



**ONE IDENTITY.
ONE STORY.
ONE COLLECTIVE,
FUELLING CANADIAN SOCCER TOGETHER.**



CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO	3
Seizing the moment to impact the game's future.	
OUR STORY SO FAR	5
Our foundation and the moment for transformation.	
Beginning with a bold idea	5
The opportunity ahead	8
OUR NORTH STAR	11
From agency to an integrated soccer hub.	
Defining our North Star	11
Our role and identity	11
BRINGING OUR VISION TO LIFE	12
Where vision meets execution.	
The CSME framework	12
The Growth Engine	12
Our Principles of Play	14
THE FUTURE WE'RE BUILDING TOWARD	16
Our blueprint for growth.	
What success looks like	16
Areas of focus	16
▪ Lead with Soccer	16
▪ Elevate Media & Storytelling	17
▪ Commercialize with Purpose	18
▪ Leave a Legacy	18
A CALL TO ACTION	19
Turning belief into momentum.	



SEIZING THE MOMENT TO IMPACT THE GAME'S FUTURE.

It is with great pride and conviction that I share this Vision for Canadian Soccer Media & Entertainment (CSME) and our role in shaping the future of the game of soccer in our country.

When I stepped in as Group CEO just 100 days ago, I was struck by both the progress Canadian soccer has made and the scale of

opportunity ahead of us. We are on the cusp of something extraordinary: a home FIFA World Cup, a surge in global attention on Canadian players, and a chance to reshape how the game lives in our communities. We have a responsibility to bring Canadian soccer into the national conversation, to cut through mainstream culture and media to make our sport part of everyday life in this country.

That is why, so early in my tenure, I asked our team to move quickly to define this Vision which articulates our bold, forward-looking aspiration: to lead by evolving into the world's first integrated soccer hub — where our leagues, media, and business work together. By innovating in this space, CSME will play our part in driving the growth of the wider soccer ecosystem in Canada.

This Vision matters because it touches every Canadian who loves the game. For young players, it means more opportunities to dream big and chase those ambitions here at home. For current fans, and those who will soon discover our game, it means more chances to watch Canadian soccer and easier ways to connect with our semi-professional, professional and national teams and their players. For communities, it means elevating a sport that has the power to bring people together from coast to coast.

Soccer is already the world's game. This is about making it Canada's game too, in ways that are simple, fun, and meaningful for all.

Just as importantly, this Vision is shared with openness and transparency. It is not a finished blueprint — it is a living document. In the months ahead, we will evolve it into a strategic roadmap with clear KPIs beginning in 2026 and lasting through 2030 and beyond. We will listen, collaborate and refine this Vision, with input from the Canadian soccer community, to ensure our ambition is matched by measurable progress.

For now, I hope you will read this document with the urgency and ambition that inspired it. Canadian soccer has always been full of promise. Now, together, we have the chance to turn that promise into a lasting legacy — one built not by CSME alone, but by all of us who believe in the future of the game in this country.



James Johnson

Group CEO

Canadian Soccer Media & Entertainment

OUR FOUNDATION AND THE MOMENT FOR **TRANSFORMATION.**



BEGINNING WITH A BOLD IDEA
For decades, Canadian soccer lived in the shadows of other sports and was an afterthought in the global game.

The nation had produced moments of pride — from the Olympic gold won by Canada Soccer’s Women’s National Team to the Men’s National Team’s long-awaited World Cup qualification — but the broader game historically lacked the infrastructure to consistently build on those milestones.

Players often had to leave Canada to chase their dreams, a reality many still face today. Fans consumed the global game but had little to connect them to a domestic product.

Clubs and competitions flickered, but few survived long enough to anchor the sport in communities.

Canadian Soccer Media & Entertainment (CSME) was created to help change that story. Leaders like Victor Montagliani, Bob Young and Scott Mitchell identified the potential of Canadian soccer and came up with a bold idea: to better connect and align the soccer economy, uniting leagues, media and partners to strengthen the conditions Canadian soccer needed to thrive.

It was the genesis of CSME and the Canadian Premier League (CPL), the country’s top men’s professional league.

The premise was simple but ambitious: build clubs, create opportunities, and give

Canadian kids a chance to dream of playing at home, in front of their families and communities. For fans, there were finally local clubs to call their own. For kids, it was a chance to see heroes in their hometowns. And for people everywhere, it marked the start of soccer becoming more than a pastime, laying the foundation for it to grow into part of local identity while finally linking Canada to the global game after standing as an outlier for so long.

The launch of the CPL was also a key part of securing Canada’s place as a co-host of the 2026 FIFA World Cup and will remain an enduring legacy of the world’s biggest sporting event on home soil. It showed the world that the country has the foundations and aspirations to build a strong professional game, which will endure well beyond the tournament.

A seven-team league kicked off in 2019, representing the highest level of men’s soccer in Canada, thanks to investment and leadership from such entrepreneurial Canadian minds as the Southern Family, Derek Martin, Wade Miller and Dean Shillington, as well as Canada Soccer Men’s National Team alums Rob Friend and Josh Simpson.

The story didn’t stop there. The group expanded, bringing in new investors to grow its national footprint. The arrival of Atlético Madrid as an owner gave the project global credibility and connected Canadian soccer to one of the world’s great

brands. The introduction of the Pasquel family further strengthened international ties, establishing valuable connections to Mexico's vibrant soccer culture and a leading country in the Concacaf region. A recent expansion into the Quebec market, backed by a passionate group of owners with deep ties to the region and the game, enhanced the league's coast-to-coast reach.

Investing in the men's professional game wasn't the only area of focus. CSME brought League1 Ontario under its umbrella in 2018, followed by League1 BC in 2023. The launch of League1 Canada, a national alliance for the country's semi-professional teams, created a clear pathway for the Canadian stars of tomorrow to progress from grassroots to the professional game and beyond, following in the footsteps of such Canada Soccer National Team stars as Alistair Johnston, Dayne St. Clair, Cyle Larin, Olivia Smith, Promise David, Richie Laryea, Tajon Buchanan, Vanessa Gilles and more.

The building blocks of a new soccer economy are now in place. The CPL, in year seven in 2025, has provided opportunity for more than 600 players to date, as well as hundreds of executives, coaches, staff, referees, media members and volunteers. It is a home for clubs to grow and perform on the national and continental stage.

League1 Canada has evolved into a stable national network, connecting provinces and creating opportunities for the next generation of Canadian talent, men's and

women's, to reach the professional level at home and abroad.

Young people across the country can now see a pathway that leads from their local environments toward semi-professional and professional opportunities, with homegrown role models proving that success in Canadian soccer is possible.

Through its commercial mandate, CSME holds an important role in supporting Canada Soccer by maximizing the value of National Team rights, expanding their visibility, influence, and impact at home and abroad.

Through the media rights it represents, CSME enables the continued growth and visibility of Canadian soccer, helping bring the sport closer to the spotlight in a landscape where recognition has long been hard-won.

Progress is real.

Fans are rallying. The CPL is building a stronger foundation for the game at home. Players like Alphonso Davies, Jonathan David, Vanessa Gilles and Olivia Smith are proving that Canadians can compete on the international stage as global soccer stars.

But there is much more opportunity to seize.

What began as an idea to professionalize Canadian soccer has become something

larger: a catalyst for growth within Canada's soccer ecosystem, bringing together leagues, business, and media in ways that reinforce each other. Now is the time to unlock the game's full potential in this country.

THE OPPORTUNITY AHEAD **Canadian soccer now stands at a once-in-a-generation inflection point.**

The foundations of CSME are set and, with new leadership in place, our real opportunity lies in scaling them into one integrated hub that is credible at home, respected globally, and capable of reinvesting into the Canadian game.

Today, 18.7 million Canadians identify as interested in soccer and that figure is expected to rise sharply in the lead-up to the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The country's connection to the global game is already deep: more than 24 million Canadians tuned into the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar and 61 per cent of Canadians have said they are planning to watch the 2026 tournament on home soil, a number which is expected to grow as the tournament draws nearer.

Soccer fandom in Canada is also expanding at a pace unmatched by any other major sport. Since 2022, the number of soccer fans has increased by 17 per cent, compared with a three per cent rise for basketball and one per cent increase for hockey. Participation tells the same story:

there are now twice as many soccer participants as hockey players across the country. With the World Cup approaching, this momentum is set to accelerate, transforming not only the scale of the audience but the depth of its engagement.

By 2027, projections suggest there will be 12.6 million active soccer fans in Canada — more than 40 per cent of the Canadian population — and more than one million new followers of Canada Soccer's Men and Women's National Teams. The World Cup legacy will not just be measured in matches hosted or infrastructure built, but in the millions of new fans, participants, and communities drawn into the game for the first time.

An analysis of Canada's soccer ecosystem reveals both the gap and the promise. Canada Soccer's National Teams now rank among the world's best. The Men's team recently reached a historic high of 26th in the latest FIFA Rankings — a remarkable rise of 68 places since 2018. The Women's team consistently sits inside the top ten. Yet, beneath that success, the domestic player market tells a very different story, with Canadian clubs generating a fraction of the transfer value of similarly-ranked nations. Closing this gap would fundamentally transform the economics of the Canadian soccer market and the pathways it provides for clubs and players.

Continued growth is equally necessary. For the CPL and League1 to fulfil their potential,



they must ensure the health of existing clubs, anchored in modern stadiums and facilities, backed by strong ownership and supported by passionate fans and partners, all while strategically considering the opportunity for expansion in both the men's and women's games.

They must also push themselves to earn their spot in the new world of club football, one defined by global opportunity and alignment through Concacaf. Access to the region's premier club competitions, like the

Concacaf Champions Cup, now connects Canadian leagues to the global club soccer season and the FIFA Club World Cup, giving our teams the chance to test themselves against the best in our region and compete for a place on the world stage.

Strengthening the pipeline of Canadian talent is essential to this growth, ensuring that every step of the pathway, from grassroots to professional, feeds a stronger, more competitive game. That means deepening the connection between

youth soccer, League1 Canada, the CPL and beyond. By increasing awareness and alignment across these levels, and exploring new competitive layers that may emerge in future, CSME can help make the Canadian soccer pathway more visible, aspirational, and complete.

Without this scale, Canadian soccer risks always lagging behind its potential.

We know millions of Canadians love soccer and follow the world's biggest leagues, but we need to give them more reasons to cheer for their own clubs here at home. The task and the opportunity are to convert global soccer passion into Canadian soccer loyalty and a sense of community pride. Without stronger domestic fandom, our sport won't grow the way we know it can. Building loyalty here at home is how we make soccer truly Canadian.

The media landscape in Canada is evolving. While traditional networks remain important, fans are increasingly seeking new ways to access the sport they love. As consumption habits shift and demand for CSME's media rights grows, expanding reach across digital and linear platforms will be critical to deepening engagement and creating lasting value for the game. To truly embed Canadian soccer in the national fabric, it must break through into mainstream culture and media, becoming part of everyday life, not just a moment during major events.

And then come 2026 and 2027.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup on home soil is not just another tournament. It is Canada's chance to unite the country around the game and to leave a legacy of growth that endures long after the final whistle. We all have a role to play in its success.

Women's soccer represents a clear opportunity, and the FIFA Women's World Cup Brazil 2027 will no doubt be a driver of this. With Olympic champions and next-generation icons like Olivia Smith — a former League1 standout whose recent record transfer shows the world Canada's potential — breaking through, women's soccer and female fandom can become a defining pillar of CSME's identity, and a powerful force for growth and cultural pride.

Finally, soccer is more than ninety minutes on the pitch. Today it lives in music, fashion, digital content, and social storytelling. Canada's "late arrival" to professional soccer is a competitive advantage. Because we're not tied to old systems, CSME can build from the ground up, creating something modern, data-driven, and digitally connected, made for the fans, partners and communities who live and love the game today and in future.

The choice is urgent and clear to build the world's first fully-connected soccer hub. CSME has the mandate and the ambition to make it happen.

FROM AGENCY TO AN INTEGRATED SOCCER HUB.

DEFINING OUR NORTH STAR

“To create a new kind of soccer company: making CSME the world’s first integrated soccer hub — where teams, leagues, stars, stories and partners connect millions of fans, fuel sustainable growth, and create enduring value for the wider Canadian soccer ecosystem, with a lasting impact at home and abroad.”

This Vision is about more than just leagues or rights. It’s about creating a first-of-its-kind model. CSME’s integrated hub will unite the product on the pitch, the business behind it, and the media that tells its stories, to drive impact and legacy for generations to come.

In Canada, CSME can play a leading role in placing soccer at the centre of sporting and community life, with clubs as civic anchors, players as cultural icons, and fans connected daily through content and experiences.

Globally, CSME can showcase and celebrate Canada’s rich soccer history while positioning the nation as a new frontier in global soccer: developing, showcasing

and exporting talent, and building a media portfolio that connects Canadian stories to the global game, raising the sport’s visibility through expanded audience reach at home and abroad.

This is the bold shift: From a traditional league operator and agency to a sports, media, and commercial force.

OUR ROLE AND IDENTITY

To bring this Vision to life, CSME’s role is to connect its soccer, media, and commercial properties into one integrated hub so that fans, players and partners are part of a stronger, more connected and growing Canadian soccer ecosystem.

This hub turns passion into momentum, linking fans, players, and investment in ways that expand the soccer economy and raise Canada’s place on the global stage. Every step forward strengthens the wider Canadian soccer ecosystem, making the game more prominent at home and more visible to the world.

WHERE **VISION** MEETS EXECUTION.

THE CSME FRAMEWORK

The Vision sets our North Star, and our Role defines what we do. They answer the questions: “Where are we going?” and “What is CSME here to do?”

But vision and role only matter if they translate into action.

To move from belief to momentum, we need a framework that makes our ambition tangible, credible, and inspiring.

That framework is built on two parts:



The Growth Engine is our map:

Soccer, Media and Storytelling, and Business form a self-reinforcing cycle, each

driving the next. Strong leagues and clubs create stories worth telling; stories build fandom and commercial value; revenues drive reinvestment. Out of that cycle comes Legacy and Impact, multiplying soccer’s reach and relevance for generations.



The Principles of Play are our compass:

These are the behaviours and choices that make the Vision real every day. They guide how

we lead, how we make decisions, and how we show up for fans, players, and partners.

Seen together, the Growth Engine and the Principles of Play transform aspiration into a system of action. They chart CSME’s course in four ways:

- The Vision is our North Star, the destination.
- Our Role is the identity shift, what we do and why it matters.
- The Growth Engine is our map, showing where we compete and lead.
- The Principles of Play are our compass, keeping us true to who we are.

This is how CSME can support Canadian soccer to win the future: not through one-off victories or short-term gains, but through a sustained, integrated approach that combines clarity, credibility, and ambition into a single, unifying force.

THE GROWTH ENGINE

The Growth Engine powers our Vision: transforming CSME from a league operator and commercial agency into a catalyst for Canada’s soccer economy.



This engine connects every layer of the game, from grassroots to professional, from content to commerce, through Soccer, Media and Storytelling and Business, so that success in one part strengthens the whole. It builds a self-reinforcing structure where talent, fandom and value flow through a single, connected hub. Strengthening this cycle strengthens Canadian soccer itself, and leaves Legacy and Impact for generations to come.

Soccer is the heartbeat: Everything begins with the product on the pitch: competitive leagues, ambitious clubs, Canadian athletes excelling at home and abroad. It is fueled by growing soccer

pathway that connects youth soccer with League1, the CPL and more, with the potential for new competitive layers that may further deepen this progression and strengthen opportunity across the Canadian game.

Media and Storytelling is the amplifier: Everything grows louder when the stories are strong. Turning matches into moments, clubs into cultural symbols, and players into recognizable stars, media and storytelling make Canadian soccer visible and relevant every day. Expanding reach across digital and linear platforms ensures the game is easy to find, easy to follow, and impossible to ignore. This is how the sport cuts



through the mainstream, builds lasting fandom, and keeps Canadian soccer in the national conversation.

Business is the fuel: Every partnership, ticket, jersey, and rightsholder builds the engine that powers the game forward. A strong commercial base reinvests directly into clubs, leagues, and communities, creating sustainable growth and enduring impact. Licensing, sponsorship, digital capability and data turn passion into revenue and revenue into opportunity, ensuring that Canadian soccer isn't just visible — it's thriving. This is how financial strength becomes cultural strength.

From that cycle comes Legacy and Impact: When soccer thrives, stories resonate and business reinvests, the ripple effects extend far beyond the pitch. Communities grow stronger, fandom deepens, and new generations find their place in the game. The 2026 FIFA World Cup and beyond present a unique chance to

turn momentum into permanence, making soccer part of Canada's cultural fabric for decades to come. Legacy is not a byproduct — it's the destination.

THE PRINCIPLES OF PLAY

The Principles of Play are the DNA of CSME: the behaviours and values that shape every decision we make. They keep us credible, consistent, bold and focused on what matters most — trust, ambition and growth.

Community-powered growth: Turning passion into progress and value.

- Connecting Canada's soccer community and inviting casual sports fans and new audiences into the game; converting their support into sustainable audiences, partnerships, and investment.

It starts on the pitch: Everything begins with a great product.

- Strong competitions, marketable clubs, compelling matches and visible semi-professional, professional and national teams competing at the highest levels domestically and internationally are the foundation for business and media to thrive.

Respect tradition, reimagine the game: Make Canadian soccer modern, exciting and distinctive.

- We honour the history and builders of Canadian soccer, while focusing our late-mover advantage to innovate boldly, and bring new ideas, formats, and experiences that present the game in fresh, modern ways.

Driven by talent: Supporting, developing, and sharing our players' stories with Canada and the world.

- Through our leagues and pathways, we create opportunities and careers that

allow our stars to shine on the field and inspire the next generation off it.

Elevate women's soccer and fandom: On the pitch, for fans, in media and in business.

- Put women's soccer at the centre of the story — champion our players, leagues, and national teams as engines of growth, pride, and connection across the country; drive progress through investment, visibility, and opportunity across our leagues, coverage, and partnerships.

Building trusted partnerships: Clarity and alignment make sustainable growth possible.

- Lead the commercialisation of sponsorship, media, licensing, ticketing, and partnerships that connect Canadian soccer to fans, partners, and the global game.





OUR BLUEPRINT FOR GROWTH.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

This Vision sets a clear direction: build the world's first fully integrated soccer hub, connecting leagues, stars in stories in ways that fuel growth at home and credibility abroad.

In the near term, our priorities include resetting CSME's identity, reputation and brand; strengthening alignment with Canada Soccer; and preparing for FIFA World Cup 2026 as an inflection moment, all while continuing conversations with clubs, partners, and fans to refine this Vision into a clear roadmap through 2030 and beyond.

In the medium- to long-term, our focus shifts to supporting a strong World Cup legacy in 2026 and 2027, fostering the strategic growth and long-term sustainability of clubs and leagues, and embedding Canadian soccer

as a permanent part of the nation's sporting and cultural fabric.

Some ambitions are timeless, while others are tied to milestones such as FIFA World Cup 2026, FIFA Women's World Cup 2027.

Our priorities centre on our three core domains, Soccer, Media & Storytelling, and Business, underpinned by a lasting Legacy and Impact. These focus areas will guide the next phase of work as we turn vision into execution through clear KPIs and shared ambition.

AREAS OF FOCUS



Lead with Soccer

Grow and strengthen the league system:

Prioritize CPL's growth and reposition CPL and League1 as a unified pathway. Expand

League1's footprint across the country and explore future competitive layers that deepen opportunities at every level of the game. Strengthen the foundation of clubs, leagues, and competitions to build a robust, scalable domestic soccer pyramid that fuels long-term growth.

Elevate standards: Raise the bar on facilities, match operations, and matchday experiences so CPL and League1 clubs set a new benchmark for professionalism and fan engagement. Attract strong investors, secure modern stadiums and training environments, and equip clubs to deliver world-class experiences for players, supporters, and communities, on and off the pitch.

Develop and export talent: Position Canada as a world leader in player development, a trusted exporter of top talent and a respected player in the global transfer market, ensuring value derived from Canadian talent progression is systematically reinvested into clubs and pathways.

Connect to national teams: Ensure homegrown players developed in CPL and League1 form the core of Canadian squads, making clubs and leagues a true foundation of national pride. Improve alignment with Canada Soccer to jointly invest in National Teams, supporting on-pitch success and the growth of the sport across the country."

Champion women's soccer: Create meaningful opportunities for players,

coaches, and fans, supporting its long-term growth within the Canadian soccer ecosystem.



**Elevate Media and Storytelling
Grow Soccer's Audience**

in Canada: Leverage CSME's existing and future media

rights to amplify the presence of Canadian soccer — including visibility of the National Teams, CPL and League1 — with a focus on transitioning from OTT to linear and driving cut-through into the mainstream conversation year-round.

Break through with bold innovation: Build a modern, soccer-first coverage model that combines digital streaming with expanded linear access, reaching more fans and bringing them closer to the game than ever before.

Expand rights strategically: Broaden our media portfolio from focusing solely on Canadian soccer properties to championing all soccer, including international rights where Canadians play, expanding the sport's audience and reach domestically.

Create a daily storytelling hub: Shoulder programming, player-led features, and multi-format content that unearths personalities and keeps soccer in the news cycle. Use storytelling and collaboration to ensure every level of Canadian soccer feels part of one connected system, with fans able to access content seamlessly across digital, social, linear and direct-to-consumer platforms

that bring them closer to the game.

Put women's soccer front and centre:

Showcase women's soccer as a core pillar of Canadian soccer, telling stories that inspire, captivate, and build enduring fandom.



**Commercialize with Purpose
Power growth through
diversified revenue streams:**

Reposition CSME brand and leverage diversified revenue streams like live events and ticketing, sponsorship and advertising, merchandise and licensing, and media rights to amplify audience reach and create resilience, scalability and reinvestment; build capabilities internally at CSME to increase following and monetize soccer.

Enable investment in infrastructure:

Champion development of stadiums, training facilities, and digital platforms that create lasting homes for clubs and communities.

Position clubs as cultural brands: Evolve CPL and League1 clubs into local symbols of pride and belonging that connect fans, culture and commerce beyond matchday.

Build a unified digital hub: Bring together content, commerce, fan engagement, and analytics in one connected environment that expands reach, deepen engagement, and deliver seamless fan experiences across digital and linear platforms. Explore new formats, products, and technologies and experiences that excite and inspire fans.

Create value through partnership:

Package rights and sponsorships to amplify reach and simplify partner access, showcasing CSME's integrated model.



**Leave a Legacy
and Make an Impact
Harness World Cups in 2026
and 2027:** Ignite passion during

the tournament; connect with and convert new audiences into long-term fans of Canadian clubs and leagues.

Deliver for communities: Use soccer to create opportunities for youth, promote inclusion and strengthen community bonds.

Strengthen ties to grassroots: Build clear connections between local clubs, communities, professional leagues, and national teams.

Build timeless symbols: Place the CPL, born as part of Canada's World Cup journey, alongside new programs, venues, and traditions; create proof that the tournament left more than memories, it helped build a permanent home for soccer in Canadian life.

**Inspire the next generation and
embed soccer in Canada's identity:**

Spark participation and ambition for young Canadians in every community, while positioning the game as a prolonged source of national pride, shared stories, and cultural connection beyond the pitch.



TURNING BELIEF INTO MOMENTUM.

THIS VISION IS MORE THAN AMBITION; IT IS A CALL TO ACTION.

Canadian soccer stands at a once-in-a-lifetime moment: a World Cup on home soil, players who inspire belief, and a sport already loved by millions. The choices we make today will help shape a future where the next generation of Canadians can grow up with a soccer culture they proudly call their own.

Now is the moment to act. Through the collective power of its hub and partnerships

across the game, CSME will aim to reach more Canadians than ever before, creating lasting momentum for Canadian soccer.

JOIN US.

Together, we can turn this Vision into a movement, one that ignites passion, inspires players, and unites everyone who believes in the future of Canadian soccer. ●