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BT Sports: Great Sport Happens here

**Executive Summary**

## The challenge

Critical to the commercial success of BT Sport was the need to break into the pubs and clubs market, who unlike consumers had to pay for the service. This commercial market was dominated by Sky, and BT had no track record in sport or content provision to build upon – representing a serious challenge in terms of driving brand awareness, credibility and conversion. Added to this, others that had gone before them and challenged Sky had not succeeded (Setanta had pulled out of the market the previous season) – this was a major challenge to overcome.

## The solution

We needed a different approach to just selling the sports content to these pubs and clubs. Many of them, particularly independents, are struggling to survive and we knew the cost of BT Sport could be prohibitive. So our strategy was not just to sell the service but provide a complete support package that could help their businesses survive and grow.

We achieved this by first acquiring pubs and clubs using personalised pricing based on what we believed they could afford. And then providing a complete support package which helped to pull punters in, keep them engaged and drive repeat visits with a toolkit. This contained amongst other things, mobile interactive beer runners, a pub finder service and assets that they could download.

## The results

From a starting base of zero, we exceeded all expectations driving subscriptions 42% ahead of target by acquiring 19,000 venues. In just 9 months this equated to 24% of all pubs, just a shade behind Sky's 25% which they'd grown over 20 years. We even grew the category 26% - getting sport into more pubs and clubs than ever before. And the campaign achieving a substantial ROI of 553%.



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Awards Entry

## Launching into a tough market

As part of monetising the BT Sport launch (which was free to BT Broadband customers), BT needed to enter the pubs and clubs market. This represented a major challenge on two fronts - Sky Sports effectively owned the paid sports market (the under-dog Setanta had pulled out of the market the previous year), and BT had no track record in providing world-class sports entertainment.

## Honing in on an audience in need

Rather than try to do complex deals with major corporate chains, we focused our campaign on small independents – those that needed to make every £1 work to ensure their survival. Many of these pubs currently risk going out of business – with 31 pubs a week closing due to several years of tough market conditions<sup>1</sup> (rising beer duty, falling real incomes amongst British people and a shift to drinking more at home less out at pubs). To thrive, they need to drive footfall and time spent in their establishments.

Our research showed an opportunity to unlock this ‘unloved’ audience – venues that wanted to show sport (as it pulls in footfall to their venue, which in turn drives revenue), but couldn’t afford prohibitively costly Sky Sports. Some would have previously had Sky Sports, but had to give it up due to price increases, and others may never have felt the numbers would ‘add up’ for them to commit to the expense of Sky Sports.

We knew we’d be speaking to owner-managers of pubs and club. These time strapped holders of multiple roles (from manager, negotiator and bookkeeper to marketing director) are responsible for the smooth-running of their venue, and for ensuring its ongoing success. They need the facts about any new opportunity for their business, a compelling case and a partner on their wavelength. Not time-wasting indulgent marketing.

<sup>1</sup>Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/aug/12/pubs-closing-rate-31-week>

## A strategic approach which appealed to this unloved audience

So we demonstrated that BT Sport was the “on their side” venue partner that’d help pull in more punters, who’d then spend more **time** and **money** with them. We delivered an ‘affordable personalised price’ (using an algorithm which calculated what we thought they could afford to pay) for those without, those who had given up and those looking to add to their current live sport. And then gave them the collateral needed to help encourage punters through the door, and to stay longer once they were there.

This wasn’t about throwing more budget and communications than the market leader. But about a smart, insightful, efficient campaign that truly delivered on how to do better business: focussing on an unloved audience, understanding their needs and pressures, and behaving accordingly – as a ‘growth’ partner rather than a plug and play big business.

We demonstrated our commitment to partnership building around a central creative platform; ‘Great sport happens here’.

## Delivering 'Great sport happens here from customer acquisition to long-term partnership:

### i) Delivering personalised pricing through the letterbox

- For launch, we targeted independent businesses using Direct Mail to deliver a personalised deal. This was based on research showing that our audience would look at DM more readily than email, especially from a company with no track record to date in sport
- This was supported by highly targeted disruptive direct response press in trade publications – which demonstrated that we mean business
- For phase two, our Direct Mail had a relevancy overlay to strengthen the message. Targeting venues with their local premier league team fixtures, or rugby where on-the-ground analysis identified them as a 'rugby' venue

**BT Sport** C9 10002

Mr AB Sample  
Sample House Number  
Sample Road  
Sample Town  
Sample County  
AB1 2CD

Role Key Mailsort code

Return Address: BT Response Centre, BRISTOL BS35 3ZZ.

**BT Sport has arrived. Don't miss out.**

Call 0800 678 1135 today and pay nothing for August.

Together we can reduce paper consumption.

**Important information.**

1. The price quoted is only an indication based on the information we hold on your rateable value as at 4 July 2013 and is subject to change. If the rateable value quoted isn't right, please call 0800 678 1135 or visit [btsportbusiness.com](http://btsportbusiness.com). We will confirm your rateable value with the Valuations Office before completing your purchase.
2. Get August for no extra cost and pay nothing until September 2013. Offer ends 31 August 2013. Available to all commercial premises. BT Sport is available from 1 August 2013. The minimum term runs from the date your service is activated but other additional charges, like paper billing, will still apply. Please see terms and conditions for full details [btsportbusiness.com/terms](http://btsportbusiness.com/terms)
3. Free box and standard installation: Offer ends 30 September 2013. Available to licensed premises (excluding hotels) where there is no existing Sky receiver box. BT Sport is available from 1 August 2013. A 12-month minimum term applies from the date of installation. You will be provided with a Sky receiver box and standard installation. You must use the authorised equipment installer referred to you by BT. Please see terms and conditions for full details at [btsportbusiness.com/terms](http://btsportbusiness.com/terms)
4. All fixtures are subject to change but correct at time of going to print.

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Sign up today and pay nothing for August.

See inside for your great low price.

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Make sure one round leads to another.

Are you missing out on Saturday lunchtimes?

Try BT Sport for 3 months and get the 1st month FREE

Hurry! Offer ends on 5 October.

Join today to get BT Sport in time for **Tottenham v Chelsea**  
Saturday 28 September 12.45pm

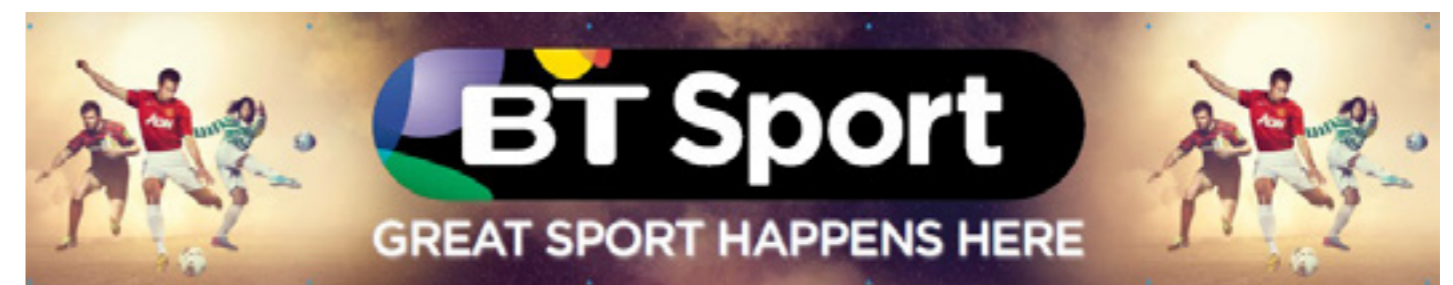
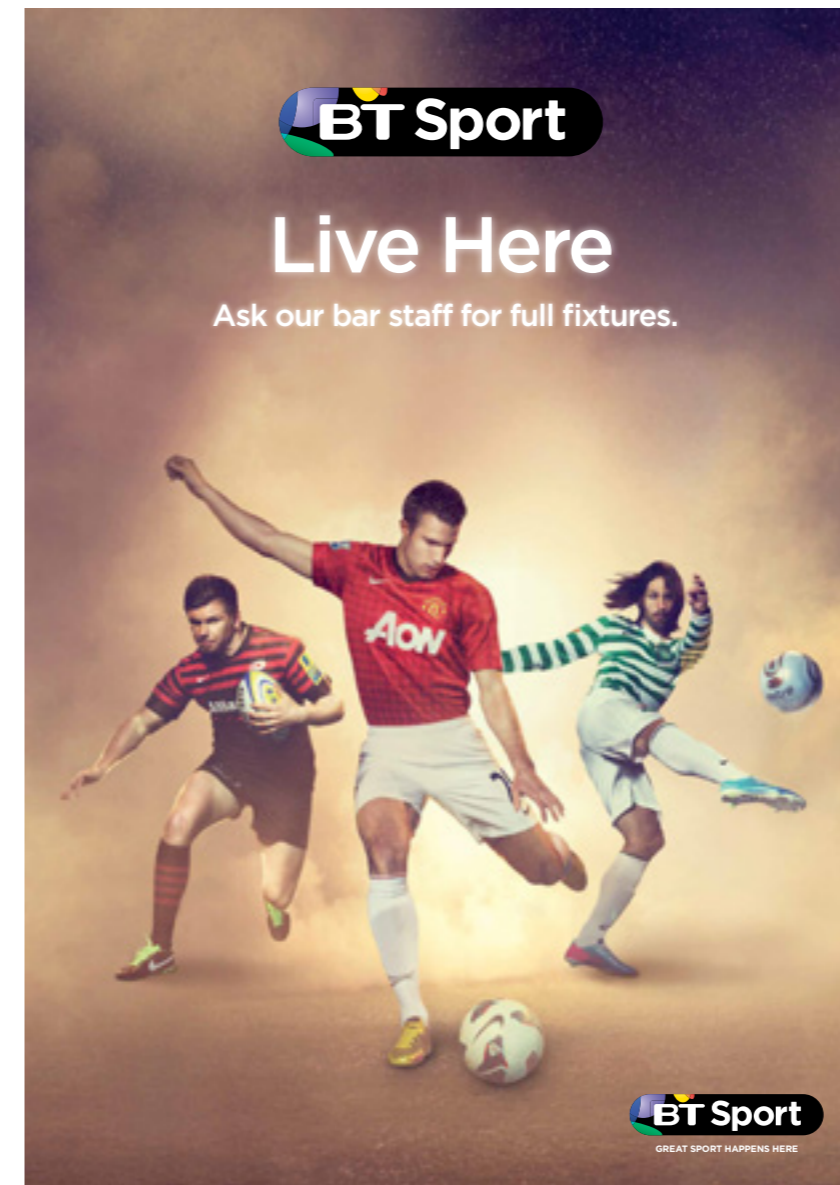
Call 0800 678 1136 or visit [btsportbusiness.com](http://btsportbusiness.com)

## Delivering 'Great sport happens here from customer acquisition to long-term partnership:

ii) The engagement programme built around 'key moments of truth' helped drive value to the business

- Outside the venue – 'Great sport happens here' high visibility posters showcased BT Sport is here, showing the best games
- Manager support – dedicated microsite for downloading and printing out 'on today' match day posters. A pub finder online service helped locals find a venue to watch the game
- In venue experience – waiting to be served provided an opportunity to turn idle dwell time into an entertaining experience, with mobile interactive beer runners telling the story to staff and customers. Blip the code and see BT Sport's fixtures and presenters
- In venue standout – sporty toilet signs and monthly fixture posters created on-going presence, giving the channel credibility

Our direct and confident language gave our time poor, cash strapped audience what they needed to make the business decision.



## And this approach was highly successful, exceeding all campaign targets:

### 1. Driving subscription sales

Combining targeted direct mail and disruptive direct response press delivered a winning result, with the campaign exceeding sales subscription targets from inbound activity by 19%, delivering 64% of all sales. That's 42% ahead of target, totalling over 19,000 pubs & clubs.

From a standing start in just nine months since launch, BT Sport captured 24% of all pubs, including groups and independents, putting them neck and neck with Sky at 25%. A massive achievement considering the 20 years of marketing from Sky and this is BT Sport's first season.

### 2. Return on investment

We delivered a positive ROI, returning £5.53 for every marketing £ we spent in 2013 - 2014 through inbound sales.

### 3. Credible entertainment partner

We've helped drive people into pubs and venues – over 1 million venue customers have watched BT Sport, at an average of 53 people per venue.

Smart, cost effective communication tools helped support the venues – we've averaged 1,007 in-venue poster downloads per month.

Interactive in-venue beer mats have helped sell the quality of the BT Sport experience. Within launch month we generated over 43,000 interactions, with 13,374 unique users maximising 'dead time' at the bar.

### 4. Generating market growth

We've given venues a real business-generating boost, by offering great sport at a great deal. The campaign has appealed to an entirely new audience of pubs and club - growing the market for pay TV sport out of home by 26%. We've sold BT Sport to customers who previously never paid for live sport, some of which never even had a TV.