

Marketing Analysis of a Floorball Club with Focus on its Stakeholders

Case Study on FBC Playmakers Prostějov

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Marketing Analysis of a Floorball Club with Focus on its Stakeholders

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Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně
Fakulta managementu a ekonomiky

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- Zpracujte kritickou literární rešerši k problematice marketingových analýz.

II. Praktická část

- Stručně představte zvolený subjekt, analyzujte jeho makroprostředí, identifikujte klíčové stakeholdery v této organizaci, popište její dosavadní marketingové strategie a vyvodte příslušné závěry.
- Vypracujte marketingovou analýzu zvoleného florbalového klubu se zaměřením na jeho stakeholdery.

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Abstract

Floorball is a relatively young and new fresh sport widespread especially in Europe where it comes from. It gained a reputation of a trendy and dynamic sport which is very attractive to play and to watch. The immense popularity of floorball in Czech Republic is obvious and its marketing potential is of great significance. These days, floorball in Czech Republic is the second most popular collective sport and the most popular school sport in terms of registered members. It is the fastest growing sport in the last two decades in Czech Republic and its marketing power is evident. This study aims to examine some marketing issues with specific focus on stakeholders of a chosen regional Czech floorball club. Empirical part of this paper consists of a case study on FBC Playmakers Prostějov where three particular areas are analyzed; namely the external environment of the club, its key stakeholders and its marketing efforts. This case study is supported by a brief literature review which provides the reader with useful theoretical background.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Rationale of the study

It is the irrefutable fact that sport is of great significance in many ways in today's society. It has a huge impact on each individual and we encounter sport in everyday life in many diverse forms. And it may not be just its active form. Importance of sport extends beyond just the active sport. Sport became an integral part of industry. It became a part of the business where the big money is spin, made and spent. Large sport institutions are generating huge profits and thus contribute significantly to GDP and the cycle of finance in the economy. These sport organizations must be managed by a competent and reliable management in order to deliver right decisions that lead to the fulfilment of strategic objectives. One of the important areas which management must deal with within those organizations is marketing.

This applies not only for big professional sport clubs which are aiming at (exempting the sport aims) to achieve profit by deliberate strategies. Marketing plays an important role in all clubs, from the smallest regional to the biggest worldwide recognised ones. Sport marketing has become a phenomenon whose importance is gaining more and more attention in recent years. It would be almost impossible to find a club at any level, does not matter whether professional or amateur, which does not pursue, at least on a small-scale, some marketing strategies. Of course that marketing objectives varies according to different sports, different levels or different club visions but all stakeholders of these clubs should bear in minds that conducting of proper marketing activities is a powerful tool which can assist them to fulfil those objectives. This paper focuses on marketing issues of a small regional Czech floorball club which is operating on an amateur level and which is classified as a non-profit sport organization.

The notion of stakeholders was mentioned above. Before the club starts to run any marketing activities, its representatives must be exactly aware of who are key stakeholders of their organization on whom marketing efforts should be targeted. The term "stakeholder"

is commonly used in management and marketing and, in brief, it expresses persons, institutions or groups of people who are somehow interested in the club in this case. Stakeholder concept is explained in detail later on in literature review. This paper, among other things, identifies key stakeholders of the chosen floorball club and describes their role for this organization.

Floorball is a relatively young and new fresh sport widespread especially in Europe where it comes from. It is a sport on the rise which is yearly moving to new locations and constantly gaining popularity among various groups of people, especially youth. It is a dynamic and trendy sport which attracted lots of new players, fans and sponsors in recent years. It is one of the most popular collective sports in Czech Republic with huge marketing potential which is confirmed by statistics of collective sports player base showing that floorball is on the second place after football in terms of number of registered players. There are a lot of semi-professional and amateur regional floorball clubs in Czech Republic and one of them is the subject of this study.

1.2 Aims of the study

The primary aim of this study is to develop a comprehensive case study dealing with the specific areas within the floorball club. Particular aims of the case study are fully described in the methodology chapter. This case study is supported by the literature review of previous authors and researchers at the beginning. Following methodology chapter serves the reader to explanation of the research process. The largest part of this paper is devoted to the case study itself and relevant conclusions drawn.

This case study is divided into four parts with different aims which are followed by the summary of results and conclusions. The first part aims to provide the reader introduction of the chosen club by presenting its history, characteristics and organizational structure. The second part analyzes the external environment of the club and points to some marketing opportunities derived from this analysis. The third one identifies key stakeholders of the club and describes their role and the last part deals with current marketing activities of the club. Lots of relevant statistics and numerical data are included to illustrate discussed issues.

1.3 Outline of the study

This study begins with an overview of the basic theoretical knowledge of previous authors and researchers which is related and linked to the case study. This literature review is the subject of the second chapter. There is a special chapter 3 in addition to the literature review where floorball is briefly introduced and its development presented. This is followed by a methodology chapter where research process, approach and techniques are explained. The vast majority of this paper is devoted to the case study on FBC Playmakers Prostějov. It comprises of presentation of the club, analysis of its external environment, stakeholder analysis and analysis of its current marketing efforts. Results are summarised and conclusions drawn in the last chapter and the study ends by including appendices and the reference list.

2 Literature review

The aim of the following literature review is to provide the reader with a brief overview of relevant theories related to the empirical part. This review should serve as an initial theoretical insight into issues examined in the case study. There is a very limited amount of literature or theories available closely linked to the chosen topic as floorball is very young sport therefore this review is very generally oriented and provides rather an insight into basic general theories which offer the reader the theoretical background for better understanding of issues researched.

At the beginning of the review, importance of the sport industry, its unique features and its classification are pointed out. This is followed by a subchapter dealing with sports marketing theory where several definitions are compared, sports marketing framework is presented and differences between sports marketing and goods/services marketing are highlighted. Following theories deal with non-profit sport organizations as floorball club researched in the case study belongs to this category of organizations. This section focuses especially on marketing challenges of these organizations. The last section deals with stakeholder theory within sport organizations.

2.1 Sports industry

The first chapter aims to classify sport as a part of industry. Unique features of sports that make it special in case of management techniques are presented in this section. Shank (2009, p. 7) points out that sport become one of the most important and universal institutions in our society. In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of studies on sports and its importance for society and economy. Detailed examination of impact of sports industry on economy by Marquee (1999) or Rivenburgh (2002) showed that due to its wide involvement in society, sport industry, therefore, significantly influences economic and social factors on both macro and micro levels.

Hoye et al. (2009, p. 13) say that the sport industry can be defined as “comprising three distinct but interrelated industries: the State or public sector, the non-profit or voluntary

sector and the professional or commercial sector". Hoye et al. (2009, p. 13) add that these sectors are not isolated from each other and often engage in many of collaborative projects, funding arrangements, joint commercial ventures and other business relationships. This paper, to a large extent, will focus on the non-profit sector as floorball belongs to this sphere.

Shank (2009, p. 11) adds that the sports industry exists to satisfy the needs of three distinct types of consumers: spectators, participants, and sponsors.

2.1.1 Unique features of sport

Stewart and Smith (1999) provide a list of ten unique features of sport which can help us to understand why the management of sport organizations requires the application of specific management techniques.

- People develop irrational passions
- Differences in judging performance
- The interdependent nature of relationships between sporting organizations
- Anti-competitive behaviour
- Sport product (a game or contest) is of variable quality
- It enjoys a high degree of product or brand loyalty
- It engenders vicarious identification
- Sport fans exhibit a high degree of optimism sport organizations are relatively reluctant to adopt new technology; and
- Sport often has a limited supply

2.1.2 Three sectors of sport

Following figure classifies sport into three distinct sectors with indication of financing of each sector. The figure graphically supports the above mentioned theory using slightly different denomination of these sectors. Arrows are used there to indicate the direction of the flow of funding.

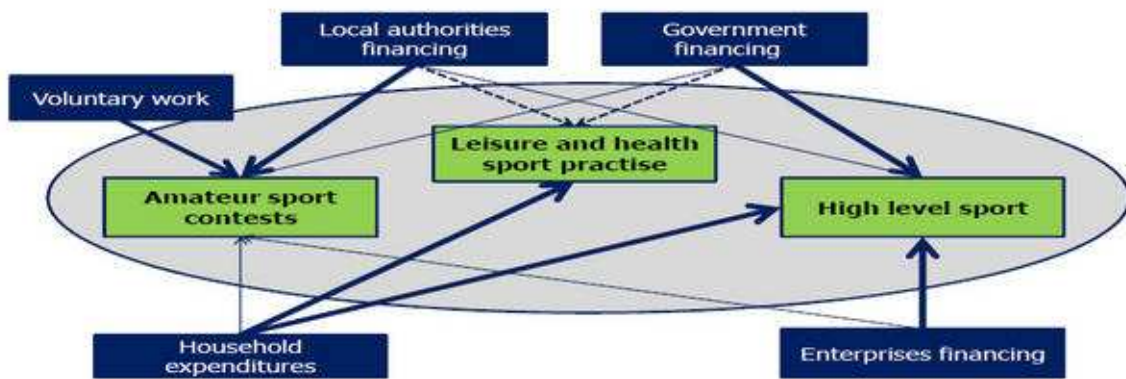


Figure 2.1 Three categories of sport

source: Andreff, Dutoya, Montel (2009)

2.2 Sports marketing

This chapter focuses on definitions of sports marketing and then puts these definitions into practice by explaining the sport marketing framework and its stages. The last sub-chapter deals with differences between goods/services marketing and sports marketing.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on sports marketing. Wakefield (2007) suggests that some may assert that sports marketing is a “special case” of marketing as it has its theoretical and practical dimensions of marketing that are typical to sports marketing. There are several points of view from different authors shown below on how to define sports marketing and on how to describe its unique features.

2.2.1 Various definitions of sports marketing and its features

“It is an ongoing process through which contests with an uncertain outcome are staged creating opportunities for the simultaneous fulfilment of direct and indirect objectives amongst sport customers, sport businesses and other related individuals and organisations”. (Beech & Chadwick, 2007).

Wakefield (2007:12) says that sports marketing is “building a highly identified fan base such that fans, sponsors, media, and government pay to promote and support the organization for the benefits of social exchange and personal, group, and community identity within a cooperative competitive environment”. Shank(2009:3) adds that sports marketing is “the specific application of marketing principles and processes to sports products and to the marketing of nonsports products through association with sport.”

According to Funk (2008:58) sport marketing action generates opportunities for stakeholders to satisfy needs and draw benefits through an exchange process. Sport marketing consists of activities designed to match needs and wants of consumers with sport products and services (Shilubry, Westerbeek, Quick, & Funk, 2009). Sport marketing, adapted from general marketing definitions, was defined as “includes arrangement of all activities to meet needs and wants of sports consumers.” (Mullin, Hardy, Sutton, 2000:8-9).

Beech & Chadwick (2004:128) highlight that primary objective of the sport marketing activity is to satisfy the right sport customer needs with sport products or services that offer greater benefits than those available from competitors whilst making the maximum sustainable profit. Hoye et al. (2009:229) agree that “sport marketing is focused on satisfying the needs of sport consumers, or those people who use sport-related goods or services through playing sport, watching or listening to sport, buying merchandise, collecting memorabilia or using sporting goods.”

2.2.2 The sport marketing framework

The Sport Marketing Framework puts the sport marketing definition into practice by providing an approach to meeting sport consumers’ needs (Hoye et al., 2009). The Framework outlines a step-by-step process for planning and implementing the key principles of sport marketing (Hoye et al., 2009). The Sport Marketing Framework involves four stages:

1. Identify sport marketing opportunities (analyse internal and external environments, analyse organization, analyse market and consumers)
2. Develop a sport marketing strategy (develop strategic marketing direction, develop sport marketing strategy)
3. Plan the sport marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion, sponsorship, services)
4. Implement and control the sport marketing strategy (implementation strategies, control process, sport marketing ethics.)

2.2.3 Differences between goods/services marketing and sports marketing

In addition to sports marketing definitions and for better understanding it is useful to highlight some of the different elements which are not common for both goods/services marketing and sports marketing. Only a few studies have attempted to explore and describe these differences. Wakefield (2007) suggests this explanation:

“While consumers of most goods and services see value as primarily an economic evaluation (Which detergent is the best buy?), the value fans derive from attending sporting events is likely to be more than a mere economic decision. In fact, when teams make fans focus on the price they are paying, they are focusing on the wrong side of the equation. The whole point is to make them fans – not consumers in the traditional sense. This is the first fundamental difference between sports marketing and marketing of most goods and services”. Compared to typical goods and services marketing, sports marketing differs in at least ten respects as evidenced by the table below taken from Wakefield (2007).

Top 10 Differences between Goods/Services Marketing and Sports Marketing			
Top 10	Dimension	Goods/services	Sports teams/events
1	Purchasers	Customers	Fanatics
2	Adoption	Loyalty-repeat purchasers of the same brand	Psychological identification with individuals and teams that goes beyond mere loyalty
3	Promotion and Media	Owner pays media for promotion	Fans, sponsors, and media pay to promote team/event
4	Distribution Channel	Static; more site-limited	Mobile; more flexible
5	Product	Adapted	Global
6	Price	Customer pays a given price for good/service	Two-part: Fans frequently pay for the right to pay for tickets
7	Facilities	Corporate owner buys/builds own facilities	Government (taxpayer) typically pays for facilities
8	Competition	Individual branding in competitive markets	Cooperative contractual relationships-monopoly power and antitrust exemption
9	Exchange	Principally economic exchange	Principally social exchange
10	Employees	Contractual power favors owners	Contractual power favors employees (players)

Table 2.1 Top 10 differences between goods/services marketing and sports marketing

Source: (Wakefield, 2007:4)

2.3 Non-profit sport organization

Floorball still belongs to the sector of non-profit sport organizations and this chapter deals with this category. The first part of chapter outlines the general classification of sports organisations and reviews marketing challenges for sport organisations. The second part provides closer look at classification, marketing strategies and strategic issues of non-profit sport organizations. There is not so much literature or specific studies available on this problematic. Only a few pages are devoted to non-profit sport organizations in sports marketing books and this area seems to be suitable for exploring, researching and acquiring new findings. This paper aims to explain and point out how these non-profit sport organizations, particularly floorball clubs, work in terms of marketing activities.

2.3.1 What is a sports organization?

Robinson et al. (2007) have proposed a general classification of sports organisations based on four characteristics:

1. The people who make up an organisation and the relationships between these people
2. The rules that govern an organisation
3. The objectives and end goals on organisation pursues
4. The resources at an organisation's disposal

Slack and Parent's (2006:5) very general definition describes a sports organisation as "a social entity in the sports industry; it is goal-directed, with a consciously structured activity system and a relatively identifiable boundary".

2.3.2 Marketing challenges for sports organizations

Ferrand and McCarthy (2009:47) suggest that the marketing challenges facing sports organisations can be summarised in the form of six recommendations:

1. Sports organisation marketing should become more relationship-oriented rather than transaction-oriented.
2. Sports organisations should implement relationship-marketing strategies in each of the three sub-sectors (market, network and internal).
3. Sports organisation offers should involve key stakeholders in the creation of a value constellation.

4. Sports organisation marketing programmes should balance commercial, social and environmental objectives.
5. Sports organisation marketing should create both functional and experiential value.
6. Sports organisations should link their brand with their stakeholders' experience.

2.3.3 Classification of non-profit sport organizations

Hoye et al. (2009:51) defined non-profit organizations as "those organizations that are institutionally separate from the State, do not return profits to owners, are self-governing, have a significant element of voluntary contribution and are formally incorporated". Hoye et al. (2009:51) add to the definition that "non-profit organizations exist to develop communities, meet the needs of identifiable and discrete groups in those communities, and work for the benefit of public good rather than wealth creation for individuals. The majority of non-profit organizations are driven largely by the efforts of volunteers rather than paid staff".

Lyons (2001) suggests that non-profit organizations are specific because they have difficulty in assessing performance relative to their commercial counterparts, have to be liable to a wide range of stakeholders and must deal with discrepancies and possible conflict between paid staff and volunteers.

Lagae (2005:9) describes few characteristics of voluntary sport sectors:

- Amateur, unpaid popular sport
- Participant sport
- Coverage of local market
- Devotion of volunteers
- Government subsidies
- Maximal sport activity based on democratic rules

2.3.4 Marketing in non-profit organizations

Beech & Chadwick (2007:42) claim that small, more amateur (or resource-poor) sporting organisation has to deal with completely different market and environment. These organisations have to seek to develop their marketing strategy through creating and developing a loyal customer base, attracting resources and people through a variety of both

well-established and innovative means, and endeavour to maximise opportunity through a low budget and planned approach(Beech & Chadwick, 2007).

Sargeant (2005) found that essential to any marketing strategy, whether focusing on the for-profit or non-profit sectors, is the determination of conjoint themes or magnitude. Sargeant (2005) add that the questions of where are we now, where do we want to be and how are we going to get there should be elementary to any organisation. Beech & Chadwick (2007:42) provide further clarification:

- 1. Where are we now?** *A complete review of an organisation's environment, its past performance and future direction should be completed. Understanding the current strategic position of the organisation in relation to the audiences that it serves assists in developing meaningful objectives for the future direction of the organisation.*
- 2. Where do we want to be?** *The organisation needs to identify and plan what the direction of the organisation will be. Targets, objectives for awareness, image and sales need to be mapped out to ensure organisation success.*
- 3. How are we going to get there?** *The strategy and tactics to be employed by the organisation to meet targets occurs at this point. The basic marketing approach is formed, including the strategy to achieve the marketing outcomes undertaken.*

2.3.5 Strategic issues for non-profit sport organizations

Beech & Chadwick (2004:203) say that “with increasing demands placed on the non-profit sport organisation (NPSO), a range of issues emerge that shape and form the functions, structure and policies of the typical NPSO”. Broadly speaking they include, but are not limited to, the following:

- stakeholder relationships;
- governance and control;
- strategic direction;
- processes and policies.

2.4 Stakeholder theory in sport organizations

This chapter reviews the knowledge about the stakeholder theory, explains the term of stakeholder and mainly focuses on stakeholders in sports organizations, especially in non-profit sport organizations. This chapter also mentions stakeholder phases in

commercialization of sport. There is a large volume of published studies describing the role of stakeholders for the organizations. However, majority of studies are aimed at explanations of this theory in terms of business organizations. In terms of stakeholder theory for sport organizations, it can be said that the generalisability of much published research on this issue is problematic. After reminding the general theory, further knowledge in area of stakeholders in sport organizations, particularly non-profit sport organizations, is presented.

2.4.1 Stakeholder theory

Ferrand & McCarthy (2009:24-25) say that stakeholder theory, like relationship marketing, is based on systems theory. It has enabled managers to move from an organisation-based approach, in which stakeholders are seen as “entities that have to be managed solely for the benefit of the organisation”, to a network-oriented vision that focuses on relationships and processes. The aim of stakeholder theory is to bring together dependence as well as their power according to Ferrand & McCarthy (2009). Popularised by Freeman (1984), “stakeholder theory identifies and models the persons and groups that really count for an organisation. In addition, it describes and recommends methods management can use to give due regard to the interests of those groups”. Freeman’s work was carried out from a strategic perspective that Mintzberg et al. (1998) assigned to the power school.

2.4.1.1 What is a stakeholder?

Several attempts have been made to define the term “stakeholder”. Useful definition made by Wheeler & Sillanpaa (1997) cited by Walker & Marr (2001) might be a most appropriate general summary. They defined a stakeholder as “any person or group that will be interested in, affected by, or is a necessary participant in the project. Identification and management of stakeholder interests has been shown to be a necessary element of effective business administration and policy making”.

2.4.2 Stakeholders in sport organizations

Previous research findings from the past served as a basis for applying general knowledge of stakeholder theory to examination of this theory in terms of sport organizations. Accepting Freeman’s (1984:46) definition of stakeholders as “any groups or individuals who can affect or are affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives”, all the people and organisations that have a relationship with a club are stakeholders in that club. From a

marketing point of view, strategic choices must be made about which of the stakeholders to engage and satisfy.

Hoye et al. (2009:93) claim that stakeholders are “all the people and groups that have an interest in an organization, including its employees, players, members, league or affiliated governing body, government, community, facility-owners, sponsors, broadcasters and fans”. Hoye et al. (2009:93) continue that the permanent issue that a sport manager has to deal with is concerned with whom they are trying to make happy. Hoye et al. (2009:93) add that either intentionally or unintentionally serving the interests of some stakeholders in preference to others has serious consequences for the defining of strategic direction and the allocation of limited resources.

Major sport organization stakeholders and their expectations are summarized in the table below taken from Hoye et al. (2009:285)

STAKEHOLDER EXPECTATIONS OF SPORT ORGANIZATION	
Stakeholder Type	Expectations of Sport Organization
Players	on field success, appropriate pay and benefits, low injury rates
Employees	appropriate pay and benefits, job security, professional development
Equipment suppliers	reliability of demand, player endorsement, brand awareness
Members	services and benefits, overall satisfaction
Owners/shareholders	return on investments, public recognition of club or association
Sponsors	positive reputation of club or association, brand awareness and recognition
Player agents	high player morale, payment of market rates
Fans	game quality and excitement, high win-loss ratio
Community/society	civic pride, provides role models for young adults
Media	mass market, high level of public interest

Table 2.2 Stakeholder expectations of sport organization

Source: Hoye et al. (2009)

2.4.3 Stakeholders in non-profit sport organizations

Most relevant part of stakeholder theory for this study is investigated in this section. It deals with stakeholders of non-profit sport organizations which will be researched in the empirical part of this paper. Several studies investigating this problematic have been carried out by Beech & Chadwick and this sub-chapter is predominantly based on their work.

Beech & Chadwick (2004: 203) say that as with any organization, the NPSO has a variety of stakeholders, all with certain levels of responsibility, reporting and influence within the organization. Beech & Chadwick (2004: 203) suggest that non-profit sport organizations characteristically have three key groups of stakeholders with varying levels of involvement, as shown in sub-chapter below.

2.4.3.1 Key stakeholders in non-profit sport organizations

Beech & Chadwick (2004) have identified three key groups of stakeholders and also have provided their detailed description as shown from their work:

Legal – *Legal owners are usually those bodies or persons identified in an organisation's constitution or articles of association who own the NPSO. They may be affiliated clubs or regional associations that form the umbrella body that controls the sport. Legal owners have the right to make changes to the NPSO constitution or articles of association, appoint or elect members to various boards and control the finances of the NPSO.*

Moral – *These stakeholders are usually more difficult to define as they may have no definitive constituted role within the organisation but nevertheless influence the way that the NPSO operates. This group can include players, coaches, officials, and fans or spectators of the sport.*

Business – *Stakeholders in this category include all entities and individuals with which the NPSO has a business or contractual relationship. These can include staff of the NPSO, sponsors and suppliers of goods and services, and in some cases the general public as paying customers.*

2.4.4 Stakeholder phases in the commercialisation of sport

To illustrate the theory and for better understanding of constantly changing dynamic sport environment the following table is given. There are implications for players and stakeholders which derive from the steady-state phase that the sport has reached. These are set out in table below taken from Beech & Chadwick (2004:8).

Stakeholder phases in the commercialisation of sport		
<i>The amateur game</i>	<i>The professional game</i>	<i>The commercial game</i>
<p>Players are unpaid.</p> <p>Stakeholders consist progressively of players, fans, clubs, and governing bodies.</p>	<p>Players are paid, although a strong supporting amateur structure persists.</p> <p>Stakeholders now include investors.</p>	<p>Players at the highest lever are very highly paid. Other players are paid, and still an amateur structure persists.</p> <p>Stakeholders now go well beyond players, fans, clubs, governing bodies and investors; they include external sponsors with only contractual loyalty, and broadcasters.</p>

Table 2.3 Stakeholder phases in the commercialisation of sport

Source: Beech & Chadwick (2004:8)

2.5 Conclusion

This literature review highlighted and indicated major theoretical knowledge based on frequently cited works of acclaimed authors that representatives of any floorball club should bear in mind and should be closely familiar with. This brief summary of important theory is a prerequisite and a guide for a successful marketer or manager of a floorball club who wants to achieve high goals. It also helps the reader to be more familiar with topics researched and presented in the case study.

Three main theoretical areas related to the following case study were pointed out and briefly explained in the literature review; namely theories concerned with sports marketing, non-profit sport organizations and their marketing challenges and finally with stakeholder theory within sport organizations. Each of these areas is somehow linked to the following case study and they provide theoretical assumptions for more accurate understanding of the issues examined within the chosen floorball club.

There is a very short extra chapter preceding the methodology chapter and the case study itself put in after this chapter which cursorily introduces floorball for readers who have

never heard of this sport and who can just hardly imagine what is floorball about. There are also some pictures included in appendices for the same purpose.

3 Introducing floorball

Floorball is a collective indoor sport fairly similar to the field hockey. It is played on a pitch with dimensions of 40x20 m with a lightweight hollow plastic ball. In normal situation, there are 5 players and 1 goalkeeper of each team on the pitch. Players use special floorball sticks in an effort to achieve the highest possible number of goals. Goalkeepers do not use sticks. They wear only a protective equipment.

Floorball was originated in Sweden in 1970s and quickly gained enormous popularity. It has gradually begun to expand to other countries and became popular in Finland and Switzerland. In 1986 the rules were unified and the International Floorball Federation (IFF) was found. Sweden leads the way in the development of floorball today and has most registered floorball players in the world. These days, IFF counts 54 member associations and floorball is played in almost 80 countries all over the world. Latest IFF statistics says that currently there are 283 059 licensed players in 4.271 floorball clubs around the world and approximately 2 million recreational players in addition. (IFF, www.floorball.org)

Czech Republic is among the four most floorball advanced countries together with Sweden, Finland and Switzerland and national floorball teams of those countries regularly achieve the greatest successes on the international scene. In terms of number of registered players, Czech Republic is on the third place with current 57.584 players (1. Sweden 2. Finland 3. Czech Republic 4. Switzerland...). Despite the huge popularity in Czech Republic, floorball is still perceived as an amateur or semi-professional sport. (Czech Floorball Union, www.cfbu.cz) For some illustrative pictures see appendices.

4 Methodology

Literature review served to provide the general theoretical background to the empirical part. Previous chapter where floorball was introduced fulfils the role of the “linking bridge” between the theory and the empirical study. It acquaints the reader with the sport which may be new for him/her and contributes to a better understanding of the empirical part. This chapter aims to provide a rationale for methodology and to describe the research process which was used in this study.

4.1 Research design

According to Jankowicz (2005) research design may be defined as an approach to data collection that addresses research questions. Jankowicz (2005) distinguishes 3 types of design: exploratory, descriptive and causal (or explanatory). This study can be considered as a descriptive one as it concerns with investigation of specific features of chosen organization. There is no intention to discover new general information as it is in exploratory researches or to explain the relationships between variables which apply for explanatory studies. This study deals with describing the phenomenon rather than explaining it.

4.2 Research method

Jankowicz (2005) says that research method is a systematic and orderly approach taken towards the collection and analysis of data. Author decided to use a case study method which seems to be the most appropriate and suitable method for author’s research objectives. A variety of techniques and methods are used in the case study to explore issues regarding the chosen topic. Saunders and Lewis (2012) suggest that case studies are useful as they provide a detailed understanding of the context of the research. Jankowicz (2005) adds that “case study method is used when thesis focuses on a set of issues in a single organization and researcher want to identify the factors involved in an in-depth study of the organization” which precisely applies for this work. Lee and Lings (2008) define a case as a single social setting or more accurately as a specific situation within that social setting.

4.3 Qualitative vs. Quantitative

This empirical work is rather qualitative than quantitative but it combines both approaches. Where possible, discussion is supplemented by relevant quantitative data. Following research is largely based on interviewing of people from FBC Playmakers Prostějov.

According to Lee and Lings (2008), interviewing is probably the most popular technique in academic qualitative research.

4.4 Research objectives

General aim of this work is to present the reader the comprehensive study of delimited areas within the floorball club listed in the objectives of the case study which are shown below.

Research objectives:

- to provide the reader with a general background of the chosen organization
- to analyse its macro-environment by using appropriate analytic tool and derive possible marketing opportunities from this analysis
- to identify key stakeholders of the club on which marketing strategies should be focused and describe their role for the club as well as what is expected from those groups of stakeholders
- to have a look and discuss some current marketing efforts of the club
- to draw relevant conclusions based on the study

4.5 Structure of the case study

Following case study is divided into 4 main parts. The first part serves as an introduction to the problematic and provides the general background of the club. History of the club, its characteristics and the organizational structure are presented there. The second part deals with the macro-environment of the club by using PESTEL analysis. Political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal factors are examined there. The third part is devoted to the identification of key stakeholders of the club and the last part deals with some marketing strategies of the club. This structure may be briefly summarized as follows:

- History + Characteristics + Organizational structure of the club
- Environmental analysis of the club
- Stakeholder identification
- Marketing efforts of the club

4.6 Research techniques used in the case study

A variety of research methods, techniques or analytic tools were used in this case study in order to deliver comprehensive view on key issues and to provide an analysis of the full richness. Most of this work, specifically background chapter, stakeholder chapter and marketing efforts chapter, is based on the individual interviewing of relevant people.

Namely, Milan Fojt, the manager of the club, was very helpful and willing to provide the author necessary information related to this research. Regular friendly discussions, correctly called as an in-depth interview, enabled author to get inside into the problematic.

4.6.1 Interviews

Mutual informal but purposeful discussions between the author and Milan Fojt or other participants from club representatives were conducted mainly via internet communication services due to the geographical distance. While doing these interviews the author was asking predetermined targeted questions to cover relevant issues but the author engaged in a flexible approach which usually led to more rich and in-depth answers reflecting to respondents' opinions and experiences and the author and the respondent often ended up "off track". However, this helped the author to deeper understanding of discussed problematic. All club representatives are aware of this research and they gave the author a permission to publish internal data about the club.

4.6.2 Author's own experience

Many observations and comments are also based on author's many years of experience in the club. Author is a member of the club for more than 8 years and was at all important milestones of this organization. Author was witness to all phases of the club development and his youth was strongly connected with this club. These experiences allowed the author to reflect to some parts of the research. Big advantage was that the author got the access to the organization as an "insider" and could fully used existing contacts. It was not needed to prove author's credibility as he is considered as a part of friendly floorball community within the club.

4.6.3 Secondary data

Some parts of this research, especially macro-environment analysis of the club, are also supported by secondary data from multiple sources. Both qualitative and quantitative data are used. These data include some statistics, surveys, financial data, tables etc. They serve to provide the reader with the contextual background.

4.7 Validity and reliability of the research

Validity

The problem of external validity may arise in this case. This refers to generalisability of the research. The aim of this work is not to generalise findings as these findings may not apply in

other regional floorball clubs. However, the overall degree of validity of this research is at good level and data are presented in an unbiased way.

Reliability

Data in this research can be considered as reliable as the most frequently used technique was one-to-one interview which guarantee high degree of the data consistency. Most probably the same results would be found on other occasions or in another time.

4.8 Limitations of the study

There are some limitations of the study which should be taken into account. For example, there are some pitfalls of using secondary data. Saunders and Lewis (2012) point out that they only meet the research needs partially, they are not always value-neutral and we do not know precisely how they were collected.

Another limitation concerns the quality of interview responds. Club representatives may provide a little bit bias answers in order to show the club in a good light or they may intentionally conceal some negative factors which may significantly influence research findings. Moreover, most of the interviews were conducted via internet therefore the lack of personal contact may lead to the wrong understanding and interpreting of responses.

As was highlighted before, generalisability of this case study is questionable. Lots of findings may apply in other regional floorball clubs. Especially stakeholder groups are very similar in most of these clubs. They are also all operating in the same macro-environment. But in case of marketing strategies and activities there is no such high degree of generalisability as each club has its unique approach to marketing.

5 Case Study – FBC Playmakers Prostějov

5.1 History of the club

For the general understanding of “how such non-profit sport organisation works” it is beneficial to include information about historical formation of the club, about its gradual development in time and its stages of development before it evolved into its present form. This section contains references to the history of the club.

Floorball Club Playmakers Prostějov was founded in 2000 and since its inception it has grown markedly. At the beginning of the new millennium club functioned as a school sports club composed mainly of students from the local high school. In that time, the first men’s club entered into the league. With hindsight, the current situation is totally incomparable.

In 2001, the first youth team was established which has helped to improved quality of players and increased membership of the club. In the 2002/2003 season, the men’s A-team managed to advance to the most prestigious regional competition which has led to increased costs. Compared to other sports that time, floorball was seen as a recreational sport, often played as an additional sport in free time. Over time, the player base grew due to gradual increase in interest in this sport. The team scored a few regional successes and in 2004 it even managed to break through to the national competition which increased the attractiveness for fans. Since that year, relatively large fan base of Playmakers began to form. Youth teams also have reached some successes and the future looked promising for the club.

Floorball was growing in Prostějov and even players from other regions were joining the squad. But since 2006, costs were rising more than Board of Directors expected and sponsorship has become essential to the functioning of the club. Due to playing in national competition, floorball in Prostějov gained prestige but this fact had its downsides. Steady increase in costs forced the club management to voluntarily leave the national league and return to the regional competition. Playmakers were forced to erase loss by selling some players to other clubs. In the same year, some of the dissatisfied players even left the club and established their own competitive club called SK K2 Sportcentrum Prostějov. In 2007/2008 season, there was a total restructuring of the club. The men’s A-team was stabilized, the men’s B-team was founded and the greatest emphasis was placed on the

emergence of junior teams. The club began to build on their own feet thanks to sponsors who have provided funds to purchase necessary equipment.

Year 2008/2009 started the floorball fever in Olomouc region. Especially because of the world championship in floorball which took place in Czech Republic, after which primarily junior teams have scored an incredible increase in members. In recent years, club counts over 200 members. These days, club primarily relies on its young players who are playing there from an early age. Good youth work is seen as an essential part of the club's strategy.

[own elaboration in cooperation with FBC Playmakers Prostějov]

5.2 Characteristics of the club

Currently, the FBC Playmakers Prostějov is one of two clubs in the town, the other is a club called SK K2 Sportcentrum Prostějov. These two clubs played earlier as one under the auspices of the FBC Playmakers Prostějov but in 2006 they broke away from each other. Since 2008, the club bears the official name of FBC Playmakers Prostějov, o. s. Club does not have its own sports hall but for purposes of trainings and playing home matches it uses the sports hall of ZŠ a RG města Prostějova [high school] or sports hall of Kostelec na Hané.

The Executive Committee which has 3 members participates in the management of the club. The General Assembly which is informed about activities and results of the Executive Committee meets once a year at a local restaurant. The club membership currently consists of 234 persons among which include all officers and active players who belong to squads playing at the regional and district levels in different age categories. The diagram below presents the structure of the player base of the club.

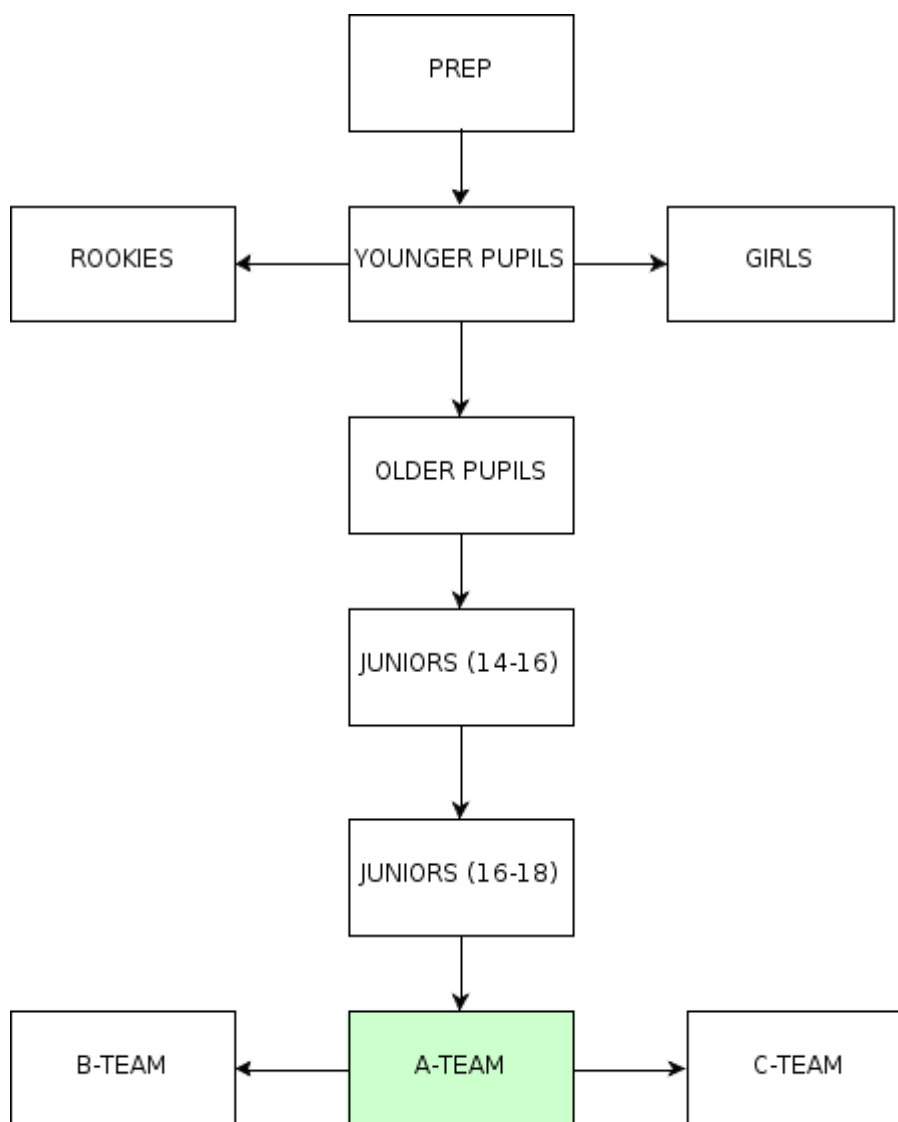


Figure 5.1 Player base of FBC Playmakers Prostějov

[own elaboration]

5.3 Organizational structure of the club

The administrative apparatus of the club is the General Assembly which meets once a year. The General Assembly elects members of the Executive Committee. The election period is 2 years. The Executive Committee manages the club and consists of 3 members. There is also the Audit Committee which oversees the Executive Committee, particularly the financial management. The management of the club FBC Playmakers Prostějov until 2008 was composed of five members of the Executive Committee. Later, an adjustment to a system of three-member composition was approved. This system now works in this form: **President FBC – Manager FBC – Special Commissioner FBC**

5.3.1 Managing units

1. Club President:

- supervisory authority of the Executive Committee
- inspection at the Czech Sports Association, access to financial resources
- member of the Executive Committee (active representative of EC, guidance of meetings, 1 vote)
- oversees compliance with statutes of the club
- representative of the club
- training and education of club members
- preparation of documents and overseeing compliance with formal procedures for the General Assembly or the Executive Committee meeting
- preparing specific documents in cooperation with the manager

2. Manager FBC

- club secretary and manager of the club in one person
- member of the Executive Committee (active representative of EC, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee Meeting, 1 vote)
- club secretary job (financial area), managerial work (marketing, management)
- control area (events, tournaments, matches)
- editorial staff (media visibility, functionality of the club websites)
- training and education of club members (supervisors, coaches etc.)
- other community, voluntary or charity events

3. Special Commissioner FBC

- club representative for the Czech Floorball Union
- member of the Executive Committee (active agent for the control activities of allocated sector, 1 vote)

[own elaboration in cooperation with FBC Playmakers Prostějov]

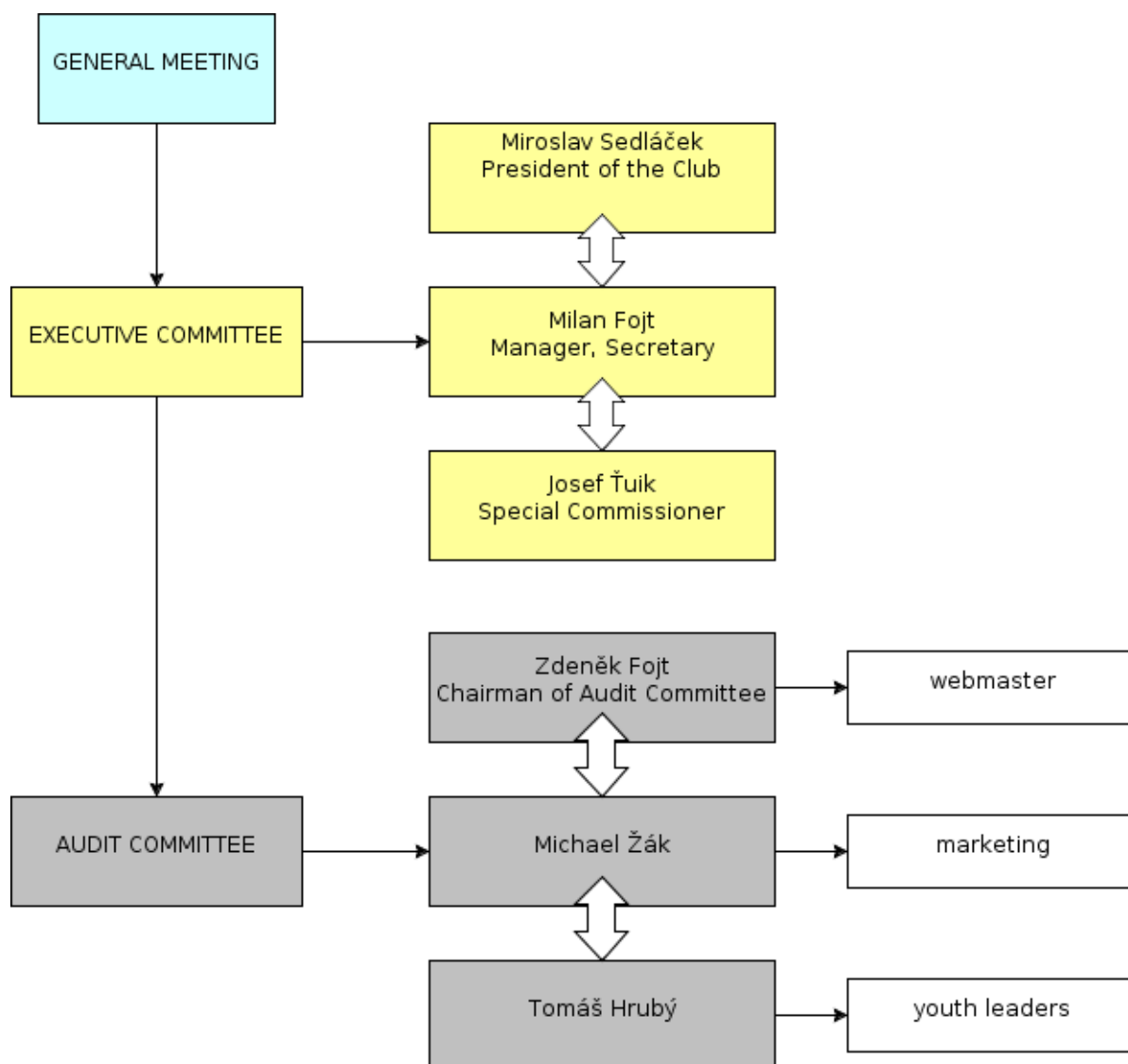


Figure 5.2 Organizational structure of FBC Playmakers Prostějov

[own elaboration]

5.4 Analysis of the external environment of the club

This section provides the reader with a closer look at environment in which club is operating. As a most appropriate analytic tool for the examination of the external environment of FBC Playmakers Prostějov was chosen the PESTEL analysis. This analysis aims to describe political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal factors of the external environment. Some of the factors mentioned have bigger influence on running of the club while others have less. Therefore, some will be given more attention. As well as most of sports clubs, floorball club of Prostějov is operating in the dynamic environment and need to be able to flexibly respond to any changes. For such non-profit sport organisation seems to be the consideration of economic and social factors as essential in terms of meeting the

targets and the trouble-free existence. The regular scanning of environment is the necessary part of club's strategies. Regular studies of the external environment should lead to the recognition of opportunities and threats as well. That's why is this analysis the indispensable part of this work. It serves as a tool for deeper understanding of the relationship between club's environment and its marketing activities. Most marketing analyses include the analysis of the external environment as a general basis for subsequent research. By external environment of FBC Playmakers Prostějov is meant environment at international, national, regional and municipal level.

5.4.1 Political factors

Recently, most political parties in Czech Republic expressed the need for supporting of Czech sport, especially in its financing. The general objective of political leaders in charge of sports area is to achieve a broad base of people actively involved in sports and to provide access to sports for children and even for people from weaker social class. Politicians are aware that sport is beneficial even for the national economy. According to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the state gets more funds by levying of taxes from sports industry and services than is provided in support of physical education and sports in form of subsidies. Sport industry also has considerable importance in job creation.

Olomouc region in which the city of Prostějov is situated is known for its concept of long-term development of sport. The city of Prostějov itself even often use slogan: "Prostějov – the city of sport". Club revenues are dependent on operating subsidies from the city council and the region council hence positive relationships with these institutions are seen as a key factor. Marketing activities of FBC Playmakers Prostějov should lead to the increased visibility of floorball in region and to closer and stronger interaction with these institutions. This fact represents a huge opportunity for people in charge of marketing in the club. More the club is visible and successful, more resources it can gain from the city council and the region council.

5.4.2 Economic factors

Prior to looking for economic aspects of the external environment, it is useful to start from an internal point of view and to outline the funding system of FBC Playmakers Prostějov which should help the reader to recognise economic opportunities of the club. As a sample

model for the illustration of the financial management of the club, year 2010 was chosen and revenues and costs were analysed.

Revenues of the club consist of subsidies from the city council and the region council, sponsorship, sales output and mainly of membership fees. Due to the fact that FBC Playmakers Prostějov has not its own sports hall, the biggest proportion of all costs is counted in “services” part. These costs include especially renting of sports halls and other various sport venues like gym or swimming pool. Following tables and charts illustrate the financial situation in year 2010.

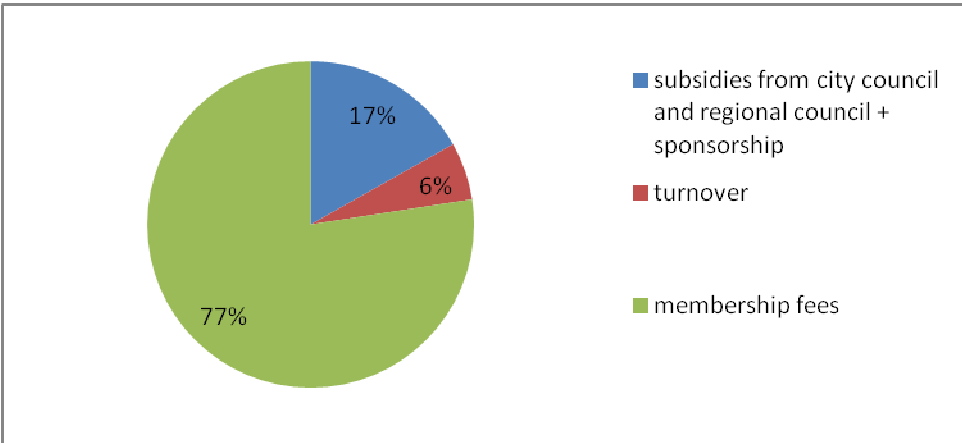
**Revenues for the year 2010
(in thousands of CZK)**

subsidies from city council and regional council + sponsorship	159
turnover	54
membership fees	732
TOTAL	945

Table 5.1 Revenues of FBC Playmakers Prostějov in 2010

Source: based on data from accounting information of FBC Playmakers Prostějov

Percentage of revenues for the year 2010



Graph 5.1 Percentage of revenues of FBC Playmakers Prostějov in 2010

Source: based on data from accounting information of FBC Playmakers Prostějov

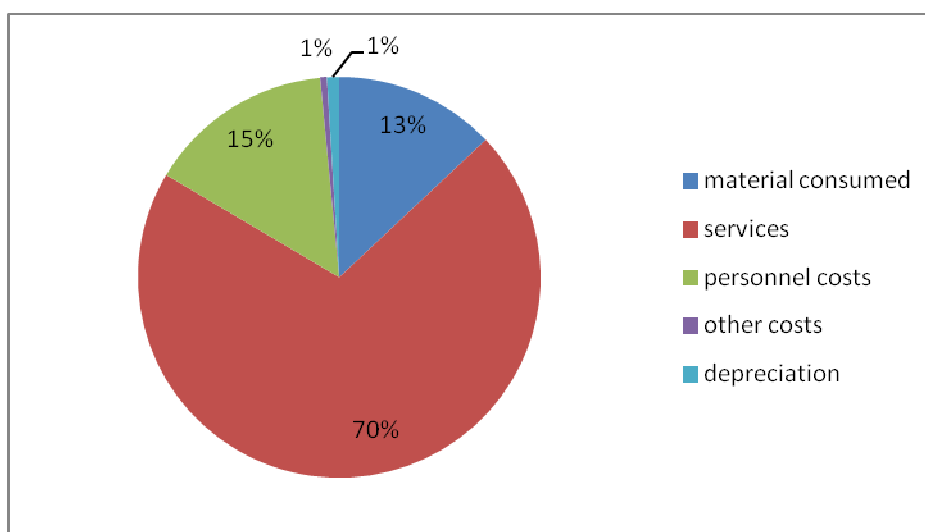
**Costs for the year 2010
(in thousands of CZK)**

material consumed	119
services	646
personnel costs	137
other costs	5
depreciation	9
TOTAL	916

Table 5.2 Costs of FBC Playmakers Prostějov in 2010

Source: based on data from accounting information of FBC Playmakers Prostějov

Percentage of costs for the year 2010



Graph 5.2 Percentage of costs of FBC Playmakers Prostějov in 2010

Source: based on data from accounting information of FBC Playmakers Prostějov

As was highlighted above, the significant part of club's revenues are subsidies from local authorities and sponsorship. Even now we can derive another great opportunity for people in charge of marketing. They should set their marketing activities in such way that could attract attention of potential sponsors of the club who can increase the financial stability of

the club by providing necessary financial resources. Club must be able to offer a credible promotion of a sponsor's brand name in return. STEM/MARK agency recently conducted a survey of public opinion in Czech Republic in terms of attractiveness of particular sports for sponsorship. People were asked to recommend 3 most attractive sports for investing money by potential sponsors. Question was: *Which maximum of 3 sports would you recommend companies to invest in?* Results are summarized in the following table. 614 respondents were asked.

SPORT	PERCENTAGE
Ice hockey	46%
Football	41%
Athletics	16%
Speed skating	16%
Skiing and snowboarding	14%
Swimming	13%
Volleyball	13%
Tennis	11%
Gymnastics	11%
Cycling	9%
Motorsport	7%
Basketball	7%
Figure skating	6%
Floorball	6%
Aerobic, Fitness	4%
Martial arts	3%
Table tennis	3%
Dancing	2%
Horsemanship	2%
Badminton	2%
Other sports	31%
No sport	6%

Table 5.3 Attractiveness of sports for sponsorship

Source: STEM/MARK

Finance in Czech sport now reached a historic minimum for the last twenty years. This is expressed by the fact that after 1990 there was a decrease of birth rate and the number of young talented athletes decreased in the order of tens of percent. Starting in 2002, this trend reversed and already since 2009 we can expect a significant increase in sporting youth,

specifically of 28% by 2014. Given the state of public finance, it is clear that sports funding should be provided also from other sources. (Ministry of education, youth and sports, 2009)

Recent analyses conducted by the government have shown that over the past 20 years expenditures on sport in Czech Republic are decreasing in comparison with state budget expenditures and gross domestic product. Czech Republic is among the countries of the EU with the lowest support for sport. The following table summarizes the funding of sport from the state budget according to medium-term plan until 2012. Table shows that funding of sport from the state budget has a decreasing trend. However, the objective of new legislation in field of sport is to provide such financial resources that could satisfy essential needs of sports environment. (Ministry of education, youth and sports, 2009)

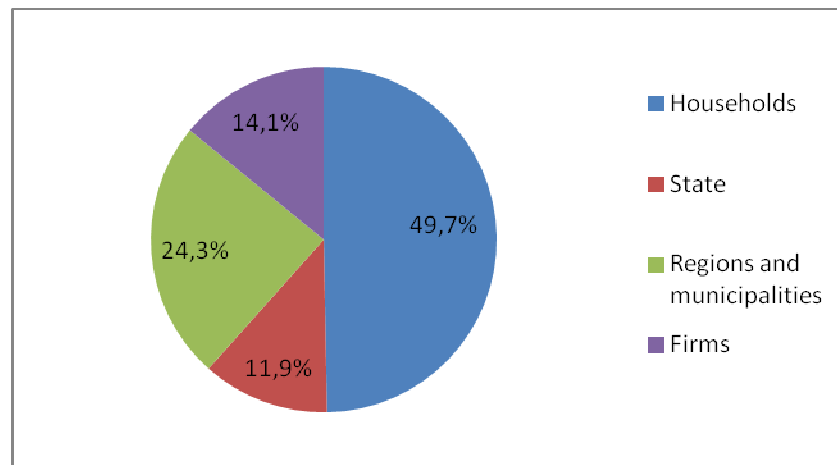
Years	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
State budget - sports (CZK)	2.234.450	1.901.526	1.900.882	1.924.596	1.924.611

Table 5.4 Funding of sport from the state budget in Czech Republic

Source: Ministry of education, youth and sports

However, according to recent studies, the state is involved in only less than 12% of the funding structure of sport. Households contribute by almost half of funding, regions and municipalities by 24,3 % and firms by 14,1 % as shown in chart below. (Finance magazine, 2009)

Structure of funding of sport in Czech Republic



Graph 5.3 Percentage structure of funding of sport in Czech Republic

Source: Finance magazine

Floorball clubs such as FBC Playmakers Prostějov aims to constantly raise the membership of the club. Marketing activities focus on attracting as many people as possible to this sport. Floorball needs to make its player base as big as possible in order to gain competitive advantage over other sports in terms of redistribution of financial resources by the state, local authorities and firms. Therefore, activities aimed at attracting new members are carefully carried out by FBC Playmakers Prostějov.

Financial issues in many of non-profit sport organisations like floorball club may be seen as a very challenging aspect of managing. Creators of marketing strategies should be very creative. In addition to club's regular activities, there is a possibility to organise other events such as tournament with participation fees, a fair, or another charity event to raise money. According to International Floorball Federation "gaining sponsorships might be difficult but when club can offer an exciting new sport in return, which counteracts trends of physical inactivity and promotes healthier and active lifestyle for all generations, especially for children, it might be the best selling line. There is also possibility to contact local communities, churches, schools, or trust funds in order to get donations. Usually these bodies are willing to promote a good cause." A wide variety of events can be organised by the volunteers of sports clubs to raise needed funds:

- Selling (i.e. food products, household objects)
- Social events (dances, movies, dinner receptions)

- Bazaars, auctions, craft sales
- Sport events
- Providing services (car washes, gardening)
- Sponsorships

These are so called indirect ways of raising money. Direct ways to raise money would be donations such as asking money from:

- Government and government agencies
- Industrial companies
- The trades union movement
- Charitable trusts and foundations
- Voluntary and social organisations
- Interested citizens

Statistics are proving that financing of sport in Czech Republic is not satisfying hence clubs need to be seeking for new opportunities of gaining financial resources and need to more rely on their own efforts rather than be waiting for the state help. Therefore, marketers should include in their strategies objectives like: seeking for new creative ways of getting resources, seeking for sponsors, keep positive relationships with local authorities, constant promotion of floorball in order to increase membership etc. This should be the most important lesson learned for marketers based on economic factors of the external environment.

5.4.3 Social factors

Czech Republic, former Czechoslovakia is among advanced countries in the world of sport which is evidenced by the number of medals from world's or European sporting events. In proportion to population, Czech Republic achieves impressive results. This is caused by a high degree of organization of the population in sports organizations. Statistics of civic associations state about 2,5 mil. members. There is a nearly 150 years lasting tradition of organized sports, advanced methodology of sports training, sufficient number of trainer cadres, positive attitude of Czech public to sports and long-term positive attitude to sports by recent governments since the establishment of republic in 1918. (*Pohyb je život*, 2009)

Floorball has become a phenomenon in Czech Republic. Attractiveness of floorball is rising among other things due to popularity of ice hockey in Czech Republic. Official statistics show that floorball has become the second largest collective sport in Czech Republic in terms of number of members. (see tables and graph)

Membership of 20 largest Czech sports to 1. 1. 2011

		TOTAL	YOUTH
1	football	512780	144220
2	tennis	58830	14768
3	floorball	57584	22170
4	ice hockey	55806	19494
5	golf	50461	6061
6	volleyball	49472	13076
7	skiing	37231	9249
8	hockey	36345	8318
9	athletics	35194	18795
10	chess	32179	7390
11	basketball	31340	13775
12	horsemanship	30219	9057
13	swimming sports	25950	17196
14	table tennis	23444	5442
15	cycling	22917	3117
16	handball	20266	8152
17	mountaineering	14326	1363
18	bowling and skittles	13192	1437
19	martial arts	12717	7900
20	canoeing	10903	1908

Table 5.5 Membership of 20 largest Czech sports

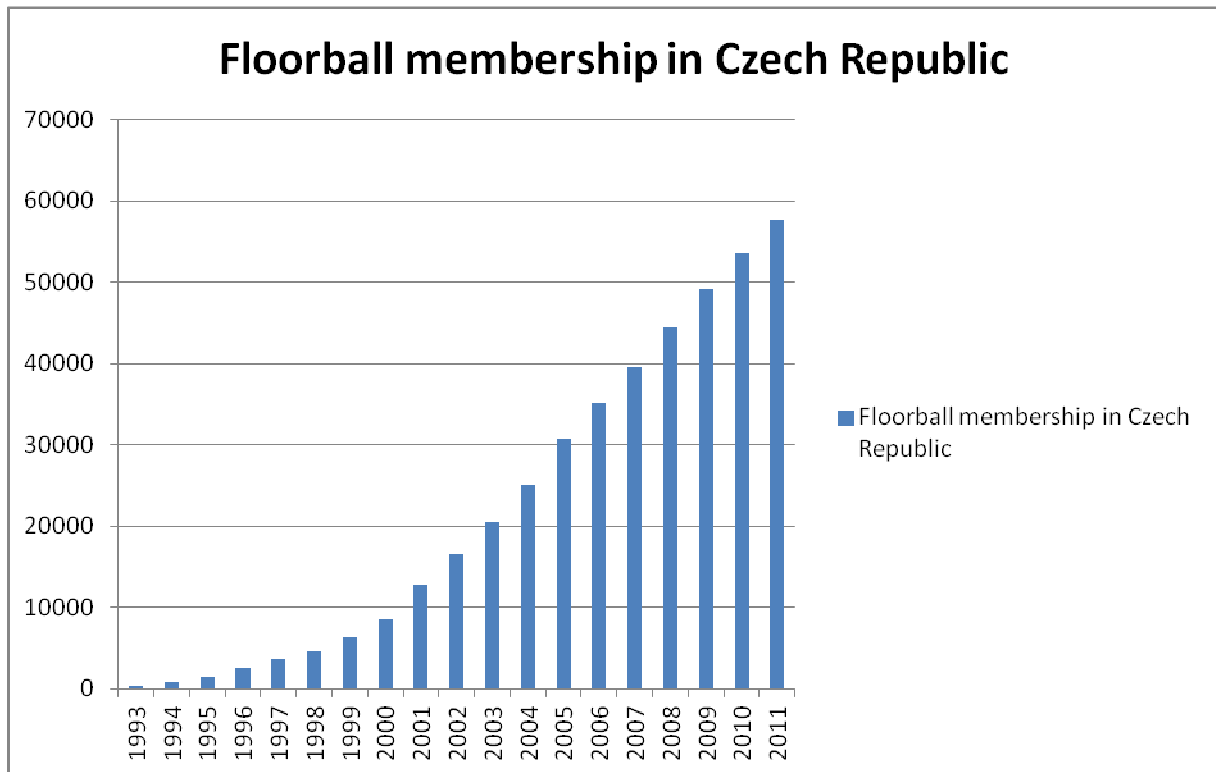
Source: Czech Floorball Union

Floorball membership in Czech Republic

Year (to 1. 1.)	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of players	320	780	1442	2478	3670	4587	6327	8554	12812	16617	20458	25017	30712	35189	39584	44421	49089	53528	57584

Table 5.6 Floorball membership in Czech Republic

Source: Czech Floorball Union



Graph 5.4 Floorball membership in Czech Republic

Source: Czech Floorball Union

There exist lots of school sports clubs in Czech Republic which are operating under the auspices of Association of school sports clubs. Currently this association works in all districts of Czech Republic and associates more than 250.000 pupils of primary and secondary schools. Another table shows interest in sports which are played in school sports clubs. Table summarizes numbers of registered school clubs dedicated to particular sports. 6 most popular sports in case of school sports clubs are presented. (Association of school sports clubs Czech Republic, 2009)

TOP 6 sports according to interest of school sports clubs

Sport	Number of registered school sports clubs dedicated to that sport
Floorball	1820
Football	1682
Athletics	1456
Volleyball	1420
Basketball	1317
Dodgeball	1117

Table 5.7 Top 6 sports according to interest of school sports clubs in Czech Republic

Source: Association of school sports clubs

From the international point of view floorball is the fastest growing sport in a number of countries and has now a total of 300,000 licensed players and a total of 2 million of recreational players in the world. There are no signs that this positive development would slow down in the future. (see Figure below, source: IFF)

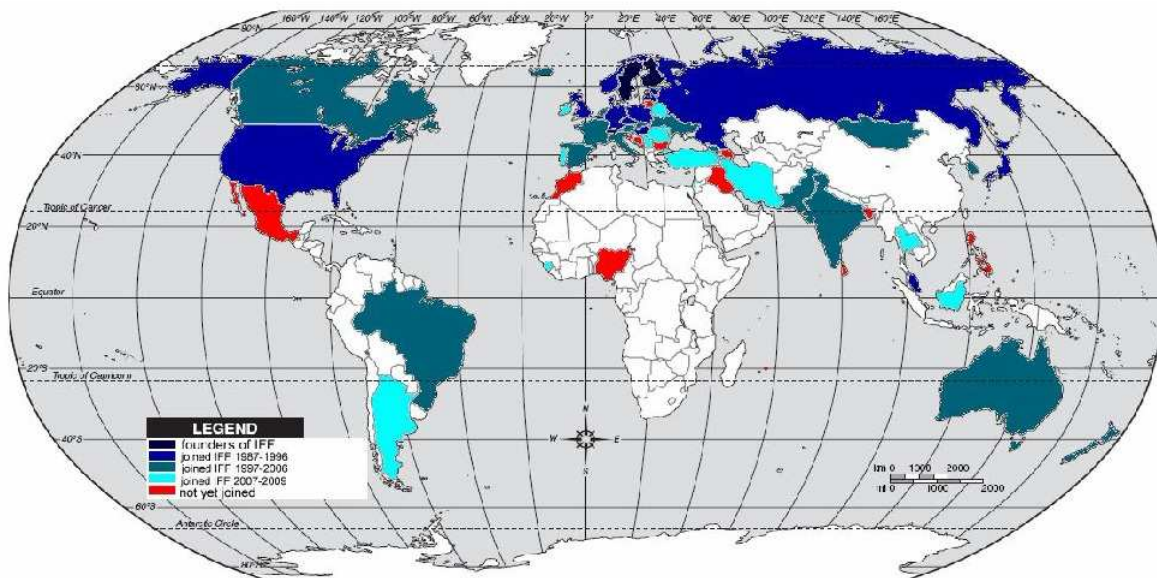


Figure 5.3 Emergence of floorball in the world

Source: International Floorball Federation

Again, opportunities for marketers of FBC Playmakers Prostějov from the social factor analysis could be derived. We are witnessing the exceptional growth of floorball over time in terms of rising popularity. The position of the most popular school sport and the second most popular collective sport in Czech Republic says it all. The constant promotion of this sport is important and attracting of more and more people to actively involve is the driving engine of each floorball club's marketing strategy, FBC Playmakers Prostějov is no exception.

5.4.4 Technological factors

In terms of technological factors, we can name concepts such as information technology, new production technologies, process automation or changes in transport technology. But simply, the most important and the most powerful technological tool for non-profit sport organizations is the internet. It offers a plethora of marketing opportunities. In case of FBC Playmakers Prostějov, exploitation of own websites and services of social networks is seen as the biggest opportunity of addressing target groups. Social media marketing could make marketing so much easier. One of the key aspects of sport marketing is ability to evolve and modify. Terms like innovation or modification are becoming more and more important for marketing strategies. Majority of research and development in floorball focuses on new technologies of floorball facilities and equipment. Marketers of FBC Playmakers Prostějov need to take into account these factors and provide its stakeholders and its target groups the innovative and dynamic environment.

5.4.5 Environmental factors

In general, floorball is seen as an environmentally friendly sport or, better say, it has no significant impact on the environment. Most of studies dealing with the impact of sports on the environment usually do not involve floorball. There might be some elements which can be discussed like materials used to produce floorball equipment etc. but these elements pose no big threat to the environment and their impact is minimal. However, presenting your floorball club as an environmentally friendly association is seen in the eyes of the public as a commendable feature.

5.4.6 Legal factors

The highest authority of Czech floorball is the Czech Floorball Union which is a member of the International Floorball Federation (IFF). The Czech Floorball Union is a civic association based on the federal democratic principles. It is the organiser and the representative of

floorball in Czech Republic. Its mission is to nurture the comprehensive development of floorball in Czech Republic and to create for it universal and equal conditions at all stages; through the work in floorball clubs lead the youth to positive civic attitudes and healthy lifestyle. (Czech Floorball Union, 2006) There is an opportunity for marketers of FBC Playmakers Prostějov to adopt strategies, vision, goals and values of Czech Floorball Union and try to implement them at level of regional floorball club.

5.5 Stakeholders of FBC Playmakers Prostějov

This section aims to identify key stakeholders of FBC Playmakers Prostějov, describe their roles within the club and discuss what is expected from them in terms of behavioural examples. For non-profit sport organizations such as floorball club of Prostějov it is very important to create a community consisting of groups of people who are interested in club's affairs, literally known as stakeholders, and try to reach the highest possible integration, interaction, cooperation and coordination among these groups. And this is exactly what is done in FBC Playmakers Prostějov.

The underlying philosophy of management of the club is to observe values of floorball like equality, fair play and solidarity and to teach all its stakeholders to respect these values as well. Fulfilling of common vision and meeting of set targets is a crucial challenge for floorball community. Principles and standards regarding the exemplary behaviour are established within the club for a long time and it is in own interest of all stakeholders to follow them. Features like level of health improvement, equity, socio-cultural integration, unity, involvement, education etc. can be named which are seen as key drivers of approach to this sport by all stakeholders involved in the floorball club of Prostějov. These elements should be rooted in minds of all members of FBC Playmakers Prostějov and the constant promotion of such approach is in the heart of club's strategies. Following subchapters deal with particular stakeholders and their roles are discussed. Where possible, stakeholder identification is supplemented by internal numeric data to illustrate the discussion.

5.5.1 Coaches and sport instructors

This group of people represents a big challenge for floorball clubs. Unfortunately, there is still lack of trained professionals in this field. And this trend applies at international level. Therefore, regional clubs like FBC Playmakers Prostějov are struggling to get trained coaches to all squads within the club. The result is that we may be witnessing that one coach is

responsible for more teams, eg. A-team + Juniors + Rookies and it often leads to a situation where he is not able to adequately assist all because of schedule crossing. In the past there was even a period when A-team worked without proper coach and the team was led only by players without the necessary qualifications.

Fortunately, in recent times, the club managed to get sufficient number of coaches who were willing to take coaching courses and voluntarily joined the club. It is important to remember that these people provide the support in their free time and above all they are not paid for it. These days, emphasis is placed on educating current members of the club in terms of coaching experience in order to avoid lack of qualified coaches in the future. People are not able to give too much time to voluntary activities these days hence club is looking for committed helpers within its own ranks. It is quite difficult to somehow persuade sport instructors to join the club. Such decision simply depends on the goodwill of these people.

There are some unwritten rules and values of what one would expect from sport instructors within the club. They should engage in approach of making primary focus on development of their athletes. They should understand that level of skills may vary therefore sessions should be adapted to suit every individual. The greatest emphasis should be placed on youth. Every single person should be given the opportunity to train or participate in the match. Constant encouragement and effort appreciation is required in both success and defeat. It is important to keep in mind sports safety practices and to promote "safety first" attitude.

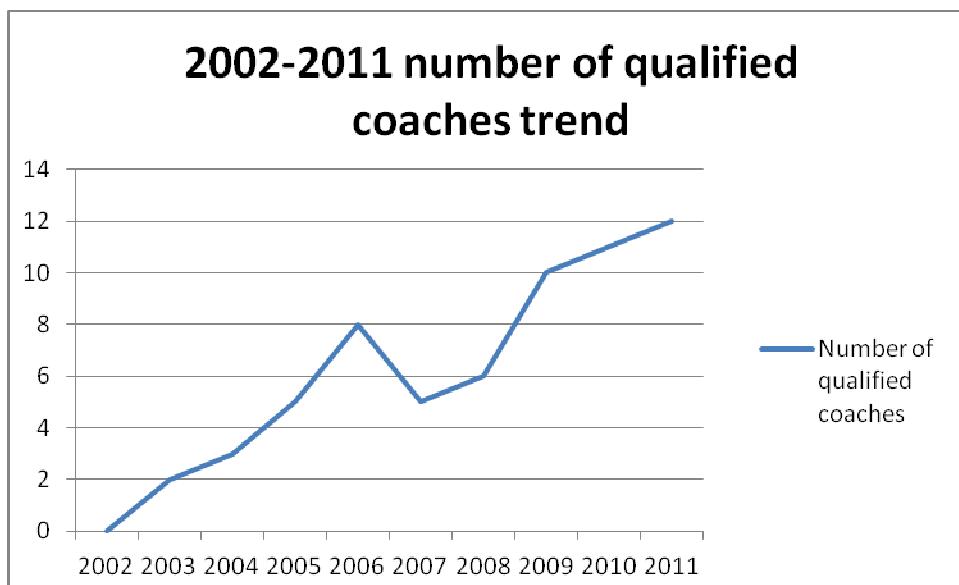
Coaches should be a role model in terms of sharing positive values and respecting others decisions. Coaches should continually update their professional knowledge and strive to personal growth in order to deliver adequate feedback. Fair play attitude is vital. For sessions leading it is important to ensure that everybody has right equipment, be clear with instructions, promote inspiring and positive environment, demonstrate where possible and ensure that everyone is actively involved. These are desired qualities expected from coaches and sport instructors in FBC Playmakers Prostějov.

Number of qualified coaches in FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
2	2	3	5	8	5	6	10	11	12

Table 5.8 Number of qualified coaches in FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

Source: FBC Playmakers Prostějov



Graph 5.5 2002-2011 number of qualified coaches trend

5.5.2 Players and youth

The largest group of stakeholders in terms of members are players. Most of the player base consists of youth who is the target group in majority of floorball clubs, in FBC Playmakers Prostějov as well. As was highlighted before, number of players in floorball clubs increases dramatically from year to year. The process of recruiting new players is a never ending activity. FBC Playmakers Prostějov annually organizes several recruitments usually aimed at youth. The average age of players is decreasing due to growing interest of young people in this sport.

Among other stakeholder groups, players are seen as a symbol of club's pride. Their behaviour, manners and sports performance is the epitome of club's values. FBC Playmakers emphasis the moral education of its wards from an early age and every newcomer is thoroughly familiar with moral principles that apply in the club. The satisfaction of other stakeholders (eg. spectators, coaches, sponsors, management, parents etc.) to some extent depends on the players' performances. Players of FBC Playmakers Prostějov are encouraged

to adopt such an approach to sport which serves as a model for the entire floorball community.

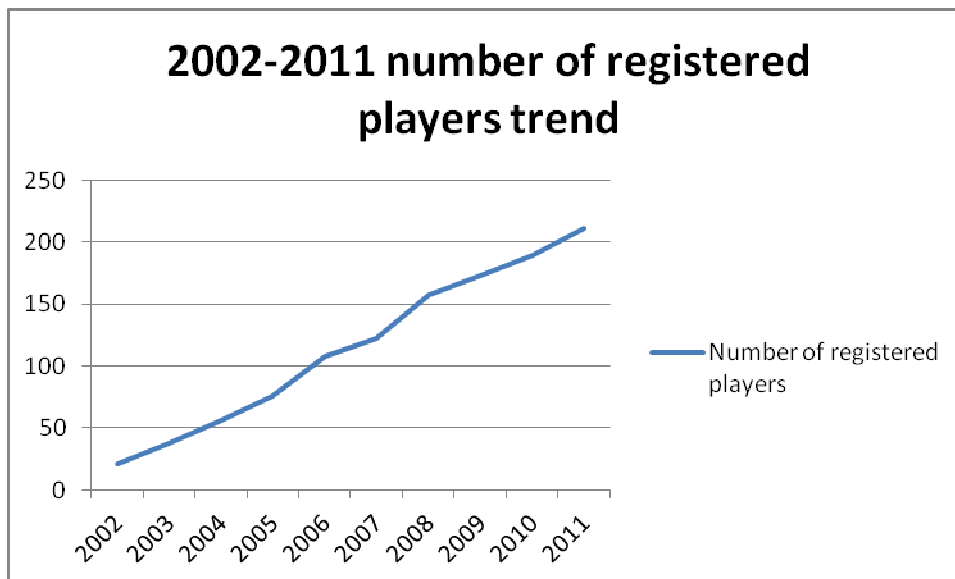
Everyone regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation is welcome to join in FBC Playmakers Prostějov. Equal treatment is guaranteed. Friendly environment is enforced persistently among players. Active commitment and dedication is prerequisite of successful player. Especially in youth teams, players are in addition to playing skills led to right interpersonal relationships. They must be able to show respect towards opponents, referees, teammates and coaches. Only in this case they can expect the similar treatment in return according to the club's philosophy. They need to realize that winning is not everything. Acceptance of defeat should be seen as a motivational factor to the further performance development. Strive to be better is another important required stance of all players regardless of level of playing skills. Team spirit is always preferred over individualities. Everyone is expected to be a team player. Even in case of greatest talents, there is no tolerance for harmful substances like alcohol or drugs. This is the abridged list of what is expected from an exemplary player of FBC Playmakers Prostějov who respects values of the club.

Number of registered players in FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
21	38	56	76	108	122	157	173	190	211

Table 5.9 Number of registered players in FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

Source: FBC Playmakers Prostějov



Graph 5.6 2002-2011 number of registered players trend

5.5.3 Management and administrators

Despite the fact that floorball is still an amateur sport strongly dependent on voluntary activities, there is a need to ensure smooth operations of these sport organizations by competent management. Every club including FBC Playmakers Prostějov has to have established the organizational structure and the hierarchy with defined competencies. The management structure of FBC Playmakers Prostějov was described in one of the preceding chapters. Each member of this organizational structure has own assigned role in the club and clearly defined competencies and responsibilities. As well as coaches, these people are not paid for their contribution to the club. Management and administrators are facing lots of difficult tasks which should help to convenient running and developing of their club. The main areas which management must deal with include funding and overall financial situation, marketing activities, communication with other stakeholders, coordination of club's activities, ensuring of effective cooperation between all stakeholders and many other areas.

The basis for successful management of the club is to have conclusively given directives and statuses where vision, values and goals are precisely defined. Everyone should be familiar with strategies that are pursued by the management. Management must be able to flexibly respond to changes in the club's environment in order to satisfy diverse needs of all stakeholders. Constant seeking of sponsors and partners willing to provide funds seems to be a never ending story for club leaders. There is an effort in FBC Playmakers Prostějov to

involve as many people as possible in process of running the club. Recruitment of more elected representatives should enable the management to share more different experiences, interests and needs which make the final decision-making more effective and beneficial for all stakeholders. By accepting the position, elected representatives undertake that they will act in the best interest of the club and that they will promote such policies which lead to the general satisfaction of all stakeholders and to effective running of the club.

As well as for other stakeholders, there are some expected values and qualities for club's elected representatives of FBC Playmakers Prostějov. Suitable candidates should respect sporting values as well as leadership values. They should be decisive and be able to rationally defend their decisions, opinions and attitudes. Decisions must be transparent and in accordance with underlying objectives and strategies. All club's events must be organized in such way that ensure healthy and safe environment. It is necessary to make sure that all people working with youth are properly qualified and educated. Focus of strategic decisions should be always placed on suitable development of work with youth.

5.5.4 Spectators, supporters and public

This group of stakeholders is one of the most influential. Why have fans so significant impact on other stakeholders? Simply because their presence and support have beneficial effects on almost all other stakeholder groups. Fans are an integral part of the floorball community. Wide fan base leads to the general satisfaction of all stakeholders. Fan support motivates players to better performance. This is especially true for young players who are happy for every appreciation of their efforts. Attracting of fans is one of the marketing targets set by management of FBC Playmakers Prostějov. Increased interest by spectators in the club may attract much-needed potential sponsors. Greater number of fans also means more media attention.

Management of FBC Playmakers Prostějov is aware of the importance of its fans and is doing everything possible to continually expand its fan base. In recent years, we are witnessing a growing trend in the interest of FBC Playmakers Prostějov by general public. Club has become quite popular in the eyes of the public thanks to its promoted values, positive approach to youth and appropriate marketing efforts. Although there is a big number of top sporting clubs in Prostějov, floorball is still managing to maintain its competitiveness despite the fact that it is played on an amateur level.

Every event organized by FBC Playmakers Prostějov is with free admission. Everyone is welcome to visit these especially sporting events regardless of age or social background. FBC Playmakers Prostějov is promoting the common vision of all floorball clubs known as “floorbal for all”. By gradual increasing of fan base and by gaining public favour, FBC Playmakers Prostějov aims to strengthen its image and brand name among other sport clubs in Prostějov.

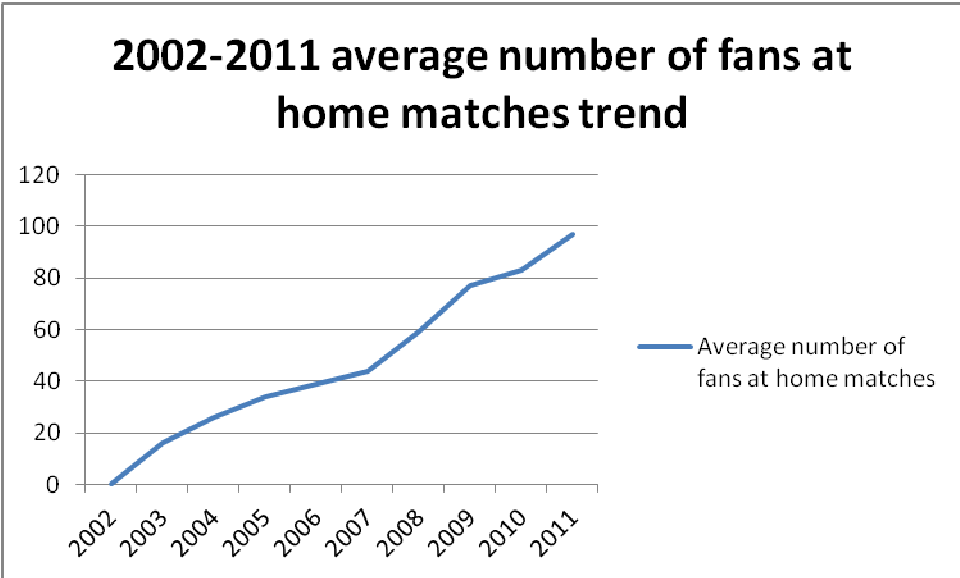
Every fan of FBC Playmakers Prostějov is expected to be encouraging whether in success or defeat and be respectful towards referees and opponents at all times. Any violence or verbal abuse is not acceptable. Committed fan should stay supportive whether in good times or bad times and should observe values of the club. Cheering should be done in a friendly spirit. Club takes pride in the fact that its supporters lead by example and display their support in positive way. Non-discriminatory environment is strictly required during games.

Average number of fans at home matches of FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
11	16	26	34	39	44	59	77	83	97

Table 5.10 Average number of fans at home matches of FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

Source: FBC Playmakers Prostějov



Graph 5.7 2002-2011 average number of fans at home matches trend

5.5.5 Members of the media

From marketing point of view, media represents a big opportunity for visibility increase of floorball club hence media members are always taken into account as an important stakeholder for the club. They represent kind of a mediator between the club and general public. When talking about media, in case of regional floorball clubs like FBC Playmakers Prostějov we mean primarily editors of local newspapers or local radio announcers. Regional floorball clubs have not yet ambitions to be visible on TV. Although floorball club of Prostějov has appeared on TV screens once or twice, it is not its primary aim to achieve such visibility. High emphasis is placed on good relations with local newspapers in Prostějov and surroundings. Media representatives are always invited to every event organized by the club. The only way how club can manage to maintain its media visibility is to keep mutual communication with media members and try to always show club in a good light.

Media attention has many benefits for other stakeholders. It allows management to more easily fulfil their marketing objectives. Media attention is a big attraction for sponsors. Players and coaches are delighted when their efforts are receiving media attention. Fortunately, FBC Playmakers Prostějov is not in such position where it could be threatened by excessive media attention that can be counterproductive and to the detriment rather than benefit. The club has so far managed to avoid media scandals or unflattering assessments. FBC Playmakers Prostějov prides itself on a good reputation in the city and always tries to build a positive image of its stakeholders. Interaction between the club and the media is used to increase the awareness of the general public and to regular inform of people who are interested in the club. Club is aware of the importance of each article or photograph published related to its activities and therefore always tries to meet the requirements of media members. At the same time, club expect friendly approach in return.

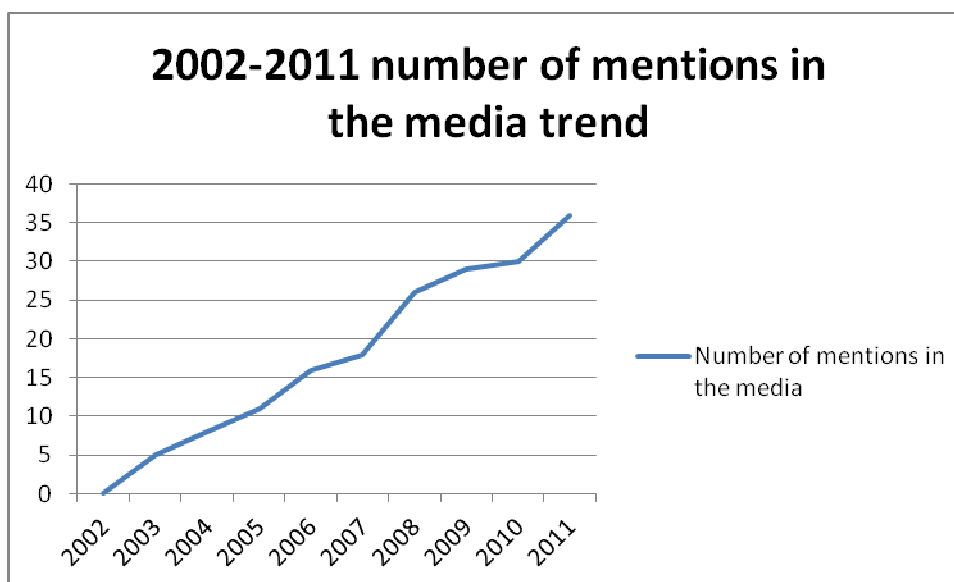
Members of media are expected to cover results of all teams within the club including youth teams and to be fair and objective in their reports. Lost should be reported as well as win. Any youth sport efforts should always be displayed in positive way. Highlighting of good sporting values is of great importance. Published information should always be based on relevant sources from the club.

Number of articles and mentions in the media about FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
5	5	8	11	16	18	26	29	30	36

Table 5.11 Number of articles and mentions in the media about FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

Source: FBC Playmakers Prostějov



Graph 5.8 2002-2011 number of mentions in the media trend

5.5.6 Parents, guardians and educators

From the perspective of youth education and sporting development, it is undoubtedly a significant part of the floorball community. It is a pleasant duty for the club to count these people as equal partners in sport education of their children or wards. Mutual communication and exchange of experience is beneficial for both parties. Coaches and sport instructors of FBC Playmakers Prostějov always listen carefully useful suggestions and comments of parents. Coaches of youth teams are aware of the important role of sport in the education of child. Parents have to always be familiar with club’s philosophy and training methods that their children undergo. It is the responsibility of the club to be in touch with parents, guardians and educators and to behave in such way that ensures first of all safety environment for children.

Parents as well as sport instructors want to see children having fun with sport and together share a commitment to lead children to respect sport and life values. Both coaches and parents should be seen as a role model, should be watchful and alert and should teach the youth to enjoy every game. Active involvement of whole families is the desired goal of FBC

Playmakers Prostějov. Parents are often involved in organizing club events and thus significantly contribute to more familiar environment within the club.

5.5.7 Sponsors

These days, floorball clubs cannot do without at least a small financial or material support from sponsors. Relying on own resources or subsidies from the municipal budget seems to be dangerous and ineffective. Therefore, each member of FBC Playmakers Prostějov is asked to be still trying to find and address potential sponsors who would be willing to provide necessary resources. If any club member can manage to find a sponsor, it allows him to draw some benefits such as having reduced membership fees or even free membership. This incentive by the club motivates every member to be searching for sponsors in their own interest. Regional floorball club can hardly attract an eminent sponsor therefore each willing fund provider is treated with great respect and humility.

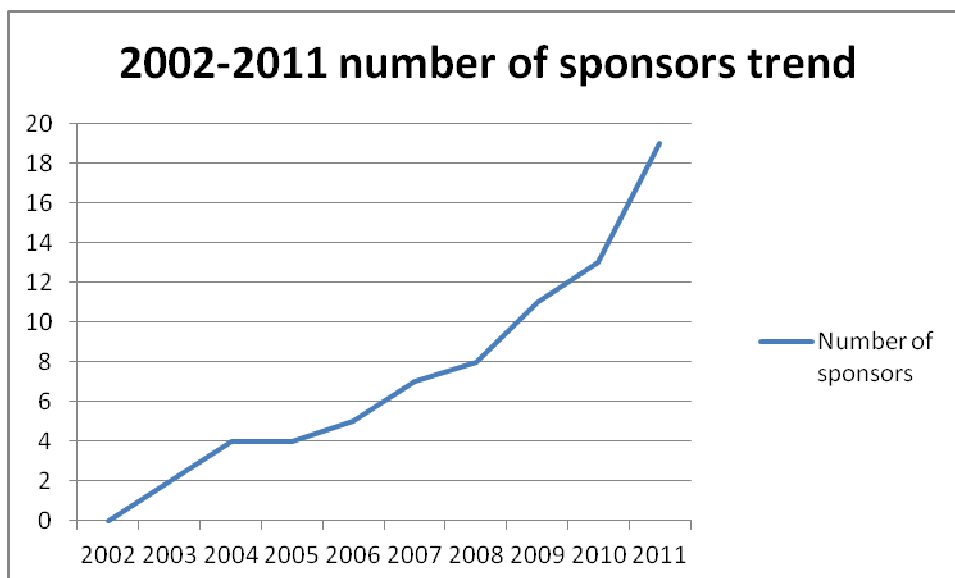
Club can offer in return chance to visibility of a sponsor name or brand by advertising placement during sport events or by personal promotion performed by club members. Expert on sports marketing Tomáš Kučera says that the marketing potential in floorball is great because it has gained a dynamic image. He adds that “floorball players are an interesting target group of people who are active and not afraid to spend. Floorball is a great alternative to football which is losing credit as well as ice hockey which is quite expensive”. When deciding on sponsorship, companies are often considering ethical issues hence FBC Playmakers Prostějov is always showing its philosophy of openness for everyone. Sponsors of FBC Playmakers Prostějov are expected to be involved, be supportive and be sports-friendly partner.

Number of sponsors of FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
2	2	4	4	5	7	8	11	13	19

Table 5.12 Number of sponsors of FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

Source: FBC Playmakers Prostějov



Graph 5.9 2002-2011 number of sponsors trend

5.5.8 Referees, sports officials and organisers

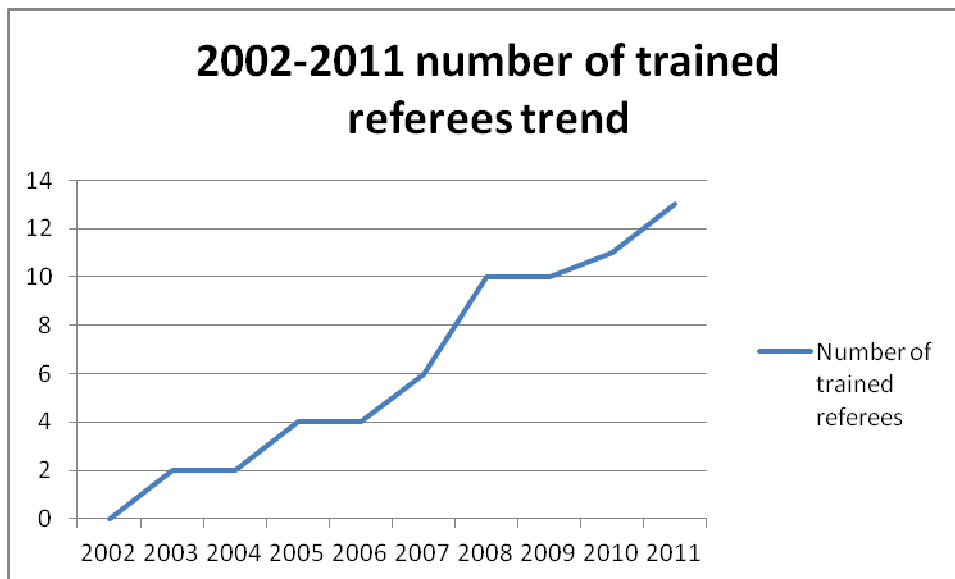
These people are essential to ensure the smooth running of sporting events organised by the club. Every such event must be carefully prepared and guided by set rules. Each floorball club must have a certain number of trained referees in its ranks and each club must have a sufficient number of stewards during the game. It is the responsibility of FBC Playmakers Prostějov to comply these rules thus it continually works at recruitment of referees and officials and encourages its members to acquire skills in this area. Knowledge of rules, checking reliability of equipment or completing the match protocol is one of main duties of referees. They are expected to be communicative, sociable, fair and positive. There are also officials needed who administrate the match and control it from the secretariat table where they have available stop watches, match protocol, rule book and other necessary office supplies. FBC Playmakers Prostějov insists on maintaining of a professional approach to every game. These stakeholders are expected to be honest, objective, transparent, impartial and familiar with safety practices at all times.

Number of trained referees within FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
2	2	2	4	4	6	10	10	11	13

Table 5.13 Number of trained referees within FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

Source: FBC Playmakers Prostějov



Graph 5.10 2002-2011 number of trained referees trend

5.5.9 Local authorities

Local authorities play an important role for FBC Playmakers Prostějov in terms of providing facilities and funds. Functioning of the club is largely dependent on means provided by local authorities therefore club is doing everything possible to receive their support. However, club management works independently of the city council which is nonetheless seen as an equal partner and there is an effort to achieve common sporting goals set by both parties. Undoubtedly the main common goal is to support youth sporting. Both club and local authorities also aim to contribute positively the whole sporting community as far as possible. Club is trying to show the city council sporting endeavours as well as its social responsibilities. FBC Playmakers Prostějov prides itself to avoid political interests in its affairs. FBC Playmakers is working hard to build its competitive advantages among other sports clubs from Prostějov in the fight for the favour of local authorities.

5.5.10 Volunteers

Since floorball is still an amateur sport and FBC Playmakers Prostějov is categorised as a non-profit sport organization, the functioning of the club to a certain extent is still dependent on a volunteer assistance. This is especially true when setting up a floorball organisation. These are dedicated people who are happy to give a helping hand without the reward or possible benefits. They are motivated just by enthusiasm or personal interest and the club very much appreciates their help. Amongst their needs can be included community need, need to meet people or gaining experience and often among these people are family members or friends

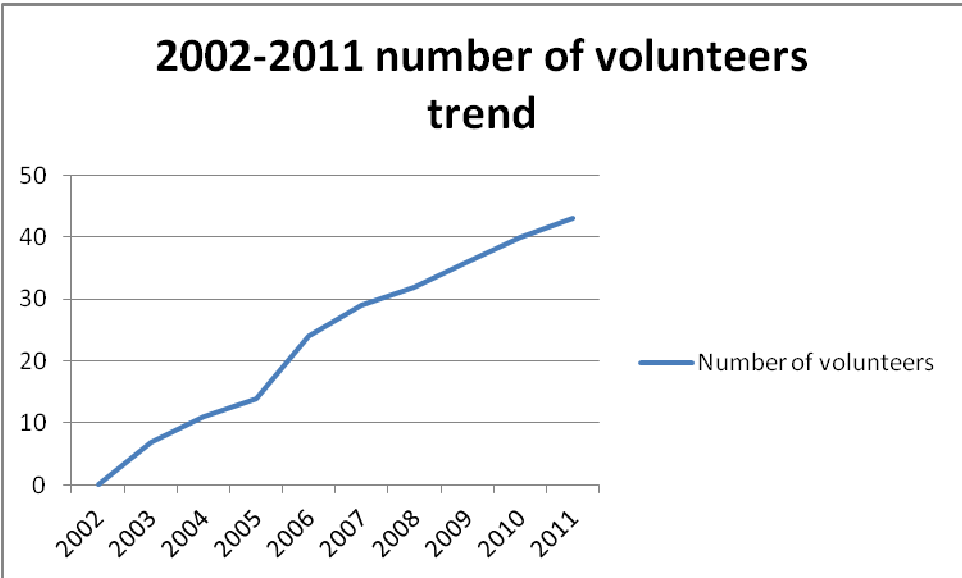
of club members or even some most dedicated fans. Club takes pride in the fact that its volunteers are rewarded in some way. They at least receive credit, praises and respect for their help, in some cases a material gain as well.

Number of volunteers participating in events of FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
4	7	11	14	24	29	32	36	40	43

Table 5.14 Number of volunteers participating in events of FBC Playmakers Prostějov (2002-2011)

Source: FBC Playmakers Prostějov



Graph 5.11 2002-2011 number of volunteers trend

5.6 Marketing efforts of FBC Playmakers Prostějov

At the beginning this section provides the reader with a brief look at common marketing vision, values and goals that apply in most floorball clubs which are acquired by FBC Playmakers Prostějov as well and thereafter it focuses on specific marketing efforts of this club.

5.6.1 Vision, values and goals

Vision

The basic common marketing vision of most floorball clubs which is followed by FBC Playmakers Prostějov is to promote floorball as a unique intriguing dynamic and fresh sport which is very exciting to play and to watch and also very attractive for sponsors and to spread, grow and develop this sport in the region as much as possible by all available means.

FBC Playmakers Prostějov seeks to understand needs and expectations of its stakeholders and aims to adapt its strategies so that it could satisfy those needs and meet expectations. At the same time it aims to be a healthy organisation which is attractive for potential members and for the whole sporting community which should be achieved by constant strengthening the image of the club within the region.

Values

If the club wants to achieve its vision it must respect some marketing and cultural values and be aware of social responsibility. Such known leading values accompanying floorball are flexibility, diversity, unity, equality, solidarity, fair play, respect and non-discrimination. Philosophy of FBC Playmakers Prostějov is based on these guiding values and the club is proud to promote healthy life style, social values and friendly environment and to teach especially children to observe these values. Club asserts the motto “Floorball for All” which mean that it gives the opportunity to involve to every person regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, skill level, religion, sexuality, nationality or social background. FBC Playmakers Prostějov aims to bring together a community of people who are interested in the club and share those positive values while having fun with floorball.

Goals

The principal marketing goal of the club can be easily formulated as “to get people involved”. Achieving of increasing number of stakeholders defined in the previous chapter is the simple basic desired goal of FBC Playmakers Prostějov. Club wishes to enable everyone to experience floorball and is happy for every newcomer who joins the club. Through the deliberate marketing the club aims to attract new players, sponsors, media members, supporters and other active participants in order to broaden the floorball community consisting of committed stakeholders in which good and long lasting relationships should be built. Increased visibility and building the positive image of the club among other sport clubs within the region are other medium-term goals set by FBC Playmakers Prostějov.

5.6.2 Floorball for different groups

FBC Playmakers Prostějov targets its marketing strategies and means of public relations at various groups of people in order to attract the whole range of new members from different environment and status. Some of these groups are presented below.

Floorbal for children

As was mentioned several times, the youth is a target group of marketing focus by FBC Playmakers Prostějov. Most newcomers to the club are very young and floorball is achieving its popularity especially amongst the youth. The club seeks to introduce this sport to juveniles by organizing lots of events aimed at familiarizing children with this sport. Often repeated and acclaimed incentives to involve are: it is easy to start, easy to play, easy to learn, low initial costs, no special requirements, friendly community of people, simple to manage, equal opportunities etc. Those elements apply for all groups.

Floorball in schools

Research of environment showed that floorball is the most popular school sport in Czech Republic and the club closely cooperate with local school institutions in an effort to spread the sport and to lead schoolchildren to an active and healthy lifestyle by doing sports. Club representatives regularly visit local schools in order to raise awareness about the club activities and to transfer experience regarding floorball to physical education teachers.

Floorball at universities

A significant part of club members consist of university students. Students who are members of FBC Playmakers Prostějov often participate in the leading of sport seminars at their home universities and help build the image of the club amongst university community.

Floorball and other sports

Rather than compete FBC Playmakers Prostějov seeks to cooperate and communicate with other sports clubs and associations. Common sporting events in cooperation with other teams are annually on the program of FBC Playmakers Prostějov in order to exchange ideas and share experience with sporting colleagues. Floorball is a great alternative to other sports and often a situation occurs when former or still present athletes from other sports clubs join the club to experience floorball. This applies especially for ice-hockey players due to similarities between these sports.

Floorball everywhere

The motto of marketing efforts of the club might sound like that. Club is promoted everywhere by all possible marketing forms performed by all club members. Club, for example, seeks to get sponsors actively involve by visiting companies and introducing sport or by organizing events designated to make all passive stakeholders moving and sporting. All stakeholders including management, fans, parents, sponsors, officials, volunteers or media members are welcome to actively involve and to draw benefits of floorball and marketing strategies are set so that this can be attained.

5.6.3 Events organised by FBC Playmakers Prostějov

Public relations applied in FBC Playmakers Prostějov are largely based on organising of various events serving to strengthen the image of the club and to develop closer cooperation with its stakeholders. As a major event can be considered the game event but there are lot of other different events and activities in addition focused on satisfaction of stakeholders' needs organised by the club on the regular basis. Some of them are listed below. The list is not exhaustive but includes and outlines the most important ones.

Recruitments, school visits and floorball seminars

Three to five times a year club organizes events of this kind in order to attract new members, especially young players. The club, the sport, basic rules and requirements are usually presented and everyone is allowed to try a few workouts for free and then decide whether to join the club or not.

General meeting

General meeting held once a year is one of the most important events in terms of communication among stakeholders. The right to vote about club's affairs have only club members but everyone can take part in the general discussion. Usually all groups of stakeholders mentioned in previous section are invited to participate at general meeting and club representatives always listen carefully to comments made by, for example, fans, sponsors or parents.

Meetings with parents

Since membership is largely made up of youth, it is quite important to regularly inform parents about activities in which their children are participating, training methods, progress of their child and sport results. Parents are often actively involved in running the club therefore the club undertakes to closely cooperate with them.

Meetings with sponsors

Sponsors and members of local authorities are not seen just as a source of funds but as equal partners whose word is taken into account while making of strategic decision. For this reason club representatives regularly meet, inform and discuss strategic issues with all fund providers in order to unify goals and agree on strategies.

Club briefings and press conferences

Data in the chapter dealing with stakeholders pointed to the growing trend of media coverage about the club. Club is aware of opportunities for increased visibility resulting from good relations with the media therefore club always provides the media representatives access to all relevant information relating to the club by organising such briefings and conferences.

Christmas party

Annually recurring informal event which is very popular among all stakeholders and it always attract abundant number of participants. Objectives are only to have fun, strengthen relations and to celebrate the spirit of friendly. Past experience has shown that this is the best way to deepen relations within the floorball community and the tradition of this party has become unshakable.

Good-bye to season party

Another informal event held after the end of the season where fans can exchange a few words with players, managers can have informal chat with sponsors; simply where closer interactions between all stakeholders are built.

RG Cup

RG Cup is a three day floorball tournament organised by FBC Playmakers Prostějov designed for the general public. Competition is divided into 3 categories (Men, Juniors and Rookies+Girls) and everyone can participate no matter whether he or she is member of the club or not. This tournament has built a strong tradition within the town and every year it records increasing interest. Everyone including fans, sponsors, managers, media members etc. is allowed to create its own team, register it, pay a fee and then compete with others for prizes and prestige. In recent time the tournament enjoyed a lot of media attention and club is aware of its marketing opportunity.

Playmakers day

Several times a year held Playmakers day serves to celebrate the sport itself. Most club stakeholders meet that day and spend time with playing various sports and doing various activities. Arranged friendly floorball matches sometimes take place on that day. There is often cooperation with other sport clubs during the day to experience other sports and also to spread floorball among other athletes. Everyone is welcome to take part.

School tournaments

Since floorball is the most popular school sport in Czech Republic, members of FBC Playmakers Prostějov regularly organise school floorball tournaments in the region. They are very popular among schoolchildren and they allow club members to look out some young talents who could potentially join the club.

Game event

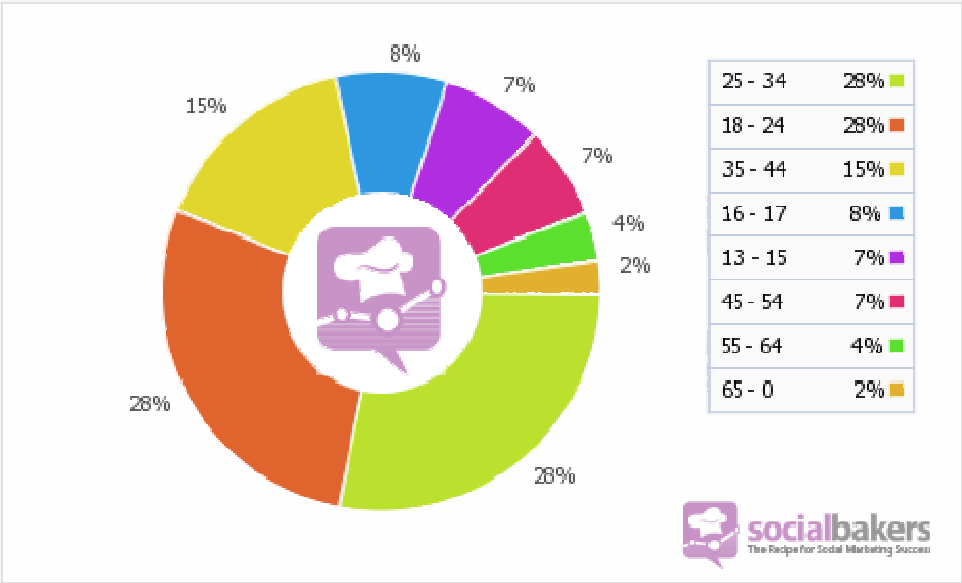
Home matches of FBC Playmakers Prostějov are basic most important periodical events which attract most attention. Club seeks to provide an extraordinary experience for all who decide to visit the game. Data on attendance of home matches in previous chapter are a little bit distorted by the fact that for example matches of men B-team do not attract so much attention unlike A-team or some youth teams. Club aims to entertain its fans by good performance as well as by rich program during the match. It is in the interest of all stakeholders to organize a well managed and attractive game event in order to strengthen the image of the club.

5.6.4 The internet

Internet is a very useful and effective marketing tool serving to communication with all stakeholders and the club is aware of this. The world wide web offers a plethora of marketing options for the club and it is the great way to reach people. Two main marketing instruments available via internet used within FBC Playmakers Prostějov are own websites and social networks.

Website under the domain fbcplaymakers.com serves to inform all stakeholders about club's activities, upcoming events, game results, sponsors representation, history of the club etc. Among other things, there are often polls and surveys posted on the website in order to explore the opinion of particular stakeholders. Necessary information for potential newcomers is also included. There is the function "guestbook" implemented in order to stimulate discussion. Everyone can leave a comment or raise an issue there. Club websites can boast by appealing design and regular updates about relevant topics.

Another powerful marketing tool widely used by FBC Playmakers Prostějov is social networking. In this respect, club use primarily the services of Facebook. Facebook seems to be the most suitable social network to reach target groups and statistics confirm this assumption. Club manages its own group on Facebook through which can easily and quickly reach the considerable amount of people. According to socialbakers.com 54,68% of internet users in Czech Republic have a Facebook account. The figure below shows the user age distribution on Facebook in Czech Republic which tells us that majority of Facebook users in Czech Republic are between 13-34 years of age. This age category is considered to be the main target group of FBC Playmakers Prostějov. Club also have a YouTube account in addition where videos are posted.



Graph 5.12 User age distribution on Facebook in Czech Republic

Source: Czech Republic Facebook statistics – Socialbakers

6 Conclusions

This paper aimed to analyze a chosen regional floorball club from a marketing point of view. Several aims were set and this chapter serves to summarise results found and to draw some conclusions from obtained findings. Developed case study should allow the reader, to some extent, understand outlined areas within the floorball club which are its external environment, its stakeholders and its marketing efforts. In terms of generalisability, it can be said that this research could be considered as one with high degree of generalisability as the external environment is the same for all Czech floorball clubs and stakeholder groups defined are also pretty similar in majority of floorball clubs. Marketing efforts and activities of individual clubs may vary but they are usually similar to those listed. It follows that this research enables the reader to get a comprehensive idea about marketing issues of regional floorball clubs in Czech Republic. Case study on FBC Playmakers pointed out some general findings and they will be summarized in the following lines.

History of the club and its gradual formation revealed that the club has undergone many stages of development in the past. However, the general trend is that the club is constantly growing in time, gaining in size and attracting new members, which is to some extent due to appropriate marketing strategies. Club in the past struggled with financial problems and the search for sponsors has become a necessity. Club has also undergone an internal crisis when the tense mood prevailed within the squad and some players decided to leave the club. However, management was able to cope with these inconveniences and today the club is financially well secured and there is a very friendly atmosphere within the club thanks to the right approach to its stakeholders. Club is aware of the mistakes from the past and sets its strategies so as to prevent their recurrence.

Analysis of the external environment of FBC Playmakers Prostějov showed that economic and social factors are those which should be paid most attention and which offer most marketing opportunities. Delivering the financial stability to the club and attracting of new members seem to be key challenges for FBC Playmakers Prostějov and its marketing strategies should be tailored to these goals. Statistics confirmed the immense popularity of floorball in Czech Republic and highlighted its marketing potential. These days, floorball in Czech Republic is the second most popular collective sport and the most popular school sport in terms of registered members. It is the fastest growing sport in the last two decades

in Czech Republic and its marketing power is evident. Partial conclusions, marketing opportunities derived from each factors and relevant statistics were given in the case study therefore the further discussion is not necessary.

Stakeholder analysis of FBC Playmakers Prostějov identified ten major stakeholder groups who affect the functioning of the club and who are interested in club's affairs. These groups of people can be seen as target groups for marketing strategies executed by the club. This list is not exhaustive but includes those important ones. Data on the number of members over the years included in this analysis clearly pointed to a growing trend of expanding the membership base in FBC Playmakers Prostějov. Club continues to expand and its significance extends beyond the regional level. As has been mentioned several times, the greatest emphasis is placed on working with youth that make up the largest share of current membership. This analysis showed that a broad spectrum of people is interested in the club. This wide involvement is common for most non-profit organizations and it is not surprising that for instance parents, friends or partners of club members are also actively involved in club activities. The primary focus of FBC Playmakers Prostějov is to unite interested people into a wide community which jointly follows the club vision.

A brief evaluation of marketing efforts spent in FBC Playmakers Prostějov shortly presented in the last chapter of the case study by far does not include all marketing activities undertaken within the club. Summary of these efforts is only limited to an outline of club marketing vision, values and goals, its target groups, its events and use of the internet for marketing purposes. However, it indicates the direction that these efforts are going and provides the reader a general idea about marketing in this type of organization. Financial resources for marketing purposes are quite limited therefore club is seeking for free ways of doing marketing like, for example, use of the internet. Nevertheless, marketing is still considered as a very important part of the club management to which considerable emphasis is placed.

To conclude this study, it is important to bear in mind that this paper is most likely the first of its kind with this specific focus and it would be useful to clarify its findings by subsequent studies of other clubs from similar backgrounds. However, the aim was to analyse a

particular floorball club and provide readers a comprehensive idea of marketing issues within this chosen club and from this perspective this paper fulfilled its purpose.

Appendix A – illustrative floorball photos



WFC 2008 picture by Pavel Lebeda/CFbU



WFC 2008 picture by Pavel Lebeda/CFbU



International match between Finland and Sweden (source: IFF)



WFC 2008 picture by Martin Neuzil/CFBU



Women's U19 WFC 2008 picture by Mika Hilska/FFF



Wheelchair floorball (source: IFF)



International Referee in WFC 2008 picture by Pavel Lebeda/CFbU



Logo of International Floorball Federation (source: IFF)



Official logo of FBC Playmakers Prostějov, o. s. (source: fbcplaymakers.com)

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