

# The Evolution of Soccer into Fútbol

## Capturing U.S. Soccer Fans in 2025-2026

BODEN

The 1994 FIFA World Cup changed the U.S. soccer landscape forever. Not only in playing a pivotal role in the birth of the MLS (Major League Soccer), but proving to doubting sponsors – and the country at-large – that the sport could prosper in the U.S. Three decades later, "The Beautiful Game" is hotter than ever. Driven by a younger and more diverse fanbase, 54% of its fans are under the age of 45, with **U.S. Hispanics playing a pivotal role in the explosion of fútbol fandom that's currently permeating throughout culture**. Clear examples include the MLS, with a 30% Latino fanbase, and the 60 million fans of the National Mexican team in the U.S. The rise of the Hispanic population has been instrumental in driving soccer's mass appeal, and as the cohort continues to grow, so will its influence. Combined with the rise of non-traditional paths to fandom, such as **gaming, sports betting, and fashion**, the soccer fan base has **increased by 57% YoY over the past five years, and 400% in the past year alone**.

## One Country, Many Soccer Subcultures

**The Soccer Advocate** **15%**

**The Enthusiast** **19%**

**The Sports Fan** **32%**

**The Casual Fan** **26%**

**The Event Seeker** **8%**

- Passionate soccer fan who views the sport as central to their identity.
- Actively promotes soccer's growth, plays the game, and passes on their enthusiasm on.
- Engages with soccer content on social media and discusses political issues tied to the sport.
- Watches multiple games weekly and inspired by star players.

- Shows deep commitment to their favorite soccer teams, though they're less vocal in their fandom than The Advocate.
- Their loyalty is evident in regular viewership and close following of outcomes.
- Many have cultural or familial ties to soccer, with a diverse fan base, including Hispanic fans.

- Has a broad interest in various sports, including soccer, but is less passionate than The Enthusiast or The Advocate.
- They appreciate sports performance and have diverse interests.
- Often Gen X and predominantly Male, their interest in soccer may come from a general love of sports or video games.

- Enjoys soccer as part of their entertainment mix, but isn't deeply immersed in the sport.
- They watch games occasionally, support local teams, and value the community aspect.
- They value the social connection over intense fandom for a team. Are often older and non-players.

- Drawn to major soccer events like the Men's and Women's FIFA World Cups, with interest peaking during high-profile tournaments.
- They engage with soccer around big moments, favoring platforms like TikTok for short-term, energetic content.
- Higher percentage of women and a relatively new fan base.

## Soccer Continues to Make Headlines...

### SOCCERBIBLE

adidas Unveil Official Match Ball for the FIFA Club World Cup 2025



Neymar on 2026 World Cup: 'I am going after this trophy in any way I can'

### SportsPro

Soccer fandom in US at 'all-time high' with new followers growing 57% YoY

### Forbes

Soccer Fandom Is Booming In America According To New Report

### FORTUNE

Billionaires, celebrities, and CEOs like Bob Iger are investing in U.S. soccer—and the beautiful game's American gold rush is just beginning



What MLS NEXT's expansion means for your youth soccer player

### ESPN

FIFA report: Women's transfer fees hit record \$15.6m in 2024

### Bloomberg

World Cup 2026 Final Goes to NYC-Area in Victory Over Dallas and LA

## Trends Among Soccer's Subcultures

### Gaming & Sports Betting



**Sports Betting:** 30% of fans have placed a legal bet on soccer in the past 12 months. Those who have legally bet on soccer are 67% more likely to watch three or more games a week, 56% more likely to use social media for soccer content, and 83% more likely to actively play soccer.

**Gaming:** 51% of fans said they played soccer video games in the past year. Those who indicated they played soccer video games in the previous 12 months are 45% more likely to watch three or more games a week, 44% more likely to use social media for soccer news, and 55% more likely to actively play soccer.

### Social Media



**Consumption Habits:** While sports remain one of the last "appointment viewing" verticals, fans across all age groups are flocking to YouTube and other platforms to catch highlights, full match replays, and analysis to catch up on games they might have missed.

**Team Channels:** Official team channels on YouTube and other platforms offer exclusive content, such as locker room access, player interviews, and match day preparations, which deepen fan loyalty.

**Celebrity Fans:** Celebrities who are vocal soccer fans often share their passion on social media, bringing attention to the sport and influencing their followers

### Soccer x Fashion



**Brand Partnerships:** High-fashion brands like Gucci, Balenciaga, and Off-White are creating limited-edition soccer jerseys and apparel, creating crossover appeal and reaching traditional soccer fans and fashion-conscious consumers.

**Retro Kits:** Fueled by **nostalgia, vintage** jerseys have become popular fashion items, worn not just to games but as everyday streetwear.

**Urban Culture:** Soccer fashion is being merged with influences across hip-hop, skateboarding, and street art, helping the sport resonate with younger and more diverse audiences.

Source: For Soccer

## Ways To Win

1

Engage **Advocates** with exclusive content on soccer's impact and support their grassroots efforts by partnering with local soccer events and clubs to celebrate their long-term commitment to the sport.

2

Enhance **Enthusiasts'** team experience with content that celebrates their cultural connections and support local soccer communities through sponsorships and team events.

3

Captivate **Sports Fans** with content that integrates soccer with other sports and create engaging experiences, like sports bar partnerships or multi-sport events that reflect their diverse interests.

4

Appeal to **Casual Fans** with local-focused content and community events, such as local soccer games or fan meet-ups, leveraging their occasional engagement with soccer.

5

Create vibrant, **event-focused** content for major tournaments and drive excitement with in-person event activations or watch parties that capture the thrill of key soccer moments.



BODEN's Hispanic+™ offering ensures brands are tapping the influence of Hispanic culture to transcend the multicultural mainstream. Our commitment to amplifying diverse voices across earned and social media, embracing diversity, and helping brands activate results-driven campaigns is unparalleled. Looking to learn more? Please reach out to [credentials@bodenagency.com](mailto:credentials@bodenagency.com) for additional details.