

CableTV.com Survey Finds World Cup Fans Weigh Low-Cost Streaming Against High-Cost Stadium Attendance.

New research shows U.S. fans can watch the '26 tournament affordably, while in-person attendees face higher ticket, travel, and debt costs.

SALT LAKE CITY, UT, UNITED STATES, June 11, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new [survey](#) from CableTV.com reveals a stark financial divide for fans following the 2026 FIFA World Cup, splitting the [tournament](#) into low-cost home viewing and highly expensive in-person attendance. Based on a survey of 1,000 U.S. World Cup fans, the research demonstrates how a major global sports event can significantly reshape household entertainment budgets, workplace productivity, and consumer technology choices.

Affordable Options for Home Viewers:

For the majority of fans watching from home, accessing the World Cup is expected to be financially manageable. According to [data](#) cited from a companion Reviews.org report, 45% of U.S. viewers plan to spend nothing on streaming. Instead, they will rely on existing TV packages, over-the-air antennas, complimentary apps, or current subscriptions.

Among those who expect to pay for streaming, most intend to keep costs under \$50. Specifically, 21% expect to spend between \$1 and \$20, while 23% anticipate spending \$21 to \$50. Only a small fraction expect higher costs, leading to an overall average expected streaming expenditure of \$36. Additionally, temporary subscriptions will play a role in the tournament economy: while 58% of fans who subscribe specifically for the tournament plan to retain the service long-term, 17% intend to cancel immediately following the championship match.



CableTV.com Logo



Our survey data highlights that national pride is a much stronger driver for tournament viewership than a general love for soccer. (Image credit: CableTV.com)

The High Price of In-Person Attendance:

The financial reality shifts dramatically for fans hoping to experience the tournament inside a stadium. Only 5% of surveyed fans have already secured tickets, while 16% are actively searching. Affordability remains a steep barrier, leaving 27% of fans feeling priced out.

On average, the maximum amount fans are willing to pay for a single upper-deck ticket is \$303. However, if a favorite player is confirmed in the starting lineup, fans are willing to spend an additional \$108. Beyond ticket prices, travel logistics represent a massive seasonal expense. Fans traveling to host cities anticipate spending an average of \$2,277 on total tournament travel, including lodging, food, and local transportation.

Debt and Budget Trade-offs:

To fund these steep in-person costs, consumers are adjusting their personal finances. While 36% of attendees plan to use personal savings and 24% plan to use a standard credit card paid off by month's end, others expect to take on longer-term debt. Roughly 11% anticipate lingering credit card bills, and 7% plan to use Buy Now, Pay Later services. Those expecting to take on tournament-related debt anticipate carrying an average balance of \$840 for more than three months.

To offset these expenses, fans are making significant trade-offs in household spending: 45% will cut back on clothing and luxury shopping, 43% will reduce dining out, and 31% will sacrifice other vacation plans.



When factoring in modern stadium fees and secondary market markups, the average World Cup fan's ticket budget doesn't stretch very far in 2026. (Image credit: CableTV.com)



Tapping into long-term savings is becoming a baseline requirement for fans determined to watch the World Cup in person. (Image credit: CableTV.com)

Workplace Disruption and Device Trends:

Because many matches are scheduled during North American business hours, the tournament is poised to impact the workplace. The survey found that 51% of respondents have streamed entertainment on the clock, with 41% reserving this behavior for major events like the World Cup. To catch the action, 33% of fans plan to use official paid time off, 10% are prepared to call in sick, and 7% intend to stream matches discreetly on a second screen while appearing to work.

In terms of hardware, 68% of viewers will watch from home, primarily using Smart TVs (65%), smartphones (49%), and streaming media players like Roku or Apple TV (42%). Demonstrating the importance of reliable digital infrastructure, 20% of viewers plan to upgrade their home internet or mobile data packages specifically to support a smooth viewing experience.

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