

Winik's firm aiming to be AP of sports video

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Gregg Winik, former NBA Entertainment executive, has formed an online video venture called CineSport that he is seeking to position as a video counterpart to content syndicators Getty Images and The Associated Press.

Set to launch broadly this fall, CineSport will compile two- to three-minute daily sports video highlight packages and seek to license them out to online destinations, such as newspaper, TV and radio station Web sites as well as high-profile blogs. The syndicated content would be free to users and supported by advertising.

Beta content, updated regularly, can be found at cinesport.com/newsite.

The company remains in a pre-revenue stage and is pursuing venture capital funds but has nonexclusive content-use agreements with the NBA, NHL, NASCAR and Collegiate Images. Additional pacts with other properties are being pursued.

Joining Winik on the venture are Ed Desser and Larry Weitzman, also former NBA executives.

"There's currently no mass aggregator and distributor of online sports video highlights for the casual fan. That's the niche we're trying to fill," said Winik, who had not detailed his plans upon disclosing his departure from the NBA more than a year ago. "The hard-core, avid fans are going to go to the league sites, ESPN.com and so forth. This is a different market we're trying to serve."

CineSport seeks to capitalize on increasing consumption of online news, particularly with sports. Unofficial estimates point to several leading newspaper Web sites generating as much as 40% of their total traffic through sports content.

Winik is seeking to structure syndication deals in which the content is licensed for a low-five-figure sum combined with revenue sharing on advertising built around the CineSport video player. The company last week completed a deal with Philly.com.

As part of the company's agreements with the sports properties, the leagues have gained links from CineSport content to their own Web sites as well as promotional ad inventory.

"This is a real basic [financial] model, based a lot on what we've seen in television," Winik said. "There's nothing really new about how that is structured."

Similarly, the feel of the CineSport clips resembles the quick-hit overviews of highlights on a local nightly TV newscast.

"CineSport may potentially help increase the exposure of our video content, and therefore our sport, to the more casual NASCAR fan, as well as the casual and hard-core sports fan that has not yet been sufficiently exposed to NASCAR," said James Monroe, NASCAR director of broadcasting and new media. "It's potentially a nice complement to our existing video distribution strategy."



CineSport will launch broadly in the fall.