A CRITICAL EXPLORATION INTO MODERN STRATEGIES USED BY SPORTS STADIA TO ENHANCE THE FANS EXPERIENCE – A CASE STUDY APPROACH

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Declaration:

I declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted or accepted previously with regards to any form of academic exam or assignment at an undergraduate level of study. It is the result of my own independent research except where otherwise stated.

Signed: .................................................. (Shorda Cridland)

Date: ........................................................
Abstract:

This study focuses on modern strategies implemented by stadia to enhance the fans experience. From the research gained the study takes on two points of views, one from employees at stadia and the other from fans attending major live sporting events. With an increasing focus on customer relationship management (CRM) and the strategies offered by the stadia when directly communicating to fans. Fans are now being targeted with more personalized and specific marketing content. This is in an attempt to create a relationship that is long lasting and economically beneficial. The motivation for this study is due to the researcher working within the sporting events industry and to contribute to an area with a distinct lack of current literature, an area which could potentially change the way fans and stadia interact.

The study used a sample of three industry experts and hundred and eighteen fans that attend major live sporting events. The study analyses what motivates fans in attending major live sporting events along with how it can be improved from their perspective. The report found that stadia are doing more to interact with their fans through different strategies and are attempting to follow in the footsteps of America.

The overriding limitation of the research was the lack of literature already out there. Following a mixed method approach as opposed to a single discipline approach did lead to a more definitive and reliable conclusion.
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# Table of Contents

Abstract iii
Acknowledgements iv
List of Abbreviations viii
List of Tables ix
List of Figures x

**Chapter One: Introduction**

1.0 Introduction 2
1.1 Background 2
1.2 Reasons for this study 3
1.3 Research Problem 4
1.4 Overview of the Research Project 5
1.5 Aims and Objectives 6
1.6 Hypotheses 8

**Chapter Two: Literature Review**

2.0 Chapter Overview 10
2.1 Why Do People Attend Sporting Events? 10
2.2 Fans Experiences at Stadia 14
2.3 Americanisation 15
2.4 Digitisation 15
   2.4.1 Mobile Applications 16
2.5 Customer Relationship Management (CRM) 18
   2.5.1 Segmentation in CRM 19
2.6 Effects on Attendance 21
2.7 Critique of Literature 24
2.8 Questions Formed From the Literature 24
Chapter Three: Methodology

3.0 Chapter Overview 26
3.1 Research Approach 26
3.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Research 27
3.3 Primary research 27
   3.3.1 Interviews 28
   3.3.2 Questionnaires 29
3.4 Secondary Research 30
3.5 Sampling 30
3.6 Ethical Issues 31
3.7 Reliability, Validity & Triangulation 32
3.8 Limitations and Constraints 33
3.9 Chapter Review 33

Chapter Four: Results & Discussion

4.0 Chapter Overview 35
4.1 Questionnaire Results & Discussions 35
4.2 Interviews 47
   4.2.1 Motivation of Fans 48
   4.2.2 Teams Performance 49
   4.2.3 Location 50
   4.2.4 Entertainment 51
   4.2.5 Americanization 52
   4.2.6 CRM 53
   4.2.7 Communication 56
4.2.8 Digitization 58
   4.2.8.1 Social Media 58
   4.2.8.2 Stadium Facilities 59
   4.2.8.3 Wi-Fi 60
   4.2.8.4 Mobile Applications 61
4.3 Comparisons

4.3.1 Age vs. Communication 63
4.3.2 Age vs. Mobile Applications 64
4.3.3 Age vs. Wi-Fi in Stadia 65
4.3.4 Entry times at Wembley Stadium 66

4.4 Chapter Review 67

Chapter Five: Conclusion & Recommendations

5.0 Chapter Overview 69
5.1 Summary of Findings Versus Objectives 69
5.2 Research Limitations 71
5.3 Further Research 71
5.4 Who Will Benefit From the Research? 72
5.5 Personal Reflection 73
5.6 Overall Conclusion 73

References 74

Appendices 85

Appendix 1 – Final Questionnaire 86
Appendix 2 – Approved Ethics Form 90
Appendix 3 – Consent Form & Information Sheet 103
Appendix 4 – Interview Questions 105
Appendix 5 – Questionnaire Results 107
Appendix 6 – Interview Transcriptions 110
List of Abbreviations:

**CRM** – Customer Relationship Management
List of Tables:

**Table 2.1** – Four Categories Formed for Football Sports Consumers 21

**Table 3.1** – List of Interview Participants 28

**Table 4.1** – Codes used for Interview Responses 47
List of Figures:

**Figure 2.1** – Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs  
13

**Figure 2.2** – Segmentation methods based on attitude of the type of team performance and commitment to the club  
20

**Figure 2.3** – Percentage of fans answering, yes, to the question: Which of the following factors could prevent you from attending the game  
22

**Figure 4.1** – Question 1 – What is your gender?  
36

**Figure 4.2** – Question 2 – What is your age?  
36

**Figure 4.3** – Question 3 – How often do you attend major live sporting events at stadia  
37

**Figure 4.4** – Question 4 – Why do you attend major live sporting events? (If you have never attended a major live sporting event what would influence you to attend?)  
38

**Figure 4.5** – Question 5 – which of the below elements contribute most to your overall experience? (If you have never attended a major live sporting event, what would contribute most for you?)  
39

**Figure 4.6** – Question 6 – Does the team or support you follow recent performance affect your decision process in attending?  
40

**Figure 4.7** – Question 7 – Would free Wi-Fi at stadiums enhance your overall experience at a sporting event?  
41

**Figure 4.8** – Question 8 – As a customer would you benefit from a stadium app? (This app could include live score updates, goal play backs, update you on toilet queues and order food from your seat?)  
42

**Figure 4.9** – Question 9 – Do you prefer watching major live sporting events on television rather than being at the stadium?  
43

**Figure 4.10** – Question 10 – Does the location of a stadium affect you attending a sporting event?  
44

**Figure 4.11** – Question 11 – Do ticket prices effect your decision in attending major live sporting events at stadiums?  
45
Figure 4.12 – Question 12 – How do you like to be contacted about future sporting events?

Figure 4.13 – Question 13 – Does marketing effect your decision in attending major live sporting events?

Figure 4.14 – Visual representation of themes uncovered in the interviews

Figure 4.15 – Under 35s and how they like to be contacted about future sporting events

Figure 4.16 – Over 35s and how they like to be contacted about future sporting events

Figure 4.17 – Under 35s and whether a stadia app would enhance their experience

Figure 4.18 – Over 35s and whether a stadia app would enhance their experience

Figure 4.19 – Under 35s and whether Wi-Fi would enhance their experience

Figure 4.20 – Under 35s and whether Wi-Fi would enhance their experience

Figure 4.21 – England vs. Switzerland turnstiles entries

Figure 4.22 – New York Jets vs. Miami Dolphins turnstiles entries

Figure 4.23 – Capital One Cup Final 2016 turnstiles entries
Chapter One:
Introduction
1.0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher will outline the key areas of this research project, looking particularly at modern strategies stadia use to enhance the customers experience when attending major live sporting events. This chapter also covers the background topic of why it has become increasingly important for sports stadia to build relationships with their customers. Finally it will outline the main aims and objectives layout the frame for the research study.

For the purpose of this study the researcher will refer to “customers” or “spectators” as “fans”. This will avoid any confusion with the terminology used throughout the study.

1.1 Background

The events industry is worth £39.1 billion to the UK economy in terms of direct spend by event delegates, attendees and organizers. Sporting events current value in 2015 was £2.3billion (Booker, 2015). A lot of money is put into these events as well as the additional experiences to enhance that experience for the fan. In the UK sporting events are on the rise and consumer expenditure on attending live sport is increasing, with an impressive 7% increase from 2013 – 2014 (Mintel, 2014). Customer relationship management (CRM) is a term that refers to practices, strategies and technologies that companies use to manage and analyse customer interactions. It allows organizations to review data collected throughout the customer lifecycle, with the goal of improving business relationships with customers, assisting in customer retention and driving sales growth (Rouse, 2014). A relationship between customers at sporting events may be short-term or long-term, continuous or discontinuous, repetitive or non-repetitive CRM is a tool that allows the organization to measure the relationship (Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012). It has become more important than ever for businesses to sustain relationships with customers, retention is key for stadiums and the way they operate, acquiring a new customer
can cost up to ten times more than retaining an existing one (CIM, 2010; Retail Active, 2008).

It is often the goal for any business, particularly in the service industry, to provide customers with the best possible experience as well as managing relationships with them (Reichheld, Markey & Hopton, 2000). The fans experience are important within current sporting events as they play a part in keeping fans engaged. The service present many more “touch points,” or discrete sub-experiences to the fan. By “sub-experience,” the researcher is referring to a specific experience that is part of the fans overall experience with an organization (Berry et al, 2006). Basically it is all about developing a detailed understanding of the motivations, expectations and behaviours of the fans at sporting events and providing services that add to and improve their experience at the stadium (Conolly, 2015).

Historically match day revenue has been the main source of income for football clubs and the need to fill their stadia but with significant television revenue and lucrative sponsorship deals prominent in the modern game many clubs now focus less on selling tickets and instead enhancing the customers experience (Thompson, 2013).

1.2 Reasons for this study

The researcher has decided to undertake this study due to previous work experience. For the past 18 months the researcher has been working for a London based company who are ‘Specialists in Stadium Events & Spectator Experiences’ and in January 2016 the researcher took on a full time role within the company. The researcher travels all around the UK working at various sporting events creating better experiences for fans at major live sporting events. Whilst talking to employees at the different stadia it has become clear how important these experiences are for the stadium and their fans. From the researchers personal experience they understand that sporting events at stadia are a thriving industry to be involved in not
only for the teams but the environment for the fans including before the gates even open. This has recently become hugely impacted on due to America.

1.3 Research Problem

The problems that many stadia may face is trying to attract customers to attend sporting events at multi sporting stadia as it may not be their regular team or sport that they support. In order to encourage fans to attend these events, stadia must ensure that there are a number of elements applicable to the fan. It is important to keeps fans involved and engaged throughout the event (Cheng, 2014).

Laverie and Arnett (2000) proposed an identity salience model to explain the motivating factors of fan loyalty. The model posits four factors that make up an individual’s identity salience and eventually commitment and attendance at sporting events. These factors are situational involvement, enduring involvement, attachment, and satisfaction.

As well as they’re being different reasons for people attending major live sporting events there are also different factors, which may put fans off attending. That is why it is important that fans are motivated in attending and receiving an outstanding experience.

Customer relationship management applies beyond the traditional product and service offerings. CRM has become a core strategic element of sports clubs and they are able to recognize the importance of managing and understanding their fans. There are a number of different areas that can be identified as key opportunities for fan engagement such as:

- Promoting the next match
- Joining the fan club
- The 90 minutes before your event starts
- The 90 minutes after your event has ended
- Renewing season tickets
- Buying a ticket to a game
- Getting all the info you need from the club web site or other social platforms

Segmentation of fans at stadia is a key part of CRM and to determine the category of fans attending the sports events. For a football clubs to be successful through CRM and see an increase in their ticket sales it is important that they build a fan centric culture, to achieve this a detailed understanding of their fans needs to be established (Goodhue et al., 2008). Different fans have different needs, Adamson et al (2006) describes football clubs into having eight ‘types’ of supporter:

- Carefree casuals
- Casuals
- Professional wanderers
- Glory hunters
- Busy supporters
- Regulars
- Committed casuals
- Fanatics

1.4 Overview of the Research Project

Throughout this study, the aim is to investigate how stadia enhance the fans experience at sporting events in particular looking at sports stadia in the UK as there are limited sources available considering literature on fans experiences at stadia the research must consider a number of different elements such as ‘Why do the stadia need to do this’, ‘Are the strategies working?’ and the effects of these experiences on the fan. Consider which marketing techniques work well within sports stadia, how CRM systems are managed and the effect of this system.
To investigate further into this study, there will be interviews put in place to speak to employees of the stadia whilst questionnaires will be distributed to fans that attend major live sporting events at stadia in order to collect data. The questions will be based on their experience, what strategies work, what they would like to see at stadia but most importantly looking at why they attend and what effects them.

The result of the research will help towards future improvements that stadia will be able to put in place to enhance their fans experience. Analysis of these results will show whether the effects and strategies that are put in place to enhance the fans experience and questioning whether they are worthwhile.

There is a surprising lack of academic research of fans experiences in the context of sporting events within the stadia environment and this is the initial reasoning behind the study. This could be a constraint for the researcher, as it will limit the amount of literature that is already out there. Another constraint for the research is that although the researcher works within the industry it will take time and money to travel to various stadia in order to undertake the primary research.

1.5 Research Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the study is to use the aim and objectives to enable the researcher to fully investigate the topic whilst allowing the researcher to understand the data collected and what results have been found.

Research Aim:

To critically explore the modern day strategies used by sports stadia to enhance the fans experience.
Research Objectives:

1. To critically review the current literature relating to modern strategies in the context of sports stadia and enhancing the fans experience.

2. To undertake primary research data collection with representatives from sports stadia to assess the applications of modern strategies put in place at their stadium.

3. To undertake primary research data collection with fans that attend major live sporting events. Whilst looking at their motivations and expectations within sports stadia.

4. To review and analyse the primary data, presenting the results using a variety of formats.

5. To consolidate the research findings by achieving an understanding of the strategies put into place in sports stadia and how this affects the overall “fans” experience.

6. To offer recommendations as to how sports stadia can improve their fans experience.
1.6 Hypothesis
The following are the primary hypotheses of this research:

- Hypothesis 1: Digitalisation will prove a prominent factor regarding how stadia’s build relationships with their fans

- Hypothesis 2: By improving the overall fans experience it will also increase the attendance at stadia during sporting events

- Hypothesis 3: The motivation, expectations of fans at multipurpose sports stadia when attending sporting events
Chapter Two:

Literature Review
2.0 Chapter Overview

The aim of the literature review is to acknowledge and review what is already known in relation to the subject topic. It is to help the researcher to develop a good understanding and insight into relevant previous research, whilst looking at any trends that have emerged.

The researcher will look closely into why people attend sporting events and what stadia can do to enhance the fans experience whilst analysing the different engagement strategies that are undertaken to create these experiences. Sports fans are estimated to be worth millions of pounds to the global economy, which would suggest them as a very valuable ‘niche’ market segment, which should be studied and understood.

2.1 Why do people attend major sporting events?

Understanding motivations, or the "internal factor that arouses, directs, and integrates a person’s behaviour" (Iso-Ahola, 1980) leads to better planning and marketing of events, and better segmentation of participants. The challenge for sport marketing professionals and researchers is to identify key elements of the decision-making process that influence behaviours (Crompton & McKay, 1997). Understanding customer’s motivations is valuable to sports managers, venue operators, and government administrators (Hall et al, 2009).

Sports consumption/fan motivation is therefore defined as:

“The motives of sports fans and their attitudes and behaviour towards players and teams” (Kwon, 2001:149).

Below are different factors that influence and effect fans from attending live sporting events:
External factors influencing attendance (Douvis, 2014):

1. Popularity of the sport
2. Game attractiveness
3. Promotions and give-a-ways
4. Game entertainment
5. Physical contact
6. Convenience and accessibility
7. Facility
8. Costs

These factors play a major role in ensuring that fans attend sporting events. Entertainment is becoming one of the fastest growing areas for sporting events, with the influence from America. Although entertainment can be perceived as performances pre match or half time shows, entertainment is also valued for its ability to generate atmosphere, which is defined as the subjective excitement level created at an event (Brooks, 1994).

Factors that influences fans decisions to attend sporting events (Douvis, 2014):

1. Fan Motivation
2. Game Attractiveness
3. Economic Factors
4. Competitive Factors
5. Demographic Factors
6. Stadium Factors
7. Value of sport to the community
8. Sports Involvement
9. Fan Identification
Denton (2011) suggests that there are five main reasons why people attend sporting events:

1. Meeting people and socialising
2. Half time shows
3. Promotions and giveaways
4. Team spirit
5. Impressing someone

One theorist notes that sports events provide opportunities for groups to socialise and that this enhances the overall experience and are:

“Less concerned with the outcome of the sporting event than they are with the overall quality of the entertainment experience.”

(Kahle & Riley, 20014: 283)

More recently, variables influencing spectator decision making on attending sporting events have been grouped by researchers (Greenstein & Marcum, 1981; Hart et al., 1975; Schofield, 1983) into the following four categories: (a) game attractiveness (e.g., individual skills, team records, league standing, record breaking performance, closeness of competition, special events and entertainment), (b) economics (e.g., ticket price, promotions, income, substitute forms of entertainment, television effect and competition of other sport events), (c) socio-demographic (e.g., population, age, gender, ethnicity, occupation, education and geography), and (d) audience preference (e.g., schedule, convenience, accommodation, weather, stadium quality and team history in a community).

The fans experience has changed a lot from the traditional ways and should now be viewed as a collection of moments that add up to a fan’s overall impression. What kind of welcome did you get when you arrived at the stadium? Did you get the assistance you needed when asking for directions? Quality service is an essential foundation on which to build innovations in the game-day experience (James, 2013).
The hierarchical theory of needs by Maslow (1943) it suggests that people’s behaviour is driven by both physiological and socio-psychological needs. Maslow's basis was human behaviour. He conducted his investigation between 1939 and 1943. The 23 hierarchies of needs have five sets of goals that are called basic needs. One of the basic problems with the needs hierarchy is that very little evidence exists to support the contention that there are five levels of needs. Furthermore, there is a disagreement about whether the satisfaction of one need automatically activates the next need in the hierarchy. In using this theory a lot of these aspects influence in why fans are motivated in attending sporting events and what keeps them motivated.

![Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs](image)

**Figure 2.1: Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1943)**

“Consumer behaviour is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires” (Solomon et al, 2006).

“The consumer’s decision to attend a game is typically a choice among entertainment alternatives”

(Robertson and Pope, 1999)
There are two different motives when it comes to buying within sporting events. One of which is emotional buying motive and the significant others and what they want, so doing something because someone else has either brought tickets or invited you. Another is rational buying motive, where fans will buy a ticket on whether it’s affordable or the price of entertainment value.

Socio-demographic and psychological variables also play a major role in the formulation of spectator attendance strategies (Dimanche and Samdahl, 1994). Becker (1983) found a positive relationship between successful past performance and attendance, as opposed to a good or a bad streak (in terms of winning or loosing games). Shank (2001) explains that although fan motivation is a multidimensional construct influenced by a variety of variables, true fans are concerned with the enjoyment of the event itself.

2.2 Fans Experience at Stadia

Brokaw (2000) theory believes that entertainment and the venue can have a massive influence on the fans experience. Football clubs have to overcome and realise that the largest profits are to be made outside of the football pitch by maximising fans value (Skalli, 2012). Apart from revenues generated through ticket sales, revenue managers should also focus on ancillary revenues from food and beverages, the use of function space, the sale of merchandise, and advertising in the stadium (Cornell, 2013).

The dimension of interaction quality focuses on the role of people in the delivery of services (Brady & Cronin, 2001; Czepiel et al, 1985; Grönroos, 1984). Human factors are important at sporting events as staff and volunteers form a key part of the fans experience (Getz et al, 2001).
2.3 Americanization

The “Americanization” of sports is something that both fans and consumers, rely on to provide them with a means of entertainment and a method in which consumers can derive the hidden values embedded in competitors (Macri, 2012).

“Sport, in its form of a regulated leisure activity, has been inextricably linked with components of modernization”

(Guttmann, 1978:198)

There are lots that UK stadia can learn from the US, with a recent article stating that ‘UK trails far behind US on customer experience’. UK brands need to improve their fans experience, which has been brought into sharp relief by new rankings showing that American brands are outperforming UK counterparts on virtually every measure, and in nearly every industry (Tesseras, 2015).

2.4 Digitalization

At the end of the 1990s the Internet and the use of ICT was penetrated into almost every aspect of people’s lives (Ratchford, 2003) and there is now becoming an importance of requirement for events in this digital age to use social media platforms (Preston, 2012).

As an event planner, the key objective is to drive the brand through various digital channels to reach an extensive target audience, and help them connect with and build a relationship ahead of the event (Barker, 2015). With social media comes the decrease in face-to-face relationships event companies will then have reliance on a faceless online exchange in dialogue between business and customer (Langham, 2015).
“Digital marketing trends are moving faster than ever, throwing up opportunities and challenges for event marketers on a regular basis.”

(Booker, 2015)

Mobile apps are one of the most important and fastest growing areas of the events industry (Cvent, 2015). Apps provide a powerful tool with many value elements that help to improve event, whilst delivering information and content. Apps allow the organiser to capture data and analytics, and foster networking between attendees and sponsors (Cvent, 2015).

A mobile strategy is adaptable for stadia as technology evolves quickly, a specific type of hardware may at some point cease to be the best option for addressing event objectives that stadia would like to put across (Solaris, 2014). Live events are not just about watching a game or concert from a seat anymore for fans. Experts in fan engagement offer a tailored mix of physical and digital experiences across their phones, digital screens, kiosks; concessions stands and pretty much every area of the venue (Reddy, 2015). 75.6% of fans in America sports say that their team/facility have its own game-day mobile application (eMarketer, 2015).

Every stadium will establish the real need for an app by evaluating the pros and cons of running an app program for any venue and whether it will be worth while (Solaris, 2014). The top priority is to bring fans to stadia is to put them in the centre of the action and create experiences that keeps them coming back (Reddy, 2015).

2.4.1 Mobile Application example:

Levis Stadium is the home of the San Francisco 49ers. They have a diverse and well-developed app that allows fans to find parking spots; purchase premium seat upgrades Levi Stadium (2015) claims that it is the most convenient way for their fans to manage their tickets. The app also allows
customers to check-in and locate their seats, order food and beverages to be delivered to their seats, find the closest restroom with the shortest line, watch high-definition instant replay videos and close-up videos, view exclusive content, promotions, coupons and statistics, and get traffic information and the fastest route home after the game. This all plays an immense role in enhancing the fans’ experience, prior, during and after the game.

"During the 2014 football season, Levi’s Stadium raked in $2 million in revenue and cost savings from the app"

(Crowdsight, 2015)

Home of The Seattle Seahawks, stadium app is suitable for iOS, Android, Blackberry and Windows Phone device a unique part of any customers game day experience (Seahawks, 2015). There mobile application offers an improved integration with Ticketmaster providing the fan more convenience when managing their tickets. Using the app you can quickly and easily access your tickets, transfer them to a friend or post them for resale through account Manager. ‘Eye of the Hawk’ allows fans to select live feeds from around the stadium along with coverage of live on-the-field action from multiple camera angles, replays and game highlights (McLoughlin, 2014).

Consumer engagement is a phrase that's used to help get customers to interact with apps (Ganguly, 2013). Engaging with the customers helps make a product drive better retention and higher fan satisfaction. In the mobile app world, there are 3 important ways in which you can connect with customers (Ganguly, 2013):

- Feedback:
- Customer research
- Targeted and personalized communications
2.5 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Buttle and Raab (2009) define the overall concept of CRM as a core business strategy that aims to create and deliver value to targeted fans at a profit. Payne and Frow (2005) and Parvatiyar and Sheth (2001) take a more relationship-focused approach defining CRM as a cross-functional, organisational process that focuses on establishing, maintaining and enhancing long-term relationships with attractive fans.

CRM applies beyond the traditional product and service offerings. CRM has become a core strategic element of sports clubs that recognise the importance of managing and understanding their fans. The growing importance of relationship marketing has led to a great interest in various tools for strengthening fan relationships (Sirdeshmukh et al, 2002). The unique characteristics of the sport and its fans need consideration when developing or implementing CRM techniques (Adamson et al, 2006).

Nowadays, all large, medium and small businesses make significant investments in CRM systems (Verhoef, 2003). The advancements in technology, revealing new models for communication, combined with increasing global competition and customer demands, have placed a great importance on building customer loyalty and relationship-based exchanges (Palmatier, 2008). Besides from good products and services, most fans are looking for “a sense of belonging” and recognition by clubs, which can be found in the face of loyalty programs (Madaan, 2009). The CRM system gives clubs the ability to segment fans and develop specific direct communications with targeted groups (Adamson et al, 2006).

Adamson et al (2006) developed a conceptual framework for ‘fan relationship management’ (FRM) that learns from the successes and failures of conventional customer relationship management (CRM) but considers the nature of football and their fans. The unique characteristics of the sport and its fans need consideration when developing or implementing CRM techniques.
2.5.1 Segmentation in CRM

“The subdivideing of a market into distinct subsets of customers, where any subset may be selected as a target market to be reached with a distinct marketing mix”

(Kotler, 1980)

Segmentation is most widely reported benefit leads to a better understanding of fans needs and characteristics, allowing more accurate marketing approaches to be made (Frank et al., 1972). Dibb and Simkin (1997) found that true market segmentation is very rarely applied. Segmentation of football supporters and the literature provides clues that "traditional" variables – age, sex, income and so on – may need to be supplemented with sector specific variables which reflect the nature of sport (Tapp et al, 2000).

The relevance of market segmentation and its application in sports management has recently increased over the past 15 year (Stewart et al, 2003). Clubs recognize that individual fans have different wants and needs as they view product and service choices quite differently.

“Various types of sports fans can be identified, and the main distinguishing criteria between them are their level of commitment”

(Wiid & Cant, 2012).

Buraiimo, Forrest and Simmons (2007) explains that with regards to market size:

“Total team revenues, not just gate revenues, are ultimately driven by local fan base as proxies by local population”
Therefore national sports teams will typically have a larger fan base and revenue stream than local sports teams. Whilst true fans are the bread and butter of the majority of sports events, the casual fan provides the bulk of attendance revenue. Casual fans are more likely to attend a sporting event if there are few competing alternatives (Zhang et al. 1997).

Adamson et al (2006) describes that more ‘casual’ fans (those who see football attendance as a form of entertainment rather than tribal worship) may indeed place a higher priority on the service-scape.

Figure 2.2 - Segmentation methods based on attitude of the type of team performance and commitment to the club

Hall et al., (2009) states that there are four categories formed for football sports consumers, which are shown in table 2.1 below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Hard core fans</td>
<td>Love and follow the sport religiously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Regular fans</td>
<td>Like the sport but do not follow it as religiously as the hard core fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Casual fans</td>
<td>Sometimes watch the sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Fans thinking of football as entertainment</td>
<td>Watch various sporting without being too involved in it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first category consists of hard-core fans, these are the true loyal fans that love the sport and normally have a season ticket to their supported team or club that they follow. These fans will travel with their teams no matter where they are playing and are deeply, emotionally attached to the team. Secondly, the regular fans like watching the support but do not follow it religiously. Thirdly, casual fans that sometimes watch the fixtures but will easily be influenced why they cannot. Lastly the fans that watch football for entertainment purposes these fans are sometimes acknowledged as neutral supporters as they do not support a particular team.

2.6 Effects on attendance

“Attendance at sports events represents a significant revenue stream for sports venues and sporting associations with subsequent economic benefits for cities and regions”

(Hall et al, 2009)

Attendance at sports events is recognised as an important activity (Shamir and Ruskin, 1984) but over the past 20 years sports event attendance has declined (Ross 2006). It can be concluded that event attendance motivations involve inherent event characteristics, the stadium or event environment, social experiences and emotions (Hall et al, 2009).
Greenwell et al. (2002) researched how satisfied fans were after visiting a sports facility focusing on the physical aspect of the stadia. It is important that the spectators leave the stadium feeling impressed by the surroundings, not just by the event. A theoretical background signifies the importance of sports facility marketing as well as the critical role of the service landscape and customer experience (Martin, 2013). It is also apparent that cleanliness and the prices of food and beverages all contribute to the feel good factor of attending a stadium as Paul et al., (2007) and Correia and Esteves (2007) state that it is paramount that the stadium is clean and hygiene-friendly. Service quality and customer satisfaction have been known to be a key determinant to retain customers (Shilbury et al, 2009). Those fans that have a high quality of interaction report higher levels of satisfaction and were more willing to attend future games. They also experienced a greater level of excitement, whereas low quality perceptions lead to less excitement (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994).

In general, loyal fans and a winning team are perceived as having a positive effect on game attendance. Teams that have not reached maximum levels in their attendance figures may find that investing on things they can control (stadium facility, marketing strategy) rather than on things they cannot control (market size of competitors, other team’s performance) may yield significant benefits for these organizations and their fans (Wakefield et al, 1996).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Price of ticket</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Game live on TV</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Child facilities</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ease of access to stadium</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Parking available</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Food and drink available</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Other games on TV</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>General atmosphere</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Stadium design</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Actual seat available</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Fans behavior</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Clean Stadium</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Good weather</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Public transportation</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Evening game</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Weekend game</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Cheerleaders</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Off field entertainment</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pre match entertainment</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.3 - Percentage of Fans Answering, Yes, to the question: Which of the following factors could prevent you from attending the game? (Tomlinson et al, 1995).
Price is considered an important factor when deciding whether to buy a ticket for an event as Andreff and Szymanski (2006). Season ticket holders who feel that supporting their football team is almost a religious activity for them and under such conditions, price, although important, becomes secondary (McDonald et al., 2013). In other words, loyalty towards the team dictates the most, especially over the pricing of the match tickets (Ellahi, 2008).

A scale created by Zhang et al., (1997) compares many components that determines the quality of a football team, which in turn compliments how many spectators attend a match. For instance, when a spectator leaves a match feeling satisfied due to the quality that was on show, Zhang et al., (1997) believes it is more probable that the spectator will return to see the same team again.

Burkitt and Cameron (1992) performed an econometric analysis of Rugby Football League matches, in England from 1966-1990. This was to examine the impact that restructuring of the league had on team attendance. The dramatic declining trend (down by 50% between 1961 and 1971, involving a loss of over a million spectators) led the game’s legislator to reorganize its financial base by adopting the radical strategy of dividing member clubs into two divisions, in the hope of coming closer to an optimal revenue maximization strategy. The results indicated that the move from one to two leagues in 1973 had a substantial impact on attendance. Teams in the upper league experienced greater attendance, while those in the lower league had reduced attendance.

Variation in attendance figures represents a major concern for professional sports and leagues. Fans are very important for major live sporting events as they buy the tickets for the games and tickets are a major income producer for any professional league (Doves, 2014).
2.7 Critique of current literature

There are a number of gaps in the literature surrounding this area:

- Very little literature surrounding fan experiences at stadia and what they want to get from their experiences
- Because CRM is a relatively new concept in the sports industry there is very little content based around it in this context, it is mainly applied to business concepts

2.8 Questions Formed as a Result of the Literature Review

- What are stadia doing to enhance their fans experience and what factors, if any, could they take into consideration to improve its effectiveness when looking at CRM?
- If stadia improved their efforts to build relationships with fans and communicated with them more often would they be more inclined to purchase tickets?
- What factors are most important for sports stadia by implementing a customer relationship management system and what change factors need to be identified?
- What directly effects fans attending major live sporting events at stadia?
Chapter Three: Methodology
3.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter will illustrate, discuss and rationalise the research approach chosen. It will include information on the purpose of the study, why primary research is believed to be of importance and the different approaches taken. The main body of the section will include an analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, whilst looking into the ethical issues, and the reliability and validity of the research throughout the study.

3.1 Research approach

The chosen research approach was mixed method, according to Creswell (2003) any research that includes only quantitative or qualitative research falls short of the multiple-method approaches used today. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) define the mixed method approach as:

“A research design in which qualitative and quantitative approaches are used in types of questions, research methods, data collection and analysis procedures.”

Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) state that mixed method approaches strengthen the overall design of an investigation as the strengths of one approach offset the weaknesses of the other. It provides more comprehensive and convincing evidence than single method studies and the narrative results of the qualitative element add more contexts to the numerical results from quantitative research. There are also challenges that researchers faced when using a mixed method approach, it is time and resource intensive and it is practically complex when collecting and analysing data (Bazely, 2004; Giddings & Grant, 2007 and Morse, 2005). Conducting, transcribing and analysing interviews alongside the questionnaire was very time consuming, that said it did significantly improve the overall validity of the findings.
The rationale behind the use of a mixed method approach for this research project was that it would produce arguably the most rounded, balanced and reliable results.

3.2 Quantitative & Qualitative Research

Qualitative research focuses on discovering and understanding the experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of participants in any study; qualitative research explores meaning, purpose, or reality (Hiatt, 1986). It also allows researchers to study things in their natural settings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative research methods are also described as inductive, the researcher may construct theories or hypotheses, explanations, and conceptualizations from details provided by a participant, of which these are shown after the literature review.

Quantitative research methods attempt to maximize objectivity, reliability, and generalisation of findings, and are typically interested in prediction. Trochim and Land (1982) defined quantitative research:

“As the glue that holds the research project together. A design is used to structure the research, to show how all of the major parts of the research project—the samples or groups, measures, treatments or programs, and methods of assignment—work together to try to address the central research questions”.

Quantitative methods are frequently described as deductive in nature, inferences from tests of statistical hypotheses lead to general inferences about characteristics of a population.

3.3 Primary Research

In this section the researcher will explore the reasoning behind the two methods of research.
3.3.1 Interviews

The interviews taken place were semi-structured; Bjornholt and Farstad (2012) state that:

“A semi-structured interview is open, allowing new ideas to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says.”

The semi-structured approach can produce unexpected content because of its free-flowing nature, an advantaged outlined by Gratton and Jones (2010). A structured interview in this instance would have potentially led to a lack of detail and context in answers, as well as possible missed information (Opdenakker, 2006). Remeyi et al (2005) states that semi-structured interview provides an opportunity to probe complex issues in a relaxed atmosphere.

Although ambitious and somewhat time intensive the interview participants were of extremely high quality, this made up for the small sample size. Interviews were conducted with the following three participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Stadium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Event Sales &amp; Operation Manager</td>
<td>Principality Stadium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Twickenham Stadium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events Manager</td>
<td>Wembley Stadium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: List of interview participants
All of the interviews were transcribed verbatim ensuring no detail was missed. Although not as detailed as unabridged verbatim, the transcriptions were sufficient and accurate simply omitting any “ums,” “ahs,” repetitions and verbal habits (Palmer, 2015). A content analysis procedure known as a ‘thematic analysis,’ allowed the research to identify any clear themes or contrasts to emerge before being sorted accordingly as recommended by Veal (2006).

3.3.2 Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a set of carefully prepared questions designed with the aim of collecting reliable data from selected participants (Remeyi et al, 2005). Cohen et al (2000) states that advantages of a questionnaire is that the feedback is anonymous which encourages openness and honesty Browne et al (2009) stated larger sample sizes increase the power of research.

Prior to the questionnaire going live on ‘Qualtrics’ the researcher piloted the questionnaire on a small handful of friends and family. Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) explain how conducting a pilot study will significantly improve a researcher’s likelihood of success piloting was extremely important to the researcher, as it was able to ensure the questions were comprehensible and flowed well. Unlike the interviews, the researcher would not be present to explain the meaning of a question. Pre-testing the questions gives the researcher a chance to gauge the meanings attributed to the questions before it is too late to amend errors (Bowden et al, 2002). Moser & Kalton (1992) describe piloting as the “dress rehearsal” as a set of questions was put together for the final questionnaire. Essentially the pilot study enabled any bias, leading questions or ambiguity to be eradicated.

The questionnaires were developed and produced using Cardiff Metropolitan University Qualtrics software online and gave instant results. Likert-type or
frequency scales use fixed choice response formats and are designed to measure attitudes or opinions (Bowling, 1997; Burns & Grove, 1997).

Following collection, data was inserted into a Microsoft Excel, which is reliable software for processing numerical and statistical data. Once the data was entered into the spread sheet it was then easily presented in the form of tables and graphs. Please see appendix 1 for the final questionnaire.

3.4 Secondary Research

Secondary research was undertaken as a part of the study through a literature review, collecting and analysing knowledge that is already known, through identifying the popular trends this also helped to create interview and questionnaire questions. Sources for secondary included; websites, books, e-books, journals, articles, blogs etc. Although most secondary data is reliable and valid, some research found might not be certified and therefore primary research is a key element of the study.

3.5 Sampling

Non-profitability sampling will be undertaken in with different interviews from different experts in the industry this offers the researcher-varied answers. Saunders et al (2012) states that non-probability sampling means that the probability of each participant being selected from the population is not equal. Another method of sampling for the research is ‘snowball sampling.’ Here one subject gives the researcher the name of another subject who in turn gives the researcher the next and so on, this method was beneficial as it was difficult to gain access to isolated professionals (Vogt, 1999; Faugier & Sargant, 1997).
The questionnaires used random sampling, defined by Berg and Latin (2004) as:

“An unbiased method of forming a representative sample from a population so every element in that population has an equal probability of being selected.”

Groves and Peytcheva (2008) states that you need to obtain a high number of responses to reduce the risk of non bias results, with the researchers questionnaire reaching 118 respondents this will not be a problem when analysing the results.

3.6 Ethical Issues

Before the primary research could be taken the researcher had to gain ethical approval from the university. Research ethics can be defined as the application of moral principles by planning, conducting and reporting the results of the research (McNabb, 2002). This ensured that the researcher would not be placed at any risk whilst undertaking her research. No research was undertaken proper to approval being granted from the university’s Ethics Committee, please see appendix 2 completed and approved ethics form.

Ethical consideration during the research was prioritised, paying particular attention to the interviewee’s anonymity. Without fail, a consent form was issued to all the interviewees along with an information sheet; if they wished to be anonymous they could state it on the form, please see appendix 3. Payne & Payne (2004) state that participant should be allowed to “terminate their evolvement at any time for any reason”. Before undertaking the questionnaire all participants had to confirm that they were over the age of 18 and accepted the terms and conditions, if they did not confirm the questionnaire would not be able to proceed.
3.7 Reliability, Validity & Triangulation

Joppe (2000) defines reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability the research instrument is considered to be reliable. He also states that validity determines whether the research truly measures what is was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions, and will often look for the answers in the research of others.

When conducting the semi-structured interviews, although the questions asked were open ended, with scope for the participant to add their own ideas, there was a basic framework to follow that allowed for the results to remain reliable please see appendix 4. If an item is unreliable it also lacks validity as reliability in the extent to which similar results are found on all occasions with constant conditions (Coleman & Brigs, 2002). The most important factor to consider when collecting data through the questionnaires and interviews for the research is the participant’s feedback and ensuring that it is accurate and honest. Whilst making sure that the results are valid and reliable (Belson, 1986).

Wolf (2010) “triangulation refers to the combination of different research modes or looking at the same topic from different angles.” By using triangulation the researcher was able to undertake two different types of research, interviews (qualitative data) with employees from stadia and questionnaires (quantitative data) with stadia fans. “Increasingly triangulation is also being used to refer to a process of cross-checking findings derived from both quantitative and qualitative research” (Bryman, 2012), It provides the researcher broader and depth of the research objectives.
3.8 Limitations and Constraints

All questions for the interviews were prepared before they commenced and only prompted questions were asked depending on the interviewees response or wanting to further their explanation, that being said. “Prompting occurs when the interviewer suggests a possible answer to a question to the respondent” (Bryman, 2012:224). There were no time limits for the interviews and the location was down to the preference of each participant, all were undertaken at the particular stadium.

3.9 Chapter Review

Overall this chapter recognises the different research methods used in order to undertake the study whilst showing both the advantages and disadvantages of each process. The use of both quantitative and qualitative research has been a vital and effective way of collecting data, to get as much information as possible on fans experiences at stadia.

The researcher met both targets of achieving 50 questionnaires and three interviews with leading stadia in the UK, Wembley Stadium, Twickenham Stadium and Principality Stadium.

This study will now undertake a critical analyse off all the research collected from the interviews and questionnaires. The researcher will also discuss and compare the results to literature found prior to the study.
Chapter Four:
Results & Discussion
4.0 Chapter Overview

Within this chapter the primary research undertaken will be analysed and discussed, when looking at fans experiences at stadia. The results and discussion have been presented as a single chapter in order to assist the reader’s comprehension of the key themes emerging from the research. The researcher concluded that separate chapters would not assist the reader in appreciating the key issues from the primary research.

Naoum (2013, p.142) alludes to the importance of a results, analysis and discussion chapter within a research study as:

“The core part of your dissertation, and will consist of the research findings expressed by texts, figures, tables, charts, graphs and the like. It is absolutely essential to present your results clearly”.

The data collected will then be compared and contrasted in order to provide reliable and valid analysis of the findings. Graphical representation of each question will be used to display the data collected. As Crossman (2015) notes, by showcasing statistical data using graphs it offers the reader a more understandable option, without the number crunching. With each graph, the question asked from the questionnaire will be stated. Alternatively the reader can refer to the appendices where an example of the questionnaire can be found. Throughout this chapter, objectives of the study will be discussed thoroughly in order to achieve a result of the aim the study.

4.1 Questionnaire Results & Discussion

The researcher created the questionnaire consisting of 13 questions to gather the required data needed for the development of this study.
The questionnaires used for this study were conducted over a period of six weeks during February and March 2016. A total of 118 participants completed the questionnaire, results can be found in appendix 5. The researcher will now go onto to show a breakdown of each question and the results found.

The participants had to complete three questions in order to enable the researcher to gain some background information on the participant and to critically analyse the results.

**Figure 4.1. Question 1 – What is your gender?**

**Figure 4.2. Question 2: What is your age?**
**Figure 4.3. Question 3: How often do you attend major live sporting events at stadia?**

Figure 4.1 identified that 61 males and 57 females answered the questionnaire, this shows an equal amount of results and will hopefully give the researcher-varied answers. The same when looking at figure 4.2 the graph shows a variety of ages and therefore should show varied answers. Although the aim of the questionnaire is to find out about the fans experiences at stadia figure 4.3 shows that 48 of participants answered rarely to attending events. A total of 67% of people that attend sporting events ‘very often’ attend because they want to support their team where as 43% of fans, which attend ‘rarely’, go for the entertainment factor.
Figure 4.4. Question 4: Why do you attend major live sporting events? (If you have never attended a major live sporting event what would influence you to attend?)

![Bar chart showing reasons for attending major live sporting events]

By finding out why people attended major live sporting events allows the researcher to discover more about what encourages people to attend sporting events and what stadia can do to increase the attendance. The two most popular answers were ‘entertainment’ with 39% and ‘support team’ with 40%, taking nearly 80% overall. Interestingly 53% of fans that said they attend for ‘free tickets’ go to games on a ‘rare’ occasion, this could be a motivational factor for fans and if they got free tickets they might attend more. Along with this 27% of people said that they have never attended a major live sporting event but this shows the researcher that they would attend if they were given free tickets, as that is what motivates them. According to Anon (2016) one of the reasons why people attend major live sporting events is to ‘impress someone’ this theory was proven wrong as no one selected this. Only 10 people choose meeting people and socializing confirming Kahle and Riley (2004) theory that some people do use sporting events as an opportunity for groups of people to socialise.
Figure 4.5. Question 5: Which of the below elements contributes most to your overall experience? (If you have never attended a major live sporting event, what would contribute most for you?)

Linked to motivational factors it was important to find out which elements contribute most to the fans experience. Similar to question 4, 23% of participants selected ‘team’ and 31% ‘sport, entertainment came out on top with 38%. With 56% of these fans having never attended a sporting event they said that ‘entertainment’ would contribute most to their overall experience. Furthermore one of the hypotheses created at the started of this study was to explore the motivation, expectations of fans at multipurpose sports stadia when attending major live sporting events, and the researcher believes this meets the requirements.
Question 6 was not available for all participants answering the questionnaire. If the participant had selected ‘team’ or ‘sport’ in question 5 they would then receive this follow up question. A total of 64 fans answered which is 54% of the overall questionnaire responses. This data also links back to McDonald et al., (2013) who stated that the fans perceive supporting their team as a religious activity, so loyalty dominates anything else including price or other factors. This sector of fans would be classed as hard-core fans as described by Hall et al., (2009). Its important to identity reasons that could affect the stadia attendance when looking at fans experiences within stadia.
A major theme that got brought to the attention of the researcher was how quickly the stadia are going digital following the trend from America stadia. When looking at Wi-Fi within stadia 38% of fans selected ‘yes’ to Wi-Fi enhancing their experience with 40% of fans selecting ‘no’ the researcher believes that from this research the answer is still inconclusive, further on in this chapter the researcher will go into more detail on these fans.
Figure 4.8. Question 8: As a customer would you benefit from a stadium app? (This app could include live score updates, goal play backs, update you on toilet queues and order food from your seat?

Another way in which America is leading the way in technology is through in stadia mobile applications. In the UK they currently only have live update mobile applications for sporting tournaments such as the Rugby World Cup 2015, the response from the app was overwhelming with over 300,000 people using it (RugbyWorldCup, 2016). In total 58% answered ‘yes’ to a stadia app. With more than half of fans answering ‘yes’ to a stadium app, it was clear to the researcher that a stadia app would enhance the fans experience. With only 16% of participants answering ‘no’.
Figure 4.9. Question 9: Do you prefer watching major live sporting events on the television rather than being at the stadium?

The researcher wanted to find out whether fans are still requiring the live experience or are happy just watch it on the screen. It is clear from the results that 60% of fans would much rather go and watch a major live sporting event than on TV. Although this question does not specify in which scenario, this could be at a pub, with friends socializing or at home. When looking closer into the 14% of fans that said they would rather watch it on the TV, 38% of these were over the age of 45 and 38% of these were under the age of 24. It also appeared from the results that 81% of them said that the location of the stadia affects them attending along with 94% of them saying that the ticket price affected them.
Figure 4.10. Question 10: Does the location of a stadium affect you attending the sporting event?

Question 10 allows the researcher to find out reasons why people do or do not attend major live sporting events more frequently. A total of 73 of the participants answered that the location of the stadia affects them attending. Therefore if the location of the stadia were more accessible, more fans would attend events at the stadia. By looking more closely into the fans that answered ‘no’ 46% of these fans attend major live sporting events to support their team and therefore would be classed as a hard-core fan by Hall et al (2009) these fans will travel with their teams no matter where they are playing following on from this, 54% of these fans selected ‘yes’ to ticket prices affecting them where only 25% selected ‘no’.
Figure 4.11. Question 11: Do ticket prices affect your decision in attending live major sporting events at stadiums?

From the previous literature it showed that ticket prices affect fans attending major live sporting events. As the reader can see from the results it was clear that ‘yes’ prices do affect their decision, with 78% of the overall respondents vote. This agrees with Andreff and Szymanski (2006) theory and that price is considered an important factor when deciding whether to buy a ticket for an event.
Figure 4.12. Question 12: How do you like to be contacted about future sporting events?

![Bar chart showing preferences for contact methods.]

Figure 4.13. Question 13: Does marketing affect your decision in attending major live sporting events?

![Bar chart showing the impact of marketing on decisions to attend events.]
Questions 12 and 13 related to the use of CRM in stadia and as found through the secondary research it is becoming more and more important for stadia to know who they are aiming their products at and which ways are the most effective when it comes to marketing to the fan. It was interesting to see that 74% of participants would prefer to be contacted through social media or email – once again another digital platform. Surprisingly 21% of participants said that they would not like to be contacted about future events when looking into these fans, 28% of these fans were people that attended major live sporting events on an ‘often’ basis were as 36% of the participants attended on a ‘rarely’ basis. The researcher believes this shows that they do not need to be told when events are on as they attend anyway, and there does not make them change their opinion. When looking at question 13 participants that selected ‘always’ to marketing were all 18-24 year olds were as participants who selected ‘never’ 76% were over the age of 25.

4.2 Interviews:

The researcher undertook three semi-structured interviews with industry experts who were interviewed and will be referred to as P1, P2 and P3 throughout this chapter, the appropriate code used for each individual can be found below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Stadium</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Principality Stadium</td>
<td>Event Sales &amp; Operations Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Twickenham Stadium</td>
<td>Event Marketing Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Wembley Stadium</td>
<td>Event Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Full transcriptions of each interview can be found in appendix 6. Interviews were undertaken with these stadia as they are the leading stadia within the UK and offer multiple sports at their stadia.
Once the interviews were complete, there were seven emergent themes that arose to the researcher when transcribing the semi-structured interviews; these are displayed below in Figure 4.14:

![Diagram of themes](image)

**Figure 4.14: Visual representation of themes uncovered in the interviews**

### 4.2.1 Motivation of fans:

When looking at the motivation of the fans, the first questioned the researcher put to all of the interviews, was what do they think motivated fans to attend sporting events at their stadia.

P1: “*I think there has been a massive shift since the 2012 Olympics where people want to consume live events.* But he also went on to state “*From a rugby perspective it’s not just the 80 minutes of the match that’s important it’s what you build around that for the whole product*”.
However in contrast participant P2 thinks that fans motivations come from there:

“Passion and the love of sport would be the first thing; people’s general love of sport and the being event experience is two things there. Some people go for huge experiences and just to say that they were there, other people are just truly passionate about the sport that they love and would go to anything associated to it”

4.2.2 Teams performance:

As shown in figure 4.6 a total of 58% of participants stated that the team’s performance does not affect them attending major live sporting events, however employees of stadia think differently, participant P1 stated:

“A key competent is how well the teams are doing. If the teams are doing poorly there is always going to be an advertise effect on the ticket sales”.

He also goes on to say that:

“Since the world cup we have seen a massive spike in interest … we have now sold out publically the three blue games for the 6 nations with Scotland, Italy and France. Which is the first time we have sold them out since 2007”.

The above statement agrees with Becker’s (1983) theory of positive relationship between successful past performance as opposed to a good or a bad streak (in terms of winning or loosing games). Participant P2 also agreed by saying that:

“England’s performance has definitely hit other sales across other events like the Barbarians”
Barbarians is another RFU rugby event that is run at Twickenham Stadium, this proves Branvold, Pan and Gabert (1997) theory correct in that the performance of the team can have a large bearing on the fans’ decision-making to attend a match or not.

Participant P2 also thinks that due to the ruby world cup it is starting to improve other areas of the RFU not just at Twickenham Stadium. P2: “It definitely having an impact on what people are buying into now.”

Not only does participant P2 think it is down to the team’s performance but he also suggests that:

“People are exercising through Eddie Jones and his new leadership so people are getting behind that. It is good that England are playing relatively well and still now a new team under his leadership”

4.2.3 Location:

Both Twickenham Stadium and Wembley Stadium in London believe that their ‘island’ location is strength to them.

P2: “I think the location helps to get people to the stadium early; I think people recognize that we put on the pre event experience, the show, the west fan village the food and drink.”

Although this is not only saying that the location is perfect for a fan zone for people attending major live sporting events at the stadia, it is also offering great entertainment another factor that plays a major role of this study.
P2: “we are easily accessible via train I think we can do with having a tube system but we are obviously have got Richmond down the road and have the free shuttle bus from there and Hounslow and people can get into the stadium pretty easy as well”.

P3: “Being in London is great, with millions of people living in the capital there is a vast market in close proximity”.

Participant P3 does address that there are some elements of improvements and are now “taking England games on the road during May to Manchester and Sunderland” this will allow more England fans to attend games.

4.2.4 Entertainment

Entertainment in a sports sense can be taken in a number of different ways. Brooks (1994) states that entertainment can be perceived as performances pre match or half time shows, entertainment is also valued for its ability to generate atmosphere, which is defined as the subjective excitement level created at an event. P1 describes major live sporting events as “entertainment product”.

P3 states it is “important to us that their experience at the stadium goes above and beyond to what they are used to”.

P3 also stated that these experiences “do require a significant investment, the pre match and half time entertainment elements in particular. We find as a stadium that these elements help to engage the fans and enhance their experience”.

Along with this P1 also stated that there are motivational challenges when it comes to fans attending sporting events at the stadia. He said that they face challenges in
getting people to continue to buy tickets “that’s why a lot of effort is put into place a match day experience to keep the ticket sales moving forward”.

4.2.5 Americanization

It became very clear from the interviewees that America is definitely leading the way of sporting events within the UK, although all three did say that UK are the closing the gap.

P1: “If you go back 10 years ago they were light years ahead of where the UK market presents sports to how they do in America. We have now caught up but they are very much leading the way”.

P2: “Undoubtly, with no doubt at all, I think the Americas tend to be probably three or four steps ahead when it comes to UK sports events”.

P3: “I think it is fair to say that US sports and stadiums are leading the way when it comes to fan experience ... a number of stadiums across Europe really are hot on their heels with the experience we can offer and that gap has certainly been reduced in recent years”.

Although when looking at Americanisation in other aspects P3 thinks that the UK are far behind:

“Another element that the US are really leading the way on is the level of detail that they are able to capture on each of their supporters which really allows them to offer a more tailored and personalised service to each of their supporters, CRM is the main driver behind this and that is something that England were years behind the US before implementing.”
4.2.6 CRM

The literature review found that one of the main difficulties for football clubs in regards to CRM is implementing it into their organizations in the first place. As outlined, implementing CRM is a risk for any business and it requires a well-structured change management strategy.

Wembley Stadium uses CRM in a number of different ways and it is something that they work very hard on. All three of the stadia that were interviewed said they use CRM in order to increase attendance at their fixtures whilst looking at segmentation to fans.

P1: ‘The commercial department is very heavily focused on CRM data again and clean data and up to date across all touch points to the business and that could be ticketing, merchandising, programs sales all the way down to the club themselves’.

Adamson et al (2006) suggested that football is behind other industries when it comes to relationship management:

P1 “the CRM the way in which we are ticketed within the welsh rugby union our clubs get an allocation of tickets so for most senior internationals they blind share all of our ticketing”

Another important element of CRM that was picked up by the researcher through the interviews was the use of technology and how they are now looking at targeting fans through these strategies. Understanding fans is of high importance to football clubs; this can be achieved through the effective segmentation of supporters, which in turn allows them to be targeted with personalized and specific content.
P1: “we want to use technology to try and bridge that gap to understand a) who our fans are b) what are there tastes what are there trends and how we can then model the match day experience around those”.

Social listening is a new concept where organizations identify and assess what is being said about them online, this allows them to target supporters accordingly (Rouse and Hildreth, 2013).

P1: “Welsh rugby union supporters club so that’s an online supporters club that is free to join for the first stage for that you then get a unique log on and we get CRM and data rich in terms of rich data from that in which we can be a bit more targeted for and gives us the opportunity to up sale”

As previously mentioned segmentation plays a major role within CRM, all three stadiums display the need for targeting their fans and customers.

P1: “Being a lot more targeted being a lot more data driven in terms of what we put on and how much we charge like the consumables such as the food and the drink all the way down to are they enjoying the experience as a whole so that is where we see trends”

P2: “we segment a lot now. In the past we had one-sided approach on how we communicated. But now it is very much looking at where the customers are coming from, what they are buying, what are there interests”

Harris and Ogbonna (2008) outlined four factors that can lead to successful relationships with customers: intimacy, interaction, trust and commitment:
P2 states that they have now “identified 7 clear segments of where our fans come from retired causals” ... “the big eventers this so the people that would watch the 6 nations but maybe do not go to watch the rugby every week, we have got all the young players such as the junior rugby every weekend, you got the parents, volunteers ... You got the people that just play touch or tag or just do something within the sport to keep fit but don’t necessarily come to watch a live game.”

This goes against Dibb and Simkin (1997) theory that true market segmentation is very rarely applied. As all three stadia implement segmentation at their stadium.

Wembley Stadium has two levels of CRM:

“The basic level of CRM we use is specific to general admission supporters, here they try and get the most rounded, detailed and 360 degree picture of the supporter through the data that they can gather”

“The second level of CRM that we operate is for the Club Wembley members, our Club Wembley package is the second highest source of revenue across the whole of the FA so there is a real drive on this and that is going on now as renewals are due across the next year”.

The researcher believes that this shows different levels must be introduced into stadiums in order to catch the eye of other fans and not just the stereotypical traditional fans. It is about getting the regular football fan to attend other events such as NFL
4.2.7 Communication

The quantitative research supported the Harris and Ogbonna (2008) and Adamson (2006) claims in regards to communication between a business and its customers and the success it brings. The stadiums now have to look into different ways in which they can communicate to their customers.

P1: “digital to us is where we see the future lying in terms of how we communicate”

P2: “early communication utilizing social media, e-mails and CRM systems to target the right people and make sure we do a dam good job of telling them what is available as early as possible”

Ways in which stadia are communicating with their customers:

P1: “Getting people to sign up to our newsletters to get the most up to date information to what is coming up in the stadium and what’s going on with welsh rugby all the way down to how people consume social media via platforms such as Facebook, periscope, twitter etc.”

P3: “Before the game we are big on interaction making sure all social media channels are regularly updated and all supporters receive personal emails with information about their visit as well as ticketing information surrounding other upcoming events”

All three of the stadia noted that direct communication to their fans through social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are P1 “quite cheap”. Other ways in which the stadia can keep costs down are:
“when you buy your ticket through us for an international you ticket a box to receive information from the Principality stadium and WRU that’s an end to end communication that we have to direct marketing to the end users”

This is a good marketing technique for the organization as they are then able to direct market these customers, at a low cost whilst being able to analyse statistics such as how old are they, where they are from and what are their needs.

P1 do say that it is their “Our conscious decision is not to bombard and don’t send constant emails of what’s going on it very targeted around specific campaigns or specific events”.

Adamson (2006) also outlines the need for clubs to take a more proactive approach when it comes to communication. He states that by focusing on building long-term relationships rather than isolated transactions clubs can improve their long-term profitability. From the moment the stadiums communicate with their fans they want to ensure the best experience possible right through to after the event, all three of the stadiums interviewed agreed.

“Series of emails and social channels and engaging from the earliest point right up to the event its self and after the event”.

“Something we are trying to push on is ensuring that the journey from buying their ticket to returning home after the game is the best experience it possibly can be”.

The Principality Stadium state that they have previously not done enough for the customer after the game and the fans felt that they had a poor after service relationship “as soon as they left there seat the back end services were not as good”
(P1). This would suggest that clubs are beginning to take the proactive approach that Adamson (2006) suggested.

4.2.8 Digitalization

Digitalization has proved a prominent factor regarding how stadia build relationships with their customers. Each of the stadia agree with (Preston, 2012) and there is now becoming an importance of requirement for events in this digital age to use social media platforms, they can do this through a number of different ways:

4.2.8.1 Social media

Stadia are investing more into communicating and marketing to their customers through social media platforms. There are a number of different ways in which stadia will do this:

P3: “Under the FA umbrella we have three main accounts that are consistent across all social media channels, these are the FA, Wembley Stadium and the England account. England is the most popular of all our channels with over 2 million followers on twitter and this again backs up what we spoke about earlier in regards to loyalty of supporters”

P1: “we are doing a lot more of pre prepared and live elements that go out now to the online platforms”.

Although it is very clear that social media is playing a major role in communication to their fans, there are always new elements being introduced such as ‘Periscope’ in which both Principality Stadium and Wembley Stadium are now using.
P3: “Periscope is great as it allows us to broadcast live behind the scenes footage to mobile users this is the kind of content that the fans are really interested in and will engage with”.

Another new element that Wembley Stadium are using is ‘Snap Chat’:

P3: “with the scale of the events we host we are lucky in the fact that we have the opportunity to feature a lot of our fixtures on live snap chat stories, these can we viewed by millions through a live feed that is covered globally, particularly our cup finals and NFL fixtures”

Principality Stadium updates their social media channels on a regular basis but particularly see an increase:

P1: “Leading up to test matches we see massive spikes across our digital platforms such as our online web accounts and social media where fans where they are just consuming this data we just cant give it to them fast enough”.

4.2.8.2 Stadium Facilities

Paul et al., (2007) and Correia and Esteves (2007) stated that stadium facilities incorporate some relevant factors that can encourage people to attend a given event, particularly with families and children, and the cleanliness of the stadium is one of these factors. Although not one of the main themes, it was mentioned in the interviews that they are all upgrading their digital platforms in order to meet the needs of the fans.

P1: “We have done major investment upgrades in the last 5 years in terms of the insulation of big screens, led ribbon boards and down to the high definition screens linked to an IPTV system on the concourse”.
P3 state that all of their “digital platforms are vital to enhancing supporters experiences from the large external screens that they see when they are walking up Wembley way to the over 1,000 television screens that we have in our concourse as well as our giant score boards and in bowl LED ribbon. We strive to produce the most spectacular and interactive content. The future of stadiums is very digitally led”.

4.2.8.3. Wi-Fi

This was a question that the researcher asked on the questionnaire and in the interviews in order to get a different opinion from both sides. All three interviewees stated that Wi-Fi would be beneficial at their stadium, although not all already implement at their stadium.

P1: “Technology is what is driving this now in terms of in stadia interaction supported by Wi-Fi so stadium Wi-Fi and the ability to stream high quality video to the fans cause everyone second screens now”.

P2 state that fans can receive free Wi-Fi in the West Fan village (a fan zone for attendees prior to any fixture):

P2: “they also get free Wi-Fi in the hospitality areas but the stadium because its such an old stadium cause of the shear age of the building there are new and old part there are difficulty in getting stadium into place at the moment”.

Wembley Stadium offer “high speed Wi-Fi” although currently only available in certain areas such as “in our corporate hospitality areas and concourses”.

Although it is all well and good being able to provide Wi-Fi at the stadium:
“There is a significant commitment and investment that would come with providing this to 90,000 supporters in their seats but when we can offer this it would go along way to boosting fans experiences”.

4.2.8.4 Mobile Applications

The last digital question that was asked to the interviewees was whether the stadium would benefit from a stadium app? It was 100% that an app would enhance the fans experience.

P1 “It is certainly something we are looking at but we are restrained by the level of Wi-Fi coverage that we have in the bowl”.

P2 “we would like it to be quite multifunctional, that it does enable ticket sales, enable people ordering food ad drinks from their seats. Getting access to live footage, it could also include virtual reality app that sits in there as well”

P3: “We do have the Wembley Stadium app that was implemented a couple of years ago, this is something that is advertised to guests across all of our sport and music events. The app offers supporters a build-in travel planner, view from seat, news and information about upcoming events”. However P3 carries on to say that the app does not include any in match interactive “such as access to replays or queue checkers” ... “but this is definitely something that we hope to incorporate in the future”

Although as you can imagine in order to implement a stadia app there are different problems that you will have to face, firstly the cost. P1 stated that it would be a “6 figure or 7 figure sum to do it correctly”.
Another use for a stadia app following from the America app would be a contactless ticket system.

P3: “when looking into ticketing is the movement towards paperless stadiums, where fans can purchase tickets and enter the stadium via an e-ticket on their mobile device as opposed to the traditional paper ticket – this is something would incur high costs but the result would mean lower running costs, smoother process and again a better experience for the supporter”

From looking at all the digital aspects it was brought to the attention of the researcher that these elements may not be perceived as well from older and more traditional fans. Below the researcher will compare questionnaire results regarding, Wi-Fi and apps to the opinions from the stadia employees.
4.3 Comparisons:

Questions that will touched upon in this section are those which the author believed to show patterns with previous data, or those that offered some form of contradiction with the author’s and others’ views.

4.3.1 Age vs. Communication

Figure 4.15. Under 35s and how they like to be contacted about future sporting events

Figure 4.16. Over 35s and how they like to be contacted about future sporting events
The questionnaires for this research were predominantly aimed to answer the questions relating to fans so the results are not direct results linking to the implementation side of CRM however this allows stadia to find out how fans would like to be contacted and what they can do to communicate with their fans. By looking at both of these charts it is very clear to the researcher that 81% of under 35s like to be contacted through social media platforms. Where as 29% of fans over 35 do not want to be contacted at all however they would prefer to be contacted via email than anything else. The researcher is surprised that only 8% of over 35s would like to be contacted through print media or post an interesting factor when looking at older supporters and how they are targeted.

4.3.2 Age vs. Mobile Applications

Figure 4.17. Under 35s and whether a stadia app would enhance their experience

![Pie chart showing responses of under 35s regarding mobile applications]

Figure 4.18. Over 35s and whether a stadia app would enhance their experience

![Pie chart showing responses of over 35s regarding mobile applications]
By looking closer at the mobile application results, the researcher broke them down to under 35s and over 35s responses. As displayed by the above graphs, 69% of under 35s state that a stadia mobile application would enhance their experience at stadia. Where as only 42% of over 35s said that it would benefit them. When undertaking the interviews with stadia employees it became clear that they did not want to put out more ‘traditional fans’. P1 “we have got to try and map out and how do we start to interact that into the stadium being sympathetic to our more traditional fan groups who do not want to sit on their iPhones” similarly P2 questions “how the implementation of this would be received by traditional fans”.

4.3.3 Age vs. Wi-Fi at Stadia

Figure 4.19. Under 35s and whether Wi-Fi would enhance their experience

Figure 4.20. Over 35s and whether Wi-Fi would enhance their experience
Similar to the last comparison on mobile applications, would Wi-Fi enhance the fans experience at stadia. With over 50% of under 35s said that Wi-Fi within stadia would enhance their experience, however 44% of over 35s said that it would not furthermore 25% of these said ‘maybe’. The researcher believes that until Wi-Fi can be tried and tested in bowl by over 35s they will not know if it will enhance their experience. If the stadia were able to offer a mobile application with features such as ‘fastest routes home’ or being able to pre order food and drink for their seat, they may benefit from Wi-Fi.

4.3.4 Entry times at Wembley Stadium

Figure 4.21. England vs. Switzerland Turnstile Entries

Figure 4.22. New York Jets vs. Miami Dolphins Turnstile Entries
By looking at these three graphs, it is very clear to the researcher that for both football fixtures there is a gradual growth of fans entering the stadium where as with the NFL fixture fans are arriving earlier to make the most out of the entertainment on offer. The first peaks on all three graphs are fans attending Club Wembley, Club Wembley is classed as a VIP experience for the fan, with entertainment provided as stated by P3 “through our club Wembley experience we offer live music post-match for guests”.

These graphs were created through Microsoft Excel Spread sheets given from P3 regarding entry times to Wembley Stadium.

4.4 Chapter Review

To conclude by using a mixed method approach the researcher was able to gather lots of relevant information on how sports stadia implement modern strategies whilst understanding fan’s needs. In the next chapter the researcher will conclude all findings whilst highlighting any limitations and ideas towards future studies.
Chapter Five:
Conclusion & Recommendations
5.0 Chapter overview

Within this chapter the researcher will firstly discuss the aim and objectives of the study. The research will then summarise the findings from the data analysis and discussion section in chapter 4. Whilst presenting the limitations of the research and outlines suggestions for future investigations. Finally the researcher will provide an overall conclusion for the study.

5.1 Summary of findings versus objectives

The author has achieved the research aim by satisfying the resulting objectives:

1. *To critically review the current literature relating to modern strategies in the context of sports stadia and enhancing the fans experience.*

As stated in the Literature Review (Chapter 2), the author has concisely brought to the reader’s attention literature based on strategies in the context of sports stadia. Looking specifically at CRM and segmentation. The researcher has also made links to motivational factors of fans attending major live sporting events. The literature review offers the reader a variety of different strategies that are put into place at stadia to enhance the fans experience. The researcher has offered the reader real life examples of strategies used.

2. *To undertake primary research data collection with representatives from sports stadia to assess the applications of modern strategies put in place at their stadium.*

As previously stated in the Methodology (Chapter 3) this objective was met by the researcher undertaking three interviews with employees from different sports stadia in the UK. All three of the interviews were semi structured and allowed the researcher to go into the interview with a range of different topics and questions she wanted covering. Full transcribes of the interviews can be found in the appendices.
3. To undertake primary research data collection with fans that attend major live sporting events. Whilst looking at their motivations and expectations within sports stadia.

The same as above primary research details can be found in the Methodology (Chapter 3). The researcher had undertaken questionnaires with sports fans. Although the researcher only required 50 participants, with the help of social media she ended up receiving 118 respondents. The data can be found in Chapter 4 of this study. What was found from the quantitative data has not only reaffirmed the researchers first thoughts, but it has also offered the researcher different opinions that can be used for future studies.

4. To review and analyse the primary data, presenting the results using a variety of formats.

To realise this objective, the researcher wanted to present the results in a way which would offer the reader a clear logical process but also easy to understand and engage. The researcher feels that this has been achieved by the quantitative data being presented through colourful bar graphs and pie charts. All of this can be found in chapter 4.

5. To consolidate the research findings by achieving an understanding of the strategies put into place in sports stadia and how this affects the overall “fans” experience.

Understanding of the strategies has been achieved by conducting both quantitative and qualitative data, the researcher was provided with an array of reliable, valid data, which has been covered throughout the study. The researcher couldn’t have asked for better results.
6. To offer recommendations as to how sports stadia can improve their fans experience.

Throughout the primary and secondary data the researcher has been able to offer recommendations as to how sports stadia can improve their fans experience. This can be found across the whole study.

5.2 Research limitations

As discussed previously, there is very little previous literature and research around fans experiences at sports stadia. This makes it a difficult task to review, as there is little room to learn from the limitations of previous research. It was then difficult for the researcher to compare and analyse primary research results, as there was not much to compare it to. However it was useful in undertaking two different samples of research, as it left opportunity for comparisons to be made from two different viewpoints.

Another limitation is that certain strategies such as CRM are a relatively new and emerging concept therefore it is very difficult getting the correct information from it during the interviews undertaken. Even though all three interviews suggested use of the strategy the researcher feels that this could have been touched on a little more, in order to give a bigger overall picture.

5.3 Further research

If the study were to be completed again the researcher would have completed a case study on a specific stadia whilst comparing it to another. Looking at the different strategies they use and how either one could be proved learning from interviews with the particular stadia. Similarly the researcher found it difficult to break down the responses from both fans and stadia employees as there was so much useful information given. If the study was to be made again the researcher
could look at a particular area such as the digital aspects of fans experience. From this study is has been made apparent that this is going to see big changes within this industry.

As the researcher works within the industry, she would have undertaken semi-structured interviews with fan engagement experts. Also the researcher would have adjusted the questionnaires slightly in order to get better results from fans that attend major live sporting events on a regular basis. For example by using a likert scale, she wouldn’t use ‘never’ as an option for attending major live sporting events, as she wanted to get responses from people that have attended. However it did let the researcher analyse why these people would attend sporting events and what motivates them to attend.

In the questionnaires for this research fans were not divided into categories such as followers, casuals, regulars and season ticket holders. To test academic research theory, future studies could test Adamson’s (2006) eight-supporter segmentation.

5.4 Who will benefit from the research?

The researcher believes that this study will benefit future stadia when implementing strategies to enhance the fans experience. It will allow them to review the needs and wants from the fans, whilst looking at what influences them and their experience. It will hopefully help the development of smaller stadia whilst improving larger stadia such as Wembley Stadium, Twickenham Stadium and Principality by following in America’s footsteps. This study will also help anyone else wanting to research into fans experience at UK sports stadia.
5.5 Personal reflection

Overall the researcher is pleased with the outcome of this study. The investigation has achieved what the researcher had hoped it would in regards to the aims and objectives that were set at the beginning of the study. Although one of the hardest things the researcher has completed it has also been one of the most rewarding.

5.6 Overall conclusion

It has been proven throughout this study that there are a number of different ways in which stadia can enhance their fans experience. Primary research was crucial within the study and the outcomes would not have been achieved if it weren’t for this. By using a mixed method approach the researcher was able to get two views on fans experience at sports stadia. The study helps the development of sports stadia and making sure that they are doing all that they possibly can to achieve that first class experience.
References:


Booker, B. (2015). An Introduction To The UK Event Industry In Numbers - See more at: Available at: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/blog/uk-event-industry-in-numbers-ds00/#sthash.9m3fhJCx.dpuf [Accessed 11 April, 2016]


CIM. (2010). What is the cost of acquiring a new customer compared to the cost of keeping an existing customer? Cost of Customer Acquisition and Customer Retention, pp.1-3.


Appendices:
Appendix 1 - Questionnaire Example

Q1 What is your gender?
• Male
• Female

Q2 What is your age?
• 18 - 24
• 25 - 34
• 35 - 44
• 45 - 54
• 55 - 64
• 65+

Q3 How often do you attend major live sporting events at stadiums?
• Very often
• Often
• Sometimes
• Rarely
• Never

Q4 Why do you attend major live sporting events? (If you have never attended a major live sporting event what would influence you to attend?)
• Meeting people & socializing
• Entertainment
• Free tickets
• Support your team
• Impressing someone
Q5 Which of the below elements contributes most to your overall experience? (If you have never attended a major live sporting event, what would contribute most for you?)

- The team
- The sport
- Give away & Promotions
- Entertainment
- Physical Contact
- Convenience
- Facility
- Cost

Q6 Does the team or sport you follow recent performances affect your decision process in attending?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
- Don't know

Q7 Would free Wi-Fi at stadiums enhance your overall experience at a sporting event?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
- Don't know

Q8 As a customer would you benefit from a stadium app? (This app could include live score updates, goal play backs, update you on toilet queues and order food from your seat)

- Yes
- Maybe
• No
• Doesn't apply to me

Q9 Do you prefer watching major live sporting events on the television rather than being at the stadium?
• Yes
• Maybe
• No
• Don't know

Q10 Does the location of a stadium affect you attending the sporting event?
• Yes
• Maybe
• No

Q11 Do ticket prices affect your decision in attending live major sporting events at stadiums?
• Yes
• Maybe
• No
• Don't know

Q12 How do you like to be contacted about future sporting events?
• Social Media
• Post
• Email
• Print Media
• Don't like to be contacted

Q13 Does marketing affect your decision in attending major live sporting events?
• Always
• Most of the time
• About half the time
• Sometimes
• Never
Appendix 2: Approved Ethics Form

EXEMPLAR 1:
DEVOLVED ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application for ethics approval</th>
<th>Participant information sheet</th>
<th>Participant consent form</th>
<th>Pilot interview/s</th>
<th>Pilot questionnaire/s</th>
<th>Letter/s to participating organisation/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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First Submission [ ] Resubmission [ ]

Date: ________________

For use by the devolved ethics approval panel:

Panel Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>[ ]</td>
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CSM Ethics Committee Representative: [ ]

Date: 1/1/15

Date of Reassessment: 11/1/15

Outcome:

Project Approved

Project Approved in Principle

Application not ready/ incomplete

Reference number: 2015-D0222

(Decision deferred)

Comments for projects not fully approved:

A3. What sections will be used? Clearly what sections will be used.

The original to be retained by the module leader and a copy given to the student.

Page 7
**CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**  
**APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL**

_Ethics Form – Shorda Cridland ST20045841_

When undertaking a research or enterprise project, Cardiff Met staff and students are obliged to complete this form in order that the ethics implications of that project may be considered.

If the project requires ethics approval from an external agency (e.g., NHS), you will not need to seek additional ethics approval from Cardiff Met. You should however complete Part One of this form and attach a copy of your ethics letter(s) of approval in order that your School has a record of the project.

The document _Ethics application guidance notes_ will help you complete this form. It is available from the Cardiff Met website. The School or Unit in which you are based may also have produced some guidance documents, please consult your supervisor or School Ethics Coordinator.

Once you have completed the form, sign the declaration and forward to the appropriate person(s) in your School or Unit.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

Participant recruitment or data collection MUST NOT commence until ethics approval has been obtained.

## PART ONE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of applicant:</th>
<th>Shorda Cridland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor (if student project):</td>
<td>Stephen Moore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School / Unit:</td>
<td>Cardiff Metropolitan University – School of Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student number (if applicable):</td>
<td>ST20045841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme enrolled on (if applicable):</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Title:</td>
<td>A study to investigate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) with a view to improving the overall customer experience for spectators visiting sports stadia - a case-study approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expected start date of data collection:</td>
<td>04/03/2016 – 16/02/16.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approximate duration of data collection:</td>
<td>6-8 Weeks</td>
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<td>Funding Body (if applicable):</td>
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<td>Other researcher(s) working on the project:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will the study involve NHS patients or staff?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will the study involve taking samples of human origin from participants?</td>
<td>No</td>
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</table>
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

| Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories: |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Paper based, involving only documents in the public domain   | No                                                             |
| Laboratory based, not involving human participants or human tissue samples | No                                                             |
| Practice based not involving human participants (e.g., curatorial, practice audit) | No                                                             |
| Compulsory projects in professional practice (e.g., Initial Teacher Education) | No                                                             |
| A project for which external approval has been obtained (e.g., NHS) | No                                                             |

If you have answered YES to any of these questions, expand on your answer in the non-technical summary. No further information regarding your project is required. If you have answered NO to all of these questions, you must complete Part 2 of this form.

In no more than 150 words, give a non-technical summary of the project:
The aim of the study is to investigate customer relationship management at sports stadia and how they can improve the overall customer experience for spectators. Using primary and secondary data collection the researcher will be able to identify what exactly stadia do to enhance the customer experience and the effects of the techniques used identifying the strengths and weaknesses. Throughout the study the research will use a case study approach using three different stadia. A comparison study will identify the key factors that stadia must consider in order to improve the success of customer relationship management at the stadia. The study will assist other stadia to apply these techniques successfully in the future.

DECLARATION:
I confirm that this project conforms with the Cardiff Met Research Governance Framework.

I confirm that I will abide by the Cardiff Met requirements regarding confidentiality and anonymity when conducting this project.

STUDENTS: I confirm that I will not disseminate any material produced as a result of this project without the prior approval of my supervisor.

Signature of the applicant:          Date:

FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY

Name of supervisor: Stephen Moore  Date:  14/2/2016

Signature of supervisor:

Application for ethics approval v4 March 2013
A Research Design

A1 Will you be using an approved protocol in your project? No
A2 If yes, please state the name and code of the approved protocol to be used

Interviews:
The researcher will complete one set of interviews with employees from the stadia (Wembley Stadium, Twickenham Stadium & Millennium Stadium).

- Participants will be adults over the age of 18+
- The researcher will be using semi-structured questions when interviewing up to 6 employees from the stadia
- Interviews will take approximately 30 mins - 60 mins with stadia employees
- The interviews will be taking place from January till the end of February
- The research will use a variety of open and close questions
- Content analysis will be used to analyse the data
- All data that will be collected will be used for the study only
- All personal information will be kept confidential if the participant requires and the participant will sign a consent form to agree with the terms and conditions before starting any interview

An Approved Protocol is one which has been approved by Cardiff Met to be used under supervision of designated members of staff; a list of approved protocols can be found on the Cardiff Met website here
The areas that will be covered in interviews with employees:

- Customer service
- Currently strategies
- CRM (Customer relationship management)
- Do they work?
- Future ideas and prospects

Questionnaires:
The researcher will also complete short questionnaires with spectators who are attending events at the three stadia (Wembley Stadium, Twickenham Stadium & Millennium Stadium).

The questionnaires will be distributed randomly to spectators with the intent of getting a mix of genders and ages.

- Participants will be adults over the age of 18+
- The questionnaire will be designed so that it can be completed quickly whilst achieving maximum data that will be useful to the researcher.
- The questionnaires will be distributed from January till the end of February at each of the three stadia
- All data that will be collected will be used for the study only
- The researcher hopes to complete 50 questionnaires
- Content analysis will be used to analyse the data

The areas that will be covered in the questionnaires:

- What event they have attended?
- How was their experience?
- The best part from their experience?
- The worse part of their experience?
- What makes them attend?

A4 Will the project involve deceptive or covert research? No
A5 If yes, give a rationale for the use of deceptive or covert research
Click here to enter text.
A5 Will the project have security sensitive implications? No
A7 If yes, please explain what they are and the measures that are proposed to address them
Click here to enter text.
PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

A1 What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project do you have?
- Undertaking target market research for level 5 Event Planning and Production module.

B2 Student project only
What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project does your supervisor have?
PhD

C POTENTIAL RISKS

C1 What potential risks do you foresee?

Risks to participants:
- Data protection of interviewees
- Questions may cause offence to participants

Risks to the researcher:
- Travel considerations to attend specific stadia
- Financial constraints
- Time constraints
- Give the university a bad name
- Conducting interviews with participants who are intoxicated
- Own personal safety

Risks to the project:
- Unreliable and different interview results
How will you deal with the potential risks?

- All interviewees will be given a consent form
- Interviewees have the option to be anonymous
- Questionnaires are neither discriminating nor personal and are handed back to the researcher before task completion.
- All data is destroyed once project has been completed
- Interviews will be conducted in safe areas that are not isolated
- Questionnaires will be distributed in safe areas that are not isolated
- Travelling to and from the stadia are at suitable times of the day
- Ensuring that interview dates/times/locations are agreed in advance
- Ensuring that someone knows the location of the researcher when they are due to be undertaking the interviews and the questionnaires
- Inform a friend where I am

When submitting your application you MUST attach a copy of the following:

- All information sheets
- Consent/assent form(s)

An exemplar information sheet and participant consent form are available from the Research section of the Cardiff Met website.
Dear ..................

I am an undergraduate student at Cardiff Metropolitan University. The title of my research is a study to investigate Customer Relationship Management (CRM), and improving the overall customer experience for spectators visiting sports stadia - a case-study approach. Its aim is to find out what stadia do in order to enhance the customer’s experience. As part of my research I would like to undertake research with people who are employed within the stadium and could give me an insight into how you enhance the customers experience at your stadium. I am writing to you because I am doing a case study on your particular stadium. Before any primary data is collected this project will have been approved by Cardiff Metropolitan University and all data collection will be in accordance with the university's ethics code of practice.

My purpose in writing is to ask if you would permit me to undertake an interview with your employees. Their participation would be entirely voluntary, neither they nor the company would be identified in the research if you would like and it would only take 30 minutes to an hour for the employee.

The areas that will be covered in the interview would be:

- What techniques do you use
- Current strategies
- Customer service
- Future ideas
- Customer relationship management (CRM)
- Attitudes towards customer interaction
- Retention of customers

I shall be very happy to make the results of my research available to you as a participant in the research when it is complete. If you would like to participate in this project and or are interested in discussing it further please contact me.

Thank you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

S. Criddall
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

Personal information sheet for interviews with employees at the stadia:

Participant Information sheet

A study to investigate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) with a view to improving the overall customer experience for spectators visiting sports stadia - a case-study approach

Project summary:

The purpose of this project is to find out what stadia do in order to enhance the customer’s experience and the effects of this, whilst looking at customer relationship management (CRM). Your participation will mean data can be collected as part of a study being conducted at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate as you work within one of the three chosen stadia. Your knowledge and experience will provide a deep insight into what steps the stadia take in enhancing the customers experience and how these have changed and developed.

You are also over the age of 18.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time, once the interview has taken place, you have up to two weeks to contact the researcher to withdraw your participation in the study.

Project risks:

The research involves you taking part in a face-to-face interview. There is no aim to collect any sensitive data from you as part of the study. If you do feel any of the questions are inappropriate or you do not wish to answer, you may stop the study, or withdraw from it at any point.

How your privacy will be protected:

Names of participants will be kept confidential, if the participant wishes, names of the company will also be kept confidential. Names of the company will also be kept anonymous if required. No questions will identify the names of participants, and consent forms with participant’s signatures on, and interview recordings, will be kept in a secure location. You have the opportunity to remain anonymous if you wish. Once the study has been completed, all recorded material from the interview will be destroyed.

A copy of this information sheet will be offered to you to keep.

If you require any further information about this project, then please contact:
Shorda Cridland, Cardiff Metropolitan University Tel +44 (0)19 2041 6425
CMU email: sk20045841@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk

Application for ethics approval v4 March 2015
**Participant Information Sheet**

A participation information sheet is not required for questionnaires. However, the researcher will briefly explain the purpose of the research project in a short paragraph at the top of the questionnaire form.
ARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR STADIA

Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Reference Number:
Name of Researchers: Shorda Cridland

Participant name:
A study to investigate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and improving the overall customer experience for spectators visiting sports stadia - a case-study approach

Participant to complete this section: (Please initial each box for approval)

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. [ ]

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. [ ]

3. I agree to take part in the above study. [ ]

4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded [ ]

5. I agree to my quotes being attributed to me/organization [ ]

6. Are you happy for me to use your name in the study? [Yes] [No]

7. Are you happy for me to use your organization name in the study? [Yes] [No]

Signature of Participant Date

Name of person taking consent Date

Signature of person taking consent

Application for ethics approval v.4 March 2015
Interviews

Sample of interview questions

Questions and topics for employees from stadia:
- What do they do to enhance the customer experience?
- How would they rate their customer service?
- Currently strategies that are put into place?
- How do you determine whether your chosen strategies are successful?
- Do they use CRM (Customer relationship management)?
- How CRM (Customer relationship management) can benefit an organisation?
- Do you believe there are ways you can better your marketing techniques?
- Retention at the stadium?
- Future ideas and prospects?

Questionnaires

Sample of questions to be used in the questionnaire design

Questions and topics for spectators attending sporting events at stadia:
- What event did you attend?
- What stadium did you attend?
- Why did you attend the event?
- What motivates you to attend these events?
- How was your experience of the event?
- What was the best part?
- What was the worst part?
- What could be improved?
- How does marketing affect your decision and buyer process?

- Please rate your overall experience...
Hi Steve,

Please see forwarded email regarding approval of interviews to attach with my ethics form for Wednesday.

Thank you,
Shorda

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Stacey Griffin <SG@event360.co.uk>**
Date: Thursday, 10 December 2015
Subject: Dissertation interviews
To: "shorda.cridland@gmail.com" <shorda.cridland@gmail.com>

Hi Shorda,

I’m emailing to confirm that any interviews that need to be undertaken as research for your dissertation at the following stadiums:

- Wembley Stadium
- Twickenham Stadium
- Millennium Stadium

Can be conducted via EVENT360 contacts.

Kind regards

Stacey Griffin

EVENT360

MAIN TEL: +44 (0)208 449 5511
DIRECT DIAL: +44 (0)208 449 5517
MOBILE: +44 (0)7961 404 756
Appendix 3 – Participant Consent Form

Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Reference Number:

Name of Researchers:

Participant name:

Participant to complete this section: (Please initial each box for approval)

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. [ ]

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. [ ]

3. I agree to take part in the above study. [ ]

4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded [ ]

5. I agree to my quotes being attributed to me/organization. [ ]

6. Are you happy for me to use your name in the study? [Yes] [No]

7. Are you happy for me to use your organization name in the study? [Yes] [No]

Signature of Participant Date

Name of Person Taking Consent Date

Signature of Person Taking Consent
Project summary:

The purpose of this project is to find out what stadia do in order to enhance the customer’s experience and the effects of this, whilst looking at different marketing techniques. Your participation will mean data can be collected as part of a study being conducted at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate as you work within one of the three chosen stadia. Your knowledge and experience will provide a deep insight into what steps the stadia takes in enhancing the customers experience and how these have changed and developed.

You are also over the age of 18.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time, once the interview has taken place, you have up to two weeks to contact the researcher to withdraw your participation in the study.

Project risks:

The research involves you taking part in a face-to-face interview. There is no aim to collect any sensitive data from you as part of the study. If you do feel any of the questions are inappropriate or you do not wish to answer, you may stop the study, or withdraw from it at any point.

How your privacy will be protected:

Names of participants will be kept confidential, if the participant wishes, names of the company will also be kept confidential. Names of the company will also be kept anonymous if required. No questions will identify the names of participants, and consent forms with participant’s signatures on, and interview recordings, will be kept in a secure location. You have the opportunity to remain anonymous if you wish. Once the study has been completed, all recorded material from the interview will be destroyed.

If you require any further information about this project, then please contact:
Shorda GRIDLAND, Cardiff Metropolitan University
Tel +44 (0)29 2041 6425
CMU email: st20045841@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk
Appendix 4 - Semi Structured Interview Questions

Engagement & Experience:

What do you think motivates fans to attend sporting events at the stadium when they could just stay and watch it at home?

What techniques do you use to enhance the customer experience?

What do you do as a stadium to engage customers?

Why are these important?

What are the effects of these techniques?

Are these techniques expensive to implement? & Are they worth it?

Americanisation & Digitalisation:

In any sporting event it is in the best interests of teams to get their fans to the stadium as early as possible, how do you make that happen and is there anything you do specifically to entice them down earlier?

Do you feel that America has played an influence on the fans experience at stadiums?

As you know the super bowl was recently played at the Levis Stadium and it is known as the most technologically advanced stadium. (Explain the app) Do you think the stadium will ever look at doing something like this?

If no... Would it benefit the stadium?

Marketing:

Do you use CRM (Customer relationship management) within your stadium?

If yes...
How does CRM benefit your organization?

Do you use any or other particular marketing strategy?

Do you look at segmentation of your customers when using these strategies?
Ticket sales and segmentation?

If so how do you target them directly? And how are they different depending on the customer?

How do you contact your customers?

How do your engagement techniques differ from hospitality customers to general customers?

Do you offer special packages to hospitality customers?

How do you determine whether your strategies are successful?

Have you seen an increase in attendances and ticket sales and attendances and the impact it has had because of the strategy?

Do you believe there are other ways you can better your marketing techniques?

What in your opinion are the biggest factors to consider in marketing and more particularly relationship marketing in sports at the moment?

Do you think teams performances affect people attending?

Are there any future ideas and prospects for the stadium?
## Appendix 5 - Questionnaire Results

### Gender Category

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<th>Gender</th>
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### Game Frequency

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### Question 4

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<td>Free tickets</td>
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<td>Support team</td>
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<td>Impressing someone</td>
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### Question 5

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<tr>
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Appendix 6 – Interview Transcriptions

Principality Stadium Interview Transcript

What do you think motivates fans to attend sporting events at the stadium?

I think the first answer to that is that it’s not just sporting events now I think there has been a massive shift since the 2012 Olympics where people want to consume live events. Sports has transcended now from sports in a traditional sense to an entertainment product. So that is more worrying now in the entertainment business. From a rugby perspective it’s not just the 80 mins of the match that’s important it’s what you build around that for the whole product. And that is something we work very closely on for the last 5 or 6 years to deliver that product, people want to engage that and consume that. It is something that is really moving on at a pace now, for the likes of the NFL it’s that live experience and that live is best. The challenge that we have is to try and get people to continuing buy tickets and that’s why a lot of effort is put into place a match day experience to keep the ticket sales moving forward.

What kind of techniques do you use to enhance or engage the customers and fans?

Again there is a mini rare evolution going on within the state that Principality stadium and welsh rugby union are pushing towards a digital landscape. So digital to us is where we see the future lying in terms of how we communicate with not only Welsh rugby union fans but sporting fans, entertainment fans in general so everything from direct communication with ease and getting people to sign up to our newsletters to get the most up to date information to what is coming up in the stadium and what’s going on with welsh rugby all the way down to how people consume social media via platforms such as Facebook, periscope, twitter etc. so we are doing a lot more of pre prepared and live elements that go out now to the online platforms. Which we then see gaps translating to ticket sales so by mixing and
managing the social media from a editorial content and commercial content were getting that engagement and we are seeing a spike then in the ticket sales that are coming through.

So are you getting a lot of engagement through your social media cause I know periscope is quite a new thing?

Were trying all sorts of new different things what is translating and what is being well received by the fan groups as I said we do see ourselves at the for front in wales. The digital policy for the stadium and union is constantly evolving because the digital landscape is evolving. So its understand where the trends are and positioning the brand within those trends and its all about accessibility of the brand and information that the core fans want to consume. Leading up to test matches we see massive spikes across our digital platforms such as our online web accounts and social media where fans where they are just consuming this data we just cant give it to them fast enough effectively to how we use those models to advertise promote and make fans aware of the next big event. That could be domestic rugby or a third party hosting in the stadium, so then again it’s the same type of story and philosophy’s that we use across all of our event types that are hosted at the Principality stadium.

Do you find that all these techniques are expensive and are they worth it?

Again it comes down to the digital strategy can be communication it can be how we present the brand it could be the production value put towards it. You know in terms of direct communication of Facebook and twitter its quite cheap cause you got to indicate it. You have someone who is sat there responding in the live environment, to the fans. That’s quite cheap its reactive we are able to put the right messages out and react to or fans, consumers questions so that isn’t costly so it’s a cost effective medium. Where the cost comes up is in terms of how we package up the editorial content if we are creating videos or VT except we do that professional, so the big
review for us internally now is if we continue to use agency or bring it in house and have a media team to create the digital content across our digital platforms. So that’s where we are currently we are at the cross roads to how do we justify the continual spend or is there a better way for us to continue the trend. That’s pretty much where we are today and that landscape will change in the next 12 months.

So you know the stuff that EVENT360 do for you do you feel that it benefits the stadium?

Yes it certainly adds to it, again we regard ourselves at the fall front of that live experience. So away from the digital aspects we do via the social media stuff the live environment in the stadium is critical to what we are and is massive sway to that in terms to positioning the product in the market as such you cant beat the experience in the principality stadium its world renowned, we are regarded the top number one rugby stadium in the world. We want to keep ourselves in that position so how we present our fixtures and how we engage the fans whilst there in the stadium is a critical thing. Again its looking at bench marking exercises, so we horizon and scan other sports so your NFL, hockey and basketballs all the way down to live concert and live music and what do they do to engage with the fans what do they do to engage with the fans what do they do to give that unique experience that you cant get anywhere else. So then merging that and moulding that to what we need from a rugby perspective, its not rocket science but again its engagement we have focus groups, we liaise with the fans we ask them the same question, do they appreciate it do they enjoy the match day experience are there certain things we need to change and that’s why its ever evolving and there are always different things that we are doing. We obviously come up with the creative and work with EVENT360 to deliver that.

Similar to this, obviously it’s in the best interest of the teams to get their fans down to the stadium as early as possible. Do you think that’s what EVENT360 do? Are there other elements that make that happen?
Again its theming and what we do is very much what us and the Welsh rugby union produce. We give very clear guidelines to EVENT360 so there more in terms of pulling together the technical aspects of it. In terms of the theming and presentation style is what we create internally, I agree it is an essential ingredient. The challenge we have is of geography and location cause its located in the city centre its fantastic for the fans, we call it the city and stadium become one on the match day. So there is a blurring of lines between the two and what we tend to find is that fan groups tend to stay outside the stadium right up until kick off and normally have a spike half an hour before when normally 40-45 thousand people make there way into the venue so it doesn’t really matter what we stick on before cause its not actually been seen by that many eyeballs but then again its all about changing patterns changing peoples routes to the stadium so if we can get them in earlier its better for us cause they are consuming more products in the stadium so the food the drink the programmes the merchandise the earlier we get them in the more money we can maximise in that time period and effectively more money can go back into welsh rugby. But that is something again we are ever competing with cause of the pull and attraction of the town centre other sites such as Twickenham and Wembley do not have that cause they are island sights but we are totally unique cause of that, it is a unique circumstance that we have to try and manage and work with.

**Do you feel that America has played an influence on the fans experience?**

If you go back 10 years ago they were light years ahead of where the UK market presents sports to how they do in America. We have now caught up but they are very much leading the way and technology is what is driving this now in terms of in stadia interaction supported by Wi-Fi so stadium Wi-Fi and the ability to stream high quality video to the fans cause everyone second screens now so we are looking into not our fans today but what they want tomorrow, what do they want to consume and how do they want to interact with us as a company and our players. So that’s a big technology landscape we have got to try and map out and how do we start to
interact that into the stadium being sympathetic to our more traditional fan groups who do not want to sit on their iPhones and have this, again its all about our future fans. Again that links into the CRM the way in which we are ticketed within the welsh rugby union our clubs get an allocation of tickets so for most senior internationals they blind share all of our ticketing, most is sold through the clubs so we don’t have the CRM data of our fan groups, we only get that information for the small amount that goes on through the public sales. So we want to use technology to try and bridge that gap to understand a) who our fans are b) what are there tastes what are there trends and how we can then model the match day experience around those. Being a lot more targeted being a lot more data driven in terms of what we put on and how much we charge like the consumables such as the food and the drink all the way down to are they enjoying the experience as a whole so that is where we see trends and learning the lessons of the American stadiums who as we say are a number of years ahead of us cause of the technology companies they have in the US that is what is pushing that development.

Similar question, do you think the stadium would benefit from its own app so people could watch playbacks, toilet queues and purchasing food via the app?

It is certainly something we are looking at but we are restrained by the level of Wi-Fi coverage that we have in the bowl as it currently stands we don’t have stadium Wi-Fi so for us to be able to deliver that we would need to get the back bone of the technology to a standard that would allow us to deliver it. What you don’t want to have is negative consumer experience on an app cause once you do that it is always going to fail so if we launch a stadium app or a WRU app with all the rich media content linked to it has to work from day 1 so again that comes at a cost you are talking a 6 figure or 7 figure sum to do it correctly. So that needs to sit in terms of the long-term cap ex plan or the development plan for the stadium. How we manage the budget requirements will determined how quickly that comes in.
I know you have kind of covered CRM do you use any elements within CRM for the stadium?

The commercial department is very heavily focused on CRM data again and clean data and up to date across all touch points to the business and that could be ticketing, merchandising, programmes sales all the way down to the club themselves that’s our market. Our greatest strength is the reach that we have in wales that is a big sway that we are going through is managing our effectiveness and growing our CRM. That’s not necessarily something I manage but the commercial team but what we are trying to do is it support them in the way that we are able to lock into our fan groups and when they come in, how we interact with them and their match day experience.

You said you kind of target customers by the newsletter is there any other way you target your customers?

Obviously when you buy your ticket through us for an international you ticket a box to receive information from the Principality stadium and WRU that’s an end to end communication that we have to direct marketing to the end users. They already express their interest in our product line, so that’s an easy one for us. Our conscious decision is not to bombard and don’t send constant emails of what’s going on it very targeted around specific campaigns or specific events we also have something called the welsh rugby union supporters club so that’s an online supporters club that is free to join for the first stage for that you then get a unique log on and we get CRM and data rich in terms of rich data from that in which we can be a bit more targeted for and gives us the opportunity to up sale. We can offer better members which they can buy and gives a better membership in terms of the availability of tickets by ballet the opportunity to get digital content of the stuff that we produce with the national squad and across all the other streams that we get welsh rugby they will be the first people to consume that and then depending on what level they are engaging with us from gold membership down that will determine the level and frequency for which
we get that bit of content cause fans want that information and want that immediate of access so you know it’s a paid for service in certain regards. In the entry level it is around getting data, getting CRM and how we then use that in our wider strategies.

**Do you differ the way you approach hospitality members to just general fans?**

Yes again it depends on the type of product we are trying to push, if you look at a long-term hospitality box that is more targeted that is more direct commutation to potential interested partners. Where as the hospitality sale on a one off basis such as a package would be an up sale to ticketing so it is more wide spread and not as much targeted as it is more one to one on a box sale because obviously the numbers we’re talking about are well from 25,000 to a 100,000 sale that needs that level of intimacy and that level of direct communication with the end client. Where as a hospitality product not as much again it is all linked to CRM we collate the data base from past sellers and when we are leading into events we are engaging with them through direct telephone sales why haven’t you brought are you aware we have these offers on and this event coming up all the way down to direct emails with a list of options and what is available at the stadium and what is happening in the stadium in the coming months.

**I know you said about ticket sales and attendance because of these strategies do you see an increase?**

We have seen yeah I think we are very lucky again it particularly down to the commercial strategies and commercial marketing that we put around events but a key competent is how well the teams are doing. If the teams are doing poorly there is always going to be an advertise effect on the ticket sales at the moment touchwood the team are playing very well and are very competitive within world rugby. Since the world cup we have seen a massive spike in interest following the world cup and the influence the team, we have now sold out publically the three
blue games for the 6 nations with Scotland, Italy and France. Which is the first time we have sold them out since 2007, so you know is that directly linked to our strategies and our policy were not 100% but across all the various variable I think yes we are very much reaping the benefits of the new police.

**Are there any future ideas and prospects for the stadium?**

I think it’s the digital landscape I think that’s definitely where we are positioning the stadium we have done major investment upgrades in the last 5 years in terms of the insulation of big screens, led ribbon boards and down to the high definition screens linked to an IPTV system on the concourse where we can interact direct to our fans on a match day, so the fans never miss the action one of the big complaints we had with the fan groups was that when they came to a match day the seats were fantastic and they have a great view but as soon as they left there seat the back end services were not as good as the front end so we put a big focus on that so that on the concourse now fan groups can now watch the game live across 500 screens in the concourse so even if they want to leave there seat during the game and use the facilities such as the toilets or bars they can still consume the game so now then their anxiety levels are reduced there enjoying the overall experience they are able to consume the game in a different way. The target for us then is to use our sponsors to sell this opportunity to them so that they can be more targeted to how they engage with the fans so again it’s a process of education. The sponsors are now being made aware to how they can now use the digital landscape to maximum their exposure and interaction with their fans and target groups on match days. So that’s where we are going to see the development it’s about increasing that range all the way through the development to what we previously discuss such as the Wi-Fi we really use Wi-Fi to be able to interact through a live basis within the stadium is a critical fistic. Once we get that right we can broaden to a wider rugby commercial fan base able to communicate with those fans that are still at home. The fans, the stadiums are all connected as one so its one community effectively all consuming
and engaging what we do, which is welsh rugby union internationals, welsh ruby union content.

**Is there anything you think I should know that would be helpful around the topic?**

I think the key thing is what you see is what you will see next year the landscape is changing and is reacting to what the market is telling us. If we stayed still we would start falling behind technology, buy a bit of kit one day, the next day it will become oblistalic the same applies to the digital strategies and how we manage CRM to how we engage with our fan groups. The key play for you in your dissertation is to say that most stadiums today have to have a long-term strategy. We run a 5 year strategy so within that is a road map, a development road map, strategic road map and a budget road map and what we are trying to do now is to a line those to give clear thinking in terms of how we are going to take the business forward from both a WRU perspective in terms of the management and the game as whole to how we then commercial the WRU to support that investment cause the key message for us is for every £1 that the fans spend would that be ticketing, merchandise or food and bereave that goes straight back into the game of rugby that supports the grass roots up to the elite levels so that’s what is it all about, that is then used to educate the fans into where the money is going and then to maximise the sales and commercial opportunities of the product that we have to manage we then take those lesson and on sell those to third party event when the likes of Beyoncé and Speedway grand pre come into the stadium the same strategies we then offer up as a part of a client support network so its not just a drive high the stadium fully supports third party events to maximise the possibility for the promotes so then they are more likely to bring a future show back, so its self supporting and it rolls that way.

**END**
What do you think motivates fans to attend sporting events?

Passion and the love of sport would be the first thing; people’s general love of sport and the being event experience is two things there. Some people go for huge experiences and just to say that they were there, other people are just truly passionate about the sport that they love and would go to anything associated to it.

What techniques do you use as a stadium to enhance the customer’s experience?

So in terms of, there are multiple levels to what we do. We work along side and look at is as a journey a complete journey from what our fans to see to the first engagement with a piece of creative to target the event and the communication and the early bird offerings that we do. Series of emails and social channels and engaging from the earliest point right up to the event its self and after the event. In terms of trying to build up what the experience is going to be like we try painting the picture quite early, tease the experience as early as possible get people talking about the 7s event for example getting them on board and offering better prices early on. Through ticket pricing and incentives through event experience so if you are one of the first people to enter the venue you might get money off food and beverages or might get a free gift. So its all about driving engaging and then trying to drive tickets on the sale on the back of that and using the enthusiasm to keep the ticket sales moving and ticking over until we get to a tipping point. That gives us the opportunity to get more people in to continue that communication with.

Do you find the techniques expensive or are they all through social media?

Well obviously doing it through social media is free unless you have to pay for an agency to do it, so that is the most cost effective way. We are quite fortunate that we have over 1million follow us through our various social media channels, so we
have got naturally a large audience to go after there. But that being said does having a large following guarantees ticket sales? So we utilize our own channels like England rugby.com as much as we can and we have obviously have lots of unique visitors coming through on a weekly/daily basis so we utilize as many assets as we can. We have a dedicated ticketing pod online so anything that goes on the rugby home page there is always something on the ticketing link, we utilize a lot of our own channels but we also use a lot of paid for media, trying to create awareness as well.

**Within sporting events it’s obviously in the best interest for teams to get their fans to the stadium as early as possible, how do you do that is there anything specific?**

So that goes back to the experience that we are offering and by putting on great food, great drinks and great entertainment. Obviously what we are working on with you guys in terms off building the West Fan Village show is about making sure that is a premium event experience where people come know they are coming to see something great the minute they walk through the gates and then when they do come through the gates its getting them to commit to us. Then again it might be that we have celebrity guests we might have games that fans can participate in all of those things help us to generate those fans and keep them coming early so its about early communication utilizing social media, e mails and CRM systems to target the right people and make sure we do a dam good job of telling them what is available as early as possible.

**Do you think America has played an influence in the fans experience at stadiums?**

Undoubtedly, with no doubt at all, I think the Americas tend to be probably three or four steps ahead when it comes to UK sports events they are closing that gap but I think that there is a distinctive way that both sets, well there. I think there is a uniquely British way of doing, still adopting some of the American traits without going totally American the Australian have got a very good way of doing that they have probably quite a American way of delivering sport which is suddenly. I don’t
think we necessarily or totally agree with but it is something we consider as being a positive thing for us to look at and there are definitely a few things we have borrowed but they have borrowed stuff of us as well.

**Do you think the customers of Twickenham would benefit from a stadium app?**

Yes we do, the Stadium does have one.

**Do you see good effects coming through the app from things such as ticket sales?**

Well the app isn’t quite ready but we will have it! I think we would like it to be quite multifunctional, that it does enable ticket sales, enable people ordering food ad drinks from their seats. Getting access to live footage, it could also include virtual reality app that sits in there as well. So you have the app as the base for then a series of other additional apps within that, wider across which is the development we are looking at right now.

**How do you use CRM within the stadium, do you look at segmentation of your customers?**

Yes we do, we segment a lot now. In the past we had one-sided approach on how we communicated. But now it is very much looking at where the customers are coming from, what are they buying, what are there interests. Looking outside of just rugby and looking at what they might be buying from a product to clothing, so where they are shopping so we can go and ask those people. We have got a lot of research that goes on, we got our segmentation we have identified 7 clear segments of where our fans come from retired causals we got the big eventers so the people that would watch the 6 nations but maybe do not go to watch the rugby every week, we have got all the young players such as the junior rugby every weekend, you got the parents, volunteers and then its all those other bits as well that. You got the people that just play touch or tag or just do something within the sport to keep fit but don’t
necessarily come to watch a live game. Its sort of recognizing that there are whole bunches of different touch points that we have, we have different ways of reaching those.

**Do you think England’s performance can affect people attending? Has the rugby world cup made it better or worse for the 6 Nations?**

Well England’s performance has definitely hit other sales across other events like the Barbarians also a case of a bit of almost not to much rugby but a sense of people having spent there money during the rugby world cup which has had an direct effect on what other people have subsequently spent their money. I think the next year as successful as the rugby world cup it definitely having an impact on what people is buying into now. So there is a surge of club level in terms of professional clubs watching week in and week out they tend to be more expensive tickets then we a bit of a change that’s seems to be lessening at the moment so I think people are exercising through Eddie Jones and his new leadership so people are getting behind that. It is good that England is playing relatively well and still now a new team under his leadership.

**Does the stadium have free Wi-Fi? If not would free Wi-Fi improve the customer’s experience?**

Yes they get free Wi-Fi in the west fan village. So the fans can get it there the fans can also get free Wi-Fi in the hospitality areas but the stadium because it’s such an old stadium cause of the shear age of the building there are new and old part there are difficulty in getting stadium into place at the moment.

**Do you think the location of the stadium is a strength or weakness?**

I think the location helps to get people to the stadium early; I think people recognize that we put on the pre event experience, the show, the west fan village the food and
drink. The entertainment I think people recognize that if they come early they can have a good day. So if you are coming from further away why not come down a little bit earlier and get the days full value in the venue. I think we are easily accessible via train I think we can do with having a tube system but we are obviously have got Richmond down the road and have the free shuttle bus from there and Hounslow and people can get into the stadium pretty easy as well.

**What time are your peak times of customers coming into the stadium?**

For entering the stadium there is a window of 45 minutes before hand because the west fan village is not considered at the moment as part of the stadium by a way of ticketed entry. We have a lot of people outside, we have about 12,000 people at the west fan village and we anticipated during there we have about 30,000 people going there next Saturday the peak is probably 35mins before hand. The peak entrance people know that they can get in they know the gates will allow them to get in at ease during that time, we can churn through people during that time?

**Lastly are there any future ideas and prospects for the stadium?**

Well we are upgrading the east stand there is going to be a massive undertaking in the east stand where there will be new areas for interacting, more indoor space for fans just normal fans coming in on match day tickets so we are looking to do use of led screens around the stadium and just being technology more developed there are lots of stuff happening in the space so I think its worth, we will be doing more in the west fan village, the west fan village space is looking at semi permanent build, structures and stuff we can be a little bit more confident with in terms of fitting into the space and work off having a kitchen that can serve all the food to outlets in the west or a big chunk of the food to just make the service better. Having the knock on effect of making the experience better for the fans!

**END**
What do you think motivates fans to attend sporting events at the stadium?

With the stadium it depends on which sporting event, whether it is a FA fixture that we own or a home game to the stadium such as England or alternatively external sporting events such as the NFL, Football League and Rugby league games that we host. Using the NFL for an example these are supporters that travel from around the country and throughout Europe as this the number one opportunity that they get to attend an NFL game live, first thing with these supporters there is less of a draw when it comes to the teams playing they do not necessarily come for the love of the team but for the love of the live event and wanting to consume that experience. The NFL have a great reputation for putting on an entertaining live fixture with a real focus on the production, engaging with the fans and providing a better overall experience. Where as England fixtures fans come for the passion, love and support of their national team, their pride drives them in attending, another thing to consider here is the team’s performance. At the end of the month we are hosting the Netherlands because of England’s unbeaten success in the euros qualifying campaign there is a real interest from the home supporters and ticket sales have boosted because of this. In comparison the Netherlands who didn’t qualify have a particularly low allocation, which just goes to show how, much of the teams performance has on fans motivation in attending these events.

What techniques do you use as a stadium to enhance the customer’s experience?

As a stadium we cannot rely solely on England supporters and their love of the team we have to actively work on providing them with the best experience possible. Something we are trying to push on is ensuring that the journey from buying their ticket to returning home after the game is the best experience it possibly can be. We do this a number of ways, before the game we are big on interaction making sure all social media channels are regularly updated and all supporters receive personal
emails with information about their visit as well as ticketing information surrounding other upcoming events. We have something called the ‘home end’, they take up the lower tier of one of our stands this is exclusive to the most loyal and committed England fans. These are the supporters that will display mosaics in the stands, raise flags and have a real presence in any England game. We try and interact with all our fans through fan zones as well as improving their experience on the day it is also an opportunity to get people to the stadium as early as possible which In turn will increase their spend at the facilities at the stadium consuming more products in the stadium such as food and beverages, buying programmes and merchandise the earlier we get them in the more money we can maximise these channels. Through the FA Cup we welcome different teams every year and different fans along with that, it is important to us that their experience at the stadium goes above and beyond to what they are used to. Some examples of how we achieve this is through the pre match entertainment and half time shows, through our club Wembley experience we offer live music post match for guests. All of our digital platforms are vital to enhancing supporters experiences from the large external screens that they see when they are walking up Wembley way to the over 1,000 television screens that we have in our concourse as well as our giant score boards and in bowl LED ribbon. We strive to produce the most spectacular and interactive content. The future of stadiums is very digitally led and this is something we really plan to capitalise on through our app.

**Are these techniques expensive and are they worth it?**

Some of the techniques I mentioned are expensive and do require a significant investment, the pre match and half time entertainment elements in particular. We find as a stadium that these elements help to engage the fans and enhance their experience, so yes they are worth it in that sense. Going forward even taking into consideration the cost of things, sometimes you need to invest significantly to ensure that you not only remain competitive in the market but we really want to be the first to offer all of our guests the experience that we aim for. An example of this
when looking into ticketing is the movement towards paperless stadiums, where fans can purchase tickets and enter the stadium via an e-ticket on their mobile device as opposed to the traditional paper ticket – this is something would incur high costs but the result would mean lower running costs, smoother process and again a better experience for the supporter.

You mentioned social media, considering how competitive it is what are you trying to do to set yourselves apart and get noticed?

Under the FA umbrella we have three main accounts that are consistent across all social media channels, these are the FA, Wembley Stadium and the England account. England is the most popular of all our channels with over 2 million followers on twitter and this again backs up what we spoke about earlier in regards to loyalty of supporters. A lot of the content across the 3 channels is similar if for example England were playing at Wembley and all entities were involved. We also have a presence across YouTube and live streaming app Periscope. Periscope is great as it allows us to broadcast live behind the scenes footage to mobile users this is the kind of content that the fans are really interested in and will engage with. With the scale of the events we host we are lucky in the fact that we have the opportunity to feature a lot of our fixtures on live snap chat stories, these can we viewed by millions through a live feed that is covered globally, particularly our cup finals and NFL fixtures. As one of the leading stadiums in the world we have to be particularly conscious when considering how we come across on all of the platforms. Not to forget how useful these platforms are to us when gathering feedback as we are always looking to improve, we have a dedicated team that collates all feedback across our social media channels.

Do you feel that America has played an influence on the fans experience?

I think it is fair to say that US sports and stadiums are leading the way when it comes to fan experience as a whole yes, but that being said ourselves and a number of
stadiums across Europe really are hot on their heels with the experience we can offer and that gap has certainly been reduced in recent years.

**What American influences in particular would you pick out?**

Well the number one area in which the states is leading the way is the technology within their stadiums, in particular the new builds. For example high speed Wi-Fi is something that is available in bowl to fans in many stadiums in the NFL, while we can offer this in our corporate hospitality areas and concourses there is a significant commitment and investment that would come with providing this to 90,000 supporters in their seats but when we can offer this it would go along way to boosting fans experiences. Our partnership with EE is something that has already improved stadium wide network coverage and with their support we can certainly take further strides in the right direction. Another element that the US are really leading the way on is the level of detail that they are able to capture on each of their supporters which really allows them to offer a more tailored and personalised service to each of their supporters, CRM is the main driver behind this and that is something that England were years behind the US before implementing. We use CRM particularly for our Club Wembley members but the more we can push forward with it across all fan types we would most certainly yield positive results throughout the stadium, fan experiences in particular.

**Do you think the stadium would benefit from its own app so people could watch playbacks, toilet queues and purchasing food via the app?**

We do have the Wembley Stadium app that was implemented a couple of years ago, this is something that is advertised to guests across all of our sport and music events. The app offers supporters a build-in travel planner, view from seat, news and information about upcoming events. There are no in-match, interactive elements within the app such as access to replays or queue checkers but this is definitely something that we hope to incorporate in the future, as well as ticketing elements
like I mentioned about a paperless experience. But I really do think that fans would benefit from these elements and this is another thing that is very much present already in the US.

**Does the stadium have free Wi-Fi? If not would free Wi-Fi improve the customer’s experience?**

As I mentioned before we do have Wi-Fi coverage for supporters in our corporate suites and boxes but we do not currently offer this in bowl for supporters. Although it would add to our supporters experience there is still a traditional aspect to the English game that is slightly different again to what is offered in the US and this is something that hasn’t been tried in football stadiums yet so there are no guarantees how the implementation of this would be received by traditional fans.

**Do you use any elements within CRM for the stadium?**

We do use CRM in the stadium in a number of different ways, and this is something that our ticketing, commercial and marketing departments work very hard on. The basic level of CRM we use is specific to general admission supporters, here they try and get the most rounded, detailed and 360 degree picture of the supporter through the data that they can gather. Analysing individuals data alongside their purchase history our commercial team can try and ensure that they are offering the most suitable packages to these individuals, this is predominantly focused on ticked sales but it also goes deeper into merchandise and food and drink, if we can target each supporter properly we can really increase each guests spend per head.

The second level of CRM that we operate is for the Club Wembley members, our Club Wembley package is the second highest source of revenue across the whole of the FA so there is a real drive on this and that is going on now as renewals are due across the next year. Members commit to a ten year package so there is a real significant financial investment on their part, while the package has to be top quality the commercial team also use CRM to assist with their sales. Once a member
commits to their ten years they only receive ‘core’ events and this is essentially England fixtures, FA Cup games, Play-offs and a handful of other fixtures. Concerts and NFL games for example are known as ‘option’ events and these have to be purchased additionally to the core Club Wembley package so the selling never stops. Understanding who each member is, what games they attend and what games they put on re-sale assists this process – with these members being often wealthy and operating in a corporate environment there are also opportunities for partnerships and them bringing in their companies on non-event days for business purposes, understanding the individuals is again crucial here.

**Do you think the location of the stadium is a strength or weakness?**

I think there are definitely a number of strengths to the location of our stadium but at the same time there are a number of elements that we need to work with. Being in London is great; with millions of people living in the capital there is a vast market in close proximity. Although some would argue the stadium should be more central in the country to allow England fans all around the country to attend regularly, this is the main drive behind taking England games on the road during May to Manchester and Sunderland. We have great transport links here in London, particularly with trains and even here in Wembley we have great links to the over ground and tubes so the stadium is very accessible with the ingress of supporters consistently spread out. The Brent area, particularly surrounding the stadium is also developing very quickly. We now have the London designer outlet right across the road which is home to plenty of shops and restaurants as well as Wembley Arena there is plenty going on, this is something that certainly helps get people to the stadium earlier but there is also competition that comes with this across retail and food and drink offered. It is a difficult one with London because where some stadiums would see being central to their cities as an advantage, we have got a really good balance being close enough to the city but with a lot of space to use, not to mention the tradition behind Wembley and the surrounding community. Being slightly out of the city means we can provide more parking, accommodation and there is also more room
for external activations such as fan zones etc. and this is why we are such a popular choice for major events and competitions such as the Champions League, Rugby World Cup and Euro 2020.

**Are there any future ideas and prospects for the stadium?**

One thing that is currently being looked into which really is a development on technology is a virtual reality concept in collaboration with EE, this is something that fans can interact with from home and essentially the goal is to really make it feel as though you are there in the stadium, this would open up a whole new market. A lot of the future hopes we have covered, particularly with the technological and digital aspects such as in bowl Wi-Fi, interactive apps, e-ticketing and so on. Another thing we touched on and something that will definitely go along way in helping us remain as one of the worlds leading venues is really pushing the boundaries across all of our digital elements. Again, fan experience is a real focus, the more activations and interaction we can start to drive behind the better and the plan is to take our flagship event the FA Cup final to the next level in terms of entertainment.

**END**