

Kwesé and ESPN sign long-term collaboration for Sub-Saharan Africa

Econet Media's Kwesé and ESPN have announced a groundbreaking media collaboration in Africa. The deal will deliver the most comprehensive sports coverage in Africa, offering a wide range of sports and thousands of hours of programming.



African audiences will benefit from industry-leading content from the world's leading sports media company in ESPN, in conjunction with Kwesé's premium sports offering, while Kwesé's pan-African reach and its 'TV everywhere' multiplatform distribution capability will deliver the content to viewers through TV and digital platforms making it accessible to sports fans wherever they are.

The deal comes into effect in early 2017 with the launch of an ESPN channel in 19 countries, which is exclusive to Kwesé. ESPN will also produce daily SportsCenter updates for Africa, bringing the iconic sports news and highlights brand to the channel.

ESPN Africa

In addition, by mid-2017, ESPN and Kwesé will together launch an African edition of the ESPN website and mobile app. The new KweseESPN.com, and its accompanying app, will combine ESPN's industry-leading coverage of global sports and world-class digital platform with local African sports news, analysis and perspectives from Kwesé.

ESPN and Kwesé's teams will feature many of the world's best sports journalists and provide up-to-the-minute news and analysis on sports from around the globe with a unique African perspective. The site will also feature live scores and data for all major sports events as well as video news and highlights from ESPN and the Kwesé Sports channels.

With the conclusion of this agreement Kwesé adds NCAA American football and basketball to its existing broadcast rights for the NFL, NHL and the NBA, making it the home of American sports in Africa.

Speaking about the significance of the agreement, Joseph Hundah chief executive officer of Econet Media said, "Ultimately our goals are the same, to bring fans the best in global sports. The synergies between Kwesé and ESPN allow us to achieve that goal by leveraging our collective ability to deliver premium African and global sports programming to sports fans across Africa. We look forward to collaborating with ESPN in Africa and providing African sports fans with access to global sports like never before."

Added Russell Wolff, executive vice president and managing director, ESPN International, "ESPN's focus around the world is simple: to serve sports fans. This long-term collaboration across television and digital media will do just that - serve millions of sports fans across Africa with exceptional products, content and coverage. We are very excited about the opportunities that lie ahead as we bring ESPN's great content, including SportsCenter, and decades of experience in sports media together with one of Africa's most dynamic and vibrant companies."

Key programming

African viewers can look forward to thousands of hours of ESPN content which will be licensed to Kwesé. Including both live sports and award-winning original programming, the content will appear across the ESPN and Kwesé Sport channels.

Key programming in the agreement includes:

- Live Sports: U.S. college football (including the College Football Playoff and comprehensive coverage of the college football bowl season); major U.S. college basketball (including the March Madness NCAA Championship Tournaments); NCAA college sport championships from baseball, softball, lacrosse, soccer; Boxing (including Premier Boxing Champions and ESPN's Big Fights Library); the Verizon IndyCar Series (including the iconic Indy 500), X Games, Special Olympics World Games coverage and more.
- Original Programming: In addition to the original *SportsCenter* program, the agreement will include ESPN Films Award-Winning *30 For 30* documentaries, and a range of additional studio programming such as ESPN FC, Pardon The Interruption, Around The Horn, College Gameday and more. Econet also already licenses NFL- related programming – including NFL Live, NFL Countdown and more – from ESPN, [as part of a TV rights deal with the NFL, brokered by ESPN Media Distribution.](#)

Kwesé also features coverage of English Premier League, Formula One, international Cricket, Aviva Premiership Rugby, The Spanish Copa Del Rey, Brazilian football, Extreme Fighting Championship and so much more.

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