

## SPORTS BRANDS IN EURO 2012

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After qualifiers and play-offs, the final tournament of the 2012 UEFA European Football Championship has begun. It will be co-hosted by Poland and Ukraine. It is not the first time that two countries were granted the privilege of organizing the European Championships, as it already was in 2000 and 2008 when the hosts were Belgium and Holland, and Austria and Switzerland respectively.

In view of the UEFA European Football Championships, a special sponsorship programme was created. It was implemented by signing a sponsorship agreement in order to create Global UEFA sponsorship programme, which covers partners from the EUROTOP Group, official sponsors of the UEFA European Football Championships, as well as national sponsors in each host country. Consequently, there are nine global and four national sponsors.

The EUROTOP Program enables the official sponsors to enjoy a full package of worldwide rights at the following events: UEFA EURO 2012, final tournaments of the UEFA European Under-21 Championships in Denmark 2011 and Israel 2013, the 2012 UEFA Futsal European Championships in Croatia, as well as the 2013 UEFA Women's European Football Championships in Sweden. The EURO sponsors have exclusive worldwide sponsor rights concerning EURO 2012, while national sponsors have sponsorship rights regarding UEFA EURO 2012 in the territory of the relevant host country.

As for today, the following companies are global sponsors of the UEFA EURO 2012: Adidas, Castrol, Coca-Cola, Hyundai-kia, Carlsberg, McDonald's, Sharp, Orange, Canon and Continental. On the other hand, national sponsorship of EURO 2012 was granted to the companies: E.Wedel, Bank Pekao SA and MasterCard.

From among the above mentioned companies, the only sport brand is Adidas - the company which signed an agreement with UEFA to last from 2010 till 2017 covering two European Championships, namely the 2012 and 2016 Euros, and all other UEFA football national team competitions during that period.

As a sponsor, Adidas is responsible for providing necessary equipment for UEFA competitions, as well as UEFA training courses, referee conferences and other events. Therefore, all equipment at EURO 2012 is marked with both logos: Adidas and the UEFA EURO 2012.

Moreover, the official EURO 2012 match ball has been created by Adidas:



The ball is made of thirty-two thermally connected pieces that are covered by a special convex coating. Owing to this, the ball is easier to dribble and control. Twenty-four pieces form six white circles, on the outlines of which the national colours of Poland and Ukraine are placed, and the remaining eight pieces are black, with patterns referring to the folk culture of the EURO 2012 host countries. Adidas has exclusive rights to put its trademark on the official match ball.

By cooperation with UEFA and using its trademarks on sportswear, equipment and match balls, Adidas does not only advertise its products, but also promotes its company and acquires reputation for its trademarks. Moreover, the company's trademarks are thus put to genuine use. Additionally, under a special agreement between Adidas and UEFA, the 2012 European Football Championships official logo is used together with the Adidas trademarks.

Adidas also intends to establish cooperation with another sports company, i.e. Intersport that is an official sports shop which sells licensed products. The Intersport stores will have a separate area where the licensed products will be sold. These products will be sold in hundreds of stores across Europe during the UEFA European Football Championships. According to Mr. Franz Julen, CEO of INTERSPORT International, "the cooperation with UEFA and Adidas enables us to further differentiate from competition and to continue the strengthening of our position as the world's biggest football retailer". (INTERSPORT website, article: INTERSPORT appointed UEFA EURO 2012™ and 2016™ Official Sports Shop of Licensed Products)

Thus, not only the position of the INTERSPORT Company will be strengthened, but also the INTERSPORT trademark will acquire recognition. It will also enable customers to distinguish the services offered by INTERSPORT from those of other competitive companies.

The opportunity to cooperate with UEFA at the 2012 European Football Championships within the EUROTOP Program is profitable to sponsors who are given an exclusive right to use the UEFA trademarks with their own marks. On the other hand, in return for granting its license, UEFA requires that specific conditions of using its trademarks must be fulfilled by sponsors. Thus, UEFA's trademarks are well protected against degeneration in turnover, as most customers are aware that only the official sponsors under the said license agreement are authorized to use UEFA's trademarks.

Also, the sponsoring companies, by fulfilling the conditions of the UEFA license agreement, have the opportunity to strengthen their trademark position on the market. Thus, a company offering sponsorship has an additional possibility of advertising its products in the context of UEFA's trademarks associated with football and prestige of the European Championships. The company's trademarks are more likely to be remembered by customers and associated with UEFA and the spirit of football championships, thus strengthening good company's image among potential customers of goods or services. What is more, customers are likely to believe that sponsor's company offers goods and services of unique quality, which is as unique as the spirit of the European Championships, and the company itself is well organized and reliable since it obtained UEFA's recognition. Also, the sponsor companies are likely to win new customers from among football fans associating the company's trademarks with UEFA's official designations.

Owing to the relevant license agreement, the official UEFA EURO 2012 logo and sponsors' trademarks are used together on sportswear and equipment used for organizing the tournament, as well as on other licensed products offered on the market. The agreement brings mutual benefits: EURO 2012 and UEFA's trademarks are well-promoted. On the other hand, the trademarks of sponsoring companies are associated with UEFA European Football Championships. It undoubtedly strengthens their position among customers, many of whom are football fans, and are likely to remember the trademarks and associate them with the goods or services deriving from a particular source of origin.

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