

INFLUENCE

BY INFLUTONIC

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MARGARITA CRUZ

The 2026 World Cup was the catalyst that raised the standard for the iGaming Industry.

18+

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OBTÉN UN AUMENTO EN TUS GANANCIAS.

SÓLO PARA MAYORES DE 18 AÑOS. LAS APUESTAS DEPORTIVAS A DISTANCIA REALIZADAS EN EXCESO PUEDEN CAUSAR LUDOPATÍA.



Institutional Editorial

Bryan Pareja

The FIFA World Cup once again demonstrated why it is one of the most important commercial events for the iGaming industry. For weeks, global attention was focused on football, creating significant opportunities for acquisition, content, partnerships, and engagement.

But now that the tournament is over, the more interesting question is: what did operators do with all that attention?

In LATAM, where football is deeply connected to culture and digital communities, the World Cup was much more than a series of matches. Audiences consumed content, followed creators, shared opinions, and interacted with brands throughout the entire experience.

It was also a test. For some operators, it demonstrated the ability of their products, technology, marketing, and CRM to respond to extraordinary demand. For others, it exposed limitations that traffic volume alone could not solve.

The real challenge began after the tournament. The registrations and FTDs generated during the World Cup are important, but the true value will lie in retention, recurring activity, and the ability to turn users acquired during these weeks into long-term players.

Everyone had access to the same World Cup. The difference was in how each company chose to activate it — and now, in what they do with it afterward.

The World Cup was not the strategy. It was the test.

The real strategy is what each brand builds from what it learned.

Bryan Pareja

Co-Founder
Influtonic Group

Telegram: @MrBPworld



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CREDITS



Bryan Pareja

Director



Jeremias Vilca

Editorial Designer

COLLABORATORS

- Lucia Chulan
- Airton Morales
- Aaron Vilca
- Gabriel Ayón



Influtonic Esports Launches VALORANT Roster in Chile

VALORANT has become one of the leading titles in the global esports ecosystem, connecting competitive gaming with streaming, creators, entertainment, and highly engaged communities. Building on this growing scene, Influtonic Esports has officially launched its new VALORANT roster in Chile, bringing together six players who combine competitive talent, ambition, and a strong digital presence, with the goal of competing, growing, and building something meaningful within the ecosystem.

This new project reflects our vision of connecting esports talent with brands and partners looking to engage with the next generation of gaming audiences. Beyond their competitive performance, the players bring their own communities, content capabilities, and digital reach, creating opportunities for brands through livestreams, social media, content creation, community activations, events, and long-term partnerships. We are currently welcoming brands and strategic partners interested in joining this new chapter and supporting the growth of competitive VALORANT in Chile.

Special Feature

World Cup Effect: Why the World Cup becomes iGaming's main marketing season

Vitaliia Pohrebniak, Team Lead Influencer Marketing at PIN-UP Partners, on why reach is not the only thing that matters during the World Cup. Preparation, context, and traffic quality after the first action matter just as much.

The World Cup quickly shows how ready a team is to work with sports traffic under pressure.

If priority GEOs, sources, creatives, and test limits are not clear before the tournament starts, the team is not scaling. It is simply buying attention at a higher price at the moment when almost everyone is fighting for it.

At PIN-UP Partners, preparation for the World Cup starts in advance. We do not only look at the volume that can be generated during the tournament. We look at the full setup: the specific match, GEO, source, creative, creator, offer, and traffic quality after the first action.

During the tournament, users follow matches more closely, read predictions, discuss line-ups, react to results, memes, unexpected wins, and losses. A strong moment can have a very short life cycle: today everyone is discussing one match, tomorrow a favourite is unexpectedly out, and the next day there is a new hero or meme.

That is why preparation for the World Cup does not start with increasing the budget. It starts with checking combos, GEOs, sources, creatives, and

stop rules. Otherwise, the team risks not scaling working traffic, but simply testing hypotheses at a higher cost during the most competitive period.

More traffic does not mean better traffic

During the World Cup, traffic can really grow. But more traffic does not always mean a better result.

At the top level, a campaign may look good: reach, clicks, registrations, and first deposits are growing. But if there is no repeat activity, retention, or healthy economics by source afterwards, this is not growth.

That is why we do not only look at the first numbers. For us, Reg2FD, eCPA, FTD cost, repeat activity, and overall economics by source are important.

It is not football in general that works. It is the specific moment

Another mistake is making creatives that are simply "about football".

A ball, a flag, a bonus, obvious CTAs. During the

tournament, there are too many creatives like this, and the user can barely tell one banner from another.

Campaigns tied to a specific event usually work better: a match, a series of matches, a strong team, local interest, a prediction, a post-match reaction, an unexpected result, a player everyone is discussing, or a meme.

The more accurately the campaign hits the moment, the higher the chance that the user will actually engage. Not just see an ad text, but feel that it is connected to what they are already discussing, watching, and emotionally reacting to right now.

The biggest match is not always the best match for a campaign

A common mistake is thinking that the loudest match will automatically be the most profitable one.

A top match can definitely bring high reach. But

it usually also has higher competition, higher traffic costs, and more ad noise. Sometimes a less obvious match can be more profitable if it has strong local interest.

I would look at several factors: how important the match is for a specific GEO, whether there is real discussion around it, how likely the audience is to react to predictions, which sources can be used, which offer will fit, and whether the competition will be too high.

It is also important not to think only in terms of one match. Sometimes it is better to work around a series of matches, because this gives more chances to return to the audience and not depend on one peak moment.

You cannot choose an influencer only by reach

In influencer marketing during the World Cup, it is especially important not to choose a creator only by reach.

We do not start evaluating an influencer from



audience size. First, we look at the context: who their audience is, which GEO they are strong in, whether people trust their predictions, how active the comments are, how often they have already promoted similar products, and whether a betting integration will feel natural in their format.

For a football tournament, it is often not just big bloggers who work best, but creators who already have trust within a niche audience. These include tipsters, football analysts, match reviewers, sports streamers, local sports creators, and Telegram and X communities built around predictions.

Their audience is already discussing matches, odds, line-ups, predictions, and results. So the integration does not appear in random content. It appears in a place where this topic already feels natural.

We already have a pool of tested sports creators and tipsters we can work with systematically. We understand what kind of audience each of them

has, which GEOs they cover, where there is trust in predictions, and where the integration feels natural.

If a creator simply inserts an ad text into a format that is not natural for them, the audience feels it very quickly. But if a prediction or sharebet becomes a continuation of their usual content, the user sees the integration very differently.

Why sharebet works well for the World Cup

During the World Cup, the role of live betting and more precise mechanics tied to specific matches and events grows significantly.

People watch the match, react to what is happening in real time, and want to make quick decisions during the game. That is why a general offer for the whole tournament often works weaker than a mechanic tied to a specific game, team, outcome, or news hook.

I would also highlight content around predictions, analysis, and reactions to matches. This is where sports influencers and tipsters become more important. Their audience does not come to them for advertising. They come for opinion, explanation, and context.

We actively use sharebet with tipsters. These are ready-made bet sets that creators choose for their audience.

Sharebet works well with tipsters not just because it is a convenient mechanic. A tipster already has the role of someone who explains the match, the prediction, and the logic behind the choice. That is why this format feels more natural than an abstract advertising message.

Compliance also affects campaign quality

Compliance is often seen as a restriction that gets in the way of bold campaigns. But in reality, it also affects the quality of the result.

In betting, communication cannot be built around promises of guaranteed wins, “easy money”, aggressive CTAs, or pressure on fans’ emotions. These formats can attract attention quickly, but they often bring the wrong audience, damage trust in the brand, and create risks at the platform and regulatory level.

Good communication should be visible, but not toxic. Especially during the World Cup, when there are already so many emotions around football.

For us, this is part of campaign quality. If a creative attracts attention through pressure, aggression, or the promise of an easy win, it may create a quick spike, but it will not necessarily bring an audience the product can work with properly afterwards

What I would advise media buying teams

First: start in advance. Not on the day of the first match, not during the semi-final, but before the tournament. You need time to test GEOs, sources, creatives, and offers, and to understand what can actually be scaled.

Second: do not confuse volume with quality. During the World Cup, there may be a lot of traffic, but that does not mean it will be good traffic. You need to look at what happens after the first action: whether the user makes a deposit, returns, shows

repeat activity, and what the economics look like by source.

Third: use local context. Football works differently across GEOs. In one market, the national team matters most. In another, it may be a specific player, tipsters, or local sports communities. Simply translating one creative into another language is not enough.

Fourth: react quickly to news hooks, but do not work blindly. The team should have limits, stop rules, and ready creative options for different scenarios in advance. Otherwise, in an expensive auction, you can spend the budget faster than you understand what actually worked.

Vitaliia Pohrebniak

TL Influencer Marketing

PIN-UP Partners

Telegram: [@vit_pinup_mb_infl](https://t.me/vit_pinup_mb_infl)



The World Cup Effect: More Than a Tournament – A Catalyst for the Future of Digital Entertainment

Every four years, the FIFA World Cup captures the attention of billions. For the iGaming, gaming and digital entertainment industries, however, it represents far more than a month of football. It is a period when consumer behaviour shifts, competition intensifies and innovation accelerates.

Having worked in performance marketing within iGaming for several years, one thing is increasingly clear: the World Cup is no longer simply a customer acquisition opportunity. It is a catalyst for how businesses approach data, AI, customer engagement and sustainable growth.

With operators, affiliates, media companies and global brands competing for the same audiences, success increasingly depends on efficiency rather than simply bigger advertising budgets. AI is central to this shift, enabling teams to optimise campaigns in real time, personalise customer journeys, analyse behaviour and make faster decisions.

At the same time, rising acquisition costs make Customer Lifetime Value more important than ever. Successful operators must look beyond registrations and focus on acquisition quality, retention, cross-sell opportunities and long-term player value.

The World Cup also highlights the growing conver-

gence of sports, gaming and digital entertainment. Audiences increasingly expect interactive experiences incorporating live statistics, social content, creators, gamification and personalisation. Affiliates are evolving too, moving beyond traffic generation towards trusted content, expertise and measurable value.

None of this operates in isolation. The strongest results come from integrating performance marketing with brand, sponsorships, CRM, SEO, affiliates, social media and customer experience, while maintaining compliance and responsible gaming standards.

Looking ahead, AI-driven personalisation, predictive analytics and sophisticated data strategies will increasingly become standard. The companies that understand customers beyond the tournament will turn short-term attention into lasting relationships.

Ultimately, the World Cup is more than football's biggest stage. It is becoming a global innovation cycle, challenging the digital entertainment industry to rethink how it acquires, engages and retains customers.

Brendon Spiteri

Head of Commercial
ROUTY

Telegram: @SBrendon

AUDIENCES INCREASINGLY EXPECT INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCES THAT INTEGRATE LIVE STATISTICS, SOCIAL CONTENT, CREATORS, GAMIFICATION, AND PERSONALIZATION.

THE WORLD CUP “HEATWAVE”: The Costly Party That Left Sportsbooks on Shaky Ground

The 2026 World Cup is over. The lights are going out across North America, and inside Risk Management rooms across Latin America, the atmosphere feels like a serious hangover. For many operators, this World Cup was not the billion-dollar party they had projected. It was an event where we provided the venue, the music... and ended up paying the entire bill.

The playing field changed before the ball was even kicked. FIFA tightened the rules with its Clean Venue policy, but the real blow came from a technical factor: the Hydration Breaks (minutes 22 and 67). Those three-minute pauses became a premium advertising opportunity reserved for global giants with virtually unlimited budgets. Mid-sized and smaller LatAm sportsbooks were left on the bench, watching the giants capture the live micro-betting market.

To make matters worse, the pitch itself worked against them: an unusual wave of draws and “bracket-breaking” results destroyed parlays and squeezed sportsbook margins. Who saved the ship? Online Casino. With themed slots, football-inspired roulette tables, and football-driven gamification, iGaming captured

users frustrated with the ball, moving them toward crash games and slots.

The post-World Cup lesson is clear: the screws need tightening now.

Surgical Risk Management: Early live detection to freeze losses when facing atypical results.

Hunt Down Multi-Account Users: Mandatory biometrics and IP tracking to combat bonus abuse and fake accounts.

Smarter Bonuses: Stop giving away balance for free; use precise segmentation to cross-sell traffic into the casino.

The money is still on the table, but only those who manage risk with a surgeon’s precision and understand the ingenuity of the Latin American market will come out ahead.

Guillermo Bejarano

Regional Director
BETCONSTRUCT

Guillermo.bejarano@softconstruct.com

FOR MANY OPERATORS, THIS WORLD CUP WAS NOT THE BILLION-DOLLAR PARTY THEY HAD ENVISIONED; IT WAS AN EVENT WHERE WE PROVIDED THE VENUE AND THE MUSIC, BUT ENDED UP PAYING THE ENTIRE BILL.

The World Cup Opportunity That Goes Far Beyond Traffic and Betting

The World Cup creates a rare situation where user attention, betting demand, content consumption, and brand competition all peak at the same time. For iGaming companies, an event of this scale creates an opportunity to build experiences around it rather than simply advertise it.

Anyone can buy media around the tournament, but the World Cup is pushing iGaming and gaming businesses to think outside of the traditional sportsbook experience. The brands people actually remember build something they come back to: a watch-along, a creator partnership, a live community, a running predictor with a payoff at the end.

This is also a significant opportunity for affiliates. World Cup traffic is valuable, but volume alone does not create value. Users are looking for more than a list of websites for placing bets, including relevant offers, timely information, and comparisons they can trust. The affiliates that understand and make good use of this will have a better chance of getting long-term value out of a short-term traffic spike.

That being said, the World Cup is not a magic growth button. It exposes how prepared a company really is; if its product, payments, acquisition strategy, or infrastructure cannot handle the demand, extra traffic means very little. In that sense, the World Cup is as much a test of the business as it is an opportunity for growth.

A World Cup guarantees attention but not much else. Every operator, affiliate and studio shows up for it, so simply being present means nothing. The tournament is less a marketing opportunity than a readiness test that happens to have an audience, and the brands that win are the ones who understood that before it started.

Levon Nikoghosyan

Founder & CEO

AffPapa

[LinkedIn: Levon Nikoghosyan](#)

THE WORLD CUP IS NOT A MAGIC BUTTON FOR DRIVING GROWTH. IT ALSO EXPOSES JUST HOW PREPARED A COMPANY REALLY IS.

The World Cup does not create demand; it reveals who knows how to read it.

I've lived through five World Cups from inside the industry, each one from a different seat. Trader, head of sportsbook, director of operations. Wherever I was standing, the analytical and strategic side of me was always present.

A few weeks ago I was reviewing a operator's odds mid-World Cup, comparing their margin against a direct competitor's. The gap was significant. Not because one had better technology than the other — the tech was comparable. The difference came down to something much simpler: one had spent months fine-tuning risk management with every local league match, while the other only started paying attention once volume spiked with the World Cup.

That's when it clicked, something I've been confirming for years across different LATAM markets: the World Cup doesn't create demand, it exposes who knows how to read it.

Every four years the same headline repeats: "betting explosion" across the industry. But volume doesn't forgive mistakes that stay hidden the rest of the year. The operator with efficient margins in regional football enters the World Cup with a structural advantage. The one compensating with

an inflated margin to cover up poor risk management gets exposed the moment users start comparing odds in real time across platforms.

And retention doesn't run on the match alone either. It runs on product — well-built live markets, cashout that actually works, fast and dedicated customer support, a CRM built for October, not just July.

The biggest opportunity of the World Cup isn't the month of the World Cup itself. It's retaining the player who showed up out of curiosity and stayed because you treated them well during those six weeks.

Whoever builds their trading and CRM with that player in mind six months later wins the World Cup twice.

Hugo Llanos

Consultant with 20 years in the industry
Contact: +598 92114939

**TRUE RETENTION ISN'T SUSTAINED
BY THE MATCH ALONE, BUT BY A
CONSISTENT PRODUCT.**

The World Cup Doesn't Need iGaming. iGaming Needs the World Cup

Every four years, the entire world stops to watch football. For iGaming, however, that moment represents far more than just a sporting event on the calendar: it is one of the biggest opportunities to demonstrate how prepared the industry truly is to compete for users' attention.

With more than a decade of experience in iGaming, I have seen how major sporting events can transform traffic, consumer behaviour, and player expectations in just a matter of weeks. But the real challenge is not simply capturing that volume.

During a World Cup, the user changes. The occasional player enters the sportsbook, the regular player expects a faster and more personalized experience, and both are exposed to an enormous amount of messaging from operators, affiliates, media, and brands. In this environment, simply offering more markets is no longer enough.

Live Betting, personalization, gamification, content, real-time data, and an increasingly sophisticated user experience are all part of a much bigger competition: who can turn a moment of massive attention into a relationship that continues long after the tournament is over?

And that, in my opinion, is the real World Cup Effect. The World Cup does not only generate GGR, users, and traffic. It also acts as a stress test for the product, technology, marketing, and the industry's overall ability to adapt.

The important question is not how much iGaming can grow during the World Cup. It is how different iGaming will be after it.

Celeste Arredondo

Founder

International Gaming Women

internationalgmwomen@gmail.com

WHO CAN TURN A MOMENT OF MASSIVE ATTENTION INTO A RELATIONSHIP THAT CONTINUES BEYOND THE TOURNAMENT?

The True World Cup Effect Is Seen After the Final

Every four years, one of the biggest celebrations in the world of sports arrives: the World Cup. And with it comes a phenomenon the betting industry eagerly anticipates: more attention, more interest, and more new users. But measuring the impact of this season solely by the number of registrations means focusing only on the surface of what really matters.

In fact, the most important part comes after the final whistle. Major sporting events are excellent acquisition drivers, but they do not necessarily create loyalty. Many players are motivated by a national team, a particular player, a specific match, or even the trends of the moment. When that stimulus disappears, their activity may decline as well. That is why the true impact of the World Cup should be measured 30, 60, and 90 days after the final.

For operators, the opportunity to turn an extraordinary moment of attention into a long-term relationship is enormous. To achieve this, they need to understand the player better,

personalize their experience, and offer relevant content around other sports, live betting, and, where there is an affinity, casino products.

Innovation is not only about creating more betting markets. It is also about using data, CRM, and player insights to understand what can keep users active after the event that brought them to the platform is over.

The World Cup can create bettors in a matter of weeks. The real business lies in turning them into recurring players.

Geovanni Fernández

General Director
InstaBet

[LinkedIn: Geovanni Fernandez](#)

**MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS ARE
EXCELLENT DRIVERS OF ACQUISITION,
BUT THEY DO NOT NECESSARILY
CREATE LOYALTY.**



Main Feature

Margarita Cruz

With more than 20 years of international experience in iGaming and Gaming, Margarita Cruz is the Founder of Diamond28 Consulting Ltd, a Commercial & Operational Director, international speaker and industry voice. Her career spans B2B and B2C, regulated markets, sportsbook, casino, technology and M&A. In this exclusive conversation for Influence Magazine, Cruz shares her perspective on the 2026 FIFA World Cup and how the world's biggest sporting event is reshaping iGaming, Gaming and Digital Entertainment.

THE WORLD CUP EFFECT

How the biggest sporting event on the planet is reshaping iGaming, Gaming & Digital Entertainment.

Spain is World Champions. As a Spaniard and lifelong football fan, what did it mean to you personally to see your country lift the World Cup, and how did you celebrate such a historic moment?

It was deeply emotional. I've followed the last 11 FIFA World Cups with my father and brothers, first as a child, and later with friends around the world. This year felt especially meaningful. I watched the final in London with friends, while staying closely connected with my brothers in Germany, Spain, and Venezuela. Together, we relived memories of watching football with our father, who is no longer with us.

The World Cup has always united Spanish people across the globe, and this final was no different, an incredibly intense match that brought everyone together once again. Spain had only won the World Cup once before, in 2010 against the Netherlands, with Andrés Iniesta scoring the winning goal in extra time. This year, history repeated itself in the most dramatic way, with another 1-0 victory in extra time against Argentina, sealed by Ferran Torres.

It was more than a sporting victory, it was a shared emotional moment across generations and continents, connecting family, memory, and national pride in a way only football can.

Looking back at the tournament, how significant was the “World Cup Effect” for the global iGaming, gaming and digital entertainment industries?

The 2026 FIFA World Cup was a gamechanger for the industry. It delivered record levels of player engagement, digital consumption and betting activity, becoming the biggest sporting event ever for many operators. Industry analysts estimated global sports betting handle at more than US\$50 billion, significantly exceeding the 2022 tournament and driven by the expanded 48-team format, 104 matches and the continued growth of regulated markets, particularly across North America.

However, the real impact went far beyond betting volumes. The tournament accelerated innovation in AI-driven personalisation, live betting, gamification, streaming, data analytics and omnichannel experiences. Operators focused not only on acquiring players, but on keeping them engaged through personalised content and responsible gaming tools.

The World Cup also demonstrated how sport,

technology and entertainment are becoming increasingly interconnected. Fans expected instant, interactive and mobile-first experiences, creating new opportunities for operators, suppliers, media companies and affiliates. For me, the greatest legacy of this World Cup is that it confirmed the future of iGaming is no longer just about placing a bet, it's about delivering engaging, responsible and immersive digital entertainment experiences that keep players connected long after the final whistle.

Did the World Cup change the way fans interacted with betting and gaming platforms? What trends in player engagement stood out most during the tournament?

Definitely. The World Cup transformed fan engagement well before the opening match and continued long after the final whistle. The tournament created continuous interaction through match predictions, fantasy sports, social media content, promotions and personalised campaigns, keeping fans engaged throughout the entire competition.

During the tournament, live betting reached unprecedented levels as fans increasingly placed in-play wagers while following matches in real time. Operators also enhanced the experience through AI-driven personalisation, instant notifications, live statistics, cash-out features and seamless omnichannel experiences across mobile, desktop and retail.

What stood out most was the demand for speed, simplicity and interactivity. Today's fans want instant access to information, frictionless payments, personalised offers and immersive experiences that allow them to engage with their favourite teams whenever and wherever they choose.

Innovation was a major part of the World Cup experience. Which technologies – AI, personalisation, real-time data, live betting or gamification – made the biggest difference in how operators engaged with fans?

The biggest winner wasn't a single technology, it was the combination of AI, real-time data and personalisation working together. The World Cup showed that operators can no longer offer a one-size-fits-all experience. Players now expect every interaction to be relevant, instant and personalised.

Leading sportsbook providers such as OpenBet, Kambi, EveryMatrix, Digitain, BetConstruct and Altenar, together with operators including DraftKings, FanDual, bet365 leveraged AI, dynamic odds and real-time data to deliver personalised experiences, smarter risk management and tailored promotions. Live betting, Bet Builders, player proposition markets and cash-out features kept fans engaged throughout every match, while prediction games, loyalty rewards and social competitions extended engagement before, during and after the tournament.

The greatest innovation wasn't simply new technology, it was how seamlessly these solutions worked together to create faster, more immersive and responsible player experiences. The World Cup proved that the future of iGaming belongs to operators that combine technology with outstanding customer experience.

With the tournament hosted across the United States, Mexico and Canada, what impact did the World Cup have on the gaming and betting landscape across the Americas, particularly the relationship between North America and Latin America?

The 2026 FIFA World Cup created a unique connection across the Americas unlike anything we've seen before. For the first time, North America and Latin America shared the world's biggest sporting event, strengthening collaboration between operators, suppliers, regulators and technology providers across the region.

I experienced this first-hand while chairing MEGA Summit by Eventus International in Mexico earlier this year. Even months before kick-off, the excitement was already evident. Having last hosted the World Cup in 1986, Mexico embraced the tournament as an opportunity to showcase its market and attract new investment.

The event also reignited discussions around regulatory modernisation. Many industry leaders agreed that Mexico's gaming legislation is overdue for reform, creating an opportunity to build a more modern framework that supports innovation while strengthening consumer protection.

The conversation will continue at LiGA Summit 2026 in Peru this September, where industry leaders will discuss sportsbook innovation in one of Latin America's newest regulated gaming markets, now in its third year.

Beyond football, the World Cup accelerated new commercial partnerships, technology adoption and knowledge sharing across the Americas. I believe its greatest legacy will be bringing the region closer together, creating long-term business opportunities and reinforcing the Americas as one of the most exciting growth markets for the global gaming industry.

The World Cup created an enormous battle for consumers' attention. Which marketing, sponsorship, affiliate or digital engagement strategies proved most effective, and what can the industry learn from them?

With more than two decades in B2C and B2B roles alongside leading operators and platform providers in the sportsbook space, I've watched



Chairperson Summit in London 2026



London World Cup 2026 — Spain vs. Argentina

consumer attention during the World Cup become one of the industry's fiercest battlegrounds the competitive noise now is, unlike anything I've seen before.

The strategies that truly cut through were athlete and team sponsorships. Partnering with recognisable football figures and national teams gave brands an instant credibility and emotional resonance that generic advertising simply can't replicate. Fans don't just watch these partnerships, they feel them.

Affiliate marketing told a similar story. The campaigns that worked were tied to the rhythm

of the tournament itself, real-time, match-driven content rather than static, pre-scheduled promotions, because bettors respond to timeliness and context, not blanket messaging.

On the digital front, operators who invested in genuinely localised experiences, from in-language commentary to region-specific offers and second-screen engagement, saw far stronger retention than those running one global campaign everywhere at once. The lesson for our industry is a simple one: authenticity beats spend, and the operators who treated fans as communities, not just conversion funnels, built the engagement that will actually last.

Major sporting events bring exceptional betting volumes but also greater responsibility. How well did the industry balance commercial opportunity with responsible gaming, player protection and regulatory compliance during the World Cup?

The industry made real progress this World Cup, but the picture was mixed. On the positive side, many leading operators embedded responsible gaming directly into the betting experience rather than treating it as an afterthought, real-time affordability checks, spending limits, and self-exclusion tools were more visible and more usable than in previous tournaments. Regulators in mature markets also stepped-up enforcement around advertising intensity and promotional messaging during peak match windows, which pushed operators toward more responsible marketing practices by necessity rather than choice.

That said, the sheer scale of this tournament, record global betting volumes, aggressive promotional pushes, and intense competition for new customers, meant commercial pressure often outpaced protective measures, particularly among smaller or less-regulated operators chasing market share. The gap between well-regulated markets and grey or unregulated ones was more visible than ever.

The honest takeaway: the industry has the tools to balance opportunity with protection, but consistency remains the challenge. Player protection can't be a competitive differentiator only where regulation forces it, it needs to be the baseline everywhere.

Now that the trophy has been lifted and the celebrations are over, what is the real legacy of the 2026 World Cup for iGaming and digital entertainment? Which changes do you believe will remain long after the final whistle?

The 2026 FIFA World Cup proved that the future of iGaming extends far beyond betting. Its greatest legacy is accelerating the convergence of sport, technology and digital entertainment into more personalised, immersive and responsible player experiences.

Fans now expect real-time interaction, AI-driven personalisation, seamless omnichannel journeys and engaging content before, during and after every sporting event. These expectations will

continue to shape product innovation, marketing and player engagement.

The tournament also strengthened collaboration between operators, suppliers, regulators and technology providers, reinforcing the importance of responsible gaming alongside innovation.

Ultimately, the 2026 World Cup became a catalyst for the next generation of digital entertainment. It didn't just prove these approaches work, it reset the standard by which the industry will be measured for years to come, long after the final whistle.

Margarita Cruz

Founder/Director

Diamond28 Consulting Limited

Telegram: @MARGARITA_CRUZ_DIAMOND28

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What Esports Can Learn from the World Cup

In my opinion, one of the main lessons esports can learn from the World Cup lies not only in the production of the event or the spectacle itself, but in the way football has managed to build a profitable industry around its fans.

Football clubs, leagues, and organizations already have structures in place that allow them to generate revenue in different ways. They have fans who buy merchandise, follow broadcasts, attend stadiums, consume content, and maintain a connection with their teams even when there are no major matches taking place. That relationship did not emerge overnight; it was built over years through identity, tradition, storytelling, and community.

Esports also have fans, but they are still fragmented. People follow individual players, teams, specific games, or tournaments, but we have not yet managed to bring all that attention together into a strong commercial model. It is still difficult to get large numbers of people to buy a team jersey, regularly watch broadcasts, attend live events, or develop the same sense of belonging that exists in football.

The World Cup demonstrates that organizing a competition is not enough. It is necessary to build an entire experience around it and create different ways for audiences to participate. The real lesson lies in understanding how football builds loyalty among its fans, how it turns passion into consumption, and how it brings clubs, sponsors, media, and communities together within the same ecosystem.

Esports do not need to copy football, but they can certainly learn from its business model. We have the audience, the talent, and the entertainment. The next step is learning how to better organize, retain, and monetize that community in a sustainable way.

Christian Andrés Roque C.

Founder & CEO
Infamous Gaming

E-mail: croque@infamous.gg

ESPORTS DON'T HAVE TO COPY FOOTBALL, BUT THEY SHOULD STUDY ITS BUSINESS MODEL. WE HAVE THE AUDIENCE, THE TALENT, AND THE ENTERTAINMENT.

The World Cup Effect: How Global Passion Is Redefining Digital Entertainment

The impact of the 2026 World Cup goes far beyond the pitch, reshaping the performance of digital entertainment. Throughout my experience leading competitive projects across the region, I have learned that the industry's challenge is not simply to attract large audiences, but to build strong communities where temporary excitement can evolve into a lasting sense of belonging.

The World Cup demonstrates that the connection between traditional sports and interactive ecosystems has now become an operational standard. The infrastructure behind major sporting events has revolutionized the way fans interact, incorporating technological innovations that the gaming ecosystem and esports must urgently replicate to remain relevant.

Immersive and co-created broadcasts are one of the best examples. They no longer simply deliver a broadcast feed; they integrate live statistics overlays, multiple camera angles selected by the user, and virtual watch parties. This integration

allows fans to become an active part of the spectacle. As Castelló (2022) points out in his analysis of digital consumption, the contemporary fan is no longer a passive spectator, but an engaged user who demands tools to participate, comment, and co-create the event's narrative in real time.

From a strategic brand planning perspective, these dynamics teach us that experience design must always prioritize interactivity. The future of esports does not lie solely in visual spectacle, but in mastering **digital communication technologies** that make every fan behind their screen feel like the true twelfth player.

Juan Gonzales

Brand Campaign Expert
Member of the FPE Advisory Committee
[Linkedin: juangonzalesalmache](#)

THE WORLD CUP HAS INTRODUCED TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS THAT THE GAMING ECOSYSTEM AND ESPORTS MUST URGENTLY ADOPT TO REMAIN RELEVANT.

Special Feature

Peruvian Esports Federation: A Commitment to Consolidating National Talent

Under the leadership of Renzo Cordiglia, in its first year of work, the Peruvian Esports Federation has focused its efforts on strengthening national competition, supporting Peruvian representatives at international tournaments, and creating new opportunities for players. The first qualifications and projects developed throughout the season show the direction the organization aims to take as it continues to grow the esports ecosystem in the country.

A Scene That Continues to Grow

Esports have built a significant community in Peru. There are players, teams, content creators, and communities that have developed around different video games. However, the growth of a competitive scene requires more than talented players. It also requires competitions, training environments, education, and opportunities to represent the country.

Against this backdrop, the Peruvian Esports Federation is entering its first year of work with an agenda aimed at making progress across different areas. The organization is primarily working around three key pillars: sports development, strengthening national competitions, and education around esports.

On the sporting side, the goal is to support Peru's national team representatives and their participation in international competitions. At the national level, the Federation aims to create new opportunities through tournaments and the development of leagues across different disciplines. It is also promoting workshops, talks, and conferences to help more people understand how esports operate.

National development is also part of these initiatives and represents another key area of the Federation's work.

The work is only beginning, but the first results point toward a structure that aims to grow progressively.



President of the Peruvian Esports Federation (FPE).

The Challenge of Supporting Peruvian Players

One of the main challenges facing esports in Peru is ensuring that talent can develop consistently. The country has highly active communities, but not all disciplines have the same level of competition, organization, or training facilities.

The Federation recognizes that support for players is still an area that needs to be strengthened. The experience of other countries shows that training programs, bootcamps, and ongoing support can make a significant difference in preparing players to represent their nation.

But players are not the only profiles that need to develop. The growth of an esports scene also requires referees, coaches, and other professionals who can participate at different stages of a competition. That is why the creation of certifications for these profiles is among the Federation's future projects.

Another objective is to develop national leagues for the leading video games, taking into account their presence and player base in the country. The idea is to give players access to consistent competition and allow them to prepare within Peru before reaching the international stage.

The challenge is to move from having communities and standout players to building a structure that allows that talent to develop continuously.

Peru Is Beginning to Gain International Presence

During this first year, one of the Federation's main achievements has been securing qualifications across different disciplines.

One of the first examples was Peru's qualification for the regional stages of the Phygital Games, Phygital Football, and Phygital Dancing. In the latter discipline, Peru secured third place worldwide.

There is also the case of Clash Royale. In March, a Peruvian representative qualified for a competition held in Mumbai, India. This was followed by another qualification for an event that will take place in Los Angeles in December, organized by the Global Esports Federation, with Peruvian representation in football and Clash Royale.

Another important achievement came with Peru's qualification for the FIFA World Cup in Saudi Arabia. The qualification process was carried out in partnership with the Peruvian Football Federation, with only two spots available for the entire region. Peru secured one of them.

At the national level, the Federation also organized a high-level competition featuring four disciplines: Just Dance, eFootball, Clash Royale, and Free Fire. In addition, it signed an agreement with Infinity to promote the development and growth of esports.

All these results share a common objective: ensuring that international representation is backed by a strong national scene capable of continuously producing players and competitions.



Official emblem of the Peruvian Esports Federation

Seven Disciplines and a New Goal

One of the most important results of this process was Peru's qualification for the Esports Nations Cup. The competition, considered the World Cup of national esports teams, was postponed and is now scheduled to take place in Saudi Arabia in 2027.

Peru qualified in seven disciplines: League of Legends, Dota, Valorant, EA FC, Chess, Fatal Fury, and Apex Legends.

This qualification places Peru as the fourth country in the region with the highest number of participating disciplines. However, the result also highlights an area the Federation will need to address over the coming months: some of the qualified disciplines still do not have a strong competitive scene within the country.

For this reason, one of the next steps will be to promote national leagues and strengthen communities around these games. The postponement of the tournament also provides additional time to prepare the representatives.

The goal is not simply to arrive in 2027 with seven qualified disciplines. The Federation also wants this period to create opportunities for new communities and more players to emerge and, eventually, for additional disciplines to expand Peru's international presence.

“THE PERUVIAN GAMER HAS A GREAT DEAL OF POTENTIAL, BUT WE STILL NEED TO STRENGTHEN SUPPORT FOR PLAYERS AND BUILD THESE STRUCTURES PROGRESSIVELY.”



Peru's qualification for the eFootball World Championship (FIFAe).

Peru qualified for the Esports Nations Cup in League of Legends.

2026 South American Games and What Comes Next for the Federation

The next major sporting objective will be Santa Fe 2026, in Argentina. The Peruvian delegation is preparing to compete in EA FC, in both the men's and women's categories, as well as Assetto Corsa.

The competition will provide another opportunity for Peru to showcase the work being carried out and continue gaining international experience. However, the Federation's work does not end with each tournament.

The intention is for these processes to continue over the coming years. To achieve this, it will be important to keep developing leagues, create training opportunities, and establish certifications for referees, coaches, and other professionals involved in esports.

There is also an economic challenge. The Federation operates with a budget allocated to its activities, although it recognizes that resources remain limited as the organization is still at the beginning of its journey.

At this point, brands can also play an important role. The Federation is looking to work with companies interested in contributing to the development of esports and creating new opportunities for players, competitions, and communities.

The growth of the ecosystem does not depend on a single organization. Players, teams, communities, influencers, brands, and sports organizations are all part of a scene that needs to work together.

A Structure That Is Only Beginning to Take Shape

The first year of the Peruvian Esports Federation has produced important results while also highlighting how much work remains to be done.

International qualifications, the FIFA World Cup, national tournaments, and seven disciplines qualified for the Esports Nations Cup represent significant progress for an organization that is only beginning its work. The next step will be ensuring that these results are not isolated achievements, but part of a consistent and sustainable process.

The 2026 South American Games will be one of the Federation's first major challenges. The 2027 Esports Nations Cup will provide another important stage for measuring how far Peruvian representation can grow.

The talent is already in the country. The challenge now is to continue building the conditions that allow players to compete, prepare, and represent Peru in the years ahead.

Renzo Cordiglia

President of the Peruvian Esports Federation
Instagram: renpes

Redacción:

Gabriel Ayón
Instagram: redninja._

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Ruth Elena Foundation

Turning Solidarity into Action



Older woman wearing a turban, representing people facing cancer.

At the Ruth Elena Foundation, our main purpose is to support people living with cancer and their families, providing assistance and helping them navigate some of the challenges that come with the disease. At the same time, we believe that our commitment to solidarity should extend to anyone facing difficult or vulnerable circumstances.

Over the past three months, we have continued turning this commitment into action through different initiatives across Peru.

In Arequipa, we donated accessories to the Beneficencia Pública designed to make everyday activities easier for people with limited mobility, contributing to greater comfort, independence, and dignity in their daily lives.

We have also donated essential supplies, including diapers and blankets, to people in vulnerable situations. These efforts have been particularly important during the recent period of intense cold affecting different parts of the country as a result of ongoing weather conditions.

While supporting people with cancer and their families remains at the heart of our work, we believe that every opportunity to help matters. Whether through ongoing support for patients and their loved ones or through responding to immediate needs in our communities, we remain committed to turning solidarity into tangible action and making a positive difference wherever we can.

HOW TO JOIN RUTH ELENA FOUNDATION'S CAMPAIGN

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PARTNERSHIPS OR DONATIONS**



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