

fandom

Sports fandom in a post-World Cup world

momentum

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Background & methodology



Momentum conducted a survey that acted as a post-FIFA World Cup™ "pulse check" to capture a rare global moment: a global mega-event just ending and its impact on overall fandom and interest in upcoming large sports events, like the 2028 LA Summer Olympics.

This research also helped us understand both the emotional and financial connection the FIFA World Cup™ had on fans, ranging from social to sponsorship, media rights and brand-partnership audiences.

The study was fielded in October 2026, during which 1,000 completes were collected across five countries: US, UK, Canada, Germany and Spain.

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Interest in soccer has spiked post-World Cup

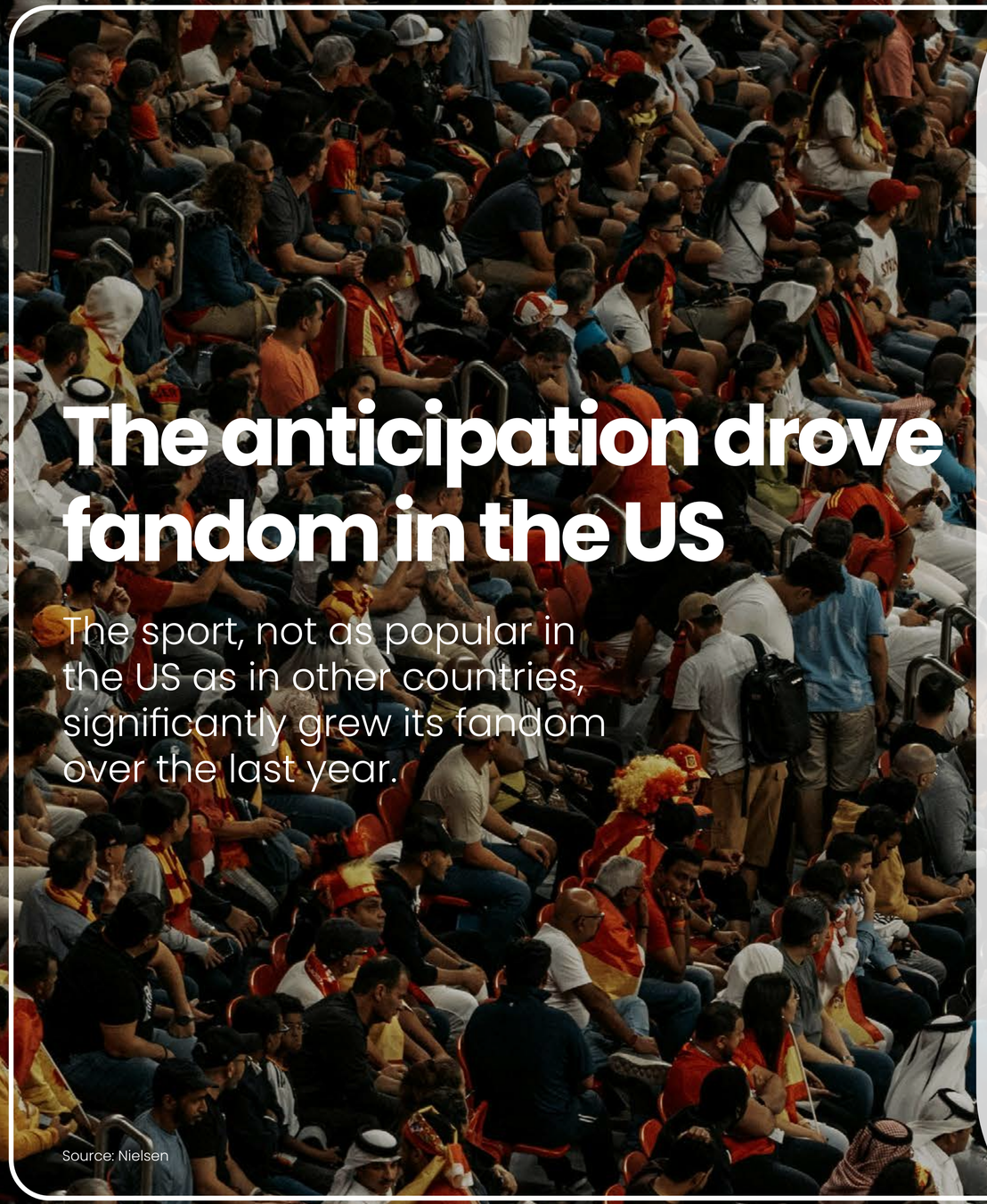
The global event succeeded in bringing fans together, leaving them wanting more after the final game was played.



72%

Find that their interest in soccer/ futbol has increased following the World Cup

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The anticipation drove fandom in the US

The sport, not as popular in the US as in other countries, significantly grew its fandom over the last year.

Source: Nielsen

Identify as a Soccer Fan (in US)

July 2025	66.8M
July 2026 (Post-World Cup)	75.2M

+8.4M YoY (+12.6%)

Spain's LaLiga on ESPN (overall audience)

+60% **Among 18-34 year olds**
Rapid adoption across younger streaming cohorts

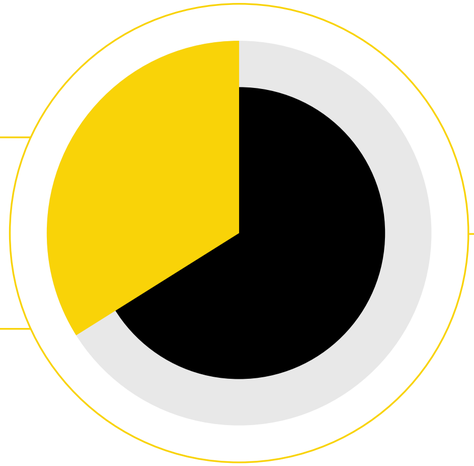
+42% **YoY total audience growth**
Across all its English and Spanish-language broadcasts

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World Cup emotions continue to run high

The feeling of connection with both the sport and fellow fans have many hungry for more and, as a result, they are leaning into other sports content.

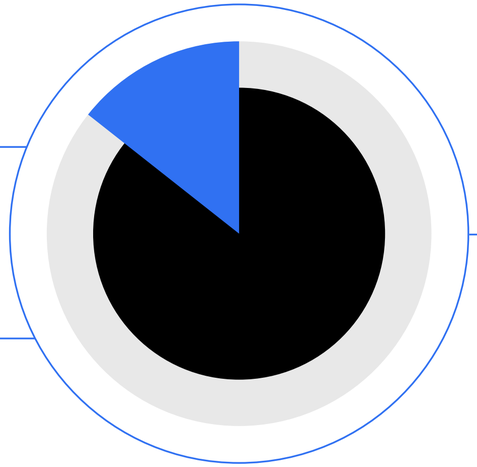
The World Cup sparked a sports “joy” within.



34%

I am riding a high on sports excitement and consuming more sports content than usual

Some are struggling, missing the World Cup joy.



14%

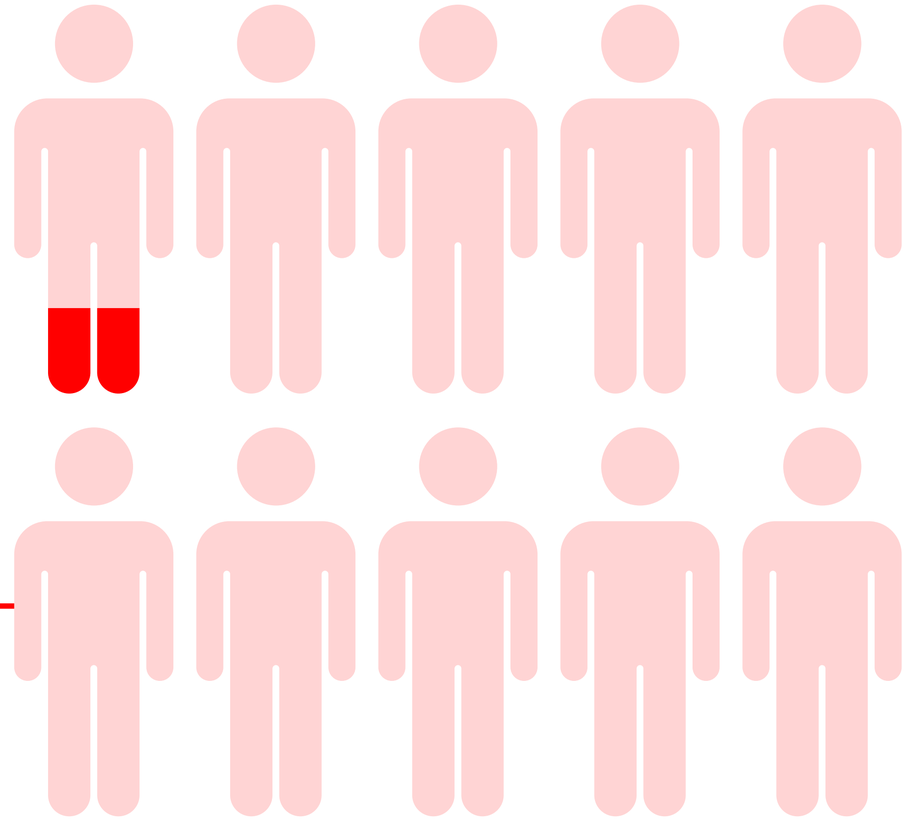
I feel a post-tournament slump/letdown and am looking for something new to fill the void

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Few need a break from the energy

Most fans sustained or grew their engagement post-World Cup rather than tuning out.

7% of fans Needed a break from the World Cup frenzy



27%
Simply returned to their regular routine

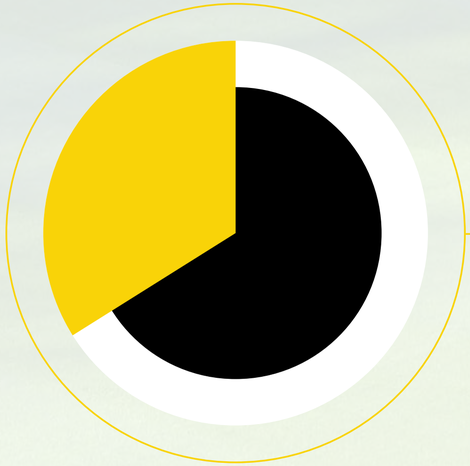
Source: Nielsen

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The “high” and “low” post-sporting event is real

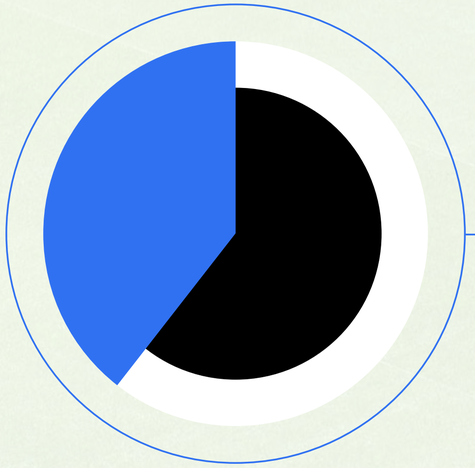
The feeling is real. Fans feel a spectrum of emotions after a major sporting event like the World Cup ends.





33%

Find the feeling lasts from one week to an entire month



42%

Say the high/low feeling lasts from one to a few days

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The World Cup has created a halo effect

Fandom didn't stop after the trophy was awarded. We're seeing a spike in supporting European leagues and following individual global stars.

This proves that events like the World Cup **convert into long-term fandom.**

50%

Are now watching/following European leagues, like Premier and La Liga

42%

Watching soccer docuseries, highlights or sports podcasts

35%

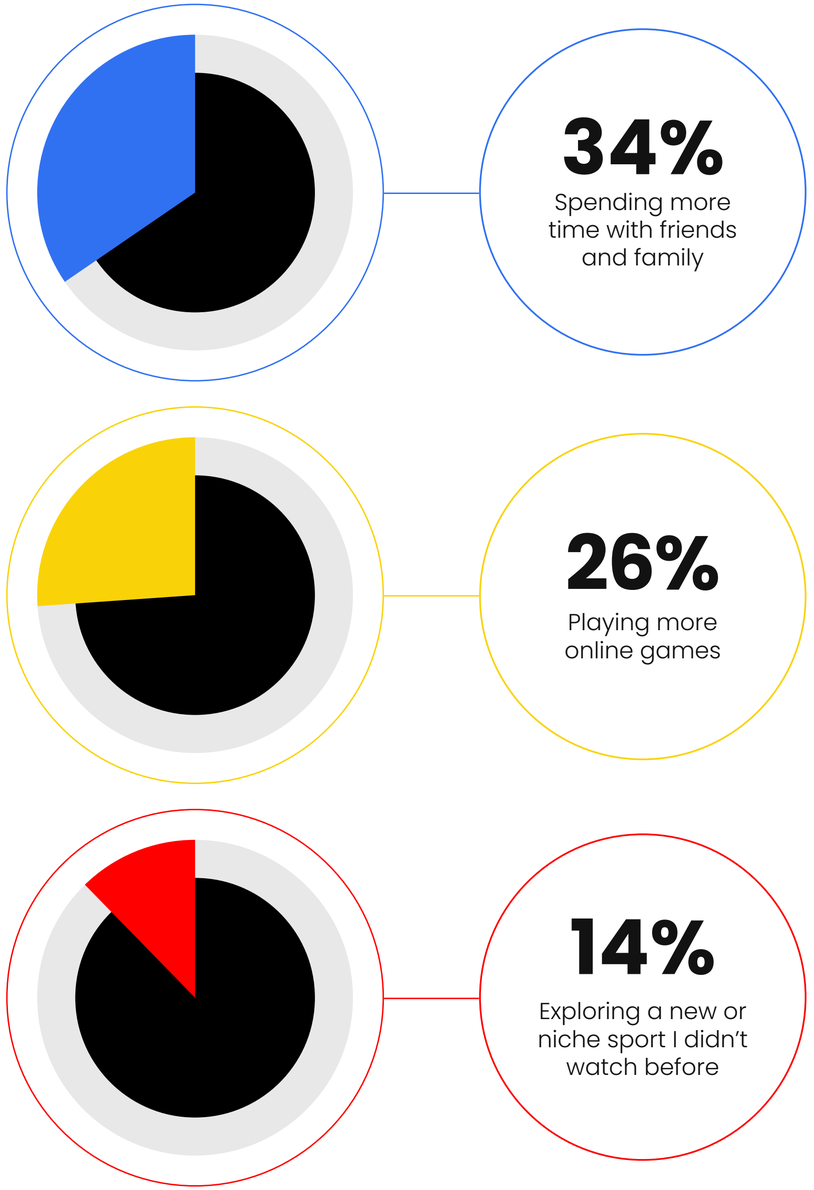
Following individual global soccer stars/ players on social media

Another **35%** are now watching/following US leagues, like MLS or NWSL

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With connection and interaction remaining priority

Other ways fans are spending their time post-World Cup:



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Mega events can remain powerful top-of-funnel conversion engines for year-round sports consumption

There are many opportunities to continue to engage the fan…

- Build the bridge from global events to local and league seasons to keep the passion going.
- Shift spend quickly to podcast and docuseries to fulfill interests and continue to feed fan passion and curiosity.
- The post-event slump is real. What can retail, digital and experiential activations do to help keep them connected to their fandom?



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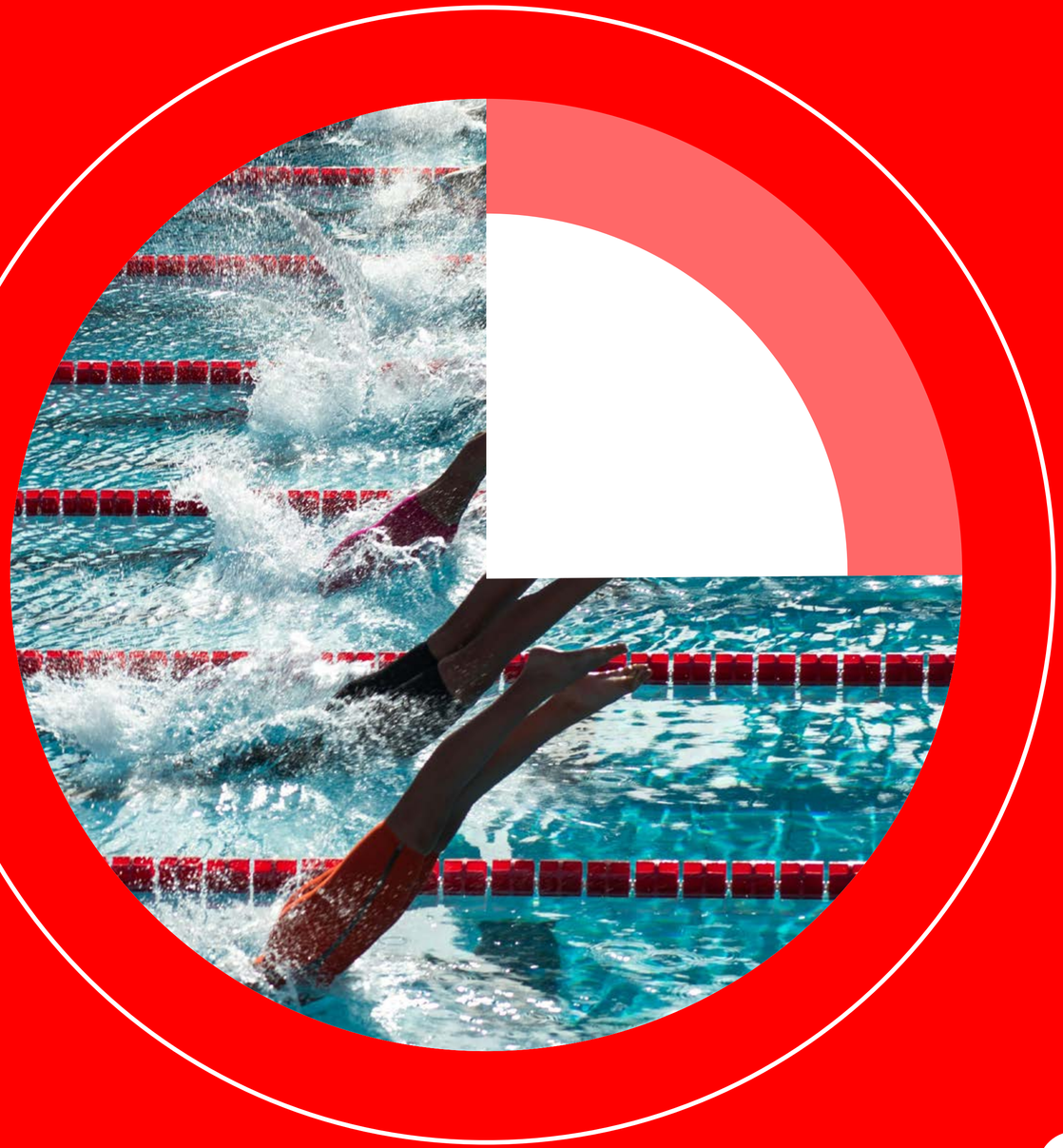
The Olympics halo: 2028 anticipation is already here



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Excitement for LA28 is building

Fans' post-World Cup feelings have increased anticipation and excitement for the LA28 Olympics.

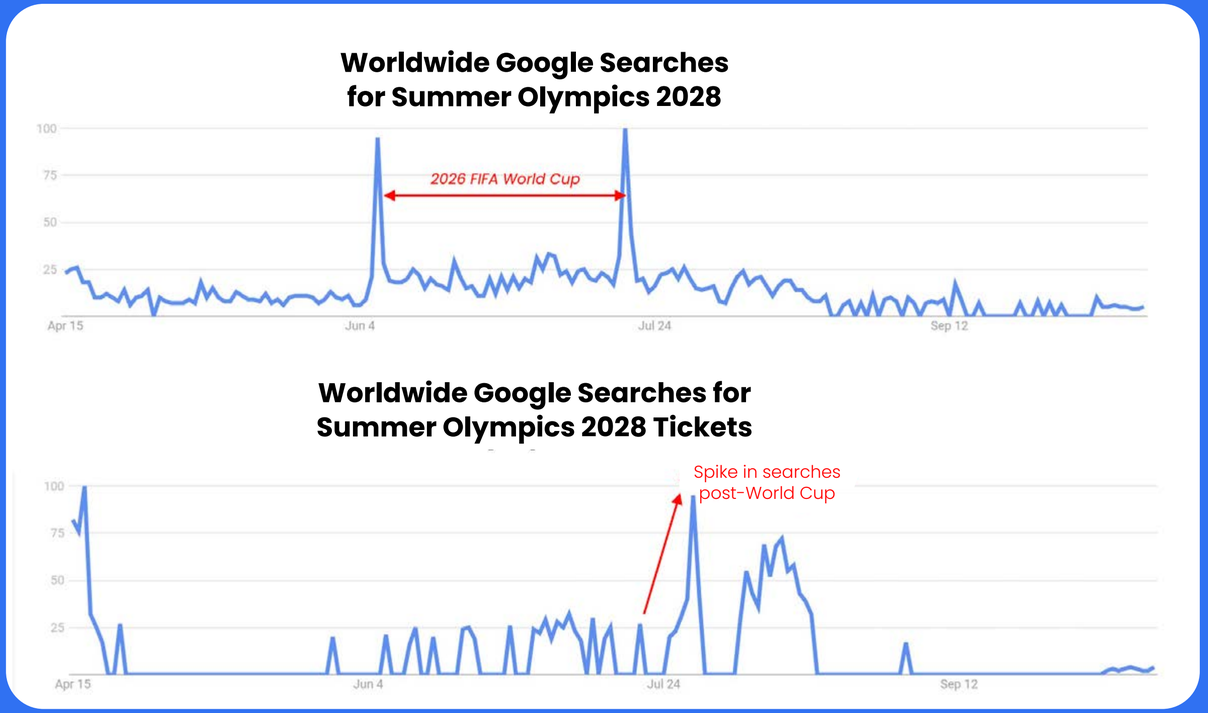


75%

Are looking forward to the LA 2028 Summer Olympics

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World Cup excitement drove searches for LA28

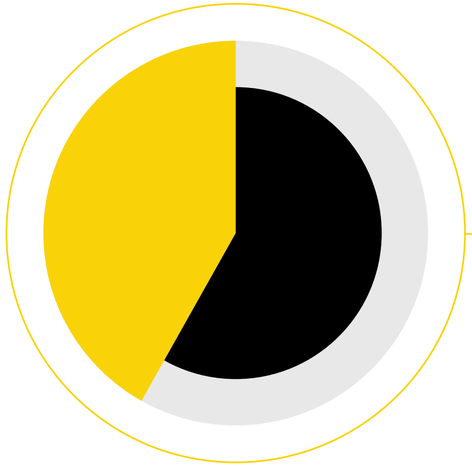


Source: Google Trends

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They're looking forward to connection

Fans are anticipating that the LA28 Summer Olympics will be another powerful moment to connect with others.



41%

Expect the LA28 Summer Olympics will "**bring people together**"



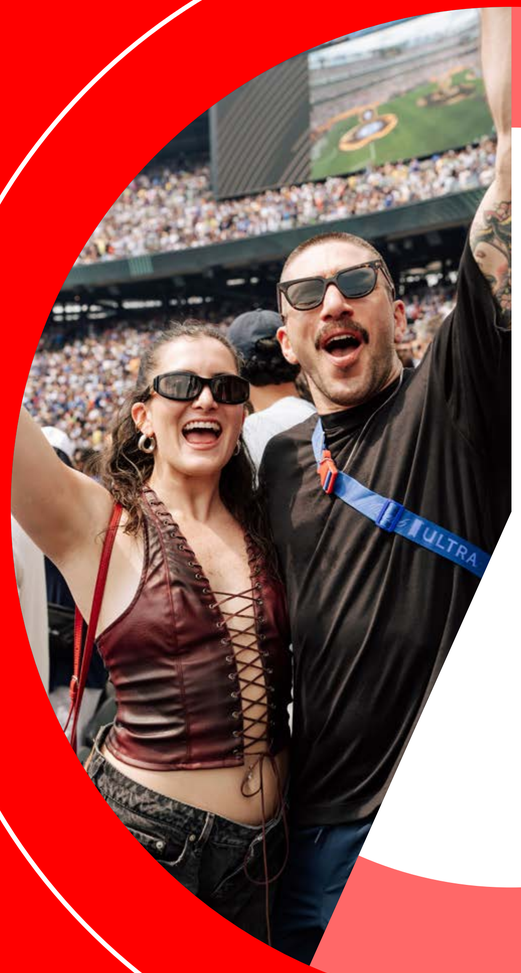
29%

Find that the World Cup **created new anticipation** for the LA28 Summer Olympics

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Discovery is key for LA28

With several new sports being introduced (or reintroduced with a slight makeover), there is particularly curiosity among Gen Zers.



43%

Of Gen Z finds discovering new sports their favorite part of the Summer Olympics

Source: Momentum Worldwide Gen Z and LA28 Proprietary Research, June 2026

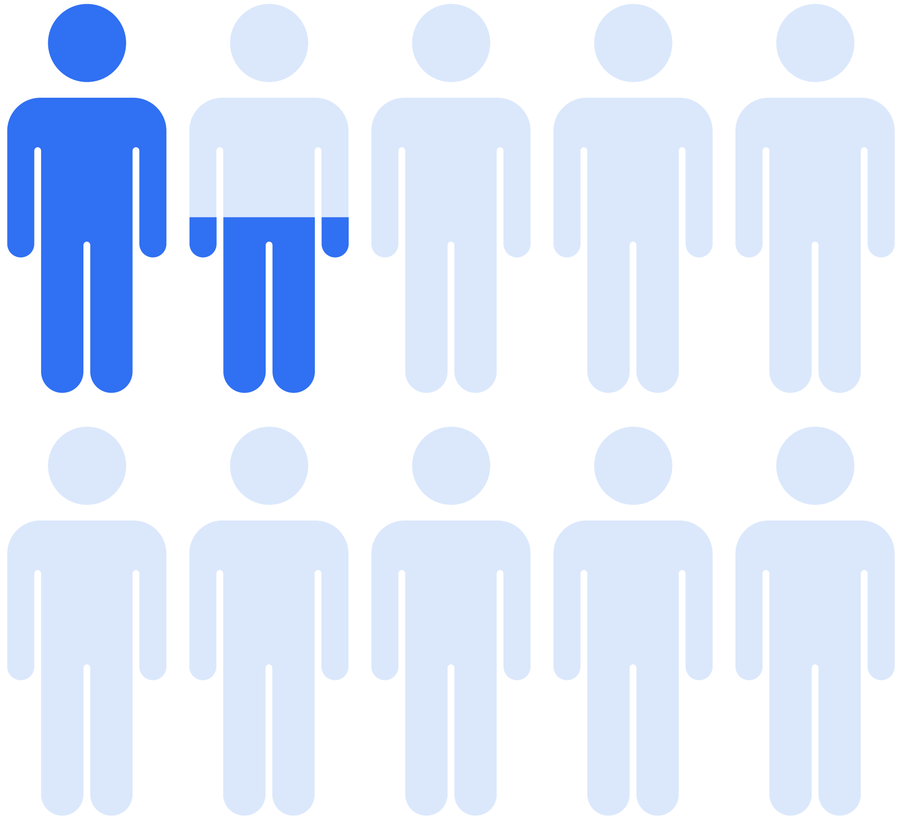
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Interest is strong two years out

What this means:
Capitalize on the Passion NOW

Brands shouldn't wait until the Olympic year for sponsorship opportunities and creative ideas.

15% of fans currently don't plan to follow/watch the LA28 Olympics



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Multi-year runways leading into mega-events should be seen as an engagement period, not a waiting phase

Start the storytelling NOW:

Talk about the new sports to build interest and affinity.

Seek out opportunities to connect with community and build brand relationships.

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The antidote to sponsorship fatigue

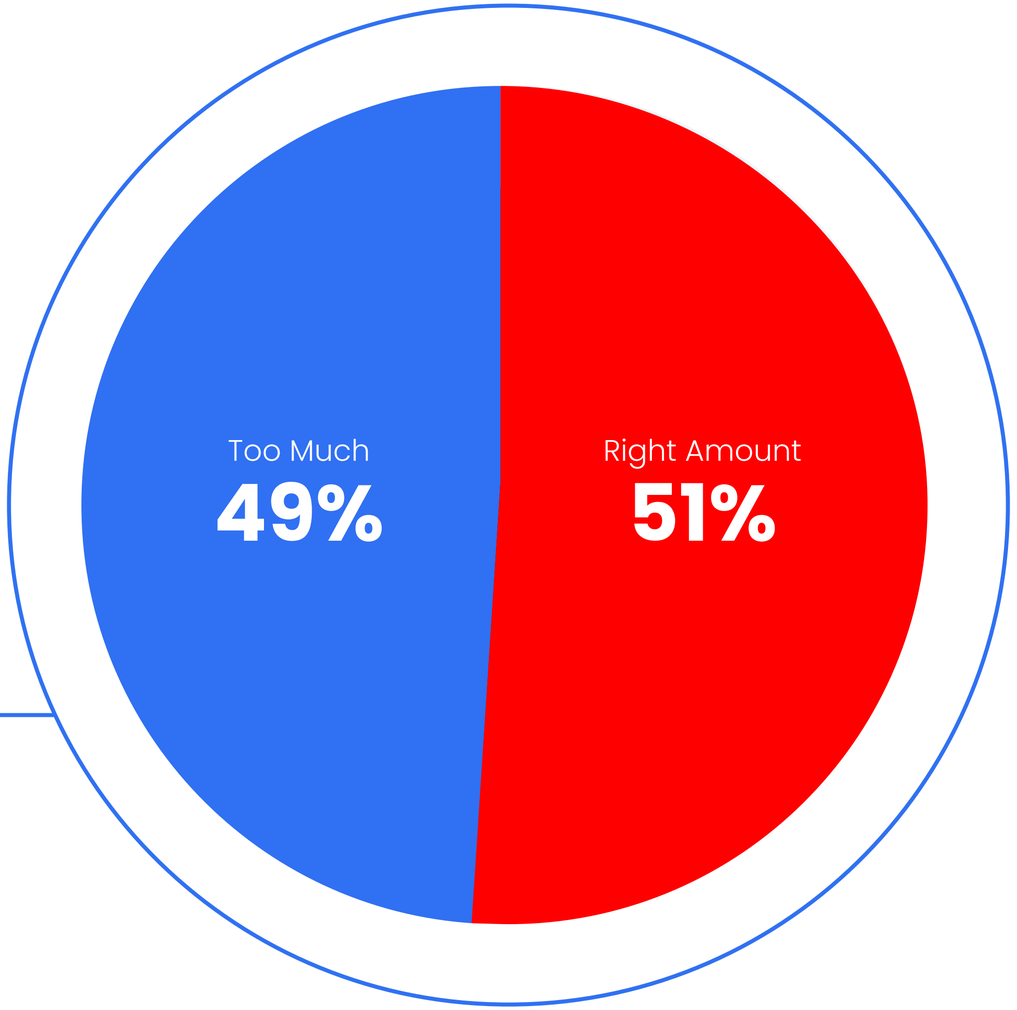


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Sponsorships are at a tipping point

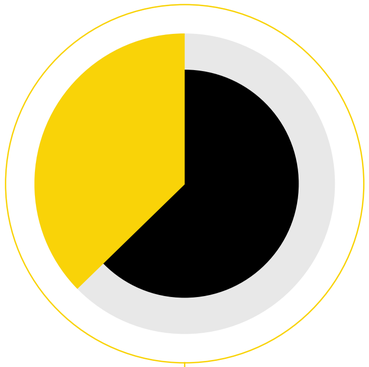
#1 Fatigue Driver?
Repetition at 30%

Opinion on Amount of World Cup Sponsorship and Advertising



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Fans' sponsorship wish list post-event



40%

Thank fans with special promo/offer



40%

Donate share of profits/sales to local youth or community sports



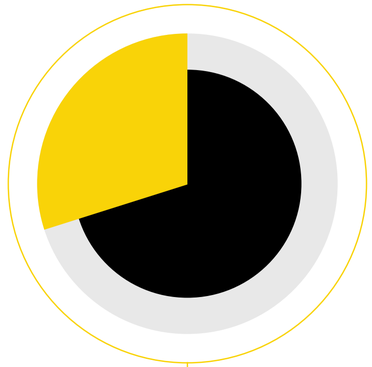
38%

Continue offering exclusive discounts/ giveaways



30%

Take a break marketing & messaging fans

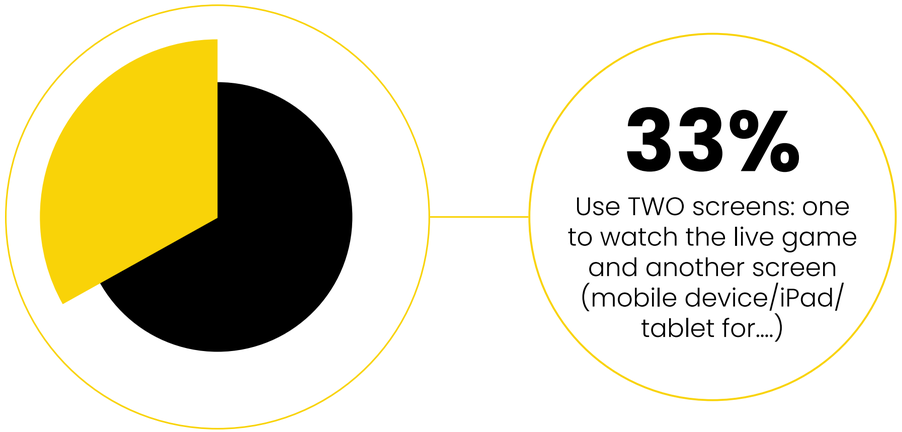


28%

Share behind-the-scenes content with fans

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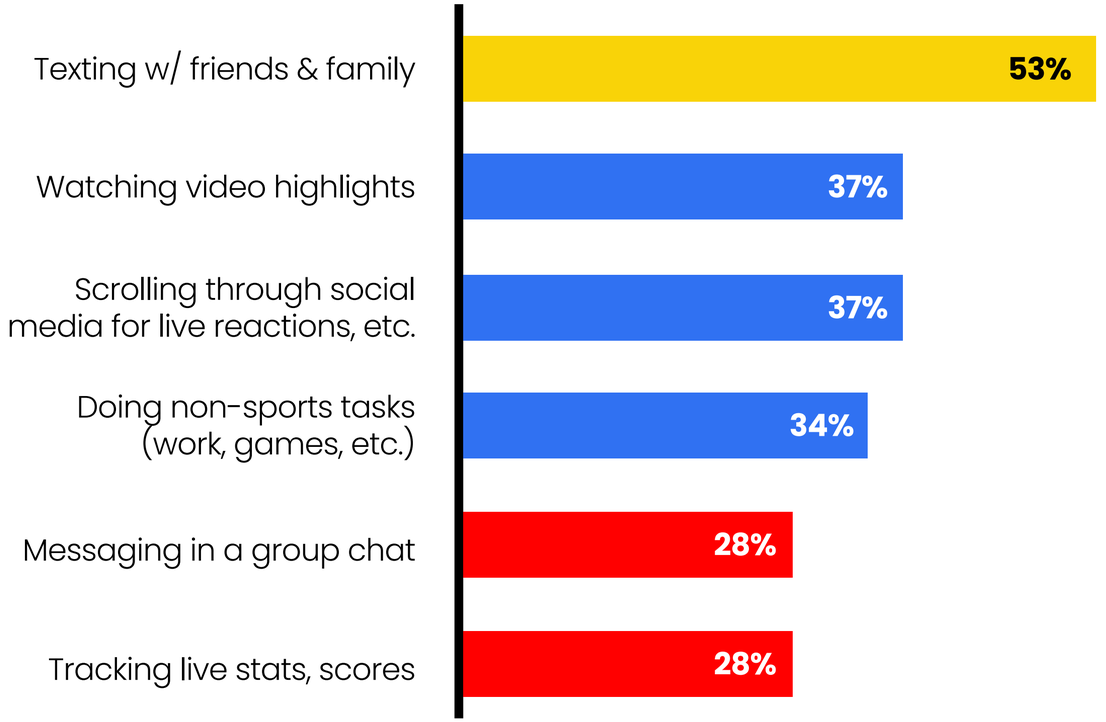
The power of the second screen



33%

Use TWO screens: one to watch the live game and another screen (mobile device/iPad/ tablet for....)

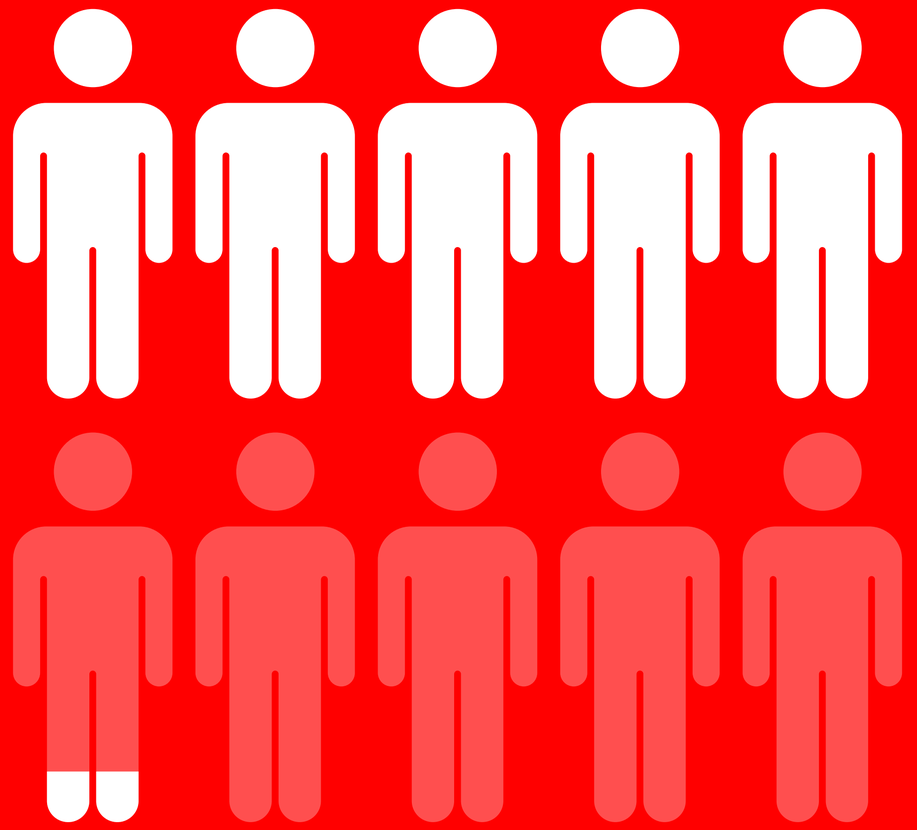
Usage of second screen



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Second screens offer sponsorship opportunities

54% of fans find a second screen makes the viewing experience better, making them feel engaged and more involved



Second Screens Are No Longer Threats to Broadcast Attention

It's an engagement amplifier and a huge opportunity for sponsorship integration.

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Fans aren't anti-sponsorship, they just want creative that's fresh and inspiring

Think new, think creative, think actionable.

Consider a sponsorship long-tail.

It doesn't need to completely cease after an event ends; there's room for more.

Don't leave fan goodwill and purchase intent on the table.

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The appetite for sports gaming is growing



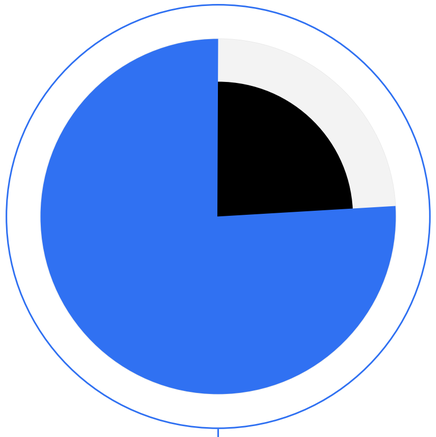
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Sports gaming enhances the game



28%

Use second screens to track live stats, fantasy sports scores or betting

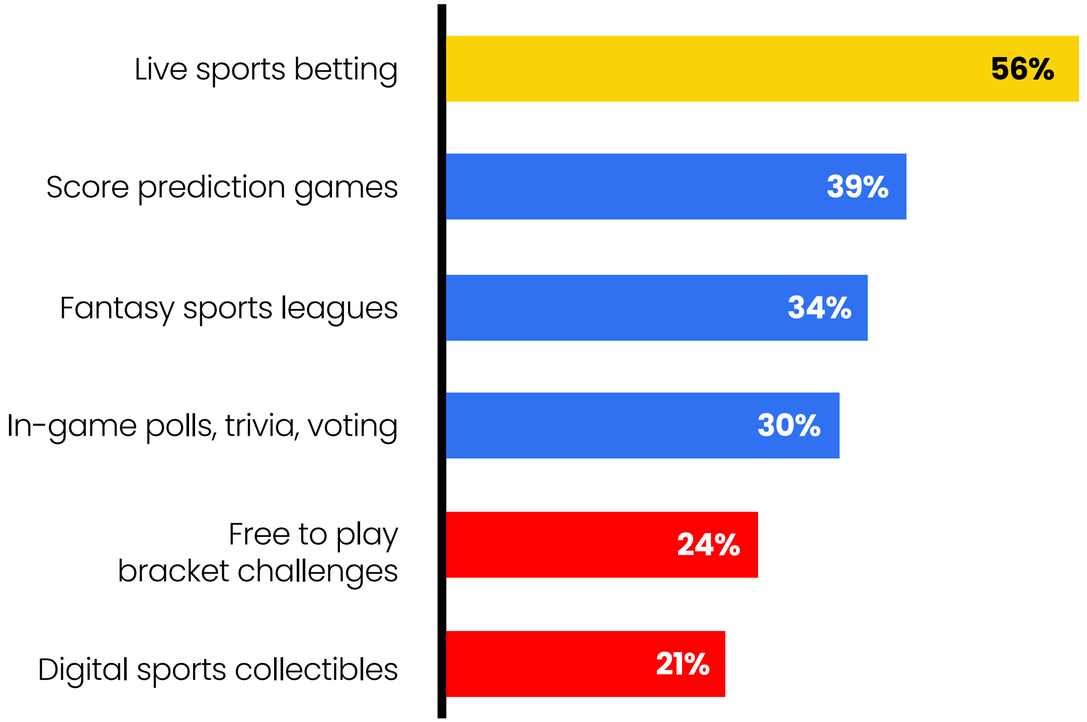


76%

Find being involved in sports gaming makes them more likely to be involved in the game in real-time

Participation in sports activities over past year

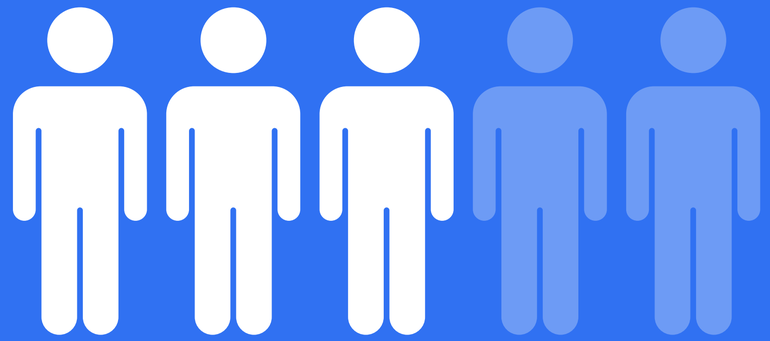
(Among those who participate)



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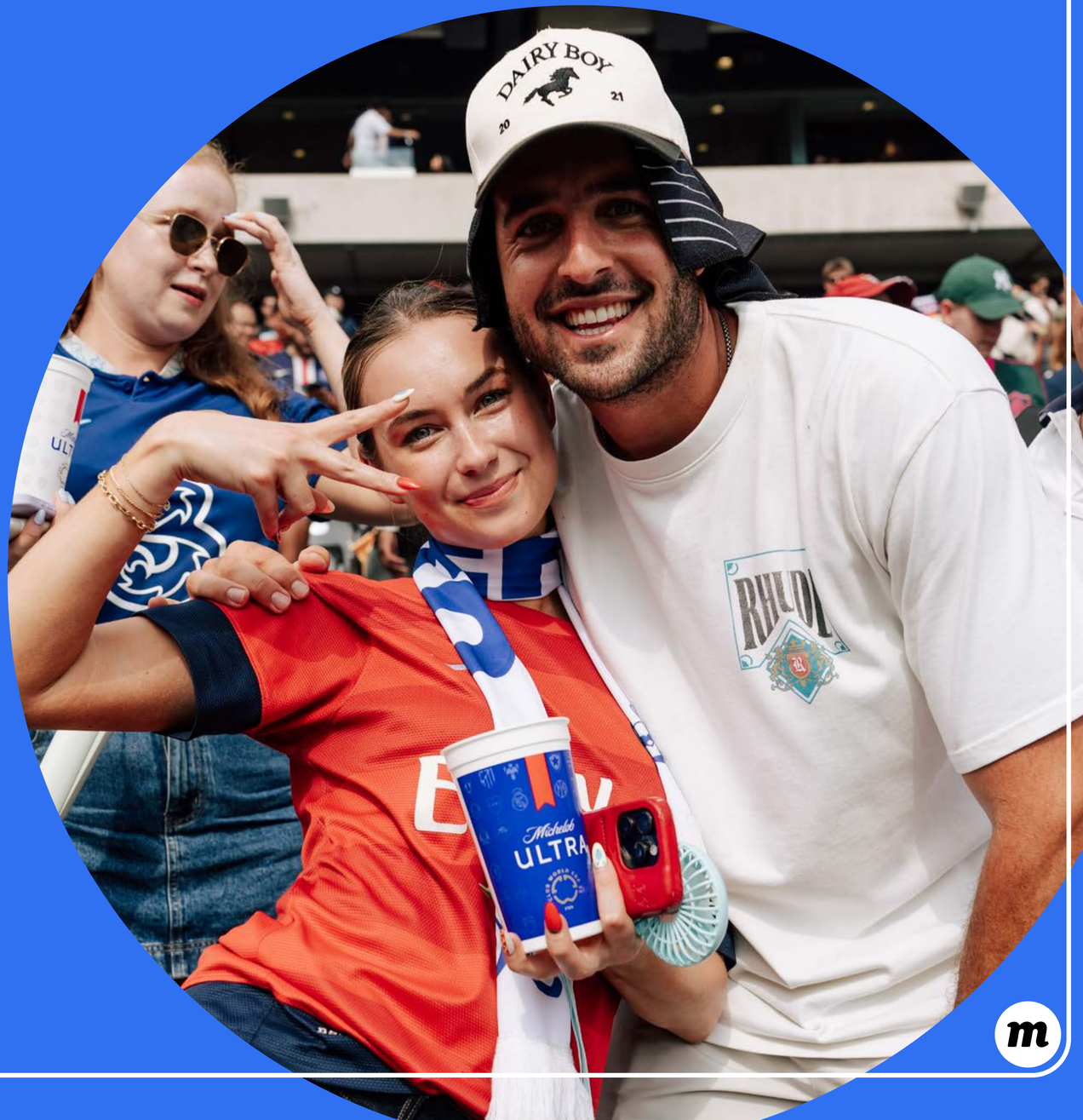
Live streaming

The ability to live stream and customize their viewing with real-time stats, betting odds or live chats has appeal.



3 out of 5

Would be interested in customizable ways to put their sports hobbies to practice.



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Passive sports viewing is rapidly transitioning into interactive, participatory entertainment

Consider gamified options to keep consumers locked-in.

How can brands and sponsors create more interactive tools that enhance the viewing experience rather than detract?

Is there a way to weave interactive gaming with real-world products?

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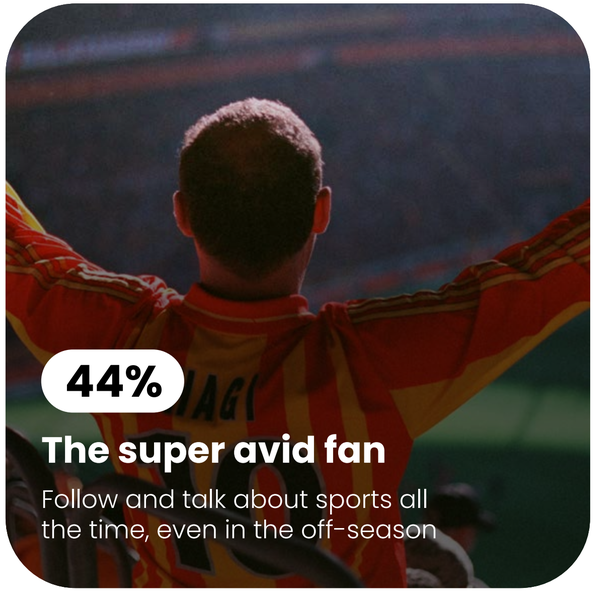
Fan connection



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Everyone's a fan of something...

But there are levels of fandom. In the overarching world of sports, there are typically four types of fans.



44%

The super avid fan

Follow and talk about sports all the time, even in the off-season



31%

The dedicated fan

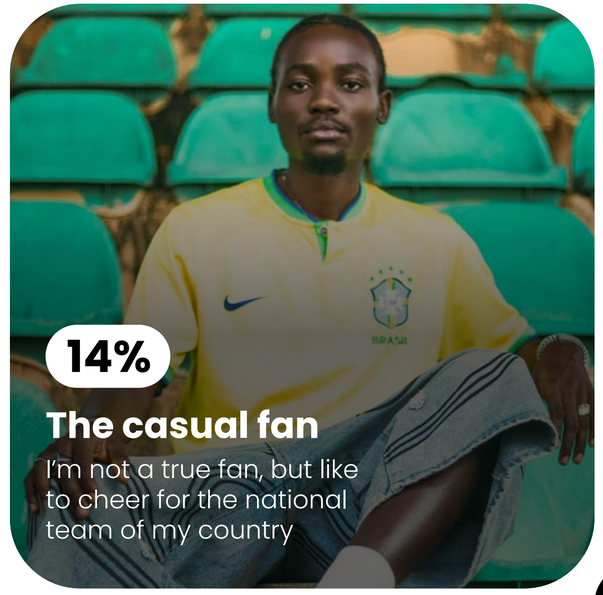
Follow and talk about sports heavily during the season but take a break in the off-season



11%

The bandwagon fan

Follow and talk about sports during major competitions



14%

The casual fan

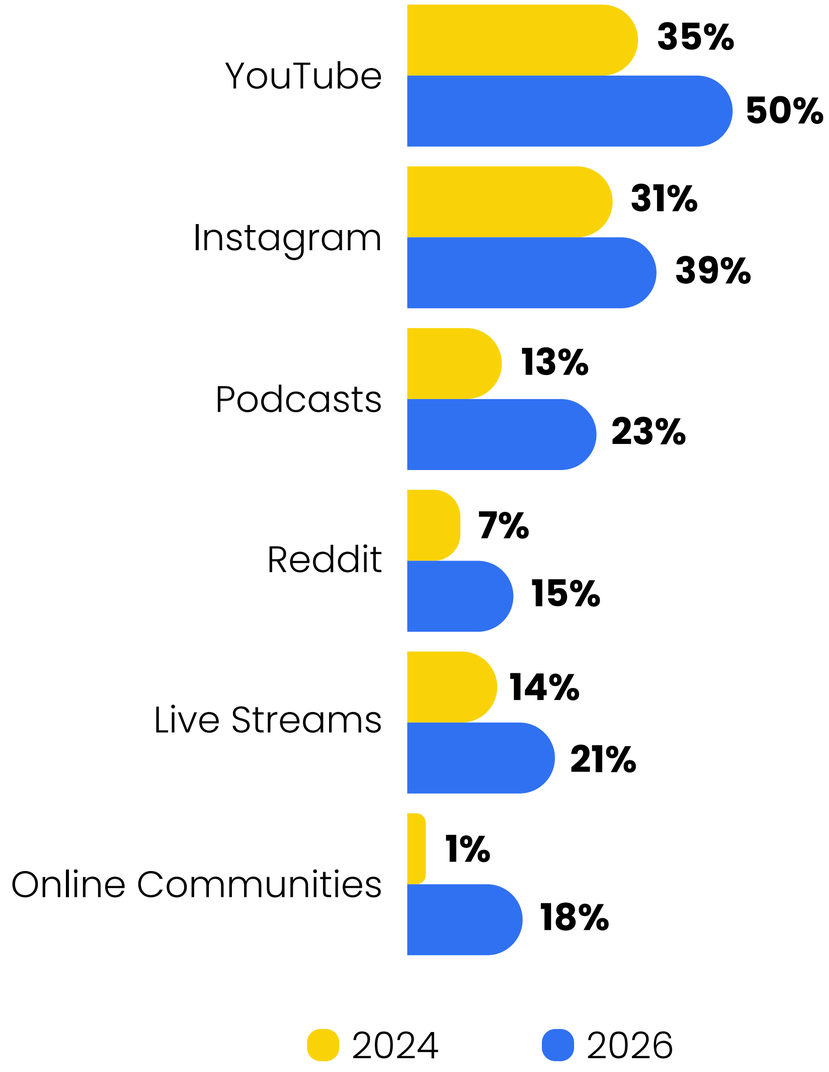
I'm not a true fan, but like to cheer for the national team of my country

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Ever-changing sports fan connection

Online fan relationships are growing, likely due in part to major global sporting events bridging connections across countries.

Changes in how they're connecting with like-minded fans



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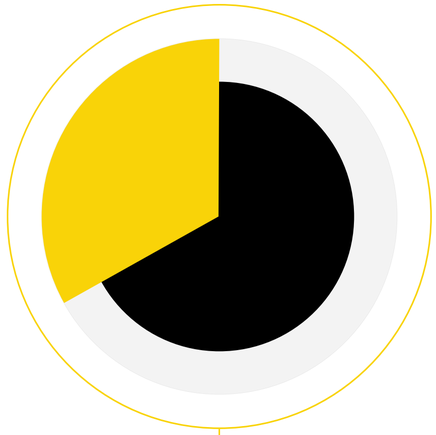
Core drivers of sports fandom



53%
Entertainment



39%
Loyal Support



31%
Community

For brands that want to learn more about how to navigate this evolving landscape, contact **momoinfo@omcworkplace.com**

fandom | Sports fandom in a post-World Cup world



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