



Game Changer – FIFA Women's World Cup 2019

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The purpose of the Game Changers research programme is to fill the gap of understanding of how brands can benefit from investing in women's sport. Currently so little is known about the women's sports market and often marketing decisions are made based on assumptions, rather than evidence.

With a particular emphasis around the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup, we used a host of innovative research techniques to explore, compare, understand, ask and track the perceptions, thoughts and opinions of marketing around Women's sport.

In association with talkSPORT, MediaCom surveyed 2,000 consumers across the UK before and after the Women's World Cup, finding that after the tournament, the World Cup won an additional 2.4 million fans for women's football on top of the 11.6 million from before the tournament. Although only 50% of those who followed this year's tournament watched the event in 2015, 95% of those who followed the game in 2015 watched it again in 2019, meaning that once someone becomes a fan, they stay loyal to the women's game and it looks promising that these numbers will only grow.

The demand for the game also rose after consumers were asked 'should women's football be broadcast more frequently?' 63% agreed that they wanted to see more from women's football, with the ages 18-24 25-34 and 65-74 having the largest increases compared to before the tournament.

TV adverts around the tournament were received positively

In fact, 66% said that they liked the adverts they watched and what they saw made them feel a sense of pride and happiness. However, the adverts were perceived to be more relatable to women despite a majority of the audience being male (64%). We found that 27% of this year's male audience thought that the adverts were patronising, however 60% of all genders said that the adverts they saw were 'for people like me' (73% female vs 50% male).

So why should advertisers get involved in women's sport?

Just like the media, brands have the ability to positively impact public perceptions too. For example, those who were aware of the Boots' sponsorship of the England and home nation teams were more likely to perceive women's sport in a more positive light. We found that consumers are also more likely to purchase from a brand who is seen to be involved in women's sport. In an increasingly competitive market place, a brand's values can be just as, if not more, important than product functionality. 68% of fans of women's sport said that brands that invest in women's sports are leading the way for others and 49% of consumers say that they were more likely to support brands who are involved also.

But why women's sport in particular? Positivity!

Women's sport is perceived as more positive, whilst men's sport is more negative. The key factors that contribute to these perceptions are around fairplay (for positivity) and money-grabbing and aggressive (negative). Other perceptions such as sporting ability and experience are much more similar.

Pauline Robson, managing partner at MediaCom, said: "It's clear that the Women's World Cup has created significant public demand for more of the sport; the tournament was a truly global one and smashed broadcasting records. There's therefore a huge opportunity for brands to help drive women's sports to even greater heights and ensure the Lionesses' legacy continues after the World Cup."

In conclusion, this is the perfect time for brands to get involved with the advertising and sponsorship opportunities that sit within women's sport. The evidence reveals that women's sport audience numbers are on the rise and with positive results from media owner coverage and advertising and sponsorship opportunities, now has never been a better time

for businesses to get their foot in the door and increase their value.

[Click here to view our complete findings.](#)

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