

+125% Year-on-Year: The Rise of Vertical Content

# The NFL 2025/26 Regular Season Content Trends Report



# Executive Summary

This report examined approx. 160K NFL regular season videos. It analyzes output and distribution trends **across all NFL rights holders on the WSC Sports network**, comparing the months of September–December 2025 to the same period in 2024. The data reflects how NFL collectively delivered NFL content to fans during the regular season.

## Executive Summary

The NFL regular season is defined by weekly peaks of attention, constant storylines, and fan demand for immediate access to moments that shape the narrative. This data reflects how NFL rights holders across the ecosystem responded to that demand in 2025/26 regular season.

Rather than representing a single editorial approach, the increases in volume, automation, and vertical formats point to a shared shift in how NFL content is produced and distributed at scale.

The trends show where the market is converging when speed, platform fit, and efficiency become critical during the season

## 6 Key Takeaways

### 1. The Vertical Takeover

Aspect ratio growth:

9:16 (Vertical)

**+125.7%**

Year on Year

4:5

**+63%**

Year on Year

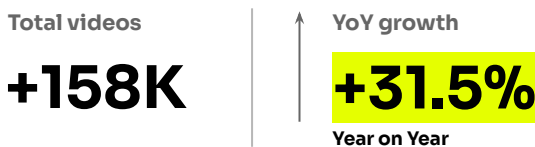
16:9 (Horizontal)

**+25.1%**

Year on Year

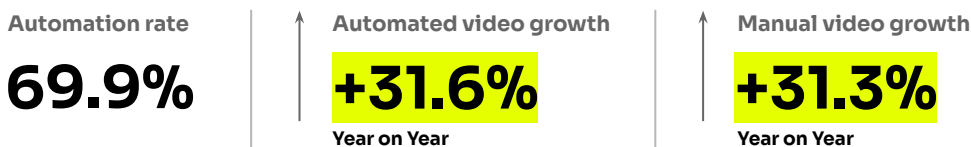
Vertical video (9:16), optimized for mobile-first platforms, saw the fastest growth by a wide margin. This indicates a clear shift toward formats designed for feeds and stories, while horizontal video continues to grow more modestly for traditional and long-form use cases.

## 2. The Volume Explosion



This increase indicates a materially higher volume of content being published across the regular season, reflecting a strategy focused on broader coverage of games, moments, and storylines rather than selective highlights alone.

## 3. Automation: The New Baseline



At a 69.9% rate, automation has become the baseline. The near-identical growth rates show that scale is now driven primarily by automated workflows, with manual creation supporting growth rather than limiting it.

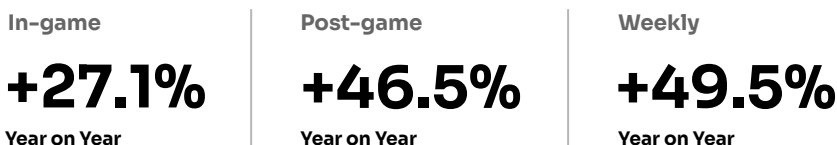
## 4. No "Dead Air" Between Snaps



This reflects deeper coverage of each game, with more moments extracted and published per matchup. Coverage now includes more of the plays, reactions, and narratives that shape each game.

## 5. Winning the "Post-Game" Rush

Videos per game by time period:



**These increases show a clear emphasis on:**

- a. Capturing moments as games unfold (in-game)
- b. Extending the conversation after the final whistle (post-game)
- c. Packaging storylines that carry through the week (weekly)

This aligns with fan behavior, where engagement increasingly peaks during and immediately after games rather than long after.

**6. The "Game as the Hero" Strategy**

**Videos by subject type:**

**ACTION**

**+41.7%**

Year on Year

*Action videos focus on individual plays or on-field moments.*

**GAME**

**+44%**

Year on Year

*Game videos center on the broader game context, key sequences, or defining stretches.*

**PLAYER**

**+16.9%**

Year on Year

*Player videos highlight individual athletes, performances, or reactions.*

The strongest growth came from game-level and action-driven content, showing a preference for moments that define how a game unfolds, while player-focused storytelling continues to grow steadily as part of that narrative.

**Summary**

Between September and December 2025, the NFL significantly increased the volume, speed, and adaptability of its regular season content compared to 2024. Growth was driven by automation, deeper per-game coverage, strong gains in in-game and post-game publishing, and a pronounced shift toward vertical video formats.

Together, these trends reflect a league optimizing its content strategy around real-time storytelling and platform-native distribution, ensuring that fans can experience more of the season's defining moments, in the formats they consume most.

