



## **SportsInnovation 2018**

**8 May 2018**

**Keynote by DFL CEO Christian Seifert**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr Dornscheidt,

Mr Rinaudo,

Welcome to SportsInnovation 2018!

At the 1954 World Cup, commentator Herbert Zimmermann shouted the following into his microphone in Bern: “Rahn should shoot from deep – Rahn shoots – goal!”

At the 2014 World Cup, we heard Tom Bartels in Rio de Janeiro say: “Do it! Do it! He’s done it!”

In content and effect, they were both the same thing: a comment on the goal that made the German national team World Champions. Yet the two events are worlds apart.

In 1954, people watched the World Cup in the few pubs and homes that had a television set. What followed was the triumph of television in Germany. Every German household soon had one of these appliances, at least as soon as the monthly wage allowed it. Sport was a major factor in this trend.

When we celebrated Mario Götze's winning goal in Rio, the experience was completely different. Fans didn't just watch on their television at home, and many watched in HD. They watched in public on big screens, or as a live stream on their PCs or smartphones. All over the world.

Many matches are unforgettable because modern technology wasn't available yet. The Wembley goal of 1966, which cost Germany the World Cup, wouldn't be possible today. The English team found themselves in a similar situation in the knockout stage of the 2010 World Cup. England were not awarded a clear goal by Frank Lampard. Had the match been played today, goal-line technology would have cleared things up quickly.

Why am I telling these anecdotes?

They stand for highlights in football history but also for something else. For something that is sadly seen far too little.

## **Sport and thus football are avant-garde.**

Football drove television's breakthrough. Football drove the breakthrough of digital media. Football, like other popular sports, drives innovation. That's why we have come together today.

SportsInnovation is not just an event where we talk about the latest technical developments. SportsInnovation also sends a signal to the outside world: Sport in general – as one of the most attractive media contents in the world – was and is a pacemaker for technological advancement.

That is why we, the DFL Deutsche Fußball Liga, made the conscious decision to partner with SportsInnovation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to use the DFL as an example to illustrate how entrepreneurial decisions drive technological development in the media.

Since I took up my post as CEO of the Deutsche Fußball Liga 13 years ago, we, the DFL, have founded half a dozen subsidiaries. We are the only football league to serve all levels of media 100 percent with companies we control. From the sporting competition via data collection for sport and media analysis, production and global distribution of the base signal, maintenance of our own digital archive

and worldwide digital marketing to global rights distribution, we guarantee the highest media expertise.

With this strategy, we have significantly enhanced the experience of a Bundesliga match. I would like to give just three examples:

- Our subsidiary Sportcast has so far produced over 8,500 football matches live and thus has the most experience in the production of live football in the world. This guarantees the highest technical standard of the base signal and the best possible service.
- Our digital archive comprises over 100,000 hours of digitised content and allows the best possible reporting for our media partners.
- In our joint venture Sportec Solutions, we will raise data collection and processing to a new level together with deltatre – to the best possible benefit of clubs, media partners and fans.

With revenue of €1.4 billion, the DFL has become one of the biggest companies in the German entertainment industry and is certainly Germany's most international media company.

Together with the 36 clubs, professional football generates revenue of around €4 billion a year, which puts it between the two German TV corporations RTL Deutschland and ProSiebenSat1.

In the space of 15 years, we have more than tripled the overall revenue of the two leagues.

So we have come a long way. But we will do a lot more in the future, partly thanks to new technologies and their consistent application.

What will be required in the future?

Three answers that apply to the entire sport and media industry:

**We must stay innovative.**

**We must demonstrate business acumen.**

**We must dare to make future-oriented decisions.**

We at the DFL have introduced many **inventive products and innovations** in recent years. Since 2007, for example, the Spidercam and the Chipcam have been showing matches from a bird's eye or goal net view.

The camera concept was consistently refined, as was the use of slow motion and editing – always with a clear focus on what is best for the viewer.

Today, we produce every game with up to 22 cameras beside and above the pitch. And we bring the atmosphere from the sidelines to viewers and listeners with intelligent microphone technology.

This is complemented by content from the German Football Archive, the world's largest digital football archive. No other league in the world documents football as comprehensively, as completely or as directly as the Bundesliga. And, of course, data makes matches exciting. It provides extensive match analyses for coaches as well as for media partners. Data thus creates context, clarification and better understanding.

We are also breaking new ground when it comes to marketing – through consistent use of technical innovation. For the last two years, we have been testing virtual advertising on LED boards in the world's most extensive test. From next season, LED advertising boards and not just static boards in markets outside the German-speaking region can be individually adjusted for the first time by way of digital overlays in the transmission signal.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Every league's success is based on the ability of the athletes. We help to make the most of this success. The many innovations that I have presented to you are the result of **consistent entrepreneurial thinking and action**. You can only act this way if you consistently analyse and anticipate trends in media use.

German TV stations have been broadcasting Bundesliga matches live since 1991. The matches have been broadcasted digitally since 1998.

Since 2000, it is possible to switch from stadium to stadium on the conference channel. The first match was broadcasted live in HD in 2006, on mobile TV in 2007 – before the advent of the iPhone. The reason for this is simple: Sport is the strongest driver of technological innovation.

In order to retain this pioneering role for the DFL, we invest between €50 million and €60 million a year in the production of high-quality content by our subsidiaries.

Entrepreneurial thinking of course also plays a role in the sale of our products, specifically the sale of rights. The world is changing radically and quickly. In the future, our global media partners will no longer simply purchase live rights for their viewers. We will provide them with individual content solutions tailored to their platform strategy for fans who participate and interact increasingly actively.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am convinced that – besides the sporting success of the teams – digitalisation and internationalisation will be the key growth drivers of the future, but also challenges for every sports organisation.

Digitalisation is benefiting us in marketing first and foremost. Never before have we been able to find out about every conceivable aspect of a sport in so many different ways. Every day, any time, at any place. We have to move quickly and boldly here. Together with our subsidiary DFL Digital Sports, we at the DFL have developed a clear strategy for our global marketing: Digital first has become mobile first. The future is mobile only.

By concentrating on digital, we are also tapping into new target groups for the fascinating world of football. And I predict that technological development will offer us more opportunities than risks.

In this respect, I am particularly pleased that we are seeing new ideas, projects and solutions here at SportsInnovation that will bring companies, clubs and fans closer to their favourite sport via various channels and devices.

Global sport needs just these kinds of ideas to keep inspiring millions of people in the future, as even millennials and digital natives are getting older.

So we come to my third and final point: We must keep **making bold decisions**. SportsInnovation and the fact that DFL is its partner again makes it clear that the courage to change is one of the hallmarks of German professional football.



But we have to keep proving this again and again. We cannot allow ourselves to stagnate.

Let me elucidate. Young people see the world through smartphones or tablets. Therefore, we have systematically converted our brand to flat design in order to be even more suitable for apps and mobile devices. We have adjusted our screen graphics to the requirements of small and mobile devices; the broadcast and sound quality of our matches are incrementally being optimised especially for smartphones.

The next developments in broadcasting are coming into view: Interactive elements in sports broadcasts will grow; personalised and contextualised advertising will open up new marketing options. Augmented reality offers brand new perspectives in the most literal sense. Virtual reality has potential, even if it turns out differently to how many suspect. We should use these opportunities – and continue to drive these new possibilities.

E-sports will not get bigger. E-sports will get much, much bigger. We don't need to hold a cultural debate about this here, today. Young people enjoy electronic and increasingly networked gaming. It is a new form of sporting competition. This is a fact, and we have to be consistent in making something of it.

The sport itself may remain simple, but access to it will be more diverse.

We as a league ventured our first steps into the e-gaming sector in 2012. As did the first clubs a few years later. We already play the “Virtuelle Bundesliga” with our partners TAG Heuer and EA. We will be much more committed to serving this segment in the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Football is a traditional sport. But the football of 2018 is completely different to how it was ten years ago. This is thanks to innovation and entrepreneurship.

Football has been exciting people for 150 years. But like all sports, it excites because we are able to keep offering viewers something better. Because we – and all of you here today – always try new things, never shy away from risk, and aim for perfection that doesn't always come off at first try.

Sure, all of us are doing this from differing perspectives. Some come from start-ups, others from major corporations, clubs or sponsors and from very diverse industries. What unites us is the desire to innovate. I am therefore delighted to be spending these two days in Düsseldorf among like-minded people. Let's explore and shape the future together!

Thank you.