

Arsenal F.C partners with Airtel

Arsenal Football Club and mobile network operator Airtel have signed a three-year partnership agreement. The deal provides Airtel with the opportunity to utilise the football club's merchandising, hospitality and content rights in five countries: Nigeria, Zambia, Ghana, Uganda and Rwanda.

The agreement will help the football club reach some of its reported 42 million fans across the continent. Airtel customers in Nigeria, Zambia, Ghana, Uganda and Rwanda will have the opportunity to win match tickets to watch this summer's pre-season tour fixture and receive exclusive club content and news direct to handsets. In addition to the agreement, Airtel will be designated as the official mobile operator of the 2012 Arsenal Tour to Nigeria.

Airtel Rising Stars football program

Arsenal will also support the Airtel Rising Stars football program, an annual, multi-country grassroots soccer initiative that offers young boys and girls the opportunity to play compete and showcase their talent to selectors in their respective countries. The selected youngsters get an opportunity to get the best-in-class sports training during a residential clinic organised by Airtel and partners. The Gunners will provide UEFA-trained coaches to assist with training in each of the five markets and at an Arsenal Coaching Clinic for up to 50 footballers.

Airtel Africa chief marketing officer, Andre Beyers commented, "Football fans across Africa are known for their passion of the great game. Arsenal's exciting style of play and a history of working with the best talent from Africa will enrich this partnership and offer a wealth of opportunities for upcoming players and fans. The partnership provides an impetus to the Airtel Rising Stars in some of the countries that have produced amazing young talent and whose youth teams have gone on to win FIFA Youth and Olympic tournaments."

Arsenal's head of global partnerships, Vinai Venkatesham added, "I am delighted to welcome Airtel into our family of commercial partners. This is the second long-term partnership arrangement to arise from the continent and we look forward to developing a number of exciting initiatives with Airtel, starting with our forthcoming tour to Nigeria in August. This underlines the depth of our following in Africa and how the profile of the club continues to grow internationally."