



A NEW MANAGEMENT OF SPORTS RIGHTS

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ORIGINAL TEXT IN ENGLISH

INTRODUCTION

Some years ago the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), introduced a new tag line that read very simply: "It's not every four years. It's every day."

Dear friends, protocol having been established, I wish to begin my very brief intervention with the tag line of the USOC as a fundamental guiding principle. Indeed, "It's not every four years. It's every day" captures the essence of what we are about in the Olympic Movement. We are about effecting change in humanity every single day of our lives. We choose to do it through sport.

The Digital Revolution offers us in the Olympic Movement new, innovative, expansive, extensive, intensive and flexible ways of impacting humanity, more than at any previous time in history.

THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

When I refer to the Digital Revolution, I mean the changes that have taken place in the way we communicate. We are, therefore, speaking about technological advances in communications, which began several decades ago, but which have taken on warp speed in the past decade.

In the Olympic Movement we see sport as entertainment. The Digital Revolution has the capacity to bring sport and all its positive values to global society.

In a sense, we must all agree with the analysis made by PricewaterhouseCoopers that there really is "no place to hide from the Digital Revolution" (London, 16 June 2009). More particularly, their analysis makes reference to "digital migration", highlighting the speed with which new technologies in the field of communication are crossing national, ethnic and cultural borders, and impacting all societies.

The analysis states that: "Over the next five years, digital technologies will become increasingly widespread across all segments of entertainment & media (E&M), as the digital migration continues to expand."

In the face of the global economic downturn, the claim is made that digital migration has accelerated and intensified, among both providers and consumers of content. We are also told that: "The global entertainment & media market as a whole, including both consumer and advertising spending, will grow by 2.7% compounded annually... to \$1.6 trillion in 2013." If this analysis is accurate, then the Olympic Movement must ensure that it positions itself to benefit from the changing digital technologies as they facilitate access to wider audiences globally.

Marcel Fenez, Global Leader Entertainment & Media Practice at PricewaterhouseCoopers, is quoted as saying: "In some ways this could be called 'the perfect storm'. Inside every cloud is a silver lining and, in this case, a digital one. Companies which grasp the opportunities that are appearing in this fast changing marketplace, and are agile enough to adapt their business models, will be able to take full advantage of the potential and new revenue models as they emerge." This stance is readily advocated in the numerous contributions to this Congress. The Digital Revolution impacts the content, the packaging and the extensive dissemination of information, leaving consumers with greater variety from which to choose, and with which to interact at their own pace, from wherever they are located and at the time most convenient to them. This reality cannot escape the Olympic Movement, and indeed we are already well on our way to addressing this reality.

FUNDAMENTALS

I would argue that we must ensure that we maintain certain fundamental principles in our use of the Digital Revolution, at all times, if we are to reap the maximum benefits in keeping with our mandate:

- Universal accessibility;
- Affordability;
- Appeal;
- Acceptability;
- Simplicity;
- Interactivity.

CHALLENGES

With regards to the various contributions on this subject, it would be fair to say that we have not heard enough about the role of the Digital Revolution in: promoting the many positive values of sport (such as Olympism); facilitating and enhancing sport and participation in sport, at whatever level; promoting sport as an international force for peace, social harmony, international understanding and a better life for all. These were the ideals of the founding fathers of the International Olympic Movement. The challenge, therefore, is to place this aspect of our work squarely at the forefront of our engagement with the Digital Revolution.

There are other challenges. We are challenged to find ways of determining the best media through which we can reach audiences in different geographical constituencies, with varying levels of economic, socio-cultural and technological development. We are also challenged by issues relating to the management of rights, relations with governments and stakeholders, and gender equity.



CONCLUSION

It is important for us all to understand that the Digital Revolution is the most rapid development taking place in the world today. Even as we meet here to discuss its various impacts on the Olympic Movement, the Digital Revolution has moved forward, and will be even farther ahead by the time our conclusions have been circulated.

We would therefore do well to heed the words of Marcel: “The winners will be those players who focus on driving and leading change that delivers real value for consumers... But for each of the industry’s diverse segments to participate fully in this growth, they will first need to embrace the digital future.”