

Retailers Prepare For A £355m Boost Ahead Of World Cup With Brazil Dubbed Second Favourite Team

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52% will be supporting England, with 13% of them also cheering on another team.
 North West represents heart of England fanbase.
 Support for England diminishes with age.
 One in five people embarrassed by the behaviour of England fans.
 New TV purchases to account for half of World Cup economic boost at £170 million.
 Off trade alcohol sales to surge by £75 million.

As World Cup fever heats up in Brazil, new research from Mintel reveals Brits may not be as patriotic as they like to believe, as just half (52%) say they will be supporting England during the 2014 World Cup. But if England don't do as well as hoped, it seems our cheers won't stop there - with 13% of England fans claiming they'll be supporting a team as well as England.

Looking at all those who will be supporting a team in the World Cup (ie not just England fans) the host Brazil is the nation's second favourite team - with 32% of those who said they will be supporting another team supporting the Seleção. Spain (24%) Italy (19%), Germany (15%), Argentina (12%) and Netherlands (12%) make up the remaining top six.

Richard Cope, Senior Trends Consultant at Mintel, said:

Some 13% of those supporting England will also be supporting another team. Many bookies have England as only third favourites to emerge from Group D, so there might be an element of England fans hedging their bets in declaring their support for 'second teams', especially when you factor in England's lack of progress in recent tournaments and the reality check that has cooled optimism. In Scotland, 24% are supporting a team other than England, and with their repeated failure to qualify, Scottish supporters have traditionally embraced Germany and Argentina, but we're also seeing England supporters adopt these former footballing enemies as their second teams - likely due to their attractive style and the fact that they have several Premiership stars in their ranks. People's adoption of other teams is a welcome progression away from jingoism, but also a reflection of how cosmopolitan society - and our football teams - have become.

And when it comes to the regions, it seems the greatest support will be coming from the North West - almost two thirds (65%) of these consumers claim they will be supporting The Three Lions. Other big supporters will be in the North East (60%) and London (58%). Meanwhile, just 40% of the Welsh will be supporting England, this declines to less than a quarter (23%) of Scots.

Historically the North West is arguably the epicentre of British football, being home to some 16 English league clubs, including the giants of Manchester and Merseyside. In particular, the presence of six Liverpool players in the England squad may be an additional factor here. Another interesting aspect to the level of support is how it ebbs away with age, dipping to 44% amongst those over 65s old enough to remember England's last World Cup success in 1966. Richard comments.

The World Cup brings the opportunity to unite as well as divide nations. Indeed, Mintel's research reveals 15% of consumers claim they will watch with other nationalities.

The fact that so many consumers are planning to watch with other nationalities reminds us - following months of political hand-wringing over the rise of right wing politics - that the UK can be an inclusive place even in the arena of football. Not surprising perhaps considering that Mintel's research has shown that 50% of UK consumers agree with the statement that 'Being British' is now as much about embracing different cultures as it is about sticking to British traditions. Richard continues.

But, as fans throw themselves into patriotic celebrations, Mintel's research reveals some may feel they are going too far. One in five (19%) Brits claim that they are embarrassed by the behaviour of England football supporters when watching national games in pubs, bars or other venues.

Meanwhile, one in 10 (9%) Brits claim watching or listening to World Cup games this summer could cause arguments between themselves and their partner or other family members. Those living in the East and West Midlands are predicting the greatest friction - some 20% of these consumers are forecasting arguments.

Mintel's research also predicts the financial benefits generated by the World Cup for Britain - revealing that retailers will gain around £355 million from the tournament.

“Whether or not consumers embrace the World Cup, it remains good news for the UK economy. This is because for every consumer prepared to participate and spend money on a new TV, England kit or food and drink for home viewing, there is another investing in shopping or a night out at a non football venue as escapism whilst the game is on.” Richard continues.

Around half of this retail boost is expected to come from television sales: Mintel estimates that sales of TVs will account for nearly £170 million of all World Cup-driven retail sales - providing a much-needed boost to a category that has been declining in value. The next biggest winner will be alcoholic drinks, especially beer, where off-trade sales are expected to surge by around £75 million as a result of the World Cup. Novelty items and gifts are a further major winner, accounting for 20% of this extra retail revenue - indeed, as many as one in ten (9%) Brits are getting into the spirit of the tournament by having bought or planning to buy World Cup merchandise for this year's tournament. The remainder of the retail gains will be made up of snacks (9%) and carbonated soft drinks (2%).

One in ten (9%) Brits are getting in the spirit of the World Cup by having bought or planning to buy World Cup merchandise for this year's tournament. And for some, the World Cup could be an excuse for a shopping spree as one in 10 consumers (12%) admit they sometimes go shopping to avoid watching sporting events on the TV such as the World Cup or Olympics

A third (32%) of those intending to watch the World Cup, are planning to do so in a pub or bar. And of those who are planning to watch, as many as one in five (20%) consumers claim that the World Cup is a good excuse to organise a boys/girls night out. For many the World Cup will be an excuse to catch up with friends and family as more than a third (35%) say they often watch major sporting events in their company.

But employers beware - things may slacken in the workplace - indeed, over one in 10 Brits (13%) admit that they are planning on leaving work early to watch a game starting at 5pm.

Finally, it seems the focus on Brazil will deliver more benefits for the country than just the short term impact of the World Cup. Indeed, over one in 10 (13%) consumers claim the World Cup has made them interested in visiting Brazil. Furthermore, some 9% of consumers claim to be interested in trying Brazilian products such as food and or drink from Brazil and (17%) of World Cup viewers and listeners say that they would like trying out different food and drinks to match the teams they are watching during the tournament.

“The World Cup is the start of Brazil’s prolonged three-year period in the media spotlight and it already appears to be working on consumers, inspiring them to support the team, whilst also arousing and piquing their interest in Brazil as a destination and producer of food and drink. Drinks from guarana, to cachaca and Brahma beer all have huge potential, as does churrasco barbecue and functional fruits like acai berries. Beyond that, beachwear brands from Blueman to Aqua de Coco - as well as established brands like Havaianas (which has just expanded into clothing) - have the potential to become the brands of this - and subsequent - summers. What’s great is that our (Britain’s) knowledge and perception of Brazil are quite dated, so there’s plenty of fresh marketing territory to explore.”