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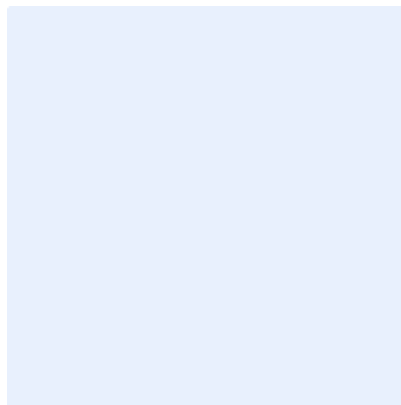
Olympic Studies Centre

ISL Marketing

Fonds list

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April 2013



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ISL Marketing

Reference: CH CIO-AH J-ISL

Dates: 1982-1998

Level of description: series

Extent and medium: 2.20 Im. Text documents

Name of creator

International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Administrative / Biographical history

By the early 1980s, the IOC was facing several challenges linked to financing the Olympic Movement: the importance of ensuring the financial stability and independence of the Movement; the wish to diversify its revenue sources which, at the time, came essentially from television rights; the need to ensure a balanced distribution of revenue within the Olympic family; and the need to control the use of the Olympic marks and prevent the “uncontrolled commercialisation” of the Games¹.

To address these challenges, the IOC approached ISL Marketing AG (International Sports Culture and Leisure). This company, based in Lucerne (Switzerland), had been created in 1982 by Horst Dassler, the son of Adidas founder Adi Dassler². It had considerable experience in the field of marketing and licensing, particularly for sports events³.

Together, the IOC and ISL created a truly international marketing programme covering the whole Olympic Movement: TOP (The Olympic Programme). This programme, coordinated by ISL, was launched to help the National Olympic Committees (NOCs), Organising Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOGs) and the IOC’s worldwide partners with their sponsorship activities linked to the Olympic Movement⁴.

On 28 May 1985 at the Château de Vidy in Lausanne (Switzerland), the IOC President, Juan Antonio Samaranch, signed an agreement with ISL. Through this contract, ISL became the IOC’s sole and exclusive official agent for negotiating and executing agreements with third parties linked to the use of Olympic marks for the IOC⁵. ISL received commission which varied depending on its activities and the body with which each contract was negotiated, i.e. with the IOC or with the OCOGs. The commission rates were in line with the market standards of the time⁶.

ISL was the IOC’s exclusive agent for TOP 1, 2 and 3, and for part of TOP 4. As of March 1996, it was “Meridian Management S.A.”, a new marketing agency partly funded and owned by the IOC, which took charge of the IOC’s marketing programme negotiations⁷. In 2005, the IOC bought out Meridian (since renamed “IOC Television and Marketing Services S.A.”), bringing all the marketing and television rights negotiation functions in house within IOC TMS, which is wholly owned by the IOC⁸. The documents concerning Meridian Management and the end of the IOC’s partnership with ISL have not yet entered the Historical Archives.

¹ Source: “TOP”, in *Olympic Review*, Volume XXV No. 2, April-May 1995

² Source: *Ibid*

³ Source: “The International Olympic Marketing Programme” by Richard Pound, in *Olympic Review*, No. 220, February 1986

⁴ Source: *Ibid*

⁵ Source: IOC Historical Archives / Olympic Marketing – ISL Marketing – Contract between the IOC and ISL - J-ISL/002 – 1983-1985

⁶ Source: *Olympic Review*, No. 220, *op. cit.*

⁷ Source: Martyn, Scott G., “[Marketing In-House: the Erosion and Eventual Rupture of the IOC-ISL Relationship and the Formation of Meridian Management SA.](#)”, *Bridging Three Centuries: Intellectual Crossroads and the Modern Olympic Movement: fifth international symposium for Olympic research*, 2000.

⁸ Source: [Catalyst for Collaboration: IOC Interim Report 2005-2006](#), IOC Communications Department, Lausanne

**Immediate source of acquisition or transfer**

The series was received by the IOC Historical Archives in 1993, following the construction of the new Olympic Museum in Ouchy.

Scope and content

Generally speaking, the series covers the activities of the IOC and ISL linked to marketing and TOP, the IOC's world-wide sponsorship programme, but also the IOC's relations with ISL.

A large part of the series consists of correspondence, which has been divided into several categories: general correspondence, correspondence linked to the right to use the Olympic marks and images, correspondence concerning the OCOGs and correspondence linked to NOC contracts or emblems.

Contracts also occupy an important place in this series, including those signed between the IOC and ISL and between the USOC and ISL for TOP 1, and those signed between the IOC, ISL, the OCOGs for the 1992 Games and the USOC for TOP 2. The contracts between ISL and each NOC for TOP 1, 2 and 3 are also included.

In addition, the series contains details about the TOP sponsor workshops. These were held to enable the TOP sponsors to meet the leaders of the IOC and ISL to talk about the marketing programme. The same types of documents are held for the various meetings: correspondence, budget, programme and meeting file. Other meetings also feature in the series, including those between the IOC and ISL, and the Marketing Coordination Meeting (MCM) composed of the IOC, ISL, the USOC and the OCOGs. This part of the series consists essentially of correspondence and minutes.

The series also contains a number of publications and bulletins, such as the "TOP Sponsor Manual" and the "TOP Sponsor Newsletter". The series also features various reports to the IOC by ISL.

As well as the subjects described above, the series has other kinds of documents, including: financial reports, various marketing plans, ISL proposals or presentations to the IOC, information on the Executive Board and details of a project for an International Olympic Association for Medico-Sports Research (AOIRMS).

Accruals

Yes

System of arrangement

The files are classified by subject, by document type or by activities in alphabetical order. The documents in the files are classified chronologically, from latest to earliest.

Conditions governing access

The documents are freely accessible subject to the IOC's access rules.

Language/scripts of material

The documents are in English and French.

Additional sourcesInternal sources

- International marketing programme: J-TOP
- IOC licensees: J-DETLI

Bibliography

"TOP", in *Olympic Review*, Volume XXV No. 2, April-May 1995, pp. 27-28

"The International Olympic Marketing Programme", *Olympic Review*, 1986 February, no. 220, pp. 84-86



Source: Martyn, Scott G., "[Marketing In-House: the Erosion and Eventual Rupture of the IOC-ISL Relationship and the Formation of Meridian Management SA.](#)", *Bridging Three Centuries: Intellectual Crossroads and the Modern Olympic Movement: fifth international symposium for Olympic research*, 2000.

Catalyst for Collaboration: IOC Interim Report 2005-2006, IOC Communications Department, Lausanne (www.olympic.org)

Notes

The content of this sub-series, including the Olympic identifications, is the property of the IOC.

Rules or conventions

Description complies with ISAD(G).

Date(s) of descriptions

April 2013