

Sports

Yankees-Cowboys Group Leads \$2.5 Billion Olympics Sponsor Drive

By [Scott Soshnick](#) and [Eben Novy-Williams](#)
October 26, 2018, 7:00 AM EDT

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- ▶ Legends group is named sponsorship agent for L.A. games, USOC
 - ▶ They'll also market Team USA sponsorships for 2022 and beyond
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Legends, the marketing and hospitality company controlled by the New York Yankees and Dallas Cowboys, has been named sponsorship sales agent for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics and Team USA, putting it in charge of securing \$2.5 billion in corporate support.

Legends has deep experience in America's second-largest media market, where it's helping to sell suites, sponsorships and seat licenses for the stadium and entertainment district being built by Los Angeles Rams owner Stan Kroenke. That stadium will host part of the 2028 Olympics opening and closing ceremonies, plus other events.



"This is exactly what I thought the vision of Legends should be," Chief Executive Officer Shervin Mirhashemi said in an interview. "The Olympics are a game changer as far as properties in the world."

Legends will work with U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Properties, a joint venture between the city's 2028 organizing committee and the U.S. Olympic Committee. The entity, whose goal is to sell \$2.5 billion in domestic sponsorships, was created this year to market LA 2028 and Team USA, including sponsorship rights to the 2022, 2024, 2026 and 2028 Games. Financial terms of the arrangement weren't disclosed.

Expiring Deals

The USOC's current portfolio of more than 20 domestic partners -- including [Nike Inc.](#), [United Airlines](#) and [Kellogg Co.](#) -- expires after the 2020 Summer Games in Tokyo. Legends and the joint venture will fill that stable for 2021-2028.

Full eight-year deals encompassing the USOC and LA 2028 will likely average up to \$400 million, according to Rob Prazmark, CEO of [21 Sports & Entertainment Marketing Group Inc.](#) He represented similar joint ventures for the last two domestic Olympics, the Atlanta games in 1996 and Salt Lake City games in 2002.

Los Angeles was awarded the 2028 games last year, at the same time that Paris won the 2024 rights. That 10-year lead time is an Olympics first, and the relatively small amount of new construction needed for facilities in Los Angeles allows the organizing committee to make partnerships the priority.

“So there’s a 10-year ramp, but also, the entire organization is going to be able to focus on how we create magic as opposed to just how we build stuff,” said LA 2028 Chief Revenue Officer Kathy Carter.

As part of the multiyear agreement, Legends will also provide sponsorship-related consulting services, including an analysis and valuation of those rights, and a sales and marketing plan for the organizing committee and Team USA. The deal doesn’t include event hospitality, another part of Legends’ business.

Yankees-Cowboys

Legends was founded in 2008, financed by the Yankees, Cowboys, [Goldman Sachs Group Inc.](#) and [CIC Partners](#). CIC is no longer involved, and New Mountain Capital took a minority stake in 2017. Its services and customers have expanded in the past 10 years. Current clients in sports and entertainment include Los Angeles Football Club, [Real Madrid](#), [Live Nation Entertainment Inc.](#), UFC, Wimbledon, One World Observatory and the [University of Notre Dame](#).

Companies can’t officially sign Olympics agreements until next year, and Mirhashemi said he expects to start securing deals shortly after that window opens in January.

“The market is going to be surprised by how quickly we start getting deals into the fold,” he said.

– *With assistance by Ira Boudway*

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