

Bridgeway to Success™

May 2010

**COMPETE WITH
YOURSELF OR
RISK
OBSOLESCENCE.**

Challenge can be a Game-Changer

You'll be surprised to learn that the second most popular team sport in the world is not baseball, not rugby, not basketball and not hockey ... but cricket. Yes, cricket.

About 10 years ago this 500-year-old sport was experiencing dwindling crowds, reduced sponsorship and disconnection from a younger audience. So they did what any venerable, long-term institution would do in the face of such challenges, right? They changed.

The success of sport as a product depends on three things: *content*, *packaging* and *distribution*. The content – the basic premise of the game – must be compelling. It must be packaged in a way that is consumable. And it must be distributed so that it is easily and widely accessible.

Content was not the issue with cricket. Packaging and distribution were. Consider that “test cricket” matches can last days! Hardly conducive to TV viewership, regular fan commitment, or even a casual family outing.

So a new variation of the game was created: Twenty20. Designed to last roughly three-hours, and to supplement – not replace – test cricket, the popularity of Twenty20 has skyrocketed. In a mere seven years, enthusiastic fan response has led to national leagues, international competitions, world championships, the sale of TV rights, and broadcast rights to cinemas, and the robust sale of promotional items. Total revenues are comfortably projected to be in the billions of dollars over the first decade. And ... *there is growing concern that Twenty20 could spell the death of test cricket.*

The point: When your long-established core offering shows vulnerability do you have the courage to compete with yourself? To cannibalize your revenues with a competitive offering? To risk making your core offering obsolete? And to recognize that if you don't, someone else will?

Michael Canic