

# Deltatre buys Massive Interactive streaming group for \$127m

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UK-based software maker Massive Interactive has been snapped up by Italian company Deltatre for \$127m, in a deal designed to create a rival to global giants Disney and Endeavor in online sports streaming services. The takeover, due to be announced on Thursday, will create a company valued at up to \$1bn according to people briefed on the deal.

Turin-based Deltatre has clients including the Premier League in England, ATP World Tour tennis and the NFL. It provides a range of technology services, including helping to run “over the top” [OTT] online screening services. Massive, founded in 1996, provides video technology to a variety of broadcasters and entertainment companies, including the BBC and Sony Pictures. It will become a division of Deltatre.

The combined entity will have 1,000 employees across 18 offices worldwide, making it one of the largest providers of OTT technologies to sports groups. Ron Downey, Massive chief executive, said the combination of the companies’ “specialist products and capabilities represents a new global industry standard for end-to-end video solutions”.

There has been a flurry of dealmaking as providers of digital streaming technology increasingly challenge the traditional broadcasters that have built their businesses on live sports. Last year Disney, the owner of the ESPN TV sports network, acquired BAMTech, a company that powers streaming for US sports groups including Major League Baseball and the National Hockey League, in a deal worth \$3.75bn. In March this year, Endeavor, the group previously known as WME-IMG and owners of the Ultimate Fighting Championship, acquired NeuLion, a streaming technology company, in a \$250m transaction.

Deltatre is seeking to expand in an effort to challenge its well-funded rivals. The company was acquired two years ago by Bruin Sports Capital, an investment fund founded by George Pyne, a former president of the IMG sports agency when it was sold to WME for \$2.4bn in 2013. Mr. Pyne said that demand for online services from broadcasters and sports leagues would grow, as they sought to keep the attention of millennial audiences which increasingly prefer to watch sport on mobile devices and over the internet. “Fans are changing,” said Mr. Pyne. “They are much more invested in how they consume sports and entertainment. The more equipped you are to personalise that experience, the more valuable the relationship will become. Deltatre will be at the centre of this, driving the sports and entertainment industries forward.”