# Sport Network Scored Big with Akamai

With Akamai solutions, this sports media and advertising powerhouse stays competitive in a fast-changing environment

**35% faster home page display**

**Real-time, actionable insights**

**Seamless bot mitigation**

## Delivering fast, secure content for a global fan base

Sport Network is a major player in Italian sports media and advertising, representing household brands like Corriere dello Sport and Tuttosport across 18 websites, mobile apps, TV, radio, and events. As audiences shift online and traffic sources evolve, the company must deliver content faster, fend off attacks, comply with data regulations, and optimize operations — all with a lean IT team. With Akamai as its one-stop solution provider for performance, protection, and observability, Sport Network is powering fast, secure, insight-driven sports content for a global digital audience.

## The digital pivot: Challenges in a changing media landscape

Sport Network is accelerating its shift to digital by diversifying content to attract new audiences while seeking a sustainable balance between page views and ad revenue. One of its biggest challenges? Converting visitors into paying subscribers with value-added services that enhance loyalty and engagement.

At the same time, traffic patterns have changed dramatically. Rather than arriving via direct channels, more than 10 million unique visitors are now coming monthly from sources including Google Discover and social media feeds. To stay relevant in this algorithm-driven ecosystem, Sport Network must ensure fast page loads, engaging content, and rock-solid infrastructure.

**SPORT NETWORK**
ADVERTISING & EXPERIENCES

**Location**

Rome, Italy
sportnetwork.it

**Industry**

Media and Entertainment

**Solutions**

App & API Protector
Adaptive Media Delivery
Download Delivery
Image & Video Manager
TrafficPeak

But that's not all. The company's well-established digital brands generate vast amounts of traffic — and with it, data. This data must be collected in line with privacy regulations and made easily accessible to nontechnical stakeholders who rely on it daily to make editorial and business decisions.

The bottom line: Sport Network needed speed, insight, and protection — all at scale.

## Content at the speed of sport: Image & Video Manager

To engage sports fans in real time, fast-loading images are critical. With Akamai Image & Video Manager, Sport Network automatically optimizes and resizes images without relying on back-end infrastructure. It also accelerated delivery of its home page by 35%. Reducing load times enhanced the site visitor experience and improved SEO metrics like Google Core Web Vitals while ensuring a more seamless user experience across devices.

## Protecting the game behind the scenes: App & API Protector

While not heavily targeted by attackers, Sport Network operates high-profile sports sites that do attract malicious traffic. Akamai App & API Protector defends the company's websites, apps, and APIs against bots, DDoS attempts, and abuse, without impacting legitimate users like search engine crawlers. As a result, Sport Network maintains brand integrity and customer trust during critical campaigns.

This protection proved critical to support the Golden Boy award, established in 2003 by Tuttosport and now one of the most prestigious awards in European football. When automated bots attempted to manipulate the Golden Boy voting system, Akamai blocked the fraudulent activity without disrupting real fans. In addition, Akamai protected Sport Network from a sophisticated Layer 7 DDoS attack targeting its digital platforms, ensuring fans could access content without interruption.

## Seeing the whole field in real time: TrafficPeak

Sport Network also needed a solution that could simplify log access, correlate traffic with front-end performance, and surface real-time errors before they hurt revenue. With TrafficPeak, it can monitor performance and behavior across its digital properties — and keep up with fast-changing traffic, such as from sources like Google Discover and social feeds.

"

Akamai gives us everything we need — performance, protection, observability — all from one trusted partner. That means fewer tools to manage, faster decisions, and a much stronger foundation for our business.

– Paolo Potitò
   Head of Digital Content,
   Sport Network

Custom dashboards show page views, edge activity, and errors in real time, enabling fast troubleshooting and smarter, faster editorial decisions. With long-term log access and visibility into what's happening at the edge, Sport Network can now pinpoint when ad units fail, track the impact of SEO efforts, and make more informed decisions about what content to feature. "Through TrafficPeak, we get insights that enable us to display the most relevant advertisements to sports fans. Simply put, it allows us to act quickly and compete with industry giants," explained Andrea Barbieri, AI, Data, and SEO Manager for Sport Network.

The much-needed visibility delivered by TrafficPeak also guides Sport Network in taking concrete actions to improve performance. "Thanks to Akamai, we gained the performance needed so our content shows up higher in the results of Google and other social sites," continued Barbieri.

## Built for agility, guided by experts

Sport Network's lean IT team relies on Akamai's Professional Services experts for proactive guidance on configurations and performance optimizations. The collaborative partnership means faster implementation, continuous fine-tuning, and less time spent troubleshooting — all critical to avoid overextending internal resources.

## Ready for what's next: Evolving to the cloud

With performance, protection, and observability covered, Sport Network is now exploring Akamai Cloud as the next step in its digital transformation. The company is evaluating Akamai's distributed cloud platform and cloud computing services. "Akamai has been more than just a provider — it is a strategic partner. Its ongoing support combined with real-time monitoring landscape," concluded Filippo Di Leva, Head of Infrastructure for Sport Network.

Sport Network, founded in 1999 and based in Rome, is the Italian advertising agency dedicated to the world of sport. By entering the market with competence and synergy, thanks to the editorial strength of the publications it represents, Sport Network has established itself as an integral part of a large industrial enterprise that owns historic Italian publishing houses and cutting-edge printing centers, located throughout Italy. Its presence is also very strong and incisive in the tourism sector.