

The sponsored by  
bookmaking firms  
unibet, ladbrokes,  
coral

[Business](#), [Branding](#)



The introduction of the BHA's Authorised Betting Partner (ABP) initiative; was the proposed solution to tackle the problem of online operators not contributing to the levy (Wood, 2015) and therefore funding racing.

This 'stick' approach was felt to be a way of forcing bookmaker's hands into signing up but with William Hill, Ladbrokes, Coral and Betfred not agreeing, racecourses were faced with the dilemma of a massive loss of sponsorship income. High profile races like the Cheltenham Gold Cup sponsorship switched from Betfred to Timico (Cook, 2015) similar to strong Soccer/Rugby brands with mass exposure. The challenge is more the day to day objective of trying to attract sponsors to lower grade races (Martin, 2015). The all-weather in the UK provides over 1, 200 races throughout the winter sponsored by bookmaking firms Unibet, Ladbrokes, Coral and 32red (AWC, 2015). This has resulted in a considerable reduction in sponsorship income as 32red are the only ABP approved bookmaker. Ladbrokes Director of Media David Williams summed up the situation from a non-ABP sponsors' perspective; " We want to work with sports who value our sponsorship experience and credentials. There is no shortage of sports with broad appeal for sponsors like us who are eager to work with bookmakers to secure mutual benefits" (Barber, 2015).

This statement raises the ante for the racing industry as a brand for sponsorship as the key words from this statement being 'value' and ' no shortage of other sports'. From a media perspective, Irish horse racing receives extensive television coverage on At the Races and also on Terrestrial channels. Similarly its betting pictures are distributed worldwide via SIS and mobile streaming. Exposure in national and local newspapers, dedicated

Industry papers and radio meanshorse racing sponsorship can provide excellent value for money in terms of exposure to local businesses. So can racecourses adapt and get local business involved in sponsorship and see the value in this media exposure. As we move more into the digital age, social media platforms provide a cheap and targeted approach for marketers as another tool in their marketing mix.

The use of modern online platforms can provide improved branding and sponsorship opportunities.