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BSkyB and Twitter to share Champions League video highlights

By Robert Cookson, Digital Media Correspondent

[British Sky Broadcasting](#) has teamed up with Twitter to share video highlights from Uefa Champions League football games in real time, a big step forward for Twitter's TV strategy ahead of an initial public offering that could value it at \$15bn.

Sky's plan to share some of its most valuable sports clips free of charge with social media users is a coup for Twitter, which is trying to capture mainstream advertising budgets by siphoning off a larger share of the \$205bn spent on TV ads across the globe annually.

Starting on Tuesday with three Champions League games including Barcelona against Milan, the Sky Sports Twitter account will share highlights including instant replays of the best goals and post-match interviews.

The aim of the project, which comes as Twitter is expected soon to embark on its investor roadshow, is to promote Sky's sports channels and its internet service Now TV.

Sky is paying Twitter an undisclosed sum to promote its tweets to people across the social media service in the UK. The broadcaster has faced increased competition from BT this year over sports content.

"We know that lots of people want access to great Sky Sports content but would rather dip in and out rather than having a full subscription," said Gidon Katz, director of Now TV.

"Sharing Uefa Champions League clips in real-time on social platforms helps us to highlight the benefits of instant, pay-as-you-go access to Sky Sports via Now TV," Mr Katz said.

Sky's decision to share match highlights follows a trial on transfer deadline day in September. According to Grabyo, the company whose software is used by Sky to grab and share clips, the trial involved 6,000 clips and generated more than 570,000 views in 12 hours.

Twitter, which has 230m active users, has been pushing hard to exploit the trend of people visiting social media sites while watching television. Second Sync, a social analytics company, estimates that 40 per cent of all UK Twitter traffic at peak TV viewing time is about television.

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Twitter launched its first partnership with a TV network last year when it teamed up with US sports channel ESPN to create custom sponsorship packages around events from the baseball World Series to American football matches. It has since signed deals with Comcast and NBCUniversal to allow users to tune in to TV programmes such as *The Voice* directly from a tweet.

After concentrating on generating revenue in the US for the past year, Twitter is trying to roll out its strategy overseas and in the past few months advertised for heads of media partnerships in more than 10 countries from Brazil to China.

Twitter last week provided updated numbers for the first nine months of the year. It said total revenues more than doubled to \$422m from the same period the previous year. But net losses also widened significantly to \$134m from \$71m a year earlier.

The number of monthly users rose from 218m in June to 232m in September, for a rise of 39 per cent year-on-year.

Additional reporting by Hannah Kuchler in San Francisco

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