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StubHub steps into spotlight with deals

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StubHub.com has signed multiyear, six-figure sponsorship deals to be the exclusive secondary ticketing partner for the Chicago Bears, Detroit Lions and University of Southern California athletic department.

The deals, expected to be announced this week, signal a new era for a company that until now has operated largely in the background, building online ticket-resale systems for media companies and a few sports teams. The deals also mark the creation of a new sponsorship category.

"We think it reflects not only where the secondary ticketing market is, but also how far our company has come," StubHub President Eric Baker said. Baker said each of the deals is valued in the low six figures annually.

StubHub launched as LiquidSeats in 2000. As part of its new deals, the company will have significant in-stadium presence, including signs and sponsorship of certain highlight segments on stadium scoreboards during games.



The site signed sponsorship deals with the Chicago Bears, Detroit lions and USC.

All of the deals include direct mail and e-mail marketing programs that will deliver information about StubHub to each team's season-ticket holders and waiting-list members. The sponsorships also include a major presence on the team and athletic department Web sites, as well as advertising inventory during game broadcasts and affiliated programming.

StubHub's system allows ticket holders to post tickets for sale in fixed-price or auction formats and ships tickets to buyers via Federal Express.

StubHub until now has provided secondary ticketing services for select clients in the major professional sports leagues, including the New York Jets, Seattle Mariners and Los Angeles Clippers, but the company sells tickets for virtually every team through partnerships with several newspapers and their Web sites.

Separately, StubHub has completed a partnership with CollegeSports.com to be the official secondary ticketing partner for the online network of schools.

Baker said the recent category sponsorship deals represent the 'tip of the iceberg' for StubHub, which he expects will sign similar deals with NBA and NHL clubs before their seasons begin.