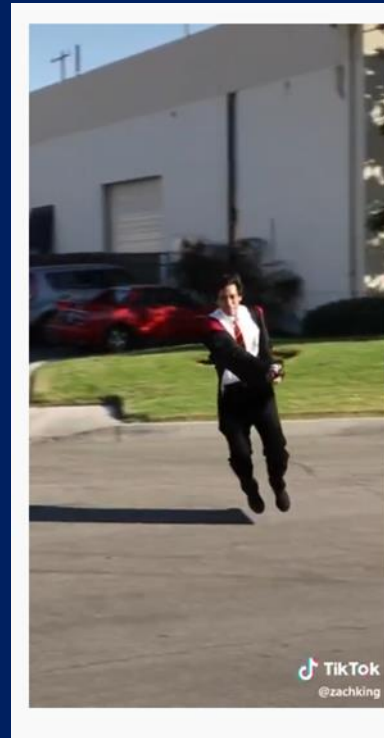


Media Events!

Mega- MEDIA-Spectacles and the Live Broadcasting of History

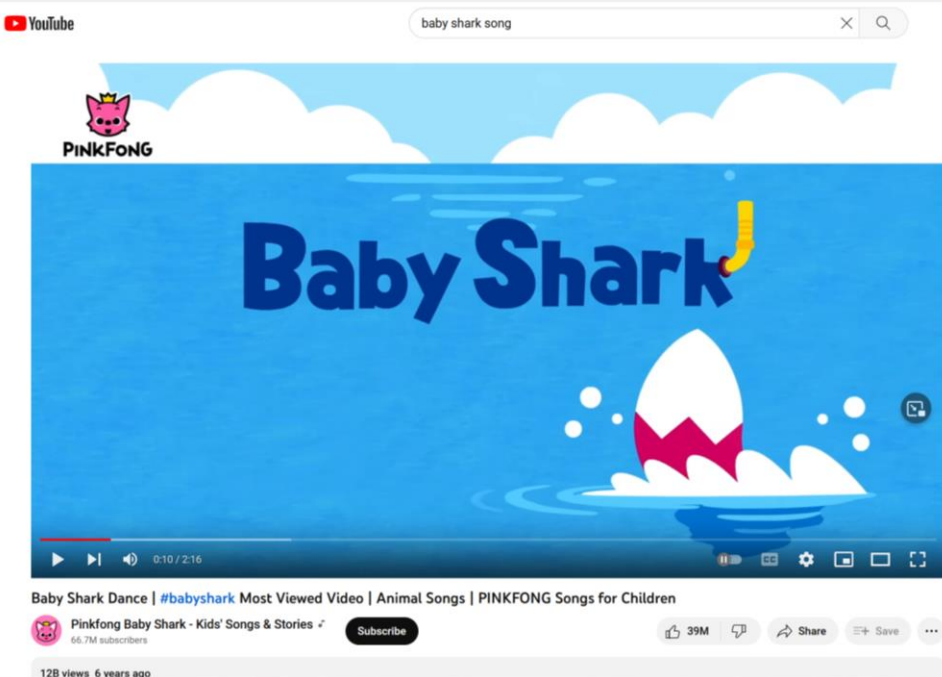
Daniel Dayan & Elihu Katz



Media Events?



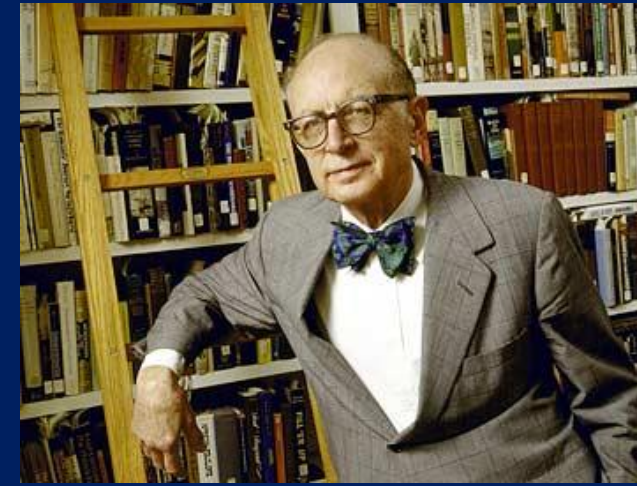
1. FIFA World Cup – 5 Billion Viewers



Daniel Boorstin & Pseudo-Events

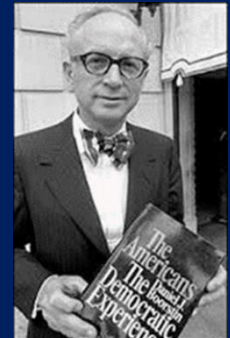
Background: American Writer, Theorist, World Historian (1914-2004)

- ✓ Lawyer and Professor at the University of Chicago for 25 years
- ✓ Wrote over **25 books** on topics of American media, history, exploration, genius, creativity, art, etc.
- ✓ Pulitzer Prize 1974 **The Americans: The Democratic Experience**
- ✓ Librarian of Congress (Presidential Appointment) 1975 –1987



BOOKS by BOORSTIN

1. *The Mysterious Science of the Law* (1941)
2. *The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson* (1948)
3. *The Genius of American Politics* (1953)
4. *The Americans: The Colonial Experience* (1958)
5. *America and the Image of Europe: Reflections on American Thought* (1960)
6. *A Lady's Life In The Rocky Mountains: Introduction* (1960)
7. ***The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-events in America* (1962)**
8. *The Americans: The National Experience* (1965)
9. *The Landmark History of the American People: From Plymouth to Appomattox* (1968)
10. *The Decline of Radicalism: Reflections of America Today* (1969)
11. *The Landmark History of the American People: From Appomattox to the Moon* (1970)
12. *The Sociology of the Absurd* (1970)
13. *The Americans: The Democratic Experience* (1973)
14. *Democracy and Its Discontents: Reflections on Everyday America* (1974)
15. *The Exploring Spirit: America and the World, Then and Now* (1976)
16. *The Republic of Technology* (1978)
17. *A History of the United States* with Brooks M. Kelley and Ruth Frankel (1981)
18. *The Discoverers* (1983)
19. *Hidden History* (1987)
20. *The Creators* (1992)
21. *Cleopatra's Nose: Essays on the Unexpected* (1994)
22. *The Seekers* (1998)



Daniel Boorstin: The Image

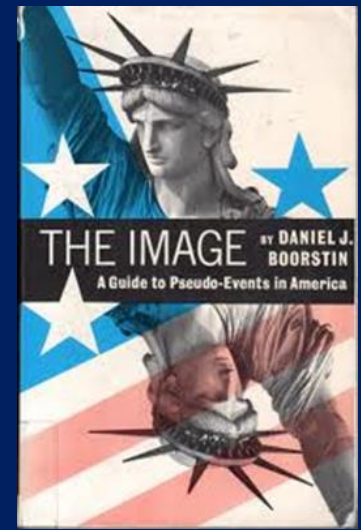
A Guide to Pseudo-events in America (1961)

2-PART Focus:

1. The **role(s)** of Mass Media in American Social and Political Life.

2. The evolution media-induced Pseudo-Events:

- ▶ **Def#1:** An event or activity that **exists for the sole purpose of media coverage or publicity**. It may also include any event that is covered in the mass media or was hosted largely **with the media in mind**.
- ▶ **Def#2:** pseudo events are: **planned, staged, repeatable, social, likely to cause other pseudo-events (viral)**, and ultimately communicated in a way that makes the public feel that they **OUGHT** to know about it to be considered "informed."



Types of pseudo-events

From the obvious . . . to the not so obvious.

- ✓ A **press release** issued by a company or organization to drum up ideas or language for marketing/branding value
- ✓ A **news/press conference** is often held when an organization has an announcement and wants members of the press to get the announcement simultaneously. The in-person events may include interviews, questioning, and show-and-tell.
- ✓ A **planned presentation or speech** such as on company earnings or the President's State of the Union Address is a form of media event.



A pseudo-event... comes about because someone has planned, planted, or incited it. Typically, it is not a train wreck or an earthquake, but an interview.

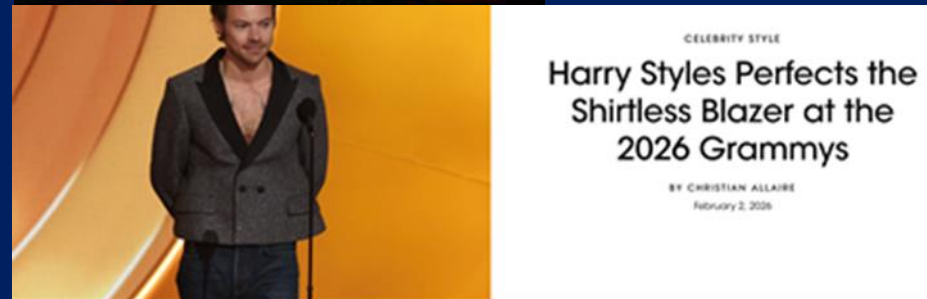
Daniel J Boorstin



Additional Types of pseudo-events

From the obvious . . . to the not so obvious.

- ✓ A news story about a projected FUTURE happening/event.
- ✓ **Photo ops:** are considered a type of media event, where the event is orchestrated for the sole purpose of photography for the media.
- ✓ **An interview:** if conducted for the purpose of generating media coverage of a particular person, event, or issue.
- ✓ A **protest or rally** may be planned almost exclusively for the purpose of getting media attention to an issue or cause.
- ✓ **The Selfie.**
- ✓ **TIK-TOK, Facebook, Instagram, photo op.**
- ✓ **Family photos, Senior photos, wedding photos**

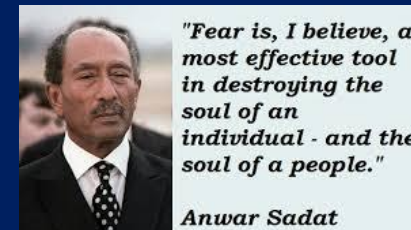


Media Events: Bit-o-background

The Authors/Researchers

• Elihu Katz

- ✓ Sociologist
- ✓ Focus: the interplay between media → conversation → opinion → **ACTUAL ACTION** in the GLOBAL public sphere.
- ✓ Mentored by Paul Lazarsfeld (Columbia University)– The study of **MASS** and **inter-personal** communication.
- ✓ Inspired by **Anwar Sadat's** (Egyptian leader, 1970s) peace-making initiatives between Egypt & Israel.
- ✓ 1990s Katz and Daniel Dayan began assembling a library of **live broadcasts** of historic occasions that enthralled a whole nation or the world.



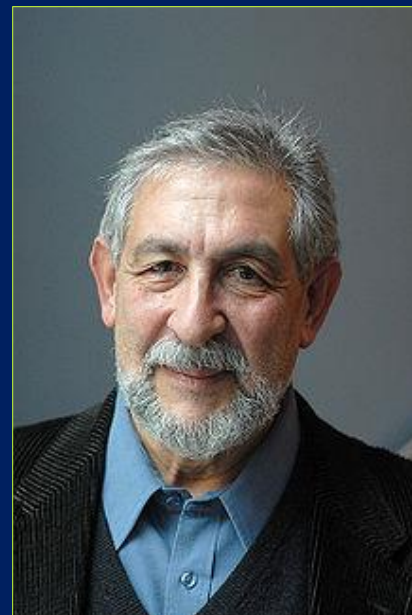
"Fear is, I believe, a most effective tool in destroying the soul of an individual - and the soul of a people."

Anwar Sadat



• Daniel Dayan

- ✓ Social scientist born in **Casablanca, Morocco**. He is Director of Research at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris.
- ✓ French/Moroccan.
- ✓ **Focus:** Visual mass media:
 - (1) the anthropology of television
 - (2) the aesthetics of cinema and
 - (3) the sociology of journalism.



The Key CHARACTERISTICS of MEDIA EVENTS

Genre/Formula

1. MUST BE GLOBAL!!!
2. “MANDATORY” viewing → “Normative” viewing -
Interruptions of daily life
3. Presented as “Live Events” but they are HIGHLY STAGED and rehearsed and preplanned → Celebration
4. Collusion btw Organizers (Public, Govt, other) and **MAJOR MEDIA Broadcasters**
5. Symbolic SPECTACLE which Reflect certain CORE values, CORE PEOPLE, AND CORE RULES of society
6. Suspension of the critical → Tend to be objects of CULTURAL SELF-WORSHIP

Why study MEDIA EVENTS?

Anthropology of Ceremony + Global Mass Media

1. It's **WAY more** than just about **TELEVISION POWER**.
2. It's about **CULTURAL EVENT** management and **GLOBAL MARKETING AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS**.
3. IT'S ABOUT TRYING TO GET THE ENTIRE WORLD'S POPULATION TO DEVOTE BRAND LOYALTY/ADDICTION TO A PARTICULAR SET OF EVENTS

4. **GLOBAL MEGA-SPECTACLES – GLOBAL Audiences – Global History/Ceremony/Ritual**

- Attracts the largest audiences in the history of the world
- These **MEGA SPECTACLE + GLOBAL MEDIA** Events are Increasing!
- **GLOBAL SPORTS** function as a central catalyst for mega media events (Olympics, World Cricket).
- Overcoming conventional geo-politics.
- Intense Public opinion/involvement.
- “History” in the Making.

5. **GLOBAL Media Framing and AGENDA SETTING**

- Reality is uprooted
- Framing of narrative spectacle on a Global Scale – Hegemony
- Neo-romantic desire for **HEROISM**
- Media Events become civil ceremonial/ritualistic “Holidays” with the power to conquer time & space

6. **The FUTURE** and the **POWER** of New Media Technologies & Techniques to control that future.

- Realization of the potential of electronic/digital media
- Preview of the Future of Global Television/Media



WORLD Television: Most Watched GLOBAL TV

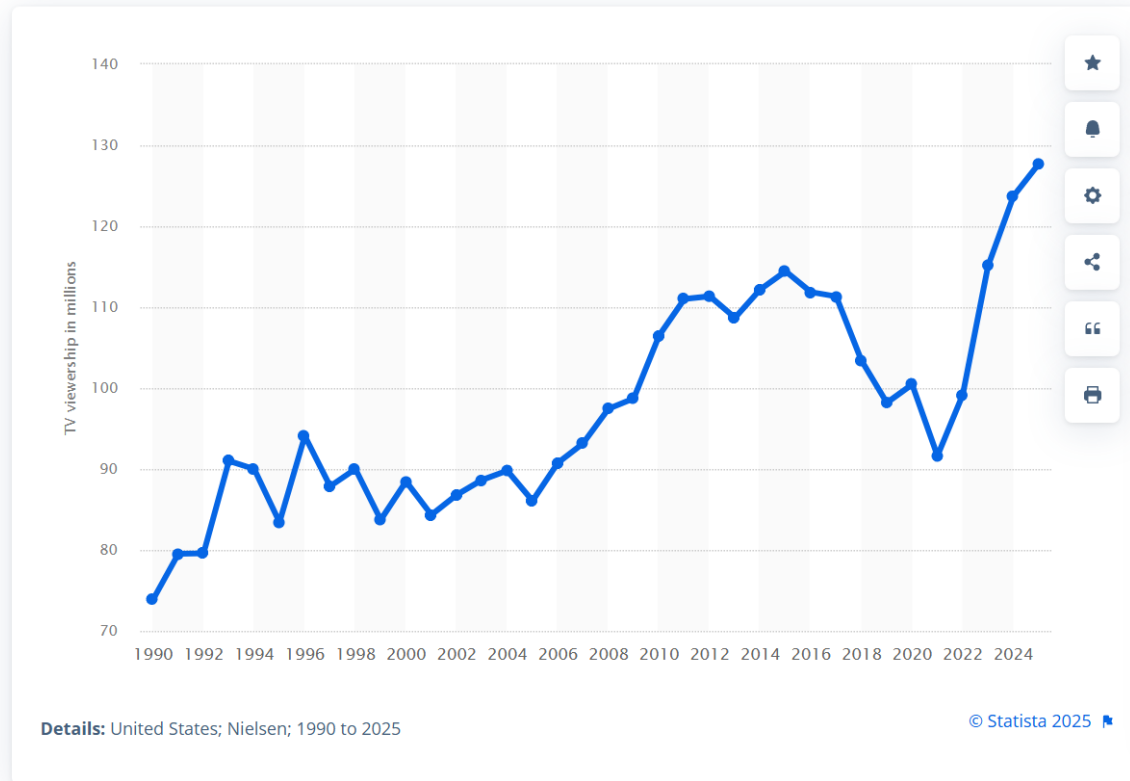
- ▶ **Sports:** The 2008/2012/2016/20/24 Olympic Games = **3.6→4.7 billion** individual viewers (**70%** of World's Population) **Paris Olympics = 5 Billion**
- ▶ **Sports:** The 2018 FIFA World Cup Finals (RUSSIA)= **3.5 billion** people worldwide.
- ▶ **Ceremony:** Funeral of Queen Elizabeth II (Sept 2022) **4.1 billion** people worldwide.
- ▶ **Ceremony:** Michael Jackson's funeral (July 2009) was seen by **2.5 to 3 billion** people worldwide.
- ▶ **Ceremony:**Princess Diana's funeral (Sept 1997) was seen by **2.5 to 3 billion** people worldwide.
- ▶ **Ceremony:** Wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle(May 2018) was seen by **1.9 billion** people worldwide.
- ▶ **Sports:** Muhammad Ali vx Leon Spinks (Boxing)= **~1.9 billion** people worldwide.
- ▶ **News:** The rescue of the 33 trapped Chilean miners in 2010 = **~1 billion** people worldwide.
- ▶ **2011 & 2015 Cricket World Cup**= India vs. Pakistan = **1 Billion households in 182 countries.**
Festival: China Central Television = **500-800mil** for Spring Festival Gala and



Super Bowl...not so Globally Super

TV viewership of the Super Bowl in the United States from 1990 to 2025

(in millions)



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SOURCE

DETAILS

FAQ

Sources

Nielsen; Variety

Survey by

Nielsen

Published by

Variety

Source link

[variety.com](https://www.variety.com)

Release date

February 2025

Citation formats

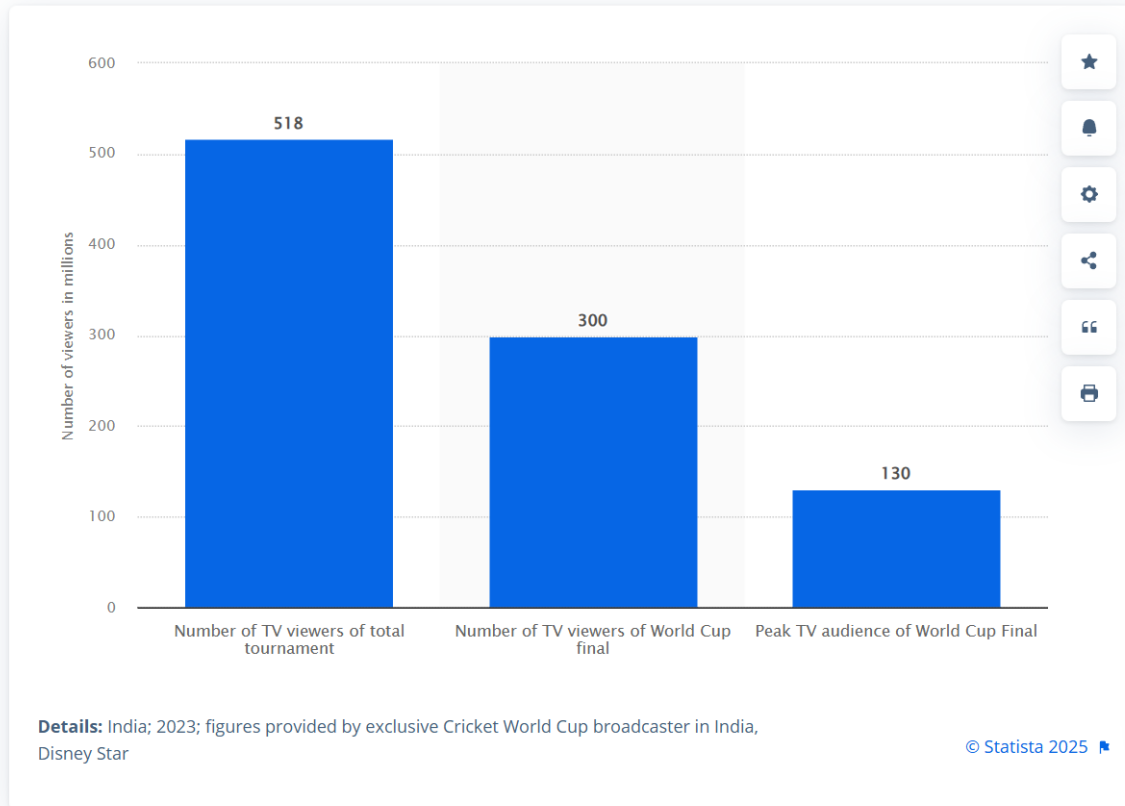
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Super Bowl TV viewership in the U.S. 1990-2025

Cricket in India (alone) vs. Super Bowl...

Sports & Recreation / Professional Sports

Key TV viewership figures of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in India in 2023 (in millions)



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[espn.com/cricket/story/_/id/38911111/icc-cricket-world-cup-2023-viewership-figures](https://www.espn.com/cricket/story/_/id/38911111/icc-cricket-world-cup-2023-viewership-figures)

Release date

November 2023

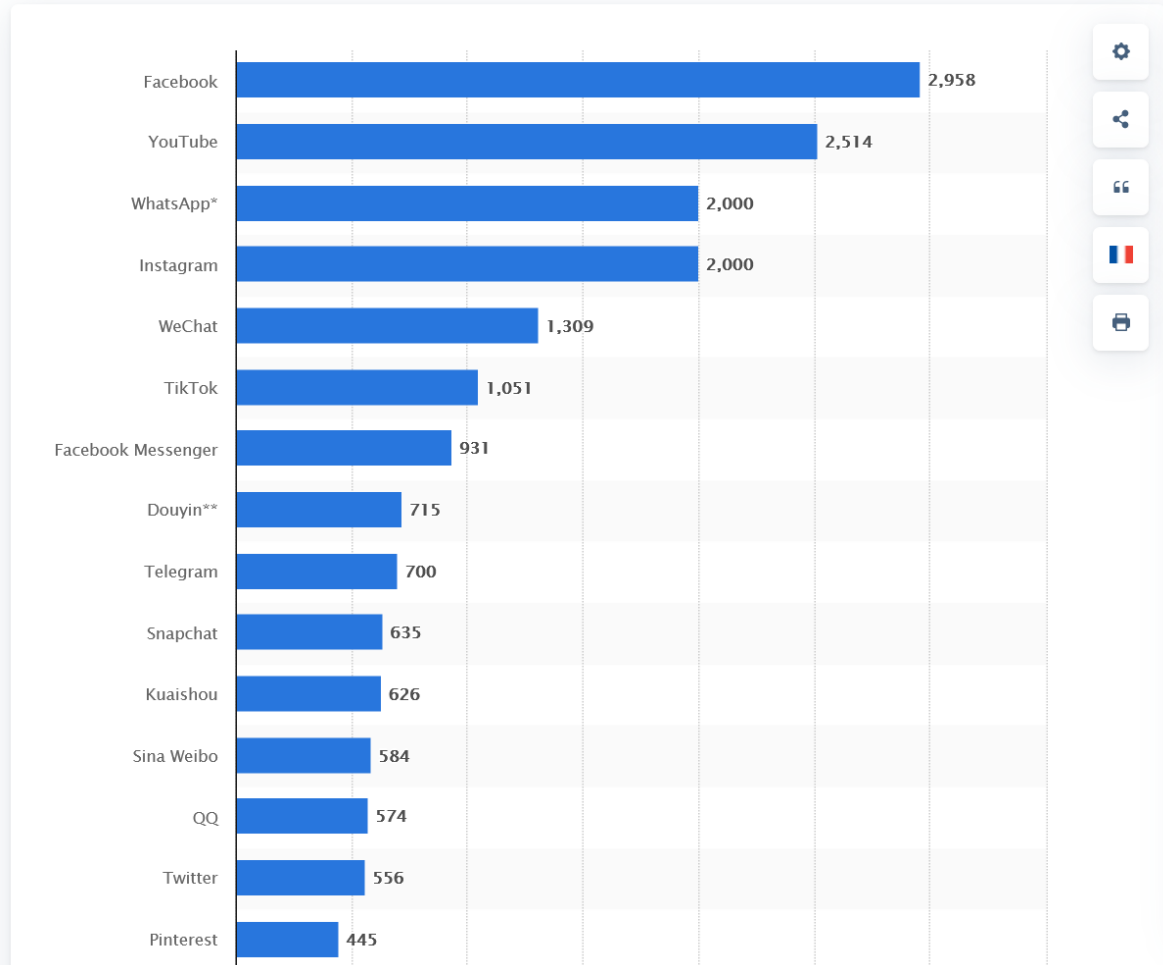
Citation formats

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2023 Social Media Networks

Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2023, ranked by number of active users

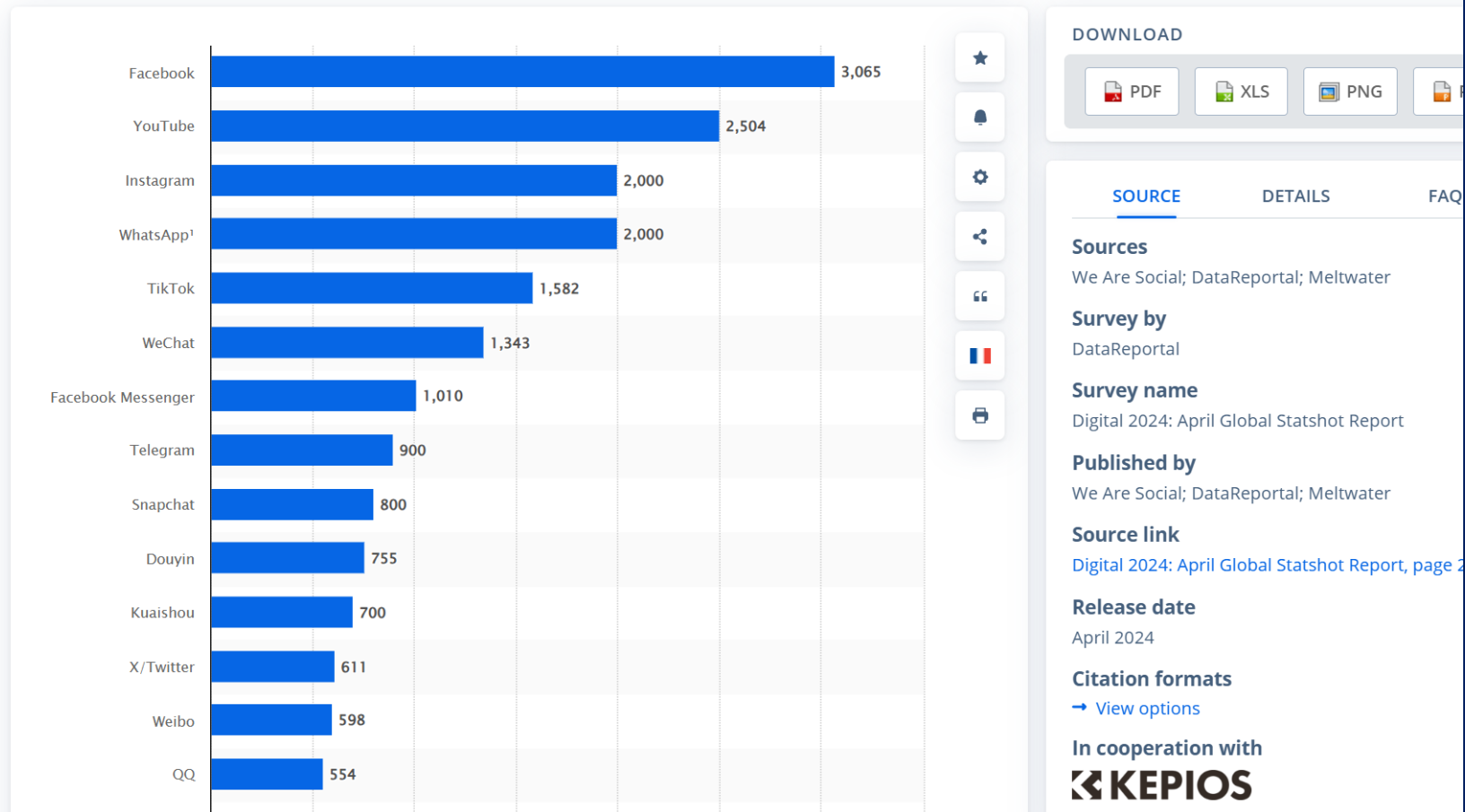
(in millions)



2024 Social Media Networks

Most popular social networks worldwide as of April 2024, by number of monthly active users

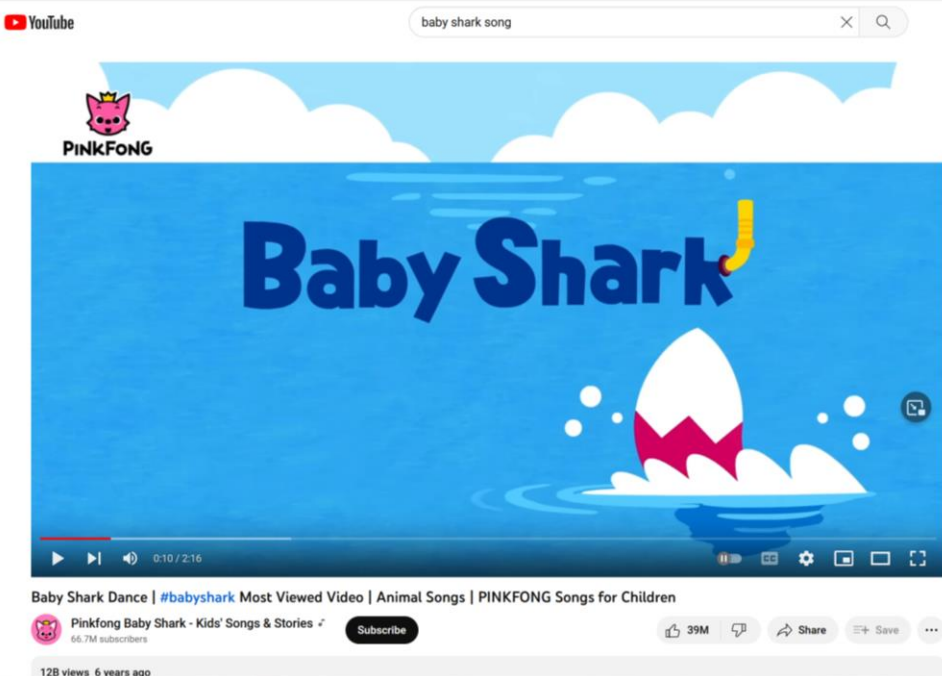
(in millions)



Media Events?



1. FIFA World Cup – 5 Billion Viewers



What's NEW or DIFFERENT in how MEDIA EVENTS happen or SHOULD BE DEFINED TODAY?

