



Host City Survey Report

The Significance of Gaining International
Recognition for Event Host Cities

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Over the recent past, it can be seen that significant importance has been given by cities/regions/countries hosting international sport events, on gaining international recognition as a by-product of hosting the event.

In order to better understand how and what these host cities are actually doing to achieve greater exposure globally, and what are their immediate shortcomings, the BCW Sports Practice developed a Host City Survey in order to collect their testimonies.

Methodology

The survey was sent out to an international selection of 100 host cities and was carried out over the last quarter of 2021. The survey comprised of multiple-choice questions, with an additional space for participants to insert any specific comments.

Summary of Findings

The following report outlines 3 key findings about the current landscape and its pitfalls amongst the host cities regarding the significance of an international communications strategy and its implementation as a factor of hosting sport events.

Results from the survey show that host cities do prioritise and deem important the need for international communications and exposure while hosting international sports events.

A disparity can be seen between the expectations and reality of the impact of hosting sporting events on the exposure of the host cities globally. A major reason for this seems to be the lack of structure and strategy cities have towards international communications.

Most host cities tend to lean towards more traditional tools of gaining exposure (eg. Advertising, press agencies, etc.). There is a growing trend in the need to focus on domestic outreach as well, alongside international outreach.

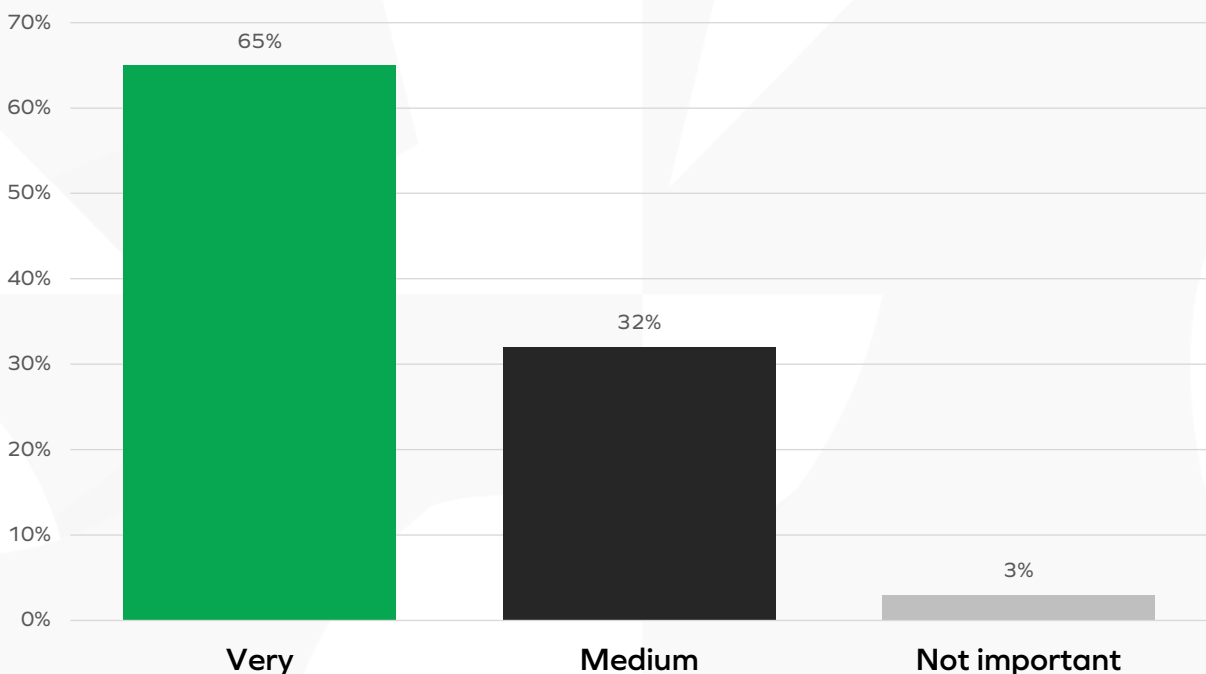
Key Findings

Generating international exposure through event hosting is important to host cities, but overall their results have not been very strong

The intention behind hosting an event is not merely to showcase a certain sport within the region, but also to provide an impetus to the region and what it has to offer. The image of a host city also forms a large part of the 'legacy' factor of hosting an event, increasing its "attractiveness" quotient for tourism, commercial activities, expos, etc.

With this background, it was seen that a large expectation does exist amongst host cities to achieve greater exposure globally. While, over 60% surveyors believed that it was intrinsic to generate international media coverage, the results were not resoundingly in favour of the same.

When your city hosts international events, how important is it for the city to generate international media coverage about the city itself?



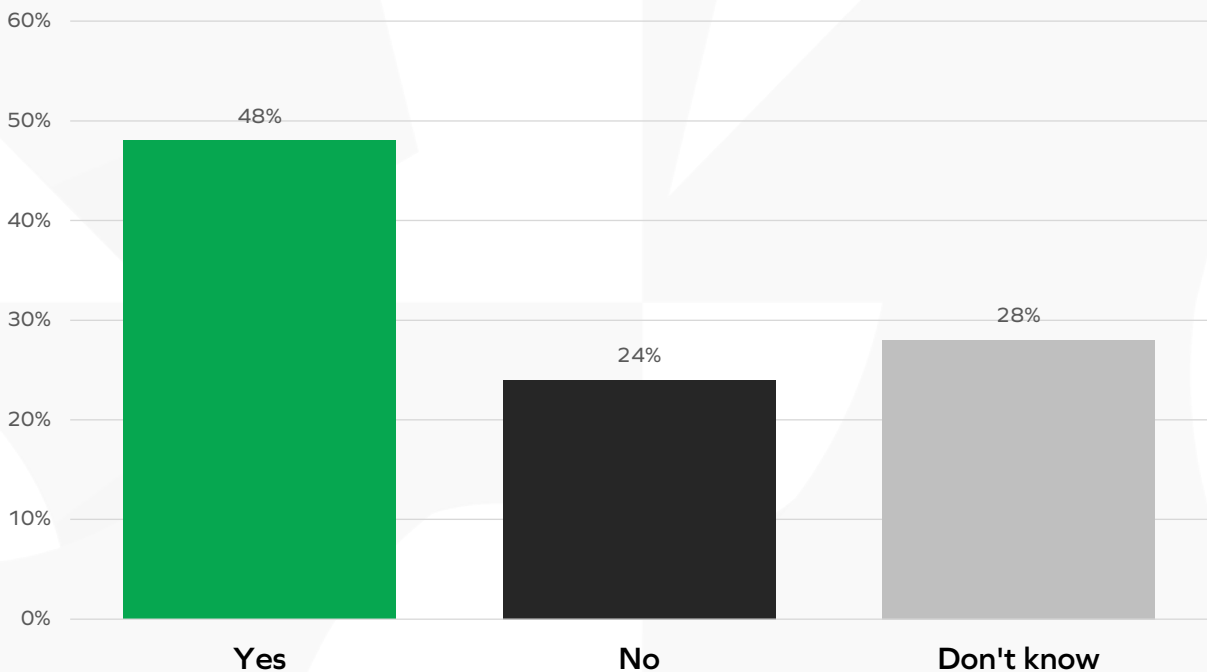
To garner international exposure, the primary requirement is of host cities optimizing their own efforts

A clear gap is identified while surveying the independent efforts taken by a host city in gaining higher coverage through various media channels. In that respect, most cities (70%) have developed a set of key messages about the city to be communicated internationally in connection with event hosting.

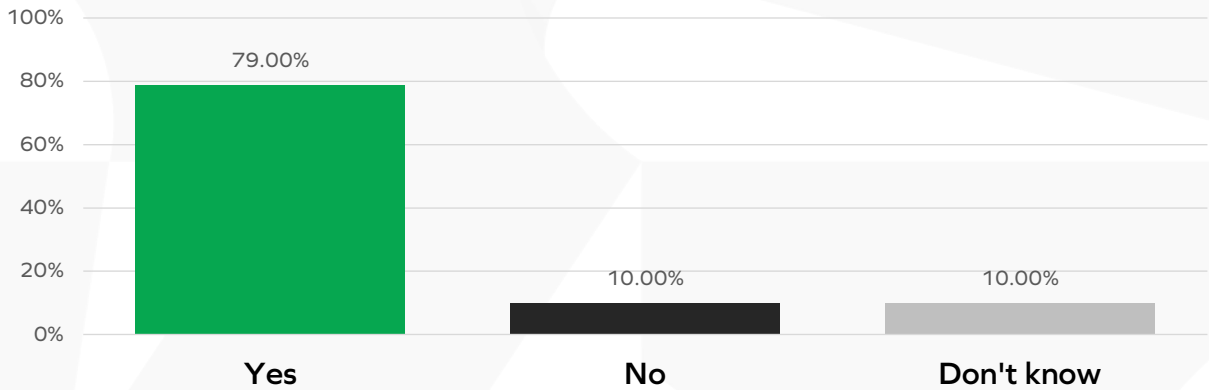
However, it is important for cities to create a strategy and set clear objectives regarding what they wish to generate based on these key messages. Only half (53%) of cities have identified specific objectives for what the international exposure should deliver to the city, and a strong minority (40%) of host cities do not work on any tailoring of key objectives about the city to specific parts of the world.

In terms of city-specific international communications, most cities (41%) are pro-active only a week before the beginning of an event.

Are you in general satisfied with the support your city is getting from the international rights holders (sports event owners) in terms of your efforts of generating international exposure for your city internationally?

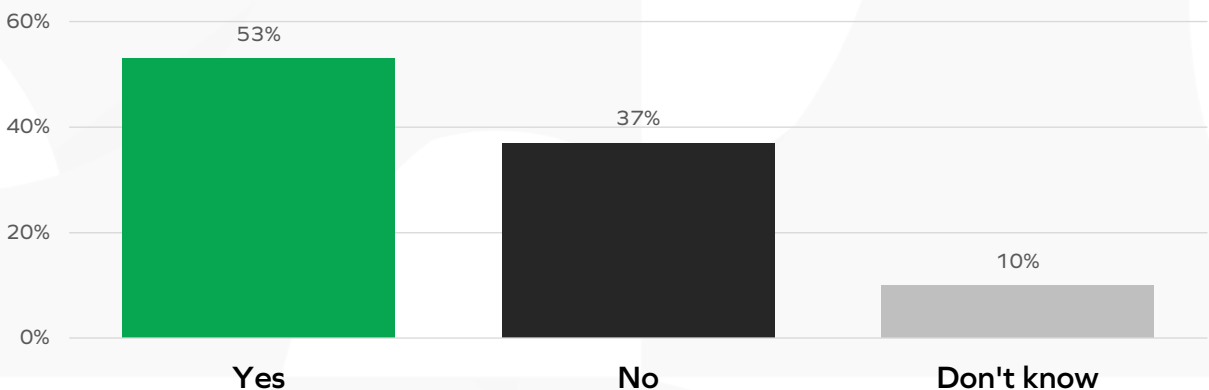


Do you feel that there is a need for your city to optimize its current efforts in terms of increasing international exposure around the hosting of international sports events?

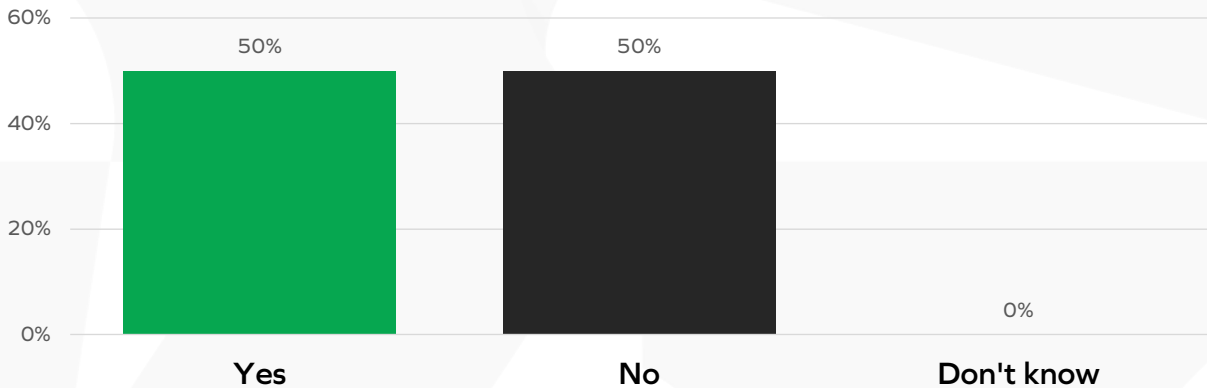


Further, only half the bid cities (50%) actually proactively select international sport events which can align with their vision regarding the exposure it can generate. About half of the cities (48%) do believe that they are receiving adequate support from the event holders (International Federations), a resounding 80% believe that there is an inherent need to optimize its own effort to increase international exposure through the event.

Has your city identified specific objectives that it wants such international media coverage to generate?



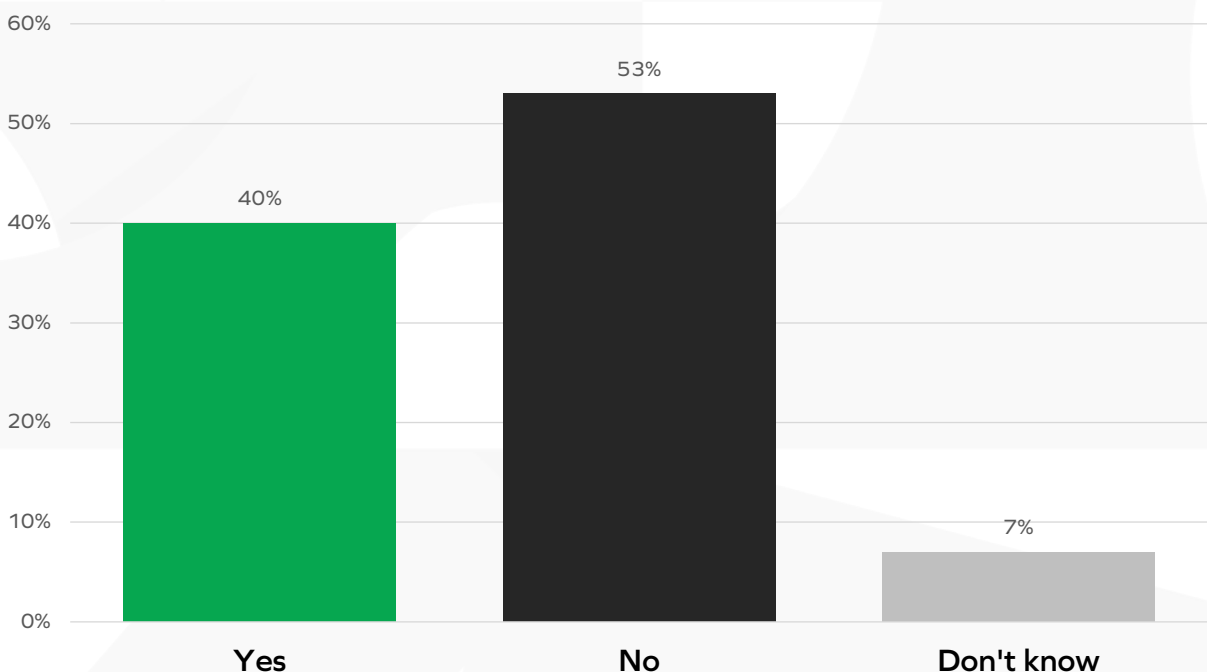
Does your city proactively select international sports events based on the exposure the event could generate in specific countries?



The priority of host cities is not just international outreach, but also national outreach and they currently achieve this with a higher reliance of traditional media avenues

It is one thing to want to grab international eyeballs for an event. However, 40% cities felt that it was important to have not just international exposure, but also local and national exposure. As some countries have a high domestic competitive landscape, showcasing the host cities capabilities and potential to the fullest is crucial.

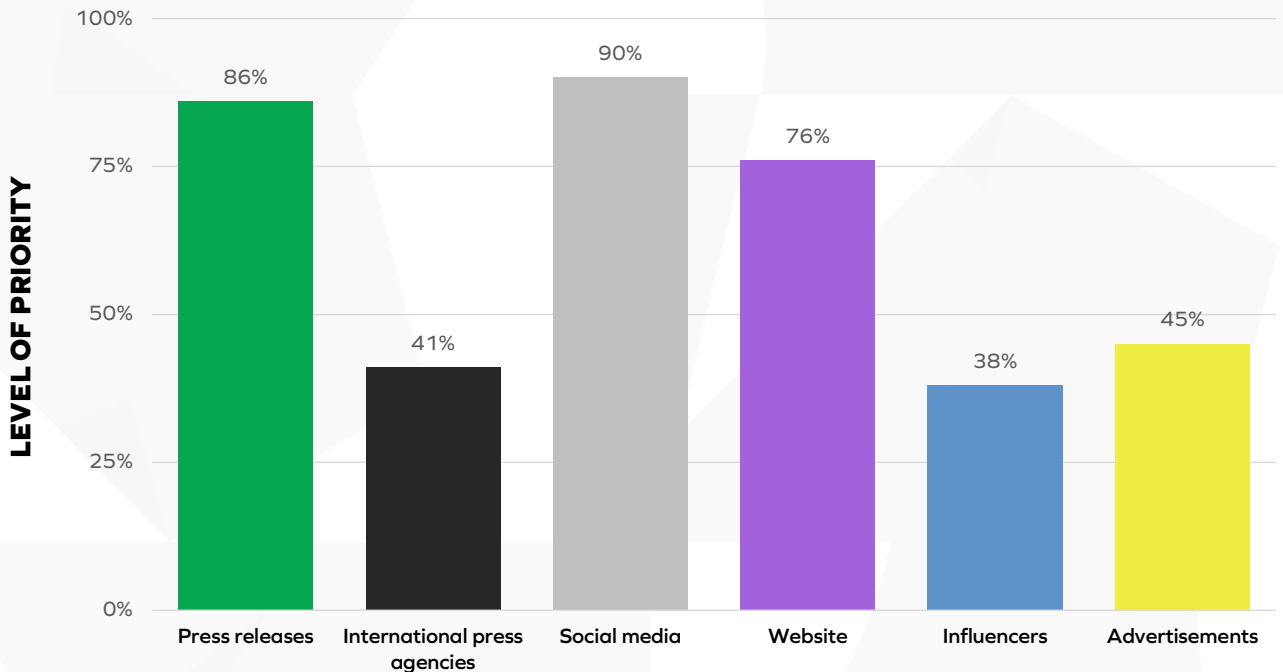
In general, what is more important to your city when hosting an international sports event?



Further, despite the burgeoning of new avenues for generating international buzz, most host cities are still falling back on the traditional forms of media for the same.

A comparison was made between preferences of host cities prioritizing press releases, international press agencies, advertising, social media, influencers, and websites. A clear leaning could be seen, with greater reliance on international press agencies and advertising. While there is an awareness of the growth and importance of the digital space for expanding awareness, preferences are more on conventional avenues.

Which tools/channels has your city so far prioritized to generate international exposure in connection with sport event hosting:



Moving Forward

There is a growing need to create streamlined efforts on behalf of all the relevant stakeholders when it comes to the international communications of host cities. However, an increase in awareness on behalf of host cities has helped highlight and identify these gaps, and they seem determined to tackle these issues on their way to global recognition.

For More Information

Thanks a lot for your interest in the 2021 BCW Host City Survey on the significance of international recognition for event host cities. For more information about the Survey, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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