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Sports marketing analysis of four Brazilian football clubs

Crafting a matrix for sports marketing strategies and
developing a questionnaire

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Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen.

Lebron James

To God, for the mental and physical support to overcome difficulties. To my advisor, Mel Solé, for the guidance, support, and corrections during the process of producing the dissertation. To the University of Barcelona, for its splendid faculty, leadership, administration, and staff. To my family, for their unconditional support in shaping my citizenship.

RESUMEN

Este estudio tuvo como objetivo investigar de manera integral las estrategias de marketing deportivo en los clubes de fútbol brasileños. Cuatro clubes fueron seleccionados meticulosamente para su análisis basado en popularidad, éxito y relevancia. La metodología cualitativa empleó un enfoque exploratorio, utilizando revisiones bibliográficas para la recolección de datos a través de fuentes secundarias. El análisis de contenido reveló conocimientos significativos sobre el panorama del marketing en el fútbol brasileño. Los hallazgos subrayaron el papel crítico de los patrocinios estratégicos, la participación de los aficionados y el marketing innovador en el éxito dentro y fuera del campo. Las historias de éxito de Palmeiras, Flamengo, Athletico Paranaense y Red Bull Bragantino destacaron el poder transformador de las estrategias de marketing deportivo bien ejecutadas. Además, se integró un análisis cuantitativo en el marco de investigación para proporcionar conocimientos empíricos. Esto implicó llevar a cabo una encuesta para recopilar datos numéricos sobre percepciones, actitudes y comportamientos relacionados con el marketing deportivo en el fútbol brasileño. En conclusión, este estudio enfatiza la importancia del marketing deportivo estratégico en el mejoramiento del estatus y el rendimiento de los clubes de fútbol brasileños. La integración de estos elementos en sus estrategias de marketing puede conducir a un éxito sostenido y solidificar su posición en el competitivo panorama del deporte.

Palabras clave: Marketing Deportivo, Análisis, Estrategia, Clubes de Fútbol Brasileños, Resultados

SUMMARY

This study aimed to comprehensively investigate sports marketing strategies in Brazilian football clubs. Four clubs were meticulously selected for analysis based on popularity, success, and significance. Qualitative methodology employed an exploratory approach, utilizing bibliographic reviews for data collection through secondary sources. Content analysis revealed significant insights into the marketing landscape of Brazilian football. Findings underscored the critical role of strategic sponsorships, fan engagement, and innovative marketing in driving success on and off the field. Success stories of Palmeiras, Flamengo, Athletico Paranaense, and Red Bull Bragantino highlighted the transformative power of well-executed sports marketing strategies. Additionally, a quantitative analysis integrated into the research framework provided empirical insights. This involved conducting a survey to gather numerical data on perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors related to sports marketing within Brazilian football. In conclusion, this study emphasizes the importance of strategic sports marketing in enhancing the status and performance of Brazilian football clubs. Integrating these elements into their marketing strategies can lead to sustained success and solidify their position in the competitive landscape of the sport.

Key Words: *Sports Marketing, Analysis, Strategy, Brazilian Football Clubs, Outcomes, Results*

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1. INTRODUCTION

This study dives deep into exploring how Brazilian football teams use marketing to grow. I chose this topic because I have a strong passion for football and a solid background in marketing, gained through both academic study and practical experience in the field. Combining these passions, I want to study how marketing helps Brazilian football clubs.

I believe sports marketing is key for these clubs to succeed. It connects fans, players, and brands emotionally. By looking at what successful clubs do, we can learn how marketing is helping them. From what experts like Cunningham (2023) say, sports marketing is vital. It helps clubs connect with fans and sponsors.

In this study, we'll look closely at how Brazilian football clubs do their marketing. The overarching hypothesis guiding this study posits that when marketing is executed effectively, positive outcomes emerge not only in the club's finances but also on the field, culminating in championship titles that elevate them to a superior level among other clubs.

To methodically investigate this hypothesis, a dual approach is adopted, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Qualitatively, the study embraces a literature review methodology. This qualitative approach seeks to critically analyze available information from articles, websites, reports, and other sources relevant to the research theme. The process entails the identification of pertinent sources, synthesis of information, and discernment of trends, gaps, and areas of interest. This analysis is anticipated to yield a contextualized understanding of sports marketing strategies within Brazilian football, elucidating the nuances and intricacies that may not be captured solely through numerical data.

Conversely, quantitatively, the research employs a survey method, aiming to gather numerical data on perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors pertinent to the research topic. This process involves the development of a clear and concise questionnaire, validation through pilot testing, online distribution, and subsequent analysis of data using statistical techniques. The outcome of this analysis is anticipated to provide a nuanced understanding of the subject matter through numerical insights.

This research endeavors to paint a comprehensive picture of sports marketing strategies within Brazilian football clubs. The study aims to provide actionable insights and recommendations to augment the marketing endeavors of these clubs, thereby fostering their growth and prosperity within the vibrant landscape of Brazilian football.

The study focused on four football clubs: Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras, Clube de Regatas do Flamengo, Club Athletico Paranaense, and Red Bull Bragantino, analyzing their respective sports marketing strategies.

These clubs were selected based on the marketing formats they employ, which have yielded significant results, both in terms of sporting achievements and financial gains, with additional emphasis placed on factors like creativity and innovation.

A matrix was developed outlining the objectives and strategies of each football club, facilitating a comparative analysis to highlight areas of superiority, creativity, or similarity among them. Furthermore, a comparison was drawn between the sports marketing efforts of the four selected clubs and those of four lower-tier clubs with less impressive results, illustrating how effective sports marketing can influence on-field performance, leading to victories and championships, and potentially altering a club's trajectory for the better when executed proficiently.

Finally, the study concludes with a set of actionable insights, offering recommendations for further exploration and application in the realm of sports marketing within Brazilian football.

2. OBJECTIVES

The overarching goal of this study is to identify the sports marketing strategies utilized within Brazilian football. By focusing on this objective, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the marketing landscape within the Brazilian football industry.

The specific objectives of this study delineate a structured approach towards achieving the overarching goal of identifying and analyzing sports marketing strategies within Brazilian football.

Firstly, a comprehensive literature review on sports marketing will be conducted to establish a foundational understanding of the subject matter. This review aims to synthesize existing knowledge, theories, and best practices in sports marketing, providing a solid framework for the subsequent analysis.

Following this, a selection of Brazilian football clubs will be defined for investigation, ensuring representation across different tiers and regions of the country. By carefully choosing clubs from diverse backgrounds, the research aims to capture a holistic view of sports marketing practices within Brazilian football.

Subsequently, the study will focus on identifying the specific sports marketing strategies employed by these selected Brazilian football clubs. This involves a meticulous analysis to uncover both common practices and unique approaches, shedding light on the diverse array of strategies utilized within the industry.

Additionally, a quantitative investigation will be conducted through the development and distribution of a questionnaire. This quantitative analysis aims to gather numerical data on perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors related to sports marketing within Brazilian football, providing a deeper understanding of the quantitative aspects of the topic.

Finally, the outcomes generated by these sports marketing strategies will be evaluated, with a focus on assessing their effectiveness in achieving the clubs' objectives and enhancing their overall performance. This evaluation aims to provide insights into the impact of sports marketing on the success and sustainability of Brazilian football clubs.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter covers concepts of sports marketing, the historical background of sports marketing in Brazil, revenue sources in sports marketing, the sports market, the sports consumer, and the sports marketing mix, promotion, merchandising, and sports sponsorship.

3.1. SPORTS MARKETING CONCEPTS

Following this, we delve into the concept of Sports Marketing.

For Shiva (2023), sports marketing is an area that encompasses a series of strategies and actions aimed at the promotion and development of brands, products, and services related to the sports universe.

It involves the application of marketing concepts and techniques in sports contexts, aiming to achieve specific objectives within this sector. In the realm of football, sports marketing plays a fundamental role in building and strengthening the brands of clubs, competitions, events, and even players themselves.

This approach goes beyond simply promoting games and teams, encompassing branding, communication, sponsorship, merchandising, fan experience, and much more.

One of the main characteristics of sports marketing is its ability to engage the emotions and passions of fans. Through creative and impactful campaigns, brands can create an emotional connection with the audience, evoking feelings of belonging, pride, and identification. This turns fans into true ambassadors of sports brands, spreading their message and strengthening their presence.

The MKTesportes asserts that:

“Sports Marketing is a subset of Marketing whose primary function is to create business opportunities through the realm of sports and utilize it as a tool for marketing strategies.” (MKTesportes, 2020, p. 1).

It can also be said that “sports marketing essentially provides a client with strategies to promote sports. There are many things that can be marketed, including people, events, objects, businesses, experiences, and events. When marketing sports, a Sports Marketer is equipped to encourage or sell the idea to people to attend a sporting event or support a sports team and even the teams' partners.” (WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY, 2023, p. 1)”

For Biscaia (2021), fans have a voice, and organizations must know how to react to messages from them.

As a result, it is concluded that teams and brands are intricately intertwined and embedded in the same context, where nowadays, it is increasingly challenging to find a sport without some form of marketing and advertising, or any company without its brand being promoted by someone.

3.2. HISTORY OF SPORTS MARKETING IN BRAZIL

Following is a brief overview of Sports Marketing history in Brazil.

According to Pozzi (1998), in Brazil, Sports Marketing had its beginnings between the 1970s and 1980s, when most young people had their interest sparked in sports, leading the media to increase its promotion using the faces of famous athletes of the time.

As pointed out by the Center for Studies and Training (2018), from the early 1990s to the late 2000s, we have the example of the Palmeiras team, which formed a very strong partnership with the Italian company "Parmalat" and experienced its greatest days of glory there. At that time, the company had a lot of influence in Brazil, which led them to sign big-name players. They achieved great success, winning various titles, and consequently, always displaying the company's brand, especially on their uniforms, which also carried the brand to all their fans throughout Brazil and internationally through international competitions.

In 2014, Flamengo's administration undertook an investment effort in new marketing partnerships and the development of fan relations to increase the club's membership of supporter associates. This strategy resulted in a fifty-five percent growth in gross revenue over five years. In 2014, the gross revenue stood at three hundred and forty-seven million reais, and by 2018, it reached five hundred and forty-three million reais, with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of twelve percent per year.

In the study conducted by Medium (2022) titled "Marketing Strategies in Football during a World Cup Year," rebrands are often successful cases in football clubs, such as the case of Atlético Paranaense, which launched its new visual identity in 2018. The change made the shield symbol cleaner and incorporated black stripes in its design. According to a report by GE (2018), the new shield combines ideas from the "hurricane wind" (as the club is known by football fans), details from the Paraná flag, and the concept of growth. The Brazilian club went further in the rebranding process by reintroducing the inclusion of the letter "H" in its name, changing from "Atlético Paranaense" to "Athletico Paranaense," as it was in the past. This name change benefited the club's identification, given the confusion by non-regional media between Atlético Mineiro and Atlético Paranaense and the difficulty in finding information about the team online, as searches for "Atlético" mainly directed to the other team. The club's growth strategy has proven effective on the field. Since 2018, two continental titles and one national title have been achieved. The club has gained relevance within the sport and is cited as one of the successful sports management models in Brazil.

One of the most recent and widely discussed cases, as recalled by MKTDesportivo (2018), is that of Red Bull, the Austrian energy drink company. In addition to owning a Formula 1 racing team, Red Bull also has football clubs around the world (in Germany, Austria, and the United States). The latest club acquired by this brand was Bragantino, from São Paulo, Brazil. The club, which has always had a large fan base and significance in the country, was going through a very difficult period in its history. It was then that the energy drink brand, which also sponsors high-level athletes worldwide, bought the team, retaining its original name to maintain an emotional connection with its fans and simply

adding the initials "R.B" to the beginning of the name. After receiving investment from this brand and showcasing it throughout Brazil, Bragantino not only became one of the wealthiest clubs in the country but also managed to rebuild itself and is currently in the top division of Brazilian football, with the strength to compete for both national and international titles.

After all these examples, it's evident how good marketing can yield excellent results for any club, particularly in the financial aspect, which is crucial for a top team to stay alive and competitive in today's landscape, with chances of winning titles.

3.3. SOURCES OF REVENUE IN SPORTS MARKETING

Next, we will explore the primary sources of income in sports marketing.

The main sources of income in sports marketing are Sponsorships, Strategic partnerships, Brand activations, Merchandising, Digital marketing and social media, Fan experience, Sports influencers and ambassadors, Sports content marketing, Development of apps and digital platforms, Advertising investments.

According to EFDeportes (2012), in Brazil, the main source of income in sports marketing is still sponsorship.

For Shiva (2023), Sponsorship is a fundamental strategy in sports marketing, allowing brands to associate themselves with teams, athletes, and competitions to increase their visibility and reach an engaged audience. Sports sponsorship offers various opportunities for companies to emotionally connect with fans, associating their brand with values such as excitement, passion, and excellence.

3.3.1. Sponsors

By sponsoring a football team, for example, the brand can have its logo displayed on the players' jerseys, exposing its identity to millions of viewers worldwide. Moreover, sponsorship can include activation efforts such as promotional events, advertising campaigns, and exclusive experiences for fans, strengthening the relationship between the brand and its target audience.

3.3.2. Partnerships

Forming strategic partnerships with football clubs is an effective way for brands to reach fans in a targeted and personalized manner. This collaboration offers opportunities such as brand exposure in stadiums, communication materials, and fan interaction on social media.

3.3.3. Brand Activations

These planned actions engage fans and create unique football-related experiences, fostering emotional connections, engagement, and market positioning.

3.3.4. Merchandising

Selling licensed products like team jerseys and hats generates revenue for clubs and strengthens fans' emotional attachment to their teams.

3.3.5. Digital Marketing and Social Media

Leveraging digital platforms for direct fan engagement, live game broadcasts, and targeted advertising campaigns enhances brand reach and engagement.

3.3.6. Fan Experience

Providing memorable experiences like loyalty programs and VIP benefits deepens the emotional bond between fans and brands.

3.3.7. Influencers and Sports Ambassadors

Partnering with influential figures in the sports world amplifies brand visibility and credibility among a wider audience.

3.3.8. Sports Content Marketing

Creating informative and entertaining content about football establishes brands as authorities in the field, attracting and engaging a loyal fan base.

3.3.9. Development of Apps and Digital Platforms

Building OTT apps and streaming platforms offers interactive features and revenue opportunities while strengthening fan-club relationships.

3.4. SPORTS MARKET - THE SPORTS CONSUMER

In this segment, we will explore who the main consumers of sports are, specifically in relation to Brazilian football.

Sports consumers refer to individuals or groups who purchase products or services related to sports, such as tickets to games, team merchandise, or equipment for participating in a sport. They may also include individuals who regularly watch sports on television or streaming platforms or engage with sports content on social media. (WESTERN OPEN BOOKS, N/A)

According to a study conducted by Google in 2017, focusing on sports consumption on YouTube, “more than half (51%) of Brazilians with internet access watch football content on the video platform, with 72% being between 18 and 34 years old, and 15% aged 35 or older” (LANCE, 2017, p. 1).

With this, it is noticed that despite the wide variety of profiles among sports enthusiasts, the majority still consists of men and young individuals who engage in sports, with only 20% being women. (LANCE, 2017, p. 1).

In a survey conducted in 2016 by the entities CNDL (National Confederation of Shopkeepers) and SPC Brazil (Credit Protection Service), football remains dominant among Brazilians: nearly seven out of ten are interested in the sport. The profile of football fans is defined as follows: 67.4% of the respondents say they are very interested in the sport, especially men (80.0%) and upper-class individuals (77.7%).

Only 20.5% said they have little interest, and only 12.1% said they have no interest in the sport, more frequently among women (21.9%). (CNDL, SPC BRAZIL, 2016).

Thus, it is perceived that the profile of the Brazilian football consumer is quite broad and eclectic.

3.5. SPORTS MARKETING MIX – PROMOTION

In this phase, concepts or aspects of the sports marketing mix will be addressed, specifically in the realm of promotion: advertising, publicity, direct marketing, and digital marketing.

3.5.1. Concepts of Advertising

Next, we will look at the concepts of advertising.

It can be stated that: Advertising is a means of communication with the users of a product or service. Advertisements are messages paid for by those who send them and are intended to inform or influence people who receive them. (THE ECONOMIC TIMES, 2024, p. 1)

In other words, one can say that: is a tool used in marketing and advertising to promote or sell a product, service, or idea. It allows brands to get the word out to potential customers. Advertisements are created to communicate messages, arouse curiosity, and create a lasting impression. They're designed to influence and persuade. When done right, they're not just a sales pitch — they're a blend of art and science that connects with people on various levels. (MEDIUM, 2024, p. 1)

With this, it can be perceived that advertising can be considered the “soul of the business”, where the product or brand is promoted, aiming to attract the maximum attention of its target audience, thus initiating the first contacts between the consumer and the brand. Next, concepts of publicity will be presented.

3.5.2. Concepts of Publicity

Next, concepts of publicity will be presented.

The term “publicity” simply refers to the act of mentioning a brand/business/person in the media. This action is performed to help brands build awareness and attract and retain potential customers. When another person mentions a brand positively in the media, it catches peoples' attention and gets them to also start viewing the brand in a favorable light. The higher the PR efforts, the more likely it is that consumers will get familiar with the brand, remember it, and ultimately become a customer. (FORBES, 2022, p.1)

It is noted that advertising is nothing more than a means of presenting a product or brand in the best way to impress its audience, encouraging them to consume it.

3.5.3. Concepts of Direct Marketing

Direct marketing consists of any marketing that relies on direct communication or distribution to individual consumers, rather than through a third party such as mass media. Mail, email, social media, and texting campaigns are among the delivery systems

used. It is called direct marketing because it generally eliminates the middleman, such as advertising media. (INVESTOPEDIA, 2022, p. 1)

According to Figueiredo (2018), direct marketing is the set of marketing strategies focused on promoting products or services using direct actions to a specific audience.

It can be concluded that direct marketing is a strategic approach that involves establishing direct communication channels with a specific audience, aiming to promote products or services effectively. Through personalized and targeted interactions, direct marketing seeks to engage potential customers directly, thereby maximizing the effectiveness of promotional efforts.

3.5.4. Concepts of Digital Marketing

Next, we will explore concepts of Digital Marketing.

Digital marketing typically refers to online marketing campaigns that appear on a computer, phone, tablet, or other device. It can take many forms, including online video, display ads, search engine marketing, paid social ads and social media posts. Digital marketing is often compared to “traditional marketing” such as magazine ads, billboards, and direct mail. Oddly, television is usually lumped in with traditional marketing. (MAILCHIMP, N/A)

For Novak (2024), it's where your ideal customer is hanging out. According to the research experts at Statista, as of 2023, there are 5.19 billion internet users and 4.88 social media users worldwide. On average, internet users spend six hours and 40 minutes online every day. This enormous, highly engaged online audience presents tremendous opportunities for businesses that want to gain visibility for their goods and services.

With this, it can be said that Digital Marketing is an evolution of marketing due to the advancement of technology, aiming to capture more attention and be more appealing to those who view it.

3.6. CONCEPTS OF MERCHANDISING

In this segment, we will explore the concepts of Merchandising.

Merchandising is the process of promoting sales of goods and services to sustain and amplify customer activity within a retail environment. The fundamental concept of merchandising is to stimulate customers' purchase behavior to reduce retail stores' off-the-shelf products. Merchandising companies are different from service companies, in that the former sells tangible goods to generate income, unlike the latter, which provides services. (CFI, N/A)

Companies that get merchandising right tend to outperform their peers. One reason is that the umbrella term “merchandising” describes many of the skills associated with excellent retailing. These include expertise on products, quantities, consumer behaviors, channels, timing, pricing, promotions, and replenishment: elements that are key drivers of value creation and vital tools to create competitive advantage. (MCKINSEY & COMPANY, 2023, p. 1)

In other words, it can be said that Merchandising is essentially a form of opportunism, bringing together the right audience, the right product, in the right place, and an excellent form of promotion that catches the consumer's attention.

3.7. CONCEPTS OF SPORTS SPONSORSHIP

Next, we will explore some concepts of sports sponsorship.

Companies of various sizes heavily invest in sports sponsorships to enhance their brand visibility and align themselves with a particular sport. The realm of sports sponsorship is ever-changing, attracting the curiosity of many individuals eager to comprehend this dynamic sector.

While sports sponsorship shares similarities with advertising, it differs in that it does not aim to directly persuade customers to make purchases through specific product or company messages. Instead, sponsorship involves supporting a sport and the various components that a company's customers value. By investing in these areas, a company becomes associated with the sport over time, creating a positive brand image among fans, attendees, customers, and media. This ultimately creates financial gains for the company and reputation gains for players and teams. (UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-PARKSIDE, 2023, p. 1)

According to UW-Parkside (2023), there are 4 Basic Types of Sports Sponsorships:

Sports sponsorship takes on various forms, spanning athlete sponsorship, team sponsorship, event sponsorship, and venue sponsorship.

3.7.1. Athlete Sponsorship

Athlete Sponsorship entails paying for the privilege of aligning a brand with a specific athlete, who then endorses the sponsor's products and features in promotional campaigns. Nike, for instance, is renowned for its partnerships with iconic athletes such as Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods, and Cristiano Ronaldo.

3.7.2. Team Sponsorship

Involves backing a professional, amateur, or collegiate team, prominently displaying the sponsor's brand on team uniforms, equipment, and promotional materials. For instance, Ineos sponsors the Ineos Grenadiers cycling team, which has excelled in events like the Tour de France.

3.7.3. Event Sponsorship

Revolves around supporting specific sports events like tournaments or championships, in return for prominent brand exposure during the event and in associated marketing endeavors. Notable examples include Red Bull and Visa, which utilize event sponsorships to bolster their presence in extreme sports and Olympic Games, respectively.

3.7.4. Venue Sponsorship

Focuses on backing sports venues such as stadiums or arenas, with the sponsor's brand prominently showcased throughout the venue and in promotional materials. Allianz, for instance, engages in venue sponsorship through partnerships with venues like the Allianz Arena, Allianz Stadium, Allianz Field, Allianz Riviera, Allianz Parque, and Allianz Stadion.

Therefore, sponsorship is understood to be a means for teams to generate revenue to cover all their expenses while simultaneously promoting other brands, typically the company providing the highest financial support.

4. SPORTS MARKETING IN BRAZILIAN FOOTBALL: DATA COLLECTION AND STUDY RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study, through the application of bibliographic and documentary research strategies. Its scope is to answer the research problem: 'What are the sports marketing strategies used in Brazilian football?' It also lists results for the following specific objectives: conducting a literature review on sports marketing; defining Brazilian football clubs to be researched; identifying the sports marketing strategies used in Brazilian football, and finally, identifying the results that sports marketing strategies generate or can generate for Brazilian football clubs.

4.1. RESEARCHED BRAZILIAN FOOTBALL CLUBS

Here are four Brazilian football clubs. They are: Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras, Clube de Regatas do Flamengo, Club Athletico Paranaense, and Red Bull Bragantino.

4.1.1. Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras

The sports club Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras is located in the city of São Paulo, São Paulo State, Brazil, it was founded on August 26, 1914. According to Brasil Escola (N/A), Palmeiras was founded by Italian immigrants, initially named Palestra Itália. However, due to the Second World War, it had to change its name.

Among its most important titles are the Copa Libertadores, which it has won three times. Its motto is "Todos somos um," which translates to "We are all one" in English.

The Palmeiras fanbase counts with more than 15 million people. Palmeiras' stadium, the Allianz Parque, has a capacity for over 43 thousand people.



Figure 1: Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras website's cover



Figure 2: Brand: Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras

4.1.2. Clube de Regatas do Flamengo

According to Brasil Escola (N/A) Clube de Regatas Flamengo, based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, was founded for rowing in the late 19th century, later embracing football in 1911. The club has achieved notable success, including Intercontinental Cup triumphs in 1981 and multiple Copa Libertadores titles. With the motto "Once Flamengo, always Flamengo," it has garnered a passionate following known as the "Nação Rubro-Negra" (Red-Black Nation). The iconic Maracanã Stadium, with a capacity exceeding 78,000, serves as a symbol of Flamengo's prominence, hosting unforgettable matches and monumental victories that resonate globally.

Based on Datafolha's (2023) findings, Flamengo stands as Brazil's foremost club with the largest fanbase, boasting 21% of the populace, totaling approximately 46.9 million dedicated supporters. (PLACAR, 2023, p. 1)



Figure 3: Clube de Regatas do Flamengo website's cover



Figure 4: Brand: Clube de Regatas do Flamengo

4.1.3. Club Athletico Paranaense

According to Brasil Escola (N/A), Athletico Paranaense football club, hailing from Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil, traces its origins to the early 20th century. Established on March 26, 1924, through the merger of two local teams, Internacional Futebol Clube and América Futebol Clube, it swiftly gained momentum. In the 1940s, the club entered a dominant phase known as the "hurricane," achieving numerous victories and overpowering opponents. However, the following three decades saw a dry spell until 1981. Since the mid-1990s, Athletico has maintained stability in both state and national championships, even competing in the prestigious Copa Libertadores da América. The renowned Arena da Baixada, formerly Ligga Arena since Ligga Telecom acquired its

naming rights in 2023, serves as the club's home ground. With a seating capacity exceeding 42,000, it has witnessed thrilling matches and historic victories.



Figure 5: Club Athletico Paranaense website's cover



Figure 6: Brand: Club Athletico Paranaense

4.1.4. Red Bull Bragantino

The Red Bull Bragantino team is located in the city of Bragança Paulista, São Paulo State, Brazil. It was founded on January 8, 1928. According to the club's website (2022), the team had a difficult start, achieving its first major title in 1989 with the conquest of the Brazilian Championship Serie B. After that, it experienced a decline but returned to the elite of Brazilian football in 2019. In the year 2020, the team finally became Red Bull Bragantino with the aim of continuing to write its history.

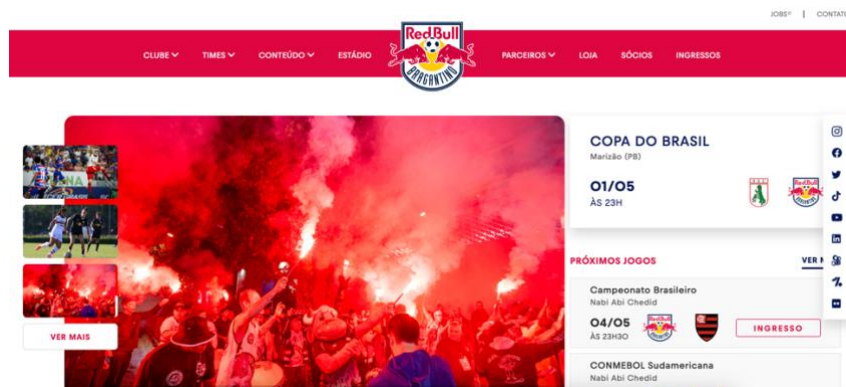


Figure 7: Red Bull Bragantino website's cover



Figure 8: Brand: Red Bull Bragantino

4.2. SPORTS MARKETING STRATEGIES USED IN BRAZILIAN FOOTBALL

Below are the sports marketing strategies identified on the internet for the four Brazilian football clubs targeted in this study: Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras, Clube de Regatas do Flamengo, Club Athletico Paranaense, and Red Bull Bragantino.

4.2.1. Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras

Here are the main marketing strategies used by Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras:

According to Gazeta Esportiva (2022), in 1992, a highly successful partnership began between the company Parmalat and Palmeiras. At the time, the team was facing a challenging period and had not won any championship trophies for about 16 years. This partnership marked the beginning of a significant turnaround for the club. With an injection of money and excellent planning, already in 1993, the team lifted its first title, a São Paulo State Championship against the strong Corinthians team. In 1994, it became a two-time Brazilian Champion, and in 1999, it won the continent's most prestigious title, the Copa Libertadores. Here is a figure showing Palmeiras as the Libertadores champion with Parmalat sponsorship.



Figure 9: The partnership between the company Parmalat and Palmeiras

With an injection of money and excellent planning, already in 1993, the team lifted its first title, a São Paulo State Championship against the strong Corinthians team. In 1994, it became a two-time Brazilian Champion, and in 1999, it won the continent's most prestigious title, the Copa Libertadores.

Here is a figure showing Palmeiras as the Libertadores champion with Parmalat sponsorship.



Figure 10: Palmeiras Libertadores champion with Parmalat sponsorship

According to the club's own website (S/A), the successful partnership with the company came to an end in December 2000 when the contract expired. From that date, the team underwent perhaps one of its greatest crises in history, as in 2002, the team was relegated to Serie B. However, the team underwent a successful reconstruction and won the championship in 2003. In 2004, they qualified for the Libertadores. Thus, Palmeiras managed to recover from one of its greatest political and administrative crises, especially without the funding previously provided by Parmalat.

Years later, still according to the official website of the team, in 2015, an agreement was reached with the company Crefisa, where they became the club's main sponsor. Consequently, new signings began to arrive at the green and white team. The partnership showed immediate results in the first year, where they won the Copa do Brasil, facing Santos in the final.



Figure 11: Partnership between Palmeiras and Crefisa

Their dominance continued to grow, and in 2016, they won the Brazilian championship, ending a 22-year drought. They repeated this achievement in 2018.



Figure 12: Palmeiras Brasileirão Champion in 2018

What was already working well became even better with Abel Ferreira's arrival as the club's head coach in 2020. In his first year, he led the team to a Copa do Brasil title against Grêmio and a Libertadores title against Santos.



Figure 13: Palmeiras clinching the title under Abel Ferreira's coaching in 2020

To seal the successful partnership, the team once again became Libertadores champions the following year (2021), defeating Flamengo in the final. With the partnership solidified and Leila Pereira (owner of Crefisa and a Palmeiras supporter) increasingly involved in the club's activities, she became the president of the club on December 15, 2021, to this day. Palmeiras continues to be one of the main teams to beat both nationally and continentally.

Titles since then:

Recopa Sudamericana 2022, Campeonato Paulista 2022, Campeonato Brasileiro 2022, Campeonato Brasileiro 2023, Campeonato Paulista 2023, Supercopa do Brasil 2023, Campeonato Paulista 2024.



Figure 14: Leila Andrade: owner of Crefisa, Palmeiras supporter, and current president of the club

According to Laveri (2022), contrary to what many may think and by Leila's choice, Palmeiras is the only one among the twelve major Brazilian clubs without a marketing professional. The individual responsible for this area is Everaldo Coelho, who does not receive payment for his role and does not have any professional obligations to the club.

Furthermore, as stated by Laveri (2002), below him is Eduardo Silva, the marketing superintendent, who also lacks formal training. It is also reported that the pair has been facing internal criticism as well as criticism from companies seeking partnerships due to their unconventional practices in the market.

Palmeiras' marketing has shown that the triple Libertadores championship was not utilized. The club didn't offer any new service to its supporters, didn't communicate any sales, didn't capitalize on the euphoria of victory to showcase a new product that Palmeiras fans would be eager to consume. There is still time to recover. But a significant portion of the opportunity has already been lost (BETING, 2021, p. 1).

As a result, it is concluded that the marketing department of the "green and white" team has not been pleasing many people recently, something that should be reconsidered within the club, taking advantage of the excellent moment the team is experiencing.

Here is a summary of the sports marketing strategies used by Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras:

- a) Partnership (agreement) between the company Parmalat and Palmeiras.
- b) Partnership (agreement) between the company Crefisa (club's main sponsor) and Palmeiras.
- c) With the sealed partnership, Leila Andrade (owner of Crefisa, Palmeira's supporter, and president of Palmeiras) becomes increasingly present in the club's activities, bringing greater visibility to the team.

4.2.2. Clube de Regatas do Flamengo

Here are the main marketing strategies used by Clube de Regatas do Flamengo:

Flamengo's sports marketing strategy has transformed the club from a once-questionable entity to a beacon of professionalism in Brazilian football. Through improved management, strategic investments, and enhanced revenue streams from sponsorships, television rights, merchandise sales, ticketing, and player transfers, the club has elevated its competitive edge and financial stability. With a focus on building a strong player roster and bolstering fan engagement, Flamengo has not only achieved success on the field but has also become a global model for effective sports administration and marketing.

At the beginning of President Eduardo Bandeira de Mello's term in 2013, there was a crisis in the financial department that affected all areas of the club. The management aimed to regain credibility with its stakeholders, enhance brand recognition, organize finances, generate extraordinary revenue, improve media utilization, and seek strategies to enhance athlete performance.



Figure 15: President Eduardo Bandeira de Mello, elected in 2013

The scenario of quality and professionalization in management, established from 2013 and consolidated from 2017 onwards, allowed the club to finally achieve significant sporting results. In 2019, Flamengo became champion of the Taça Guanabara in 2018, champion of the Taça Rio in 2019, champion of the Carioca Championship in 2019 and 2020, champion of the Brazilian Championship in 2019, champion of the Copa Libertadores da América in 2019, and obtained second place in the FIFA Club World Cup in 2019. Additionally, significant increases were observed in average attendance at home games, the number of club members, and the participation of club athletes in national teams.



Figure 16: Flamengo Brasileirão Champion in 2019



Figure 17: Flamengo Libertadores Champion in 2019

The success of Flamengo on the field is reflected in the club's financial health, greatly fueled by the revenue generated from ticket sales in 2019, largely stimulated through the close relationship between Flamengo and its fans on social media platforms.

According to a study by Deporte & Finanzas (2020), Flamengo is the Brazilian club with the most interactions on Instagram in the month of August of 2020, totaling 39.4 million interactions. (GAZETA ESPORTIVA, p. 1, 2020).

Through its constant presence on social media and interaction with its fans, Flamengo has secured sponsorships that have contributed to its financial and social growth. As a result, it has emerged as the leading Brazilian football club in terms of economic and social development.

Flamengo has reached the mark of R\$210 million in sponsorship revenues with its uniform for 2024. This amount includes the new contract with Kwai for R\$ 10 million per year to feature on the sleeve. With this total value, Flamengo sees a 23% increase in uniform sponsorships compared to 2023. In 2023, the team closed with R\$ 170 million in uniform sponsorships. It's worth noting that BRB has a quarterly contract and may

cause this number to fluctuate until December 2024. The club has eight sponsors solely on the jersey of the main men's team. (UOL, p. 1, 2024)

Here are the sponsorship deals for Flamengo's uniform:

Pixbet (main): R\$ 85 million/year, Adidas (supplier): R\$ 60 to 70 million/year, BRB (shoulder): R\$ 6.2 million/3 months, Mercado Livre (back): R\$ 21.5 million/year, ABC da Construção (shorts): R\$ 7.1 million/year, Assist Card (rear bar): R\$ 8.5 million/year, TIM (number): R\$ 7 million/year, Kwai (sleeve): R\$ 10 million/year. (UOL, p. 1, 2024)



Figure 18: Flamengo 2024 Home Shirt

In 2023, Flamengo achieved a revenue of R\$ 1.37 billion, marking a historic milestone in Brazilian football. This figure represents an impressive growth of approximately R\$ 200 million compared to the previous year's revenue of R\$ 1.177 billion. (UOL, p.1, 2024)

The club's consistent ability to generate substantial revenue is attributed to its strong brand presence, extensive fan base, and effective commercial strategies. This achievement underscores the increasing commercialization and financial competitiveness of Brazilian football, with Flamengo setting a benchmark for other clubs to follow in maximizing revenue streams. Overall, Flamengo's success reflects its status as a powerhouse in Brazilian football, showcasing its prowess on and off the pitch.

Here is a summary of the sports marketing strategies used by Clube de Regatas do Flamengo:

- a) Transmedia - Multiple media platforms to tell a story in an integrated manner, expanding reach and engagement with the audience beyond traditional experiences.
- b) Sponsorships - Flamengo's sponsorship strategy entails partnering with various brands across multiple sectors to create integrated marketing campaigns, extending the club's visibility and engagement with fans beyond conventional sponsorship arrangements.
- c) Fan Memberships - Flamengo's fan membership strategy involves creating comprehensive programs that offer exclusive benefits and experiences to supporters, fostering deeper connections with the club beyond traditional fan engagement methods.

4.2.3. Club Athletico Paranaense

Athlético Paranaense has a constant desire for distinction. Since 1995, the club's aim has been to be one of the greatest clubs in the Americas, both on and off the field. To achieve this goal, in addition to all the structural and technical work, the following marketing strategies have taken place:

The history of Athletico Paranaense, one of Brazil's prominent football clubs, is a tapestry woven with innovation, passion, and a relentless pursuit of progress. It began in 1995 with the inception of "Atlético Total" (FURACAO.COM, p. 1, 2003) a campaign that not only represented the club's new project but also marked the commencement of construction on the groundbreaking Arena da Baixada. This arena, inaugurated in 1999, stood as the first Brazilian football stadium of its kind, embodying the club's commitment to innovation and advancement.



Figure 19: Athletico Paranaense's Third Kit 1997

In 1997-99, the club embarked on the "Baixada, I'm coming back!" campaign, celebrating the inauguration of the new Joaquim Américo stadium. The campaign's focus on utilizing materials from the demolition of the previous stadium reflected the club's resourcefulness and connection to its roots.



Figure 20: Arena da Baixada Inauguration

The year 2000 witnessed the launch of "Atlético 3000 – eternal passion," a campaign fueled by a supporter's suggestion to immortalize the club's shirt in a time capsule. This symbolic gesture, combined with the team's successful campaigns, encapsulated the enduring passion that defines Athletico Paranaense. (FURACAO.COM, p. 1, 2001)

In 2003, the club experimented with its identity, emphasizing "Paranaense" over "Atlético" in the "Clube Atlético dos Paranaenses" campaign. This shift aimed to broaden the club's appeal and connect with fans from across the Paraná region. (FURACAO.COM, p. 1, 2003)

Athletico continued to break new ground in 2005 by selling its stadium naming rights, pioneering a practice that would later become commonplace in Brazilian football. The transformation of the Arena da Baixada into the Kyocera Arena reflected the club's innovative approach to sponsorship and revenue generation. (TERRA, p. 1, 2023)



Figure 21: Kyocera Arena

The completion of stadium renovations in 2006 marked a milestone for Athletico Paranaense, as the arena became the first in Brazil to have seats for 100% of the audience. This achievement, coupled with the introduction of supporter plans, underscored the club's commitment to providing a world-class fan experience.

In 2012, the club navigated challenges with the "I follow you everywhere" campaign, which highlighted its resilience during a period of stadium renovations and lower division play. This campaign reinforced the unwavering bond between the club and its supporters, transcending on-field success. (GE, p. 1, 2013)

The inauguration of the new Arena da Baixada in 2014 represented a historic moment for Athletico Paranaense and the city of Curitiba. The stadium's blend of tradition and modernity embodied the club's ethos of progress and innovation, setting the stage for the next phase of its evolution.



Figure 22: Arena da Baixada Reinauguration

In 2018, Athletico Paranaense made waves by becoming the first Brazilian club to adopt a brand in place of its traditional logo. This bold move symbolized a departure from convention and a commitment to charting its own path in the digital age. By reclaiming the "H" in its name, the club honored its heritage while signaling a new era of distinction and innovation.



Figure 23: Athletico Paranaense's branding

Since 2018, Athletico Paranaense has seen significant success both domestically and internationally, attributed in part to innovative marketing strategies. Winning the Copa do Brasil in 2019 and securing two Copa Sudamericana titles in 2018 and 2021 highlight the club's achievements. These victories underscore the impact of effective marketing efforts in enhancing Athletico Paranaense's visibility and reputation on a global scale.

4.2.4. Red Bull Bragantino

Here are the main marketing strategies used by the Red Bull Bragantino football team:

According to Oliveira and Andrade (2021), to understand the whole process, it's important to remember that in 2007 the company arrived in Brazil and founded the RB Brasil club.



Figure 24: Brand: Red Bull Brasil

However, the brand already aimed for greater heights, and in 2019, the partnership between the company and Clube Atlético Bragantino (its name at the time) was officially sealed. As a result, the club underwent numerous changes, including its name (now called RB Bragantino), logo, uniforms, not to mention the multimillion-dollar investments made possible by the brand.



Figure 25: Presentation of the partnership between Red Bull and Bragantino in 2019

According to Santos and Sardinha (2021), already in 2019, the club received an investment of around R\$100 million in reinforcements for the competition in the Brazilian Serie B that year. All the investment quickly paid off, as the team not only secured promotion to the Brazilian football elite but also clinched the championship title.

In 2020, the team won the trophy for the interior champion and reached the quarterfinals of the São Paulo state championship, where they were eliminated by Corinthians. In the Brazilian championship, after a shaky start, the team managed to find its rhythm and finished the season in ninth place, earning a spot in the Copa Sudamericana. Therefore, in just two years of partnership, the team that rose from Serie B played in an international competition, losing in the final to Athletico Paranaense.



Figure 26: The Sudamericana Final

Additionally, in 2020, the team also established a women's team, becoming one of the pioneering teams in Brazil to invest in women's football.



Figure 27: Clube Atlético Bragantino's women's team

According to Terra (2022), the team from Bragança Paulista closed an unprecedented sponsorship deal in football in 2022: the toothpaste brand Sorriso partnered with the club, but it's only valid for one player, Marcos Vinícius, known in the sports world as Sorriso. The campaign involves the player wearing the brand's logo instead of his name on the back of the jersey. This contract will be valid for 4 games of the team, and the shirt will be produced in limited quantity.



Figure 28: The partnership between the company Sorriso and the player known as "Sorriso" (Smile)

According to Terra (2022), the team from Bragança Paulista closed an unprecedented sponsorship deal in football in 2022: the toothpaste brand Sorriso partnered with the club, but it's only valid for one player, Marcos Vinícius, known in the sports world as Sorriso. The campaign involves the player wearing the brand's logo instead of his name on the back of the jersey. This contract will be valid for 4 games of the team, and the shirt will be produced in limited quantity.

Here is a summary of the sports marketing strategies used by the Red Bull Bragantino football team:

- a) 2019 - Partnership with Clube Atlético Bragantino, resulting in a name change to RB Bragantino, along with alterations to the logo, uniforms, and investments of approximately R\$100 million in reinforcements for that year's Serie B championship.
- b) 2019 - The team achieved promotion to the Brazilian football elite.
- c) 2019 - The team clinched the championship title in the Brazilian football competition.
- d) 2020 - The team won the trophy for the interior champions.
- e) 2020 - In the São Paulo state championship, the team reached the quarterfinals.
- f) 2020 - In the Brazilian championship, the team finished the season in ninth place, earning a spot in the Copa Sudamericana.
- g) 2020 - The team, which rose from Serie B, participated in an international competition, losing in the final to Athletico Paranaense.
- h) 2020 - The team established a women's team, becoming one of the pioneering teams in Brazil to invest in women's football.
- i) 2022 - The team from Bragança Paulista secured an unprecedented sponsorship deal in football: the toothpaste brand Sorriso partnered with the club, valid for the player Marcos Vinícius, known in the sports world as Sorriso. The campaign involved the player wearing the brand's logo instead of his name on the back of the jersey. This contract was valid for 4 games of the team, and the shirt was produced in limited quantity.

4.3. SPORTS MARKETING STRATEGY MATRIX

Expanding on the insights gleaned from this research, matrices have been crafted outlining objectives and strategies tailored for Brazilian football clubs, with a strong emphasis on sports marketing promotion. Careful selection of these teams was based on their adept use of marketing strategies, which have translated into significant success both on and off the field.

This endeavor underscores the profound impact that well-executed marketing strategies can have on a club's prosperity. It highlights the pivotal role of strategic marketing in shaping the trajectories of football clubs, where shrewd decisions can pave the way for greatness.

Within these matrices, each of the four selected teams shares common objectives, which are matched with distinct strategies. Detailed explanations and comments accompany each objective and strategy, offering valuable insights into their relevance and potential impact. The identified objectives in crafting these matrices center around promoting various aspects within the sports marketing mix, encompassing topics and strategies deemed crucial in this study.

It's crucial for all Brazilian football clubs to heed these considerations when devising their sports marketing strategies. By integrating these essential elements, clubs can strive for success within the competitive sports industry.

The current matrices delineate primary strategies aimed at achieving key objectives across different domains. From enhancing brand visibility through advertising to cultivating a positive image through publicity, clubs are actively engaged in expanding their fan base through direct marketing initiatives and amplifying online engagement via digital marketing strategies. Moreover, efforts are directed towards diversifying revenue streams through merchandising endeavors and fostering strategic partnerships through sports sponsorship activities. This matrix offers a contemporary snapshot of the tactics employed by these clubs to realize their specific goals in these areas.

4.3.1. Strategy Matrix of Four Successful Brazilian Football Clubs

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES			
				
Advertising Brand Visibility Enhancement	#VerdeÉaCorDaInveja (Green is the color of envy)	Christ the Redeemer statue illuminated with a Flamengo shirt. (Cannes award)	Goalkeeper with a cellphone on the field (Cannes award)	#ForçaInterior (Strength for the interior)
Publicity Positive Image Cultivation	@palmeiras not found (Campaign about disappearance of people)	Nós Por Elas "Us For Them" (Campaign on violence against women)	"Furacão Solidário" (Putting shoes on feet to change lives)	Cantareira System Wildfire Awareness Campaign
Direct Marketing Fan Base Expansion	Palmeiras Pay (Digital bank account and credit card)	"Nação Rubro-Negra" program, brand new car campaign	"#VemFerver" (Join the fervor and support Athletico campaign)	Red Bull Experience (Participation in Red Bull-sponsored events beyond club matches)
Digital Marketing Online Engagement Amplification	TV Palmeiras (Biggest Brazilian club TV/channel on YouTube)	Club with the largest number of followers on social media in Brazil	Super App Furacão (Official club app unifying all digital platform services)	Censo Massa Bruta (A fan census and questionnaire, published on social media)
Merchandising Revenue Stream Diversification	Palmeiras shirt is voted the most beautiful in the world by footyheadlines.com	Flamengo Official Store Investment in e-commerce and new technologies (Simples Inovação agency)	"Black Edition": Athletico-PR revolutionizes with new shirt	Bragantino starts selling official shirts in the club's online store
Sports Sponsorship Strategic Partnership Development	Crefisa (8.5 years of partnership, R\$ 1.2 billion in funding)	PixBet (The biggest sponsorship deal in Brazilian football history)	Esportes da Sorte (The biggest sponsorship deal in its history)	MrJack.Bet (Premium sponsor)

Figure 29: Strategy Matrix of Four Successful Brazilian Football Clubs

4.3.1.1. Advertising

In the realm of sports marketing, enhancing brand visibility is a crucial objective for football clubs aiming to strengthen their presence and engage with a broader audience. This involves deploying creative and impactful advertising strategies that not only promote the clubs themselves but also their sponsors and associated brands.

Palmeiras: "Verde e Inveja" Campaign by Puma: in collaboration with Puma, Palmeiras launched the "Verde e Inveja" (Green and Envy) campaign at the start of their partnership in 2019. The campaign kicked off with a striking video released on social media, featuring the hashtag #VerdeÉaCorDaInveja. This initiative leveraged the emotional connection fans have with the color green, symbolizing both the club's identity and the envy of its rivals. The campaign quickly became a trending topic on social media, significantly boosting the brand awareness of both Palmeiras and Puma. This strategy exemplifies the power of leveraging strong, recognizable symbols and emotional resonance to captivate an audience and enhance brand visibility.

Flamengo: "Jesus Our Supporter" Campaign by Adidas: Flamengo, in partnership with Adidas, executed the "Jesus Our Supporter" campaign, which earned two Bronze Lions at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity. The campaign featured the iconic Christ the Redeemer statue illuminated with the Flamengo jersey on the eve of the 2019 Copa Libertadores final. This bold and visually stunning activation united two of Brazil's most recognizable symbols: the Christ the Redeemer statue and Flamengo's jersey. The global attention this campaign garnered not only amplified Flamengo's brand awareness but also highlighted Adidas's innovative marketing approach. This campaign underscores the effectiveness of associating a brand with national and cultural icons to create a memorable impact.

Athletico Paranaense: "Maio Amarelo" Campaign with Uber Athletico Paranaense's collaboration with Uber for the "Yellow May" campaign took a daring and controversial turn that paid off in terms of visibility. The campaign featured goalkeeper Santos holding a mobile phone moments before kickoff, a stunt designed to raise awareness about the dangers of using phones while driving. Despite resulting in penalties for the club and the player, the campaign won a prestigious award at Cannes. This campaign stands out for its integration of social responsibility with brand promotion. It successfully captured widespread attention and conveyed an important message about road safety, enhancing the club's and Uber's brand visibility and demonstrating how social issues can be effectively incorporated into sports marketing.

Red Bull Bragantino: "#ForçaInterior" Campaign Red Bull Bragantino's "Strenght for the interior" campaign focused on reinforcing the club's roots in Bragança Paulista, emphasizing local pride and community spirit. As the only team from the interior in Brazil's top football division and international competitions, the campaign highlighted the club's unique position and its representation of the city's 170,000 inhabitants. This strategy was effective in fostering a strong sense of identity and belonging among local supporters, while also appealing to broader audiences by showcasing the club's distinctive character. The campaign leveraged the emotional connection between the club and its local community, which is a powerful tool in enhancing brand loyalty and visibility.

Each of these campaigns demonstrates creative strategies for enhancing brand visibility in sports. By leveraging emotional connections, cultural symbols, social responsibility, and local pride, Palmeiras, Flamengo, Athletico Paranaense, and Red Bull Bragantino successfully elevated their brands. These efforts align with key marketing principles like emotional branding and community engagement, showing how innovative campaigns can achieve significant brand visibility and engagement. These strategies benefit both the clubs and their sponsors, highlighting the mutual advantages of effective marketing collaborations in sports.

4.3.1.2. Publicity

In the realm of Brazilian football, clubs like Palmeiras, Flamengo, Athletico Paranaense, and Red Bull Bragantino have demonstrated the significance of going beyond the pitch. Their innovative marketing strategies not only enhance their brand visibility but also play a crucial role in cultivating positive images and fostering social responsibility. By engaging in such initiatives, these clubs not only strengthen their connections with fans and communities but also contribute to the overall development and reputation of the sport.

Palmeiras, for instance, orchestrated a groundbreaking campaign, "@palmeiras not found," in collaboration with the NGO "Mães da Sé". Temporarily deactivating their Twitter account to raise awareness about missing persons, Palmeiras ingeniously utilized social media to spark conversations and drive change. Winning prestigious awards like the AMPRO Globes Awards underscored the campaign's success and the club's commitment to social causes.

Similarly, Flamengo demonstrated a bold stance against gender-based violence by dedicating its master sponsorship space to the Instituto "Nós Por Elas". This collaborative effort with BRB not only elevated awareness but also showcased the club's dedication to impactful social change. By leveraging its sponsorship for social impact, Flamengo set a precedent for clubs to use their platforms for meaningful societal contributions.

Athletico Paranaense's "Furacão Solidário" campaign exemplified the club's commitment to community engagement. Partnering with FUNCAP and Samaritan's Feet Brasil, the club donated 500 pairs of football boots to underprivileged youth, symbolizing its investment in community well-being. Through initiatives like these, Athletico Paranaense strengthened its bond with the community and showcased the transformative power of sport beyond the field.

Red Bull Bragantino took a unique approach to environmental awareness by leveraging its online presence to educate about the risk of wildfires in the Cantareira system. Transforming typical match commentary on Twitter into a platform for disseminating crucial environmental information showcased the club's commitment to environmental stewardship and community education. This innovative strategy not only raised awareness but also positioned Red Bull Bragantino as a responsible member of the community.

In summary, these clubs have not only excelled in their respective leagues but have also pioneered groundbreaking marketing strategies that transcend the sport. By intertwining their brand with social responsibility, they have not only cultivated positive images but have also inspired change and made lasting impacts on their communities.

4.3.1.3. Direct Marketing

Direct marketing is a cornerstone in sports, particularly in expanding fan bases and deepening connections with supporters.

Palmeiras introduced "Palmeiras Pay," a digital banking solution integrated with exclusive club benefits. Beyond conventional perks like priority ticket purchases, Palmeiras leveraged this initiative to instill a profound sense of belonging among fans. By offering membership tiers and fee exemptions, they tapped into fans' emotional attachment to the club. The campaign not only bolstered the club's already impressive roster of 183,000 members but also saw a surge in Palmeiras Pay sign-ups, indicating its resounding success.

Flamengo devised a compelling incentive program, offering a car to the fan who recruited the most new members to the "Nação Rubro-Negra" membership program. This bold move not only incentivized existing members but also sparked widespread interest among potential fans. Flamengo effectively transformed fan loyalty into an active recruitment tool, resulting in a notable increase in membership numbers.

Athletico Paranaense's "#VemFerver" campaign aimed to heat up the atmosphere at their stadium, enticing more fans to attend matches and join the club's membership plans. Leveraging YouTube as a promotional platform, they combined visually engaging advertisements with the launch of exclusive membership packages. By highlighting the enticing benefits of membership, Athletico Paranaense successfully attracted new fans and bolstered match attendance.

Red Bull Bragantino unveiled the "Red Bull Experience" membership plan, offering not only standard perks but also access to exclusive events sponsored by Red Bull. With a captivating YouTube video launch, they effectively communicated the unique experiences awaiting members. This strategy not only expanded the club's fan base but also aligned with Red Bull's brand ethos of adventure and excitement.

Moreover, the integration of email marketing across all campaigns serves as a testament to their comprehensive direct marketing approach. By targeting existing members with promotional emails, clubs maintain ongoing engagement while enticing potential fans to join. This intelligent utilization of email marketing not only ensures continuous communication but also maximizes campaign reach and effectiveness.

The success of these strategies underscores the importance of personalized, incentive-driven approaches in direct marketing for sports clubs. By tapping into fans' emotions, offering exclusive benefits, and leveraging digital platforms effectively, these clubs have not only expanded their fan bases but also solidified their positions as market leaders in fan engagement and loyalty.

4.3.1.4. Digital Marketing

In the dynamic world of digital marketing, online engagement amplification stands out as a pivotal objective. This is particularly true for sports organizations, where the interaction between clubs and fans is crucial. Social media is not just a display window but a direct communication bridge with supporters. Clubs are increasingly involving fans in decision-making processes, allowing them to vote on line-ups and even create content for the team's platforms.

Palmeiras: Leveraging YouTube for Fan Engagement.

Palmeiras has established its YouTube channel, TV Palmeiras, as a cornerstone of its digital marketing strategy. This channel, which has grown to become the largest of any Brazilian club, offers fans behind-the-scenes access to matches, training sessions, events, podcasts, and exclusive content. By consistently providing high-quality, engaging videos, Palmeiras registers an impressive daily average of 375,000 views on YouTube.

This strategy is instrumental in fostering fan engagement. By giving supporters an inside look at the club's daily operations and special events, Palmeiras builds a stronger emotional connection with its fan base. The regularity and variety of content not only keep fans returning but also create monetization opportunities through advertising and sponsorships. The sustained engagement translates into a loyal and active community, driving both brand loyalty and financial growth.

Flamengo: Dominating Social Media Platforms.

Flamengo holds the distinction of being the Brazilian club with the most followers across social media, boasting approximately 49.7 million followers on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and Facebook. This impressive following is not merely a function of having the largest fanbase in Brazil but also the result of strategic, creative content production. The club regularly posts engaging material, including line-ups, behind-the-scenes glimpses, and other captivating content that resonates with fans.

The club's dominance on social media is a testament to its effective digital marketing strategy. By maintaining a strong presence across multiple platforms, Flamengo ensures that it reaches a wide audience and keeps its fans continuously engaged. This approach not only strengthens the club's brand but also opens numerous monetization avenues through sponsored posts and partnerships. The creative content strategy significantly enhances fan interaction and loyalty, contributing to the club's financial success.

Athletico Paranaense: Innovating with the Super App Furacão.

Athletico Paranaense has taken a bold step in digital engagement with the introduction of the Super App Furacão. This official app consolidates all digital services offered by the club into a single, intuitive platform, enhancing the overall fan experience. Features include a digital Smart Card for match access, replacing the physical card for convenience, and the "Super App Série," an immersive series that provides behind-the-scenes content.

The Super App is a game-changer in fan engagement. By integrating multiple services and providing exclusive content, Athletico Paranaense offers a seamless and enriched experience for its supporters. This digital innovation not only strengthens the bond between the club and its fans but also generates additional revenue streams through in-app purchases and subscriptions. The app's comprehensive functionality ensures sustained engagement and monetization, exemplifying a modern approach to digital fan interaction.

Red Bull Bragantino: Enhancing Fan Understanding with Censo Massa Bruta.

Red Bull Bragantino's Censo Massa Bruta initiative is a unique approach to enhancing fan engagement. This comprehensive survey, distributed via social media, aims to gather valuable insights about the club's supporters. By understanding the preferences and demographics of their fanbase, Red Bull Bragantino can tailor its marketing strategies and improve the overall fan experience.

This strategic initiative is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it allows the club to build a detailed profile of its supporters, facilitating more personalized and effective marketing campaigns. Secondly, the act of involving fans in such a survey strengthens their sense of connection to the club, fostering loyalty and engagement. The data collected can be used to optimize both online and offline interactions, ensuring a more satisfying fan experience. This approach underscores the importance of data-driven marketing in enhancing engagement and driving revenue growth.

The digital marketing strategies employed by Palmeiras, Flamengo, Athletico Paranaense, and Red Bull Bragantino showcase creative and innovative approaches to amplifying fan engagement. By leveraging various platforms and technologies, these clubs are enhancing fan interaction significantly. These efforts not only strengthen the connection with their supporters but also create valuable monetization opportunities. The success of these strategies highlights the importance of digital marketing in building strong, engaged communities within the sports industry.

4.3.1.5. Merchandising

Merchandising has become a pivotal strategy for sports clubs to diversify their revenue streams, enhancing financial stability and fostering deeper connections with their fan bases. Brazilian football clubs have implemented innovative marketing strategies to achieve this objective. Each club's approach offers valuable insights into effective merchandising tactics that capitalize on brand loyalty and modern consumer behaviors.

Palmeiras: Leveraging Iconic Apparel.

Palmeiras achieved significant success by creating an iconic jersey that resonated deeply with fans and beyond. The club's jersey, produced in collaboration with Puma, was voted the most beautiful in the world by Footy Headlines, surpassing those of Manchester City and Paris Saint-Germain. This jersey, part of the "O que nos torna família" (What Makes Us Family) campaign, emphasized unity and shared passion among fans.

The emotional connection fostered by this campaign led to a surge in sales, demonstrating how a well-designed product that embodies the club's values can drive merchandise revenue. This strategy effectively diversified Palmeiras' income by attracting purchases from both loyal supporters and new consumers captivated by the jersey's aesthetic and symbolic significance.

Flamengo: Innovating E-Commerce.

Flamengo revolutionized its merchandising approach by heavily investing in its e-commerce platform. By partnering with Simples Inovação, the club optimized its online store, enhancing the user experience with improved layout and functionality. This investment resulted in a 60% increase in website views and a 34% rise in revenue over seven months. The success of Flamengo's strategy underscores the importance of adapting to digital trends and leveraging technology to reach a broader audience. E-commerce is a critical revenue stream in today's market, and Flamengo's innovative approach serves as a model for other clubs aiming to boost merchandise sales and diversify their income through online channels.

Athletico Paranaense: Embracing Unique Designs

Athletico Paranaense demonstrated the power of unique and fan-influenced product designs with their "Black Edition" jersey. Incorporating fan suggestions, the club launched a striking black jersey with red and black gradient stripes, which quickly sold out. This success highlights the effectiveness of involving fans in the design process, creating products that reflect their preferences and foster a sense of ownership. By offering distinctive and innovative merchandise, Athletico Paranaense not only diversified its revenue but also strengthened fan engagement and loyalty.

Red Bull Bragantino: Establishing an Online Presence.

Red Bull Bragantino took a significant step by launching its first online store, making club merchandise accessible to a broader audience. Previously, fans could only purchase items at the physical store in the stadium. This move signaled the club's growth and commitment to expanding its reach. Establishing an e-commerce platform is essential for modern clubs, providing a convenient shopping experience for fans and opening new revenue streams. Red Bull Bragantino's strategy highlights the importance of accessibility and convenience in today's digital age, setting a foundation for continued growth and revenue diversification.

Each of these Brazilian clubs employed creative and well-executed strategies to diversify their revenue streams through merchandising. These strategies not only boosted revenue but also strengthened fan engagement, demonstrating that innovative merchandising is a vital component of a football club's financial strategy. By understanding and adapting to market trends and consumer behaviors, clubs can effectively diversify their income and achieve sustainable growth.

4.3.1.6. Sports Sponsorship

In the rapidly evolving landscape of Brazilian football, sports sponsorship has emerged as a pivotal strategy for club development and revenue generation. Clubs have employed innovative marketing strategies to harness the power of strategic partnerships, particularly with betting companies, to elevate their status and financial stability.

Palmeiras: A Benchmark in Sponsorship Success.

Palmeiras' partnership with Crefisa, a personal credit company, stands as a hallmark of successful sports sponsorship. Since 2015, Crefisa has been the club's main sponsor, contributing significantly to infrastructure improvements and player salaries. Over eight and a half years, this collaboration has yielded 13 titles and an injection of over R\$ 1.2 billion into the club.

This partnership highlights a mutually beneficial relationship where Crefisa has expanded its customer base and corporate stature, while Palmeiras has enjoyed a period of unprecedented success both on and off the pitch. The strategic alignment between Palmeiras and Crefisa demonstrates how long-term sponsorships can drive sustained growth and achievement for both parties.

Flamengo: Setting New Sponsorship Records.

Flamengo's recent agreement with Pixbet marks the largest master sponsorship deal in the history of Brazilian football. With an investment potentially reaching R\$ 470 million over four years, this partnership strengthens Flamengo's financial position and underscores its status as a premier club in Brazilian football.

The deal with Pixbet is a testament to Flamengo's robust market appeal and its ability to attract high-value investments. This strategic partnership enhances Flamengo's competitiveness on national and international stages, showcasing how substantial sponsorships can propel clubs to new heights of success.

Athletico Paranaense: Capitalizing on Sponsorship Growth.

Athletico Paranaense's agreement with Esportes da Sorte represents the largest sponsorship deal in the club's history and a record for football in Paraná. Valued at an estimated R\$ 34 million over two years, this partnership ensures prominent exposure on major broadcasters like Rede Globo and CazéTV.

This collaboration highlights how Athletico Paranaense has adeptly navigated the burgeoning sponsorship landscape, securing significant financial support from a leading online betting company. The club's ability to attract such substantial sponsorship underscores the evolving nature of sports marketing in Brazil.

Red Bull Bragantino: Embracing Ambitious Sponsorships

Red Bull Bragantino's recent deal with MrJack.Bet, a sports betting company, exemplifies how even less traditionally popular clubs can secure valuable sponsorships. While financial details remain undisclosed, the partnership's strategic placement on the team's jerseys signifies a lucrative and ambitious marketing approach.

This agreement underscores the willingness of betting companies to invest in Brazilian football, recognizing the potential of clubs like Red Bull Bragantino with strong growth trajectories. It reflects a new era of sponsorship in Brazilian football, where clubs of all sizes can leverage the increasing interest from the betting industry.

A notable trend in Brazilian football sponsorship is the surge of betting companies as major sponsors. These partnerships bring substantial financial resources, enabling clubs to enhance their competitive edge and operational capabilities.

The strategic sponsorships by Palmeiras, Flamengo, Athletico Paranaense, and Red Bull Bragantino highlight innovative marketing approaches that drive mutual growth and success. The influx of betting companies into Brazilian football sponsorship is reshaping the financial landscape, offering new opportunities for clubs to thrive. These well-executed partnerships showcase the dynamic potential of sports sponsorships in achieving strategic goals and revenue enhancement.

4.4. QUESTIONNAIRE

To thoroughly investigate the research topic, a questionnaire was created as the primary method for qualitative data collection. This approach allowed for detailed insights directly from participants, providing a rich understanding of their experiences and perspectives. The questionnaire was designed to assess whether the promotional strategies employed by Brazilian football clubs influenced their fans' consumption behaviors. Specifically, it focused on various promotional strategies such as Advertising, Publicity, Direct Marketing, Digital Marketing, Merchandising, and Sports Sponsorship.

The research aimed to determine the effectiveness of these promotional strategies in increasing fan engagement and generating higher revenue for the clubs. The central research question was: "How do the different promotional strategies employed by Brazilian football clubs influence their fans' consumption behaviors?" The questionnaire included multiple-choice questions that captured a wide range of behaviors and attitudes towards each promotional strategy. For instance, questions explored the impact of advertising campaigns on merchandise purchases, the role of publicity in boosting game attendance, the effectiveness of direct marketing in encouraging event participation, and the influence of digital marketing on fan interactions. Additionally, it assessed how merchandising efforts and sports sponsorships affected fans' loyalty and engagement levels.

This method provided a focused and systematic analysis of how various promotional efforts translated into tangible outcomes for Brazilian football clubs. By correlating fan responses with specific promotional strategies, the findings offered valuable insights into which tactics effectively drove fan engagement, enhanced the fan experience, and ultimately contributed to the financial growth of the clubs. This comprehensive analysis could help clubs refine their promotional approaches, ensuring they connect more effectively with their fan base and achieve their revenue objectives.

4.4.1. Objective

The objective of this questionnaire is to investigate how the promotional strategies employed by Brazilian football clubs influence fans' consumption behavior. Specifically, it aims to understand whether strategies such as Advertising, Publicity, Direct Marketing, Digital Marketing, Merchandising, and Sports Sponsorship impact the purchase of club products, attendance at games, and participation in club campaigns, resulting in increased revenue for the clubs.

4.4.2. Hypotheses

a) Marketing strategies implemented by Brazilian football clubs increase fan engagement, resulting in both higher sales of club products and greater attendance at games.

b) Digital marketing by Brazilian football clubs enhances fan interaction and loyalty, leading to more frequent purchases of official merchandise.

c) Sports sponsorships increase the likelihood of fans buying products or services from sponsoring companies, showing their support and engagement with the club.

4.4.3. Technical Specifications

According to a survey conducted by Nielsen (2018), 60% of the Brazilian population, approximately 124 million people, are interested or very interested in football in the country.

Sampling Procedure	Simple Random Sampling
Geographic Scope	Brazil - Nationwide
Universe	Brazilian Football Fans
Population	Approximately 124 million football fans across Brazil
Sampling Error	+/- 9%.
Confidence Level	95% $p=q=0,5$
Sample Size	119
Fieldwork	Online surveys - Google Forms from May 1st to May 31st, 2024.

4.4.3. Questions

Exploring the Impact: Brazilian Football Club Promotional Strategies and Fan Consumption Behaviors.

The questionnaire presented is intended for individuals interested in the Brazilian football universe. The questions aim to collect data on the perception and behavior of football fans regarding the promotional strategies adopted by Brazilian football clubs. This research is conducted as part of a study on the impacts of marketing strategies on the relationship between clubs and their fans. All information provided will be treated confidentially and will be used exclusively for analysis and research purposes. We sincerely appreciate your collaboration and participation in this study.

1 - Gender

Male

Female

Non-binary

2 - Age

17 years or younger

Between 18 and 30 years old

Between 31 and 50 years old

51 years or older

3 - How often do you usually attend Brazilian football club games during a typical season?

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Always

4 - How often do you interact with promotional content from Brazilian football clubs (advertisements, social media posts, others)?

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Always

5 - How often do you interact with social media or online advertisements from the Brazilian football club you follow most? (Favorite Club)

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Always

6 - How often do you purchase customized products from Brazilian football clubs (jerseys, scarves, hats, others)?

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Always

7 - How influential are advertising campaigns in your decision to purchase products from a Brazilian football club?

Not influential at all

Slightly influential

Moderately influential

Highly influential

8 - Have you ever decided to attend a game mainly due to the club's promotion?

Yes

No

9 - Have you ever purchased customized products from a Brazilian football club as a result of seeing them promoted through digital marketing efforts (social media posts, online ads)?

Yes

No

10 - Do you tend to consume more products or services from companies that sponsor your favorite Brazilian football club?

Yes

No

11 - In your opinion, how important is it for Brazilian football clubs to invest in marketing and promotional activities?

- Not important at all
- Slightly important
- Important
- Very important

12 - How do you assess the relationship between the club you follow the most and its fans? Considering the promotional strategies adopted by the club.

- Very positive
- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeAu_izVWch6F4uGEGNclxSLoA53zwzGZNn1Q5xBqCy4vQjcA/viewform?usp=sf_link Google Form Survey Link.

4.4.4. Research Findings

The analysis of the questionnaire data uncovered several significant trends and insights into the effectiveness of various promotional strategies used by Brazilian football clubs. The key findings are summarized below:

4.4.4.1. Demographics

The demographic analysis of the respondents reveals that the majority of the participants in the questionnaire were young males, aged between 18 and 50 years. This indicates a strong interest in Brazilian football within this demographic segment, which is crucial for understanding the broader implications of the research findings.



Figure 30: Demographic Questions 1-2 Results Graphs

In the first question, blue represents Male, red represents Female, and yellow represents Non-binary.

In the second question, blue represents 17 years or younger, red represents Between 18 and 30 years old, yellow represents Between 31 and 50 years old, and green represents 51 years or older.

4.4.4.2. Fan Engagement and Consumer Behavior

The questionnaire analysis reveals a strong link between fan engagement and consumer behavior among Brazilian football enthusiasts. Most fans attend stadium events occasionally, closely tied to their engagement with club promotions and merchandise purchases. This synergy suggests that active participation in promotions directly impacts attendance and merchandise sales. Additionally, fans show higher interaction with digital campaigns related to their favorite club, driven by their passion and loyalty. This underscores how fandom influences consumer behavior, emphasizing the importance of targeted marketing strategies.

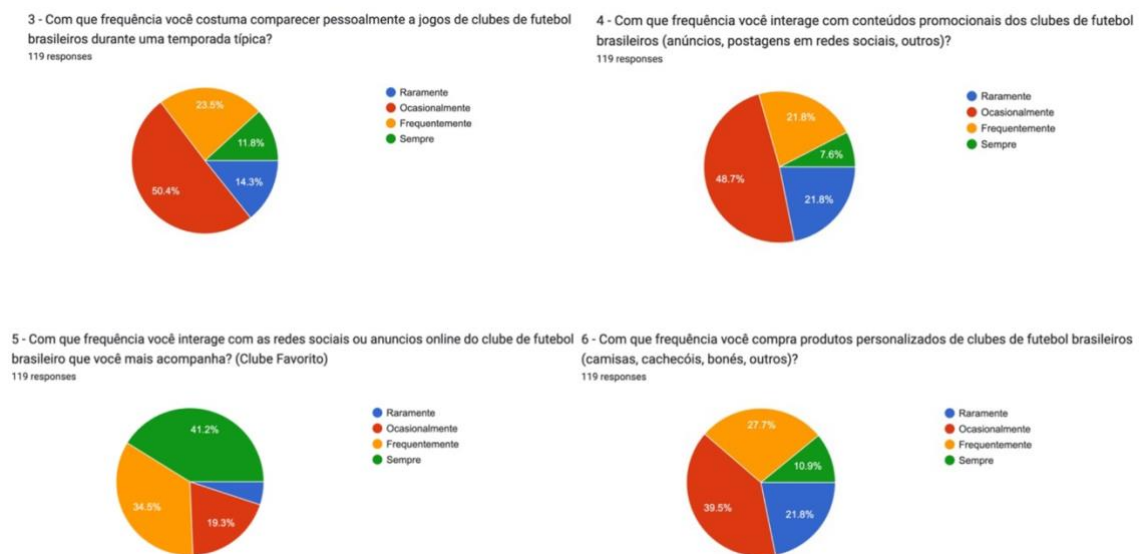


Figure 31: Fan Engagement and Consumer Behavior Questions 3-6 Results Graphs

In questions 3-6, blue represents Rarely, red represents Occasionally, yellow represents Frequently, and green represents Always.

4.4.4.3. Sports Marketing Strategies Impact on Fan Engagement and Consumer Behavior

The analysis of the questionnaire data highlights the significant impact of sports marketing strategies on fan engagement and consumer behavior within the realm of Brazilian football. According to respondents, advertising campaigns are predominantly perceived as moderately to highly influential in their decision to purchase products from Brazilian clubs. Moreover, a substantial majority of respondents reported that they have decided to attend a game primarily due to club promotions, indicating the pivotal role of promotional activities in driving stadium attendance.

Furthermore, the data reveals that a majority of fans have purchased club merchandise because of actions taken in digital marketing by the club. This underscores the effectiveness of digital marketing initiatives in stimulating fan interest and driving consumer purchases. Additionally, the survey findings suggest that fans exhibit a strong inclination to consume products or services from companies that sponsor their favorite clubs, indicating the positive impact of sports sponsorships on consumer behavior.

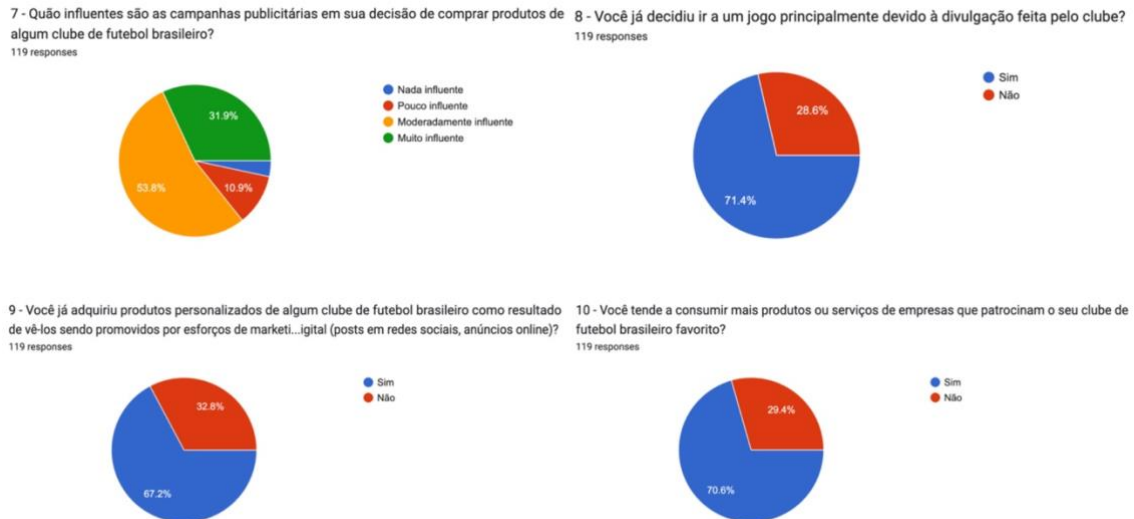


Figure 32: Sports Marketing Strategies Impact on Fan Engagement and Consumer Behavior Questions 7-10 Results Graphs

In question 7, blue represents Not influential at all, red represents Slightly influential, yellow represents Moderately influential, and green represents Highly influential.

In questions 8-10, blue represents Yes and red represents No.

4.4.4.4. Perceptions of Sports Marketing in Brazilian Football Clubs

The analysis of perceptions regarding sports marketing in Brazilian football clubs reveals notable insights into fan attitudes and preferences. A significant majority of respondents view it as important or very important for Brazilian clubs to invest in marketing and promotional activities. This indicates a widespread belief among fans that such investments yield considerable benefits for clubs, underscoring the perceived value of marketing efforts in the context of Brazilian football.

Additionally, concerning the relationship between fans' favorite clubs and their perceptions of sports marketing, the majority of responses indicate a neutral or positive association. However, it is noteworthy that this relationship is not overwhelmingly positive, suggesting room for improvement in the marketing strategies implemented by Brazilian clubs. This observation underscores the potential for clubs to enhance their marketing campaigns significantly, as there appears to be untapped potential to strengthen the connection between fans and their favorite teams through more effective sports marketing initiatives.

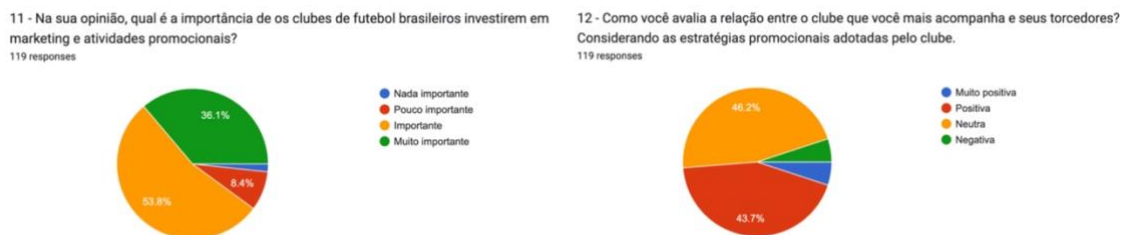


Figure 33: Perceptions of Sports Marketing in Brazilian Football Clubs Questions 11-12 Results Graphs

In question 11, blue represents Not important at all, red represents Slightly important, yellow represents Important, and green represents Very important.

In question 12, blue represents Very positive, red represents Positive, yellow represents Neutral, and green represents Negative.

4.4.5. Research Conclusions

The analysis of the questionnaire data has effectively validated all three hypotheses proposed regarding the impact of marketing strategies on fan engagement and consumer behavior within Brazilian football clubs. Firstly, the findings confirm that marketing strategies implemented by these clubs indeed contribute to increased fan engagement, translating into higher sales of club products and greater attendance at games. This alignment underscores the significant role of marketing initiatives in fostering a strong connection between clubs and their fan base, ultimately driving revenue growth.

Secondly, the results provide clear evidence supporting the hypothesis that digital marketing efforts by Brazilian football clubs enhance fan interaction and loyalty. The data indicates that fans exhibit a higher level of engagement with digital campaigns related to their favorite clubs, leading to more frequent purchases of official merchandise. This highlights the importance of leveraging digital platforms to cultivate deeper relationships with fans and capitalize on their passion for the club.

Lastly, the survey findings affirm the hypothesis that sports sponsorships increase the likelihood of fans purchasing products or services from sponsoring companies. The majority of respondents expressed a strong inclination to support sponsoring brands, demonstrating their engagement with the club and reinforcing the mutually beneficial relationship between clubs and sponsors.

In conclusion, the research has provided compelling evidence to support the hypotheses, emphasizing the integral role of marketing strategies, particularly digital marketing and sports sponsorships, in driving fan engagement, loyalty, and consumer behavior within the context of Brazilian football clubs. Moving forward, these insights can inform the development of more targeted and effective marketing campaigns, ultimately enhancing the overall success and sustainability of Brazilian clubs.

4.5. RESULTS THAT SPORTS MARKETING STRATEGIES GENERATE OR CAN GENERATE FOR BRAZILIAN FOOTBALL CLUBS

Here are some results that sports marketing strategies generate or can generate for Brazilian football clubs:

- a) They increase fans' passion for a particular sport, team, athlete, or even an event itself.
- b) Promotion of athletes, providing the opportunity to enhance the value of players, putting them in the spotlight.
- c) Club promotion, effective marketing creates a buzz both nationally and internationally, attracting attention from outside, thus popularizing the team.
- d) Strengthening of fan membership programs with a higher number of members, increasing the club's revenue.
- e) Association of the football team with social causes, intertwining the club with people's love and becoming a great option for reaching them.
- f) Clubs can offer interactive experiences that capture consumer attention and interest.
- g) Generates greater identification between the club and the fans.
- h) Can generate both financial and technical returns for the team.
- i) Excellent opportunity to promote the brand, as well as the sport in general.
- j) Possible exchange of experiences between customers of both brands in the case of sponsorship or partnership.
- k) Attracting the attention of as many people as possible, always aiming at the target audience.
- l) The main source of profit for a team.
- m) Greater profit leads to more investment, resulting in better technical returns, enabling the team to compete in major competitions and enhancing the brand.
- n) Brings the club closer to its main goal: winning titles, which is not possible without investment.
- o) With the winning of titles, the club grows, and consequently, the number of fans increases, creating a cycle.
- p) Combines entertainment, passion, and people's emotions.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study set out to identify and analyze the sports marketing strategies employed by four prominent Brazilian football clubs: Sociedade Esportiva Palmeiras, Clube de Regatas do Flamengo, Club Athletico Paranaense, and Red Bull Bragantino. Through a comprehensive literature review and empirical analysis, it has become evident that well-executed sports marketing strategies are crucial for achieving success both on and off the field.

The primary strategy identified is sponsorship deals with multinational corporations, which provide significant financial support and brand visibility. For instance, Palmeiras' strategic partnerships with major companies like Crefisa have greatly enhanced their financial stability and market presence. Similarly, Red Bull Bragantino's corporate integration has revitalized the club and expanded its global reach, demonstrating how comprehensive sponsorship can transform a club's fortunes.

Fan engagement also plays a pivotal role in sports marketing success. Flamengo, driven by its vast and passionate fan base, exemplifies how effective fan engagement can drive revenue through merchandise sales and matchday experiences. The club's ability to connect emotionally with fans ensures high levels of participation and loyalty, contributing to its overall success.

Innovation and creativity are equally important in the sports marketing landscape. Athletico Paranaense stands out for its bold and inventive marketing strategies, including the pioneering sale of naming rights and unique digital campaigns. This creativity not only enhances brand visibility but also keeps the fan base excited and engaged.

The overarching hypothesis that effective sports marketing, grounded in a well-rounded marketing mix, leads to positive outcomes has been validated through this study. By focusing on advertising, publicity, direct marketing, digital marketing, merchandising, and sponsorship, Brazilian football clubs can achieve remarkable results. The success of the four clubs analyzed—both financially and in terms of championship titles—demonstrates the potential of strategic sports marketing to elevate a club's status within the competitive sports industry.

The comprehensive matrix developed in this study serves as a valuable framework for clubs aiming to enhance their marketing efforts. This matrix outlines key strategies and objectives across various domains, providing a structured approach for clubs to follow in order to achieve financial stability, brand visibility, and fan loyalty.

In conclusion, the cases of Palmeiras, Flamengo, Athletico Paranaense, and Red Bull Bragantino underscore the critical role that strategic sponsorships, fan engagement, and innovative marketing play in modern football. As Brazilian football continues to evolve its marketing capabilities, these examples provide a blueprint for leveraging various strategies to achieve sustained success. Integrating these essential elements into their sports marketing strategies will enable Brazilian football clubs to secure financial growth and sporting achievements, solidifying their position in the elite tiers of the sport.

5.1. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

Exploring this theme, I notice that there are many other aspects to be explored, such as: Reasons for the decline of clubs after the termination of major partnerships, why Brazilian football does not invest as much in sports marketing and how to analyze if a partnership is worthwhile or not.

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