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Distribution Report

Roger Duthie of BearFish Sports Marketing Reveals How the Sports Marketing Industry Across the USA and Beyond will be Transformed in 2026

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Already exploding year over year, sports market growth is poised to continue to [reach unprecedented heights](#) once more in 2026 with no signs of slowing down.

Headlined by the FIFA World Cup, which will be staged across North America, the year is set to deliver increased opportunities for brands, rights holders, and sponsors alike. With the Super Bowl, Winter Olympics, and a packed calendar across major global leagues, 2026 is poised to be a banner year for sports marketing.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup will surely represent the signature event of the year. Ampere estimates the tournament will generate at least US 2.2 billion dollars in marketing and commercial rights revenue, representing a 23 percent increase from the Qatar edition. Across the wider industry, revenue in the sports market is projected to reach 87.11 billion dollars in 2026, with continued annual growth expected through the end of the decade.

Beyond major events this growth is reflected across major global sports. Football continues to dominate worldwide, with leagues such as the Premier League and major international tournaments driving global audiences and sponsorship demand. North American leagues including the MLB, NBA, and NHL remain powerful commercial engines, while cricket and rugby continue to expand their commercial footprint in key international markets.

According to league valuation reports, most major leagues continue to break new ground with the NFL leading the way valued at \$20 billion dollars. Followed by other huge earners the IPL (\$17 billion), NBA (\$14 billion), the MLB (\$12 billion), the EPL (\$8 billion), and the NHL (\$6.5 billion), with additional soccer competitions rounding out the top ten.

As these properties evolve, the competition for meaningful sponsorship partnerships is an increasingly nuanced and sophisticated endeavour. Navigating this landscape requires experience, access, and a familiarity with how sponsorship works across cultures and markets.

That is where [BearFish Sports Marketing and its founder Roger Duthie](#) have built their reputation.

Founded by Duthie, BearFish Sports Marketing is a boutique sports marketing consultancy offering global sponsorship strategy, partnership negotiation, and long-term management for brands and rights holders seeking high value relationships in sport.

Built on transparent access to the founder himself, BearFish Sports Marketing incorporates a hands-on approach shaped by more than three decades in the industry.

The BearFish brand name, drawn from the childhood nicknames of Duthie's children, is intended to be emblematic of the individualized service he brings to every partnership. After more than 30 years in sports sponsorship and marketing, including close to two

decades in senior roles managing global partnerships for Emirates Airline, Duthie launched BearFish to ensure clients had direct access to senior expertise.

“With many agencies they get the business and then you never see them again,” Duthie says. “For me, people are hiring me for my extensive experience for close to 30 years working on major sponsorships and with Premier League clubs like Arsenal. When clients work with BearFish, they are getting a senior person, not a junior person learning on the job.”

That direct involvement defines how BearFish operates. Duthie remains closely involved in strategy, negotiations, and long-term partnership management rather than passing the buck once a deal is signed.

“I understand what does and does not work, and I bring global relationships to the table,” he says. “There are not many people I cannot get in touch with. When a client comes to BearFish, they are speaking to me. I am very hands on, and that is how I run this business.”

BearFish Sports Marketing focuses on evaluating and negotiating commercial partnerships between brands and rights holders, managing opportunities from initial strategy through to execution.

Duthie’s diverse global perspective represents a cornerstone of BearFish Sports Marketing’s approach. Board and raised in Toronto, ON, Duthie’s journey began in North America but now the “world is his hometown” and informs his global market fluency. His career has spanned North America, Europe, Asia, Australia, and the Middle East, giving him a one-of-a-kind understanding of how sponsorship operates within different cultural and commercial environments.

“I have built relationships over 20 years across Australia, Japan, Korea, the Middle East, Europe, and India,” Duthie says. “I have seen how sponsorship works everywhere in the world, and I understand how cultural differences shape negotiations and partnerships.”

That global experience informs BearFish’s holistic approach to sponsorship, integrating partnerships into broader communications and marketing strategies designed to resonate across regions.

As the sports marketing industry accelerates toward 2026, [BearFish Sports Marketing](#) serves as a personalized connector between brands, rights holders, and markets worldwide, offering hands-on expertise built on trust, access, with eye toward long term value.

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