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Sports

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CLUB IMAGE AS A MARKETING TOOL 1

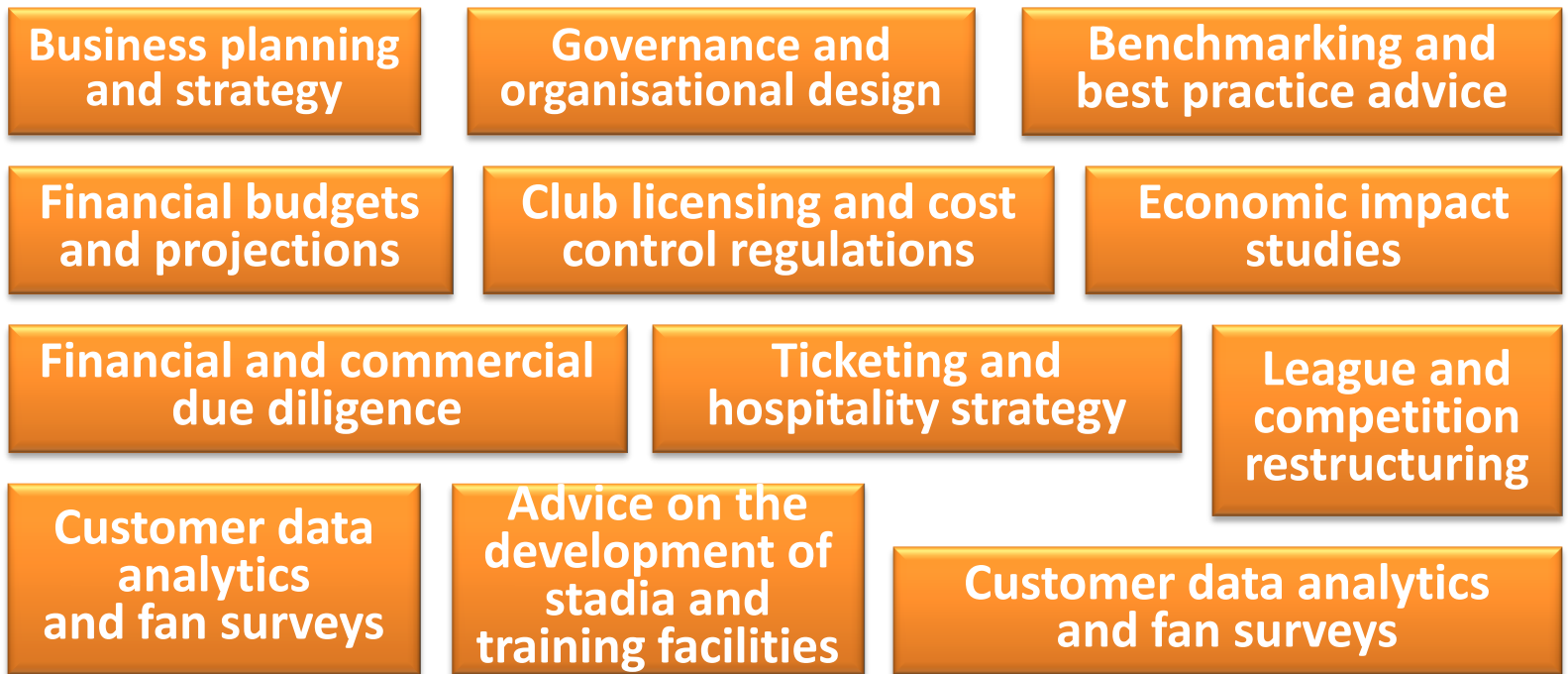
Tips to improve club logo



Partnering with the following sports businesses



to provide the following services



in order to achieve the following results



Introduction



Football, like every other sport, sells performance. The quality of a team's performance and its on-the-pitch triumphs are the products the public want. The portion of the public that becomes addicted to a team's product forms the fan-base.

Like every product on sale, packaging is an essential part of the prospective consumer's attraction. A good packaging creates a nice first-impression, but the success of the product is in the repeat patronage of the consumer.

Nobody wants to be a fan of a losing team any more than people want to identify with a less-than-satisfactory product. The goal of every team's management and director is to ensure a colourful marriage of professional team-play and outstanding image.

Good play makes people want to watch your team, while a well-crafted image makes people buy club merchandise .

This book is a guide that provides tips to club management for developing outstanding, world-class logo and colours, as a foundation for creating an overall look-and-feel for the club. This all-encompassing effect will include club stationeries, social media, website, outlets, kits and merchandise.

This book is primarily concerned with improving soccer business in Nigeria, and growing the sector into a viable business worthy of the attention, partnership and sponsorship enjoyed in other parts of the world. The ideas will work in any professional sporting environment.

Who wants to buy trash?

Q: What is an image?

**A: (1) A picture created in one's mind of (or about) a person, group or thing.
(2) The way someone or something appears to other people.**

- Scholastic Children's Dictionary



A survey of 600 respondents carried out in 8 football viewing centres across Lagos Metropolis tells us what we already know:

Q: Would you pay same (as you pay in a viewing centre) to watch an NPFL match?

YES = 7% NO = 93%

Q: Are you a fan of any team playing in the NPFL?

YES = 13% NO = 87%

Q: Are you a fan of any team playing in the EPL, or any other European League?

YES = 98% NO = 2%

Q: Do you own a club jersey (new, original, 2nd-hand, or 'Aba-made') of your favourite European club?

YES = 75% NO = 25%

Q: Have you considered buying the team jersey of an NPFL team?

YES = 0% NO = 100%

Q: Will you buy a product of an NPFL team?

YES = 9% NO = 91%



436 people recognised above jersey without its logo, and over 300 people could identify what club uses the logo, with the club's name erased.



94%

Respondents identified clubs just by looking at parts of their logos above.



Most recognised

398 People who knew which clubs use these logos

25 People who confused the logos of Enyimba & Wikki Tourists

When shown the home jerseys of **5** top-flight professional clubs in Nigeria (name-prints and logos removed):

NONE of the respondents could identify **4**, while only **21** guessed **KANO PILLARS** jersey right.

Poorest Outing!



100%
Everyone knew and liked these logos!



0%

Vs



100%

Given a choice between Warri Wolves FC logo and my make-shift version, nobody wanted the former...

The case for a great logo

Overall Public Perception:

How people see your football club is critical to the club's acceptance. Your efforts on the pitch must be complemented by an off-pitch spectator-engagement plan. This is even more needful, given the Nigerian 'market' where stadium stands are almost empty at every match venue. There may be no income from match tickets, but this is not the only means to rake in revenue. Merchandising is not given priority in Nigeria because club owners do not necessarily see the venture as a commercially viable business.

A take-away from the survey conducted is that the public can hardly identify your club by its logo. It is near impossible to then expect them to identify with your team, buy match tickets, or go to the stadium (especially, given other challenges. See **Growing The Super Fan**).

Image Audit and Reputation Risk Management:

The responsibility for promoting the general image of the professional league, and the game, rests with the League Management Company (LMC). However, every club is primarily responsible for the protection and advancement of its own image, through careful planning and monitoring. Therefore, a club must have:

- An Image/Brand Management Policy as part of its Marketing plan. This will show the accurate club logo and colours, acceptable forms of usage, and copyright/trademark elements, as well as quality control measures.
- A fail-proof quality control measure that incorporates media enlightenment, rapport and monitoring. This should be a critical deliverable for the Public Relations/Marketing Manager/Director.



Why is a great logo important?

To the League:

- League sponsor expects a certain quality-level in image, organisation, quality control and monitoring, and professionalism.
- Watered down image quality confuses the public, shows up league/clubs as lacking in taste, and causes public indifference and disaffection.
- Professionally designed image of clubs in the league enhances public perception, and increases interest of prospective stakeholders.
- Nicely crafted image instills partners' and sponsors' confidence in the league's brand. Every participating club benefits from this.



- The league becomes attractive to top corporate brands looking for co-branding and endorsement opportunities.

To the Club:

- Club's image quality affects the mentality and carriage of players.
- Club's image (together with an outstanding performance) influences a positive public perception, and creates goodwill. This is critical to establishment of a subscribing fan-base.
- An improved club image serves as a business tool to attract investors, sponsors and partners.
- Outstanding logo and image are the bedrock of merchandising. Kids buy Ben 10 and Barbie items because they identify with them; fans buy club items because the logo and colours are well known and liked.

Licensing Benefits

Developing a marketable logo and image will help your club comply with **Article 15** of the NFF **Club Licensing Regulations**. The sections primarily affected are:

B.03 – MERCHANDISING

A compulsory marketing and promotions criterion for a club licensed to participate in NFF recognised professional competitions is sale of club merchandise to the public.

A club cannot have branded merchandise without a properly designed logo, supported by easily recognisable club colours. There is no better way to engage and attract your fan-base than creating a unique, professional and artistic logo that they can proudly wear or show off.

B.04 – CLUB WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

Another compulsory criterion. A website is the club's online office, outlet and public relations tool, all rolled into one. A club's social media pages and handles serve as globally accessible customer service and customer engagement 'desks' (see **Club Image As A Marketing Tool 2**).

Your club cannot afford to confuse the public by providing tasteless or inconsistent logos and colours on your online platforms. Nothing puts an organisation in disrepute more than an unreliable public image. On the other hand, a club achieves brand recognition when parts, or all, of its trademarked image are unmistakably identified at a glance. This is the effect your club should fervently desire.



Responsibility for a great logo

Who owns the work?

The responsibility for overseeing the development of an outstanding logo (and indeed, all materials relating to publicity and marketing relations) resides with the **Marketing/Commercial Officer** (in compliance with Article 12, Section P.01, Item 6(c) of NFF Club Licensing Regulations).

What are the deliverables?

- Develop a world-class logo and club image.
- Make branded products of excellent quality.
- Provide sales outlets for branded materials.
- Advertise products for sale to the public.
- Source partnership and sponsorship deals with the corporate world, leveraging on club's brand quality.
- Agree on, and deliver, set income targets from souvenir sales.
- Monitor club trademark usage internally and externally, for quality control. This includes vetting club stationery supplied, and media and partners' usage of club logo and colours.
- Set a policy standard for periodic review of the club's image.
- Encourage quality feedback from fans and the public through opinion polls, surveys and discussions.

Good quality is NOT about money! It is mostly about imagination and innovation. These two talents will save you loads of money. They help you set a standard below which you cannot operate, or accept just any output.

Carling Beer using co-branding to promote Orlando Pirates FC brand.



Making a great logo

What you need

- A group of at least 5 artistically-minded people. They may not be able to draw if their lives depended on it, but they can appreciate good art. Having at least 1 fashion-wise lady in the group is an advantage.
- An excellence-oriented designer that can show you how image delivery ties in with club's overall goal of becoming a winning brand.
- 1 or 2 artistically-inclined children.

What to do

- Get critique of present logo from the group. If ALL like your logo, there may not be any need to change/improve. Get a second opinion from a design professional, just to be sure.
- Draw up a list of all details of

the club you want the designer to take into consideration. Colours, ideology, vision, mission statement, strategic intent, are all important.

- Engage the designer. It is not enough that a designer studied or knows Art. The most important thing is how creative a designer is.
- Let designer give you at least 3 or 4 different designs. Do not rush to accept the first output you are offered.
- Run all outputs by your group of 5, a few fans, and most especially those art-loving children. The harder it is for everyone to agree on the 'best' design sample, the better for the club.
- If these groups cannot agree on 'the' new logo, get the opinions of the management team, staff, friends and the players. That should do the trick!
- Get different formats of the approved logo design (JPG, PNG, GIF, SVG) and let the public know they are available for media use, and non-commercial purposes only.



Quality Control & Usage Monitoring

Managing Image Quality

The most effective way to apply quality control, as means to managing the image (and reputation) of the club, is to include the following control measures in the club's business plan, and ensure that a critical performance standard is attached to the role of the responsible officer:

- Marketing Officer/Manager/Director must vet and approve all final renderings of club image before use.
- Suppliers of souvenirs and club stationeries must be provided adequate materials and guidance. They may be required to also provide real-life samples of projects before final output.
- Engage partners, sponsors and the media, in order to fully enlighten them on acceptable ways to use club image.
- Periodically search online and in news print to observe how club's logo is used, and proactively liaise with responsible parties to correct usage errors.

Monitoring Image Usage

You have to monitor online and real-space usages of the club's image and identity against trademark and rights infringement. This becomes more necessary as a club becomes more popular, and public demand for its merchandise increases. The harder task is monitoring real-world usage:

- Search online periodically to see if a third party has the club's permission for use of its brand image.
- Observe and investigate in real-space the souvenirs and outfits worn by supporters. Where these are not from club-approved stores, you may need the help of the Police to stop illegal use of club's brand.
- Use the electronic and print media to sensitise fans on the need and implications of buying approved souvenirs/wears from the right sources.
- Let interested independent suppliers enjoy the success of your brand. Sell them usage rights, and protect their rights.
- Do not over-price your products to the extent that even your fans begin to find pirated or inferior products more appealing.

Case-studies

WURA UNITED FC

A football club in development, wanting to get 'it' right from onset.

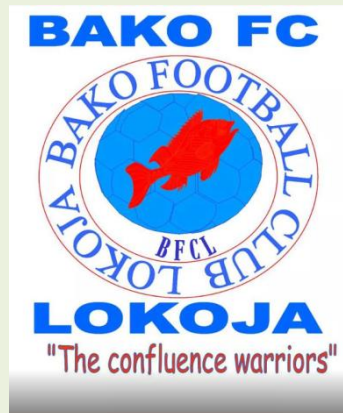


LAGOS STATE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (LSFA)

LSFA was offered a valid reason to review and update their logo. The visionary management is looking into it.



BAKO FC, LOKOJA



Bako Football Club plays in the Kogi State League. Their desire to have a professional, befitting logo made the owner/founder, Hon. Musa Bako, talk to me.

FREE GUIDEBOOKS

We do not assume that every club owner wants or aspires towards glory, and business success, or that everyone will achieve the same level of result. However, for those interested, here are a few free research-based guidebooks for your use...

Read/download them at www.wise.ng

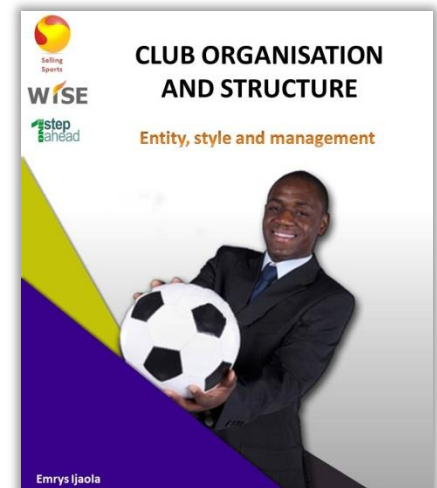
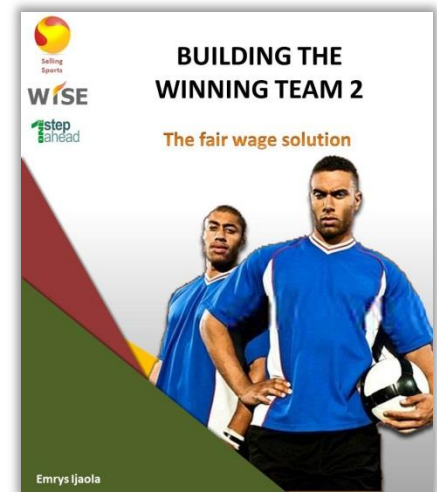
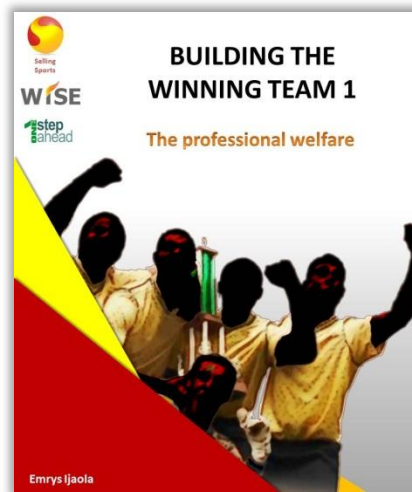
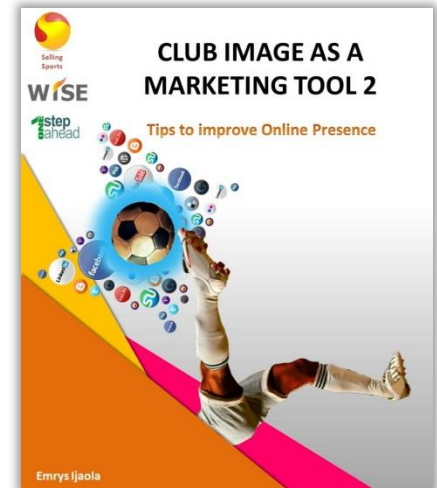
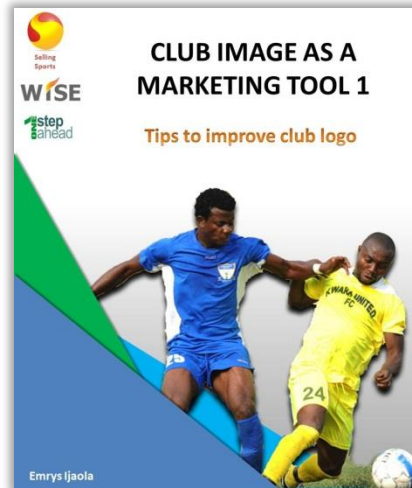
Contact for further enquiries and/or professional assistance :

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Guidebooks from the author



What's on our website

- Guidelines on football business
- Training e-books for academies
- Affiliated coaching courses
- Advanced management courses
- Player grooming courses
- Officials' workshops

Why I Do This:

I am a sports enthusiast, and also a director of a sports and entertainment business. I believe in the triumph of innovation, and usefulness of experience where it promotes growth. I believe in capitalistic pursuit of wealth, and that good financial returns is the just reward for innovation and growth. Having learnt a lot about how sports should be run professionally, I am motivated to share my ideas. I also appreciate the fact that not all clubs can afford to pay a consultant, or (as it appears) employ sports-business experts; and this is no reason for them not to benefit from a little knowledge of industry best practice, without the hassles of time-consuming 'fact-finding'.

I wear many caps. I am a research-enthusiast, business development specialist and designer, amongst other endeavours. I enjoy new experiences, and for this, I have been tagged an adventurer by some acquaintances.

Emrys Ijaola

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**WURA INTERNATIONAL SPORTS
ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED**

