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Xbox 360 to show Sky live and on-demand programming

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By [Kate Holton](#)

LONDON, May 29 (Reuters) - Millions of Xbox 360 owners in Britain and Ireland will be able to watch live programming such as Premier League soccer and movies following a deal with pay-TV group BSkyB (BSY.L: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#), [Stock Buzz](#)).

The two companies did not give any pricing or full channel line up details but said users of the broadband-enabled games console would be able to watch around 20 live channels on their TVs, including sports, entertainment, movies and news.

They will also have access to an on-demand library of thousands of programmes, in what the two companies described as the first time live programming would be available through a games console.

A number of subscription packages will be available, as will the opportunity to access programming on a pay-per-view basis. Users will also be able to take advantage of the Xbox live interactive service, such as talking to other fans while watching sports.

"Our customers have told us that they want the opportunity to use their consoles as a way to access TV and once again Xbox has pulled off an entertainment first with amazing content and rich entertainment experience," said Neil Thompson, head of Xbox UK and Ireland.

Dan Cryan, a senior broadband analyst at Screen Digest, said the deal made sense as the offer of sports would also appeal to the average Xbox user and said both firms were trying to widen their reach.

Microsoft Corp (MSFT.O: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#), [Stock Buzz](#)) said this week its Xbox live community had reached 20 million users, but did not break out sales figures for Britain and Ireland.

Cryan said Screen Digest believed there were over 2 million active Xbox live users in the UK by the end of 2008.

Sky said the agreement was part of its strategy of using a range of platforms to reach as many customers as possible. For Xbox, the deal could attract new audiences by offering a wider range of entertainment through the games consoles.

The two companies said the service would be launched from this Autumn. (Reporting by Kate Holton; Editing by David Holmes)

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