

SPORTS

Audi extends partnership with Major League Soccer

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Audi is Major League Soccer's official automotive partner. Image credit: MLS

By SARAH RAMIREZ

German automaker Audi is expanding its multi-year partnership with Major League Soccer, as it aims to remain a fixture in the minds of enthusiastic American soccer fans.

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Audi of America will be the league's official automotive partner through the 2022 season and continue to serve as title sponsor of the MLS Cup Playoffs. With the most millennial fans of any United States sports league, MLS has an audience that Audi and other luxury brands are hoping to turn into buyers.

"MLS takes great pride in our collaborative relationship with Audi," said Jennifer Cramer, vice president of partnership marketing at **MLS**. "With a shared vision in producing cutting-edge technology solutions mixed with innovative ideas, the Audi-MLS partnership forges a deeper connection with fans, drives the business of soccer and fuels league growth on and off the field."

Partnership goals

MLS and Audi first teamed up in 2015.

Since then, the automaker has also established partnerships with 10 individual MLS clubs. Audi is additionally the sponsor of the new D.C. United stadium, a state-of-the-art field that opened this July.

Audi Field is located along the newly developed Washington southwest waterfront. Including retail space along the Washington riverfront ensures that stadium usage will extend beyond planned events and become part of the local scene for residents and visitors alike ([see story](#)).



The long-awaited Audi Field opened in July 2018. Image credit: D.C. United

During nationally televised MLS games, Audi will also air soccer-themed commercials, as it has in the past.

Audi has also worked to develop a tool that captures sports data. The Audi Player Index allows the automaker to combine its reputation for innovation and passion for soccer.

The league-wide Audi Player Index is integrated into the MLS Match Center and MLS mobile application, allowing soccer enthusiasts to see a numerical breakdown of player actions as they happen. This incorporates Audi into fans' viewing experiences and helps track players' statistics in real-time, taking its sponsorship of MLS beyond brand placement ([see story](#)).

The Audi Player Index helps soccer fans follow their favorite players

Continuing its partnership with MLS is a timely move for Audi, since the 2026 FIFA Men's World Cup will be played in the U.S., Mexico and Canada. Although the tournament is years away, Audi will continue to endear itself to younger soccer fans as their purchasing power continues to grow.

MLS's other current sponsors include Adidas and Heineken.

Soccer strategies

Audi has long catered to soccer fans, in the U.S. as well as abroad.

Last year, the luxury automaker and home-sharing platform Airbnb teamed up to give soccer fans the chance to not only come to the field during a match, but actually stay there overnight. The winners were able to test drive the Audi A7 automated driving feature ([see story](#)).

Other high-end car brands capitalized on this summer's Men's World Cup with soccer-themed campaigns.

In a friendly competition, British automaker Aston Martin decided to go head-to-head with rival German car manufacturer BMW. Mirroring a soccer rivalry, the brands' drivers were pitted against each other in a penalty shootout ([see story](#)).