

YouTube ropes in HSBC as lead sponsor

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EVEN as IPL garners an envious lineup for sponsors for the most-watched T20 event, YouTube is also looking to get some big guns on board. YouTube, world's largest online video-sharing site, has signed on HSBC as one of the lead sponsors for the live online streaming of IPL matches. Further, the sponsors who are coming on board on YouTube are being classified under Gold and Silver sponsors with brands like HP and Samsung also evaluating the potential of the medium. YouTube, in its first major sporting deal, recently acquired a two-year rights to host IPL matches live for an undisclosed sum.

When contacted, a Google spokesperson confirmed that HSBC has been signed on as one of the sponsors. "We are excited by the response that live streaming of IPL matches in YouTube has evoked amongst advertisers in India," said the spokesperson. "HSBC is one of our sponsors and beyond this, we are unable to comment on specific partners and initiatives. We hope to announce the details of our partnerships soon," the spokesperson added.

Even as Google spokesperson declined to comment on other sponsors, sources close to the deal said that the sponsorships have been bracketed into gold and silver sponsor. So, HSBC has come on board as a gold sponsor on YouTube, sources said that technology brand HP is also looking at an online association with YouTube as a silver sponsor. "YouTube is defining the associations differ-

ently. So unlike associate sponsors, they are looking to have silver sponsors," sources said. Sources also indicated that consumer durable major Samsung is also evaluating the idea of an online association, though nothing has been firmed up as yet.

On the digital marketing route and the association, Maitri Kumar, head - marketing, HSBC, said that it's an opportunity to associate with such a high profile event without becoming part of the clutter. "It ties-up with the overall objective of talking to a largely male audience who are our target consumers using the digital route," said Ms Kumar.

Although a new platform, live streaming of 60 IPL matches has definitely got brands interested even on a pure monetary terms. Ms Kumar of HSBC declined to comment on the total size of the sponsorship deal. However, sources in media agencies indicated that the rates for presenting sponsors online are hovering between Rs 5-8 crore, compared to Rs 20 crore on television. Likewise, associate sponsorship deals on YouTube are in the range of Rs 1-3 crore, media agencies sources said. Further, there's an interest in some of the innovation on offer by brands being firmed by YouTube. So the skin (the remaining portion of the page, beyond the screen) can be customised and offered to brands. "In terms of viewership, year one won't see any big traction. But it's an engaging medium with a strong proliferation. So brands are associating to ride on something new in the hope that it becomes big in the time to come," said Sandeep Lakhina, COO - southasia, Starcom Worldwide.

