



14 Key Sports Sponsorship Metrics To Measure

TLDR: Record growth in viewing and engagement by fans is driving record investments in sponsorships. But brands also need to measure the ROI, so what sponsorship analysis metrics should be tracked? The key top-level metrics are; Impressions, Sponsorship Recall, Demographics, Brand Lift & Brand Health Metrics, Competitor Analysis, and Sales Metrics. Details of each are in the full article.

Sponsorship Analysis – The 14 Key Metrics To Measure

The Sports Sponsorship industry is poised for accelerated growth with [over \\$500 billion of estimated investment in 2022](#); a more than 41% compound annual growth, with continued growth predicted. Interestingly, [approximately 80% of this spend will be on TV and digital streaming rights](#). Having just come out of a global pandemic, yet still dealing with economic and political fallout from the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, some would say that this kind of investment and growth in sports sponsorship seems excessive and unlikely. But underlying this are some very interesting statistics and drivers.

According to [Nielsen](#):

- 40.7% of global sports fans now stream live sports through digital platforms thanks to the growth of connected devices.
- 39.4% of global fans will watch non-live content related to a live sports event
- Sports viewership has become a multi-screen experience, with 47% of people who watch sports simultaneously interact with other live content
- Acceleration in women's sports sponsorships with 146% year over year rise in sponsorship investment in women's sports compared to only 27% in 2020
- New technologies and platforms massively increased investment with a projected 778% increase in sports sponsorship by blockchain and NFT related companies, and we have seen massive investment by social media giants like TikTok
- Esports are seeing a massive increase too, with 2,254 publicly announced e-sport sponsorship deals globally in 2021 compared to 1,785 in 2020 making it one of the fastest-growing segments
- Further, in the last year, the female esports fan base grew by 19%, faster than the male fanbase, which grew by 12%

In short, there are more fans, and more varied fans, across more types of sports than ever before and this provides many opportunities for brands to attract and engage with consumers than ever before. Additionally, new Digital Overlay technologies allow localized ads in each region, which allows venues, events and teams to enlarge their pool of sponsors.

Yet companies don't invest blindly. They want to see if their investment has delivered solid ROI. But this is one of the most challenging areas for sponsors because sports sponsorship ROI measurement tools have evolved slowly over the decades.. The chasm in reporting becomes very obvious when you look at things like web analytics or advertising analytics where a brand can precisely identify a number of key metrics. This includes exact impressions, CPM, CPC, Share of Voice, initial touch point, follow-up touch points, and final acquisition.

For numerous reasons this single-portal, integrated approach doesn't exist in the sponsorship analysis and valuation sector and this causes problems that in any other area would be deemed catastrophic. In fact, research highlights that there could be, on average, a 68% miscalculation of ROI and that up to 88% of sponsorships are inefficient. In essence, this means that brands are overspending on their sponsorship investments and could get the same return while spending a lot less. But in practice, these brands would not spend less if they found a way to drive up the efficiency of their sponsorship investments. Instead, they would either spend the same amount of money, but across more varied sports, or would invest in more activities within the

same sports. Either way, it would be a win-win for them and their supported teams/venues/events/broadcasts.

Let's Talk Metrics

So, what metrics should brands be tracking? This really splits into two key areas. The first are metrics that can help define sponsorship efficacy. In other words, we sponsored this team/event/league and we saw an X% uplift in sales. The other metrics relate to sponsorship efficiency. These help to identify whether the right amount of budget was spent to achieve the uplift in sales, or could the same outcome have been achieved with less spend?

1. Impressions

At the heart of any campaign measurement tool (whether for efficacy or efficiency), you'll find impressions stats. But it's not quite as simple as counting the impressions of an online ad or web page. Brand impressions in sport broadcasts and streams have many varied qualities.

This image highlights how vastly impressions can vary based on factors like time on screen, clarity and visibility of the logo, the size and prominence of the logo, and share of voice.



These impressions are detected using a computer vision (Visual-AI) system, and not only must it be capable of detecting every impression, from the most obvious to the most fleeting, but it must be able to categorize the type of each impression, based on the factors highlighted above.

Another factor is processing time. Nobody today would accept having to wait days or weeks for online advertising impression data, so why should it be acceptable for

sponsorship analysis? In some cases being able to process in real-time enables innovative commercial models where brand placement at multi-day events, or future events, can be negotiated immediately after, or even during, the event broadcast.

But impressions should be multi-channel and count not just paid but earned. It is quite amazing just how much additional value earned impressions can deliver to a campaign. Think about player and coach interviews, highlights, behind the scenes footage, etc. All of this is driving brand value that should be measured.

2. **Sponsorship Recall**

How well can consumers recall your brand specifically related to the sponsorship exposure? This is obviously heavily affected by the frequency of exposure and duration of the sponsorship. As highlighted above, adding in earned exposure will give a much clearer picture of why recall figures show what they show.

3. **Demographics**

As outlined at the top of this article, fan base demographics are altering dramatically. The good news is that platforms like Conviva can deliver key [streaming insights](#) along with brand impression data. Similarly, social platforms can provide demographic data too, with platforms like Conviva being able to pull in data for sponsors' own posts to blend with their streaming demographic analysis.

This may indicate that the audience you have is not the audience you thought you had, which may prompt a change in messaging or campaign strategy.

4. **Brand Lift & Brand Health Metrics**

○ **NPS (Net Promoter Score)**

At the core of brand-related metrics is your overall NPS rating. A single standardized question that gives a high-level view of consumer sentiment towards your brand. Take data from before and after the sponsorship and analyze the difference (hopefully showing uplift).

○ **Brand Awareness**

How familiar consumers are with your brand in your segment?

○ **Brand Sentiment and Favorability**

Focuses on how consumers feel about your brand and if they would recommend you to others.

5. **Competitor Analysis**

All the above data points can be analyzed for your key competitors, which can give you a benchmark as to how you are performing against them. But you should also ensure you look at:

○ **Competitor Sponsorship Activity**

What events/teams/leagues do your competitors sponsor? Based on your

budget for each sponsorship you can infer what they are spending. This is important because it will inform you about how your efficiency might compare to theirs.

- **Share of Voice**

How much space your brand occupies compared to your competitors, which illustrates how your sponsorship exposure compares to theirs.

6. Sales Metrics

- **Consideration**

Brand awareness is one thing, but consideration is entirely different.

Purchase consideration follows brand awareness. At this stage, the consumer is actively evaluating your products or services and considering the idea of making a purchase or taking further action with your brand.

- **Online Searches**

What are the top searches for products like yours? Are the terms relating to your brand rising or falling? This can inherently deliver important competitor data, allowing direct benchmarking of your online search demand.

- **Web Traffic**

Increasing web traffic during or following a sponsorship is a strong indicator of real consideration and purchase intent.

- **Conversions**

By conversions we mean the number of product and sales enquiries and other engagements, like live chats.

- **Sales and Acquisitions**

At the very end of the funnel we naturally have the sales figures themselves. Did they go up in line with the other metrics?

- **Attribution**

It's important to break down your web and sales data so you can accurately attribute it to the various activities. It's no good thinking your sponsorship was successful if your uplift in sales actually came from an unrelated online ad campaign.
