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Sponsorship is a Slam Dunk for the NBA 2020-21 Season

Record revenues despite shortened season due to the pandemic

CHICAGO – June 29, 2021 – The National Basketball Association and its 30 teams brought in record sponsorship revenue during the 2020-21 season despite a late start and shorter season. IEG, the sponsorship authority, estimates sponsorship spending in the NBA reached \$1.46 Billion, showing more than 6% year-over-year growth.

“NBA sponsorship revenue is close to reaching the heights of the preeminent National Football League that had total sponsorship revenue \$1.62 Billion last season,” said Peter Laatz, Global Managing Director, IEG. “The star power, number of games, variety of sponsorable assets and global popularity of the NBA all contribute to the League’s continued growth.”

Large League-Level Partnerships

IEG’s Sponsorship Intelligence Database shows league-level partnerships led the sponsorship surge, with the NBA reaching 13 new deals including one with Microsoft, making the tech giant the Official Artificial Intelligence Partner and an Official Cloud and Laptop Partner of the NBA. NBA League-level sponsorship spending has increased by nearly 50% since the 2017-18 season. Major League Soccer is the only league with a higher rate of growth during that same period.

Little Patch with a Big Impact

The jersey patch addition has had a significant impact over the past several years, as total sponsorship revenue for the NBA and its teams has grown by nearly 70% since the last season (2016-2017) before that sponsorship asset was introduced. This season, 27 of the teams had jersey patch sponsors including new deals with Honey and the LA Clippers and Motorola with the Brooklyn Nets. Motorola is the only brand with multiple jersey patch sponsorships (Brooklyn, Milwaukee and Indiana).

"Some teams are getting more than \$15 million per year for jersey patches and that is close to the \$30 million a naming rights sponsorship can bring in annually," said Laatz.

Tech Tops Spending

Technology was the top sponsorship category during the 2020-2021 NBA season, with nearly \$115 Million in new spending. Lottery and gaming brands were also very active new spenders putting almost \$50 Million of new money on the books. The technology, lottery and gaming, telecommunications, sports apparel and banking categories each contribute more than \$100 Million of NBA sponsorship revenue annually.

The most active brand categories in the NBA are insurance, retail, beer and wine/spirits with each category holding in excess of 70 individual deals. The most involved brands based on the number of

partnerships are State Farm, Anheuser-Busch and Verizon. Each brand has sponsorship agreements with 20 or more of the League's 30 teams. Verizon inked 12 new NBA deals last season.

ABOUT IEG

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IEG is the sponsorship authority, helping buyers and sellers of sponsorship develop and improve their partnerships through research, strategy and evaluation. For nearly 40 years, IEG has delivered expert counsel across a full spectrum of partnerships. The world's most recognized sports and entertainment properties and best-known brands, along with start-ups, social-driven organizations and public-sector operators, all turn to IEG to access the company's unmatched depth of expertise. IEG is owned by [Engine Shop](#) and is part of the [Bruin Capital](#) portfolio of companies.