



TV SPONSORSHIP REPORT 23

The top performing TV
sponsorships of 2023

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TV Sponsorship
consistently fuels **positive**
outcomes for brands

Sean Rea
Head of Media Sponsorship

This is the second time we have reviewed the **top TV sponsorships in Ireland**. The first review covered 2021 and this report looks at 2023. What is clear, two years later, is that TV is still the best medium to deliver mass reach for both spot advertisers and sponsors.

As a nation, our love affair with TV continues, the average adult watches 2 hours and 32 mins of TV a day, however this is down from 2 hours and 47 mins in 2021 as video consumption continues to diversify.

The top Irish TV programmes in 2023 were recently released by TAM Ireland, and we have explored how these compare to the Top TV Sponsorships in 2023. Furthermore, research released by TAM Ireland in 2023[^], shows that better performing content, drives better attention to ads within it. TV sponsorship is then at a significant advantage due to its placement, topping and tailing the chosen content.

In a year that had the men's Irish rugby team favourites for the Rugby World Cup, our first appearance at the Women's World Cup in football and epic All Ireland Finals, it is no great surprise to see sport dominating the top TV programmes once again. While sponsors of sport undoubtedly reaped the rewards, can the same be said for sponsors of sports broadcast content?

One off events such as the Late Late Toy Show or Ireland v New Zealand in the Rugby World Cup may grab the nation's attention, but consistency also pays dividends in broadcast sponsorship, and therefore Soaps remain high performing.

The number one TV programme, The Late Late Toy Show continues to

unite the country like no other. You need to go back to 2002 for the last time it wasn't number one. PTSB will be delighted their new flagship TV sponsorship continues to lead the viewing table in their first year as sponsor.

For context, it is worth considering the value PTSB receive as a sponsor. They are the first and last commercial message in every ad break. Therefore, the brand is seen by the audience in the most valuable slot, topping and tailing each commercial break, with the highest audience attention.

While there are many benefits to TV sponsorship, a key one is allowing a brand to be always on throughout the year, sometimes at a fraction of the cost if they were to buy the equivalent airtime as standard spot advertising.

This is especially evident in the highest reaching Irish TV sponsorship, that is Fáilte Ireland's sponsorship of RTÉ Weather. Once again it tops the table for the best performing TV sponsorship. In terms of Ireland's obsessions, the weather, alongside sport ranks high and this influences people's TV consumption.

Fáilte Ireland cleverly capitalise on this by associating stunning footage of the Irish landscape with RTÉ's Weather bulletin. These visuals are broadcast into Irish homes 365 days of the year, reaching more people than any other programme. It also provides Fáilte Ireland with unparalleled proximity to RTÉ News which is not sponsorable. This is invaluable attention as the Weather retains a large portion of the News audience.



2023 was an incredible year from a sporting perspective. Live sport dominates the top programmes. No surprise then, it also features highly in the top TV sponsorship. The sponsors of the Rugby World Cup, Six Nations and GAA coverage all feature along with the sponsors of the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Euro Qualifiers also.

The remaining broadcast deals allow the TV stations to sell the broadcast sponsorships to the market, after first offering them to official sponsors and domestic partners for first refusal.

In certain scenarios the official event partners of these tournaments also get the stings on the broadcast as part of their package. This includes GAA and UEFA Champions League coverage.

It is also clear the Irish TV landscape is awash with high-quality home-produced content such as Kin and Room to Improve. However, due to their shorter season, they do not appear in the top 20 TV sponsorships, whereas longer run home produced series series such a Reeling in the years and Dancing with the Stars do feature.

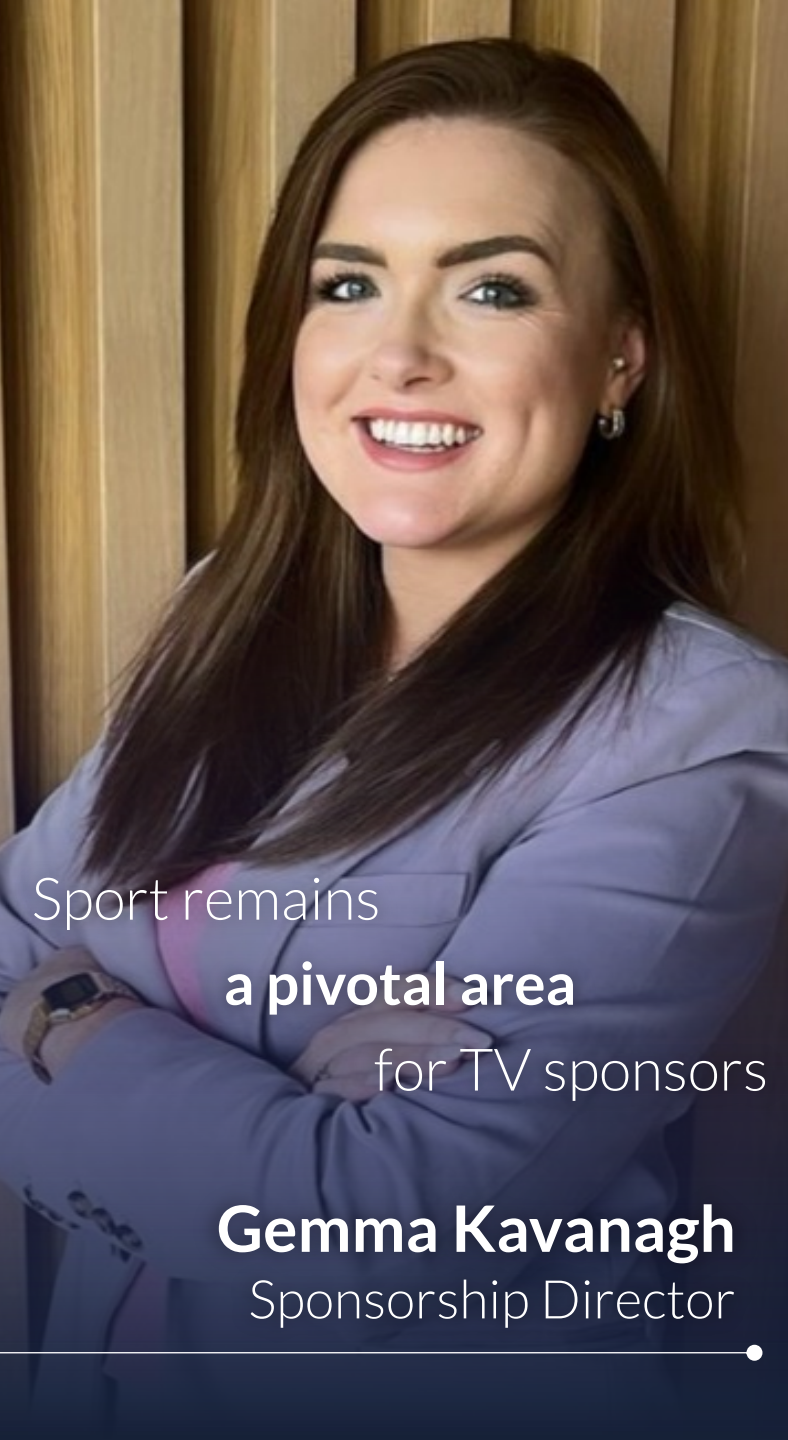
Top TV programmes differ widely from the top TV sponsorships

TOP 25 TV PROGRAMMES: REACH		
Programme	Broadcaster	Avg Audience
The Late Late Toy Show	RTÉ One	1,575
Rugby WC: Ireland vs NZ	Virgin Media	1,384
Rugby WC: Ireland vs SA	RTÉ 2	1,254
Rugby WC: Ireland vs Scotland	Virgin Media	1,200
Rugby 6 Nations: Ireland vs England	Virgin Media	1,019
All Ireland Football: Dublin v Kerry	RTÉ 2	977
Rugby WC: Ireland vs Tonga	RTÉ 2	972
All Ireland Hurling: Limerick vs Kilkenny	RTÉ 2	838
The Late Late Show	RTÉ One	833
Rugby 6 Nations: Ireland vs Scotland	RTÉ 2	823
RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock	RTÉ One	791
Rugby WC: England vs SA	Virgin Media	782
Rugby 6 Nations: Ireland vs France	RTÉ 2	748
Rugby WC: NZ vs SA	RTÉ 2	684
Rugby WC: France vs SA	RTÉ 2	681
Rugby 6 Nations: Ireland vs Italy	RTÉ 2	648
Kin	RTÉ One	611
RTÉ News: Six One	RTÉ One	604
Euro Qualifiers: Ireland vs France	RTÉ 2	600
Room to Improve	RTÉ One	593
NYE Countdown	RTÉ One	592
Rugby WC: France vs NZ	RTÉ 2	582
Rugby WC: Ireland vs Romania	Virgin Media	580
All Ireland Football: Dublin vs Mayo	RTÉ 2	575
FIFA Women's WC: Ireland vs Canada	RTÉ 2	551

TOP 25 TV SPONSORSHIPS: REACH			
Programme	2023 Sponsor	Broadcaster	Reach
RTÉ Weather	Fáilte Ireland	RTÉ One	3,750
Primetime Movies on RTÉ	Coke Zero/Tesco	RTÉ One & 2	3,282
Rugby World Cup	KFC & Vodafone	RTÉ & Virgin	3,262
The Late Late Show	PTSB	RTÉ One	3,226
Fair City	Chill/Un-sponsored	RTÉ One	3,016
Eastenders	Liberty	RTÉ One	2,915
Nationwide	Hidden Hearing	RTÉ One	2,814
Virgin Media Weather	Chill	Virgin Media	2,772
The Chase	Un-sponsored	Virgin Media	2,662
Emmerdale	Hyundai	Virgin Media	2,563
Coronation Street	Hyundai	Virgin Media	2,542
The Big Big Movie	Un-sponsored	RTÉ One	2,491
6 Nations Rugby	Vodafone	RTÉ & Virgin	2,459
Home and Away	Heinz	RTÉ 2	2,435
UEFA Champions League	Various	RTÉ & Virgin	2,407
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire	McDonald's	Virgin Media	2,403
Today	Mater Hospital	RTÉ One	2,375
Movies on Virgin Media	Lindt	Virgin Media	2,355
Tipping Point	Un-sponsored	Virgin Media	2,354
All Ireland Senior Football	AIB, SV, eir	RTÉ 2	2,320
The Graham Norton Show	Toyota	Virgin Media	2,312
UEFA Euro Qualifiers	HSE Quit	RTÉ 2	2,284
Six O'Clock Show	Normende	Virgin Media	2,227
Reeling in the Years	Panadol	RTÉ One	2,204
Dancing With The Stars	Muller	RTÉ One	2,193

Source: TAM Ireland / Nielsen, 2023, Individuals 4+, in 000's

Source: TechEdge Sponsorship, 2023, Individuals 4+, in 000's



Sport remains
a pivotal area
for TV sponsors

Gemma Kavanagh
Sponsorship Director

RTÉ continues to dominate the list of top viewed TV programmes. Notably, Virgin Media secures a presence in the top 25 programs only five times, exclusively for its rugby coverage, including both the World Cup Rugby and Six Nations..

However, the landscape changes when examining top TV sponsorships, revealing a more balanced distribution between RTÉ and Virgin Media. The latter excels in delivering always-on, high-reaching, and high-frequency properties. These shows provide brands a consistent presence throughout the year, shielding them from seasonal price fluctuations.

It is important to note that our analysis focuses solely on programs open to sponsorship. If major RTÉ reach-drivers such as the News at Nine or Six One could be sponsored, they would secure the second and third positions, respectively. However, current affairs programming such as News, Primetime, and the Tonight Show, are rightly, not available for commercial sponsorship.

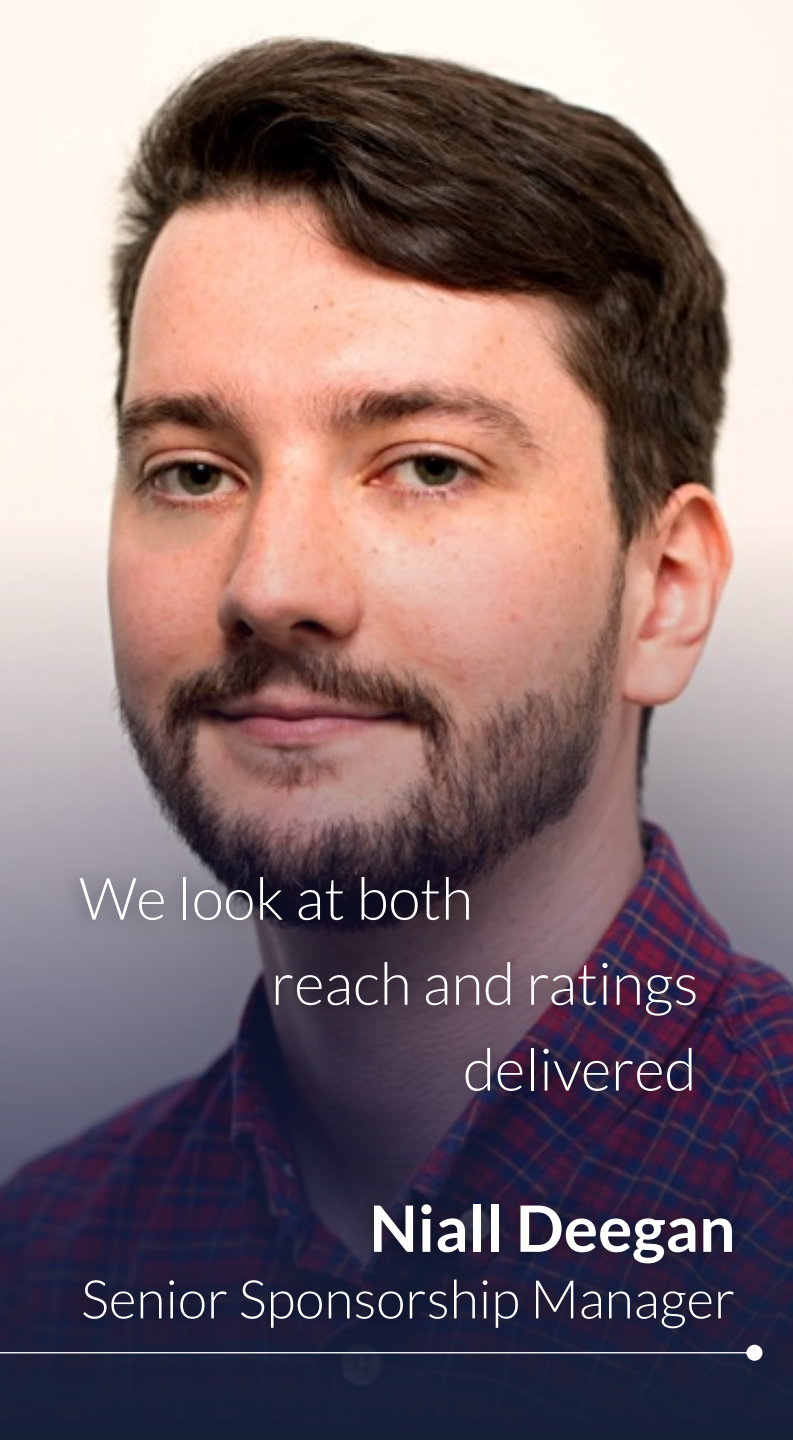
Please note we have examined programme sponsorship in this report only, not channel takeovers such as Volvo on Sky Atlantic. Channel takeovers are an exciting proposition but can have a more complex sales process as availability of the sponsorship can be dependent on the overall UK sponsor's contract.

Sport remains a pivotal area for TV sponsors, though accessing content can be intricate, especially for major broadcast deals like the GAA All Ireland Championships, UEFA Champions League, and World Cups. Tournament partners enjoy preferential access to these coverage rights, as outlined on the previous page.

A positive highlight from 2023 is the Women's Football World Cup coverage sponsorship ranking among the highest-reaching sponsorships (26th overall). Additionally, Ireland's group-stage match against Canada secured a spot in the top 25 programming of the year. This underscores the significant growth in interest in the women's sport over recent years. Broadcast sponsors, Cadbury reaped the benefits here during Ireland's first ever presence in a Women's World Cup in football.

A topic of conversation over the last couple of years has been Love Island and whether interest in the series has experienced a decline. We can see in the report on the next page, that the combined Winter & Summer editions of the show rank 15th for top sponsorships when looking at TV ratings delivery. However, when we look at this under the lens of commonly traded audience of Adults 25-44, its ranking shoots up to fourth, showing its value to brands targeting younger demographics.

While Sky and TG4 may not feature in the top 25 sponsorships, these channels offer compelling opportunities for brands. A promising example of this is Smart Sponsorships on Sky which leverages their AdSmart technology to seamlessly swap UK stings with Irish sponsorship stings. This innovation opens new sponsorship avenues previously unavailable to the Irish market, with an anticipated rollout in Q1 2024.



We look at both reach and ratings delivered

Niall Deegan
Senior Sponsorship Manager

There are two ways to analyse TV sponsorship delivery; the overall reach of the stings which come as part of the sponsorship package, and the level of TV ratings the sponsorship delivers. Typically, the more often a programme is on air, the more ratings it delivers across the year, delivering messaging frequency.

Therefore, RTÉ Weather and soaps such as Coronation Street (Hyundai) and Fair City (previously Chill Insurance) are strong sponsorship properties in terms of ratings delivery.

This is a key factor to consider if a brand has an always on strategy. Properties like this allow a brand to promote multiple product or brand messages throughout the year. They also afford the brand the desired frequency level to keep the brand top of mind – enhancing mental availability.

There are several properties unsponsored below which could deliver significant reach and frequency for the right sponsor and further value may be gained by packaging them together as a strand.

TOP 25 TV SPONSORSHIPS: REACH			
Programme	2023 Sponsor	Broadcaster	Reach
RTÉ Weather	Fáilte Ireland	RTÉ One	3,750
Primetime Movies on RTÉ	Coke Zero/Tesco	RTÉ One & 2	3,282
Rugby World Cup	KFC & Vodafone	RTÉ & Virgin	3,262
The Late Late Show	PTSB	RTÉ One	3,226
Fair City	Chill/Unsponsored	RTÉ One	3,016
Eastenders	Liberty	RTÉ One	2,915
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Home and Away	Heinz	RTÉ 2	2,435
UEFA Champions League	Various	RTÉ & Virgin	2,407
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire	McDonald's	Virgin Media	2,403
Today	Mater Hospital	RTÉ One	2,375
Movies on Virgin Media	Lindt	Virgin Media	2,355
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All Ireland Senior Football	AIB, SV, eir	RTÉ 2	2,320
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Reeling in the Years	Panadol	RTÉ One	2,204
Dancing With The Stars	Muller	RTÉ One	2,193

Source: TechEdge Sponsorship, 2023, Individuals 4+, in 000's

TOP 25 TV SPONSORSHIPS: RATINGS (GRPs)			
Programme	2023 Sponsor	Broadcaster	Ratings
RTÉ Weather	Fáilte Ireland	RTÉ One	14,979
Ireland AM	P&G	Virgin Media	9,938
Coronation Street	Hyundai	Virgin Media	9,202
Emmerdale	Hyundai	Virgin Media	7,478
The Chase	Unsponsored	Virgin Media	7,190
Fair City	Chill/Unsponsored	RTÉ One	6,173
Today	Mater Hospital	RTÉ One	5,147
This Morning	Unsponsored	Virgin Media	5,143
Tipping Point	Unsponsored	Virgin Media	4,687
Eastenders	Liberty	RTÉ One	4,489
Rugby World Cup	KFC & Vodafone	RTÉ & Virgin	4,372
Virgin Media Weather	Chill	Virgin Media	3,796
Nationwide	Hidden Hearing	RTÉ One	3,641
Home and Away	Heinz	RTÉ 2	3,503
The Late Late Show	PTSB	RTÉ One	3,029
Love Island (Winter + Summer)	Just Eat & Virgin Media	Virgin Media	2,842
Primetime Movies on RTÉ	Coke Zero/Tesco	RTÉ One & 2	2,833
The Six O'Clock Show	Normende	Virgin Media	2,637
I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here	McDonald's	Virgin Media	1,950
Judge Judy	Unsponsored	Virgin Media	1,936
Shortland Street	Unsponsored	RTÉ One	1,780
6 Nations Rugby	Vodafone	RTÉ & Virgin	1,706
UEFA Champions League	Various	RTÉ & Virgin	1,704
All Ireland Senior Football	AIB, SV, eir	RTÉ 2	1,644
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire	McDonald's	Virgin Media	1,627

Source: TechEdge Sponsorship, 2023, Individuals 4+, in GRPs

Why should
a brand consider
TV sponsorship?

Jill Downey
Chief Sponsorship Officer

Core Sponsorship takes an impartial stance when evaluating sponsorship opportunities. Rooted in an in-depth understanding of diverse sponsorship assets, from teams to events, and an unparalleled understanding of broadcast sponsorship due to our media heritage, we bring a unique perspective.

Leveraging rich audience data and advanced research methodologies through Core Research, we empower brands to build compelling broadcast sponsorships.

Building on our previous report, our ongoing data analysis further emphasises the reasons for brands to consider TV sponsorship. Let's delve into the key insights:

1. **Mental availability;** TV sponsorship ensures consistent brand visibility, leveraging both reach and frequency to foster top-of-mind awareness during consumer purchasing decisions. The proximity to program content further enhances attention levels, collectively contributing to crucial mental availability.
2. **Pressure and presence;** TV sponsorships deliver considerable TV ratings and are often overlooked when looking at category share of voice. The true extent of your and competitor's presence, may be under-represented if you are not reviewing this data.
3. **Consistent pricing;** TV sponsorships, negotiated based off market rates, offers stability throughout the year, protecting brands from seasonal TV inflation. This also enables additional ratings during peak periods, such as December, when TV spot inventory may be limited and costly.
4. **Extension beyond the programme;** sponsorship activation can bring the brand closer to the show's content and its fans. In Ireland's Fittest Family on RTÉ, show sponsor Londis, were

naturally woven into the content with logos featured on the official kit worn by contestants, branding on the trophy as well as on key obstacles. In last year's Home of the Year, sponsors AIB and show producers Shinawil, created social content with judges and contestants for promotion around each relevant episode, feeding viewers appetite for more content.

5. **TV sponsorship to fuel a rights sponsorship;** our proprietary National Sponsorship Index (NSI) research consistently demonstrates that supplementing team and event sponsorship with a high-quality media sponsorship contributes to significant increases in key brand metrics. This was clear with Cadbury's FAI Women's National football team sponsorship and the sponsorship of RTÉ Women's World Cup broadcast. We would consider this sponsorship best practice.
6. **TV sponsorship to guarantee younger audience;** TV sponsorships are becoming more attractive to advertisers as a technique to overcome an increasingly fragmented video landscape. As younger adults watch less linear TV, they are still consuming the biggest programming live. With TV cost per reach growing significantly, sponsorship can be used as an effective tool to still deliver a younger audience at scale.

For more information, further discussions or to learn about our tools and methodologies which can help your brand source, select and maximise the best sponsorship properties, please contact me or a team member at Core Sponsorship.

About **Core Sponsorship**

We understand the value of sponsorship and the importance of measuring sponsorship with precision. We give sponsors the confidence of knowing their investments will deliver their marketing and business objectives.

For more information

jill.downey@onecore.ie

+353 1 649 6344