



GUIDES SERIES

# The ultimate guide for sports productions

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INTRODUCTION

# The sports scene is more dynamic than ever

From the first Olympic Games in Ancient Greece to today's Super Bowl and World Cup, live sports have long captivated and united billions of sports fans worldwide. Since these premium sporting events are demanding, expensive, and challenging to produce, they remain the domain of major sports leagues and broadcast networks.

But the sports scene is dramatically expanding. People today can watch regional, local, and even niche sports—such as Lacrosse, esports, handball, and Ultimate Frisbee—on the same screens and devices they do major league sports. In this digital era, the transformation of video production and distribution has been remarkable. Instead of just a handful of major TV networks, or a dozen or so network TV affiliate stations, the internet now enables countless channels—such as YouTube, TikTok, Twitch, Instagram and Facebook—that can deliver live streaming media to viewers globally.

As the number of online platforms and channels grows, and as the technology that drives sports productions becomes more accessible, smaller sports content creators can now reach and engage the same mainstream audiences that have always gravitated to high-profile sporting events. How? We'll tell you.

In this eBook, we'll showcase **game-changers who are transforming live broadcasts, and the must-have sports production solutions they are using for small-scale productions, regional and local matches plus much more.**

These content creators are redefining the sports experience into engaging, interactive experiences for today's fans and unlocking new opportunities to win more fans and advertisers.

# Leveling the playing field for local and niche sports

Live streaming media and Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms and services have changed the game for sportscasting. In total, **41% of global sports fans** watch some sporting events via OTT. However, half of this audience (47%) also has the television on at the same time, suggesting that streaming has added additional windows to consume sport, rather than replacing existing ones.



When we can elevate our production value, audience satisfaction skyrockets and it increases the likelihood of more viewers being exposed to and engaging with our content. Working with the cloud also helped reduce our carbon footprint as we had no need to ship hardware, or people down to Texas where the event took place, allowing us to do more of this type of production in the future, in a sustainable way.

Stine Brun Kjeldaas  
Head of Sports and Media  
The International Døds Federation

This is especially true for regional, local, and niche sports that are rarely, if ever, carried on traditional broadcast networks and channels. Streaming gives viewers a window to watch niche sports events, local games, and games being played on foreign grounds, or other novel matches that they would otherwise be unable to see.

Have you ever heard of Dødsing? It's a very niche sport stemming from Norway and stands for 'Death Diving'. Participants launch themselves from a 10m (33ft) high platform and perform a variety of stunts, holding poses for as long as possible before they tuck into a tight curl before hitting the water. Dødsing has been steadily growing in popularity in recent years and has held a World Championship since 2008.

For its first U.S. Event in Austin, Texas the Dødsing Federation wanted to increase its production value and provide a rich viewing experience for audiences, alongside making it as easy as possible, cost effective, and sustainable for its global production crew. So, they opted for automated cloud deployment for the live stream via Vizrt's Viz Now.

This expanded mediascape via live streaming makes winners of sports content creators both large and small. In addition to having access to advanced, software-driven tools for preparing, polishing, and delivering the high-value content that sports fans want, there are more ways, and more technologies than ever before, to support creators in reaching audiences across the IP-connected world.



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Niche events like this wouldn't normally have the budget and access to have entirely dedicated enterprise-grade live production hardware set ups and there are often barriers, like time and complexity, to manually set up new cloud environments. By using Viz Now, Dødsing was able to remove barriers to the cloud and achieve an extremely high production value and use all the top market tools they wanted for live production from graphics to sports replay all in one solution.

Ulrich Voigt  
Global Head of Product Management  
Vizrt

# Gaining freedom through remote production

Another trend that has been fast evolving in the sports world is remote production. High-end video production has traditionally required massive, expensive equipment installed in control rooms and on huge OB (outside broadcasting) vans. This workflow can have significant costs and complexities to set up, which presents barriers to many content creators, especially smaller producers, newcomers, and start-ups.

With the advent of IP-based production and NDI networking, a whole new approach has gained a foothold in sports production. Known as remote production, or "Remi," it's now possible to manage multi-camera productions from a centralized location. This means that equipment no longer needs to be moved and set up from scratch each time there is a need to move to a different sports venue.

Today's advanced remote production technology enables more sports content creators to produce live games with broadcast quality in a faster, more affordable, and user-friendly way.

With remote production, there's virtually zero latency while integrating elements like instant replays, highlight clips, and graphical overlays. When live camera signals are sent from a stadium or arena to a centralized production hub for final assembly and distribution, there's no longer a need to send out a large, expensive OB mobile unit and crew to that venue.





We've achieved a range of efficiencies through a centralized, flexible workflow, and this has totally transformed how we broadcast high-action FIU sports games to fans...Our production team achieved broadcast-quality output for every single one of our home volleyball, soccer, football, and basketball games in the season. Moving equipment is no longer required and flexible production is achieved with ease.

Nick Garrido  
Athletics' Assistant  
Athletic Director of Live  
Production, FIU

The Vizrt gear's ease of use is particularly powerful considering the quick, easy setup of cameras and video sources, and the kit's endless creative possibilities...We are aiming to be the best in our game and deliver a service like 'The Big Boys' do but with a more cost-effective solution.

Damien Constable  
MMS 360 Media



## Enabling next-generation remote production for Florida International University

**A great example of how remote production is changing the game for smaller content producers is Florida International University (FIU), in Miami, FL. FIU produces and streams its live Panthers sporting events, including football, soccer, basketball, and volleyball games, to ESPN+ for broadcast, as well as via YouTube.**

To accomplish this, FIU built a centralized video production control room using Vizrt equipment that enables their crews to produce the games remotely. Since its on-campus sports venues are now networked directly to the control room via NDI, they need only move and set-up their cameras on-site, not their whole kit. Remote production has greatly streamlined FIU's workflow, making it faster and easier to produce high-action games with the quality ESPN+ expects.

FIU uses a TriCaster, which is at the heart of many Vizrt customers' live production workflows. The TriCaster is a versatile solution that empowers teams to switch between multiple video sources, integrate graphics, and manage live streaming seamlessly, reducing complexity and enabling higher production quality. This means even smaller organizations can achieve broadcast-level results without the need for extensive hardware setups.

Damien Constable from MMS 360 Media in the UK, credits the TriCaster to his success. He had been using the switcher to expand his business into remote video production and streaming services. Within a short timeframe, MMS 360 provided streaming services to many customers, including Motorsport UK's 5 Nations British Rallycross (BRX) Championship Tournament, Canterbury Rugby Club, and Canterbury Cricket Club.



# Unlocking the power of cloud

Cloud is also playing a key role in the growing prevalence of remote sports production. Interest in cloud-based production is gaining in popularity because it offers the possibility of **cost efficiency, flexibility, automation, and scalability** that is essential to today's demanding sports productions. We are also seeing increased adoption of "hybrid" video production configurations that mix cloud-based, and on-premises based solutions for greater flexibility.

The use of cloud technology is making it easier for smaller sports content creators—such as college teams, local tournaments, and high schools—to produce and stream their own games and matches without any compromise on quality.

Leveraging the cloud approach means having a faster ramp-up to acquire the necessary video and graphics production capabilities. When tasks like hi-res video switching and advanced graphics no longer need expensive and rigid set ups on-premises, this can spare productions the cost and complexity associated with installing video hardware facilities. As a result, creators will see a smaller CAPEX initially, alongside the ability to spin up productions much faster than being in an OB van.

## Scoring a touchdown for sustainability and cost savings

One sports organization making impressive strides with cloud-based production is the European League of Football (ELF), which, in collaboration with Vizrt and AWS, completed a fully cloud-powered production pipeline for its season in just three weeks. This shift to the cloud enabled ELF to tap into high-end production tools typically out of reach for niche sports, such as real-time augmented reality (AR) graphics, automated video/audio switching, and rapid deployment of live production environments.

Vizrt's solutions like Viz Arena allowed ELF to enhance the viewer experience with visually engaging AR elements and sponsor ads. Additionally, **leveraging cloud technology has significantly reduced its carbon footprint, cutting over 300 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** by minimizing travel and the need for on-site broadcast trucks. The cloud-based setup has streamlined production, cut costs, and made it easier to scale operations while delivering high-quality broadcasts to a global audience.

This move highlights the transformative power of the cloud in sports production, giving organizations greater flexibility, scalability, and environmental sustainability while ensuring immersive fan engagement and increased sponsor value.

# Driving fan engagement

Fans are the lifeblood that fuels the passion and energy of every sport. Whether they're roaring from the stands, tuning into live streams, or engaging on social media, content producers at all levels of sports want to connect directly with their fan bases, and drive greater interest and loyalty beyond venues, borders, cultures, and time zones.

There's no single formula for engaging fans—each interaction must be dynamic and diverse. Social media plays a crucial role in creating a multi-faceted fan experience, leveraging personalized data and engaging content to connect with audiences.



Sports broadcasters, producers, leagues, and rights holders harness the power of social media to drive fan awareness and excitement through various strategies, including:

- Eye-catching promos and targeted ads that reach specific demographics
- Interactive game analysis and expert commentary through live chats and Q&A sessions
- Engaging mini-documentaries or player profiles that provide unique behind-the-scenes stories
- Real-time instant replays and highlight clips shared across platforms to spark discussions

By utilizing social media effectively, sports organizations can further deeper connections with fans, enhance their engagement, and create a vibrant community around their teams and events.



3Play® turns what used to be a cumbersome 10-minute process into a super easy 10-second process. It even renders and streams the clips directly from its internal storage to online sites, such as our [X], Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok sites, as well as our website. By working in near-real-time, we're able to save a huge amount of money, time, and resources that pretty much pays for the system. The ability to take live broadcast feeds and turn them into highlights that go instantaneously to our social channels—while building fan loyalty—is huge for us.

Luke Winzar  
Head of Digital  
Collingwood

3Play® has worked wonders for us on game days. It enables us to be responsive in the moment, and control our own destiny. We're often the first to release game highlights and replays and this is very important to our fans.

Luke Winzar  
Head of Digital  
at Collingwood



## The role of replay

The **Collingwood Football Club**, based in Melbourne, Australia, is a great example of a football club that actively works to engage its fans on social media. Nicknamed the "Magpies" or "Pies" for short, the Collingwood team competes in the Australian Football League (AFL), which is comprised of 18 teams across Australia.

The Collingwood team creates football highlights clips that fans can access on their social media channels to stay informed and engaged. To do this, the club invested in a Vizrt 3Play®. This turnkey video editing solution helps create branded highlights reels, instant replays, and other rapid-fire video clips and promos crafted to attract fans and generate excitement for high-profile sports and other live events.



Viz Flowics is a game changer in the creation and delivery of broadcast-quality graphics. The league's broadcast operations team continues to add innovative, best-in-class technology partners to our productions and presentations that offer viewers the most tech-forward and fan-first experience.

Joel Feld  
Executive Vice President,  
Broadcast and Content  
NLL

## Rising popularity of HTML5 graphics

Creating visual engagement is critical in today's fast-paced sports environment to engage fans. And solutions like Viz Flowics, one of Vizrt's HTML5 based platform for creating, customizing, and controlling live data-driven graphics from anywhere, empowers teams to create and manage real-time graphics easily.

With intuitive templates and data connectors, producers can populate graphics with live statistics from third-party feeds or input their own data manually using formats like Google Sheets or JSON files. This capability not only enhances the viewing experience but also allows for timely, relevant content that resonates with fans.

The U.S. National Lacrosse League (NLL) chose Viz Flowics as its main broadcast-quality graphics engine for live data integration. NLL streamlined its workflow and reduced costs, with minimal hardware and no OB trucks needed on-site. In terms of revenue generation, Viz Flowics gave the NLL opportunities for increased ad inventory, thanks to the platform's fan engagement features.

The organization's setup is largely an IP and cloud-based remote workflow complete with real-time broadcast graphics. This implementation includes Viz Data Connector's architecture, which integrates with the Sportzcast live scoreboard API, enabling the insertion of scoreboards, score bugs, and stats into live streams.

# What do sports fans, including Gen Z, really want from their content?

They want a seamless, consistent experience no matter how they tune in – and more often than not, they are tuning in on their phones. The research we conducted on **sports viewer engagement** found with each successive generation, this shift in media consumption is becoming more pronounced.

Full game viewing on traditional TV is becoming rarer as younger generations gravitate to digital channels and mobile devices. 67% of Gen Z viewers—born in the late 1990's and early 2000's—prefer to watch video on mobile phones, compared to 54% of the previous generation, known as millennials.

Ensuring brand loyalty, capturing the attention of fans/new audiences and driving engagement to better monetize advertising streams is a challenge faced by many sports organizations and content creators. We wanted to understand better what sports audiences, including new demographics of sports fans, like Gen Z, enjoyed when consuming sports so we conducted our own research.

## 58%

of Gen Z prefer to watch full games

## 60%

of survey respondents prefer to watch sports on digital channels

## 74%

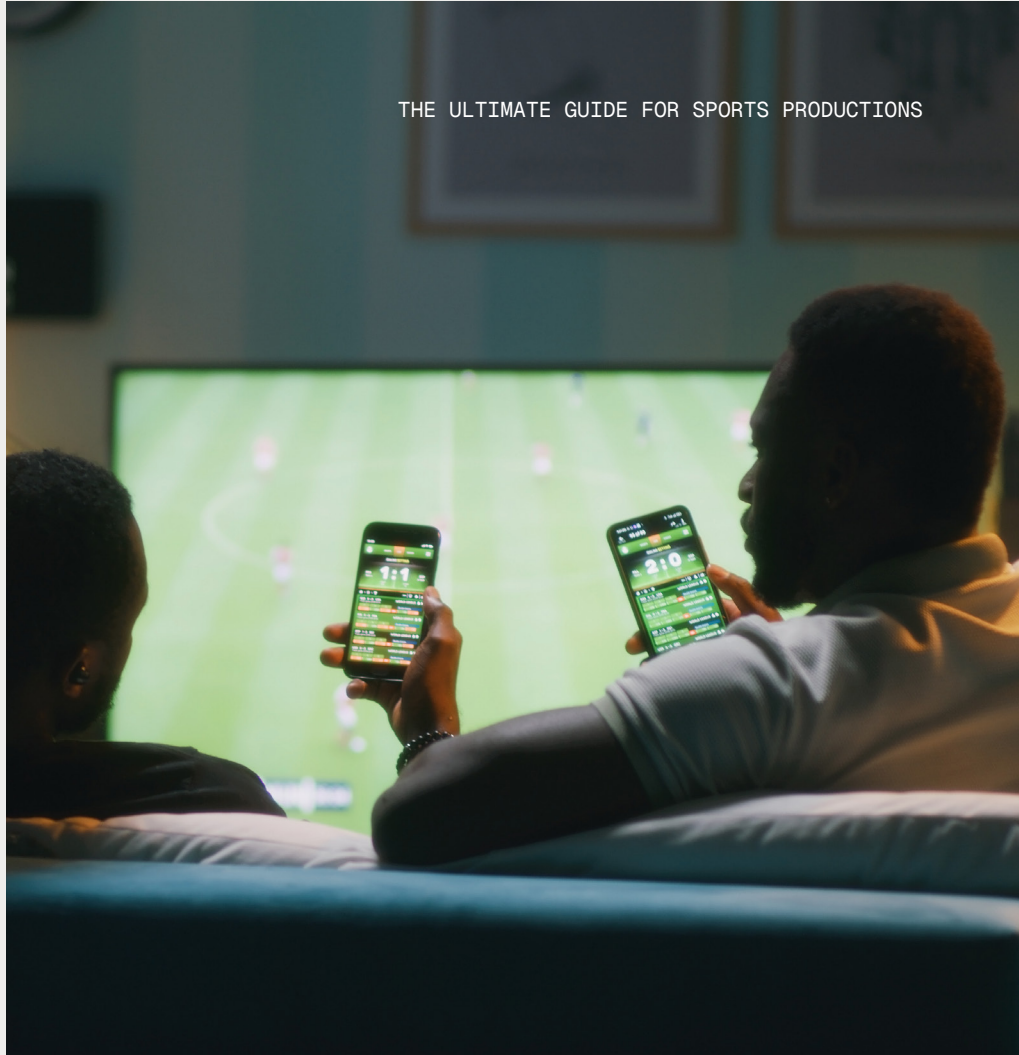
of Gen Z use social media to catch up on sports, and only 58% of them prefer to watch full games

## 77%

of sports fans agree graphics are very important, when watching content on the go. The importance of additional visuals for feeling engaged with sports content increases for the younger demographics

As younger generations lean towards watching highlights and other short-format videos on platforms like TikTok, we're also seeing a rise in the "second screen" experience. It's called the second screen because it's meant to be consumed on mobile devices, like iPhones and iPads, while watching the game on TV.

Research indicates that more than 80% of sports enthusiasts engage with a second screen while watching live events. This phenomenon has moved beyond a trend; it is transforming how fans engage with and experience sports content. Consequently, for sports organizations, improving the second-screen experience has become essential rather than optional.

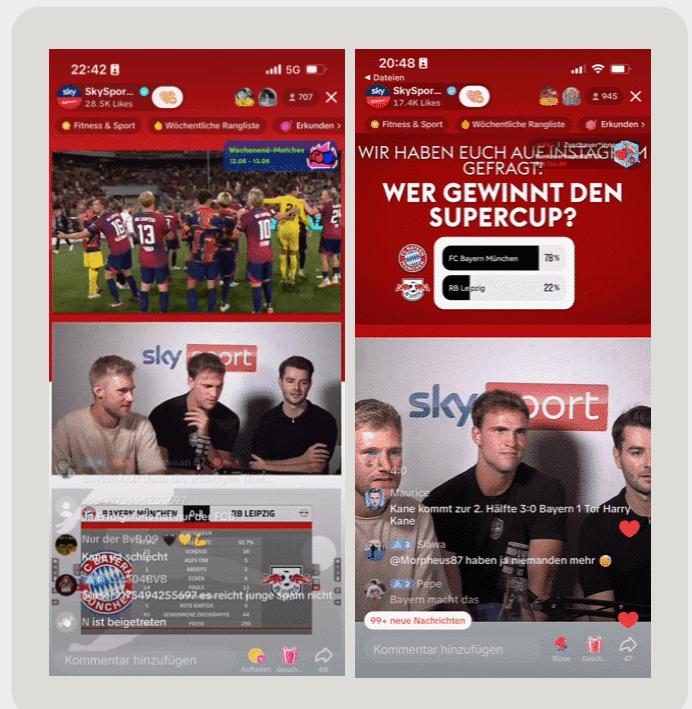


**Second screen** viewers can engage more deeply with the game by viewing content created exclusively to enhance their enjoyment and understanding. Second screen offerings include multi-angle viewing, special camera angles, replays, and behind-the-scenes looks not on the main broadcast. It also offers viewers real-time stats, online polling, and social posts generated by others in the fan community.

For tech-savvy viewers, digital content must be accessible and engaging across multiple platforms seamlessly. This requires video production tools that ensure aspect ratios and formats automatically optimize for any platform that fans choose to use.

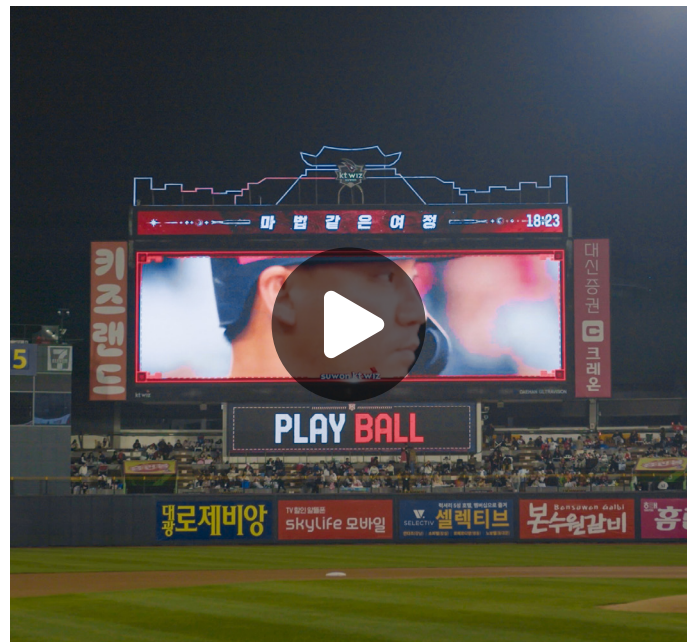
To better support the needs of its sports fans, Sky Sports Germany partnered with Vizrt to launch a secondary soccer broadcast on TikTok in 9×16. This unique multi-screen experience helped fans watch live segments with exclusive camera angles and performance analytics, transforming traditional viewing into a dynamic, interactive experience which harnessed hundreds of thousands of engagements.

Initiatives like Sky Germany highlight the importance of adapting content delivery methods to align with the preferences of tech-savvy audiences, ensuring engagement and enjoyment in today's rapidly changing media landscape. It's not just about the media landscape and considering the fans tuning in from home though, sports storytelling needs to consider the fans at the stadium too.



# Revitalizing the in-stadium experience

Sports venues like **Suwon KT Wiz Park** in Seoul, South Korea, exemplify this approach by upgrading their outdated video technology to create an immersive game-day experience. By integrating solutions such as Viz Multiplay, which drives five LED ribbon walls, along with Viz Artist for graphic creation and Viz Trio for graphic control, KT Wiz has transformed its environment into a center of sports and entertainment.



These advancements allow the stadium to engage approximately 30,000 fans in attendance, showcasing interactive fan boards, instant replays, and engaging sponsor messages, all synchronized via NDI for real-time content delivery. The stadium's commitment to technology not only elevates the spectator's experience but also supports year-round usage by hosting local games, concerts, and corporate events, ultimately increasing advertising revenue potential, setting a precedent for future sports venues to follow.

As professional sports venues embrace advanced technology to enhance fan engagement, educational institutions such as high schools and universities are also recognizing the value of integrating innovative solutions to enrich the experience of their students and local communities during sporting events.

# Connecting communities

## How educational institutions are enhancing fan experiences through technology

Colleges and high schools are increasingly recognizing the value of live sports broadcasts to share the excitement of athletic events with their peers and communities. This digital coverage not only enhances visibility but also boosts name recognition, attracting potential students and increasing school pride. Successful sports production can lead to increased financial support from alumni, local businesses, and fans, ultimately enhancing community engagement and revenue generation.

For instance, Nick Garrido from **Florida International University** emphasizes that by utilizing tools like TriCaster®, NDI, and Viz 3Play®, they have streamlined their broadcasting workflow, transforming the way they present high-energy FIU sports events to fans. This approach has opened up new creative avenues and facilitated collaboration among internal teams, leading to more engaging broadcasts.

Similarly, **Fort Hays State University** has leveraged advanced production technologies to elevate their athletic broadcasts. By adopting an innovative workflow with Vizrt solutions, like the TriCaster all in one live production system, Viz 3Play, and Viz Engine, they have significantly improved their ability to deliver high-quality, multi-camera coverage, engaging viewers both on-site and online.



Humbly, our productions are some of the best in the conference and often times the best in Division II, because of the gear we have and the broadcast quality we're able to provide. Recently we also upgraded our workflow to include Viz Engine. When other schools in the area see Tiger Media Network's productions, we get comments asking, 'How are you guys doing this? How are you pulling it off?'

Nick Schwein  
Director  
Tiger Media Network



We put a lot of work into our productions, so ensuring our audiences receive an engaging show on the other side of the screen is of the utmost importance for us. That's why it made sense to integrate Vizrt technology – we wanted great, creative graphics but without added complexity.

Nick Schwein  
 Director  
 Tiger Media Network

**This transformation not only enriches the fan experience but also strengthens the university's ties with its community, showcasing the power of technology in enhancing sports visibility at the collegiate level.**

With the addition of Viz Engine to the workflow, FHSU can not only capture and distribute the content, but apply photo-realistic, real time 3D renderings to enhance what the audience sees on screen.

The adoption of innovative production solutions like TriCaster, NDI, and Vizrt tools is transforming how colleges and high schools connect with their communities through sports. These innovations enhance the fan experience and create new opportunities for financial support and collaboration. As educational institutions recognize the importance of high-quality production in attracting attention and building school spirit, it's essential to identify and implement must-have sports solutions that meet their specific needs.

# Maximizing ROI with unforgettable sports stories

Whether your fans are roaring in the stands or cheering from home, the opportunity to create electrifying sports content is limitless. With the right production tools, and successful implementation like in the stories shared, you can supercharge your audience engagement, boost fan loyalty, reach global audiences, and unlock exciting new revenue streams!

Now is the time to create unforgettable sports stories that captivate your audiences and adapt to their evolving expectations. With unmatched flexibility and scalability, Vizrt's sports solutions equip you with cutting-edge video production, eye-catching graphics, dynamic data analytics, and powerful replay and analysis capabilities to bring every thrilling moment to life for your fans!

With streamlined workflows, rock-solid system reliability, and future-proof scalability you can elevate your content strategy and maximize value and monetization while creating an exhilarating fan experience.



Talk with us today!

Book a demo

Want to take your sports productions to the next level with the right tools?  
**Speak with our team of experts today!**



## About Vizrt

Founded in 1997, Vizrt is a leading viewer engagement platform and a trusted expert in live production technologies for the Media & Entertainment, Sports, Enterprise, and Content Creator industries.

Vizrt's software-defined, cloud-ready and AI-integrated solutions are the foundation for a new era of storytelling, enabling creators to streamline workflows and enhance content delivery. It offers solutions for every component of live production, from real-time data-driven graphics and studio automation to intelligent media asset management and cloud-based productions.

Vizrt, and its subsidiary NDI, employs over 600 people globally, enabling thousands of organizations worldwide, from colleges and corporates to the largest names in news and sports, to deliver visually immersive experiences to billions of people daily. For more information, visit [vizrt.com](http://vizrt.com)

