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A global media and marketing programme

Infront Sports & Media handles key aspects of event commercialisation and jointly operates the Organising Committee with the SIHA

The 2009 IIHF World Championship in Switzerland promises to be a showcase event. It benefits from a comprehensive global media and marketing programme implemented by the international sports marketing company Infront Sports & Media, based in Zug, Switzerland.

Infront is the marketing partner to the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) and is responsible for sponsorship, marketing and media rights sales for the annual IIHF World Championship - a role which it has held for 28 years. For the 2009 event, Infront is also operating as co-owner of the Organising Committee through a joint-venture with the Swiss Ice Hockey Association (SIHA). This joint-venture allows all Infront's practical, front-line experience of organising previous IIHF World Championship to be carried forward, to the benefit of the 2009 event in Switzerland.

A multi-faceted agency involvement

With the championships being hosted in Infront's home market, the full-service agency is not only handling the global media and marketing rights but providing a multi-faceted array of services for the event, including host broadcast production, a dedicated online broadcast service, B2B client servicing and VIP hospitality. Around 300 Infront staff members and temporary specialists will be fielded during the two weeks of the event.


Infront's extremely comprehensive role includes:

- **Marketing sales and sponsor servicing**

Infront is responsible for developing the sponsorship strategy and recruiting all Official Sponsors. Although most sponsors have been involved with the championship for many years, Infront has proved its sales skills in an economic downturn by achieving "sell-out" of the sponsorship inventory, adding three new commercial partners for the 2009 event.

The marketing programme has been enhanced with each succeeding year to give the best possible visibility and marketing opportunities for the companies taking part. Infront follows a consistent onsite advertising theme, including rink boards, under ice advertising, branded penalty and team benches, team advertising, product placement, media backdrops and presentation stands.

The impressive sponsor group – led by long-term partner Škoda as the Official Main Sponsor for the 17th year in succession – remains solidly loyal. Seven brands have been involved for 10 years or more: AJ, Bauhaus, Intersport, Konica Minolta, Nike, Tissot and Zepter. They have recently been joined by high-profile blue-chip sponsors, including Boehringer Ingelheim, Henkel (already since 2007), Ramirent and Zurich Group.

 For further information see Media Information 2.

- **Distribution of media rights throughout the world - from Andorra to Zimbabwe**

With Infront overlooking the worldwide sales of media rights for the 2009 IIHF World Championship, television distribution for the event includes agreements for over 100 territories and it will be transmitted by more than 70 broadcasters. Most of these broadcasters will provide live or near-live transmissions, depending on the time zones and broadcaster schedules. In addition, there is a high level of news access interest. News coverage will be available worldwide through international news networks.


The 2009 IIHF World Championship is predicted to deliver another success story in terms of reach and exposure around the world, especially as it is taking place in Europe, where most of the competing countries are in the right time zone for their fans. In Canada last year, when compared to 2007, hours of programming increased by over 20% on a worldwide basis. The cumulative viewing audience again reached the respectable level of around 600 million viewers. This is predicted to pass 700 million in 2009, given the more attractive time zone for the European market.

With the current agreements in place the 2009 IIHF World Championship is not only available in ice hockey core markets like the Czech Republic, Finland, Russia, Sweden and Switzerland, but from Andorra to Zimbabwe, the event can be seen around the globe.

 For further information see Media Information 3.

- **Host Broadcast Production in full HD quality for the first time**

In 2009, all games will be produced in high definition television (HDTV) quality for the first time in the history of the event. The host broadcast is again being carried out under the supervision of Infront Production and Host Broadcast Services (HBS). The multilateral broadcast production includes filming and transmitting a high quality signal, support for broadcasters in their unilateral production, as well as with transmission and commentary facilities, the provision of live statistics and additional services. The production will include 20 cameras in each arena and for each game. In-goal and over head centre circle cameras will be installed for each of the 56 games.

 For further information see Media Information 4 and 5.

- **Broadcaster Servicing**

Infront's Broadcaster Servicing team will look after the 70 contracted broadcasters, ensuring that contracts are implemented correctly, handling liaison on bookable services and providing a first point of contact at venues, the link between broadcasters and the production operation. The team handles more than 300 accredited broadcast journalists and crew members on-site.

- **Online broadcast service for fans around the globe**

The dedicated online broadcast service of the event has now been fully integrated into the official federation website, www.iihf.com. It will be produced by Infront Advanced Media Solutions, a subsidiary of Infront. It means that fans throughout the world can view live and on demand every game of the IIHF World Championship. Fans can choose from two subscription models including single games at 6.95 Euro and the tournament pass option covering all 56 games of the tournament for only 39.95 Euros. The games are available as high-quality video stream. Access is only geo-blocked in a few countries where conflicting media license agreements are in place.

- **World class hospitality**

The VIP and business hospitality service for the 2009 IIHF World Championship is being provided by Infront Hospitality Management, another Infront subsidiary. The hospitality operation will be of the highest standard and will enhance client entertainment opportunities during the tournament. The setting includes three different hospitality zones. Up to 2,000 guests in Berne and up to 250 guests in Zurich-Kloten can be served at once. The service, which will be active on every game day, will make use of up to 180 staff members and will provide first-class rotating menus throughout the day. Infront Hospitality Management (the former Walch's Event Hospitality) is providing VIP hospitality to the IIHF World Championship since 2005.

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