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Big rebound for Raycom

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A little more than two years ago, Raycom Sports looked like it was dying. Now the company has a slew of projects in the works — and more on the way.

[The Charlotte-based sports media company lost its portion of the Southeastern Conference football and basketball TV rights in 2008](#), taking away a huge slice of Raycom's revenue. That deal, which gave the SEC significant increases through new deals with **ESPN** and **CBS**, made many analysts skeptical that Raycom would be able to hang on to its other major college sports property, the Atlantic Coast Conference.

[ESPN won the ACC rights last summer, but agreed to make Raycom part of the deal through a subcontracting arrangement](#). Since then, the company has gained momentum with related projects.

Ken Haines, chief executive at Raycom Sports, says the flurry of activity in recent months has helped the company regain its footing. The surest sign of confidence emerged last month, when the company disclosed plans to build a high-definition production truck, giving Raycom the capability to produce all of its ACC football and basketball games in HD beginning in September.

Other recent moves include:

- Creating new graphics, logos and branding Raycom productions as the ACC Network, launched this past fall as a lead-in to the start of the new ACC TV contract that takes effect next football season.
- Several new digital products and expanded video-streaming on TheACC.com website, as well as creation of an iPhone app.
- A venture known as The Vault, which started last month with archival footage and highlights from ACC men's basketball games dating to 1983. Fans can share favorite clips on Facebook, Twitter and other social-media outlets. Annual subscriptions cost \$3.99.
- Selling sponsorships for various apps and digital products, including The Vault (Champion apparel) and TheACC.com's new mobile website (AT&T).
- Assisting with Charlotte's role as host of the ACC football championship game in 2010 and 2011 and supporting the Belk Bowl through participation in the nonprofit organizer of the two games, Charlotte Collegiate Football.

Raycom Sports is owned by Montgomery, Ala.-based **Raycom Media**. The parent company owns 39 TV stations in 12 states.