



Company Round-up

Attheraces launches TV digital channel

attheraces, the horseracing media rights company, has launched its digital television channel, broadcasting racing from the premier 49 British racecourses.

attheraces digital TV is available to Sky subscribers. There is no additional subscription fee for attheraces and it is located on channel 418.

It will broadcast 14 hours per day (from 7am to 9pm), seven days per week to a subscriber base of six million homes, reaching some 15 million viewers. The company expects the channel to be available on cable (with an additional potential audience of 2.2 million homes) later this year.

attheraces' principal objectives are to increase live coverage for British racing, and to raise its profile and popularity across the widest audiences, thereby maximizing revenue for the sport and all its constituent parties.

Brad Higgins, Director of Programming, explains: "The attheraces digital channel aims to bring fresh impetus into the sport, breaking down traditional barriers and demystifying betting. Our schedule will provide live racing coverage from all 49 racecourses, reviews, previews, features and news from Britain and overseas."

He adds: "Our objective is to meet the demands of existing racing enthusiasts as well as engaging the non-traditional racing audience through innovative, informative and compelling features fronted by our team of 10 presenters who combine youth and experience, and new and established faces."

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Football crazy fans get football smart

Fans at Chelsea Football Club will get smart next season when the club moves its ticketing systems to a new high-tech smart cards. Around 80,000 club members and season ticket holders will receive the new smart cards in time for the August kick-off and be able to take advantage of new reward programmes built especially for Chelsea fans.

Designed and developed by Teamcard, the world's first smart technology business for sport, the new membership cards will be accepted in targeted retail and restaurant outlets across Chelsea's west London heartland. Fans using the card in partner outlets will accumulate Chelsea reward points that can be used at Chelsea's Megastore or go towards the cost of future season tickets. Ultimately, cards will be loaded with season ticket entitlement, allowing fans to enter the stadium simply by swiping their card through a reader as they enter the turnstile.

Chelsea is the second Premiership club in England to sign up to the Teamcard reward programme. In Greater Manchester, where the scheme was introduced at the beginning of this season, Bolton Wanderers' smart card holders are already accumulating rewards in over 45 partner outlets around the city. The card is accepted in stores, pubs and food outlets around Bolton's ➤



Reebok Stadium and in local branches of major chains like Boots or Holiday Hypermarket.

Commenting on the Chelsea deal, Teamcard's Brian Hawkins said: "Smart football membership cards are changing the relationship between club and fan. The new benefits with which these cards provide supporters extend well beyond the traditional boundaries of the stadium. Already in Bolton, only six months into the scheme, we've seen card holders able to reduce the price of their season ticket by half simply because of the rewards they get from shopping in partner outlets."

With two Premiership operations now signed up, other clubs around the UK are beginning to sit up and take notice. Teamcard is already talking with other clubs in the Premiership, the First Division and the Scottish Premier League, and it expects to finalise deals with at least three more clubs over the next 12 months.

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Karen Earl Sponsorship Scoops Sports Industry Award

ntl's sponsorship of the British & Irish Lions Tour of Australia, managed by Karen Earl Sponsorship, has won the award for the Best Sponsorship of a Team or Individual at the

inaugural Sports Industry Awards in April.

The sponsorship was commended by the judges for the fit of the sponsorship to objectives, the presence and awareness achieved and the integration of the property into the product portfolio via Lions TV, the video production with Premium TV, the web presence, direct marketing and advertising across a wide variety of platforms.

The award is even more impressive when judged against the other nominees in the category: Vodafone and Manchester United/Nationwide and the England football team; adidas and David Beckham/fellow KES client Norwich Union and Team GB athletics.

David Pinnington, Sponsorship Manager at ntl, said: "The award was a great honour for ntl. Karen Earl Sponsorship was crucial to the success of this sponsorship as the agency ensured the smooth running of all operations from event management to excellent coverage throughout in the media."

The eight-person KES account team working on the ntl sponsorship was headed by Debra Blair on the events and Dominic Curran on PR and Media in both the UK and Australia.

Karen Earl herself was also nominated in the "Lifetime Achievement in Sport" category.

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