

## BUSINESS OF BRANDS

# BRAND IPL CLUTTER

With more than 100 brands competing for the viewers' attention, the buzz about brand clutter is growing louder

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NEW DELHI

**T**HE INDIAN Premier League (IPL), which begins rolling on Friday, has yet to find any takers for regional sponsorship slots even as the buzz about brand clutter is gaining momentum with more than 100 brands competing for the consumer's attention at cricket's most lucrative event.

IPL had, last month, floated new sponsorship slots for the 11 cities that will host 60 matches this season at Rs 8-10 crore per sponsor.

The sponsors were offered access to branding on perimeters and in-stadia displays. But most marketers have found the price, about one-fourth of what a central sponsor like DLF pays, far too steep to spend on a specific city.

Meanwhile, marketing circles are abuzz with talks of a brand overload around the Twenty20 tournament, thanks to the numerous advertising and sponsorship opportunities floated by the IPL, ranging from television (Sony Max and Colors) and Internet (YouTube) to team sponsorships, ground sponsorships and theatre rights.

Besides, each of the eight franchisees is selling every possible sponsorship property including apparel, kits, beverages and even post-match parties.

"The third IPL season has opened avenues for even smaller advertisers outside of television. So clutter is bound to increase," says Navin Khemka, senior VP at media buying firm Zenith Optimedia. "Having said that, with IPL, sports marketing is coming of age in India." That hasn't stopped many brands from associating with the league though.

"Clutter is a reality outside IPL as well. We are trying innovative steps like ground activations, a co-branded fan club with Delhi Daredevils and advertising on YouTube among others," says Anand Singh, marketing director of Coca-Cola, which is using more than one platform to ad-

### ACTION TIME

Last month, IPL floated new sponsorship slots for the eight cities that will host seven matches each this season at Rs 9-10 crore per sponsor

The sponsors were offered access to branding on perimeters, in-stadia displays and so on

But most marketers have found the price, which is about 25% lower than the price a central sponsor like DLF pays, far too steep to spend on a specific city



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**ANAND SINGH,**  
MARKETING DIRECTOR, COCA-COLA

Team sponsors are managing to get access to spots on-ground as part of their deal with IPL franchisees. Moreover, we believe only the big brands with largest money muscle get visibility with the others getting lost in the clutter.

**VIJAY NARYANAN,**  
VICE-PRESIDENT, HAVELLS INDIA

vertise on IPL.

But the world's largest beverages firm did not find the regional sponsorship slot appealing enough because as a national brand Coke is more interested in pan-India platforms.

Vijay Naryanan, vice president — marketing at Havells India, said the electric switches firm did not take ground sponsorship slots as team sponsors also get access to spots on ground. "Moreover, we believe only the big brands with largest money muscle get visibility with the others getting lost in the clutter."

Havells has bought ad spots on IPL broadcaster Sony Max.

If regional ground sponsorship is not a hot property now, virtual sponsorship definitely is, thanks to its clutter-free existence.

At a time when online advertising is still evolving, Google has managed multi-crore deals for its live streaming of IPL matches through YouTube. It has roped in HSBC, Royal Challengers and HP as main sponsors, while Coca-Cola, Airtel and Samsung are associate sponsors.

"One of the reasons why we have

### BIG MOOLAH

Despite it being offered on several mediums, viewers are expected to catch the action on TV & Sony Max, the official broadcasters, is likely to rake in Rs 850-900 crore through advertising deals

managed to get a good response for IPL on YouTube is the fact that, unlike television, we do not have clutter. In addition, all the sponsors' ads are visible to our global viewers except those in the UK," says Narasimha Jayakumar, business head at Google India.

YouTube has struck a separate advertising deal for the UK.

Meanwhile, UFO Moviez, which has exclusive rights for screening of matches at theaters and public places, is eyeing an estimated Rs 40-50 crore in revenues.

PVR Cinemas president Pramod

Arora say revenue streams will be small for multiplexes this year but will become more significant in the coming years.

Meanwhile, hotels expect Rs 40-50 crore revenues through room occupancies and food & beverages sales. "This is typically lean season for hotels and IPL comes at a good time for hoteliers, with teams, other delegates and fans coming in," says Rajeev Menon, area VP (India, Malaysia and Maldives), Marriott International, one of the hotel chains that will host IPL teams and fans.

Despite it being offered on several mediums, most viewers are expected to catch the matches on TV and Sony Max, the official broadcasters, is expected to rake in Rs 850-900 crore through advertising deals this season.

"There are various ways IPL content can now be consumed though I believe television will remain the largest platform by which consumers will watch IPL matches," says L K Gupta, chief marketing officer at top consumer electronics firm LG India.

## Sun Direct to telecast IPL in HD format on Set Max

**New Delhi:** Sun Direct on Wednesday announced that it has partnered with Set Max to telecast DLF IPL matches in high definition (HD) format, DTH major said in a statement. The telecast feed will not carry any advertisements giving viewers uninterrupted match experience, it added. At present, Sun Direct offers five channels in the HD format—National Geographic HD, Sun TV HD, Colors HD service, Discovery World HD and a Tamil/Telugu movie service.—PTI

## Apalya bags global live mobile TV rights for IPL

**New Delhi:** Mobile video service provider Apalya Technologies on Wednesday said it has partnered with Global Cricket Ventures (GCV), which will allow Apalya to exclusively provide live mobile video streaming of IPL matches for three years, Apalya said in a statement. "Apalya has over 1 million users through leading mobile operators. The tie-up with GCV will enable us to make IPL action available to our users," Apalya Technologies CEO Vamshi Krishna Reddy said.—PTI

## Wasserman to sponsor Indian sportspersons

Global sports and entertainment company Wasserman Media plans to sponsor Indian sportspersons, reports **Aminah Sheikh** from Mumbai. Wasserman will also open shop in Mumbai to offer other services including consulting service to sportspeople, said a senior executive. "An international property like IPL is one such property that provides immense opportunities for sports management companies," said Wasserman Media Group chairman Casey Wasserman.