

FAN INVOLVEMENT AND SPONSORSHIP EFFECTS OF UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA  
ATHLETICS

By

BRIAN CANNING

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To my Dad who has made everything possible.

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School  
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Brian Canning

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A considerable amount of research exists on the concept of involvement. Fan involvement, however, has been paid far less attention, particularly when paired with the concept of sponsorship effect. Our study measured both purchase intention and brand/sponsor image using fan involvement and the effect of sponsorship in regards to University of Florida athletics.

Participants took part in one of three versions of a web-based experiment. The versions differed only in the type of print advertisement given as a stimulus. The advertisements for all three versions were identical for the brand Glaceau Vitamin Water. The first version had no sponsorship included, the second had an added logo and text deeming the brand an “official sponsor of Gator football”, and the third had an added logo and text deeming the brand an “official sponsor of Gator baseball”.

We hypothesized that respondents with high levels of fan involvement would result in expressing higher levels of purchase intention and more positive levels of brand/sponsor image. We also predicted that respondents who were given the Gator football sponsored advertisement would show the highest levels of purchase intention and brand/sponsor image, followed by the Gator baseball version of the advertisement, and finally the lowest levels of purchase intention and brand/sponsor image would belong to the stimulus that included no official sponsorship. The

final hypotheses predicted that the disparity would be the greatest between high and low involved fans for the experiment using the sponsorship of Gator football pertaining to both brand/image sponsor and purchase intentions.

Hypotheses were supported in the situations of predicting fans with higher fan involvement expressing high levels of brand/sponsor image and purchase intentions. However, in the instance of the type of sponsorship that proved to be the most effective in participants expressing the highest level of purchase intentions this was not the case. The version that used Gator baseball as an official sponsor actually proved to have the highest levels of purchase intention over the predicted Gator football version. The final two hypotheses also proved to be incorrect as the experiments with no sponsorship proved to have the most disparity between high versus low involvement for brand/sponsor image and purchase intentions. Future research may be able to determine why these hypotheses proved to be incorrect.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

A quick glance around a sports stadium reveals the varying degrees of fan involvement throughout the stands, from the fan who is painted head to toe screaming their head off to the fan who is sitting quietly semi-watching the game while chatting with friends (Wann, 2004). This study attempts to understand this incredible scene. It takes a look at how the varying levels of fan involvement affect a consumer's purchase intentions and how they view the brand that officially sponsors an athletic team. In this study the football and baseball teams at the University of Florida will be the focus.

On June 7, 2002, England's industrial sector was a ghost town as nearly 20% of the workforce or about 6 million workers called in sick, not because of a nasty virus, but because it was the opening round of the 2002 FIFA World Cup (Bryant & Raney, 2006). This is an example of the popularity and importance of sports to people all over the globe, from soccer hooligans in England to the raucous college football scene at The Swamp in Gainesville, Florida, as the Gators take the field. One question that arises from the immense popularity of sports is how do businesses capitalize on these millions upon millions of fans, and can they be reached through sponsorship?

There is a need for studying this topic because sports fan involvement and behavior from a business perspective may be pivotal in terms of marketing and sales of sports tickets, paraphernalia, television contracts, endorsements, and anything else fan related, to sports either collegiate or professional. The study of sports fan involvement gives insight into the fan's relationship with athletics and what most attracts them and why. If the aspects of sports, such as sponsorship, which fans pay the most attention to can be measured, then marketers can focus on

these aspects in marketing communication. An example of this is whether it is beneficial to be a sports sponsor.

Attempting to understand the difference between targeting strategy for high versus low involved fans will lead to answers about how to increase brand equity, understanding the types of sports consumer, and ultimately how to increase profits. By segmenting the sports fan into varying levels of involvement it will be easier to identify how effective specific aspects of marketing, such as sponsorship, will be.

A starting point would involve understanding the behaviors, motivations, and psychology behind fan involvement. Past research on involvement that will be reviewed focuses on sports in the United States and will lead to understanding the level of fan involvement within college football and baseball at the University of Florida and its subsequent effect on sponsorship.

The concept of fan involvement has been conceptualized as "...the extent to which consumers identify with, and are motivated by, their engagement and affiliation with particular leisure activities" (Meenaghan, 2001, p.106). This particular definition has been used for a number of recent research studies, therefore this will be the definition used for the purpose of this study. The definition of sponsorship that will be used, for the same reasons, is "an investment, in cash or in kind, in an activity, in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that activity" (Madrigal, 2001, p. 147; Meenaghan, 1991, p. 36).

The purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which a fan's involvement level affects the success or failure of a sponsor of Gator football and baseball. The proposed research question becomes, "Will participants who display higher levels of fan involvement with Gator athletics demonstrate stronger purchase intentions and positive brand/sponsor image than

participants with lower levels of fan involvement when a product is deemed an ‘official sponsor?’”

This study is relevant to marketers and potential sponsors because the research considers whether sponsorship works and on whom. The relationship between the level of involvement and sponsorship is important because it can be used to identify if sponsorship is appropriate for a given marketing plan or if the sponsorship will be lost on the intended group. Sponsorship and sales are key contributors to maintaining a profitable college sports business. Thus knowing how to maximize these fundamentals is important.

This study is also important to top current football sponsors such as SunTrust Bank, Pepsi, and Nike, who not only sponsor Gator football, but also heavily advertise in the venue of Ben Hill Griffin Stadium. These sponsors are paying to have their businesses advertised by Gator football, and it is important to know if their brands benefit. The bottom line is that businesses pay for advertising to maximize profits.

Theoretically this study will contribute to an area that has not been highly developed. Involvement has been thoroughly researched, but fan involvement is in need of more research. Furthermore, by combining the areas of fan involvement and sponsorship, this study attempts to research an even more underdeveloped topic. The intent of this study is to contribute to the understanding of fan involvement, sponsorship, and sports marketing in general on a very practical and useful level.

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding fan involvement begins with understanding the broader term of involvement, which has been defined in a number of ways such as, “an individual, internal state of arousal with intensity, direction, and persistence properties” (Andrews, Durvasula, & Akhter, 2001, p.28). This definition essentially means involvement is not primarily focused on the products, advertising content, media, objects, or situation, but the actual individual consumer. The individual’s reaction measured by an internal state of arousal to marketing is what makes up involvement (Andrews et al., 2001). This is by no means the only definition of involvement and Zaichkowsky (1985) argues that the reasons for the range of definitions and measurements for involvement are due to differences in how scholars apply the term. To exemplify, the literature deals with involvement with products (Howard & Sheth 1969; Hupfer & Gardner, 1971), advertisements (Krugman, 1965), and purchase decisions (Clarke & Belke, 1978).

### **Types of Involvement**

There are a multitude of types of involvement beginning with involvement regarding the consumer, called felt involvement. Felt involvement is more specifically defined as, “a consumer’s overall subjective feeling of personal relevance” (Celsi & Olson, 1988, p.211). It is essentially the psychological experience of the consumer and their motivation. Felt involvement only occurs in specific circumstances that take place when a consumer’s personal relevance for an object or event is in a certain state of mind (Celsi & Olson, 1998). It can even be described as an experience that is propelled by a combination of motivation that is tied to an individual that reacts to an outside influence or situation (Celsi & Olsen, 1998). For example, if a person has a strong Republican political tie and is in the middle of a heated debate regarding an issue, and a

political advertisement comes on television asking for support of the Republican Party, that person may experience felt involvement and take action.

Felt involvement can be broken into four types: enduring, situational, cognitive, and affective (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). Enduring involvement is defined as, “when we show interest in an offering or activity over a long period of time” (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007, p.51). An example would be a sports enthusiast who loves to go to sporting events, play sports, and shows an enduring commitment to these activities. Consumers can show enduring interest in a variety of different activities or genres, but the typical consumer only exhibits enduring involvement for a select few (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007).

Situational involvement is temporary involvement in an offering or activity (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). An example of situational involvement is if a consumer buys a new plasma television when their old television breaks. The consumer has no previous enduring involvement with plasma televisions, but is in the market for one because their old television broke. After the initial search period, involvement with the new plasma television category dramatically declines (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). Another example of situational involvement is gift giving because the involvement is high when the consumer is trying to decide upon a gift to purchase, but then dramatically decreases afterward (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007).

Cognitive involvement is defined as, “the consumer’s interest in thinking about and processing information related to his or her goal. The goal therefore includes learning about the offering” (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007, p.52). An example of cognitive involvement would be a BMX enthusiast attempting to learn all about Matt Hoffman as a bicycle stunt man. The process of learning about their goal would be demonstrating cognitive involvement.

Affective involvement is defined as when “the consumer is willing to expend emotional energy in or has heightened feelings about an offering or activity” (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). An example of affective involvement would be the Salvation Army using an ad campaign to evoke emotional responses that result in donating clothes to a cause. The heightened feelings created by the act of giving are what make the involvement affective.

The different types of involvement previously mentioned focused on the individual and involvement with product categories, brands, ads, media, and decisions. These are the objects of involvement (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). Objects of involvement are important to identify because a person can have multiple objects of involvement between these categories.

Objects of involvement consist of showing either cognitive or affective involvement within product categories like motorcycles, clothing, or plasma televisions (Zaichkowsky, 1985). This means that the consumer is either processing or expending emotional energy in a certain product category.

Involvement with brands is based on the idea of brand loyalty. This means that consumers are loyal to a specific brand and will often refuse to buy another brand because they are so committed (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). The consumer can show either cognitive or affective involvement with brands (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007).

Involvement with advertisements relates to a consumer’s motivation towards the ad, and involvement is based on the level of attention the consumer gives an advertisement and the level at which the advertisement is processed (Andrews et al., 2001). High involvement is typically attributed to personal relevance (Andrews et al., 2001). Other reasons for involvement in advertisements include interest level (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). As an example, if an

advertisement used a person's favorite celebrity, their involvement with the advertisement would increase because of that interest.

Involvement with a medium is "when a consumer may get involved with the medium in which an ad is placed" (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007 p.53). The level of involvement with a medium typically varies with the specific type of medium. Television, for example, has low involvement because of the lack of interaction with the viewer. Print media is higher in levels of involvement due to greater interaction with the medium (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). The exception to the rule for television is broadcasts that create interaction with the viewer such as "Deal or No Deal," where viewers from home can participate by calling or texting in to play along and win prizes.

Response involvement involves the consumer and his or her specific behaviors and decisions (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). This means that the consumer may be more interested in the process of buying as opposed to the actual purchase. It could also equate to an individual who enjoys sporting events, not because of sports in general, but perhaps because they have a specific interest within sports. For example, it could be the team playing, a particular player, or perhaps the city in which the event is located (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007).

Leisure involvement is defined as, "unobservable states of motivation, arousal, or interest toward a recreational activity or associated product that is evoked by a particular stimulus or situation that possess drive properties" (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman, 2002). Leisure involvement has recently been adapted and deemed appropriate to use in sport consumer and behavioral research (Funk et al., 2002). This involvement construct applied to sports and its fans gives a better understanding of motives, stimuli, and situations that direct attitudes and behaviors (Funk et al., 2002). Behaviors in this leisure context are defined by indicators such as attendance,

merchandise, and media consumption (Funk et al., 2002). Attitudinal formation in this context of leisure involvement is defined as loyalty, preferences, and commitment (Funk et al., 2002).

A consumer's involvement level clearly affects purchase decision therefore advertisers need to take into account these different levels of involvement. Low involvement is characterized by a general lack of personal involvement. For example, a television commercial airs, and the spokesperson for the product is Tiger Woods. "Person A" watching the commercial is not very interested in golf so he or she does not make a personal connection with it. This lack of connection is an example of low involvement for Person A.

High involvement, on the other hand, is characterized by having a high degree of personal involvement. High involvement is not limited to attention, interest, or excitement, but more importantly measures the number of conscious "bridging experiences," connections, or personal references per minute that the viewer makes between their own life and the stimulus (Krugman, 1979). For example, "Person B" watches the exact same commercial featuring Tiger Woods. This person has an extraordinary interest in golf and will have a high level of involvement. A reason for understanding this concept is that the impact is immensely different. The low involvement person would require a lot more time for a stimulus to change their attitude, while the high involvement person would be much more accepting (Krugman, 1979).

### **Measuring and Defining Involvement**

The conceptualization and measurement of involvement can be a controversial topic for advertising researchers, but it is also vital for a number of reasons (Andrews et al., 2001). There is a need for a comprehensive, detailed, and operational framework (Andrews et al., 2001). The theoretical approach revolves around the involvement construct. The recent involvement research has been directed at characterizing involvement and developing better instruments to measure the construct to satisfy this need (Funk et al., 2002).

Involvement theory is a continually developing theory that has been applied to consumer behavior research to attempt to better understand purchase behavior (Laurent & Krapferer, 1985). The five antecedents of involvement presented by Laurent & Krapferer (1985) include: importance, risk importance, risk probability, sign, and pleasure. These antecedents are often used to explore sports and leisure activities, however, these will not be an aspect used in this study.

### **Previous Involvement Studies**

An important study of involvement to consider involves building a framework for conceptualizing and measuring the involvement construct (Andrews et al., 2001). The Andrews, et al (2001) study presented a framework that is comprehensive, detailed, and operational integrating all of the involvement issues. It does so by looking at the properties of the involvement construct, while separating the construct from its antecedents, consequences, and potential confounding constructs. The definition of involvement the study used was, “involvement is an individual, internal state of arousal with intensity, direction, and persistent properties” (Andrews et al., 2001, p. 28). The focus of the study is on the individual’s involvement, as opposed to involvement with products, advertising content, media, objects or situations. The individual’s state of arousal was the key determinant to measure the response with respect to the given stimuli (Andrews et al., 2001). An important distinction to recognize among the research is whether involvement is *evoked by* the stimuli (products, ads, media) or involvement is the individual’s arousal levels with *respect to* the stimuli (Andrews et al., 2001).

Andrews et al., (2001) argue that antecedents such as risk and familiarity must be avoided as being defined as involvement. The research argued that this is inferring that involvement can be defined by terms that are not involvement. The study sets the framework for conceptualizing involvement using three properties for an internal state of arousal: intensity, direction, and

persistence (Bettman, 1979 & Shimp, 1982). These three properties are typically associated with motivation, but the authors describe motivation as a more broad term of involvement (Andrews et al., 2001). The study creates concepts of involvement made up of involvement intensity as the degree of arousal, the direction of involvement as the target of the involvement intensity level, and the involvement persistence as the duration of the involvement intensity (Andrews et al., 2001).

The important results for the framework of measuring involvement in the study were identifying the four major groupings of involvement conceptualizations: 1) Attention/processing strategies 2) Personal/situational involvement 3) Audience/process involvement and 4) Enduring/product involvement (Andrews et al., 2001, p. 30). These involvement conceptualizations broken down into four groupings simplify the framework of the concept of involvement.

An additional involvement study that has proven valuable looks at the role of involvement in the attention and comprehension processes (Celsi & Olsen, 1988). The Celsi and Olsen (1988) study focused on felt involvement, which they defined as referring to a consumer's subjective and personal relevance. The study showed that felt involvement played as large a role as motivation in the attention and comprehension process of consumers (Celsi & Olsen, 1988). The researchers accomplished this by finding the role of involvement in the consumer's attention and comprehensive process. The decision to use the motivational role of involvement in the process contributed to an area less researched when compared to ability and opportunity (Celsi & Olsen, 1988). The model used in the study identifies individual difference and situational factors that together determine levels of involvement the consumer felt (Celsi & Olsen, 1988). The researchers describe process factors such as physical and social aspects of the consumer's

immediate environment. Also, intrinsic characteristics of the individual were used to create the consumer's overall level of involvement and ultimately their motivation to process information (Celsi & Olsen, 1988). The results were found by varying the levels of intrinsic sources of personal relevance and situational sources of personal relevance. This was achieved through such factors as the amount of attention and comprehension effort, focus of attention and comprehension processes, elaboration during comprehension, and domain knowledge (Celsi & Olsen, 1988).

The researchers used advertisements for tennis and the product categories of racquets, shoes, and strings to test these levels because they were of no theoretical interest in the study (Celsi & Olsen, 1988). The researchers demonstrated that the consumer's domain knowledge combined with felt involvement was related to various stages and outputs of the consumer's attention and comprehension process (Celsi & Olsen, 1988).

### **Fan Involvement**

The connection from involvement to fan involvement has recently been explored more thoroughly by researchers who are looking at fan and spectator behavior (Capella, 2001). A pertinent study to this exploration has been the development of measuring sports fans' involvement through a fan behavior questionnaire. The definition of fan involvement in research often consists of both behavioral and emotional components (Capella, 2001). Capella (2001) looked at involvement through three scales: emotionality, positive behavior, and negative behavior.

The scale of emotionality presented emotional responses some fans experience with their team in general or during a game either negative or positive (Capella, 2001). The negative behavior scale consisted of items that showed support for their team in a harmful way. This was defined as harmful to oneself or others and any additional behavior deemed "out of control"

(Capella, 2001). The positive behavior scales consisted of items that showed support for a team in a positive or even neutral way that was not harmful (Capella, 2001). Capella (2001) created the items through literature based on existing theories regarding sports fan behavior.

The results of the study showed high correlation between emotionality and negative behavior scales, only moderate correlation between emotionality and positive behavior scales, and moderate correlation between positive behavior and negative behavior scales (Capella, 2001).

An additional study that looked at fan involvement from a different perspective was interpreting the difference between a “fan” and a “fanatic.” The study attempted to develop a scale to measure sports involvement capable of deciphering between the two types of fans (Shank & Beasley, 1998). The study explored the relationship between sports related behaviors and sports involvement. It led to the finding that sports involvement had both cognitive and affective dimensions that could be measured by indicators such as television, magazines, newspapers, events, and participation in sports (Shank & Beasley, 1998).

The researches came to this conclusion by discovering that sports fans are highly involved with varying levels of emotional attachment to sports. The study created a scale to specifically assess sports involvement from a psychological perspective as opposed to behavioral perspective (Shank & Beasley, 1998). The researchers developed an involvement scale in the context of sports to capture the sports involvement construct, while also discovering the relationship between sports involvement and the sports fan’s habits. The habits included media consumption, exercise habits/participation in sports, and demographics (Shank & Beasley, 1998).

The key difference in this study is “the psychological concept of sports involvement is not participation, but rather the perceived interest in and personal importance of sports to an

individual” (Shank & Beasley, 1998, p. 436). The researcher felt that an important reason for the development of the psychological construct of involvement was that involvement might be a good predictor of sports related behaviors (Shank & Beasley, 1998).

Trail, et al (2003) raised the question asking if there is a difference between a “fan” and a “spectator.” The researchers questioned whether the words should be used synonymously. The study examined motives and points of attachment at collegiate football games. The results found that fans were motivated by the players and teams involved, while spectators were there for the game itself (Trail et al., 2003). Distinguishing a fan from a spectator from a marketing perspective is monumental because it is marketing to two different breeds (Trail et al., 2003).

When marketing to a fan it becomes important to appeal to the connection between the fan and their team. Promotional efforts about the players, coaches, or anything about “their” team would be deemed more appropriate (Trail et al., 2003). This same approach would most likely not work with a spectator because he or she does not have this same connection or identification with the team. The marketer would need to know this difference and alter their communication to reach this different target (Trail et al., 2003). The researchers felt these differences may exist due to the different motives for consumption behavior between the group considered spectators and the group considered fans (Trail et al., 2003).

The researchers developed three models that dealt with identification or points of attachment and relationships between motives and identification (Trail et al., 2003). The first model “stipulates that seven motives are all represented by a second-order latent variable. This latent variable is directly related to a second-order latent identification-variable that represents seven points of attachment” (Trail et al., 2003, p. 218).

In the second model, motives have been separated into three different latent variables. The first consists of the motives of social support and escape, the second consists solely of the vicarious achievement motive, and the third consists of the aesthetic, drama/eustress, acquisition of knowledge, and appreciation of skill motives (Trail et al., 2003).

The third model was exactly like the second model except that the link between organizational identification and sport identification has been eliminated (Trail et al., 2003).

These three models led to results that showed motives could be separated into three categories. The first category consisted of motives that apply solely to fans of successful teams. The second category was made up of motives that apply only to spectators or fans of unsuccessful teams. The final category consisted of motives that focused on the physical skill of athletes. These three categories of motives applied to both spectators and fans (Trail et al., 2003). These results confirmed the previously mentioned idea that fans differ from spectators in that fans are highly involved with their team and players, while spectators are highly involved more for the playing of the actual game (Trail et al., 2003).

Funk, et al (2002) explored fan involvement by attempting to understand the relationship between consumer motives and involvement with professional sports teams by creating a “team sports involvement” (TSI) model. The model takes into consideration the motivation, arousal, and interest related to a professional sports team. The development of the TSI model attempts to understand sports consumers and the correlation with involvement (Funk et al., 2002).

This study attempted to contribute to the lack of consensus in the literature about the factors that predict the motives and behaviors of consumers of both college and professional sports (Funk et al., 2002 p. 36). Developing an additional model to the original Psychological Continuum Model previously constructed by Funk and James (2001) was the purpose of the

research. The model attempts to give parameters to the psychological connection between an individual and sport or recreation object (Funk et al., 2002).

The PCM model is important to the theoretical development of fan involvement because it used a holistic approach to involvement as a motivational construct to distinguish between levels of psychological connection (Funk et al., 2002). The PCM model used the drive of an individual for motivation within the context of recreation and leisure, while the TSI model developed in this study demonstrates the utility of involvement in understanding the motivation of spectating (Funk et al., 2002).

This study and subsequent TSI model are important to gain a better understanding of the different patterns of involvement useful in segmentation sports research (Funk et al., 2002). Understanding the patterns of individual sport spectators may create involvement profiles. Patterns may include being a season ticket holder or the different types of sporting events attended per season (Funk et al., 2002). Understanding these profiles would be critical to marketing success for team sports (Funk et al., 2002).

### **Sponsorship**

The relationship between fan involvement and the effectiveness of sponsorship is an area of research that has not yet been extensively explored. The principle study used for this research, however, took a look at the effectiveness of sponsorship at an elite college football program. The study discovered that fan involvement is a critical component of sponsorship effectiveness (Dees, Bennett, & Villegas, 2008). The study used the variables of attitude toward the sponsor, goodwill, and fan involvement to measure fans' purchase intentions. These variables were derived from Meenaghan's (2001) theoretical model, which states that attitude toward the sponsor, goodwill, and fan involvement are the three central variables that most affect purchase intention when dealing with the effect of sponsorship (Dees et al., 2008).

The Dees, et al (2008) study asked three research questions: RQ1: Will participants who display higher levels of attitude toward the sponsor demonstrate stronger purchase intentions than participants with lower levels of attitude toward the sponsor? RQ2: Will participants who display higher levels of attitude goodwill demonstrate stronger purchase intentions than participants with lower levels of goodwill? RQ3: Will participants who display higher levels of fan involvement demonstrate stronger purchase intentions than participants with lower levels of fan involvement?

Purchase intention is not the actual purchasing behavior, but a reflection of how the consumer will behave in the future as a consumer (Dees et al., 2008). In the study, the questions asked how each of the three central variables will effect what the consumer intends to purchase because of sponsorship. The study answered these questions by using a cross sectional, non-experimental, exploratory study through a web-based questionnaire. The questionnaire about the football program was given to random participants tailgating outside the stadium before three home games.

The questionnaire measured the four variables by four questions for each variable using a five-point Likert scale, which ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. For example, a question measuring the fan involvement variable stated, "I see myself as a strong fan of [university] football" (Dees et al., 2008). The fan involvement and purchase intention measures were modified from Madrigal's (2001) study of the belief attitude intention hierarchy. The reliability found for fan involvement was  $\alpha = .881$  and purchase intention was  $\alpha = .742$  (Dees et al., 2008).

The results of the Dees, et al (2008) study showed that all three of the variables were significant predictors of consumer purchase intentions at that college football event. In regards to

attitude toward the sponsor, the study showed that individuals who attended the football games and held positive attitudes of the sponsors were much more likely to purchase than those who had less positive views. In terms of goodwill, it was the same finding that attendees who thought the sponsor was supporting their team would be much more likely to purchase than those who did not view the sponsors as supporting their team. Lastly, fan involvement had the same finding, although, the researchers found fan involvement to have less of an impact than the other two variables. The researches stressed that fan involvement was still found to be a critical factor on purchase intention. The study showed that it is important for sponsors to emphasize that buying their product is a way of supporting the team. By doing this a brand can capitalize on the fan involvement-sponsorship relationship.

An additional study that is important in the arena of evaluating sponsorship effectiveness was done by Alexandris, Tsaousi, & James (2007). The study attempted to predict sponsorship outcomes from attitudinal constructs at a professional basketball event (Alexandris et al., 2007). The researchers used three attitudinal constructs consisting of attitude towards the event, sports activity involvement, and belief about sponsorship to see the extent to which each could predict three sponsorships outcomes consisting of sponsor's image, word of mouth, and purchase intention (Alexandris et al., 2007).

The difference in this study is that the researches used sports activity involvement as an alternate for fan involvement. The study operationalized sports activity involvement as, "an unobservable state of motivation, arousal, or interest toward a recreation activity or associated product (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997, p, 246). The researchers then divided the involvement construct into two dimensions: attraction and centrality (Alexandris et al., 2007).

Attraction was defined as the importance the activity holds for an individual and the interest, pleasure, and enjoyment derived from the activity. Centrality was defined as the position an activity has in an individual's lifestyle (Alexandris et al., 2007). The researchers argued that fan involvement is more applicable to products and events in which fans root for one side or the other. The researchers felt that sports activity involvement is more suitable for an event where there are no fans of either team, such as the all-star basketball game used in this particular study (Alexandris et al., 2007). The study assesses the fan's involvement with the sport as opposed to a team or player.

We hypothesized that individuals who have a positive attitude toward the event will be more likely to develop a positive image of the sponsor, engage in positive word of mouth about the sponsor, and express positive purchase intentions (Alexandris et al., 2007). The researchers also hypothesized that individuals who have a higher level of basketball involvement in terms of attraction and centrality are more likely to develop a positive image of the sponsor, express positive word of mouth about the sponsor, and express positive purchase intentions. Finally, the researchers felt that individuals who have a positive belief regarding sponsorship are more likely to be positive in all the previously mentioned areas (Alexandris et al., 2007).

The method for this study involved passing out questionnaires at an all-star basketball event. The initial goal of the survey was to identify if the respondents knew the lone sponsor of the event without a prompt. The questions that made up the instrument used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, about the variables of beliefs about sponsorship, sponsor's image, sports activity involvement attraction, sports activity involvement centrality, purchase intention, and word of mouth.

The most telling result of the study indicated that belief about sponsorship was the best predictor of the of the sponsorship outcomes. The study also indicated that beliefs about sponsorship, attitude towards the event, and involvement in terms of centrality could be predicted and were statistically significant (Alexandris et al., 2007). An additional two sponsorship outcomes of brand image and word of mouth were predicted by beliefs about sponsorship and the centrality aspect of involvement. The final suggestion of the study advised that sports with more involved fans provide better business opportunities for potential sponsors. The researches concluded that it is more important to segment audiences based on fan involvement, which is where further research should be done.

### **University of Florida Athletics**

The University of Florida is a unique institution that can boast both academic and athletic excellence. UF has over 51, 700 students, which comprises the third-largest student enrollments in all the United States (Gatorzone, 2008). The freshman profile for the 2005 class had an average GPA of 4.06 and an SAT score of 1306 (Gatorzone, 2008).

In terms of athletics the University is considered elite. UF is one of only two schools to be in the NACDA National All-Sports top ten every year for the last 24 years (Gatorzone, 2008). The University also became the first school to hold National Championships in both football and basketball in the same calendar and academic year. This was accomplished by the basketball team winning the national title in 2006 and then repeated again in 2007, while the football team won the NCAA title in 2006. In the year 2006-07 alone UF had 62 student-athletes win 145 All-America honors in athletics (Gatorzone, 2008).

Football at the University of Florida is considered the dominant sport. Ben Hill Griffin Stadium is iconic on campus and can seat over 90,000 fans. The school holds two NCAA Titles, one in 1996 along with the previously mentioned title in 2006. The football team will also be

playing in the National Title game again on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Florida can back up its elite status with the fact that it has the highest winning percentage of any Division 1 university since 1990 (Gatorzone, 2008).

Baseball at UF does not have the pedigree that football does. It does have a winning tradition, but not nearly to the extent of the football team. The baseball team does not have a national title and the record for attendance came in 1998 when the average was 2, 631 fans per game (Gatorzone, 2008). The baseball team has attracted a crowd of over 5,000 people only 18 times in the history of the program (Gatorzone, 2008).

Collegiate baseball does not have the fan following of other collegiate sports such as football partly due to the existence of minor league baseball. A large portion of top high school baseball prospects go directly into the minor leagues where they can be paid, as opposed to college baseball where they are not. This is a problem that college football does not have to deal with as the top high school prospects in football typically enter directly into collegiate football. Fans like to see elite players and the lack of elite players in college baseball could directly contribute to the traditional levels of low fan involvement.

### **Fan Involvement's Effect on Sponsorship**

The concept of involvement has received much attention in social psychology, but more recently it has been focused on for its benefits to understanding consumer behavior (Traylor, 1981). Involvement has been studied to understand the individual through stimulus and also as involvement through advertising, products, and media. Involvement has been defined in so many different ways that creating a framework was a primary focus for a number of studies.

Fan involvement, on the other hand, has not been dissected to a great extent, but with recent literature about fans versus spectators (Trail et al., 2003), refining measures of sports involvement (Shank & Beasley, 1998), involvement through a fan behavior questionnaire

(Capella, 2001), consumer motives with professional sport teams (Funk et al., 2002), elusive fans (Reign, Kotler, & Shields, 2006), and segmenting sport fans (Ross, 2007) a good base has been provided.

The unknown about fan involvement is what effect it has on sponsorship if a simple “official sponsor” logo is added to an advertisement. Will consumers with high involvement with the team being sponsored have a decisively more positive image of the brand/sponsor than those who have low fan involvement? How will the levels of fan involvement effect purchase intention? Will a sport such as football, which has a traditionally high level of involvement at the University of Florida, have vastly different results than a sport with lower involvement such as baseball? These variables discussed will be used at the University of Florida in regards to Gator athletics and the research question, “Will participants who display higher levels of fan involvement with Gator athletics demonstrate stronger purchase intentions and positive brand/sponsor image than participants with lower levels of fan involvement when a product is deemed an ‘official sponsor’?”

**Hypothesis 1:** Individuals who have a higher level of fan involvement with Gator athletics are more likely to develop a positive image of the brand/sponsor.

**Hypothesis 2:** Individuals who have a higher level of fan involvement with Gator athletics are more likely to express positive purchase intentions.

**Hypothesis 3:** Individuals will develop the highest positive image of the brand/sponsor if an advertisement is deemed an “official sponsor” of Gator football, followed by an “official sponsor” of Gator baseball, and the least positive will be no sponsorship.

**Hypothesis 4:** Individuals will express the highest purchase intentions if an advertisement is deemed an “official sponsor” of Gator football, followed by an “official sponsor” of Gator baseball, and the least positive will be no sponsorship.

**Hypothesis 5:** The experimental group given the advertisement stimulus that is an “official sponsor” of Gator football will show the largest disparity between high and low involved fans, followed by the experimental group given the “official sponsor” of Gator

baseball stimulus, and lastly the group that is given the stimulus with no sponsorship will show the least amount of disparity in terms of brand/sponsor image.

**Hypothesis 6:** The experimental group given the advertisement stimulus that is an “official sponsor” of Gator football will show the largest disparity between high and low involved fans, followed by the experimental group given the “official sponsor” of Gator baseball stimulus, and lastly the group that is given the stimulus with no sponsorship will show the least amount of disparity in terms of expressed purchase intentions.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### **Design**

An online experiment was used to obtain all data. The experiment included a print advertisement of the brand Glaceau Vitamin Water. The brand was chosen because it is not a current sponsor of University of Florida athletics, but it is relevant to the athletic industry as a brand of enhanced water. Three versions of the Vitamin Water print advertisement were created. All were identical except for the manipulated variables. One version had no sponsorship information. The second version included the logo of the University of Florida Gator and the text “Official Sponsor of Gator Football” in the lower right hand corner. The third version had the same Gator logo, but included the text “Official Sponsor of Gator Baseball”. The third survey option of baseball was included to give a comparison of a collegiate sport that traditionally has low involvement and provided an additional measure of comparison for Gator football.

An online experiment was chosen because it lessened the risk of data entry errors, and according to Cobanoglu, Warde, & Moreo (2001), web-based experiments produce better response rates and are more cost effective. Because the sample consisted of college students who were familiar with technology, the risks for confusion were minimized.

A pre-test was not conducted because the questions within the experiment were taken from a previous study that ran a pilot test, had the questions judged by a panel of experts, and ran an internal consistency measure to eliminate poor questions.

### **Variables**

The independent variables for the study were fan involvement and sponsorship. The dependent variables for the study were purchase intention and brand/sponsor image.

## **Conceptual Definitions**

For the purpose of the study the term “fan involvement” was defined as, “...the extent to which consumers identify with, and are motivated by, their engagement and affiliation with particular leisure activities” (Meenaghan, 2001, p.106). Purchase intention was defined as, “...an individual’s conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand” (Spears & Singh, 2004, p.56). Finally, brand/sponsor image was defined for this study as how the consumer perceives a brand or sponsor.

## **Measures**

The questions were adapted from previous studies including Madrigal (2001) and Dees, et al (2008). The constructs of brand/sponsor image, purchase intention, and fan involvement were measured using four questions for brand/sponsor image, four questions for purchase intention, and five questions for fan involvement. The questions were measured with a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” (1) to “strongly disagree” (5) unless otherwise designated.

Additional questions were added to include a manipulation check and covariate questions. The manipulation check verifies if the advertisement given was clear to the respondent about the brand being advertised and also if the type of sponsorship was correctly identified. For example, the respondents who participated in the experiment that were given Gator baseball sponsorship as a stimulant were asked to list their confidence level that the advertisement had expressed Glaceau Vitamin Water as an “official sponsor” of Gator baseball. The covariate questions measured the overall attitude toward the advertisement, brand familiarity with Glaceau Vitamin Water, category usage with vitamin-enhanced waters, and product usage of Glaceau Vitamin Water.

## **Reliability and Validity**

The reliability and validity of the survey questions used were previously discussed in the Dees, et al (2008) study by a panel of experts including two sport management professors, an advertising professor, and twelve graduate students. This panel debated about the relevance, representativeness, and clarity of the items.

The survey questions were then tested for reliability by a pilot test of 49 participants that yielded results of  $\alpha = .87$  of reliability for fan involvement,  $\alpha = .66$  for purchase intention, and  $\alpha = .72$  for brand/sponsor image (Dees, et al, 2008).

## **Participants**

The participants were recruited from two sections of the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications undergraduate advertising class. The participants were both male and female and the students were given a link to one of the three online experiments. The sampling procedure was reliant on available subjects or convenience sampling, which is a type of non-probability sampling. This sampling procedure was used because it can be a source for useful insights even though it may not have any control over the representativeness of the sample (Babbie, 2007).

## **Materials**

The primary materials used in this study were three versions of an online experiment set-up through SurveyMonkey.com. The respondents were led to the experiments by three separate Internet links that led to one of the versions of the web-based experiment. The first part of the experiment was an informed consent form, which asked the subjects to agree their voluntary participation in the research project on the full understanding of the possible risks involved (Babbie, 2007). The experiment was set-up so that the respondent could not move forward without agreeing to the informed consent.

Following the informed consent, a detailed set of instructions told the respondent exactly how to complete the survey. This included the directions to view the advertisement and then to continue on to answer each of the questions. The directions told the respondent to only mark one response per question and to not omit any.

Subjects then viewed the single print advertisement for Glaceau Vitamin Water from their respective link. After reviewing the ad they answered the questions that followed. The experiment was set-up in a way that did not allow the respondent to go back to answer any questions and could also not move forward without answering all of the questions on each page.

The first four questions measured brand/sponsor image and used a five-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” that followed each of the questions. For example, the first question for brand/sponsor image was “I think favorably of companies that sponsor Gator Football” followed by the five Likert choices.

The next four questions consisted of covariate questions that measured brand familiarity, attitude towards the ad, category usage, and product usage. The first two items for brand familiarity and attitude toward the ad were measured with a Likert scale. The last two covariate items of category and product usage used the range “7+ times a week”, “4-6 times a week”, “1-3” times a week”, “Less than 1 time a week”, to “Never” to measure the items.

Following the covariate questions were four questions measuring purchase intention using the five-point Likert scale from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.” An example of the purchase intention measures was, “I would consider purchasing Glaceau Vitamin Water”.

The next five questions on the survey were used to measure fan involvement. An example of one of the measure was, “It is important for me to be a part of Gator football.” The

fan involvement questions were answered with a five-point Likert scale from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.”

The following five questions were created to serve as a manipulation check. An example of these questions was “In today’s experiment we showed you an advertisement. How confident are you that the brand featured was Glaceau Vitamin Water?” This question was then followed with choices ranging from “Very Confident” to “Not at all Confident.”

The final section of the experiment included the demographic questions, which asked for information such as gender, age, classification in school, and race. The experiment then thanked the respondent for their participation and stated that if there were any questions to contact the researcher by email.

### **Procedure**

The researcher came to the classrooms on October 30, 2008 and began the experiment by greeting the participants. Following this, the researcher explained that the experiment was web-based, for actual research, and their honest opinions would be the data collected. The researcher then explained to the participants that they were in no way required to participate, but they would be given two points of extra credit for their participation as designated by their professor. The researcher told the students they had until November 5th, 2008 to complete the experiment. They were also told that the professor of the class was the supervisor for the experiment so he remained blind as to who had completed the experiment until the end of the semester as to avoid bias. The researcher then asked if there were any questions.

Following this, the researcher passed out the three separate links at random by passing out an estimated equal number of each of the three links to the three sections of the classroom beginning with the front row. The students then passed the links backwards. Prior to coming into the classroom, the researcher had organized the approximately 400 links so that they were

handed out in the order of “No Sponsorship,” “Football,” and “Baseball” over and over again.

The organization was a valid attempt at collecting a relatively even number of each of the three experiments.

## CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

This chapter analyzes the data collected from the study by reporting demographic statistics, reliability of scales, manipulation checks, and analysis of variance for testing the hypotheses.

### **Demographics**

A total of 240 of the web-based surveys were successfully completed and collected from respondents. The first version of the experiment featuring the advertisement with no sponsorship accounted for 76 of the respondents, the second version featuring the advertisement sponsored by Gator football accounted for 88 of the respondents, and the third and final version of the experiment featuring the advertisement sponsored by Gator baseball accounted for 76 of the respondents.

The divide by gender of the 240 respondents was 65 males (27.1%) and 175 females (72.9%) overall. Gender across the three versions of the survey were quite similar with 22 males (28.9%) and 54 females (71.1%) completing the experiment featuring no sponsorship, 23 males (26.1%) and 65 females (73.9%) completing the experiment featuring football sponsorship, and 20 males (26.3%) and 56 females (73.7%) completing the experiment featuring baseball sponsorship.

The average respondent was 20 years old. The average ages across the three versions of the survey were very similar to the overall numbers.

Juniors led the classification in school breakdown over all three version of the survey with 94 respondents (39.2%). The next most reported classification was sophomores with 79 respondents (32.9%), followed by seniors with 58 respondents (24.2%), then freshman with 8

respondents (3.3%), and finally 1 respondent (0.4%) classified himself or herself as a Graduate Student.

The final demographic statistics collected classified the respondents' race and showed that of the 240 overall respondents the majority was Caucasian with a total of 154 respondents (64.2%). The next highest result classified themselves as Hispanic/Latino with 40 respondents (16.7%), followed by African Americans with 25 respondents (10.4%), then Asian with 11 respondents (4.6%), followed by Other with 9 respondents (3.8%), and the last result was 1 respondent (0.4%) classified himself or herself as Native American.

Table 4-1. Summary of Demographics

	Overall Respondents		Survey 1: No Sponsorship		Survey 2: Football Sponsorship		Survey 3: Baseball Sponsorship	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Gender</b>								
Male	65	27.1%	22	28.9%	23	26.1%	20	26.3%
Female	175	72.9%	54	71.1%	65	73.9%	56	73.7%
Total	240	100%	76	100%	88	100%	76	100%
<b>Age</b>								
17	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
18	8	3.3%	3	3.9%	4	4.5%	1	1.3%
19	75	31.3%	20	26.3%	26	29.5%	29	38.2%
20	85	35.4%	24	31.6%	33	37.5%	28	36.8%
21	48	20%	19	25.0%	17	19.3%	12	15.8%
22	10	4.2%	5	6.6%	3	3.4%	2	2.6%
23+	14	5.8%	5	6.6%	5	5.7%	4	5.3%
Total	240	100%	76	100%	88	100%	76	100%
<b>Class</b>								
Freshman	8	3.3%	2	2.6%	4	4.5%	2	2.6%
Soph.	79	32.9%	24	31.6%	30	34.1%	25	32.9%
Jr.	94	39.2%	24	31.6%	36	40.9%	34	44.7%
Sr.	58	24.2%	25	32.9%	18	20.5%	15	19.7%
Grad St.	1	0.4%	1	1.3%	0	0%	0	0
Total	240	100%	76	100%	88	100%	76	100%
<b>Race</b>								
Afr. Am	25	10.4%	12	15.8%	8	9.1%	5	6.6%
Asian	11	4.6%	5	6.6%	1	1.1%	5	6.6%
Caucasian	154	64.2%	46	60.5%	57	64.8%	51	67.1%

Table 4-1. Continued

	Overall Respondents		Survey 1: No Sponsorship		Survey 2: Football Sponsorship		Survey 3: Baseball Sponsorship	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hispanic/Latino	40	16.7%	12	15.8%	17	19.3%	11	14.5%
Native American	1	.4%	0	0	1	1.1%	0	0%
Other	9	3.8%	1	1.3%	4	4.5%	4	5.3%
Total	240	100%	76	100%	88	100%	76	100%

### Reliability of Scales

For each of the constructs of brand/sponsor image, purchase intention, and fan involvement a scale was created and a reliability test was performed in order to test the correlation of the items in each. The reliability of each of the scales was found to be satisfactory and internally consistent with Cronbach's  $\alpha = .78$  for brand/sponsor image scale, Cronbach's  $\alpha = .89$  for purchase intention scale, and Cronbach's  $\alpha = .94$  for the fan involvement scale.

The findings show all three are quality scales because the results show the items are measuring the same aspect. The items must correlate or they are probably measuring different aspects or there is error in the data. The findings from the reliability test show the items do in fact correlate.

Table 4-2. Summary of Brand/Sponsor Image Scale

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Think favorably of companies that sponsor Gator football/baseball	240	1.87	.71
Companies that sponsor Gator football/baseball are successful	240	2.08	.68
Companies that sponsor Gator football/baseball provide quality products/services	240	2.17	.72
Companies that sponsor Gator football/baseball are professional	240	1.99	.66

Cronbach's  $\alpha = .78$

Table 4-3. Summary of Purchase Intention Scale

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would consider purchasing Glaceau Vitamin Water	240	2.58	1.06
I would try to buy Glaceau Vitamin Water	240	2.76	1.04
I would definitely purchase Glaceau Vitamin Water	240	3.18	1.08
My overall attitude towards purchasing Glaceau Vitamin Water	240	2.43	.69

Cronbach's  $\alpha = .89$

Table 4-4. Summary of Fan Involvement Scale

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Important for me to be a part of Gator football/baseball	240	2.50	1.22
Friends view me as a strong fan of Gator football/baseball	240	2.95	1.39
Very important to me that Gator football/baseball games are played	240	2.25	1.20
See myself as a strong fan of Gator football/baseball	240	2.73	1.33
I display the Gator football/baseball insignia or name at my workplace, where I live, or on my clothing	240	2.76	1.47

Cronbach's  $\alpha = .94$

### Manipulation Check

The key manipulation check item in the study was put in place to identify if the respondent was aware of whether the Glaceau Vitamin Water advertisement they viewed was either not sponsored, sponsored by Gator football, or sponsored by Gator Baseball. The question asked the respondent to identify their confidence level using a five point Likert scale ranging from “very confident” to “not at all confident” regarding which type of sponsorship it was that they viewed. A univariate test (ANOVA) was performed to identify whether the respondents were aware of the sponsorship for each particular experiment. The findings show that the results are significant ( $p < .05$ ) and the respondents, on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being “very confident” and 5 being “not at all confident” of the type of sponsorship, accurately identified the type of

sponsorship. The experiment that used no sponsorship resulted in a much lower confidence level (M= 3.76) because no sponsor was given, while football (M=1.55) and baseball (M=1.66) sponsored experiments showed high levels of confidence in the type of sponsor because they were given.

Table 4-5. Manipulation Check of Sponsorship Confidence

DV	Sponsor Type	N	M	Std. Deviation
Confidence level of type of sponsorship brand featured in the given ad	None	76	3.76	1.23
	Football	88	1.55	1.02
	Baseball	76	1.66	1.01
	Total	240	2.28	1.48

d.f.= 2,  $p < .05$

### Test of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** Individuals who have a higher level of fan involvement with Gator athletics are more likely to develop a positive image of the brand/sponsor.

**Hypothesis 2:** Individuals who have a higher level of fan involvement with Gator athletics are more likely to express positive purchase intentions.

Two univariate analysis of variance tests (ANOVA) were used to test the effects of the independent variables on the mean value of the dependent variables. One independent variable used was the type of sponsorship. The type of sponsorship was separated between the experimental conditions of no sponsorship, sponsored by Gator football, and sponsored by Gator baseball.

The other independent variable used was fan involvement, which was divided into high involvement and low involvement. The levels of involvement were calculated by dividing the median of the respondent's answers in the respective experiments on a Likert scale of 1 as "strongly agree" to 5 as "strongly disagree". The experiment that featured a no sponsorship stimulus and the experiment that featured a sponsorship for Gator football were divided over one median (2.6) because these experiments asked identical questions. A separate median (3.6) was

calculated for the experiment that featured a sponsorship for Gator baseball because the experiment questions differed by referring to baseball as opposed to football.

The two dependent variables used were brand/sponsor image and purchase intention. The ANOVA tests were run with and without the covariate item of brand familiarity and because the inclusion had no effect, the item was omitted from the analysis.

The ANOVA test showed that the main effect of fan involvement was statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) on both brand/sponsor image and purchase intention.

Hypothesis 1 proved to be supported as the respondents who had high fan involvement had a more positive brand/sponsor image ( $M = 1.86$ ) than the respondents with low fan involvement ( $M = 2.24$ ). ( $M = 1.86$  vs.  $2.24$ ,  $F = 35.31$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Hypothesis 2 is also supported as the respondents who had high fan involvement expressed more positive purchase intentions ( $M = 2.61$ ) than the respondents with low fan involvement ( $M = 2.88$ ). ( $M = 2.61$  vs.  $2.88$ ,  $F = 6.28$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Table 4-6. Main Effect of Fan Involvement

	Fan Involvement Level	Mean	N
Brand/Sponsor Image	High	1.86	127
	Low	2.24	113
Purchase Intentions	High	2.61	127
	Low	2.88	113

d.f. = 1,  $p < .05$

**Hypothesis 3:** Individuals will develop the highest positive image of the brand/sponsor if an advertisement is deemed an “official sponsor” of Gator football, followed by an “official sponsor” of Gator baseball, and the least positive will be no sponsorship.

**Hypothesis 4:** Individuals will express the highest purchase intentions if an advertisement is deemed an “official sponsor” of Gator football, followed by an “official sponsor” of Gator baseball, and the least positive will be no sponsorship.

The ANOVA test shows that the effect of sponsorship is statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) for brand/sponsor image, but was not statistically significant for purchase intention ( $*p \geq .05$ ).

Hypothesis 3 was partly supported because the respondents who partook in the experiment that viewed the print advertisement with the sponsor of Gator football had the highest positive image of the brand/sponsor (M= 1.84). However, the second highest was not Gator baseball as predicted, but instead, it was no sponsorship (M=2.08). The least positive expression of brand/sponsor image was the Gator baseball sponsored experiment (M=2.22). Additionally, a Post hoc Scheffe test indicated that the Gator football sponsorship differed significantly from both the no sponsors and Gator baseball experiments. (M= 1.84 vs. 2.08 vs. 2.22, F= 12.83, p< .05).

Hypothesis 4 proved to not be supported because the individuals who expressed the highest purchase intentions was the experiment group who completed the sponsor of Gator baseball print advertisement (M=2.63) The other two experiments of no sponsorship and sponsorship of Gator football showed the exact same levels purchase intentions expressed (M=2.80). A Post hoc Scheffe test revealed that there were no significant differences between the three experiments. (M= 2.63 vs. 2.80 vs. 2.80, F=1.04, \*p> .05).

Table 4-7. Main Effect of Sponsorship

	Type of Sponsorship	Mean	N
Brand/Sponsor Image	No Sponsor	2.08 <sup>a</sup>	76
	Gator Football	1.84 <sup>b</sup>	88
	Gator Baseball	2.22 <sup>a</sup>	76
Purchase Intentions	No Sponsor	2.80 <sup>a</sup>	76
	Gator Football	2.80 <sup>a</sup>	88
	Gator Baseball	2.63 <sup>a</sup>	76

d.f. = 2

**Hypothesis 5:** The experimental group given the advertisement stimulus that is an “official sponsor” of Gator football will show the largest disparity between high and low involved fans, followed by the experimental group given the “official sponsor” of Gator baseball stimulus, and lastly the group that is given the stimulus with no sponsorship will show the least amount of disparity in terms of brand/sponsor image.

**Hypothesis 6:** The experimental group given the advertisement stimulus that is an “official

sponsor” of Gator football will show the largest disparity between high and low involved fans, followed by the experimental group given the “official sponsor” of Gator baseball stimulus, and lastly the group that is given the stimulus with no sponsorship will show the least amount of disparity in terms of expressed purchase intentions.

The interaction effect between the two independent variables was found to not be statistically significant for brand/sponsor image ( $p > .05$ ) or purchase intention ( $p > .05$ ).

Hypothesis 5 was not supported by the data. The biggest disparity of reported brand/sponsor image between fans considered low involvement and high involvement occurred in the experiment that presented the stimulus no sponsorship ( $M = 2.29$  vs.  $1.88$ ). The next largest disparity came from the experiment that presented Gator baseball as the sponsor ( $M = 2.40$  vs.  $2.04$ ). The stimulus that showed the least amount of disparity was the Gator football sponsored experiment ( $M = 2.02$  vs.  $1.67$ ).

Hypothesis 6 was not supported by the data in relation to expressed purchase intentions. The experiment that was not sponsored showed the largest disparity reported ( $M = 2.98$  vs.  $2.63$ ). The next largest amount of disparity came from the experiment sponsoring Gator football ( $M = 2.97$  vs.  $2.64$ ). The least amount of disparity related to purchase intention was from the experiment that sponsored Gator baseball ( $M = 2.70$  vs.  $2.56$ ).

Table 4-8. Brand/Sponsor Image Interaction Effect

	Type of Sponsorship		
	No Sponsor	Football	Baseball
Low Involvement	2.29 (.50) N=30	2.02 (.55) N=46	2.40 (.53) N=37
High Involvement	1.88 (.42) N=46	1.67 (.44) N=42	2.04 (.46) N=39
d.f.= 2, $p \geq .05^*$			Mean (Std. Deviation)

Table 4-9. Purchase Intentions Interaction Effect

	Type of Sponsorship		
	No Sponsor	Football	Baseball
Low Involvement	2.98 (.91) N=30	2.97 (.92) N=46	2.70 (.82) N=37
High Involvement	2.63 (.79) N=46	2.64 (.81) N=42	2.56 (.82) N=39
d.f.= 2, $p \geq .05^*$			Mean (Std. Deviation)

## CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Fan involvement and sponsorship are imperative aspects in the sports marketing industry to understand when creating a strategic marketing plan. The fans are what bring in revenue. Opportunities can be lost if a marketer does not understand the different levels of involvement or what types of sponsorships are effective.

This study aimed at being very practical for both aspects of the sports marketing business. In terms of sponsorship, the results of this study could be used to show that perhaps sponsorship is not highly effective in increasing a consumer's image of a brand or increasing purchase intentions. For example, if Glaceau Vitamin Water was formulating a marketing plan to target sports fans in local areas they may want to consider something besides sponsoring the local team. The results of this study showed that perhaps a guerilla campaign or something of that nature might be more effective in increasing a consumer's image of a brand and purchase intentions.

In terms of theoretical contributions, this study supported much of the previous fan involvement research. As previously mentioned, the volume of work on fan involvement is not heavy so any research into the topic adds to a much-needed area. Adding new dimensions such as sponsorship effects to a fan involvement study could be of particular interest to researchers that are dedicated to refining measure of sports involvement such as Shank & Beasley (1998).

This study was partially based off of the Dees, Bennett, & Villegas (2008) study measuring the effectiveness of sponsorship of elite college football. A large portion of the results supported their findings, particularly in the facets of fan involvement, purchase intention, and attitude towards the sponsor. This research added a new dimension to the study by adapting their ideas about sponsorship to creating an experiment that compares the disparities in sponsorship

effectiveness. The comparison did not prove to follow the hypotheses inspired by the Dees, et al (2008) study, but a base for future research could be argued. It is important for development to try to approach similar measures in different ways and this study attempted to accomplish that from previous sports marketing research.

### **Summary of Results**

The overall result that should be taken away from this research is that the level of fan involvement has a much larger impact than sponsorship on both purchase intention and brand/sponsor image. The data reveals that if a fan is highly involved they are going to a much easier target for marketing communication. Sponsorship, on the other hand, did not prove to be as effective in influencing respondents in either purchase intentions or brand/sponsor image.

The first hypothesis reveals that fans that are highly involved with Gator athletics will have a more positive brand/sponsor image by a significant margin over those who are considered low involvement fans. These results agree with previous research such as Meenaghan (2001) and Dees, Bennett, & Villegas (2008). For example, this means that if Glaceau Vitamin Water is going to be an official sponsor of an athletic team they will most likely increase their brand image much more with highly involved fans than fans that are less involved with that team. This connection is logical, but is important to study because it affects the marketing communication.

If a brand sponsors a team they could be more specific to the details of that team in their messages with less risk of alienating potential consumers. If a brand such as Wachovia sponsored a local team they could create advertising messages that are targeted specifically towards a fan that is highly involved. The message could be humorous regarding a player on the team or a team tradition. The highly involved fan would understand that message and potentially increase their image of Wachovia because of it. A study like this showed that the low involved

fan would not be highly affected by the message regardless so communication designed for the highly involved fan could be ideal.

The data supporting the second hypothesis was very similar to the first in its value for sports marketers. The results showed that fans that are highly involved with Gator athletics would express much higher purchase intentions than fans that are less involved. Just like the first hypothesis this could mean that if a brand such as Glaceau Vitamin Water was going to be an official sponsor they could increase their sales with highly involved fans significantly over less involved fans.

The third hypothesis predicted that a traditionally highly involved sport at the University of Florida, such as football, would lead to the highest degree of positive brand/sponsor image for the brand Glaceau Vitamin Water. The hypothesis was supported in this dimension of the image of the brand/sponsor being the highest when Gator football was used as the sponsor stimulus.

The hypothesis, however, did not successfully predict the second highest positive brand/sponsor image. Instead of the Gator baseball sponsor experiment, it was the experiment that did not feature a sponsor that proved to have the second highest results. The rationale behind this hypothesis was because even though Gator baseball is traditionally a sport that elicits low involvement from fans compared to football, it would still resonate with the respondents more than no sponsorship. Gator baseball according to the results of this test does not resonate like predicted and elicited the lowest positive brand/sponsor image of the three. This leads to the assumption that a low involvement sport's team such as Gator baseball is not a good option when considering sponsorship options to increase brand image.

The fourth hypothesis was not supported because instead of the Gator football experiment creating the most expression of positive purchase intentions it was the Gator baseball

experiment. The Gator football and no sponsorship experiments had identical scores when it came to purchase intentions that were less than Gator baseball.

The question that stands out from this result is, why would an identical Vitamin Water advertisement toting the claim of being an official sponsor of Gator baseball elicit higher purchase intentions than being an official sponsor of Gator football? One explanation could be that Gator football has so many sponsors already that Vitamin Water would stand out more as a sponsor of Gator baseball. Another potential reason could be that respondents felt that sponsoring a smaller sport with fewer fans comparably (3,000/game baseball to 90,000/game football) was more of a reason to purchase Vitamin Water. According to the results of this test, if a brand were to sponsor a team the better option to potentially increase purchase intention would be to officially sponsor Gator baseball over Gator football.

The fifth hypothesis attempted to predict the biggest disparity between sponsorship and fan involvement in terms of brand/sponsor image. To this point the analysis looked vertically at the data, this analysis attempted to look at the experiment results across the data for the interaction effect. The hypothesis stated that the biggest difference in how a brand is viewed would be between low involved fans of Gator football and high-involved fans with Gator football by using the advertisement that boasts sponsorship of Gator football. The data did not support this hypothesis, in fact, the data supported the exact opposite by showing the most disparity between high and low involvement for the experiment that was not sponsored at all. The experiment that used the sponsorship of Gator baseball had very similar results to that of Gator football.

These results are a bit dumbfounding, but the most logical reason could be attributed to the advertisement chosen as part of the stimulus. The advertisement could have been so well

liked that it did not make an impact whether it was sponsored. The differences in the total disparity are quite small so this cause could be argued. Perhaps, it could also be attributed to the sample type, the design of the experiment, or the limited size of the sample.

The sixth hypothesis focused on the same factors except for instead of brand/sponsor image, it examined purchase intentions. The hypothesis had very similar results to the previous and was not at all supported. Again, the experiment featuring no sponsorship showed the most disparity in terms of purchase intentions. These less than expected results for expressed purchase intention from the sponsorships of Gator football and baseball could be attributed to the same arguments as the previous hypothesis.

A common theme for the varying results for hypotheses three through six could be attributed to the brand choice of Glaceau Vitamin Water. The brand is perhaps too well liked and very well could have affected the results. The brand could be argued to be consistent with the type of person who would be involved in sports and this relationship would cause a more positive response regardless of sponsorship. If the brand overshadowed the level of fan involvement or type of sponsorship than it could be the reason the results were so inconclusive. Perhaps a brand choice of less of a relationship to athletics may have been more appropriate.

### **Limitations**

This study had several limitations beginning with the most glaring, which is that a convenience sample was used. All of the respondents were University of Florida students, which lends to a specific demographic of respondent. The majority of respondents were college-aged, technologically savvy, and highly educated. All of which could affect the outcome of the study.

In terms of other demographic issues the gender of respondents was heavily female and Caucasian, which could have potentially affect results and making this study quite limited in its scope.

Another limitation would be that this data is not transferable to most other markets because the University of Florida is an elite football program that has a unique tradition that could affect data. The timing of this study also could have potentially affected the results as the University of Florida was currently in the midst of a National Championship season. This could heavily factor into a study about sports marketing, particularly football. Also, at other Universities baseball may be the dominant sport with one such example being Long Beach State University. This data is perhaps minimized to the University of Florida or very similar collegiate teams only.

The selection of the product advertised was deemed a good fit because it was not currently or ever has been an official sponsor of UF athletics. It was also seen as an athletic product. However, it still imposes limitations on the study, especially because of the large range of the University of Florida's current sponsors. An additional potential limitation was University of Florida's well-known history with a relatively similar sports drink product in Gatorade.

### **Future Research**

Any future research on the topic of fan involvement is welcomed because of the relative lack of research. The theoretical aspects of fan involvement in particular could be more accurately defined. Given the findings of this research, an excellent idea would be to replicate this study using a different brand other than Glaceau Vitamin Water. The brand may have proved to be problematic and a replication using a non-athletic brand may give far better results. Also, replication or adaptation of this study could be very telling in a professional sports environment, in a collegiate basketball dominated environment, or across the gender line into women's sports. Replicating this study by using television commercials opposed to print advertisement could be beneficial. Also, doing a pre-post test version could give more in-depth and even different results.

A comparative study of sponsorship taking a look at advertisements with team sponsorships versus individual player sponsorships would be an excellent study. An additional idea in the field of college football could be a study that examined women's fan involvement versus men's fan involvement using the Fan Behavior Questionnaire (Capella, 2001) or another appropriate measure.

APPENDIX A  
INFORMED CONSENT

**Please read this consent document carefully before you decide to participate in this study.**

**Purpose of the research study:**

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of fan involvement and sponsorship.

**What you will be asked to do in the study:** You will be asked to view a print advertisement and then complete a questionnaire containing questions about the advertisement and University of Florida athletics.

**Time required:**

10 minutes

**Risks and Benefits:**

There is no risk to participating in this study. There are no direct benefits from participating in this study.

**Compensation:**

You will receive two (2) extra credit points from Dr. Weigold in your ADV3008 class for participating in this research. Dr. Weigold will not be aware of your participation until the end of the semester when you will be rewarded your extra credit. Brian Canning will be conducted the research and results.

**Confidentiality:**

Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Your name will be kept separate from your completed survey and will be used only to provide proof of completion to your professor for extra credit purposes.

**Voluntary participation:**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.

**Right to withdraw from the study:**

You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequence.

**Whom to contact if you have questions about the study:**

Brian Canning, Graduate Student, College of Journalism and Communications

Canning@ufl.edu, phone 303-601-8362.

Supervisor: Dr. Mike Weigold, Department of Advertising

MWeigold@jou.ufl.edu, phone 352-392-8199

Room 118400, Weimer Hall, PO Box 118400, Gainesville, FL 32611

**Whom to contact about your rights as a research participant in the study:** IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433.

**Agreement:** I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure and I have received a copy of this description.

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B  
EXPERIMENT SURVEY VERSION ONE

**Instructions:** Please view the following advertisement carefully and then continue on to answer the questions following the advertisement honestly. Be sure to only mark one response per question: do not omit any.



1. I think favorably of companies that sponsor Gator football
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
2. Companies that sponsor Gator football are successful.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
3. Companies that sponsor Gator football provide quality products/services.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
4. Companies that sponsor Gator football are professional.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
5. My overall attitude towards the advertisement is:
  - Very Negative
  - Negative
  - Neutral
  - Positive
  - Very Positive

6. How familiar are you with the brand Glaceau Vitamin Water?

- Very familiar
- Familiar
- Not sure
- Unfamiliar
- Very Unfamiliar

7. I drink vitamin infused water:

- 7+ times a week
- 4-6 times a week
- 1-3 times a week
- Less than 1 time a week
- Never

8. I drink Glaceau Vitamin Water:

- 7+ times a week
- 4-6 times a week
- 1-3 times a week
- Less than 1 time a week
- Never

9. I would consider purchasing Glaceau Vitamin Water.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. I would try to buy Glaceau Vitamin Water.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. I would definitely purchase Glaceau Vitamin Water.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

12. My overall attitude toward purchasing Glaceau Vitamin Water is:

- Very Negative
- Negative
- Neutral
- Positive
- Very Positive

13. It is important for me to be a part of Gator football.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14. My friends view me as a strong fan of Gator football.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15. It is very important to me that Gator football games are played.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

16. I see myself as a strong fan of Gator football.
- Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
17. I often display the Gator football insignia or name at my workplace, where I live, or on my clothing.
- Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
18. In today's experiment we showed you an advertisement. How confident are you that the brand featured was Glaceau Vitamin Water?
- Very Confident
  - Slightly Confident
  - Neutral
  - Slightly Unconfident
  - Not at all Confident
19. The advertisement you saw suggested several things. Please list how confident you are that the features listed below were mentioned in the advertisement.
- No Calories
- Very Confident
  - Slightly Confident
  - Neutral
  - Slightly Unconfident
  - Not at all Confident
- Vitamin Infused
- Very Confident
  - Slightly Confident
  - Neutral
  - Slightly Unconfident
  - Not at all Confident

An Official Sponsor of Gator football

- Very Confident
- Slightly Confident
- Neutral
- Slightly Unconfident
- Not at all Confident

12 oz Bottles

- Very Confident
- Slightly Confident
- Neutral
- Slightly Unconfident
- Not at all Confident

Demographic Information:

20. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

21. What is your age?

- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23+

22. What is your classification in school?

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate School

23. What is your race?

- African-American
- Asian
- Caucasian
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- Other

This is the end of the survey. Thank you for your participation and if you have any questions please contact me via email at [Canning@ufl.edu](mailto:Canning@ufl.edu).

APPENDIX C  
EXPERIMENT SURVEY VERSION TWO

**Instructions:** Please view the following advertisement carefully and then continue on to answer the questions following the advertisement honestly. Be sure to only mark one response per question: do not omit any.



1. I think favorably of companies that sponsor Gator football
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
2. Companies that sponsor Gator football are successful.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
3. Companies that sponsor Gator football provide quality products/services.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
4. Companies that sponsor Gator football are professional.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
5. My overall attitude towards the advertisement is:
  - Very Negative
  - Negative
  - Neutral
  - Positive
  - Very Positive

6. How familiar are you with the brand Glaceau Vitamin Water?

- Very familiar
- Familiar
- Not sure
- Unfamiliar
- Very Unfamiliar

7. I drink vitamin infused water:

- 7+ times a week
- 4-6 times a week
- 1-3 times a week
- Less than 1 time a week
- Never

8. I drink Glaceau Vitamin Water:

- 7+ times a week
- 4-6 times a week
- 1-3 times a week
- Less than 1 time a week
- Never

9. I would consider purchasing Glaceau Vitamin Water.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. I would try to buy Glaceau Vitamin Water.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. I would definitely purchase Glaceau Vitamin Water.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

12. My overall attitude toward purchasing Glaceau Vitamin Water is:

- Very Negative
- Negative
- Neutral
- Positive
- Very Positive

13. It is important for me to be a part of Gator football.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14. My friends view me as a strong fan of Gator football.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15. It is very important to me that Gator football games are played.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

16. I see myself as a strong fan of Gator football.
- Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
17. I often display the Gator football insignia or name at my workplace, where I live, or on my clothing.
- Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
18. In today's experiment we showed you an advertisement. How confident are you that the brand featured was Glaceau Vitamin Water?
- Very Confident
  - Slightly Confident
  - Neutral
  - Slightly Unconfident
  - Not at all Confident
19. The advertisement you saw suggested several things. Please list how confident you are that the features listed below were mentioned in the advertisement.
- No Calories
- Very Confident
  - Slightly Confident
  - Neutral
  - Slightly Unconfident
  - Not at all Confident
- Vitamin Infused
- Very Confident
  - Slightly Confident
  - Neutral
  - Slightly Unconfident
  - Not at all Confident

An Official Sponsor of Gator football

- Very Confident
- Slightly Confident
- Neutral
- Slightly Unconfident
- Not at all Confident

12 oz Bottles

- Very Confident
- Slightly Confident
- Neutral
- Slightly Unconfident
- Not at all Confident

Demographic Information:

20. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

21. What is your age?

- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23+

22. What is your classification in school?

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate School

23. What is your race?

- African-American
- Asian
- Caucasian
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- Other

This is the end of the survey. Thank you for your participation and if you have any questions please contact me via email at [Canning@ufl.edu](mailto:Canning@ufl.edu).

APPENDIX D  
EXPERIMENT SURVEY VERSION THREE

**Instructions:** Please view the following advertisement carefully and then continue on to answer the questions following the advertisement honestly. Be sure to only mark one response per question: do not omit any.



1. I think favorably of companies that sponsor Gator baseball
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
2. Companies that sponsor Gator baseball are successful.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
3. Companies that sponsor Gator baseball provide quality products/services.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
4. Companies that sponsor Gator baseball are professional.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  
5. My overall attitude towards the advertisement is:
  - Very Negative
  - Negative
  - Neutral
  - Positive
  - Very Positive

6. How familiar are you with the brand Glaceau Vitamin Water?

- Very familiar
- Familiar
- Not sure
- Unfamiliar
- Very Unfamiliar

7. I drink vitamin infused water:

- 7+ times a week
- 4-6 times a week
- 1-3 times a week
- Less than 1 time a week
- Never

8. I drink Glaceau Vitamin Water:

- 7+ times a week
- 4-6 times a week
- 1-3 times a week
- Less than 1 time a week
- Never

9. I would consider purchasing Glaceau Vitamin Water.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. I would try to buy Glaceau Vitamin Water.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. I would definitely purchase Glaceau Vitamin Water.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

12. My overall attitude toward purchasing Glaceau Vitamin Water is:

- Very Negative
- Negative
- Neutral
- Positive
- Very Positive

13. It is important for me to be a part of Gator baseball.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14. My friends view me as a strong fan of Gator baseball.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15. It is very important to me that Gator baseball games are played.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

16. I see myself as a strong fan of Gator baseball.
- Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
17. I often display the Gator baseball insignia or name at my workplace, where I live, or on my clothing.
- Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
18. In today's experiment we showed you an advertisement. How confident are you that the brand featured was Glaceau Vitamin Water?
- Very Confident
  - Slightly Confident
  - Neutral
  - Slightly Unconfident
  - Not at all Confident
19. The advertisement you saw suggested several things. Please list how confident you are that the features listed below were mentioned in the advertisement.
- No Calories
- Very Confident
  - Slightly Confident
  - Neutral
  - Slightly Unconfident
  - Not at all Confident
- Vitamin Infused
- Very Confident
  - Slightly Confident
  - Neutral
  - Slightly Unconfident
  - Not at all Confident

An Official Sponsor of Gator baseball

- Very Confident
- Slightly Confident
- Neutral
- Slightly Unconfident
- Not at all Confident

12 oz Bottles

- Very Confident
- Slightly Confident
- Neutral
- Slightly Unconfident
- Not at all Confident

Demographic Information:

20. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

21. What is your age?

- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23+

22. What is your classification in school?

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate School

23. What is your race?

- African-American
- Asian
- Caucasian
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- Other

This is the end of the survey. Thank you for your participation and if you have any questions please contact me via email at [Canning@ufl.edu](mailto:Canning@ufl.edu).

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Brian Canning was born in Houston, Texas, in 1985, and grew up in Simi Valley, California. He earned a BS in advertising from the University of Colorado at Boulder. He expects to receive his Master of Advertising degree from the University of Florida in May 2009. Upon graduation Brian plans to pursue a career in sports marketing.