

More Than Just a Game? Corporate Social Responsibility and Super Bowl XL

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Abstract

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has grown in importance to sport organizations as well as to the mega-events run by these organizations. This paper explores CSR initiatives related to Super Bowl XL in Detroit. Using Carroll's (Carroll, 1979, 1999) framework of CSR, we outline some of the key community outreach efforts initiated by the NFL and the Super Bowl Host Committee, and further, we discuss the ways in which these efforts might help in building the NFL's image as a professional sport league that takes its social responsibility seriously.

More Than Just a Game? Corporate Social Responsibility in Super Bowl XL

The Super Bowl attracts more viewers and creates more revenue than any other single sport event. The Super Bowl, however, is more than just a game to the National Football League (NFL) and the communities that host it. Increasingly, organizing (host) committees, nonprofit organizations, and local governments in cities that are awarded the game use the event as a catalyst to address pressing social issues (Kott, 2005). The opportunities that a mega-event such as the Super Bowl affords a community for hosting the game in terms of economic, social, and political benefits are considerable. Kwame Kilpatrick, the mayor of Detroit reflected on this opportunity:

In truth the game is not nearly as important as the events that go on around the game. Those events will give us a platform to start changing the image of the City of Detroit around this nation and around the world. Only 12 cities have hosted the Super Bowl. This is our shot. (Kleinefelter, 2006a, Audio source)

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"... the NFL is becoming progressively more invested in corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives in an effort to establish itself as a socially conscious organization ..."

In a reciprocal fashion, the NFL is becoming progressively more invested in corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives in an effort to establish itself as a socially conscious organization, one based on the twin pillars of football and the community (Tagliabue, 2006). As the proverbial jewel in the NFL's crown, the Super Bowl is an institution composed of many inter-linked parts: the league, competing teams, corporate entities, governments, and nonprofit organizations. Increasingly, the NFL is investing its efforts around the Super Bowl on social issues and concerns in cities that host the event.

This paper addresses community outreach initiatives delivered in conjunction with Super Bowl XL (SBXL) hosted by the City of Detroit in February 2006. We position the paper within the CSR construct developed by Carroll (1979, 1999), focusing on the ethical and discretionary aspects of social responsibility. Further, we discuss the strategic relevance of these efforts in enhancing the image of the NFL as a socially responsible organization. We provide an overview of the main tenets of CSR next.

CSR: A brief overview

CSR has been addressed in the organizational/management and economic literatures from a number of different perspectives (Carroll, 1979, 1999, 2000; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; van Marrewijk, 2003; Wood, 1991). Friedman (1962, 2002) offered the view that the only responsibility of business is to make a profit, within the limits of the law. An opposing stance, however, is that the corporation has responsibilities to others, in addition to shareholders. Increasingly, organizations have faced pressures to address societal concerns (Lewis, 2003; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Matten, Crane, & Chapple, 2003; Moir, 2001). As a result, organizations have been sensitized to the importance of making a positive contribution to society, and many act

accordingly. CSR involves a broad range of issues related to the role, position, and function of business in contemporary society (Jonker, 2005). Van Marrewijk (2003) stated that CSR "...refers to company activities – voluntary by definition – demonstrating the inclusion of social and environmental concerns in business operations and in interactions with stakeholders" (p. 236).

The seminal theme of CSR, thus, is that organizations have responsibilities beyond profit maximization (Carroll, 1979, 1999; Moir, 2001). The challenge faced by companies in the current environment is to "use their capabilities and capacities to contribute in a traditional business sense while accepting a social role" (Jonker, 2005, p. 20). Adopting this dual perspective, many leading U.S. corporations have been shifting from a traditional charity perspective to strategic CSR which attempts to integrate corporate donations and community service activities with business operations and interests (Dean, 2003). Similarly, cause-related marketing, whereby firms link the promotion of their product to a social cause and contribute a share of the revenues to the cause, is an increasingly common manifestation of business-society linkages (File & Prince, 1998; Gupta & Pirsch, 2005; Higgins, 2003; Irwin, Lachowetz, & Clark, 2003; Irwin, Lachowetz, Cornwell, & Clark, 2003; Meyer, 1999).

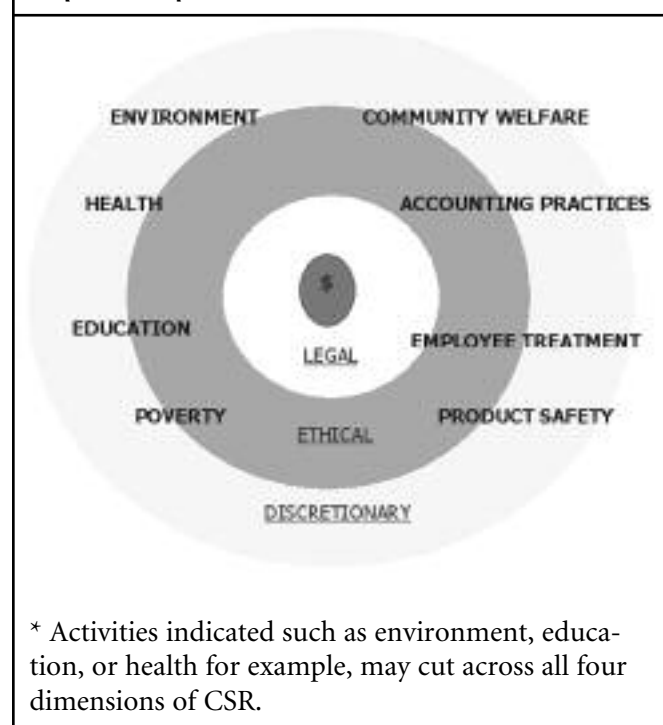
"... cause-related marketing, whereby firms link the promotion of their product to a social cause and contribute a share of the revenues to the cause, is an increasingly common manifestation of business-society linkages ..."

Engaging in CSR activities can help a company in various ways (Alperson, 1995; Foley, 1998; Graham, 1994; Mullen, 1997; Stark, 1999). Increasingly, companies and brands associate themselves with a cause as a means to: differentiate from competition; build an emotional bond with their customer; engender employee satisfaction/loyalty; create a cushion for greater customer acceptance of price increases; generate favorable publicity/counter negative publicity; help win over skeptical public officials (who might determine expansion/growth); and build corporate reputation and brand loyalty.

In order to structure our investigation of the CSR activities surrounding the Super Bowl in Detroit, we have adopted Carroll's (1979, 1999) framing of CSR. Carroll argued that CSR is composed of four components: economic (the basic responsibility to make a profit and, thus, be viable), legal (the duty to obey the law), ethical (responsibility to act in a manner consistent with societal expectations), and discretionary

(activities that go beyond societal expectations). This paper focuses on the ethical and discretionary components of CSR—that is, activities consistent with societal expectations as well as activities which go beyond societal expectations. We chose to focus on these two areas of CSR as we were interested in voluntary, as opposed to obligatory conformity with economic and legal dimensions of CSR (Godfrey, 2005). A number of CSR areas have been identified which cross each of Carroll's CSR dimensions; examples include: employee treatment, product safety, community welfare, and the environment (McAdam & Leonard, 2003). See Figure 1 for an overview of Carroll's CSR framework and CSR areas.

Figure 1
Carroll's (1979, 1999) framework of corporate social responsibility



CSR and Sport.

The concept of CSR is gaining considerable currency in the sport industry. As recently as 10 years ago, CSR issues did not play a significant role in sport (Kott, 2005; Robinson, 2005). Professional sport organizations, however, are entering into socially responsible initiatives at a rapid pace. Currently, most if not all, professional sport organizations have a community affairs or community outreach department, and many are creating foundations to support social causes in their communities (Robinson, 2005). Strong relations with the local community are essential for a sport organization's success (i.e., it is believed to affect an organization's ability to attract fans, secure corporate sponsors, and to have effective dealings with local and state governments). The growing focus on community

outreach activities by these organizations, therefore, is understandable.

A number of levels of socially responsible behavior are evident in the sport industry. First, professional sport leagues such as the NFL, NBA, NHL and MLB have initiated league wide programs to address social concerns (e.g., the NBA's Read to Achieve program). Second, teams / franchises have their own programs which address social concerns (e.g., Atlanta Braves' "Grand Slam" and "Straight A" programs). Third, athletes are increasingly engaging in socially responsible initiatives, frequently through their own foundations (e.g., Peyton Manning's PeyBack Foundation). Finally, major events such as the Olympics and the Super Bowl implement socially responsible projects (Kott, 2005). These events have the potential to create a legacy in host cities via a number of related factors: improved infrastructure, increased private and public investment, enhanced tax base, new jobs, and improved image (Ahmed, 1991).

CSR initiatives of sport organizations have advantages that organizations in other industries do not. Among these are the cachet of celebrity athletes, and the media exposure of the events, leagues, teams, and athletes themselves. These advantages result in sport organizations having greater effects than other businesses in providing inspiration in areas such as education and health care for children; health and exercise; concern for the environment; and social / cultural enrichment (Headlee, 2006). Partnering with sport organizations in CSR initiatives, therefore, is very attractive to corporate and nonprofit organizations wanting to increase their CSR impact and be perceived as good corporate citizens by stakeholders.

Mega-events such as the Olympics and the Super Bowl face pressures to be socially responsible in addition to those addressed above. These often result from stakeholder concerns related to potential negative social and environmental impacts of the events. Concerns have been expressed related to impacts on transportation; efforts to relocate homeless people; and how public money spent on these events can best contribute to social well-being (Jennings, 2000; Lenskyj, 2000). Notably, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has included socially related concerns in its mandate. For example:

More than ever, sport is a universal language and plays the role of catalyst in today's society as a means of improving quality of life and well-being. The Olympic Movement is about more than sport. ... the Olympic Movement is continuously involved in humanitarian aid efforts, environmental efforts as well as the world-wide goal of elevating the status of women in sport.

(<http://www.olympic.org>, Development Through Sport Section, ¶ 2)

Thus, at an increasing rate, mega-events are being designed to include CSR related programs. These efforts can be motivated by altruistic values of top management, to develop and to project a positive corporate image, and/or to alleviate negative perceptions stakeholders might have of an event.

"CSR initiatives of sport organizations have advantages that organizations in other industries do not."

Super Bowls and CSR

For the past several years, the NFL has made efforts to take the social responsibility associated with the Super Bowl very seriously. Its website states that "As part of each Super Bowl's community investment, the NFL works with local organizations to develop programs focusing on youth outreach, health and wellness, the arts, education, business advancement for racial and gender minorities, and community rebuilding" (National Football League, 2006, In the Community, ¶ 1).

NFL commissioner, Paul Tagliabue, has been instrumental in guiding the league and the Super Bowl towards greater social responsibility. He has stated that:

The Super Bowl may last just four hours, but its legacy lasts forever in the host city. The NFL and the host city give equal attention to the game and the community each year. Throughout the week preceding the game, the NFL stages multiple events and activities to enliven, enrich, and assist the Super Bowl host community. Community outreach is an important element of the Super Bowl experience. Our goal is to take a leadership role and encourage others to join us in public service. (<http://www.jointheteam.com>, Super Bowl Outreach, ¶ 1)

Consistent with this, recent Super Bowls in Houston (2004) and Jacksonville (2005) implemented many community outreach initiatives including programs to encourage children to read; projects devoted to build new, or refurbish existing, homes for the underprivileged; and initiatives to address health related issues such as physical inactivity in children and youth.

In what follows, we examine some of the community outreach efforts implemented in concert with SBXL hosted by the City of Detroit in February 2006. First, however, we describe the social context of Detroit, outline the approach we used to gather the data for this preliminary study on CSR and the Super Bowl, and present an overview of the key CSR initiatives delivered in conjunction with SBXL.

SBXL Site – Background

Many accounts detail the social ills facing Detroit. Among the most pressing issues are poverty (over one third of the population lives below the poverty line (Census Bureau, 2006)), crime, and poor education (Murray, 2006). The city faces serious financial hardship, being on the verge of bankruptcy. This has resulted in recent reductions in police officers and firefighters and the closing of eight local community centers. Detroit is a largely minority city surrounded by affluent white suburbs; it has seen decades of population decline (50% of population has gone to suburbs since the 1960s) (Karush, 2006). Given the many social problems facing Detroit, there were many opportunities for SBXL CSR initiatives to positively impact the city.

The SBXL Host Committee spent \$18.5 million to attract and stage the game (Rovell, 2006). With such large amounts being spent on hosting such events, sport organizations and host cities are increasingly focusing on the impact on a community of hosting an event. Although the final number is still being debated, some have estimated that SBXL had an economic impact of approximately \$250 million on the deflated Detroit economy (Walsh, 2006).

“The Emerging Business Program, launched by the NFL in 1994, is a program that was open to firms certified to be at least 51% owned, operated, and controlled by minorities and/or women ...”

Data Collection

Data was collected primarily from secondary sources including media clippings (print and audio), and web-page analysis. Several local newspapers and business sources were systematically scanned daily for six months prior to the game and for six months subsequent to the game. These sources included the Detroit News, Detroit Free Press, Crain’s Detroit Business, and other community based media outlets (such as National Public Radio). All sections of these newspapers were reviewed, as many articles related to the community impact of SBXL appeared in non-sport sections. In total, over 90 articles related to community outreach and SBXL were reviewed and analyzed from these sources. Further, an ongoing analysis of four key web pages allowed the researchers to collect a broad range of information regarding specific Super Bowl community outreach efforts. The four web pages were those of the Detroit Lions (www.detroitlions.com), SBXL (www.sbxl.org/community), the Super Bowl

(www.superbowl.com/features/community), and the NFL (www.jointheteam.com).

Research Findings and Discussion

In this section we present the socially responsible programs enacted by the NFL and the Host Committee for SBXL. We categorize the programs based on Carroll’s (1979, 1999) framework, focusing on ethical and discretionary CSR-related activities. We provide an overview of some of the major programs and then offer our thoughts on how the NFL may build its corporate image by engaging in CSR-related programs. Under the NFL’s “Community Impact” umbrella, more than 50 CSR-related events in 12 communities were held during SBXL (Smith, 2006). Tables 1 and 2 present the major ethical and discretionary outreach efforts examined for this paper.

Ethical CSR

Carroll (1999) described the ethical portion of his framework as “...the kinds of behaviors and ethical norms that society expects business to follow. These extend to behaviors and practices that are beyond what is required by the law” (p. 283). The impact of mega sport events on a community has tended to draw criticism from various stakeholders. Critics point to the negative social and environmental impact a major sport event can have on a local community. A primary concern is that money spent by governments on a mega-event could be better used to improve education, infrastructure, health care, and/or the environment. Further, as tickets for an event often cost considerably more than the average citizen can afford, the latter thus have limited chances of attending the event.

In order to prevent being perceived in a poor light, and/or to do the “right” thing, the NFL and Host Committee may engage in CSR-related efforts to proactively address the concerns of critics, and thus comply with societal expectations. As a result, a number of ‘ethically’ related outreach activities were planned around SBXL. Table 1 outlines a sample of these ethical practices which include addressing environmental concerns, and ensuring fair business practices and opportunities for underrepresented groups. Below, we describe these initiatives in greater detail.

Addressing Environmental Concerns: A concern for environmentalists is the long-term consequences of major sport events on local communities. This issue was triggered by concerns related to the impact of unrecycled waste at Super Bowl events (Kleinefelter, 2006a). For over a decade, the NFL has addressed this matter by implementing programs to reuse left over food, recycling trash from the game, and coordinating

Table 1
Ethical corporate social responsibility and Super Bowl XL

Name of Program	Partners	Purpose
Emerging Business Program	Corporate: 1 *Nonprofit: 1 (750 companies registered, contracts offered to 250)	To provide women and minority owned businesses with opportunities for participation in Super Bowl business process
Super Makeover	Corporate: 1 **Government: 4	Initiative to enhance City of Detroit: picking up trash, painting over graffiti, and killing and removing weeds in high traffic pedestrian areas
Project "Green"	Corporate: 1 Nonprofit: 2 Government: 4	2,500 trees and plants planted to offset carbon emissions
<p>* Nonprofit partners include charities, nonprofit organizations, schools, and foundations ** Government partners include local/municipal governments and organizations, state or federal governments</p>		

a tree planting effort to offset carbon emissions generated by the increased vehicle traffic. In Detroit, 1,500 trees were planted as part of this program, and 50,000 pounds of food were donated to needy recipients. Local environmental groups believed that although planting 1,500 trees would not have much impact on offsetting carbon emissions during the event, the visibility of the effort and being associated with the NFL and Super Bowl was of greater value than anything they could communicate to the public themselves (Kleinefelter, 2006a). For the NFL, being perceived as an organization that cares about the environment helped to create an image of an organization that is socially responsible (Anderson, 2006).

Combating Unfair Business Practices: Another aspect of ethical CSR related to the Super Bowl has to do with how the NFL conducts its business leading up to the event. In order to address local business concerns, the NFL created a program to ensure that minority owned businesses benefit from a Super Bowl hosted in their community. The Emerging Business Program, launched by the NFL in 1994, is a program that was open to firms certified to be at least 51% owned, operated, and controlled by minorities and/or women. Detroit's version of the program was judged as being particularly successful, having 750 firms on its resource guide, more than any previous Super Bowl. During SBXL, approximately 250 firms received contracts worth an estimated \$5.8 million for products and services (<http://www.sbxl.com>). Not only does this program help the NFL's image as an organization that cares about minorities and women (two large fan bases), they believe that it makes for good business

"reaching out to minority and women-owned businesses is part of the NFL's commitment to community service. More than that, the program makes good business sense for all involved" (<http://www.superbowl.com>, In the Community, Emerging Business Program ¶ 2).

"One of the most visible and important (physical) legacies of SBXL will be a Youth Education Town (YET), a \$6 million project which will provide broad educational support for local youth."

Addressing Concerns Related to the Homeless – A Different Perspective: As mentioned above, there exist concerns associated with potential negative effects of the Super Bowl on the homeless (Martin, 2006). While the NFL does implement a variety of socially related programs around the Super Bowl, the homeless may have been overlooked. For instance, according to advocates for the homeless, efforts were made at Jacksonville's Super Bowl in 2005 to keep the homeless off the streets and out of sight. In fact, a shelter which was opened for the Jacksonville Super Bowl, was closed the day after the game (Bianchi, 2005).

Similar issues occurred in Detroit. It is estimated that as many as 13,000 people in Detroit are homeless, though many of those find shelter with friends or family. As many as 3,000, however, are on the city's streets at any given time (Albom, 2006; Kleinefelter, 2006b). It was left to nonprofit organizations in Detroit to organize a SBXL 'party' to get the city's homeless into shelters. When police encountered a homeless person during Super Bowl week, they were to contact service

providers who would be dispatched to persuade the person into going to a shelter. "They just want to get us (homeless) off the street, keep us from panhandling. When the game is over and we wake up the next morning, I still got nothing in my pockets" said a Detroit homeless man (Martin, 2006, ¶20). It was expected that the Super Bowl would cost homeless service providers as much as \$100,000; however, the NFL did not help pay for those costs (Martin, 2006).

Discretionary CSR

Carroll (1999) describes discretionary responsibilities as:

Voluntary roles that business assumes but for which society does not provide as clear-cut an expectation as it does in the ethical responsibility. These are left to individual managers' and corporations' judgment and choice. ... Examples include making philanthropic contributions, or conducting programs for drug abusers... (p. 284)

A number of discretionary CSR activities were implemented by the NFL and the Host Committee to coincide with SBXL. Many of these efforts are beyond the core competencies of the NFL's business. We have grouped these in the following categories: education, culture, infrastructure related activities, and charitable events and contributions.

Supporting Education: In concert with the NFL, Detroit's SBXL Host Committee implemented the Super Reading Program Book Drive, a program which partnered with Charter One Bank, the Detroit Lions, and the Comcast Foundation (Detroit Lions, 2005). Through this program, over 14,000 books were collected at bank branches and Detroit Lions' games and 3,000 new books were purchased for the Detroit Public School system. As stated by Susan Scherer, Executive Director of SBXL:

Super Bowl is not just about the game. It is also about the community. Detroit Public Schools had an established program that could use the Super Bowl as a chance to reach their goals and encourage reading. We are proud to be able to support such an important initiative.

(<http://www.sbxl.com>, Community Outreach, Super Reading, ¶ 10)

In addition to the book drive, the Super Reading Program had three focus areas: the Host Committee's adoption of 40 third-grade classes at Detroit Public Schools; support of an accelerated reader program implemented by Detroit Public Schools to encourage reading; and a library card challenge to encourage children to use the Detroit public library system.

One of the most visible and important (physical) legacies of SBXL will be a Youth Education Town (YET), a \$6 million project which will provide broad

educational support for local youth. The center will be an after-school educational and recreational facility designed to enhance academics, physical fitness, and job-related skills for disadvantaged youth. For more than a decade, the NFL, in partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of America and other leading community organizations, has constructed YETs in Super Bowl host cities. The YET initiative is aimed at positively impacting at-risk youth, and would not have been built had Detroit not hosted the Super Bowl (Michigan Economic Development Corporation, 2006). The NFL will support this program indefinitely.

Cultural CSR: In an effort to promote diversity and to create an environment of tolerance, a number of cultural and diversity related CSR events were held in conjunction with SBXL. One of the events held was One World, One Detroit, where 240 ethnically diverse teens participated in a day-long conference addressing issues of tolerance and diversity. Another event held as part of the community outreach efforts of SBXL was Rock my Soul, a celebration of African American art, dance, and music.

"... the NFL estimates that Super Bowl-related charity events in Detroit raised \$8 million ... Over 200 of the state's nonprofit organizations expect to benefit from this money ..."

Building Infrastructure. In partnership with Habitat for Humanity, the NFL and the Host Committee participated in SuperBuild XL, a project in which 40 homes were built and shipped to Forth Worth, Houston, and College Station, Texas, to help families that were displaced by Hurricane Katrina. Rebuilding Together is a renovation project conducted each year in underserved neighborhoods of Super Bowl host cities. The first project of Rebuilding Together involved revamping the Cass Avenue Activity Center which works with nearly 70 adults who have mental and physical disabilities (Khatri, 2006a).

Some suggest that SBXL has had a dramatic effect on Detroit, doing more to change the city's physical appearance than have corporate relocations, new casinos, two new stadiums, and the last three mayors (Howes, 2006). Infrastructure improvements include upgrades on two main highways and a new streetscape on Lower Woodward, a main street in the city. Former Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer believes Detroit has capitalized on the Super Bowl where other cities have not. "In cities such as Miami, which has hosted eight Super Bowls, there is little redevelopment in preparation for a game. But downtown redevelopment ... has been so successful, Detroit will be in the running for another Super Bowl in five to eight years" (Howes, 2006, ¶ 8).

Table 2**Discretionary corporate social responsibility and Super Bowl XL**

Name of Program	Partners	Purpose
Education related CSR		
Super Reading Program	Corporate: 11 Nonprofit: 3	Encourage children in Detroit schools to read and use local public libraries
Youth Education Town	Corporate: 8 Nonprofit: 5 Government: 2 Individuals: 3	The creation of educational and recreational centers for youth in at-risk neighborhoods in Super Bowl Host cities including tutoring, mentoring, career training, computer education, and athletics. YETs are physical legacies of the Super Bowl.
Cultural CSR		
One World, One Detroit	Corporate: 1 Nonprofit: 10 Government: 1	Tolerance and diversity conference
Rock my Soul	Corporate: Nonprofit:	A celebration of art, dance, and music of African Americans throughout history
Infrastructure		
SuperBuild	Corporate: 16 Nonprofit: 6	In partnership with Habitat for Humanity, 40 homes were built for families displaced by Hurricane Katrina
Rebuilding Together		A one-day blitz of much needed home improvements to families, the elderly, or disabled homeowners
Charity Events		
Super Bowl NFL Charities Bowling Classic	Corporate: 1 Nonprofit: 1	Proceeds to benefit Detroit Youth Education Town
NFL Experience	Corporate: 34 Government: 1	An event which provides an opportunity for families to have a 'Super Bowl experience' by experiencing interactive exhibits, clinics, and autograph signings. Proceeds from this charitable event go to the Detroit Youth Education Town
Taste of the NFL	Corporate: 8 Nonprofit: 3	To raise money and awareness for the hungry

Charitable Efforts: The NFL and the SBXL Host Committee established the Sanctioned Event Program to provide local residents who would not otherwise have the opportunity to enjoy Super Bowl-related programming to do so, and at the same time, raise funds for local charities (McDonald, 2005). The NFL provided Super Bowl tickets to organizations to be raffled or auctioned off; this initiative raised \$625,000. Another event held was a bowling weekend with proceeds going to charity (Carter, 2005). Usually NFL charities host a golf tournament the day before the game. However,

since golf in January in Detroit was not an option, bowling became an alternative. The bowling weekend raised \$200,000 and included 75 celebrities, mostly former and current NFL players.

The Taste of the NFL, a high-end food and wine-tasting fund-raiser for area food banks, is estimated to have raised \$1 million during SBXL (Smith, 2006). Taste of the NFL is a sanctioned NFL event where funds and awareness are raised for hunger relief organizations. The event provides food and grocery products to those at risk of hunger. Funds raised are distributed

to food bank members of America's Second Harvest in each NFL city, as well as other hunger-relief agencies.

In total, the NFL estimates that Super Bowl-related charity events in Detroit raised \$8 million (Smith, 2006), but this number is very difficult to confirm. Over 200 of the state's nonprofit organizations expect to benefit from this money (Khatri, 2006b) which will help compensate for the decrease in donations seen in the state of Michigan over the past few years.

Concluding Thoughts: The Super Bowl and CSR

CSR has been viewed as an effective tool for corporations to enhance their reputation and build brand image and customer loyalty, as well as to positively influence society (Lewis, 2003). For the NFL, particularly with an event of the magnitude of the Super Bowl, engaging in CSR-related activities may help to soften some of the criticism surrounding the event (i.e., cost constraints on who is able to attend; issues of who really benefits from such mega-events; effects on the underprivileged, particularly the homeless). Doing the "right thing," in an environment where corporations are increasingly criticized for unethical activity, may ward off backlash and contribute to the NFL's reputation as an entity that cares, and thus may enhance its image.

We suggest that sport organizations have no choice when it comes to CSR—they cannot ignore it, whether they are motivated by altruistic principles of helping others, and/or by pragmatic concerns related to the bottom line. As we have seen above, the Super Bowl is an event which is surrounded by considerable CSR activity. While we cannot definitively say what the NFL's motivation for this is, it is likely a combination of altruism and pragmatism. On the one hand, the NFL is enacting its core value of being a socially conscious organization—on the other, it is a means to pragmatic outcomes such as generating favorable publicity and building its reputation, and establishing an emotional bond with its customers. As argued by Mintzberg (1984), organizational leaders believe that "doing good is the right thing to do" and/or "doing good is good business."

We believe that the growing area of mega-events and social responsibility provides opportunities for researchers to investigate a number of relevant questions. As little work has explored CSR in sport, areas worthy of exploration may include: devising criteria by which to measure the extent and/or impact of CSR-related activities, efforts at uncovering the degree to which CSR-related activities are motivated by pragmatics or principles, tracking the development and evolution of CSR initiatives, identifying customer

perceptions of CSR-related efforts and whether they have any impact on brand image, and the extent to which multi-sectoral partnerships are being included in an organization's CSR efforts.

Further, we believe that this paper may provide food for thought for practitioners in the NFL and other parts of the sport industry. Overall, it appeared that the NFL is relatively consistent with its values/beliefs regarding its social responsibility purpose. With the exception of the issue of the homeless during the lead up to the Super Bowl, this may serve to further enhance the strong brand image the NFL is building as an organization who cares about both football and the community. One issue practitioners may want to consider and one which we intend to explore in further research is the extent to which many of these CSR-related programs are 'boiler plate' programs (that is implemented in the same manner in each Super Bowl host city). One drawback from a purely socially responsible perspective is that by being so focused on existing programs, it may prevent the opportunity from addressing real issues/social causes and having long term impact in areas in which their business operates (i.e., poverty, crime, homelessness in Detroit.)

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