



CHANNEL STRATEGIES

# Validating Event Sponsorship Brand Impact and ROI

## The Client

Top-three import automaker

## The Challenge

Provide a leading automaker with the media accountability to validate ROI on a highly visible, sponsorship investment. Devise a measurement solution to effectively gauge the impact of their cross-media integrated advertising campaign—including TV, print and online—within the purchase funnel.

## The Results

We proved that as part of an integrated cross-media campaign, each dollar invested in the sponsorship program delivered higher ROI than the same investment in the brand's more typical benchmark ad campaigns. Compared with traditional media campaigns, the sponsorship program clearly drove an increased intent to test drive the brand's vehicles.

## How Does a Leading Brand Quantify the ROI of Sponsoring a Major Sports Award?

A top-three import automaker asked Symphony Advanced Media to develop a strategy to measure the ROI of sponsoring a widely recognized, highly coveted sports award. As the automaker's partner for measurement and optimization of advertising in all media channels since 2006, SymphonyAM was tapped by the client's advertising agency to quantify the brand impact and ROI of sponsoring this highly visible event.

## The Background

Recently, our client once again—for the fourth year running—sponsored the Heisman Trophy, college football's most prestigious award. Their sponsorship included the *Sports Illustrated* Heisman tour of ten of the most anticipated college football match-ups and featured Heisman-related events as well as top billing as the official car of the event.

College football game audiences were exposed to the sponsorship via in-person game attendance, televised games or media coverage of the Heisman Trophy ceremony. The automaker executed a cross-media integrated advertising campaign promoting their sponsorship in TV, print and online channels.

The client's investment objectives included building awareness, favorability and consideration for the auto nameplate and specific new car models.

## What We Did

Sponsored events have traditionally been considered difficult and expensive to measure. We developed an innovative measurement strategy to answer the agency's questions in the context of the client's overall advertising program. The study was conducted using a customized survey which reached the sponsorship event audience via the brand's online advertising presence.

### Research objectives included:

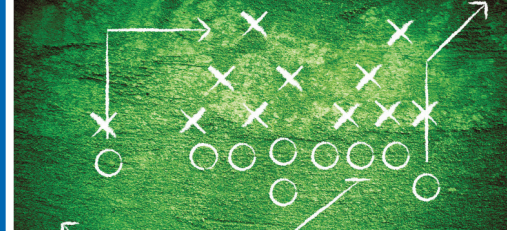
1. Quantify the branding value of event sponsorship within the context of the purchasing funnel: awareness, favorability, consideration, intent to visit Web site, intent to visit a dealer, intent to test drive and purchase intent
2. Compare event sponsorship ROI to more traditional advertising campaigns
3. Develop a deeper understanding of the college football audience as potential customers



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# Validating Sponsorship ROI and Brand Impact



To help our top-three automaker quantify the brand impact and ROI of sponsoring a multi-channel, widely recognized sponsorship program, we developed a customized survey that reached the sponsorship event audience via the brand's online advertising presence.

## The Methodology

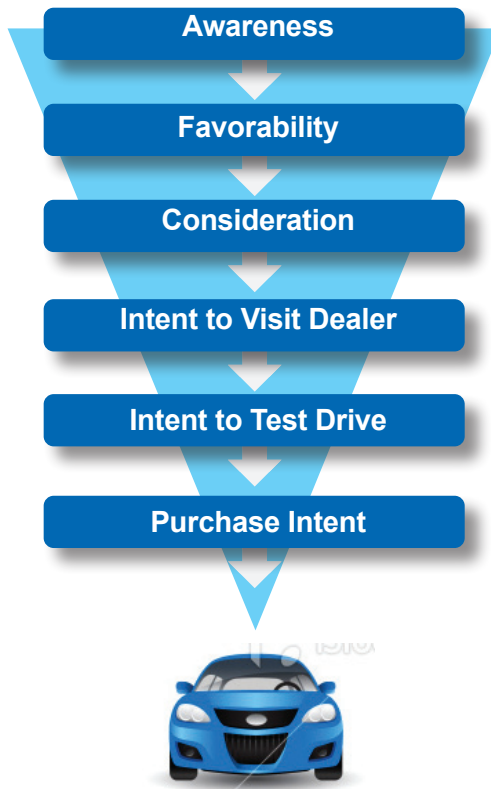
Using a hybrid of opportunity-to-see (media exposure) and ad recall (sponsorship events), all survey participants had similar media and client brand advertising consumption in television, magazine, online and radio. Results were reported for the audience which followed college football regularly compared with the remainder of the audience which did not.

## The Findings

Overall, the sponsorship's impact was extremely positive through the purchase funnel, including quadrupling unaided recall of the client brand, greatly increasing intent to visit the automaker's dealerships, and increasing consideration for specific vehicles.

Perhaps even more surprising, the research determined that each dollar invested in the sponsorship program delivered higher ROI than the same investment in the brand's more typical benchmark ad campaigns. Compared with traditional media campaigns, the sponsorship program clearly drove an increased intent to test drive the brand's vehicles.

The program also increased the client brand's share of consideration and intent to test drive in comparison to competitive brands, particularly among current Honda owners. It also caused a positive synergistic effect for the competitive position of the client's sister brand through the purchase funnel.



## The Results

Based on the effectiveness of the sponsorship, consumers exposed to the campaign were 51% more likely to visit the dealership and 50% more likely to test drive an automobile. Further impact of the combined media campaign (TV, Print, Online and Sponsorship) led to a remarkable 95% increase in likelihood to visit the dealership. This led to a 40% increase in consideration of purchase and a 22% increase intent to purchase the automobile in the next 24 months. Based on Symphony Advanced Media's research, the client validated their decision to sponsor the "Heisman Trophy Event."

## What We Can Do For You

If you need to evaluate the ROI of your marketing and media investments, we can help. Our innovative measurement solutions and platforms, expertise in cross-media measurement and unparalleled client services will help you validate your most challenging media investments.

Examples of key strategic issues addressed include:

- Developing and comparing multiple strategic media allocation scenarios
- Assessing the impact of media marketing alternatives, in context with other promotion actions
- Discovering the best media properties, creative and ad execution strategies
- Finding optimal media allocation and timing
- Assessing campaign performance vs. key competitor brands

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