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## MARKETING & MEDIA

# BellSouth vet takes on sports marketing post

Atlanta Business Chronicle - by [Andrew Nelson](#)

The former chief marketing officer at BellSouth Corp., William Pate, is joining forces with Atlanta sports executive Lonnie Cooper.

Pate is the new president of marketing services for Career Sports & Entertainment Inc., the Atlanta sports marketing firm that Cooper founded 21 years ago as a sports agent.

Cooper is the CEO of the firm, whose clients include Braves pitcher John Smoltz, announcers Chip Caray and Joe Simpson, and seven of the 64 coaches in the NCAA basketball tournament.

Pate, who worked at BellSouth, now part of AT&T Inc., for 10 years, will oversee the corporate side of Career Sports & Entertainment, or everything but client representation. That includes corporate marketing, event services and property consulting.

The company represents a number of large corporate clients, including Kellogg Co. (NYSE: K) and Cingular Wireless LLC, as well as several major sports teams, including the Atlanta Falcons and the NBA's New Jersey Nets.

Sports are an excellent promotional tool because they cut across all customer segments, from consumer to small business and enterprise, said Pate.

Pate, 46, has done stints in advertising, sports marketing, promotions and research. He is the chairman of the Atlanta Local Organizing Committee for the 2007 Final Four and past chairman of the Atlanta Sports Council. He also serves on the board of directors of The Ad Council.

Moving from BellSouth to Career Sports & Entertainment was very attractive because it is an opportunity to marry marketing and sports even more, he said.

"We create value by showing companies how to use sports as a platform to reach more customers and sell more products and services," he said.

"We are going to see exponential growth in the sports industry, as teams and conferences recognize they are content providers," Pate said. "Delivering that content to all three screens (TV, PC, cell phone) will unlock millions of dollars of additional revenue through expanded sponsorship opportunities and new end-user transactions."

### **Who's spending what**

The Coca-Cola Co. last year paid the National Basketball Association \$11.8 million for marketing, media placement, advertising, sponsorship, tickets and other similar items, the company reported March 9. Coke and the NBA have had a relationship since the late 1980s.

- Delta Air Lines Inc. spent \$150 million on advertising last year, while it was under bankruptcy court supervision, compared with \$164 million in 2005 and \$148 million in 2004, the company reported March 2.
- Atlanta-based recreational boat-maker Marine Products Corp., which is riding out a slowdown in its market, reported March 2 that it could increase advertising during 2007. Marine Products supports its dealers' marketing efforts by supplementing local advertising, sales and marketing follow-up in boating magazines, and boat shows. Advertising expenses totaled about \$2.8 million in 2006, \$2.6 million in 2005 and \$2.5 million in 2004.

### **Earthlink focuses on revenue**

EarthLink Inc. says it will focus in 2007 on increasing its advertising and other value-added services revenue, without turning off customers with overly intrusive advertising.

"To do this, we will seek to increase the EarthLink start page utilization, seek partnerships to increase search traffic and revenues from non-access customers and offer new services, among other efforts," the company said in its annual report filed March 1 with the SEC.

### **Who got what**

Solomon Says signed a contract with the Georgia Tech College of Management and with Alliancesphere LLC to promote the company's consulting expertise.

Trevelino/Keller Communications Group has added technology company Omnilink Systems Inc.

DENMARK {the agency} is representing Griffin Industries, a Southern California residential real estate company; John Wieland Homes & Neighborhoods Inc., a builder of luxury homes; and Rio Piedra Plantation, a Georgia quail-hunting lodge.

Bull's-Eye Creative Communications will design and develop a Web site for TecnoTile, a division of Group Roland & Roland Plastics Ltd.

The Robin Shepherd Group has been chosen by THE TOUR Championship presented by Coca-Cola to work on the PGA golf tournament at the East Lake Golf Course in Atlanta.

### **Dollars in its wake**

MasterCraft Boat Co. is making a big splash at Lake Allatoona. The Tennessee company is title sponsor for the Pro Wakeboard Championship, which is making its second appearance in Georgia May 18-20. The extreme sports contest challenges riders as they are towed behind a MasterCraft boat.