A Comparative Analysis of the Professional Baseball Team Mobile Site in Korea and Japan

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to provide the turning point for base data and new stepping board for structuring and operation of the web-site for both countries. To accomplish such purpose, I analyzed web-sites of 12 Japanese clubs and 8 Korean clubs based on the analysis paper that consists of 6 functional aspects. As a result, in Japan, Yomiuri Giants and Sofrbank Hawks were found to provide the most information and in Korea, Kia Tigers was found to provide the most information.

1. Introduction

Internet is the effective communication mean to deliver information with the least expensive cost without restriction of time and space throughout the world (Lee, 2004) that it has been sometime that it has become the newest mass media not only in the US but also throughout the globe (Song, 2004).

Due to such influence, our society has been able to access to information through internet and easily access to web-site now.

Web-site takes an important role in sports part. Professional sports teams as well as most of sports organizations approach consumers through the web-site operation of its company. These sports organizations and teams have the greatest purpose of operating the web-site through internet for strengthening the position of respective organization (Tedesco, 1996). With such a purpose, present pro sports teams structure and operate their web-site. In other words, rather than knowing where the customers are, how to access to customers is valued more that all marketing efforts of the sports organization is focused more on desire of customers (Graham, 1996).

Currently, most pro sports teams use internet to provide the opportunities for communication for online sports fans with players, coaches and other fans (Mcdaniel & Sulivan, 1998).

Both Korea and Japan have professional baseball from all pro sports events to attract most popularity and highest number of fans and under the situation where they provide diverse information through internet and have the interaction, there is a steady need to establish the marketing strategy that facilitates the web-site to make steady progress for professional baseball.

Therefore there is an emergence of needs for research on how web-site is organized and provided through the comparison and analysis of Korea and Japan's professional baseball

teams and surveying on service status of users that use the applicable web-site would be meaningful. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to provide the turning point for base data and new stepping board for structuring and operation of the web-site for both countries.

2. Method

2.1. Subject of research

Subjects of research selected to accomplish the purpose of this research could be classified in two-fold. First of all, for the analysis of web-site contents of professional baseball teams in Korea and Japan, the subject was taken for the web-sites of professional baseball teams in both countries, and second, in order to find out the service status of user web-site, the research was carried out for web-site users of both countries. The web-sites are analyzed for 12 teams in both Central League and Pacific League, the two top leagues managed by the Nippon Professional Baseball (NPB) and 8 teams of domestic professional baseball teams belonging to the Korea Baseball Organization (KBO).

2.2. Method of web-site analysis

Under this research, based on the method to perform under the research of Naessens (2002) and Hwang(2002) the analysis performed under the research of Kim(2009), it was counted after the analysis. The analysis sheet was classified for a total of 6 functional aspects and the detailed matters are shown in Table 1. On the basis of 6 functions, the web-sites of 12 Japanese professional baseball teams and 8 Korean teams are learned what information they provide as well as their characteristic matters.

Table 1. Web-site Analysis method

Category	Contents
Information function	Function on providing the independent information of the team, such as history of organization, competitiveness element (ranking, result, game, competing team and others), stadium, information on the other team and others
Communication function	Function of information to provide and deliver newest news, news, press coverage, interview, audio, video, photo, ticket information, FAQ, fan zone, game schedule, business, travel, annual report, update. live broadcasting, junior club and others are provided in real time by the team on daily basis.
Interaction	Forum newsletter, questions, web-mail service, download (wall paper), SMS service, financial service, link, TV relay, radio relay Members<-> communication of members, members<->player for communication, member<-> team communication for interaction function
Promotion	Merchandising information, merchandising catalog, sponsor, banner advertisement, team magazine, event and others where it functions to provide practical help for users to participate or purchases
Transaction function	Function to provide for ticket sales, merchandising, team magazine application, betting, travel booking and other transaction and sales
User-friendliness	Site map, search tool, URL and others that user for use in consideration of convenience in the function

2.3. Subject of web-site users for Korea and Japan's professional baseball teams

In the event of Korea, the Lotte Giants team was selected while Japan was selected for the Jiba Lotte Marins to implement through the internet survey.

Korea received the 270 responses and Japan received 309 responses, and with the exclusion of questionnaires considered as omitting or delinquent survey contents, 245 Korean responses and 228 Japanese responses were used for actual analysis. The composition of the questionnaire is structured with two questions of general characteristics and 6 questions of web-site service status for professional baseball team.

3. Result

3.1. Result of web-site analysis of Korean professional baseball teams and Japan professional baseball teams

Looking at the number of information provided by domestic professional baseball team as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Result of web-site analysis of Korean professional baseball teams

		KIA	NEXEN	DOOSAN	LOTTE	SAMSUNG	HANHWA	LG	SK
Team information	Team information	9	7	19	18	15	9	16	7
	Player & coach	14	7	10	8	9	8	7	7
	Competitiveness element	23	6	15	25	6	14	3	7
	Scores	10	8	3	2	2	11	8	2
Communication		49	22	35	22	29	28	34	22
Interaction		16	15	15	17	17	11	13	15
Promotion		13	5	10	9	19	6	9	2
Transaction function		14	3	11	10	8	6	8	3
User-friendliness		3	2	4	2	1	3	1	2
total		151	75	122	113	106	96	99	67

Looking into the number of information provision of the 6 Central League teams and 6 pacific League teams, it is shown as in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3. Result of web-site analysis of Japan central league teams

		Yakult	Yomiuri	Yokohama	Chunichi	Hansin	Hiroshima
Team information	Team information	6	9	9	5	11	5
	Player & coach	8	26	14	8	8	7
	Competitiveness element	13	16	17	9	8	10
	Scores	4	16	11	10	9	3
Communication		48	48	33	31	36	24
Interaction		10	3	11	11	12	5
Promotion		20	13	6	11	12	13
Transaction function		15	12	15	10	10	10
User-friendliness		2	2	1	2	1	0
Total		126	145	117	97	107	77

Table 4. Result of web-site analysis of Japan pacific league teams

		Nipponham	Rakuten	Lotte	Seibu	Softbank	Orix
Team information	Team information	2	6	10	9	17	9
	Player & coach	7	7	7	7	8	8
	Competitiveness element	11	12	17	10	19	27
	Scores	10	16	13	9	5	7
Communication		48	38	57	46	57	41
Interaction		6	12	11	7	7	8
Promotion		15	18	16	14	30	12
Transaction function		12	7	12	11	7	8
User-friendliness		1	0	4	2	5	2
Total		112	116	147	115	155	122

3.2. Result of analysis on service types for web-site users of Korea and Japan professional baseball teams

Looking into the general characteristics of web-site users for professional baseball teams in Korea and Japan. Korea has almost the same ratio of men and women, but Japan has much more men. The age range is 50% or more for 20s in Korea while Japan has 30s and 40s along with 60s beyond the 6.2% ratio.

The frequency analysis is implemented for the service type analysis of users for web-site of professional baseball teams in Korea and Japan. As a result, with respect to the team web-site visit period, for the case of Korea, it was steady and regular visit for 77 persons (31.4%), accidentally for 63 persons (25.7%), with each issue for 60 persons (24.5%), and after watching the game for 31 persons (12.2%). For the case of Japan, steady regular visit for 106 persons (46.5%) as the largest, followed by, with each issue (44 persons, 19.3%), for ticket reservation (21 persons, 9.2%), and before watching game (20 persons, 8.8%).

The service hour of the team web-site is the most for within 30 minutes for both countries (Korea: 147 persons, Japan: 172 persons), followed by 30 minutes ~ 1 hour for Korea with 82 persons (33.5%) and Japan with 47 persons (20.6%).

For the service method, Korea has the most in entering through the search engine for portal and others with 142 persons (58.0%), followed by link to bookmark to enter with 87 persons (35.5%). Japan responded to enter by linking to bookmark for 117 persons or 51.3%, followed by the response to enter by searching with the team name under the search window of portal and others for 93 persons, or 40.8%. The reason to use the team web-site is the most with the opinion to use since both countries provide prompt information (Korea: 124 persons (50.6%) and Japan: 140 persons (61.4%), followed by the easy access for 56 persons (22.9%) of Korean and 61 persons (26.8%) of Japanese.

For the information in use, in the event of Korea, the game schedule is the most with 147 persons (20.3%), followed by game result and high light (129 persons, 17.8%), record of team or player (124 persons, 17.1%), and ticket reservation (82 persons, 11.3%), and Japan is shown to be in the order of game result and high light (145 persons, 21.2%), game schedule (126 persons, 18.4%), record of team or player (92 persons, 13.5%), and team news (76 persons, 11.1%).

4. Conclusion

By finding out the marketing activities and information that is provided by the web-site of professional baseball teams in Japan, the purpose is to provide the turning point to prepare for new stepping step for structuring and operation of pro sports web-site of both countries and basic data with effectiveness and possibility for development in

facilitating the marketing and the part to benchmark in the web-sites of professional baseball teams in Korea. In order to accomplish the applicable goal, the web-sites of 12 teams in Japan and 8 teams in Korea are classified into 6 functions in team information function, communication function, interaction function, promotion function, transaction/marketing function, and service-friendly function to make the analysis for counting. As a result, the KIA Tigers has the most information in Korea. For team information function, it is the Doosan Bears, for communication function, it is the KIA Tigers, for interaction function, it is the Lotte Giants and Samsung Lions, for promotion function, it is the Samsung Lions, for transaction/marketing function, it is the KIA Tigers, and for social friendly function, it is the Doosan Bears that have the most information available. From 6 Central League teams of Japan, the Yomiuri Giants is shown to have the most information, and for team information function, it is the Yomiuri Giants, for it is the communication function, it is the Nippon Ham Fighters and Yomiuri Giants, for interaction function, it is the Hanshin Tigers, for promotion function and transaction/marketing function, it is the Yakult Swallows, and for service friendly function, it is the Yakult Swallows, Yomiuri Giants and chunich Dragons that have the most information.

From the 6 Pacific League teams, the Soft Bank Hawks is shown to have the most information. For team information function, the Soft Bank Hawks has the most information. For the communication function, the Lotte Marins and Soft Bank Hawks have the most information. For mutual interaction function, it is the Rakuten Eagles, and for promotion function, it is the Soft Bank Hawks, for transaction/marketing functions, it is the Nippon Ham Fighters and Lotte Marins, and for service friendly function, it is the Soft Bank Hawks that have the most information.

In the meantime, as a result of analyzing the status of web-site users of Korea and Japan's professional baseball teams, the visiting time for web-sites on both Korea and Japan has shown to be regular and steady, and the service hour is within 30 minutes or less for both countries and the service method for Korea is made through search engine in portal and others while Japan links to the bookmark to enter. The reason for service is that the web-sites provide information promptly and the information sought are in the order of game schedule, game result and highlight for Korea and game result, highlight and game schedule for Japan.

This research is considered to provide new frameworks on web-site structure and operation for new teams as well as existing teams, and the web-site analysis should not end in sole and isolated research. There is a need for continuous web-site analysis and, in addition to the analysis method presented above, it needs to present continuous analysis methods. In addition, the desire and need of consumers are constantly changing that, for web-site structuring and operation appropriate to the change, it is required to make analysis of web-site users continuously, not a single research effort.

Acknowledgements

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