

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APOS Sports Edge Returns to Singapore as MPA Research Finds the Next Dollar in Asia Pacific Sport Must Come from Beyond the Rights Fee

Second edition of MPA's sports leadership forum brings Liberty Media, LALIGA, JioStar, Amazon, the Bundesliga, the J.League, Netflix, YouTube and Visa Cash App Racing Bulls F1 Team to The METT in Singapore

MPA and ampd publish two reports on the US\$16 bil. sports economy and the fans behind it

(SINGAPORE, 9 October 2026) Media Partners Asia (MPA) today hosts the second APOS Sports Edge at The METT in Singapore, ahead of the Formula 1 Singapore Grand Prix weekend. Alongside the forum, MPA publishes *Mapping the Sports Economy*, a summary of two new reports: MPA's *APAC's Sports Economy and Where Value Goes Next*, covering 14 markets, and *APAC Sports Fandom: The Consumer's Voice*, ampd's study of 10,249 fans in six markets. Every delegate receives the summary.

The next dollar, MPA argues, will come from sponsorship priced on audience data, the gate, local stars and the women's game, and it will go to the rights-holders who own their fan data and know their fans. ampd's research shows why: fans arrive through people, follow their own players abroad, spend the week with creators and drift when no one around them shares the game.

THE RESEARCH IN SIX NUMBERS

US\$16.2 bil.

Asia Pacific's commercial sports economy in 2026, across 14 markets

US\$4 vs US\$200+

commercial sports revenue a person, Asia Pacific against North America; rights fees rose 58% in five years to US\$5.7 bil.

1–2%

a year: MPA's outlook for rights-fee growth to 2030, after about 10% a year in 2021–26

50%

of rights fees paid by streaming platforms in 2026, up from 36% in 2021

35%

of fans who took up a new sport came in through someone they know; 14% through a big event

63%

of fans who spent on sport in the last year bought no subscription at all

“ This is not the end of sport's boom in Asia Pacific. It is the end of the easy part.

For five years, rights fees rose on a handful of contested tenders, more than half of the growth from one country and much of it from one sport, and several buyers are still paying for what they bought. Yet the region earns about US\$4 of commercial sports revenue a person against more than US\$200 in North America. That gap is not a ceiling. It is headroom. The next dollar will come from the seat, the sponsor, the local star and the women's game, and it will go to the rights-holders who know their fans by name. In the end, it's all in the cash flow. The work now is building businesses, not simply selling rights.”

Vivek Couto CEO & Executive Director, MPA

MPA's five takeouts for the next cycle

01 Rights growth has to be earned.

Only 3% of returning fans came back because a sport arrived on a service they had. Growth needs local products, investment, new rights structures and action on piracy.

02 Close the sponsorship gap.

Priced on audience data, sponsorship can grow 6–7% a year to 2030. Closing half the gap to the global ratio of sponsorship to GDP in Korea, India, Southeast Asia and China would add about US\$5.4 bil. a year.

03 Own the venue, the calendar and the fan.

The Nippon-Ham Fighters' revenue was 59% higher in their first year owning Es Con Field than in 2019.

04 Back the next contested tenders.

Japan, women's sport and local stars are where buyers are likely to compete. Japan's US\$6.4 bil. subscription streaming market is six times its sports rights fees.

05 Run sport as a business.

About US\$14 bil. has been invested in APAC sport or changed hands since 2021, mostly in IPL franchises and venues. Capital has bought scarcity, not cash flow.

THE FORUM

A full day on the whole sports economy

Now in its second year and expanded to a full day, APOS Sports Edge brings brands and advertisers into the room with leagues, platforms and investors, with a sharper focus on Japan and Korea. Vivek Couto, CEO & Executive Director, MPA, opens at 08:30 with "Where the Next Dollar in Asia Pacific Sport Comes From"; Dhivya T, Head of Insights, ampd & MPA, presents the fan research at 16:35. More than 30 speakers take part, including:

Derek Chang

President & CEO, Liberty Media

Javier Tebas

President, LALIGA

Uday Shankar

Vice Chairman, JioStar; Founder & CEO, Bodhi Tree Systems

Alex Green

Managing Director, Prime Video Sport International, Amazon

Gaurav Gandhi

Vice President, APAC and ANZ, Prime Video

Robin Austermann

EVP Americas and Head of Europe, Bundesliga Media

Kevin Mayer

Co-Founder & Executive Chairman, Smash Capital

Finn Bradshaw

Head of Digital, International Cricket Council

Peter Bayer

CEO, Visa Cash App Racing Bulls Formula One Team

Ajay Vidyasagar

Regional Director, YouTube

Julie Choi

CEO, TVING

Toshi Honda

COO, U-NEXT

Markus Gloël

Co-Founder, IKON Capital

Hua Fung Teh

Co-Founder and Group President, ONE Championship

Jose Ramón Capdevila

Founder & CEO, Arragari Group

Henry Tan

Group CEO, Astro

Junya Higuchi

Corporate Executive Officer, J.League

Barney Francis

Chief Business Officer, IMG

Also taking part: leaders and attendees from AIS, Amuse Sports Agency, beIN, Emtek, Fastly, Fighters Sports & Entertainment, Formula 1, Genedant Capital, Google, the International Finance Corporation, the NBA, Netflix, Panjaya, the Premier League, PubMatic, Red Bull Asia, SPOTV Media, Telstra, Tennis Australia, Vidio, The Walt Disney Company, Warner Bros. Discovery and WSC Sports, among others.

Full agenda → apos-sports-edge.com/agenda

KEY FINDINGS

The sports economy

MPA, APAC's Sports Economy and Where Value Goes Next

A large audience, low revenue per fan. Media rights are the largest line at US\$6.1 bil., ahead of sponsorship (US\$4.7 bil.), the gate and hospitality (US\$3.9 bil.) and merchandise (US\$1.5 bil.).

Rights fees have grown, but narrowly. More than half of the rise since 2021 came from India, and the 12 most valuable rights take 64% of fees.

Streaming now pays half. Streamers paid 36% of rights fees in 2021 and 50% in 2026; in most markets a streaming platform now sets the price.

Only the IPL is priced at the top. It earns about US\$12.4 mil. a match, comparable with the Premier League; the KBO earns about US\$100,000.

Growth slows. MPA expects the commercial sports economy to grow about 5% a year to about US\$19.5 bil. in 2030, led by sponsorship and the gate.

Local sport and stars move the audience. KBO attendance rose from 7.3 mil. in 2019 to a record 12.3 mil. in 2025, and more than 25 mil. Japanese viewers watched the first game of MLB's 2025 Tokyo Series.

The women's game is a new lever. The 2025 Women's Cricket World Cup final drew 185 mil. digital viewers in India. MPA expects contested bids for women's competitions, starting with the WPL's rights in 2028.

AI and tech cut the cost of sport. MPA expects 80% of the region's tier-two and tier-three matches to be produced remotely or automatically by 2030. A league-owned fan data layer is likely the most valuable technology investment a rights-holder can make.

KEY FINDINGS

The fan

ampd, APAC Sports Fandom: The Consumer's Voice

New fans arrive through people they know. In every market and every generation, someone they know is the most common way in, and in their earliest memories fans name a father or a friend first.

When the player leaves, fans leave too. 19% of fans who stepped away from an international league say their team or player left, against 11% for local sport; in Korea it is 28%.

International sport grows on top of local fandom. 81% of fans who follow an international league closely also follow local sport closely.

Fans watch the match with creators, and between matches too. In Korea and Thailand, independent creators take 42–43% of sport viewing hours on YouTube; the leagues' and clubs' own channels take 10% to 19%.

The fans who spend live with sport all week. 84% of fans who follow players, creators or pundits spent on sport last year, against 43% of those who follow none.

Fans with no one to share their sport drift away. 28% of fans with no community around their team or league now follow it a lot less, against 5% of those who meet in person.

Local properties lead everywhere but the Philippines. Thailand's women's volleyball team is followed by 48% of adults and Indonesian badminton by 45%; in the Philippines, the NBA leads with 53%.

“ Sport inspires fandom when it comes home, lives beyond the broadcast, and spreads through community.

We asked more than 10,000 fans across six markets what turns a match into a fandom. Fans follow their country, their club and the player from home, and global leagues win fans here through a local star. All week, fans live with their sport beyond the broadcast through the creators, clips and players they follow, and fans who follow players, creators or pundits are twice as likely to spend on it. The rightsholders who meet fans in those spaces, and nurture local, real-life experiences and communities around their sport, are the ones fans will stay and spend with.”

Dhivya T Head of Insights, ampd & MPA

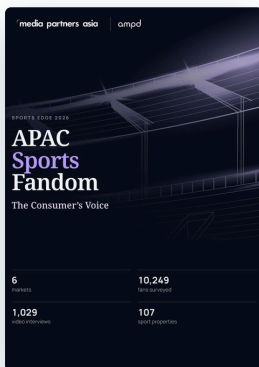
Two new reports



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APAC's Sports Economy and Where Value Goes Next

Sizes the commercial sports economy in 14 markets, shows who has paid for sports rights since 2021 and sets out MPA's 10 Key Calls to 2030. Built on the MPA APAC Sports Rights Database of more than 150 property-market contracts.



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APAC Sports Fandom: The Consumer's Voice

10,249 fans surveyed online in Australia, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines from 9 to 28 September 2026 (adults aged 18 to 50; 18 to 59 in Japan), with 1,029 video interviews through ampd Reveal.

ABOUT APOS SPORTS EDGE

APOS Sports Edge is MPA's leadership forum on the business of sport, held in Singapore ahead of the Formula 1 weekend. It was first held in 2025; the 2026 edition is a full-day forum with an evening reception at The METT, Fort Canning.

apos-sports-edge.com/agenda

ABOUT MEDIA PARTNERS ASIA

Media Partners Asia (MPA) is an insights and influence platform rooted in Asia, combining proprietary consumer data with research, advisory and executive forums. MPA advises on M&A, IPOs and strategy; publishes widely used industry reports; and operates ampd, its data and analytics arm. MPA forums, APOS, APOS Sports Edge and AETHER, convene leaders across media, sports and technology, helping clients in Asia navigate disruption and set strategy.

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