

FAQs on PCB's three-year broadcast deal with PTV Sports

What are the deals the PCB has signed with PTV Sports and I-Media Communications Services?

The PCB has acquired space on PTV Sports on which the PCB will run its own produced content. The PCB, unlike previous times, will produce its own content, including live matches. The content will be owned by the PCB and will be placed on PTV Sports channel for Pakistan only.

PCB has not granted PTV satellite broadcast rights and has only granted terrestrial rights, which have been granted to PTV due to it being the national terrestrial broadcaster.

The PCB has a separate deal for cable with I-Media Communications Services, for cable distribution and securing the transmission of PCB content broadcast on PTV Sports.

Why the PCB has chosen PTV Sports?

PTV Sports is the national broadcaster and the single largest sports network in Pakistan. PCB enjoys a very long relationship with PTV. The focus of the PCB is developing the Pakistan market as its home territory. The PCB wants to consolidate it and maximise cricket viewership and availability of quality cricket for all its fans nationwide. Also, PTV Sports is the only satellite broadcaster in Pakistan which must be mandatorily distributed by all distribution channels.

What about the international rights?

The PCB has separated domestic rights from international broadcast rights, which are still up for grabs. The process to sell international rights has already commenced.

What is the reason for signing a deal with I-Media Communications Services?

For the first time, the PCB has divided its broadcast rights in terms of satellite, cable and digital media.

The reason for giving cable rights separately to I-Media Communications Services is because the PCB needed to secure its content against what has been happening in the past i.e. extensive piracy and leakages of our content that greatly diminished the value of PCB matches and PCB content and also resulted in unauthorized and illegal distribution of cricket matches being of extremely low quality which resulted in millions of our cricket fans in Pakistan not receiving the quality product that they deserve to see for their beloved sport.

What will be I-Media Communications Services responsibility?

The cable license-holders' responsibilities will be to secure our content and ensure it only goes down to all cable who are licensed under the law and not unlicensed operators. This will allow the PCB to: (a) ensure the quality of the signals that goes down to the homes; and (b) it is in sync with the government policy of converting all analogue cable into digital cable in the next year or two.

What was the value of the previous media rights?

In 2015, the PCB sold international rights for a five-year period at about \$12million a year.

What was the projected value of media rights for 2020-23 cycle?

Interestingly, our previous media rights partner, when it last made contact with the PCB, had indicated that the value would be around half of the last cycle rights value this time around and the market was not willing to offer more.

Was a tender required for the latest agreements?

As far as the agreement between the PCB and PTV Sports is concerned, there was no need to tender since, first of all, PTV Sports is the national broadcaster and a government owned entity, and secondly the PCB is not charging PTV Sports any fee. The PCB is simply using space/airtime.

As far as the cable rights are concerned, the Lahore High Court has already given a decision in recent years relating to recent PTV rights that public procurement or a tender rights process was only needed when the PCB was procuring something. The PCB has only given rights and not procured anything, consequently there was no need for a tender.

How will PTV Sports manage their revenues?

PTV Sports is not paying a fee to the PCB nor is the PCB paying a fee to PTV Sports. The cost that PTV Sports will incur for televising the matches, they will take that from the commercial airtime the PCB and PTV jointly will sell on its content during the broadcast.

Therefore, there is no grant of rights, and there is no requirement for that process and, as such, no need of a tender. Even otherwise what PCB specifically requires for broadcasting its content, the only entity capable of that is PTV in Pakistan.

What was the PCB's philosophy behind this novel model?

The PCB has made this decision to ensure that it develops, secures and maximises the home market. The PCB has had problems in the past, when it used to sell rights in the Pakistani market to foreign broadcasters.

The PCB was unable to secure the quality of broadcast, which was being delivered to the homes of the Pakistani cricket fans.

This method by keeping the signal in Pakistan through a Pakistani operator, the PCB will have the direct visibility on it and we can ensure the best quality.