Given that streaming is up 266% over the past three years and so many people predicted the pandemic lockdown period to be the pinnacle, it’s almost inconceivable that it continued to grow this quarter, up 21% over Q3 2020. Not only that, but streaming platforms are investing heavily in video content on social media, particularly YouTube. So, it seems that streaming video—whether it’s a massively popular streaming show, a trailer promoting that show on YouTube, or a range of TikTok video fan reactions—will continue to entertain populations the world over.

**Q3 2021 highlights:**

- **No stopping streaming:** Globally, streaming increased yet again this quarter, up 21% over this time last year, led predominately by Africa, which saw a massive 273% increase.

- **Advertising continues advances in streaming:** Between this quarter and the last, ad impressions and ad attempts were up over 30%, a good sign for publishers and advertisers alike.

- **Big screen domination persisted:** Despite seeing a slight decrease in share over Q3 of last year, big screens still accounted for almost three quarters of viewing time worldwide.

- **Quality impacts quantity:** Engagement and quality of the experience for viewers are highly correlated with viewers tuning out as buffering increases or picture quality declines.

- **Buffering begone:** Q3 2021 marks the first quarter that all six regions measured tallied buffering under 1%, after significant improvements in recent quarters.

- **Streamers doubling down on social:** The average streaming platform increased their content by 97% on YouTube, resulting in an 8.4% increase of average views per account and an increase in engagements of 24%.

- **The biggest sporting event played a big role on social media:** Olympic committee accounts increased their following by 15% on average, gaining over 4.4 million new followers in aggregate during the short span of the Olympics.

Conviva’s data is primarily collected using proprietary sensor technology with a global footprint of more than 500 million unique viewers watching 180 billion streams per year across nearly four billion applications streaming on devices. Embedded directly within streaming video applications, the sensor measures across content and ads to analyze nearly three trillion real-time transactions per day for its customers. In this report, the year-over-year data from Q3 2021 as compared to Q3 2020 was normalized based on Conviva’s customer base.
Streaming swells sustain

Global streaming continued to increase, up 21% in Q3 2021 over the same quarter last year, led predominately by more nascent regions including Africa, which saw a massive 273% increase. Oceania saw a healthy increase of 80%, followed by South America up 56%. Asia and Europe were neck and neck with their increases, at 45% and 42%, respectively. North America, a much more established streaming market, held steady at 2% growth, which was the same year-over-year increase as last quarter.

Advertising advances in streaming

In addition to the overall increase in content consumption, streaming advertising also made gains after a rocky 2020. Between just this quarter and the last, ad attempts and ad impressions were up over 30%, a good sign for publishers and advertisers alike. Just 15% of ads in Q3 2021 were not delivered as intended, for an impressive 23% decrease in missed ad opportunities quarter over quarter.

We’ve seen that the leading streaming publishers consistently have a focus on extensive real-time analytics and intelligence for both their subscription and ad-based offerings to both optimize the customer experience and maximize return on investment. As advertising quality improves and more advertisers see the value of doubling down on their investments in streaming, the caliber, relevancy, and overall ad experience for consumers is likely to improve as well.
Global quality gains

Year over year, buffering, bitrate, start failure, and minutes per play (for the most part) made decent gains in every region. Buffering – when the video pauses during playback so it can reload – improved across the board with Africa reaping the most benefit, down 78%. At the opposite end of the spectrum, North America had the most modest gains over last year, and was still down a significant 29%, to maintain its lead as the region with the least buffering at just 0.19%. While Asia recorded the worst buffering at 0.98%, this is the first quarter that all six regions measured tallied buffering under 1%, which is a significant accomplishment.

South America recorded the largest improvement in picture quality with bitrate up 142% to 8.35 Mbps, but came in second to Oceania with an impressive bitrate of 9.64 Mbps. Asia was the lone region to see no improvement year over year in picture quality and also had the lowest bitrate of any region at 2.20 Mbps.

Video start failures decreased for every region except Africa, which saw an increase of 7% for a 4.47% video start failure rate. In contrast, Asia and South America saw the largest improvements, down 44% and 39% to 1.13% and 2.16%, respectively but still have a way to go to reach parity with North America which experienced the least video start failures at just 0.69% despite a more modest improvement of 28% year over year.

Video start time was the only real outlier when it came to quality as only two regions recorded improvements, Africa at 7% and North America at 3%. Asia had the worst decline in start time, up 35% in the time it took for videos to play. Despite a 12% decline, Europe had the best start time at 4.18 seconds. South America experienced the highest average start times at 6.56 seconds, with a modest 1% bump year over year.

In Q3 2021, Europe enjoyed the most minutes per play at 22.31 despite being the only region to record a year-over-year decrease, down 1%, while Asia expectedly had the lowest minutes per play at 10.74 given the increased smaller screen viewing that takes place in the region. Despite significant improvements in viewing time in Africa with a 153% increase, the region came in second to last only slightly ahead of Asia with just 13.21 minutes per play on average.
The payoff of quality progress

There are literally millions of potential issue combinations that can impact the quality of the viewer’s experience. However, amidst skyrocketing demand, streaming publishers have consistently delivered increasingly strong overall quality. It’s no surprise that quality is a focus for many publishers as the data illustrates how small improvements in quality, less buffering or higher picture quality, result in gains in viewing time.

For buffering rates less than 0.4%, viewers engaged for an average of 28.44 minutes in Q3. That dropped to 24.55 minutes with only a slight bump in rebuffering rate and steadily declined with each incremental increase in buffering. Similarly, higher picture quality was correlated with higher engagement, as viewers averaged more than 20 minutes at bitrate above 3.5 Mbps in Q3. Conversely, engagement declined as bitrates dropped. The higher the quality, the more a viewer engaged, which is critical as highly engaged viewers are less likely to tune out, which results in less monetizable minutes for ad-based streaming services, or cancel a subscription.

Optimizing advertising for streaming

In the world of streaming, ads are just another form of content that depends heavily on the quality of experience for its success. While publishers and brands must consider ad effectiveness and inventory monetization, the first order of business is to ensure ads are delivered at the seamless quality viewers expect as engagement and quality go hand in hand.

When it comes to ad quality, ad buffering worsened 22% from last quarter, to a 1.3% rebuffering rate, while picture quality also declined marginally, down 1% from last quarter, to 2.93 Mbps average bitrate. But in better news, ad start time was down 23% from last quarter. And in a good sign for consumers who report wanting shorter ad breaks, ad duration decreased by 3% from last quarter to 26 seconds. As competition continues to heighten and consumer dollars are increasingly spread thin across platforms, quality of the ad viewing experience will be an important factor in keeping viewers engaged for more monetizable minutes.
Device divide

Near-perfect experiences in streaming have become vital as viewers demand the same level of quality from their streams as they would expect with linear TV delivery. With the millions of potential combinations of factors that can impact the quality of the viewer’s streaming experience – devices, platforms, CDNs, ISPs, servers, locations, etc. – providers are required to employ increasingly sophisticated data to target issues that are often device-specific. These advances have proven effective as overall quality continues to improve with reductions in video start failures, down 24%, buffering, down 22%, and picture quality, up 10%, across all devices.

Diving deeper into devices, most enjoyed double-digit improvements in buffering with gaming consoles most improved, down 62% over the previous Q3 to an almost imperceptible 0.08%, and connected TVs modestly improved with a decrease of 7%. Despite a 31% improvement, mobile phones still tallied the worst buffering at 0.84%.

Picture quality also improved across the board with gaming consoles up the most at 16% but at 7.89 Mbps bitrate, they came in second to smart TVs which averaged 8.80 Mbps. Desktop made the least gains, up just 3%, and had the worst picture quality of any device at 2.95 Mbps.

For the most part, video start failures were also better than this point last year; tablets were the only device that didn’t budge, but all other devices improved with desktops the clear winner for most improved, down a whopping 52%. Overall, start failures were 0.96% with tablets the worst at 1.47% and gaming consoles the best at 0.50%.

Video start time was fairly consistent, with most devices taking around four seconds, but desktop took the longest at 5.02 and tablets enjoyed the fastest start times at 3.90 seconds. Despite connected TVs, gaming consoles, and desktops all enjoying lower start times, the improvements weren’t good enough to overcome the poorer performances of mobile phones up 23%, tablets up 4%, and smart TVs up 1%, all contributing to the 4% overall lengthening of start times.

Minutes per play also generally fared better than last year, as only connected TVs were down, but by just 1%, and gaming consoles and tablets held steady with no changes. Connected TVs enjoyed the most minutes per play at 27.56, while mobile phones had the least at 9.11.
## Quality by device

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Min/Play</th>
<th>Video Start Failures</th>
<th>Video Start Time</th>
<th>Buffering</th>
<th>Bitrate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connected TV Devices</strong></td>
<td>27.56%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>0.67%</td>
<td>-9%</td>
<td>4.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smart TV</strong></td>
<td>26.02%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0.68%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>4.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaming Console</strong></td>
<td>25.45%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
<td>-29%</td>
<td>4.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desktop</strong></td>
<td>16.05%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>1.08%</td>
<td>-52%</td>
<td>5.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobile Phone</strong></td>
<td>9.11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1.33%</td>
<td>-24%</td>
<td>4.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tablet</strong></td>
<td>15.31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1.47%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall</strong></td>
<td>20.14%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0.96%</td>
<td>-24%</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q3 2021 YoY  Q3 2021 YoY  Q3 2021 YoY  Q3 2021 YoY  Q3 2021 YoY  Q3 2021 YoY

Improvements in **green**, declines in **pink**  | Best per category in **green**, worst in **pink**
Smoking smart TVs, stagnating devices

Clear trends have emerged within the big screen category to illustrate what devices drove growth for TV viewing time. Smart TVs were responsible for nearly all the growth among big screens in Q3 2021, up 64% which was the most of any device, while connected TVs and gaming consoles lagged. Connected TVs grew much slower than most devices, up just 5% year over year while gaming consoles fell by 1% in viewing time, down for the second quarter in a row after last quarter having the dubious distinction of being the first device to lose share in years.

Across all devices, viewing time increased 21% over this time last year. Smaller screens saw steady gains as mobile and desktop outpaced the overall growth, up 32% and 30%, respectively, while tablets grew less, up just 14%.

Big screen domination

Big screens, which include connected TV devices, smart TVs, and gaming consoles, continue to dominate in nearly every region around the world and again took the majority share of global viewing time at 73% in Q3 2021.

In every part of the world except Asia, big screens took the majority of viewership, particularly so in North America with a massive 82%. Mobile phones, desktops, and tablets barely even registered in North America at 8%, 6%, and 4%, respectively.

In Africa, big screens captured 57% share while desktop and mobile were pretty evenly matched at 19% for desktop and 18% for mobile. Tablets took only 6% of viewing share this quarter.

Big screens accounted for 66% of viewing share in Europe, while the rest of the devices were fairly evenly distributed. Desktop and mobile tied with 12% and tablets, like in every region, came up last at 10%, which while low also had the highest share of any region.

Oceania had a similar breakdown with big screens at the top with 68% followed by desktop at 14%, mobile phones at 10%, and tablets with just 8%.

South America also predominantly watched big screens at 67% of viewing share. Mobile phones beat out desktop, but only by 4%, and tablets had the smallest share of any region with 2%.

Always the outlier, Asia’s share of big screen viewership was low compared to the rest of the world at just 14%. Desktop won the most share with 49%, followed closely—compared to the second-place devices in other regions—by mobile phones at 33%. Tablets brought up the rear at just 4%.
Growth in viewing time by device
Q3 2021 vs Q3 2020

Share of viewing time by device
Big screen breakdown

Diving deeper into the big screen category, Roku, Amazon Fire TV, and Samsung TV made up the bulk of big screen viewing time globally with Roku again coming out on top with 31.1% share. Amazon Fire TV fell from 20% this time last year to 16.8%, which was still enough to maintain second in front of Samsung TV, despite Samsung gaining nearly three percentage points over Q3 of last year to go from 9.4% to 12.2% share of global viewing time.

LG TV also gained considerable share over last year, up 2% to 6.4%, as did Android TV up 0.5% to 5.8% and Chromecast up 0.4% to 5.1%.

Given the decline in gaming consoles’ share of viewing, it’s no surprise that PlayStation and Xbox lost some share, down .7% and 1.3%, respectively, from this time last year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>2021 Share</th>
<th>2020 Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roku</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon Fire TV</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samsung TV</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LG TV</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Android TV</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PlayStation</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple TV</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chromecast</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xbox</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linux STB</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vizio TV</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nintendo</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panasonic TV</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV Web</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philips TV</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STB Web</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony TV</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TiVo</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
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<td>Hisense TV</td>
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<td>0.004%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linux TV</td>
<td>0.003%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games Console Web</td>
<td>0.002%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whale OS TV</td>
<td>0.0001%</td>
<td>0.000005%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Share of big screen viewing time by device.
Regional TV viewing

By region, big screen preference varied wildly. For instance, in North America, Roku accounted for a remarkable 38% of viewing time, while it only saw slim share in Europe and Oceania with 6%, 5% in South America, and in Africa, was just 1%.

In Europe and Oceania, no big screen device dominated. Europe broke down with the top devices having only a few percentages among them—Samsung TV at 19%; Chromecast, Amazon Fire TV, Linux STB each at 12%; Android TV at 11%; and LG TV with 10% share. While Oceania was similarly close; Chromecast with 21%, Samsung TV and Android TV both at 17%, PlayStation with 11%, and Apple TV at 10%.

Africa had a much wider spread with Linux STB taking in the most share at 29% while Chromecast, Android TV, and Samsung TV followed with around 15% share each. LG TV with 8% and PlayStation and Apple TV, both with 7%, rounded out the top devices in Africa.

While big screen viewing time in Asia is only 12% share of the overall viewing time in the region, with 52% share, Android TV clearly won the most share of any big screen device in any region as Asia’s big screen of choice. It was followed fairly closely by Amazon Fire TV with 22% and then, there was a cliff. The other devices barely chart with the next closest share being Samsung TV with just 8% and LG TV at only 6%.

South America’s top four big screens were separated by at most 7% with Samsung TV at 28%, LG TV at 21%, Android TV with 17%, and Chromecast at 14% of viewing share. The rest of the devices measured all had single-digit share with Roku and Amazon Fire TV near the bottom of the list.

This was in sharp contrast to North America where Roku and Amazon Fire TV ranked at the top of the list, Roku with 39% and Amazon Fire TV with 19%. Samsung rounded out the top three with 10% share and again, every other device had single-digit share with LG TV, PlayStation, Apple TV, and Xbox all tied at 5%.
Olympics vie for gold on social media

After delays due to COVID concerns, the 2020 Tokyo Olympics officially happened in Q3 of 2021. In a truly global event, the worldwide spectacle took streaming and social media to new heights. This Olympics was one of the most diverse in history. An Olympic record of 63 different nations won a gold medal in Tokyo, but social media showed that you don’t need to win big on the podium to win on social. Of the 206 countries that participated, 170 of them had active social media accounts dedicated to their country’s efforts and we tracked these national Olympics committee accounts to determine which country won the gold on social.

In total, the 170 Olympic federation accounts made around 67,000 posts during the Olympics, 10% of which were video, and totaled 148 million total cross-platform engagements on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. These accounts gained over 4.4 million new followers in aggregate during the short span of the Olympics, with the average account increasing their following by 15% during that short window. These accounts also racked up 85 million video views on Facebook and YouTube alone.

Brazil topped all national Olympics committee accounts with over 22.4 million engagements during the Olympics, beating out U.S. which came in second despite having nearly double the following. Britain, Russia, and Japan rounded out the top five in engagements. Notably, Chile and Guatemala were the only two countries in the top 25 that did not medal in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Deserving of a special mention, the National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, despite coming in at 24th in overall engagement rankings, came in first in average engagement rate at 112% throughout the Olympics.

The host nation of Japan posted most frequently, more than the other top 25 combined, with over 24,000 posts, the majority of which were on Twitter. Australia and the U.S. posted the second and third most with a fraction of that at 2,608 and 1,822 posts, respectively.
Olympic federation national accounts take gold on social media

Olympic federation national social media accounts tallied:

- 170 posts
- 67,000 posts (10% of posts included video)
- 85 million video views
- 148 million cross-platform engagements
- 4.4 million new followers (15% increase in followers)

Cross-platform engagement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Medal Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Comité Olímpico do Brasil</td>
<td>22.4M</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Team USA</td>
<td>21.9M</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>British Olympic Association</td>
<td>13.1M</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Russian Olympic Committee</td>
<td>7.7M</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Japanese Olympic Committee</td>
<td>6.8M</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Account | Cross-platform engagement | Medal count
---|---------------------------|-------------|
6 | Canadian Olympic Committee | 6,475,986 | 24 |
7 | Comitato Olimpico Nazionale Italiano | 5,281,498 | 40 |
8 | Australian Olympic Committee | 5,054,156 | 46 |
9 | Comité Olímpico Español | 4,979,791 | 17 |
10 | Czech Olympic Committee | 4,966,844 | 11 |
11 | Comité Olímpico Mexicano | 3,629,167 | 4 |
12 | New Zealand Olympic Committee Inc. | 3,177,701 | 20 |
13 | Comité Olímpico Colombiano | 3,006,809 | 5 |
14 | Turkish Olympic Committee | 2,711,514 | 13 |
15 | Olympic Committee of Serbia | 2,545,014 | 9 |
16 | National Olympic Committee of the Islamic Republic of Iran | 2,367,579 | 7 |
17 | Chinese Taipei Olympic Committee | 2,299,799 | 12 |
18 | Comité Olímpico Guatemalteco | 2,224,928 | 0 |
19 | Comité Olímpico de Portugal | 1,689,511 | 4 |
20 | Comité Olímpico de Chile | 1,569,660 | 0 |
21 | Comité National Olympique et Sportif Français | 1,335,669 | 33 |
22 | Comité Olímpico de Puerto Rico | 1,332,987 | 1 |
23 | Comité Olympique et Interfédéral Belge | 1,185,228 | 7 |
24 | National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan | 1,167,081 | 8 |
25 | Argentina Olympics Committee | 1,090,618 | 3 |
Team USA Olympic run

While it’s clear the United States took the country’s social success seriously, the United States promoted their athletes and the country further by managing accounts for many individual sports. USA Basketball topped the list of these accounts with over seven million cross-platform engagements on 534 posts. USA Gymnastics came in second at nearly five million engagements on 343 posts followed by USA Swimming with nearly four million engagements. USA Wrestling was the most active on social posting nearly nine thousand times on social during the Olympics, including nearly eight thousand videos. While the top ten team sports for engagements were all summer sports, an interesting aspect of the Team USA strategy was cross-promotion from many winter sports. USA Ice Hockey, for example, came in 11th out of 60 sports accounts in total engagements.

![Team USA scores Olympic engagement for individual sports](image-url)

**Team USA scores Olympic engagement for individual sports**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports accounts</th>
<th>Engagements</th>
<th>Posts</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Basketball</td>
<td>7,012,724</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>8,730,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gymnastics</td>
<td>4,931,281</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>2,911,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Swimming</td>
<td>3,705,773</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>1,567,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Volleyball</td>
<td>2,505,145</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>1,636,346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Track and Field</td>
<td>1,602,157</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>1,276,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Wrestling</td>
<td>939,934</td>
<td>8753</td>
<td>1,299,529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Weightlifting</td>
<td>810,585</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>542,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Equestrian</td>
<td>628,201</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>553,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Diving</td>
<td>523,122</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>134,175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Baseball</td>
<td>499,743</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>1,027,230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sports leagues continued growth

Despite overlap with the Olympics, which drew the attention of sports aficionados around the globe, regional sports leagues increased their total social media engagements by 6% in Q3 2021 as compared to the previous Q3. The Q3 prior also represented the first return to normalcy in sports as nearly every sport had restarted, and many were running simultaneously, so the gains were not evenly experienced around the globe.

Q3 2020 was a rare moment in sports where the NBA, NFL, MLB, NHL, and MLS all played games on the same day. Couple that with fans chomping at the bit for some small amount of normalcy last year and it’s hard to compare that to a normal Q3, let alone one still facing pandemic conditions. North American sports leagues produced fewer posts and fewer videos, both down 16%, and garnered 12% fewer total cross-platform engagements. MLB was a highlight, increasing their total engagements by 27% compared to the previous year, as they finished their season and headed into the playoffs. The unfortunate reality for North American sports is that, nearly 20 months after the pandemic began, there has yet to be a single month in which total engagements topped the pre-pandemic social engagements totals recorded in January 2020.

In Europe, engagement soared as football leagues returned to normal business following the Euro Cup and Olympics. Two of the biggest players in the world, Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi, signed with new teams and lit up social platforms, igniting a flurry of social media engagement that broke records. Cross-platform engagement for leagues including Bundesliga, La Liga, Premier League, and Serie A totaled more than 3.5 times the lowest month the European leagues experienced in April 2020. Compared to Q3, European leagues tallied 7% growth in engagements. Even more impressive, these totals were reached without seeing a massive increase in content output, as posts increased by only 8% and videos increased by just 2%.

Asian sports leagues, including Indian Premier League (IPL), Nippon Professional Baseball (NPB), and Korea Baseball Organization (KBO) saw a significant increase in engagement year over year with total cross-platform engagements up by 36%, despite a decrease in videos posted, down 19%. The IPL saw the biggest year-over-year increase in engagement, up 201% in July, 32% in August, and 23% in September.
Sports engagement around the world

America leagues

Europe leagues

Asia leagues

Engagement

MLB  MLS  NBA  NFL  NHL

Bundesliga  LaLiga  Premier League  Serie A

8% YoY Growth

36% YoY Growth

-12% YoY Growth

-16% YoY Growth

-16% YoY Growth

-19% YoY Growth

-19% YoY Growth

-12% YoY Growth

-16% YoY Growth

-16% YoY Growth

-12% YoY Growth

-19% YoY Growth

-19% YoY Growth

-12% YoY Growth

-16% YoY Growth

MLB | MLS | NBA | NFL | NHL

Bundesliga | LaLiga | Premier League | Serie A

6% YoY growth
Fatigue cooled news accounts on social

While news accounts had a record 2020 as they covered everything from the pandemic, civil rights movements, and the U.S. election, things cooled off significantly in Q3 2021.

A look at global news accounts, which includes national, international, regional, and special interest news accounts from around the globe, showed that even with a 17% increase in posting compared to Q3 2020, news accounts charted a 27% decrease in total engagements and a 38% decrease in average engagements per post. Global news also experienced a 17% decrease in total views on YouTube and Facebook and a nearly 14% decrease in average engagements per video.

Local news organizations, which include local and city news outlets in the United States, became a beacon of life-saving information in 2020, but saw an even sharper decline in social engagement in 2021 compared to the previous Q3 2020. While they posted less, 4% fewer posts and 18% fewer videos, local news saw a decrease in total views of 42% and a decrease in total cross-platform engagements of 46%. This was coupled with a 20% decrease in average engagements per video and a 44% decrease in average engagements per post.

For many consumers, the lack of news is a reprieve from the continuous, 24/7 news emergencies of the past year and half. For news organizations looking to develop new content to engage viewers, those that recognize the decline and adapt to the content preferences of their current viewers will weather the storm better than most.
Streaming invests in YouTube

Social media has rapidly become a channel where streaming publishers must maintain a presence, increasingly with premium, full-length streaming content. Savvy publishers use social media to test-market, determine what resonates to build better content, promote their catalog, monetize with branded content on social, and to acquire audiences. YouTube is a prime example of this as the social platform became a cornerstone marketing tool for streaming publishers in the past year. Audiences for streaming platform accounts grew by 66% on YouTube in Q3 2021 as compared to the previous year’s Q3. Streaming platforms also increased their content output on YouTube by 97% which resulted in an 8.4% increase in views and an increase in engagement of 24%.

Looking at total video views on YouTube, Disney+ Hotstar stole the show from Netflix with a whooping 365.3 million views in the quarter to Netflix’s 302.9 million, despite having an audience around a tenth their size. Disney+ Hotstar also led in average views per video on YouTube with 2.5 million, an increase of 103% over Q3 of last year. Netflix did make the top ten list twice, with their main account in second place and with their Japanese account in tenth. Amazon Prime, HBO Max, and Hulu came in third, fourth, and fifth in views with 70.1 million, 59.5 million, and 48.7 million total YouTube views, respectively.

YouTube’s versatility as a place for trailers, behind-the-scenes content, live streams, and long-form content made it one of the premier marketing platforms for streaming platforms, especially as viewing shifts from mobile phones to connected TV, as recorded in our Q2 2021 State of Streaming. Expect additional investments in this platform for the foreseeable future.
Conclusion

Quality improvements in advertising, by device, and per region point to better experiences for consumers overall, which might be linked to the growth in streaming generally. Or perhaps the increasing interest in streaming by consumers is forcing streaming platforms to do better. Either way, it’s a win-win for content providers and consumers.

Methodology

Data for Conviva’s State of Streaming report was primarily collected from Conviva’s proprietary Stream Sensor technology currently embedded in nearly four billion streaming video applications, measuring in excess of 500 million unique viewers watching 200 billion streams per year with nearly three trillion real-time transactions per day across more than 180 countries. Year-over-year comparisons were normalized at the customer level for accurate representations of industry growth.

The social media data consists of data from over 2,800 accounts, over 21 million posts, and over 18 billion engagements across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube in Q3 2021. Conviva’s news leaderboard list is comprised of 1,400 national, international, regional, and special interest news accounts from around the globe. The local news leaderboard list is comprised of over 820 local and city news outlets in the United States. Both news lists combine for a total 20 million posts and 7.5 billion cross-platform engagements in Q3 2021. Conviva’s Olympics Federation accounts leaderboard list is comprised of 171 different country accounts and included 67,000 posts and 148 million cross-platform engagements. The Team USA sports account leaderboard is comprised of 60 different accounts which totaled over 27,000 cross-platform posts and 32 million cross-platform engagements in Q3 2021. Conviva’s professional sports leagues leaderboard list is comprised of 261 team accounts and tallied over nine billion cross-platform engagements in Q3 2021. Conviva’s streaming platforms leaderboard list is comprised of 86 different accounts which totaled over 1.1 billion views on YouTube in Q3 2021.
About Conviva

Conviva is the census, continuous measurement and engagement platform for streaming media. Powered by our patented Stream Sensor™ and Stream ID™, our real-time platform enables marketers, advertisers, tech ops, engineering, and customer care teams to acquire, engage, monetize, and retain their audiences. Conviva is dedicated to supporting brands like CCTV, DAZN, Disney+, Hulu, Paramount+, Peacock, Sky, Sling TV, TED, and WarnerMedia as they unlock the incredible opportunity in streaming media. Today our platform processes nearly three trillion streaming data events daily, supporting more than 500 million unique viewers watching 200 billion streams per year across four billion applications streaming on devices. Conviva ensures digital businesses of all sizes can stream better—every stream, every screen, every second.

Any Questions?

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