

STAYING ON THE INSIDE

The Biggest Moment in Football
Is Coming. Don't Miss Your
Chance to Show Up

With three host nations and record-breaking reach, FWC26 gives brands a unique chance to plug into a cultural moment powerful enough to define a generation of fans.

Official and non-official partners can and will score big next summer. If they know where and how to show up.

We explore six areas where brands can tap into the culture of football:

TEAM SPIRIT

TASTEMAKERS

TOUCHPOINTS

TIE-INS

TRAFFIC

TURNING POINTS



TEAM SPIRIT

Everyone expects football everywhere, but fans just want to know where they belong. Communities will set the rules of engagement.



Consumer Voice

“[I’m looking forward] to the sense of community, excitement and pride in nations coming together to support their teams.”

—F, England

TEAM SPIRIT

EXAMPLES

Even those who aren't current fans are expected to change their minds.

Their interest is expected to increase by 11% after FWC26.

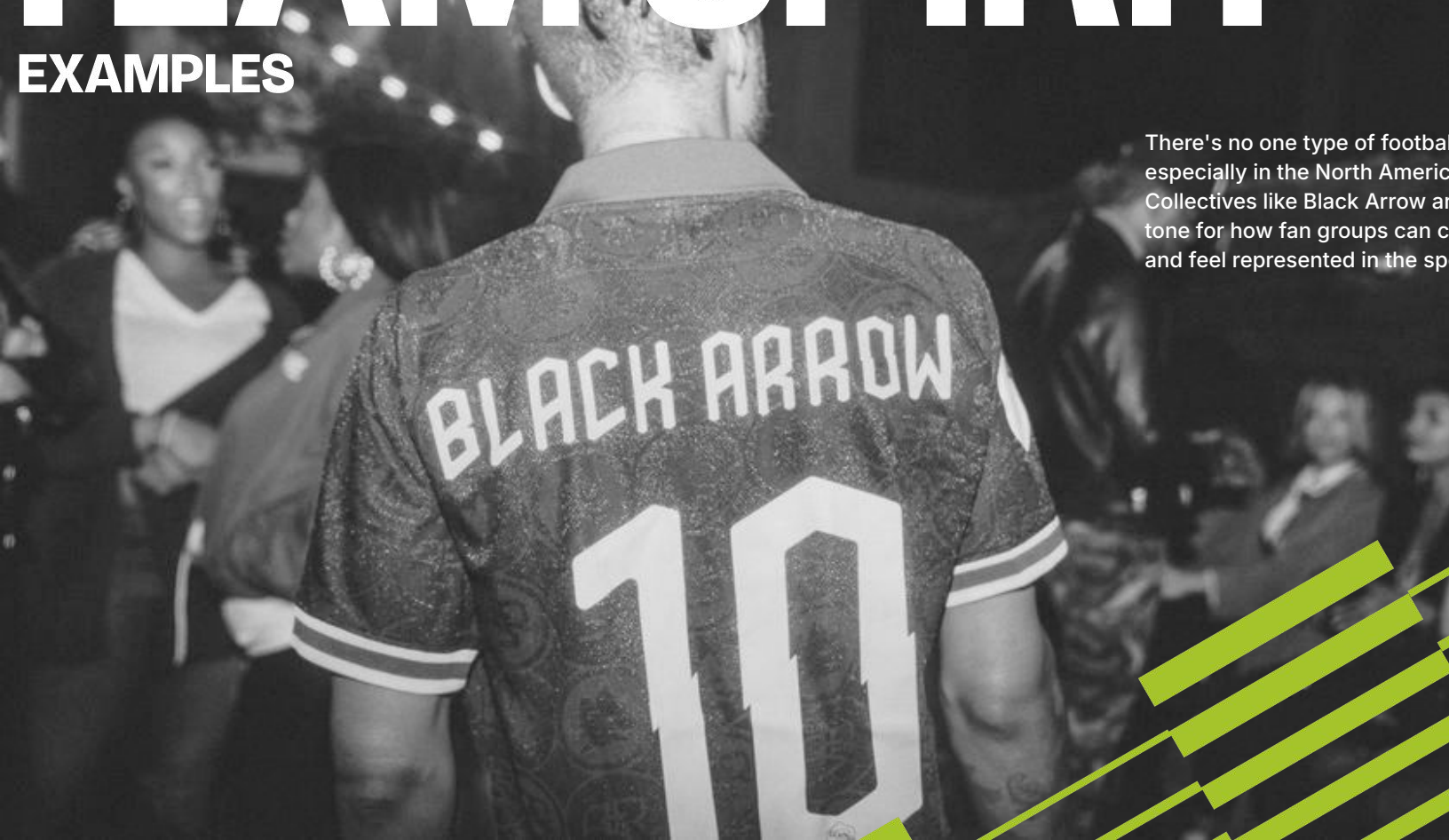


In England cities like London and Manchester, Baller FC and She's A Baller are known for hosting major watch parties, with DJs and musicians to continue growing fandom in the women's game.

Fandom runs deep across the Americas, not just in the 11 host cities. Cities like Chicago and Austin have strong fanbases, heavily influenced by Hispanic and Latino futbol culture. Expect supporter groups like Los Verdes to lead their communities with energy throughout the whole tournament.

TEAM SPIRIT

EXAMPLES



There's no one type of football fan, especially in the North American market. Collectives like Black Arrow are setting the tone for how fan groups can come together and feel represented in the sport.



1 in 4 adults
look to join
summer
leagues to
relieve
stress.

Local rec leagues like NYC Footy and HeyDay Athletics (Philly) are where football is life. Fans who play the sports they follow extend their pack mentality to other fans.

The Home Depot is ready to help everyone create their own World Cup team spirit through DIY fan zones, where fans will be able celebrate how local communities live, gather, and cheer, whilst watching the FWC26 action.



EXAMPLES

TEAM SPIRIT

Brand Provocations

Brands that help fans find their people will win. The question for fans isn't where to watch—it's where can I belong?

Fans aren't looking for another sponsor—they're looking for a home team. Communities will crown their own heroes in 2026. Show up as one of them.

TASTE MAKERS

Fans won't only be paying attention to what's happening on the pitch, but to the people and brands shaping the world around it. Their passion brings football to life beyond the tournament, setting trends and shaping lifestyles that last beyond an epic summer of football.



Consumer Voice

“[I'm most excited for] the games, the vibes, the camaraderie, the passion, seeing people from all around the world...it's just such a joyful and electric environment, whether you're physically at a game, in a participating city, or watching virtually from afar.”

—M, USA



TASTE MAKERS

EXAMPLES

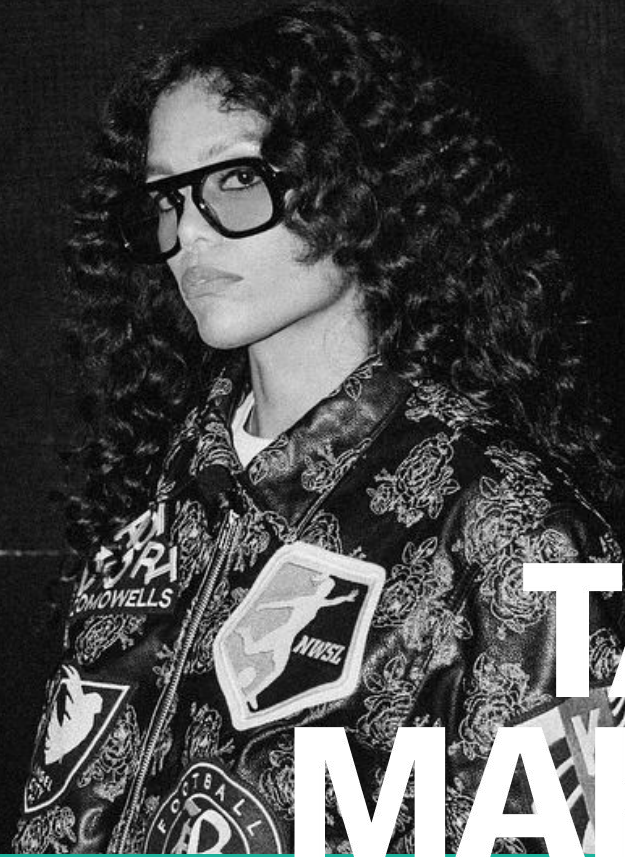
In our social-first world, footballers like Freda Ayisi prove fans now also follow athletes for the craft itself—the tricks and skills shared beyond match days.

+1 mil. IG followers



Creative leaders in the football space like Dead Dirt founder Domo Wells stand out as coveted tastemakers beyond football. In addition to her collaboration with the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL), she recently became the personal Creative Director for pro tennis star Taylor Townsend.

+37K. IG followers



EXAMPLES

TASTE
MAKERS

EXAMPLES TASTE MAKERS



Sports power couple Megan Rapinoe and Sue Bird are looking forward to the 2026 World Cup, with plans to host queer-friendly summer watch parties throughout the tournament.

+1.9 mil IG followers (Rapinoe)
+780k IG followers (Bird)

STAYING ONSIDE



Colombian singer, Maluma, is a major rootball fan. He'll join hopefuls for the Colombian national team.

+64 mil. IG followers

TASTE MAKERS

EXAMPLES



Rhuigi Villaseñor — the founder and creative force behind luxury streetwear label RHUDE — has been appointed Chief Brand Officer of Como 1907. His mandate goes far beyond football: he's been brought in to redefine the entire Como brand across fashion, lifestyle, hospitality, and consumer products

Brand Provocations

Focus on supporting what the football talent cares about—not just stop at an ad or cameo.

Collaborate with artists and creators eager to shape the look and feel of football fandom.

TOUCH POINTS

The World Cup isn't just in host cities, stadiums, and fan fests. It's everywhere.

Fans won't need a World Cup ticket to have an unforgettable World Cup experience.



Consumer Voice

“I will try and watch all of the USA games in public spaces—like bars or watch parties. Or at a friends’ house. I want it to feel like a communal experience.”

—F, USA



Fans are planning summer vacations early, looking into World Cup host regions—not just cities. Vrbo hosts are already posting 'World Cup Ready' stays beyond metro zones.

More fans will host their own parties—like how Mexican fans threw BBQ fiestas outside of the AT&T Stadium (Texas) during the 2025 Gold Cup.



STAYING ONSIDE

EXAMPLES TOUCH POINTS



Neighborhoods with diasporic roots like Pequeño Seúl in CDMX and Newark's Little Portugal, will go all out for their national teams—attracting insiders and outsiders alike to celebrate all day long.

Expect all football bars in North America, like the Glebe Central Pub in Ottawa, to be packed and overflowing all tournament long.

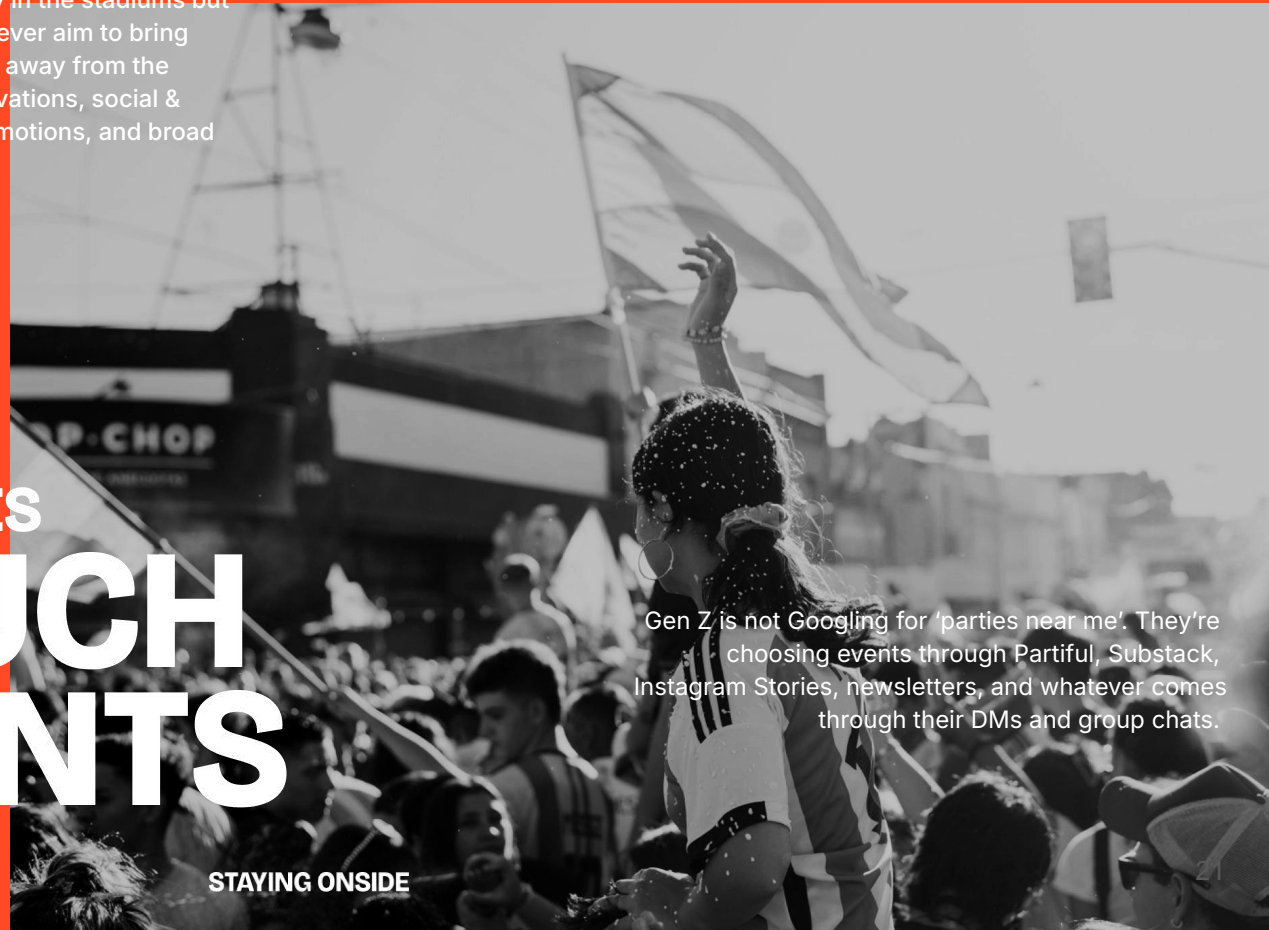


EXAMPLES TOUCH POINTS



The action doesn't happen only in the stadiums but everywhere. Which is why Unilever aim to bring brands to life at, in, around and away from the stadium. That means retail activations, social & digital content, fan stories, promotions, and broad reach beyond match-goers.

EXAMPLES TOUCH POINTS



Gen Z is not Googling for 'parties near me'. They're choosing events through Partiful, Substack, Instagram Stories, newsletters, and whatever comes through their DMs and group chats.

Brand Provocations

Build your fans a World Cup guide. Partner with cultural commentators to map where fans can find you—surprise drops, exclusive treats, limited gear, and experiences they can't get anywhere else.

If your brand already has summer plans—don't beat them, join them. Chances are, your audience is already tab-toggling the games.

TIE-INS

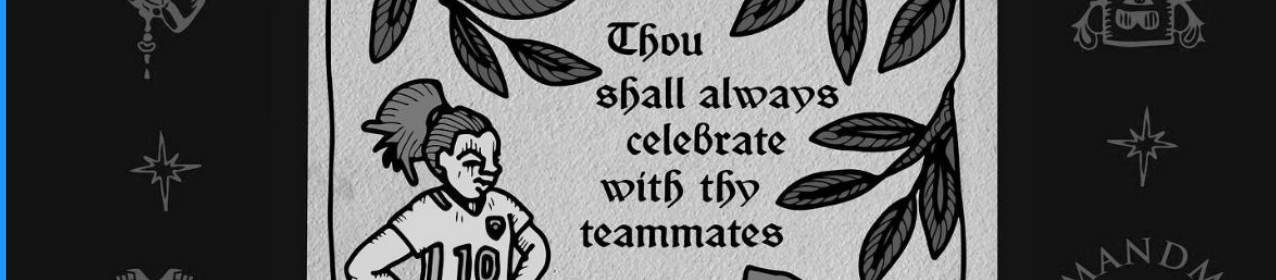
Football crossovers will be the norm, not a novelty. Brands have to stand out by deepening connections through thoughtful collaborations, not just chasing trends.



Consumer Voice

“Fandom is not a monolith. I think there are different ways to be a fan and all are valid and special.”

—F, USA



Footy Temple blends tarot with football, bridging the mysticism of sport and beliefs.

88% of fans love discovering and following niche creatives and creator accounts on social media that contribute to football's creative culture.

Some of the loudest fans cheering at a Kansas City Current match weren't everyday fans, but Kansas City Chiefs Rookies. More American athletes and fans outside of football are getting in on the beautiful game.

EXAMPLES

TIE-INS



Social issues are finding their medium with football too—
from Full Kit's design of Zohran Mamdani's 2023 Keffiyeh
Cup jerseys to the Lapô Sports's launch of their Nature
Major League with support from Heineken and Puma.



EXAMPLES

TIE-INS

STAYING ONSIDE



Some art and cultural organizations like the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas, or Science World in Vancouver, are seizing this big summer of football to provide exhibits that add more immersive layers to the cultural moment.

EXAMPLES

TIE-INS

In the lead up to the FWC26, Verizon will give customers various opportunities to pick up free tickets and match day experiences, but perhaps most interestingly, will offer fans exclusive merch created in collaboration with as yet unknown designers to drive deeper connections with fans.



STAYING ONSIDE

Brand Provocations

**Football is a canvas—
not just for jerseys. Skip
the overdone kit collabs.
Show how the game
inspires your brand's
unique expression.**

**Local communities will
welcome you if you're ready
to add value. When youth
leagues and neighborhood
pitches are lifelines for
social wellness, safety, and
belonging, brands that show
up become MVPs that earn
loyalty, not just visibility.**

TRAFFIC

With 2026 World Cup spread across days, cities, time zones, and screens, there's more opportunities to connect with fans between games—not just where and when the live action happens.



Consumer Voice

“I'll follow my team on social... I'll get most news and discourse from my Whatsapp groups and just conversations with family and friends. I also want to get the Panini album.”

—F, USA

TRAFFIC

EXAMPLES

1 in 6

Americans
are planning
road trips
during the
World Cup.

160/90

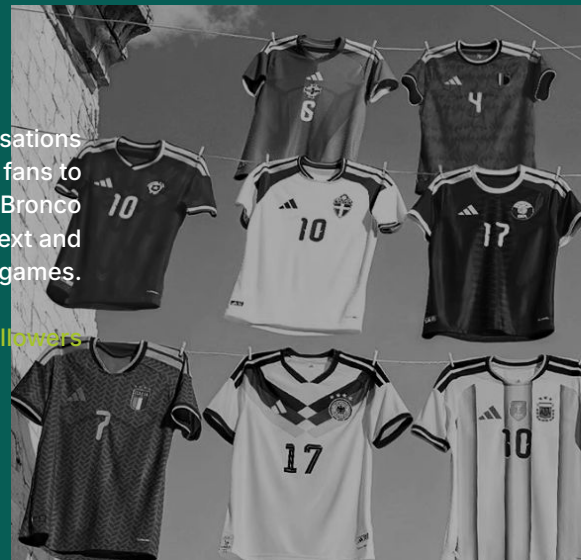
STAYING INSIDE

Looking for a space to watch the World Cup with the liveliest commentary and other fans? Men in Blazers will host their popular Live Watchalongs on Twitch for some of the most anticipated matches.

+30m listeners annually

Keeping up with the World Cup conversations across 104 games will be tough. Expect fans to depend on football influencers like Da Bronco (NBA fan turned football fan) to add context and personality between games.

+141k YouTube followers



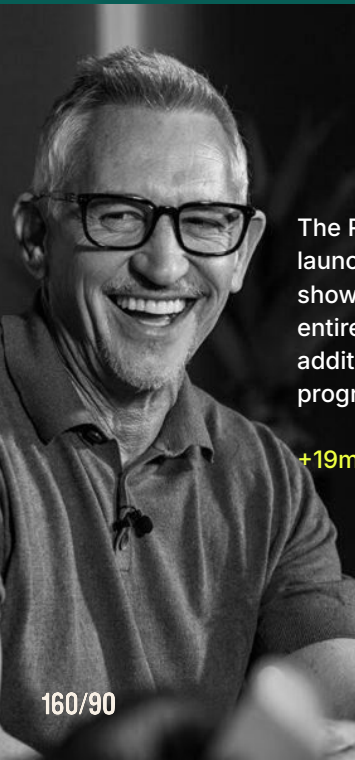
TRAFFIC

EXAMPLES

Nearly two-thirds of fans watch games at home, and more than a quarter tune in from a friend's home.

TRAFFIC

EXAMPLES



The Rest is Football podcast is launching a new, Netflix daily show that will run through the entire World Cup tournament — in addition to their regular programming.

+19m listens during Euros 2024

160/90



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FIFA WORLD CUP 26™



Ahead of the FWC26 Draw, Lay's launched their "No Lay's, No Game" campaign, leveraging some of the biggest names in world football and entertainment to remind fans that even without match tickets, you can still enjoy moments of togetherness and celebration from the comfort of home. Just don't forget your Lay's.

STAYING ONSIDE

Brand Provocations

Show up where fans will be en-route to games (online forums, podcasts during their commutes, airports and train stations).

Support the indie football publications and creators who don't just cover the culture—they're building it. Sponsor their content, fund their coverage, or co-create stories that matter to fans.

TURNING POINTS

The World Cup is a historical moment and you don't have to be a football fan to want in on a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



Consumer Voice

“...[it’s] always a rogue player that lights up the tournament that no one has ever heard of. It will also be great to see teams like Cape Verde or Uzbekistan participate.”

—M, Spain

TURNING POINTS

EXAMPLES

Women's football is on course to reach 800 million fans by 2030 becoming the fifth largest sport in the world.


By 2027, Major Soccer League will officially shift its calendar to the international fall-to-spring standard.





EXAMPLES

TURNING POINTS



Messi's farewell meets Lamine's coronation at the 2026 World Cup. Two generations, one stage—especially in Miami, where intense fandoms will collide to witness the changing of the guard.

STAYING ONSIDE



For kids in North America, this will be their first World Cup ever — making the summer of 2026 unforgettable.

TURNING POINTS

EXAMPLES

American Premier League
fan base expanded by
62.3% from 2020-2024,
growing from 18.6 million
to 30.2 million fans

Brand Provocations

Use 2026's spotlight to build the fanbase, partnerships, and cultural momentum that will pay dividends when the women take center stage in 2027 and beyond.

2026 isn't about the 90 minutes—it's about the moment someone's grandkids will ask about. Brands that understand this will create experiences worth remembering, not just attending.

Whether you're an official sponsor or simply want to be part of the global football conversation — our team will help you navigate the complex world of fandom, partnerships, and experiences.

- Find your role in the game and where your brand can meaningfully fit into the culture of football.
- Build connection beyond rights to earn credibility with fans, not just visibility around matches.
- Embed your brand into the sport and build foundations for growth in the sport beyond 2026

160/90