

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Etihad aligns with Major League Soccer for North American outreach

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Image courtesy of Etihad

By STAFF REPORTS

United Arab Emirates airline Etihad Airways is appealing to American and Canadian travelers through a strategic athletic placement.

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Etihad, which has been Major League Soccer's official airline since 2014, has renewed its partnership with the sports organization in a multi-year sponsorship deal. Kicking off this newly renewed alliance, Etihad is hosting an MLS Flight Path campaign, which includes competitions and exclusive experiences for fans.

Goal oriented

To introduce its sponsorship, Etihad teamed with Roger Bennett and Michael Davies, the duo behind the soccer-themed podcast and show Men in Blazers. With these personalities and a marker, the airline tells the story of soccer and its own relationship to the sport.

Etihad Airways and Major League Soccer - We're a Fan

The airline's MLS Flight Path campaign also looks at the intersections between sports and travel.

Interactive digital content traces the global journeys soccer stars have taken to get where they are.

Surrounding the MLS All-Star Game presented by Target and the MLS Cup, Etihad is hosting a social media contest. Consumers are asked to share a photo that is related to both travel and soccer with the hashtag #MLSFlightPath for a chance at a VIP experience at the Chicago game.



Bedroom in Etihad's The Residence

While at the All-Star Game, the UGC winners will compete to win a trip to Abu Dhabi, the home of Etihad.

"We are thrilled to continue our partnership with Major League Soccer, reinforcing our long-term commitment to North American soccer fans," said Patrick Pierce, vice president marketing partnerships at Etihad Airways. "Etihad Airways and MLS share the same spirit of global connectivity through sports, and we are dedicated to celebrating soccer's rising popularity in the U.S., Canada and beyond."

In addition to MLS, Etihad has partnerships with football clubs in New York, Manchester, Melbourne and Abu Dhabi.

Etihad has also made other alliances aimed at raising its profile among a North American audience.

As the official airline of New York Fashion Week, Etihad partnered with Jimmy Choo during the event last September.

To celebrate the label's 20th anniversary Etihad co-hosted a Jimmy Choo-themed VIP lounge at runway show venue Skylight at Moynihan Station and decked out a livery with Jimmy Choo and NYFW branding. As Etihad boosted its service to New York, having a presence among the affluent, stylish community at fashion week helped it raise awareness among the stylish set ([see story](#)).

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