

## Fantasy gaming platforms woo users by launching high-decibel IPL campaigns

Saumya Tewari, 09 Apr 2021, Mint

NEW DELHI: Fantasy gaming platforms are ready to lock horns during the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2021 edition that began on Friday, armed with big celebrities, new features and huge prize money.

Both established and relatively new players such as Dream11, My11Circle, Paytm First Games and Gamerz have launched a clutch of campaigns featuring Bollywood actors or cricketers to acquire new users and retain existing ones to grab market share.

These platforms are expected to collectively spend upwards of ₹200 crore in advertising to maintain the top-of-mind recall of viewers across Star India's TV network and OTT streaming platform Disney+Hotstar, according to estimates by media buyers.

"The ad blitz started last week and is expected to grow at high speed. India has only scratched the surface when it comes to online gaming. Therefore, the majority of the platforms are creating awareness about the sport and urging people to try fantasy gaming through their ads," said Sujata Dwibedy, group trading director, Amplifi, Dentsu.

Fantasy gaming platform My11Circle, owned by Games24x7, has launched a high-decibel campaign featuring its brand ambassadors, actor Ranveer Singh, former Indian captain Sourav Ganguly, Indian Test vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane and former cricketer V.V.S. Laxman, which will run during the IPL.

"This year's '₹1 to ₹1 crore' campaign allows cricket fans to enter a contest by paying ₹1 and rewards the most-skilled player with ₹1 crore every day during the league. Games24x7 wants to make fantasy cricket accessible to every fan," said Saroj Panigrahi, vice-president, My11Circle.

Paytm First Games, which is offering prize money of ₹10 crore during this IPL season, has launched full-page print ads featuring brand ambassador Sachin Tendulkar.

"We have prepared an elaborate brand marketing and engagement plan with a slew of promotional videos. We expect that more than 20 million enthusiasts will start playing fantasy cricket on our platform in the next two months," said Sudhanshu Gupta, COO, Paytm First Games.

Meanwhile, Dream11, the official partner of IPL, has launched a campaign #TeamHaiTohMazaaHai featuring cricketers of different teams.

An estimated 50 million gamers engaged on various fantasy platforms during IPL 2020, generating a turnover of approximately ₹2,000 crore, which is expected to go up during IPL 2021, said Roland Landers, CEO of the The All India Gaming Federation.