

# It's not just cricket – the portfolios of the English/Welsh cricket teams

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## **It's not just cricket – the portfolios of the English/Welsh cricket teams**

### **Abstract**

**Purpose-** The aim of the article is to examine the range of products and services offered by the professional cricket teams in the UK. To what extent have they added to their core activity of staging matches?

**Design/methodology/approach-** A case study approach was adopted using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The accounts of the 18 teams and the governing body were reviewed to analyse the flow of income within the sport and categorize its sources. Interviews were then held with senior commercial staff of twelve of the teams.

**Findings-** All of the teams had engaged in brand extensions, offering a category of products/services that were more concerned with facilities utilization. These were not aimed at fans of the teams, as with conventional sporting extensions, but at a different market. Though there was some overlap between customers. The use of alliances and joint ventures was common in the provision of these lines.

**Research limitations /implications-** The research is limited to a single sport, with the portfolio being investigated from a management as opposed to a consumer perspective. The findings are likely to be relevant to other sports teams, particularly SMEs, where income from the sport alone is insufficient to maintain professional status.

**Originality/value-** This paper adds to the previous research on typologies of brand extensions in sport by incorporating product/service lines that were aimed at resource utilization and different markets.

**Keywords:** Sources of income, sports products, brand extensions, facilities utilization, cricket

**Paper type:** Case study

## Introduction

Professional sports teams and the leagues they compete in generate income from a range of sources. The most successful generate far more revenue from broadcasting and commercial sources, including sponsorship, than they do from spectators who attend matches (Deloitte, 2012; Kern et al., 2012). A further corner-stone of their commercial strategy has been through brand extensions that enable additional contact between teams/leagues and their supporters (Richelieu and Desbordes, 2013; Walsh and Lee, 2012; Abosag et al. 2012; Hill and Vincent, 2006; Chadwick and Clowes, 1998). However, this research has tended to focus on teams who operate nationally. Little research has been conducted on those teams who are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with an annual turnover of less than €50 million and limited resources (Moore and Levermore, 2012). These are likely to operate in a restricted geographical areas as regional brands (Couvelaere and Richelieu, 2005) limiting their potential for growth. These constraints may lead to the development of a product/service portfolio that includes lines that are aimed at a different market, not concerned with fan allegiance and whose primary concern is facilities utilization.

The rationale for the paper is to examine the portfolio of products and services offered by the teams in English and Welsh cricket. It contributes to the literature on brand extensions in sport by incorporating into the study additions to the portfolio that are not aimed at fans of the team, but at a different market. This type of addition has received scant attention in a sporting context. The Types of extension strategies typology developed in the context of U.S.A. professional team sport was used as a framework (Apostolopoulou, 2002). However, there was a need to adapt it because of the different sporting context and its limited analysis of extensions that utilize facilities. The sport of cricket was selected for analysis because it has long established teams. All 18 have been professional since the 1920s, with the exception of Durham who turned professional in 1992 (Wagg, 2012). Both the academic (Shibli and Wilkinson-Riddle, 1997 & 1998) and practitioner literature (Stoner, 2013; Jones, 2012) accept that it is a sport where relying on income from spectators who attend matches is not feasible, to maintain commercial viability income is needed from other sources.

This paper commences by reviewing the literature into income streams in professional sport, proceeding to present an overview of research into the sporting offering. It then explains how domestic cricket is organized in England and Wales, describing brand extensions of the teams. The flow of income and its sources are then calculated for the sport and teams to show why a portfolio based approach is necessary. The results of a study to investigate the range of products and services marketed by the teams are presented. A revised typology is devised, developing the work of Apostolopoulou (2002), implications and conclusions of the study are then presented.

## Literature review

### Income streams in professional sport

The changing nature of sources of income in professional sport started to attract academic interest in the 1990s. Mason (1999) examined commercial viability in sport and noted that most clubs and leagues originally relied solely on gate receipts to maintain financial viability. In the modern era income was generated from four distinct groups: fans, who attend games; media companies, who purchase the rights to show games; communities, who build facilities and offer support; and corporations, who purchase teams and/or provide revenue through commercial association. The growth of broadcasting has led to some leagues and clubs becoming delocalised and having greater geographical appeal.

Andreff and Staudohar (2000) examined the changing nature of income streams in sport. Under the traditional model the main source of income was gate receipts. Some clubs augmented this with advertising, sponsorship and subsidies from organizations that were usually located in close geographical proximity. This was referred to as the spectators-subsidies-sponsors-local model (SSSL). The emergence of new sources of finance during the 1980s and 1990s through deregulation in broadcasting, together with the increased interest of entrepreneurs and corporations led to more professional management of commercial operations. A contemporary model of income based on media-corporations-merchandising and markets (MCMMG) emerged. These were no longer local but global markets. The importance of media coverage in terms of finance, commercial rationale and organizational skills is generally accepted within the literature (Pritchard, 2011).

Borland and MacDonald (2003) contrasted direct demand for either live attendance or watching broadcasts and derived demand, where the contest was used as an input in the production of another good or service. The latter group includes broadcasters seeking to market programme content to advertisers or subscribers; and organizations using sport for commercial purposes through sponsorship, advertising and merchandising. The authors believe it is difficult to generalise about commercial motives, but derived demand was dependent on the ability of a sport to provide producers of goods and services with access to profitable markets.

### The sporting offering

A concurrent stream of research focuses on the marketing of additional products and services, as opposed to the sources of finance stemming from the match itself. It acknowledged that teams and leagues had developed a range of products and services that went beyond matches. In a generic business sense Aaker (1996) defines brand extension as

the attaching of a name to a newly created product that exists in a new product category. In a sport related context Chadwick and Clowes (1998) define the core product as the sporting event and the activities directly associated with it, such as the sale of programmes and refreshments. They noted a proliferation of brand extensions by English football clubs that were necessary to grow the business. A view endorsed by Gladden et al. (2001) and Hill and Vincent (2006) who both posit that teams will be increasingly viewed as brands and managed accordingly with the aim of building brand equity and increasing team valuation.

Campbell and Kent (2002) and Walsh and Ross (2010) both argue that in a sporting context extensions are popular and logical because they provide new products with a ready-made image. These are likely to attract those who have a high degree of emotional attachment to teams they support. Others observe that they can provide increased avenues for interaction between a club and its fans, attract new consumers and contribute to financial viability (Apostolopoulou, 2002; Walsh et al., 2012).

Apostolopoulou (2002) developed a typology to classify extensions into five categories: sport activities, including training and coaching; match entertainment, such as cheerleaders and music bands; media, such as broadcasting; information related, such as web sites and team publications; and those that had a low perceived fit to the core product, such as health clubs and credit cards. These may be operated with a club's sponsor or partner.

What was not made explicit was to how perceived fit was defined. In a generic business sense Tauber (1988) measured it by the extent to which it was a logical and appropriate offering. Aaker and Keller (1990) view it as a function of the ability to transfer expertise and complement the existing brand. In a sporting context Campbell and Kent (2002) use the term brand concept consistency (Park et al. 1991) to measure the extent to which a sport's abstract meaning could be developed through brand extensions. Observing the need to preserve tradition and maintain quality standards. Papadimitriou et al. (2004) argue that there needs to be some sport-related element such as use of a team's names, logo and colours to facilitate connection in the mind of fans. Walsh et al. (2012) believe that sporting fit can be established by a similar brand image, use in similar settings and if consumers feel the organization has some sort of established expertise in the area.

This stream of literature focuses on brand extensions to existing customers. It has paid scant attention to those that use the facilities of a team but do not seek to capitalize on the connection with its fans (Richelieu and Desbordes, 2013; O'Reilly and Nadeau, 2006). These product/service lines are likely to transfer expertise that derives from managing a sport team. Although there is use in a similar setting they are aimed at a different market segment, non fans. It may also be an area where they may not have a ready-made image (Campbell and Kent, 2002; Walsh and Ross, 2010) but may through positive consumer experience enhance the parent brand, the team (Walsh et al., 2012). The paper fills this gap in the literature by incorporating into the study those brand extensions that make use of a team's facilities but are targeted at non fans.

## The organization of Cricket in England and Wales

Since 1997 the sport has been governed by the ECB (English and Welsh Cricket Board), a company that was created to take responsibility for all cricket in the two countries. For an outline of developments within the sport refer to Kuenzel and Yassim (2010), Bennett et al. (2007) and Paton and Cooke (2005). The ECB generate income through the proceeds of the staging of international matches, the sale of broadcasting and media rights, government grants and commercial activities. Some of this income is used to provide grants to the teams to support the domestic game, in 2009 this was the largest part of their expenditure (ECB, 2010). In turn the counties provide the national team with its players and the grounds that are used to stage international matches. These are by far the most lucrative games in the sport (Bennett et al., 2007). Unlike other team sports there is competition between international and domestic cricket as they are played at the same time (Paton and Cooke, 2005).

Currently there are three professional formats of the game, played in a season that begins in mid April and concludes in September: First class, which is played over four days; One day matches, which last for up to eight hours; and T20, which last up to four hours. First class cricket at domestic level has been in decline for a long time as a spectator sport and this led to the introduction of one day cricket in the 1960s (Preston, 2006). T20 was launched in England and Wales in 2003 as a shorter format of the game to attract a new younger audience to the sport (Hyde and Pritchard, 2009).

## Brand extensions in cricket

Shibli and Wilkinson-Riddle (1997 & 1998) analysed the published accounts of the counties for the 1995 season noting that they derived substantial income from their commercial activities, that income was insufficient to pay for the core activity of cricket and that they were heavily reliant on grants from the ECB for financial viability. More recent studies have also commented on the counties dependency on subsidies (Intel, 2006; The Economist, 2003). County cricket is constrained in terms of its ability to market its core product, matches, by a number of factors including interest in the sport, the six month length of the season and the limited capacity of the grounds (Chadwick and Clowes, 1998).

Wright (2011), Gibson (2010) and Garrahan and Owen (2005) all observe that the majority of teams have diversified into activities such as conferencing and banqueting. Turning their grounds into multi-purpose locations and developing non-cricket activities to ensure all year round income. Using the facilities to extend the brand is evidenced by Gloucestershire running a gym, Hampshire providing golf facilities and Kent a physiotherapy clinic. Stern (2011) claims this is the most profitable part of Kent's business. This approach to portfolio

management is well illustrated by the vision statement of Rose Bowl Plc the holding company of Hampshire who describe their vision to be an iconic international venue hosting cricket, entertainment, leisure and business (Rose Bowl Plc, 2011).

These initiatives are varied and done on a team basis. However, this is not without risks. Mintel (2006) describe cricket watchers as male and ageing, yet some of the music ventures have targeted young females, a market that the teams do not have a great deal of experience in. Lancashire reported income of £2 million and a surplus of £960 000 from the staging of pop concerts. These offset the loss in income, though not profit, caused by a reduction in international matches (Lancashire, 2009). Kent reported a loss of over £190 000 from the same type of venture (Kent, 2009).

Though the typology of Apostolopoulou (2002) provides a useful conceptual framework it has a number of limitations. It has only been empirically tested in a North American context. It does not distinguish explicitly between extensions that are aimed at participants and spectators. It does not examine extensions from the perspective of facilities utilization and it has not been applied to SMEs (Moore and Levermore, 2012). This article attempts to develop the model by incorporating brand extensions that make use of the team's facilities, are aimed at a different market segment (Walsh et al., 2012); and may be developed with commercial partners (Lee and Walsh, 2011).

## **Objectives**

- To model the flow of income within the sport quantifying the different sources of income of both the ECB and the 18 teams, using the model of Andreff and Staudohar (2000)
- To develop a typology of the product/service portfolio adapting the model of Apostodoulou (2002)
- To contrast the range of brand extensions. Are there categories that are marketed in a different manner and to different markets?

## Methodology

A case study approach was adopted as this method is preferable when the research deals with questions of “how and “why” things were done, the focus is on contemporary events and it uses multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2014). The essence of this approach is to illuminate a set of decisions, their implementation and results (Schramm, 1971). In this case secondary data sources, the financial accounts of the teams and in-depth interviews were used in order to build an in depth picture of the case.

The research approach is also deemed appropriate when it is carried out in close interaction with practitioners and it deals with real management situations (Gibbert et al. 2008). A criticism of this approach is in the ability to generalize from case studies (Yin, 2014; Dawes Farquhar, 2012). Though it is accepted that the findings of the study may be contextual to cricket, they also may be applicable to SMEs in other sports. Particularly those, who have difficulty maintaining commercial viability based on income from their core product, matches.

The annual accounts for the 18 teams and the ECB report for the year ending in 2009 were collected. The counties use different accounting periods but for the purpose of this research this is not regarded as problematic as the reports all cover the 2009 playing season. This information together with other secondary sources, see figure 1, allowed for an estimation to be made of the annual value of the sport for the season. It also helped put the teams’ turnover in the context of the sport in England and Wales.

The income streams of the teams were then divided into three categories grants from the ECB, attendance income and commercial income. Attendance income is for domestic matches only and includes both membership fees and payments made at the gate. All other non attendance income is included under the heading commercial income. International matches are included in this category because they are allocated by a bidding process and by inference commercial activity is needed to win staging rights. It also allows in some cases for the calculation of both county and international matches as a percentage of total income.

The counties were then all contacted by email to try and arrange a telephone interview with a senior member of their staff to discuss the range of products and services they offer. Twelve semi-structured interviews were then held over a period of a month with four Chief Executives, five Commercial Directors and three Marketing/Commercial Managers of the teams. Each lasted about 30 minutes with the same twelve questions asked concerning the range of products/services offered. These interviews helped corroborate findings from reviewing the annual accounts. Although it is accepted that a limitation of this line of inquiry is that there may be problems of recalling events and reflexivity in that the interviewer may have influenced respondents (Yin, 2014).

These questions were divided into four areas, see appendix one. The first was the manner in which matches and facilities were marketed. As a review of the teams' accounts indicate that parts of the portfolio are concerned with facilities usage and not related to cricket. The second markets as practitioner research has identified that some of these brand extensions may not be aimed at cricket fans (Wright, 2011; Stern 2011; Gibson, 2010). The third joint ventures/ alliances, as these have been observed to be commonplace in the offering of additions to the core product in the area of sport (Lee and Walsh, 2011). The final area was co-ordination and information sharing. Though previous research has led to the devising of a typology it has not contrasted the roles of individual teams and governing bodies in making decisions on brand extensions (Apostodoulou, 2002).

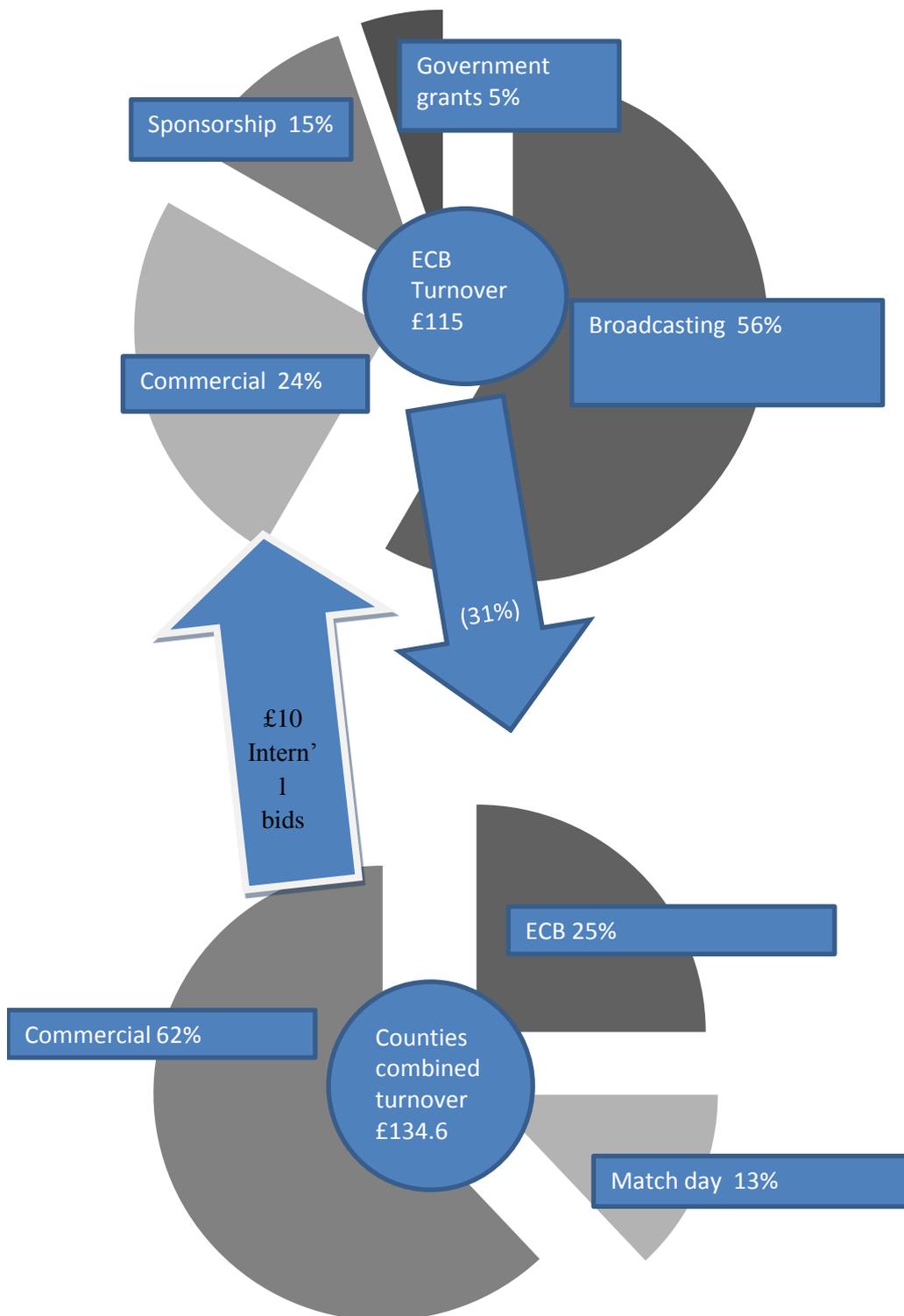
## **Findings**

### The flow of income in the sport

The sources of ECB income are shown in figure 1. Turnover in 2009 was £115 million, over 70% of this coming from broadcasting and sponsorship income (ECB, 2010). The main interest of these commercial partners is in international as opposed to domestic matches (Bennett et al, 2007). Gillis (2009) notes the increasing dependency on broadcasting rights, exclusive rights have been held by BSkyB since 2006, estimating that over half of ECB income after 2010 will come from this source. Shibli and Wilkinson-Riddle (1998) estimated the figure to be 38% in the 1996 season. As figure 1 shows the sport operates on a MCM model, though it is heavily reliant on the media stream (Andreff and Staudohar, 2000). Ultimately the counties are dependent on this. Any large reduction in the value of media rights is likely to lead to a reduction in ECB grants. Though £35 million is given in grants to the counties, estimates are that the counties who staged international matches returned £10 million in staging rights (Wright, 2011).

In terms of valuation of the sport of professional cricket in the UK, this amounts to about £206 million. This constitutes ECB turnover of £105 million (excluding bids for staging international matches), county match day income of £18 million and county commercial income of £83 million. The counties are generating more money from commercial activities than their core activity of staging domestic cricket matches.

**Figure 1: The Flow of income in English and Welsh cricket 2009 (£ millions)**



Sources: Wright (2011), ECB (2010), Gillis (2010), Smith (2009), Tennant (2007), Pengelly (2006), Counties annual accounts

## Teams income

The individual teams can be divided into three categories based on the size of their grounds and facilities: A and B, which stage international games; and C, which stage county games and other non England internationals (Wright, 2011). The value of staging international matches is illustrated by Gloucestershire obtaining 18% of their total turnover from a single one day international. Glamorgan obtained 50% from the staging of a five day Test match.

Those with the smaller grounds in category C, most have capacities below 10000, are particularly reliant upon the ECB for income and are unlikely to be viable without it (Shibli and Wilkinson-Riddle, 1997). Using Andreff and Staudohar's (2000) classification they are SSSL. They are constrained in terms of attendance income by a limited amount of interest in attending matches and ground size. They are regional brands (Couvellaere and Richelieu, 2005) and their sponsors are mainly local companies (Smith, 2009). As table 1 shows all but one gain more income from commercial sources than match day income. Middlesex are the exception as they are tenants at their ground as opposed to owners. A number of the counties are loss making, illustrating the need to develop a portfolio of products/services in order to ensure financial viability.

**Table 1: Turnover of counties in the 2009 season**

Counties	Turnover (000s)	Pre tax Profit/ (loss) (000s)	Ground category	ECB (%)	Attendance day (%)	Commercial (%)
Surrey	25465	752	A	6	8	86
Warwickshire	15685	1156	A	11	4	85
Lancashire	12214	(605)	A	16	21	63
Glamorgan	11595	338	A	20	6	74
Yorkshire	8449	699	A	19	13	68
Notts	7180	(149)	A	31	9	60
Hampshire	7073	(160)	A	28	16	56
Durham	6936	146	A	27	8	65
Sussex	5873	(15)	C	37	25	38
Kent	5029	(812)	C	37	21	42
Somerset	4501	6	C	39	23	39
Essex	4400	(355)	C	38	30	32
Middlesex	4316	(114)	A	43	33	24
Worcestershire	4009	(118)	C	48	18	34
Glouc'shire	3817	(182)	B	42	13	45
Northants	2892	9	C	59	14	27
Derbyshire	2707	14	C	60	11	29
Leicestershire	2506	(22)	C	73	8	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>134.6</b>			<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>62</b>

Sources: Annual County Reports for 2009, Wright (2011)

## Interview analysis

### Matches and facilities marketing

All of the respondents said their team marketed the sport and the facilities of the venue in a different manner. What was evident was that the grounds were used for a wide range of events. Mentioned in the interviews were Christmas parties, cinema screens at the ground, conferences, dog shows, fireworks displays, musical concerts and weddings. Two of the teams had also rented out their amenities to organizations for filming adverts, one of these had also rented out the ground as training facilities for a foreign sports team. In addition to these ad hoc activities a number had continuous income streams through general shops, gyms, hotels and renting out office space. However, unlike brand extensions that had previously been identified in a sporting context these did not seek specifically to connect with core customers (Apostodoulou, 2002). Most remarked that they operate in a number of different markets, both consumer and organizational, and there was a need to market to them in a different manner.

A number of respondents also made the point that it was more productive to market the facilities to supporters rather than marketing cricket to users of the facilities. Getting people to come to the ground was seen as very useful as it showed off the facilities and may encourage visitors to return. A comment was made, "Our raison d'être is cricket... it is marketed very separately to the venue. Though cricket is our focus our biggest business is catering and events".

### Markets

All teams spent time marketing the sport and the facilities to their local community, operating as regional as opposed to national brands (Abosag et al., 2012; Couvelaere and Richelieu, 2005). The exception to this was international matches that were marketed outside of the team's catchment area. A lot of effort had been put into improving participation amongst children through the ECB's Chance to Shine Programme in local schools. Most respondents thought that these activities if done well and as part of a planned programme increased interest in the sport and the team, but it was difficult to measure. These findings endorse previous research that show sporting organizations view themselves as having an obligation to develop their sport in the community (Morrow, 2013; Walsh and Lee, 2012).

What also emerged from the research was that in addition to the sport most were engaged in a range of activities within their local community that were not related to the sport. These introduced the facilities of the clubs to both consumer and business markets including local authorities, charities, health trusts and sports clubs. Some had given office space for free to small organizations because it might lead to increased interest in the team. One responded, "We are realistic enough to know that people will be using us for different thing

and it is like the old Venn diagram, there will be a bit of overlap in the middle but we will be dealing with different groups of people". Most agreed the crossover was limited, a number estimated it to be a single figure percentage but they had difficulty tracking this. One made the point, "We retain the same business for Christmas parties and we know they like that part of us. What we do not know is whether they come back for the cricket".

#### Joint ventures/alliances

Using partners to provide product/service lines at a team's grounds was a common occurrence, particularly in the areas of catering, hotels and music concerts. The decision as to whether to work with a partner depended on the nature of the business. One respondent commented that catering was an individual decision and depended on the clubs needs and what they could negotiate. Some teams used the same catering partner pointing out that the partner was a specialist in sporting catering and the agreement worked well as the teams were big customers.

A number said that if they knew the market well they would run an event on their own, such as firework displays. If they did not they would work with a partner. As one Commercial Director remarked, "We are good at running a venue...our strength does not lie in promoting non cricket events". These findings are consistent with previous findings in a sporting context, that a lack of certain skills and financial returns are drivers of outsourcing (Moore and Levermore, 2012; Lee and Walsh, 2011). Some ventures involved reciprocal arrangements with organizations who rented an executive box for corporate hospitality.

#### Co-ordination and information sharing

In terms of co-operation between teams one remarked, "Geographically scattered around the country, each of us has a primarily local concern targeting our local residents. We collaborate and communicate in most areas we do not compete anywhere other than on the pitch". However, when asked for their opinion on the league providing guidance on the offering of products/services the view was best summed up by one respondent who said, "The grounds are different market places...the teams are so different you really need a bespoke business plan for each". These findings are consistent with those of Couvelaere and Richelieu (2005) who observe that in France football clubs offer different product/services, dependent upon local market conditions. Another respondent added, "In certain areas we could gain economies of scale but in general it is best left to the counties". Most agreed that the ECB was good at co-ordinating and providing information. "Pooling of resources is much better, we are less proud of keeping success stories. We have 2/3 meetings a year" another endorsed this view "There are things we like to shout about and we can learn from things that others do well. These are mainly cricket related".

## The product/service portfolio

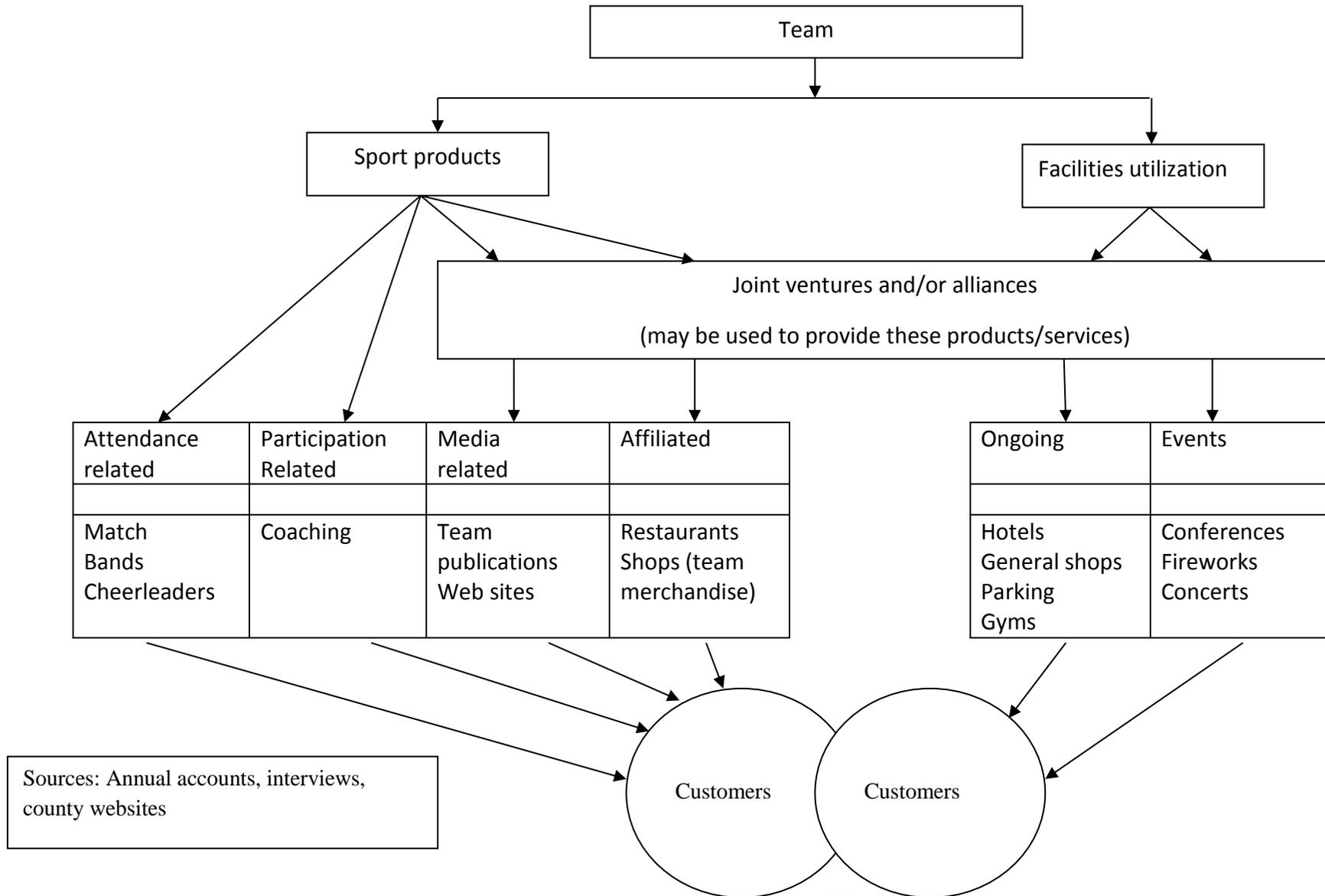
The research identified two broad categories within the portfolio, see figure 2. Those related to the core activity of the sport and targeted at fans and those that are concerned with utilizing the facilities and targeting a different market. The former was labelled sport products as it embraced both the match and the merchandise associated with it (Dolles and Söderman, 2005). The second category that emerged from the research was labelled facilities utilization and involved use of the venue and resources. As table 1 shows a portfolio based approach is necessary in this case because income from the core activity, cricket is limited and insufficient for financial viability. These are extensions based on the ability to transfer expertise (Aaker and Keller, 1990), in this case from running a professional sports team.

Apostolopoulou's (2002) Types of extension strategies typology was used as a conceptual framework for the sport products category only. However, there was a need to adapt it and include the core activity of the match as the focus is on the entire product/service range offered by a team. Combining the core and the activities that surround a match, the auxiliary features (Couvellaere and Richelieu, 2005) led to the development of a category labelled attendance related. This incorporates all entertainment activities that are part of the match, such as bands and cheerleaders.

The sport related extensions she identified includes additional teams/leagues which are more applicable to governing bodies as opposed to individual teams. However, some of the activities in this category such as coaching are concerned with participation in the sport and this was the label that was used. In this instance it is a condition of team's grants that they engage in this activity (ECB, 2010). Media and information related are combined into a media category as subsequent technological developments mean both can be delivered via electronic methods. The term affiliated was used to describe extensions that are linked to the core activity but can be consumed independently of it. For example a consumer does not have to use the catering facilities at a match and restaurants are used outside of matches.

The facilities utilization category that had not been included in the typology (Apostolopoulou, 2002) was divided into two subgroups that emerged from the interviews, Ongoing and Events. The former consists of those products/services which provide a continuous stream of income. These include lines such as hotels, restaurants, gyms and general shops selling merchandise not related to the core product. The latter subgroup refers to those which are irregular and ad hoc in their nature e.g. conferences, firework displays and music concerts. One of the features of this category is that many of these activities are likely to be provided with partners through joint ventures/alliances (Lee and Walsh, 2011).

**Figure 2: The product/service portfolio of county cricket teams**



## Implications

Sports clubs face constraints in the supply of their core product that are not applicable to most businesses. In the case of cricket they do not play matches from late September to early April. In some sports it may be possible to rely on income that it is generated from the sports product category to fans. However, in this context as figure 1 shows there is insufficient income within cricket and they have to offer a wider range of products/services for commercial viability. Although cricket is their *raison d'être* teams need to finance themselves by marketing products/services that are not related to the sport.

The findings of this study indicate that both governing bodies in sports and teams should acknowledge that their core product, the match, is part of a portfolio of products/services. The theoretical contribution of the paper is in the addition to previous typologies of brand extensions that are not aimed at fans, but at a different market (Apostodoulou, 2002). In terms of management and strategy the league governing body decide on the provision of the attendance related subgroup. They are also likely to be highly influential in outlining strategy in the participation related and to a certain extent media related subgroups. This will be done through imposing obligations on the teams that are a condition of league membership. These may also entail commitments of a social nature, such as encouraging participation (Morrow, 2013). The other sub group within the sport products category, affiliated and the facilities utilization category are largely determined by local market conditions. Teams, particularly those that are SMEs need to develop their brand on a regional basis (Couvelaere and Richelieu, 2005) developing commercial relationships with local companies and organizations (Abosag et al., 2012; Smith, 2009). In the context of cricket this approach can be regarded as successful as none has yet to cease operating.

Where cricket teams serve as a model for other sports is the ability to transfer expertise they have developed in running a professional sports team. This they have done in a range of activities in their local community, particularly those related to leisure and health. Facilities utilization provides a touch point between a team's brand and its customers (Walsh et al. 2012) but in this case it was not clear if they are fans of the team or just users of the facilities and to what extent this enhances the team brand (Aaker and Keller, 1990). The general consensus is that they are different markets and should be segmented and marketed to differently, though some attempts should be made to cross sell.

What might be a better strategy for the ECB and other governing bodies in sport is to develop an abstract meaning for their sport and the facilities it offers (Campbell and Kent, 2002; Park et al., 1991). This could be then used to market the portfolios at a national level as governing bodies generally have far greater resources and geographical reach than the individual teams. In cricket this would need to take account of their differences from the national team, although as Walsh et al. (2012) observe any image will be strongly linked to the sport itself. This meaning needs to encompass the fact that the offering of the teams

goes beyond their core product of cricket and that they have developed expertise in other activities such as the staging of leisure and business events. The issues of promotion and market positioning falls outside the scope of this article but one respondent pointed out that corporate customers liked the atmosphere, the green and the open space of their club.

## **Conclusions**

The sport operates on what Andreff and Staudohar (2000) describe as the contemporary model of finance, with a heavy reliance on broadcasting income. Though their core activity is staging cricket matches the lack of income from this activity has led the teams to offer a portfolio of products/services to ensure their survival. Apostolopoulou's (2002) typology was revised to incorporate a further category, facilities utilization which was concerned with deriving income from their resources. These differ from brand extensions that had previously been identified in the literature, as they are not aimed at a team's fans but at a different market, though there may be some overlap (Richelieu and Desbordes, 2013).

This adds an additional stream of income to the four identified by Mason (1999) fans who attend games, broadcasters, local communities and commercial partners. This fifth stream, facilities utilization, is important in this and probably other sporting contexts as it helps ensure commercial viability. These consumers, who may be individuals or organizations, differ from the commercial partners previously identified as their interest is primarily the facilities of the team as opposed to the core activity of the sport.

This segment is likely to be marketed to in a different manner to consumers of the sport. In this case a lot of the activities associated with the sport are marketed by the governing body and operate on a national level. The facilities utilization products/services are managed by the counties, which operate on a regional basis. In many instances partners are involved as products/services are provided through joint ventures/alliances. This is particularly evident in activities such as music concerts and catering. Knowledge of this market segment is important because facilities use brings people and organizations into contact with the sport and this may lead to increased involvement, though the evidence in this case is only anecdotal. This stream also needs to be considered when marketing the sport as it provides broadcasters and sponsors with access to markets (Borland and MacDonald, 2003). This may be overlooked if access to consumers is only considered from a team spectator perspective.

## **Limitations and further research**

The research was conducted in the context of a single sport and from a supplier perspective. The author believes that the findings are likely to have relevance to sports where income from the sport itself is insufficient for commercial viability. However, further research is needed to establish whether these findings apply and the types of portfolios offered.

It also remains unclear as to the extent to which usage of facilities leads to involvement with the sport. It is an area that is ripe for investigation from both an academic and practitioner perspective. A number of respondents pointed out that the qualities of their databases were improving and it was something they may be able to do in the future. Abstract meaning is another area that is worthy of investigation. In particular how it can be established for a sporting team's portfolio and how perception of it may differ by market segment.

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## **Appendix one**

The twelve questions asked were

### Matches and facilities marketing

Do you market matches and the facilities of the county separately and in a different manner?

Are there any activities that are not related to cricket that have been successful at generating income e.g. musical concerts, weddings?

Are there any facilities that you rent out to generate income (e.g. car parking, general shops and hotels)?

Do you try to market the facilities to supporters of the county?

### Markets

Do you work with organizations in your local community?

Do you believe that coaching and school visits lead to those involved becoming spectators in either the short or long term?

Is there any evidence to suggest that non cricket activities such as conferencing and banqueting have encouraged people to attend matches?

### Joint ventures/alliances

Have you formed alliances with other companies to provide products /services not related to cricket on a commercial basis?

Are there any reasons for this?

### Co-ordination and information sharing

The Morgan Report mentions counties pooling resources and sharing information. Do you think counties do this well or are there areas for improvement?

Would your county benefit from a more co-ordinated approach by the ECB in the marketing of products/services?

Should the ECB try to provide guidance to the counties on the addition of specific products/services, e.g. physiotherapy units?