



WINNING THE WORLD CUP MOMENT:

Cultural Resonance vs. Cultural Risk



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Quick Reality Check

What We'll Cover Today

1

Spot cultural risk before it becomes public backlash

2

How fan interpretation changes across markets

3

How to shift from visibility-led to culturally informed strategy



When Good Intentions aren't Enough

- Brands often plan for audiences through media, assumptions, or partial insight.
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- In high-stakes cultural moments, that creates risk.



World Cup is a Cultural Moment

The World Cup is the largest sporting event in the world. EVER.

2026

3

countries

48

teams instead of 32

104

games up from 64

This isn't just more scale. It's more variables.

This Moment Changes Consumer Behavior

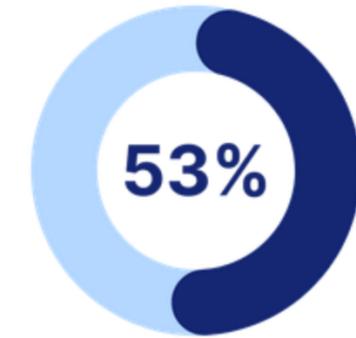
New soccer fans compared to long term fans



Younger fans:
35% ages 16-24 y.o.



Established fans

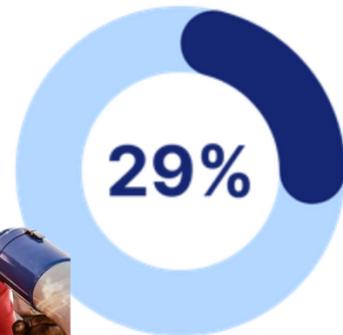


More female

53% compared to 38%



More diverse



Black



More Hispanics



Source: forsoccer.com

VISIBILITY IS NOT RELEVANCE

Are you planning for visibility or resonance?

Visibility gets you seen

Resonance connects

Identity Drives Engagement

- Identity comes first
 - People don't show up as consumers, they show up as who they are

- Belonging, pride, collective emotion is real

- Ritual shapes engagement

- People respond as members of something bigger



Pressure-Test before You Activate

- 1 What assumptions are we making about the audience?**
 - Are they current?
 - Differences across markets?
- 2 What in this message could be misinterpreted?**
 - What might audiences read into symbolism, language or tone?
- 3 Why does our brand credibly belong in this moment?**
 - What values are we adding beyond visibility?
 - Are we showing up with credibility, or just chasing the moment?



How to Use the Framework

Use the Pressure-Test questions when:

- Timing is tight
- Teams need a fast filter
- You want to catch preventable mistakes early

Use a Full Scorecard when:

- The activation is high-stakes or high-visibility
- Multiple markets are involved
- Identity and symbolism are central to the message

The downloadable includes both the quick Pressure-Test questions set and Full Scorecard

Let me show you how the framework works with two quick examples.

Banking for Every Fan, Everywhere

- **Brand intention:**
“Banking for Every Fan, Everywhere”

- **How it may be misread:**
Broad promise, limited credibility,
mismatch with lived experience

- **Framework catches:**
Ownership, Credibility, Activation Fit



The World is Coming. We're Ready



Hospitality

Brand intention:

“The World Is Coming.
We're Ready”



How it may be misread:

Celebrates demand,
ignores local
strain/context



Framework catches:

Environment,
Ownership,
Network Effect

Thank you!

Download the Framework

- Cultural Risk Pressure-Test Checklist
- Cultural Resonance Scorecard



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