

McCann gets creative duties of Indian Badminton League

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Prasoon Joshi

Indian Badminton League (IBL), a joint initiative between Badminton Association of India (BAI) and Sporty Solutionz, has appointed McCann Worldgroup India to carry out its creative mandate. Sporty Solutionz own the commercial right holders of the League for multiple years. McCann, which won the account after a multi-agency pitch, will be responsible for strategic and creative communication promoting IBL. The pitch process was held in Delhi and the account will be serviced by the agency's Delhi team. Some of the other agencies in the fray were Lowe Lintas, Scarecrow and Leo Burnett, according to a source close to the development.

IBL will be launched this year with tournaments being held from August 14 till August 31. It is claimed to be the richest Badminton League worldwide, with a kitty of \$1 million.

The tournament will be carried out in six cities of India, with participation from well-known national and international players. The first edition of the league will comprise six franchise-based city teams, namely Hyderabad Hotshots (Hyderabad), Rajdhani Smashers (Delhi), Mumbai Masters (Mumbai), Karnataka Kings (Bengaluru), Pune Vijetas (Pune) and Lucknow Warriors (Lucknow).

Considering the inaugural ceremony will take place soon, the agency is already working on the promotional campaign, which will be launched shortly.

Interestingly, McCann already services STAR Sport's sporting properties which include test cricket series and a new wrestling property by the channel. It is also the creative partner of Mumbai Indians and Hockey India League.

Speaking about the win, Prasoon Joshi, President, South Asia, McCann World Group, says, "We are happy to promote Badminton and use our expertise in sport communication to further the game and the Indian Badminton League."

Alok Lall, Executive Director, McCann, adds, "Badminton was invented in India - not many know this. It's a great opportunity to make this wonderful sport become front of mind once again through the IBL. Having said that, it is a challenge to create a lasting impression for a sport other than cricket but that's what drives us at McCann."

Dr Akhilesh Das Gupta, BAI President and IBL Governing Council Chairman, says, "I am confident our association will transform Badminton's profile in India and elsewhere, and make the sport even more popular amongst the masses."

Agreeing with him, Ashish Chadha, CEO, Sporty Solutionz, says that McCann Worldgroup was a unanimous choice based on the agency's experience and expertise in managing similar mandates in the past. He adds that the agency's ability and the right amount of tenacity to think beyond basic advertising and look at the larger picture of brand building will help the league.
