



Chapter 10

ROLE OF GAMES PARTNERS

Success in staging a 'Green Olympics' in 2008 also depended on how well BOCOG cooperated with key partners. Recognising the importance of achieving a collective effort, BOCOG set out to engage Olympic Worldwide Partners, other sponsors, suppliers and contractors in its environmental programmes.

Worldwide Olympic Partner, Panasonic, supplied a range of technology and was praised for the high energy efficiency of its recording equipment for Olympic broadcasters.

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10.1 ROLE OF SPONSORS

The sponsorship strategy for the 2008 Games was comprehensive and involved various tiers of support. The IOC managed the relationships with the 12 Worldwide Olympic Partners. The Beijing 2008 Sponsorship Programme, designed by BOCOG to support the Games at the national level, was comprehensive and comprised the following:

- Beijing 2008 Partners – 11 for the Olympic Games, 19 for the Paralympic Games;
- Sponsors – 10 for the Olympic Games, 10 for the Paralympic Games;
- Exclusive Suppliers – 14 for the Olympic Games, three for the Paralympic Games, and
- Suppliers – eight for the Olympic Games, three for the Paralympic Games.

The Games sponsors and suppliers were integral to promoting Olympism throughout China. They contributed technology, products and services to support BOCOG’s operations and helped promote environmental issues to the general public. Other partners included contractors, such as hotels, caterers and 59 licensed manufacturers.

Cooperation on environmental initiatives for the Games involved close liaison between Chinese environmental regulators, BOCOG, the IOC and partners at all levels.

Olympic Sponsor Environment Group

In July 2007, an Olympic Sponsor Environment Group was established as a non-permanent working body and platform



Representatives of BOCOG and the Beijing Yuanpei Century Translation Company at a joint announcement of the Official Translation and Interpretation Supplier of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.

which brought national and global sponsors together to coordinate environmental initiatives. The group’s aim was to make sure sponsors adhered to environmental laws and regulations, delivered environmentally-friendly technologies, products and services, and developed communication and education programmes.

The members also wanted to use their collective strength to enhance public awareness of environmental issues, help promote BOCOG and sponsors’ environmental records and support the ‘Green Olympics’ concept. However, the reality was that time was limited for this group to make significant inputs to BOCOG’s greening efforts.

10.2 SPONSOR SELECTION PROCESS

According to BOCOG, a preliminary step in selecting national sponsors involved

the committee’s Marketing Department seeking an environmental assessment of potential partners from the Construction and Environment Department. For example, the paper-making industry was excluded from the sponsorship programme because of environmental concerns, even though numerous paper manufacturers had expressed interest in sponsoring the Games.

After an initial evaluation, potential sponsors had to present their environmental certifications, either local or national. According to BOCOG’s Marketing Department, 51 of the 55 Olympic and Paralympic Games sponsors possessed local or national environmental certification of some kind.

Finally, to be accepted as a Games sponsor, each organisation was requested to ensure the materials it procured, its manufacturing

methods and business activities complied with the relevant national or industrial environmental standards. Sponsors also had to commit to maintaining a good environmental public image and to providing environmentally friendly products for the Games.

10.3 SPONSOR INITIATIVES AND CAMPAIGNS

Eliminating HFCs in refrigeration and air-conditioning

One Worldwide Olympic Partner, Coca Cola, was part of a coalition called ‘Refrigerants, Naturally’, which was launched in 2004. The initiative was supported by UNEP and Greenpeace to promote environmentally-friendly cooling technologies. Coca-Cola ensured that all of its soft-drink coolers (5,658 in total) in the Olympic venues were free of ozone depleting hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

Coca-Cola's coolers and vending machines were instead powered by carbon dioxide (CO₂). Ironically, while CO₂ is a potent greenhouse gas, when used as refrigerant it has a negligible impact on the climate especially when compared to the impact of HFCs on the ozone layer. In May 2008, Coca-Cola announced that by 2010, the company would deploy 100,000 CO₂ refrigerators worldwide.

Greenpeace recognized Coca-Cola's efforts to take on the environment-friendly cooling issue beyond the Beijing Games but has maintained that Coca-Cola needs to do much more, as 100,000 coolers represents less than 1 per cent of the company's 11 million refrigeration units.

More eco-friendly air conditioners

China's largest home appliance manufacturer and a Beijing 2008 sponsor, Haier, provided more than 30 products for the Games. Haier was praised for promoting prototypes of climate-friendly and energy efficient solar-based air conditioners.

Haier also provided Coca-Cola with HFC-free coolers. These prototypes, which used water for cooling, were showcased in several venues including the Olympic Village and Olympic Tennis Centre. However, Haier continued to provide commercial coolers using HFCs to other providers, thus most of the Haier coolers used in the venues still relied heavily on HFCs.

General Electric, another Worldwide Olympic Partner, provided solar-powered and water-filtration air conditioning systems for Games venues.

More eco-friendly mobile phones

The official Beijing 2008 Olympic mobile phone was Samsung's first more eco-friendly model

– free of polyvinyl chlorides (PVCs) and brominated flame retardants (BFRs). Samsung, also a Worldwide Partner, launched their new phone at the Games. In support of Beijing's 'Green Olympics' goal, Samsung also promoted its global plan to phase-out in its products BFRs from 1 January 2009, and PVCs from 1 January 2010.

A national-level Partner, China Mobile, initiated a Green-Box Environmental Protection Programme, whereby consumers could recycle used mobile phones and accessories. This was one example of a sponsor initiative which transferred the 'Green Olympics' into everyday life.

The Green Class Tour

The Centre for Environmental Education and Communications joined with the Green Volunteers from Volkswagen Group China to arrange the Green Class National Tour. Launched in June 2007, it was part of the Volkswagen Green Future Environmental Education Initiative.

Volkswagen, a 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games partner, also supported an Olympic tree planting campaign in Inner Mongolia.

Creativity Competition for the Environment

In early 2008, China Mobile launched a creativity competition with environmental protection and energy efficiency as its themes. Through the competition, Beijing residents could suggest environment protection tips by sending text messages. Unfortunately there was little information available to determine the impact and success of this sponsor initiative.

Reducing the carbon footprint of Olympic broadcasters

Innovative high definition video recording equipment provided for the Games by Panasonic, another Worldwide Partner, was praised for its high energy efficiency. The new technology helped each Olympic broadcaster cut CO₂ emissions by around 2

tonnes compared to conventional video recording equipment. Beijing Olympic Broadcasting's Chief Executive Officer, Manolo Romero, said: "The highly environmentally conscious performance of this [equipment] will help achieve the goal of making the Beijing 2008 'environmentally conscious Olympic Games.'"

10.4 ROLE OF SUPPLIERS AND CONTRACTORS

To improve the overall environmental performance of the Games, BOCOG involved other business partners, namely suppliers, caterers, contractors and hoteliers.

Games suppliers

The Olympic Logistics Centre was responsible for assessing BOCOG's entire purchasing needs. The Centre worked with the Construction and Environment Department to verify that potential suppliers complied with environmental laws and regulations, giving preference to companies with

BOCOG and Worldwide Olympic Partner Coca Cola launched a joint water saving campaign involving students at more than 1,000 primary schools



ISO 14001 or similar standards certification.

Merchandise

The Games licensing sub-programme contracted companies to manufacture and sell merchandise which featured the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games logos. Potential licensees were requested to provide evidence of any environmental certifications. The baseline requirement was a certificate issued by the local government that guaranteed the manufacturer complied with all environmental regulations applicable to its products and manufacturing processes.

According to BOCOG's Marketing Department, all 59 licensed manufacturers complied with at least one of these requirements.

BOCOG included an environmental clause in its licensing contract which stated that: "the manufacturer must provide licensed products that meet the governmental and BOCOG environmental requirements and guidelines".

In addition, BOCOG asked its licensed manufacturers to reduce the packaging for licensed products and to use more environmentally friendly materials in their production processes.

Catering

To support the sustainability of catering services during the Games, the Construction and Environment Department developed guidelines entitled, *Environmental Protection Guidelines for Beijing 2008 Catering Services*. The guidelines were implemented in cooperation with the BOCOG Games Services Department which managed accommodation and catering services.

The guidelines provided useful suggestions for catering contractors in the areas of environmental management,

resource protection, pollution control and waste management.

For example, the guidelines suggested that preferential selection of catering companies would apply to companies with ISO 14001 certification. Potential contractors were asked to comply with existing environmental laws and regulations; to use food with green labels, and to take care of their environmental impact, for example by avoiding open air barbecues.

The guidelines also provided energy efficiency advice, suggesting that Games caterers should minimize the use of disposable tableware, cutlery and wooden chopsticks.

The above environmental requirements were met on a voluntary basis, if at all. There is little evidence to confirm how many caterers adopted the guidelines. Furthermore, there was no mechanism in place to monitor the impact before, during or after the Games.

Greenpeace stated publicly that due to a lack of information they were unable to assess whether catering companies used disposable chopsticks, which would have been against the spirit of the environmental guidelines for caterers.

Accommodation

One of the main tasks of the BOCOG Games Services Department was to contract the hotels required to welcome the Olympic Family (i.e. the International Olympic Committee and the International Sport Federation).

In 2004, the Construction and Environment Department developed guidelines for hotels, the *Environmental Protection Guidelines for the Beijing 2008 Hotel Services*. The guidelines included suggestions to improve energy efficiency and water conservation at contracted hotels.

For instance, the BOCOG

guidelines suggested hotels increase the temperature of their air conditioning systems by 1°C in the summer and decrease the temperature of heaters by 1°C in the winter. Hotels were urged to use energy saving light bulbs and were given energy information cards to distribute as part of an initiative by environmental NGO, Global Village of Beijing.

The guidelines were an appendix to BOCOG's standard Agreement on Olympic accommodation and reception services. Again, the environmental guidelines were voluntary, not compulsory. However, to promote their uptake, BOCOG provided training for hotel managers and their staff about environmental aspects of the accommodation sector.

Green Travel Hotel standard

In 2006, the China National Travel Administration launched a new environmental standard, called the 'Green Travel Hotel (LB/T007—2006)' which applied to hotels contracted for the Games. It was designed to strengthen the BOCOG guidelines and increase the environmental performance of the hotel sector.

In October 2006, the Beijing Green Hotel Assessment Committee began assessing the 637 Beijing

star-rated hotels against the Green Travel Hotel standard. By the end of 2006, 77 hotels were ranked as Gold Leaf and 57 hotels were awarded Silver Leaf status.

BOCOG and the China National Travel Administration were determined that hotels which met the Green Travel Hotel standard should also be certified as complying with the BOGOC guidelines. In February 2007, the environmental protection efforts by Olympic contracted hotels were audited. According to advice provided to UNEP, all contracted properties met the Green Travel Hotel standard.

10.5 COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As discussed in UNEP's 2007 Environmental Review, environmental performance was part of the selection process for Games sponsors and other partners.

This is not common practice for major sports events. For example, Official Partners of the FIFA World Cup are not assessed on the basis of their environmental performance. The use of environmental guidelines by BOCOG was therefore an important development.





The "Green" Beijing Hotel

However, the overall consideration of environmental credentials during the selection of local sponsors for the Beijing 2008 Games was weak, with no mandatory requirements for potential sponsors. Because of this, some sponsors missed an opportunity to reinforce their reputation as socially and environmentally responsibly companies. This ultimately diminished the role of sponsors in contributing to the 'Green Olympics' and was countered only by proactive environmental campaigns initiated by individual sponsors.

Recommendations for sponsors

The IOC should be encouraged to formalise the way in which Worldwide Olympic Partners integrate environmental considerations into their operations and provision of services for the Games. As observed in Beijing and at previous Games, several of these partners

are already eager to promote their environmental profile. This could be a good signal for encouraging all sponsors to follow suit.

As part of the selection criteria for national sponsors and partners for the Games, future organizing committees should be encouraged to reinforce the environmental criteria that were used for the Beijing Games and, where possible, include some mandatory or baseline environmental requirements for sponsors and other partners.

BOCOG released a comprehensive set of guidelines for an environmentally sound screening for the procurement of products and services discussed earlier in this chapter. There is however, insufficient information to assess the following:

- how ambitious the required standards were compared to international standards;
- what role they played

within the procurement or selection process (as most of them definitively were not mandatory);

- which partners did meet the requirements, and
- what was the overall impact on their products and services?

There was, unfortunately, no comprehensive monitoring process to evaluate whether partners adhered to these measures. Based on the available information, no systematic assessment is possible.

Recommendations for suppliers and contractors

Future Olympic Games Organizing Committees are encouraged to develop mandatory guidelines on the following processes:

- Suppliers - The focus of these guidelines should be more

about the product than the production process;

- Merchandisers - Compare products and services of various suppliers and ensure that licensing rights include strict environmental benchmarks;
- Caterers – Encourage the approach of BOCOG and ensure better monitoring processes, and
- Accommodation providers - The guidelines for hotels and other accommodation providers should include more quantifiable performance indicators and a comprehensive monitoring process.

Such guidelines should include incentives for companies to comply with sustainability requirements and a transparent, reliable process for assessing the environmental impact of the wide range of contractors and suppliers.



