

H1 2025 Content Trends Report:

Fan-First Formats, Real-Time Growth, and the Vertical Surge

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A mid-year benchmark from WSC Sports

Why It Matters?

The first half of 2025 confirms a structural shift in sports media. Based on over 8 million videos created using WSC Sports' platform, mobile now leads TV and vertical video exceeds horizontal. Real-time, vertical, short-form is the operating baseline. Fan behavior is feed-first, with highlights consumed continuously and acted on in the moment. The shift advanced faster than expected, and delivering at this scale and speed requires AI. For rights holders, the priority is execution speed.

5 Key Takeaways

- 1. Output is way up.**
Video creation jumped 52% YoY, hitting 8 million clips in just six months.
- 2. Vertical is now the default.**
Vertical video accounted for 63% of output, up from 51% last year.
- 3. Shorter is stronger.**
Average video length dropped 13%, from 71 to 62 seconds.
- 4. Real-time rules.**
Automated clips rose 19%, driving faster, scalable production.
- 5. Engagement isn't uniform.**
Basketball and tennis saw massive gains in content per game, showing where fans are most hungry.

Vertical Videos Created Up 87.5%

2024 marked a turning point: for the first time, more vertical videos were created than horizontal. In H1 2025, that gap widened dramatically, vertical output grew by 87.5% compared to the same period in 2024. As platforms like TikTok, Shorts, and Reels dominate fan attention, vertical has gone from emerging format to primary strategy. The feed is the new front row, and it's built for portrait.

In addition, vertical now represents more than 63% of total output, up from 51% in H1 2024. This crossover moment confirms that mobile-first is no longer just a tactic, it's the default strategy. Rights holders who ignore vertical formats risk missing out on the fastest-growing audiences.

Vertical Video Output Nearly Doubles



Videos Created is Up 51.7%

WSC Sports-powered partners created over 8 million videos in H1 2025, a massive 52% increase from the year prior. This jump reflects broader industry trends: more teams, leagues, and broadcasters are leaning on automation to scale video output across channels. It's not just volume for volume's sake this growth mirrors the fan demand for constant, personalized content.

Total Videos Created: Up 52% Year-over-Year



Automated Videos Up 18.6%

Automation continues to power scale. WSC Sports clients generated 3.46 million automated videos in H1, an increase of nearly 19%. This rise signals growing trust in automation to deliver high-quality content at speed, while freeing up editorial teams to focus on creativity, storytelling, and strategy.

Automated Content Creation On The Rise



Avg. Video Length (sec) is Down 12.7%

The average video is now just over a minute long, down from 71 seconds in H1 2024. This isn't a drop in quality, it's a reflection of format trends. Short-form video continues to outperform across social platforms, especially on mobile, where fans prefer faster consumption and quicker dopamine hits.






Video Is Getting Shorter



Sport-Specific Growth Highlights Where Fans Want More

Different formats, different flows, but all signs point to rising demand for fast, high-impact content across sports. The average number of videos created per game rose to 89 in H1 2025, up 33.5% from the previous year. Basketball jumped 26.2% to nearly 153 videos per game driven by high-frequency action and star appeal. Soccer wasn't far behind, up 29.5%, as global leagues doubled down on fan experiences and highlight-first strategies to engage fans around goals, skill clips, and storylines. Cricket saw modest growth (+3.3%) but remains the most clipped sport overall, averaging 161 videos per game thanks to its dense format. The biggest leap came from tennis, up 58.7%, reflecting a surge in short-form, personality-driven content that thrives in vertical formats.

Highlight Volume Grows Across All Sports

| | H1 2024 | H1 2025 | Change (%) |
|---|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Basketball  | 121 | 152.8 | ↑ 26.2 |
| Cricket  | 156.1 | 161.2 | ↑ 3.3 |
| Soccer  | 58.5 | 75.7 | ↑ 29.5 |
| Tennis  | 22 | 34.9 | ↑ 58.7 |
| Videos Per game  | 66.6 | 89 | ↑ 33.5 |

Video Total Duration (Hours) is Up 31.5%

While average video length dropped, the total length of video produced rose sharply, up more than 30% to nearly 138,000 hours. This reflects increased game inventory and more moments being captured and distributed across platforms. For media teams, this means more surface area for monetization and engagement.

Total Video Duration Surges

| H1 2024 | H1 2025 | Change (%) |
|---------|---------|------------|
| 104,441 | 137,860 | ↑ +31.5 |



What It Means for Rights Holders?

- **Speed = Engagement.**
If you're not delivering highlights in real time, you're losing attention, and momentum.
- **Vertical is the new horizontal.**
Fans are watching on phones, and vertical now dominates the feed.
- **Less is more.**
Shorter videos are winning, but fans still want more of them, especially personalized and per-platform.
- **Don't ignore sport-specific behavior.**
Tennis and soccer saw some of the biggest jumps in content demand. Lean into what your fans are actually watching.