



UCL Université catholique de Louvain - **Mons**

# **Umbrella Branding in Sports**

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*"A house of brands is like a family, each needs a role and a relationship to others."*

*-Jeffrey Sinclair, Brand Strategist*

## **Word of thanks**

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## **Preface**

Investing in sports has become a popular marketing tool for companies and cities all over the world. The visibility, the emotional value and the human aspect of sports attracts people to cooperate with professional or amateur sport clubs.

The main concept of this study is Umbrella Branding in Sports.

Umbrella Branding can be compared with companies like L'Oreal and Nivea or even Virgin. Those organizations have one particular brand name with different product categories. Virgin for example, enters the market with one specific brand, but the products are various: From Virgin Mobile, till Virgin Airways and even Virgin Radio.

The eventual goal of this study is to apply the umbrella branding model on sports. On the sports level, the classic example of umbrella branding is FC Barcelona. That club or even better, that brand combines soccer with several other sports such as: volleyball, basketball, handball and even athletics. The organization has for each sport discipline one overarching corporate identity; same logo, colors, sponsors, complex, etc. Everything is in a manner of speaking, placed under one huge umbrella and is being offered underneath one brand name, namely: FC Barcelona. In this study the advantages of a model like FC Barcelona will be taken a closer look at and will be applied on the city of Roeselare, a Belgian city in the heart of West-Flanders.

This thesis is divided in three major parts. First of all there is the literary review where all the consulted literature will be described. The second part is the methodological research. In this part all the persons I have interviewed are being introduced. Also in this second part, an analysis has been made about three umbrella branding models in sports. In the third part the analyses and recommendations concerning an umbrella branding model are explained. These analyses and recommendations contain information conducted from the interviews, the results of a small survey and a SWOT-analysis. In the fourth part I gave my personal point of view for an umbrella branding model for the city of Roeselare. Finally in the fifth and last part a general conclusion has been made. In addition, a table of content concerning the annexes and a bibliography were also implemented in this document. Concerning the annexes I would like to refer to the disc that subjoined this thesis.

# 1 Literary Review

## 1.1 Branding

### 1.1.1 What is a brand?

According to the American Marketing Association a brand is “a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of these, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers, and to differentiate them from those of a competitor.” A brand is also a promise a company makes to its customers, this promise is built on coherence and continuity of the brand its products (Kapferer, 2001)<sup>1</sup>. We can take the example of Coca Cola; no matter where I drink a Coca Cola, it should have the same great taste. In this case we talk about the coherence of the brand its products. Furthermore, the Coca Cola that I drink today should be as good as the one I drank yesterday and as the one I will drink tomorrow. This represents the continuity of the brand its products (Richelieu, 2003).

According to De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Van den Bergh (2008), for brands to be successful there are several requirements. First of all, brands have to be differentiated. Every consumer seeks unique benefits in a brand. If all brands offer the same benefits we cannot talk about uniqueness anymore. That is why brands need to be different from each other. Secondly, brands need to be positioned on quality and added value. If a brand does not offer any quality or added value, consumers will not be interested in buying the brand. A third important factor of successful brands is innovation. Consumers have continuous changes in tastes over time. Brands have to anticipate on those continuous changes in tastes, to stay ahead of competition. A fourth necessity is that brands need the full support and commitment of management and employees to be successful. When the management/employees of a company are not convinced about a certain new product it will be unlikely that the product is going to be a success. A fifth and final important factor is that brands need to have consistent communications support. Without communicating about the brand, the customer will be left out in the cold because of the lack of information. Brands can only be successful by informing the customers about its uniqueness and benefits.

Some brands are being called “concept brands”. Those are brands which offer specific visions, attitudes, convictions, motivations and so on. They arise from emerging social and cultural trends. An example of such a brand is Virgin. Richard Branson, the founder of Virgin

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<sup>1</sup> Richelieu referred to Kapferer in “Building the brand equity of professional sports teams”, (2003)

likes to say that what he is selling is “a way of life”. A sports team like FC Barcelona can also be seen as a concept brand. It tries to create a certain vision of sports in general. That is one of the aspects that will be explained in this study.

### **1.1.2 What is an umbrella brand?**

According to Wernerfelt (1988), the practice of umbrella branding is when a firm uses its established brand name in its advertising for a newly introduced good. For example: Diet Coke versus Tab<sup>2</sup>. In this case, experience goods are products which quality cannot be determined by inspection, so customers need to buy the product to learn its quality.

When companies introduce a brand they can use different brand strategies. One of these brand strategies is the introduction of a brand with one over-arching brand name. Brand extension or brand stretching is the use of an existing brand to market products in a different product category. A good example of such a strategy is the one of Apple. The company first brought computers on the market and later on they launched their successful I-phones. There are several advantages of a brand stretching strategy. First of all more market share can be captured by the use of an over-arching brand name. Secondly, in line with the market share, brand extension requires less advertising because people already know the success of previous products. On the other hand there are also some negative aspects when using such a strategy. The introduction of a product in a different product category can be very risky. People admired previous products, but maybe they are not interested in the new product category anymore. Without any specific research towards the needs of the customers, the launch of a new product category can be a total fiasco. Another disadvantage is that a certain brand dilution can appear. When introducing several new product categories the personality of the brand can become fuzzy. This can end in a decrease of the actual brand value.

The idea of an umbrella brand is that it helps firms with strong brands to successfully introduce new products by convincing consumers that new and existing products are of similar quality. One of the most beautiful international examples of an umbrella brand is Nivea. It has several product categories like skincare and personal care. In every category there are different products like Nivea Sun or Nivea Deo. Every product, regardless of its category, carries the same brand name: Nivea. Another example is Virgin, as already mentioned this brand is also a kind of concept brand. It has diverged product categories, from

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<sup>2</sup> The first sugar free drink of the Coca Cola Company.

a provider of financial services till an airline company. By using an umbrella brand like Virgin, the number of interactions a consumer has with the brand increases significantly. The brand value also reinforces and that helps to transfer the goodwill to new products and categories. The main thing people need to take into account is that an umbrella brand needs to be focused. It has to stand for the same values in the different product categories, so there has to be a similar emotional link between the products.

### **1.1.3 Are umbrella brands successful?**

Several worldwide studies tried to identify the advantages of using an umbrella brand instead of individual brands. The majority of these studies were made by the use of empirical analysis. One of the most important researchers was the economist Birgen Wernerfelt. In his study; *Umbrella branding as a signal of new product quality* (1988), he explains that an umbrella brand can be an indicator for the quality of a product. Economics suggest that multiproduct firms can take advantage of their reputation for quality by using the brand name of an established product for a new good. Consumers are uncertain about the quality of both the old product and the new one, but they have some experience with the old product. Both products are experienced goods, and the old product will be purchased again after the new one is introduced. So Wernerfelt (1988) states that when a company brands a new product, it is doing two things: first of all, it is claiming that the old and the new products are both of good quality and secondly, it is inviting consumers to pool their experience with the two products infer the quality of both. Let us take an example that can occur in reality. A company like Nivea introduces a new product: A kind of cream that can be used for the care of ears. Let us pretend that such a product does not exist for the moment. Nivea can afford to take the risk of introducing such a product because it can rely on the success of previous products. Customers will buy the new product because they have faith in the product development and quality of Nivea. When a new, unknown company tries to introduce a care product for ears, potential customers will rather play a waiting game because they cannot compare with other products of that company.

According to a study made by Jeanine Miklos-Thal (2008), the use of an umbrella brand can induce several effects. First of all an umbrella brand can lead to feedback effects whenever consumers believe that the qualities of the different products are correlated. When two products are perfectly correlated, the success (failure) of any one of the umbrella branded products has a positive (negative) feedback effect on the other products. In her work Miklos-

Thal (2008) cites two examples of these feedback effects. On the one hand there was the success of Apple iPods in 2008 that seems to have boosted the demand of Apple computers. Conversely in 1990 an acceleration defect of the Audi 5000 model resulted in the significant drop of demand for the Audi 4000 model. Second effect is the so called signaling effects of umbrella branding. The price consumers are willing to pay for the different products of an umbrella brand might be influenced by the brand itself. For example when Jaguar launched its first new model in seventeen years, the brand experienced a significant increase in demand for the old Jaguar models (Miklos-Thal, 2008).

In daily life, consumers are often imperfectly informed about product attributes. This is especially important for new products. A firm which offers an umbrella brand can use its brand name as a guarantee for quality when it introduces a new experience good. When consumers have experience with the parent product, they get provided with information on the new product. This can reduce the uncertainty of consumers towards the product and the perceived risk associated with the extension. All of this is explained in Wernerfelt his signaling theory of umbrella branding related to consumer behavior (1988). He was the first to show that an umbrella brand can serve as a perfect signal of product quality. Signaling can be seen as following: when a product is consumed in public, brand choice could be used to send a signal. Once developed a signal, it can be transferred from one market to another, as when the “Marlboro” name is put on a type of clothing. This is also the principle of Umbrella Branding. There are different types of signals. Quality signals are different from variety signals because their meaning is derived from the spending of money. The cost of a product is mostly an indicator of the product its quality. Wernerfelt also states that umbrella branding lowers the cost of risk reduction (Wernerfelt, 1992). In his theory of: “Umbrella branding as a signal of new product quality”, he presents a signaling model in which a multiproduct firm can use its reputation as a bond for good quality. This is being done by using a brand name for an established product when it introduces a new experience good.

#### **1.1.3.1 Advantages of umbrella brands according to Wernerfelt (1992)**

According to Wernerfelt (1992) direct development costs (packaging, design...) are lower for umbrella brands because they all have the same corporate identity. Another advantage is that as the owner of an umbrella brand you have to invest less in advertising. Individual brand companies have to make sure that people know the existence of their brand by investing in

advertisement. Umbrella brands also benefit from the success of previous products which reduces the costs of advertising.

### **1.1.3.2 Disadvantages of umbrella brands according to Wernerfelt (1992)**

Wernerfelt (1992) assumed that umbrella branding is more costly than separate branding and that failure can be a perfect signal of low quality. In his work, according to Kimrey (1974) and Guyen and Long (1982)<sup>3</sup> marketers ascribe a significant indirect cost to umbrella branding. The argument is that an existing brand name identifies the product its location in attribute space and that the meaning of the name gets fuzzy, which results in confused consumers if it is used on different products. Umbrella brands also raise many different issues such as the impact of consumer quality perceptions on the choice of the consumer and the spillover effects of marketing mix strategies from one category to another. None of these issues have been addressed directly in marketing literature.

### **1.1.3.3 Umbrella branding analyzed by Birger Wernerfelt (1988)**

The theory of Wernerfelt (1988) is based on several premises. First of all, the main premise is that there is consumer uncertainty about product quality. Second, consumers believe that a new extension of a high quality brand is likely to be high quality as well. High-quality brands try to have high quality extensions, because poor-quality extension will damage the reputation of the parent brand. Another thing is that umbrella brands decrease the perceived risk of consumers and therefore increase the consumer utility. For this to be true, consumers must dislike uncertainty or be risk averse.

After different studies, researchers conclude that quality is a very important indicator of the success of an umbrella brand. The quality of the extension should match with the expectations of the consumers. Otherwise a strong parent brand cannot guarantee the success of the launch of a new extension. Also, the qualities of the products a firm is selling under an umbrella brand need to be uniform. According to Wernerfelt (1988), the quality of the old product can sometimes be put at risk by introducing a new product in an umbrella structure. But in many examples this is not a reasonable assumption for all consumers. If one is been drinking Coca Cola for twenty years, it is not likely that a bad experience with a Diet Coke will change somebodies mind.

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<sup>3</sup> Wernerfelt (1992) referred in his work to Kimrey (1974) and Guyen and Long (1982).

#### **1.1.4 Brand personality**

Friedman (2011) explains brand personality as human personality traits that are both applicable to, and relevant for brands. Brands have often been portrayed as having human characteristics. This is what Aaker (2007)<sup>4</sup> examined with the creation of his Brand Personality Scale. He examined 309 candidate traits based on previous literature. He looked at 114 traits over thirty-seven brands. He scaled based on different factors, for example: sincerity, excitement, sophistication, etc. After the study researchers agreed that it is important for producers of new products to focus on the consumer their perception of the message. As a marketer you must take the time to first understand the perception of your brand before launching a marketing campaign. Brand personality is an important item for managers to understand in order to effectively market and position a brand.

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<sup>4</sup> Braunstein and Ross referred to Aaker's personality scale (2007), in their work: "Brand Personality in Sport" (2010)

## **1.2 Branding in sports**

For several years, companies have been using brands to develop a strong and durable relationship with their customers. A relatively recent trend is that professional sports teams also use brand strategy as a tool for success. In the beginning we talked about concept brands like Virgin. A sports team is also such a kind of brand, because it generates an emotional response from their fans. Nowadays relatively few teams seem proactive in working on good and sustainable brand equity. However, becoming a successful brand can bring along several advantages. An executive from Manchester United once said: “Everything is in the brand [...] we must think in terms of products in order to develop the company. The brand is the team, its logo, the red shirt, the players, the story; it is everything related to Manchester United. It is a precious asset in developing the business” (France 2 Télévision, 2002).

It is increasingly important for sports teams to position themselves against other teams and entertainment offers in the market by becoming a brand. Customers have a certain budget for entertainment. They choose between several leisure activities such as festivals, movies, restaurants and also sports. So the purpose is to attract those customers to spend their money on a sports team activity. When managing a sports team you have to make sure you create trust and fan-loyalty. This can generate the sale of a variety of goods and services beyond the sports arena. Your mission as a sports team manager will be succeeded when people/fans live the brand at different moments of their daily life. Like for example people who chose to wear Levis instead of another brand of jeans.

According to Richelieu (2003), there is a specific framework for building the brand equity of professional sports teams. It contains 3 different steps: i) Defining the identity of the sports team; ii) Positioning the sports team in the market; iii) Developing a brand strategy. I shall explain each of these different steps. All of those steps are explained starting from 1.2.2.

### **1.2.1 The importance of brand personality in sports**

Nowadays, brand personality is a hot topic in sports. According to Braunstein and Ross (2010) brand personality can be influenced by various factors including: packaging, distribution, communication, consumer interaction, the logo and the success of the team. In sports, brand personality can be used as a point of differentiation of the brand as well as a tool to position the brand against competitors. Companies or even sport teams need to use brand personality in order to maximize their marketing strategies. Many sport teams only examine images associated with their own team. This is wrong because they subconsciously ignore the

association linked to the competition. When sport teams understand their home organization and the one of their competitors, they would be more able to use the specific resources needed to change or strengthen their team.

In their analysis, Braunstein and Ross mention that brand personality in sports is also very important in relation with sponsors. It can be decisive in the decision whether a potential sponsor fits with the image of the organization/team. Brand personality in sports is also more than just the personality about the sports team. The brand is the whole organization with multiple components such as: the office personnel, the team facilities, extensions, etc. Finally brand personality is also effective when we talk about brand awareness or identity. People need to associate the brand with your organization. This is also the case with sport teams. Fans should make a link between the logo, the colors of the jersey, the team its anthem, its slogan and the team itself. In this case brand personality can be used to strengthen the so called brand awareness.

### **1.2.2 How to define the identity of a sports team?**

According to Richelieu (2003), there are the two main elements in the identity of a sports team: The attributes of the team and the value the team represents to its fans. The attribute refers to the values of the team and what the team stands for. A team can be associated with different values for example: fighting spirit, reliability, ambition... These values are also a starting point for the long term vision and strategy of the sports team. It is also linked with the value of the city where the team is located. It becomes part of the social, economic and cultural landscape of the city. Next to the attributes we have the values that need to be translated into a message. In marketing it is important to tell stories. These stories are often based on a specific message that we want to send with someone. We need to create a kind of value proposition by translating the values of the team in a kind of message that underlines the benefits of the brand. It is important that this value proposition is based on the vision of the managers and the perception of the fans. A team needs to ensure that what they believe they stand for is understood by its fans. A good example of this value proposition is the slogan of FC Bruges, a Belgian first division soccer team. Its slogan says: "No sweat, no glory". Each time FC Bruges scores a goal, the speaker shouts the words: "No sweat" and the fans reply with: "No glory".

### **1.2.3 How to positioning a sports team?**

When positioning a sports team we need to take into account two specific elements: the selection of market segment(s) and the differentiation of the brand on the market. By selecting the market segment the sports team tries to identify the customers that are sensitive to the value proposition of the team. Another thing is that the brand has to be unique in the eyes of the customer. This is also an important factor in general brand management as we explained in the part of: What is a brand and when is it successful? Brand differentiation in sports is the way a sports team differentiates itself from its competitors, rival sports teams. For example: by having a multi-sports stadium, extra parking space or a high class chairman.

### **1.2.4 How to develop a brand strategy for a sports team?**

When the identity and the positioning are determined, the sports team can continue with its brand strategy. There are several factors which can help a team building up a strategy and reinforce its brand equity. In his work, *Building the brand equity of professional sports teams* (2003), Richelieu cites three types of factors: Internal catalyst factors, external catalyst factors and moderating variables.

The internal catalyst factors are variables that help a professional sports team with a better brand leverage. It can be seen as a set of tools used by the team to reinforce its brand image. Richelieu (2003) makes a difference between two categories of internal catalysts: marketing actions and fans that bond with the team. Concerning the marketing actions, there are several variables that can trigger when a team wants to leverage its brand. Some examples are: The sales of the merchandise of the team, promotional campaigns, management of players, etc. But one of the most common examples is the so called “on-field jerseys”. Logos and colors worn by players can be very attractive. Also the brand of the jersey can play a huge role for a team. Brands like Adidas, Puma and Nike sometimes offer lots of money to famous clubs for wearing their brand.

The second category of internal catalysts is the fans that bond with the team. Here we also have several examples, but one of the most important things is the rituals a certain team can have. In the part; “How to define the identity of a sports team”, FC Bruges was mentioned with its quote: “No sweat, no glory”. Other examples are the famous “You never walk alone” hymn fans are singing during the home games of Liverpool FC. These kinds of rituals create a stronger brand and make it more attractive for outsiders. Another thing is that sometimes synergies can be created between several sports. Just take a look at several soccer teams who

also own a private Premier 1 GP car. By doing this, a club tries to rouse the interest of soccer fans in auto racing. In this study, a certain synergy between the different sports is being observed such as; soccer, basketball, volleyball and handball. How to create this synergy is explained in the part of the methodological research. A final thing, is the importance of a team its involvement in community. By doing this, the brand will become a kind of social conscience.

The external catalyst factors are environmental factors that are not under the immediate control of the sports team. Richelieu (2003) distinguishes three categories of external catalysts: i) market size, ii) industry changes and iii) technological advances.

Concerning the market size, the ability of a team to leverage its brand is strongly influenced by the TV deals. In Belgium, as a soccer team, it is very important to play in first division to benefit from the lucrative proposals of TV deals. In my study one of the teams that will take part of the model is KSV Roeselare, a soccer team that plays in the second division of Belgian soccer. The difference between a first division team and a second division team is financially incredible. To give an example, in the season 2010-2011 the difference between RSC Anderlecht, the biggest glutton in the division of the TV rights, and RAEC Mons, the team who got the smallest part was, €4.353.780. This amount is enormous, knowing that the total budget of RAEC Mons is €5.500.000. In the second division there are no actual TV rights<sup>5</sup>. Some teams even individually sell their rights to a television company like Belgacom to generate extra revenues. This individual selling of TV rights is forbidden in the first division because Telenet and Belgacom have an agreement on the emission of the rights of each team in first division. We can see that the financial aspect plays a huge role in the success and value of a sports team.

Another external catalyst factor is the industry that changes continuously. It is common these days that the sports industry merges with the entertainment and communication industry. As already mentioned, the selling of TV rights is one example, but there are stronger examples of mergers. Some teams are actually owned by communication or entertainment companies like for example Manchester United which was few years ago in hands of Rupert Murdoch its BSkyB corporation; a satellite broadcasting, broadband and telephone service company. For professional sports teams these kinds of mergers can be an opportunity to get a larger audience and attract more potentially interested sponsors.

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<sup>5</sup> Figures according to [www.sporza.be](http://www.sporza.be)

The third and last external factor is the technological advances. They bring new methods of communication like for example the internet. This can open new frontiers for professional sports teams. But a website always needs to provide real information instead of focusing on merchandising and promotional material. Fans often refuse to visit websites because of the lack of real information. Most of the websites are being used for commercial purposes only. The real goal is to create an attractive and virtual community with the fans via the website of the club. A good professional example is the website of FC Barcelona, which is being analyzed in the methodological research part.

Apart from the catalyst factors we also have constraining factors that can be seen as obstacles. These factors can prevent a team from leveraging its brand. For example a decline in loyalty can appear. This happens when players or fans show signs of decreasing loyalty towards a sports club. Players can do this when they want to change clubs because they think they can play at a better team. Fans will be less loyal when the team underperforms. Also a lack of good management can be a cause of disloyalty. The vice president marketing of the Montréal Alouettes football team once said: “You cannot betray the emotion of your fans. Otherwise, you alienate them, they go somewhere else, and they may never come back.”

Finally, Richelieu (2003) identifies the moderating variables. These variables can help a team build up the brand equity as much as they can hurt it. The teams have a lack of control on these variables. Examples of these variables are: the financial state of a team and the on field performances. Both of these can change very quickly into a positive or a negative way. The team does not always have these kinds of factors under control.

### **1.2.5 Place branding**

Zenker and Braun define in their work: “Towards an Integrated Approach for Place Brand Management” (2010), a place brand as: a network of associations in the mind of the consumer based on the visual, verbal, and behavioral expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values, and the general culture of the place its stakeholders and the overall place design.

Rein and Shields (2006) analyze the significance of sports as a place branding platform for emerging, transition, negatively viewed, and newly industrialized countries in their work: “place branding sports”. For some countries sports can serve as a central platform. As the sports industry continues to grow and globalize, place brand managers and marketers must

adjust to and capitalize on what has become an ever-expanding paradigm: the sports economy.

According to Rein and Shields (2006), there are several advantages of sports as a marketing tool. It can provide places with both tangible and intangible benefits. First of all sports receive a lot of free media coverage. This generates valuable visibility of the city that can attract tourists, residents and investors at a low cost. Secondly, it stimulates an emotional heat between the participants and the audiences that can symbolize the energy and strength of an emerging nation. A third advantage is that sports can provide the local residents and companies with an environment that promises an engaging place to live. Finally sports competition fosters common bonding, which includes places for residents to share their experiences and the accompanying healthy tensions and uncertain outcomes that encourage identity building.

The past few years, there has been a huge evolution of sports and place branding. According to Rein and Shields (2006), there is no better example of the relationship between sports and place than New Zealand. Its national rugby team put the country on the map of the world by wearing the ominous black uniforms and silver fern logo. They also impressed the world by their famous Haka opening ritual before every game. The team, named the All Blacks, put a face on its country and still remains an integral part of its identity. The team is not only a winner but symbolizes the independent, adventuresome and rugged personage of the country itself.

As seen in the example of the All Blacks we can conclude that sports can form an identity for a country. Other examples cited by Rein and Shields (2006) are: Scandinavian countries with their branded skiing, the Dutch speed ice-skating and the Japanese sumo wrestling. In Belgium we can say that cycle racing or more in particular, cyclo-cross racing can be the identity of the country.

When linking place branding with umbrella branding we can say that several countries try to integrate their sports experience into the creation of other products. Norway for example integrated their winter sports expertise into producing not only sports stars but also clothing lines and tourist attractions.

## **1.3 Sport-marketing**

### **1.3.1 Sport-marketing defined**

For the development of branding in sports, you need to establish a powerful sport marketing policy. According to Shilbury, Shayne and Westerbeek (2003), marketing of sports refers to the use of marketing mix variables to communicate the benefits of sport participation and spectatorship to potential consumers. The ultimate goal of sport-marketing is to ensure the ongoing survival of the sport in rapidly changing environmental circumstances. According to Pecheux (2011), there are several characteristics of sports as an event. First of all, sports can be seen as a tool to link emotions with the passion and enthusiasm of consumers. The semi-final of the 2012 Uefa Champions League between Real Madrid and Bayern München, was so thrilling that people could actually see some fans with nerves that were in tatters. Another characteristic is that sports can be local or rather international. Take for example cyclo-cross racing which is very famous in Belgium and the Netherlands and some other European countries, but outside Europe it does not have any recognition. Sports also have a certain typology. We can identify individual versus collective sports. Natural versus mechanical sports and as already mentioned; local versus global sports. Another important characteristic that Pecheux (2011) identifies is that every sport carries a certain value for example; team spirit, courage, tenacity, power, etc. Every sport also has a specific character; soccer is often seen as a very traditional sport, volleyball is modern and entertaining, rugby on the other hand is rather violent, virile and courageous.

### **1.3.2 The sport product**

Boyd and Walker (1990)<sup>6</sup> describe a product as being anything that satisfies a want or need in terms of use, consumption or acquisition. In sport, the product is easy to recognize but the quality of the product is something over which the marketer has no control. Sports products are not only the game but a lot more than that. Mullin (1958)<sup>7</sup> identifies the playing of a game as the core product and all the related activities, such as food, beverage, merchandise, half-time entertainment, video screens, the sport facility, etc.

Organizing a World Championship soccer is not only about the games that are played but also about all the entertainment around the event.

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<sup>6</sup> Shilbury, Shayne and Westerbeek refer to Boyd and Walker (1990) in their book: Strategic Sport Marketing

<sup>7</sup> Shilbury, Shayne and Westerbeek refer to Mullin (1958) in their book: Strategic Sport Marketing

Next to the product, sports can also be seen as a service. Something that can be seen as an activity or benefit, that is intangible and does not result in ownership. A season ticket can be seen as a sport-product, it is tangible and I take it home after the game. On the other hand we have the emotional value of the game which is rather intangible; this can be seen as a sport-service rather than a product.

### **1.3.3 The sport marketing mix**

As in general marketing, sport-marketing also has a marketing mix. Nevertheless, the marketing mix of sport-marketing is slightly different than the one of general marketing. Normally we have the four P's; Product, Place, Promotion and Price. In sport-marketing Shilbury, Shayne and Westerbeek (2003) describe that we have a total of seven P's; Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Physical evidence, Process and People. The first "P", Product, ensures that product characteristics provide benefits to the consumer. The second "P", Price, ensures that the product is priced at a level that reflects the value of the product in the eyes of the consumer. The third "P", place, stands for the product to be at the right place on the right time to facilitate purchase. "P" number four, Physical evidence, is the visual or tangible clues of the service of a product. The design and the construction of the facility e.g. a soccer stadium, is an example of physical evidence. The fifth "P", Process represents the marketing and operational functions to create real time service delivery and quality. The sixth "P", People, stands for the people that are responsible for the delivering and organization of the event. The last and seventh "P", Promotion, is about the communication, personal selling and sponsorship, to satisfy the costumer.

### **1.3.4 The sport facility**

The environment around a stadium can be defined as the 'sports cape'. There are several elements that need to be present to have a satisfactory sport facility. According to Wakefield and Blodgett (1996)<sup>8</sup> these elements are: Layout accessibility, facility aesthetics, seating comfort, electronic equipment, and displays and facility cleanliness. These elements have a significant influence on how sport fans perceive the quality of the stadium; the higher the perceived quality of the sports cape, the higher the sport fans its satisfaction. If fans are

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<sup>8</sup> Shilbury, Shayne and Westerbeek refer to Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) in their book: Strategic Sport Marketing

satisfied about the sport stadium they will stay longer, come more often, and spend more money inside the stadium.

Sport teams should also bear in mind a long term perspective when building a sport facility. Times are changing and consumers make higher demands every year. Therefore it is the future of sports to create multi sports complexes with several sport facilities in one complex; the more to do on one place the better for the customer satisfaction. For example parents who drop their kids off for tennis or soccer practice can go to the gym that is situated next to the swimming-pool which is also situated on the same sport complex as the tennis or soccer courts.

### **1.3.5 Sport and internet**

The internet is an important commercial and informational factor in sport-marketing. First of all we have the informational aspect. The internet is a tool where people can find lots of interesting information concerning their favorite sport; for example: player names, schedules, results, addresses, statistics, etc. Secondly, the internet is also a commercial tool for sport clubs. They can use their website as a marketing instrument where they can display their sponsors. Some of those sponsors are prepared to pay a lot of money to be present on a website of a famous sport team. This can generate extra revenues for those companies because of the huge amount of visitors on that particular website. More of this is explained in the analysis of the FC Barcelona model.

Internet is also being used to facilitate the buying process of consumers, even in sports. Marketers try to do this with the so called AIDA principle, which stands for Attention, Interest, Desire and Action. According to Shilbury, Quick and Westerbeek (2003), the AIDA principle is defined as following. By manipulating search engines on the internet, sport organizations can be proactive in grabbing the attention of sport consumers. Generating traffic to their website via key words and links is the key to attract consumers. Once they have the attention of the consumer, the internet sites must generate in interest in staying. Therefore, websites should be clear, well designed, have an ease of navigation as well as speed. All of this will influence the consumers' interest to return. Next step is to stimulate consumers' desire to become more involved. The stimulation can be realized by sport marketers via traditional and innovative online sales promotions. The last step is to create action. By creating virtual stores, sport consumers can buy tickets online or participate in an online membership of the club.

### **1.3.6 Sport and television**

As well as the internet, television can play a huge role in the marketing policy of a sport-team. Sport and television is a business relationship that has grown throughout the world. The configuration of worldwide television networks has exploded. In that process sports have been one of the greatest benefactors. Day or night, fans can see or hear their favorite team no matter where they are in the world. United States NBA is making major inroads in Europe, China and most of the globe. For many sports, television rights provide an important source of revenue. Television networks can demand more from their broadcasting rights, they have more power because the clubs/sport-teams need those revenues for their financial health. Negotiations between television networks and professional sport teams have become an annual phenomenon. But as already mentioned, the power of the television networks is huge. They even influence the scheduling of the games or events of sport clubs. An important factor of this bargaining power of television networks is the advertising during sport programming. Advertising is the most important revenue for television networks. To give an idea about the cost and duration of a spot, let us take a look at the following example. According to the journal Sports Daily Business, the average price for a 30-second spot during the Super Bowl on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February this year was \$3,5M. Interesting anecdote is that “A-B InBev” was the biggest advertiser this year during the Super Bowl with four and a half minutes of ad time.<sup>9</sup> The conclusion is that advertisers are investing more heavily in sports content than they ever have.

### **1.3.7 Investing in sports**

Despite the expansion of the sports industry, investing in sports facilities and teams has been an unresolved issue for places around the globe. This can be an interesting subject for further research.

Lots of cities take financial risks to build massive stadiums with public money. Sometimes stadiums with a combined cost of more than 300M euros are being built in small cities. Taxpayers are being the victim of all these huge investments. This is one of the reasons why investing in sports scares people or cities off. On the other hand, sport facilities offer a lot of marketing and communication benefits. This will raise the visibility of the city. But a very crucial thing when investing in sports is to understand the different branding possibilities of sports. One of these possibilities is umbrella branding.

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<sup>9</sup> According to the website [www.sportsbusinessdaily.com](http://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com)

Just take a look at Manchester United, which has become a global brand with approximately 75 million fans worldwide (Rein and Shields, 2006). But for the clubs to be successful, Rein and Shields (2006) take into account three issues: The brand concept, the infrastructure and the distribution. First of all every place must think of its sports brand as a concept, making it attractive over the long term. The concept must also reflect the place its goal. For example: Thailand will be more likely to invest in kickboxing than in ice hockey. For countries with a small population, it will be more efficient to invest in a niche. A second issue is the infrastructure. Youth programs are one of these infrastructures that are necessary for a good and prospective future of a sports club. The most successful sport countries have very strong youth programs. Third and last element is the distribution. After developing the concept and establishing the infrastructure internally, sports place brands must be launched into the market place. Media plays a huge role in this stage of the investment process. Nowadays, new media are being used for the optimization of the branding plan. Websites, social networks, blogs and podcasts gives cities a low cost option for reaching targeted audiences.

In general, sports are an important area for innovation because of the visibility and emotional benefits that is being established between cities and their markets. Also the ability to attract tourists, investors and residents plays a role. Take for example the former trainer of FC Bruges, the German Christophe Daum. For several times, during interviews, he expressed his positive feelings for the city of Bruges. When people see those interviews they can be attracted by the city of Bruges because the trainer of Club Bruges expresses the attractiveness of the city.

## **1.4 Sport-sponsorship**

### **1.4.1 Definition**

Sponsorship is putting at disposal a specific value for an object of sponsorship with as favor in return that the one who put at disposal that value can use the object of sponsorship for promotional purposes (Kolijn & Kok, 2007). Sponsorship is a communication medium that complements a firm its marketing, promotion and advertising programs (Walliser 2003). Sponsorship of sports by firms is an example of marketing “through” sport. Big corporations use sport as a vehicle to promote their products (Shilbury, Shayne & Quick, 2003). It is very difficult for a team to ‘match’ a sponsor to a specific sport and eventually create a win-win situation. Therefore a sports team needs a clear vision on sports and commercial possibilities. Sponsorship is something that is extremely important for a sports club. The financial strength of a team depends on the number of sponsors or the financial value that these sponsors bring along. In their book: Sports marketing, Jolanda Kolijn and Robert Kok (2007) make clear analyses about effective sponsorship which will be described in general in the following subdivisions.

According to Kolijn and Kok (2007), when sponsorship is being chosen as a marketing-communication instrument, there has to be a sponsor object. When selecting a sponsor object, two choices have to be made. First one is the choice of a specific sport and the second one is the choice between the different possibilities in that sport. The purpose is to find a match between: the sponsor, the sponsor object and the sport. A sponsor can choose for soccer as a sport, but afterwards it should choose for a team, a competition, bond or other possibilities.

### **1.4.2 Analyze your potential sponsors**

The first step in sponsorship according to Kolijn and Kok (2007) is to analyze your potential sponsors. A good sponsor should know who he is and what he wants. Therefore a thorough analysis of potential sponsors is necessary. Sponsorship can be risky for both the sponsor as well as the sports club. When a sports club is underperforming it can be harmful for the sponsor itself. On the other hand, it is not very colorful for the future of a sports team when it has a sponsor who faces financial difficulties.

When analyzing your potential sponsor you have to bear in mind several aspects. First of all, create a good marketing-communication audience. It should have the same characteristics of the practitioners of the sport. Secondly, it is necessary to have elaborated marketing-

communication objectives. What does the sports team want to reach with the sponsorship and vice versa? Thirdly, the sponsorship should be linked with the mission and the overall vision of the club. And last but not least, a sports team and its sponsor have to take into account the available budget. What are the financial possibilities of both the club and its sponsor?

### **1.4.3 Analyze the sport and the object of sponsoring**

A second step in sponsorship according to Koliijn and Kok (2007) is choosing the right object of sponsoring. When choosing a sport or an object of sponsoring, it needs a certain understanding of specific characteristics of a sport and the object of sponsoring. There are different questions people need to ask when analyzing a sport sponsorship. When sponsoring you need to know what the social status is linked with the sport. There is a difference between a fan of golf and a fan of boxing.

Also the choice of the object of sponsoring is important. That is why sport managers need to know the characteristics of the object of sponsoring. The ratio risk and return is one of the most important characteristics. Objects with a high level of risk are for example: a team or an individual sponsor. The return that comes with a victory by these objects is high, but in case of a defeat the return will be very low. When a company sponsors a specific sports price than the return will be the same because there is always a winner. On the other hand, when sponsoring a sports price, the emotional impact will be lower than the victory of a team or an individual player.

Another thing that needs to be considered is the cost of sponsorship. In the world of sponsorship relatively huge amounts are being paid. For a sponsor, not only the initial costs are important, but also the activation costs. Those are the costs that are paid for the creation of a synergy between sponsoring and other instruments of marketing-communication.

#### **1.4.4 Team identification and sponsor credibility**

In sponsorship it is necessary to have a good relation between the team and its sponsor.

Therefore good team identification is needed as well as sponsor credibility.

Team identification refers to the perceived connectedness of individuals to the sports team (Ashforth & Mael 1989)<sup>10</sup>. The credibility of the sponsor is communicated as the extent to which the sponsor is perceived as trustable and believable (Goldsmith et al. 2000)<sup>11</sup>. When individuals connect to their favorite sports team, they define themselves as a member of the team and maintain their identification with the team.

Through sponsorship of a sports team, the sponsor will be perceived as aiding the team in accomplishing its goals (Gwinner 2005)<sup>12</sup>. The sponsor can obtain association with the sports team and will be recognized as an important partner. When the sports team is performing well, the fans will show their enthusiasm towards the sponsor. In that case the credibility of the sponsor will increase. Based on those arguments, we can conclude that; the higher the identification of the sports team fan, the higher the credibility of the sponsor. This is what Wang, Cheng, Parwento and Erimurti conclude in their study of the determination of a sports team its brand equity (2010).

#### **1.4.5 Sponsor credibility and brand equity**

Brand equity reflects various types of brand-related information such as product characteristics and brand images (Keller 2003)<sup>13</sup>. This brand related knowledge can reside in consumers' memories and will have effects on their responses to marketing activities and advertising programs for different brands (Roy & Cornwell 2004)<sup>14</sup>.

Wang, Cheng, Parwento and Erimurti (2010) also conclude that fans' attention towards the sponsored sports team will be transferred to the sponsor because of the sponsorship relation and their interest will be aroused towards the marketing and advertising messages of the sponsor. There will be a higher level of preference for the marketing activities and advertising programs of the sponsor. Fans will show their loyalty to the sponsor. This will lead to higher

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<sup>10</sup> Wang, Cheng, Parwento and Erimurti refer to Ashforth & Mael (1989) in their study of the determination of a sports team its brand equity (2010).

<sup>11</sup> Wang, Cheng, Parwento and Erimurti refer to Goldsmith et al. (2000) in their study of the determination of a sports team its brand equity (2010).

<sup>12</sup> Wang, Cheng, Parwento and Erimurti refer to Gwinner (2005) in their study of the determination of a sports team its brand equity (2010).

<sup>13</sup> Wang, Cheng, Parwento and Erimurti refer to Keller (2003) in their study of the determination of a sports team its brand equity (2010).

<sup>14</sup> Wang, Cheng, Parwento and Erimurti refer to Roy & Cornwell (2004) in their study of the determination of a sports team its brand equity (2010).

brand equity of the sponsor. They conclude that: higher sponsor credibility leads to higher sponsor brand equity.

**1.4.6 Communication objectives of sport sponsorship**

When talking about communication objectives we try to identify what the sponsor is trying to reach with his/her sponsorship. According to Kolijn & Kok (2009), communication objectives are being elaborated in objectives of reach, process and effect. Sponsorship objectives are always linked with communication objectives. The more sponsorship is integrated with another communication instrument, the more difficult it will be to realize specific sponsorship objectives. An example of this integration can be the influence of the logo of Ford during a Champions League game or the logo of Ford during the ads broadcasted at halftime of that Champions League game.

Objectives of sponsoring need to be clearly defined. In the following example of T-Mobile, a formal sponsor of a cycling team, the objectives of sponsoring are formulated in a good way:

<b>Example:</b>	Increase awareness of T-Mobile Team (cycling) amongst 18-35 year old men in Germany from 5% currently to 15% by December 2008
<b>Specific:</b>	Unaided awareness of the T-mobile Cycling Team amongst 18-35 year old men in Germany
<b>Measurable:</b>	Tracked changes in quarterly brand tracker responses using the data of the month as the benchmark
<b>Achievable:</b>	Rising from 5% currently to 15%
<b>Relevant:</b>	‘Primes the Pump’ for future sales
<b>Time bound:</b>	Achieved by December 2008



Source: ESA-conference Brussels, 2008

## **1.5 City-marketing**

City marketing is a hot item nowadays. Because of the globalization, products do not come from a factory anymore, but out of a country. Some researchers say that city-marketing came into being by the influence of marketing for non-profit organizations. Philip Kotler was one of the researchers that wanted to broaden the marketing instrument outside the private sector. Several metropolises got their first expression of city marketing by the use of the “I love” logo or city logo.

### **1.5.1 City-branding**

According to Van Gelder (2008) city branding is intentionally creating, developing and demonstrating of the value of a city by using on-brand activities, which consists of investments, physical and economic planning, attracting programs, events and communication. Briefly: The determination and promotion of a city-identity. A good example of city-branding in Belgium is the city of Antwerp<sup>15</sup>. It has created an own logo which is perceptible on many different sport jerseys, posters, banners, etc. The “A” of Antwerp has become so popular that everybody associates the logo with the city. This is called real city-branding.

### **1.5.2 City-marketing and sports**

Sports or sport events can be a signboard for a city. Just think about the Olympic Games or a certain World Championship. Thousands of visitors come and see the spectacle with their own eyes. They also discover the organizing city and the cultural richness of that city. A lot of people link cities with sports. For example the city of Roubaix is known for its famous bicycle race, “Paris-Roubaix”. Another example is Barcelona which is famous because of FC Barcelona, the soccer team. The famous stadium of FC Barcelona, Camp Nou, is so popular that it is a real tourist draw for many people. Some people just make a trip to Barcelona only for seeing the famous stadium.

Also Olympic Stadiums are frequently visited. Olympic Stadiums are mostly situated in a so called Olympic Village. After organizing the Olympic Games of Shanghai, China still takes advantage of the interest of lots of tourists who want to see the enormous creations.

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<sup>15</sup> Annex 13

Every year a specific European city is nominated for European capital of sports. This year the nomination went to Istanbul, the capital of Turkey. Last year Valencia, a Spanish city, was nominated and next year, 2013, the nomination goes to Antwerp. Everything happens under the watchful eye of Aces, the federation for the association of the European Capital and Cities of Sports.

## 2 Methodological research

### 2.1 Introduction

First of all, I would like to emphasize that this is a pure feasibility study or case study. I have had the opportunity to work together with the city of Roeselare, its alderman of sports and the head of the sports service<sup>16</sup>. I went thoroughly into the subject of umbrella branding and tried to apply it on sports, more specifically on the sports policy of the city of Roeselare. The main objective of this study is to test if an umbrella branding model in sports is applicable on the city of Roeselare and more specifically on four main sports; soccer, handball, volleyball and basketball. The question is if there is a possibility for Roeselare to put those sports underneath one overarching umbrella, like for example the model of FC Barcelona which will be described in the part: “An analysis of three umbrella branding models in sports”.

Concerning the methodological research, I have made an appeal on six individuals that all had a different perspective on the subject. With all of those people I did a personal two hours interview. As already mentioned, every individual added a specific value to my research. The first person, I have interviewed was someone that worked at Real Madrid<sup>17</sup> for five years, that person told me more about the structure concerning that club and the one of FC Barcelona. The second person was a functionary of sports at a local village in the region of Roeselare. He is also an important member in the board of the handball club of Roeselare. The third person I have interviewed was the leader of an umbrella branding model of sports in Belgium, more specifically in the city of Antwerp. The fourth source was the cabinet of the Belgian minister of sports, Minister Muylers. The fifth interviewee was the manager of an important newspaper in Flanders and a member of one of the most famous media companies in Belgium. Finally the sixth and last person was a professor in sport marketing who brainstormed together with me, about my subject. All the information I have extracted from the six individual interviews is being used to analyze and to take in hand the current sports model of Roeselare. In the beginning of my thesis I informed all the sport-clubs of Roeselare about my upcoming study by giving a general presentation about my subject.<sup>18</sup> Every club was invited by the city of Roeselare itself.

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<sup>16</sup> The alderman of sports in Roeselare is Mr. José Debels. The head of the sport service of Roeselare is Mr. Andrès Van de Weghe.

<sup>17</sup> Real Madrid is football and basketball club in the first division of the Spanish football/basketball league.

<sup>18</sup> The presentation was given at February 21th, in a conference room that was booked by the sport service of Roeselare.

In this study I also tried to implement the business aspect by analyzing the interest in an overarching sports model of several companies within Roeselare. Therefore I made a survey about sponsorship in general and an umbrella branding model for Roeselare. I would like to stress that few companies actually filled out the survey so the results cannot be generalized, but we have an overview about the general opinion of several companies.

## **2.2 Overview**

Beforehand I would like to give a clear overview of my study; therefore I would like to go through the different items that will be taken in hand.

First of all I would like to present some detailed information about the six individuals I have interviewed and what the interview was about. Secondly, I will analyze three umbrella branding models in sports, namely: The model of FC Barcelona, the model of Antwerp and the model of Groningen. The analyses of those models are based on the interviews of Mr. Christoffer Komen, Mr. Tom Ghysels and some personal research.

## **2.3 Interviews**

In this part a profile of the different persons I have interviewed is being described. Also the reason why I have chosen these persons is explained. All of these interviews were used in the further progress of this study.

### **2.3.1 Interview with Christoffer Komen<sup>19</sup>**

Christoffer Komen recently works at FC Bruges, a Belgian professional soccer club. After some research I discovered that Mr. Komen worked at Real Madrid, a Spanish professional soccer club, for five years in international sponsorship. He is knows the ins and outs of Real Madrid and is also familiar with the structure of rival club, FC Barcelona. Those are the reasons why I found it interesting to do an interview with Mr. Komen. His reflections and comments are incorporated in: “The model of FC Barcelona”.

### **2.3.2 Interview with Stefaan Degryse<sup>20</sup>**

Stefaan Degryse is a sports functionary at Moorslede, a village in the neighborhood of Roeselare. He is also a board member of the handball club of Roeselare. Mr. Degryse brainstormed few years ago about a similar model like FC Barcelona applied on the city of Roeselare. That is the reason why I chose him as a second individual for my interviews. His conclusions are noted in the third part of this study: “Analyses and recommendations concerning an umbrella branding model in sports.”

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<sup>19</sup> Annex 1

<sup>20</sup> Annex 2

### **2.3.3 Interview with Tom Ghysels<sup>21</sup>**

Tom Ghysels is the manager of the so called “Top-Class Sports Foundation”<sup>22</sup> of Antwerp. After some years of expertise he decided to hold on the helm of the execution of an umbrella branding model for the city of Antwerp. The evaluation and evolution of this model is being explained in: “The model of Antwerp.”

### **2.3.4 Interview with the cabinet of Minister Muyters<sup>23</sup>**

I have had the opportunity to explain my subject and study to two members of the cabinet of the Belgian Minister of Sports, Mr. Philippe Muyters. I have had an interview with a counselor of sports, Mme. Nicole Bossaerts and her assistant, Brecht Devos. They provided me with some interesting information and statistics of sports in Belgium such as the policy document of sports in Belgium for 2009-2014, the book of figures for the local sports policy in Belgium and VRIND 2011, the book of Flemish Regional Indicators. They also gave me some detailed information about cooperative entrepreneurship which is being described in the third part of my study: “Analyses and recommendations concerning an umbrella branding model in sports”.

### **2.3.5 Interview with Eddy Brouckaert<sup>24</sup>**

An aspect that is ubiquitous in the sports world is the impact of the media. Therefore I have interviewed the manager of a regional newspaper called “De Krant van West-Vlaanderen”. This newspaper belongs to one of the biggest media companies in Belgium, namely; Roularta Media Group<sup>25</sup>. The commentaries of Mister Brouckaert are written out in the third part of this study: “Analyses and recommendations concerning an umbrella branding model in sports.”

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<sup>21</sup> Annex 3

<sup>22</sup> The Top-Class Sports Foundation is a foundation in Antwerp that supports top-class sport clubs.

<sup>23</sup> Annex 4

<sup>24</sup> Annex 5

<sup>25</sup> [www.roularta.be](http://www.roularta.be)

### **2.3.6 Interview with Jos Verschueren<sup>26</sup>**

A final and very interesting interview was the one with Professor Jos Verschueren. I got in contact with Mr. Verschueren via Professor Wim Lagae, writer of several sport marketing books and professor at the Lessius-KUL<sup>27</sup>. Mr. Jos Verschueren is a professor in sports marketing and is program director of sport management at the VUB<sup>28</sup>. He brainstormed with me about several aspects of my study and advised me to take a closer look at the city of Groningen and its green multi-sport model. The comment and suggestions of professor Verschueren are processed in: “The model of Groningen” and in: “Analyses and recommendations concerning an umbrella branding model in sports”.

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<sup>26</sup> Annex 6

<sup>27</sup> Katholieke Universiteit Leuven – Catholic University of Louvain

<sup>28</sup> Vrije Universiteit Brussel – Free University of Brussels.

## 2.4 An analysis of three umbrella branding models in sports

### 2.4.1 Overview

To corroborate my study in the most realistic and achievable way, I have tried to find another umbrella branding model in Europe, different from FC Barcelona. There are several models that try to operate in a similar way like FC Barcelona, VfB<sup>29</sup> Stuttgart; a German sports association and Rotterdam; a Dutch sport city. These were the two main cities I have contacted for further information, but none of these clubs actually adopts a similar umbrella branding model like FC Barcelona<sup>30</sup> does. The club or city that bears the most resemblance to FC Barcelona is Galatasaray; a Turkish sports association. It combines football, basketball, volleyball and even super league formula (racing) underneath one specific brand name; Galatasaray Sports Club. The leitmotiv in the story of Galatasaray is that it all started with the Galatasaray-School. The school did not only produce businessmen, prime-ministers or scientist, but also sportsmen, that competed in several sports. As my information about Galatasaray is restricted to its website, I did not take a closer look at it concerning my study. Nevertheless, three other models were being observed, namely; FC Barcelona, Antwerp and Groningen.

For each model I analyzed its history and its current situation. In addition, I have tried to identify the unique considerations of each model. I would like to emphasize that each model has specific unique considerations that differ from one another. Finally I have mentioned the specific barriers for each model. General barriers for an umbrella branding model are implemented in the part “Analyses and recommendations concerning an umbrella branding model in sports”.

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<sup>29</sup> Verein für Bewegungsspiele

<sup>30</sup> Annex 7

## 2.4.2 The model of FC Barcelona

### 2.4.2.1 History and origin of the model

When analyzing the history of FC Barcelona via its website<sup>31</sup>, I conclude that the model of FC Barcelona is one of the most known umbrella branding models in sports. FC Barcelona was founded in 1899 by a group of young foreigners living in Barcelona. It was the result of an increasing popularity of football and other British sports, across Europe. The club has an intercultural identity and a multi sports focus. The actual founder was Hans Gamper<sup>32</sup>, he wanted to create an organization that was open to everyone. Gamper also wanted to make a commitment to the Catalan identity. His original values; Catalan identity, democracy, multi sports and universality, still continue today to give Barça<sup>33</sup> meaning.

In the 1960s, lots of football clubs benefited from the broadcasting of football on television. Because televisions were so expensive at that time, crowds of people in Catalonia were watching the first Barça matches standing outside shops, that sold televisions, or in bars or restaurants throughout Catalonia. After some years of success on television, FC Barcelona came with their own motto: “Més que un club”<sup>34</sup>. Nowadays, “More than a club” is a famous saying all over the world. It was Barça president Narcis de Carreras that first pronounced those famous words during his acceptance speech on 17 January 1968.

In addition to football, FC Barcelona also has a roller hockey team, a handball team, a basketball team, a futsal<sup>35</sup> team and several amateur sports teams. Next to the success and victories of FC Barcelona its football team, in 1973 the success of the umbrella branding model expressed itself by the roller hockey team that won the Champions League. In 1991 the success of the model continued with the victory of the handball team in the Champions League. Few years later in 2003 the basketball team of Barcelona won the European Champion’s Cup. Last but not least, the futsal team won the European title in 2010. In the season 2010-2011 the club settled a record by winning 16 professional titles. This was the first time FC Barcelona won so many trophies in a single season.

I mentioned this brief summary of the success of FC Barcelona to show that it has also been a long-term process until the club reached its presupposed objectives. It took the club more than

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<sup>31</sup> [www.fcbarcelona.com](http://www.fcbarcelona.com)

<sup>32</sup> Hans Gamper was a Swiss Football pioneer that founded clubs like FC Barcelona, FC Basel and FC Zürich.

<sup>33</sup> Abbreviation for FC Barcelona

<sup>34</sup> In English: ”More than a club”

<sup>35</sup> Futsal is the same as soccer, but it is being played indoor. It is a combination of the words Football “Fut” and in French: “salle”: a hall or indoor playground.

a century to reach the success of 2010 after its foundation in 1899. The beauty of it all is not just the success of the football team with astonishing players like Cruyff, Maradona and Messi, but also all the other sport teams collected the honors for the club. It was a collective success and once again it exposes the effect of synergy, namely that  $1 + 1 = 3$ . FC Barcelona clearly opted for a long term vision that creates success in the end.

#### **2.4.2.2 Unique considerations about the model**

##### **I. The model of governance at FC Barcelona**

According to an analysis of the model of governance at FC Barcelona by Hamil, Walters and Watson (2010), a club needs to be able to attract major private investments to allow it to compete effectively in the international football player labor market; a club therefore needs to be constituted as a limited company by shares to allow new equity investment. The ironic aspect about this statement is that the first and third largest clubs in Europe in the season 2006/2007, namely Real Madrid and FC Barcelona were in fact not-for-profit sporting clubs owned by their members and not by private limited companies. But then how can they compete with those other giant clubs that are privately owned?

FC Barcelona works with the so called ‘socios’, those are people, supporters of the club that pay an annual fee and give them the right to elect members of the board. The fee or cost of membership for the ‘socios’ in 2008 was € 175. Their involvement counts on many levels, for example in 2003 they were able to vote to allow shirt sponsorship for the first time in the history of the club. In this case FC Barcelona is a member-owned organization controlled by its members – socios – supporters - and not a private company.

The club motto: “Més que un club” – meaning – “more than a club” – reflects the fact that the role of FC Barcelona is not restricted to football but to several other sports and aspects of Catalan society<sup>36</sup>. FC Barcelona was also one of the first clubs that actually created a brand name around their organization. Joan Laporte who was elected as president of the club in 2003 appointed successful professional managers to key executive positions in the club from outside the football industry in order to draw on their business and entrepreneurial experience. He wanted to obtain a situation in which a young boy in Singapore or Tokyo wears a Barça shirt instead of a Manchester United<sup>37</sup> shirt. Therefore an international brand name known all

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<sup>36</sup> The society of Catalonia, which is an autonomous region of Spain in the north-east of the country. Its capital is Barcelona.

<sup>37</sup> A famous football club in the English premier league

over the world, is required. The club also invested in an extraordinary youth academy, which is the foundation for the future success of a sports club.

## **II. The corporate identity of FC Barcelona**

The identity of FC Barcelona represents a club that competes in a sporting sense on the field of play, but that also beats, every day, to the rhythm of its people its concerns. Many people outside of Spain see FC Barcelona as a defender of democratic rights and freedom.

The club decided to contribute 0,7 per cent of its ordinary income to the FC Barcelona Foundation. This foundation sets up international cooperation programs for development, supports the UN Millenium Development Goals and has made a commitment to Unicef. This is what makes Barça unique. The success and the continuation of FC Barcelona were owed thanks to Hans Gamper. When the club had some problems due to political concerns in 1908 he saved the club by the following words: “If there is nobody who wants to try, I shall take full responsibility and look after it in the future.” This is a good example of a leader that is necessary for an umbrella branding project according to Tom Ghysels<sup>38</sup>, this will be further described in the analysis of the model of Antwerp.

The corporate identity of FC Barcelona consists of several characteristics. First of all in 1899 FC Barcelona had its first coat of arms<sup>39</sup> which was the same as the one of the city of Barcelona. The club and the city wanted to be recognized as one and the same. In 1910 the board decided that the club needed its own coat of arms<sup>40</sup> but the one of the city is still integrated. Nowadays the coat of arms still contains the colors of FC Barcelona as well as the shield of Catalonia and the one of Barcelona<sup>41</sup>. On the bottom center of the coat of arms a ball can be noticed. Remarkable about the ball is that it does not represent either a football, basketball, handball or hockey ball. As the coat of arms is being retraceable on every jersey of the club, the ball represents the multi sports aspect of the club.

In addition to the coat of arms, also the colors of the club are omnipresent. The shirt of FC Barcelona has always been blue and claret<sup>42</sup>. One of the many theories explaining the origin

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<sup>38</sup> Tom Ghysels is the manager of the Top-Class-Sports foundation of Antwerp who was also interviewed for this study.

<sup>39</sup> Annex 8.a

<sup>40</sup> Annex 8.b

<sup>41</sup> Annex 8.b

<sup>42</sup> Annex 9.a

of the kit colors – blue and claret – is that Hans Gamper, the founder of FC Barcelona, used the same colors as the Basel team<sup>43</sup>, where he had played before coming to Barcelona. Another characteristic of the identity of Barcelona is the stadium. Camp Nou has been built in three years' time and has an initial capacity of 93,053 spectators. Nowadays it is the stadium with the largest capacity in Europe, accommodating 98,772<sup>44</sup> spectators. Next to the football stadium, the basketball, hockey, futsal and handball accommodations are also situated on the same site. This creates certain cohesion between the different teams and reinforces the power of a so called sports front. If people have ever visited the complex of FC Barcelona they would imagine being in an athletic village during the Olympic Games. Everything is around and all in the same colors of the club. There is a kind of enjoyable and entertaining but also powerful atmosphere. Next to a place for sports, Camp Nou has also been used for several international events such as concerts or acts of solidarity for Amnesty International or the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1982. The club also lends out its stadium for private and corporate meetings of companies. Even weddings are being organized at the Camp Nou stadium of FC Barcelona. Imagine yourself being a huge fan of FC Barcelona and getting married in the stadium of the club of your heart. With their slogan: “Never ending emotions, never-ending possibilities” the people of FC Barcelona want to promote their multi-functional stadium. This is also one of the major advantages of an umbrella branding club.

### **III. The website of FC Barcelona as a promotional tool**

One of the most important marketing tools of FC Barcelona is its famous and extraordinary website<sup>45</sup>. It shows the different sections of the umbrella branding model with for every team a specific webpage and navigation system.

As we can see on the website of FC Barcelona, different banners appear with advertisements of sponsors' products or services. To give an example of the monthly amount of visitors the website: [www.fcbarcelona.com](http://www.fcbarcelona.com) has; I used a program called Google Adplanner. This program analyzes<sup>46</sup> the profile of the visitors a website has a month. A month, the website of FC Barcelona has approximately 1, 2 million unique visitors. Those visitors spent on average six minutes and thirty seconds on the website. Most of them are men between 25 and 34 years old

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<sup>43</sup> Annex 9.b

<sup>44</sup> Because of the expansion of the stadium in 1994, the number of potential spectators increased from 93.053 till 98.772.

<sup>45</sup> Annex 10

<sup>46</sup> Annex 11.a

with a college degree. Visitors of the website are also interested in Barcelona itself, Catalonia, Madrid, Spain and even Manchester.

#### **IV. FC Barcelona vs. Real Madrid**

For some people it may come as a surprise, but Real Madrid has a total different structure as the one of FC Barcelona. According to Christoffer Komen, Real Madrid has a football team and a basketball team both underneath the same umbrella. Yet, both teams are operating independently. The two teams have the same name and logo. Real Madrid basketball has a logo with Real Madrid FC, by which the FC refers to football club. As well as the same name and logo, the two teams also represent the same value. As already mentioned in the literary study, every team has its own value. For FC Bruges the value was “No sweat, no glory”. When playing for Real Madrid players represent a certain prestige, always in need of winning and trying to win everything that is possible. That is also why Real Madrid is often named, the Royal club, a real brand name. Their jersey is also white, which represents prestige and richness. These values and characteristics are present both in the football- as in the basketball team of Real Madrid. Brand values are very important for Real Madrid, such as the will to win, uniqueness, prestige and rivalry with FC Barcelona. The club also has one overarching chairman and a general manager that is responsible for both departments. That manager appoints a sports manager for the football team and one for the basketball team. Sometimes both teams play on the same day because of television regulations. Now and then the football team makes publicity for the basketball team but not the other way around because that is not necessary for the football team. Sometimes the basketball team qualifies for an important final or semi-final and therefore the publicity in the stadium of the football team is necessary to attract supporters for the basketball team. Mr. Komen says that the values of FC Barcelona are totally different of those of Real Madrid. FC Barcelona should win everything for the next 100 years to snatch the prestige of Real Madrid. Barcelona is also the capital of Cataluña and Madrid the capital of Spain itself. Another difference is that FC Barcelona is going for its own youth and Real Madrid just tries to gather away the best players all over the world. If Real Madrid should make the decision to add a new sport underneath its umbrella, it should be a sport that shares the same values as their basketball- or football team. They once tried to start up a cycling team, but that is not in line with those two previous sports mentioned<sup>47</sup>. Starting up a cycling team would mean for Real Madrid to have the best team in the world

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<sup>47</sup> Football and basketball are the two sports in the model of Real Madrid

and also the best possible cyclists. Muddling would not be in line with the values of Real Madrid.

Despite the success of Real Madrid its basketball- and football team, the first one is an actual cost center. The basketball just stays alive because of a rich tradition. Real Madrid is morally forced to its supporters to keep the basketball team alive.

The function of Mr. Komen at Real Madrid was the one of international sponsorship, but only for the football team. Sometimes big companies were interested in sponsoring both teams, but that did not happen very often. It would be unwise to have a company like Nike sponsoring the basketball team and a company like Adidas sponsoring the football team. Mr. Komen also mentioned that he did not feel a real cohesion between the two clubs. The basketball team only survived because of the success of the football team and not the other way around. Also the rivalry with FC Barcelona plays a huge role in keeping the basketball team alive. FC Barcelona has a world class basketball team so Real Madrid also has to have an equivalent basketball team.

#### **2.4.2.3 Barriers of the model**

There is one big barrier concerning this specific model which is the financial aspect. This model was created and put in place in the long run with ups and downs. If we would take a look at the financial situation of FC Barcelona we would notice that the club is loss-making. All of this is being covered by the successes of the teams on a sports and marketing level. The financial rules in the football-world are quite difficult. That is one of the reasons why top-clubs like FC Barcelona or Chelsea can continue having debt. Other barriers for this model are explained in the third part of my study and more particularly in the part: “Main barriers of an umbrella branding model in sports according to the interviewees.”

### **2.4.3 The model of Antwerp**

#### **2.4.3.1 History and origin of the model**

##### **I. The model before 2004**

Antwerp is the second largest city of Belgium with 508.797 residents on the first of March 2012. According to figures of the city of Antwerp, 43% of the people practices sports on a daily or weekly bases.<sup>48</sup>

To be able to draw an overall picture of the city of Antwerp and its sports policy, I contacted Mr. Tom Ghysels; manager of the so called “Top-Class Sports Foundation” of Antwerp. The city actually has its own resources to run its sport policy, but it does not want to act as a city-state. Federations such as Bloso<sup>49</sup> and the BOIC<sup>50</sup> are still important for Antwerp. The city is still a part of an entity, a unit, but it has its own pride. Therefore Antwerp wants to create a specific framework of sports. That is also one of the reasons why Mr. Ghysels started with an umbrella branding concept in the city of Antwerp.

##### **II. What happened between 2004 and 2011**

Since 2004 Antwerp has a top-class sport foundation. This expresses itself in municipal resources by which the foundation gets 1, 5 million euro at disposal. This is actually a lot of money, but it is necessary for a city like Antwerp to promote its top-class sport. Like in every city, also in Antwerp there is a kind of pyramidal structure in sports. The biggest clubs get all the best players of the smaller clubs and so on. In Antwerp they try to create a structure where top-class clubs are being supported by clubs from a lower but still national division and those clubs are backed by smaller provincial clubs. In this case, players have a better possibility to grow. For several years, Antwerp is trying to start-up such a structure, but each time it fails because of ego-trippers. Those are people that are only interested in the success of their own club or company. They support the project at the start up, but when it comes to financial success, those ego-trippers are only thinking about the future of their own club and not about the overarching one.

In the top-class sport foundation, two soccer clubs are supported, one basketball club, a volleyball club, handball, indoor football, swimming, athletics and some others. An average of: 60.000 till 200.000 euro, per project. Some of those clubs get a lot more, like for example

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<sup>48</sup> According to: [www.antwerpen.buurtmonitor.be](http://www.antwerpen.buurtmonitor.be), an online monitor that shows different figures about the residents of Antwerp.

<sup>49</sup> Bevordering van de Lichamelijke Ontwikkeling, de Sport en de Openluchtrecreatie/Advancement of the Physical development, Sports and Open air Leisure.

<sup>50</sup> Belgisch Olympisch en Interfederaal Comité/Belgian Olympic and Interfederal Committee

basketball gets 320.000 a year and the two soccer clubs get 350.000 euro a year; 200.000 euro for Beerschot AC and 150.000 for Royal Antwerp FC.

In that top-class foundation, all the clubs are screened and the founders of the foundation know the clubs individually as well as their needs. In 2006 there was a proposal to start up a general and common secretary for all the clubs in the top-class sport foundation. This project was named; Brabantkoepel Antwerpen. By this cooperation, costs could easily be cut. This was a first form of a real collaboration. In this case, the city of Antwerp did not intervene because they took the view that they already contributed enough by supporting the top-class sport foundation of Antwerp. By the lack of support of the city of Antwerp, the proposal was swiftly waved aside. Yet, the clubs were convinced that cooperation was the key to commercial success.

In 2008 there was another collaboration. This time between: football, basketball and volleyball, namely; Germinal Beerschot Antwerpen, the Antwerp Giants and Precura Antwerpen. The clubs thought that with cooperation they would create a kind of backbone and more personality. The cooperation was named: Topsport Antwerpen.

The purpose was to attract companies from the harbor and other company sites. They even had a specific distributive code for its revenues. 60% of the revenues would go towards football, 30% towards basketball and 10% towards volleyball. The only problem with this project was that the chairmen of those clubs had to run their own club, their company and the project at the same time. This took a lot of time and effort and was not possible to maintain. The project could not stay alive because of the lack of effort and organization. Therefore the clubs shared the same opinion that for such a project they need a leader, an individual project leader. Another disappointment was that the clubs thought the money would flood in, but nothing was further from the truth. So the project failed and the clubs blamed the lack of interest by the city of Antwerp. The clubs thought that the mayor as well as some alderman would join them to convince the companies and excite them into the project. Not appointing an overarching management for this project was a huge mistake. This demonstrates again that the project was only aimed at short-term. There was no leader, plan or even purpose. Nevertheless, the plan for a similar project kept on wandering around in the lobbies of several clubs.

### III. The actual umbrella branding model since 2011

In 2011, as already mentioned, the story or project kept on wandering around. The decision came to restart a similar collaborating project, yet without any football club. Beerschot AC has reached rock bottom these days, financially and organizationally. With the appointment of a new chairman, the club needs some time to fall on its feet again. Still, the door is always open for the club to join the umbrella branding model, when it feels ready to do so.

The actual overarching model<sup>51</sup> contains five different clubs, namely: The Antwerp Giants (basketball), Topvolley Precura Scheldennatie Antwerpen (volleyball), Futsal topsport Antwerpen (indoor football), Sasja (man's handball) and DHW Antwerpen<sup>52</sup> (female handball). As we can see, all of these sports are indoor sports. This was not really the purpose, but the indoor aspect generates something common. Eventually the difference between these clubs is huge. The Antwerp Giants have a far larger budget than the one of Sasja handball for example.

So these five clubs joined forces and want to step forward as one umbrella branding club. Compared with the last projects, there is a specific program, demarcation and coordination. Regarding the revenues, the idea was and still is to attract new companies that are settled in Antwerp. Companies that do not sponsor any projects yet, but that want to be heard. Those companies do not need to be enormous, but they need to have the financial strength to support and be part of the umbrella branding project. All of the companies that were eligible for the project were invited on a so called "roadshow" at each of the five different clubs. The official start of the roadshow was given on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2011 by the Antwerp Giants. One month later Topvolley Precura Scheldennatie Antwerpen was next. Every club showed itself, its infrastructure by telling who they were and how its VIP room looks like. The companies needed to be attracted by the spaces and infrastructures of the clubs. The main objective was to create a B2B aspect in which not only sponsorship counts, but also networking. This project, called Topsport Antwerpen, is being coordinated and well-delineated by Mr. Ghysels himself. There is a clear content right now with this project and that is positive. For the start of the roadshow, thirty companies were invited, only fifteen of them reacted in a positive way and ten of them subscribed. After some roadshows the number of interested companies was thinning out. The purpose was to maintain those companies that are actually interested and also show their interest in the project. Mr. Ghysels says that the idea is to launch the roadshow again next year, to attract and convince more companies.

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<sup>51</sup> Annex 12

<sup>52</sup> DHW stands for: Dames Hoboken Wilrijk Antwerpen.

Next step for the project is the creation of one specific logo and corporate identity. There is also a possibility for the clubs to relate their company name with the project. An example could be: “Toyota Topsport Antwerpen”.<sup>53</sup>

Something that has to be borne in mind is the fact that some huge companies such as chemistry giants do not benefit from visibility. Those companies do not seek their customers in Antwerp so there is no B2C. They just do it for the city and possibly also for the visibility on television if one of the clubs plays on a European level. Indirectly, there is more political support than formerly. There is one cabinet assistant who is an ex-top-class sportsman that supports the project. Mr. Ghysels supervises the clubs that they do not try to take ones chance with one specific sponsor individually. He tries to play the role of empire and inspector, to assure that the game is fairly played. Once again the city wants to emphasize that this is a long-term story.

#### **2.4.3.2 Unique considerations about the model**

##### **I. The financial aspect by using this model**

Regarding the cost, every club has its own operation costs. For one club those costs are a lot higher than for another. For example; the football clubs of Antwerp have to invest in fulltime personnel, they also have a lot of costs concerning the fulfillment of the license dossier, in and out-going transfers, etc. Other clubs are not big enough yet to exploit fulltime employment. With an umbrella branding model, sport clubs can do some serious cost-cutting, because a lot of things are being centralized. Something that also appears in Antwerp is that every club has its own bus company. So five clubs with each a different bus company, means five different bus companies. One of those companies charges, for example, a total cost of 300 euro per ride, another company charges for example 200 euro per ride. This is total madness, because by using an umbrella branding model sport clubs could pick out one of those bus companies for all five clubs. By approaching those companies as one big front of five clubs the price will also drop, because the companies will compete among themselves to fetch in five clubs at once instead of one individual club. If Mr. Ghysels faces the clubs with this banality, they tell him that some of those companies are also sponsors of the club, so some things have to be done in return. This changes the content of the story.

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<sup>53</sup> A big company like Toyota could link its name with the project of the city.

Concerning the financial aspect of the model we can conclude that the clubs need to work in a more professional way. It is not about selling waffles anymore, but it is about real professional business to business.

## **II. David vs. Goliath**

As already mentioned, none of these five clubs have the same capacity or financial support. When Beerschot AC would enter the project they would play the role of Goliath, because they have a lot of attention from television in Belgium. The smaller ones like the volleyball and handball would play the role of David. Finally the Antwerp Giants (Basketball) would play a middle role. That is why the Giants would like Beerschot AC to join forces because of the power and a better signboard. The Antwerp Giants have a lot of potential; it is a real brand name. This is being confirmed by the games they play at the Sport-Palace in Antwerp, where they played for 14.000 people in March 2012. Nevertheless, soccer is still the most important sport in Belgium, as well on sports- as on commercial level. With Beerschot AC the model would have a bigger impact and backbone which would make it easier to attract potential sponsors. It is unique that both big and small clubs can cooperate to become one attractive overarching club without arguing about the financial aspects.

## **III. A product that can be sold**

The umbrella branding project can be sold by telling the potential sponsors that the city of Antwerp offers cohesion in sports, one club with five different sport teams. Companies will not be visited by several clubs asking for sponsorship anymore.

Another thing that is being used to attract the companies is a real B2B framework. Some of the companies sponsor clubs because they know them very well; others do it because they like the sport. Some of the companies sponsor because they want to leave their visiting card.

By creating a network platform, companies will be able to look for potential customers or suppliers within the overarching club. If someone is invited for a game of the Antwerp Giants, maybe some sponsors of the volleyball will be there as well. This creates opportunities for those sponsors to get to know each other and to create an effective network within the club.

Another thing is that employees of those companies can be served hand and feet. A lot of employees are interested in the team a company sponsors. For them free tickets or business seats can be seen as a gift or a reward for their hard work within the company.

#### **IV. The media as the trump card of the model**

Radio Nostalgie<sup>54</sup> is a partner of the Antwerp Giants and Mr. Ghysels wanted to attract and involve the radio station into his project, so that other teams could also benefit from the radio-publicity. Unfortunately, Radio Nostalgie only wants to be associated with the Antwerp Giants. According to Mr. Ghysels, this is again a kind of protectionist attitude by some individuals that are hard to convince.

On the television level there are the Antwerp Giants that have their own television channel; Giant TV, as well as the indoor soccer club has a television channel. Eventually there are some plans for the other clubs to become active on television with their own channel.

Generally for this project a person should also be hired as commercial manager; making folders, closing company contracts, commercial actions, and holding up to the strategic plan. Those are all things that clubs do not want to take for their own expense anymore.

#### **V. Antwerp can become a real city of sports**

The role of the city of Antwerp towards this model is to create a top-class sport structure in the end by giving money to the clubs. When this structure is up-to-date, there will be a stable organization with a good medical framework, etcetera. A good medical framework results in less injuries and a bigger and healthier team. This is a direct advantage for the clubs by opting for an umbrella branding model. There is also the will from the city for the clubs to come together and negotiate. Nowadays, clubs are acting on their own, looking for a project, looking for sponsors... The city supports everything but it keeps a low profile.

The city of Antwerp supports several foundations concerning sports, such as: the top-class sport foundation, the diversity foundation and the foundation for the subsidies for sport clubs. The city has 799 recognized sport clubs of which 265 of them are being subsidized. As we can see the city plays a huge role in sports. It will be highly unlikely that the city will give extra financial support to the umbrella branding model because of the foundations that it already backs.

Another aspect of visibility supported by the city is the clubs that are recognized to wear the “A” logo of Antwerp<sup>55</sup>.

Mr. Ghysels takes the view that the city of Antwerp plays a more supervisory and guiding role. Nevertheless, he thinks that the city can play a huger role as a whole in the sports world. A good example is Rotterdam. That city does not only give money but it also offers its

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<sup>54</sup> A famous Belgian radio station which is situated in Antwerp

<sup>55</sup> Annex 13

utilities to offer a platform and play an arbitrary role. We can conclude that also for the city of Antwerp, there has to be a strategic plan in the long-run.

### **2.4.3.3 Barriers of the model**

According to Mr. Ghysels, the project has a possibility to succeed, but therefore several questions need to be solved.

There is the need for a capable and fulltime equivalent that leads the project. Somebody who will also be rewarded for the work he is going to fulfill. Some people are of the opinion that the leader should be a businessman. Others say that it should be an ex-sport man or a political leader. Mr. Ghysels says it should be a person that has some affinity with the city, because after all it is still an urban project.

With regard to the companies, it is not necessary to get huge amounts of money at once, but the purpose is to keep those companies involved in the project. In the end we have to be honest, the ultimate goal for the clubs is to financially improve and get healthier. It is a first initiative where the clubs can show that they are also able to undertake real business.

The interview with Mr. Ghysels was made in February; to be aware of the continuation and process of the project I have contacted him again<sup>56</sup>. He replied that the clubs in general showed of what they were capable of towards the potential sponsors/companies. They tried to take of their blinder and looked at things in a more perspective and broader way. The roadshows also visualized how popular or attractive the clubs were in the eyes of those potential sponsors.

On the other hand, they started the project with thirty prospective companies and noticed that it is difficult to achieve and convince those potential sponsors. The fishpond was drying out and at the end there were almost no potential sponsors left. Concerning the roadshows, the companies sent somebody of some department to have an enjoyable night with some food and drinks. That was not the purpose of the roadshow at all. There was a lack of political supporters at those roadshows. The clubs do believe that those people have the power to convince several companies. Mr. Ghysels concludes that the project is attractive, but at the end there need to be some revenues otherwise it is a waste of time. The clubs are still motivated and next season they will start their roadshow again.

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<sup>56</sup> Annex 14

Every famous pop star once started playing with his friends in a garage, until he got the opportunity to perform at a local festival. When the ball keeps rolling it is difficult to stop it and that is what they want to achieve in Antwerp as well.

## 2.4.4 The model of Groningen

### 2.4.4.1 History and origin of the model

FC Groningen is a Dutch Soccer club that was founded in 1971. It plays in the Dutch Premier League. The brand colors of the club are green and white which are relevant for the model that will be described<sup>57</sup>. The club tries to make a link with the model of FC Barcelona, this is expressed in the slogan of the club as well: “FC Groningen is more than football”, a wink to FC Barcelona its slogan: “More than a club”.

FC Groningen takes part in an organization called: “Energy Valley Topclub”, it promotes durable energy supply or green energy. FC Groningen has a very green personality because of its club colors and stadium name; The Green Cathedral. The club wants to do pioneering work in renewable -and green energy and tries to bring does items under the attention of a wider public. The team also strives for an energy neutral and energy producing club.

Energy Valley Topclub is an initiative in which BAM, GasTerra, Imtech, Groningen Seaports and Essent<sup>58</sup> have bundled their forces as partner in green for FC Groningen. This strong energy cooperation is starting from 2011 the back-shirt sponsor of FC Groningen, GasTerra Flames Basketball club, the volleyball team Abiant/Lycurgus and korfbal club Nic./alfa-colege<sup>59</sup>, for three seasons. With this so called “Barcelona model” Energy Valley supports Groningen Topsport by mentioning its brand name on the shirts of four top-class clubs. All of these clubs play in the highest national division in their branch of sport. The motto of this model is: “Samen duurzaam aan de top” or “Together, renewable leaders”. With this Energy Valley Top Club, the participating organizations have found a way to promote green energy towards a larger public, enthuse the youth for durability and technique and to be a meeting place for the energy sector. Education and sports are being used to spread out the energy message and try to cater for a multimillion public. Around the home games of FC Groningen, Energy Valley Top Club organizes several activities, such as; knowledge –and network meetings and durable clinics, to bring energy innovations under the notice. The city and province of Groningen are supporters of the Top Club.

This is a total different model than the one of FC Barcelona or Antwerp. It is still in its infancy and has no actual cohesion between the four teams of the Energy Valley Top Club.

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<sup>57</sup> FC Groningen is part of a green energy model, that is why green and white are convenient colors.

<sup>58</sup> Five companies that promote green energy.

<sup>59</sup> Gas Terra Flames, Abiant/Lycurgus and Nic./Alfa college are the names of those clubs, which are also the names of the involved companies.

On the other hand there is that one thing that combines the teams and creates the foundation of the whole model, namely; green renewable energy.<sup>60</sup>

#### **2.4.4.2 Unique considerations about the model**

##### **I. Cooperative entrepreneurship**

Cooperative entrepreneurship is something that is rising in the business world. It goes from cooperation between companies and cultural organizations till cooperation between companies and sport clubs. This is why the term cooperative entrepreneurship can be useful for an umbrella branding club. Let us take the example of the model of Groningen. This is a perfect pattern of cooperative entrepreneurship between companies and sport clubs even with an environmental touch. In my interview with the cabinet of Minister Muylers we talked about cooperative entrepreneurship in general and how it is being used in several countries. There is a kind of European appeal towards companies and sport clubs or cultural organizations to stimulate collaboration. Based on this European appeal, in Flanders they made a decree in sports that stimulates collaborations between clubs and companies or cooperation's in general. They want to stimulate mergers between sport clubs to drop the amount of individual clubs asking for financial support. According to the cabinet of Minister Muylers there are 20.000 recognized<sup>61</sup> sport clubs in Flanders. All those clubs have specific infrastructure that occupies a certain piece of land. Only in Flanders we see five different federations of walking clubs. Why not join forces and make one big federation that contains everything, just like the Flanders tennis federation does. This federation includes all the recognized tennis clubs in Flanders and counts 150.000 members. This big federation has knowledge on every aspect of tennis in Belgium and even in Europe. Because of the size of this federation also its financial capacity and its bargaining power increases. Also concerning communication, data management and voluntary work a combination of sports or one big federation would work in a more efficient way.

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<sup>60</sup> This analyse was made based on the information found on the two following websites: [www.fcgroningen.nl](http://www.fcgroningen.nl) and [www.energyvalley.nl](http://www.energyvalley.nl)

<sup>61</sup> A sport club in Belgium is only official when it is recognized by an official sports organization. When it is official it can make an appeal to specific financial support.

### **2.4.4.3 Barriers of the model**

The main barrier of this model is that the agreement between the teams and the companies is only temporary. Once again decisions were made on a short term basis. Personally I think that this initiative is taken because green and renewable energy is a hot topic these days. In periods of the recession, people look for innovative and cheaper solutions. When the economy stabilizes, people will easily ignore long term initiatives like investing in solar panels or wind energy because they have the financial capacity to invest in the short run.

Another barrier is that this model is still in its infancy. There is no certainty about whether the model is going to succeed or not. Because of the short term vision the model has to yield rich rewards on a short term basis. This puts a lot of pressure on the success this model.

### **3 Analysis and recommendations concerning an umbrella branding model in sports**

#### **3.1 Overview**

In this third part of my study, all the recommendations and analysis of an umbrella branding model according the interviewees, the companies of Roeselare that filled in my survey and the SWOT-analyses are implemented. If the city of Roeselare wants to create a similar model like the one of Antwerp, Groningen or FC Barcelona it should bear in mind the recommendations and analysis described in this part.

#### **3.2 Analysis and recommendations concerning an umbrella branding model in sports by the interviewees**

##### **3.2.1 Analysis and recommendations by Christoffer Komen**

Mr. Komen stresses that when applying an umbrella branding model, clubs need to be big enough for media attention. The final step in such a model is to create an acceptable and attractive corporate identity and logo. Corporate identity is very important for Mr. Komen, also at his current club, FC Bruges. It is a sign, a symbol, something that people recognize very easily. Another aspect is the financial distribution between the teams under the same umbrella. Revenues are coming from the different teams, but the expenses also need to be equally divided. Mr. Komen also states that a common sports accommodation is not necessary but it can be attractive to receive sponsors and observe different teams at one place.

Mr. Komen uses his experience acquired at Real Madrid to help a Belgian club with its sponsorship policy. In his eyes, the difference is huge, but customers need to realize when investing in a professional sports team companies will have more in return than they would think. In the long term, Mr. Komen is convinced that companies will sell more by investing in a professional sports team.

As a sales manager in sponsorship according to Mr. Komen you should be flexible. In a first meeting the manager has to ask the client what his actual targets and marketing strategy is. Based on that information the manager can create a clear plan or work out a package by considering their needs. Mr. Komen also prefers to use the word partner instead of sponsor. A partner is someone that invests in a team and looks for a return. In his eyes, a sponsor is rather a cost and a partner an investor. Partners look further than only at football perspective or any other sport, they look at a project. Take for example a business lady that is not interested in sports at all, but she knows that one specific club attracts 25.000 visitors/supporters every

week. If she thinks the profile of the company fits with the one of the professional sports team, than why should she not invest in it?

### **3.2.2 Analysis and recommendations by Stefaan Degryse**

Next to the four interviews I have analyzed outside the city of Roeselare, I also interviewed two persons that are involved in the ins and outs of sports in Roeselare. The first person I have interviewed is Mr. Stefaan Degryse. As already mentioned, Stefaan Degryse is a sports functionary at Moorslede, a village in the neighborhood of Roeselare. He is also a board member of the handball club of Roeselare.

Mr. Degryse explains that few years ago, Roularta Media Group<sup>62</sup>, had plans to create a kind of umbrella branding model in sports, at Schiervelde<sup>63</sup>. They would be the main player in the story and could attract a lot of media attention by investing in this project. Roularta is the main sponsor of Knack Roeselare which is the volleyball club of Roeselare. As this club plays on an international level, it would be the showpiece of the model.

According to Mr. Degryse, the main advantage of Roeselare for creating an umbrella branding model is the common sport infrastructure the city has, namely site Schiervelde. Another advantage is that people could create a huge non-profit organization or a limited company. This would simplify closing off sponsorship deals because, as already mentioned several times, the strength of the organization is much higher. According to Mr. Degryse and several other interviewees, companies will also be more interested in sponsoring an overarching club with more power and media attention than an individual club.

Also concerning youth training there would be several advantages with such a model. The club could employ master or bachelor students in physical education to give training to several clubs. For training younger children trainers do not have to be specialized in one specific sport. This would lead to a reduction in costs because one teacher could train several clubs on a youth level.

Mr. Degryse is also convinced about the fact that Roeselare could create one big website for all the sports included in the model. This would generate more hits and visitors at once, something that can be interesting for potential website announcers.

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<sup>62</sup> A famous Belgian media company that is situated in the heart of Roeselare.

<sup>63</sup> Schiervelde is the main sport complex of Roeselare where several sports can be practiced.

As mentioned in the model of Antwerp, an umbrella branding club can generate lots of cost reductions. Mr. Degryse emphasizes that one big secretariat could be created for all the clubs underneath the model, in that aspect; he shares the same opinion of Mr. Ghysels.

Another advantage could be that the city of Roeselare would benefit from this kind of projects. The logo and corporate identity of the city could be mixed with the one of the overarching club. In the end Roeselare would be an actual city of sports instead of city of shopping by which the city is characterized right now. When being a real city of sports you create opportunities like Antwerp by being elected for European City of Sports. These kinds of titles will create a lot of media attention and promotes tourism.

### **3.2.3 Analysis and recommendations by Tom Ghysels**

Tom Ghysels leader of the umbrella branding model in sports of Antwerp is convinced about the added value sport clubs create by working together. According to Mr. Ghysels, there are several advantages for clubs to join forces and establish an umbrella branding model. First of all there is the aspect of money. Clubs that work together can generate more revenues. But it is not only about the profit, it is also about working in a more efficient and cost-cutting way. When sport-clubs bundle their forces, they will create a kind of front this will result in more bargaining power towards suppliers or sponsors. A second advantage is that, as a multi-sport club, sport managers could create a general secretarial office for all the clubs underneath the umbrella branding model. Instead of one secretary for every team there will now be one general secretary for the whole model. This person will be able to have a full-time job. A third advantage is the personality. We all know the motto: “Together we are stronger”. One front, one package, one player will enhance the strategic position of the club. A fourth and last advantage is a multi-sports complex. If cities can place all the sports underneath the umbrella branding model, at one unique and common site, it will create a passive binder. On the other hand, in the story of Antwerp, there are some disadvantages that occur, mainly; rivalry. In this city, all the clubs are placed along a river, namely; the Scheldt. As each river there is the north and the south-side. As in the United States of America this also creates a kind of rivalry between those two sections. In Antwerp the rivalry continuous between the two soccer clubs, namely; Royal Antwerp FC and Beerschot AC<sup>64</sup>. These two clubs both have a long history. They actually let each other do their worst. How a city like Antwerp has to deal with that kind of situations? Nevertheless, in one way or another, the situation can be placed because both clubs play in a different league. Beerschot AC plays in the highest league of Belgium,

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<sup>64</sup> Beerschot Antwerpen Club

namely; the Jupiler Pro league<sup>65</sup> and Royal Antwerp FC plays in the Belgian second division of soccer. If Royal Antwerp FC would be promoted to the Jupiler Pro League, than the two clubs would be playing in the same league which would increase the rivalry again. Beerschot AC recently even lodged an appeal against Royal Antwerp FC for obtaining the license for next season.

Generally, Mr. Ghysels concludes that the main advantage for an umbrella branding structure in Antwerp is the following. In Antwerp there are lots of companies at the harbor. All those companies sponsor something, some of them even several projects. Every club is knocking on the door of those companies to cash. In this case, all the money and sponsors are cut up into pieces. With one umbrella branding club, the amount of money cashed could be a lot bigger, for example: 250.000 euro at once. This is the advantage for the clubs, but also for the sponsors it is more attractive. With one overarching club, a lot more supporters would be reached at once, because not only those of soccer or volleyball are reached, but also those of basketball and several other clubs. Also the mayor, Mr. Patrick Janssens, dreams about an umbrella branding system in Antwerp.

### **3.2.4 Analysis and recommendations by the cabinet of Minister Muylers**

According to the cabinet of Minister Muylers, umbrella branding can be useful on two levels: On the one hand on the level of top-level sports and on the other hand on the level of local sports. Also a combination of both levels is perfectly possible. As already analyzed in the model of FC Barcelona, with for one thing the professional sports and for another thing the amateur sports. In Flanders a combination of both is perfectly attainable. Take for example a city where there is one strong sport club, for example one strong soccer club, and for the rest there is a small supply of sports. Suddenly, a brand new indoor sport complex appears in that city. With the creation of that complex, several new sport clubs will appear because there is more infrastructures to create new clubs. If that one big club is a bit far-sighted it can change its statute from soccer club to sports club and it can diversify its sport offer by taking the other and smaller, but brand new sport clubs, under its wing. This is a lot more efficient than ten or more different sport clubs fighting for their rights and competing among themselves. This is also better for the city in general. The only thing that can be a kind of stumbling block in this situation is the financial distribution code. Which club gets which part of the cake?

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<sup>65</sup> The Belgian first division league of football

The cabinet of Minister Muylers hammered away at the point that the city in general plays a huge role in this kind of situations. It needs to take its responsibility to rouse the interest of the different sport clubs to come and have a group conversation about the possibilities of a new and cooperative project.

The cabinet also emphasizes that projects like the new model of Antwerp are things that will get support by the Flemish government. When clubs have a proposal like an overarching sport model, the Flemish government is prepared to listen and support these initiatives if the story around those projects is plausible.

Another policy that is strongly supported by the Flemish government is the youth policy, talent detection and guidance. The youth is the future of the sports level in Belgium, therefore a small country has to invest in youth potential rather than making expensive transfers to attract new players. If we take a look in general, Belgium has a lot of young talent, with athletes like: Kevin Debruyne (soccer), Romelu Lukaku (soccer), Seppe Smits (Snowboarding) and even in snooker<sup>66</sup> with the 17 year old Luca Brecel who already joined the World Championship this year. Also the collaboration of sport clubs and universities is an important aspect of top class sports.

To conclude the umbrella branding structure, the cabinet of Minister Muylers argues that subsidy for big clubs is just an amusing bonus, so starting an umbrella branding model will be more the interest of smaller clubs that are likely to cash the bonus. If those small clubs succeed in applying such a model, bigger clubs will be inclined to move over to a similar model because of the successful contribution the model had with the smaller clubs.

### **3.2.5 Analyses and recommendations by Eddy Brouckaert**

The media can play a huge role in the start-up of an umbrella branding model in sports: The more media attention, the better for the success and continuation of the model. That is why I have had an interview with Eddy Brouckaert. As already mentioned, Mr. Brouckaert is the manager of a regional newspaper called “De Krant van West-Vlaanderen”. This newspaper belongs to one of the biggest media companies in Belgium, namely; Roularta Media Group.

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<sup>66</sup> Snooker is a variation of pool played with fifteen red balls and six variously colored balls.

According to Mister Brouckaert, for the basketball team of Roeselare the end is near. There are no more potential sponsors and the club already scrapped their first male team. The soccer team of Roeselare also relegated to a lower division and the volleyball team is not the international team anymore like it used to be. The handball team stagnates but does not play in the highest division. Shortly, the level of the sport teams is not high enough and that can be a disadvantage for the start-up of an umbrella branding model. The problem is that people identify themselves very often with success. If a sports team has a lot of success everybody is prepared to put money in a team, but if the success disappears they are not interested anymore. In general, potential sponsors are hard to attract and the difference between a first division and a second division team is huge.

Few years ago the business lunches were very popular for VIP's during important matches of the volleyball team or soccer team of Roeselare. It became so popular that they wanted more expensive food and high-quality drinks. This lasted for two or three years. Nowadays people are not interested anymore in those kinds of business lunches. This reflects the change of interests that people face during their lives. These changes in interest of people are also factors that can influence the success of an umbrella branding model in sports.

The story of FC Barcelona is according to Mr. Brouckaert a very nice story, but if FC Barcelona was a normal company it would have been bankrupt for several years. On the other hand it mobilizes so many people that it has to be kept alive. Just take a look at clubs like Chelsea for example, with one powerful man, Mr. Abramovich<sup>67</sup> that runs the club. If that man would withdraw as investor, the club could be shut down.

The media would not write a lot about an umbrella branding model in sports. They would wait until results would be put down. Media attention also differs from sport to sport. The attention for soccer is a lot higher in Belgium than the attention towards indoor sports such as volleyball. Mr. Brouckaert emphasizes that results need to be present to be able to start-up an umbrella branding model. Without any results, sponsors will not be interested in the project. The only thing we can do is to make a plan with perspectives. For example a long term plan that in five or six years' time KSV Roeselare has to play in the first division again and Knack Roeselare has to play on a European level again. Sponsors will be more interested when they see ambitious plans for the future. The only thing that needs to be reassured is that the results actually take place as mentioned in the business plan.

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<sup>67</sup> Roman Arkadyevich Abramovich is a Russian business tycoon and main owner of Chelsea Football Club

The structure of the model should be like the structure of a holding. Every month there is a briefing towards the manager of the holding about the progression and positive and negative effects. As already mentioned in all the other interviews, Mr. Brouckaert also says that a project leader is necessary, as well as an overarching board. He also emphasizes that such a model can drop the costs increasingly. Take for example the costs of a brewer<sup>68</sup>. Every club has a different brewer; this problem would be solved by an umbrella branding model, just like the example of the different bus companies in the model of Antwerp.

Nowadays there is already a consultation committee in Roeselare for the entire sport infrastructure. This is in the eyes of Mr. Brouckaert also an overarching model. Already in that committee leaders have to be from iron steel to manage and refute the critics of the different members. Therefore, people management is very important when applying such a model.

The accommodation of Schiervelde has a lot of potential. By introducing an umbrella branding model everything could be centralized at the site of Schiervelde. In that perspective the clubs in the overarching model could really work on the field, with one building, top accommodation...

Without top results of the teams there is a possibility to start an umbrella branding model, but there is a need of a clear business plan. A plan that shows stakeholders where the overarching club wants to go and with what kind of resources. Mr. Brouckaert concludes by telling that in Roeselare there is a top class sport accommodation that should be used in a more decent way. Also a lot of big companies in Roeselare do not sponsor any of the sport activities in the city. This is something that should be examined. The first steps were made by doing a survey for this study, towards several companies in Roeselare.

### **3.2.6 Analyses and recommendations by Professor Jos Verschuere**

As already mentioned, Jos Verschuere is director of sport management at the VUB. According to Professor Verschuere, the term umbrella branding is rather vague to apply on sports. After explaining him the umbrella branding models of Nivea and Virgin, he sees the

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<sup>68</sup> A company or person that brews, sells and delivers beer and other drinks to its clients such as Alken Maes, Ab Inbev or Palm.

link with the model of FC Barcelona and other sport clubs. It is also Mr. Verschueren that suggested me to take a look at the model of Groningen and the surplus value such a model has to a city.

Concerning the model in general, Mr. Verschueren emphasizes that without any sponsorship the model can never succeed. Although FC Barcelona is an exception with its socios, in this club the supporters are actually direct members of the club.

Also the aspect of cooperative entrepreneurship is something that Mr. Verschueren stimulates.

Belgium is according to professor Verschueren not a real sport minded country. Nowadays sport has to been seen as a valuable communication tool for clubs and companies.

Overarching models like the one Antwerp is trying to create are rare in Europe. Nobody dares to take the first step. Nevertheless, such a model is a perfect city marketing project. If people hear the word Antwerp, everybody thinks about an international port or diamonds. Nowadays people associate Antwerp also with city of sports, especially after being elected by the ACES<sup>69</sup> for: “European City of Sports 2013”. This also brings along lots of responsibilities.

Just take a look at the loss of face Antwerp had by losing the European Championship swimming in May 2012. Antwerp was appointed as organizing city but due to a lack of organization they had to part with the organization of the European Championship.

Sport sponsorship is according to professor Verschueren a trump card for companies. In advertising we have radio spots, television spots, tram shelters, banners, and classical advertisements and so on, but nowadays we also have sports. When the CEO of a company has a special connection with a kind of sport, it is easier for a club to attract those companies. On the other hand, sport sponsorship has to bring in something for the companies as well. It is not because Audi sponsors Bayern Munich or FC Barcelona that half of the city will drive with that make of car. Another thing that is important is the activation. When RSC Anderlecht is sponsored by BNP Paribas Fortis not all the supporters will have an account in that bank because the shirt visualizes the logo of that bank. There have to be flyers, folders<sup>70</sup>, brochures, and lots of other marketing tools to attract the attention of the people towards the sponsor. It is also a matter of synergy:  $1 + 1 = 3$ . The first “one” represents the amount of money that a sponsor pays for shirts, boarding, advertisement, and hospitality for example. The second “one” is the same amount that is invested to say that a company is actually a partner in sports,

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<sup>69</sup> Federation for the Association of the European Capitals and Cities of Sport

<sup>70</sup> Annex 19

only than they can create a real synergy effect. This effect of synergy is also something that can be reinforced by using an umbrella branding model.

### **3.2.7 Main barriers of an umbrella branding model in sports according to the interviewees**

There are several barriers for the start-up of an umbrella branding model in sports according to the interviewees. A first stumbling block is the search for somebody that can lead an overarching club. All the interviewees shared the same opinion that one specific project leader is necessary to start-up and continue the project. Next to the leader there should also be an overarching board with several neutral board members. People that have affinity with sports need to be found, politics and entrepreneurship. The only thing we have to avoid is members that have a close connection to one specific sports club otherwise some clubs will be shown favor above others. This search will be very difficult to achieve and when the right person has been found it will be even more difficult to keep him in the same leading position.

A second stumbling block is the level of the clubs. If sponsors step into an umbrella branding model they want the clubs to play on a high level. For playing on a high level clubs need more money and this will be a problem when applying this model. The difference between Roeselare and Antwerp is that in the last city all the clubs play on the highest level. Sponsors like media attention and therefore clubs most play on the highest live either. On the other hand, a stronger association will generate more financial funds that can be invested in the creation of more competitive clubs.

A third thing that needs to be reconsidered is the juridical aspect. Everything needs to fit because if one link disappears, the whole model can collapse. Just take a look at the model of FC Barcelona, imagine that the soccer club disappears, how will the model survive without its main source of income?

A fourth barrier is that cities like Antwerp or Roeselare cannot emulate the model of a city like Barcelona. On the other hand people have prejudices that an approach to an ideal model like FC Barcelona is impossible. People are in fact stigmatizing themselves before even doing the necessary research. Why do people have the fear to enter an adventure such as the creation of a multi sports model? According to my interviews there is one big reason for this. The fact that there is a kind of fear is the guilt of some individuals. The collective result and the co-operation do not dominate anymore. Cities like Antwerp or every other sport city, wants to see results in the end, but when it comes to the crunch, they want to abandon the subject. The reasons why cities are scared when results fail to occur are the following. First of all they want to see results in the short run. Setting up an umbrella branding model for a city is a long-

winded work and the watchword for setting up such a model is: long-term thinking. A second reason is that sometimes cities or clubs are financially under pressure because of the lack of financial resources. In this case, long term perspectives are out of the question. A third and last reason is that the professional sports world, like other businesses, is poisoned by the egocentric vision of some individuals. Those people only think about themselves and just want to do business in their own way and for their own wallet.

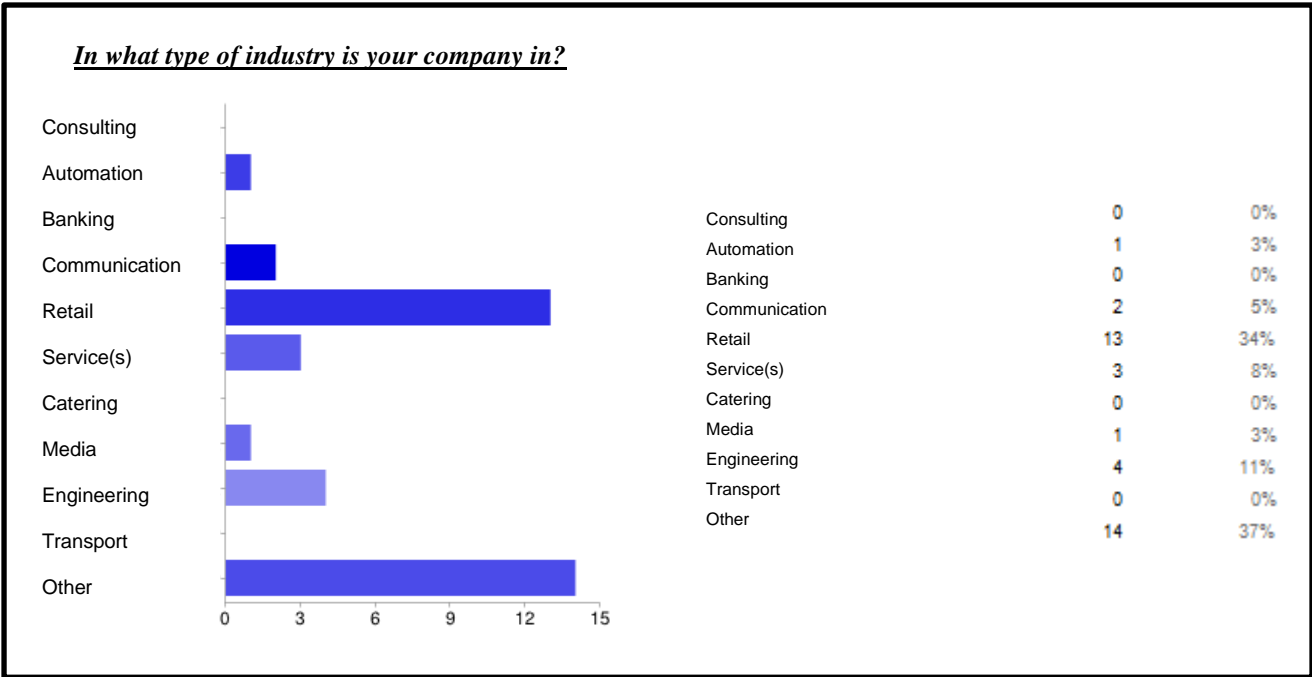
### 3.3 Analysis and recommendations concerning an umbrella branding model in sports by the companies of Roeselare

#### 3.3.1 The survey

After my presentation towards the clubs and my interviews, I wanted to know the opinion of the companies regarding an umbrella branding model in sports and their attitude towards sport sponsorship in general. Since the sport service of Roeselare did not have any data about companies and sports, I carried out a small survey<sup>71</sup> to have a brief overview. The results<sup>72</sup> of the survey are not generalizable because my sample was too small. I want to emphasize that this survey is purely additional, and I have only executed this questionnaire to have a broad overview of the companies' opinion. Out of 150 companies in Roeselare only thirty-eight of them filled in the survey.

I divided the survey into two different parts, first of all I asked some questions about sports sponsorship in general and secondly I asked their opinion about an umbrella branding model in sports for the city of Roeselare. Regardless of the lack of response, the results are quite favorable within the scope of my research. First of all I analyze the results regarding the sponsorship policy of the companies.

The majority of the companies that answered is active in the retail sector on a regional level and employ between one and fifty employees.



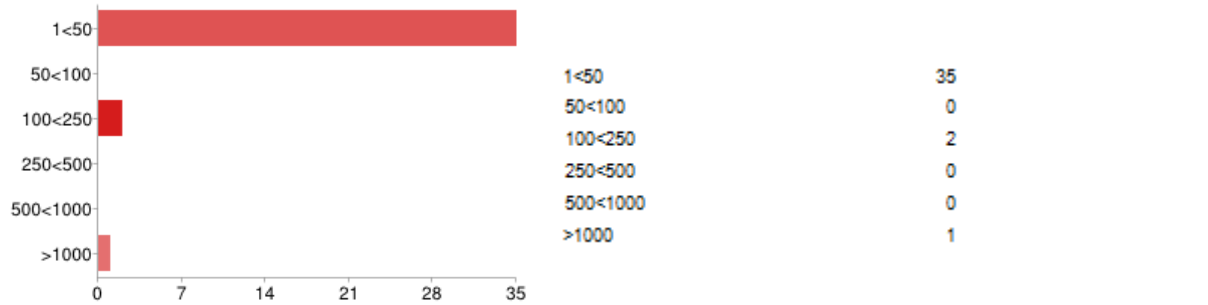
<sup>71</sup> Annex 15.a

<sup>72</sup> Annex 15.b

**On which geographic level does your company operate?**

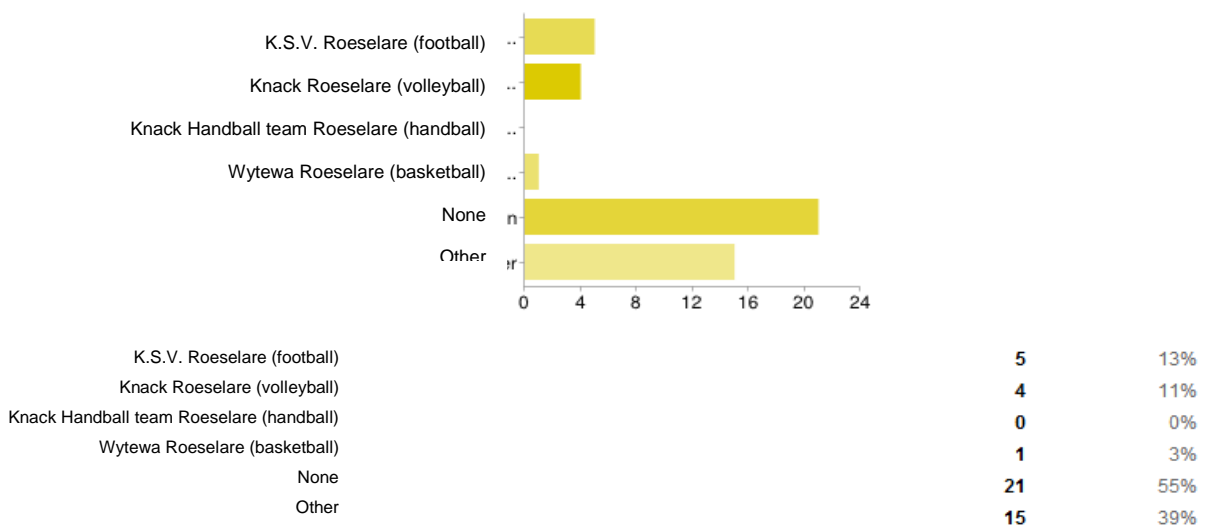


**How many employees does your company employ?**



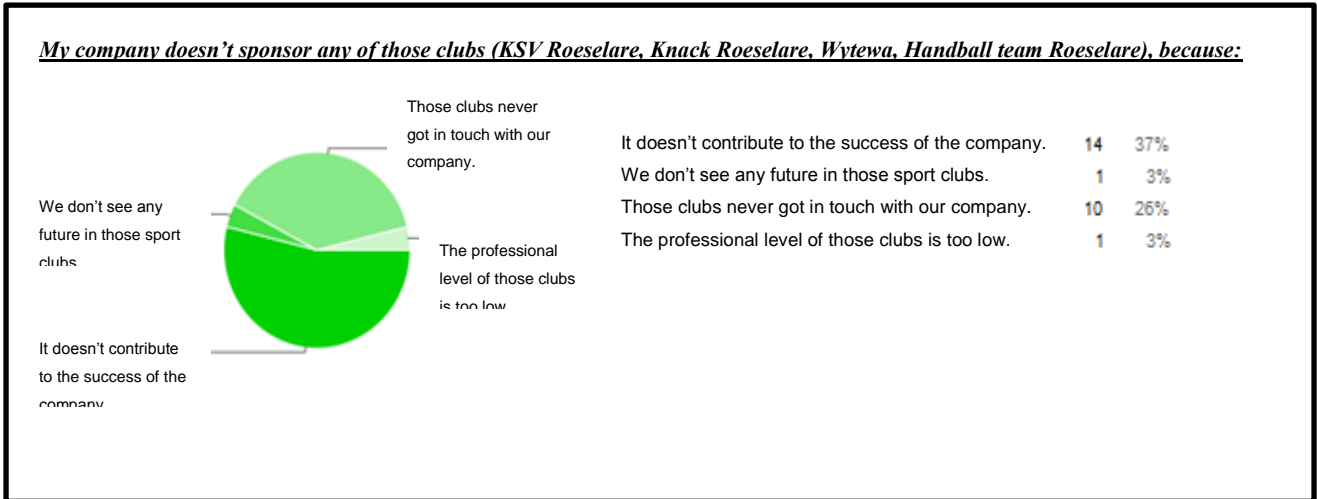
53% of the respondents do not sponsor any of the clubs I want to implement in my model<sup>73</sup>.

**Which sports team does your company sponsor?**

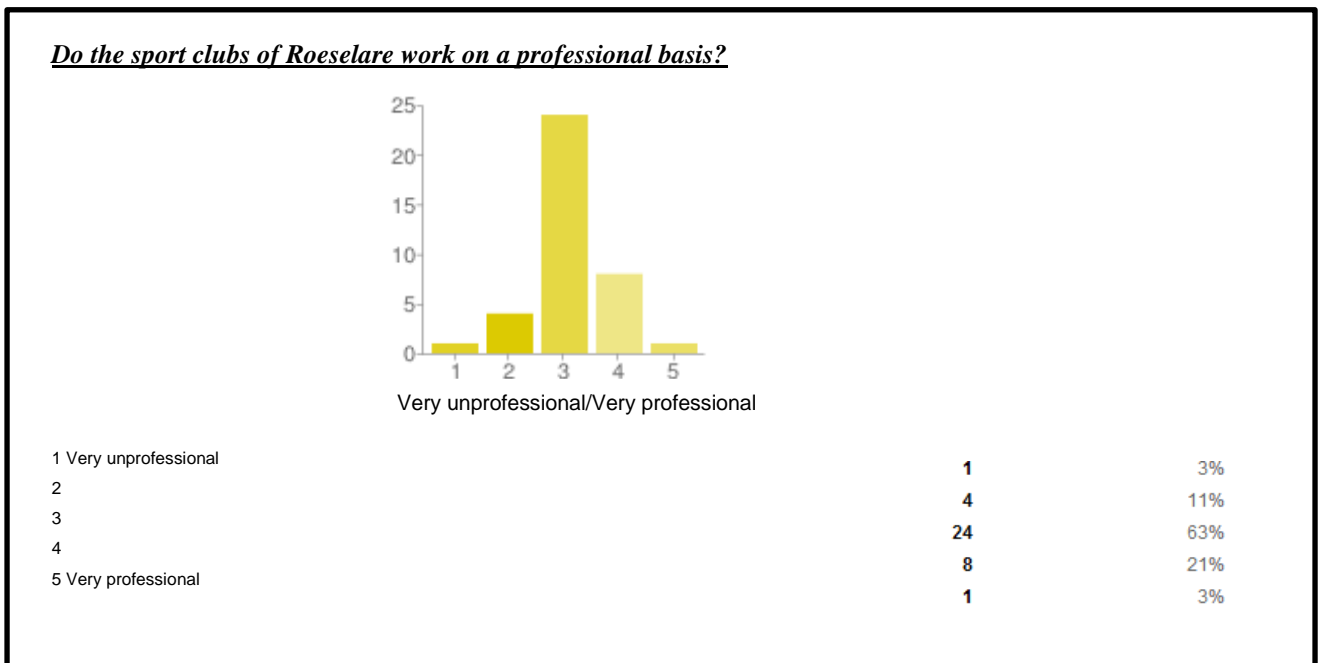


<sup>73</sup> Those clubs are: Knack Roeselare (volleyball), KSV Roeselare (football), Wytewa (basketball) and handball club Roeselare (handball).

26% of the companies answered; do not sponsor any of those clubs because the clubs never got in touch with them. 37% does not sponsor any of those clubs because they think it does not contribute to the success of the company.

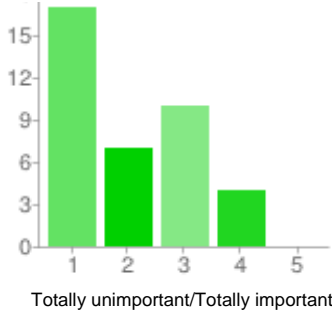


On a scale of one to five, 63% gives a score of three on the question if the sport clubs of Roeselare work on a professional basis.



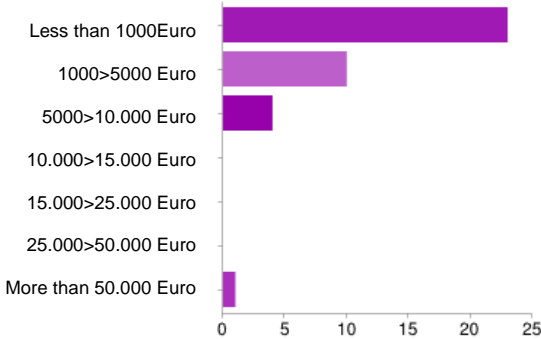
For 45% of the respondents sport sponsorship is completely unimportant and 61% of them spends less than 1000 euro towards sport sponsorship.

**How important is sport sponsorship for your company?**



Importance Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1 Totally unimportant	17	45%
2	7	18%
3	10	26%
4	4	11%
5 Totally important	0	0%

**How much money does your company invest in sport sponsorship on a monthly**

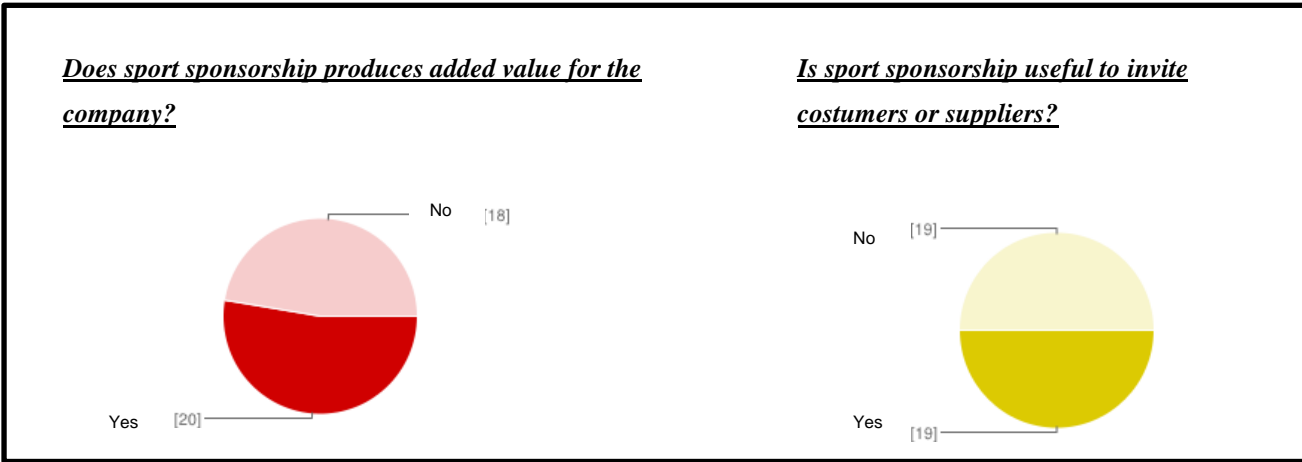


Investment Range	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 1000Euro	23	61%
1000>5000 Euro	10	26%
5000>10.000 Euro	4	11%
10.000>15.000 Euro	0	0%
15.000>25.000 Euro	0	0%
25.000>50.000 Euro	0	0%
More than 50.000 Euro	1	3%

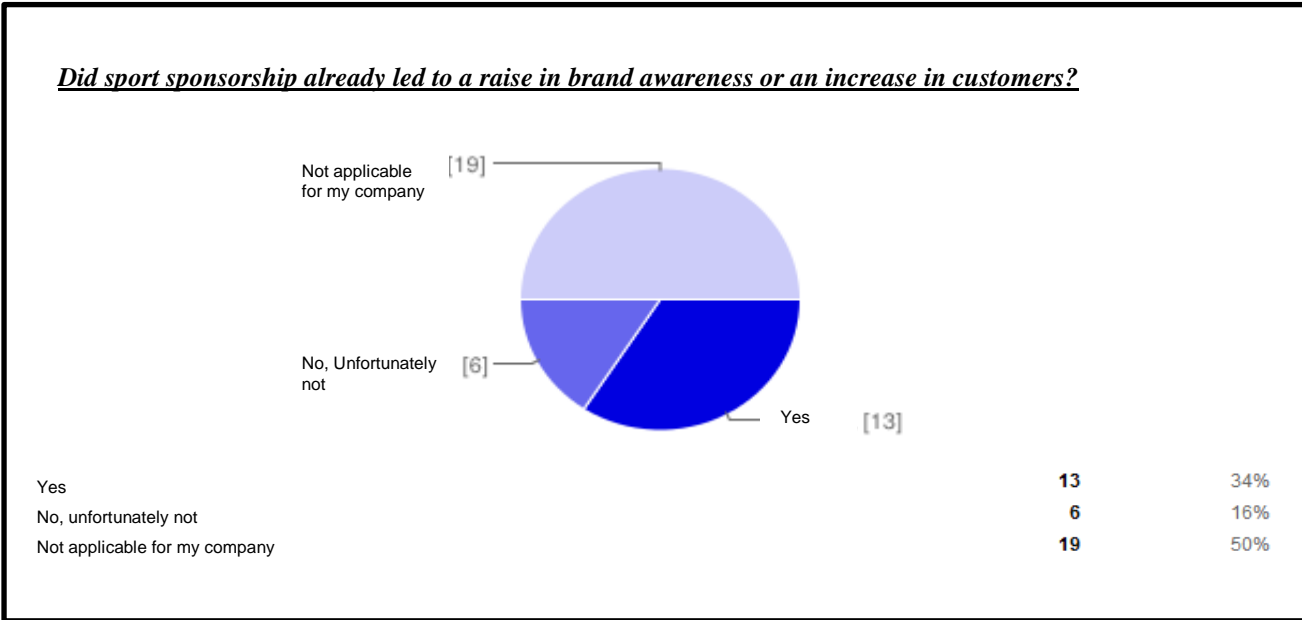
61% of the respondents invest in sport sponsorship for either goodwill or a better brand awareness.



53% thinks that sport sponsorship produces added value for the company and half of the respondents thinks it is useful to invite customers or suppliers.



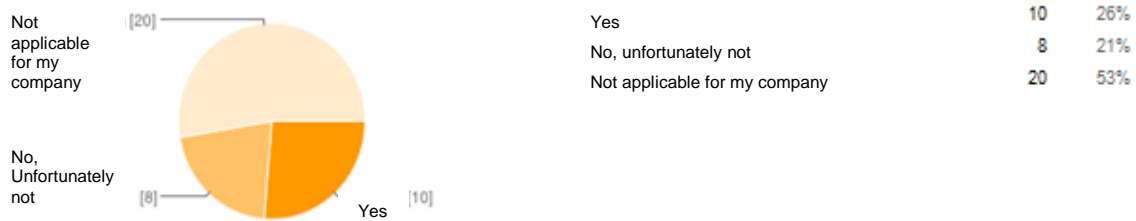
For 34% of the respondents sport sponsorship leads to a raise in clients or more brand awareness.



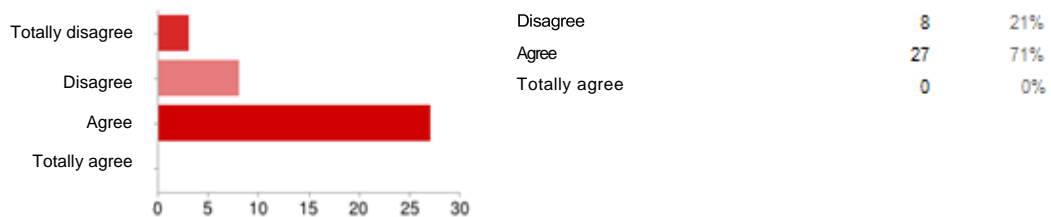
For 26% of the respondents sport sponsorship already led to a bigger turnover.

71% of the respondents think that sport sponsorship can lead to more employee satisfaction.

***Did sport sponsorship already lead to a bigger turnover for your***

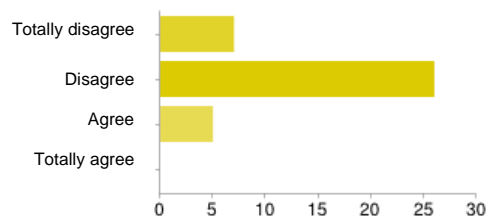


***Sport sponsorship can lead to more employee satisfaction within the***



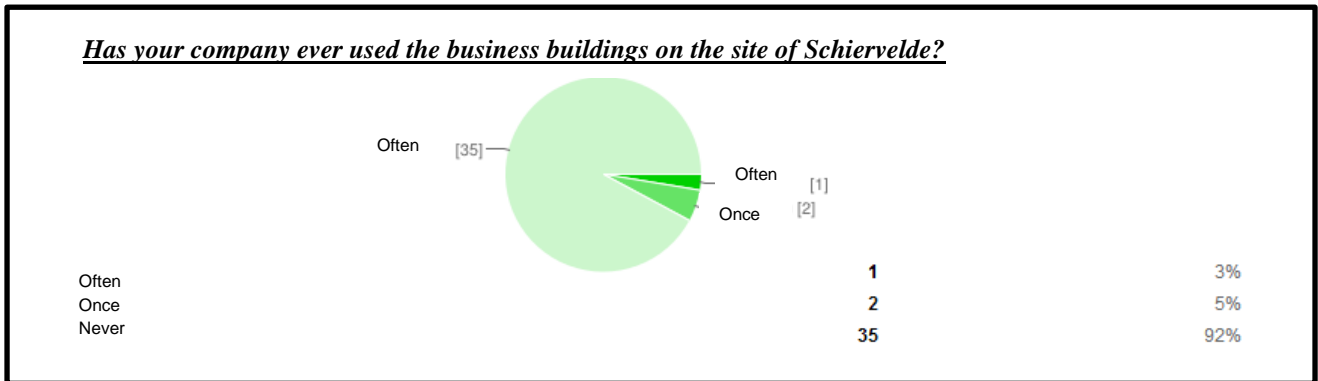
For 68% of the respondents it is not necessary that a club plays in the highest division for going into sponsorship.

***It is necessary that a club plays in the highest division for us to go into***

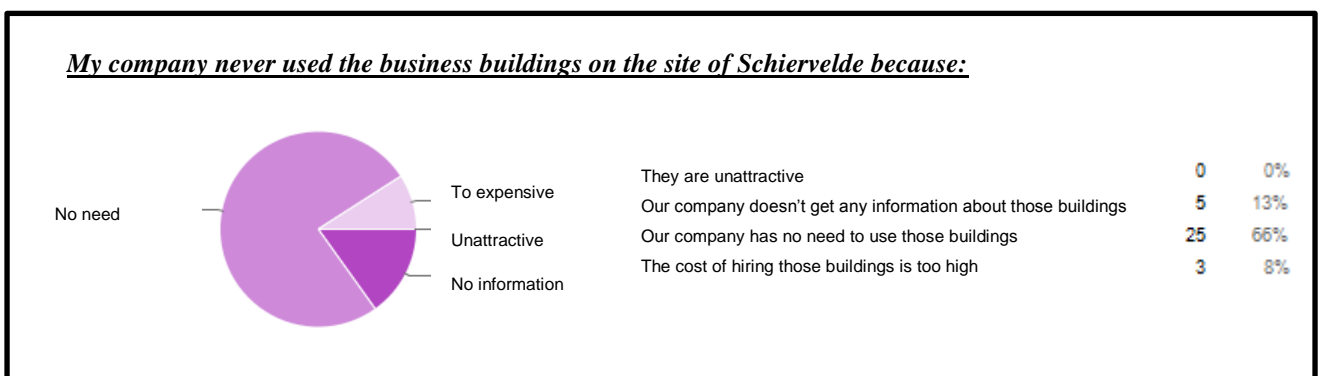


Response	Count	Percentage
Totally disagree	7	18%
Disagree	26	68%
Agree	5	13%
Totally agree	0	0%

Concerning the attractiveness of the business buildings on the site of Schiervelde, 92% of the respondents never used them.

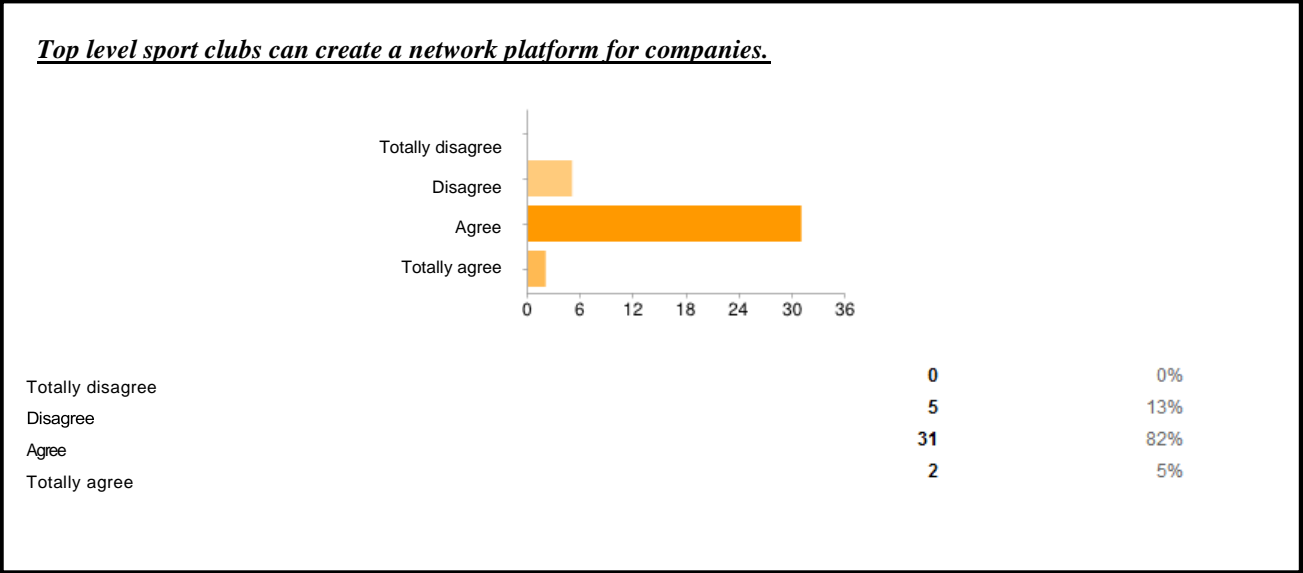


On the question why they never used the business buildings on Schiervelde, 66% answers that the company does not need that infrastructure and 13% of the respondents answered that they are not informed in a proper way about the buildings.

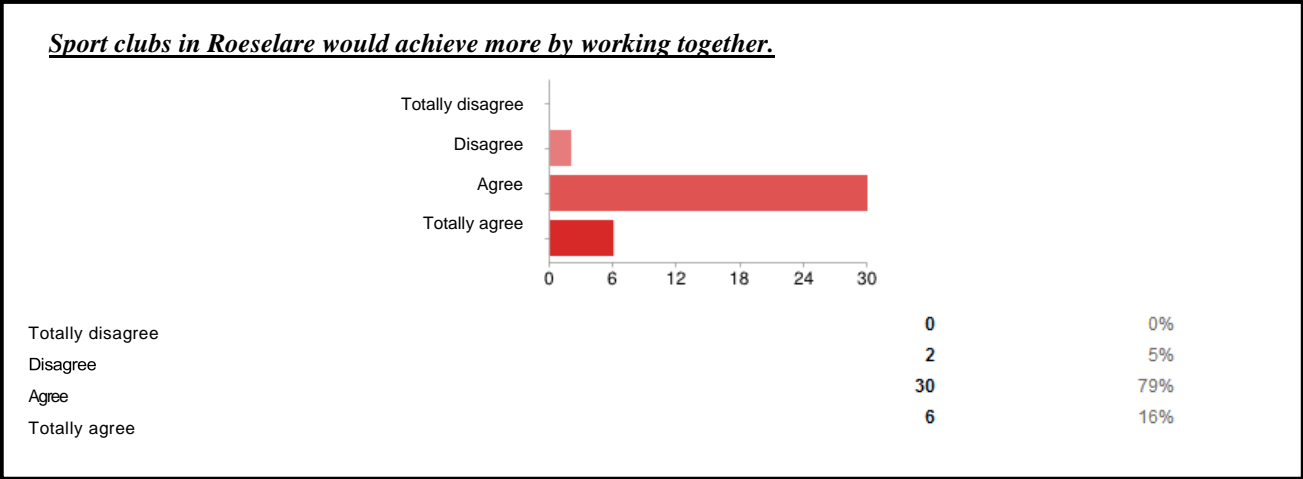


In the survey there were also some questions asked about the opportunities for an umbrella branding model in Roeselare.

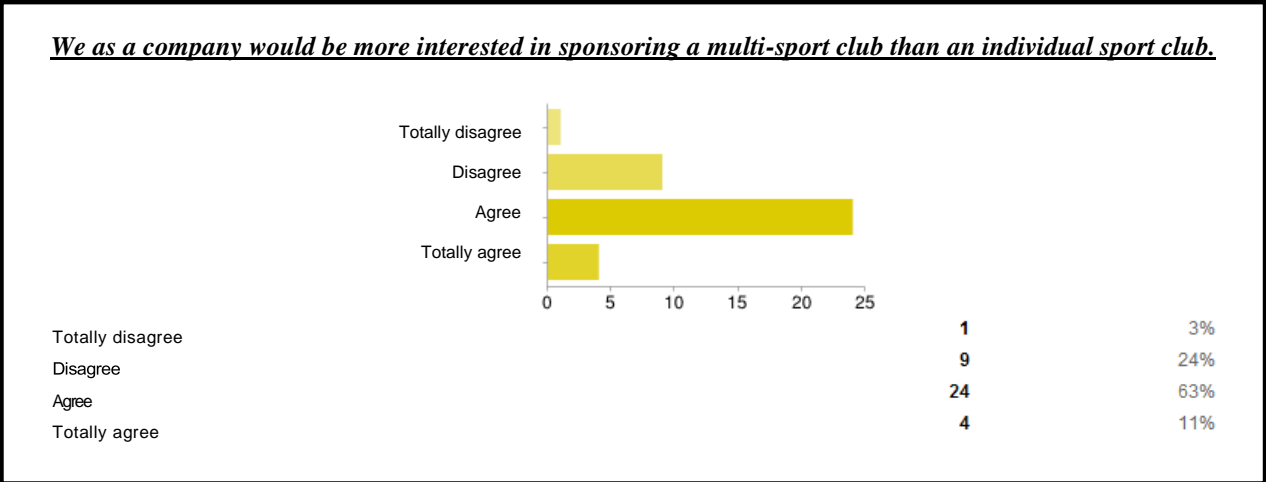
87% of the respondents agree with the fact that top level sport clubs can create a network platform for companies.



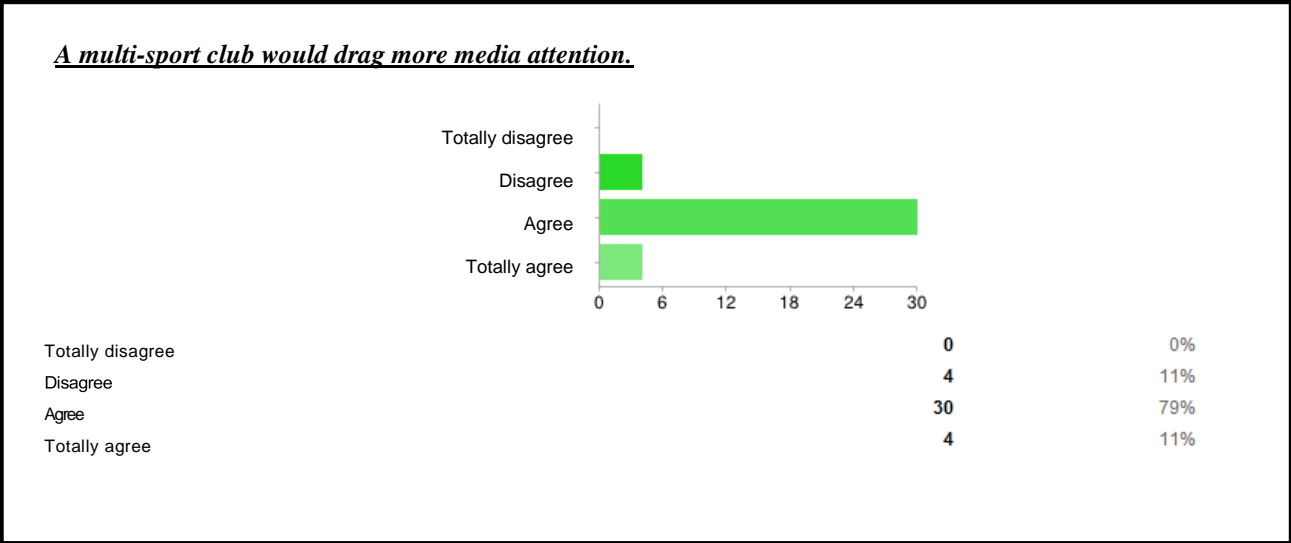
95% of the respondents think that the sport clubs of Roeselare would achieve more by working together.



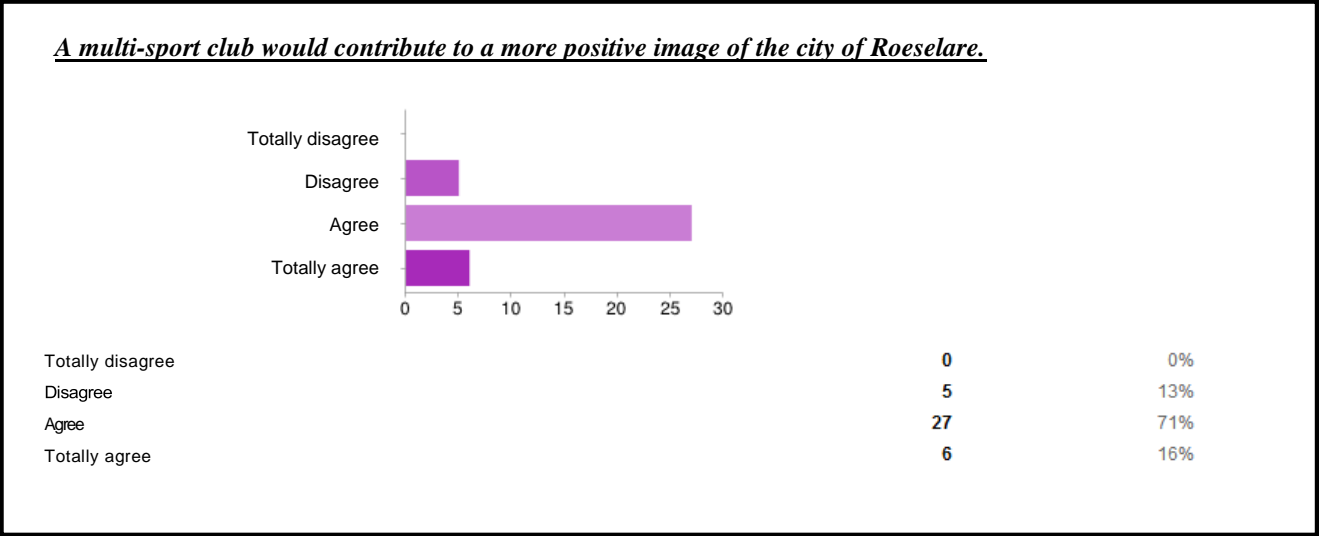
It is remarkable that 74% of the respondents would be more interested in sponsoring a multi-sport club than an individual club.



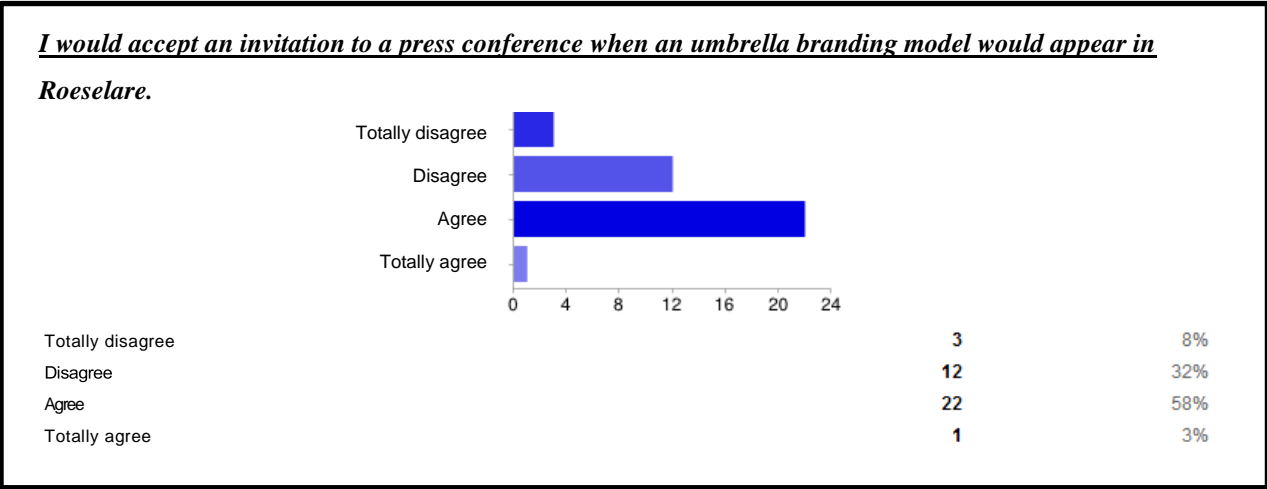
90% of the respondents agree that a multi-sport club would drag more media attention.



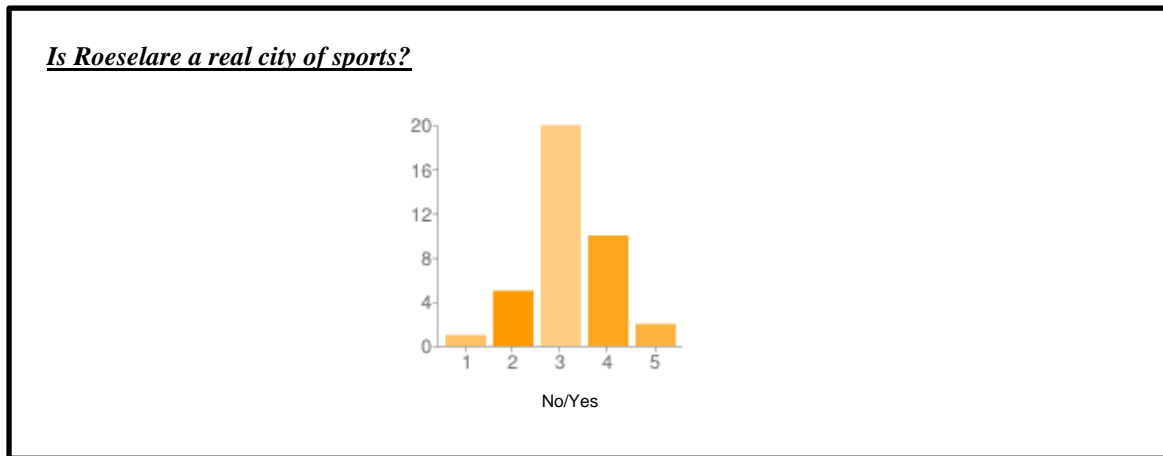
Also 87% of the companies responded think that a multi-sport club would contribute to a more positive image of the city of Roeselare.



On the question if the companies would accept an invitation to a press conference when an umbrella branding model would appear in Roeselare, 61% of the companies responded would accept the invitation.



Finally, on a scale of one to five, 53% of the respondents answered neutral on the question if Roeselare is a real city of sports.



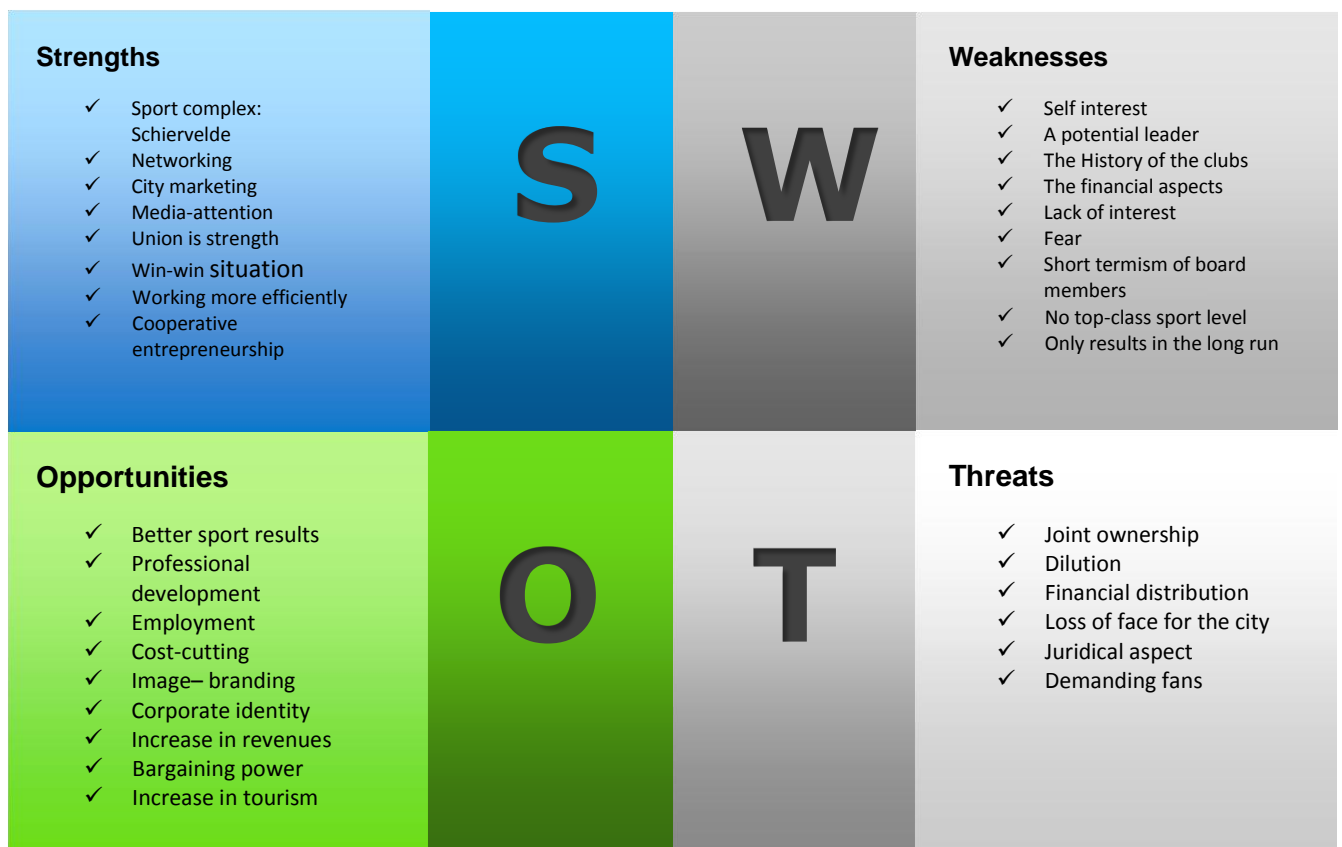
Two open questions were asked in the survey. The first question was: “Could you please describe your sport sponsorship policy in a few words”. Most of the companies answered that they were too small to have an actual sport sponsorship policy because it is too expensive. This is an obvious answer regarding the number of retailers that filled in the survey. Some others answered that sport sponsorship contributes to a win-win situation.

The second open question that was asked in the survey was the following: “Could you briefly describe if an umbrella branding model in sports could be attractive for a city as Roeselare?” Most of the companies responded think that a model would be attractive for a city as Roeselare. Some of them think that the clubs have to play on the highest level; others want to include smaller clubs as well. Also the aspect of cost-cutting and working in a more efficient way appears in the answers. Others answer that companies will be more interested in sponsoring in such a model because there would be more media attention. Although some people answer that such a model is possible, but the clubs and the city would have to work in a more professional way such as cities like Bruges or Ghent.

The majority of the respondents think that the clubs should be on the same wavelength before starting up an umbrella branding model in sports. In a word, an umbrella branding model would be a surplus value for a city of Roeselare if we could generalize the result of the survey.

### 3.4 SWOT analyses

Based on the interviews, the results of the survey and the comments I have received after presentation in February<sup>74</sup>, I have made a SWOT analyses<sup>75</sup> for the city of Roeselare. A SWOT analysis consists on the one hand of strengths and weaknesses which are factors tend to be in the present; on the other hand it consists of opportunities and threats which are factors tend to be in the future. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of an umbrella branding model for the city of Roeselare are taken into account.



<sup>74</sup> Annex 17

<sup>75</sup> Annex 16

### **3.4.1.1 Strengths**

An umbrella branding model in sports for Roeselare has several strengths. First of all there is the sport complex of Schiervelde that accommodates all the different sports that are implemented in the model. The opportunity to centralize all the sports is a major advantage for the city and its sportspeople. Another strength is the business lounges at the similar sport complex<sup>76</sup>. This creates tremendous possibilities for networking. Companies that are interested in volleyball can network with companies that are more football minded. Business can be done during several sports events. The city also benefits from an umbrella branding model because of the attention by the media. If we take a look at Antwerp, because of their excellent sport policy they were elected for European City of Sports 2013. Union is strength is another quality of an umbrella branding model. More supporting power and working in a more efficient way by organizing and centralizing several overarching sport activities. Such a model also creates win-win situation for entrepreneurs/sponsors, media, fans, clubs and the city of Roeselare in general. A last strength is cooperative entrepreneurship that is stimulated by applying an umbrella branding model. As the European government is stimulating this kind of collaboration, it is obvious that Roeselare would get financial support if they submit a proposal towards the Flemish government concerning an overarching model.

### **3.4.1.2 Weaknesses**

Next to the strengths of such a model there are also several weaknesses. The self-interest of several people is a big problem when starting up an umbrella branding model. Board members of the sport clubs do not want to cooperate with other clubs because they only look at the success of their own club. Next to the self-interest there is also the short-termism of those members. Results need to appear as fast as possible without looking at the quality and the financial stability of the club. Without a long term vision, an umbrella branding model is impossible to create. Such a model also needs a certain leader, somebody with affinity both in sports and general management. The question is where to find a capable leader for that model? Other weaknesses are the uncertainty about the financial conditions and the lack of top-class sport clubs in Roeselare. None of those clubs that would be implemented in the model plays at an international level and there is only one club, Knack Roeselare (volleyball) that plays at the highest level in Belgium.

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<sup>76</sup> Annex 18

### **3.4.1.3 Opportunities**

Next to strengths and weaknesses there are also opportunities for the future when applying such a model. In the end an umbrella branding model would bring along better sport performances as well as a more professional development of the multi-sports club. If we take a look at FC Barcelona, it took several years for the first successes of the team but after some years all the clubs in the model won at least one price. Another opportunity is employment. When the club gets bigger there will be more possibilities for employment because it will be more than just a club, the profile will be similar to that of a company. In that opinion the club will also become a real brand, it will create a real brand image as well as a strong corporate identity. By centralizing different sport clubs there will be possibilities to do some cost-cutting by the development of one specific secretariat and other cost cutting activities such as one specific bus company as well as one brewer. If the model stimulates city marketing, the tourism in the city of Roeselare will also expand. This will generate more revenues. A last opportunity is that the strength of the union will create more bargaining power. Therefore the model has to be at a certain maturity level.

### **3.4.1.4 Threats**

A last aspect that is accompanied with the SWOT-analysis are the threats. Joint ownership is one of those threats that might appear in the future. As already mentioned there is a lot of self-interest by the members of the different clubs. That is why they will never be satisfied about the way resources will be divided. Linked with the joined ownership is the threat of disagreement with the financial distribution. Which club will get which part of the pie? Another threat is the dilution that can appear after some time. Stakeholders will always look for profit at short term, if this fails to come, they will be disappointed and lose their patience and faith in the model. Next to the board members of the clubs there is also the interest of the fans that can be very demanding. If the overarching club cannot meet with the requirements of the fans, their enthusiasm will drop and this could be harmful for the club. Another threat is the amount of juridical approvals that need to be fulfilled. All of these threats can be the end of the model. If the model ceases to exist, it will produce a loss of face for the city of Roeselare.

#### **4 The proposed model for the city of Roeselare in my point of view**

Based on the analyses and recommendations I would like to describe the ultimate model for the city of Roeselare in my opinion.

When analyzing the different points of view in my study I am still convinced that an umbrella branding model is possible for a city like Roeselare. I would start by the creation of an overarching website that contains the four main clubs mentioned in the introduction of my methodological research, namely: KSV Roeselare (soccer), Knack Roeselare (volleyball), Wytewa (basketball) and handball club Roeselare (handball). Those four clubs mainly play on the same site called site Schiervelde. With this website I would promote those four clubs and others specific sports of Roeselare. The idea is that a visitor has information about every sport in Roeselare that plays on a high level. As there are only two clubs that play on professional bases, namely, KSV Roeselare and Knack Roeselare, it is quite obvious that some amateuristic sports would also be part of the website such as water polo for example. In my opinion, sport cities do not need an umbrella branding model to represent their professional sport teams on one specific common website. This is also attractive for several sponsors because a common website creates more visitors than an individual website for every team. As mentioned in my analyses of the model of FC Barcelona, the more unique visitors, the more your advertisement can be observed. The difference between websites like FC Barcelona and the one Roeselare should create is that the amount of unique visitors is much higher than the amount of visitors the website of Roeselare would have. If we compare [www.fcbarcelona.com](http://www.fcbarcelona.com) with the website: [www.roeselare.be](http://www.roeselare.be), we can see that the website of Roeselare has 12.000 unique visitors a month spending on average four minutes on the website, which is quite a difference with the results for the website of FC Barcelona.<sup>77</sup> The website would be a first step in the creation of an overarching model for sports. Next step would be to find several sponsors that would like to invest in an umbrella branding model. When those sponsors are part of the game we could create a general name for the model for example Sports Club Roeselare or Sports Association Roeselare. Every team would share the same name, logo and corporate identity. A last and final step would be to create an overarching management and cooperation with the city of Roeselare. Implementing the logo of Roeselare in the logo of the overarching sports club would, by analogy with FC Barcelona,

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<sup>77</sup> Annex 11.b

be a real marketing stunt. If we take a look at the model of Antwerp, the logo of the city<sup>78</sup> plays a huge role in the marketing and commercial aspect of both the city and the model, same story with FC Barcelona and its coat of arms<sup>79</sup>.

For this model to be created, Roeselare needs a leader, somebody that takes full responsibility for the start-and follow-up of the project. Next to this person, there needs to be a full support of the included sport clubs as well as sponsors and the city board. This will be the most difficult step because as in Antwerp, in Roeselare there is also a kind of obstinacy by the people of the several sport teams. They rather compete with each other than work together. Therefore those people need to see the success and advantages of such a model. That is why we cannot start immediately with the implementation of an umbrella branding club, but step by step try to get in the neighborhood of that overarching model. A last thing is that we have to get rid of the short term vision of team managers. Success can only be assured on a long term vision that is also what FC Barcelona reflects by its long term history of the club. For that team 2010 was a year where they reaped the rewards of years of hard and cooperative work. This is also something that managers need to bear in mind when starting up a new project. In the beginning it will be chaos, but after some years the model will land on its feet.

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<sup>78</sup> Annex 13

<sup>79</sup> Annex 8.a/8.b

## **5 General conclusion**

If somebody would ask me if an umbrella branding model in sports for Roeselare is applicable I would answer: “No, at least not at once.” People need to operate with a long term vision, which was also the leitmotiv through my study. The self-interest of a lot of people disposes the long term vision of few believers. Many advantages such as cost-cutting and better sport performances in the end are being over looked. It is true that it would require enormous efforts to put in place an overarching model in sports, but the city and the many stakeholders would reap the rewards in the future. Out of few believers it is difficult to select one leader that can launch, manage and maintain the project. All the same I think the city of Roeselare needs a revival in sports and a similar model can produce this.

First of all I would create a common website as already mentioned in previous parts of this study. Such a website can be developed without the idea to create an umbrella branding model. It would be a lot easier for people interested in sports of Roeselare to get access to a common website were all the sports of the city are implemented, the professional sports as well as the amateur sports. By clicking on the sport that people wanted to explore, they would get a direct link to the personal website of that sports club. When several clubs play on the highest level in Belgium a similar website model like the one of FC Barcelona could be a possibility.

If the city wants to go one step further in the actual process of an umbrella branding model in sports, I would propose to establish a business plan with a long term vision included. This plan would contain the objectives of the clubs in general and the aim of the model for the future. Also the financial distribution as well as marketing activities should be included in this business plan. When the plan is being approved, the clubs could start creating the model, step by step.

The follow up of the several steps is necessary for the continuation of the process. If one step cannot be completed, a return to the previous step is necessary in order to fulfill the completion of the next step.

Before all of this is possible I think that first and foremost all the clubs that would be implemented in the model should sit around the table to balance the pros and cons of an umbrella branding model in sports for Roeselare. If none of those clubs is convinced by the advantages of such a model, it is unlikely to set the first steps. I am convinced regardless of

the establishment of an umbrella branding model, more cooperation between the different sport clubs is the key to success and creation of a real city of sports. I like to conclude with the words of Benjamin Franklin: “We must, indeed, all hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.”



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## 7 Annexes

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