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An Interview with Brian Phillpotts, Marketing Director, The Football League

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Introduction

Brian Philpotts is Marketing Director of The Football League and is soon to take up a similar role at the FA Premier League.

Here he talks to David Hudson of De Montfort University about his role and the challenges he faced after joining The Football League from Newcastle United in 1999. He shares his experience and insights on the subject of sports marketing at both league and club level.

DH: Brian, what was it that led you to pursue a career in the marketing profession?

BP: I never really had a strategic plan to enter the marketing profession. I spent my early career in PLC Hotel Groups, having taken four years at Hotel Management School, and I took a sort of mainstream hotel management career path resulting in managing large resort hotels. I then moved on to take on a wider role within the group including resort hotels, golf complexes, theme parks, snooker halls etc. There was a real mix of activities from deluxe hotels through to mass catering down into niche marketing in quasar laser centres and things like that. I then took on the role of Group Marketing Director in addition to my

operational role and then, as part of the hotels division we had, I sat on the board of a hotel consortium as Marketing Director so I really fell into marketing.

DH: You joined Newcastle United as Deputy Marketing Director. What were your motivations for moving into the football industry?

BP: Well it was several things really. If a job in football is offered to you at a sizeable club like Newcastle United and you look at that against other opportunities, something at the back of your mind says when I am 65 and retired I will always think back and think, maybe I should have taken the job. There is something very interesting about the industry that made me want to go and have a look. Again that was the heart element of the decision but then, when you analyse it, running licensed leisure is actually not that different to certain aspects of marketing in football. If you don't sell a seat at a ground by 3pm this Saturday you can never sell it again, it has perished; if you don't sell a hotel bedroom by midnight tonight it has perished. So there are quite a lot of aspects about the two businesses that are very similar, and I was able to bring a set of thinking that was similar because the product range was quite similar. In many ►



ways selling corporate hospitality at a football ground is actually no different to selling conferences, weddings, or general meetings in a hotel business: there were lots of cross-overs. So when I looked at the areas where I thought it might be new for me and areas where my existing skill base would bring something to the party and contribute something straight away it was just something I couldn't not go and do.

DH: You spent two years at Newcastle United. What were your main responsibilities there?

BP: My time at Newcastle was a great experience. The club gave me the first opportunity to come into a football environment and I will always be very thankful to them for that. I had an interesting role at Newcastle: I was initially there as Deputy Director of Marketing, a title which I retained whilst also picking up the title of Director of Branded Products, and the position sort of evolved really because the club was embarking on the £43 million expansion of the ground with all the corporate hospitality facilities that entailed. The Marketing Director, Alec King, concentrated on delivering that new facility and as Deputy Director of Marketing I picked up some of his existing responsibilities.

Alec and I had a working relationship that might not have worked for two other people. He concentrated on developing the new aspects to the stadium, I concentrated on branded products, new media and the traditional areas of the Commercial Department. We then evolved the role of Director of Branded Products which was

really aimed at taking control of the brand, to start moving it forward.

Newcastle, prior to me being there, had a fairly mature and sophisticated merchandising and branded products philosophy and a very successful business. I was really there to move the business forward in new areas like mail order, on-line sales and licensing opportunities. I was therefore responsible for developing the company's strategy in those areas as well as developing the relationships we had with two companies, Adidas, our long-term kit partner, and the company we were in partnership with for all our branded products that were not supplied by Adidas, which was a company operated by George Davis of Next.

DH: After your stint at Newcastle you were appointed as the Football League's first ever Marketing Director in January 1999 by the Football League's new Chief Executive Richard Scudamore. What were the motivations behind the creation of your post at that time?

BP: I think Richard, having come in from major PLCs and large multi-national businesses, wanted a small team of directors who had a real management focus on the areas that they controlled. When I came in we had broadcasting and sponsorship as separate entities, reporting into what was an administrative base in Preston.

The Chief Executive was brought in and one of the key things he had to do was (a) bring the administrative part of the business and the commercial part of the business closer together, and (b) drive the commercial side of the League and the revenues for-



ward. He therefore needed a Marketing Director who could bring focus to that part of the business.

DH: It is interesting because recent research has shown that the administrative focus you have mentioned at The Football League was mirrored at club level with Commercial Managers reporting to the Club Secretary and administrative staff. We now have more clubs appointing senior Commercial and Marketing Managers to co-ordinate the commercial function.

BP: Yes, I think the League model was not dissimilar to how a club traditionally operated, that the administrative base at the club was all-powerful and was the focus. The example I would use was that, until fairly recently (within the last couple of years), ticketing policy and ticketing pricing had been the domain of the Club Secretary. Now, most clubs have viewed tickets as being inventory which would be better brought under the auspices of the Marketing Department because they are selling seats as anyone would market any other product.

DH: So the new Chief Executive created your post as Marketing Director. What other posts were created at the time?

BP: He created a Communications Directors post. We had a Press Officer and he brought in a Communications Director to run the Communications Department which again gave us a clearer strategy, not only in handling the press but also in terms of handling how we communicated with other stakeholders in the business. These included the

clubs, the political arena, and other governing bodies, so we had a fairly clear method in how we disseminated our messages.

DH: How did you go about structuring the marketing and commercial function at The Football League?

BP: In the Marketing Department the team had been historically set up by products such as broadcasting, sponsorship etc. I brought in a team of staff who were multi-disciplinary but had very clear objectives in each of the areas they looked after so, for example, we started very clearly account-managing our sponsors. So our sponsors – our title sponsor being Nationwide and our major cup sponsor being Worthington – have an account manager and that account manager would also have other responsibilities including a number of defined clubs within The Football League that they would liaise with, provide advice to, and account-manage also. So rather than have a department where if anybody called anybody dealt with the issue, we could set some clear objectives for the staff both in terms of how we liaise with the clubs but also how we move our sponsorship relationships forward.

DH: Where did you recruit your new marketing staff from?

BP: The new staff all came in from outside football, from brand marketing and media sales backgrounds. That wasn't a conscious decision. When I interviewed for those positions I had a very open mind as to whether they were positions from within football or ➤



positions from outside football. My ideal scenario would have probably been someone from inside and somebody from outside to give me that blend; I will talk a bit more about that in a second. But it happened that the two guys who were right both came from outside the industry so again it took a while for them to fully understand the intricacies of the business.

DH: It is interesting that you mention the intricacies of the business. There are academics and practitioners who argue that marketing a sports club or league is very similar to marketing other service operations, particularly those in the leisure industry, and that marketing managers need only adapt the basic principles and practices to the particular industry and organisational context. Do you agree with this?

BP: This is probably one of the fundamental points of marketing within football. Historically the football industry hasn't embraced some of the mainstream marketing techniques that other industries have and then there was a real move, five or six years ago, by the clubs and authorities to bring people in from outside the industry, from mainstream, blue-chip marketing positions. Some of the appointments worked out extremely well, some didn't, and if you were to analyse that it comes down to whether you believe one of two things. First, football is like any other industry, in which case anybody can come in and move the brand forward. Or second, that football is different to any other industry, it has its own idiosyncrasies and, therefore, the way to move the business forward is for people who are with-

in the business to progress the club forward. What I learnt fairly quickly is that it's actually both: football is no different to any other industry except when it is! The clubs that carried on with the traditional commercial manager type of role were missing out on some of the broader long-term marketing objectives such as growing the fan base or segmenting the market. But the clubs that replaced the commercial manager with a main-stream marketer missed out on some of the key revenue drivers that have historically made football revenues for clubs. So, for example, football is no different to the cinema when it comes to selling tickets, except when it is. As a Manchester City fan I could quite happily sit next to a Manchester United fan in a cinema so buying a ticket on-line would be quite straight forward: buying a ticket on-line for a football game has certain issues that are only relevant to our business.

So it's marrying the broad forward thinking of general marketing practices to the idiosyncrasies of the business that makes it work. Some clubs have been particularly successful at this. Sunderland, for example, have a traditional Marketing Manager, who has been with the club some time, to perform the traditional commercial role within the club, but they also have a Marketing Director who has a more long-term brand perspective. And rather than replacing one with the other, or continuing with one and not embracing the other, they have married the two together but they have done it with two people and they have been particularly good at it. There is something about football that attracts marketers because it is quite a



sexy industry to be in, but the one thing you have to make sure you do is that you continue with the head decisions and not the heart decisions.

It's one of those industries where there is passion and involvement and it is easy to become engulfed in the passion and the whole family atmosphere of the club. If they were marketing beans or soap they wouldn't get wrapped up in that passion and sometimes the thinking becomes blurred. Again the people that do well understand all the drivers and all the passion that makes football what it is but can look at it and make very clear strategic head decisions.

DH: You are a football fan yourself. Do you feel that being a customer of the industry helps you understand how the industry ticks?

BP: Yes, I am a football fan, a season ticket holder at Manchester City. I have had it for many years: I go with my girlfriend and my mother and my friend and his godchildren and we have done it together for years. We go as a sort of extended family and I sit on the terraces and pay my money and that's my leisure time.

With regard to understanding the industry, I think it's like going into any other industry: your learning curve is shorter if you have an appreciation of (a) how the industry works and (b) what the customer thinks about it – it just makes it easier for you to adapt. I think it is pretty important now that some clubs in The Football League, principally in the first division and the majority of Premier League clubs, are of a size and a complexity that a lot of the staff that have a real balanced view

of the business could go and experience the product in a way that fans have experienced it. I think you need to know what your customer is actually getting as opposed to what you think s/he is getting.

DH: Last year the Football Association's new CEO set up the organisation's first marketing department and appointed its first Commercial Director. There appear to be parallels with the "modernisation" changes that The Football League has made since your appointment. Why do you think the football industry (at league and club level) has been slow to embrace traditional marketing practices?

BP: I think it is for several reasons really. First of all, the way in which The Football League operates has developed over a hundred-year period. Primarily our first role was to organise and run competitions, not historically to build a brand, to grow a client base, to differentiate our product in the market place etc. So it has taken probably longer than other industries to alter that role. Second, because we are in an industry where spending money on a particular player may give you a competitive advantage in the short term, there hasn't been a history and a culture of taking some of the money and re-investing it in the long-term value of the brand, and that is now changing.

DH: Yes, you mention the historical context and in many ways the football industry has gone through a revolution since the early 1990s rather than a gradual evolution which has led to greater management complexity.





BP: Yes, it has, and it is certainly a more complex business model as a result. For example, during this round of television negotiations the landscape in which we were negotiating is more complex again with regards to things like the convergence of the Internet and television, the proliferation of digital media and the voracious appetite for content that drives new media. Again football has now realised that in order to make sure you can maximise those opportunities in some cases you need the right set of advisers to advise you. So, for example, we had a team of people from Arthur Anderson on board with us during our TV negotiating process.

DH: As Marketing Director at The Football League, what are your main responsibilities?

BP: My role as Marketing and Commercial Director would encompass several departments really. First, broadcasting which would encompass not only the negotiation of future contracts but also the administration and activation and operation of the existing contract. Within broadcasting would also sit the sale of archive footage, be it into television programmes, CD-ROMs, videos etc. New media would fall outside broadcasting but within my remit and that is to develop and implement the new media strategy for The Football League on behalf of the clubs, which we are doing.

Second, there is sponsorship which would entail the account management of our existing sponsorship portfolio and, again, we are looking to refocus our sponsorship portfolio, redefine it and, therefore, open up certain

other opportunities. So, for example, we currently have a title sponsor, Nationwide, who also have the designation of the official supplier as the official financial services partner. We have Worthington who sponsor the Worthington Cup as part of Bass Brewers and they are a title sponsor but they also have the official supplier designation of official beer suppliers to The Football League. So there are certain other partnership levels that we are going to try to introduce, in certain product and market categories that a survey we have completed with the clubs has identified, so that is an interesting area for us going forward. Again we have the Nationwide title sponsorship renewal happening now, and we also have a series of licenses. For example, we have a license with a company called Goals on CD who produce CD-ROMs each month for a Football League magazine. So we are working closely with our existing portfolio of licensees and looking to expand them.

Club liaison is also an area under my responsibility. It is our responsibility to provide marketing advice, marketing support to the clubs on an individual and collective basis, and again our staff are individually targeted to a group of clubs. They have a one-to-one relationship with those clubs and assist them wherever they can.

DH: What do you see as the core brand values of The Football League? And how do you work to differentiate yourself from the Premier League?

BP: It's relatively straightforward. It's difficult to achieve, but relatively straightforward. If we were to be considered the number two



brand, in most other industries the number two brand has an opportunity to catch and overtake the number one brand, be it by better sales, better management, acquisitions, disposals, whatever it might be. But the very nature of Premier League football suggests that our business model would stop us ever catching the first brand, so it's not about being second best, it's about finding the values that we have that differentiate us from the Premier League. We would have certain key things such as we are a national brand but we are inherently local. Lincoln City, for example, is probably one of the two biggest brands in its community and for the work it does in its community it is probably the most important brand in its community. So the national but inherently local is key to us. Having a wide geographic spread is pretty important to us. Having 72 clubs across 68 towns and cities again gives us a great national geographic coverage, which to certain sponsors is particularly important. One of the things that our title sponsor Nationwide Building Society looks for is that they have a clear High-Street presence in 68 towns and cities across the country so that they can use the rights they have with us in that town on that High Street.

We also think that we play real football. There is real hearts and minds, we are the heart and soul of football, we are the bedrock, we have got a great history, great integrity, great tradition. Some of those are brand values that other brands spend years trying to create.

We also have other slants. For example, quite a lot of the Premier League stars started in the Football League so we have a sort

of breeding ground of heroes. Robbie Keane would be an example of a player who started at a Football League club, went on to play for Inter Milan and is now at Leeds United. David Beckham, when he was a youngster, was on loan at Preston North End. So getting some of our younger fans to be able to see stars of the future is quite important to us. It is generally easier to get into a Football League ground as a family than it is in the Premier League and, therefore, one of the great strengths we have is that we are accessible and we are affordable. The family can come to a safe environment, watch a great entertainment product at a price which gives value for money.

DH: Nationwide Building Society has been The Football League's title sponsor since 1996. Could you outline the main features of the contract that you have with them?

BP: Yes, we re-signed for two years and we are now in the second year of that contract so their sponsorship expires at the end of this season. The main reason why we went for two years was that we felt in terms of valuing the sponsorship, and trying to put a rights packages together, it made some sense that the title sponsorship and the broadcast contract expire at the same time. So the conversations we are now having with Nationwide going forward clearly reflect the new broadcasting arrangements we have with ONdigital and ITV and it makes defining that package of rights a lot easier.

Nationwide has been a great partner for The Football League, and remains a great partner, and the basket of rights it has ►



had has been pretty traditional including perimeter boards, sponsorship, use of logos, interview backdrop boards etc. Now going forward there is a growing feeling that with the whole area of digital, new media, and Internet broadcasting converging I think the rights that sponsors are looking for will mean a change in emphasis from the traditional basket of rights that we have had.

DH: Can you give a specific example of these likely sponsorship rights changes?

BP: There are certain things that have only really come to the fore in the last two years. For example, there have always been people interested in data but the proliferation of data around football now is enormous. Player and team performance statistics have been around in America for a long time in the NFL and the NBA but have really only just started to come into football at this level in the last couple of years. So clearly sponsors are saying: "Well, if the public are interested in data, how can we use a basket of data rights to drive our sponsorship forward?"

We have concluded a joint venture with Premium Television, a subsidiary of NTL, to set up an Internet portal for the clubs in The Football League that wish to join. It is not a collective deal that every club has to join, but fortunately 68 clubs have chosen to join this venture, so now clubs have got their own commercial reasons for driving information and content through their own product.

DH: You recently concluded The Football League's collective TV rights deal with

ONdigital for the next three years. What were the key aspects of this deal?

BP: The deal we have concluded is with ONdigital together with their partner ITV who will provide the terrestrial television element to the deal. What was key to the deal? Well it would be foolish of me not to say it was about cash, again for the reasons I just discussed about clubs wanting as much money as they can possibly have today. It's always very difficult for us to convince our stakeholders that perhaps there might be a reason to take less money from somebody for the long-term good of the game. Without wanting to go into other people's sports I think there might be certain instances in rugby where they have taken a digital satellite or cable view of how they wanted to portray that product for cash which gave them less terrestrial coverage and as a result some of the core values of the game have struggled. We had several aspirations, one was to find the partner that wanted our content, that our content was key to how they wanted to move their business forward. We also wanted to be able to demonstrate the brand values that we believe The Football League stands for and to make sure that the brand was portrayed in the right context.

DH: The Football League was the first to trial pay-per-view (PPV) in England in 1999. What did you learn from that experience and what do you think the future holds for PPV?

BP: Yes, we did three games that season, including Sunderland away to Oxford United and Manchester City away to Colchester



United. We trialed a particular model which was a large club that has a large home support and a large away support, travelling to a club where that fixture is likely to be a sell-out, with a distance of over 100 miles. We did that because we wanted to protect the core values of our business and the attendance at those games. We wanted to make the game available to people who would not have travelled, who either couldn't travel because of work commitments, who wouldn't ordinarily travel mid-week or on bank holidays to games that far.

So we saw it as an additional service and we got a tremendous amount of information about the type of people who would buy PPV and the sort of prices they would pay. We learnt a tremendous amount from those three trial games and again we should thank our broadcast partners Sky for wanting to conduct that trial with us, and I am sure they got invaluable information out of it as well. Some of the research we got from those three games framed how we wanted to treat PPV as part of our latest broadcast deal.

DH: So is there a PPV element to your deal with ONdigital?

BP: Yes, it has always been perceived as part of our contract with ONdigital that we would have live games on a Thursday evening, Sunday lunchtime and Sunday evening with an additional live game on Friday evening being the PPV game. In the first year of the contract we are likely to do 20 PPV games. One of the problems The Football League had in its last broadcast contract with Sky was developing our own

schedule because Sky had the Premier League rights as well. Sky were excellent at conceiving Monday Night Football and you know if it's Friday it must be Football League. So breaking out from under the Premier League's Monday Night Football has been difficult for us so, again, we will be trying in our new contract to establish a regular routine of games and building programming around it, to make it a sort of destination choice of the two.

DH: Clubs were keen to keep their Internet broadcast rights in the recent TV negotiations. What do you think the future holds in this area and is there a concern that some clubs may benefit more than others from this aspect of the deal?

BP: I think the Premier League and The Football League and the FA were negotiating their respective TV contracts at the same time and although there were slight differences in the process I think the main thrust of the contracts was the same. The Football League retained its live Internet rights, the Premier League retained its live Internet rights as did the FA. So it's not the fact that the rights have been retained by the clubs – the clubs have got certain Internet audio visual rights – but the live aspect hasn't gone back to the clubs and it hasn't been sold to a broadcaster. They have been retained so we can decide what we might want to do with them going forward. There are always opportunities and there are always pressures when advances in technology open up new areas of revenue. The Internet is purely another delivery ►



mechanism and if a club or a league decided to show all its games on the Internet then there would be considerable damage to the overseas television value. So it is not a situation where the Internet is this little nugget which can be kept separate. It has to be planned into the overall broadcasting strategy over the life of the contract and beyond. Delivering live games on the Internet will become a reality, but as it becomes a reality I would be surprised if the rights to those live games revert back to the clubs. And again I can only talk for The Football League but I still believe the value in maximising audio-visual rights is on a collective basis.

DH: Since taking on the role at The Football League have you encountered situations with individual clubs wanting to pursue their own commercial deals rather than buying into the collective negotiating process?

BP: Yes, every day, and this is not peculiar to football again. In my days representing a hotel consortium with 120 members, there were members of the consortium that would be a five-bedroom bed-and-breakfast in the wilds of Northumberland through to resort hotels that would have the capacity to host something like the Ryder Cup. So in a membership as diverse as that, be it in hotels, in football or in any other industry, trying to reach a collective position that suits both ends of the spectrum is impossible to achieve. All you can hope to do is to construct a model that suits the majority and try to demonstrate that the part that would be distributed to the larger elements within that structure would be more than they could

generate themselves – and sometimes it isn't. And then we rely on hoping that those clubs realise that for the greater good for the greater number for the longest period of time it is the right route to follow. It is difficult and there are tensions and there are pressures on various deals, sometimes on a daily occurrence, but that is what we are there to do, to manage to produce the most equitable solution that suits all of our members.

DH: You mentioned earlier that you are responsible for The Football League's new media strategy. What exactly does this involve?

BP: We have an Internet joint venture with Premier Television and they have paid us a rights fee of something in excess of £65 million and have committed a further £40 million to the working capital of the business. We have put some rights into the joint venture and we will jointly activate those rights, so in the long term that business will employ its own people, will make its own decisions guided by the Board. The portal is heavily focused on the individual brands of the individual clubs so the Web-site will be predominately club branded but brought together in one portal. So the e-commerce opportunities will be open to all the clubs in a portal environment. And we will be delivering clips, highlights, archive, but we will be doing it in such a way that recognises the value of our broadcast partner, currently Sky, but three years forward ONdigital, and recognising the rights that they have purchased and the value they have paid for those. It's very exciting and I believe that with the technolo-



gy help that Premier Television will put into this business, and the size of the brands the individual clubs have within their own communities, the power of that business is just phenomenal

DH: One of the key recommendations made by Deloitte & Touche in 1997, in their consultancy report for The Football League, was that the League's commercial division should market itself more actively and openly to the clubs. What sort of commercial and marketing assistance does your department offer individual clubs?

BP: When we renewed our rights sponsorship with Nationwide one of the things that we committed to was a significant proportion of the rights fee to our "Season Of Promise" attendance initiative. We are now in the second year of the initiative. The idea was that each individual club could claim a grant for encouraging attendances. Clubs had to demonstrate to both us and Nationwide a particular activity that encouraged attendance at a game from a group who might not ordinarily attend a game, so more children, more ladies, more people from a different county, whatever it might be. A whole host of great ideas came out last year and the clubs were paid a particular fee to make sure that it happened so it meant we could subsidise attendance for a group of people who might not otherwise have been able to go. That introduces them to the product, they can start to see the team, to have a feel for the club, and hopefully they may start coming more often.

The Football League has also conducted considerably more research in the last two

years than it ever has before. We have a company in Norwich called SMRC who have conducted research on our behalf into PPV, Internet usage, television habits etc. One of the things we have recently finished is a commercial bench-marking exercise which involved sending a very detailed questionnaire to all of the clubs covering most of the commercial areas, from perimeter boards through to catering sales. What we have been able to do is give the clubs a flavour of where their particular club sits within their own division across all the categories. We have issued the top-line results to the clubs on a general basis as well as an individual report to every single club giving them more detail of their own performance. What we have also done is set up a bureau with the research company so that clubs can individually interrogate that data and compare their performance with clubs of similar size, division and location for example.

Originally it was done as a paper exercise and we had something like 80 per cent of the information back from 90 per cent of the 72 clubs, so it was a great success. We are now putting the information up on a secure on-line site, for them to download or fill in so it's easier for them and we can get the information back a lot quicker.

The bench-marking exercise has not only given clubs the ability to see what other clubs are doing in terms of sales and sponsorship revenues, or even cost-saving opportunities within their own business, but it has also identified certain areas where The Football League might be able to go and sell things for the clubs centrally. I mean there are some pretty big areas within football ►



that are missed really. For example, most football clubs have conference and banqueting facilities so we have 72 locations around the country that provide meeting facilities. The majority of those don't have bedrooms so the alliance between football and a major hotel company would sit quite nicely and because we now know how each individual club operates in that area we can construct a central sponsorship opportunity which our team of staff can go out and talk to hotel companies about.

DH: In 1998 The Football League club chairmen voted against regionalisation and part-time status and the concept of a nursery feeder club system. Bearing in mind the growing financial pressures on many of the League clubs, is this something that might be revisited in the near future?

BP: With regard to regionalisation and part-time I can assure you that it's not on our agenda or the clubs' agenda. However, the question of the association between clubs is currently very topical and there has been some recent public debate about Leeds wishing to purchase a stake in Oldham Athletic and fund its youth development. It's a very complex area because currently the rules of the football authorities do not allow a club to own any stake in any other club so if we were to go down that route we would be looking at major rule changes. Second, there are serious integrity of competition questions such as can a team that is partially owned by another team play the other in a cup competition?

There are already very strong links

between The Football League, the Premier League and to a lesser extent the FA on how youth development is funded so we are looking at it. It is on the agenda, but I think the discussions fall somewhere short of clubs owning other clubs.

In terms of the financial affairs of the clubs and how one club owning another would ease that then anybody who comes into any business and injects cash into another business makes that business stronger for a period. However, for the long-term good of the clubs it is my responsibility and the responsibility of all the other employees of The Football League to try and generate as much revenue as we possibly can whilst respecting the integrity of the business we operate in. But it is contingent on the individual clubs to look at their cost bases and operate within their means.

DH: Finally, you are soon to take up your new post at the FA Premier League as Head of Commercial Enterprises. What will this job entail and how different will it be from your job at The Football League?

BP: The scope of that job is again across several departments. It will involve looking after the activation and the administration of our existing broadcasting arrangements with our broadcast partners. Again, in the Premier League, because of their separate PPV aspirations, their terrestrial highlights package and their live satellite partner Sky, the contract management and activation of those rights is a fairly complicated issue to manage. I will also assist the CEO, Richard Scudamore, in negotiating further broadcast



packages as they materialise, and I will embark on taking control of the implementation of the Premier League's new media strategy so again that is fairly similar to my role here at The Football League. I will pick up sponsorship and licensing and I will be involved in integrating and activating the new title sponsor, be it a further period with Carling or someone completely new. I will also be responsible for identifying other sponsorship opportunities along with Richard Thompson, Head of Sponsorship, and moving forward our licensing arrangements and broadening our licensing portfolio. The opportunities to grow the Premier League brand outside the UK are massive and I will have the responsibility for a new department with a Head of International Brand Development, so that is pretty exciting.

Finally there is the other area which could broadly be defined as data. Because of the voracious appetite and interest that fans and media companies have for all levels of data we will formalise our data rights and sales into a department that will handle considerably more than just the sale of fixtures. So they are really the key departments and, again, the area of the Premier League's new media and where we go as an industry with data is all pretty ground-breaking stuff, and I am very excited about it.

Biographies

Brian Phillpotts is Marketing Director of The Football League. Brian joined The Football League in 1999 and was previously deputy Director of Marketing at Newcastle United FC. Prior to joining Newcastle, Brian held several strategic management roles within the hotel and leisure industry. His main responsibilities at The Football League include sponsorship, media/broadcasting, and club liaison.

Brian is soon to take up his new post at the FA Premier League as Head of Commercial Enterprises.

David Hudson is Senior Lecturer in marketing at De Montfort University's School of Business. His primary research interest is in the area of sports marketing and he has presented on the subject at a variety of international conferences. He is currently completing his Doctorate on the role of marketing in English professional football clubs and his research has been part financed by The Football League.

David is a guest lecturer at the University of San Marino on their MA in Football Management and he has recently been appointed to the international academic team that will deliver the FIFA-sponsored MA in Sport Management.



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