



Scripps National Spelling Bee Names Microsoft and Words With Friends as Official Broadcast Sponsors

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CINCINNATI—The nation's largest and longest-running educational program is joining with two highly regarded and internationally known consumer brands to sponsor the 2015 Scripps National Spelling Bee finals live on ESPN.

Microsoft Corp., the worldwide leader in software, services, devices and solutions, and Words With Friends, a mobile app and social game created by Zynga Inc. (Nasdaq: ZNGA), are the official broadcast sponsors of this year's competition.

"We are fortunate to have two sponsors who share a similar mission with the Scripps National Spelling Bee," said Paige Kimble, executive director of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. "We all are deeply committed to supporting educational programs. We welcome back Microsoft for its second sponsorship year. Microsoft has had a profound impact on millions of students around the world. Words with Friends engages millions of Wordies to test their vocabulary skills and to challenge other players in the social word game. Through this relationship, we hope to expose more audiences to the exploration of words, spelling and vocabulary."

Microsoft has partnered with over 12 million educators to impact more than 207 million students in 240 countries. Microsoft is committed to empowering students with innovative technology to help them develop the 21st century skills needed to excel now and in the future.

"Spelling and grammar are foundational skills that pave the way for effective communication in school and career," said Margo Day, vice president of U.S. Education, Microsoft. "Microsoft Surface is proud to once again sponsor the Scripps National Spelling Bee to inspire students around the nation to improve their spelling and build the communication skills they'll need in order to succeed in the future."

Launched in 2009, and named by Apple as the App Store's No. 1 free game of all time, Words With Friends continues to be the world's most popular mobile word game with an estimated 55 million matches being played around the world at any given moment. Words With Friends encourages vocabulary expansion and word discovery through challenging players to create the highest-scoring words while playing against friends, family or random opponents. Millions of spellers, both competitive and not, have used Words With Friends as an exciting and motivating way to build their vocabulary while connecting with others through social word-play.

"We're proud to team up with The E.W. Scripps Company in recognizing the 2015 Scripps National Spelling Bee contestants and joining in this global celebration of words," said Jonathan Knight, vice president of games at Zynga. "Since launching nearly six years ago, Words With Friends has connected millions of people around the world through competitive and fun social word-play, empowering them to increase their vocabulary and discover new words. Through our partnership with the Scripps National Spelling Bee, we are thrilled to support the next generation

of passionate spellers and word enthusiasts. We wish them the best of L-U-C-K during the competition.”

As part of its sponsorship, Words With Friends will award the Champion of the 2015 Scripps National Spelling Bee with a cash prize of \$5,000.

The Scripps National Spelling Bee started in 1925 with nine contestants. Today, it is estimated that more than 11 million students participate each year. This is the 88th annual National Spelling Bee.

At Bee Week, international attention will shine on young spellers vying for the coveted title of champion. The Scripps National Spelling Bee will take place May 26-28 at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in the Washington, D.C., area. ESPN will broadcast live the Championship Finals on Thursday, May 28, from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. EDT.

About the Scripps National Spelling Bee:

[The Scripps National Spelling Bee](#) is the nation's largest and longest-running educational program. The purpose of the Scripps National Spelling Bee is to help students improve spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct English usage that will help them all of their lives. Visit spellingbee.com for more information about the Scripps National Spelling Bee, which is administered on a not-for-profit basis by The E.W. Scripps Company.

About Scripps

[The E.W. Scripps Company](#) serves audiences and businesses through a growing portfolio of television, radio and digital media brands. Scripps is one of the nation's largest independent TV station owners, with 33 television stations in 24 markets and a reach of nearly one in five U.S. households. It also owns 34 radio stations in eight markets. When Scripps and the former Journal Communications merged their broadcast assets in early 2015, they also spun off their respective newspapers, creating a new public company, Journal Media Group. Scripps also runs an expanding collection of local and national digital journalism and information businesses, including mobile video news service [Newsy](#) and weather app developer [WeatherSphere](#). Scripps also produces television shows including [The List](#) and [The Now](#), runs an award-winning investigative reporting newsroom in Washington, D.C., and serves as the long-time steward of the nation's largest, most successful and longest-running educational program, the [Scripps National Spelling Bee](#). Founded in 1878, Scripps has held for decades to the motto, “Give light and the people will find their own way.”

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