The FOX Fandom Advantage

TURNING PASSION INTO PERFORMANCE

Five Predictive Signals for Smarter Media Decisions





The Opportunity

WHY FANDOM MATTERS NOW (MORE THAN EVER)

Audiences have never been harder to reach or easier to lose. They're spread across platforms and touchpoints, making scale elusive and sustained attention even more difficult to earn. In this environment, exposure alone means little. The real challenge is creating resonance: earning the attention of people who are deeply engaged and ready to act. That kind of audience is increasingly rare and incredibly valuable.

For advertisers, the opportunity goes beyond simply reaching people. It's about finding the places and spaces where audiences are paying attention, leaning in, and more likely to act.

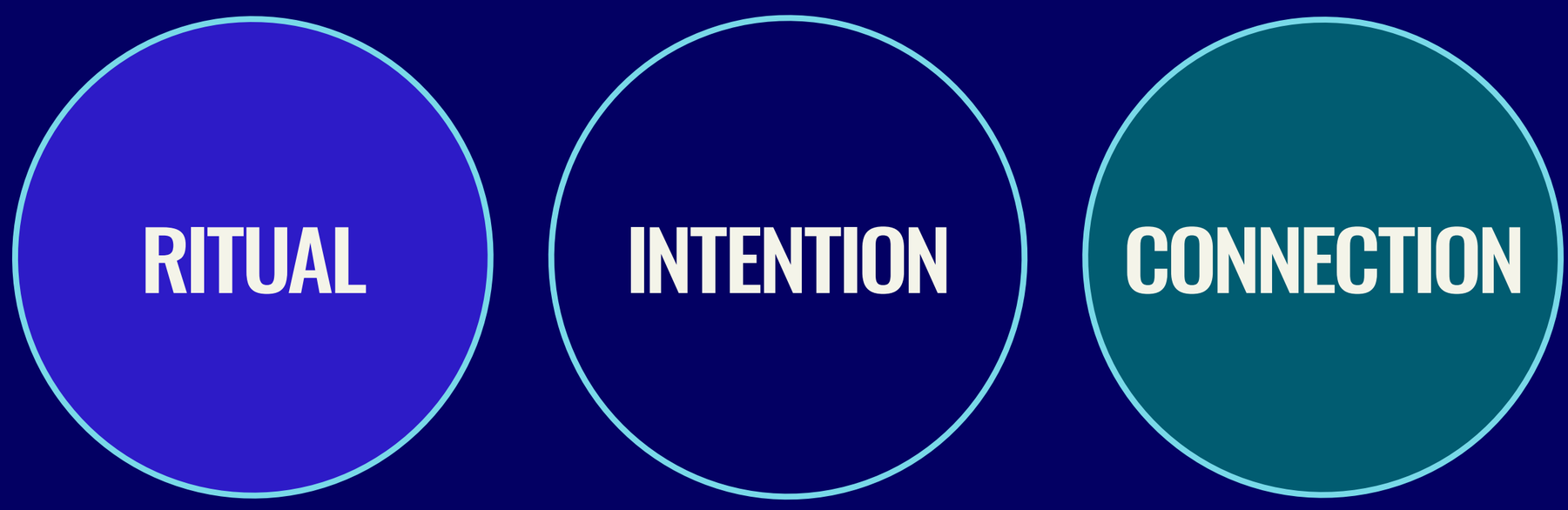
What signals that an audience is deeply invested, and what does that mean for advertisers? Drawing on research with The Harris Poll, MediaProbe, and other measurement partners, FOX explores five behavioral signals of fandom and their implications for media planning, creative, and measurement.

The Model

A FRAMEWORK TO UNDERSTAND PASSION

Passion is easy to feel, but harder to quantify. For advertisers, passion matters most when it drives performance. FOX's own behavioral research breaks passion into five signals that separate a real fan from a casual viewer.

FIVE DISTINCT SIGNALS



FIVE SIGNALS OF FANDOM

HOW IT'S MEASURED

RITUAL

Content becomes a recurring fixture in fans' lives, whether it's Sunday football, the nightly news, or a standing date with a favorite series. The distinction from habit matters: a habit is repeated with little thought, while a ritual is deliberately chosen. A moment a viewer actively protects is one a brand can plan around with confidence. Returning to these experiences creates continuity, anticipation, and familiarity. For advertisers, those recurring moments offer opportunities to build a sustained presence.

Watching at a consistent day or time, returning to the same program week after week, setting a reminder or recording in advance.

INTENTION

Fans arrive with a purpose: to follow the outcome, catch the next development, or experience a moment as it happens. That investment shapes how closely they watch and how much attention they bring. The opportunity for advertisers is to reach audiences when they're most actively engaged.

Watching live rather than delayed, binging multiple episodes in one sitting, watching a program for its entire duration.

CONNECTION

A shared passion creates common ground and nurtures community. Watch parties, group chats, and conversations turn individual viewing into a sense of belonging, giving brands an opportunity to become part of what brings people together.

Viewing with other people in the room, watching in an out-of-home setting such as a bar or restaurant, the online buzz a broadcast generates afterward.

EXTENSION

Passion travels beyond the program. Fans seek out highlights, follow personalities, and explore related podcasts or behind-the-scenes material. Each touchpoint offers another way to sustain interest and build on a brand's presence.

Following the show, team, or talent on social media, watching content before or after the program itself, engaging with a creator or personality tied to it.

ACTION

Fans express their passion through purchases, subscriptions, and recommendations. These are the outcomes that matter most to advertisers, the point where passion becomes commercial behavior. These choices reveal the commercial potential of fandom, while campaign measurement establishes how advertising contributes.

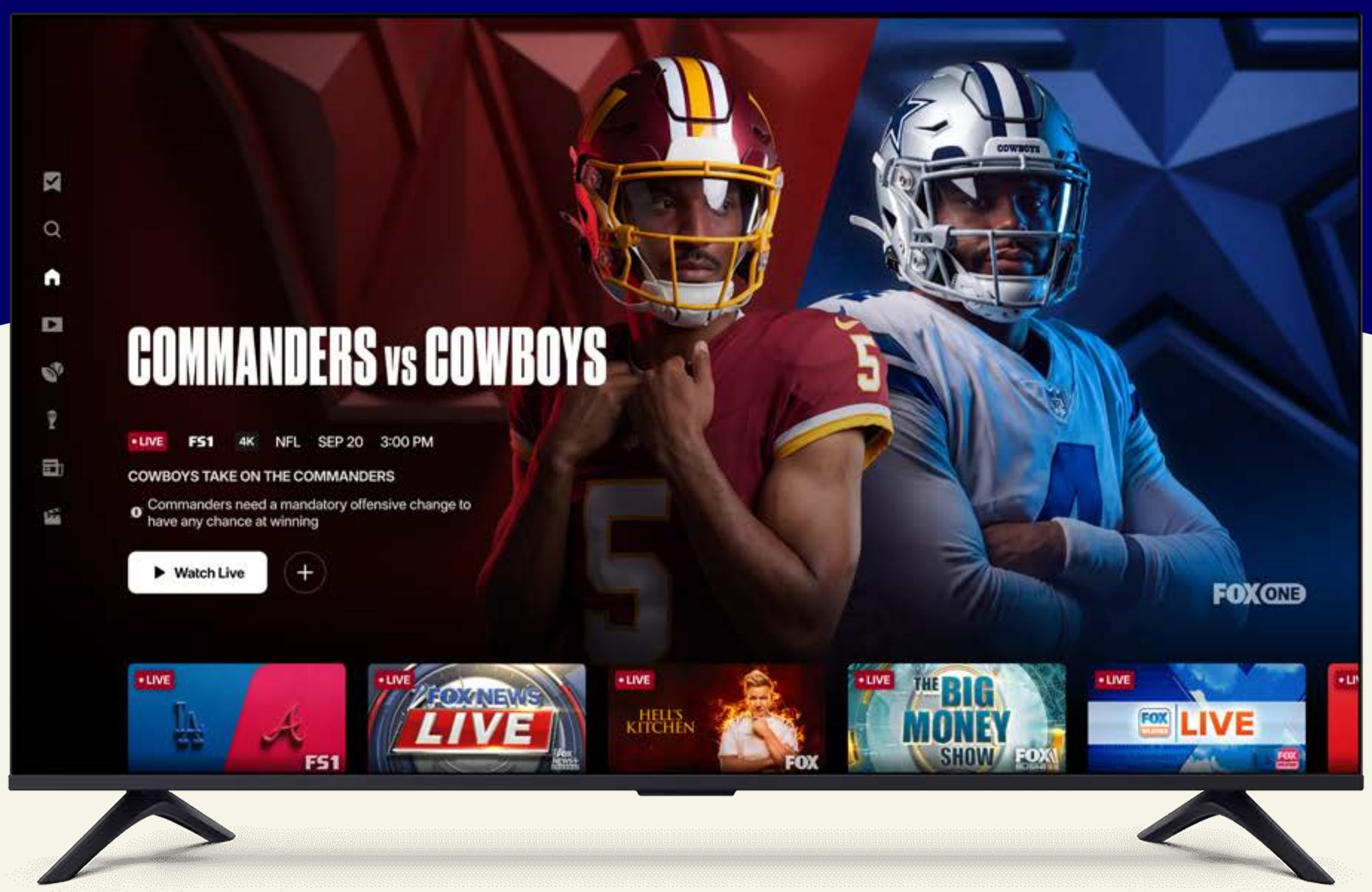
Making a purchase because of the content, subscribing to a new service to keep watching, recommending the program to someone else.

The Data

WHAT FAN BEHAVIOR REVEALS

FOX's research examines these five signals through reported viewing routines, attention, community participation, engagement beyond the program, and purchasing behavior.

The findings below show how FOX viewers compare with non-FOX viewers.



AUDIENCE DEVOTION SHOWS UP CLEARLY IN THE DATA

The Harris Poll surveyed more than 12,000 U.S. adults and measured how often FOX viewers build programming into their routine, watch with urgency, and give it their full attention compared to non-FOX viewers. Throughout, "FOX viewers" are respondents who watch FOX programming and "non-FOX viewers" are those who do not. These aren't passive exposures.

They're planned moments that give advertisers a much better shot at being seen, remembered, and talked about.



Model Signal:
Ritual

48%

VS 39% NON-FOX VIEWERS

Report that their programming is a core part of their routine

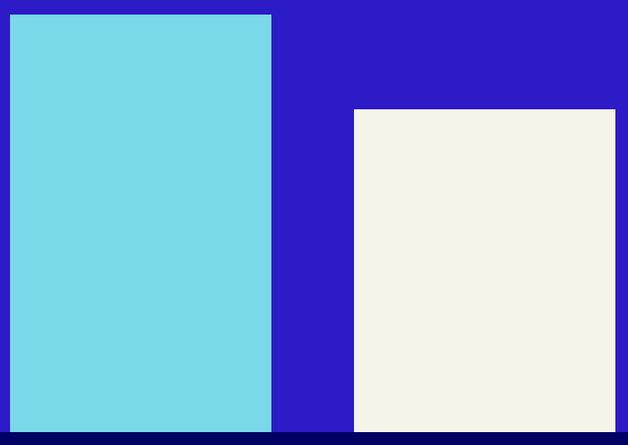


Model Signal:
Intention

44%

VS 34% NON-FOX VIEWERS

Report that it is important to watch right away

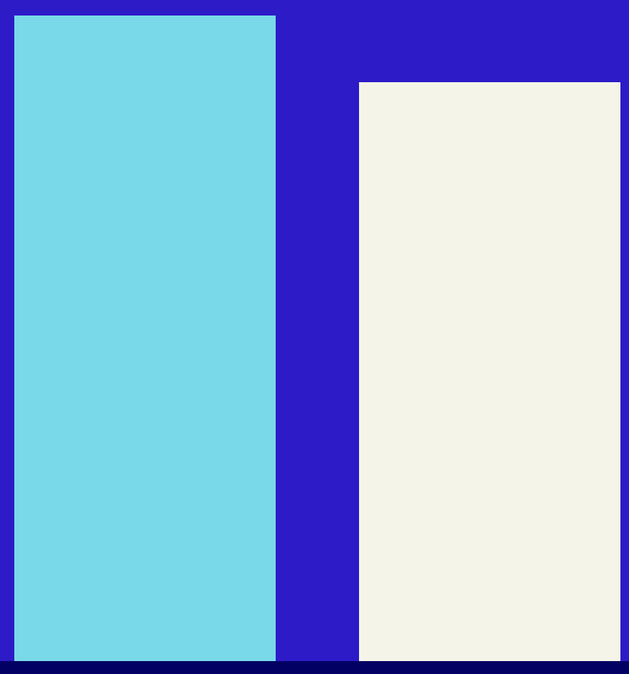


Model Signal:
Intention

68%

VS 61% NON-FOX VIEWERS

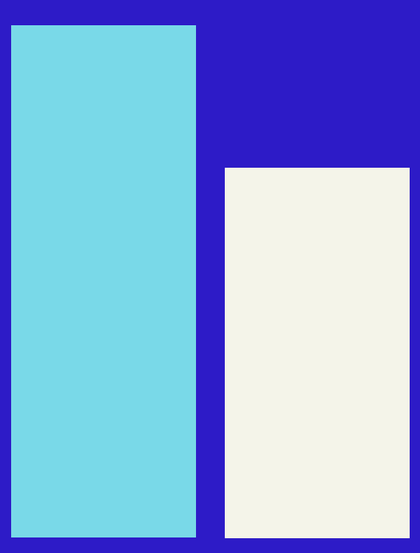
Report giving it their full attention while watching



FANDOM SHAPES IDENTITY AND BELONGING.

The findings below show how shared interests connect viewers to one another and to broader fan communities.

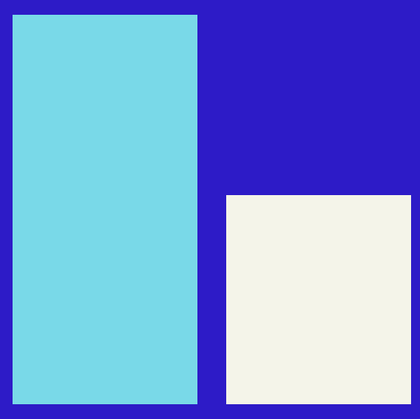
Model Signal: Connection



54%

VS 39% NON-FOX VIEWERS

Report a spark of connection meeting someone else who shares the interest



41%

VS 22% NON-FOX VIEWERS

Have participated in a fan community

That passion goes beyond the content itself.

FOX viewers are not only fans of a show or a game, they are fans of the people who bring it to life, the anchors, analysts, hosts, and personalities who become part of what they look forward to right alongside the program. That same passion extends into what surrounds the broadcast. Across the portfolio, FOX viewers are far more likely than non-FOX viewers to follow social accounts tied to what they watch and to consume ancillary content, pre- and postgame shows, podcasts, spinoffs, and behind-the-scenes material that supports the primary program.



FOX TURNS PROGRAMMING INTO AN ALWAYS-ON NETWORK.

The content becomes a hub, with fans actively seeking out the recaps, clips, and conversations that surround it.

For a brand already advertising within the program, that creates more chances for the same message to be seen again, provided the brand also shows up in the surrounding content.



Model Signal:
Extension

74%

VS 56% NON-FOX VIEWERS

FOX viewers across the portfolio who follow social accounts tied to what they watch, versus non-FOX viewers

Model Signal:
Extension

84%

VS 74% NON-FOX VIEWERS

FOX viewers across the portfolio who watch ancillary content, versus non-FOX viewers

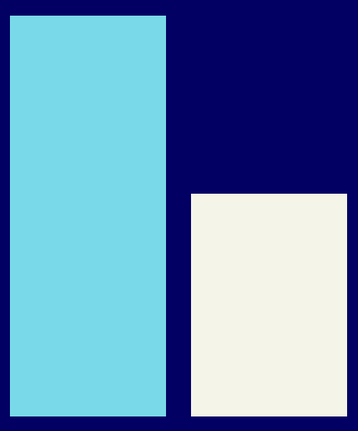
Percentages reflect an unweighted average across Sports, News, Entertainment and Streaming (FOX Viewers vs non-FOX Viewers)

WHERE PASSION TURNS INTO ACTION

The Harris Poll found that FOX viewers say they've spent money in the past year because of a program, team, host, or creator they follow

at a far higher rate than non-FOX viewers, and that holds true across the whole portfolio, not in one vertical alone.

Model Signal: Action



54%

VS 30% NON-FOX VIEWERS

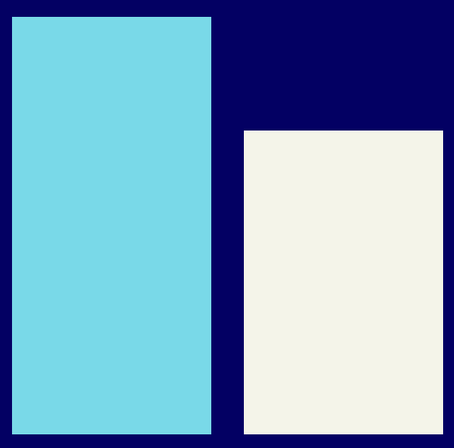
FOX viewers across the portfolio who report spending money because of programming, versus non-FOX viewers

Percentages reflect an unweighted average across Sports, News, Entertainment and Streaming (FOX Viewers vs non-FOX Viewers)



FOX viewers also report greater receptivity to advertising than non-FOX viewers.

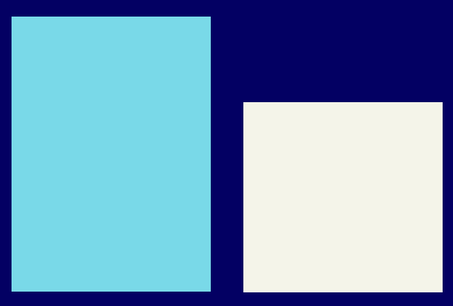
Model Signal: Action



44%

VS 32% NON-FOX VIEWERS

More likely to notice brands that advertise during their programming



29%

VS 20% NON-FOX VIEWERS

More likely to report that a brand's advertisement increases their interest in it



TALENT ACCELERATES THE CYCLE OF FANDOM

FOX viewers are more likely than non-FOX viewers to say a creator or personality influences what they watch.



62%

VS 48% NON-FOX VIEWERS

Likely to watch a program because a creator or personality they like is involved or recommends it

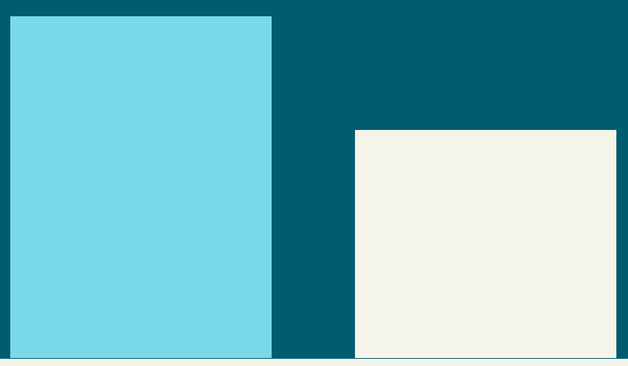
THAT INFLUENCE EXTENDS BEYOND DISCOVERY.

The following findings show how creators feature in decisions to watch live, subscribe, and purchase.

36%

VS 24% NON-FOX VIEWERS

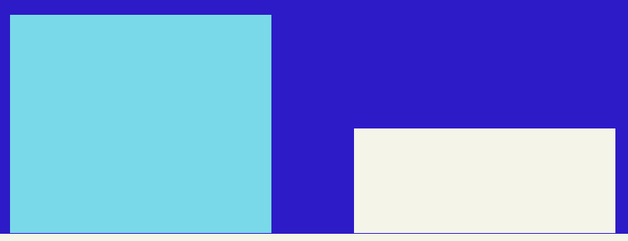
Made an effort to watch something live instead of later because of a creator



23%

VS 11% NON-FOX VIEWERS

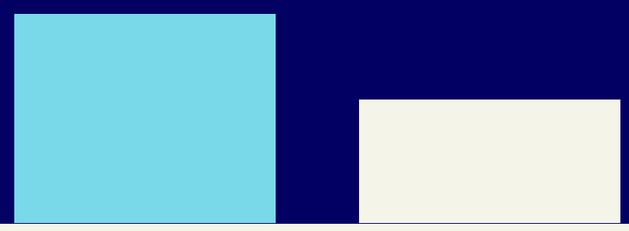
Started a free trial or subscribed to a service to watch content a creator recommended



22%

VS 13% NON-FOX VIEWERS

Purchased a product or service a creator or personality recommended



Creators function as FOX's built-in amplification network, mobilizing audiences rather than merely delivering them.

FOX delivers audiences who are already paying attention and already more likely to act on what they see.

Passion changes the quality of the impression itself.

A schedule built around passionate audiences should be valued differently than one built around raw reach, in the investment it receives, in the creative built for it, and in how success against it gets measured.



The Portfolio

FANDOM FLEXES ACROSS THE PORTFOLIO

The same signals of fandom show up across FOX, but they take different forms in different environments. Across FOX Sports, FOX News, FOX Entertainment, and Tubi, those differences create distinct opportunities for advertisers to meet audiences when passion is working hardest. Each environment can exhibit all five signals, and the examples below highlight fandom's different expressions.

One portfolio, many modes of passion. Across every environment, the same five signals drive the passion that performs for brands.

FOX SPORTS

Brands benefit from appearing when intention and emotion are already elevated.

Ritual around the live moment. Communal, inherited, and anchored to occasions like tailgates and watch parties, where fellow fans often become close friends.

FOX NEWS media

Brands benefit from environments viewers return to consistently.

Trust and daily consistency. Habitual viewing driven by the need to stay informed, shaped as much by trusted hosts as by the news itself.

FOX ENTERTAINMENT

Brands benefit from a cultural afterglow that extends beyond the episode itself.

Identity through character and narrative. Passion lives in the conversation after an episode, and in a show becoming part of someone's identity.

tubi

Brands benefit from reaching people within an environment shaped by personal taste and deliberate choice.

Community through discovery. Digital–first, with viewers finding what they love on their own terms.

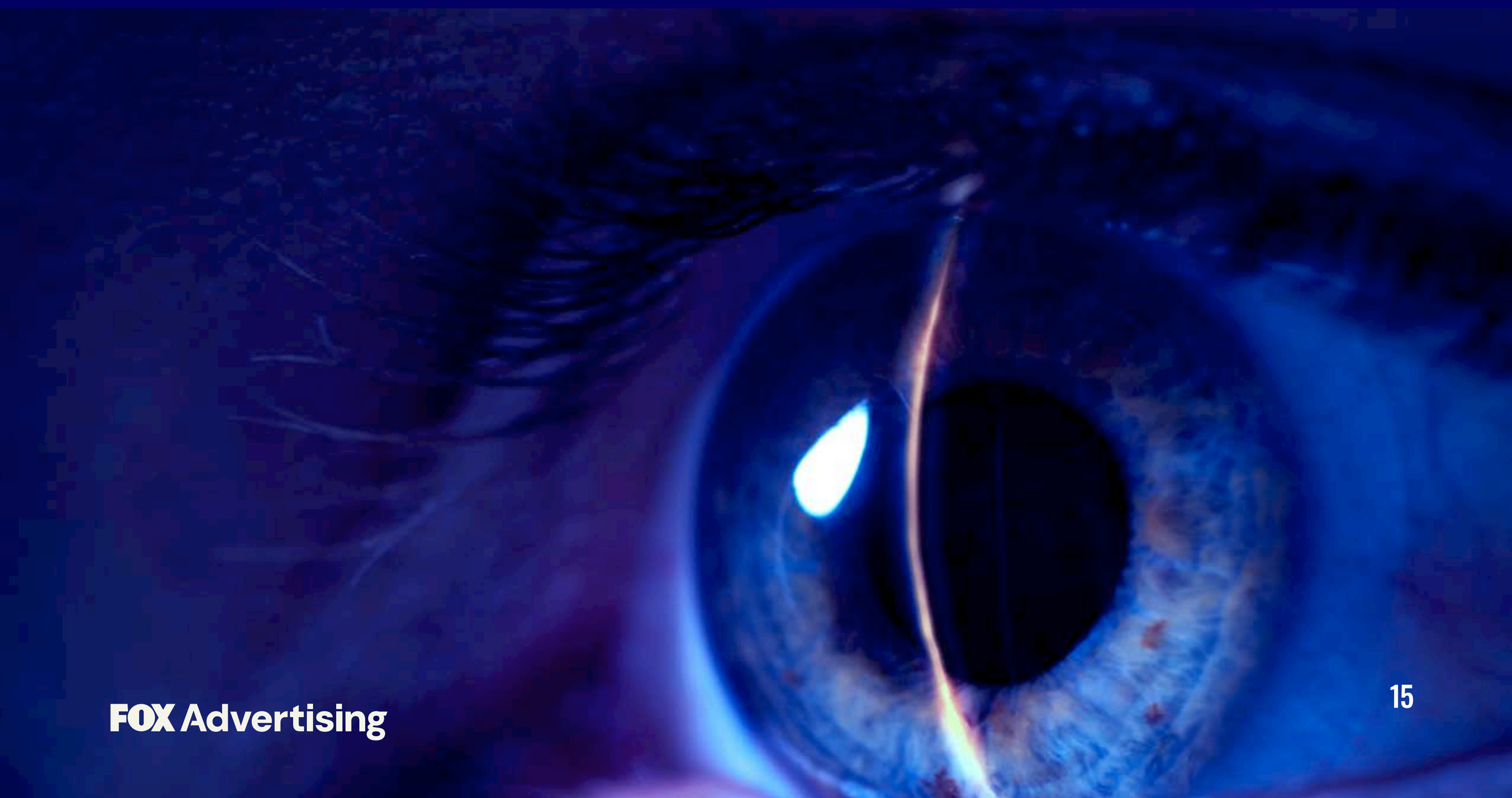
The Science

THE BIOMETRICS OF FANDOM

Behavior tells us what passionate audiences do. A growing body of physiological and academic research helps explain why these audiences are different, including effects people may not even be able to articulate themselves.

Fandom is accompanied by a measurable, involuntary physiological response when audiences engage with content they care about.

FOX partnered with MediaProbe to test that directly, tracking electrodermal activity, a signal people can't consciously control, second-by-second while participants watched content and ads. Where The Harris Poll compared FOX viewers to non-FOX viewers, MediaProbe set out to confirm something broader: that fans, of anything, respond differently in the body.



THE QUESTION WAS SIMPLE.

Could that involuntary signal alone identify a real fan, without ever asking them?

8,000+
HOURS OF BIOMETRIC DATA COLLECTED

4,600+
PARTICIPANT SESSIONS MEASURED

290
BRANDS ANALYZED

70,711
AD EXPOSURE RECORDS TRACKED

MediaProbe trained its model on part of the sample, then tested it against a completely separate group of people the model had never analyzed before, to make sure it wasn't just recognizing familiar faces.

The model detected self-identified fans from physiological response alone with 86% accuracy.

The study also turned up something unexpected.

Some participants showed a galvanic skin response consistent with fandom, even though they didn't call themselves fans.

Researchers named them hidden fans.

Fandom, it turns out, can run ahead of what people report about themselves. The science is interesting. The business implication matters even more.



1.3x

Ad recall multiplier for fans relative to non-fans



1.5x

Recommendation multiplier for fans relative to non-fans

Fans beat non-fans on every single measure MediaProbe tracked, eight for eight.

A fan can be worth more than a casual viewer when the goal is intention, memory, recommendation, or action. The media environments that matter most are the ones where people care the most, not necessarily the ones with the biggest audience.

MediaProbe's findings confirm what fans told The Harris Poll: two methods pointing to the same conclusion.

Alongside a growing body of independent research, they show that fandom is not just a marketing signal. It is real, measurable, and more valuable to advertisers.

The Results

FANDOM IN ACTION: WORLD CUP

The World Cup is the five signals playing out at full scale, on the biggest sporting stage in the world, on FOX. And fans could act on all of it without friction. As sports rights fragment across more services, simply finding the game has gotten harder. But with every match airing on FOX in the U.S., fans had one clear destination for the tournament. No searching, no confusion, just the game where fans knew to find it. And when they found it, every signal showed up in the numbers.

The World Cup this past summer showed exactly that, at a scale few properties in the U.S. sports calendar can match, reaching more total viewers than the Winter Olympics, the NBA Postseason, the NCAA Postseason, and the NHL Postseason combined reach, and drove the highest co-viewing rate of any major sporting event measured this year.

That is connection at scale.



WHY FANDOM MATTERS

That same intention converted for advertisers too. The action signal at work. Official World Cup sponsors and everyday advertisers alike outperformed U.S. TV norms on engagement, recall, and action, and MRI-Simmons and EDO data confirm the same pattern holds across FOX Sports programming generally, not just during the tournament.

ADVERTISERS

201 Million
Total Reach

FOX's FIFA World Cup 2026 coverage, more than other major U.S. sports properties measured over the same period, per Nielsen

COMMUNITY

55% +23% vs 2022

Watched FOX's World Cup coverage with at least one other person, per Nielsen

LIFT

19% vs. TV Sports Norm

Official World Cup sponsors, engagement lift, per MediaProbe

ATTENTION

153 Index vs. Total TV Average

FOX Sports viewers who always pay attention to ads, per MRI-Simmons

RECALL

1.9X vs. Sponsor Benchmark

Official World Cup sponsors, brand recall per MediaProbe

SPEND

9X per EDO

Average TV ad units needed to match one FOX Sports ad's impact

The Application

TURNING FANDOM INTO A WINNING MEDIA STRATEGY



THE FIVE SIGNALS

give advertisers a practical way to evaluate audience relationships and the opportunities they create.

Use them to ask more of a media plan:

RITUAL

What content do audiences consistently make time for, and how can a brand build a sustained presence around it?

INTENTION

What evidence shows audiences are engaged, and what does that mean for the message?

CONNECTION

How do people share the experience, and how can a brand participate meaningfully?

EXTENSION

Where does engagement continue beyond the program, and which additional touchpoints fit the campaign?

ACTION

Which outcomes matter to the brand, and how will they be measured?

THE ANSWERS CAN INFORM WHERE A BRAND APPEARS,

how its creative fits the context, and how success is evaluated. Because these signals are observable and stable, they also function as leading indicators for planning.

A buyer can evaluate them on the front end and choose environments likely to deliver a higher concentration of genuine fans, rather than discovering it only after a campaign runs. The five signals are parallel markers of fan intensity, not sequential stages. Read together, they turn fandom into a forward-looking planning input.

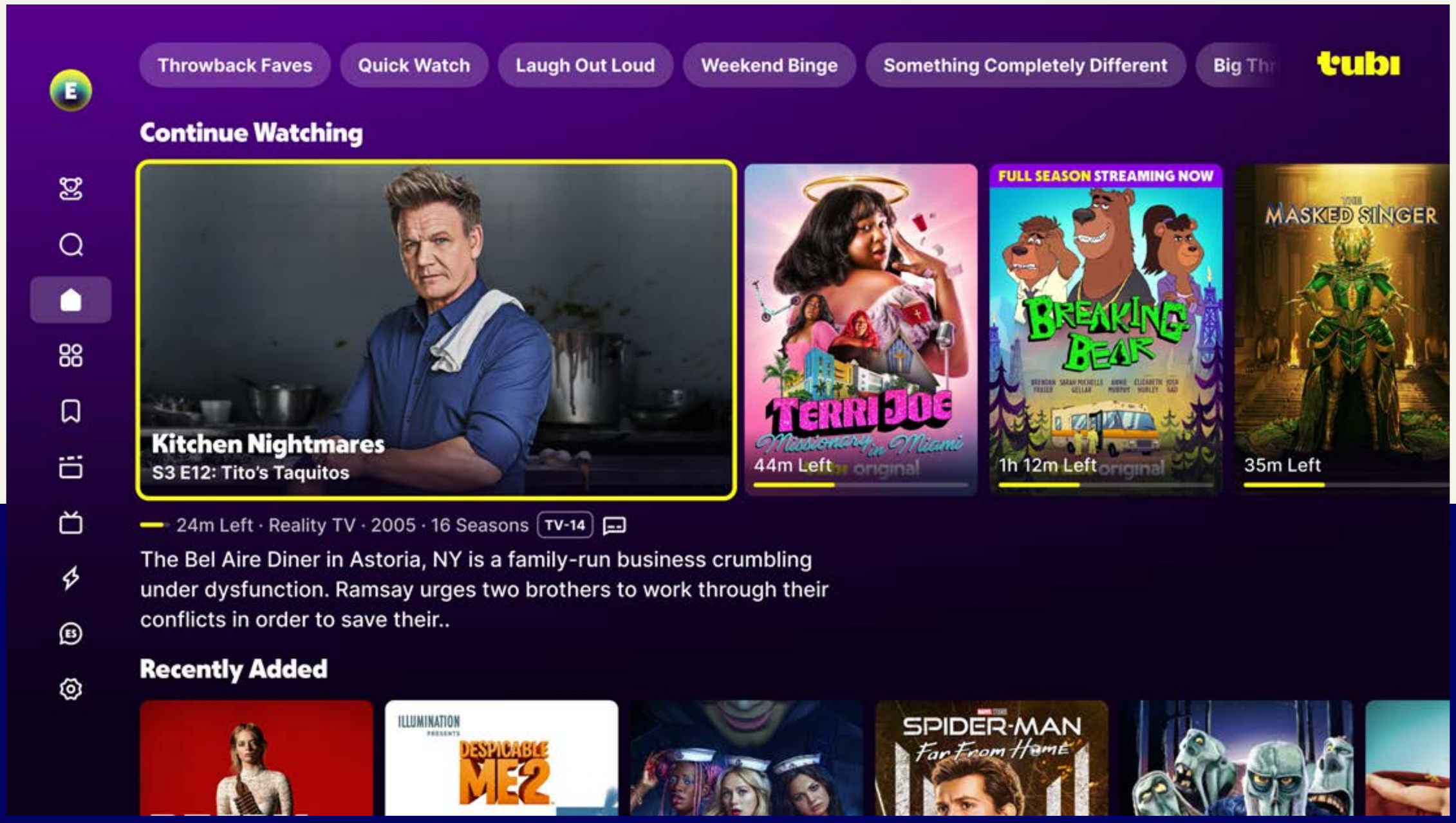
Across FOX Sports, FOX News, FOX Entertainment, and Tubi, FOX provides the programming, personalities, and communities where fandoms thrive, and brands can connect with passionate fans. Additionally, FOX AdStudio expands how brands can leverage those connections through smarter audience planning, activation, and measurement.



The Takeaway

PASSION MULTIPLIES PERFORMANCE

The value of an audience lies in both its scale and the strength of its connection.



Ritual, intention, connection, extension, and action give advertisers a clearer way to understand that relationship, and to make more informed decisions about where to show up, what to create, and how to measure success.

An impression delivered to a passive, divided audience lands quietly.

That same impression delivered to a leaned-in, intentional viewer becomes a commercial catalyst.



FOX CURATES THE PROGRAMMING AND EXPERIENCES

that bring hyper-passionate audiences together at scale. For brands, that creates opportunities to become part of what fans already care about, turning fandom into fuel for growth.

The signals are clear. The advantage is real. Let's put it to work for your brand.

Turn Passion Into Performance.

SOURCES

The FOX Passion Advantage, FOX Advertising, with The Harris Poll and MediaProbe

FOX Fandom Report, The Harris Poll, February to March 2026, 12,088 respondents

The Biometric Signature of a Fan, MediaProbe and TVOT

FIFA World Cup 2026, FOX Overall Insights One Pager, with MediaProbe

Nielsen coviewing and out-of-home viewing data,
FIFA World Cup 2026 versus FIFA World Cup 2022

MRI-Simmons Sports Fan Study

EDO ad performance data, FOX Sports programming versus average TV