

## MLB and Gillette extend "into ninth decade"

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Major League Baseball announced yesterday the renewal of four major sponsorship deals, notably taking its partnership with Gillette into a ninth decade.

The MLB's partnership with Gillette – which began in 1939 - is the longest running sponsorship association of any US sports league. Deals have also been renewed with InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), PepsiCo International and ESun.

"The strong commitment by these companies to join forces with baseball is a testament to the strength of our game and our business as part of the cultural fabric of society and its ability to touch so many people around the world," said Tim Brosnan, executive vice-president of business for the MLB. "In addition, these deals make a powerful statement about baseball's strength in the marketplace, especially given the current economic climate."

Gillette will continue to have exclusive rights in several brand categories, including men's and women's pre and post wet/dry shaving products, antiperspirants/deodorants and men's skin care products. IHG's Holiday Inn brand will become the "Official Partner of MLB Road Trips" and continues the largest relationship in US professional sport between a league property and a member of the hotel industry.

Pepsi's deal extends its branding as Official Soft Drink of Major League Baseball in Latin America and Official Sponsor of MLB, the American League, National League, All-Star Game, Division Series, League Championship Series and World Series. Asian financial services company ESun has renewed its official MLB sponsorship in Taiwan.

In addition, Major League Baseball International has reached agreements for new sponsorships in Japan with Lawson, Lotte and Kowa, while Gillette has expanded its MLB sponsorship into Puerto Rico.