

Report reveals key global and local developments in sports for rights holders and brands

A recent report released by Nielsen Sports has revealed key global and local developments in sports for rights holders and brands.



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The Commercial Trends Report outlines five key trends that will impact the sports industry in 2019 and beyond including:

- **Clutter and complexity** - Increasing competition, fragmenting audiences, greater business sophistication and a proliferation of products are producing a variety of challenges and opportunities for rights holders and brands.
- **Getting smarter with data** - To deal with those challenges, rights holders and sponsors are looking at data and measurement to make sense of sponsorship, from understanding fan behaviour to building lasting relationships with their fans and consumers.
- **Entertainment value** – Sports properties and media are innovating with rule changes in core formats, incorporating esports competitions and making technological advances to foster fan engagement.
- **Enhancing the live experience** - Closely linked to the necessity of providing greater entertainment value, is the growing trend of delivering improved experiences for fans at live sports events. These have become multi-dimensional entertainment experiences, with elements designed to cater to a variety of audiences.
- **Athlete influencers** - Powered by social media and athlete-owned media platforms, athletes have become powerful sports properties as technology has connected them directly with fans and turbo-charged their profiles and personal brands.

According to Nielsen Sports business unit MD for Africa, Middle East and Asia Pacific Kelvin Watt:

“ The increasing complexity and clutter of the sponsorship landscape place a greater onus on rights holders to provide unique and compelling content to remain relevant. Sponsorships have become a buyer's market for brands, so there's a lot of pressure on rights holders. At the same time, brands must have a clear strategy and measurement plans behind their sponsorship activity, to choose the best partnership and investment areas based on ROI. ”

Among advice Watt provides for sports industry leaders is to make smart use of data while developing strategies to increase efficiency and effectiveness of sponsorship activation. And, embrace social media, personalised experiences

and festivalisation to attract and retain the attention of audiences.

Festivalisation is the addition of features and entertainment to sports events, such as music concerts and entertainment for children that turn them into larger, festival-like events. Other aspects of the focus on creating entertaining experiences include; venue upgrades and superior food and drinks.

“These commercial trends in sports demonstrate exciting areas of opportunity and growth for sports rights holders and sponsors. Looking to the future, it’s clear that the organisations that are already investing in data and consumer research will ultimately experience the greatest success,” said Watt.

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