

FIFA Brands Are Finally Feeling the Heat of Scandal—Especially Nike

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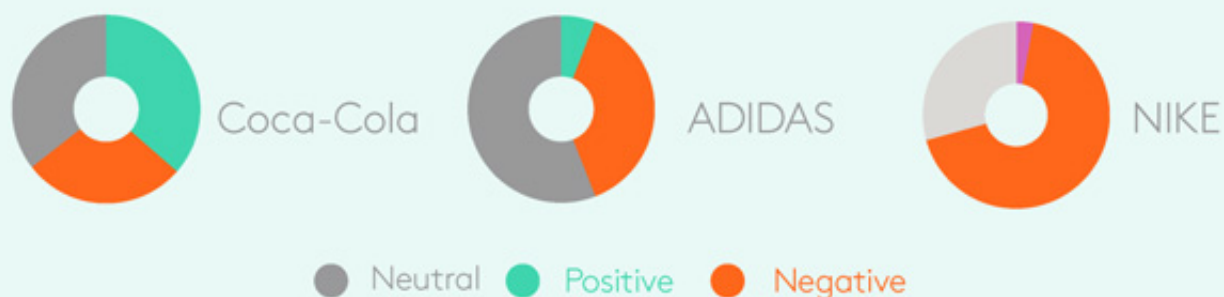
A week after FIFA's world was turned upside down and 14 people were [arrested](#) in connection with alleged corruption in world football, brands had released the requisite toothless statements about being disappointed and demanding FIFA to clean up its act.

Only Visa really came on strong as if it might actually end its sponsorship if FIFA couldn't find a way to fix things quickly. [YouGov](#) data showed that consumers weren't upset with the brands at that point so there was no reason to lose those hundreds of millions of potential eyeballs.

Now, though, media intelligence platform [Meltwater](#) is finding that attitudes toward top FIFA sponsors are "skewing largely negative" in the social media world. In the Asia-Pacific region, for example, Nike and McDonald's were mentioned along with words such as "corruption," "bribery" and "scandal." Coca-Cola and adidas are also being lambasted by consumers online.

Sentiment: From Bad To Worse

Analyzing the sentiment expressed in Social Media buzz showed that the attitude toward top FIFA sponsors was incredibly negative.



Nike, however, is the brand getting the [most heat](#) on social media, Meltwater research shows, largely because the company is alleged to have paid millions of dollars in bribes to sign Brazil to a sponsorship deal.

The social media fallout for brands associated with FIFA have reached near crisis level. Especially NIKE. The unflattering terms below were all heavily trending in association with #NIKE. 



A word cloud on a light blue background. The words are in various sizes and colors (grey, orange, and dark grey). The most prominent words are 'FIFA', 'SCANDAL', 'BIBERY', 'CORRUPTION', 'ADIDAS', 'PATILLA', 'IMPPLICATED', 'WELP', 'SCANDAL', 'BRIBES', 'BRIbery', 'CORRUPTION', 'SCANDAL', 'BRIBES', 'BRIbery', 'CORRUPTION', 'SCANDAL', 'BRIBES', 'BRIbery'. Other words include 'ARRESTS', 'CORRUPCION', 'BARCELONA', 'RETHINKING', 'MULTINATIONALS', 'SPONSORSHIP', 'WELP', 'COOPERATING', 'VISA', 'INDAGATORIA', 'BRIBES', 'ESCANDALO', 'SOCCER', 'BLATTER', 'UNIDENTIFIED', 'NELSONBOCARANDA', 'FOOTBALL', 'WELP', 'BRIBES', 'BRIbery', 'CORRUPTION', 'SCANDAL', 'BRIBES', 'BRIbery', 'CORRUPTION', 'SCANDAL', 'BRIBES', 'BRIbery'.

Nike denies the allegations and is busy pushing itself as a [feel-good brand](#) with a new video supporting the American women's national team that just posted its first victory at the Women's World Cup in Canada.

US consumers showed their dislike for FIFA in another way this past weekend when the film "United Passions," which tells the story of world football's governing body and was heavily financed by FIFA itself, was released in 10 cities. The film, which stars such big names as Tim Roth, Sam Neill and Gerard Depardieu, could not have bombed more. It brought in a total of \$607 in the first two days, the [Associated Press](#) reports. One theater in Phoenix only tallied \$9, meaning one person saw it there in two days.

The film has been labeled pure "[propaganda](#)" and likely earned a few chuckles when Neill, as former FIFA head honcho João Havelange, welcomes current president Sepp Blatter (Roth)

with the words, “He is apparently good at finding money.”

Blatter, of course, has said he will resign from his post, though it remains very unclear when he’ll actually pack up his belongings and leave the building. His announcement, though, led comedian John Oliver to fulfill promises he recently made on his show, *Last Week Tonight*, to eat items from the McDonald’s dollar menu, wear a pair of ridiculous-looking adidas shoes and drink a Bud Light Lime and call it “delicious” afterward if Blatter was ousted. Oliver hilariously made good on his word this week, noting that he hadn’t promised what he would say before drinking the brewski, coming up with humorous options.

Bud Light proved it has a sense of humor, toasting Oliver on social media for being a man of his word.

Meanwhile, brands keep hoping consumers will turn their eyes away from the chaos in Zurich to the games being played in the Women’s World Cup in Canada right now. According to the [Wall Street Journal](#), brands have spent nearly triple what they shelled out on the last WWC, which was held in Germany. Perhaps helping this year’s cause is that it is taking place in North America, so games are being broadcast during ideal viewing hours for US fans.