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THE EXPEDITION SPONSORSHIP AS AN ELEMENT OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT

Abstract

Authors presented analysis of impact of sponsorship in contemporary tourism management. Based on case study of expedition on the K2 mountain pick, authors described process of gaining sponsors, creation of sponsoring strategy, change management caused by failure and finally successes of the whole project. Of course, case study analysis has been predicted by theoretical studies of such concepts like tourism, sponsoring, sponsorship, and tourism management. In formulated conclusions authors underlined meaning of planning, managers skills and competition, ethical aspect of decision making under pressure of crisis and many other problems related to the subject of the paper.

Key words: Expedition, Sport, Tourism, Tourism Management, Sponsorship

JEL Classification: L83, M31, M37

1. Introduction

Tourism and tourism management place important role in contemporary world. There are a lot of countries that achieve their profits directly and mainly from this part of economy (i.e. Spain, France, Egypt, Thailand, etc.). So, it is obvious that tourism is incredible source of direct and indirect income. Apart from money earn by hotels, tourist agencies, transport, etc. companies from different business branches realized that tourism (just like sport) can be a very efficient way of marketing and promotion. The most popular way of doing it is sponsorship. But, just like in many other cases, there are also some reservations. First of all, sponsorship must catch customers' attention. Secondly, it should relate to something impressing, crazy or simply unusual. One of such groups of activities, worthwhile to sponsor, is organization of expeditions to undiscovered, difficult to achieve or not penetrated places. Professional and well organized sponsoring of above events gives opportunity to present company (the sponsor) on TV news and programmes, newspapers, internet, etc. according to media plan. But, sometimes can happen, that perfect plan can be destroyed by failure of the

sponsored project. In the paper, authors present example that adversity of the expedition was translated in to success of the image of particular company.

2. Theoretical Background

Writing about expeditions should be preceded by defining, classifying this phenomenon and finally decide if it is a kind of sport, tourist activity or something in between. According to Oxford Dictionary:

- sport is “*an activity involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against another or others for entertainment*”;
- tourism is “*the commercial organization and operation of holidays and visits to places of interest*”;
- expedition is defined as “*a journey undertaken by a group of people with a particular purpose, especially that of exploration, research, or war*”¹.

In contemporary world those definitions do not satisfy authors because can be a source of misunderstandings. First of all, sport is done not only for entertainment but mostly for money (i.e. football); on the other hand tourism, especially individual tourism is organized not only for profit. But, following above mentioned concepts, “expedition” is both sport and tourist activity, because:

- it is activity during participants use their physical skill,
- competition factor is absolutely necessary to motivate and encourage participants,
- it is organized to visits some place to explore, research, or achieve it.

Otherwise, tourism can be characterised as activity that should give the tourists pleasure and fulfil their expectations. Based on that point of view, we can understand why “expedition” cannot only be classified as “tourism”. Members of expedition do not engage their time to satisfy anyone, they organize resources to achieve the formulated goal. From this perspective it can be seen how important role place management of the whole venture. But in this point we come back to previous question: sport or tourism – which field of science should be leading?

According to Tadeusz Chudoba tourism management is “*a totality of directional relations which, due to existence of the need of creating a functioning complementary tourist market and the conditions for their realization, occur between, as well as within, tourism people and institutions active for tourism*”². Stephen J. Page presented also principle management functions in tourism business such as: marketing, operational issues and human resource management. The author underlined that those functions seems to be general like in every field of management, but what makes them different is

¹ *Oxford Dictionary* [on-line]. Dostęp 23.04.2014. Dostępny w World Wide Web: <http://oxforddictionaries.com>

² Chudoba T., *Theory of Tourism and Tourism Management*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Fachowe CeDeWu, 2010, p. 224.

product of this business, that is actually a service characterised by “*intangible elements, expectation of quality of delivery and evaluation of experience difficult to visualize*”³.

Most of all, tourism or sport management, even if not called professional, always consist of: planning goals, organizing resources, motivating / directing people and controlling results. So, coming back to point of the paper, expeditions which differ from range, destinations, quantity of members, etc., also differ from budget. Costs of professional, international expeditions are very big, so important role in management of such activity is placed by sponsorship, as part of organizing financial resources.

The main objective of sponsorship is to achieve the benefits by the support to different areas of life, not as good beneficiary patronage. Expressions “sponsorship” and „the sponsor” have come a long way since the Protestant interpretation of the nearly 200 years ago, by “patrons” who devote time and resources to matters unrelated to their regular activities in Victorian times until the later of the words: “sponsorship” (being a sponsor, or to act as a sponsor), “the sponsor” (supporting company) and “sponsoring” (referring to the sponsor) and used for the sponsor to place at the disposal of a person or body specified amounts of money or property in order to undertake the actions which serve intensified the reputation of the donor and the growth of his company's turnover⁴. It should also be noted that “the sponsoring” is often used in relation to the activities while “the sponsorship” is often regarded as the name of the concept.

Noun “a sponsor” today points to a person or company who bears the costs of performances, television broadcasting, show or sporting event usually in exchange for advertising⁵ or paying for a radio or television program in exchange for the right to use the limited advertising time⁶. The verb “to sponsor” refers to the financing of radio and television programs in exchange for placing the name of the company that paid for the program, prior to its issuance⁷. However, the growing role of radio, television in the social and economic life meant that they began to mean any personal or financial support to other persons or institutions, providing them with the help of different kinds of donated sums

³ Page S. J., *Tourism management. Managing for change*. Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth - Heinemann, 2009, p. 383.

⁴ Collard J., Sponsorship. In: A. Gregory (editor), *Public Relations in Practice*. London: Kogan Page Limited, 1996, p. 136.

⁵ *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. Warszawa: PWN, 1989, p. 1018; *Webster's School Dictionary*, Springfield Massachusetts Merriam-Webster Inc., 1986, p. 895.

⁶ “One that pays the cost of a radio or television program usually in return for advertising time during its course”. *Merriam-Webster's On-line Dictionary* [on-line]. Dostęp 8.08.2010. Dostępny w World Wide Web: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/mwwod.pl>.

⁷ Adam J. H., *Longman Dictionary of Business English*, Beirut: Longman York Press, Burnt Mill, 1989, p. 475.

of money and taking over a guarantee for someone or for someone to sponsor in exchange for certain benefits, mainly promotional.

Sponsorship is also a form of communication with the market using situation that support of various walks of life to showcase their image and marketing objectives. Using this tool of promotion should cause a range of business deals of the sponsor's company. Such an approach of sponsoring implies two of its aspects: communication and support.

From the marketing communication perspective, sponsoring is a marketing strategy focused on promotion of company's name, trade mark or image of particular company⁸. So, sponsorship is an important tool of marketing communication that allows the image transfer, the aim of which is a positive presentation of the company and / or brand of the sponsor in the target group by supporting activities not directly related to normal business. This is an indirect form of promotion, the company or brand name is associated with a project sponsored by the company. Sponsors tries to take an image of the project, hoping that the consumer will connect the positive feelings associated with the project with the sponsor, thus moving image of events on the image of the sponsor. The aim of sponsorship is rather to present the image of the sponsor, and no attempt to relate the unique brand attributes to the known characteristics of the target group, which is due to the fact that many brands today is similar to the competition, so that the brand identity is often the main factor distinguishing the brand from each other⁹.

Sponsoring can also be seen as providing support by both financial and in-kind different actions in order to achieve business objectives. And so, for M. Bruhn sponsoring it is the planning, organization, implementation and control role of any activities involving the provision of measures to promote the organization of sport, culture and the social sphere in order to achieve the effect of business and promotion¹⁰. Moreover, Tom Griffin argues also that sponsorship is kind of promotion that uses the relationship of the brand with social, cultural or sporting event in such a way as to achieve the benefits of exploiting the commercial potential connected with this event, and that activity¹¹.

In the definition of sponsorship which treats it more as a contract than an instrument of communication, more attention was paid to the mutual benefit of the sponsor and the sponsored non connotations, adding the right to promote the association and the granting of benefits¹². In accordance with the foregoing,

⁸ Drabik M., Bez względu na pogodę. *Businessman Magazine*, 1994, No. 2, p. 70.

⁹ Bennett R., Sports sponsorship, spectator recall and false consensus. *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 33, 1999, No. 3/4, p. 291; Henseler J., Wilson B., de Vreede D., Can sponsorships be harmful for events? Investigating the transfer of associations from sponsors to events. *International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship*, April 2009, p. 245-246.

¹⁰ Sznajder A., *Marketing sportu*. Warszawa: PWE, 2008, p. 215-216.

¹¹ Griffin T., *International Marketing Communications*. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 1993, p. 376.

¹² Day H., What's in a name? *Journal of Sponsorship*, vol. 1, April 2008, No. 3, p. 208.

sponsoring is a trade agreement in which the sponsor of an agreement provides funding or other support in order to build mutual benefits and a positive association between the image, identity, brand, products and services of the sponsor and the sponsored project in exchange for the rights to promote this association and / or the granting of certain agreed direct or indirect benefits¹³.

In conclusion of concepts presented above, definition of sponsorship, according to the authors, should be stated as follows: financial, material and service activity of sponsor (individual, company, organization) to its partners (individuals, institutions, events, activities) to support various aspects of life socially acceptable (e.g. sports, culture, science and education, health, social affairs, environment), independent of it, and not directly related to its normal business. In return, the sponsor gets access to commercial opportunities and resources, associated with these partners and the ability to use positive associations with the activity of the supported entities to achieve specific marketing and communication¹⁴.

Professional sponsorship can be characterise by following features:

- mutual benefit sponsor and sponsored: a sponsor makes available a certain amount and / or other resources (cash or in kind services), a sponsored performs the action for the sponsor, which directly or indirectly contribute to the achievement of marketing objectives sponsor,
- a combination of advertising, public relations and sales promotion in the instrument of company promotion that uses: communication, publicity, build image and gaining popularity, reaching economic effects,
- indirect way of promoting the company and / or product (media report the sponsored project and during it they present sponsors),
- keeping decision-making process in a conscious and systematic way, it means planning, organization, control of self-activity and sponsored item from the point of view of the results of financing and equipping the specified items (services),
- professional actions¹⁵.

The core of sponsorship is therefore expedient transfer of the sponsor's funds, goods, property or services, including know-how, sponsored, to achieve certain objectives and benefits, which condition is the principle of mutual benefit from receiving benefits¹⁶.

¹³ Söderman S., Dolles H., Strategic fit in international sponsorship – the case of the Olympic Games in Beijing 2008. *International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship*, January 2008, p. 96.

¹⁴ Datko M., *Sponsoring. Klucz nowoczesnego marketingu*. Warszawa: Placet, 2012, p. 40.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 41.; Sznajder A., *Sztuka promocji, czyli jak najlepiej zaprezentować siebie i swoją firmę*, Warszawa: Business Press Ltd., 1993, p. 129; Polakowska - Kujawa J., Kujawa M., *Sponsoring. Aspekty prawne i gospodarcze*. Warszawa: Poltext, 1994, p. 11.

¹⁶ Sznajder A., op. cit., p. 216.

Providing sponsorship activity is related with the so called “transfer of the image”. In this process following elements occurs:

- sponsor, which aims to transfer a positive image of the sponsored item to his/her company or brand,
- sponsored, which features of the appropriate image, quite attractive for sponsors for the realization of the objectives of marketing,
- customers acquiring goods of sponsor, and others among which the sponsor wants to create its proper image,
- customers of sponsored subject.¹⁷

The sponsorship project, directly related with sponsor, allows the sponsor to create its own image through the transfer for the company mainly reputation and prestige of the sponsored entity. In this case, the image transfer mechanism to other object is used. This involves the use of a positive image of the sponsored entity or object by others. Upon this the essence of sponsorship in creating the image of the brand. The model of transferring the image of the brand in the sponsorship (for example, sports) was presented by the Kevin Gwinner’s Model (Figure 1).

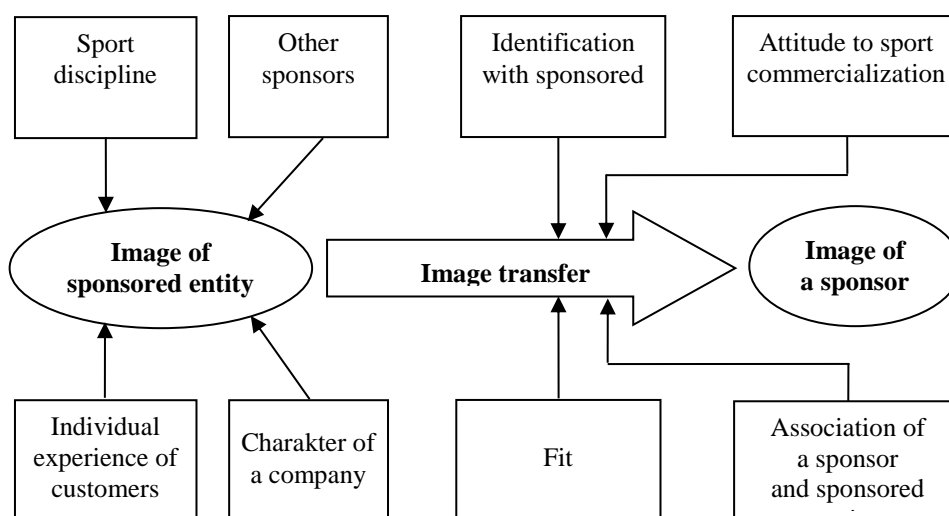


Fig. 1. The K. Gwinner Model of the Image Transfer

Source: Gwinner K. Image Transfer in Global Sponsorship. In: B. T. Cornwell, J. M. Amis (editors), *Global Sport Sponsorship*. New York: Berg, 2004, p. 164

¹⁷ Idem, *Sponsoring, czyli jak promować firmę wspierając innych*. Warszawa Business Press Ltd., 1996, p. 88.

It follows from the figure that the process of transferring the image from sponsored to the sponsor is affected by various factors. Some of them are associated with the image of sponsored, or of the process of transferring the image. It seems that the most important factors in the transfer of the image are: to fit sponsored image to the created image of the sponsor and the identification of the sponsored to the sponsor.

In the theoretical explanation of the image transfer process creep phenomenon is 'the media effect' and 'the media vehicle effect'. The media effect (television, radio, press) refers to the qualitative aspects of the media and make the media hierarchy of the recipients of the effect of the mutual clashing of the mass media influences the audience's reactions causing¹⁸, that as Marshall McLuhan said „the medium is the message”¹⁹. Media “vehicle effect”, which refers to the media of communication (press, radio station, television station, and their individual programs) is perceived by the public through their own individual characteristics, and thus raises the specific atmosphere of openness to persuasive communication.

It turns out that these results also apply to sponsorship. Choosing sponsored field (sport, culture, ecology, etc.) can be compared to the effect of the medium²⁰. At this point, the choice of such and no other areas of sponsorship provides information about the desired image of what the sponsor wants to transfer. Choice of discipline or entity sponsorship has close ties with the effect of the media of communication. Perception of the individual disciplines within selected fields allows to transfer just the individual associations to sponsor. In the final step it should be decided who or what will be a particular entity of sponsorship. The basic factor of the selection is the usefulness of such an entity to achieve the objectives of sponsoring companies, which allow frequent appearance of the sponsor in the media and create the desired image, so most will be the operator achieves success²¹. In the sponsorship of both the sponsor and the project links are included in the symbiotic relationship associated with the transfer of the desired value with the sponsored the sponsor. Recipients, seeing the sponsor, its company name, logo, etc. through the lens of sponsored projects, they learn to associate the other two entities. The task is to connect the sponsor of his presence with a sponsored project and, where necessary, the transfer value of the brand²².

Sponsorship can fulfil its role as an instrument of transfer of the image, provided that the image of each sponsored project will reflect the own

¹⁸ Meenaghan T., Shipley D., Media effect in commercial sponsorship. *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 33., 1999, No. 3/4, p. 332.

¹⁹ McLuhan M., *Zrozumieć media. Przedłużenie człowieka*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Naukowo – Techniczne, 2004, p. 37.

²⁰ Meenaghan T., Shipley D., op. cit., p. 332-333, 335.

²¹ Datko M., *Sponsoring. Strategia, promocja, komunikacja*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Komunikacji i Zarządzania, 2003, p. 71-74.

²² Meenaghan T., Shipley D., op. cit., p. 335.

personality of the company, and that a unique set of attributes and values of the sponsor and the sponsored becomes reflected in the perception of consumers. The sponsor should also not forget about the possibility of transferring the negative image of the sponsored when the actions of an entity are not accepted by the public and arouse aversion (potentially also the sponsor).

Sponsoring activities conducted by the company should not be considered self-employed, i.e. without providing them with adequate publicity. Sponsor make the mistake of assuming that it is sufficient to support the project, to present sponsorship banners, and sponsorship will generate profits for a long time. Without publicizing the fact of being a sponsor company diminish the impact of sponsorship and does not use unconventional opportunities to reach their target groups. The key to ensure that consumers combined event with brand-sponsored is to promote it in all possible ways and at all times. The most common channel, which usually is used to sponsored transfer is the media. Without their participation sponsoring would be the activity known only for few famous people, and the functioning of the sponsorship triangle would be impossible.

The fact of sponsorship should be used before, during and after the finishing of the sponsored project. Therefore, publicity of the fact of being a sponsor is also necessary, but not in order to satisfy the vanity and the pride of the company or its president, but in order to:

- reach the awareness of target groups,
- extend the range of the impact of media promotion,
- enhance the prestige and reputation of the company,
- use sponsorship as a base for other promotional activities,
- preserve and enhance the knowledge of the company and its image in the minds of consumers.

As it was mentioned above, unfortunately, apart from positive aspects of sponsorship, the sponsor should consider risk. Discussing the concept of risk in sponsoring, two main aspects should be underlined:

- the risk of acting as the probability that the intention will not work – because this applies to every action, is also sponsoring is not free from this form of risk
- risk as a result of the project, the outcome of which is uncertain - sponsorship is an instrument to promote, where the results of operations can not be 100% predicted (consumer response) so well understood and so there is a risk of the sponsorship.

Risk in business sponsorship can be found on both the sponsor and the sponsored entity. Due to the fact, however, that sponsorship is considered as an instrument of communication of risk, sponsored entity will not be discussed in this paper. Although there are number of risks in sponsoring activities such as organizational risk, personal, legal and social risk, inflation risk, and others. Few of them play the biggest role.

Moreover, also the objective risk should be considered. It is the risk when its cause lies not with the sponsor and the sponsored and are impossible to predict, and its effects cannot be insured. Threatening all may be associated with unlucky situation faced by sponsored event (i.e. failures, accidents, etc.). If the product does not meet the promises announced in the case of global sponsorship and promotion based on quality could seriously threaten the brand of the company. Also, such common situation like bad weather during the sponsored event can trigger negative connotations of the sponsor. Shadow of the sponsors may also shed some misfortune. So, in any case of sponsorship it appears an emotional reaction, which leads to a strong sponsor relationship with the sponsored. If, however, victory turns to defeat the public reacts negatively to the actions of the sponsor²³. Based on below case study, authors presented interaction between success of the project and success of sponsorship activity; moreover, it was pointed, how managerial and marketing tools can be used to minimize negative effect of failure.

3. Case study – The Expedition to K2 sponsored by Netia S.A.

Polish Netia K2 Winter Expedition 2002 / 2003 or a trip to the second Earth Summit (8611 m), began on December 16th, 2002 and ended on March 18th, 2003. The aim of the expedition was considered by many of today's most challenging mountaineering, the first ever entry Winter on the summit of K2, aiming to contribute to the proclaimed by the United Nations International Year of Mountains.

The main sponsors of the expedition were Netia Telekom SA and Lech Premium. Media sponsors of the sport and exploratory event included: TELEVISION POLAND SA, Rzeczpospolita Daily, and internet portal Onet. For the first time in the history of Polish expeditions, expedition had its producer (organizer). The producer of the expedition on behalf of Polish Mountaineering Association was COSMOS Entertainment, the company responsible for the acquisition financing of the project, organizing trips, and for the creation, in consultation with sponsors and media partners coherent campaign²⁴. The schedule of the expedition has been presented in table 1.

Tab. 1. The schedule of the Netia K2 Winter Expedition 2002/2003

Date	Step
December 16 th – 29 th 2002	Transportation of people and equipment from Poland to Pakistan; Establishment of the main base at an altitude of 5100 m;
December 30 th – January 5 th 2003	Establishment of the base at an altitude of 6030 m;

²³ Griffin T., op. cit. p. 379.

²⁴ *Netia K2 – kampania promocyjna roku* [on-line]. Dostęp 24.04.2014. Dostępny w World Wide Web: http://netia2.pl/o_wyprawie.html.

January 6 th – 20 th 2003	Establishment of the base at an altitude of 6780 m
January 21 st – 30 th 2003	Bad weather (the break of the weather) in the Karakorum, which was very difficult, then impossible for mountain activities. The destruction of the camp II and strong winds caused that climbers have not won consecutive meters high on the North Pillar during a week. They moved Camp II
January 31 st – February 4 th 2003	Establishment of the base III at an altitude of 7150 m;
February 5 th – 12 th 2003	Time of changing weather, short time of good weather mixed with bad one; Establishment of the base IV at an altitude of 7630 m;
February 15 th – 20 th 2003	The break of the weather
February 21 st – 25 th 2003	The attempt the summit. Weather forecast was bad, but provided momentary improvement, which meant that it is the only chance to attack the summit. Reaching to camp IV (the highest point that the winter has been achieved by himalaists on K2), where it appeared that set ten days before the tent with the equipment was blew away by the wind, causing sleepless night in a spare tent and a sleeping bag on a roll ropes.
February 26 th – 27 th 2003	The rescue expedition; this situation occurred at the end of the expedition, and how each of these situations was unpredictable - one of the participants in the summit collapsed, he had symptoms of altitude illness (loss of contact and communication abilities), he was exhausted and unable to continue wandering in the mountains; as the altitude sickness, in such circumstances without help, without oxygen ends in death, the other members of the expedition immediately took the right decision by bringing him down. At the same time from the camp III another member of the expedition came to bring the patient down. At the height of 6000 m was organized medical point of oxygen, medicines and medical instructions from a doctor. The next day the patient was able to go down to the base. The action was successful.
February 27 th 2003	The decision to end the expedition
February 28 th – March 5 th 2003	Closing the base
March 7 th – 9 th 2003	Return caravan
March 18 th 2003	Landing in Warsaw

Source: Rajwa A., Relacja pierwsza (21 XII 2002), Relacja druga (8 I 2003), Relacja piąta (4 II 2003), Relacja szósta (10 II 2003), Relacja siódma (21 II 2003), Relacja ósma (11 III 2003). *e-góry.pl górską stroną internetu*. [on-line]. Dostęp 24.07.2013. Dostępny w World Wide Web: <http://www.e-gory.pl/index.php/Relacje-z-wypraw/Himalaje-Karakorum/Netia-K2-Polska-Wyprawa-Zimowa/>

The aim of the expedition was to gain K2. Unfortunately, the tip has not been achieved, and the completion of the expedition took place after the accident and rescue operation. Although the expedition did not realize the sport goal, which was the entrance to the summit, but it can be treated as success; all members of the expedition returned home, climbers came to a height of almost 7700 meters, that it has never been done before; members of expedition saved life of their friends, preferring human life and partnership to the purpose of the expedition; moreover, logistics has been worked out at 100%²⁵.

The expedition presented above is a good example of the use of media-sponsored events. TVP (Polish Public Television) has invested over a million PLN for the first time creating an event, rather than just reporting on them. Given the Polish success in winter himalaism and the memory of Wanda Rutkiewicz and Jerzy Kukuczka, the product which was the media report from the Polish Netia K2 Winter Expedition 2002/2003 enjoyed the attention of customers. There is no doubt, however, that the trip was there more important than the destination, and the core of the program was to be the TV show, and do not get the peak. TVP planned 45 programs broadcasting events of K2 (On January 6th, 2003 at 4:50 p.m. TVP 1 Channel released the first report of the expedition, the next one were issued every day for the duration of the expedition. In the K2 Camp, the highest located TV studio in the world, six-team of TVP worked, sending news by three satellite phones and digital cameras. Picture and sound were issued by specifically purchased Scotty Mobile devices through four Inmarsat satellites. The head of the expedition Mr. Krzysztof Wielicki was available for media all the time²⁶.

From the perspective of promotion and marketing the expedition was a big undertaking. Netia's decision to sponsor winter expedition to K2 resulted from the fact that the company decided for the first time to appear on television and needed a spectacular, original events that occur in the minds of customers. Netia, which did not have the appropriate telecommunication scope, could not position itself on the market as an operator of a nationwide. Moreover, it was also a time of the financial restructuring, when the company was perceived as an operator with financial problems. Therefore, the sponsoring expeditions to K2 was intended to improve the image, as a pretext to pass a clear message - we walked out of trouble and have a good.

²⁵ Polish winter expedition to K2, 2002/3. *Himalayan's Weblog* [on-line]. Dostęp 23.05.2014. Dostępny w World Wide Web: [http://himalman.wordpress.com/2008/01/02/polish-winter-expedition-to-k2-20023-version-polish-and-english](http://himalman.wordpress.com/2008/01/02/polish-winter-expedition-to-k2-20023-version-polish-and-english;),; Zielinski M., Czas na podsumowanie. *Netia K2 – Polska Wyprawa Zimowa – Relacje* [on-line]. Dostęp 24.05.2014. Dostępny w World Wide Web: <http://netiak2.pl/relacje.html>.

²⁶ Rajwa A., Relacja pierwsza (21 XII 2002), Relacja druga (8 I 2003), Relacja piąta (4 II 2003), Relacja szósta (10 II 2003), Relacja siódma (21 II 2003), Relacja ósma (11 III 2003). *e-góry.pl górską stronę internetu* [on-line]. Dostęp 24.07.2013. Dostępny w World Wide Web: <http://www.e-gory.pl/index.php/Relacje-z-wypraw/Himalaje-Karakorum/Netia-K2-Polska-Wyprawa-Zimowa/>.

It should be noted that the selection of sponsored projects was very accurate. Because in that period mobile operator was assessed from the perspective of the offered range/scope, that is, the higher was the transmitter, the transmission quality was better. For this purpose, it was well-suited to K2, because where may be a better place for the transmitter than at the top of the second Summit of the Earth. In addition, K2 as a hidden metaphor (the most difficult to come by) and the choice of people: strong, fearless and relentless striving relentlessly to end, and a great name (K. Wielicki – one of the best climbers in the world, winning all 14 eight-thousanders summits) was to ensure the transfer of positive image²⁷. Even the tragic problems which was the altitude sickness and rescue operation, the sponsor used properly to improve the image of the company. When it turned out that there was no chance of getting the peak, the media began to appear slogan: „Sometimes conquering means more than winning”²⁸ and it would seem obvious to rescue a man presented as a success, despite the fact that prior to departure from Warsaw K. Wielicki said: „The expedition will be successful, if we get the peak. Happy, however, when all of it back”²⁹.

4. Conclusion

Sponsorship can be risky. But, on the other hand, in the contemporary world, world of media, it seems to be one of the most efficient way of promotion. Both parties of the agreement can benefit from the contract. Members of expedition get necessary funds. The sponsor gets market image. However, based on presented case study, it is simple to conclude that sponsorship activity must be professionally planned, from the step of choosing event to the last moment of the project. Moreover, during the whole process of sponsoring, marketing analysis must be done and depending on current results and situation of the project, particular actions must support it. Thanks to good management, monitoring of achievements and presumed aims, sponsorship becomes an useful instrument which gives a possibility to sustain positive image even if enterprise ends up with failure (as it was described in case study above).

Sponsors and organizers took care of presence of representatives of media world, such as TV operators, who were engaged in whole expedition as the outright actors. That is one of the reason of image success in media, although we can't treat it as a success in sport categories.

If marketing specialists from Netia S.A. did not react wisely (by changing interpretation of expedition result), the effect of sponsorship would bring financial and strategic loss. In perspective of sponsorship actions, change of

²⁷Zientek H., Netia nadaje z K2. *Marketing przy kawie* [on-line]. Dostęp 23.07.2014. Dostępny w World Wide Web: <http://www.marketing-news.pl/article.php?art=21>.

²⁸Czasami zdobywać znaczy więcej niż zdobyć. *Netia K2 - Kampania promocyjna roku* [on-line]. Dostęp 23.07.2014. Dostępny w World Wide Web: <http://netiak2.pl/nagroda.html>.

²⁹Już w kraju. *Netia K2 – Polska Wyprawa Zimowa – Relacje* [on-line]. Dostęp 23.07.2014 Dostępny w World Wide Web: http://netiak2.pl/relacja_030319.html.

crucial aspects in narration about “Polish Netia K2 Winter Expedition 2002/2003” was also very important. Essential became rescue action and happily return home of every member of the group instead of reaching the K2 Summit – let achieve the image and marketing aims.

The summary of the expedition, mentioned earlier, established as “Sometimes conquering means more than winning”, can be also a motto in other, very different sponsorship projects and is great illustration of well reaction on changing conditions during long-lasting events.

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