



IPL woos digital consumers



Client profile

The Indian Premier League (IPL) is a professional cricket league created and promoted by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and backed by the International Cricket Council (ICC).

With a brand value currently estimated in excess of US\$4.1 billion, IPL is one of the largest sporting leagues in the world. Featuring international cricketers playing 59 matches over a 44 day tournament, its compelling combination of sporting action and glamour has captured the imagination of Indian and international audiences alike.

Business context

The third season of the tournament, which opened in March 2010, was the most successful yet, with 42 million television viewers in India alone tuning in for the opening match, and a dramatic increase in interest from across the globe – especially from the UK, North America and South Africa.

The 2010 tournament was also notable for the fact that it was the first sporting event ever to be broadcast live on YouTube – a breakthrough enabled by Prime Focus Technologies (PFT) and its proprietary live event editing and delivery technology platform, CLEAR™ Live.

IPL is all about entertainment – cricket is at the centre of the experience, but the organisers of the 2010 tournament were also keen to focus on the entertainment and fun happening behind the scenes, and on reaching the fans in new ways. For the first time, there was a clear strategy and a concerted effort to take the tournament to platforms beyond television.

PFT solution

PFT's role in the 2010 tournament was to take IPL to the fans via web and mobile. There were three key deliverables which PFT provided:

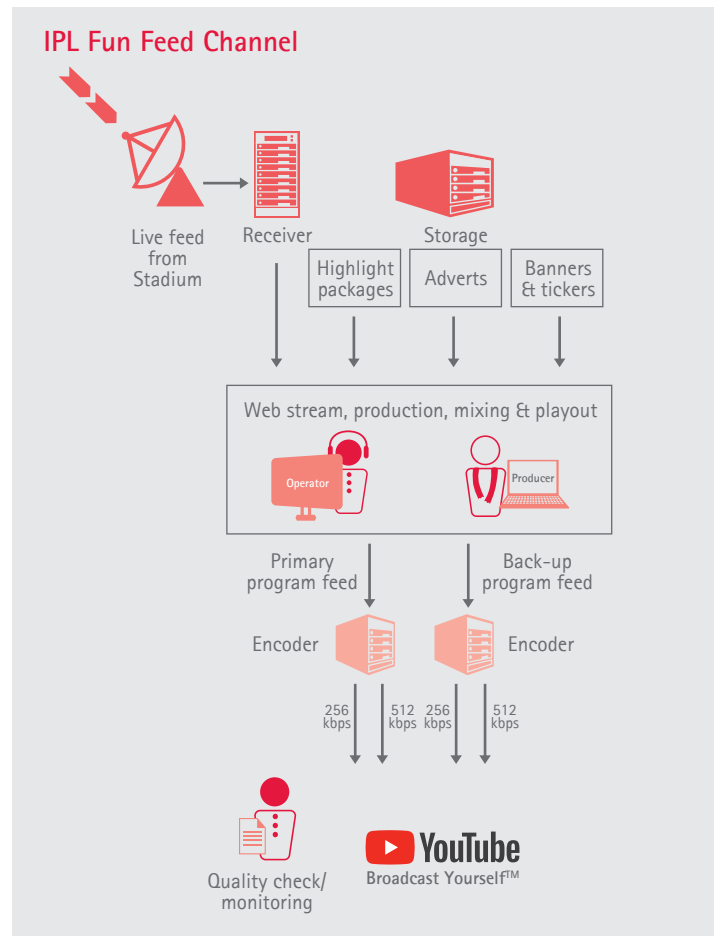
- Delivering the IPL FunFeed channel
- Delivering live match streams and Video on Demand (VoD) packages to IPL's internet channel
- Delivering video updates to the mobile internet platform within 45 seconds of the live event

Delivering the IPL FunFeed Channel

The IPL FunFeed channel ran alongside the live match stream on YouTube as a screen-in-screen, which was packaged and played out live by PFT. Consisting of video packages covering the fun element around the tournament both on and off the ground, this stream was conceived by the organisers to bring the tournament closer to the fans, giving them exclusive access to the players and celebrities attending the matches.

A dedicated production crew was allocated to the creation of the FunFeed, working across the various grounds at which the matches were being played and PFT's production and playout facility in Mumbai.

Live content was uplinked via satellite as the games progressed, for PFT to receive at its Mumbai facility. Once downlinked, it was cut by PFT editors into FunFeed packages that could be scheduled into the playout list. Chief Producer of the FunFeed then mixed between the live feed, the FunFeed packages from the editors,



offline content (information about the city hosting the match, interviews with the players, footage from the 'IPL Nights' parties that were being held every night and more) and commercials, adding banners, slates and lower thirds (aston band) to create an SDI stream which was then encoded to a Flash stream and delivered to the content delivery networks (CDNs) for distribution.

The FunFeed was extremely well received by the fans, with 65,000 plus unique consumers on day one of the tournament alone.

Delivering live match stream and VoD packages to IPL's internet channel

PFT was also responsible for delivering the live match streams to YouTube – the first time this had been undertaken for a major sporting event. The streams were played out live for some countries, and were delayed for others, and each territory had its own specific advertising requirements to cater to – an interesting set of logistical challenges.

Delays were introduced for some countries to protect IPL's telecast and broadcast partners, permission only being granted for live feeds to YouTube in areas where IPL's agreement with the partner permitted.

PFT also created and delivered up to 30 VoD 'highlight' packages per match for the online channel. These television style highlight shows were compiled and creatively packaged by PFT during the match and made available on YouTube within 60 minutes of the match ending – an amazing advance on the previous turnaround time (TAT) of approximately 6 to 8 hours for similar packages.

This was achievable because CLEAR Live enabled the PFT team to clip the live feed as it was downlinked via the satellite receiver at the PFT playout facility, allowing the editors to easily find relevant clips for the highlight packages, and to spend time on the creative treatment rather than hunting for footage. Integration of CLEAR Live with the Final Cut Pro (FCP) editing environment further enhanced the ease and speed of the creative process.

The VoDs were delivered to the channel with accompanying XML files, which provided YouTube's system with metadata allowing fully automated exhibition of the content on the correct page. Upon delivery from PFT, the VoDs populated YouTube's IPL channel pages with no manual intervention.

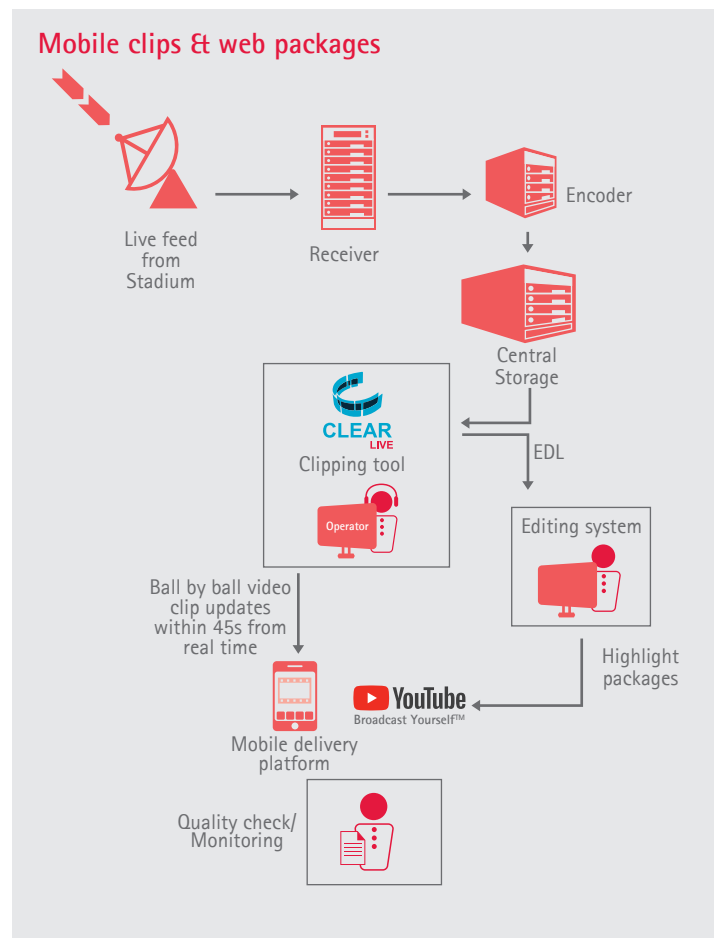
The delivery of up to 30 sponsor-driven VoD highlight packages within 60 minutes of the match ending, the convenience of having matches streamed live to your desktop, and the availability of

unique and exclusive FunFeed content, meant that the IPL online channel was an unqualified success.

Delivering Video updates to the mobile internet platform within 45 seconds of the live event

Another important audience for IPL in 2010 was mobile users. Mobile handsets are hugely prevalent in India, and even those with no access to televisions or computers use mobile phones. This is a fact not lost on advertisers, who are keen to reach these users through their handheld devices. For the IPL, the mobile channel allowed them to reach fans without access to TV and web – fans who wanted to be kept abreast of the game in near real-time. The clips therefore had to be available within seconds, rather than minutes or hours.

PFT powered the IPL mobile internet platform – and more specifically, the video scorecard which was available on m.iplt20.com. CLEAR Live was again deployed to clip the incoming live feed ball-by-ball and deliver it, with appropriate metadata, to



the mobile internet platform within 45 seconds of the live event. It was theoretically possible therefore to follow the match ball-by-ball on your mobile.

Over 25,000 hours of IPL video had been downloaded to mobile devices by the end of the tournament. Considering that each clip was no more than 40 seconds, this equated to over 2 million video downloads viewed from the mobile portal alone – each sponsored by an advertiser. This rich video experience was a welcome change for consumers used to just live text score updates.

IPL 2010 has clearly demonstrated the vast potential for sporting events to exploit multi-platform channels such as web and mobile.

“It was extremely important for us to deliver the right IPL experience on the Web and Mobile. In PFT we found the best blend of TV & Internet skills to deliver rich experiences on Web and Mobile. We are extremely pleased with PFT's contributions and they are a great team to work with. Their flexibility and agility during the tournament has been commendable.”

Sameer Mehta

Director, Willow TV

(Online & TV broadcaster of Cricket in US and Canada)



Client Outcome

By the end of the tournament, YouTube reported 55.7 million channel views and 31.7 million VoD views. With over 93,000 subscribers, the channel was rated as the "#1 Most Subscribed Channel (All Time) – India". Fans from over 200 countries watched IPL 2010 on YouTube – India had the most views, with the United States in second place.

Furthermore, the mobile internet platform delivered over 25,000 hours of IPL content, downloaded and viewed by fans on their mobile devices. Over 60% of this content had been accessed by consumers in the 'Tier 2' cities in India – a growing consumer market which is of great interest to brands and advertisers.

Conclusion

New audiences are reached, existing fans are given the opportunity to consume content in different ways, brand visibility is enhanced, and new advertising opportunities become available, with better return on investment (RoI) and more specific analytics and profiling, allowing targeted marketing by sponsors. These multi-platform channels are also relatively inexpensive for advertisers when compared to traditional media such as TV and print, and in many cases the content is available free to the consumer, making the inclusion of advertising acceptable.

PFT is at the forefront of enabling these benefits for clients. CLEAR Live is unique in its ability to provide editorial takes on a live feed and to take those editorial decisions to web and mobile channels in a fast and efficient manner. When it comes to live events, reaching web and mobile audience with compelling, tailored content in near real-time is often a pre-requisite. CLEAR Live delivers this and much more in a fast, easily integrated, intuitive and cost efficient manner.



About Prime Focus Technologies

Prime Focus Technologies (PFT) is the creator of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software, CLEAR™ for the Media & Entertainment (M&E) industry. It offers broadcasters, studios, brands and service providers transformational solutions that help them lower their Total Cost of Operations (TCOP) by automating business processes around content and managing their business of content better.

PFT works with major M&E companies like Turner, PBS, 21st Century Fox-owned Star TV, Hearst, CBS Television Studios, 20th Century Fox Television Studios, Lionsgate, Starz Media (a Lionsgate company), Showtime, A+E Networks, Complex Networks, HBO, IFC Films, FX Networks, Miramax, CNBC Africa, TERN International, Sony Music, Google, YouTube, Novi Digital – Hotstar, Amazon, HOOQ, Viacom's Voot, Cricket Australia, BCCI, Indian Premier League and The Associated Press.

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