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Introduction

The United States Olympic Committee (USOC), some years ago, introduced a new tag line that read very simply:

It's not every four years. It's every day.

Dear friends, protocol having been established, I wish to begin my very brief intervention with the tagline of the USOC as a fundamental guiding principle.

Indeed, the tag line, *It's not every four years. It's every day*, captures the essence of what we are about in the Olympic Movement. We are about effecting change in humanity every single day of our lives. We choose to do it through sport.

The Digital Revolution offers us in the Olympic Movement new, innovative, expansive, extensive, intensive and flexible ways of impacting humanity better than on any previous occasion in history.

The Digital Revolution

When I refer to the digital revolution here I mean the changes that have taken place in the way we communicate. We are therefore speaking about communications technological advances which began several decades ago but which have nonetheless taken on warp speed in the past decade.

In the Olympic Movement we see sport as entertainment. The digital revolution has the capacity to bring sport and its slew of positive values to global society.

In a sense we must all agree with the analysis of PricewaterhouseCoopers that there really is 'No place to hide from the digital revolution' (London, 16 June 2009). More particularly, the analysis makes reference to 'digital migration', highlighting the speed with which new technologies in the field of communication are crossing national, ethnic, cultural borders impacting all societies. The analysis states,

Over the next five years, digital technologies will become increasingly widespread across all segments of entertainment & media (E&M) as the digital migration continues to expand.

The claim is made that in the face of the global economic downturn digital migration has *accelerated and intensified ... among both providers and consumers of content*. We are also told that *The global entertainment & media market as a whole, including both consumer and advertising spending will grow by 2.7 per cent compounded annually ... to \$1.6 trillion in 2013*. If this analysis is accurate then the Olympic Movement must ensure that it positions itself to readily benefit from the changing digital technologies as they facilitate accessing wider audiences globally.

Marcel Fenez, Global Leader Entertainment & Media practice, PricewaterhouseCoopers, *is quoted as saying, "In some ways this could be called "the perfect storm". Inside every cloud is a silver lining and in this case, a digital one. Companies who grasp the opportunities which are appearing in this fast changing marketplace and are agile enough to adapt their business models will be able to take full advantage of the potential and new revenue models as they emerge."* This stance is readily advocated in the numerous contributions to this Congress. The digital revolution impacts the content, the packaging and extensive dissemination of information, leaving consumers with greater variety from which to choose and with which to interact at their own pace from wherever they are located and at any time deemed most convenient to them. This reality cannot escape the Olympic Movement and indeed we are already well on our way in

addressing this reality.

Fundamentals

I would readily argue that we must ensure at all times that we maintain certain fundamental principles in the use of the digital revolution by the International Olympic Movement if we are to reap the maximum benefit relative to our mandate.

- *Universal accessibility*
- *Affordability*
- *Appeal*
- *Acceptability*
- *Simplicity*
- *Interactivity*

Challenges

Perhaps it is fair to say that in the various contributions we have not heard enough about the role of the digital revolution in the promotion of the numerous positive values of sport – Olympism – to facilitate and enhance sport and participation in sport, at whatever level, as an international movement for peace, social harmony, international understanding and a better life for all – ideals of the founding fathers of the International Olympic Movement. The challenge therefore is to place this aspect of our work squarely at the front of our engagement of the digital revolution.

There are other challenges. We are challenged to find ways of determining the best media through which to reach audiences in different geographical constituencies, varying levels of economic, socio-cultural and technological development. We are also challenged by issues relating to the management of rights, new relations with governments and stakeholders, gender equity

Conclusion

It is important for us all to understand that the digital revolution is the most rapid development taking place in the world today. Even as we meet here to discuss the various contributions on its impact on the Olympic Movement the digital revolution has moved forward and will be even farther ahead by the time our conclusions have been circulated.

We would therefore do well to heed the words of *Marcel*, *The winners will be those players who focus on driving and leading change that delivers real value for consumers... But for each of the industry's diverse segments to participate fully in this growth, they will first need to embrace the digital future."*