

## **Online IPL a big success: Google India MD**

20 Mar 2010, 0040 hrs IST, Aminah Sheikh, Economic Times

*It's the biggest online deal ever signed for a sporting event. Rs 80 crore is what Google is believed to have pitched in for the online telecast rights of the most popular cricketing tournament, DLF Indian Premier League, for a period of two years. Google India's managing director Shailesh Rao chats with ET on the success of IPL on YouTube. Excerpts:*

**From just 10,000 viewers subscribing to the channel on March 11 to nearly 52,000 subscribers and over 11 million views as on March 19. It's clearly a win for Google...**

The response has been overwhelming and has surpassed our expectations. There are almost 1 million new channel views everyday. We started off with around 2 lakh views on March 11. On the inaugural day of IPL the channel views and subscription both went up to 8 lakh views and 40,000 subscribers. The myth was that more number of views will come from other countries than India because of connectivity issues. Surprisingly, the maximum number of subscription and channel views has come from India followed by the UK, Australia and the US.

**There have been issues regarding the quality of match streaming. What are you doing to resolve it?**

The response has exceeded our expectations and our capacities were tuned accordingly. However, now we are ramping up our capacities to support the growing demand. By the end of the week our streaming quality will most certainly improve. In fact, some videos clips are already available in high definition.

**How have advertisers reacted to the move?**

As you know we've managed to sign on 7 brands as of now which include Hero Honda, Airtel, HSBC Bank, HP, Coca Cola, Bangalore Royal Challengers and Samsung. We are looking at providing maximum brand mileage to our advertisers. While premium sponsors gets presence during six league matches, semi finals and the final match, other sponsors get ad spots during the match streaming (through in-stream ads) and pre roll (ad prior to the match highlights). Advertisers also get brand paste up during fall of wickets, boundaries and sixes.

**How does the deal with IPL work? Do you share the revenues with the league body?**

Yes, we do. But I can't divulge the details. The deal is focus on increasing reach and users base for now, we will look at revenues once we have successfully build the user base for the IPL YouTube channel. The aim of this alliance is to offer cricket fans an interactive experience to enjoy their favourite sport online

**Will you now considering extending the alliance for IPL's Champions League as well?**

The present deal will demonstrate the many possibilities we can venture into in times to come. Our focus right now is to deliver the best possible consumer experience on the Internet. Other live events and sporting events will follow.