

Over a half of adults believe the London Olympics will leave a sporting legacy and greater sports participation

Consumer engagement with the 2012 Olympics is growing. Ticket demand is greater than the recently announced supply and the proportion of people who believe the London Olympics will be beneficial for the UK economy has doubled in the past year.

Financial research specialist JGFR has been tracking the attitudes of consumers towards the London Olympics since before the bid was won. A new report '*Consumer attitudes towards the Olympics*' measures the pulse of the consumer towards the 2012 Games.

With very strong economic optimism a feature of recent confidence surveys the consumer mood is far more upbeat than may be expected. Often the proximity of a general election boosts optimism and this year a World Cup in which England are expected to do well also may be a factor. Increasingly the impact on the economy of the Olympics may also be playing its part.

For the past two years only around 19% of the population felt that winning the Olympic bid had boosted their confidence about prospects for the UK economy. This compared with 35% of the population in June 2005 before the bid was won. The negative publicity about rising costs in 2007 and 2008 will have reduced people's views of the economic benefits. In the latest survey, people are far more positive about the benefits of the Olympics with a third of the population confident that the Olympics will boost UK economic prospects.

Another objective of the London Games is to inspire change – particularly in people's lives and in how they regard sport. More people (30%) expect the London Olympics to be the greatest sporting event in their lifetime – up from 27% in 2008 and 26% in 2007.

Getting people involved in the 2012 Games is another objective covering a broad range of activities. Some 16% of adults intend to apply for tickets, slightly down on 18% in 2008, but representing some 8 million adults and above the 7.5 million tickets earmarked for public release. Demand is greatest among Londoners with 25% of the population intending to apply for tickets.

Many people will be involved in the build up to the Olympics through the events and activities of sponsors. With debate about the value of Olympic sponsorship continuing, survey evidence shows around 16% of adults are more likely to switch to/ purchase from or regularly use a brand that is supporting the 2012 Olympics.

For the London Olympics to be a success they have to leave a lasting sporting legacy. In this regard over half the population (56%) believe this will be the case. Regional variations are a major feature of the research and highlight the greater challenge of engaging people further away from London and the South East. The sporting legacy will come in many forms, with an increase in sports participation a prime objective. 58% of adults believe that the London Olympics will boost participation in sport and this may prove to be the ultimate sporting achievement of the London Games.

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The latest report is based on specially commissioned research from GfK NOP by JGFR. It was undertaken in June 2005, December 2007, March 2008, December 2008 and December 2009 among samples of 2,000 or 1,000 adults aged 16+, representative of the UK population.