

## **Business Category Sponsorship Analysis: Beverages**

The biggest spenders in the beverage category include PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, Anheuser-Busch, MillerCoors, Diageo North America, Dr. Pepper Snapple Group, and Red Bull North America. The most common theme to recognize amongst these top brands is that they often have exclusive rights to sell their product in stadiums and are the official beverage sponsor of certain leagues and teams. A notable example is that Anheuser-Bush became the NFL's main beer sponsor over Coors in 2011. Coors had been the official NFL sponsor since 2002.

The most common marketing objective amongst these top sponsors is probably being able to connect and do business with their vendors and suppliers; not to mention that they are trying to get their target market to drink their beverages. The tricky part is that each of these companies has to manage several different brands and tailor their strategies to fit those brands. All of the companies believe they are the best in the beverage industry, and they try to show this belief by pushing their products into stadiums and associating their brands with teams and leagues. At the end of the day however, they are trying to retain market share and make product sales to vendors and customers.

Sponsors usually activate their sponsorships by working with teams to place their product throughout the stadium. This not only includes selling their product at the concession stands, but signage, PA announcements, and fan entertainment opportunities. For example, the San Francisco Giants official soft drink sponsor is Coca-Cola. Their activation includes having a massive Coca-Cola bottle in left field at ATT Park. This serves as not only a slide for kids, but a massive piece of signage that is aesthetically pleasing to the consumer. It is also common to have the beverage sponsor's logo placed on all soft drink and beer containers.

It will be interesting over the next few years to see how beverage companies continue to compete with each other to become the official supplier to leagues like the NBA, NFL, MLB, NASCAR, etc. In the NFL, Bud Light will look to take back some market share from Coors Light with its recent \$1.2 billion sponsorship deal.