



UNIVERSIDADE DA CORUÑA

Facultade de Economía e Empresa

---

Traballo de fin de grao

# Sport Marketing in the football industry

The influence of sponsorship

Silvia Velasco Guitián

Titor/a: José Javier Orosa González

Grao en Administración e Dirección de Empresas

Curso académico 2021/22

---

Traballo de Fin de Grao presentado na Facultade de Economía e Empresa da  
Universidade da Coruña para a obtención do Grao en Administración e  
Dirección de Empresas



# Resumen

El objetivo de este trabajo es analizar en profundidad la importancia del marketing deportivo en los clubes de fútbol, poniendo el foco de atención en los patrocinios.

Dentro del concepto de patrocinio deportivo hoy en día se encuentran una gran variedad de activos que los clubes comercializan con los patrocinadores para obtener ingresos, esto se debe en parte a los grandes avances que se están llevando a cabo en los últimos años desde los clubes y también al progreso tecnológico, que aumenta aún más el abanico de posibilidades.

Para llevar a cabo este trabajo, en primer lugar, se hará un estudio teórico de los fundamentos y conceptos básicos del marketing, analizando posteriormente la rama de marketing deportivo y, dentro de esta, el patrocinio.

Posteriormente, se plantearán una serie de hipótesis relacionadas con la importancia que tiene el patrocinio deportivo, para después contrastarlas con un análisis empírico.

Para realizar esta investigación, se emplean tanto fuentes primarias como secundarias. Las fuentes primarias utilizadas son una encuesta y una serie de entrevistas con trabajadores de los departamentos comerciales y de patrocinios de varios equipos de fútbol, incluyendo clubes de distintos países y categorías de competición.

Finalmente, con toda la información analizada, se aceptarán o rechazarán las hipótesis planteadas al inicio de la investigación.

*Palabras clave:* marketing deportivo, patrocinio, fútbol, visibilidad, posicionamiento, aficionados.

*Número de palabras:* 13.263

# Abstract

The main goal of this project is to analyse the importance of sport marketing in football clubs, focusing on sponsorships.

Nowadays, inside the concept of sport sponsorship there can be found a large variety of assets that clubs commercialise with their sponsors in order to obtain earnings, this is in part due to the incredible advances that clubs are doing in the last years in this field and also due to the technological progress, that widens their possibilities.

To develop this project, in first place there'll be a theoretical study of the main concepts of marketing, analysing afterwards the branch of sport marketing and, within this, sponsorship.

Then, a series of hypotheses related to the importance of sport sponsorship will be established, in order to contrast them with an empirical analysis.

To effectuate this investigation, there'll be taken into account both primary and secondary sources of information. The primary sources used are a survey and a set of interviews with members of the commercial and sponsorship departments of various football clubs, including clubs from different countries and categories of competition.

Finally, with all the information analysed, the hypotheses proposed at the beginning of the investigation will be accepted or rejected.

*Keywords:* sport marketing, sponsorship, football, visibility, positioning, fans.

# Index

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1. Theoretical framework.....</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1. Foundations of marketing.....	9
1.1.1. Concept of marketing.....	9
1.1.2. Basic marketing-related concepts.....	10
1.1.3. Evolution and present of marketing.....	11
1.2. Digital marketing.....	13
1.2.1. Definition of digital marketing .....	13
1.2.2. Differences between traditional and digital marketing.....	13
1.2.3. Main tools of digital marketing.....	13
1.3. Sport marketing.....	14
1.3.1. Definition and historical evolution of sport marketing.....	14
1.3.2. Main characteristics of sport marketing .....	15
1.3.3. Types of sport marketing .....	17
1.3.4. Consumer in sports .....	18
<b>2. Sponsorship .....</b>	<b>22</b>
2.1. Definition and main characteristics of sponsorship.....	22
2.2. Sponsorship activities.....	23
<b>3. Empiric analysis.....</b>	<b>28</b>
3.1. Objectives.....	28
3.1.1. General objective .....	28
3.1.2. Specific objectives .....	28

3.2.	Justification .....	28
3.3.	Methodology.....	32
3.3.1.	What type of investigation fits best? .....	32
3.3.2.	What variables will be taken into consideration?.....	32
3.3.3.	What sources of information will be used? .....	33
3.4.	Hypotheses.....	35
3.4.1.	Hypotheses analysis by means of secondary sources.....	35
3.4.2.	Hypotheses analysis by means of primary sources.....	39
3.4.3.	Final evaluation of the hypotheses .....	49
	<b>Conclusions .....</b>	<b>52</b>
	<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>54</b>
	<b>Annex 1. Results from the survey .....</b>	<b>59</b>
	<b>Annex 2. Questions of the interviews .....</b>	<b>64</b>
	<b>Annex 3. Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>67</b>

# List of figures

<b>Figure 1. Socios.com logo printed on the back of Sevilla FC’s kit. ....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Figure 2. Plus500, main sponsor of Atlético de Madrid, printed in the shirt. 23</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Figure 3. LED and fixed billboards at Wanda Metropolitano stadium.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Figure 4. Billboard used by Atlético de Madrid before the start of a match ..</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Figure 5. Paris Saint-Germain’s starting eleven, sponsored by Orange .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Figure 6. Sevilla FC’s match result, sponsored by NAGA .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Figure 7. Atlético de Madrid’s “Image of the match”, sponsored by TD Systems.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Figure 8. Atlético de Madrid’s stadium, Wanda Metropolitano.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Figure 9. Atlético de Madrid players wearing Philipp Plein garments on a club travel.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Figure 10. Players from Italy’s national football team wearing Giorgio Armani clothes .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Figure 11. Football teams with the highest earnings (2019/2020, millions of euros) .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Figure 12. Valencia CF’s fan token printed in the front of the team’s shirt... 30</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Figure 13. Socios.com promoting their fan tokens on Wanda Metropolitano’s LED billboard. ....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Figure 14. Socios.com appears in a 3D Carpet at Camp Nou.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Figure 15. RC Deportivo players with their individual sponsors at the back of their shirts. ....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Figure 16. Main sectors of sponsors in professional football in Spain (Season 2020/2021) .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Figure 17. VISA’s 2019 FIFA Women’s World Cup sponsorship results .....</b>	<b>39</b>

<b>Figure 18. Answers of the survey regarding sectors with the most presence in football sponsorship .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Figure 19. Results from the survey regarding the opinion about RC Deportivo's individual sponsorships activity .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Figure 20. Results from the survey concerning the knowledge about RC Deportivo's individual sponsorships campaign .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Figure 21. Answer of A Coruña survey participants about RC Deportivo's initiative. ....</b>	<b>43</b>



# List of tables

<b>Table 1. Relation between the four P's and the four C's.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Table 2. Types of involvement: definition and examples.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Table 3. Demographic variables .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Table 4. Geographic variables .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Table 5. RC Deportivo players and their individual sponsors (2021/2022) ....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Table 6. Data sheet of the survey .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Table 7. Results of the questions of the survey regarding their remembrance about sponsorship assets.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Table 8. Summary of the interviews conducted .....</b>	<b>44</b>

# Introduction

Football is one of the most followed sports in the world and especially in Europe, as millions of people gather every weekend around the television or go to a stadium to see their team play. This has not gone unnoticed by companies, as they have seen the potential audience they could reach by associating themselves with a club or a competition. Clubs are also aware of the revenue stream that can come from this relation so, they offer to sponsors a wide variety of assets with which their brands have visibility within the team, both physically and digitally.

In this project, the importance of sponsorships will be analysed in depth, structuring the study and investigation in the following way:

The first section intends to explain the main concepts of the marketing theoretical framework, paying special attention to digital and sport marketing.

In the second section the focus is on sponsorship, defining firstly this concept and its main characteristics. After this, the most common sponsorship activities will be defined and illustrated with real examples.

The third section corresponds with the empirical analysis, in which a set of hypotheses are proposed and, in order to decide if they can be accepted or not, an investigation with primary and secondary sources of information is effectuated.

Finally, a series of conclusions, both of the theoretical framework and of the investigation, are enumerated.

The nature of this work is an application of an investigation to a specific topic which, in this case, is the importance of sponsorship in the football industry.

## 1. Theoretical framework

Firstly, a revision of the theoretical framework concerning marketing's history, main trends and sport marketing.

## 1.1. Foundations of marketing

### 1.1.1. Concept of marketing

The term “marketing” has been defined by many experts in this field. Philip Kotler described it as “a societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, and exchanging products and services of value freely with others.” (Kotler, P., 2000; p. 4)

The American Marketing Association defines marketing as “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” (American Marketing Association, 2017)

Santesmases defined marketing as “a way of conceiving and executing the exchange relationship, with the aim of it being satisfactory for those taking part in it and for society, by means of the development, valuation, distribution and promotion, by one of the parts, of the goods, services or ideas that the other part needs” (Santesmases, 2012; p. 67)

For Peter Drucker, the objective of marketing is “to make selling superfluous, the aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him and sells itself.” (Drucker and Maciariello, 2008; p. 99)

Charles W. Lamb says that marketing has two sides. In the first place, it’s a philosophy, a way of managing a company in search of generating satisfaction in the consumers. Secondly, marketing is composed of activities that apply those principles. (Lamb, C. et al, 20011; p. 3)

Analysing these definitions, some common attributes can be highlighted.

In the first place, they refer to a relationship between the two parts involved in the transaction and also taking into account other stakeholders, such as society in global.

Furthermore, most of the definitions mention the 4 P components of marketing mix: product, price, promotion and place. (Kotler, 2000; p. 10)

The concept of marketing has experimented a lot of changes along the years, going from the original sales approach to a marketing approach. Sometimes marketing is mistakenly defined as the concept of sales, however, the final goal of these two approaches is not the same.

From a sales approach, the intention is to increase the level of sales, getting consumers to buy the product. On the other hand, the aim of marketing is to understand what the consumer wants and parting from that, offer them a product or service that fits their needs. This is, marketing has its starting point in the minds of the consumers, in the needs that they have. After identifying those needs, the company creates a product or service adjusted to what the consumers want. This is different from the sales approach because, in said perspective, the first step is creating a product and afterwards comes the activity of trying to convince consumers to buy it. (Kotler, P. and Armstrong, G., 2008; p. 36)

Due to this change in the main focus point, it has been suggested by Robert Lauterborn (Table 1) a new concept parting from the 4 P's (selling approach) to the 4 C's (marketing approach).

**Table 1. Relation between the four P's and the four C's**

<b>Four P's</b>	<b>Four C's</b>
Product	Customer solution
Price	Customer cost
Place	Convenience
Promotion	Communication

*Source: Own elaboration from Lauterborn, B. (1990)*

The selling approach, with the 4 P's, has its focus on the supply of goods and services, whereas the marketing approach, with the 4 C's, is centred on the demand consumers have of said goods and services. As a brief summary, it can be stated that the selling approach parts from the supply and the marketing approach, from the demand.

### 1.1.2. Basic marketing-related concepts

There are several marketing-related concepts that are fundamental to complete the marketing idea.

“Customer needs” are a feeling of deprivation. When individuals become aware of these needs, they're turned into “wants”, which are the form that the needs take influenced by cultural aspects that affect the individuals and their personal traits. The demand is the shape that the wants end up taking conditioned by the purchasing power

of the individuals and their economic capacity. (Armstrong and Kotler, 2008; pp. 669, 671 and 674)

The “target market” refers to the public to which the company is directing its offer of products and services. They’re a group of consumers that have a common need and similar characteristics. (Armstrong and Kotler, 2008; p. 674)

The term “positioning” refers to placing a company’s offer in the minds of the consumers in relation to competitors. (Armstrong and Kotler, 2008; p. 672). The main goal is to achieve the “top of mind awareness”, this is, be the first brand the consumer thinks about when hearing something related to the company’s activity, products or industry.

“Customer satisfaction” is what companies are looking for when delivering their products or services, this means that the offer matches what the consumer is searching for and it meets their expectations. (Armstrong and Kotler, 2008; p. 668). Achieving satisfaction in the customers is a very important factor in order to generate loyalty in them and also achieve repetition purchases. So, if the clients are satisfied with what the company offers, it’s probable that they’ll be loyal to the company’s products or services and the next time they’ll also buy from them.

Finally, “customer-engagement marketing” has the aim of including the brand in the consumers’ life and turning it into something relevant in their day-to-day activities and thoughts. (Armstrong and Kotler, 2008; p. 669). This kind of marketing tries to involve the consumer in the company’s activity, creating a two-way communication flow between the two parts, from which both sides benefit. Engaging with consumers nowadays is easier thanks to the technological advances, such as social media platforms, that facilitate the exchange of messages and ideas between a company and their clients.

### 1.1.3. Evolution and present of marketing

Since marketing was born, there are five stages clearly defined depending on their main focus point. (Calvo and Stanton, 2017; p. 29)

The first one is the production orientation, this approach states that consumers will buy a product if it’s broadly available and it has an affordable price. Companies that follow this orientation are mainly focused on efficiency and achieving high levels of production while minimizing costs. (Kotler, 2000)

Secondly, it's the product orientation. According to this orientation, what consumers look for in a product is mainly quality, it's because of this that companies with product orientation will use as a source of ideas mainly the knowledge of the engineers in charge of creating and manufacturing the products and will almost not consider what consumers really want in those products. (Kotler, 2000) The problem this approach has is that it can conduct companies into developing marketing myopia. This means that companies are focused on technically improving their products instead of trying to adjust them to the needs of the consumers. (Levitt, 1984)

After the product orientation comes the selling orientation, that affirms that the key of having success in the market and achieving high levels of sales is reached by developing aggressive sales policies and promotions. In accordance with this idea, the selling orientation defends that the consumers will buy the products of a company if said company stimulates them with a lot of publicity. This approach believes that these consumers that are pushed into buying the product will like it and those who don't like it won't talk bad about it and will eventually forget it and buy it another time. (Kotler, 2000)

Next is the marketing approach, that believes that what companies should do is focus on what the consumers need, and deliver it to them in a better way than their competitors. There are four main concepts that sustain this idea, which are: the target market, customer needs, integrated marketing and profitability. This approach starts by analysing the target market and understanding what the customers of that market need. Also, it integrates marketing in the company, being all of the different departments affected by the marketing activity and finally these actions achieve customer satisfaction, generating profitability. (Kotler, 2000)

The fifth and last trend is known as the societal marketing concept, whose main characteristic is that it takes into account the environmental impact of the company and its compromise with social issues. By following this orientation, companies satisfy consumer needs and deliver value for them considering the consequences of their activity and sometimes, having to choose between their own profitability and preserving the environment. A key factor in this approach is the corporate social responsibility of the company, as it tries to undergo its activity while positively impacting on the well-being of society. (Kotler, 2000)

## 1.2. Digital marketing

### 1.2.1. Definition of digital marketing

One of the rising trends nowadays is digital marketing, which consists on the application of technologies in the marketing activities with the final goal of satisfying the needs of consumers more precisely thanks to the knowledge of these individuals achieved with the help of technologic platforms. (Chaffey, 2016)

However, due to the fast development this industry has experienced in the recent years, this term is being redefined in a broader sense. Digital marketing also includes email marketing, digital advertising, content marketing, social media marketing and search engine optimization, among others. (Joshi and Mandal, 2017)

### 1.2.2. Differences between traditional and digital marketing

One of the main benefits of digital marketing in comparison to traditional marketing is that thanks to digital marketing it's possible to target a worldwide market, whereas with traditional marketing it's difficult to target such audience. Also, digital marketing makes it possible for consumers to interact with the company and also to choose the kind of content they want to see or receive. This can end up in higher levels of customer loyalty. In relation to data collection, with digital marketing it's an automatic process and it records data in real-time, this way the company can adapt fast if there's a change of the situation. Finally, digital marketing can also be a helpful tool in order to reduce costs. (Membrillo, A., 2021)

### 1.2.3. Main tools of digital marketing

Similar to the 4 P's and 4 C's of marketing mix, in the case of digital marketing there are five main components to manage. These are known as the 5 D's of digital marketing, which include: digital devices, digital platforms, digital media, digital data and digital technology. (Pandey, M. and Pandey, S., 2019)

Author Maini Homer described these five elements and how they are used by companies in their marketing activities.

The first component, digital devices, comprises gadgets such as smartphones, laptops, tablets and smartwatches. These are related to digital marketing because

consumers use them to interact with companies by means of browsing websites or downloading applications.

In relation to digital platforms, some examples to be mentioned are Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and other social media networks. Companies use them to reach their consumers and interact with them and also to attract new ones.

Taking into account the two previous elements, the digital media would be the way in which the company communicates with the consumers through the different digital platforms. Some examples of digital media are email and messages.

Digital data is generated thanks to the three mentioned components. It's the information gathered from potential customers that interact with the company's digital platforms. This data is used to direct the communication towards these potential customers and attract them into buying the products and services offered. Moreover, it's also useful in order to analyse consumer behaviour, what are the most searched elements, the hours at which they interact more with the platforms, how much time they spend on average and many more.

Finally, the last D stands for digital technology, which is the tool used in order to process and store the data. Some examples are artificial intelligence, cloud computing systems and big data. They are useful for improving promotion and for offering consumers a better experience. (Homer, 2021)

In conclusion, the combination of these five elements will help the company improve their marketing strategy by means of digital tools with the final effect of a better consumer experience. Thanks to the knowledge obtained about consumer's preferences and behaviours, companies are able to deliver their target audiences an offer adjusted to what these individuals are most interested in.

## 1.3. Sport marketing

### 1.3.1. Definition and historical evolution of sport marketing

The concept of "sport marketing" first appeared in 1978 at Advertising Age magazine to illustrate the activities developed by companies by means of sports for promotional purposes of their products and services. (Campos López, 1997; p. 17). An updated definition of this term was given by Bernard Mullin, Stephen Hardy and William Sutton in



their book “Sport Marketing” (2007). These authors state that sport marketing includes the activities arranged to meet the needs and wants of the consumers of the sport industry as a result of an exchange process.

The two main aspects developed in the sport marketing industry are: (Mullin et al., 2007)

- The marketing of products and services effectuated directly to the consumers.
- The marketing of products and services executed via partnerships and promotions with sport organizations and individuals.

Nowadays the range of activities performed in the sport marketing area has increased exponentially thanks to the growth this field has had in the last years. It's mainly focused on the interaction between fans and clubs, having the focal point set on increasing fan engagement and developing consumer loyalty. Something that has contributed to this are the electronic advances and the proliferation of social media.

### 1.3.2. Main characteristics of sport marketing

Sport marketing is different from other fields of the marketing industry due to many reasons.

Firstly, the product that sport marketing works with is sometimes intangible and subjective, as it deals with experiences that contain an important sentimental component. Therefore, no matter the efforts that marketers do, it all comes down to the feelings and overall perception of the experience that each consumer has. (Molina, 2015; p. 82)

Secondly, in many occasions, consumers are also co-producers of the service they're consuming. For example, the experience of attending a football match is more than just watching the match, it's also enjoying the atmosphere inside of the stadium, the crowd cheering for the players and the vibrations of the supporters before and after the match. In this case, the consumer is contributing to building that ambience, and said ambience is part of the service they're enjoying. Then, the quality of the experience depends on the consumer. (Molina, 2015; pp. 83-84)

Thirdly, the product that sport marketing deals with can be a product for consumption if it's directed massively to a crowd, but it can also be an industrial product

when it's used as a platform for companies to promote their own products, like in the case of sponsorships. (Molina, 2015; p. 84)

Bernard Mullin (1985) listed the main actors intervening in this industry:

- a) Primary participants are the individuals that play a sport.
- b) Secondary participants include referees and executives.
- c) Tertiary participants are mainly journalists.
- d) Primary viewers are those that attend the sport event live.
- e) Secondary viewers follow the sport event by means of communication such as radio, TV or newspapers.
- f) Tertiary viewers keep up with these events in an indirect way, for example, by means of comments made by primary and secondary viewers and participants.

Moving on to the marketing mix of sport marketing, in addition to the characteristics previously stated, the product that sport marketing deals with is intangible, ephemeral, experimental and subjective. Also, the product is elaborated and consumed almost simultaneously. (Mullin et al., 2007; p. 31)

In relation to the price, it's hard to calculate the value of the products and services with a traditional approach. In most cases, prices are established taking into account the location, hour of the day and added benefits, among others. Another remarkable factor in relation to the price is the time between the moment a user purchases a ticket for a sports event and when said event takes place. Normally there's a positive relation between these two elements, this is, as days pass by and the event is closer, the price of the tickets is lower. (Mullin et al., 2007; p. 186)

With respect to promotion, the sports industry is seen as a very attractive sector for all kinds of companies, as many of them want to be linked to this field. This is because sports have a wide diffusion in the mass media thanks to the large crowds that follow it and the quality of the audiences in demographic terms. In conclusion, the sports industry is very profitable for companies to promote themselves. (Mullin et al., 2007; p. 38)

Finally, placement is quite different in comparison with other marketing sectors. This is mainly due to the fact that the product of sport marketing is created and consumed almost concomitantly. The placement of the sport marketing product is normally the venue where the match takes place. Even though it may not seem as a key factor because of this particularity, the geographical location of the venue and the rest of

installations is crucial. It's important as well to design them taking into account points such as accessibility, connections with public transport, assign space for food areas, restrooms and meeting points for the fans. Additionally, inside of the venue there are also several conditions that should be satisfied like, for example, the transit from the entrance to the seating area and management of the flow of people to avoid large crowds and queues. (Mullin et al., 2007; p. 247)

On another note, apart from having in mind the characteristics the venue should have for matters related to the team it plays there, nowadays there's an increasing trend of using these infrastructures for a wide variety of events. For example, Atlético de Madrid's recently built stadium, Wanda Metropolitano, besides from hosting the team's matches, it holds many diverse activities such as concerts, graduations, set for TV filming or even becoming a COVID – 19 vaccination point in the last year.

### 1.3.3. Types of sport marketing

There are four major types of sport marketing, which are: (Gilibets, 2013)

a) Marketing of sport events

This kind of marketing's basis is the increasing relevance that sponsorships and publicity have acquired in sport events. It has two main objectives, which are the promotion and advertising of the event itself and also the compensation to the sponsors and brands that have invested money in the event in order to gain visibility in return. Some examples of events that have a big popularity among sponsors due to their large audiences are the FIFA World Cup, the Olympic Games, Formula 1 races and UEFA tournaments.

b) Marketing of sport in general

The goal of this type of marketing is to communicate the benefits of sport and encouraging people to practice it. An example that illustrates this kind of marketing are the advertising campaigns developed by public health institutions promulgating healthy habits such as eating real food and practicing exercise.

c) Marketing of products or services related to sport

The activity developed by this class of marketing is the promotion of products that are related to sports. It's interesting to make a special mention within this marketing to the use of celebrities to advertise these products and services. The reason why this is done is because it helps to increase the levels of consumer loyalty and engagement. Brands benefit from the popularity of these individuals, that attract consumers towards buying their products. This can be clearly seen in the football industry when players participate in campaigns of brands such as Nike or Adidas because the boots they wear during the matches and training are of said brand.

d) Marketing of sport teams and athletes

In this case the marketing activity is performed by the sport team or the marketing team that works with the athlete. The aim it has is to spread the word about them and make them popular among the public. In the last years this kind of marketing has been very popular in the form of films and documentaries of sport personalities or teams, showing their day-to-day life so that the audience gets to know them on a more personal facet, creating a bond between the viewers and the athlete or team.

### 1.3.4. Consumer in sports

Consumers are affected by two main groups of influences, which are environmental and individual factors. Individual factors would be those related to the family life cycle, attitudes and motivations. Among environmental factors are included, for example, friends and family, social norms and cultural beliefs. These factors are important because they shape how consumers behave and interact with sports. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 59)

Socialization is a crucial element in this field, as it conditions the level of involvement an individual has with sports. There are three main kinds of involvement: behavioural, cognitive and affective. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 59)

Behavioural involvement refers to physically performing an action like for example, practicing a sport. Here would also be included the actions carried out by fans at sport venues or while watching a game at home cheering on their team. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 59)

Cognitive involvement is related to learning about a sport. Two clear examples of cognitive involvement are the talk a team has to prepare a game and the fans listening to the coach's press conference. Items such as magazines, TV programs, radio and electronic devices are fundamental actors in cognitive involvement, as they have consumers up to date with everything that's happening in the sports world and they also make these consumers more interested in knowing something else about it. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 59)

This is something that sport clubs know perfectly, explaining their large presence in social media platforms to keep fans updated with the latest news. Consumers want to enter the daily life of the teams and their players, they want to see them training and preparing for the next match, travelling, interact with them, etc.

Affective involvement is all about the feelings and emotions that fans have for a team. This sentimental link is crucial to understand a consumer's behaviour towards sports. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 61)

The table below (Table 2) summarizes the three types of involvement, complimenting it with some examples for better understanding them:

**Table 2. Types of involvement: definition and examples**

TYPES OF INVOLVEMENT		
BEHAVIOURAL	COGNITIVE	AFFECTIVE
Physical actions performed by the consumer.	Knowledge possessed by the consumer in relation to sports.	Emotional link developed by the consumer with a sport team or athlete.
EXAMPLES		
Attending a match, going to the stadium.  Going to a fan gathering.  Cheering for the team (at the sport venue, at home, with friends, etc.)	Following a sport team on social media and checking their posts.  Watching television programs about sports.  Listening to the analysis of sports casters during a match.	Being happy if the team the consumer supports wins a match or tournament.  Being in a bad mood if the team loses.  Feeling nervous before and during an important game.

*Source: Own elaboration from Mullin et al. (2014)*

Apart from involvement, another related factor that must be taken into account is commitment, which is "the frequency, duration and intensity of involvement in a sport, or the willingness to expend money, time and energy in a pattern of sport involvement" (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 61)

A strong bond between an individual and the football team they support can mean a higher level of attendance to the matches, a greater amount of team-related products

purchased and also a bigger involvement with the team on social media. Because of this, the teams must work hard in order to increase the level of engagement their fans have with them, as it will lead to developing loyalty, which is a crucial factor towards retaining consumers. In short, this is the main reason why marketing experts working in the sport industry must always have in mind that commitment and involvement are highly determinant factors of a team's success in the market.

Researchers have divided sports consumers in two main groups according to their involvement and commitment with the team, which are casual and avid fans. Avid fans are more prone to attend a match in person than casual fans, that prefer to follow it on television or radio. Another difference between these two groups is that avid fans are more active on social media than casual fans, as they interact with the team's content and post their own as well. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 61)

In conclusion, both individual and environmental factors shape the attitude an individual has with a sport team, influencing their involvement and commitment. However, these factors aren't static and can change drastically in a short period of time. Therefore, sport marketers have to be aware that this environment is very complex and analyse and understand all the changes happening in it, as it will have an impact on the level of commitment and involvement of consumers. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 62)

Coming back to the individual factors, it has been highlighted by psychologists that the way sport fans behave is related to the outcome of their team's matches. However, even though the team executives can't change the result of the game, they can influence the form in which the sport product as a whole is presented to fans. This includes how the teams are presented to the audience, how the leagues are organized and how the distribution of the matches is done, among many other elements. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 67). Something as simple as the promotional activities and media diffusion developed around a certain match such as "El Clásico" (Real Madrid versus FC Barcelona), can have a huge impact on the way fans perceive these two teams and also on the overall image of the Spanish Football League.

Another emerging trend in the last few years is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). If consumers see that a club has CSR concerns, the probability of purchasing their products increases, as well as boosting their positive attitude towards said club. As a consequence of this, sport clubs are developing a wide variety of campaigns related to CSR by means of the creation of Foundations. For these actions to be fruitful, they must shift the focus from the sales to community building goals and also come up with a

metrics system that measures the results of these programs with the aim of extracting a conclusion of their effectiveness. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 68)

Applying the decision-making process to the sport industry there can be highlighted some particularities. In relation to the need recognition, studies show that the main cue is team identification, this is, the sense of belonging the consumer has with the team. This has been shown to positively affect match attendance. (Mullin et al., 2014; p.77)

In relation to the search of information step, the key topics that consumers search about are distance to the venue and time it takes to arrive. Also, another topic that fans seek for are the latest news of their team. A differential factor in the past few years has been the rise of social media. Thanks to these platforms, consumers can follow everything that happens with their team and as well see what their friends and family post about sport events. For example, many people attend a match because a friend of them invites them through social media to go with them or because they see that they have posted about a certain event. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 77)

After this step comes the evaluation of choices, here it's important to highlight the role family and friends have. For example, children might become supporters of the same team as their parents because they take them to the matches since they're very young, developing that previously mentioned sense of belonging. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 77)

The purchase decision made by a sport consumer can be planned or impulsive. Some decisions like, for example, purchasing a team's merchandise right after a win may be impulsive, whereas buying tickets to attend a match in another country is a planned decision. In relation to the sale of match tickets, the approach adopted by sport firms isn't the same towards season ticket holders than it is concerning fans that attend the games occasionally. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 78)

Moving on to the sport experience, this doesn't comprise the game itself, it would go from the moment that the individual has made the decision and starts thinking about the day of the match up to the return from the experience. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 78)

Finally, the evaluation of the experience is going to be mainly conditioned by the outcome of the game and the ambience they've experienced before, during and after it. (Mullin et al., 2014; p. 78)

Nonetheless, it should be remarked that due to the constantly changing environment surrounding the sports industry and its complexity, there's not a single formula that explains the way that the decision-making process is developed by all consumers. (Mullin

et al., 2014; p. 78). This is explained basically because of the large importance of internal factors.

As a brief conclusion regarding the sports consumer, it can be accentuated the relevance that involvement and commitment have in the behaviour of fans, as well as the emotional aspect illustrated by the sense of belonging. Sport firms must pay special attention to these elements in order to adapt their marketing strategies to the characteristics of their fans, with the purpose of having a solid and loyal fan base.

## 2. Sponsorship

### 2.1. Definition and main characteristics of sponsorship

Sponsorship in the sports field can be described as the action that companies develop in one or several sport firms with the aim of unifying their values and ideas. (Molina, 2019; p. 11)

Nowadays a large variety of companies invest in sponsorship in sport firms, even if their nature isn't related at all with the sport industry. However, the fundamental objective all these companies share is to increase their visibility and popularity among the sports audience and achieve the "top of mind" effect in said consumers thanks to the association with a sports team or athlete. (Molina, 2019; p. 11)

In sponsorship relations there are two parts intervening: the sponsor and the sponsee. The sponsor is the company that invests in having presence in the sport firm. The sponsee is the sport entity that receives funds from sponsors in exchange of giving them visibility among their fans. The benefit the sponsee obtains from this sponsorship relation is basically the investment made by the sponsor, as it increases the level of funds available. Moving now to the sponsor, the benefit they achieve with these activities is being associated with the sport firm. In conclusion, both parts benefit from this agreement. (Molina, 2019; p. 12)

However, the part played by sponsors isn't limited to paying a certain amount of money to the sport club, but also convincing the fans of the benefits their brand's



products have. To do so, companies develop commercial actions that involve the club and their own company in order to accomplish that sense of association of both parts from the consumer's perspective. (Molina, 2019; p. 12)

## 2.2. Sponsorship activities

There are a lot of ways of implementing a sponsorship within the sports industry, some of the most common activities are: (Molina, 2019; pp. 45-46)

- a) Printing on to the team's kits the logo or name of the sponsor

The visibility achieved by companies investing in having their names printed on to a team's kit depends on where in the kit they have their name placed. The cost a sponsor faces for having their logo in the front of the shirt, right below the crest, is not the same as the cost of having their name in the pants. Normally the front of the shirt is reserved for the club's main sponsor (Figure 2), while the rest of sponsors, depending on their relevance and investments, will be distributed along the remaining parts of the kit. (Figure 1)

**Figure 1. Socios.com logo printed on the back of Sevilla FC's kit.**



*Source: Socios.com, 2022*

**Figure 2. Plus500, main sponsor of Atlético de Madrid, printed in the shirt.**

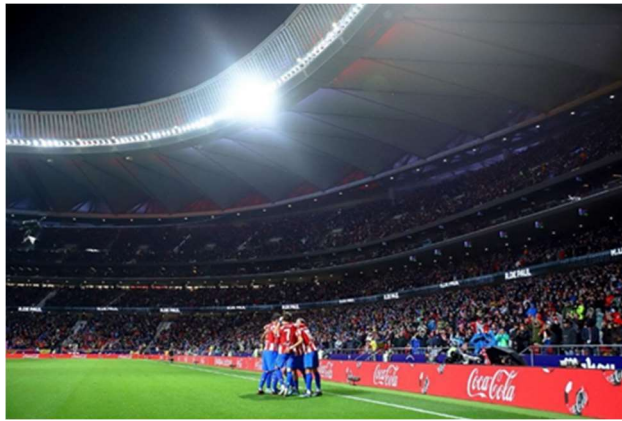


*Source: Atlético de Madrid, 2022*

b) Placing the brand's billboards in the club's facilities.

An important point in the negotiation of the sponsorship's terms is the visibility sponsors have in the club's billboards. Here there are mainly two categories (Figure 3), which are the fixed and LED billboards. Fixed billboards are those that don't change (Figure 4), they can be found all around the game field and they always display the same content. On the other hand, LED billboards are set around the field and they do change the display before, during and after a match. The time a sponsor's name appears on the LED billboard has a certain price, normally per minute, and companies will pay for the amount of time they want to appear.

**Figure 3. LED and fixed billboards at Wanda Metropolitano stadium**



*Source: Atlético de Madrid, 2022*

**Figure 4. Billboard used by Atlético de Madrid before the start of a match**



*Source: Ángel Gutiérrez, 2021*

c) Associating the name of the sponsor with the club's name on social media.

There are many examples of this kind of sponsorships, like the case of the Spanish Football League, La Liga Santander. This can be seen every week

on their Instagram profile, as they post a video of the best goals using the hashtag #GolazoSantander and displaying the logo of Banco Santander. Moreover, the best saves made by goalkeepers of the week are sponsored by Socios.com and the best one is voted every week by Socios.com users on this company's app. There are also examples on the posts done by football teams, placing the names of their sponsors on the starting eleven photos, goals, final result of the match, etc. Below there are some pictures showing these sponsorships: (Figures 5, 6 and 7)

**Figure 5. Paris Saint-Germain's starting eleven, sponsored by Orange**



*Source: Paris Saint-Germain, 2022*

**Figure 6. Sevilla FC's match result, sponsored by NAGA**



*Source: Sevilla FC, 2022*

**Figure 7. Atlético de Madrid's "Image of the match", sponsored by TD Systems**



*Source: Atlético de Madrid, 2022*

- d) Link the name of the sponsor to the name of the stadium.

Some recent examples of this category can be found in two Spanish football teams. Atlético de Madrid's new stadium (Figure 8), Wanda Metropolitano, includes the term "Wanda" on account of Wanda Group, a multinational Chinese conglomerate that has invested in the club. (Atlético de Madrid, 2016) In the case of FC Barcelona, it has been announced this year that it will change the name of its stadium to "Camp Nou Spotify". Spotify has signed a commercial agreement with FC Barcelona for the next three seasons and it will pay to the club 160 million euros for this sponsorship activity. (Marca, 2022)

**Figure 8. Atlético de Madrid's stadium, Wanda Metropolitano**



*Source: Wanda Metropolitano, 2022*

- e) Use a particular sports clothing brand.

Another common sponsorship activity is the last one mentioned, as almost every team has a contract with a sports clothing brand that designs their kits and training clothes. Furthermore, there are even teams signing contracts with clothing brands that aren't related to sportswear. For example, Atlético de Madrid's first team wear Philipp Plein clothes on their travels when playing games away from their stadium (Figure 9). This is because of a four-year contract the club signed with the German fashion label in 2020. (Soccerbible, 2020) Another example would be the agreement signed between Giorgio Armani and the Italian national team (Figure 10), as the previously mentioned Milanese high-fashion company was the one who designed their uniform for the UEFA Euro 2020 tournament. (FIGC, 2021)

**Figure 9. Atlético de Madrid players wearing Philipp Plein garments on a club travel**



*Source: Atlético de Madrid, 2021*

**Figure 10. Players from Italy's national football team wearing Giorgio Armani clothes**



*Source: Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio, 2021*

## 3. Empiric analysis

### 3.1. Objectives

#### 3.1.1. General objective

Understanding the importance of sponsorships in the football industry.

#### 3.1.2. Specific objectives

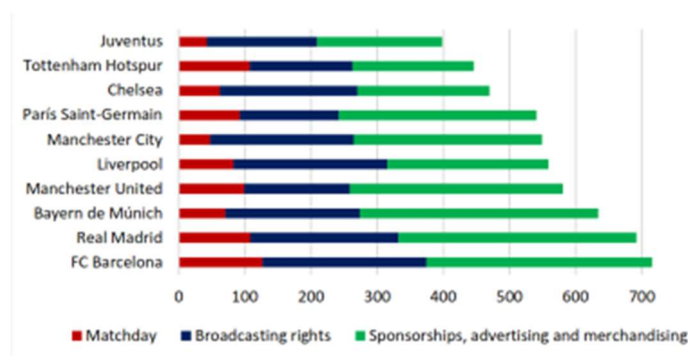
- Study the common factors of successful sponsorship campaigns.
- Find out what commercial actions are the most requested among sponsors.
- Determine the influence of a team's results in its relation with sponsors.
- Analyse the impact football sponsorships have on consumers.

### 3.2. Justification

Sponsorship in sports is a field that is growing in the last years and, according to the latest edition of SPSCG Consulting's Sport Sponsorship Barometer, half of the companies investing in this sector will increase their expenditure for the next year and another 38% will maintain it. (IPMark, 2022)

This income stream has a remarkable importance in football club's earnings, representing a large percentage of their revenue. In the graph below (Figure 11), it can be clearly seen that the most voluminous block of income for the highest earning teams two seasons ago was coming from sponsorships, advertising and merchandising. (Statista 2021)

**Figure 11. Football teams with the highest earnings (2019/2020, millions of euros)**



Source: Own elaboration from Statista, 2021

In relation to the clubs and companies chosen for the development of the interviews, the justification for each of them is below.

### **Atlético de Madrid**

Atlético de Madrid is a club that has experienced in the last 10 years an immense growth, both sports and economically speaking. Furthermore, nowadays they're one of the biggest clubs in Europe and are playing final rounds of European competitions every season, that has an important impact in terms of sponsorships. Because of this, it's interesting to include representation from this club in the interviews.

### **Real Betis Balompié**

Real Betis is a Spanish football team that in these last years has played European competition several times. The actual Spanish Cup winners have experienced a huge change in the last years, as in 2015 they were playing in Spain's Second Division and this last season they've played UEFA Europa League. Furthermore, they're very involved in their communication strategies over social media, which is an element that differentiates them from the rest of the clubs.

Because of this, it's very valuable to include Real Betis in the interviews for this investigation.

### **FC Nantes**

FC Nantes is a French club that plays in France's First Division, Ligue 1 Uber Eats. Including a club that isn't from Spain sheds a light on how sponsorships work abroad.

### **Athletic Club de Bilbao**

Athletic Club are a club different from the rest, as all their players are from the Basque Country or Navarre, or they've ancestry from these places. In the last years Athletic Club haven't played European competitions, but not so long ago, in 2012, they played a UEFA Europa League final. This club can give a perspective of the importance of having presence in Europe due to their experience in the past years and the change they're seeing nowadays.

## Socios.com

Socios.com is a company based in Malta and founded in 2019 centred in fan engagement and offering once-in-a-lifetime experiences to sports fans. Between their more than 120 partners there are teams from a large variety of sports, for example, football, basketball and Formula 1. In relation to their football partners, these include Atlético de Madrid, FC Barcelona, Paris Saint-Germain, Manchester City and Juventus.

They're mostly known for being the creators of fan tokens, which are digital assets that allow their owner to participate in a team's decisions and have access to exclusive VIP rewards such as hospitality tickets to a football match or a team's signed shirt. Fans in possession of fan tokens can choose the design of the team's bus, the song that plays in the stadium when the team scores or the merchandise design they prefer, among many others.

Socios.com have presence in two Spanish football team's shirts, Sevilla FC and Valencia CF. This season they're the main sponsor of Valencia CF, that portrays their fan token in the front of their shirt (Figure 12). In Sevilla FC's kit they appear at the back of the shirt (Figure 1) and also in the pants.

**Figure 12. Valencia CF's fan token printed in the front of the team's shirt.**



*Source: Valencia CF, 2021*

Furthermore, they also have presence in the LED (Figure 13) and fixed billboards (Figure 14) of their partners' stadiums, as well as appearing in the billboards of the training fields.



**Figure 13. Socios.com promoting their fan tokens on Wanda Metropolitano's LED billboard.**



*Source: LaLiga Santander, 2022*

**Figure 14. Socios.com appears in a 3D Carpet at Camp Nou.**



*Source: LaLiga Santander, 2022*

Apart from signing partnerships with football clubs, Socios.com has also partnered with UEFA, being the Official Fan Token Partner of UEFA Club Competitions and also the regional sponsor of some of UEFA competitions in the United States until 2024. (UEFA, 2022)

Due to the impact Socios.com has had in the sports industry in such a small amount of time and the sponsorship activities they develop, their participation in this project gives a different point of view that is very interesting for the analysis.

### **Real Club Deportivo de La Coruña**

The case of RC Deportivo is very interesting in comparison with other clubs, because they develop sponsorship actions that other football clubs don't. For example, this season they have started including individual sponsors in the back of the player's shirts, right above the name of the player. (Figure 15)

**Figure 15. RC Deportivo players with their individual sponsors at the back of their shirts.**



*Source: RC Deportivo, 2022*

Furthermore, every match is sponsored by a company, appearing their logo in the stadium's screens and also being announced on the club's social media profiles. Moreover, these aren't the only benefits that the sponsor of the match obtains, as they're also provided a private tour of the stadium the day of the match before the doors open, a private skybox to watch the match and the possibility of viewing the players warm up from the touchline.

Because of these innovative propositions, it's interesting to incorporate RC Deportivo's case in the interviews.

### 3.3. Methodology

#### 3.3.1. What type of investigation fits best?

A basic investigation has been effectuated for the realization of this project, but without a precise goal of application, because the objective is to learn about the importance of sponsorships in the football industry.

In relation to the design of the investigation, it'll be a descriptive investigation and its aim is to analyse the impact that sponsorships have in the football industry from two opposite perspectives: the point of view of football clubs and also consumers' outlook.

#### 3.3.2. What variables will be taken into consideration?

The variables taken into account in this investigation are shown in the tables below.

**Table 3. Demographic variables**

Demographic variables	Types and intervals
Gender	Male, female
Age	Mainly between 18 and 40 years old
Occupation	Indifferent

*Source: Own elaboration*

**Table 4. Geographic variables**

Geographic variables	Types
Location	Europe (mainly Spain)
Density	Urban, semi-urban and rural

*Source: Own elaboration*

### 3.3.3. What sources of information will be used?

In order to select the sources of information for this investigation the main conditioning factor has been the objectives of said investigation, as well as analysing what information was necessary and where it could be found.

#### a) Sources

In this investigation both secondary and primary sources of information have been taken into account.

##### 1. Secondary sources.

These type of sources of information's main characteristic is that they're already available prior to performing the investigation. They're studies and reports that contain relevant data with regards to the research that is going to be done. The main reasons that justify the use of these sources of information are economic and methodological motives. Firstly, economically speaking, these sources of information have a low cost, are easy to find and the process of obtaining them is fast. Secondly, in terms of methodology, with sources of this nature the delimitation of the object of study can be done in a more precise way. The secondary sources of information that will be used in this investigation are the following:

- Web pages that provide information about the football industry and its most relevant features.
- Websites of football clubs involved in the investigation and their sponsors.

## 2. Primary sources.

In this investigation there have been conducted two sources of this kind, a quantitative research and also a qualitative one.

The quantitative research that has been effectuated is an online survey, it has been spread via social media. It's a passive survey created via Google Drive. This method has been selected due to its reduced cost and the ease of sharing it and analysing the results. The aim of the survey is to gather data by means of a questionnaire, that has been previously elaborated in accordance with the attributes of the investigation in question. In this case it must be highlighted that the survey won't be representative due to the small size of the sample (267 people), and also because of the age proximity between most of the respondents. Because of this, the conclusions of the survey effectuated can't be inferred to the whole population.

However, this method has some drawbacks, like the risk of a higher bias in the sample. The respondent might not be willing to share the information required and answer randomly or giving false answers. As a consequence of this, total reliability can't be assured.

In relation to the qualitative research, a series of interviews have been effectuated. The interviewees are employees of the Sponsorships and Commercial Departments of several football clubs (Atlético de Madrid, Real Betis Balompié, FC Nantes, Athletic Club Bilbao and Real Club Deportivo de La Coruña) as well as the Sponsorship Executive of Socios.com.

### b) Techniques

For the elaboration of the report, it has been used Microsoft's word processor, Microsoft Word. In relation to the treatment and analysis of the results of the survey, Google Drive has automatically generated graphics with the answers and a spreadsheet with all de data, that has been exported to Microsoft Excel for further treatment. Some of the interviews have been done in person and recorded with a phone, meanwhile others, for geographic reasons, have been done via Microsoft Teams and Skype. Finally, for the oral presentation the platform used has been Microsoft Power Point.

### 3.4. Hypotheses

For developing this investigation firstly there are going to be stated several hypotheses, with the aim of accepting or rejecting them by means of primary and secondary sources of information. The hypotheses proposed are the following:

- Hypothesis 1:  
Football clubs try to have sponsors of varied nature, being the drinks industry the one with the most presence.
- Hypothesis 2:  
Innovative promotional initiatives like the individual sponsorships of RC Deportivo are attractive to sponsors and fans.
- Hypothesis 3:  
A club's dynamic of results and the league they play in affects their sponsorships, as the most important leagues have more visibility.
- Hypothesis 4:  
Having presence in the front of the team's shirt is the most attractive sponsorship action, as it's what consumers remember the most.
- Hypothesis 5:  
Digital content will be the dominant trend in sport sponsorship in the future years.

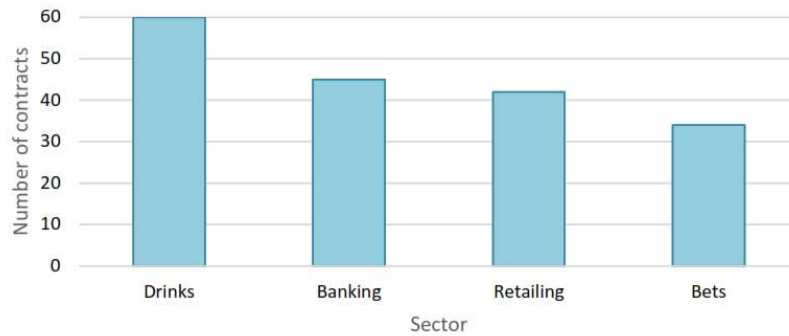
#### 3.4.1. Hypotheses analysis by means of secondary sources

**Hypothesis 1: Football clubs try to have sponsors of varied nature, being the drinks industry the one with the most presence.**

A wide variety of sectors have presence in the football industry, as it gives them access to a large audience. However, there are some types of companies that have more visibility than others in these sponsorship activities.

According to Statista, the sector with the most presence in football sponsorships in Spain is the drinks industry, with a total of 60 sponsorship contracts signed for the last season. It's closely followed by the banking sector, with 45 contracts, and the retailing sector, with 42 agreements in the last season. In the following graph (Figure 16) there's a visual representation of the main sectors from which the sponsors are in Spain's professional football.

**Figure 16. Main sectors of sponsors in professional football in Spain (Season 2020/2021)**



*Source: Own elaboration from Statista (2021)*

According to SPSC Consulting's latest Barometer of Sport Sponsorship 2021, published in January 2022, Coca-Cola was the company with the highest presence from consumers' point of view in sport sponsorship in 2021. The Sponsorship Awareness Index (SAI) developed by SPSC Consulting concludes that Coca-Cola was first in the ranking, followed by Banco Santander, Movistar, Red Bull and Iberdrola, therefore it can be seen the variety of the sectors from which these companies come from, as well as the dominance of the drinks industry. (Spanish Marketing Association, 2022)

**Hypothesis 2: Innovative promotional initiatives like the individual sponsorships of RC Deportivo are attractive to sponsors and fans.**

The initiative of RC Deportivo's individual sponsorships had an incredible repercussion on social media when it was announced last summer. The club first published about it the 13th of August 2021, with a video in which they took a shirt and stamped a name on it. However, instead of being the name of a player, it was the name of a sponsor, Recambios Barreiro, and then they stamped the name of a new signing, Doncel. Recambios Barreiro has been this season Doncel's individual sponsor. This video has more than twenty-six thousand views on Twitter and almost eighteen thousand on Instagram, observing these numbers it's clear that it created a lot of expectation among the fans. In relation to the sponsors, it can be stated that they found it attractive as well, as almost all the players had an individual sponsor this season. Below there's a table (Table 5) that summarizes the players and their individual sponsors.

**Table 5. RC Deportivo players and their individual sponsors (2021/2022)**

Player	Sponsor	Player	Sponsor
Ian Mackay	Duacode	Juergen Elitim	Proel
Adrián Lapeña	Adefer	Mario Soriano	Auga de Parada
Antoñito	Oreco Balcón	Diego Villares	Debullar
Borja Granero	Arteixo Maquinaria	Yeremay Hernández	#Undosmeus
Víctor García	Vida Móvil	Miku	Hilton
Jaime Sánchez	Integral Motion	Alberto Quiles	Engel & Völkers
Héctor Hernández	Hilton	William de Camargo	Gonzaba
Trilli	#Undosmeus	Carlos Doncel	Recambios Barreiro
Álex Bergantiños	Mástil	Noel López	#Undosmeus

*Source: Own elaboration from RC Deportivo, 2022*

**Hypothesis 3: A club's dynamic of results and the league they play in affects their sponsorships, as the most important leagues have more visibility.**

It may sound obvious that the league in which a football team plays affects the sponsorship agreements they can reach, both in economic and quality terms.

According to Goal.com, playing the UEFA Champions League is a key factor for many sponsorship agreements to be fulfilled, due to the visibility that sponsors achieve thanks to the levels of audience that these matches have in comparison with domestic competitions. (Uría, 2022)

In relation to the impact that playing in the first division has, there's the example of Marbella FC. This team signed a contract with the city council by which they're the club's main sponsor. However, for each category relegation suffered along the duration of the sponsorship agreement, the council of Marbella will pay 20% less to the club. (A., J. C., 2021)

Furthermore, observing data from Palco23's Economic Guide of La Liga 2020, the total amount earned by clubs playing La Liga Santander, which is the first division, was of around 884 million euros, while in La Liga Smartbank, the second division, this figure was of about 47 million euros. (Palco23, 2020)

**Hypothesis 4: Having presence in the front of the team's shirt is the most attractive sponsorship action, as it's what consumers remember the most.**

Firstly, even though it might be the most attractive option for sponsors, in many occasions they can't be the main sponsor of a football team because of the high price they would have to pay in order to have their logo printed in the front of a club's shirt. According to data from 2017 Sport Sponsorship Barometer, the companies that consumers associate the most to a football team are those that design the kit and in second position it's not always found the main sponsor. (Cantó, 2018)

Therefore, with this information from secondary sources, this hypothesis should be rejected.

**Hypothesis 5: Digital content will be the dominant trend in sport sponsorship in the future years.**

It's a reality that nowadays there's a transition ongoing towards the digital world, and the sports industry is not an exception. From the transformation of stadiums into smart facilities to the professionalization of club employees in charge of social media profiles, football is also adapting to this new situation, including their sponsorship agreements.

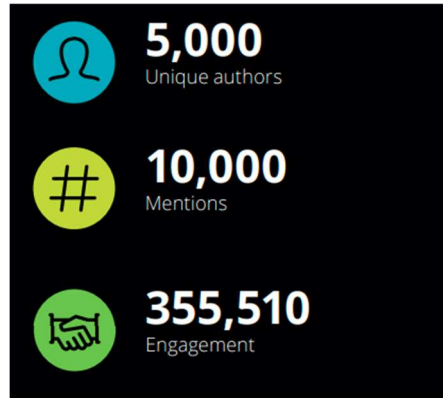
According to Carlos Cantó, CEO of SPSG Consulting, sport sponsorship in the near future will include eSports, NFT, fan tokens and big data more actively (Cantó, 2022). This drift towards the digital world in sponsorship can also be seen in the increase of presence that clubs have on social media platforms, as now brands also sponsor their posts. Furthermore, the appearance of companies such as Socios.com also shows that digital companies are entering the sport sponsorship field.

Another interesting study about this subject is the one elaborated by Deloitte regarding the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup, in which they establish that the boom that social media has experimented in the last years has brought brands a wide variety of possibilities to link themselves with clubs and sport personalities to sponsor their messages and have more visibility. Translating this into numbers with a concrete case, one of the main sponsors of this competition was the financial company VISA, and thanks to this sponsorship they were able to reach an audience of 5,000 individual authors. (Deloitte, 2020)



In the figure below (Figure 17), there's a more detailed breakdown of this sponsorship's action results.

**Figure 17. VISA's 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup sponsorship results**



*Source: Deloitte, 2020*

### 3.4.2. Hypotheses analysis by means of primary sources

#### 3.4.2.1. Survey

The table below (Table 6) summarizes the main characteristics of the survey.

**Table 6. Data sheet of the survey**

<b>Investigation technique</b>	Online survey
<b>Data analysis</b>	Google Drive (Forms) and Microsoft Excel
<b>Geographical area</b>	Europe, mainly Spain
<b>Sample size</b>	267 surveys
<b>Sampling</b>	Non-probabilistic sampling
<b>Date of the operation</b>	May 2022

*Source: Own elaboration*

#### Profile of the survey participants

This survey has helped to understand the knowledge consumers have concerning sponsorship actions in football and their opinion about it.

#### Objectives of the survey

- Analyse to what extent consumers remember the brands that invest in sponsorship in football.
- Find out if consumers' notion of the industries that have the most presence in these sponsorships matches the real data.
- Discover the opinion consumers have of differential sponsorship actions.

### Development of the survey

The survey was designed and performed in Google Drive's Forms platform, that allows the creation of surveys online. Because of this, the sample couldn't be selected and that, joined with the fact that the size of the sample is non-representative, leads to the results obtained in the investigation not being representative, offering an estimation that cannot be easily extrapolated to the whole population.

This survey has been written in both Spanish and English in order for it to be understandable for all the people surveyed.

### Processing and presentation of the data

It's important to present the data from the survey in the clearest way possible, in order to facilitate its analysis and obtaining conclusions from it. The graphs employed for presenting the results of the survey have been automatically generated by Google Forms and a deeper treatment of the data has been effectuated in Microsoft Excel.

### Transcription of the survey

Once the survey was closed, the data has been collected in the form of graphs to facilitate the visualization of the results, accompanied by a brief explanation. This has been included in the Annex 1 of the project.

### **Hypothesis 1: Football clubs try to have sponsors of varied nature, being the drinks industry the one with the most presence.**

This hypothesis is backed by the participants of the survey as, when asked about the sectors with the most presence in football sponsorship, the most voted option were beverages companies, with 137 votes. This means that more than half of the members of the sample perceive that drinks companies have a lot of presence.

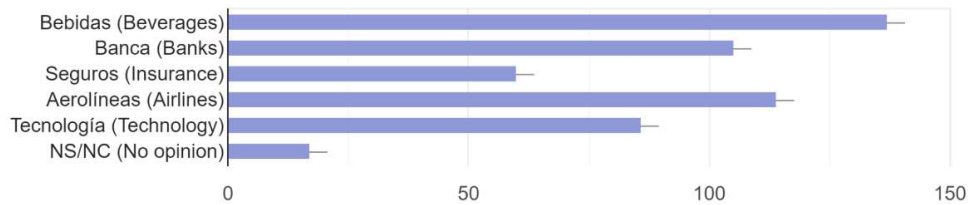
However, it's interesting to highlight the fact that the second most voted option were airline companies, that don't appear in Statista's ranking. Following closely the airlines sector, the third answer with the most votes was the banking industry, which occupies the second place in Statista's ranking.

Furthermore, in this question of the survey, participants had the possibility of writing more sectors than those in the options they were presented. The most popular answers in this sense were gambling companies (16 answers) and cryptocurrencies (4 answers). The graph below (Figure 18) presents this result.

**Figure 18. Answers of the survey regarding sectors with the most presence in football sponsorship**

2. Entre estos sectores, ¿cuáles crees que están más presentes en el patrocinio del fútbol? (From these industries, which one/s do you think have a higher presence in football sponsorship?)

267 respuestas



Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey

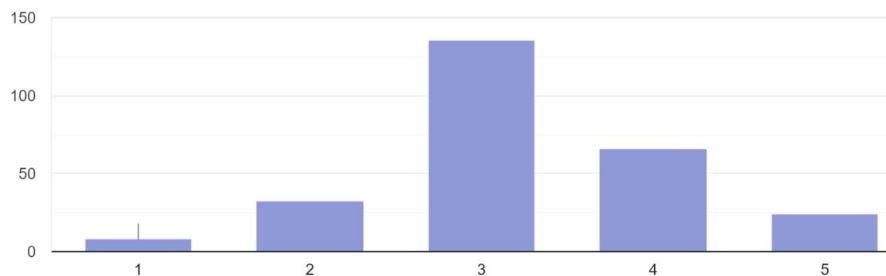
**Hypothesis 2: Innovative promotional initiatives like the individual sponsorships of RC Deportivo are attractive to sponsors and fans.**

This topic was included in the survey and, even though the majority of the participants didn't position themselves on whether they thought these initiatives were successful or not, among those who did position themselves, there were more favourable than unfavourable votes. In the graph below (Figure 19) are the results from this question of the survey, where participants had a Likert scale to give their opinion on how successful they believed the initiative was.

**Figure 19. Results from the survey regarding the opinion about RC Deportivo's individual sponsorships activity**

8. En una escala del 1 al 5, ¿cómo de exitosas crees que son las iniciativas como esta llevada a cabo por el RC Deportivo? (On a scale from 1 to 5, how successful do you think initiatives like this one of RC Deportivo are?)

267 respuestas



Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey

Not taking into account the participants that voted the middle option (136 votes), 90 participants rated it towards being successful, whereas 41 didn't think this initiative was successful.

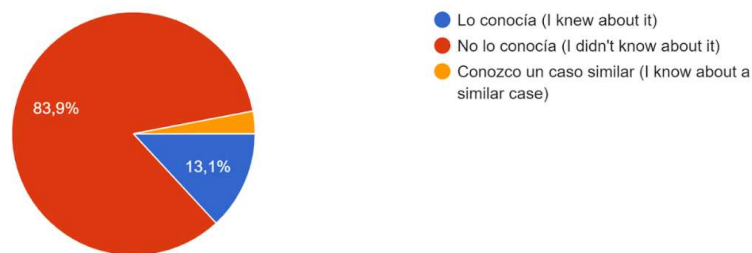
**Hypothesis 3: A club's dynamic of results and the league they play in affects their sponsorships, as the most important leagues have more visibility.**

An example of this can be found in the survey when participants are asked about their knowledge of RC Deportivo's individual sponsorships initiative. Probably, if it was FC Barcelona or Real Madrid the club that developed it, as they have more visibility and a larger fanbase, a higher proportion of the participants would have heard about it. When asked about whether they knew about RC Deportivo's initiative, 83,9% of the respondents claim to not know about it, while only 13,1% (35 people) have heard about it. (Figure 20)

**Figure 20. Results from the survey concerning the knowledge about RC Deportivo's individual sponsorships campaign**

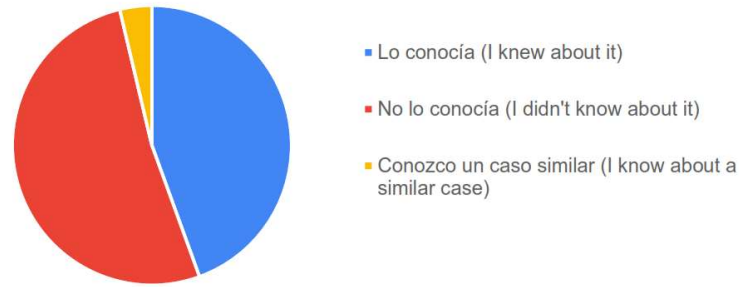
7. ¿Conocías la iniciativa de los patrocinadores individuales del RC Deportivo? (Did you know about the individual sponsors initiative of RC Deportivo?)

267 respuestas



*Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey*

However, due to the geographical diversity of the answers, it's interesting in order to debate this hypothesis analysing separately the answer to this question of participants from A Coruña, which are 54 in total. When studying this data separately, it can be seen that the graph of results changes drastically (Figure 21). From those 54 answers, almost half of them had knowledge about it and the other half didn't. To be precise, 28 of the participants hadn't heard of this initiative, whereas 24 respondents did know about it. The 2 remaining participants claim to know about a similar initiative, but weren't aware of the existence of this one.

**Figure 21. Answer of A Coruña survey participants about RC Deportivo's initiative.**

Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey

**Hypothesis 4: Having presence in the front of the team's shirt is the most attractive sponsorship action, as it's what consumers remember the most.**

In the survey there were a set of questions about different sponsorship assets in order to compare the results between them to see which of them is most remembered by consumers. These assets were:

- The logo in the front of the shirt.
- A competition's naming rights.
- A stadium's naming rights.

Below there's a table summarizing the results of these three questions (Table 7), the graphs of the individual results of each question can be found in Annex 1.

**Table 7. Results of the questions of the survey regarding their remembrance about sponsorship assets**

Question/Answer	Yes	No
Logo in the front shirt	92,9% (248 votes)	7,1% (19 votes)
Competition's name	88% (235 votes)	12% (32 votes)
Stadium's name	89,9% (240 votes)	10,1% (27 votes)

Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey

Analysing this data, it can be seen that the three cases exposed to the participants have a high impact and are kept in consumers' minds. However, the one with the highest percentage of remembrance is the logo in the front of the shirt. Therefore, the results of the survey support this hypothesis.

**Hypothesis 5: Digital content will be the dominant trend in sport sponsorship in the future years.**

When asked about the dominant sectors of companies in football sponsorship, technologic firms were the fourth most voted option, proving that these sector, as years pass, is gaining weight in football sponsorship (Figure 18). Furthermore, another reason why the results from the survey back this hypothesis is the fact that several participants included in this section of the survey cryptocurrencies and fan token companies.

### 3.4.2.2. Interviews

In order to get a deeper understanding of how sponsorships work in football clubs and the importance they have, several interviews were conducted with members of football clubs in charge of sponsorship activities. Also, to have a vision of the other side of sponsorship relations, an interview was conducted with Socios.com Sponsorship Executive in Spain.

These interviews, except for one, were developed in Spanish, as it was preferred by the interviewees. The interview with FC Nantes Sales Manager, Jean-Christophe Coste, was performed in French. The format in which the interviews are presented with the project depends on the preference of the interviewees. The questions of each interview can be found in Annex 2 of this project.

**Table 8. Summary of the interviews conducted**

Name	Company	Position	Date
Sergio Pérez Sanz	Atlético de Madrid	Sponsorship Manager	19 <sup>th</sup> April, 2022
Jean-Christophe Coste	FC Nantes	Sales Manager	21 <sup>st</sup> April, 2022
Xabier Nebreda Nájera	Athletic Club Bilbao	Sponsorship Department	25 <sup>th</sup> April, 2022
Álvaro Suárez-Coalla	Real Betis Balompié	International Business Development Manager	27 <sup>th</sup> April, 2022
Santiago Vázquez Cobián	Real Club Deportivo de La Coruña	Commercial Department	2 <sup>nd</sup> May, 2022
Juan Pazos Galicia	Socios.com	Sponsorship Executive	3 <sup>rd</sup> May, 2022

*Source: Own elaboration*

These interviews were very fruitful and interesting to perform, as they provided first-hand information about the main topics the investigation of this project is about. The

questions of each interview can be found in the Annex 2 of the project. The recordings of the interviews are presented with this project as well.

**Hypothesis 1: Football clubs try to have sponsors of varied nature, being the drinks industry the one with the most presence.**

Santiago Vázquez, from RC Deportivo's Commercial Department, highlighted the importance of having sponsors of a varied nature as "it's something that sponsors always ask for, independently of the sector they come from, they want exclusivity, so it's fundamental to have variety" (Santiago Vázquez, personal communication, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2022). Moreover, according to him, among the sectors that predominate in football sponsorship nowadays there can be found "banks, drinks, sport products, insurance companies, NFTs and fan tokens" (Santiago Vázquez, personal communication, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2022). According to Santiago, the reason why football clubs must have sponsors of varied nature is "because it's the sponsor the one that rejects the agreement in case the club already has a sponsor of their sector" (Santiago Vázquez, personal communication, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2022), this goes in the line of the exclusivity required by companies when reaching sponsorship agreements that was previously mentioned.

An example of this exclusivity Santiago Vázquez talks about was illustrated by Álvaro Suárez-Coalla, from Real Betis, explaining that there are companies like Coca-Cola, that "what they want is to avoid that companies from their sector, such as Pepsi, to have presence in the clubs" (Álvaro Suárez-Coalla, personal communication, 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2022).

**Hypothesis 2: Innovative promotional initiatives like the individual sponsorships of RC Deportivo are attractive to sponsors and fans.**

In relation to the discussion of this hypothesis it's of much interest to consider the interview with Santiago Vázquez, from RC Deportivo's Commercial Department, as he gives a very detailed insight of the whole process of developing this initiative and the response the club received from both fans and companies.

He states that the reason of implementing it was "searching for a new revenue stream", "we launched an initial idea and, from there, we understood that it was a new type of sponsorship that companies were not going to ask us for, as they didn't know about its existence. During summer's transfer market these last years, companies search

for sponsoring announcements on social media of new signings and we tried to do this the other way around. Through a sponsor that had been collaborating with the club for many years, Recambios Barreiro, we explained to them the idea and they were interested in participating.” (Santiago Vázquez, personal communication, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2022).

As it was mentioned when analysing this hypothesis with secondary sources of information, the video announcing this new format of sponsorship had a great reception by the public, as it happened also with the companies interested in sponsoring RC Deportivo players, “the same day in which we posted the video, a Friday afternoon in August, we received about 30 or 40 requests of companies interested in participating.” (Santiago Vázquez, personal communication, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2022), therefore we can affirm that it was an interesting initiative from the perspective of the sponsors.

**Hypothesis 3: A club’s dynamic of results and the league they play in affects their sponsorships, as the most important leagues have more visibility.**

The league in which a club plays or the fact of participating in European competitions are factors that have an influence on the jobs of the interviewees, so their opinion regarding this topic is very important.

In the case of Atlético de Madrid, winner of last season’s league title, the fact of winning La Liga title “hasn’t affected any new sponsorship agreement” (Sergio Pérez, personal communication, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2022). However, the determinant factor is playing or not European competitions. For Atlético de Madrid “the fact of being in UEFA Champions League is valued in 100 million euros, apart from the economic rewards given by UEFA for achieving the classification or advancing rounds in the competition” (Sergio Pérez, personal communication, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2022). The main reason is that “playing the Champions League gives the club international visibility and sponsors value it a lot” (Sergio Pérez, personal communication, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2022).

The importance of playing European competition was also backed by Álvaro Suárez-Coalla, International Business Development Manager at Real Betis Balompié, as “international brands consider the investment in the sponsorship more profitable if the club plays matches in European competitions because of the visibility it gives them” (Álvaro Suárez-Coalla, personal communication, 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2022).

However, there are several limitations in terms of the assets that the club can commercialise with its sponsors for these matches as “the perimeter LED screen in



European competitions can't be sold by the club to its sponsors, as it's an asset sold by UEFA" (Xabier Nebreda, personal communication, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2022).

Another determinant factor is the division in which the club plays, as it's not the same being in first, second or third division of the competition in terms of visibility for sponsors. According to Santiago Vázquez, that has experienced in RC Deportivo in these last years a relegation from first to second division and from second to third division, "the category in which the team plays is everything". "There's an absolutely differential factor, which is competing or not in professional football. In professional football there are several brands that want to enter club sponsoring in first and second division, and a lot of companies come to the club in search of being their sponsor. As well, there are many companies that the club reaches thanks to playing in professional football leagues. However, in the case of non-professional football, it's the club the one that goes in search of sponsors" (Santiago Vázquez, personal communication, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2022).

From a fan perspective, Juan Pazos, from Socios.com stated that "it's inevitable that results provoke wellbeing or discomfort among fans. For example, the fact that the club that I'm a fan of had a good dynamic and won trophies when I became their supporter did influence my decision and it also generates interest" (Juan Pazos, personal communication, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2022).

**Hypothesis 4: Having presence in the front of the team's shirt is the most attractive sponsorship action, as it's what consumers remember the most.**

One of the main objectives of companies when investing in this sponsorship is "generating brand notoriety, and the place in which this is mainly generated is on television, for example with the LED perimeter billboard, the kit or press panels" (Xabier Nebreda, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2022).

According to Jean-Christophe Coste, Sales Manager at French football club FC Nantes, stated that "the asset most searched by sponsors is presence on the kit, followed by appearing at the club's facilities' publicity platforms" (Jean-Christophe Coste, personal communication, 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2022). The reason why this is the most requested by sponsors is that "it's what grants the highest level of visibility" (Santiago Vázquez, personal communication, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2022).

However, as stated by Sergio Pérez, nowadays sponsors are drifting their requests from mere presence to having a bigger involvement with the club, they demand from the clubs “more than just having a set of assets, they're looking for the capacity of creating a project with them around that sponsorship. Creating a project that the audience trusts and having an emotional link between the brand and the club” (Sergio Pérez, personal communication, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2022).

From the other side of the sponsorship relation, these affirmations were supported by Juan Pazos, from Socios.com. He stated that “a traditional company might be looking for presence in the LED billboard, being the main sponsor or having the naming rights of a stadium” but, in the case of innovative companies like Socios.com, what they want “is to give that space to the fans and that, for example, let them choose the name they want for the stadium” (Juan Pazos, personal communication, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2022). This is, they're in search of a deeper connection between their company and the club.

Moreover, the most determining factor for sponsors that conditions the set of assets they end up having is their budget, as “the most expensive sponsorships are those that have presence in the kit” (Sergio Pérez, personal communication, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2022) and, “the requests made by sponsors are conditioned by the budget they have, therefore not all the companies have access to the assets they desire” (Jean-Christophe Coste, personal communication, 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2022). “All companies, if they had an unlimited budget, would want to be present on the kit” (Santiago Vázquez, personal communication, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2022)

Nevertheless, this affirmation cannot be extended to every single sponsor, as “there are other types of sponsors that are local and what they want are activations in the town, and not in the stadium but outside of it, such as a meet and greet with the players (Xabier Nebreda, personal communication, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2022).

**Hypothesis 5: Digital content will be the dominant trend in sport sponsorship in the future years.**

Digital platforms being one of the main trends in the near future of football sponsorship was the common denominator in all of the interviews. Jean-Christophe Coste thinks that one of the reasons behind the digital field becoming the dominant trend is “the change in consumption we've experienced in the last years” (Jean-Christophe Coste, personal communication, 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2022) and, in relation to the potential it has in

the sponsorships context, there's a clear advantage in comparison with sponsorships in the stadium due to the fact that the visibility of these last ones "once a match ends it kind of disappears until the next one" and "there's a huge audience for sport sponsorships in the digital world and it can be monetized" (Jean-Christophe Coste, 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2022). Juan Pazos supports this idea as well, stating that "right now we have the first steps of what we'll see in the future years, as the physical and digital environments have been in a transition phase" (Juan Pazos, personal communication, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2022).

However, the speed of the process by which digital content becomes the main trend will depend on the initiative the clubs take because, as Sergio Pérez said, "it's a relatively new world and there are many clubs that don't know yet the commercialization these products will have. It's in an initial phase and it's difficult to know where its peak will be. There's fear of closing long term agreements in this sector because there's no security about them being beneficial" (Sergio Pérez, personal communication, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2022).

Furthermore, another trend that it's being seen from the clubs these last years that will have a large importance in the near future is the fact that nowadays the relationships between sponsors and clubs are tighter. Before, "until the moment in which the agreement had to be renovated, there wasn't practically any interaction, but now there's a collaboration between the sponsors and the club" (Álvaro Suárez-Coalla, personal communication, 27<sup>th</sup> April). This was also supported by Sergio Pérez, as "it's not only focusing on the assets that the club gives to the brand, but creating a project around that sponsorship" (Sergio Pérez, personal communication, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2022).

### 3.4.3. Final evaluation of the hypotheses

Taking into consideration the data collected by means of the primary and secondary sources of information used in this investigation, a final evaluation of the hypotheses can be effectuated:

**Hypothesis 1: Football clubs try to have sponsors of varied nature, being the drinks industry the one with the most presence.**

This hypothesis is supported by secondary sources of information, as mentioned before. In relation to primary sources of information, the survey also backs this affirmation, as the most voted sector by interviewees in terms of presence in football sponsorship was the beverages industry. Furthermore, as seen before with the

interviews performed, professionals of football sponsorship in clubs also confirm this theory.

With all this information, this hypothesis can be accepted.

**Hypothesis 2: Innovative promotional initiatives like the individual sponsorships of RC Deportivo are attractive to sponsors and fans.**

To confirm or reject this hypothesis is important to mention the interview with Santiago Vázquez, as he explained the process of developing this idea and the reaction of companies when it was announced.

In conclusion, all the sources of information support this hypothesis as true, so it can be accepted.

**Hypothesis 3: A club's dynamic of results and the league they play in affects their sponsorships, as the most important leagues have more visibility.**

Based on secondary sources, this hypothesis makes sense. However, it's of large importance and interest to take into account the perspective that interviewees have of it, as they're the closest source of information regarding this topic because it's a factor that influences their daily work.

Taking into account the outcome of the interviews, it's very clear that playing or not European competitions is vital in economic terms for the clubs in terms of sponsorship income. Also, another differential factor in many aspects is the division in which the club plays, as the amounts paid by sponsors vary, the effort that has to be done to reach an agreement also changes and the prestige of the companies that the clubs can sign as sponsors is, in most cases, also dependent on the division that the club plays in.

With the information analysed above, this hypothesis can be accepted.

**Hypothesis 4: Having presence in the front of the team's shirt is the most attractive sponsorship action, as it's what consumers remember the most.**

There are both arguments for and against this hypothesis, as it's not fully backed by secondary sources of information and the interviewees emphasized the fact that this is mainly conditioned by the budget each sponsor has. Additionally, the results from the

survey confirm that, given a determined set of assets, the one that participants remembered most was the main sponsor of a club, yet it was followed very closely by the other options so, there might not be a big difference in terms of what consumers end up recalling the most.

Taking all these justifications, this hypothesis can't be fully accepted as true.

**Hypothesis 5: Digital content will be the dominant trend in sport sponsorship in the future years.**

This hypothesis is supported by all the sources of information analysed in this investigation. According to SPSG Consulting's Barometer for this last year, the digital world is going to be one of the predominating trends in sport sponsorship. All the interviewees mentioned the importance of the digital industry as one of the future trends and in the survey, the participants themselves introduced this topic as some of the most present industries in sponsorship.

Taking into consideration this information, this hypothesis can be accepted as true

# Conclusions

After all the work developed, there can be stated a set of conclusions regarding the theoretical framework and the investigation.

In relation to the conclusions obtained from the analysis of the theoretical framework:

1. Marketing has shifted its main focus from the product to the consumers, companies nowadays ask themselves what consumers need, instead of trying to sell them something before observing their needs.
2. Digital marketing is gaining more and more presence, even though it's still experiencing a development process due to all the technologic advances. Companies are incorporating digital marketing in order to be up to date with the latest trends and survive in the market.
3. Sport marketing is a relatively new field, but the activities included in it have increased drastically in the last years, being fan engagement the main topic.
4. Sponsorship assets can be of a very varied nature and, thanks to the digital advances, clubs can offer a wider range of options to companies, going from having presence in the traditional billboards placed in the stadium to appearing in the club's social media posts.

Concerning the investigation performed in this project, there are also several conclusions that can be highlighted:

1. The league in which a team plays affects their sponsorships and also does the fact of playing or not European competitions. In some cases, like for example Atlético de Madrid's situation, not playing the UEFA Champions League could risk the economic stability of the club due to the incredibly high economic value that it has.
2. Digital content is going to be determinant for clubs, sponsors and fans in the near future, as it provides a lot of opportunities.
3. The field of football sponsorships is very varied and when clubs are in a difficult situation in economic terms, they have in this a chance of innovating

and generating new revenue streams, like RC Deportivo did with their individual sponsorship initiative.

4. The relation that links sponsors and clubs is changing from having almost no interaction during the season to collaborating in the development of projects together and establishing a closer bond between them.

# Bibliography

A., J. C. (2021). *El Marbella FC perderá por el descenso el 20% del patrocinio municipal*. 2022, from Marbella 24 Horas Website: <https://www.marbella24horas.es/futbol/el-marbella-fc-perdida-por-el-descenso-el-20-del-patrocinio-municipal-30074>

American Marketing Association. (2017). *Definitions of Marketing*. 2022, from American Marketing Association. Website: <https://www.ama.org/the-definition-of-marketing-what-is-marketing/>

Armstrong, G and Kotler, P. (2008). *Principles of Marketing*. University of California: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Asociación de Marketing de España. (2022). *El patrocinio deportivo comienza a recuperar su crecimiento y se consolidará en 2022, según el «Barómetro de Patrocinio Deportivo 2021»*. 2022, from Asociación de Marketing de España Website: <https://www.asociacionmkt.es/eventos/barometro-de-patrocinio-deportivo-2021-spsg-consulting/>

Atlético de Madrid [@atleticodemadrid] (December 6, 2021) *¡Qué elegancia! ¡Hoy estrenamos el nuevo traje de nuestros amigos de @philipppein rumbo a Oporto!* [Image]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CXJ14cKscji/>

Atlético de Madrid [@atleticodemadrid] (May 16, 2021) *Así se vivió. Siéntelo. #AúpaAtleti* [Image]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CO8kvhVsr6l/>

Atlético de Madrid [@atleticodemadrid]. (March 12, 2022) *¡Buen fin de semana, atléticos!* [Image]. Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/Ca\\_30dms6QL/](https://www.instagram.com/p/Ca_30dms6QL/)

Atlético de Madrid [@atleticodemadrid]. (March 16, 2022) *¡Oh capitán, mi capitán!. Dear captain* [Image]. Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/CbJI37fs1G\\_/](https://www.instagram.com/p/CbJI37fs1G_/)

Atlético de Madrid. (2016). *Presentamos el Wanda Metropolitano*. March 26, 2022, de Atlético de Madrid Sitio web: <https://www.atleticodemadrid.com/noticias/presentamos-el-wanda-metropolitano>

Calvo, C. and Stanton, J. (2017). *Principles of marketing*. Madrid: ESIC.



Campos López, C. (1997). *Marketing y patrocinio deportivo*. Barcelona, España: Gestió i Promoció Editorial.

Cantó, C. (2018). *Sport Sponsorship Barometer 2017*. 2022, from SPSC Consulting Website:

[https://itemsweb.esade.edu/wi/Prensa/ESADE\\_Barometro\\_Patrocinio\\_Deportivo\\_2017.pdf](https://itemsweb.esade.edu/wi/Prensa/ESADE_Barometro_Patrocinio_Deportivo_2017.pdf)

Chaffey, D. (2016). *Definitions of Digital marketing vs Internet marketing vs Online marketing*. 2022, from Smart Insights Website: <https://www.smartinsights.com/digital-marketing-strategy/online-marketing-mix/definitions-of-emarketing-vs-internet-vs-digital-marketing/>

Deloitte. (2020). *Sponsoring sports in today's digital age. A Use Case from the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup*. 2022, from Deloitte Website: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/lu/Documents/sports-consulting/lu-sponsoring-sports-today-digital-age.pdf>

Drucker, P. and Maciariello, J. (2008). *Management: Revised Edition*. HarperCollins Publishers Ltd.: London.

Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio. (2021). *Giorgio Armani firma la divisa formale della Nazionale Italiana di calcio agli Europei 2021*. March 26, 2022, de Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio Sitio web: <https://www.figc.it/it/nazionali/news/giorgio-armani-firma-la-divisa-formale-della-nazionale-italiana-di-calcio-agli-europei-2021/>

Gilibet, L. (2013). *Marketing deportivo: el marketing al servicio del deporte*. 26/03/2022, from Blog: Marketing Deportivo Website: <https://blogmarketingdeportivo.com/2013/12/03/marketing-deportivo/>

Gutiérrez, Á. (May 16, 2021). *El Atleti-Osasuna, en imágenes*. March 26, 2022, from Atlético de Madrid Website: <https://www.atleticodemadrid.com/galerias/el-atleti-osasuna-en-imagenes?modo=diapos>

Homer, M. (2021). *What Are the 5 Ds of Digital Marketing?* 2022, from Business 2 Community Website: <https://www.business2community.com/digital-marketing/what-are-the-5-ds-of-digital-marketing-02379569>

Joshi, N. and Mandal, P. (2017). *Understanding Digital Marketing Strategy*. International Journal of Scientific Research and Management, 5 (Issue 06), 5428-5431

Kotler, P. (2000). *Marketing Management, Millenium Edition*. United States: Pearson.

Kotler, P. (2000). *Marketing Management, Millenium Edition*. United States: Pearson.

LaLiga Santander [LaLiga Santander] (2022, February 27) *Resumen de Atlético de Madrid vs RC Celta (2-0)* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=meDIArxg7mY>

LaLiga Santander [LaLiga Santander] (2022, March 13) *Resumen de FC Barcelona vs CA Osasuna (4-0)* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2VhPTSqqAPY>

Lamb, C. W., Hair, J. F., McDaniel, C. (2011). *Marketing*. United States: Cengage Learning.

Lauterborn, B. (1990). *New marketing litany; four P's passe; C-words take over*. Advertising Age, 41, 26.

Levitt, T. (1960). *Marketing myopia*. Harvard Business Review, July-August, 45-56.

Marca. (2022). *Las millonarias cifras del acuerdo del Barcelona con Spotify, al descubierto*. April 1, 2022, from Diario Marca Website: <https://www.marca.com/futbol/barcelona/2022/04/01/6246b5a8ca47411d3d8b4620.htm>  
|

Membrillo, A. (2021). *Top 9 Benefits of Digital Marketing*. 2022, from Cardinal Digital Marketing Website: <https://www.cardinaldigitalmarketing.com/blog/top-9-benefits-of-digital-marketing/>

Molina, G. (2015). *Manual de Marketing Deportivo*. Madrid: ESM.

Molina, G. (2019). *Patrocinio Deportivo*. Sevilla, España: Wanceulen Editorial Deportiva.

Mullin, B. J. (1985), "Characteristics of Sport Marketing" in Lewis, G. Y Appenzeller, H. (1985), *Successful Sport Management*, (pp. 102-123). The Michie Company, Law Publishers, Charlottesville, Virginia, United States.

Mullin, B. J., Hardy, S. y Sutton, W. A. (2007). *Sport Marketing*. Badalona, España: Paidotribo Editorial.

Mullin, B. J., Hardy, S. y Sutton, W. A. (2014). *Sport Marketing 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United States: Human Kinetic Publishers, Inc.

Palco 23. (2020). *La guía económica de La Liga*. 2022, from Palco 23 Website: <https://www.palco23.com/files/publicaciones/free/2020/guia-laliga-2020/#page=1>

Pandey, M. and Pandey, S. *DIGITAL MARKETING: RESHAPING BUSINESSES*. In National Conference on “Achieving Business Excellence through Sustainability and Innovation” (p. 101).

Paris Saint-Germain [@PSG\_Inside]. (March 20, 2022). *Notre XI pour ce #ASMPSG !* [Tweet]. Twitter [https://twitter.com/PSG\\_inside/status/1505505701992534021](https://twitter.com/PSG_inside/status/1505505701992534021)

RC Deportivo [RC Deportivo] (April 20, 2022) *J32 Primera RFEF: Dépor - DUX (3-0)* 17.04.2022 [Image]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=514123390085222&set=a.514135816750646>

RC Deportivo. (2022). *Plantilla Real Club Deportivo*. 2022, from RC Deportivo Website: <https://www.rcdeportivo.es/osnosos/plantilla/rc-deportivo>

Santesmases Mestre, M. (2012). *Marketing: conceptos y estrategias*. Madrid, España: Pirámide.

Sevilla FC [@sevillafc]. (March 20, 2022) *Final del partido. Reparto de puntos en el Ramón Sánchez-Pizjuán. #WeareSevilla #NuncaTeRindas #SevillaFCRealSociedad* [Image]. Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/CbVI\\_rEsFrU/](https://www.instagram.com/p/CbVI_rEsFrU/)

Soccerbible. (2020). *Atlético Madrid Announce Four-Year Partnership with Philipp Plein*. 27/03/2022, from Soccerbible Website: <https://www.soccerbible.com/news/2020/03/atletico-madrid-announce-four-year-partnership-with-philipp-plein/>

Socios [@sociosdotcom]. (February 27, 2022) *S E V I L L A. #elgranderbi #WeAreSocios #BeMoreThanAFan #SevillaFC #Sevilla* [Image]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CafXBADsEN5/>

Socios.com. (2022). *Socios.com*. 2022, from Socios.com Website: <https://www.socios.com/>

Statista. (2021). *Equipos de fútbol con los ingresos más altos del mundo en la temporada 2019/20, por concepto (en millones de euros)*. 2022, from Statista Website:

<https://es.statista.com/estadisticas/503616/ingresos-de-los-equipos-de-futbol-que-mas-facturan-en-el-mundo-por-concepto/>

Statista. (2021). *Principales sectores de las marcas patrocinadoras del fútbol profesional en España en la temporada 2020/2021*. 2022, from Statista Website: <https://es.statista.com/estadisticas/1229748/principales-sectores-de-los-patrocinadores-del-futbol-profesional-en-espana/>

UEFA. (2022). *Socios.com becomes the Official Fan Token Partner of UEFA Club Competitions*. 2022, from UEFA Website: <https://www.uefa.com/returntoplay/news/0272-1473824c0479-593ea71c724a-1000--socios-com-becomes-the-official-fan-token-partner-of-uefa-club-/>

Uría, R. (2022). *Las claves económicas del futuro del Atlético de Madrid*. 2022, from Goal.com Website: <https://www.goal.com/es-cl/noticias/las-claves-economicas-del-futuro-del-atletico-de-madrid/blt1d15ff887933bf57>

Valencia CF [@valenciacf]. (December 31, 2021) *Dura derrota hoy. Queremos más, tenemos que dar más. ¡En 2022 seguiremos dándolo todo para estar en lo más alto!* [Image]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CYKF4FDMgBg/>

Wanda Metropolitano [@wandametropolitano] (April 17, 2022) *Finalizó la XVII edición del #DíadelNiño, tercera que albergamos en nuestro estadio*. [Image]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CcdqpzvLIQb/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>

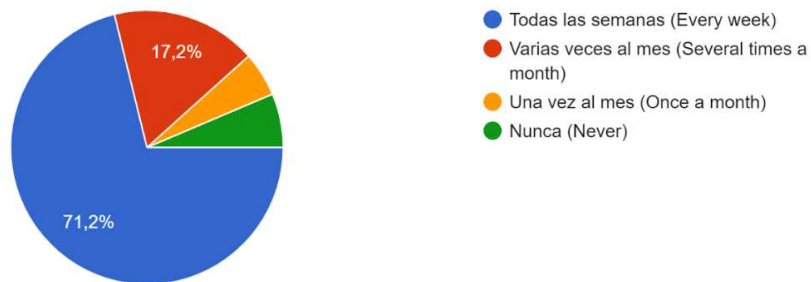
# Annex 1. Results from the survey

In this annex there are shown the graphic results of the answers of all the questions of the survey, with a sample of 267 participants.

The first question of the survey, participants were asked about the frequency they've watched football matches this season, in order to know if they've been exposed to all the sponsorship platforms that are present during football matches. Almost three quarters of the participants watch football matches weekly, and about 17%, monthly. A very large percentage of the respondents watch very frequently football.

1. ¿Con qué frecuencia has visto partidos de fútbol esta temporada? (How often have you watched football matches this season?)

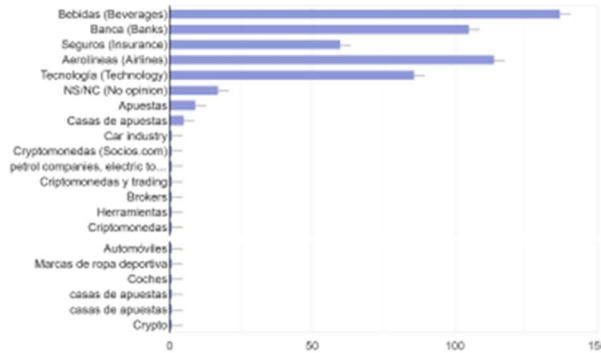
267 respuestas



*Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey*

The second question was concerning the main sectors from which consumers believe that sponsors in football come from. Several options were presented (beverages, banks, airlines and technology) and the participants also had the chance to add more sectors they believe have a high presence in these sponsorships. The most voted option, as commented before, was the beverages industry, followed by technology companies and banks. Among the sectors respondents added, cryptocurrencies and betting companies were the most popular answers.

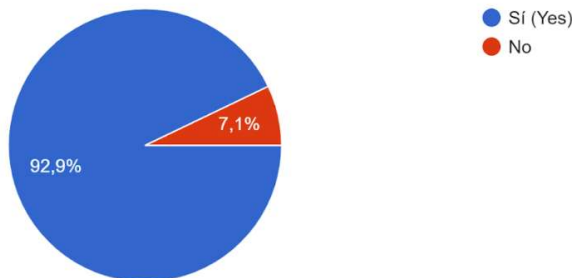
2. Entre estos sectores, ¿cuáles crees que están más presentes en el patrocinio del fútbol? (From these industries, which one/s do you think have a higher presence in football sponsorship?)  
267 respuestas



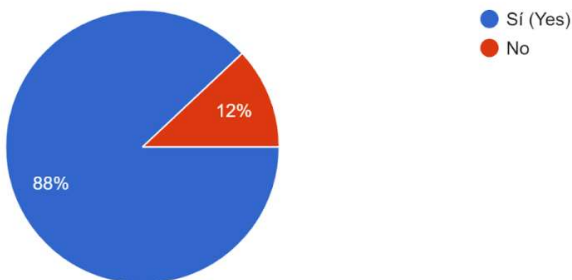
Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey

The third, fourth and fifth questions revolve around a set of sponsorship assets and the remembrance participants have of the companies present in them. The three assets were the logo in the front of the shirt (question 3), the name of a competition (question 4) and the name of a stadium (question 5). As commented when discussing the hypotheses, the three questions have a high percentage of positive answers, being the front logo the one with a higher proportion of remembrance.

3. ¿Sabrías decir de qué empresa es el logo que aparece en la parte delantera de la camiseta de algún equipo? (Do you know from what company is the logo that appears at the front of any team?)  
267 respuestas

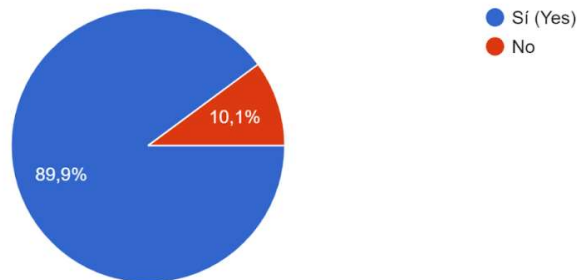


4. ¿Conoces alguna competición que incluya en su nombre el de alguna empresa patrocinadora? (Do you know any competition that includes in its name a sponsor?)  
267 respuestas



5. ¿Conoces algún estadio que en su nombre incluya el de un patrocinador? (Do you know any stadium that includes in its name a sponsor?)

267 respuestas

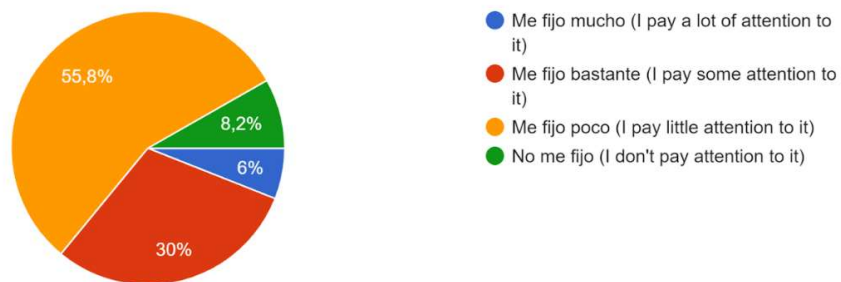


Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey

An important factor to consider is the level of attention consumers pay to advertising platforms when watching a football match. Even though the results of this question don't reflect a high level of attention from the participants, they still remember the companies in the sponsorship platforms as shown in the questions above. More than half of the respondents pay little attention to the advertising platforms and 30% claim to pay attention to them, but not too much.

6. ¿Cuánto te fijas durante los partidos en las empresas que aparecen en los distintos soportes publicitarios del estadio? (When watching a football...e different advertising platforms of the stadium?)

267 respuestas

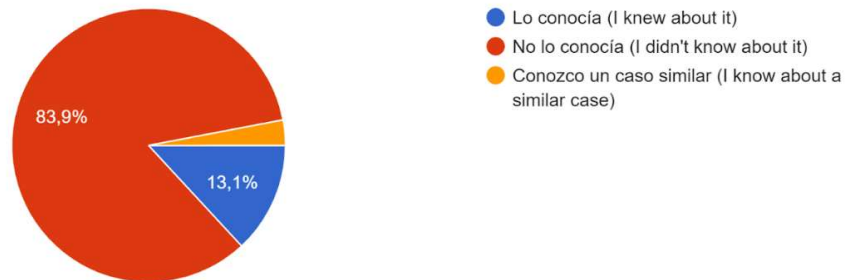


Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey

The next two questions had as topic RC Deportivo's individual sponsorships initiative. The results of these questions have already been analysed in the hypotheses discussion. Below there are the graphs representing the results. In the first one (question 7), participants were asked about their knowledge about the existence of this initiative and in the second (question 8), they were asked to rate this initiative on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, being 5 the most positive rating.

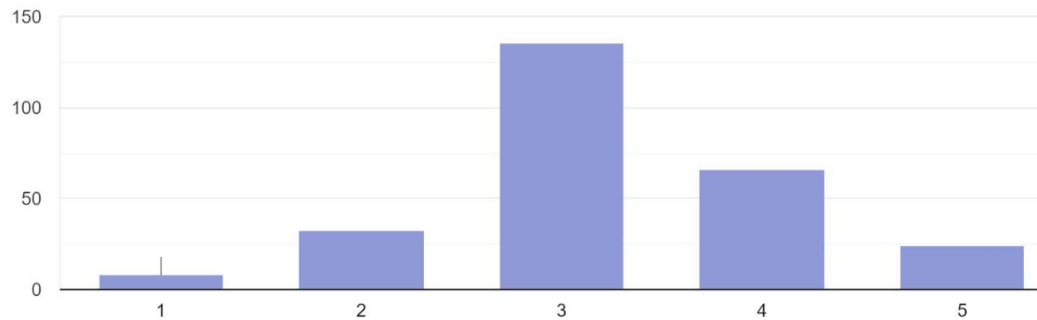
7. ¿Conocías la iniciativa de los patrocinadores individuales del RC Deportivo? (Did you know about the individual sponsors initiative of RC Deportivo?)

267 respuestas



8. En una escala del 1 al 5, ¿cómo de exitosas crees que son las iniciativas como esta llevada a cabo por el RC Deportivo? (On a scale from 1 to 5, how successful do you think initiatives like this one of RC Deportivo are?)

267 respuestas

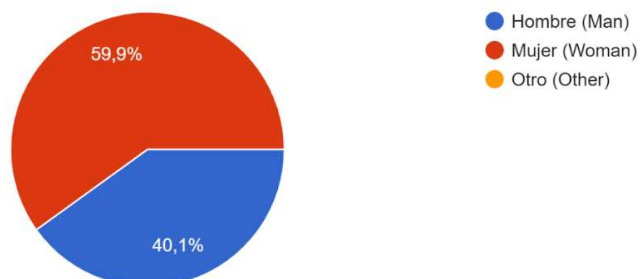


Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey

The questions concerning the investigation of the project were the eight already displayed above, the next three questions are a collection of demographic information from the respondents (gender, age and city).

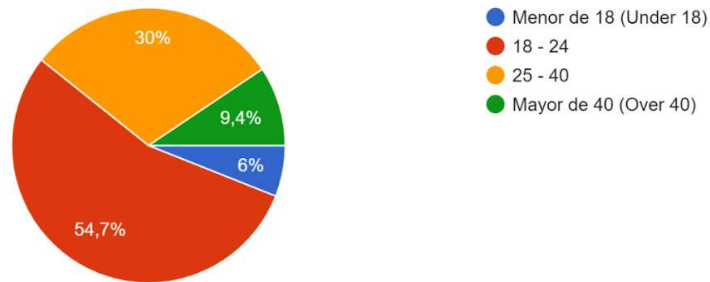
Género (Gender)

267 respuestas





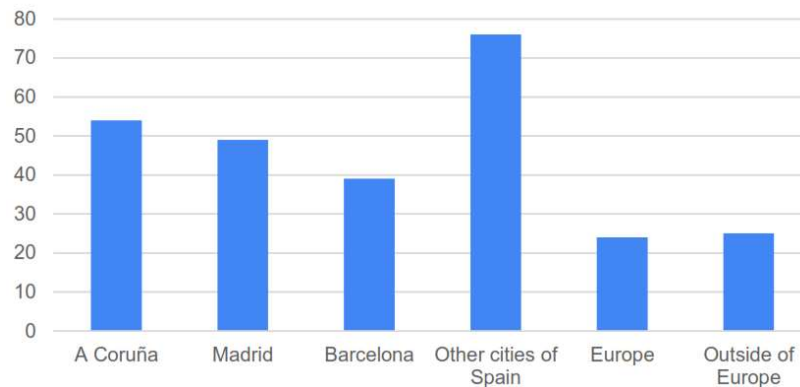
Edad (Age)  
267 respuestas



*Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey*

Almost 60% of the respondents are women and 40% of them are men. More than half of them are between 18 and 24 years old and, around three quarters of the members of the sample are between the ages of 18 and 40.

In relation to the last question, each participant had to write the city they live in, below there's a summary of them.



*Source: Own elaboration from data of the survey*

The city from which most of the responses come is A Coruña (54 people), closely followed by Madrid (49 people) and Barcelona (39 people). Among the rest of Spanish cities there are a total of 76 answers, being some of the most popular Sevilla and Valencia. In relation to the rest of Europe, the 24 responses come mainly from Italy and Germany. The remaining 25 answers come from outside of Europe, most of them are from Mexico, Brazil and the United States.

## Annex 2. Questions of the interviews

In this annex there are the questions that were asked in each of the interviews.

### ENTREVISTA PATROCINIO DEPORTIVO. SERGIO PÉREZ (ATLÉTICO DE MADRID) 19/04/2022

*Esta entrevista se realiza con la finalidad de obtener información acerca de la importancia del patrocinio deportivo en los clubes de fútbol para el Trabajo de Fin de Grado.*

1. Introducción (Presentación, en qué consiste el trabajo que realizas en el Atlético de Madrid)
2. En un campo como el del patrocinio deportivo, que es muy amplio, ¿qué es lo más solicitado por los patrocinadores? (Por ejemplo, minutos en la valla LED, presencia en la equipación, etc)
3. ¿Tienen todos los acuerdos de patrocinio una duración similar?
4. ¿Quién inicia la relación de patrocinio? ¿Son siempre los patrocinadores o alguna vez es el club el que acude a la empresa?
5. ¿Cómo mide el club los resultados de una relación de patrocinio?
6. ¿Cuánto influye la dinámica de resultados que lleva el equipo? Por ejemplo, ¿influyó el haber ganado la liga el año pasado?
7. ¿Qué otros departamentos del club se involucran?
8. ¿Se tienen en cuenta los acuerdos de patrocinio que tiene una empresa con otros equipos a la hora de negociar un patrocinio con el club? Por ejemplo, tanto el Atleti como el Real Madrid tienen entre sus patrocinadores a Mahou.
9. En cuanto al futuro del patrocinio deportivo, ¿qué cambios crees que podremos ver en este campo los próximos años?

### INTERVIEW PARRAINAGE SPORTIF. JEAN-CHRISTOPHE COSTE (FC NANTES) 21/04/2022

*Cet interview est fait avec la finalité d'obtenir information concernant l'importance du parrainage sportif dans les clubs de football pour le Projet de Fin d'Études.*

1. Introduction (Présentation, en quoi consiste votre travail au FC Nantes)
2. Qu'est-ce que c'est le plus sollicité par les sponsors ? (Par exemple, minutes sur le panneau LED, présence dans l'équipement, etc.)
3. Ont tous les accords de parrainage une duration similaire ?
4. Qui commence la relation de parrainage ? C'est le club qui cherche des sponsors ou c'est le sponsor qui contact avec le club ?
5. En parlant du futur du parrainage sportif, quels changements et innovations croyez-vous qu'on verra les prochaines années ?

ENTREVISTA PATROCINIO DEPORTIVO. XABIER NEBREDA (ATHLETIC DE BILBAO) 25/04/2022

*Esta entrevista se realiza con la finalidad de obtener información acerca de la importancia del patrocinio deportivo en los clubes de fútbol para el Trabajo de Fin de Grado.*

1. Introducción (Presentación, en qué consiste el trabajo que realizas en el Athletic de Bilbao)
2. En un campo como el del patrocinio deportivo, que es muy amplio, ¿qué es lo más solicitado por los patrocinadores? (Por ejemplo, minutos en la valla LED, presencia en la equipación, etc)
3. ¿Tienen todos los acuerdos de patrocinio una duración similar?
4. ¿Quién inicia la relación de patrocinio? ¿Son siempre los patrocinadores o alguna vez es el club el que acude a la empresa?
5. ¿Cómo mide el club los resultados de una relación de patrocinio?
6. ¿Cuánto influye la dinámica de resultados que lleva el equipo? Por ejemplo, ¿influye el jugar una competición europea?
7. ¿Qué otros departamentos del club se involucran?
8. ¿Se tienen en cuenta los acuerdos de patrocinio que tiene una empresa con otros equipos a la hora de negociar un patrocinio con el club?
9. En cuanto al futuro del patrocinio deportivo, ¿qué cambios crees que podremos ver en este campo los próximos años?

ENTREVISTA PATROCINIO DEPORTIVO. ÁLVARO SUÁREZ (REAL BETIS) 27/04/2022

*Esta entrevista se realiza con la finalidad de obtener información acerca de la importancia del patrocinio deportivo en los clubes de fútbol para el Trabajo de Fin de Grado.*

1. Introducción (Presentación, en qué consiste el trabajo que realizas en el Real Betis Balompié)
2. En un campo como el del patrocinio deportivo, que es muy amplio, ¿qué es lo más solicitado por los patrocinadores? (Por ejemplo, minutos en la valla LED, presencia en la equipación, etc)
3. ¿Tienen todos los acuerdos de patrocinio una duración similar?
4. ¿Quién inicia la relación de patrocinio? ¿Son siempre los patrocinadores o alguna vez es el club el que acude a la empresa?
5. ¿Cómo mide el club los resultados de una relación de patrocinio?
6. ¿Cuánto influye la dinámica de resultados que lleva el equipo? Por ejemplo, ¿esta temporada influye el jugar una competición europea como la Europa League?
7. ¿Qué otros departamentos del club se involucran?
8. ¿Se tienen en cuenta los acuerdos de patrocinio que tiene una empresa con otros equipos a la hora de negociar un patrocinio con el club?
9. En cuanto al futuro del patrocinio deportivo, ¿qué cambios crees que podremos ver en este campo los próximos años?

ENTREVISTA PATROCINIO DEPORTIVO. SANTIAGO VÁZQUEZ (RC DEPORTIVO)  
02/04/2022

*Esta entrevista se realiza con la finalidad de obtener información acerca de la importancia del patrocinio deportivo en los clubes de fútbol para el Trabajo de Fin de Grado.*

1. Introducción (Presentación, en qué consiste el trabajo que realizas en el RC Deportivo)
2. En un campo como el del patrocinio deportivo, que es muy amplio, ¿qué es lo más solicitado por los patrocinadores? (Por ejemplo, minutos en la valla LED, presencia en la equipación, etc)
3. ¿Tienen todos los acuerdos de patrocinio una duración similar?
4. ¿Quién inicia la relación de patrocinio? ¿Son los patrocinadores o es el club el que acude a la empresa?
5. ¿Cuánto influye la categoría en la que juega el equipo? ¿Hay más diferencia entre 1ª y 2ª división o entre 2ª división y 1ª RFEF?
6. ¿Desde el club se intenta que haya variedad en los patrocinadores? ¿Qué sector o sectores dirías que predominan?
7. ¿Cómo fue el proceso de llevar a cabo la iniciativa de los patrocinios individuales esta temporada?
8. En cuanto al futuro del patrocinio deportivo, ¿qué cambios crees que podremos ver en este campo los próximos años?

ENTREVISTA PATROCINIO DEPORTIVO. JUAN PAZOS (SOCIOS.COM) 03/04/2022

*Esta entrevista se realiza con la finalidad de obtener información acerca de la importancia del patrocinio deportivo en los clubes de fútbol para el Trabajo de Fin de Grado.*

1. Introducción (Presentación, en qué consiste el trabajo que realizas en Socios.com)
2. En un campo como el del patrocinio deportivo, que es muy amplio, ¿qué es lo más solicita Socios.com a los clubes? (Por ejemplo, minutos en la valla LED, presencia en la equipación, etc)
3. ¿Tienen todos los acuerdos de patrocinio una duración similar?
4. En cuanto a las actividades realizadas con los clubes, ¿es Socios.com quien propone actividades a los clubes o son los clubes los que se las proponen a Socios.com?
5. ¿Cómo mide Socios.com los resultados de una relación de patrocinio? (Por ejemplo, la presencia en las equipaciones del Valencia CF y del Sevilla FC)
6. ¿Influye la dinámica de resultados que lleva un equipo?
7. ¿Se tienen en cuenta los acuerdos que tiene Socios.com con otros equipos a la hora de negociar un acuerdo con un club nuevo?
8. En cuanto al futuro del patrocinio deportivo, ¿qué cambios crees que podremos ver en este campo los próximos años?

## Annex 3. Acknowledgements

I would like to say thank you to everyone who supported me and somehow took part in this project.

In the first place, I want to say a massive thank you to my parents and my brother for always supporting me in everything I do and for helping me as much as they could during the elaboration of this project.

I also want to thank my tutor, José Javier Orosa González, for accepting the topic I proposed for the project and for orientating me along the way, I have learned a lot about marketing in general and sport marketing deeply.

Thank you so much to the 267 persons who spared a few minutes of the time to answer the survey.

Finally, a special thank you to Sergio Pérez, Juan Pazos, Jean-Christophe Coste, Xabier Nebreda, Álvaro Suárez-Coalla and Santiago Vázquez for collaborating in my project and giving me a huge insight on the world of football sponsorship. You were all so kind with me and I'm extremely grateful for having talked with all of you.