

A tight race for More Valuable Pitchman

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You're more likely to see Peyton Manning than Tom Brady in a commercial when their teams vie for the American Football Conference title on Sunday, but that may not mean that Peyton is running away with the National Football League's endorsement title.

Manning, star quarterback for the Indianapolis Colts, is by far a more prolific pitchman than local hero Brady. But Brady, who is not that far behind Manning in terms of endorsement dollars, just may be a lot more efficient.

Manning raked in \$11.5 million from endorsements in 2006, hawking everything from Sprint cellphones to shopping at Tweeter stores. By comparison, Brady pulled in \$9 million from endorsements, according to the latest ranking by Sports Illustrated.

Beyond that, the two both got high marks from the public in a survey in which participants were asked to attribute positive and negative adjectives to celebrities.

"On paper, those guys are very bankable. All the negatives are really down, all the positives are up," said Gerry Philpott, chief executive of E-Poll Market Research, which produced the study.

Forty-six percent of adults said they recognize Manning by name and 31 percent by face, according to E-Poll, compared with 27 percent name recognition and 26 percent face recognition for Brady. Forty-one percent called Brady "handsome" compared with 18 percent for Manning. Fifty-one percent said Brady was talented, compared with 63 percent for Manning, while 20 percent saw Manning as sincere, compared with 15 percent for Brady.

Given that, why does Manning have so many more endorsement deals than Brady? This season alone, the Colts' gunslinger with the "laser, rocket arm" has been in commercials plugging [Sony](#) high-definition TVs, Sprint cellphones, DirecTV's NFL Sunday Ticket package, MasterCard credit cards, Reebok apparel, Gatorade sports drink, and Tweeter stores as the place to go to buy, well, Sony TVs.

[Tweeter Home Entertainment Group Inc.](#) spokesman Jeff Duhamel said the Canton-based company didn't pursue Manning, but jumped at the chance to feature him in an ad when Sony, whose products Tweeter sells, offered up its famous pitchman.

"Doing a commercial with Peyton Manning gave us the opportunity to both work with Sony's pitchman and align the Tweeter brand nationally with one of the most recognizable quarterbacks in the NFL," Duhamel said.

One reason Manning does more ads is that Brady probably turns down most offers, said Jon Hickey, senior vice president of sports entertainment and marketing for Mullen, a Boston ad agency.

"My guess is Peyton isn't turning down a [darned] thing," said Hickey. Manning also has emerged as a de facto public face for the National Football League, with many of the companies he endorses doubling as official league sponsors.

Messages for Manning's agent, Alan Zucker, were not returned. Brady's agent, Don Yee, could not be reached for comment.

Not that Brady's an endorsement slouch: He and his offensive linemen starred in a campaign for Visa credit cards in the 2005 season, and he's also pitched Cadillacs, a Dunkin' Donuts sandwich, Gap clothes, [Sirius Satellite Radio](#), and Movado watches.

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