

HAVAS Play



Twelve Paris 2024 Takeaways for Brands Looking to Take Home Olympic Gold

As media and broadcast giants report record-breaking viewership of the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics, it's clear that, amidst a fragmented landscape where competition for attention is fierce, the Olympics serve as a rare, unifying moment of celebration for people across the world.

Just as spectators are already anticipating virtually coming together once again for LA 2028, forward looking brands should also be planning and anticipating for this next opportunity. Like athletes, brands have the opportunity to analyze their own performance, observe the competition's strategy, and put together a rigorous preparation plan to be in peak form for their next showing.

Elite athletes need a team of trainers with the depth of expertise to bring out their full potential.

The good news is that brands also don't need to undergo this preparation alone. Drawing on more than 30 years of experience building Olympic experiences for brands, including nearly a decade working with 18 official partners and the local Olympic organizing committee in the leadup to Paris 2024, the Havas Play team has distilled 12 key lessons for brands as they begin their preparation for LA 2028.





01

IT'S A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT

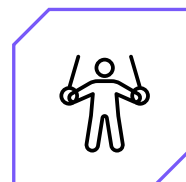


The Olympic Games offer a unique, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for brands to create memorable experiences. More brands than ever are seizing this opportunity, with NBCU sharing that [90% of their programmatic Olympic ad sales came from brands that are new to the games](#). However, some first-time activators at Paris 2024 realized too late that they had underestimated the potential for innovative, omnichannel activations.

The takeaway for LA 2028 is clear: plan, think big, and be audacious in your campaigns. Brands that took home Olympic gold set their ambition early and had a clear narrative for their Olympic story that they delivered with anchor points that began in the months before the games began. Just like athletes, years of preparation go into a moment to shine before the world. This is your chance to do something extraordinary, and planning is what will make the landing stick.

02

KNOW YOUR ROUTINE AND STICK TO WHAT MAKES YOU SHINE



The most successful Olympic partners are those who build a strong brand narrative and maintain it consistently throughout the Games. While there is an infectious excitement surrounding the Games, it's important for partners to remember that they aren't there to promote the Olympics or the athletes, but to reinforce their own brand positioning. This requires discipline and a commitment to staying on message.

Despite being a newcomer to the Olympics scene, LVMH set the standard in brand storytelling through their ["Artisan of All Victories"](#) vision. LVMH's partnership was strategic and creative, finding

celebratory moments to activate that played to their artisanal heritage and expertise: medals designed by Chaumet, medal trunks by Louis Vuitton, Team France uniforms by Berluti, and more.

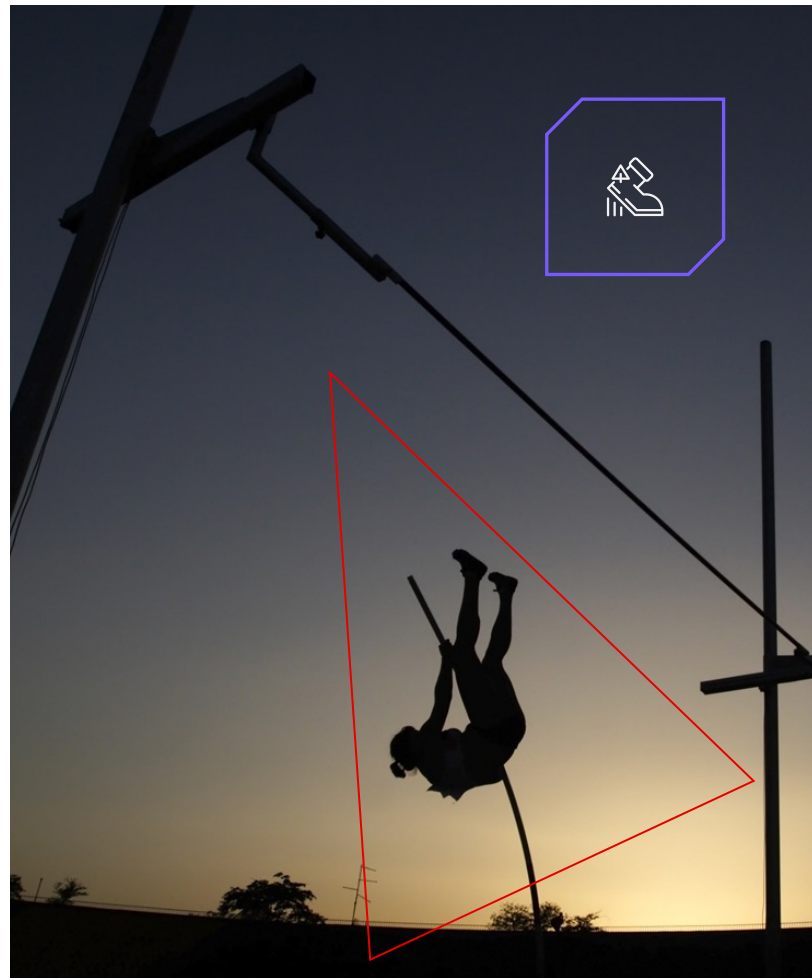
Brands aiming to engage with LA 2028 should focus on building and maintaining a clear and consistent brand narrative, and ensure it permeates every aspect of your involvement, from marketing to on-the-ground activations.

03

LEADING THE PACK MEANS TAKING CREATIVE RISKS

In an environment where over 80 official partners are vying for attention, it's crucial to differentiate your brand by surprising and delighting your target audience. The Olympics are akin to another standout moment in sports, the Super Bowl, in that consumers are anticipating the imaginative, and out-of-the-box creativity is not so much a risk as it is an expectation.

World-leading hospitality group Accor demonstrated creativity in their "[Crafting Treasured Memories](#)" campaign, which found commonality between their vision for hospitality and an athlete's commitment to their craft. As your brand looks for a unique angle, consider what will surprise and delight your audience, while capturing excitement for the Olympics in a way that only your brand can.



04

WINNERS KNOW THE FIELD THEY'RE COMPETING ON

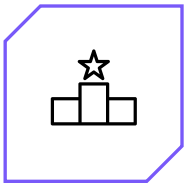
Certain brands stood out at Paris 2024 because spectators literally saw more of them. The most successful partners were those who understood what makes Paris iconic and embraced the 'Games Wide Open' mindset that made monuments part of the competition venues like never before.

French utility company EDF harnessed the power of user-generated content with their [Paris 2024 Cauldron](#) that rose into the Paris sky each evening from the Jardin des Invalides near the Louvre, drawing thousands of nightly viewers to an iconic spectacle. For other brands, knowing the layout of the city and its most visible landmarks provided a competitive edge. LVMH's display of Léon Marchand,

positioned on one of Paris's tallest towers, was visible from the Champions Park and the TV studios of NBC and France Télévisions, and Nike's animated video facade at the Centre Pompidou was visible even from the nearby Adidas pavilion, creating a powerful brand presence in the heart of the city.

To stand out in LA 2028, brands should think creatively about how to integrate the iconic locations and cultural touchpoints of Los Angeles to create memorable experiences that resonate with audiences both locally and globally.

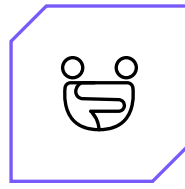




05

VICTORY ISN'T ALWAYS FOUND IN THE TRADITIONAL PLAYBOOK

The Olympics offer endless possibilities for unique and exclusive activations, and winning brands looked to carve out ownable moments that might have been overlooked. As demonstrated by LVMH putting themselves at the heart of the medal ceremony with Louis Vuitton trays and outfits for medal bearers, the key is to invent properties that are unique to your brand. For LA 2028, consider how you can craft signature experiences that resonate with your audience and leave a lasting impact.



06

EMBRACE A TRIATHLON OF SPORT, ART AND ENTERTAINMENT

The Olympics are no longer just about sports. Paris 2024 demonstrated the importance of blending sport with art, culture, and even eccentricity. From [Snoop Dogg stealing the show](#) as a ubiquitous, beloved presence, to LVMH's star-studded events and [Club France drawing 40,000 fans each day](#) to cheer athletes and attend artists' performances, the Games are a cultural phenomenon. With LA's renown for glamour and entertainment, expect the 2028 Games to elevate this mix even further. Brands should explore how they can tap into this cultural convergence to supercharge their presence.

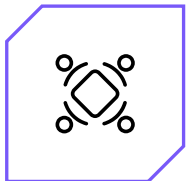


07

GO BEYOND TRADITIONAL ADVERTISING TO MEET YOUR FANS WHERE THEY ARE

Visibility within the Olympic venues is limited, so brands must harness the synergy of earned media, influencer partnerships, and PR activations to amplify your reach far beyond national borders. As models for creating buzz, consider initiatives like Orange's ["Marathon Pour Tous"](#) where 40,048 people ran the same race as the real Olympians in a powerful symbol of inclusivity, or gold medalist Kauli

Vaast's surfing on the Seine – an experience designed by Accor that generated 15 million views in less than 24 hours. For LA 2028, think about how you can create your own moments and harness these earned media channels to maximize exposure.



08

CELEBRATE AND MOTIVATE YOUR #1 FAN COMMUNITY: YOUR PEOPLE



The Olympics offer a unique opportunity to unify and energize your organization. They can break down silos, accelerate critical initiatives like accessibility, and serve as a catalyst for positive change within your company. Sanofi used the Games to engage 40,000 employees throughout the year with the Sanofi Cup, culminating in a day of sports and celebration in Paris with participants from over 20 countries. Accor leveraged the Games to accelerate its transformation plan by improving accessibility for disabled people across all its hotels, and LVMH brought together communication experts from their different Maisons in a post-ceremony "war room" to foster collaboration and innovation.

The Games have immense power to drive internal engagement and transformation. As you look ahead to LA 2028, think about the legacy this moment can have for your organization. Whether through sustainability initiatives, community engagement, or cultural contributions, consider how your involvement in the Olympics can create a lasting impact that extends well beyond the event itself.



09

DEFINE WHAT WINNING LOOKS LIKE FOR YOUR BRAND

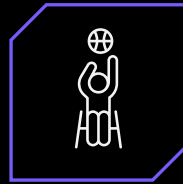
While the Olympics offer invaluable branding and opportunities to demonstrate your organization's mission and values, they are also a prime opportunity to showcase your products and solutions. After prioritizing its corporate brand over the last four Olympics, global consumer package goods conglomerate P&G shifted focus at Paris to prioritize its product brands. So did Coca-Cola. Toyota went even further, testing and showcasing 5,000 vehicles of different types in the streets of Paris to demonstrate live their "multipath" strategy. Whether it's testing products on millions of visitors or creating incentive programs for sales teams, the Games can be a powerful business tool. For LA 2028, ensure that your activations have a clear commercial dimension that aligns with your broader business goals.



10

THINK AND NEGOTIATE STRATEGICALLY TO TAKE HOME GOLD

The rights and opportunities available to Olympic sponsors are limited and highly sought after. The earlier your brand can join the negotiation conversation, the greater the opportunity to secure a partnership that's tailored to your needs. Come prepared with a clear view for your partnership. Whether it's securing a role in the opening ceremony like LVMH did for its Louis Vuitton, Dior and Berluti, or gaining access to exclusive moments like Toyota obtained during the track and field experience, understanding your brand's objectives will ensure you're properly prepared to advocate for the optimal partnership for your brand.



11

NEVER OVERLOOK THE PARALYMPIC GAMES

The Paralympic Games are gaining significant traction and offer an authentic platform to highlight your brand's commitment to inclusivity while connecting with a growing audience. As you plan for LA 2028, be sure to include the Paralympics in your strategy, leveraging the event to further amplify your brand's presence.

Some brands like EDF and Toyota even position their Paralympic partnership first when telling their larger brand narrative and commitment to inclusivity and mobility. Small gestures, such as displaying the Paralympics logo first on their branding materials, can go a long way in terms of displaying their commitment to this event.

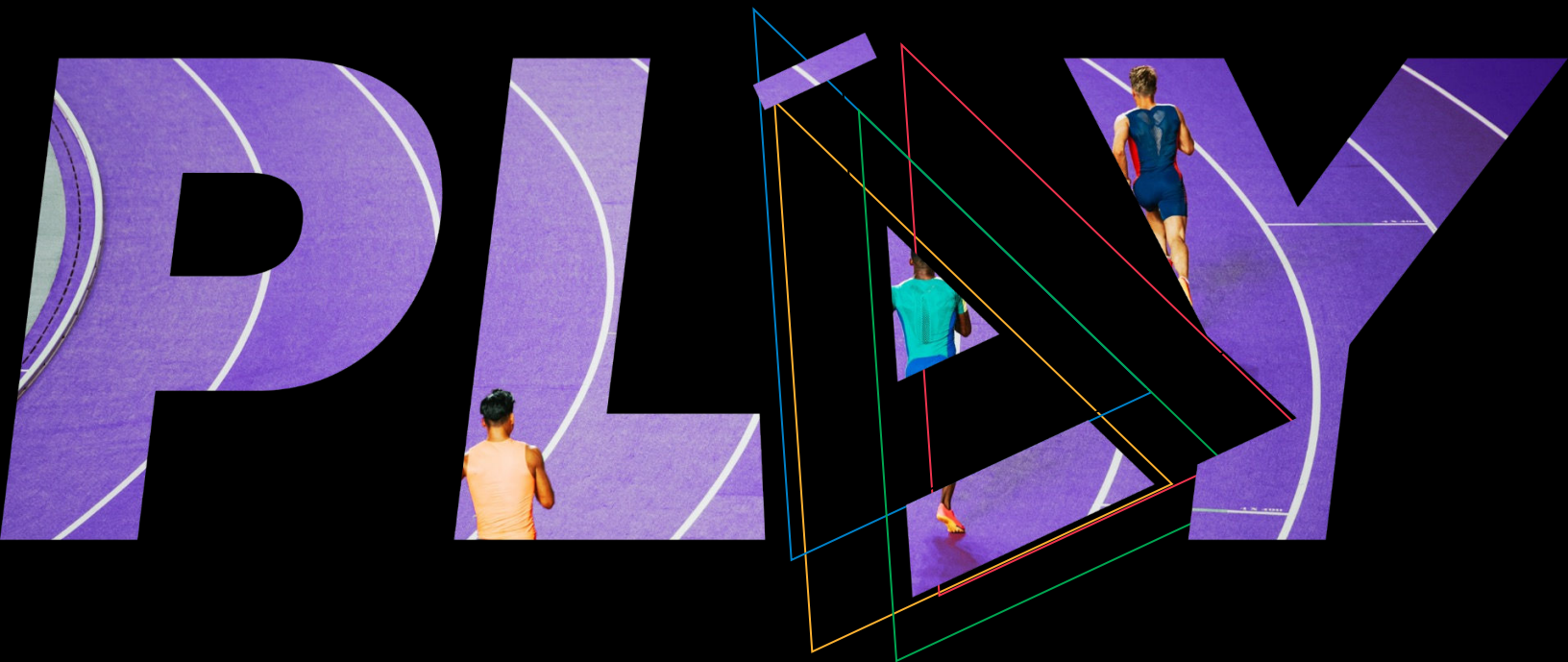
12

GO BEYOND MEDALS TO BUILD AUTHENTIC ATHLETE RELATIONSHIPS



Athletes are the true heroes of the Games, and developing a long-term, values-based relationship is crucial to deliver for your brand and create campaigns that go beyond contractual obligations. Accor sought to champion athletes that aligned with their values through ["All Champions Family,"](#) sponsoring five women and five men that shared a commitment to inclusion & diversity, sustainability, and social elevation. Danone embodied its commitment to eating a healthy diet and regularly exercising at all ages with their ["Champions at Every Age"](#) multigenerational team.

It's important to remember that the Olympics are not just about medals. The vast majority of athletes do not win medals, but these experiences offer a wealth of authentic stories that brands can align with to showcase their humanity. Toyota has done this effectively by supporting 100 athletes across Europe, focusing on those with remarkable journeys rather than just medalists.



WHILE THE CLOSING CEREMONY IS ALWAYS BITTERSWEET FOR THE ATHLETES, SPECTATORS, AND BRANDS THAT HAVE CELEBRATED TOGETHER, IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO START PLANNING YOUR NEXT OLYMPICS ACTIVATION.

The Paris 2024 Olympics have provided invaluable lessons for brands looking to make their mark at the LA 2028 Games. As a truly global team, Havas Play's experts in France and the US have experience driving success for brands at Paris 2024 as well as local market knowledge to create a tailored approach for your brand at LA 2028.

Contact [Augustin Penicaud](#) to learn how this comprehensive approach to the Olympics will deliver a lasting legacy for your brand.