



Games of the XXIX Olympiad, Beijing 2008

Global Television and Online Media Report



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Beijing 2008 Global Broadcast Overview

Beijing 2008 saw the Olympic Games – and Olympic broadcasting – come of age, as superb sporting action was delivered to the world via television, the internet and mobile phones, offering fans unprecedented choice of what, when and where to watch the Games.

These were the first truly digital Games, harnessing the power and potential of digital technology to ensure that more people enjoyed more action from in and around the Chinese capital than ever before. The IOC's cutting-edge host broadcast partner, Olympic Broadcasting Services (OBS), delivered more than 5,000 hours of high-definition sporting excellence to the rights-holding broadcast partners. In turn, the IOC's broadcast partners made an unprecedented amount of footage available to viewers in their territories, with more than 61,700 hours of dedicated Beijing 2008 broadcast coverage aired globally on TV alone.

From the spectacular Opening Ceremony to the moment that Beijing bade farewell, this was the biggest broadcast event in history – a complex undertaking involving the world's most talented and experienced producers, directors and technicians. Coverage of every single event reflected state-of-the-art production values, helping to demonstrate the skill and determination of the athletes in minute detail. The Beijing Games were made available across the world, with broadcasts in 220 territories and an estimated potential TV audience of 4.3 billion people. Superb sporting performances helped drive not only television audiences, but also internet and mobile phone downloads, to new levels.

Television - Key Findings

Coverage

- There was a total of more than 61,700 hours of dedicated Beijing 2008 television coverage aired globally across 220 territories.
- 72% of coverage (44,454 hours) was aired on free-to-air terrestrial channels (all other coverage was aired on either pay TV cable/satellite platforms or free-to-air digital channels).
- The total television broadcast hours of Beijing 2008 was 40% more than that of Athens 2004 and more than double that of Sydney 2000. The continual growth of digital/cable platforms has led to free-to-air terrestrial coverage being complemented in many territories by multi-platform coverage, which was often aired by the affiliated digital/cable/satellite channels of the main free-to-air terrestrial broadcaster.
- The region to enjoy the most dedicated coverage in 2008 was Europe, with the 21,292 hours of coverage in this region representing a 46% increase over the 14,602 hours that were reported to have been aired in 2004 (Athens Games in European time zone).

Global Reach

- Of the 6.7 billion globally there was a total of 4.3 billion people who had home access to dedicated Beijing 2008 coverage aired by official broadcasters. This represents 63% of the world's population.
- Projections indicate that 3.6 billion people watched at least one minute of dedicated coverage.¹ This figure represents 83% of the total potential TV audience and 53% of the world's population.
- The projected number of Asians who saw at least one minute of coverage was 2.1 billion (60% of those who saw at least one minute of coverage globally).
- The average minute of Beijing 2008 coverage was seen by 160 million viewers.²

Audience Profile

- The profile of Games viewers indicates that 53% of the audience were males. A much more even gender split than is associated with many sporting events, which often expect to see a 60% male to 40% female gender split.
- 45% of the Games television audience were less than 45 years old, reflecting a somewhat younger cross-section than can often be seen for broadcasters' overall average scores.

Opening Ceremony

- The Opening Ceremony, which lasted over four hours, received 1,144 hours of dedicated global television coverage, 54% (616 hours) of which was broadcast live.
- Global reach (one minute) projections for television coverage of the Opening Ceremony was 1.5 billion viewers. This means that over 35% of the Games potential audience were impacted in the very first broadcast (excluding group stage football matches) and 42% of the eventual total Games audience saw at least a part of the Opening Ceremony coverage. A projected 1.4 billion viewers watched at least 15 minutes of coverage.
- Host country broadcaster coverage aired by CCTV was watched by an average of 496 million Chinese viewers, representing 40.5% of the potential audience. Some 739.4 million viewers in China saw at least one minute of the Opening Ceremony coverage, which is 60.4% of the potential audience.

Online Overview

Beijing 2008 was termed as the first truly digital Games with a worldwide offering of the Olympic Games being broadcast on internet and mobile platforms.

Online coverage of Beijing 2008 was made available via official broadcaster websites. Large quantities of online video content (including online HD coverage in some territories) were available for the first time in Games history. From the sample of sites for which statistics were available, there were a total of 8.2 billion pages views and over 628 million video streams.

Online broadcast over official broadcaster websites exceeded the TV coverage in terms of coverage hours. For example, CCTV.com alone broadcast more than 4,000 hours of Games coverage in China which were watched by more than 90% of the internet population (compared to about 1,310 hours which were aired on TV).

In the USA, NBCOlympics.com offered more than 2,000 hours of live coverage with simultaneous streams, with 72 million streams in total consumed (compared to 680 hours on TV).

Advances in "geo-blocking" and anti-piracy technology allowed the IOC to guarantee exclusive digital rights within their territories. In addition to the activities of its rights-holding broadcast partners, the IOC launched its own internet channel, "Beijing 2008", available on the YouTube platform, to broadcast video highlights from the Games to those territories where digital video-on-demand rights had not been sold.

In brief, Beijing 2008's broadcast offering and consumption through multi-platforms in all territories established that:

- With online platforms and simultaneous, it is now realistic to broadcast and consume each and every moment of the Games, not just on-demand but live.
- The Games demonstrated that a multi-platform offering through TV, the internet and on mobile devices, far from cannibalising ratings, was, on the contrary, not only complementary, but indeed enhanced, TV ratings.

- Time zone differences are becoming less relevant with on-demand coverage, both on TV and online, available worldwide.
- The demand remains after the Games period for on-demand videos online.

Online - Key Findings

- The site with the highest unique reach was cctv.com with 153 million unique users having watched a live broadcast, 47.3 million higher than the highest official Olympic site beijing2008.com, which attained a unique reach of 105.7 million.
- EBU's Common Broadband Platform generated 180 million video stream views for 51 million unique users with over 15,000 hours of content on offer through official websites of EBU and its members.
- The IOC's official YouTube channel (youtube.com/beijing2008) received 21 million video views during Games time with 40% of traffic coming from India and South Korea with the channel open only for 78 territories in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.
- The BBC website obtained a unique reach of 13 million delivering 50 million video streams.
- In Latin America, Terra offered 13 online channels with about 23 million users registering more than 39 million video views and 100 million page views.

¹ One minute reach - The net number, or percentage, of people who have seen at least one minute of broadcast output (in this case dedicated Beijing 2008 television coverage)

² Average minute rating (AMR) - the average number of viewers across the combined duration of a group of programmes

³ Demographic profile is based upon the results of 52 territories across all global regions