

Publication: The Hindu Business Line

Date: December 4, 2014

Connecting with sports helps build brand recall among youth: Aircel

AMRITA NAIR-GHASWALLA

Mumbai, December 3

Telecom major Aircel has a simple strategy: associate with more sports. The company says its strategic brand associations with events such as the Indian Super League (ISL), the Indian Premier League (IPL) and the Aircel Chennai Open, give it an edge in terms of brand recall amongst Gen Y.

Buoyed by its association with IPL's Chennai Super Kings (CSK), the company has decided to add more sports to its repertoire. Anupam Vasudev, Chief Marketing Officer, Aircel says the association with sports, a passion with Indian youth, has helped the company mobilise, motivate and inspire them. In order to better understand Aircel's association with sports, *BusinessLine* caught up with Vasudev recently.

How do sponsorship deals like IPL, Chennai Open, or golf help Aircel?

Aircel is a new age brand. We drive business and build brand affinity by engaging with youth

in innovative ways, by offering a variety of products and services, or associating with sporting events in cricket, tennis, etc.

As a brand, Aircel is sports-focused. Since sports takes precedence in the lives of our target audience, the youth, our association with sports gives the brand an edge.



By associating with so many sporting events, is there a possibility the brand image cannot be clearly defined with consumers?

Platforms like the IPL, ISL and Chennai Open are great for the youth to learn about key attributes such as team spirit, achievement, success, bouncing back from failure, etc.

Through its association with sports, Aircel wants to contribute towards nation building by encouraging young talent to become sports enthusiasts and eventually champions.

Our recent sponsorships and brand associations have all been sports driven.

From a brand point of view, these associations help us gain



Since sports takes precedence in the lives of our target audience, the youth, our association with sports gives the brand an edge.

ANUPAM VASUDEV
Chief Marketing Officer, Aircel

immense visibility and strengthen our engagement with our key target segment.

Some details on the sponsorship deals that have been inked by Aircel in the recent past?

Aircel recently got associated with high quality football, by being part of the ISL. We are the principal sponsors of ISL team, Atletico De Kolkata (ADK), which has a large dedicated fan base,

spanning eastern and central India and Bangladesh. The platform will not only help us connect with the youth, it will make the game of football more popular in the country. Through this partnership, we aim to encourage the current crop of young talent and shape them into future football stars.

When IPL was launched and we started supporting Chennai Super Kings (CSK), nobody knew it would become so successful, and that we would have such a great run with them. Aircel has been associated with CSK for seven years now.

We hope to have the same association with ADK, as we firmly believe ISL has the potential.

As for the Chennai Open, Aircel has been associated with India and South Asia's only ATP World Tour event since 2010. Aircel is its title sponsor until 2016.

We are confident that not only will it harness young tennis talent in the country, the property will grow to become a global platform, strengthening Chennai's position on the international tennis map.