

Soccer viewing not to incur heavy penalties at restaurants

By [Michael Goldman](#)

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Much of the media furore, that has focused on the belief that any restaurant, pub or hotel planning to show any 2010 FIFA World Cup games will have to apply for a pricey special licence, donate 2% of turnover to liquor authorities and submit a comprehensive security plan, is another unfortunate example of misunderstanding the specific FIFA guidelines.

The original wording of the Department of Trade & Industry's draft 2010 Soccer World Cup Liquor Policy did give some cause for concern.

Minister Davies' draft refers to "all FIFA Stadiums, FIFA Fan Parks and Public viewing areas" and did not make a clear distinction between what FIFA terms as commercial and non-commercial public viewing events.

The draft policy later defines a "Public Viewing Event," using exactly the same words as FIFA does in its regulations, but then fails to cut-and-paste the next important paragraph that adequately accommodates most of the local restaurants where South Africans may watch the games.

FIFA's public viewing event guidelines, published on its website since early 2008, make provision for those in the South African hospitality industry who wish to continue to make money from patrons through the sale of food and drinks, as well as those who wish to also charge an entrance fee and even attract sponsorship from suppliers and other companies.

Guidelines summary

<i>Commercial</i>	<i>Non-commercial</i>
Direct or indirect admission fee is charged	No fee
No official association	No official association
Non-competitive event sponsors	No sponsorship
Pubs, cinemas, offices, etc.	Pubs, cinemas, offices, etc.
Live broadcast only	Live broadcast only (SABC)
No broadcast modifications	No broadcast modifications
Concessions allowed	Concessions allowed
"World Cup" allowed	"World Cup" allowed

For those establishments wanting to host their regular patrons with a big screen in the corner and waiters wearing Bafana Bafana gear, the FIFA regulations outline the conditions.

- Unaltered use of the SABC's official broadcast feed, including the 10-minutes before and after the game;

- Limitations on any attempt at official association with the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa
- Any sponsorship or branding
- Any direct or indirect attendance fee

The FIFA guidelines do thus not prevent these venues from showing all the games, selling Castle or Pepsi, and even using the words "World Cup" to inform people about the game on the big screen.

Commercial requirements

As summarised above, the FIFA guidelines are slightly stricter when it comes to people wanting to charge for the experience of watching a game, and include the requirement to apply for a licence from FIFA to do so.

The media release sent to all journalists and news editors on the evening of 18 February 2010 attempted to clarify the misunderstanding in the draft policy.

The Department correctly confirms that the policy is not proposing an additional special liquor licence for those establishments holding valid liquor licenses. The update also correctly directs those venues wanting to show the games as a commercial public viewing event to apply for permission from FIFA first.

Unfortunately, the DTI contributes to further confusion in its media release by suggesting that a "public viewing area in the draft policy refers to an area designated and managed by the municipality for the public to view the Soccer World Cup games."

That is certainly not the definition used by FIFA in their regulations and is also very close to the DTI's previous definition for a FIFA Fan Park.

Should the DTI now be changing the scope of its policy to only cover the two or three official FIFA Fan Parks in each city, then it means that all the issues relating to the application and fee for the special liquor licence, security plan, 2% of turnover contribution and limits on beer brands, volumes and drinking times only apply to the organisations running official FIFA Fan Parks.

Clarification called for

It will be important for the DTI to clarify its definitions and perhaps opt for greater alignment with existing regulations related to the World Cup, to ensure that all businesses, official and fans are clear on the 'rules of the game' for June and July. Given the lead times often involved in putting these kinds of events together professionally and the widespread desire to make this "the best World Cup ever," it may also be prudent for the DTI to do this in March, as opposed to the scheduled April timeline.

Opportunities still exist

The media discussion of the business opportunities surrounding the World Cup have often focused on the limitations imposed by FIFA and the government. These strongly negative views about constraints on using certain words and images are accurate, given FIFA's marketing rights and the government's guarantees for the event.

However, it would be incorrect to suggest that all economic opportunities have already been captured and protected by FIFA. The government's 'Fly the Flag', 'Football Fridays' and 'Diski Dance' campaigns have been designed to offer any South African business the opportunity to get involved in the World Cup, leverage the event for employee, supplier or customer objectives and generate revenue.

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