

# Research on brand management of Guangzhou R&F Football Club

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<p>This thesis studies the brand management of Guangzhou R &amp; F Football Club. On the tenth anniversary of Guangzhou R &amp; F Football, the club began to carry out brand management in terms of brand building, brand communication and brand maintenance. Football clubs use brand management to improve their brand awareness, awareness, trust, satisfaction, and loyalty.</p> <p>The conclusion is the club has carried out brand management, compared with the famous European and Chinese clubs, Guangzhou R &amp; F Football Club has insufficient brand management.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Brand management, football club, sport marketing	

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# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Background**

In today's world, football is the first sport. Football has developed for more than 100 years. In the 19th century, football appeared League, season, football club, football club management, football club brand management. In the 20th century, football began to be professional. In Europe, some football clubs began to establish their own brands and manage their own football brands in order to increase their attention and income. (Wu 1999, 2.)

Chinese football began to be professional in 1992, and the Chinese Super League has been more than 20 years. China has a large population, and its football league has a large scale, which drives huge consumption every year. In China, the time of Football Professionalization is relatively short, and there are some shortcomings. The management of football club has experienced from the short-term huge investment management to the long-term rational investment management. Therefore, Chinese football clubs use brand management to increase their attention and income.

In recent years, there have been two football clubs in Guangzhou in the Chinese Super League. The two football clubs are Guangzhou Evergrande club and Guangzhou R&F club. They are competing for sponsors and fans from Guangzhou. In order to gain more attention and increase the club's income, Guangzhou R&F football club began to establish and manage its own football brand. (LIANG 2010, 4.)

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

The research objectives is to find out the current situation of brand management of Guangzhou R & F Football Club. Compare the brand management differences between Chinese football clubs and European football clubs. Finally try to find a way to improve the brand management level of Guangzhou R & F Football Club.

## **1.3 Research Significance**

To improve the brand management of Guangzhou R & F Club is the need for sustainable development of Guangzhou R & F Club. The club wants to:

1. Improve the competitiveness of football clubs in the market.
2. Improve the competitive level of the football club.
3. Add more fans to support the club.
4. Increase the visibility of the club worldwide.

### **1.3.1 Practical significance**

Since the professionalization of Chinese football, no Chinese football club has made a profit at the end of the season. Investors invest huge amounts of money into football clubs every season to improve the club's level of competition. Although the strength of the team has been improved, there are still many shortcomings in brand management, which ultimately lead to their financial failure to achieve balance or profit in the club. (Ma 2015, 3.)

Once a huge amount of money is invested in the club, Chinese football clubs often face poor performance or even relegation. This will cause the club to lose a large number of fans and no more fans to support the team in the future. (Ma 2015, 3.)

Guangzhou R & F Football Club is located in Guangzhou city. In Guangzhou, there are two professional football clubs. In addition to R & F Club, another club is Guangzhou Evergrande Club. The competition between the two football clubs is fierce. (Wu 2015, 5.)

In terms of club results, Guangzhou Evergrande Football Club has won Chinese Super League titles and Asian Football Championship titles in China. Guangzhou R & F Football Club ranked third in the Chinese Super League. (WU 2015, 6.)

In terms of club personnel, Guangzhou Evergrande Football Club has 10 members of the Chinese national team. The Guangzhou R & F Football Club has only one member of the Chinese national team. In Guangzhou City, more local fans support Guangzhou Evergrande Football Club than Guangzhou R & F Football Club. Because their results are better than R & F club, they also attract a lot of attention. (WU 2015, 8.)

In order to solve this problem, Guangzhou R & F Club must improve its brand management level. This can enable the football club to increase revenue, attract more sponsors to sponsor the club, and attract more fans to support the club, so as to achieve the club's financial balance and profitability.

### **1.3.2 Theoretical significance**

Worldwide, in order to achieve sustainable development of football clubs, brand management is very important. Because brand management can allow the club to get more investment and more fan attention in the future. Brand management and team management are equally important at the club level. There is no difference between the two management tasks. (GU 2015, 10.)

Team management is to improve the competitive level of the club. Let the club achieve good results in domestic and foreign leagues. Brand management can increase the visibility of the club. Both of these efforts will allow the club to gain more visibility and brand value to be successful, a football club must make brand management one of its daily tasks.

## **2. Research Methods**

### **2.1 Research Management Tools**

In this thesis, the SWOT analysis method and the PEST analysis method are used in the research on the brand management of Guangzhou R&F Football Club.

### **2.1.1 SWOT Analysis**

The SWOT analysis method was proposed by the management professor of the University of San Francisco in the early 1980s, Heinz Wehrich, and is often used in corporate strategy formulation, competitor analysis, and other occasions. (Heinz 1982, 12.)

(1) “S” refers to the strengths.

(2) “W” refers to weaknesses.

(3) “O” refers to the opportunities.

(4) “T” refers to the threats.

### **2.1.2 PEST Analysis**

PEST analysis refers to the external factors that affect the development of an enterprise. These external factors come from the macro environment. (Jiang 2002, 3.)

(1) “P” refers to the political environment.

(2) “E” refers to the economic environment.

(3) “S” refers to the social environment.

(4) “T” refers to the technical environment.

### **2.1.3 Documentation**

### (1) Brand building

The definition of brand building is to generate awareness about your business using marketing strategies and campaigns with the goal of creating a unique and lasting image in the marketplace. (Strahler 2000, 6.)

### (2) Brand communication

Brand communication is an important part and tool of brand management. Companies can use it to convey, persuade, inspire, teach, remind and enrich stakeholders' knowledge of the brand, its advantages, values, fundamentals and its products and services. (Robert 2001, 10.)

### (3) Brand maintenance

Brand maintenance refers to a series of activities to maintain the brand image, maintain the brand's market position, and brand value in response to the impact of changes in the external environment on brands. (Zhang 2002, 8.)

## **2.2 Research Target**

The research target of this thesis is Guangzhou R&F football club. This club is a football club from China, located in Guangzhou. The club was founded in 2011 and has a history of eight years. At present, Guangzhou R&F Football Club participates in the highest level of professional football league in China. (R&F Official Website)

## **2.3 Research contents**

The research contents of this thesis is Guangzhou R&F football club brand management. The thesis compares R&F clubs with Chinese and European clubs and draws a conclusion. Finally, find out how to improve the brand management of R&F Club.

## **2.4 Research implementation**

### **2.4.1 Questionnaire**

(1) Two questionnaires were set up:

1. Questionnaire on Guangzhou R&F football club.
2. Questionnaire on brand management of Guangzhou R&F football club.

(2) Questionnaire recipients

1. Buying season tickets of R&F football club's fans.
2. Watching a live R&F football club match's fans.
3. Buying R & F football club souvenirs ' s fans.
4. Guangzhou local football fans.
5. Guangzhou citizens.

### **3. Research Results**

#### **3.1 Brand management of football clubs in China and Europe**

##### **3.1.1 Football club brand management in Europe**

(1) Brand building: membership system

The Spanish royal Madrid Football Club implements the membership of the Spanish team. After paying the membership fee every year, the fans can enjoy the following benefits:

1. Preferential purchase and selection.
2. Free team journals and gifts.
3. Offers and fan shop discount tickets.
4. The right to vote for the president of Real Madrid (LI 2010, 3.)

The membership system can enhance customer loyalty and give the client team football club a sense of identity and participation. Service customer service, to meet the requirements of the customer is the reason for the successful operation of the Real Madrid club. (LI 2010, 3.)

First, every year they get a huge membership fee through this system. The club uses this money to buy the best players on the market, which will greatly improve the team's competitive level. (LI 2010, 4.)

Second, players in the team will receive a generous bonus when they win the Spanish League or win the UEFA Champions League. Winning multiple championships is also the main reason why fans from all over the world like Real Madrid Football Club. (LI 2010, 5.)

Third, the club uses funds to hire high-level football coaches or football executives around the world. This has driven the club to become more professional and to achieve great success in management. (LI 2010, 6.)

## (2) Brand building: excellent youth training

Spain FC Barcelona attaches great importance to youth training. The administrator established the La Masia Youth Training Camp. In the past ten years, Messi led a number of Barcelona clubs to win the Spanish First Division, the Champions League . (Zhang 2014, 2.)

### 1. Enhance the brand awareness of the club.

Good youth training will allow the club to have more high-level football talents in the future. The best teams in the world have their own youth camps. They will continue to publicize their youth training talents and let them participate in the highest level of competition. Create their own football brand. Use excellent youth training camps to attract the best young players from all over the world to participate in their clubs. (Zhang 2014, 3.)

### 2. Enhance the brand value of the club.

Some outstanding young players have already received the attention of fans in the youth camp. Since they were very young, their fans have begun to support them. In the future, when they stand in higher-level competitions, they will continue to increase the fans' love for them. As long as these players don't transfer to other clubs and are always in the club, the fans will have more and more bases, and these fans will not give up supporting the players they like. This undoubtedly increases the loyalty of the fans to the club. (Zhang 2014, 4.)

## (1) Brand communication: Introduce famous football players.

After 2000, Real Madrid club has introduced famous football players every year to build the strongest football club in the world. (Jia 2012, 1.)

1. Figo. Golden Globe winner from Portugal. He joined the club in 2000 for \$56.1 million. His presence gave the team the 2000 / 01 Spanish first division title. (Jia 2012, 2.)

2. Zidane. Football player from France. He once won the world cup for France. He joined the team for a transfer fee of 76 million euros. It also broke Figo 's transfer record and became the most expensive football player in the world at that time. (Jia 2012, 2.)

(4) Brand maintenance: establish team history museum and souvenir Shop

The Bayern Munich football club in Germany has set up museums. (Bai 2010, 1.)

1. Visitors can visit the museum before and after the competition, recognize the history of the club and see the trophies obtained by Bayern football club. (Bai 2010, 2.)

2. At the end of the museum visit, will come to a souvenir shop. People can buy jerseys, scarves, hats and other souvenirs. (Bai 2010, 3.)

Founded in 1900, Bayern Munich has a history of 119 years and can be said to span two centuries. Many fans will come to Munich, Germany to watch the team's competition and visit the team's museum. (Bai 2010, 4.)

There are three reasons why a team builds a museum:

The first is to increase customer loyalty and identity to the brand. (Bai 2010, 5.)

Second, discover more new team supporters. After the establishment of the team museum, a family ticket discount is offered. Let more team supporters visit with their children. Let the children love the club from an early age, and more and more new fans will appear in the future. (Bai 2010, 5.)

Third, sponsors generally seek to invest in football clubs with a long history and relatively stable team performance. This allows their brand to be seen by more people and can be constantly exposed to media exposure. More fans choose to buy jerseys at the souvenir shop,

which also allows potential sponsors to be more willing to invest in the club's jersey. This can increase the club's income. (Bai 2010, 5.)

Overview ,European football clubs have established their own football brands for decades and are more mature in the way they manage brands. It can be seen from this that famous European clubs attach great importance to the management of their own brands. They will use different methods to improve the value and popularity of the brand. There are also some systems to cultivate and increase customer loyalty, so that customers have a sense of dependence on the team club, so as to continuously increase fans who only want the team.

These clubs use very reasonable brand management, which makes the operation of the club very ideal. The competitive level of the club is also improved because of good brand management. The results of these clubs at home or in Europe are very good, there is no risk of relegation at all. A large number of potential sponsors choose to cooperate with football clubs because of their brands, and want to put their own advertisements in their jerseys or stadiums.

### **3.1.2 China**

(1)Brand building: guardian of the capital.

Beijing is the capital of China, and the home of Beijing Guoan football club is located in the capital. Their clubs call themselves guardians of the capital. This symbolizes that the team guards the city like an ancient soldier. This brand building has attracted a lot of local fans and caused a very big impact in Beijing. Many local fans like the team because of the brand building and imagine that they guard their country like a soldier. In the home game, fans will wear uniform to cheer for the team. This kind of fan culture has a certain reputation throughout the country. (XU 2016, 10.)

This brand building is to make use of the psychology of fans to make them more dependent and representative of the team. And in the promotion of fan culture, improve fan satisfaction with the club.

(2) Brand communication: the football club uses Internet channels to promote the team

Guangzhou Evergrande club is good at using the Internet to promote the team. They display the team's profile and data on the club's official website. (SHI 2012, 2.)

1. The official website displays information and photos of Guangzhou Evergrande football club's top league titles in the history. (SHI 2012, 3.)

2. Information and training photos of each player in the club. (SHI 2012, 3.)

3. Provide match information for fans and media workers. (SHI 2012, 3.)

4. Publicize your youth training camp. Promote successful work and work with well-known European clubs to attract young players to the club's youth training camp. (SHI 2012, 3.)

5. Set up internet discussion forums to provide channels for fans and club staff to discuss team work. (SHI 2012, 4.)

This brand communication method is to use the advantages of the internet to make the club's propaganda work more accurately targeted to the fans or media workers in need. Such publicity work can also reduce the cost of publicity work.

(3) Brand maintenance: fans club management

Liaoning football club of China attaches great importance to the influence of fans on the team. Because these fans will continue to support the team, the club has established a fan club. The team is also recruiting a group of volunteers in the fan club. (ZHAO 2006, 2.)

Then trained for on-site management, so that these fans can participate in the management of the game, increasing their support for the brand. Hiring fans as volunteers can increase fan satisfaction with the team. Because the work of each volunteer is more difficult than the fans

who simply watch the game, but can let these fans who love the club deeply participate in the team's daily work. This will increase the loyalty of some fans to the club. (ZHAO 2006, 2.)

The club asks fans to do the following three tasks to promote fan support for the club. Make fans feel that they are involved in the daily operation of the team. (ZHAO 2006, 2.)

1. Fan staff participate in ticket check.

Have fans check their tickets at the ticket office so they can experience the day-to-day work of club employees. The job is not difficult, and fans can easily get it done. (ZHAO 2006, 3.)

2. Fans guide the audience to the scene and guide them to the ticket location.

This task is more complicated than checking the tickets. The club trains fans so that they can become familiar with every location of the stadium. By match day, these trained fans can be responsible for helping some fans who come to the scene for the first time to find their place. (ZHAO 2006, 3.)

3. Fans are responsible for cleaning up the pitch after the match

This is the most able to cultivate fan support for the club. Because this work is left to the most passionate fans. After the game, they and the staff cleaned the entire stadium, turning the messy team into a very beautiful football field. This work will consume some of the fans' time, so the club will give away tickets to these fans who love the club after the end. (ZHAO 2006, 4.)

(4) Brand maintenance: internet technology

Shenzhen football club attaches great importance to its football brand. They use internet technology to promote fan satisfaction with the club. Increase customer dependence on the club. They did the following jobs on the internet. (DAI 2016, 3.)

1. On the team's football homepage, a ticket purchase service is provided, and customers can purchase their favorite locations on the Internet. Customers don't have to worry about the risk of buying fake tickets or losing tickets. (DAI 2016, 3.)

2. Shenzhen football club uses the Internet media to publicize the team's daily dynamics in real time. Customers can easily watch the team news on their mobile phones or computers. The club will screen the players most loved by fans, so that the news of this player occupy the most prominent position. The club took staff training videos and photos of the team and posted them on their official channel for fans to watch. (DAI 2016, 4.)

3. Solicit fan videos on the official channel. Let fans show their favorite clubs by recording videos themselves. During the intermission on the game day, these videos were posted on the big screen, so that the audience in the audience can feel this fan's love for the club.

In summary, after the professionalization of Chinese football, China Football Club has carried out a series of work on brand management. (DAI 2016, 5.)

(1) Guardian of the capital.

(2) The football club uses Internet channels to promote the team

(3) Fans Club management

(4) Internet technology

This shows that Chinese clubs have begun to manage their football brands. They provide clients with a series of tasks to increase satisfaction. With 1.4 billion people in China, these are potential football customers. Chinese clubs use the Internet to promote their teams and build some local brands to attract potential football fans' attention and like the club. As long as the number of fans continues to increase, football clubs can use fan spending to increase the club's income, and finally reach a financial balance of the club's finances.

## 3.2 Analysis of Guangzhou R&F Football Club

### 3.2.1 SWOT Analysis

(S) Strengths analysis of Brand Advantage of Guangzhou R & F football club

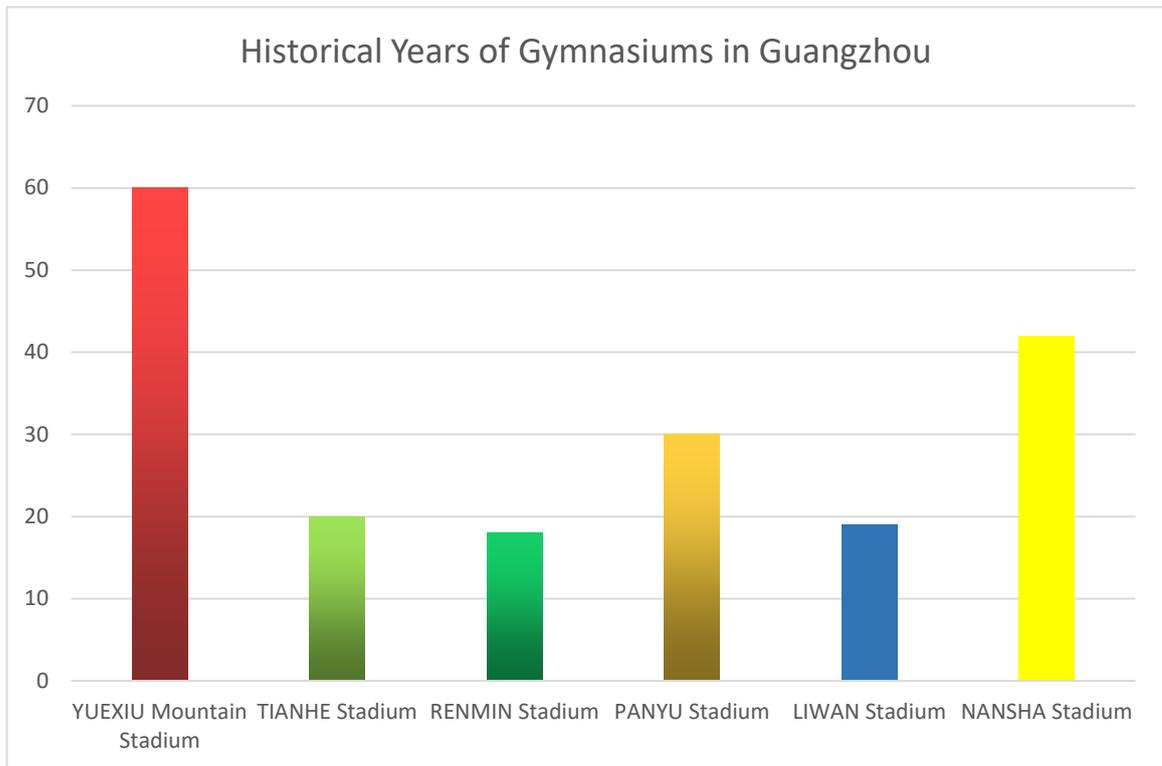


Figure 1. Historical years of gymnasiums in Guangzhou (HE 2015, 6.)

(1) Football brands with a long history. The home stadium of the football club is Yuexiu mountain Stadium. This stadium has a history of 60 years. This stadium has accompanied the growth of many citizens in Guangzhou. Many citizens will choose to play sports and watch matches in this stadium. The team chose to play in this historic stadium because it attracted many citizens from Guangzhou to watch the scene.

(2) Localized football brands. When the club selected football players to join the team, it deliberately selected some football players from Guangzhou. Because with the participation of these local players, it can attract more support from local fans in Guangzhou. Because when they see these players, they have a sense of substitution. This can increase customer recognition of the club.

(3) Ample funding sources. The owner of Guangzhou R & F football club is a real estate developer. The club has sufficient funds to continue running the team. Fans do not have to worry about the team being relegated or disbanded due to financial problems. You can also see new high-level football players joining the team after the end of each year's football transfer window.

(4) Excellent young fans. Xiao, a female fan who supports the team, she went to the team's home to support the team for consecutive years. She spurred her classmates to join the support of the team. Has a lot of popularity among the young Guangzhou student group.

(5) Chinese national team players. Fans can watch R & F club players when watching the Chinese team participating in international matches. R & F Club provided four outstanding athletes for the national team. Because these national team members appear in R & F matches, the club has gained more visibility and attention.

(W) Weakness analysis of Football Brands of Guangzhou R & F football club

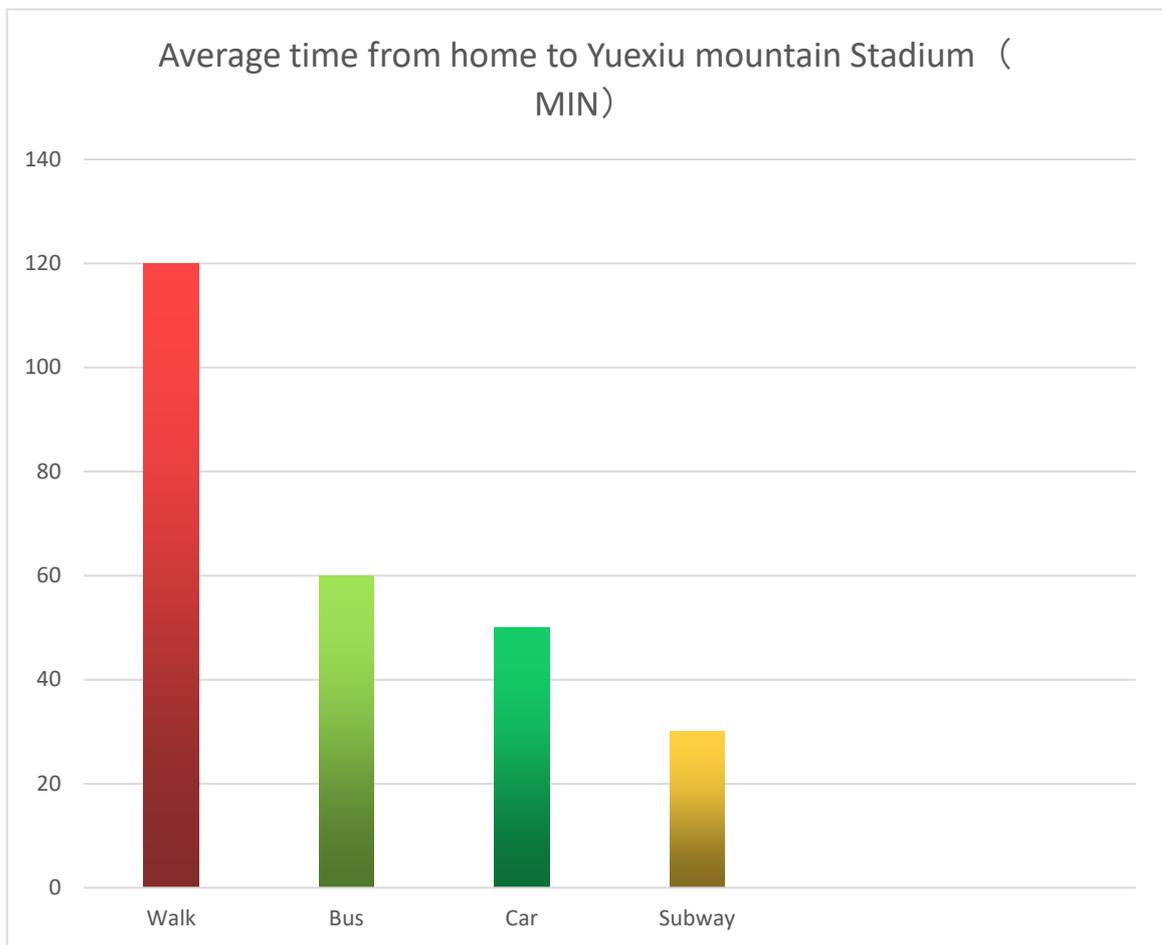


Figure 2. Average time from home to Yuexiu mountain Stadium (HE 2015, 8.)

(1) It is difficult for fans to watch the game at home. The home court chosen by the club is too close to the city centre. On the match day, it is very inconvenient for the fans to drive to the home to watch the game, because the traffic in the city center is very congested, and the fans will experience a very long traffic jam. Moreover, the subway station is relatively far from the stadium. Fans who choose this mode of transportation will not be able to enter the playing field for 15 minutes after getting off the bus. This weakness will greatly reduce fan satisfaction with the club. Because they take longer to reach the location.

(2) A stadium with a long history. This stadium was chosen because it can attract a lot of local fans from Guangzhou. But because it has been built for a long time, the stadium facilities are old. The canopy above the stadium is also partially detached. When it rains, it will affect the viewing experience of some fans.

(3) The stadium design is not user-friendly. There are not enough toilets in the stadium, which causes many people to queue for a long time during the intermission. This greatly reduces customer satisfaction.

(O) Guangzhou R&F football club's opportunity analysis

(1) The popularization of electronic commerce. People can choose to buy tickets on the Internet.

(2) People are willing to volunteer. Volunteers were put in work to relieve pressure on security and to speed up the time spent on security and ticket testing.

(T) Guangzhou R&F football club's threats analysis

(1) The popularity of television and new media. People may no longer choose to watch the ball on the spot, but choose to watch the game at home.

(2) Competition in the same city. There is another Guangzhou Evergrande football club in Guangzhou. Guangzhou Evergrande football club won Chinese League titles in 2011-2017 years.

### 3.2.1.2 Guangzhou R&F football club SWOT rectangle analysis

SWOT	Strengths (S)	Weaknesses(W)
Opportunities (O)	SO	WO
Threats (T)	ST	WT

(1)SO strategic analysis: strengths + opportunities.

In 2017, Guangzhou had a permanent population of 14 million 498 thousand and 400 people, and the urbanization rate was 84%. The Yuexiu mountain stadium is a landmark building in Guangzhou, which attracts many visitors every year. Guangzhou R & F football club with Yuexiu mountain stadium as the home court to attract more people to watch the race.

(2) ST strategic analysis: strengths + threats.

Use excellent fans to attract more local fans in Guangzhou. A regular offer of a number of activities and tickets. In the competition with the rival of the city of Guangzhou Evergrande football club to take up the upper hand.

(3) WO strategic analysis: weaknesses + opportunities.

Energetically promoting electronic ticket service. Let the fans do not buy a ticket at the scene again, and in the mobile phone or computer to buy tickets online, shorten the waiting time, enhance the spectators feel.

(4) WT strategic analysis: weaknesses+ threats

The facilities for the refurbishment of the stadium. See the old stadium, the club should take the seat transformation, increase the canopy, increase restroom, free WIFI stadium construction. To enhance the hardware conditions, transform Yuexiu mountain stadium into professional football field, so as to attract more fans to choose the two teams in Guangzhou, and are more willing to watch the Yuexiu mountain stadium.

### 3.2.2 PEST Analysis

(P) Political environment analysis

In from June 23 to 27, 1992, the Chinese football association held a working conference in Hongshan meet in the western suburbs of Beijing. The conference focused on reform and

decided to take football as a breakthrough in sports reform, and established the direction of reform for Chinese football to go professionalized. This is the epoch-making "red mountain pass" in the history of Chinese football. Since then, Chinese football is becoming professionalized.

#### (E) Economic environment analysis

In 2017, the total amount of GDP in Guangzhou was up to 215 billion yuan. The top 20 ranks of the global city in the total economic volume. Guangzhou R&F football club can attract the sponsorship of many investors in Guangzhou.

According to the financial report disclosed by R&F group on the internet in 2017, the turnover in 2017 was 59.2 billion yuan, and it had 51.38 million square meters of land and many hotels. Compared with 2016, R&F group's net profit increased by 204% to RMB 21.4 billion. From this we can see that R&F group has enough funds to invest in football clubs.

The healthy development of football clubs is inseparable from the investment of funds, and stable economic benefits ensure that investors invest in clubs every year. In the past five years, China has reached 25 million new enterprises. More and more companies want to increase their exposure, and investing in football clubs is an important measure to promote their own clubs.

#### (S) Social environment analysis

The number of the world football league matches in 2015. China is ranked the first in Asia and sixth in the world. In China, there is a large base of football spectators. People are more willing to invest in football, including watching the ball on the spot and buying the shirt souvenirs.

Football is the first sport in China. More than 100 million people watch football in different ways each year. With the development of society, people have more disposable funds. The change of concept, the Chinese people never want to use money in football, and now they are willing to use money in football. Through the purchase of jerseys and other activities, increased support for their favorite clubs.

## (T) Technical environment analysis

In the past years, the Chinese league has attracted many famous players from the world, and the overall level has been greatly improved. In 2013 and 2015, the Chinese football club won the champions league in the Asian champions league. In the 2018 season, the Chinese super company introduced video playback technology (VAR) and invited foreign excellent referees to enforce the law enforcement competition, which greatly improved the viewing degree of the league. (Zhang 2012, 8.)

After the start of the super league season in 2018, the average audience for the super league is 20,000. This reflects that fans are more willing to go to the stadium than they were in 2017.

In recent years, Chinese fans have complained that the level of Chinese referees is not high, resulting in wrong judgments. The Chinese football association has introduced VAR technology in Europe. Although video playback technology will cause the game to be interrupted, there will be a situation where the penalty kick is re-adjusted after the midfield.

In some important game matches, such as the derby match or the championship competition, the Chinese football association invited European referees to participate in the game. Improve neutrality and improve law enforcement.

### **3.2.3 Summary**

The club manages its brand from three aspects: brand building, brand communication and brand maintenance.

#### (1) To create China Southern football brand

The team has a style that is dominated by ball control. Chinese southern football, is the core of the ball, continue to create opportunities for short. The rhythm is fast and the appreciation is pleasing to the eyes. This style is reflected in the Guangzhou R&F competition. The team coach is also playing the middle super game with the 352 formation. Guangzhou is representative of Chinese southern football.

## (2) Guangzhou R&F football club and in the city of Guangzhou

Guangzhou city high Tong primary school Guangzhou No. 117 middle school, Guangzhou middle school and the south China normal university have established a cooperative relationship. Young players can not only be guided by excellent youth coaches in the youth camp, but also go to school with their classmates at the same time after training. And let them complete the education from the primary school to the university. This scientific youth training mechanism can ensure young players' knowledge level, even if they no longer engage in football habits, they also have skills to cope with future life.

## (3) Buy tickets on the spot

1. Fans can buy tickets at the official sales point of the stadium on the match day.

2. The club puts the match notice in the major sports websites. Let people who watch the website know the time of the next game, so that fans can buy tickets to the game in advance. Add more people to watch the game.

## (4) Pays attention to the culture of fans and the establishment of a vermicelli club

1. The establishment of Guangzhou R&F fans club. A member of the club will win the latest season's jerseys and scarves from Guangzhou R&F club, and fans will distribute the R&F magazine to the members before the game starts. After becoming a member to buy season tickets, not only have the discounts, as well as the exclusive membership card sign.

2. R&F, while building local fans, has also established R&F fans international fans group, attracting more than 100 foreign supporters from more than 10 countries in the world. The fans are promoting the Guangzhou R&F club to the world, increasing the popularity of the club in the world.

3. Regularly organize the activities of the fans' meetings. The club staff members meet the fans by contacting the president, organizing the fans together, and sending gifts. At the end of

the day, take a picture. Let the fans enjoy and support the club. WIN champion in the R&F fan club. Their fans will be fans to join the team, and then the game will be the champion. The champion's team will be awarded the trophy by the president of the club during the first home midfield break of the new season.

4. Hold the R & F fans will games. Young fans love gaming, the club organized by FIFA18 games, let the fans enjoy it. Champion can join in Guangzhou R&F e-sport club, and join in China FIFA 19 league.

## **4. Discussion**

### **4.1 Consideration about the results**

The significance of improving brand management of Guangzhou R&f football club fans are very important in the football industry. Professional football club is not only a way of sports entertainment, but also a spiritual sustenance for fans. Guangzhou R&F club can improve its brand management, improve its operation level, and attract and serve fans better.

### **4.2 Trustworthiness of the research**

Questionnaire issuing and recycling: questionnaire surveys are distributed electronically and use the internet to conduct surveys with fans and ordinary citizens. The success rate reaches 82%. We fully understand the outside world's understanding and improvement of Guangzhou R&F football club.

### **4.3 Ethical viewpoints**

China's football industry is becoming more and more mature and professional. With the development of economy, fans are more willing to invest in football clubs. Professional football clubs need to improve their management level to compete for better results and attract more fans. Football clubs should combine their own development situation with their own resources and abilities to learn and absorb the world's excellent football club management mode that is conducive to their own development. I believe that in the near future, Guangzhou R&F football club will become better and better.

### **4.4 Evaluation**

In writing this thesis, I fully learned about brand management. I have mastered a lot of knowledge points that have skyrocketed. I find the relevant knowledge in the library and Internet, and clearly elaborate in the thesis. Through the communication with the manager and fans of the club, I know a lot about the specific situation of Guangzhou R&F football club, which is not available in the media. After analyzing the brand management of the club, the conclusion

is drawn. This also allows me to put forward a lot of suggestions for the club in the future in the discussion part of the paper. I am very satisfied with the process of the thesis. With the help of my teacher and through my own continuous efforts, I have completed all the contents of the thesis within the specified time. And the total number of pages of the thesis also conforms to the number of pages stipulated by the teacher. In terms of content, it also analyzes and discusses the influence of brand management on football clubs from multiple perspectives. Combined with Chinese football clubs and foreign football clubs, it is concluded that Chinese clubs still lag behind in brand management. In the future, we should learn from European football clubs if brand management. Brand management can really improve the club's income and popularity. More and more clubs choose to pay attention to managing their own brands.

For my own learning, I think in the process of writing the thesis, I have a better understanding and knowledge of sports management. I understand that sports management can promote the development of sports clubs. Every link can make the club better. In my future career, I believe that I can use the knowledge I gained in writing papers to apply in my work.

Finally, thank everyone for helping me in this thesis. It includes teachers who guide my thesis, staff and fans who provide club information, and interviewees who complete my questionnaire. I am very grateful for their help to my thesis, which is also an important factor to promote the completion of my thesis.

## **5. Conclusions and suggestions for development or further work**

### **5.1 Conclusions**

This thesis research Guangzhou R&F football club by using a variety of research methods. The conclusion is: R&F football club has some brand management methods at present. But compared with other football clubs in Europe and China, R&F football club lacks some methods of brand management. In the future, Guangzhou R&F club can make the development of the club better through more ways of brand management. The club manages its brand from three aspects: brand building, brand communication and brand maintenance.

Eight reasons for increasing the way of brand management.

1. Increase brand awareness in the market.
2. Increase the value of the brand in the market.
3. Increase the competitiveness of brands in the market.
4. Increase the attractiveness of the brand to the sponsors.
5. Increase customer satisfaction with the brand.
6. Increase the customer's dependence on the brand.
7. Increase customer trust in the brand.
8. Use the brand to attract potential customers.

Through this series of brand management. Guangzhou R&F football club can get these points:

1. Get more sponsor investment.
2. Get more fans to support the team.
3. The club is well known all over the world.
4. Win the market competition in the same city football club.

## **5.2 Suggestions for development or further work**

### **(1) Build a football brand in south China**

In southern China, people's height and stature are the same as those in southern Europe, they are shorter and not strong enough. So they play with fast passing and more running to attack their opponents. This way of playing has been practiced in southern China for many years. In Guangzhou, in the south of China, R&F must adhere to this technique and tactics. Adhere to this kind of highly ornamental technical and tactical play, and let this method make every player clearly understand and integrate into the team. On the field, show this way of playing and attract more people who like beautiful football to watch the R&F teams. This is a kind of brand building behavior, which will definitely let a large number of new audiences watch the R&F competition. And in the domestic media will also seize the characteristics of the southern football brand to launch a series of reports. This means that the attention of the club will be greatly increased.

Barcelona in Spain have been playing one way for many years. In addition, the sports media all over the world report again, which makes Barcelona's football brand known to the world. Therefore, Guangzhou R&F football club should also learn from the European club's brand management methods, adhere to the southern football playing methods, and improve its brand awareness.

## (2) Youth training combined with school football

Chinese football has been professionalized for more than 20 years, but many Chinese parents are not keen or willing to send their children to professional clubs for vocational training.

The reason is that in China, every year, a large number of young players who can't play the main team and professional team retire and go to the society and leave the professional football circle. These young people, because they participated in professional football training when they were young, did not systematically learn knowledge, so there was no diploma or only a small number of diploma. In their future career, this is a very big problem. Because there are so many people in China, hundreds of thousands of graduates start their careers every year. And those with full-time college degrees are more likely to get interviews and jobs than those with no or fewer degrees.

These retired football players will face three major difficulties because of their relatively small knowledge. The first is that they often can't choose different jobs. They can only do football related jobs, such as football coach. The second is that these retired athletes will get less pay. Because they can only engage in some kind of work that does not need too much professional knowledge. The third is their lack of contacts, because they have been engaged in football training for a long time and missed meeting their peers at school. It's hard to get help from friends in the future. The above three reasons are that Chinese parents are not willing to participate in vocational club training. Because there are not enough young people to take part in professional training, leading to no skilled football players. Because of this, the level of Chinese football is lower than before. After entering the football world cup in 2002, China has not entered the world cup for 17 years.

How to solve this problem? The combination of youth training and campus is a solution. It is to let the players of the professional team go to school as ordinary people from childhood and let them acquire knowledge from childhood. At the same time of training, like normal young people, they go to high school and university. The professional players trained by this mode can not only show their strength in the football field, but also have the strength to support their career in the football field. Young people with formal education can also learn better about the world's excellent football knowledge and fully understand them. After retirement, I can also use my diploma and professional skills to do other jobs. This is the way to solve this problem.

In the future, Guangzhou R&F club will use this combination of young athletes and schools. We are sure to receive more parents from all over China willing to accept. So a large number of excellent young people from different cities in China will join the team. Then from a large number of participants to select excellent football players to join the club, the level of the whole club will be greatly improved. This move can not only enhance the popularity of Guangzhou R&F's football brand nationwide, but also improve the value and influence of the brand. Finally, it can help the team to have more excellent youth players in the future. This is a three win approach.

### (3) Organize campus football competitions to train young fans

The football enlightenment of teenagers often comes from school. Between the classes held in the school, the football match between the grades will allow young people to quickly love the sport of football. Outstanding players in the campus competition will be recruited into the school team by the school. They will go out to compete with other schools on behalf of the school.

In the future, Guangzhou R&F Football Club should hold a youth competition. For example, the Guangzhou school cup was held in Guangzhou. Let all the schools in Guangzhou come to participate in the competitions held by the clubs, so that young students from Guangzhou can participate. In the playing field, add football club elements. Let young people recognize Guangzhou R&F Football Club. In the final finals, set to the club's home court. Let the students experience the feeling of what is playing in the professional stadium. Live the content of all student competitions on TV and online platforms. This will allow more parents or more adults to learn about Guangzhou R&F. This can increase the visibility of the club brand. Let everyone who watches the game remember that this is a competition held by Guangzhou R&F football club. Let everyone who likes campus football love and support this club.

Training young fans can not only maintain more support in future competitions, but when these teenagers become the next generation of parents, they will train their children to support their favorite clubs. This move can increase the loyalty of the fans' brand. By continuing to hold campus football matches, the club can watch the excellent football talents in the competition and then let them choose to join the professional club. Let these potential students join the club to become professional players, not only can make them the pride of the entire school, but also provide better players for the club.

#### (4) Annual world football club competition

The world football club competition is held every year to let the best football clubs in the world go to the home game of Guangzhou R&F football club. First, at the fixed time of the year, invite the highest level of intercontinental champions from continents to participate, and then draw the group to play. Finally, the world football club championship was decided at Yuexiu stadium.

Four reasons to host this world football club competition:

1. Improve brand awareness.

Each year of the world football club competition, the eyes of football fans all over the world will focus on Guangzhou R&F football club. This will allow the club to know people around the world and increase the visibility of the club.

2. Increase club income.

Every year, the competition will be held at Yuexiu stadium. There must be a lot of sponsors who want to promote their products through this platform. Potential sponsors will want to mention their company in the advertising bar, big screen, or stadium broadcast on the side of the court. It can be seen from this that the game can increase the club's income.

3. Improve the level of competition in the club.

Every year, Guangzhou R&F has a fixed number of matches. Every year there are opportunities to compete with the best teams in the world. Not only can you learn the best style of the opponent in the game, but you can also see what is wrong with you in the game. This will improve the club's level of competition. In the future training, the coach will strengthen the club's weaknesses and will be more competitive in the league.

4. Enhance brand value.

Guangzhou R&F football club has become a business card in Guangzhou. After the competition was held, a large number of fans went to Guangzhou to watch the competition every year, and traveled and consumed in Guangzhou by the way. Later in the Google search, when the keyword "Guangzhou" is played, there will be an extended reading about Guangzhou R&F football club. This definitely enhances the brand value of the club. The more people you know, the higher the brand value, because sponsors will look for high-profile football clubs to invest.

#### (5) Use the internet to enhance the user experience

People in today's world are inseparable from the internet. In life, people can use their mobile phones or computers to buy the goods they need through the internet. In Finland, people can use their mobile phones to download and use the mobile phone software with the name "HSL". Purchase train tickets and subway tickets. In China, people can also use the internet to make electronic tickets to enter concerts, and electronic tickets to take public transportation. In many countries in Europe and the Americas, you can use the electronic ticket to achieve an environmentally friendly game. This technology greatly facilitates users. Because of the traditional paper ticket admission, users who use the e-ticket only need to carry a mobile phone, so they can easily enter the stadium to watch the game.

Guangzhou R&F football club chose to use the traditional way of selling paper tickets on the spot. Before each match, many fans have to wait for a long time before they can buy tickets for admission. This is an operation that greatly reduces the user experience. Therefore, the club should follow the trend and should promote the channel of electronic ticket sales. This allows fans to easily purchase admission tickets. Let more fans who usually choose to watch football games at home, because there are channels to buy e-tickets online, change their way of watching games, and choose to watch the game on the spot. Let more fans go to the scene to watch the ball, you can also increase the club's income. When more people watch each live game, they will attract more sponsors to invest in the stadium.

All in all, the promotion of online e-ticketing services will definitely increase the brand value and brand appeal of football clubs. It is convenient for the fans and also increases the income of the club. It is a win-win plan.

#### (6) Open day for fans

What a fan wants most is to take photos with his favorite football player and have a friendly interaction. Guangzhou R&F football club can set up an open day for fans. It's in the club's training center. Give fans a close look at the training of the club's players. Have a real experience of what each player has trained in daily training.

After training, fans can enter the training ground to take photos with their favorite players. If necessary, players can also be asked to sign photos and souvenirs as souvenirs. Next, the staff of the club find out the fans of the recent birthday from the fans, and then let the whole team of players and fans celebrate the birthday together. Let these lucky fans have an unforgettable birthday. In the end, the staff can arrange some small games in the retraining base for players and fans to participate in interactive games. This can increase the fans' feeling of love and belonging to the club.

The significance of this job is to cultivate fans' loyalty to the club. Let them love the club more than ever. Contribute your time, money and feelings to the club. This work will make the outside world feel that the club is very close to the people and connect the club with the fans. Improve fans' satisfaction with the club.

Finally, the opening of fans' day may encourage fans to buy souvenirs of the team. For example, jerseys, trousers, mugs, etc.

#### (7) Provide free WIFI service

In today's society, people are keen to upload photos of social events to their personal web homepage. For example, where to travel, where to enjoy a meal, or to watch a concert. They will share it with their friends on their homepage. However, in the stadium, because at least 20,000 to 30,000 people use the Internet at the same time, the communication base station cannot work efficiently. It usually happens that you can't connect to the Internet while watching the game. At this time, if the football club provides free WIFI service to the public, it can solve the problem of not being able to connect to the internet. Adding free WIFI to Yuexiu stadium, allowing fans to connect to the Internet while watching the game, upload their own viewing experience and pictures to social media. This can increase customer satisfaction with the brand.

At the beginning and end of a game, many media reporters will go to the scene to shoot and interview, and some will use text or live broadcast to record the game. However, because the stadium has more than 50 years of history, there is a shortage of supply in the wired network. This has led to many media not being able to provide the game in real time. Providing WIFI services on the stadium can solve this problem. When these workers connect to the internet with WIFI, they can continue their work. In fact, this is also a good way to increase the attention of football brands.

The last thing is to let the club staff know the scores of other games in the first time. When the league reaches the end, there may be scores with the same points, or closer. At this time, during the intermission, I saw the competitor's score in the first place. The coach can choose to attack in the second half according to the opponent's situation, or conservative play.

#### (8) Renovate club facilities.

The club's stadiums are more than 50 years old, and the old seating and court environment do reduce the audience's feeling of watching the game. Therefore, the club facilities must be updated.

##### 1. Renovation of audience seats.

Replace all the seats with new ones, then color them blue according to the team's color. Make the whole stadium a blue ocean. When the audience is watching the game, they feel as if they are in the sea.

##### 2. Transform the canopy.

The canopy of the stadium is very old, and only in the middle of the stadium, there is no canopy at the back of the goal area. Once it rained during the competition, the spectators sitting in the area without canopy would be forced to open their umbrellas to avoid the rain, which greatly affected the experience of watching the competition.

### 3. Add toilets.

In the middle of the game, the man 's toilets usually line up and wait for a long time. Sometimes there is a 15 minute break. When the second half is over, some men are still waiting for the toilet. So it's convenient to add some toilets to the court.

### 4. Large screen update.

In modern football games, the big screen in the field is not only to show the score of the field. In some European clubs, after the goal, they will display the photos of the players and the replay of the goal on the large screen. And during the intermission, the sponsor's advertisement, the video taken by the fans, or the video of the club's players are played.

### 5. Lawn renewal.

When the strength of the club is stronger and stronger, the requirements for the lawn will be higher and higher. High quality lawn not only allows the team to have a smooth attack, but also the audience will get a good visual experience.

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## 7. Appendix

Appendix a: Questionnaire on Guangzhou R&F football club.

Dear football fan:

Hello! First of all, thank you for completing this questionnaire during your busy schedule. I am currently writing an thesis “Research on brand management of Guangzhou R&F Football Club” and need to understand our broad fans’ views on the management style of Guangzhou R&F Football Club.

(1) The situation of respondents

1. Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )

2. Age: ( ) years old

3. Education: elementary School ( ) junior High School ( ) high School ( ) university ( )

(2) Satisfaction of management style of Guangzhou R&F Football Club

4. Impression on Guangzhou R&F football club ( )

A. very satisfied B. relatively satisfied C. generally D. not satisfied E is not satisfied

5. Satisfaction with Yuexiu stadium facilities ( )

A. very satisfied B. relatively satisfied C. generally D. not satisfied E is not satisfied

6. Satisfaction with ticketing methods ( )

A. very satisfied B. relatively satisfied C. generally D. not satisfied E is not satisfied

7.Satisfaction with the official media of Guangzhou R&F Football Club ( )

A. very satisfied B. relatively satisfied C. generally D. not satisfied E is not satisfied

(3) Cognition of Guangzhou R&F Football Club

8. Through what channels to recognize Guangzhou R & F Club ( )

A. TV B. newspaper C. internet D. live

9. Attention to Guangzhou R&F Club's time ( )

A.1 year B.2 year C.3 year D.4 year E.5 years and more than 5 years

Thank you for your input. Your opinion is very helpful to me

Name:

Time:

Dear football fan:

Hello! First of all, thank you for completing this questionnaire during your busy schedule. I am currently writing an thesis “Research on brand management of Guangzhou R&F Football Club” and need to understand our broad fans’ views on the management style of Guangzhou R&F football club.

(1) The situation of respondents

1. Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )

2. Age: ( ) years old

(2) What do you know about GUANGZHOU R&F football brand?

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(3) Where do you think R&F football clubs do well?

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(4) Where do you think the R&F football club is not doing well enough?

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(5) Do you have any new ideas about club work?

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(6) Would you like to volunteer for the football club?

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(7) What would you like to do as a volunteer?

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(8) What's your special opinion on improving the club's facilities

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Thank you for your input. Your opinion is very helpful to me

NAME:

TIME: