



2023

International Sports Federations Social Media Ranking



What's the Score?

BCW Sports is pleased to publish our 2023 International Sports Federations Social Media Ranking. Published annually since 2016, this ranking aims to capture the social media footprint of international sports federations (IFs) and provide insightful takeaways on the trends of social media use within international sport.

This year's ranking includes international sports federations, both Olympic (summer and winter) and non-Olympic. The ranking is based on the organisation / corporate accounts, including language, commercial and discipline accounts of these IFs and does not include the various event specific social media accounts.

With the ever-changing landscape of social media, approaches to analysing an organisation's or individual's social media footprint are constantly evolving. Our aim is to ensure that our annual ranking uses a consistent approach while also adapting to the changes taking place. Our overall ranking, for Olympic IFs, non-Olympic IFs and Combined continues to use the number of followers as its primary performance indicator.

The results this year across the different platforms show that there continues to be substantial growth in the followership of IFs in big established federations, but even more so across smaller niche sports. More than ever the trick is understanding the possibilities that lie within each of these platforms to connect with and even more importantly engage with audiences across the globe.

On behalf of BCW Sports, I truly hope that you enjoy the 2023 International Sports Federation Social Media Ranking. We look forward to what 2024 will bring to sports on social.

Switzerland, January 2024



Lars Haue-Pedersen
Managing Director
BCW Sports

Contents

Key Takeaways of 2023 Ranking	3
Tips and Trends for 2024	4
Methodology	5
The Overall 2023 Ranking	6
Most Followed – Olympic	7
Most Followed – Non-Olympic IFs	8
Most Followed – Combined	9
IFs on Social	10
Facebook	
<i>Most Followed</i>	11
<i>Biggest Growth</i>	12
Instagram	
<i>Most Followed</i>	13
<i>Biggest Growth</i>	14
LinkedIn	
<i>Most Followed</i>	15
<i>Biggest Growth</i>	16
Threads	
<i>Most Followed</i>	17
TikTok	
<i>Most Followed</i>	18
<i>Biggest Growth</i>	19
YouTube	
<i>Most Followed</i>	20
<i>Biggest Growth</i>	21
X (Twitter)	
<i>Most Followed</i>	22
<i>Biggest Growth</i>	23
Leaders on Social	24
Instagram	
<i>Most Followed</i>	25
LinkedIn	
<i>Most Followed</i>	26
X (Twitter)	
<i>Most Followed</i>	27
BCW Insights	28
About BCW / For More Information	29

Key Takeaways of the 2023 Ranking

As we delve into the eighth edition of our BCW International Sports Federation Social Media Ranking, two things are obvious: first, that the social media landscape continues to evolve, and secondly, that sports federations have truly captured social media as a space to connect and foster a community amongst their global fan base.

The landscape is changing, with the evolution of existing platforms like Twitter (now X) and the introduction of new ones, like Threads. Similarly, the tools used to measure these different platforms are also evolving. As you can read in the BCW Insights at the end of this report, there is a shift in the way social media is being consumed and therefore, how organisations are likely to be using it within their communication strategies.

In 2023, we saw growth in followers from federations – both Olympic and non-Olympic and both new and more traditional sports – across all platforms.

The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** **continues to lead** the overall combined ranking, showing a total of 106'519'541 followers across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Threads, TikTok, YouTube and X (Twitter). It continued to show a stable growth rate of 16% from last year (the same percentage growth it showed in 2022).

On the overall Olympic Ranking, we saw World Aquatics join the table, and on the non-Olympic Ranking, International Sambo. Besides a few changes in positioning within the top 10, these are the only changes we saw across the overall rankings.

Facebook, despite being the oldest of the platforms included in the 2023 ranking still comes in as the one that has the most followers across all IFs, with a combined followership of over 100 million. New to the social media landscape in 2023, and therefore also to the ranking, was Threads. Only 35 IFs have embraced Threads so far.

As for the Leaders on Social, the ranking shows the top ten Presidents and CEO/Secretary Generals across Instagram, LinkedIn and X (Twitter). Instagram was newly included in the 2023 Ranking, and we see leaders from Boxing, Football and Golf take the lead. On LinkedIn, we saw new joiners on the ranking from Canoe/Kayak, Badminton and Curling. For X, we see a new joiner who reigns at number one from Chess.

As we head into an Olympic year, we look forward to seeing the impact of Paris 2024 on the social footprints of the international sports federations – especially from the new sports that will be joining the programme in Paris. Looking further ahead, it will be interesting to see the impact the Olympics has on our social media ranking leader Cricket, and the impact Cricket has on the Olympics in terms of social media, when it joins in LA2028.

Tips and Trends for 2024

As we look forward to the year ahead, here are a few tips and trends to keep in mind for international sports federations and their leaders as they aim to further their reach and impact on social media. A few additional tips and trends for each platform are included in the section IFs on Social.

Search is social.

You will see a lot about SEO on social this year. As a reminder, SEO stands for search engine optimisation and is about helping your content be discoverable based on the keywords people use to find it. More and more, audiences are using social platforms to search for brands and products instead of search engines, especially Gen Z. This means you should do your (native) research and prioritise your keyword strategy across all channels. Remember to consider metadata and accessibility to give your content the best chance to be seen in the right places.

Entertain, entertain, entertain.

Even if users are searching for information and looking for how-to content, they want to have fun while they do it. And the good news is, you can provide it! It will help if you see entertainment as a cornerstone to build relationships. First, have absolute clarity with yourself about your objective and ask yourself: how can I build a fandom? Your tactics should then build on that.

Content is the raw material to build relationships.

In a fragmented digital world, *good* content couldn't be more important. The reason people follow you on social, the reason you follow brands on social, is content. Brands need to see themselves as content creators and be clear with themselves: Who are your target audiences? Is there something you can do to help with their everyday struggles or to motivate them? How are you making people want to interact with you? Why should anyone follow you? Brands need to deliver dynamic and meaningful content that engages and truly creates a value exchange.

Collaborations that spark creative outcomes.

Be it with other brands, influencers or content creators, collaborations bring together two worlds to create something new and creative. From Barbie partnering with multiple brands to create a global movement, to Nike and Dove introducing Body Confident Sport, and the Heinz x Absolut Tomato Vodka Pasta Sauce, the more unusual the partner, the more surprising and wonderful. Who could you partner with?

Influencers as content and engagement engines.

Influencers know their audiences to the core and are nimbler than companies. Working with them allows you to explore approaches and ideas in ways you cannot. They can lend you their voice and allow you to tap into their network to give you a direct line to connect. And as their content is scaled more and more towards omnichannel marketing and integrated communications, they are becoming a must-have in your media mix. The trick is to work with the right influencers: the ones who are close to your values and can represent you, no matter how different their worldview and scope might seem.

The medium is the message.

Choose your platforms wisely and define clear, realistic objectives for your audience. While you can repurpose content for different platforms, these are used in different ways by different audiences and offer a diverse range of features that you should make the most of. Don't adopt a cookie-cutter approach and be intentional with each piece of content you publish, taking full advantage of the options you have.

Artificial intelligence turbo charge.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is on the rise and changing things. With Microsoft, Meta and TikTok releasing AI features, you and your teams should try them and keep an eye out for new ones to be released. From social listening and targeting to customer service, creative and content production, there is much to learn and test.

Methodology

Defining and measuring social media reach, impact or influence of an organisation or brand is a multifaceted challenge. Varying methodologies and tools are available to utilise. The evolving nature of social platforms, coupled with increasing restrictions on data accessibility, underscores the importance of adopting a consistent approach. BCW is a global leader in the development of proprietary tools to tackle these challenges, for example the [BCW Influence Index](#), which ranks the parliamentary and public influence of European policymakers. To ensure consistency with our rankings published in previous years, we have chosen to be consistent in the organisations included in the ranking and the tools used, however, the number of performance indicators has been restricted as compared to previous years.

Which organisations and accounts are included in the ranking?

The 2023 International Sports Federation Social Media Ranking includes all IFs, summer and winter, that fell under the Global Association of International Sports Federations umbrella prior to its dissolution. To be considered an Olympic IF, summer or winter, the federation must have been included in the programme of the last edition of the Olympic Games (in this case Tokyo 2020 or Beijing 2022). Only corporate accounts are included (including language, discipline or commercial accounts), but no event accounts are included in the ranking. For the Leaders on Social Rankings, the accounts of Presidents and CEO/Secretary Generals are included.

What tools are used to collect data?

Three tools were used and for each ranking that appears in the report the specific tool used is indicated:

- [CrowdTangle](#): a tool from Meta to help follow, analyse, and report on what's happening across social media.
- [Audiense](#): everything you need to understand audiences and get better social media results.
- [BCW Proprietary Tools](#): to capture, compile and aggregate data.

What performance indicators are included?

The use of these tools means that all IFs are being measured in the same way. However, these tools also have increasing limitations in terms of the data that they can capture on unowned accounts to measure social media engagement, resulting in us decreasing the number of performance indicators we included in this year's ranking. The two key performance indicators we have focused on in the 2023 ranking are:

Number of followers: How many followers does an IF have on an individual social media platform?

Growth: To what extent has the IF been able to grow this followership in the last year?

Data was collected on 01 January 2024 across the following platforms: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Threads, TikTok, YouTube and X.

Looking at social media followers and follower growth involves assessing the number of individuals who have chosen to subscribe or follow a particular social media account, as well as tracking how that follower count changes over time. The number of followers represents the audience size that has opted to receive updates, posts, and content from a specific account on a social media platform. Follower growth, on the other hand, measures the rate at which this audience is expanding or shrinking over a given period.

By examining these two indicators, we aim to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the current captive audiences of the IFs, yet we also acknowledge the intrinsic significance of engagement indicators. This decision to remain focused in this year's ranking underlines the need for adaptability in assessing social media impact amidst the changing landscape of data accessibility, platform dynamics and social media analytic tools.

The Overall 2023 Ranking











The overall ranking shows the top 10 IFs based on an aggregated number of followers across multiple social media platforms. This year, Threads was included for the first time, joining Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, YouTube and X. Three overall rankings are included: first Olympic and non-Olympic IFs are examined separately, and then combined. An IF is classified as Olympic if it appeared on the programme of the last edition of the Olympic Games (for the 2023 ranking this means Tokyo 2020 or Beijing 2022).



Most Followed International Sports Federations on Social Media

Olympic

FIFA continues to reign the Olympic sports ranking, while Judo dropped from the top 10, replaced by World Aquatics. United World Wrestling saw the biggest growth of the top 10 sports at 56%. Winter sports continue to lag with not one appearing in the ranking, despite it only being one year after the last Winter Olympic Games.

Rank		Federation	Followers	Growth %
1		FIFA	56'836'902	11%
2		International Basketball Federation	21'869'824	41%
3		Volleyball World	15'825'447	27%
4		World Athletics	11'983'040	20%
5		World Rugby	9'708'855	27%
6		Badminton World Federation	7'416'086	20%
7		Union Cycliste Internationale	5'044'330	17%
+2 8		United World Wrestling	4'204'996	56%
-1 9		International Table Tennis	3'484'259	23%
NEW 10		World Aquatics	3'171'819	39%











Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024

Aggregated followers on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Threads, TikTok, YouTube and X, taken from Crowdtangle.com, Audiense.com, BCW Proprietary Tools. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled.

Most Followed International Sports Federations on Social Media Non-Olympic

The International Cricket Council (ICC) continues to reign the non-Olympic ranking, remaining miles ahead of the rest of the federations and still showing impressive growth at 16%. That represents a total of 14'308'130 new followers across its platforms. The International Teqball Federation (FITEQ) continues to show strong results, jumping up to number two with a significant 142% growth this year. The International Sambo Federation (FIAS) is the only new joiner this year, replacing last year's number 10, the International Floorball Federation (IFF).











	Rank	Federation	Followers	Growth %
	1	 International Cricket Council	106'519'541	16%
+1	2	 International Teqball Federation	8'232'904	142%
-1	3	 International Automobile Federation	4'583'948	23%
	4	 International Cheer Union	3'323'501	0%
+2	5	 International Chess Federation	1'021'375	48%
-1	6	 Powerlifting Federation	993'892	8%
-1	7	 International Federation of Fitness and Bodybuilding	876'924	14%
	8	 International Motorcycling Federation	359'014	5%
	9	 World DanceSport Federation	338'293	8%
NEW	10	 International Sambo Federation	301'904	45%

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
Aggregated followers on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Threads, TikTok, YouTube and X, taken from Crowdtangle.com, Audiense.com, BCW Proprietary Tools.. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled.

Most Followed International Sports Federations on Social Media Combined

The combined Olympic and non-Olympic federation ranking shows no significant changes this year. The top six sports remain constant, with the International Cricket Council (ICC) maintaining its significant lead. With its recent inclusion on the programme for the LA2028 Games, it will be interesting to see the impact of its following on the Olympic Games in general. The International Teqball Federation (FITEQ) and International Automobile Federation (FIA) remain the only two non-Olympic sports in the ranking.

Rank		Federation	Followers	Growth %
1		International Cricket Council	106'519'541	16%
2		FIFA	56'836'902	11%
3		International Basketball Federation	21'869'824	41%
4		Volleyball World	15'825'447	27%
5		World Athletics	11'983'040	20%
6		World Rugby	9'708'855	27%
+3 7		International Teqball Federation	8'232'904	142%
-1 8		Badminton World Federation	7'416'086	20%
-1 9		International Cycling Union	5'044'330	17%
-1 10		International Automobile Federation	4'583'948	23%

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
Aggregated followers on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Threads, TikTok, YouTube and X, taken from Crowdtangle.com, Audiense.com, BCW Proprietary Tools.. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled.

IFs on Social

This year a ranking of the top 10 IFs (Olympic and non-Olympic) for most followers and biggest growth in followers are provided across seven platforms: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Threads, TikTok, YouTube and X.





















Facebook

Facebook comes in as the platform that has the most followers across all IFs, with a combined followership of over 100 million. For most followed, the ICC remains in the lead on this platform with almost four-fold the followership of the number two the International Basketball Federation (FIBA). The International Teqball Federation (FITEQ) and World Aquatics joined the top 10, replacing the International Cycling Union (UCI) and International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) from the 2022 ranking.

The biggest growth on Facebook is with American Football. The entire top 10 are non-Olympic federations, apart from United World Wrestling which ties for 2nd place with the International Chess Federation (FIDE).

Most Followed on Facebook

Rank		Federation/Username	Followers	Growth %
1		International Cricket Council @ICC	41'014'563	11%
2		International Basketball Federation @FIBA	9'918'356	6%
 +1	3	 Volleyball World @VolleyballWorld	5'926'384	10%
 -1	4	 FIFA @FIFA	5'413'762	5%
NEW	5	 Teqball @Teqball	4'098'031	n/a
 -1	6	 International Cheer Union @InternationalCheerUnion	3'192'835	-1%
 -1	7	 World Athletics @WorldAthletics	2'929'711	20%
 -1	8	 World Rugby @WorldRugby	2'433'186	12%
 -1	9	 Badminton World Federation @BWFbadminton	1'938'218	9%
NEW	10	 World Aquatics @WorldAquatics1908	1'813'110	18%

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
Crowdtangle.com. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled.

Biggest Growth on Facebook

Rank		Federation/Username	Growth %	Absolute
1		International American Football Federation @IFAFMedia	74%	1'780
2		International Chess Federation @ChessFIDE	68%	107'926
2		United World Wrestling @UnitedWorldWrestling	68%	527'189
4		World Underwater Federation @CMASorg	57%	7'944
5		World Darts Federation @DartsWDF	52%	7'496
6		International Casting Sport Federation @Official.ICSF	50%	110
7		World Lacrosse @WorldLacrosse	48%	5'137
8		World Netball @OfficialWorldNetball	36%	13'529
9		International Sambo Federation @InternationalSamboFederation	30%	26'648
10		International Bobsleigh & Skeleton Federation @IBSFsliding	23%	6'126

Data Captured
Source

001.01.2024
Crowdtangle.com. This ranking did not appear in our 2022 report and so no change in position is shown. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled. .

Facebook trends to keep in mind for 2024

Reels rule. Use them for both organic and paid content. Keep an eye out for features and more options for this format, and test, test, test.

Groups continue to be an important feature on Facebook. The platform recommends groups to join based on geographic location, demography, activity and interests. Consider creating or participating in groups to connect with your audience, keeping in mind that groups are not about promotion. You should provide helpful resources and interact to strengthen your relationship with them.

Meta Verified is available in a few countries and not to brands yet, but we expect that to change.

For now, consider this feature for leaders and executives who use their personal Facebook profiles for business purposes.

If they're not in a country where the feature is available yet, encourage them to sign up for the waiting list [here](#).

Prioritise SEO. Don't forget one of the clearest signals of relevant content for the algorithm is your keywords. So, maintain alignment on these across channels and make sure you conduct research on Facebook (and each platform) natively too.

AI is on the rise. Meta has been experimenting with AI for a while and has launched several products, from creative production tools to chatbots with "AI personas that can help people in a variety of ways", according to Mark Zuckerberg. Stay on the loop at ai.meta.com/genai/.













Instagram

Instagram is the platform with the second most followers across all IFs – 61 million – and the second platform in terms of overall growth (24%).

FIFA is the only new joiner on the most followed ranking coming in second, whereas the International Judo Federation (IJF) was dropped from the top 10. A lot of newcomers on the biggest growth ranking, where FIFA also comes second with an impressive absolute follower growth of over 2 million.

Most Followed on Instagram

	Rank		Federation/Username	Followers	Growth %
	1		International Cricket Council @ICC	29'904'925	17%
NEW	2		FIFA @FIFA	3'258'865	322%
+1	3		International Basketball Federation @FIBA	3'073'555	49%
-2	4		Volleyball World @VolleyballWorld	2'832'576	23%
-2	5		World Athletics @WorldAthletics	2'514'345	21%
-1	6		World Rugby @WorldRugby	2'152'077	15%
-1	7		International Automobile Federation @FIA.official	1'870'806	12%
	8		Badminton World Federation @BWF.official	1'700'398	24%
-2	9		International Cycling Union @UCI_cycling	1'615'152	9%
	10		United World Wrestling @UnitedWorldWrestling	1'418'718	38%

Data Captured
Source

05.01.2024
Crowdtangle.com. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled.

Biggest Growth on Instagram

	Rank		Federation/Username	Growth %	Absolute
NEW	1		Federation of International Bandy @FIBWorldBandy	725%	377
NEW	2		FIFA @FIFA	318%	2'480'086
-2	3		World Squash @WSFWorldSquash	160%	10'740
-1	4		World Netball @WorldNetball	140%	20'278
NEW	5		World Underwater Federation @CMASorg	130%	7'614
NEW	6		World Darts Federation @WDFdarts	93%	1'221
-2	7		Federation of American Football @IFAFmedia	90%	9'989
NEW	8		World Lacrosse @WorldLacrosse	79%	22'144
NEW	9		World Aquatics @World_Aquatics	73%	318'376
NEW	10		Interantional Sambo Federation @Sambo_fias	68%	52'658

Data Captured
Source

05.01.2024
Crowdtangle.com. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled.

Instagram trends to keep in mind for 2024

Think keywords first. With more and more people using social for search, especially Gen Z, your keyword strategy is more important than ever. Think keywords first when creating posts, update your bio and add SEO captions to increase your discoverability and engage your audiences. This means you should conduct solid keyword research to meet search demand. Use descriptive and accurate keywords to help your audiences find your content and include metadata and accessibility features on your posts (such as subtitles on videos and alt-text on images).

Hashtags still matter. Although hashtags are not the be-all and end-all to maximise reach, they still matter towards discoverability. Keep to 3 to 5 truly relevant hashtags per post.

Reels will continue to be one of the most important content formats on the platform (see also Reels on Facebook in the previous pages). Reels generate high engagement rates and present a visual, easy to consume content format that makes it easy for you to tap into trends and less polished content that feels more relatable and authentic.

Use more interactive formats, such as polls.

The public and competitive nature of sport naturally lends itself to raising interaction by touching on teams' and athletes' fandoms. You will not only raise engagement but also gain insights from your audiences and get to know them better.















LinkedIn

LinkedIn saw a total of 24% followers across all IFs. The Most Followed on LinkedIn ranking remained consistent with the only change being a switching of places between World Rugby and the International Tennis Federation (ITF).

For the biggest growth ranking, we see some big percentages, but the absolute numbers of new followers are quite insignificant with the exception of World Rugby showing 49% with an absolute follower growth of 15'759.

Most Followed on LinkedIn

Rank		Federation/Username	Followers	Growth %
1		FIFA @fifa	401'020	21%
2		International Automobile Federation @FIA	113'165	27%
3		International Cricket Council @international-cricket-council	106'910	23%
4		International Basketball Federation @fiba	65'046	17%
 +1		World Rugby @WorldRugby	47'636	49%
 -1		International Tennis Federation @international-tennis-federation	44'278	21%
7		International Equestrian Federation @federation-equestre-internationale-fei	37'608	23%
8		International Cycling Union @unioncyclisteinternationale	32'842	23%
9		World Aquatics @worldaquatics	17'452	20%
10		World Athletics @world-athletics	16'619	47%

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
BCW proprietary tool. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled.

Biggest Growth on LinkedIn

Rank	Federation/Username		Growth %	Absolute
1		International Ski Mountaineering Federation @SMF	266%	221
2		Ju-Jitsu International Federation @JJIF	94%	47
3		World Lacrosse @WorldLacrosse	68%	1'562
3		International Federation of American Football @IAFmedia	68%	765
5		International Ice Hockey Federation @IIHFhockey	58%	3'365
6		World Skate @World-Skate	56%	555
7		International Biathlon Union @International-Biathlon-Union	54%	733
8		World Darts Federation @World-Darts-Federation	53%	24
9		International Korfball Federation @International-Korfball-Federation	50%	159
10		World Rugby @World-Rugby	49%	15'759

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
Crowdtangle.com. This ranking did not appear in our 2022 report and so no change in position is shown.

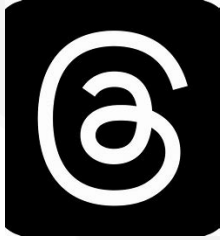
LinkedIn trends to keep in mind for 2024

With LinkedIn transformed into a new Facebook-like platform in the last years, **it is correcting its usage with algorithm changes that prioritise content linked to its ethos: the professional world.** The algorithm will prioritise “knowledge and advice”, especially among subject matter experts and people’s networks. This means your activity on LinkedIn should focus on creating related content that people might find useful, building your network and establishing connections.

Even if you create professional content, you still want to be authentic and human. Don’t shy away from letting your personality shine through, both as an individual and as a brand.

In short, scale back on personal posts and focus on content related to your profession and your subject matter. Understand your value as a content creator and ask yourself: what would be helpful to people interested in my industry and/or what I do? What is my point of view on relevant topics?











There are two versions of Top Voice badging on your profile, either as part of the LinkedIn Top Voices (blue badge) or the Community Top Voices programs (light gold badge). The former is invitation-only and features senior-level experts and leaders. You can earn the latter for a specific skill on your profile by making “noteworthy” contributions to collaborative articles on LinkedIn. Below, you can learn more about each type of badge and how it is awarded.



Threads

Threads was new on the scene in 2023 and therefore this is a whole new most followed ranking. Only 35 IFs have embraced Threads so far, and although they exist, we see that many (or most) of their accounts are lying dormant. Of the top 10 federations, only ICC, FIBA and Volleyball World seem to actually be active on the channel. We will have to wait until next year to see if action on Threads picks up across the sports world. Perhaps 2024 will show an uptake in this new platform.

Most Followed on Threads

Rank		Federation/Username	Followers
1		International Cricket Council @ICC	1'829'009
2		FIFA @FIFA	437'955
3		International Basketball Federation @FIBA	328'442
4		Volleyball World @VolleyballWorld	285'470
5		World Athletics @WorldAthletics	256'377
6		International Automobile Federation @FIA.official	233'000
7		Badminton World Federation @BWF.official	156'726
8		World Rugby @WorldRugby	152'677
9		International Cycling Union @UCI_cycling	107'920
10		United World Wrestling @UnitedWorldWrestling	92'308

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
BCW proprietary tools. This ranking did not appear in our 2022 report and so no change in position is shown.

Threads trends to keep in mind for 2024

Now available in Europe, we expect **user numbers on Threads to rise**. While it's still relatively new and we see text-based content succeed, the platform has the potential to replace X as the mainstream text-based platform.

Excel at copywriting. This should be a priority across all platforms and posts but is especially important here - people are hungry for text!













TikTok

2023 saw a surge in TikTok from IFs and was the platform that saw the biggest growth across all federations.

The most followed federation on TikTok in 2023 was the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) with almost 5 million followers – and it continues to expand with a 306% growth rate. However, that isn't enough though to make it onto the biggest growth ranking, where federations showed rates in to the 1000's.











Most Followed on TikTok

Rank	Federation/Username		Followers	Growth %
+5 1		International Basketball Federation @FIBA	4'900'000	306%
-1 2		World Athletics @WorldAthletics	4'300'000	10%
3		Volleyball World @VolleyballWorld	3'100'000	41%
-2 4		International Teqball Federation @Teqball	2'900'000	16%
5		World Rugby @WorldRugby	2'435'200	59%
-2 6		International Cricket Council @ICC	1'700'000	0%
7		World Taekwondo @WorldTaekwondo	731'600	144%
+1 8		United World Wrestling @UnitedWorldWrestling	462'000	222%
+1 9		International Cycling Union @UCI_cycling	358'800	242%
NEW 10		International Automobile Federation @FIA	319'700	330%

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
BCW proprietary tools. . Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled.

Biggest Growth on TikTok

Rank		Federation/Username	Growth %	Absolute
1		International Racquetball Federation @InternationalRacquetball	3381%	710
2		World Aquatics @WorldAquatics	1841%	224'600
3		International Korfball Federation @Korfball.Sport	1690%	997
4		World Karate Federation @WorldKarateFederation	1407%	22'221
5		International Bobsleigh & Skeleton Federation @IBSFsliding	1285%	48'801
6		International Table Tennis Federation @WTTglobal	1194%	204'272
7		International Hockey Federation @FIH_hockey	884%	23'269
8		International Federation of Sport Climbing @WorldClimbing	618%	871
9		International Equestrian Federation @FEI_Horse_World	535%	170'200
10		International Automobile Federation @FIA	330%	245'400

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
Crowdtangle.com. This ranking did not appear in our 2022 report and so no change in position is shown.

TikTok trends to keep in mind for 2024

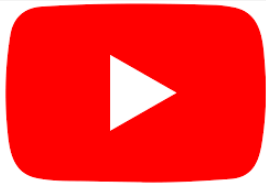
People using TikTok as a search engine are growing, especially Gen Z. Do your homework and optimise search on the platform with a clear keyword strategy.

Even if people use TikTok to search for products and brands, there is no doubt that they want to be entertained. Don't make it feel like promotional content but focus on providing fun entertainment to your audiences which can translate into love for your brand.

Cater to that thirst for fun and keep it real. Staying true to the platform and trends, experiment with more casual content that makes your brand approachable and helps you build connections with your audience.

Put real, relatable people at the centre. Spot people who align with your brand and help you connect with their audiences. Whether that means creating content that showcases real people or working with content creators, use the power of a third party to build trust and relationships with your audience.











As competition amongst platforms continues, try out new features and formats to offer more diversity to your audience and test performance. Most new features won't last, but you could get a boost from the algorithm and surprise your audience.



YouTube

FIFA continues to lead on YouTube with over 20 million followers. The World Karate Federation (WKF) dropped from the ranking this year to be replaced by United World Wrestling which joins at number 10 with a 30% follower growth from last year. We see some high percentage growth numbers in the biggest growth ranking, but in absolute terms, Volleyball World has the biggest number of new followers (1'032'000).

Most Followed (Subscribed) on YouTube

	Rank		Federation/Username	Followers (Subscribers)	Growth %
	1		FIFA @FIFA	20'200'000	9%
	2		International Cricket Council @ICC	10'200'000	5%
+2	3		Volleyball World @VolleyballWorld	3'200'000	48%
-1	4		Badminton World Federation @BWFtv	2'930'000	20%
-1	5		International Basketball Federation @FIBA	2'923'000	30%
	6		World Rugby @WorldRugby	1'580'000	32%
	7		World Athletics @WorldAthletics	1'500'000	33%
	8		International Gymnastics Federation @GymnasticsChannel	886'000	6%
	9		International Table Tennis @WTTGlobal	855'000	24%
NEW	10		United World Wrestling @UnitedWorldWrestling	751'000	30%

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
BCW proprietary tool. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled.

Biggest Growth on YouTube

Rank		Federation/Username	Growth %	Absolute
1		International Federation of Fitness and Bodybuilding @IFBBofficial126	5193%	37'184
2		World Confederation of Billiards Sports @WCBSbilliards6125	4386%	1'623
3		World Federation of Darts @WDFdarts	468%	11'370
4		International Teqball Federation @TEQBALL	217%	125'300
5		International Dragon Boat Federation @IDBF-dragonboat-sport	95%	357
6		International Federation of American Football @@IFAFsport3409	83%	68
7		International Luge Federation @FILluge_Channel	61%	1'690
8		International Federation of Muaythai Associations @InternationalFederationofM4050	51%	11'200
9		Volleyball World @VolleyballWorld	48%	1'032'000
10		World Lacrosse @WorldLacrosse	42%	550

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024

BCW Proprietary Tool. This ranking did not appear in our 2022 report and so no change in position is shown.

YouTube trends to keep in mind for 2024

Although it is a social media platform, YouTube is still the second biggest search engine in the world after Google. Use that to your advantage for paid media: make use of the different ad formats depending on your objectives and where your audiences are in the funnel and use search engine targeting capabilities.

Usage across demographics continues to be high on the platform, and fierce competition against other platforms like TikTok, with current regulatory data concerns, and Instagram/Meta will ensure YouTube stays on its feet.

Keep an eye on YouTube Shorts, as we expect the format to continue the growth it has demonstrated so far, even though it is still behind Meta's Reels. This is certainly a content format to keep your eyes on across platforms.











If you already do, **continue using YouTube as your video hub and test different video lengths with your audience.** While short, snackable content is recommended, that also depends on your objectives and your audience's response to the type of content you publish.



X (Twitter)

The follower growth on X, formerly Twitter, is by far the smallest across all of the social media platforms in 2023. The International Chess Federation (FIDE) is the only newcomer to the most followed ranking, replacing the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) who dropped from the top 10 this year. Some of the top scorers on the biggest growth ranking show quite limited absolute growth.

Most Followed on X (Twitter)










	Rank		Federation/Username	Followers	Growth %
	1		FIFA @FIFAcorn	27'125'300	2%
	2		International Cricket Council @ICC	21'764'134	21%
	3		International Automobile Federation @FIA	1'286'444	10%
	4		World Rugby @WorldRugby	908'079	9%
+1	5		Badminton World Federation @BWFmedia	683'532	15%
-1	6		International Basketball Federation @FIBA	661'425	7%
	7		International Cycling Union @UCI_cycling	609'938	5%
+1	8		Volleyball World @VolleyballWorld	469'910	17%
-1	9		World Athletics @WorldAthletics	465'988	14%
NEW	10		International Chess Federation @FIDE_chess	262'141	27%

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024

Audiense.com. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled.

Biggest Growth on X (Twitter)

Rank		Federation/Username	Growth %	Absolute
1		International Life Saving Federation @ILS_life_saving	52%	147
2		World Association of Kickboxing Organizations @Kickboxing_wako	48%	381
3		World Underwater Federation @WorldCmas	46%	6
4		World Armwrestling Federation @WAFArmWrestling	38%	181
5		World Confederation of Billiards Sports @WCBSbilliards	31%	32
6		World Netball @WorldNetball_	28%	3'157
7		International Chess Federation @FIDE_chess	27%	55'050
8		World Lacrosse @WorldLacrosse	26%	4'162
9		International Cricket Council @ICC	21%	3'731'865
10		World Darts Federation @DartsWDF	19%	1'803

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
Audiense.com. Federations with various accounts (language, discipline, commercial) were totalled. This ranking did not appear in our 2022 report and so no change in position is shown.

X trends to keep in mind for 2024

With advertisers, traffic, revenue and credibility going down, **the future of X is as much a question mark as ever.** For this, we expect to see more changes and features through 2024, so don't miss a beat.

An undeniable strength of this platform is its **influence in search results.** More so with audiences using social media for such purposes over search engines, so do your research and stay on top of your keyword strategy for every single post.

As with other platforms, you should evaluate your presence on X by understanding how your target audience uses the platform and what you want out of it. If you're already on it, assess the ROI and decide whether it is worth continuing.

Leaders on Social

The 2023 Leaders' rankings show the most followed Presidents and CEO/Secretary Generals across Instagram (new this year), LinkedIn and X (Twitter).





Instagram

Most Followed Federation Leaders

Rank	Name / Username	Sport	Followers	Growth
1	Umar Kremlev @Umar_Kremlev	Boxing	2'490'296	10%
2	Gianni Infantino @Gianni_Infantino	Football	1'895'953	643%
3	Annika Sorenstam @AnnikaS59	Golf	104'826	29%
4	Mohammed Ben Sulayem @Mohammed.Ben.Sulayem	Automobile	68'496	33%
5	Fernando Aguerre @FernandoAguerre	Surfing	20'956	19%
6	Sebastien Coe @SebCoeofficial	Athletics	11'068	27%
7	Andreas Zagklis @AndreasZagklis	Basketball	5'756	111%
8	Dana Reizniece-Ozola @ReiznieceOzola	Chess	4'351	11%
9	Arkady Dvorkovich @Advorkovich	Chess	1'956	0%
10	Beau Welling @Beau.Welling	Curling	1'682	n/a

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
Crowdtanble.com. This ranking did not appear in our 2022 report and so no change in position is shown.



LinkedIn

Most Followed Federation Leaders

Rank	Name / Username	Sport	Followers	Growth
1	Gianni Infantino @fifapresident	Football	93'025	42%
+1 2	Annika Sörenstam @annika-sorenstam-0ab5	Golf	8'817	38%
-1 3	Jim Scherr @jimscherr1	Lacrosse	7'539	4%
NEW 4	Richard Pettit @richardpettituk	Canoe/Kayak	5'825	n/a
NEW 5	Poul-Erik Høyer Larsen @poul-erik-høyer-014222	Badminton	4'191	n/a
-1 6	Petra Sörling @petrasorling	Table Tennis	4'110	12%
NEW 7	Beau Welling @beau-welling-7129924	Curling	3'863	n/a
-4 8	Jon Ridgeon @jon-ridgeon-b9a21032	Athletics	3'834	1%
-3 9	Steve Dainton @steve-dainton-2b22072	Table Tennis	3'648	8%
-3 10	Thomas Lund @thomas-lund-2690b27	Badminton	3'499	5%

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
Audiense.com



X (Twitter)

Most Followed Federation Leaders

	Rank	Name / Username	Sport	Followers	Growth
NEW	1	Arkady Dvorkovich @Advorkovich	Chess	597'513	n/a
▼ -1	2	Annika Sörenstam @Annika59	Golf	123'602	1%
▼ -1	3	Seb Coe @SebCoe	Athletics	120'481	0%
▼ -1	4	Mohammed Ben Sulayem @Ben_Sulayem	Automobile	74'341	11%
	5	Borsányi Gábor @BorsanyiGabor	Tegball	40'285	-3%
▲ +1	6	Sir Bill Beaumont @BillBeaumont	Rugby	14'790	5%
▲ +2	7	David Lappartient @Dlappartient	Cycling	8'253	15%
	8	Dana Reizniece-Ozola @DanaReiznieceOz	Chess	8'080	1%
▲ +1	9	Marius Vizer @MariusVizer	Judo	5'981	4%
NEW	10	Riccardo Fraccari @WBSCPresident	Baseball / Softball	4'245	8%

Data Captured
Source

01.01.2024
Audiense.com

BCW Insights

How Social Networks Becoming Asocial Impacts Communications Strategies

Available on [BCW-global.com](https://bcw-global.com).

How did platforms designed for social interaction and connection become asocial and push us further into our own ideologies?

The demise of traditional social media connections - created with the intention of more human connection - and the rise of "asocial" social networks driven by algorithms are recreating how we share and consume information and engage (actively or passively) with content and presumed peers (bots). This tectonic shift in behaviour has serious implications for how brands reach and communicate with target audiences and society.

Previously, you needed to help the algorithm serve relevant content, such as an upvote or downvote in the case of Reddit. However, new platforms no longer require active participation or engagement to serve users content that interests them. Users no longer need to "like" Facebook pages or even follow accounts they find interesting to ensure a relevant, customized user experience.

Apps like TikTok have pioneered the new age of social media, providing users with an endless supply of content, with no active participation necessary. Other platforms, such as Twitter and [Meta](#), adopted new algorithms that mimic TikTok's:

"...rather than prioritize posts from accounts people follow, Facebook's main feed will, like TikTok, start heavily recommending posts regardless of where they come from."

While AI learns from user behaviour to customize content, it also helps push users further into their own existing thought and value structures. TikTok and YouTube users frequently complain that once they've entered a corner of the app, it's hard to get out.

For many users, that can push them deeper into an existing ideology, fuelling the [extremism](#) and misinformation that regulators accuse these platforms of harbouring.

The prioritization of view time and passive engagement metrics by platforms, including scroll speed and impressions, creates a customized experience without giving the algorithm active feedback from the user.

New algorithms and changing user behaviours necessitate new approaches and considerations to reach and engage audiences as well as measure the success of your efforts.

Instead of diving headfirst into every emerging social media platform, evaluate which platforms to use strategically and on a case-by-case basis. This includes:

- Considering audience research to determine where to show up as a brand. Not all platforms are appropriate for every brand or message.
- Knowing the basics about how each platform's algorithm works to optimize content and develop it specifically for each channel and audience.
- Developing visually engaging and pithier content to capture users' attention - whether a power user or a passive scroller/lurker (i.e., [the 90-9-1 rule](#)).
- Not ignoring the lurkers: Prioritizing view rate and time-on-page metrics to ensure that users who don't actively engage are considered when content planning.
- Determining whether the desired platform is "brand safe". Be prepared for changing environments - have a detailed plan for content pauses and escalation, community management, and crises across all active platforms. Evaluate brand implications associated with mis- and disinformation. Consider leveraging [BCW's Decipher](#) to identify and mitigate weaponized information.

About BCW

BCW is the global communications agency built to move people. BCW partners with clients in the B2B, consumer, corporate, crisis management, healthcare, public affairs, purpose and technology sectors to set strategic direction for all communications and create powerful and unexpected ideas that earn attention. BCW uses earned media, paid media, creative technology, data, AI and an expanding suite of innovative capabilities to move people with power and precision to move its clients forward. BCW is a part of WPP (NYSE: WPP), a creative transformation company. For more information, visit www.bcw-global.com.

BCW Sports is the specialist sports practice of BCW. The team is headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland – the home of international sport – and works with a dedicated team of sport specialists across the BCW global network to service its clients: sports organisations and public sector bodies (cities and countries) investing in sport. BCW Sports combines expert insights, up-to-date experience, and global resources as it helps its clients to define and achieve their objectives and to reach their full potential in sport. For more information, visit www.bcw-sports.com.

For More Information

For more information about this ranking, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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