Industry Summit 2026 in Munich:

Between tradition and global growth: Football is setting the course

Munich, 27th of October 2026. International marketing, new business models and artificial intelligence: at SPORT BRAND MEDIA, the premier event in the sports business, the future prospects for football will be discussed on 30th of November and 1st of December 2026. Among those attending at the 'House of Sports' in Munich's Werksviertel will be top UEFA executive Guy-Laurent Epstein, Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and Peer Naubert (DFL).

Football is facing a fundamental balancing act: international markets and new revenue models offer growth potential, whilst at the same time the demands on economic competitiveness and fan loyalty are increasing. How tradition and entrepreneurial innovation can be combined is a key theme at this year's SPORT BRAND MEDIA in Munich. Leading representatives from associations, leagues and clubs will discuss the prospects for the football business.

Between global marketing and economic competition

Through the joint marketing company UC3, UEFA and the European Club Association (ECA) are pooling the marketing of European men's and women's club competitions. In the discussion "The UEFA Club Football Playbook" with Sports & Media Advisor Carsten Schmidt, Guy-Laurent Epstein, UEFA's Executive Director of Marketing, examines the implications of this structure for media partners and sponsors, as well as the tension between commercial interests, UEFA's values and the expectations of fans.

German football must maintain its position in international competition too. Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, long-standing CEO of FC Bayern Munich and a member of the Supervisory Board since 2023, also discusses with Carsten Schmidt the the economic framework, new sources of revenue and the limits to growth.

The Bundesliga and its clubs on the international stage

Global reach alone does not guarantee long-term relevance. Peer Naubert, Chief Commercial Officer of the Bundesliga, discusses the importance of local partnerships, changing media consumption patterns and bespoke content for the league's international development. Hannover 96 Managing Director Henning Bindzus demonstrates that new markets can also be tapped into through creative approaches. In addition to the partnership with the Japanese club FC Mito HollyHock, the club is collaborating with EPOCH on its own trading card collection for Japan. This approach combines international brand-building with new commercial opportunities.

Tradition as a foundation for a new beginning

Business models and structures are changing not only internationally, but also within the clubs themselves. TSV 1860 Munich is exploring new avenues to combine its history, stretching back over 165 years, with entrepreneurial dynamism. Under the title 'Start-up TSV Munich 1860 – Tradition Drives Change', President Gernot Mang and Tamara Pagel, CEO of the new main sponsor Dialog Versicherung, will discuss crowdfunding, strong partnerships and the active role of fans and members. This year's panels and discussion sessions on the topic of football at SPORT BRAND MEDIA demonstrate just how closely economic development, international positioning and the identity of the sport are intertwined. With Eintracht Frankfurt, Schalke 04, 1. FC Nürnberg, VfL Bochum, HSV, Club Brugge and many more, numerous club representatives will once again be in Munich this year. Also this year, the latest popularity survey by SLC on the Bundesliga will be presented.

About the ESB Marketing Netzwerk

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Press contact:
ESB Marketing Netzwerk
Tobias Graf
graf@esb-online.com