

# CUSTOMER FOCUSED RESEARCH IN A SPORTS ENVIRONMENT: A STUDY OF SPECTATOR ATTENDANCE

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**Abstract:**

**Purpose:** *This paper reports the main findings of a 290 respondent questionnaire survey carried out 'live' amongst home spectators at a sporting fixture.*

**Methodology:** *The methodology used for designing the questionnaire by means of a Fans Forum and distributing and collecting questionnaires to and from home spectators is novel and can be used by other researchers.*

**Findings:** *The paper identifies the main factors that influence attendance and the initiatives to attract new or lapsed supporters. Amongst the main findings is that those spectators who make regular contributions to the club through a range of schemes and are members of its Independent Supporters Association rate club and players public profiles higher and perceive season tickets and ground entrance prices better value than non-members, and are also more likely to visit the club shop to purchase merchandise. Also reported in the paper are follow-up discussions with lapsed fans.*

**Originality/value of paper:** *This paper reports a project carried out by a supporter's Forum of a Rugby League Club into the means of increasing attendance at home games. There are sparse details in the literature of similar projects of its type and scale being undertaken in sporting arenas. Therefore the methodology adopted, the questionnaire details and the findings can be useful in other sporting environments.*

**Key Words:** *Attendance, Sports, Service Quality, Relationship Marketing.*