



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Beyond the Final Whistle

**Capturing the Halo of Relevant Attention
during the 2026 FIFA World Cup**

A strategic framework for streaming TV advertisers



This material is not affiliated with, endorsed by, or sponsored by FIFA. FIFA World Cup and related marks are trademarks of FIFA. All references are used solely for descriptive purposes and do not imply any association with or endorsement by FIFA.

The game is the draw. The halo is the strategy.

The Core Insight

For the 2026 FIFA World Cup, official sponsors can extend their investment while challengers can conquest relevant attention without paying for rights.

Live games represent only a fraction of total World Cup engagement. In 2022, short-form VOD generated **4X as many views as live coverage** in North America, and that gap widens further across social and streaming platforms beyond rights-holders.

US World Cup viewers are primarily **Gen Z and Millennials** who consume **halo content** including highlights, reactions, and **personality-driven stories across free ad-supported streaming services**.

AI-powered contextual categorization now allows advertisers to programmatically target halo content across supply sources to reach these audiences at scale.

The U.S. opportunity is getting larger - and more local
87 million Americans are interested in the tournament. Host-city intensity and diaspora concentration make localized halo content a significant incremental reach opportunity.

Buyers already want halo content

In a 2025 survey of 200+ brand marketers, 91% prioritize digital-native sports video and 45% plan to increase creator spend. Both are formats that define World Cup halo content.

IRIS.TV unlocks accuracy, scale, and performance

Advertisers contextually targeting sports halo content with IRIS_ID have seen 2-5X lifts in conversion rates across comparable major sporting events including the 2026 Winter Olympics.

The U.S. opportunity is getting larger - and more local

World Cup momentum is building nationally, and host markets already over-index on soccer fandom.

The potential audience for the 2026 tournament is substantial: 87 million Americans are interested in the World Cup. This includes 34 million female fans and diverse audiences that represent both the present and future of American soccer fandom. Gen Z can't afford multiple premium subscriptions, has been impacted by account-sharing crackdowns, and prefers free-ad-supported streaming TV (FAST).

87M

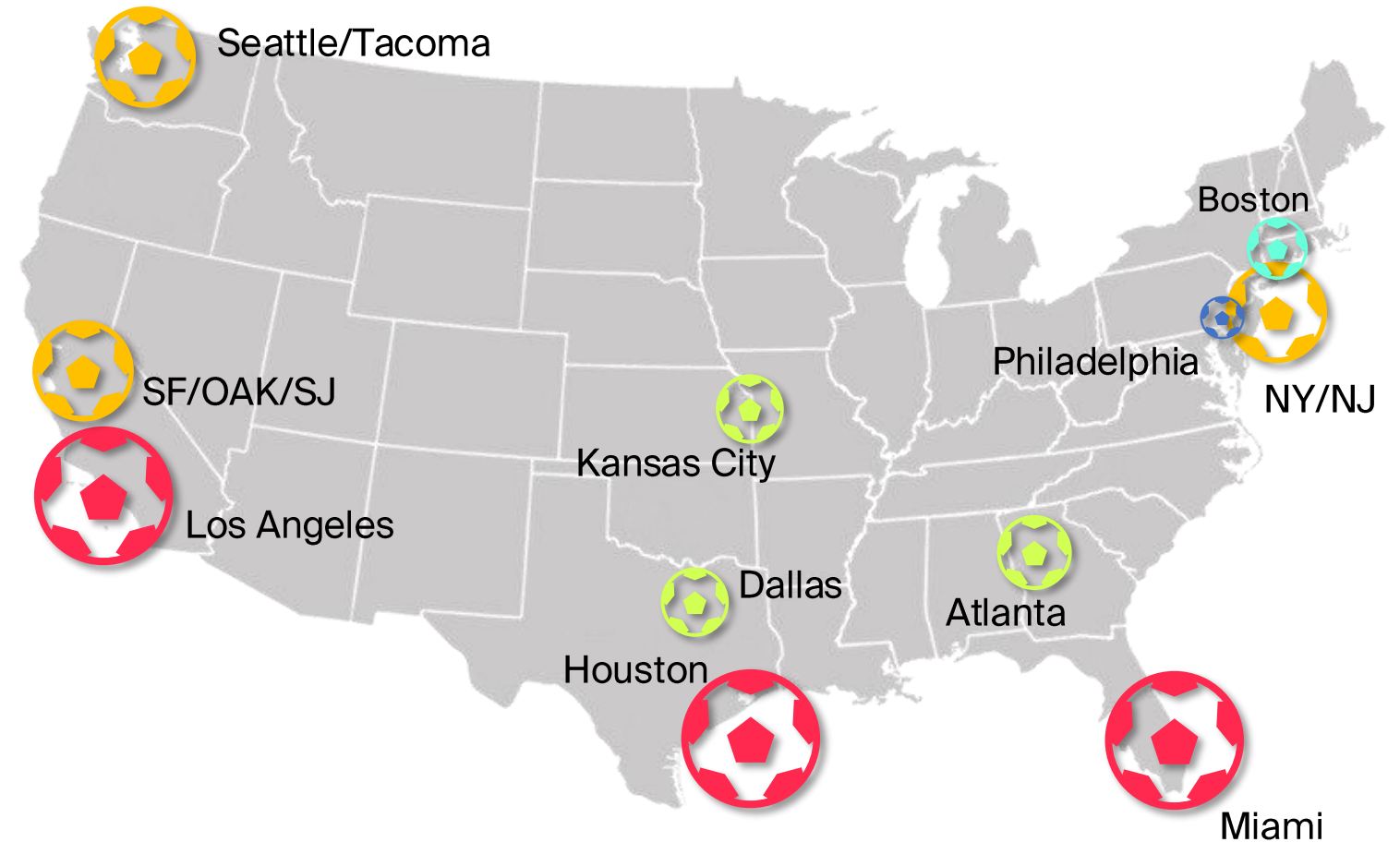
Americans are interested

76%

Gen Z or Millennial

Planning Implication

Plan national reach, but layer geo and halo content in host markets where soccer intensity is already elevated and event participation will be visible.



There is more inventory in the halo

The tournament is a continuous attention system – not a single event. Most attention exists outside the live streams.

Live streams capture the most hours watched but unlike most televised U.S. sports, live World Cup games have fewer stoppages and less inventory.

For the 2022 World Cup, in the North American region, video-on-demand (VOD) represented the highest share of views.

4X

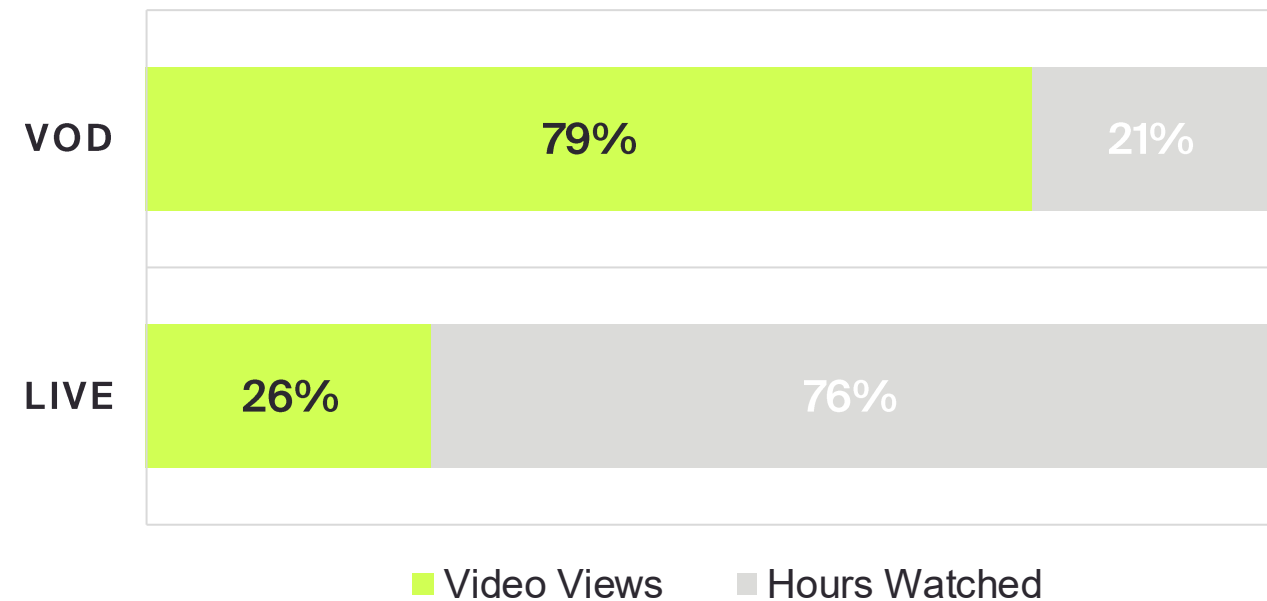
More VOD views than live

2.1

avg minutes per VOD view

These figures only account for rights-holder viewership. When taking account of all social, online video (OLV), and streaming platforms, the gap is considerably wider.

2022 World Cup North, Central & Caribbean Viewership Splits



Planning implication

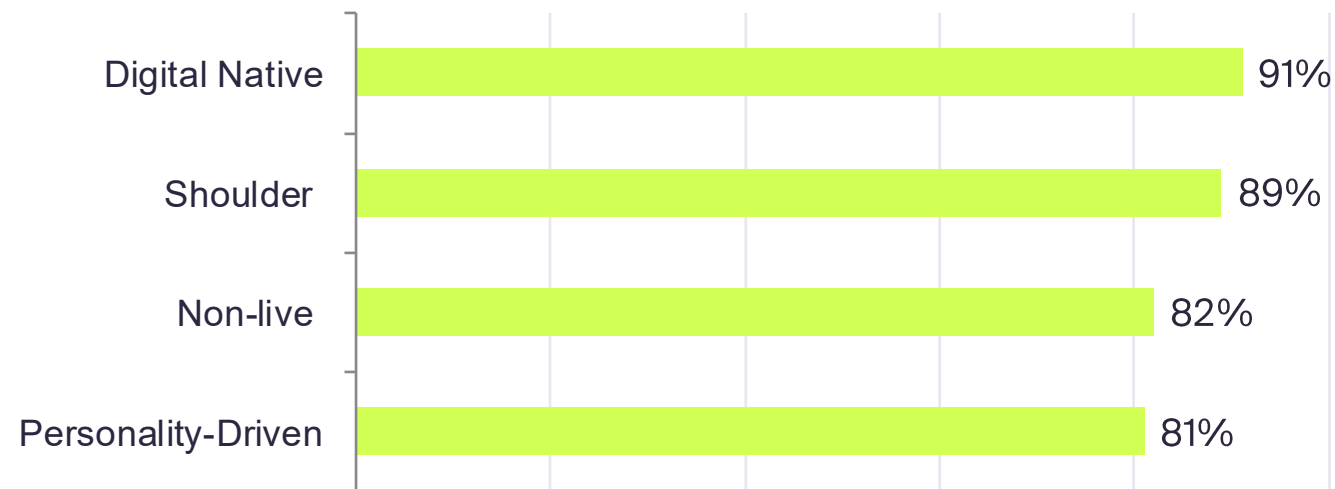
Fans did not just watch the match. They repeatedly returned to World Cup content in formats that are closer to halo content including highlights, recaps, reactions, explainers, and other short-form shoulder content.

Advertisers want halo content

Buyers are already validating the same content that define World Cup halo content in streaming.

In a 2025 survey of over 200 brand marketers, 35% expect non-live televised sports content spend to increase in the next 12 months. 45% expect sports-focused creators / influencer spend to increase.

Advertising Demand for Sports Content Types



Planning implication

Halo content is not a fallback tactic. It aligns with where buyer demand, creator spend, and digital-native sports video budgets are moving.

Source: Advertiser Perceptions, Sports Advertising Report Q3 2025.

WHAT IS HALO CONTENT?

Digital Native



Video Podcasts

Shoulder



Halftime, postgame, analysis

Non-live



Replays, highlights clips, behind the scenes with teams

Personality-Driven



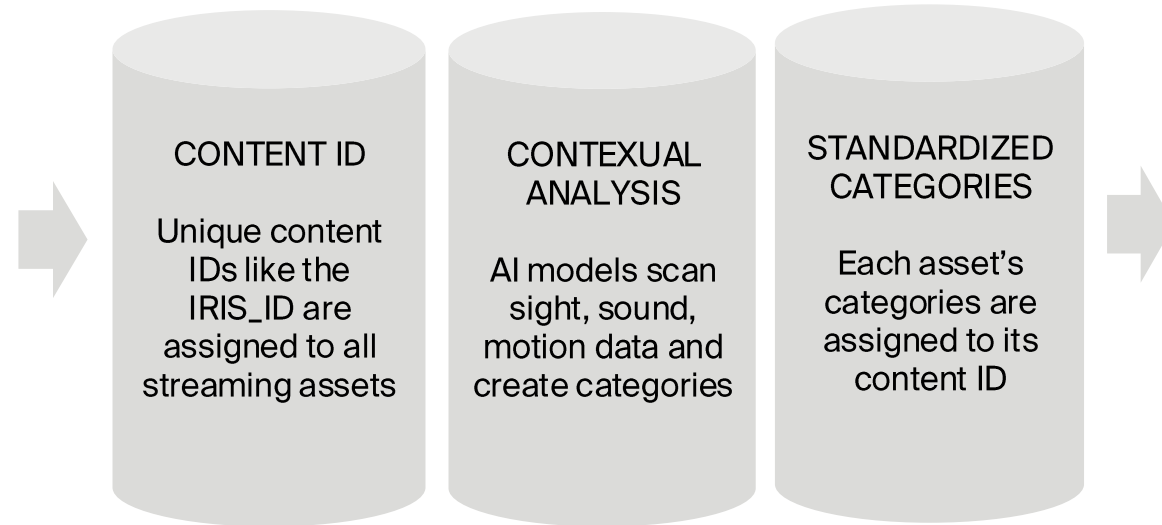
Docuseries, news, culture

Fragmentation is the problem. Context is the solution.

The market wants more digital-first sports inventory, but buying it provider by provider makes reach, consistency, and measurement harder. IRIS.TV's content ID (IRIS_ID) and AI data marketplace standardizes content categorization so advertisers can reach World Cup viewers with accuracy at scale. Spot and programmatic budgets can be deployed across IRIS_ID content data in a consistent manner to unlock incremental reach, ROAS, full-funnel outcomes.



CONTENT IDENTIFICATION & CATEGORIZATION



DIGITAL NATIVE



Soccer	
Publisher	Paramount
Title	Morning Footy
Content ID	iris_f9c0d1074uf

SHOULDER



World Cup	Mexico
Publisher	Univision
Title	Mex v S. Africa
Content ID	iris_7heusf5sgff

NON-LIVE



Soccer	Messi
Publisher	FIFA
Title	Miami vs Porto
Content ID	iris_8h5misf8n

PERSONALITY-DRIVEN



World Cup	Documentary
Publisher	TUBI
Title	Destination WC
Content ID	iris_2ysos5dp5z

Contextual Halo Content Drives CTV Outcomes

What the Winter Olympics proved about World Cup planning

In the weeks leading to, during, and following the 2026 Milan Cortina Winter Olympics, Viant DSP customers contextually targeting CTV halo content with an IRIS_ID outperformed baseline CTV conversion rates.

3.7X Lift in Conversion Rate

IRIS_ID Categories	Lift in Conversion Rate
Winter Olympics	3.7X
Snowboarding	5.8X
Ice Hockey	4.6X
Skiing	3.1X
Figure Skating	2.3X

Winter Olympics

TARGETED HALO CONTENT



DIGITAL NATIVE

Are Tate McRae and Jack Hughes Dating? Pair 'Having Fun'



SHOULDER

Who will win Gold in Women's Singles?



NON-LIVE

USA defeats Canada



PERSONALITY-DRIVEN

Honoring Gaudreau brothers at Olympics left parents feeling proud

Planning implication

When targeting relevant attention, **balancing accuracy and precision is an important consideration.** While "Snowboarding" had the higher conversion rate lift, "Winter Olympics" had the most scale over the course of the games.

World Cup Fan Attention Evolves. It Doesn't Start at Kickoff.

The World Cup tournament is several weeks longer than the Olympics and offers a diversity of storylines that extend in phases that provide opportunities to leverage existing programmatic and spot budgets.

ANTICIPATION

Weeks 1-2 before kickoff

- **Lower CPMs, high contextual relevance**
- Squad announcements and previews
- Host-city content and travel coverage
- Brand and cultural buildup

IMMERSION

Tournament duration (6 weeks)

- Live-match adjacency and second-screen activity
- Highlights, recaps, and analysis
- Peak fan engagement and intent
- Highest demand – deploy Halo channels

REVERBERATION

2-4 weeks post-Final

- Retrospectives and best moments
- Champion celebration content
- Fan communities remain activated
- Lower competition, extended reach

The Halo Changes the Rules. Not Just the Players.

Regardless of sponsorship status, halo content allows brands to maintain or conquest share of mindset

OFFICIAL SPONSOR

NON-SPONSOR CHALLENGER

Objective

Reinforce dominance and maximize return on sponsorship investment

Conquest adjacent attention without paying for official rights

Halo Role

Amplify live moments into always-on contextual presence across the full arc

Own the content ecosystem surrounding the event – not the event itself

Priority Channels

CTV highlights, sports editorial, fan-culture content

Reaction, analysis, player profiles, entertainment crossover

Budget Allocation

Live + Halo blend to extend reach and frequency

Halo-first investment across contextual adjacency

What to Avoid

Over-concentration on live inventory limits total reach ceiling

Low accuracy and contextual scale dilutes brand relevance

Mapping halo content to brand verticals

Each phase offers different opportunities across brand verticals to maximize the halo of relevant attention throughout the tournament

VERTICAL	HALO CONTENT	BEST PHASE	PRIMARY KPI	NOTES
CPG	Highlights, watch-party recaps, national-pride moments	Immersion	Sales Lift	Occasion-based HH reach
Retail	Merch / style content, creator reactions, player social	Immersion + Reverberation	Traffic	Show up in culture and capture spikes
Dining / QSR	Where-to-watch, pre / post analysis, fan-zone content	Immersion	Foot Traffic	Own the match-day occasion
Healthcare	Expert analysis, recovery / training stories, premium editorial	Anticipation + Reverberation	Favorability	Prioritize trust
Travel	Host-city guides, itineraries, local culture, booking-planning video	Anticipation + Reverberation	Site visits / bookings	Turn host-city interest into demand

Planning implication

These recommendations are not one-size-fits-all. The best halo mix depends on the brand category, the phase, and the KPI.

Top Contextual Categories

IRIS.TV's AI models offers core World Cup taxonomy and interest-based categories that align with soccer fan profiles

CORE TAXONOMY	POPULAR TEAMS	FAN INTEREST	DEMOGRAPHIC AFFINITY
Foundational content categories for contextual targeting	Top national teams supported by soccer fans in the USA	Content that align with consumer profile of US-based soccer fans	Content frequently watched by the target demographic profile
<p>Soccer</p> <p>World Cup</p> <p>Team Name</p> <p>Tournament Stage</p>	<p>USA</p> <p>Mexico</p> <p>Argentina</p> <p>Brazil</p> <p>England</p>	<p>Gambling</p> <p>Gaming</p> <p>Fashion</p> <p>Politics</p> <p>Finance</p>	<p>Age 25-34</p> <p>Age 35-44</p> <p>Gen Z</p> <p>Millennial</p> <p>Hispanic</p>
<p>Best for</p> <p>National campaigns that prioritize scale across streaming supply</p>	<p>Best for</p> <p>National campaigns that prioritize more precision</p>	<p>Best for</p> <p>Combining with host city geo to capture attention of attendees</p>	<p>Best for</p> <p>Extending the halo for non-soccer content that matches target demo</p>

Local Group Play Storylines

Group play concentrates international excitement with local experiences.

Ecuador's NYC-to-Philly Corridor



Ecuador plays in both Philadelphia and NY/NJ, creating a natural circuit for the largest Ecuadorian diaspora in the United States. With more than 600K Ecuadorians in the NYC-Northern NJ-Long Island metro area

Targeting

GEO: NY Counties: Queens, Kings, Bronx, Westchester, Suffolk; NJ Counties: Essex, Hudson, Bergen, Union; FL Counties: Miami Dade

CONTEXT: Ecuador, Spanish

Mexico's Texas Empire



Houston and Dallas represent massive Mexican-American populations that will pack stadiums regardless of who's playing. These aren't just soccer fans—they're passionate supporters of the sport who will show up

Targeting

GEO: Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, El Paso, Austin, Laredo; Counties: Harris, Bexar, Webb, Starr, Maverick

CONTEXT: Mexico, Spanish,

Colombia's South Florida Stronghold



With over 530K Colombians in the greater Miami metro and Florida hosting 826K Colombian-Americans total (the highest U.S. concentration) this is as close to a home game on U.S. soil.

Targeting

GEO: Miami; Counties: Miami-Dade, Broward, Orange, Palm Beach, Hillsborough

CONTEXT: Colombia, Spanish

Brazil's East Coast I-95 Circuit



Brazil plays in three connected East Coast markets—New York, Philadelphia, and Miami—creating a natural 'Brazil circuit' for fans and brands alike.

Targeting

GEO: NY, NY Counties: Queens, Kings, Westchester; Boston, MA Counties: Middlesex, Worcester, Essex; Philadelphia, PA Counties: Allegheny, Lebanon

CONTEXT: Brazil, Portuguese

Caribbean Mobilization



Panama, Haiti, and Curaçao have tightly-knit, passionate diaspora communities that will mobilize intensely for what may be a once-in-a-generation World Cup appearance

Targeting

GEO: Haiti (FL, NY/NJ, MA, GA); Panama (FL, NY, CA, TX); Curaçao (NY/NJ, FL, MA)

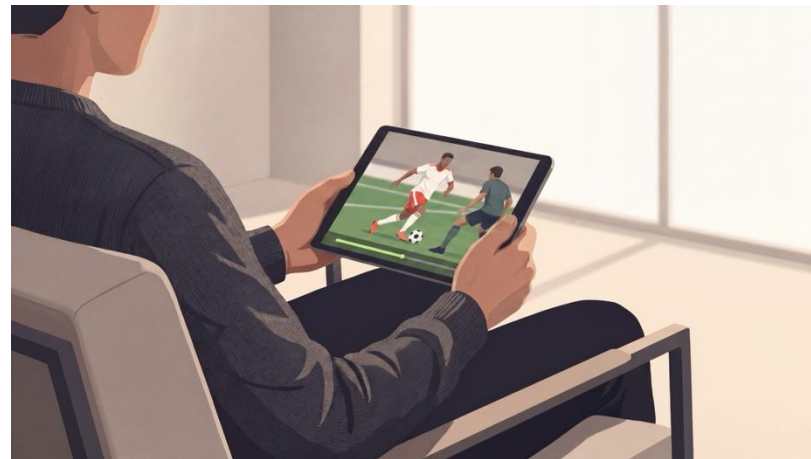
CONTEXT: Panama, Haiti, Curaçao, Spanish

Fan Attention Moves Across Screens. Your Strategy Should Too.



CONNECTED TV (CTV)

- Premium streaming and sports editorial environments
- Highest attention and longest dwell time
- Ideal for storytelling and contextual alignment



ONLINE VIDEO (OLV)

- High-volume highlight and reaction consumption
- Reaches fans between matches in micro-sessions
- Efficient CPMs and creative agility



DIGITAL OUT OF HOME (DOOH)

- Extends the Halo into communal match-day environments
- Dynamic creative can respond to results and real-time scores
- Strong brand salience for non-endemic categories

Winning brands will not outspend. They will strategically plan and buy the halo.

The goal is not to replace live matches. It is to capture and scale the relevant attention consumers will have for the World Cup.

Identify Categories	Allocate by Phase	Activate Across Screens	Measure and Optimize
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Map contextual categories aligned to your brand and campaign goals• Start with one national layer and one geo layer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute spend across tournament phases – Anticipation, Immersion, and Reverberation.• Pair broad contextual reach with two or three deeper-intent categories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leverage creative analysis to inform category selection by channel• Execute contextual targeting across CTV, OLV, and DOOH environments simultaneously.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Measure attention, brand lift, and conversion signals at the content category level, not just by placement or publisher.• Enable performance-based optimization to prioritize categories that convert

GETTING STARTED

The Anticipation phase is already here. Is your strategy?

Brands that plan the full tournament arc now will own lower CPMs, better contextual relevance, and more reach than those who wait for kickoff.

Our team will work with you to build a customized Halo strategy for your brand or clients — including contextual category mapping, phase-based budget allocation, and cross-screen activation planning.

Build My Halo Strategy

About IRIS.TV

IRIS.TV, a Viant Technology company, is the leading content data marketplace for streaming. We structure, connect, and activate the world's video-level data to create better viewing experiences and advertising outcomes. Our content identifier, the IRIS_ID, enables our partners to build scalable advertising solutions for contextual and brand-suitability planning, targeting, and measurement. Learn more about the IRIS_ID and the IRIS-enabled™ ecosystem of premium sellers, data partners, and ad platforms at www.iris.tv.

