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Haier is 9th founding deal for Nets

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The New Jersey Nets have added appliance and electronics maker Haier as a Barclays Center founding partner, a deal that comes two weeks after owner Bruce Ratner closed on the planned \$800 million arena in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Nets Sports & Entertainment President and CEO Brett Yormark refused to disclose specific terms of the deal, but the average Barclays Center founding deal is worth \$2 million per year for seven years.



ERROL ANDERSON (2)
Developments last month cleared the way for Barclays Center, planned for this site in Brooklyn.

Haier is the ninth founding deal for the Barclays Center and is the first since the Dec. 23 master closing, clearing the way for a project that has been beset by costly delays and lawsuits. In addition to the nine founding partners, Anheuser-Busch has signed on as a major, non-exclusive arena sponsor.

Haier receives exclusivity in the home appliance category and will build a Haier Experience Store within the 18,000-seat arena, which is expected to open during the 2011-12 NBA season. The company's products will also be installed in each of the arena's 100 suites. In addition, Haier will look to supply apartments with appliances planned within the Atlantic Yards development where the arena is located.

China-based Haier is an NBA league partner and a current Nets team sponsor, the company's only NBA team deal.

"We are very involved in the NBA and we felt it was a good situation with the marketing benefits," said Richard Block, vice president of marketing for Haier America. "They are building 7,000 apartments that need appliances, and we are in a good position to do the business."

The Nets want to sell 12 founding Barclays Center deals, with more expected following the December master closing.

BARCLAYS CENTER FOUNDING PARTNERS

ADT	Jones Soda Co.
Cushman & Wakefield	MetroPCS Communications
EmblemHealth	MGM Grand at Foxwoods
Haier	Phillips-Van Heusen
High Point Solutions	Source: New Jersey Nets

"The closing helps us with the fence-sitters who wanted to wait until we closed on the arena deal," Yormark said.

Each of the founding partners has also bought signage around the construction site of the Barclays Center. Yormark said that the signage deals around the site are separate from the arena founding deals and will generate \$4 million in revenue.

"The sponsors are being charged during the interim period, and those dollars will be used to market the Barclays Center over the next two years," he said.

The Nets are working on a deal to play the next two years at the Prudential Center in Newark, N.J., and then relocate to Brooklyn, a move that team officials hope will revitalize a franchise that has been hemorrhaging cash since Ratner bought the team for \$300 million in 2004. Ratner is awaiting league approval to sell 80 percent of the Nets and 45 percent of the Barclays Center to Russian oligarch Mikhail Prokhorov for \$200 million.