

MLB informs Dodgers VOD Deal Breaks Rules

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MLB has informed the Dodgers that a deal between the club and Time Warner to create a Video On-Demand channel breaks with rules outlined a 2000 agreement under which the league, not clubs, control any "interactive media."

Launched on August 9th, the Dodgers On-Demand almost immediatly raised concerns from MLB as Bob DuPuy sent an email to all the clubs stating that clubs did not have the right to launch such braodcast holdings. As DuPuy said at in the email at the time, "That is why when clubs have submitted local broadcast agreements for review," the e-mail read, "the question of VOD has been put on hold."

Yesterday, Bill Shaikin of the LA Times reported ([Dodgers Told TV Deal Breaks Rules](#)):

The Dodgers' VOD channel currently features interviews and highlights of the 1981 championship season. The agreement permits teams to authorize "one-way transmission of radio and television," but a board comprised of DuPuy and several club owners ruled the Dodgers' channel is interactive because fans can stop, start, fast forward and rewind programming.

"The board interpreted that user interaction with the content, which is at the heart of what interactivity is, is a two-way communication," said Bob Bowman, president of Major League Baseball Advanced Media (MLBAM). "The board made the determination that Dodgers on Demand is a two-way communication and therefore interactive.

MLBAM has yet to put in place a policy under which clubs can roll out VOD on cable and satellite systems.