

YouTube confirms worldwide deal for live Indian Premier League cricket

IPL games to be streamed live on YouTube in every country except the US – calling into question the value of TV rights

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International appeal: Kevin Pietersen (who played for Bangalore) and Andrew Flintoff (Chennai) shake hands after an IPL match last April. Photograph: Tom Shaw/Getty

YouTube has confirmed its first live major sporting deal, announcing today that it will host live Indian Premier League cricket matches in the UK, and casting into doubt the value of British TV broadcast rights.

The YouTube deal involves every country outside the US – a significantly larger scope than reports had suggested. It was thought that YouTube would only stream live matches to countries that did not have TV deals with the [IPL](#).

The two-year deal gives the Google-owned YouTube the exclusive rights to stream IPL matches online, with the two companies splitting revenue from sponsorship and advertising.

In the UK broadcast rights were held by Setanta, which closed last year, and have yet to be sold on. A spokesman for the IPL said that a TV rights deal for the UK would go ahead. "The dedicated loyal fanbase will still want to watch on TV," he said.

The value of YouTube's deal was not disclosed. However, the IPL originally sold its internet rights to the Dubai-based company netlinkblue for \$50m over 10 years. At the time the IPL made it clear that online streaming deals excluded markets - such as cricket playing nations including such as South Africa and New Zealand - where television broadcast deals were in place. In August 2009, netlinkblue's parent company, Live Current Media, sold its IPL contract to Global Cricket Ventures for \$1.75m, which worked with the IPL on the latest deal.

Willow TV holds the North America internet rights.

Under the IPL deal, YouTube will broadcast 60 matches over 45 days live in the 2010 IPL season through a dedicated channel at youtube.com/ipl. YouTube claims that this is the first major sporting event to be streamed across the globe.

Shailesh Rao, Google's managing director in India and for media and platforms in the Asia Pacific region, said: "We are thrilled to have the IPL as our global partner and bring to the YouTube community around the world and here in India an interactive, unique experience building greater awareness around the world for the sport."

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