

WHITE PAPER

Presented by
Partnership Group – Sponsorship Specialists™

What Consumers Are Thinking

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Next week, at the sold-out SMCC Western Sponsorship Congress™ in Calgary, the 2012 Consumer Sponsorship Rankings (CSR 2012) highlights will be released. This proprietary subscription research study speaks live with over 1000 Canadians about sponsorship. It is not an online study, but rather a telephone survey with average Canadians. It does not ask people in the sponsorship industry what they think of sponsoring brands and companies or of the events and properties. It talks to average Canadians for about 10 minutes each to gather their thoughts and insights. It talks to the people whom sponsorship targets. It has conversations with the people who buy sponsors' products and events, and properties' tickets and programs.

The CSR 2012 clearly shows some trends. The telecommunications companies, financial institutions, and beverage companies owned the top ten list as the most recognized sponsors in Canada. McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Molson, Air Canada, Ford, and surprisingly, TD led as the most supportive brands in their sector industries through unaided recall. Festivals, hockey, and cancer were seen as the most important and recognized events in Canada. Music festivals in Quebec topped the lists for music and cultural events, while the CNE and Stampede came in as a 1-2 punch after tying for the top spot in 2011. The Terry Fox Run followed by the Run for the Cure were identified as the top Canadian walks and runs. On the sports side, the Montreal Canadiens, Stanley Cup Hockey, and the Grey Cup topped the lists. Interestingly this year, auto racing and curling both dropped from their eye-opening levels of 2011.

Almost 70% of Canadians prefer to conduct business with brands that support the causes they support, while 53% feel the same about supporting brands that support their arts and cultural choices. But only 45%, or less than half of Canadians, will turn their dollars over to the brands that support their favorite sport or team. This ongoing trend shows that charities continue to be the most influential affinity opportunity for brands.

The CSR 2012 continues to show trending about consumers' thoughts and feelings about sponsorship in Canada. As the single unprejudiced study of its kind, this research helps brands and sponsorship selling organizations to better understand the Canadian consumer. It allows them to build better events for participants and sponsors. It allows them to better understand how brands can activate and whom they should align with... or not.