

Analyzing the Marketing Strategy of Manchester United: A Study of Success in the Premier League

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Abstract:

For the past several decades, Manchester United has been deemed the most successful soccer club in the world either in their achievements or marketing. However, starting from this decade, the ranking and achievements of Manchester United have dropped into the trough, but, still, their marketing strategy is strong, and they gained a lot of commercial lubricants. This study is going to analyze the success of Manchester United's Marketing Strategy. Especially focusing on the brand sponsors and variations, also analyzing the arena services of the team. By combining the analysis of these aspects, we could clearly identify the expedient scheme of Manchester United's Marketing strategy whether to orientate on their potential customers or attract the potential customers. Moreover, this paper also gives a thorough analysis of the current dilemma by identifying the problem current grade of the team and providing the potential comparison strategy with other teams. On account of the current ranking of Manchester United in the Premier League does not satiate the fans, they have not won the great champions for several years, and the fandom outflow and the decreasing value of the branding is a severe problem that needs to be solved by Manchester United. Utilizing the comparison with another team could comprehensively provide a satisfactory solution to deal with the current dilemma of the team record and strengthen their marketing strategy.

Keywords: Manchester United; commercial Success; globalization; marketing analysis.

1. Introduction

This study examines the dynamics of sports management, globalization, and brand strategy in the context of professional football, as well as Manchester United's commercial success in the face of sporting decline. The primary goal is to clarify how Manchester United's difficult on-field business performance is impacted by their strategic alliances and rich historical past. This study is important because it helps us understand how sports organizations may take advantage of sponsorship and brand opportunities when sports wealth fluctuates. This study intends to advance the field of sports management and marketing by analyzing the Manchester United case study and extracting important lessons that may be applied to other sports organizations in comparable circumstances. Using a qualitative research methodology, this study combines a thorough literature review and case analysis. Theories of global brand management, sponsorship dynamics, and sports marketing serve as the foundation for this research paradigm. The present study aims to examine the relationship between sports success and commercial feasibility by delving into Manchester United's sponsorship portfolio,

foreign market penetration strategy, and fan engagement plan. In conclusion, the goal of this research is to offer scholars and practitioners in sports management useful information as well as doable recommendations for preserving brand relevance and income diversification in the cutthroat sports industry. Through the clarification of the tactics that have enabled Manchester United to achieve financial success in sports difficulties, this research seeks to further understanding of sports business and offer data for strategic decision-making in international sports enterprises.

2. The Current Situation of Manchester United

Manchester united is one of the greatest and iconic football club in the world. During the pinnacle times which is under the coaching of Sir Alex Ferguson, Manchester united won numerous trophies, including 2 times Champion's leagues champion, 13 primary league champions, and 5 FA cups.etc. Moreover, they also possessed lots of superstars at that time, Cristiano Ronaldo, the first and the only Golden Ball Award winner in the primary league, David Beckham, Wayne Rooney, Ryan Giggs.etc. How-

ever, the prosperous light is never appeared. Nowadays, Under the coaching of Eric Ten Hag, Manchester united is not the former Manchester United, and they are struggling to win a candidacy to play in the Champion leagues. The great comparison of the aim clearly illustrates the decline of the Manchester United. From a beast of Europe who always stands on list of champion candidacy to a team which fights for the Champion league candidacy, not to mention win the champion. The red DNA seems disappear in this team; The spiritualism that Manchester United possessed seems to vanish.

Manchester United's primary sources of revenue are the large number of sponsors and the fandoms. However, A poor ranking and grade will also result in significant financial loss. Since the supporters are unwilling to observe the team's poor performance, they vent their unhappiness in other ways. Additionally, not being able to play in the champions leagues and other games will negatively affect their income because playing in those games would have given the team an extra bonus. However, Manchester United is unable to play in those games due to the teams' dismal records. Furthermore, Manchester United's sponsors will pull out of the team as a result of the poor position and grade. Once the team reaches such terms, they will also lose a significant amount of revenue. Manchester United's financial status is likewise not good. The Financial report that Manchester united released shows a declination in profits but increase in deficits. In the first quarter of 2023–24, Manchester United reported a pre-tax loss of £32.8 million. For the two seasons prior, the pre-tax deficit totaled £182.2 million, or £ 215 million. The growing number of losses represents the result of not competing in the champion leagues and losing in the primary leagues, which results in the loss of sponsorships.

Despite the recent decline in revenue, globalization and branding are incredibly successful. A brand concept expresses a company's core beliefs and the value that it offers to consumers [1]. Globalization is the establishment of national and international sports organizations, as well as the standardization and universal acceptance of individual and team sport laws and regulations that have been identified as hallmarks of the globalization of sports [2]. Manchester United is the optimum of these concepts. Being a globalized, popular brand, Manchester United performs very well in attracting the fans no matter the aged or gender or races, Manchester united has diverse group of fans around the world [3]. It has been reported that: "Manchester United has a fixed home city and stadium, but its [fifty] million global fan base means that, in theory, it could play" root "games anywhere in England, or even East Asia" [4]. Although this is a theoretical saying, but the words can prove how great the fandoms of Manches-

ter united are. They extend over the entire world, not just their own country of England. The collected reputations of the former players and coaches are what give Manchester United its brand. Manchester United at that time had a large global fan base thanks to the champions. The Manchester United fan community is diverse in age because the legacy is being passed down from one generation to the next. Manchester United may attract supporters from other nations by purchasing players from other countries. For instance, in 2004 Manchester United acquired the Chinese player FangZhuo Dong. This moves garnered significant attention in China, and in this instance, the player may have contributed to the growing diversity of the fan base. Another factor that Manchester United can gain the value of globalization is their performance in social media, As the development of the social media today, people are not necessarily having to come to the live and participate in watching the game. People can comment on the official website or account of the team and interact with the team. Manchester United has numerous social media account, such as X, Instagram, Facebook, or even the agency of Chinese official account on Weibo. Those platforms provide the chance for the interaction between Manchester United and their fan. Manchester United communicates with players and supporters on social media channels in a proactive manner. They honor team accomplishments, showcase player-personal moments, and invite supporters to engage in conversations and interactions on social media.; Manchester United frequently shares riveting and captivating content, such as team news, game reviews, player interviews, updates from the training facility, and behind-the-scenes tales. These materials seek to draw viewers in and offer a special insider viewpoint; Manchester United also uses social media platforms to host a variety of creative competitions and events in an effort to boost fan interaction. Tickets, jersey signings, fan events, and team product rewards are a few examples of this. Those are the reasons why Manchester United can acquire so much influence around the world, mainly attributed to the frequent interaction with fans on social media and the large activity that invites fans involved in it.

3. Manchester United's Commercial Success

3.1 Sponsorship Supports

The commercial success of Manchester United will be covered in the following section of this study. There are several factors that contributed to the success of Manchester United's commercialization. The first important factor is the historical background of Manchester United. Manchester United is a club that founded in 1878 by the Man-

chester Railway Workers, which is a 146-year club. The official Manchester United website states that the club's rebuilding culminated in a triumph in the 1968 European Cup final, making them the first English club to win this title. In 1986, Sir Alex Ferguson was named manager of the team. When Manchester United won the FA Cup in 1990, it marked the beginning of a successful streak that continues to this day. Between 1988 and 2013, Manchester United won 13 league titles, 5 FA titles, and 2 Champions League titles. These were Manchester United's illustrious moments, when the team had a large following and had numerous opportunities to interact with major sponsors [5].

Manchester United has several opportunities to pursue commercial success because of their strong sponsor partnerships. As of right now, more than 40 sponsors, including Adidas, TeamViewer, CHEVROLET, and others, have a contractual agreement with Manchester United, according to the team's official website. Manchester United also collaborates with a variety of industries, including as business, electronics, technology, and tourism. Manchester United will gain from those many sponsor sectors because they offer security and enough financial backing to allow Manchester United to make up for any shortfalls [6]. The 70% of the revenues of Manchester United come from the sponsorship by these company contracts. According to the financial report of Manchester United 2023, it shows the aggregate sponsorship revenues are 189.5 million sterling, which is the highest in 5 years. Specifically, the sponsorship is the crucial factor that contributed to the success of Manchester United commercialization, the club's brand is being driven to emerge globally by the infusion of sponsorship deals, which give the necessary financial support and strategic collaborations. In addition to providing the team with much-needed financial support, these sponsorships create rich marketing opportunities that help Manchester United grow its brand and connect with a wider range of global audiences. In general, Manchester United's commercial success has been greatly influenced by sponsorship variables.

3.2 Branding and Globalization

Expanding the brand globally is also a vital factor that contributed the commercial success of Manchester United. In the perspective of globalization, Manchester United has promoted their brand in many different countries, including the countries from Europe, South American, Asian, and North American among others. Manchester United successfully enthralles followers worldwide by employing various market strategies to adapt to various markets, taking into account their cultural customs and geographic differences. Furthermore, the participation with international

tournaments, friendly games, and the iterated activities in different countries not just showcase the ability of the club but these engagements also strengthen their international fanbase. For example, in the 2007 Asian tour, Manchester United as a team that consecutively won the primary league champions iterated their pre-season game in July in Japan, China, South Korea, and Malaysia. During the iteration, Manchester United was playing against a different team from the native: In Japan, they were facing the Urawa Red Diamonds; In South Korea, they were facing FC Seoul; In China, they were facing the Shenzhen FC; And in Malaysia, they were facing Malaysia XI. Furthermore, players from Manchester United have engaged in a range of cultural events across globe. In this instance, Manchester United's involvement and acceptance of many cultures significantly boosted the team's fan base. Manchester United attracted a considerable number of Asian fandoms from these nations during the iteration. The reputations of Manchester United rapidly grew in Asian, especially in China, today the number grows to more than 253 million [7].

Manchester United's retail outlets and entertainment are widely distributed throughout several continents. Manchester United has an agency in every nation that specializes in team publicity. The local agency frequently arranges several activities that attract locals and link local supporters with Manchester United, according to the team's official website. Manchester United uses local applications on social media to maintain distinct accounts for each country. Manchester United, for example, has a dedicated Wei Bo account in China where it posts team news and engages with Chinese supporters. This can preserve the communication between the local supporters and the club, resulting in a feeling of harmonious situations [8]. Although international fandoms and sponsorships account for most of the revenues of Manchester United, the utilization of the facilities of the arena is also a crucial part that accounts for the success of commercialization. Old Trafford, the home stadium of Manchester United, is the second largest football stadium after Wembley in England with a capacity of 74310 people, and the use of commercialization. Manchester United provides different seat tickets respected to various prices according to the position of the seats. There are also VIP Rooms and other special seats which commemorate some famous contributors of the teams. The large number of seats can provide lots of revenue from the ticket prices. Another tourist destination at Old Trafford is stadium tours, which can bring in extra cash. The sports stadium's amenities, which include a restaurant, retail stores with name brands, and neighboring entertainment venues, support Manchester United's efforts to diversify its sources of income. There is a sizable mall

beneath Old Trafford that offers a wide variety of brands of goods and services. The club is also connected to the eateries and vendors near the former Trafford; the entertainment offerings will bring in a sizable sum of money for the team. The arena is also used for other events, such as the fantastic concerts and rugby matches held at the former Trafford stadium.

4. The Solution of Terrible Management Team

4.1 Bizarre Management

Though Manchester United's achievements in globalization and branding commercialization. They continue to face numerous difficulties at this time. Manchester United of today might be said to have fallen to the lowest levels. The team's low standing and the expensive but non-classic player. One could conclude that Manchester United's entire management structure is immobilized. In the Manchester United, the salaries and contracts are highly unbalanced. In 2023-2024 seasons, the total salary of Manchester United players is 326.01 millions of sterling per year, or 3821346 pounds per week. This is a huge salary payment that can rank Manchester United 8th among all clubs in the world. With a weekly salary of 350000 pounds, Carols Casimiro is the highest paid player on the club. Seven other players get weekly salaries greater than 200,000 pounds, but some players earning such large salaries fall short of expectations or don't contribute much to the team. The turbulent management incurs more than this. Although Manchester United invest lots more money on the transfer market every year for seeking the potential players or superstars, but the transfer players often disappoint the fans. Most of them never achieve the expectation of their value, and wages. This phenomenon can be imputed by the manipulation of Manchester United management. Formerly, Manchester United has giving up lots of top players. They gave Jude Bellingham, Declan Rice, and Haaland serious consideration, but ultimately decided to go with players in the same position as Van de Beek, Casemiro, and Weghorst for managerial reasons. When top striker Harry Kane of Tottenham Hotspur announced his intention to leave in the summer of 2023, Manchester United did not make an offer for the best center forward in the world and instead signed Rasmus Højlund from Atlanta for £ 72 million; Then, head coach Mourinho expressed interest in signing Southampton's Virgil van Dijk in 2017, but Manchester United ultimately decided to sign Lindelöf; Former CEO of Manchester United Woodward claimed in 2023 that the club signed Wan Bissaka from Crystal Palace for £ 50 million after evaluating 804 right backs. Conversely, during the summer of that same year,

Manchester City paid a comparable amount to acquire Cancelo from Juventus, a player with a wider range of positions and a higher attacking output. If it makes sense to have paid a total of 94 million pounds to recruit Real Madrid players Varane and Casemiro during their prime seasons given their performance, then it was somewhat perplexing to get Mayson Mount from Chelsea for a mere 55 million pounds last summer. It should be mentioned that at the time, this team position already had Bruno Fernandes.

4.2 The Hope of the Light

Fortunately, the terrible scouting system and management system is remediable. This summer, as the new injection, Ineos bought 25% of Manchester United in exchange of sporting; the dealing is worth about 1.3 billion pounds. Meaning that starts from next season, Manchester United is overseen by Ineos. Jim Ratcliffe, the founder of Ineos, is allowed to oversee the football operations as part of his deal to buy a quarter of the club's shares, but it's generally accepted that he now has a great deal of influence over non-sports decisions. He revolutionized the manage team and systematize the facilities in Manchester United, such as scouting system and salary system. Etc. He also plans to rebuild a new arena that can accommodate 100000 people. This imposed scene solidifies Manchester United's standing as one of the top football teams in the world and exemplifies Hercules' dedication to giving supporters amazing match day experiences. In addition to having a bigger seating capacity, the new arena that is being proposed will have state-of-the-art amenities and cutting-edge technology, giving spectators experiences they won't soon forget. The Injection of Ineos has also given Manchester United access to a wealth of resources. Ineos might provide the club additional growth prospects in the form of strategic alliances, sponsorships, and chances for international expansion thanks to its extensive network and financial backing. Manchester United is anticipated to employ new revenue streams to strengthen its standing as a major player in international sports with the help of Ineos. As the approaching of next season, fans are eager to see results of the new bloods and the leadership of Jim Ratcliffe. Under the govern of Ineos, Manchester United is expected to reconstruct their glorious era by strengthening the basic facilities, improving the managed system.

5. Conclusion

Under Sir Alex Ferguson's direction, Manchester United was once a formidable squad; however, their athletic performance has deteriorated, as seen by their financial losses and Champions League qualifying attempts. The club continues to enjoy financial success in spite of these ob-

stacles, mostly because of its broad portfolio of sponsors and appealing global brand. This analysis places a strong emphasis on Manchester United's past while highlighting key turning points that helped establish successful alliances. The club's fan base and revenue streams have grown significantly as a result of the globalization strategy, which also includes foreign tours and cultural events. Additionally, Manchester United's commercial viability has improved because to the use of Old Trafford's infrastructure and creative fan involvement through social media platforms.

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