THE LADDER OF BELONGING

Community

Nobody becomes a loyal supporter in one day. People climb four steps. Move them one step at a time: every campaign helps one specific group climb exactly one step.

Step 1 · Heard of the club

Knows it exists, the colours, a name. No relationship yet. Marketing: make them curious, give them a reason to come once. Where: the city — schools, companies, neighbourhoods.

Step 2 · First contact

A match with a friend, a game in a bar, a follow, a scarf as a gift. Marketing: make the first experience great and get the contact, with permission. Where: one-time buyers, new followers, event visitors.

Step 3 · Comes back

Attends regularly, follows every result, says "we", has friends in the stand. Marketing: reasons to belong — a group, a ritual, a role, the same seat. Where: the stands, regular buyers, active fan-group members.

Step 4 · Loyal

Season ticket or membership, away trips, defends the club, brings others. Passes the test of defeat. Marketing: recognise, thank, give a voice, turn them into ambassadors. Where: season ticket, membership and away-travel lists.

What a community is

Three signs: the consciousness of "we", rituals and traditions, mutual responsibility. The test of defeat: who stays when the team loses.

What marketing does

Knows the community, serves it, gives it reasons to grow: strengthens the bonds between members and helps people climb.