

# Watch out for the bouncer. When It comes, it is going to be prolific

By [Neil Jankelowitz](#), issued by [Mscsports](#)

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What would a business article be without a relatable sporting analogy? Particularly when we, as a sporting nation, so desperately crave a return to live sport and a sense of 'normality'.



In the world of cricket, the 'bouncer' is the perfect 'surprise' delivery. The bowler focuses on a number of full-length deliveries, luring the batsman into a sense of comfort. Then, just when they least expect it, strategically delivers a short bouncer that has the ability to catch them by surprise and secure the wicket!

In much the same way, the world of sport and entertainment – along with all those invested in the sector – have faced and continue to face the proverbial 'full-length delivery'. The delivery has taken the shape of concern, anxiety, uncertainty, reduced revenues and general pandemic malaise. However, as we have seen in so many markets that have begun to open up, the demand for the opportunity to connect with other humans and the consumer's passions has been significant which, unlike the bouncer, is something that should not catch us by surprise!

**Get ready, South Africa, for when the bouncer comes at us you are either going to be ready and hit it for six or get caught out quickly and painfully!**

As the world reintroduces itself to live spectator sport, the demand for opportunities to connect with these spectators and consumers will come to light. The pent-up demand to connect with each other, as well as the desire to feel the emotion of being able to support your favourite team and passion point, is no more prevalent than at the European Soccer Championships that were underway in Europe.

In our homeland, the desperation to support the Boks against the British and Irish Lions has been shared across all social media platforms, and we know that had we dealt with our vaccination programme more effectively, we too would be in the stands going crazy to show our passion and love for our most revered World Champions.

**If ever there was a time to secure a set of rights or a sponsorship platform... Now is the time.**

Whilst the gaming brands have brought some much-needed investment in an otherwise barren sponsorship environment, there are still a host of fantastic opportunities for brands to secure audience engagement platforms now for when the Covid pandemic has subsided. This excess supply means that brands with foresight would be able to secure significant rights at a discounted value. The houses for sale are plenty and it is, therefore, a buyer's market – now is the time to buy.

Examples of this oversupply lie currently within the PSL environment, where there are more than half of the current PSL teams sitting sponsor-less. Kaizer Chiefs find themselves without a sleeve partner for the first time in over two decades. The Fantastic Run Your City series (previously owned by FNB), the 94.7 Ride Joburg, the Jacaranda and East Coast Radio Walks all too do not have sponsors. The Proteas do not have a team sponsor, and the event sponsorship rights for test cricket lie vacant along with union partners and a number of other areas of opportunity. Where some may only see obstacles, others will see opportunity.

If I was a brand manager seeking out new and specific audiences at a reduced rate, now would be the time for me to secure the maximum rights for the minimum spend required. If the advice of Warren Buffet is anything to go by, “buying when everyone is selling and selling when everyone is buying” might be worth following – now is indeed the time to buy!

### So when is the bouncer coming and what do we need to look out for?

Simply put, the bounce depends on how quickly the vaccine roll out takes place in South Africa. By all accounts, the government has accelerated the roll out by allowing those over 50 to register. This is soon to be followed by 35+ and then the larger population. An additional 12-month window to enable total vaccination of the population is conservative. This would mean that by June 2022 we should be in the European position of allowing crowds back to live sport.

If this is the case, then now is absolutely the time to secure and invest in the relevant platforms that will deliver significant return, based on both pent-up demand as well as reduced rights fees and the ability to maximise digital and social rights for limited additional investment.



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