

WORLD CUP IN VIETNAM

Fan Demand, Viewing
Behaviour and the Media
Landscape



How the world's biggest football event is being
consumed in one of Southeast Asia's most
football-passionate digital markets

SUMMARY

Vietnam's football audience has moved on from being a TV audience. Search, streaming and social now do most of the work: live matches, highlights, creator content, café screenings and real-time updates all feed into the same experience.

Searches for "World Cup" in Vietnam jumped 1,550% immediately after kickoff, and overall football searches rose 480% compared with the month before the tournament (Coc Coc Research). The top 1,000 football keywords pulled in 16.6 million searches from the opening match to the end of the group stage.

Most of that volume was practical – standings, fixtures, results, schedules. Standings alone made up 4.9 million searches, 29.4% of the whole football search category.

Streaming saw the same pattern: VTVgo traffic rose 812%, TV360 rose 126%, and FPT Play rose 88%. VTV holds the full Vietnam rights package – TV, radio, mobile, internet, social distribution, public screening.

With 85.6 million internet users, 79 million social media identities and 137 million mobile connections, Vietnam has the scale to make this a full-funnel opportunity across media, content and commerce.

Bottom line: this isn't just a TV event in Vietnam. It's a digital behaviour event search spikes, streaming traffic, social content, café culture, all at once.



DIGITAL AND FOOTBALL LANDSCAPE

METRIC	VIETNAM 2026
Population	102 million
Internet users	85.6 million
Internet penetration	84.2%
Social media identities	79.0 million
Mobile connections	137 million (134% of population)
TikTok ad reach, 18+	76.1 million
Facebook ad reach	79.0 million
YouTube ad reach	62.1 million
Zalo monthly active users	78.3 million



Mobile connections outnumber the population.
TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, and Zalo all sit at mass scale.
World Cup content here travels well past the broadcast window.

The opportunity for broadcasters and brands isn't just the live audience – it's the full path:

search > live match > highlights > social reaction >
café viewing > anticipation for the next game.

SEARCH BEHAVIOUR

"World Cup" searches rose 1,550% after kick-off; football searches broadly rose 480% (Coc Coc). Top 1,000 keywords: 16.6 million searches through the group stage.

SEARCH CATEGORY	SEARCHES	SHARE
Standings	4.9m	29.4%
Fixtures/head-to-head	4.4m	26.4%
Schedules	~2.0M	12.1%



"World Cup 2026 schedule" was the single most-searched term. Coc Coc's Football Search feature saw engagement up 531%.

Player searches: Messi led during the group stage, ahead of Ronaldo, Neymar, Haaland, Mbappé and Lamine Yamal. All three of Portugal's group matches landed in the top 10 most-searched fixtures; Argentina had two.

Fans search for utility first – schedule, standings, results – but the emotional pull still comes from the big names.

VIEWING BEHAVIOUR: TV, STREAMING, CATCH-UP

BEHAVIOUR

Live TV
OTT streaming
Replays/highlights
Second-screen
Selective viewing

TREND

Still central for big matches, family viewing
Growing fast – mobile access, catch-up demand
More important given the odd kick-off times
Checking standings/results while watching
Prioritising favourite teams, stars, and knockouts



VTVgo traffic **+812%**, TV360 **+126%**, FPT Play **+88%**

(Coc Coc Browser data). VTVgo's World Cup package: VND100,000 for live access to all 104 matches, replays, VOD, 10-minute highlights.

Fans aren't just watching matches anymore – they're managing attention across time zones and platforms, which is why replays, highlights and mobile access matter as much as the live broadcast itself.



MEDIA RIGHTS & DISTRIBUTION

VTV holds the full rights package: TV, radio, mobile, internet, social, public screening, all 104 matches plus ceremonies and highlights.

AREA	STATUS
Main rights holder	VTV
Live matches	104
OTT / digital	VTVgo, FPT Play, TV360, MyTV, SCTV, VTCab
Second-screen	Checking standings/results while watching
Public screenings	Licensed through VTV



VTV has sublicensed to FPT Play, MyTV, TV360, VTCab, and SCTV.

The catch: TVAD (VTV's ad arm) reportedly asked pay-TV broadcasters for around VND100 billion (~US\$4M) each in sublicensing fees (VietnamNet). Combined with matches airing 2am–11am Vietnam time, that's a tough ad-value equation for operators – rights are expensive, and the natural viewing window is thin.



SOCIAL MEDIA AND SHORT-FORM CONTENT

TikTok is an official FIFA platform partner for the first time in a men's World Cup – a Preferred Platform deal with a dedicated hub, creator programme, curated clips, partial livestreams, and 30 global Creator Correspondents doing behind-the-scenes coverage.

In Vietnam: TikTok ad reach 76.1M (88.8% of internet users); Facebook 79M; YouTube 62.1M; Zalo 78.3M MAU.

PLATFORM	ROLE
TikTok	Highlights, reactions, creator content, discovery
Facebook	Discussion, publisher posts, fan debate
YouTube	Highlights, analysis
Zalo	Link-sharing, group chats
VTVgo / FPT Play / TV360	Legal live + replay access



Social doesn't replace live viewing; it extends it – live match, highlight, reaction, meme, discussion, then back to search for the next fixture. Content strategy should cover more than match-result posts: reactions, fixture explainers, standings updates, star content, café/fan culture stories, recap content.



COMMERCIAL & FAN CULTURE IMPACT

In Ho Chi Minh City, cafés went 24-hour and saw customer traffic up 40-70%. One owner reported traffic up 50-70%; another saw both revenue and traffic up 40-50% after switching to round-the-clock hours.

BUSINESS AREA

Cafés/sports bars

F&B

Telco / OTT

Retail / sportswear

Travel

Public viewing

OPPORTUNITY

Overnight and early-morning screenings

104

Themed products, check-in spaces, collectibles

Jerseys, merchandise, team campaigns

World Cup travel packages

Licensed fan zones, big-screen setups



VOV also reported cafés and sports bars investing in projectors and big screens as gathering spots grow more popular.

The real opportunity isn't the screen - it's the experience around it: food, drinks, photo moments, check-in spaces, social sharing. This is football fandom turning into an urban experience economy, and the most valuable moments may happen outside the 90 minutes - before kick-off, at cafés, in group chats, after the final whistle.



STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

BROADCASTERS:

Treat schedules/standings/results as core products, not filler. Push legal streaming (VTVgo, FPT Play, TV360) to cut piracy. Invest in replays and highlights given the time-zone problem. Use TikTok and short-form to extend match relevance.

BRANDS:

Target demand around Messi, Ronaldo, Neymar, Mbappé, Lamine Yamal – works even in matches Vietnam isn't in. Focus spend on marquee teams, knockout games, and convenient kick-off times. Attach to viewing rituals – food delivery, coffee, beer, data, sportswear. Invest in shareable spaces: check-ins, themed packaging, public viewing.

PUBLISHERS:

Real-time explainers (standings, permutations, schedules) drive search volume. Human stories – cafés, fan groups, viewing habits – make the tournament feel local. Match content to platform: Facebook for debate, TikTok for reactions, YouTube for analysis, Zalo for sharing. Keep the post-match lifecycle going with results, highlights, player moments, memes.

