

# The power of sponsorship (part I)

 By [Struan Campbell](#)

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2012 was a revolutionary year for sponsorship and one that churned out some notable campaigns that have helped clarify what modern best practice sponsorship is all about (or at least what it should be about).

But there seems to be some misunderstanding about sponsorship outside of the sponsorship industry itself, so let's begin with that and then clarify what makes sponsorship such a powerful marketing tool.

In some quarters there is a negative perception towards sponsorship. This is partly due to a lack of understanding and knowledge and partly to do with some average sponsorships currently taking place in this country and the frequent inability of them to not show any meaningful results.

The good news is that both of these perceptions can be changed. We as the sponsorship industry need to take responsibility in ensuring that the marketing and business industry at large start to understand the role we play and that in order to execute sponsorship properly and deliver results. It takes specialised expertise, not self proclaimed events 'specialists'. We also need to raise the bar a whole lot further.

## Moments that matter

The bottom line is that sponsorship allows brands access to moments that matter to people whether it be sport, music, film, fashion or art. You either enhance the touch points around those moments and are loved or act as wallpaper and intrude.

The biggest impact from 2012 was the London Olympic and Paralympic Games, which will be seen as landmark events in the evolution of sponsorship.

Olympic sponsorships tend to be many of the best around. Why? Largely because they are clean stadia events, ensuring that brands leverage their association with the event creatively, without relying on any showpiece branding to make an impact.

The 2012 games showed that the brands that built activation around consumers and concentrated on the enhancing of the experience as opposed to brands and products are the ones that succeeded. The Games saw some exceptional sponsorship campaigns that were driven by clear objectives and executed with meaningful interactions in mind.

## 'Socialympics'

London 2012 must be seen as the event that really lit up the social space, both from a social media and social responsibility standpoint. The Games were coined the 'Socialympics' and how the social media hyperspace exploded over the period proved how integral it was to many highly effective campaigns.

In my [next piece](#) I look at some trends for 2013, taken from some best practice work in 2012.

## ABOUT STRUAN CAMPBELL

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