

FIFA World Cup: Fraud Attempts Surged More Than Threefold at Past World Cups, ACI Worldwide Finds

June 18, 2026

ACI data shows elevated fraud risk for fans and ticket sellers as the tournament gets underway

OMAHA, Neb.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jun. 18, 2026-- As the 2026 FIFA World Cup gets underway, new analysis from [ACI Worldwide](#) (NASDAQ: ACIW), an original innovator in global payments technology, shows that the fraud patterns seen around previous major tournaments are already in play, exposing fans and ticket sellers to heightened risks.

Based on 24.5 million transactions across 61 live-event merchants serving global fan audiences, ACI's data reveals the same warning signs that preceded fraud surges during Copa America 2024 and the 2022 World Cup have re-emerged, with fraud pressure expected to remain high through the opening stages of the tournament across the United States, Canada and Mexico.

ACI monitors billions of transactions globally across issuers, acquirers and merchants and can identify coordinated fraud activity early, distinguishing genuine fan demand from criminal behavior and identifying warning signals before they become visible to individual merchants or banks.

What the data shows during major tournaments

- **Fraud builds before and continues after kick-off:** In the build-up to Copa America 2024, card-not-present attempted fraud reached 4% of transaction value, averaging 3.6 times the 2023 baseline. The fraud window opened weeks before the first match and extended well beyond the final whistle.
- **Alternative payment methods (APMs) are significantly safer:** APMs recorded a 0.57% attempted fraud rate, compared with 3.97% for traditional cards, a sevenfold difference. APM adoption has climbed from 7% of transactions in 2022 to 24.8% year-to-date in 2026.
- **Fraudsters target high-value purchases:** During the pre-tournament build, fraudulent orders averaged \$405, 1.5 times the \$270 legitimate average, and average transaction value rose 1.2%, suggesting average fraudulent transaction values could again approach \$400 during the 2026 World Cup. The pattern raises the risk of false declines for genuine fans buying higher-value tickets.
- **Domestic cards carry higher risk:** During the pre-tournament build, domestic cards recorded a 3.2% attempted fraud rate, compared with 1.4% for cross-border cards, reflecting fraudsters' preference for locally issued credentials.
- **International card traffic is an early warning sign:** Cross-border card share rose from an average of 7.53% of total spending to 11.47% in the run-up to the Copa America 2024. In May 2026 it already stood at 10.83%, above the annual average of 7.16%.

Fraud is on the rise, and fans are directly in the firing line

Cybersecurity firms and law enforcement have warned that fraudsters are using automation and artificial intelligence to scale World Cup-related scams. Silent Push, a U.S.-based threat intelligence firm that tracks online fraud networks, has identified more than 300 pixel-perfect replica ticketing websites. Check Point Research, the research arm of cybersecurity company Check Point Software, recorded 9,741 fraudulent World Cup-related domains registered in April 2026 alone, nearly four times the peak seen around the 2022 tournament. Separately, cybersecurity company Fortinet counted more than 13,000 tournament-themed domains registered between January and May 2026.

In a public service announcement issued May 27, 2026, the FBI warned fans to navigate directly to [fifa.com](https://www.fifa.com) rather than clicking on search results or sponsored ads. The agency said reported losses range from hundreds to thousands of dollars per incident, driven by fake ticketing, hospitality and VIP offers. In Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre issued a warning in March 2026 about fraudulent ticket portals and merchandise scams targeting matches hosted in the country.

In Mexico, one of the three host nations, the federal consumer protection agency Profeco has launched an anti-fraud campaign and taken legal action against resale platforms. Meanwhile, civic organization Consejo Ciudadano para la Seguridad y Justicia estimates ticket scam losses of roughly 1,000 to 100,000 pesos (about \$55 to \$5,500) per victim. A 2025 Mastercard study found that nearly 80% of Mexican consumers experienced scam attempts in the prior year.

"The clearest warning sign isn't match day itself. It's the days and weeks before kick-off, when attempted fraud rises, cross-border card activity increases and fans start hunting for tickets, often under pressure," said Jackie Barwell, director of fraud product management at ACI Worldwide. "Because we see these patterns across our global network, we can tell the difference between genuine fan demand, risky behavior driven by urgency, and outright fraud, helping merchants approve legitimate purchases while reducing the impact of scams as the tournament unfolds."

What fans can do to stay safe

- **Stick to official sources:** Buy tickets only from official sellers or authorized resale platforms. If it's not listed on a trusted site, think twice.
- **Go direct:** Type known web addresses into your browser yourself, avoid clicking on ads, sponsored links or social media posts.
- **If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is:** Be cautious of prices below face value or claims of "guaranteed" access

to sold-out matches.

- **Choose safer ways to pay:** Use payment methods that offer dispute or chargeback protection, especially for high-value purchases.
- **Be wary of unsolicited offers:** Treat unexpected emails, messages or calls offering tickets, hospitality or VIP packages with caution, especially if they pressure you to act fast.

About ACI Worldwide

ACI Worldwide, an original innovator in global payments technology, delivers transformative software solutions that power intelligent payments orchestration in real time so banks, billers and merchants can drive growth, while continuously modernizing their payment infrastructures, simply and securely. With nearly 50 years of trusted payments expertise, we combine our global footprint with a local presence to offer enhanced payment experiences to stay ahead of constantly changing payment challenges and opportunities.

Copyright ACI Worldwide, Inc. 2026

ACI, ACI Worldwide, ACI Payments, Inc., ACI Pay, Speedpay and all ACI product/solution names are trademarks or registered trademarks of ACI Worldwide, Inc., or one of its subsidiaries, in the United States, other countries or both. Other parties' trademarks referenced are the property of their respective owners.

View source version on businesswire.com: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20260617940322/en/>

Media

Katrin Boettger | Communications and Corporate Affairs Director | katrin.boettger@aciworldwide.com

Pierce Rohrmann | Head of Communications and Corporate Affairs | pierce.rohrmann@aciworldwide.com

Source: ACI Worldwide