

Neo Cricket on revamp mode; earmarks Rs 4 cr for marketing

Neo Cricket has got busy with a revamp exercise that involves launching a new tagline for the brand, to making a complete change in its show packaging. The channel is in an aggressive marketing mode and has earmarked nearly Rs 4 crore as marketing budget.

After all the hype and hoopla of the Indian Premier League Season 2, Neo Cricket has a series of cricket tournaments lined up, starting with the India-Australia ODI series in October, followed by India-Sri Lanka three Test and five ODI series in November-December 2009; the Tri Series featuring India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh in December 2009; the India-South Africa series involving five ODIs and three Tests from January through March 2010.

On the programming front, after interactive shows like 'Dial C for Cricket', 'Sportszone', etc, Neo Cricket is planning to launch another show by August 2009, which is said to be a different kind of cricket show - a game show, which would be highly interactive and have a cash reward for every round.

Neo Cricket's marketing campaign is expected to commence from August 2009 for its broad cricket season. The 360-degree marketing campaign is expected to continue for 2-3 months. The campaigns are scheduled to commence from August, which includes print, TVC across all networks, radio, outdoor and even online. The new tagline will be launched in September. McCann Erickson is the creative agency for Neo Cricket and Neo Sports, while Mediaedge:cia is the media agency. The marketing activities will begin with Neo Cricket, followed by Neo Sports, which would be visible from October 2009.

Commenting on the revamp exercise, Abhishek Verma, Head of Marketing and Communications, Neo Sports, said, "This year is a big milestone for us as through this revamping we hope to further consolidate our leadership this year as well. We are revamping our entire channel with a new tagline, we have also changed the packaging of our shows, in fact, we have even launched a new show on the lines of 'Dial C for Cricket' and 'Sportszone'. We are also aiming at creating the India season as the biggest season and replicate the passion that IPL has shown."

He further said, "This year we are extensively focusing on branding, therefore, we are going aggressive in our marketing plans. We have allotted around Rs 3-4 crore for the marketing campaign for Neo Cricket alone. The marketing campaigns will commence from August, which includes print campaigns followed by TVC, outdoor, radio, digital and so on. The tagline for the brand, however, is scheduled to launch soon. Even our spends on digital will significantly increase than what it was before. In fact, our non-cricket shows/ campaign will have more digital and BTL activities because of its niche audience. The campaigns are likely to continue for two and a half months to three months from the launch itself."

After completing a year since its launch in April 2008, Neo Cricket claims to have received a lot of positive feedback, especially on its cricket entertainment shows. The tagline is being developed following a research conducted to figure out the passion and the values that an Indian cricket fan looks forward to. The qualitative research was conducted in Delhi and Mumbai, which eventually led to the development of the new tagline.

Apart from Neo Cricket, Neo Sports, too, is working on a revamp, starting with a change in its packaging. It, too, will have a new tagline. The marketing of Neo Sports is expected to begin from October this year.