.5)

Coming from under the shadow of the Olympic Games would be a difficult task for the Paralympic brand, but at the same time being affiliated with the Olympic brand does have its advantages with being able to be synonymous with what the Olympic Games stands for, from a traditions and global appeal stand point.

Legg & Dottori’s (2017) study found the following:

Using the lens of the paradox literature suggested by Smith & Lewis (2011), this tension can be viewed as a performing paradox, stemming from the Paralympic Movement’s attempt to address the differing and sometimes conflicting demands of its stakeholders. Paralympic athletes desire able-bodied audiences to focus on their athletic achievements that can empower the athlete and break stereotypes, but at the same time, they wish disability audiences to view them as role models. However, if they distance themselves too much from their disability so that able-body audiences can focus on their athletic performances, they risk being unrelatable to the disabled community. The result is that the failure of the Paralympic athletes and sport to identify as “disabled” could potentially limit the ability of the Paralympic Games and movement to empower other persons with a disability (Purdue & Howe, 2012).

However, despite this unprecedented coverage for parasport, criticism ensued. IPC President Sir Philip Craven requested that the word “disabled” be dropped from Games coverage

(Gibson, 2012). The television advertisement used but Channel 4 with the slogan “Meet the Superhuman”, also met with concern with some the Paralympic community, troubled about how athletes were failing to be portrayed as elite athletes and instead being shows as one of two extremes; super human or victims of accidents overcoming handicaps (The Inclusion Club, 2012). Pearce (2008) suggested that such portrayals potentially reduced the accomplishments of Paralympic athletes to demeaning, feel good stories (Legg, 2016). These paradoxes are both the Paralympic brands’ greatest strength and weakness (Dottori et al., 2014b). It is a weakness because it confuses key brand elements (Guenzi & Nocco, 2006; Kotlet, 2009) to the general public and consumers’ perception of the Movement. The paradox has made it unclear as to where the brand is positioned, thus weakening the brand as a whole. (p.12-13)

According to the CPC study (2018), the Paralympics represent a highly competitive sporting competition for elite athletes, who happen to be physically disabled (79% agree, compared to 75% in 2015) and that the Paralympics are a competition among some of the world’s best athletes (71%, up from 62%. Canadians are also now more likely to disagree that Paralympic sports are not as competitive as Olympic sports because there are so few competitors (58%, up from 53%). (p.6)

According to Depauw (1997), it is argued that individuals with disabilities:

- (a) have been invisible or excluded from sport
- (b) have become visible in sport as disabled athletes
- (c) are increasingly becoming visible in sport as athletes

The Paralympic Games is arguably an example of a vehicle which currently ensures, the *visibility of disability in sport* in that it is a relatively high-profile global sports event for individuals with an impairment. (p.24)

It is important to note the transition from a challenge to an opportunity by giving people with disabilities a platform such as the Paralympic Games. The Paralympic Movement provides the opportunity to raise awareness and create opportunities for those who are disabled using sport as the primary mechanism. When opportunities are created then there is the chance that more can then be done for the Paralympic movement. Sponsor 2 notes, that the Paralympic platform is ideal for them to showcase what they have to offer the world. “We think it’s a great alignment between our brand and the Paralympic brand in terms of mobility and it is

removing barriers whether social or technological barriers of any sort. As Toyota, it is not just about being a car company, but how do we use our technology that we are working on to improve the way that we move. So, it stems from the whole idea of our brand campaign ‘Start your impossible’ when you are free to move, anything is possible. I think it is pretty free range kind of expression you can define whichever way that you want it to but for a Toyota perspective obviously its about creating those technologies, creating those moments, not just technology but also in society what can we do to help people more freely.” (Sponsor 2, 2019)

There are noted tensions between how the Paralympic brand is seen and how they see themselves. As they continue to grow and establish their presence within the Canadian sporting community it is important to understand that they are able to offer a refreshing and segmented area for sponsors to carve their identity and build their brands. The Paralympic brand knows their identity as they aim to grow and evolve, they want to be able to add the that narrative rather than being stuck or left behind.

4.5 SWOT Analysis

<p>STRENGTHS</p>	<p>Paralympians and their ability to perform in completion but also their personal stories. It is important to acknowledge what the Paralympians deal with day in and day out. That is what makes the Paralympic brand extra special, it’s special to start with and you can’t separate that.</p> <p>The way that the CPC managing the content for their Games broadcast. Where the alternative is the CBC would take back the management and distribution of the Games content and manage it the way that they COC does.</p> <p>The strength of the CPC brand is very much about the emotional connectivity, overcoming obstacles, that is we are still high performance.</p>
<p>WEAKNESSES</p>	<p>Brand awareness overall, can be seen as the biggest challenge for the CPC brand, the lack of big corporate support can be seen as a factor for not capturing the fans. The TV world is changing dramatically, so to increase the awareness of the Paralympic movement and its sports there needs to be an increase in viewership of</p>

	<p>Parasport on TV. It being more accessible on TV increases the exposure to the public, so when you are introduced, you're like "Wow, that's amazing."</p> <p>Paralympic brand is continually overshadowed by the Olympic brand. It is also a part of how the community perceives people with disabilities and as diversity and inclusion becomes a prevalent issue that as a community we need to think more about and have it more cognizant.</p> <p>Today there is still a bit of brand confusion, it's not where it used to be, but we still have some work to do. Some people still can't differentiate the Special Olympics from the Paralympics and it's not bad but it's not as prevalent as you are probably aware the Special Olympics is about intellectual disabilities and focuses on participation. Whereas with us it is mostly physical disabilities and there are intellectual disabilities as well, but it is about high performance.</p>
<p>OPPURTUNITIES</p>	<p>Making the Paralympic movement more mainstream. Improving the way people are treated or perceived around the world with disabilities is very different. As perceptions change about Parasport, hopefully that can be a leader in bringing things along to other countries to be more accessible.</p> <p>Having COC partners who are also CPC partners rally around the Paralympic movement, it would be extremely helpful for them as well. Expanding the partnerships beyond COC logo placement but also put up the CPC logo as well, visual representation of the unity between the two entities. Which would help to draw attention to the CPC. The CPC is very resilient, and they are coming up with ideas and solutions and bringing things to the table on how to work together on the brand.</p> <p>The CPC needs to build awareness of our athletes, partners need to be onboard to build the awareness of the Games and the Paralympic Movement. The CPC purchased the broadcast rights back in 2012 and now own the rights and priority is to increase the coverage of the Games and share more stories. More of the CPC partners need to activate their partnerships.</p>

THREATS

One of the biggest challenges that the CPC faces is that as they evolve is staying true to themselves. The good thing about the Paralympic group/team is that they are able to be flexible and agile because of the size they are so as it gets more evolved, as the movement gets more popular, how do they keep that authentic piece, that allows them to keep that strong relationship able to be flexible and agile vs when u get into the COC world because they have always been so big for so long sometimes they can be more inflexible (or harder) to get things done. Keeping collaboration and keeping that open for sponsors to feel comfortable to share and develop.

Doping is deemed as a threat to the CPC brand. I think Canadians today do not associate Paralympians and doping. So, CPC needs to defend that and they have.

Another threat for the CPC would be classification. Classification is how do we classify our athletes with varying levels of disabilities in order to compete against similar athletes. But as the Paralympics become more mainstream, it is something that needs to be addressed.

CHAPTER V- DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the Paralympic brand in Canada and how the brand is leveraged by its sponsors and to increase the understanding of the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) as it relates to sponsor activation and motivations to partner with the brand.

The objective of the questionnaires that were administered was to be able to obtain firsthand information from specific CPC stakeholders who would be directly influential or impacted by the partnerships with CPC sponsors. In order to be able to build qualitative research, the questionnaires had specific focus areas that were to ensure that the information gathered would be beneficial to the purpose of the study.

The results that were collected for this research was done with semi-structured interviews that were conducted either in -person or over the phone. Participants include an Executive Director of Partnership with the CPC, Directors and Senior Managers of Sponsorship/Partnership with CPC Partners and Paralympians.

The nature of the questions that were posed to the interviewees were around the following focus areas:

- Perceptions of the brand
- Motivation for partnership
- Relationships
- Activation

The aim of the questionnaires was to ensure that the following research questions could be answered and then were able to also provide additional data needed to show the different perspectives on the following concepts:

- How is the Paralympic brand perceived in Canada?
- What are the motivations behind sponsoring the brand?
- How do sponsors activate around the brand? What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the Paralympic brand?

Key learnings

- The CPC brand has experienced notable growth over the past five to ten years both from a brand and sponsorship standpoint, largely due to the increase in the support that their partners have provided. The partners have been able to invest in the Paralympic Movement in a significant way that has allowed for the three main areas of growth to occur:
 - **Paralympic Movement:** the sponsors have been able to invest in the growth and development of awareness and infrastructure of the Paralympic Movement. Being able to share the stories of the Paralympians and their triumph over adversity has been able to raise the awareness and understanding of people with disabilities not only for Paralympians but for other Canadians living with disabilities as well. The development of the Jumpstart Foundation which will aim to further grow and cultivate the education of the movement starting at a young age will assist in how people with disabilities will be supported in the future, ensuring that they are also considered with planning in most societal aspects. The area of Mobility which is also a primary focus for another CPC sponsor speaks to the idea of inclusion of the Paralympic Movement and providing the opportunity for people with disabilities to be able to be mobile and have access as seamlessly as possible.
 - **Paralympians:** Paralympians play a vital role in the growth of the CPC brand as they are ambassadors and champions of the movement and are testaments to determination and overcoming obstacles. They do embody the heart of who Canada is and sponsors have been able to take their stories and experiences to share with the nation and the world. Sponsors have been able to leverage their resources whether it is marketing, consumer and employee engagement or hospitality and the Games to be able to share the stories of the Paralympians. Bringing them closer to the public and giving them a platform to share their experiences. As the reach continues to grow it is undoubted that the power of the CPC brand lies with their parathletes and in order to continue to grow for years to come, their stories need to continue to be shared whether on a screen, digital platform or in person. The Paralympians who are passionate about the

development of the movement have been able to venture out on their own and with the help of the CPC become aligned with sponsors and develop relationships with them in order to educate and inspire. Sponsors have a great appreciation for the parathletes and they showcase that when they are able to gather the content needed to share the stories across their platforms to raise awareness and to garner support for the Games.

- **Marketing:** this has been a huge focus for the CPC brand, and they have been making strides in increasing the tools that they use to market the Paralympic brand and being able to support the sponsors with what they need to also market the brand. Sponsors who sponsor both the Olympic and Paralympic brands have been promoting both brands simultaneously as that has assisted in the push of the Paralympic brand as CPC aims to bridge the gap between how the public views the Paralympic brand versus the Olympic brand. Sponsors have also been placing Olympians and Paralympians in the same spots in order to promote Team Canada for both Games and that way both brands get extended play in the market places during Games years. Marketing on social platforms is key when it comes to raising awareness and building brand equity for the CPC, gaining fans, likes and views on their platforms translates to the growth in awareness of the CPC brand and gives a tool for them to utilize to gain the following that should translate into Games viewership. The lack of popularity of the Games in comparison to the Olympic Games continues to be a challenge, but being continuing to leverage their assets in the marketplace will continue to grow their brand and the hope is in time the high performance factor of parasport will be valued and seen as such.

The Paralympic brand in Canada has been growing and it continues to show that there is potential for continued growth. It is important to note that sponsors have expressed an overall satisfaction of their CPC partnership is very high. Sponsors are pleased with their partnership and relationship with the CPC brand. When possible, sponsors have been able to measure how their brand has been received with their partnership with the CPC brand how that partnership has been able to meet their objectives and if their public perception has changed since their alignment with the CPC brand.

The tools to measure are usually implemented after a Paralympic Games and sponsors have expressed that they do see their objectives being met with the CPC partnership. A couple have noted they do not use their objectives solely to measure the satisfaction with the partnership but also take into consideration what they overall impact has on the Paralympic Movement. The sponsors believe in the movement and what it stands for and they want to support the parathletes and their families.

Sponsors have noted that for them it is more about the support and belief in values of the Paralympic movement and brand affinity that comes with partnering with the CPC. They are willing to see minimal movement as it relates to their objectives in order to support the CPC and their Paralympians. They also believe that the spirit of the Paralympic Movement embodies who they are as Canadians and support the resilience, determination and heart of the Paralympians and they continue to fight the odds daily.

The CPC has proven itself as a valued property within the sport landscape in Canada and as they continue to expand and evolve in an attempt to increase their audience and popularity, one noted challenge is to maintain the authenticity that they have been known for as they aspire to be seen as a high-performance sport property. The Paralympic brand is the brand that inspires, motivates and gives hope all while being seen as wholesome and embodying values that attract sponsors. That level of authenticity is what sets the CPC brand apart as a sport property and where they value for them lies, the lack of controversy and heart and determination of their parathletes.

Limitations

- The inability to interview all necessary stakeholders to gain more knowledge that would provide a deeper understanding of the partnerships from other perspectives. To be able to interview all CPC partners and possibly former partners would have been able to provide additional knowledge from other perspectives.
- Due to limited information available in this area as it specifically relates to the CPC brand and sponsorship, there was a limitation on the amount of research that could have been conducted in order to gain more insight and to draw comparisons within the Paralympic Movement in Canada.

- The sharing of best in class sponsorship practices within Canada are not as noted academically as they are within private entities, which poses a limitation on the availability on the amount of information that can be provided on the area to help to build the knowledge sharing.
- In comparison, there is less research information available on the Paralympic sponsorship space versus the Olympic Sponsorship space. Being able to have more information available on sponsorship within the Paralympic Movement would be helpful with for research and bibliographical development.

Recommendations

- Interviewing more sponsors and being able to gain a broader understanding of the CPC brand as it relates to other partners and their objectives.
- Focusing more on the brand aspect of the research, as this research provided more information and insights on the sponsorship aspect of the
- Conducting research with the public to get a pulse on how the CPC brand is perceived outwardly and how their efforts to improve awareness and brand reach are being accomplished.
- Obtaining sponsor measurement results to be able to better assess the value that the CPC brand has with the public and the partnership recall both aided and unaided.

This research has been able to provide information and insight on the area of sponsorship within the Paralympic Movement in Canada. It shares practices of sponsors as well as challenges and showcases information on the CPC brand as its value to its partners. Historical knowledge on the Paralympic Movement is also provided as well as Olympic sponsorship as it assists with understanding the framework of sponsorship within the Olympic Movement. This research has added value within the Paralympic Movement as it relates to sponsorship and provides an additional academic reference for further research to be conducted.

Future research can be based on a comparison of the Olympic Brand and Sponsorship to the Paralympic Brand and Sponsorship within Canada. Being able to draw comparisons between both brands and sponsorship practices for both which are similar and different and what

sponsors hope to gain by partnering with either brand and how sponsors that partner with both brands benefit.

CHAPTER VI- BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Olympic Marketing Fact File (2017) - 2017 Edition- Prepared by IOC

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APPENDICES

Questionnaires:

CPC Executive

1. Knowledge and approach to brand?

- What is your approach to Paralympic brand and its management? What factors lead this approach?
- What is the knowledge of the IPC brand in Canada and its market? Do you rely on studies/research to inform on brand decisions? Is this research secondary or primary data? How often do you conduct research in country? How is the IPC brand research contributing to your NPC?
- What are the main results of these studies/research? How is it used by your NPC?
- Is this information used in your sponsorship strategies? Explain or give an example.
- Ask for proposal examples (secondary document) if possible. This will remain confidential unless OK to share (e.g. in class presentation)

2. Strategic approach to sponsorship selling

- What are the key elements of the proposals?
- What is the positioning of the proposal (e.g. high-performance vs social responsibility or social impacts)?
- Who decides on the positioning? (executives of NPC? Sponsors? Athletes?)
- What is the link between other organizations: (1) IPC, (2) CPC, (3) National Federations, (4) Athletes – in the quest for sponsorship?
- What are the objectives of sponsors? Is this shared prior to making agreements?

3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Paralympic Brand? What are the opportunities for growth of the Paralympic brand in your country? Internationally? What are the threats and/or challenges?

4. Relationship with sponsors

- What are key success factors for your sponsorship? What works? Are sponsors activating their rights with Paralympics? If yes, what are the main platforms used? What is the positioning of the activations by sponsors? What support do the NPC provide to sponsors? Is activation discussed in negotiating sponsorship? What is the ratio of activation vs rights?
- If sponsors do not activate, why?
- What is the nature of the relation between your NPC and sponsors: interactions? Frequency? Format? Support? How often?
- Is there a willingness to co-create? How?
- What do you think sponsors expect from you as the rights holder?
- What do you think is the level of satisfaction of your sponsors? Explain?

5. Future of the NPC

- Do you think the newly introduced sponsorship model for the IOC and IPC is a good opportunity for both entities?
- Do you see this proposition benefiting the IPC in a great way?
- Would this model be beneficial for NPCs to follow in conjunction with their NOC?

CPC Sponsors

1. *Perceptions of the Paralympic Brand*

- What is your knowledge of the brand in your market? International? Do you conduct (or ask agency) brand research on Paralympic? If yes, what kind of research is being done? expect research from sponsee? Are you aware of the IPC brand research?
- What are key elements of the brand? What do you think is the brand positioning? What are differentiation factors?
- What is the fit/congruence between the Paralympic brand and Olympic brand? How are they distinct from each other?
- What is your opinion of the NPC's approach towards brand and branding?

2. *Why sponsorships? Origin and motivation*

- Why did you decide to sponsor the NPC? What is the nature of your sponsorship? (length, cash, in-kind, etc.).
- What was the point of entry to this sponsorship? First contact? (Already a sponsor, Olympic sponsor, etc.)
- What are the objectives of your sponsorship? (importance) How are they supporting your corporate objectives/strategies?
- *For some, what is complementarity/extension to their Olympic partnership?
- Are they shared by the Committee?

3. *Relationship with sponsee?*

- What is the nature of your relationship of the NPC? what kind of interactions? Frequency? Format? Support?
- Is there a willingness to co-create? How is this discussed between the organisations?
- How proactive is the NPC in responding to your needs?
- Do you evaluate the sponsorship results? If so, what the indicators? If not, how do you decide whether or not to cease or renew sponsorship?
- What is your level of satisfaction with the sponsee?

4. *Activation*

- What is your level of activation? (strong/weak, ratio, amount)
- Main activation platforms (FAMILIARISATION PREALABLE AVEC LES ACTIVATIONS)
- Internal/external activations?
- What angles? What supports (athletes, performance, storytelling...)?
- Have you attended the Paralympic Games? If yes, what were your impressions? Did it change your perspective on the Paralympic? How so?

5. *What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Paralympic Brand? What are the opportunities for growth of the Paralympic brand in your country? Internationally? What are the threats and/or challenges?*

Canadian Paralympians

Athlete:

Name:

Sport:

Years as Paralympian:

Paralympic Games attended:

Sponsorship and Brand background

- As a Paralympian, what do you think of the Paralympic brand in Canada?
 - o How do you think the public views the Paralympic brand in Canada?
- What do you think are the brand assets of the CPC which makes it stand out?
- Are you familiar with the current brand partnerships that your NPC manage?
- Do you know who the partners are?
 - o Do you think they are good fits for the NPC brand?
- Are you familiar with the work that the partners have done with your NPC?

Sponsorship value

- Have you been personally impacted by the work done by an NPC sponsor?
- Do you think the value of an NPC sponsor is more targeted to Paralympians or the organization?
- Do you have higher expectations for the NPC sponsors?

CPC and Sponsorship relations

- Do you think the NPC adequately manages the relationships with the partners?
- Should the NPC brand or Paralympians benefit more from the partnerships?
- What are some ways in which the partners can improve their impact with Paralympians?
- Overall, do you see partnership being a great benefit to the athletes and something that should continue?