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Making Census

More good news for Irish consumer marketers - there are a lot more consumers out there! There are now over 4.2 million adults and children in the Republic of Ireland, up from 3.9 million just four years ago. Ireland has the highest rate of population growth in the EU, a further spur to our already high economic growth rate. Not too long ago, Ireland's high birth rate was seen as a problem (more fodder for emigration); now it is seen as a blessing (more employees for the booming economy).

The highest ever rate of net emigration in any inter-census period was 42,000 per year between 1956 and 1961. Between 2002 and 2006 we had net immigration of 46,000 per year. How times change.

Irish marketers now effectively have the best of both worlds - rising spending power due to economic growth, and expanding consumer markets due to high birth rates and immigration. It won't last (nothing ever does) but you should certainly enjoy it while it continues...

Ryding High

A recent study by Amárach Consulting provides early insights into the power of sports sponsorship in Ireland: focusing on golf and rugby. The sponsorship of sport in Ireland is undergoing rapid change in 2006. Ultimately, the success of such investment will depend on the impact of the association forged between a sporting event and a particular brand or company.

The decision by Heineken to renew its association with the European Rugby Cup makes a lot of sense in light of the survey findings, which asked a representative sample of 1,000 adults (aged 15-74) to name any one company or brand they most associate with sponsorship of rugby in Ireland (without prompting):

- Three in ten adults (30%) - or some 900,000 people in Ireland - can name

Heineken as a company or brand that they associate with rugby in Ireland, well ahead of Guinness (9%) or Permanent TSB (7%).

- A substantial minority (39%) cannot recall any rugby sponsor - falling to 26% of men, and rising to 53% of women.
- Younger adults (under 24) are more likely than any other age group to recall a sponsor of rugby in Ireland.

The chart below shows awareness of Rugby sponsorship and golf sponsorship.

Ireland is host to the 2006 Ryder Cup which in turn has generated unprecedented levels of sponsorship in golf by Irish sponsors. Those sponsoring the Ryder Cup include AIB, Failte Ireland, Waterford Crystal, O2 and Bord Bia. At the time of our survey, AIB teed off with an 'epic' sponsorship campaign costing an estimated €5 million. O2 have followed suit with their own campaign, and others will follow.

So our analysis captured the impact of Ryder Cup sponsorship at the early stages of marketing activities by the sponsors.

Again, our survey asked a representative sample of 1,000 adults (aged 15-74) to name any one company or brand they most associate with sponsorship of the Ryder Cup (without prompting):

- AIB fares well - coming top of the unprompted list of sponsors, named by 9% of all adults (nearly 290,000 people).
- Others sponsoring the Ryder Cup do less well - O2 and Ballygowan recalled by 2% and 1% respectively.

Nevertheless, Our research points to the enduring value of sponsorship - sometimes contributing to brand awareness and consumer connections long after the original sponsorship relation has ceased. Something all of Ireland's rugby and golf sponsors should be factoring into their measurement of the true return on their sponsorship investments.

You can download a copy of the Ryding High report from our publications section at:

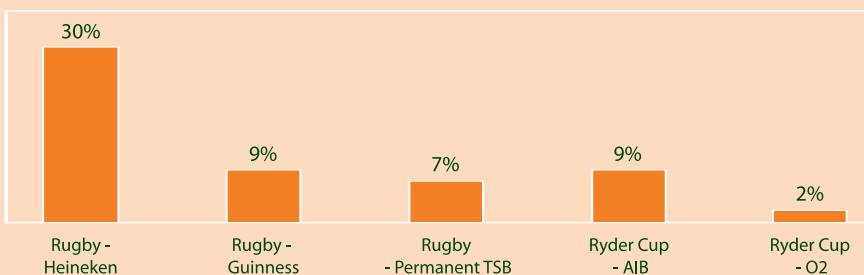
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Ask Amárach

If you require any further details about the studies reported in The Irish Consumer just contact us with your questions. Also, if you have any suggestions on themes and trends you would like us to explore, then please send your suggestions to

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Rugby & Ryder Cup Sponsorships
% of adults recalling any sponsors



Source : Ryding High report from Amárach, 2006