

HOW TO OWN A HORSE WITH A HOCKEY LEGEND

A Case Study in Integrated Marketing

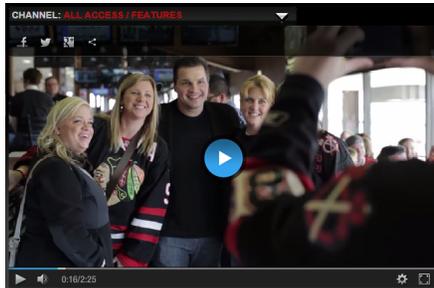
OPPORTUNITY⁰

The Chicago Blackhawks were looking for sponsors. Hawthorne Race Course was looking for innovative ways to reach new fans. And Eddie Olczyk, a Blackhawks legend, hockey hall of famer, and horseracing fanatic was the link. But for what?

A shared common passion. Compared with the major sports (the NFL, MLB and NBA), hockey and horses are on the fringe. But with proud histories, and with fans who both remember and are hopeful for renewed excitement. Enter Eddie. A long-time handicapper and graded stakes winning horse owner.

THE PROMOTION⁰

A chance to own a race horse (an actual race horse) with Eddie Olczyk. Thousands registered online after advertisements in-stadium, via Blackhawks' email, social media and web promotions—not to mention myriad editorial mentions by Eddie in interviews and color commentary during games. Ultimately (20) semi-finalists were invited with guests to a private party at Hawthorne with Eddie, where, after a few additional semi-finalists were picked out of the public crowd, five finalists were chosen at random to join Eddie in the winner's circle to meet their horse.



[\[video link\]](#)

THE INCIDENTALS⁰

Custom-made jockey silks with the Blackhawks' colors, Indian head, and feathers for "Eddie Olczyk Racing." Eddie as a co-host of a live hour-long Illinois Derby broadcast on WGN-TV. Additional live-read advertising by Hawthorne on sports radio stations promoting the contest and leading to editorial chatter by media talent. Harborton (the horse) winning on Illinois Derby day, Hawthorne's biggest day of the spring meet. Game tickets for top players at Hawthorne. Sports journalists around the city anxious to talk to Eddie about how they too could "own a horse with Eddie" ...at Hawthorne Race Course. Oh...and a Stanley Cup!

From the Blackhawks: *"This was one of the most unique and innovative sponsorship promotions that we've ever done."*

From Hawthorne: *"This was exactly the kind of promotion we needed at exactly the time we needed it: it engaged our current fans, created new ones and got everyone's attention."*