Globant ▶

AI Reinvention

Sportainment Edition

How AI Is Changing Media & Fan Experience

Gone are the days when sports were confined to sweaty arenas and fuzzy TV screens.

Today's media and sports organizations are digital juggernauts, their influence spanning continents and pixels alike. They're not just competing for trophies but battling for fan attention in a gladiatorial arena of content, commerce, and cutting-edge tech. The game has changed, and the players aren't just the ones on the field anymore.

Welcome to the brave new world of Sportainment, where the line between athlete and audience blurs into a technicolor frenzy of sensory overload. Sportainment looks beyond the game itself, harnessing technology, multimedia, music, and interactive experiences to craft a captivating entertainment spectacle for fans.

The traditional way fans engage and interact with sports has evolved, with younger audiences, video-on-demand platforms, and social networks on top of conventional media. TikTok and Twitch have become their primary sources of information and entertainment, necessitating a shift in brand content. Game formats, video games, reality shows, and emotionally expressive audiovisual content are particularly popular among this demographic.

Today's consumers seek constant stimulation and entertainment, reflecting the demands of the experience economy.

Step into the world of sportainment!

People's expectations around **their digital experiences are changing rapidly. Media and entertainment companies have often been at the forefront of this change.**
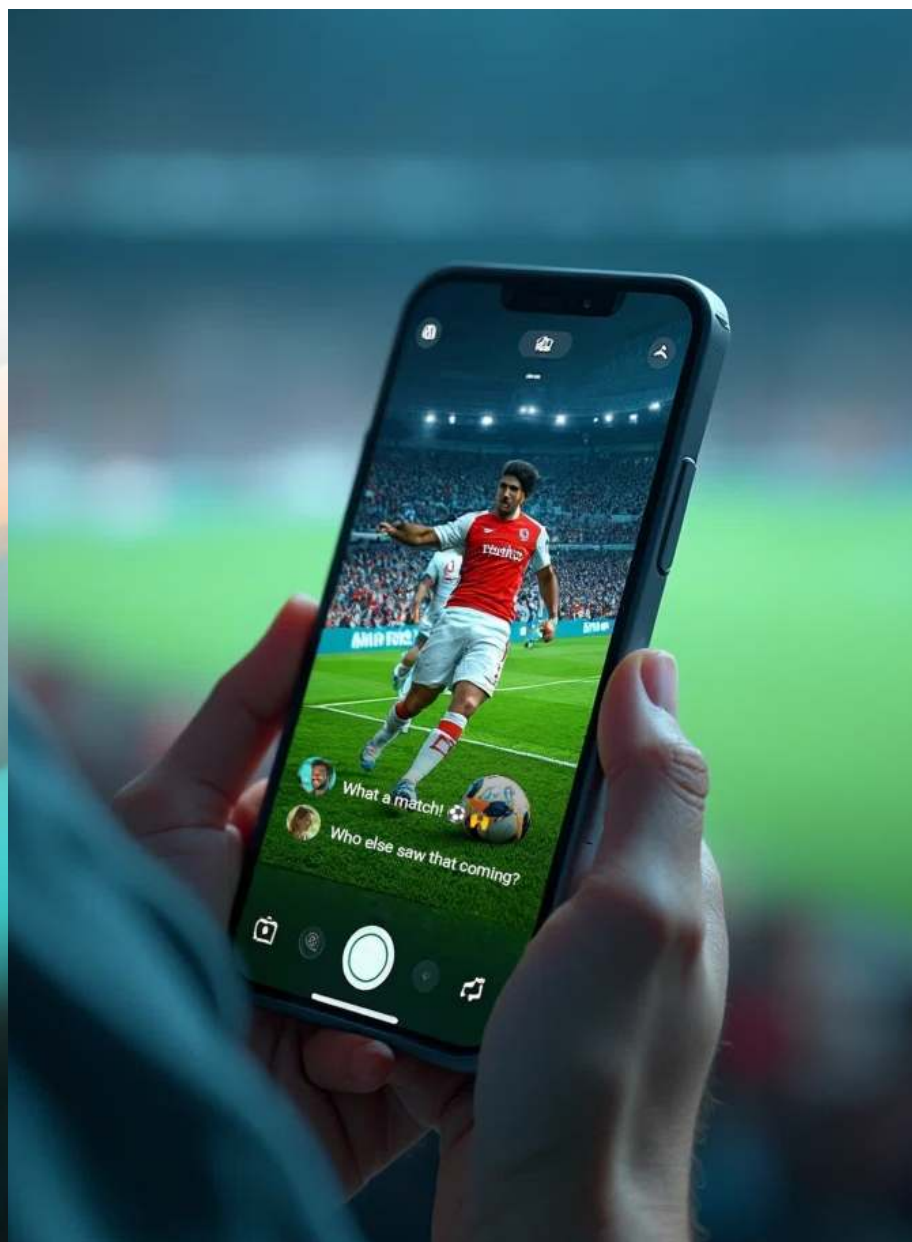
According to IDC's **recent research**, cloud and virtualization will still be king when it comes to media tech investments from 2020 to 2024, but some game-changing shifts are happening. AI, Machine Learning, and analytics soared to the second spot, jumping from a modest seventh place in the 2020-2022 averages. And guess what? Social media and ad tech are crashing the party, now making it into the top seven. AI in the sports market is projected to skyrocket to **$19.2 billion by 2030**, mainly driven by shifting fan preferences and behaviors.

Sports, media & entertainment companies must be prepared to embrace emerging trends, technologies, and data, as we'll see in this report. But hold onto your jerseys, folks, because this is just the warm-up. As AI takes center stage, it's poised to revolutionize every aspect of sportainment.

Let's explore key pillars that can help organizations deliver their brand promise through sport, spectacle, and technology while increasing reach, acquisition, loyalty, and sales. Are you ready to play?

Reimaging Fan Experience with AI

Imagine an AI that knows you just as well as your best friend, curating personalized highlight reels, offering real-time stats that matter to you, and even predicting your team's next play. This isn't science fiction – it's the new reality of sports fandom.

But here's the kicker: this tech-driven revolution isn't just about flashy gadgets. It's about forging deep, emotional connections with fans on an unprecedented scale. By harnessing the power of targeted data analytics and AI, sports, and media organizations are crafting hyper-personalized experiences that turn casual viewers into die-hard loyalists.

01. *The Power of* Streaming Platforms

The rise of OTT (Over-the-Top) platforms offers flexible, on-demand access to sports content, meeting the evolving needs of modern viewers.

- Streaming consumption is up by **266%** over the past three years.

- Younger audiences are increasingly opting to consume sport via data-rich platforms. Comparatively, nearly **50%** of 55-64-years-olds never use online and instead prioritize traditional linear TV.

From soccer to cricket, baseball to golf, streaming platforms worldwide pour billions into live sports rights to capture, engage, and profit from an increasingly unpredictable audience. Amazon secured a deal worth around **$1 billion** annually to stream Thursday Night Football for 11 years, starting in 2022. Additionally, ESPN and Hulu (both owned by Disney) obtained rights to stream NHL games in a seven-year deal valued at **$2.8 billion**.

For smaller and newer sports and leagues, streaming services can offer the advantage of initial coverage, serving as a gateway to increased visibility and growth. Also, these platforms can help expand a sport's international fan base, providing audiences in different regions with easier access to sports they might not be well-acquainted with.

The promising news is that fans may enjoy **expanded content** related to their favorite sports, like exclusive interviews with star athletes, behind-the-scenes footage, in-depth analysis, and interactive quizzes. Streaming platforms could also bring new advancements in **personalization, interactivity, and real-time data analytics.**

Sports channels face the challenge of meeting the growing demand **for accessible content anytime, anywhere.** This is where platforms offer a game-changing solution.

> By leveraging Streaming platforms, sports channels can extend their reach beyond traditional television to viewers on multiple devices at all times, ensuring fans never miss a moment of the action."

— **Gonzalo Zarza,**
Chief Data Officer at Sportian.
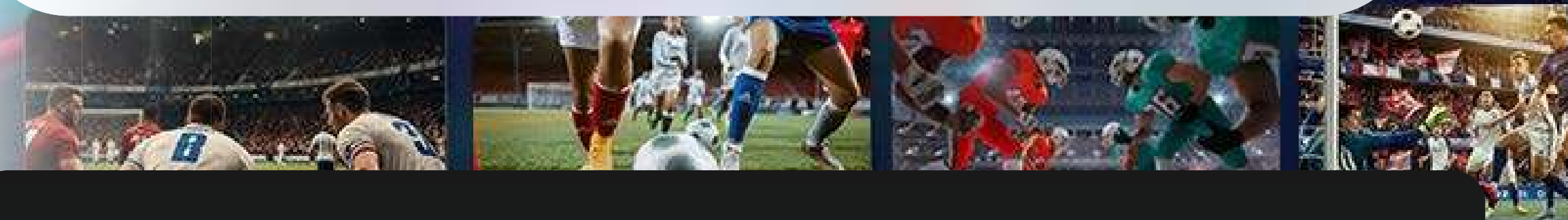
Whether it's live games, highlights, or behind-the-scenes coverage, viewers can access their favorite sports content whenever it suits them. This constant availability enhances viewer engagement and loyalty, as fans are no longer tied to fixed broadcast schedules. As technology evolves, those who embrace streaming platforms will be better positioned to adapt to changing viewer behaviors.

How the Kings League
Captivates the Digital Age

The **Kings League** exemplifies a clear attempt to leverage streaming platforms within a 'sportainment' approach, captivating young audiences with its innovative use of Twitch and other platforms to stream matches.

The Kings League shines for its impromptu nature, grand spectacle, and unpredictability. Instead of traditional corporate figures, it spotlights charismatic streamers and former players, setting it apart. Customization and instant access are vital in drawing the young audience, and the King's League leverages these trends by providing more tailored and accessible experiences via digital platforms. The successful results of this case highlight the **importance of innovation** in sports beyond mere technology, highlighting experimental gamification formats as essential for maintaining cultural relevance and keeping youth audiences engaged. The Kings League's impact is already being felt in conventional broadcasting.

Another valuable use case of AI in streaming platforms is **automated content tagging and metadata generation.** AI algorithms can analyze sports videos and automatically tag them with relevant information such as player names, team names, match statistics, and key moments. This automated tagging process saves time and effort for content creators and allows for efficient organization and searchability of sports content.

Additionally, AI can generate metadata for each video, providing detailed descriptions, timestamps, and relevant keywords. This metadata enhances the discoverability of sports content, making it easier for users to find specific games, highlights, or moments within a match. By leveraging AI for automated tagging and metadata generation, streaming platforms can improve the overall user experience and make sports content more accessible and engaging for viewers.

Likewise, most sports organizations possess vast, untapped archives and need to learn how to monetize them. AI can analyze these archives, identify valuable video assets, and present them to streaming platforms. This technology also assists editors and studios in creating precise content without manually reviewing each old asset.

AI-Powered Video Search Sets
New Industry Benchmarks

Globant rocked the industry with the launch of its groundbreaking AI-powered tool for advanced video search .AVS).

This revolutionary technology allows companies to effortlessly dig through their vast content libraries using both text and image queries. Fueled by cutting-edge AI, our AVS tool doesn't just process video on demand—it pulls out invaluable context like never before. A standout feature of our AVS solution is its multiple prompts capability, delivering superior performance and exceptional accuracy compared to other market offerings.

The groundbreaking Gen-AI solution, resulting from collaboration between Globant and **Google Cloud,** seeks to transform the media industry by greatly improving operational efficiency.

02.

Lights, Camera, Algorithm:
AI in sports broadcasting

AI revolutionizes sports storytelling with automated video editing and personalized broadcasts

In just 5 seconds, users decide whether to stay or leave a live broadcast.

AI is poised to revolutionize sports storytelling like never before. With machine learning and deep learning algorithms, broadcasters can now automate various video editing tasks, from camera shooting to zooming in on pivotal field actions. But that's not all. Breakthroughs in natural language processing (NLP) are shaking up sports journalism as generative AI crafts concise news reports for countless matches. This technology empowers media organizations to cover far more events while slashing resource usage.

Imagine owning a media company and wanting to provide your network of journalists with exclusive access to a private ChatGPT connected to any LLM (Large Language Model) that contains information about games, athletes, and championships. Today, robust and reliable software solutions, such as **GeneXus Enterprise AI**, can turn this vision into reality by creating private enterprise Gen-AI solutions that provide the same experience as ChatGPT with all the security and privacy layers to ensure your data stays in-company.

If you are surprised at how much the sports companies will grow with AI-driven sports broadcasting, wait for its impact on the fan, the real winner of the new era.

Imagine tuning into a game where the camera could know precisely where you want to look, the commentary speaks your language, and highlight reels can be tailored just for you. We're no longer in the age of one-size-fits-all coverage. AI could turn every fan into a personal director, orchestrating a symphony of camera angles, stats, and stories that resonate with your unique tastes. Late to the game? No problem. Cutting-edge algorithms will catch you up in seconds with personalized clips that make you feel like you've been watching from the start. Now imagine all these fantastic pros but in real time.

Cloud and edge computing technologies ensure seamless content delivery and scalability for broadcasters. Multi-camera angles and 360-degree views offer fans unique perspectives and deeper insights. AI and machine learning could enable highly personalized viewing experiences, catering to individual preferences.

AI-powered technology can revolutionize translating and generating sports news worlwide,

significantly improving efficiency and speed for sports editorial teams. AI systems can quickly translate sports news articles, generating sports headlines and content within seconds instead of waiting for the entire translation process.

Pablo Peranzola, VP of Technology of Media & Entertainment Studio at Globant, emphasized the transformative role of AI in journalism:

"

This advancement enables sports editorial teams to access news from different sources and languages in real-time, allowing them to cover a wider range of sports events and reach a global audience more efficiently."

— **Pablo Peranzola,**
VP of Technology of Media & Entertainment Studio at Globant.

Spain's top football league, LALIGA, engages billions of fans worldwide

With advancing technology and rising fan expectations, the league needed a strategy to stay ahead and continually captivate its global audience. To elevate the fan experience, **Sportian**, a joint venture between LaLiga Tech and Globant, developed a **fan-facing web portal powered by AI that provides:**

Real-time advanced insights and more than 50 metrics. Advanced models of Goal Probability that give spectators new perspectives play-by-play.

Real-time match subtitles that provide dynamic insights and commentary at every moment, enabling all viewers to engage with the game on a deeper level.

03.

Stream, Share, Celebrate: How Social Media Delights Fans

Fans crave constant, personalized engagement, making AI and social media crucial for deeper connections.

56% of people use social media for additional game content, 64% watch video highlights, and 48% consume post-match recaps or analysis.

> "The fans want a lot more today. They want to know their clubs and their heroes through social networks. But they now demand information seven days a week. They want to know what happens between games."
>
> — **Javier Tebas,**
> President of LALIGA.

Just as AI and social media algorithms construct a personalized experience, sports is a massive and collective phenomenon. One of its secrets lies in sharing and discussing victories, defeats, plays, championships, and idols with others. **Global fans connect and feel part of the experience through social media.** They react live in chat rooms on streaming platforms like YouTube or Twitch, comment on second screens on X, or find highlights on Instagram or TikTok.

> **Social media is the preferred channel for athletes to connect with their community**. Official accounts are filled with messages of support and admiration, and collaborative Instagram posts have become a natural way to cross audiences, bringing together athletes with their brands or teams and enhancing their reach."
>
> — **Matías Mosquera,**
> Social Media Global Manager at Globant.

The Olympic Games are a great example of this phenomenon, which including connection and personalization. Each person watched their own games, with a wide range of sports, where the user educated their algorithm to receive and follow their preferred disciplines, either live or on-demand through reels. Many new disciplines, such as breakdance or skateboarding, debuted in Tokyo 2020. In addition to a record number of interactions (11 billion), Paris 2024 gained 27 million new followers on Olympic accounts.

Finally, social media data enables sports organizations to gain deeper insights into their fanbase, complementing first-party data with a richer understanding of consumers. Leveraging AI, companies can achieve hyper-personalization, creating a one-on-one relationship with each customer by delivering tailored experiences that meet individual preferences and needs.

Going Beyond the Game: The Power of Hybrid Sports Experiences

On the other hand, the hybrid experience is part of the fan's journey. **The connection between the digital and physical worlds is experienced through social media.** Those present at the events become journalists and storytellers, bringing the competition and behind-the-scenes of the show closer. From the "Get Ready With Me" to go to the stadium to vlogs exploring the city on game day, these types of content remain popular on TikTok, Reels, and especially on YouTube. They allow local fans or those who could travel to become the protagonists and enable those far away to get closer to the audience.

Sports organizations, athletes and celebrities should be aware of these influential trends to enhance their impact on social media. The key lies in leveraging **real-time interactions**, **personalizing content**, **integrating digital and physical experiences**, and adapting to emerging trends. This approach strengthens fan engagement, broadens reach, and fosters a deeper connection with the audience.

Globant and 9z Globant - a partnership between **9z Team**, an esport professional team, and Globant, organized the **e-Grand Prix**, where hundreds of participants competed using the rFactor2 simulator to race live against F1 driver Franco Colapinto and professional sim racer Facu Dudulec. After a rigorous qualification process, the top 20 racers joined Colapinto and Dudulec in a grand final held at the Globant Tower offices.

The event attracted thousands of viewers and social media interactions, **blending the physical and digital worlds.** A virtual and analog driver raced on a digital track in front of an audience while others competed remotely. A fan zone for 150 people featured sponsor activations and the event was broadcast live on Twitch and Fox Sports, with prominent automotive journalists present. **Each audience segment enjoyed a unique experience,** from on-stage views to traditional TV broadcasts and interactive Twitch commentary.

04. *Invisible Marketing:* AI's Stealth Game in Sportainment

AI is revolutionizing sportainment with seamless, personalized marketing campaigns.

> Personalized rewards can drive **4 7 times more revenue** than non-personalized interactions.

Sportainment emerged from sports marketing as an evolution from mere sporting events to grand entertainment spectacles, aiming to boost the visibility and positioning of brands, sports, and athletes. However, the over-commercialization led to a critical flaw: ads flooding the screens at pivotal moments, turning fans against sponsors and robbing them of the joy of the game. This outdated marketing strategy has run its course.

Enter AI, the game-changer. We're now on the brink of a revolution, using it to redefine how fans interact with sports and entertainment. We've left behind the era of intrusive ads.

Instead, AI is crafting seamless, personalized experiences that keep fans engaged and sponsors celebrated.

Through the power of AI and data analytics, brands are no longer just meeting customer needs—they're anticipating them, seamlessly embedding themselves into everyday routines and narratives. The ubiquitous use of digital platforms offers an unparalleled opportunity for brands to establish deep, meaningful connections with their audiences.

Picture this: sending a push notification to a stadium attendee, perfectly timed to halftime, reminding them to grab food or merchandise—not during the tension of a goal. AI makes this precision possible, ensuring that interactions are timely, relevant, and welcome.
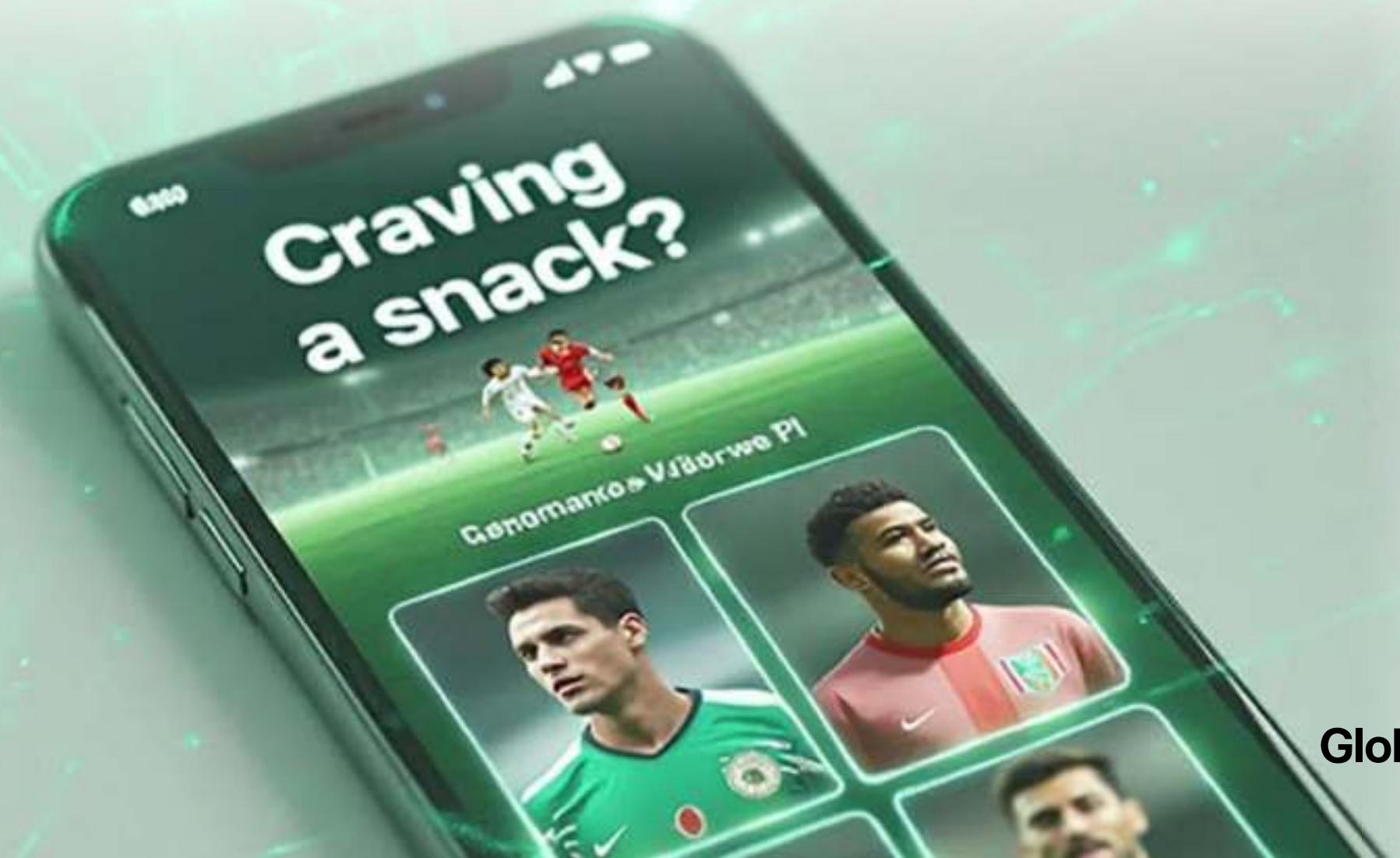
This new paradigm transcends traditional transactional marketing, shifting the focus to a profound and holistic integration of brands into customers' lives. It's not just about selling; it's about becoming indispensable to fans' stories.

> "
>
> Sports fans expect brands to provide authentic and engaging content, exclusive access to behind-the-scenes moments, interactive experiences, and personalized offers. AI is an enabler for these experiences, allowing marketers to deliver relevant content and offers, which are key for increasing relevance and ROI."
>
> — **Agostina Ardenghi,**
> Advertising & Monetization
> Strategist at Globant

Technology, advertising, and *passion* to improve the *game for fans*

Ball delays disrupt the rhythm of a football match and can even impact its outcome. That's why Mercado Livre, the e-commerce giant known for Brazil's fastest delivery, introduced **Ballboards.** These pitch-side ad boards are equipped with ball cannons to swiftly return balls to the game, transforming an old advertising medium into the next football revolution while showcasing the brand's standout feature.

05. *The Era of Smart Stadiums* and Connected Experiences

AI is transforming sportainment, creating immersive and personalized stadium experiences.

In the era of sportainment, watching a game is more than just spectating—it's about living and feeling every moment. It's about immersing yourself in a connected experience that heightens the thrill from planning your trip to the stadium until you're celebrating your team's victory.

AI is the driving force behind this evolution, seamlessly merging the physical and digital realms to create a connected and personalized experience for every fan.

The global AI in stadium market is set to soar to **$11.65 billion** by 2029, with a staggering 30.3% annual growth. The use of AI to personalize fan experiences and loyalty programs is becoming critical, though there's a need for innovation to avoid commoditization.

Digital stadiums are transforming how we experience live sports and events (concerts, artists) by integrating cutting-edge technologies into every aspect of the experience. These smart venues leverage better data capture to offer personalized interactions, from loyalty programs and rewards to transparent, secure ticketing systems. Fans can now enjoy smart hospitality with contactless payments, engage in interactive experiences, and even hold fan tokens. Improved security and monitoring ensure a safe environment, while features like dynamic pricing, VIP spaces, and AR experiences make every visit unique. By fully digitizing stadiums, we're creating spaces that are not just full but alive with fan engagement.

AI at LA Clippers' Intuit Dome:
Redefining Fan Experience

Recognizing the disruptive power of AI in smart venues, Globant has teamed up with the LA Clippers to create an unparalleled, seamless fan experience that sets a new standard in sportainment.

A work that started from blueprints and is today a reality, the **Intuit Dome** is equipped with a stack of technologies where AI enhances the entire fan journey. Whether it's selecting the perfect seat, upgrading tickets, or providing real-time, personalized information during transit, the experience is designed to be frictionless.

A standout feature of the Intuit Dome is its **advanced access control system**. Globant has developed hardware and software that uses facial recognition to create a cashless, cardless entry experience. This technology knows who you are, confirms your ticket, and gives you the green light to enter—all in seconds.

This feature is also crucial for **security.** AI video analytics monitor arenas for potential security threats, like overcrowding or suspicious objects, ensuring fans can enjoy the game with peace of mind.

Facial recognition and age verification features ensure swift, secure entry, while AI-driven loyalty platforms reward fans in real time based on their engagement. Whether recognizing a fan's loyalty or adjusting the space's air temperature, AI ensures that every detail is optimized for comfort and enjoyment.

But AI doesn't stop at enhancing the live experience. It continues post-event, sending fans **personalized content** that matters to them, keeping the excitement alive long after the final whistle.

Embrace AI and prepare for the future of Sportainment

The report showcases AI's vast and potent applications in sportainment, revealing how it revolutionizes fan experience. AI brings forth smarter, hyper-personalized, and real-time interactions for fans, elevating satisfaction and fostering unwavering brand loyalty. Meanwhile, the impact on productivity—from content creation to curation and distribution—is nothing short of transformative, with AI's evolving capabilities promising even greater advancements.

Sports and media companies must ramp up their technology stack and digital expertise to stay ahead of the curve, honing in on robust data strategies. This is crucial not only to meet fans' evolving demands but also to keep pace with shifting media consumption patterns and unlock new monetization avenues.

**The time is now to harness AI's immense power, captivate audiences, and shape a future where sports and media converge in unprecedented ways.
Your turn to play!**

Where Globant comes in

To simplify the adoption of AI solutions tailored for sports media & entertainment, consider leveraging Globant expert guidance. A strong technology partner can help you build an AI-powered sportainment model.

The match is about to start!

About
Globant

At Globant, we create the digitally-native products that people love. We bridge the gap between businesses and consumers through technology and creativity, leveraging our experience as an AI powerhouse. We dare to digitally transform organizations and strive to delight their customers.

- We have more than 29,100 employees and are present in 33 countries across 5 continents, working for companies like Google, Electronic Arts, and Santander, among others.

- We were named a Worldwide Leader in AI Services (2023) and a Worldwide Leader in CX Improvement Services (2020) by IDC MarketScape report.

- We are the fastest-growing IT brand and the 5th strongest IT brand globally (2024), according to Brand Finance.

- We were featured as a business case study at Harvard, MIT, and Stanford.

- We are active members of The Green Software Foundation (GSF) and the Cybersecurity Tech Accord.

Contact: pr@globant.com
Sign up to get first dibs on press news and updates.

For more information, visit
www.globant.com

Globant ▶