

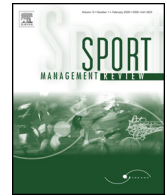


ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Sport Management Review

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/smr



A typology of cause-related marketing approaches in European professional basketball

Cleo Schyvinck*, Annick Willem

Ghent University, Watersportlaan 2, 9000 Gent, Belgium

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 26 January 2017
Received in revised form 9 August 2017
Accepted 9 August 2017
Available online xxx

Keywords:

Corporate social responsibility
Marketing
Stakeholder management

ABSTRACT

As professional sports organisations are increasingly engaging in Cause-Related Marketing (CRM), there is a growing interest in understanding to what extent Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can deliver win–win outcomes for both the organisation and society at large. In this article, the authors provide a typology of CRM approaches adopted by professional sports teams and demonstrate if and how they approach social responsibility from a marketing perspective. The authors use a qualitative method to explore CRM engagement of professional basketball teams in Europe. The findings show that CRM is more than an act of philanthropy to the majority of the sports organisations. The sport organisations envision a win–win situation either through increased revenue or improved stakeholder relationships, or a combination of both. The authors merge the CSR and CRM concept and contribute to the CRM literature by investigating it from a broad managerial and stakeholder perspective rather than from a unilateral consumer perspective. The model will assist sports managers in CRM decision-making, more specifically, in handling the paradox between commercialising CRM and safeguarding integrity.

© 2017 Sport Management Association of Australia and New Zealand. Published by Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Translating Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) into marketing strategy is what briefly defines Cause-Related Marketing (CRM; [Liston-Heyes & Liu, 2013](#)). Over the past two decades, researchers have recognized the role of CRM in leveraging a firm's social responsibility activities in such a way that it enhances its reputation, profitability and sustainability ([Liu & Ko, 2011](#); [Pracejus & Olsen, 2004](#)).

Professional sports organisations, like other for-profit organisations, are increasingly engaging in CRM ([Inoue, Mahan, & Kent, 2013](#); [Irwin, Lachowetz, & Clark, 2010](#)). However, there is a lack of understanding as to why and how sports organisations engage in CRM ([Roy, 2011](#)). While CRM receives increased academic attention with regards to impact on consumer behaviour, the management point of view remains underexplored in the sports context ([Irwin et al., 2010](#)). We expand the CRM research domain from a unilateral consumer perspective towards a broader managerial and stakeholder perspective. The sports sector will especially benefit from a broader view on CRM, given the multitude of stakeholders (fans, players, sponsors, leagues, media, local community) influencing CRM decision-making ([Babiak & Wolfe, 2009](#)). We propose

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: Cleo.Schyvinck@Ugent.be (C. Schyvinck), Annick.Willem@Ugent.be (A. Willem).

that marketing outcomes vary according to CRM approach, through distinct value propositions to stakeholders. Consequently, we contribute to the CRM literature by taking a stakeholder management perspective.

Researchers have noted the benefits of adopting a strategic and integrative approach towards social engagement (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012; Porter & Kramer, 2002; Seitanidi & Ryan, 2007). Equally, sports management scholars advocate this approach (Heinze, Soderstrom, & Zdroik, 2014; Inoue & Kent, 2014). However, the limited amount of CRM studies conducted in sport suggests that sports organisations approach CRM rather altruistically than strategically (Extejt, 2004; Kim, Kwak, & Kim, 2010; Roy & Graeff, 2003). Some of the positive financial outcomes, like increased purchasing intent or switching behaviour, have not yet been confirmed in sport (Extejt, 2004; Kim et al., 2010; Lachowetz & Gladden, 2002; Roy & Graeff, 2003). This may suggest that professional sports organisations consider CRM engagement more as a public relations necessity rather than as a marketing tool (Roy & Graeff, 2003). In this study, we investigate the different CRM approaches adopted by professional sports teams. Understanding why sports teams engage in CRM is relevant, because while an altruistic approach may be a worthwhile activity, it is perhaps not leveraging the full potential of a powerful sports team to make a difference for both the good cause and the sports team (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009; Heinze et al., 2014; Porter & Kramer, 2002). Categorising sports organisations based on CRM type addresses the need for a more comprehensive picture of the adoption and diffusion of the CRM phenomenon in sport (Roy, 2011).

By enlarging the view on CRM, we are intersecting partly with research on CSR management. Where CSR and CRM are closely related, both concepts are mostly studied in separate literature streams, namely management and marketing literature (Sheikh & Beise-Zee, 2011). Scholars usually define social responsibility as CSR from a managerial and stakeholder perspective and as CRM from a marketing perspective. The purpose of this study is to blend both concepts and investigate if and how CSR ideas are marketed into CRM strategies. In that sense, we add to the literature on CRM, taking a stakeholder and management perspective.

2. Literature review

2.1. Cause-related marketing in sport

The rise of CRM in sport is captured in a growing body of literature on the benefits of CRM for sports organisations (Kim et al., 2010; Lachowetz & Gladden, 2002; Roy & Graeff, 2003). CRM efforts can provide competitive advantages by enhancing the team's reputation and the consumers' attitudes towards the team. Furthermore, social engagement among sport organizations can have a significant impact on image of (Roy & Graeff, 2003) and loyalty towards the team (Lachowetz & Gladden, 2002). Other marketing benefits include increased word-of-mouth and merchandise consumption (Walker & Kent, 2009). Examples of sport teams engaging in CRM can be found throughout the big sports leagues in the US. For example, the Boston Red Sox raised money for cancer research through the Dana Farber Cancer Research Institute (Lachowetz & Gladden, 2002). Additionally, CRM can demonstrate concern and involvement in the local community, which can generate support from stakeholders (Sheth & Babiak, 2010). Playing for Success (an education and health program for children) is an example of a community relations initiative that is deployed by various professional sports teams in Europe. These kinds of collaborations can generate goodwill from stakeholders and provide a competitive advantage towards other teams in the league. According to Roy and Graeff (2003), engaging in CRM is as viable for professional sports organisations as for other product and services companies.

Moreover, professional sports organisations are ideal vehicles to engage socially, given their role model status (McGowan & Mahon, 2009; Smith & Westerbeek, 2007). Smith and Westerbeek (2007) described some unique aspects of sport that make these organisations well-suited, even better than traditional corporations, to engage socially. These include the engagement of mass media and its communication power, youth appeal, and positive health and social impacts. Moreover, sport merits an affinity from its consumers that only few regular brands can match. This enhances its receptivity for social responsibility messages toward consumers (Roy, 2011). Professional sports teams also believe they should give back to those who are less fortunate than themselves, and create a stronger bond between them and their local community (Lee & Ferreira, 2013). Fans or consumers even expect them to do so, as evidenced by Roy and Graeff's (2003) study, where 90% of the consumers agreed that professional sports teams should support community charities or causes. Similarly, scholars consider social responsibility as critical in bridging the gap between the stars that athletes have become, and their fans (Knecht, 2007). Thus, as their influence on communities can hardly be overestimated, professional sports organisations are well placed to engage in charity work (Smith & Westerbeek, 2007).

Whereas general management scholars advise a strategic and integrative approach to social engagement (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012; Porter & Kramer, 2002; Seitanidi & Ryan, 2007), it seems that only few sports organisations are managing it that way (Kihl, Babiak, & Tainsky, 2014; Sheth & Babiak, 2010; Walker & Kent, 2009). Researchers show that it is crucial for team credibility and outcome to proactively manage CRM initiatives rather than in response to pressures from stakeholders (Inoue & Kent, 2014). The Detroit Lions' case is considered a positively deviant case in which social responsibility is managed in a strategic and integrated way (Heinze et al., 2014). In addition to focusing on what is best for both the cause and the local community, the Detroit Lions develop partnerships that are mutually beneficial for themselves and their partners. The CRM collaborations allow the Lions and their partner Non Profit Organisations (NPO) to match needs and expectations, delivering maximal win-win outcome for the team, its stakeholders, and society (Heinze et al., 2014).

However, various dimensions that differentiate sport from other business contexts may suggest that professional sports organisations view CRM involvement more as a public relations necessity rather than as a strategic marketing tool (Inoue, Kent, & Lee, 2011; Ratten & Babiak, 2010; Roy & Graeff, 2003). Several theories of ethics (justice, deontology, virtue) could be called upon to contend a merely commercial approach to the marketing of CSR (Van de Ven, 2008). Given the scepticism of many, teams might believe it is best not to communicate at all about CSR endeavours to prevent an unvirtuous image. Furthermore, the monopolistic market situation, highly engaged consumers and stakeholders and the lack of evidence of a direct monetary return, may suggest that teams envision other benefits than financial gain from their CRM engagement (Extejt, 2004; Kim et al., 2010; Roy & Graeff, 2003; Walker & Kent, 2009). Spectator sport consumers rarely switch teams after a CRM campaign (Lachowetz & Gladden, 2002; Roy & Graeff, 2003). Increased attendance (Inoue et al., 2011) or purchasing intent (Walker & Kent, 2009) after a CRM campaign is also less prevailing in sport compared to other industries. According to Inoue et al. (2011), CRM motivations of professional sports teams might differ from other business organisations in a way that sports teams thrive for win maximisation, rather than for profit maximisation. Consequently, their social initiatives are often poorly marketed and/or communicated (Inoue et al., 2011). Lastly, given the high scrutiny of unethical practices in professional sport, teams often use CRM as a medium to offset negative publicity.

2.2. Inter-section between CSR and CRM

Since the early 2000's, a growing body of literature has emerged with a focus on CSR in sport (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009; Babiak, 2010; Bradish & Cronin, 2009; Breitbarth & Harris, 2008; Sheth & Babiak, 2010; Smith & Westerbeek, 2007; Walker & Kent, 2009; Walker, Kent, & Vincent, 2010). Similarly, several scholars have focused on the benefits of CRM for sports organisations (Irwin et al., 2010; Irwin, Lachowetz, Cornwell, & Clark, 2003; Kim et al., 2010; Lachowetz & Gladden, 2002; Lachowetz & Irwin, 2002; McGlone & Martin, 2006; Roy & Graeff, 2003). Although CSR and CRM are two terms that vary conceptually, they have similarities in practice (Sheikh & Beise-Zee, 2011).

Sheikh and Beise-Zee (2011) state that CSR is more holistic, and more encompassing than CRM (see Table 1). CSR covers a large spectrum of an organisation's activities, varying from environmental welfare, to employee management, to community engagement, and includes every aspect of an organisation's goodwill towards society (Sheikh & Beise-Zee, 2011). CRM, on the other hand, is more focused, especially through the link with a good cause. Moreover, its targets are often more tightly defined and linked to the goal of the organisation (Sheikh & Beise-Zee, 2011).

Although CSR and CRM are two terms that vary conceptually, they have similarities in practice (Sheikh & Beise-Zee, 2011) and theory. Lantos (2002) describes CSR as a social engagement that benefits both society and the business. This definition is in line with the one that Babiak and Wolfe (2009) adopt, who note that CSR can go beyond philanthropy and benefit the business as well (Aguilera, Rupp, Williams, & Ganapathi, 2007; Barnett, 2007). Further, Marconi (2002) defines CRM as a practice of marketing a product, service, brand, or company through a mutually beneficial relationship with an NPO or social cause. In these broad definitions, CSR and CRM both see a win–win for the organisation and the cause by doing good. Although there is clearly an inter-section between CRM and strategic CSR, the link between CSR and CRM in sport has not yet

Table 1

Corporate social responsibility versus cause-related marketing in sport.

	Corporate social responsibility	Cause-related marketing
Short description	A set of actions to deliver some social good	Social activities used as a marketing instrument
Definition	CSR is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis (European Commission, 2011)	CRM is the practice of marketing a product, service, brand, or company through a mutually beneficial relationship with a non-profit or social cause organisation (Marconi, 2002)
Objectives/outcomes	Increase personal and/or social welfare	Influence customer behaviour and/or attitudes
Employees involved	Potentially all organisational employees	Marketing department
Timeframe	Ongoing	Limited duration
Locus of benefit	Society at large	Cause or social partner and sports team
Primary focus	Stakeholders	Customers
Research stream	Management	Marketing
Example	The Miami HEAT, invested in designing and constructing one of the world's greenest, most energy-efficient, and highest performing arenas in the world (The Miami Heat, 2017)	The Miami HEAT collaborates with NPO's supporting the Hispanic community in South Florida, for which they generate awareness and donations (The Miami Heat, 2017)
Key references	Babiak (2010); Babiak and Wolfe (2009); Breitbarth and Harris (2008); Inoue et al. (2011); Sheth and Babiak (2010); Smith and Westerbeek (2007); Walker and Kent (2009); Walker et al. (2010)	Irwin et al. (2010); Irwin et al. (2003); Kim et al. (2010); Lachowetz and Gladden (2002); Lachowetz and Irwin (2002); McGlone and Martin (2006); Roy and Graeff (2003)

been clearly articulated (Lough & Pharr, 2010). Mostly, the management (CSR) and marketing (CRM) of social responsibility activities are treated as distinct phenomena. In this paper, we investigate to what extent social responsibility is embedded in an organisations' marketing thought and carried out as CRM in order to create win–win benefits.

2.2.1. Corporate social responsibility and marketing

The bulk of CSR research in sport is conducted from a management perspective and is based on organisational, institutional, and stakeholder theory. A gap remains in studying CSR management from a marketing perspective (Vaaland, Heide, & Grønhaug, 2008). This approach can be important because increasingly, sport organisations are motivated by self-interests in order to survive and be effective (Irwin et al., 2010; Lachowetz & Gladden, 2002; Lachowetz & Irwin, 2002).

Philanthropic intentions can no longer justify charitable giving and expenditures related to CSR activities (Porter & Kramer, 2002). Multiple stakeholders are looking critically at the behaviour of the firm. Kotler and Lee (2005) also position CSR as a business strategy, aiming at doing well and doing good. According to these scholars, there should be no paradox between improving competitiveness, on the one hand, and making a sincere effort to improve society, on the other hand. Also in sport management, several scholars suggest that, in order for socially responsible behaviour to be sustainable in the long run, CSR activities should contribute to the company's revenue, and that increasingly, sports managers are marketing their CSR activities to do so (Irwin et al., 2003; Lachowetz & Gladden, 2002; Lachowetz & Irwin, 2002; Roy & Graeff, 2003; Sheth & Babiak, 2010). Various clinics and teaching programs (such as the Punt, Pass, and Kick program of the National Football League) are adopted by teams to develop future generations of fans or players by generating interest in the game. In this sense, CSR becomes integral to an organisation's profitability and brand strategy (Polonsky & Jevons, 2006). It leverages its unique resources and expertise to create both economic and social value. Hence, marketing should be considered as a suitable lens through which the phenomenon of CSR can be examined (Lantos, 2001).

This marketing of CSR is often practiced via the support of causes or specific social issues (Brønn & Vrioni, 2001). Cause selection is perhaps the most popular topic in the research on CRM (Hamiln & Wilson, 2004; Trimble & Rifon, 2006). Pharr and Lough (2012) and Hoeffler and Keller (2002) state that a cause should resonate with stakeholders in order to transfer a positive image from the cause to the brand. Inoue and Kent (2014) also suggest that company-cause congruence has a positive effect on credibility of the CRM engagement. In other words, there should be a fit between the sports team and the selected cause or social partner. Supporting a cause as a marketing tactic is basically the essence of CRM, one that aims to transfer a positive image from the cause to the brand and vice versa through brand extension (Broderick, Jogi, & Garry, 2003; Pracejus & Olsen, 2004). However, transfer can also be negative when endorsers of the professional sports team engage in unfavourable actions (Doyle, Pentecost, & Funk, 2014). Engaging strategically in CSR/CRM may help professional sports organisations to prevent long-term damage after ethical issues (i.e. cheating, gambling, doping and hooliganism). CRM can create positive attitudes towards a company that has engaged in unethical practices (Berglind & Nakata, 2005; Sheth & Babiak, 2010).

2.2.2. Broadening cause-related marketing

Research have adopted different approaches to the study of CSR and CRM, with some discussing CRM as a marketing tool without referring to CSR (Gupta & Pirsch, 2006; Pracejus & Olsen, 2004; Samu & Wymer, 2009; Varadarajan & Menon, 1988; Webb & Mohr, 1998), while other treat CRM as very similar to CSR (Barone, Miyazaki, & Taylor, 2000; Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, & Hill, 2006; Endacott, 2004; Mohr, Webb, & Harris, 2001; Nan & Heo, 2007; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Traditionally, CRM is approached from an instrumental perspective focusing on the impact of CRM campaigns on consumer behaviour and marketing outcomes. The bulk of CRM studies concentrate on consumers as sole stakeholders. Mounting evidence suggests, however, that an increasing number of actors, both internal and external, are placing more and more demands on organisations' social responsibilities (Aguilera et al., 2007; Joyner & Payne, 2002). The multitude of stakeholders and their interrelationships call for a broader view on CRM, shifting from the narrow perspective of consumer-based CRM towards a broader corporate-level CRM concept (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004).

An important change in the marketing definition, created by The National Association of Marketing Teachers (2004), was the introduction of stakeholders. Vaaland et al. (2008) notes that "Marketing is an organisational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organisation and its stakeholders" (p. 929). This change implied a shift from a dyadic perspective (i.e. organisation and individual) to a triadic perspective (i.e. organisation, customers, and other external stakeholders) (Kotler & Keller, 2006).

At the core of stakeholder theory is that stakeholders are essential to the success of an organisation because they provide resources to the company (Post, Preston, & Sachs, 2002). Post et al. (2002) define stakeholders as "individuals and constituencies that contribute, either voluntarily or involuntarily, to the corporation's wealth-creating capacity and activities, and who are therefore its potential beneficiaries and/or risk-bearers" (p. 8). Stakeholder theorists state that an organisation should maintain profitable relationships with its stakeholders to be successful in the long run (Friedman, Parent, & Mason, 2004). Similarly, Parent (2016) notes that increasing stakeholder participation can increase capacity, resources, and an emotional connection to the sports organisation.

Given the numerous amount of stakeholders involved in professional sport (media, leagues, fans, players, sponsors and local community), adopting a holistic stakeholder view to CRM seems opportune. Some of the sport specific elements previously mentioned, like power, affinity, and public interest, illustrate the complexity of and dependency on stakeholders

(Babiak & Wolfe, 2009; Babiak, 2010; Smith & Westerbeek, 2007). Sports teams engaging stakeholders via CRM can demonstrate concern, build bonds, show leadership in the community, and garner favourable attitudes for the organisation in return (Sheth & Babiak, 2010). These activities can take a multitude of forms, varying from sponsorships to donations-in-kind, depending on the influence of different stakeholder groups and the priority the organisation wishes to give to each of those stakeholders (Liu & Ko, 2011). Good stakeholder relations can be both a means and an end to successful CRM engagement.

2.3. CRM engagement, towards a conceptual model

For companies and their managers, dilemmas arise as they are faced with choosing the most appropriate CRM approach to meet differing business goals and stakeholder expectations, such as generating increased revenue, positive attitudes toward the company, improved stakeholder relationships, and increased legitimacy. These choices enable companies to reinforce the associations with their brands. Henderson and Arora (2010) suggest that such processes can help organisations to establish differentiation, if performed effectively.

We draw from Liu (2013) as a base to explore CRM engagement in the sports industry. Although Liu considered the framework as marketing oriented, the author adopted the idea of taking a broad stakeholder and management orientation rather than a narrow consumer orientation (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004). In this sense, we find it useful to study the intersection between CSR and CRM. For the purpose of this study, we distinguish between a stakeholder focus, encompassing customers and non-customers as target group and a customer focus, including solely customers as target group. As such, we adopt Smith, Drumwright, and Gentile's (2010) description of a customer as "a commercial entity seeking to satisfy short-term needs" (p. 4), and a non-customer stakeholder as an individual who is "concerned about a firm's social and environmental impacts" (p. 4).

In our model, we propose two distinct logics at the strategic level. Either an organisation is more stakeholder-driven and adopts a relational dominant logic for CRM engagement, or it is more performance-driven and adopts an instrumental dominant logic. Stakeholder-driven CRM approaches focus on improving stakeholder relationships and meeting their expectations, whereas performance-driven CRM approaches focus on increasing company revenue through improved customer behaviour (Liu, 2013; Maignan & Ralston, 2002). The relational dominant logic defines CRM as a legitimisation tool that aims to enhance reputation and establish trustworthy relationships with stakeholders (Liu, 2013). CRM, from this point of view, is a type of stakeholder relationship management strategy. This perspective of CRM demonstrates that a firm is operating within the boundaries imposed by its stakeholders (Liston-Heyes & Liu, 2013). The instrumental dominant logic focuses on the psychological responses that customers make to the CRM stimulus (Liu, 2013). The underlying principle in the instrumental dominant logic is to find the perfect cause that can generate the strongest response from the customer, and hence, generate the largest economic return for the organisation (Liu, 2013).

Although both the instrumental and relational dominant logics represent different views on CRM engagement, they are not mutually exclusive. Hence, four CRM types are defined. Those types represent the possible combinations of the extreme values (high vs. low) of the instrumental and relational dominant logics: an altruistic, social, commercial and integrative CRM type (Liu, 2013). We use this conceptual approach to address the following research question: To what extent is social responsibility embedded in an organisations' marketing thought and carried out as CRM in order to maximise win–win outcomes for both the sports organisation and society?

3. Method

Given that CRM research in professional sport is relatively new, our study is exploratory in nature (Creswell, 2013). We start from the conceptual framework of Liu (2013) to study CRM engagement. Based on the weighting of an instrumental dimension and a relational dimension, this framework outlines four types of CRM engagement: an altruistic, a social, a commercial and an integrative CRM type. We seek to elaborate the preliminary management background with in-depth understanding of the adoption of CRM types, and the variation thereof, in sport. Below, we describe our approach in more detail.

3.1. Participants

As the aim of the study was not the generalizability to populations, but the exploration of the motivations, beliefs, and attitudes of CRM managers, purposive sampling was used (Patton, 2002). This involves consciously identifying and selecting individuals that are knowledgeable about or experienced with the phenomenon of interest and are willing to communicate their experiences and opinions (Palinkas et al., 2015). The goal here was to explore and describe professional sports organisations along each of the study conditions.

Marketing and/or community managers responsible for community engagement within professional basketball organisations in four European countries—Belgium, the Netherlands, France, and the UK—were selected. Basketball is an important sport in these countries in terms of participation, but remains under researched in the area of CRM, relative to football, for example. The rationale for our country selection is also underpinned by the fact that the chosen regions have more or less established CRM records. The teams within each country were selected based on ranking in the season 2014–

2015. For each country, selecting the top three and bottom one teams assumed a variety of CRM approaches. We intentionally selected three of the better teams, assuming that they invest more time and effort into CRM and might have more resources to invest (Extejt, 2004; McGowan & Mahon, 2009; Sheth & Babiak, 2010). The bottom team was selected to contrast with the better teams. In case of unwillingness to cooperate, we continued selecting teams top-down and bottom-up until saturation of four teams per country was reached. Although the selection was based on ranking in 2014–2015, we controlled for coincidence in ranking in a sense that the selected teams in the upper/lower part of the ranking in 2014–2015, had been in that position for several years.

3.2. Data collection

We chose to adopt a qualitative approach in order to explore CRM engagement in depth and categorise the subjects of study (C. Stewart-Withers, Sewabu, & Richardson, 2017). The research method selected was the elite interview, which is often used to interview decision-makers who have a rich knowledge of the topic at hand. As opposed to interviews with the mass population, elite interviews enable the researcher to go in depth and understand how decisions are made within the organisation (Boris, Donald, & Pamela, 2005; Goldstein, 2002). We developed a semi-structured interview guide, with mainly open-ended questions, thereby allowing respondents to engage in wide-ranging discussions in an in-depth manner.

In total, we conducted 16 telephone and face-to-face interviews with team executives. Table 2 indicates an overview of the informants' characteristics. These individuals were responsible for creating, designing, and implementing CRM efforts in their organisation and were knowledgeable about the history and future plans of their CRM engagement. Their positions ranged from general to marketing/communications or community manager. For consistency of the study, only CRM initiatives engaged at the individual team level were analysed. Leagues engaging in CRM was left out of this scope.

The interviews lasted between 45 and 60 min and were recorded on an MP3 player. Respondents answered questions about the social responsibility behaviour of their team, the motives behind adopting a certain CRM approach, determinants of implementation, and about the structure of the organisation. Each interview was based on the research question: "Why do you engage in CRM?" Interviewees were asked to elaborate on intended outcomes, logic, strategic principle and target group. We encouraged participants to discuss the benefits, challenges, obstacles, and future expectations they perceived regarding the design and implementation of their organisations' CRM efforts. Probes requesting clarification and/or examples, based on the interviewee's responses, followed.

3.3. Data analysis

We transcribed each interview and then used NVIVO 11 software to assist the data analysis (Welsh, 2002). Initial categories and codes were constructed based on existing theory (Liu, 2013), as the aim of this study is to assess an existing model in a sports context (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). However, given the semi-inductive nature of this study, the initial coding scheme was completed by new codes that emerged as the data analysis progressed. Recurring categories identifying the drivers and determinants for CRM engagement were identified. The codes and categories were then reviewed, confirmed and

Table 2
Overview of informants.

Team	Country	Job title	Gender	Average number of tickets sold per game	Estimated team budget (€)	Foundation	Interview
A	Netherlands	General Manager	Male	500	135.000	No	In person
B	Belgium	Community Manager	Male	2750	NA	No	In person
C	Netherlands	Community & Communications Manager	Male	700	300.000	No	In person
D	Belgium	General Manager	Male	3000	3.200.000	No	In person
E	Belgium	Communications manager	Male	2500	2.000.000	No	In person
F	Netherlands	Communications Manager	Male	3000	1.000.000	Yes	In person
G	France	General Manager	Male	4400	4.800.000	Yes	Telephone
H	France	Marketing & Communications Manager	Male	5000	5.900.000	No	Telephone
I	United Kingdom	Operations manager (marketing and community work)	Male	2000	800.000	Yes	Telephone
J	Belgium	Coordinator	Male	1200	1.500.000	No	In person
K	France	Marketing & Communications Manager	Male	3900	3.800.000	No	In person
L	United Kingdom	Community Manager	Female	1900	NA	Yes	Telephone
M	Netherlands	Marketing & Communications Manager (external consultant)	Male	1750	850.000	No	In person
N	United Kingdom	General Manager	Male	675	90.000	Yes	Telephone
O	United Kingdom	General Manager	Male	1400	350.000	No	Telephone
P	France	Communications Manager	Male	5100	4.700.000	No	Telephone

if necessary, revised. Any questions or issues regarding the data analysis were continuously discussed, debated, and agreed upon through research team discussions. The categories to analyse CRM engagement—intended outcome, logic, strategic principle, and target group (Liu, 2013)—were summarized in a coding protocol. The first author, Cleo Schyvinck, coded each passage according to those categories. Afterwards, a sample of the interviews was coded by a second researcher, Géraldine Zeimers, to assure coding reliability. The inter-rater reliability measured by kappa-coefficient in NVIVO, was 0.71. A kappa-coefficient of 0.71 is generally accepted as a sufficient inter-rater reliability score (Gwet, 2014), and the inter-rater agreement in this study was 98%.

The mapping was based on patterns found in the data coming from the interviews, organizational documents, and the parallel literature. In addition to the CRM drivers, information on cause selection, communication, duration of the collaboration, geographical scope, and implementation type was taken into account to appoint the teams to a certain CRM type. These determinants influence CRM type (Lachowetz & Gladden, 2002; Liston-Heyes & Liu, 2010; Liu, 2013). Analysing all these variables against the relational and instrumental dominant logic, enabled us to appoint the teams to a specific place in the quadrant. To verify the reliability of the sorting and coding, the mapping was also done by a colleague. Dividing the number of mapping agreements by the total number of mapping agreements and disagreements, suggested that there was a reliability of 87.5%.

4. Results

The results of the mapping are summarized in Fig. 1. The findings of the mapping show that CRM approaches adopted by professional basketball teams in Europe are very diverse and that they attempt to influence the behaviour of different stakeholders who are important to the organisation. As expected and in line with the CRM literature in sport, many of professional sport organisations approach CRM with a high relational dominant logic. Findings suggest sport organisations are often driven by pressures from key stakeholders, such as sponsors, the media and the league. However, pressures can also be normative, deriving from a desire for sports organisations to act as role models within the community (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009):

CRM is a way to show citizens that we are more than a professional basketball team. We use our network, resources and impact to help develop the community. In return, we get a positive impact on image towards our stakeholders. (Team G)

These stakeholder pressures might also explain why teams aim to disseminate the performance of social initiative activities, to demonstrate that it acts legitimately. For example: “CRM is about image marketing. It is about walking the talk and talking the walk. If you do it, it is also smart to communicate about it and to look for PR from fans, sponsors and partners” (Team F).

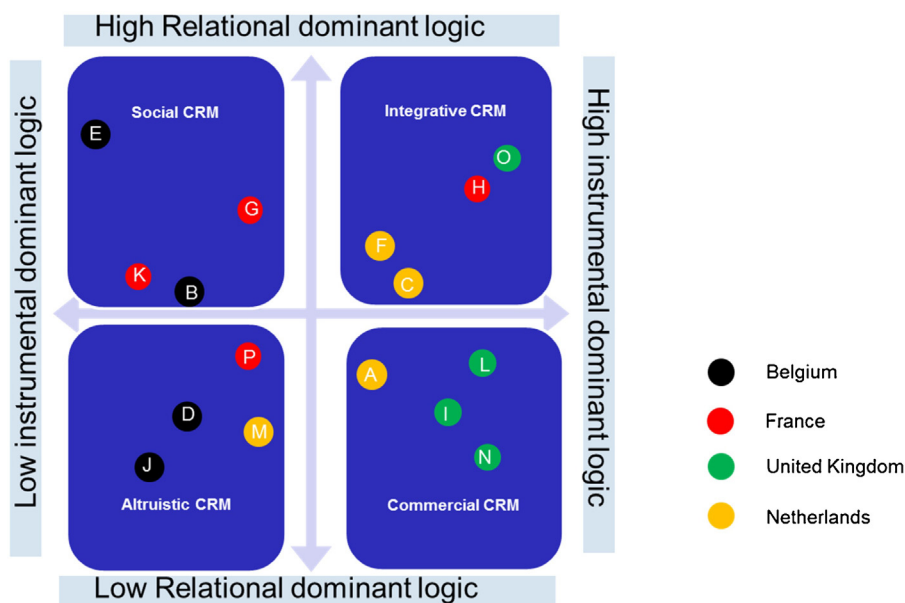


Fig. 1. CRM approach of European professional basketball teams.

Note. Adapted from “Impacts of Instrumental Versus Relational Centered Logic on Cause-Related Marketing Decision Making,” by Liu, 2013, Journal of Business Ethics, 113, p. 253.

Within our sample, the clubs stemming from more developed leagues show more relational dominant logic in their CRM approach. Equally, differences between teams show that those teams with higher resources, seem to manage CRM more relationally. CRM, from their perspective is more like a stakeholder management strategy than a commercial marketing strategy. Since these teams usually have higher budgets, more qualified players (with higher salaries), more scrutiny of unethical practices, more demanding sponsors and fans, stakeholder pressure may arise to give back to society. The following statement illustrates the aim of basketball teams to safeguard organisational legitimacy and stakeholder trust in the business: “The image of professional sports teams is not always good, so it is important to show that professional sports organisations can also be a vehicle for serving good causes and giving back to society” (Team G).

4.1. High relational dominant logic/low instrumental dominant logic – Social CRM type

The organising principle behind the social CRM type is to emphasise an organisations’ stakeholder relationships (Liu, 2013). This type is about strengthening connections with the local community members rather than addressing fans or stakeholders for commercial purposes. This intended outcome is illustrated in Table 3 and in the statement below:

The win for us is the improved reputation of the club. That is the most important benefit, towards fans, non-fans, to all other stakeholders, to show that “we are more than just a professional basketball team”. (Team B)

Teams in this type often make a clear distinction between commercial activities that serve to generate revenue and CRM activities that need to safeguard image and awareness. Ensuring organisational legitimacy is the strategic principle of these teams. In words of one interviewee: “When you calculate the financial benefits those social initiatives bring us, it is close to €0 I think. We have sponsors and commercial partners to deliver revenue. Our social engagement is there for image reasons” (Team K)

In the social type, CRM is hardly ever integrated into the marketing strategy, or a task of the management of the team. Rather, it remains a publicity tool, managed by the communications department: “Everyone works a bit on the social projects, because everybody cares, but it is mainly managed by the communications department” (Team G).

In terms of cause selection, teams in this CRM type are often approached by NPO’s willing to work with them. This reactive approach in cause selection is reflected by the following informant: “We will continue the way we do it now; say yes to more or less all requests we get” (Team K).

Often, the choice of NPO is imposed by stakeholders, resulting in a lack of congruence between CRM activities and team operations. The following statement illustrates that meeting the expectations of stakeholders, is also reflected in the choice of NPO to partner with: “Our main sponsor already works with this NPO, and I don’t say we don’t have the choice, but . . . It is a nice NPO, but if we would have the choice, we would engage with “X” (Team E).

This CRM type typically delivers the second order benefits, but doesn’t succeed at leveraging the concept to the fullest. To a large extent, it remains a cosmetic tool to impress stakeholders.

A large number of the responding organisations do approach CRM more instrumentally. These teams state that a reactive approach to CRM, as defined by Inoue and Kent (2014), will not have the same beneficial outcome on corporate credibility than a proactive one. As the below statement illustrates, the paradox between commercialising CRM and safeguarding legitimacy appears to be less an issue for these teams: “It is somewhere in between; you do it because you want to mean something for society and at the same time, it is also a revenue model for your club” (Team F). Team managers expressed the commercial potential of the CRM concept as follows: “Alongside the genuine work the foundation does, it is easy marketing for us in terms of ticket selling for our games” (Team I).

The need for an instrumental approach often originates from a high demand for marketing results or a desire to improve the firm’s revenue within a short period of time (Liu, 2013). The following interview excerpt illustrates this financial pressure: “I think that like in the NBA, the balance shifts. If you have these role model players that earn over 10 million a year, then you shift more towards image marketing, then the monetary return becomes less important” (Team A).

4.2. High instrumental dominant logic/low relational dominant logic – Commercial CRM type

In a commercial CRM type, the intended outcome of a team is to get immediate results from its CRM engagement (Liu, 2013). In this sense, we see that respondents use CRM as a strategy for revenue generation through increased customer behaviour (see Table 3), and that CRM would be redundant if it did not deliver direct and concrete financial benefits for the team: “No social without commercial, and no commercial without social” (Team A). Inherent to the sports sector, and different to the general business sector, is the dependency of sports organisations on subsidies and funds from public and/or private partners. Therefore, in the commercial CRM type, what we define as a customer is more than a single consumer. A customer can be a stakeholder on the one hand (i.e. sponsors, funders, league, local community) and a fan or consumer on the other hand. The data show that both are important influencers of CRM decision-making in the commercial type. In most of the cases, increased revenue is expected from stakeholder funding, rather than through increased fan purchasing behaviour. The following statement illustrates use of CRM as a strategy to increase funding: “As a business we know that we would not get those sponsors without that activity. And by doing that activity, it allows us to grow by tapping into a different group of companies” (Team I).

However, some commercial teams, also focus on getting more fans or potential fans to the games:

Table 3
Cause-related marketing typology based on drivers.

		Altruistic CRM Type	Social CRM Type	Commercial CRM Type	Integrative CRM Type
CRM intended outcome.	Description	No expected outcomes	Improved stakeholder relationships	Increased revenue	Revenue generation and stakeholder relationship management
	Quotation	We do not intend to get any monetary return from it, but it can deliver some positive word-of-mouth, though. (Team P)	The objective is social. Not that there is not a marketing vision behind it, but that is related to image. What is interesting for us is to link the image of the team to the image of a good cause. (Team E)	The last 10 years, CRM has become increasingly important. Also because the club recognizes it is a mean to generate revenue. (Team F)	Financial benefits: What you can really directly ascribe to our social engagement is 25000 euro. So we earn about 10% of our revenue that way. Legitimacy benefits: For the players, it is also fun and relevant, as they can use their experience from their social initiatives for their further career. So we basically help them develop, a double function so to speak. (Team C)
CRM logic	Description	Value driven strategy	Stakeholder communication strategy	Commercial marketing strategy	Commercial and stakeholder communication strategy
	Quotation	We do it out of ethical and social principals. We all have a heart, don't we? We do not need our social projects to deliver money. (Team P)	There is this charity event to which we participate. It is important for our image and contacts to be there. There are a lot of potential sponsors, partners and people from the region present. It's a small village, everyone knows each other, so interesting returns can come from that. (Team E)	Well, I mean I always say to our community coaches that actually, sometimes they need to consider themselves more as marketing people than asthen coaches. In terms of their delivery on a given night at the club or in a session, it is really about marketing. (Team L)	Commercial marketing strategy: As a counterpart, we ask the children to come to our games. Stakeholder communication strategy: The league encourages teams to engage socially, they give labels to teams that engage. (Team H)
CRM strategic principle	Description	No underlying strategic principle	Organisational legitimacy	Brand-cause fit to increase spending behaviour	Increased spending behaviour and organisational legitimacy
	Quotation	Maybe an opportunity will pop up again of which I think "well, that could be something". (Team D)	My task is to show the stakeholders that we are more than a professional basketball team. (Team B)	The clinics and sessions we give in schools, fit with what we do and are good means to attract children to become member of the club. Moreover, we want them to come to our games. (Team A)	Increased spending behaviour: Sponsors donate money to fund our clinics. Organisational legitimacy: You have more value in your region. If your image gets a little hit, or you have a difficult time, then at least you have that value, then your reputation is not solely depending on that good sports game. (Team D)
Marketing target	Description	No target defined	Stakeholders	Customers	Customers and stakeholders
	Quotation	With our social engagement, we want to give back to the local community. (Team M)	We want to reach companies, politicians, media, all stakeholders basically. In terms of PR, it is a way to reach positive word-of-mouth around the club in the region. (Team G)	CRM allows us to target more than 1 type of person, so we are able to market the games and raise awareness for the team, not only towards the normal stereotypical fan, but also to someone that would normally not come. (Team I)	We use it as a means to engage with sponsors, but in the meantime, it is also a way to get more people to come to the arena or attract new members. (Team C)

Note. Adapted from "Impacts of Instrumental Versus Relational Centered Logic on Cause-Related Marketing Decision Making," by Liu, 2013, Journal of Business Ethics, 113, p. 251.

Our focus with CRM at the moment is fundamentally around ticket sales. So, if there is anything we can do to increase brand awareness, then we do that. Whether it is working with a local organisation, a charity, a school. (Team N)

The focus on team-cause fit will be the highest in teams tackling a commercial CRM approach as the connection needs to amplify image transfer in order to stimulate customers' funding or purchasing intentions. In our study, we indeed found that teams in the commercial CRM type were explicit about their choice of good cause or social initiative they engage with. The following statement indicates brand-cause fit as a strategic principle in this CRM type: "Our programs are all based around youth and disability, because all people are sensitive to both these themes" (Team N).

In the cases that manage CRM more commercially, we see that the sports teams are mostly the initiators of the team-NPO collaboration:

This project gets us 100 to 150 young people in the building which is a financial income for us and our sponsors. Focusing on this target group also enables us to reach out to sponsors that, for example, provide toys. (Team I)

In these cases, there is often a thin line between commercial and social sponsoring, and regularly, both are interrelated. Team L, for example, displays its CRM collaboration with a commercial partner on its website. The logic of CRM being used as a commercial marketing strategy, is also illustrated by the following quotation: “My sales story with potential sponsors is simply not as good if I cannot showcase any social involvement. Then the picture is not perfect” (Team A).

Hence, CRM is a task that is mostly managed by the commercial department that regularly outsources the practical execution to the team’s foundation. This commercial approach of organising social engagement is illustrated below: “There are members of staff that sit in the board of trustees for both organisations (team and foundation) to make sure that there is cross-over in aims and objectives” (Team I).

A unique phenomenon in sport is that the awareness of CRM engagement remains limited to a small group of stakeholders (funders), which results in under deployed financial benefits for the team. The following quotation indicates that CRM communication is mainly focused towards these customers that are or can be of value for the team, and to a lesser extent towards the broad public: “We use the space in the arena and around the game night mainly for our commercial partners. The community partners, would be given other incentives like free tickets” (Team I).

In this CRM type, the transactional view focusses primarily on a single customer providing benefits for the team, rather than on attaining mutually beneficial outcomes for the team and the other stakeholders. CRM involvement in this type is often associated with egoistic rather than value-driven motives, potentially harming credibility and outcome.

4.3. Low instrumental dominant logic/low relational dominant logic – Altruistic CRM type

To a certain degree, CRM continues to be an ad hoc activity for some European professional basketball teams. The emergence of this type is largely due to the unintentional activity of either engaging in revenue generating activities or in building stakeholder relationships (Liu, 2013). In this type, teams have a collection of well-intentioned practices but there is no real marketing thinking behind it. A typical altruistic CRM engagement is initiated by a team that wants to do something good for the community without ever thinking about the potential marketing benefits of their activities (see Table 3). For example: “That initiative, where we don’t intend to gain something out of, all of a sudden delivered benefits for us and the NPO” (Team J).

It might be that professional sport organisations explicitly choose to keep their corporate engagement at a philanthropic level because they suffer from the CRM paradox. Arguments that arose from the interviews were prioritization of sport related management efforts, value driven and ethical decision making, and the reluctance to commercialize corporate giving. An example of each of those barriers is stated below:

Priority of sport related issues: Currently, we are looking for a new big sponsor, which requires our full attention. Then you don’t have to ask to the board to discuss on CRM projects. (Team M)

Value driven and ethical decision making: It is driven from my personal social background. I have always worked with kids before and I think that helping the weakest in society, namely kids in difficult circumstances, is something we should not overthink, but just do. (Team D)

Reluctance to commercialise corporate giving: It is also dangerous to communicate a lot about our social initiatives and put a lot of time and money in it, because when sports results don’t follow . . . reactions might come against you. (Team M)

The results show that many teams adopting an altruistic CRM type are in this type because of a lack of planning and prioritisation? of CRM. It is basically because they do not engage strategically, not because they explicitly want to keep their CRM engagement below the radar. In this sense, team D had CRM information on its website that was outdated for three years already. The below statement illustrates that CRM is not a priority to those teams: “There is definitely potential and we are open to tackle it more commercially and get more out of it. However, we already have so much work for the moment” (Team M).

Teams in the altruistic CRM type, often do not have objectives in place to generate revenue or build stakeholder relationships through CRM. Their sole intention is to do something good for society. In that sense, CRM often remains at the executional level of the management or is subject to the good intentions of an individual: “To have commercial benefits, we should do more. But I am not a commercial type of person, so I don’t think about it that way” (Team D). In the rare cases where there is a CRM plan in place, it either serves an archival purpose, or, it is no more than a schedule of the activities taking place: “Yes, we have a plan that contains all the activities we do throughout the year in a calendar. I manage that plan together with the sports coordinator to make sure all activities can be covered” (Team P).

In this type, CRM is more a gathering of various functional initiatives where partners are randomly selected and communication is fragmented. This responsive fashion of managing CRM leads to social initiatives that are unrelated to the team’s core operations and that are unlikely to provide optimal financial or image returns. Examples of responsive approaches to managing CRM include: “Cause selection: One time, I met someone who introduced me to that good cause, I thought it could be interesting to so we tried it to see what it would give” (Team P); and “We communicate about it if people ask for it. Like one time, a cause asked us to have a booth, so we allowed that. But no, we don’t often communicate

about it” (Team M). This type of CRM can deliver teams some unexpected benefits through positive word-of-mouth or PR, but long term impact will be poor, as there is no sustainable marketing thinking behind this CRM approach. Moreover, the impact on society remains limited as well, as target, cause selection and communication are not consistently managed.

4.4. High instrumental dominant logic/high relational dominant logic – Integrative CRM type

Several teams are focusing both on influencing commercial decisions and on establishing continuing stakeholder relationships as CRM intended outcomes (see Table 3). More specifically, the design of the integrative CRM type incorporates the demands of both the customers and stakeholders (Liu, 2013). In the words of one of the integrative teams: “We love it that sponsors engage in our projects, it looks good for us, but also for them. And children and their parents they may become fans, so . . . it works all round really” (Team O).

Teams in this type understand how to best translate CSR ideas into marketing strategies and have the biggest potential to reap both financial and legitimacy benefits, respectively: “Sponsors donate money to fund our clinics” (Team F) and “You have more value in your region. If your image gets a little hit, or you have a difficult time, then at least you have that value, then your reputation is not solely depending on that good sports game” (Team F). In this type, CSR is integral to an organisation’s profitability, and is embedded in its values and DNA. These organisations understand that neither self-interest, nor stakeholder pressures are good motives to engage in CRM. To them, the combination of instrumental and relational motivations and sincere intentions are needed to attain maximal win–win for team, stakeholders and society. As stated by one of the interviewees: “It is part of our overall marketing strategy, the approach of the club, its image, and the communication we as team want to have” (Team H). CRM is mostly managed by the commercial marketing department, but with close ties to the top of the organisation.

Teams in this type are also explicit in their choice of good cause or social partner, in a sense that the collaboration needs to address both revenue and image goals. On the website of team O, for example, there is an advertisement of the clinics to which schools can subscribe, accompanied by a note stating that participating schools can bring groups of children to their games at discounted prices. This strategic principle of dual focus is also illustrated by the following statement: “We focus on youth projects because we want to get people to come to our games and attract new members. Also, young people bring a positive atmosphere and sponsors are sensitive to youth” (Team C).

Lastly, in their aim for a win–win outcome, teams in the integrative CRM type communicate explicitly about their CRM engagement. The below statement illustrates that both broad diffusion and targeted communication are aimed for: “We use our game programs, our social media, and the half time of the game for ‘X’ to organise their tournament finals. We get some local press coverage about it as well, which also helps” (Team C). In this CRM type, sports managers exploit CSR to generate benefits for both business and society and their CSR ideas are clearly reflected and integrated in the marketing thought. Sports managers in this type take a holistic marketing approach by embracing a broad stakeholder view in their CRM engagement.

5. Discussion

The current CSR/CRM literature in sport suggests that professional sports teams manage CRM more in an altruistic rather than in a commercial manner (Extejt, 2004; Sheth & Babiak, 2010). In North America, the majority of teams handles social responsibility more philanthropically, mainly for ethical cover up and legitimacy reasons (Sheth & Babiak, 2010). Inoue et al. (2011) also suggest that contributing to the community and satisfying stakeholders through philanthropic activities could be the main goal for professional sports teams’ CSR/CRM engagement. However, our findings show that for the majority of the questioned teams, CRM is more than an act of philanthropy. Ethical issues are less at play in Europe, as the basketball sport is less developed than in the US. Equally, philanthropic donations are less at stake, since most European teams are in need of funding rather than having the capacity to donate financial means to charity.

Given the unique context of sport, we suggest the instrumental dominant logic is less important than in a general business context. Further, professional sports organisations were potentially more highly represented in social and altruistic CRM types, relative to companies outside sport (Bennett, 1998; Liu, 2013). Interestingly, this was not the case in our sample, proving that CRM appears to be more than a publicity tool. Hence, one can question whether sports teams are that unique and different from general businesses in the sense that they also aim to be financially healthy and contribute to society.

Our findings, show that CRM approaches adopted by professional basketball teams in Europe are diverse, and they attempt to influence the behaviour of different stakeholders who are important to the organisation. The variety in CRM types adopted can be explained by differences between countries and between teams. The influence of socio-political, cultural, institutional, market, and other contextual factors are likely to influence CRM adoption and cause differences between countries (Roome, 2005; Trendafilova et al., 2013). Matten and Moon (2008) also state that stakeholder identities, needs and expectations vary cross-nationally, which is vital to understanding CRM approach. Differences between teams can be explained by inequalities in resources. Teams with higher resources seem to handle CRM more relationally, whereas teams with low to medium turn-over manage CRM more instrumentally. This is in line with previous work in the US, where big professional sports teams might have other motivations to engage in social responsibility than financial return (Inoue et al., 2011). Other researchers state that the higher the winning percentage of the team is, the more they are involved in charity

work (Extejt, 2004; McGowan & Mahon, 2009; Sheth & Babiak, 2010). This conclusion is not confirmed in this study. Ranking or competing in an international competition was not a consistent determinant for adopting a certain CRM type.

Results reveal that several teams approach CRM in an integrative way. This approach can deliver not only second order benefits, such as improved image, reputation, and organisational legitimacy, but also first order benefits, such as increased revenue, profitability, and loyalty. These findings add to the research on CRM outcomes that, to date, did not find monetary and tangible benefits in sport (Extejt, 2004; Inoue et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2010; Roy, 2010). Teams in the integrative type combine the best of both worlds. They aim for revenue generation (commercial CRM type), and they want to increase goodwill in the public eye (social CRM type). Their CSR ideas are embedded in the organisations' marketing thought, in a sense that they want to adhere to a broad range of stakeholders and deliver both positive financial and reputational outcomes for the team. In these teams, the management (CSR) and marketing (CRM) of social responsibility activities are treated as integrated instead of distinct phenomena.

In short, we can conclude that the paradox existing in sport management literature is not necessarily an issue for European professional basketball organisations. To those teams, commercialising social responsibility does not have to jeopardise legitimacy. Rather, these organisations aim for win–win outcomes by contributing to good stakeholder management, economic benefit, and societal welfare.

It is also interesting to learn from the teams engaging in an altruistic CRM type. Findings show that many of the respondents are in this type because of lack of professionalism, rather than because of intentionally keeping their CRM engagement at a philanthropic level. These teams have potential to grow and move towards another quadrant. Should they want to progress towards a more efficient CRM approach, they would need to consider aspects of their organisational culture and professionalism that currently limits the development of a coherent CRM approach. These organisations need to be convinced of the idea that social and corporate benefits can and should co-exist in CRM engagement (Inoue & Kent, 2014). They need to become aware of the dual focus (instrumental vs relational) of CRM (Liu, 2013) and of the fact that doing the right thing is one thing, but telling people about the right things the organisation is doing, is another. Explicit external communication and creating awareness on CSR initiatives carried out, can help to leverage CSR engagement as a marketing strategy (Inoue et al., 2011). Furthermore, focusing on specific social issues and ensuring team-cause fit is desirable for effective communication, and enhances stakeholders' receptiveness to an organisations' CRM efforts, delivering benefits for the organisation, its stakeholders and society (Inoue et al., 2011; Sheikh & Beise-Zee, 2011).

We cannot conclude from this study, however, whether one type of CRM approach is better than another, or which type is better suited for a particular sports organisation (type of sport, ranking, country). In theory, the integrative type offers the biggest win for the organisation, the stakeholders and society. However, since there is no standard measuring tool, we are unable to formulate conclusions on effectiveness. Results show that most of the responding teams do not incorporate CRM objectives into overall strategic plans and do not measure the effect of their efforts. CRM approaches often remain limited, unilateral, and disconnected from strategy. In that sense, the sports sector is perhaps still running behind on the general business context, where CRM is no longer considered a bolt-on activity, but rather it has evolved towards an integral matter for business management (Kolyperas, Morrow, & Sparks, 2015; Maon, Lindgreen, & Swaen, 2010). Where researchers outside of sport have shown that companies have moved on a continuum from a rejection stage, via a grasping stage, towards an embedment stage (Maon et al., 2010), it is only fair to say that this evolution is not yet visible in this study. Teams could look deeper into the effects of CRM, incorporate them into the team's strategic plan and measure their impact. CRM success could be evaluated by awareness figures, exposure to messages, fan loyalty, and attractiveness for sponsors. Consequently, we hope that this paper may encourage professional sports teams to manage CRM more professionally, optimize strategic consideration when planning CRM activities and leverage the concept to the fullest.

6. Limitations and future research

Although the findings reported in this study indicate that marketing social responsibility becomes more prevalent, there are limitations to this work. Firstly, this research does not produce any quantitative measurements on the four types of CRM adoption. Consequently, the authors were not able to precisely map the teams into each quadrant, pointing out the exact relationship between the two dominant logics. Moreover, other factors than intended outcomes, logic and strategic principle can influence an organisations' CRM approach. In our qualitative mapping process, we did not account for economic conditions, organisational culture, and professionalism, which can all influence the adoption of a certain CRM type. Therefore, a quantitative cluster analysis may help to map the different teams more accurately. In this sense, we offer opportunities for scale development research. As a result, CRM intended outcome, logic, strategic principle and target group can be measured and high or low levels of both the instrumental and relational dominant logics can be determined more accurately. Additionally, future longitudinal researchers could provide insights on the dynamic movement of teams across quadrants.

Secondly, we acknowledge the mapping of the teams according to CRM approach; however, we did not touch upon CRM implementation. It was beyond the scope of this study to discuss how CRM strategy can be executed into CRM implementation and whether implementation succeeds at addressing (various) stakeholder concerns. Future researchers could explore the design of CRM campaigns by analysing communication, efforts put into the program, involvement of employees, cause selection and geographical scope, which can all influence credibility and outcome (Inoue & Kent, 2014). The model can be extended to analyse the alignment between CRM type and campaign choices and to identify factors that

affect the implementation process. Additionally, broader stakeholder populations could be envisioned as data sources. The multitude of studies on CSR/CRM, including this one, uses consumers or marketers as study objects. However, as discussed in this paper, CRM is mainly about the interface between business, society, and stakeholders, so including thoughts of the NPO, for example, would be a valid extension to this study.

A third limitation is that the sports organisation can be involved in multiple types of CRM. Sometimes logic, strategic principles and execution contradict, and as a result, the typology becomes more complex and warrants becoming the subject of further study. Future research could be conducted with individual CRM programs as unit of research.

Fourthly, there is potential bias in the respondents' view on CRM according to the function they fulfil within the management of the team. Respondents were selected based on their responsibility and involvement in community engagement of the team. The job functions varied from general managers to marketing or communication managers to dedicated community managers. Based on the scope of their responsibilities, it is possible that they view CRM differently.

Lastly, the data was gathered in four countries. Cultural and institutional differences between countries are likely to influence CRM adoption. In the current CRM literature, regional and cultural differences are often ignored and commonalities are assumed, despite the fact that we know the concept of CRM possesses different connotations in different countries (Breitbarth, Walzel, Anagnostopoulos, & Eekeren, 2015). Larger contextual dimensions, such as cultural acceptance, institutionalized norms regarding appropriate behaviour (labels), the regulatory environment (favourable tax treatments), and organized dialogues between the team and its stakeholders (league mandates) merit further research (Campbell, 2007; Doh & Guay, 2006; Galaskiewicz & Burt, 1991; Matten & Moon, 2008). It is worthwhile to study what aspects of CRM approach can be generalized to international contexts.

7. Conclusion and implications

While CRM has been studied rather extensively in the general management literature, little has been written about the management of CRM in sport (Roy, 2011). We address this gap and contribute to the understanding of CRM engagement in the sports industry. Empirically, we explored why and how European professional basketball organisations engage in CRM, based on the theoretical framework of Liu (2013). Depending on two dimensions, an instrumental and a relational dominant logic, we mapped the teams into an altruistic, social, commercial or integrative type. Conceptually, we enhanced understanding of the CSR and CRM phenomena in sport by bringing both concepts together, rather than studying them independently. Although CSR has been studied extensively in sport, little focus has been given to the way multiple CSR perspectives have been addressed and whether and how these have been integrated and framed by the marketing perspective (Vaaland et al., 2008). We show that increasingly sports organisations are aiming for win-win outcomes when engaging in social responsibility. Specifically, there seems to be a clear acceptance among sports managers of the mutual benefits to be gained from CRM. Our study thus indicates that professional basketball organisations in Europe go beyond social engagement for the sake of altruism, but that they want their CSR ideas, to a smaller (commercial and social type) or larger (integrative type) extent, provide marketing outcomes as well.

There are several practical and theoretical implications to be considered. One of the contributions of this paper is the clarification of the relationship between CSR and CRM. These concepts are currently practiced and studied as relatively distinct and different phenomena. We establish bridges between the different streams of knowledge that have emerged in management and marketing literature. The potential for marketing strategies and theories to assist CSR, and vice versa, has not been sufficiently explored (Vaaland et al., 2008). We contribute to this gap in literature by defining CRM as a way of looking at social responsibility through a marketing lens, favouring the dual perspective of benefiting both the society and the organisation.

Secondly, we studied the notion of CRM within sports organisations in relation to decision-making. By not focusing on the measurable outcomes of CRM, but on its management, we provide a more in-depth analysis of CRM and its role and relevance for sports organisations. The mapping presented in this study, provides an encompassing picture explaining the drivers, intended outcomes, logic, and strategic principle behind CRM engagement.

Thirdly, we broaden the concept of CRM from merely addressing consumers' needs to addressing multiple stakeholders' concerns (i.e. sponsors, league, media, fans and local community). We go beyond the typical unilateral consumer view on CRM. In that sense, the results of this study build on stakeholder theory, showing that it is possible to handle firm, stakeholders and communities' needs tackling a single CRM approach.

Lastly, we address the CRM concept from a different geographical stance. The majority of research on CRM in sport has been conducted in Western sports organisations. Only few scholars have studied the European context, which differs in many ways from the American. This study showed that European basketball teams often engage more implicitly in CRM than in the US as they often rely on supporting organisations (state, unions, and local funders). Moreover, the American ethic of giving back to society is less embedded in the European culture, and the receptivity to CRM is less outspoken. This study indicates that the way the competition is organised, can also have an impact on CRM engagement (Matten & Moon, 2008). The teams in our sample thrive for win maximisation as they participate in open leagues instead of closed leagues, resulting in different CRM priorities. Shedding light on a different continent helps to build a more substantial body of knowledge because as Votaw (1972, p. 25) states, "CSR means something, but not always the same to everybody".

In sum, the findings of this research contribute to the understanding of CRM in the sports industry. By categorising CRM engagement of European professional basketball organisations based on an instrumental and relational dominant logic, this

study provides a more encompassing view on CRM definitions, descriptions and domains. The mapping can assist sports managers facing the challenge of marketing their company's CSR agenda. Best practices from this research show that it is possible to market CSR ideas in order to deliver both increased revenue and organisational legitimacy, as well as augmented impact on society. By analysing more broadly the role and responsibilities of marketing CSR, we hope to contribute to a more holistic and comprehensive picture of the adoption and diffusion of CRM in sport.

References

- Aguilera, R. V., Rupp, D. E., Williams, C. A., & Ganapathi, J. (2007). Putting the S back in corporate social responsibility: A multilevel theory of social change in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(3), 836–863.
- Austin, J. E., & Seitanidi, M. M. (2012). Collaborative value creation: A review of partnering between nonprofits and businesses. Part 2: Partnership processes and outcomes. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 41(6), 929–968.
- Babiak, K., & Wolfe, R. (2009). Determinants of corporate social responsibility in professional sport: Internal and external factors. *Journal of Sport Management*, 23(6), 717.
- Babiak, K. (2010). The role and relevance of corporate social responsibility in sport: A view from the top. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 16(04), 528–549.
- Barnett, M. L. (2007). Stakeholder influence capacity and the variability of financial returns to corporate social responsibility. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(3), 794–816.
- Barone, M. J., Miyazaki, A. D., & Taylor, K. A. (2000). The influence of cause-related marketing on consumer choice: Does one good turn deserve another? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 28(2), 248–262.
- Becker-Olsen, K. L., Cudmore, B. A., & Hill, R. P. (2006). The impact of perceived corporate social responsibility on consumer behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, 59(1), 46–53.
- Bennett, R. (1998). Corporate philanthropy in France, Germany and the UK: International comparisons of commercial orientation towards company giving in European nations. *International Marketing Review*, 15(6), 458–475.
- Berglind, M., & Nakata, C. (2005). Cause-related marketing: More buck than bang? *Business Horizons*, 48(5), 443–453.
- Boris, B., Donald, R., & Pamela, S. (2005). *Business research methods*. Berkshire: McGraw-Hill.
- Brønn, P. S., & Vrioni, A. B. (2001). Corporate social responsibility and cause-related marketing: An overview. *International Journal of Advertising*, 20(2), 207–222.
- Bradish, C. L., & Cronin, J. J. (2009). Special Issue: Corporate social responsibility in sport. *Journal of Sport Management*, 23(6), 691–794.
- Breitbarth, T., & Harris, P. (2008). The role of corporate social responsibility in the football business: Towards the development of a conceptual model. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 8(2), 179–206.
- Breitbarth, T., Walzel, S., Anagnostopoulos, C., & Eekeren, F. v. (2015). Corporate social responsibility and governance in sport: Oh, the things you can find, if you don't stay behind!. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, 15(2), 254–273.
- Broderick, A., Jogi, A., & Garry, T. (2003). Ticked pink: The personal meaning of cause related marketing for customers. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 19(5–6), 583–610.
- Campbell, J. L. (2007). Why would corporations behave in socially responsible ways? An institutional theory of corporate social responsibility. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(3), 946–967.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Doh, J. P., & Guay, T. R. (2006). Corporate social responsibility, public policy, and NGO activism in Europe and the United States: An institutional-stakeholder perspective. *Journal of Management Studies*, 43(1), 47–73.
- Doyle, J. P., Pentecost, R. D., & Funk, D. C. (2014). The effect of familiarity on associated sponsor and event brand attitudes following negative celebrity endorser publicity. *Sport Management Review*, 17(3), 310–323.
- Endacott, R. W. J. (2004). Consumers and CRM: A national and global perspective. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 21(3), 183–189.
- Extejt, M. M. (2004). Philanthropy and professional sport teams. *International Journal of Sport Management*, 5(3), 215–228.
- Friedman, M. T., Parent, M. M., & Mason, D. S. (2004). Building a framework for issues management in sport through stakeholder theory. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 4(3), 170–190.
- Galaskiewicz, J., & Burt, R. S. (1991). Interorganization contagion in corporate philanthropy. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 88–105.
- Goldstein, K. (2002). Getting in the door: Sampling and completing elite interviews. *Political Science & Politics*, 35(04), 669–672.
- Gupta, S., & Pirsch, J. (2006). The company-cause-customer fit decision in cause-related marketing. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 23(6), 314–326.
- Gwet, K. L. (2014). *Handbook of inter-rater reliability: The definitive guide to measuring the extent of agreement among raters*. Advanced Analytics LLC.
- Hamiln, R., & Wilson, T. (2004). The impact of cause branding on consumer reactions to products: Does product/cause fit really matter? *Journal of Marketing Management*, 20(7–8), 663–681.
- Heinze, K. L., Soderstrom, S., & Zdroik, J. (2014). Toward strategic and authentic corporate social responsibility in professional sport: A case study of the Detroit Lions. *Journal of Sport Management*, 28(6), 672–686.
- Henderson, T., & Arora, N. (2010). Promoting brands across categories with a social cause: Implementing effective embedded premium programs. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(6), 41–60.
- Hoeffler, S., & Keller, K. L. (2002). Building brand equity through corporate societal marketing. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 21(1), 78–89.
- Hsieh, H.-F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277–1288.
- Inoue, Y., & Kent, A. (2014). A conceptual framework for understanding the effects of corporate social marketing on consumer behavior. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 121(4), 621–633.
- Inoue, Y., Kent, A., & Lee, S. (2011). CSR and the bottom line: Analyzing the link between CSR and financial performance for professional teams. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25(6), 531–549.
- Inoue, Y., Mahan, J. E., & Kent, A. (2013). Enhancing the benefits of professional sport philanthropy: The roles of corporate ability and communication strategies. *Sport Management Review*, 16(3), 314–325.
- Irwin, R. L., Lachowetz, T., Cornwell, T. B., & Clark, J. S. (2003). Cause-related sport sponsorship: An assessment of spectator beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral intentions. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 12(3), 131–139.
- Irwin, R. L., Lachowetz, T., & Clark, J. (2010). Cause-related sport marketing: Can this marketing strategy affect company decision-makers? *Journal of Management & Organization*, 16(04), 550–556.
- Joyner, B. E., & Payne, D. (2002). Evolution and implementation: A study of values, business ethics and corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 41(4), 297–311.
- Késenne, S. (1996). *League management in professional team sports with win maximizing clubs*. .
- Kihl, L., Babiak, K., & Tainsky, S. (2014). Evaluating the implementation of a professional sport team's corporate community involvement initiative. *Journal of Sport Management*, 28(3).
- Kim, K. T., Kwak, D. H., & Kim, Y. K. (2010). The impact of cause-related marketing (CRM) in spectator sport. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 16(04), 515–527.
- Knecht, B. (2007). Big players in charity. *Wall Street Journal*, 5.

- Kolyperas, D., Morrow, S., & Sparks, L. (2015). Developing CSR in professional football clubs: Drivers and phases. *Corporate Governance-the International Journal of Business in Society*, 15(2), 177–195.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2006). *Administração de marketing*.
- Kotler, P., & Lee, N. (2005). Best of breed: When it comes to gaining a market edge while supporting a social cause, corporate social marketing leads the pack. *Social Marketing Quarterly*, 11(3–4), 91–103.
- Lachowetz, T., & Gladden, J. (2002). A framework for understanding cause-related sport marketing programs. (Research paper). *International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship*, 4(4), 313.
- Lachowetz, T., & Irwin, R. (2002). FedEx and the St. Jude classic. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 11(2), 114–116.
- Lantos, G. P. (2001). The boundaries of strategic corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 18(7), 595–632.
- Lantos, G. P. (2002). The ethicality of altruistic corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 19(3), 205–232.
- Lee, J., & Ferreira, M. (2013). A role of team and organizational identification in the success of cause-related sport marketing. *Sport Management Review*, 16(2), 161–172.
- Liston-Heyes, C., & Liu, G. (2010). Cause-related marketing in the retail and finance sectors an exploratory study of the determinants of cause selection and nonprofit alliances. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 39(1), 77–101.
- Liston-Heyes, C., & Liu, G. (2013). A study of non-profit organisations in cause-related marketing Stakeholder concerns and safeguarding strategies. *European Journal of Marketing*, 47(11–12), 1954–1974.
- Liu, G., & Ko, W. W. (2011). An analysis of cause-related marketing implementation strategies through social alliance: Partnership conditions and strategic objectives. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 100(2), 253–281.
- Liu, G. (2013). Impacts of instrumental versus relational centered logic on cause-related marketing decision making. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 113(2), 243–263.
- Lough, N. L., & Pharr, J. R. (2010). Use of a multi-tiered framework to analyze commercial, cause and social marketing strategies in sport. *Journal of Applied Marketing Theory*, 1(2), 8.
- Maignan, I., & Ferrell, O. (2004). Corporate social responsibility and marketing: An integrative framework. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 32(1), 3–19.
- Maignan, I., & Ralston, D. A. (2002). Corporate social responsibility in Europe and the US: Insights from businesses' self-presentations. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 33(3), 497–514.
- Maon, F., Lindgreen, A., & Swaen, V. (2010). Organizational stages and cultural phases: A critical review and a consolidative model of corporate social responsibility development. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(1), 20–38.
- Marconi, J. (2002). Cause marketing: build your image and bottom line through socially responsible partnerships, programs, and events. *Dearborn Trade Publishing*.
- Matten, D., & Moon, J. (2008). Implicit and explicit CSR: A conceptual framework for a comparative understanding of corporate social responsibility. *Academy of Management Review*, 33(2), 404–424.
- McGlone, C., & Martin, N. (2006). Nike's corporate interest lives strong: A case of cause-related marketing and leveraging. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 15(3), 184–188.
- McGowan, R., & Mahon, S. (2009). Corporate social responsibility in professional sports: An analysis of the NBA, NFL, and MLB. *Academy of Business Disciplines Journal*, 1(1), 45–82.
- Mohr, L. A., Webb, D. J., & Harris, K. E. (2001). Do consumers expect companies to be socially responsible? The impact of corporate social responsibility on buying behavior. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 35(1), 45–72.
- Nan, X., & Heo, K. (2007). Consumer responses to corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives: Examining the role of brand-cause fit in cause-related marketing. *Journal of Advertising*, 36(2), 63–74.
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533–544.
- Parent, M. M. (2016). Stakeholder perceptions on the democratic governance of major sports events. *Sport Management Review*, 19(4), 402–416.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). Qualitative analysis and interpretation. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3, 431–539.
- Pharr, J. R., & Lough, N. L. (2012). Differentiation of social marketing and cause-related marketing in US professional sport. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 21, 91.
- Polonsky, M. J., & Jevons, C. (2006). Understanding issue complexity when building a socially responsible brand. *European Business Review*, 18(5), 340–349.
- Porter, M. E., & Kramer, M. R. (2002). The competitive advantage of corporate philanthropy. *Harvard Business Review*, 80(12), 56–68.
- Post, J. E., Preston, L. E., & Sachs, S. (2002). Managing the extended enterprise: The new stakeholder view. *California Management Review*, 45(1), 6–28.
- Pracejus, J. W., & Olsen, G. D. (2004). The role of brand/cause fit in the effectiveness of cause-related marketing campaigns. *Journal of Business Research*, 57(6), 635–640.
- Ratten, V., & Babiak, K. (2010). The role of social responsibility, philanthropy and entrepreneurship in the sport industry. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 16(04), 482–487.
- Roome, N. (2005). Some implications of national agendas for CSR. *Corporate social responsibility across Europe*. 317–333.
- Roy, D. P., & Graeff, T. R. (2003). Consumer attitudes toward cause-related marketing activities in professional sports. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 12(3), 163–172.
- Roy, D. P. (2010). The impact of congruence in cause marketing campaigns for service firms. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 24(3), 255–263.
- Roy, D. P. (2011). Impact of congruence in cause marketing campaigns for professional sport organisations. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 10(1–2), 21–34.
- Samu, S., & Wymer, W. (2009). The effect of fit and dominance in cause marketing communications. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(4), 432–440.
- Seitani, M. M., & Ryan, A. (2007). A critical review of forms of corporate community involvement: From philanthropy to partnerships. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 12(3), 247–266.
- Sen, S., & Bhattacharya, C. B. (2001). Does doing good always lead to doing better? Consumer reactions to corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38(2), 225–243.
- Sheikh, S.-u.-R., & Beise-Zee, R. (2011). Corporate social responsibility or cause-related marketing? The role of cause specificity of CSR. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 28(1), 27–39.
- Sheth, H., & Babiak, K. M. (2010). Beyond the game: Perceptions and practices of corporate social responsibility in the professional sport industry. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 91(3), 433–450.
- Smith, N. C., Drumwright, M. E., & Gentile, M. C. (2010). The new marketing myopia. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 29(1), 4–11.
- Smith, A. C., & Westerbeek, H. M. (2007). Sport as a vehicle for deploying corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, 2007(25), 43–54.
- Stewart-Withers, R., Sewabu, K., & Richardson, S. (2017). Talanoa: A contemporary qualitative methodology for sport management. *Sport Management Review*, 20(1), 55–68.
- Trendafilova, S., Babiak, K., & Heinze, K. (2013). Corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability: Why professional sport is greening the playing field. *Sport Management Review*, 16(3), 298–313.
- Trimble, C. S., & Rifon, N. J. (2006). Consumer perceptions of compatibility in cause-related marketing messages. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 11(1), 29–47.
- Vaaland, T. I., Heide, M., & Grønhaug, K. (2008). Corporate social responsibility: Investigating theory and research in the marketing context. *European Journal of Marketing*, 42(9/10), 927–953.
- Van de Ven, B. (2008). An ethical framework for the marketing of corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 82(2), 339–352.

- Varadarajan, P. R., & Menon, A. (1988). Cause-related marketing: A coalignment of marketing strategy and corporate philanthropy. *The Journal of Marketing* 58–74.
- Walker, M., & Kent, A. (2009). Do fans care? Assessing the influence of corporate social responsibility on consumer attitudes in the sport industry. *Journal of Sport Management*, 23(6), 743.
- Walker, M., Kent, A., & Vincent, J. (2010). Communicating socially responsible initiatives: An analysis of US professional teams. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 19(4), 187.
- Webb, D. J., & Mohr, L. A. (1998). A typology of consumer responses to cause-related marketing: From skeptics to socially concerned. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* 226–238.
- Welsh, E. (2002). Dealing with data: Using NVivo in the qualitative data analysis process. *Paper presented at the forum qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative social research.*