

# How to monetise football

Learnings in dynamic ad insertion from the Euro 2024 football tournament





# Introduction

The high-stakes action of live tournament football has the power to bring together captive TV audiences around the world like very few other events can. And when you get to the knockout stages when it's all-or-nothing, entire nations are on the edge of their seats with every twist and turn, and every kick.

For advertisers, the mass reach and high engagement of major sports tournaments, with the depth of addressability that streaming provides, is simply unmatched.

For ad-funded broadcasters, the importance of delivering an uninterrupted viewer experience while monetising effectively with dynamic ad insertion is critical.

But maximising the potential value of addressable advertising within a major sports tournament is challenging. Global audiences counted in millions are set to go to an ad break simultaneously, triggering millions of ad requests from the dynamic ad insertion system. These in turn trigger millions more ad requests, auctions, and decisions within the adtech ecosystem.

Add to that an audience that fluctuates in size all the time based on in-match events, and the prospect that a last-minute goal or high-drama moment could completely transform the viewership of the next ad break at a moment's notice, and you can start to see why fulfilling the monetisation potential of major tournaments is so difficult.

This report gathers together three example matches from the UEFA European Football Championship in 2024. Each one presents a different challenge in streaming and monetising football effectively at mass scale. The month-long, pan-European tournament attracted a global audience, which is reflected here. The data is gathered from broadcasters across four continents, all of whom were using Yospace's dynamic ad insertion technology.

With streaming set to become the primary method of watching and monetising live television, the scale that rights-holders need to support is only going to grow from here. This report provides a valuable guide to the digital advertising challenges that lie ahead.

Stream starts

2.3<sup>bn</sup>

EURO 2024

# Yospace's Euro 2024 in numbers

Data collated from 13 broadcaster customers across four continents.

YOSP>CE

51,000

years of ads  
stitched

YOSP>CE

Total ads  
stitched

6bn

EURO 2024

All ads had  
one-to-one  
addressability and  
transparent  
measurement

EURO 2024

YOSP>CE

Biggest impact  
on ad break

Quarter Final

 Spain	2
 Germany	1

33%

uplift in ad views  
at full time

EURO 2024

YOSP>CE

Most watched  
ad break

Semi Final

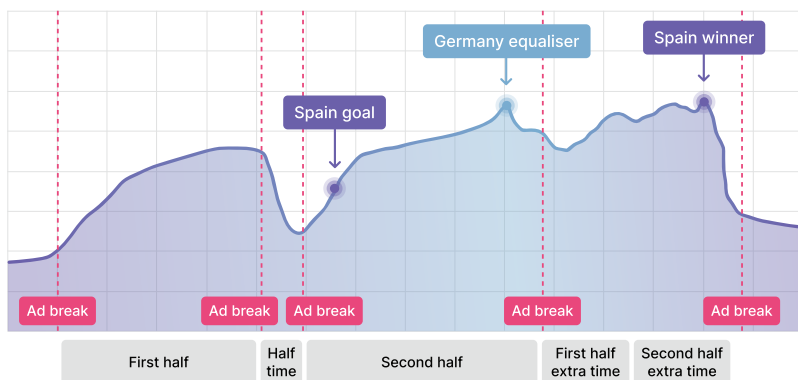
 England	2
 Netherlands	1

9m+

ads stitched in  
half time break

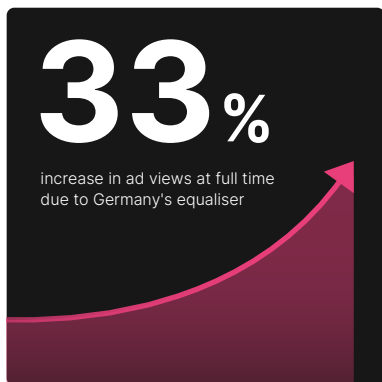
EURO 2024

Spain 2 - 1 Germany 5th Jul 2024



## The match

Germany, the tournament hosts, were on the verge of going out when Florian Wirtz's wonder goal levelled the match in the 89th minute and took the game into extra time. With the game destined for a dreaded penalty shoot-out, Spain recovered to score the winner in the very last moments of the extra time.



## Viewers

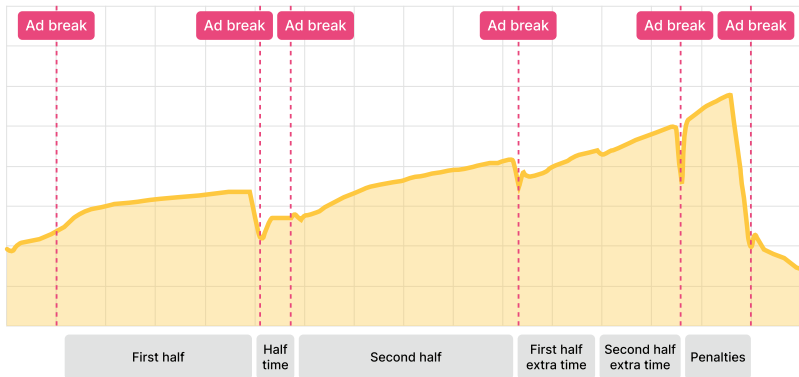
The CTV audience grew steadily throughout the match as the drama unfolded. Mobile was more changeable, with sudden surges in viewership coming after each goal, as casual fans switched on anytime they heard of a big moment. Mobile traffic reached a peak with Germany's last-minute equaliser.

## Advertising

The ad break at the final whistle of normal time suddenly increased in value as it came moments after Germany's last-gasp goal to keep them in the game. The goal drove the audience for the ad break up 33% compared to other games in the knockout stages of the competition.

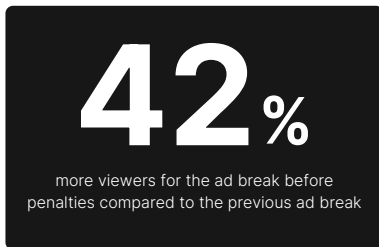
This increase is in stark contrast to matches that were decided during normal play, without dramatic endings, which typically saw a 25% decrease in ad views at full time compared with half time. A game that seemed destined to end at 90 minutes with a lower value ad break suddenly burst into life and delivered the biggest uplift for an ad break in the whole tournament.

Portugal 0 - 0 France France win on penalties



## The match

With footballing superstars Kylian Mbappe and Cristiano Ronaldo facing each other, there was a lot of hype for this last 16 knockout tie. Unfortunately, it was a disappointingly dull spectacle as France struggled to find the form that had earned them the billing of tournament favourites. There were no goals during the 90 minutes of normal time nor the extra 30 minutes of extra time. A penalty shoot out added some late drama to what was otherwise a very forgettable game.



## Viewers

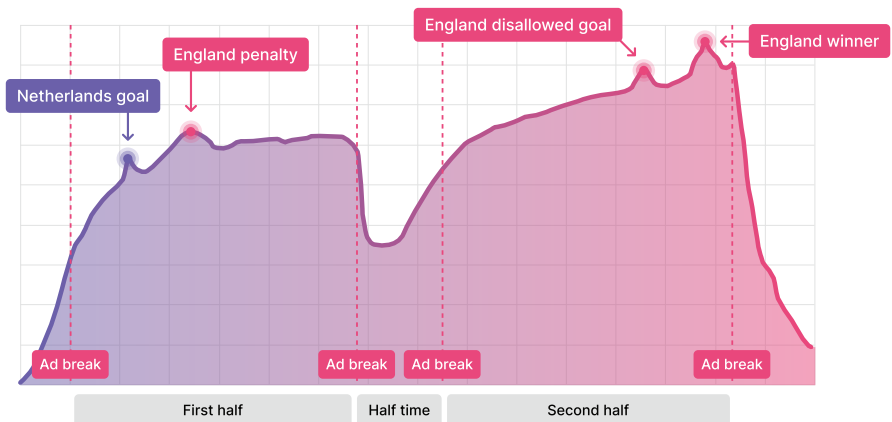
The audience built slowly from the start and grew during each successive period of the match (first half, second half, extra time, penalties) as the prospect of a single goal became more decisive to the outcome. Viewer numbers increased sharply during extra time and reached a crescendo for the end of the penalty shoot out.

## Advertising

The slow build of viewers during this game meant that the ad views became progressively higher for each break. The peak audience came during the penalty shoot out and the ad break right before was the most popular of the match, attracting 42% more viewers than the previous ad break. In a win for broadcasters, this ad break was unscheduled - it took place beyond the usual set of ad breaks you'd see in a 90 minute football match - so it resulted in extra ad revenues on top of what had been planned for.

Unscheduled breaks pose questions for the adtech. With audiences rising at a rapid rate, the dynamic ad insertion system had to ensure many millions of addressable ad requests were processed in sufficient time to deliver maximum fill rates. Otherwise, the ad server may not have had time to process all the requests, resulting in timeouts and blank slates. The rights-holder would have missed out on the most valuable ad revenue opportunity of the match.

England 2 - 1 Netherlands 10th Jul 2024



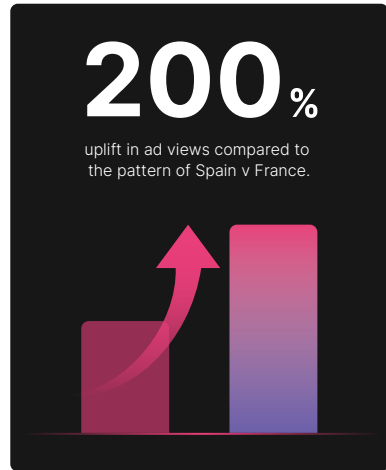
## The match

An end-to-end knockout match that was full of goal-scoring opportunities and excitement. The Dutch took an early lead with a spectacular long-range shot, before a long video assistant referee (VAR) intervention awarded England with a controversial penalty kick. The game opened up in the second half with both teams having clear chances on goal. England scored what they thought was the winning goal before it was ruled offside, then in the final minute England substitute Ollie Watkins scored the winner to break Dutch hearts and seal the match in the most dramatic fashion.

## Viewers

After a slow start on CTV, the game burst into life following the Dutch goal, with viewers on the go tuning in on mobile to catch the strike. There was an extended peak in traffic during the VAR review as mobile viewers waited on tenterhooks for the penalty decision. Mobile traffic dropped off again after the resulting penalty kick.

The second half started slowly again, but viewer numbers increased at a sharp rate across the 45 minutes as the game delivered exciting end-to-end play. The biggest peak of the game so far came when England's Bukayo Saka scored a goal which was soon ruled out for offside, shortly before the biggest and last peak for England's last minute winner.



## Advertising

The most watched ad break in the whole tournament was at half time during this game. Even though the goals came earlier in the first half, viewers were glued to their screens as the sides attacked and threatened to score more. England's 90th minute winner came right before the full time whistle, which made the full time ad break much more valuable than expected. The Spain v France match the night before, where all three goals were scored in the first half, saw a 71% drop off in ad views at full time compared to half time. But this game saw an almost 200% uplift in ad views compared to the pattern of Spain v France.

# Learnings

To effectively monetise major football tournaments, dynamic ad insertion systems must be able to cope with scale (often across multiple geographies) and extreme fluctuations in viewing habits.

Moreover, because dynamic ad insertion sits at the intersection of streaming tech and adtech, it can play a critical role in managing and optimising the performance of the ad server.

Well architected dynamic ad insertion for sports should include an advanced prefetch system to cope with demand and sudden audience shifts and the effect they have on the advertising. On top of that, delivering maximum device reach, real-time advertising metrics, and campaign performance data can all add value to those highly prized advertising spots.

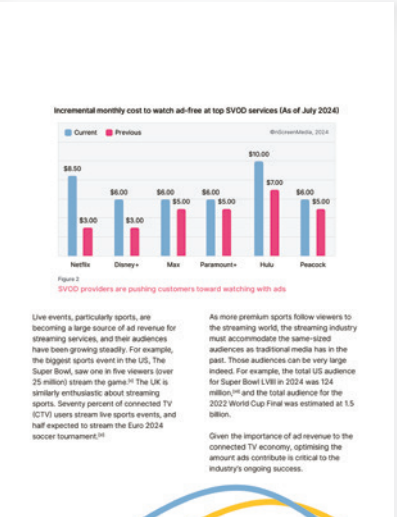
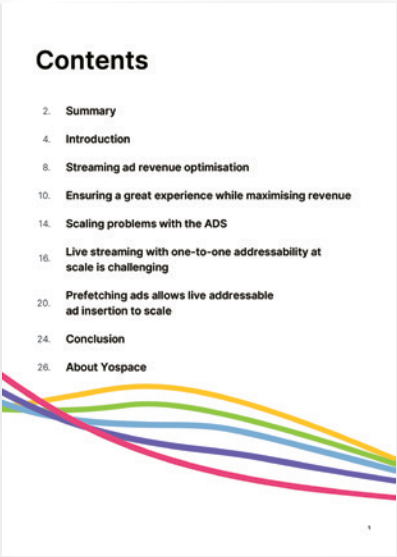
As the TV industry moves towards an all-IP future, the scale we saw during Euro 2024 is set to increase substantially. To give a sense of the rate of growth, the Euro 2024 saw Yospace stitch 6bn one-to-one addressable ads, which at the time was a record. 12 months later and we're stitching 8bn per month for normal day-to-day traffic. With such growth set to continue, we will see even greater fluctuations in traffic during those knife-edge moments that tournament football is so brilliant at delivering.

Applying a dynamic ad insertion strategy that delivers maximum value through addressability, while ensuring the best viewer experience during the most thrilling moments, is vital to future success.



Find out more about how Yospace's dynamic ad insertion scales for major live events in our latest white paper. You can download it from our website here:

[www.yospace.com/insights/scaling-up](http://www.yospace.com/insights/scaling-up)



# About Yospace

For 25 years, Yospace has been at the forefront of the digital video revolution. From the early days of mobile delivery, to the mass consumption and monetisation of premium streaming, we have a history of driving business success for the world's biggest telcos, broadcasters, and media companies.

Today, we specialise in dynamic ad insertion using server-side ad insertion (SSAI) and server-guided ad insertion, technologies we have played a central role in pioneered for over a decade. We have helped monetise five Olympic Games, five FIFA World Cups, and thirty-five Grand Slam tennis tournaments. We have over 2,000 live channels under management and we stitch 8 billion advertisements per month.

We work with the biggest names in video streaming, including DIRECTV, FOX, and Tubi in the USA; Allente, Channel 4, ITV, M6, RTL, Telenor, Telia, and TV4 in Europe; Nine, Optus, and Seven West Media in APAC.

Yospace sits under RTL Group's adtech unit.

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## Contact

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Yospace's support was invaluable in helping ITV deliver a record-breaking Euro 2024 with our highest ever peak viewing, whilst maximising our ad delivery to ensure the tournament was a commercial success.

Luke Holder

Head of Service Delivery, ITV

**YOSP▶CE®**