

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION – FOUR YEAR PLAN 2014/15 – 2017/18***Project/Function/Area of activity:*****Media / Communications*****Committee/Commission/internal ISU body:*****ISU Council/ISU Secretariat*****Statement of specific results & benefits to be obtained:***

- To improve general media servicing throughout the year and media operations at ISU Events, thereby increasing worldwide media exposure and interest in all markets in the ISU sport disciplines.
- To attract a younger audience and use modern communication tools through the use of social media
- To position the ISU as a professional, effective major international sports federation playing a significant role as a major player in international sport worldwide.
- To achieve increased ISU presence in the media.
- To develop and implement a corporate identity strategy.

Recommended activities to obtain benefits:**2014/15 2015/16 2016/17 2017/18**

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
The ISU Secretariat in cooperation with the Sports Directorate will perform the following tasks:				
1. Maintenance of an ISU media mailing list and preparation and distribution of ISU publications, press releases and other communications including effective use of the Internet and ensure that all information/news is communicated professionally, swiftly and effectively following Council meetings, Congress, other meetings, press conferences, ISU Events and other news opportunities.	X	X	X	X
2. Maintenance of an ISU media presence at major ISU Events, through an ISU Media Team or individual ISU Media Coordinators/Representatives to perform the following tasks:	X	X	X	X
- Instruction and supervision of the local Organizing Committee (OC) so that a uniform professional standard of media operations is provided				
- Scrutinizing and monitoring of media accreditation applications				
- Working with the OC to train volunteers and staff working in media area				
- Handling media queries				
- Distribution of ISU information (newsletters, bulletins, regulations etc.)				
- Gathering quick quotes (figure skating only) from athletes and distribute them to the media				
- Supervising/monitoring of interview procedures between the media and skaters, coaches, officials				
- Producing media advisories (e.g. withdrawals, injuries, rankings, statistics, etc.)				
- Coordinating/editing and supervising the publication of press releases from all ISU Events				
- Writing periodic press releases				
- Arranging ISU press conferences in consultation with the ISU President and/or ISU Representative.				
- Updating Guidelines (Memorandums) for holding ISU Events in the area of media/communications according to experience and necessities.				
- Developing and maintaining off-site information services for specific target groups.				
- Servicing the ISU TV Right Holders and other important media clients				

3. Implementation and coordination with local Organizing Committees of result services from ISU Events without an ISU media presence through the Internet.	X	X	X	X
4. Maintenance and development of social media strategy and use of multimedia tools	X	X	X	X
5. Maintenance and development of live streaming and video on demand strategy	X	X	X	X
6. Monitoring of media coverage	X	X	X	X
7. Creation of content for website and social media including text and audiovisual material	X	X	X	X
8. Enhancement, production and publication of ISU Newsletter (ISU WORLD).	X	X	X	X
9. Production of ISU Books in cooperation with the specialized internal/external bodies concerned.	X	X	X	X
10. Enhancement and maintenance of the ISU web-site and web related tools including database services and results statistics.	X	X	X	X
11. Enhancement and maintenance of multi-media services.	X	X	X	X
12. Preparation and distribution of specialized information for strategic target groups.	X	X	X	X
13. Production and distribution of supporting material to the media such as press kits, media guides etc.	X	X	X	X
14. Monitoring of the implementation of “Corporate Identity Charter”.	X	X	X	X
15. Fielding media enquiries on designated questions and coordination with relevant ISU persons/bodies on complex issues and policy matters.	X	X	X	X
16. In close cooperation with the Sports Directors, Event Coordinator and respective Technical Committees and/or other technically knowledgeable ISU Office Holders, holding of educational meetings for technical aspects with the media on the occasion of ISU Events.	X	X	X	X
17. Maintenance and enhancement of contact and dialogue with the international media representatives.	X	X	X	X
18. Maintenance and development of strategic communication planning in cooperation with relevant persons/bodies.	X	X	X	X

Status Report to the 2016 ISU Congress on the Four Year Plan 2014/15-2017/18

Committee/Commission:

ISU Council/ISU Secretariat

Project/Function/Area of Activity:

Media/Communications

In the first two years of the 2014-2018 Four-Year-Plan, the ISU Council and ISU Secretariat did not only achieve the specific results stated in the plan but also went beyond the Four-Year-Plan. As the shift in sport consumption becomes greater each year, digital communication methods are favored over traditional methods. The limited media resources at the ISU Secretariat (1 ½ staff) proved to be challenging for the team to keep up with the rapid changes. As the focus on digital intensifies, a full time employee specialized in digital and web development joined the Media Team in March 2016. Although this recruitment is part of the ongoing strategy to improve the media services to the Skating family, fans and the media, additional resources could prove to be necessary depending on the strategy of the newly elected ISU Council in 2016.

These last two years has also seen a shift in event presentation in particular in Short Track Speed Skating and Figure Skating. The Organizing Committees request more content (videos, photographs, text) from the ISU in order to create a more enriching experience during the events. The use of Social Media and direct interaction with the fans and audiences has grown and the Media strategy has remained flexible in order to adapt to these demands.

This Status Report lists in no particular order a summary of the numerous projects undertaken by the Media Team. The main points are the following

- Service the media efficiently and rapidly
- Focus on content creation for social media and event presentation
- Intensify event and sport promotion through social media and a stronger Communications strategy
- Use of videos
- Adapt the ISU website to today's demands
- Increasing workload

Servicing the Media

Although there is a shift to digital, it is important that the ISU provides a high level service to media attending ISU Events and Championships. The continuing budget cuts within the media organizations have an influence on the number of journalists, photographers and television right holders that attend the Events. However, over the last couple of years, the attendance has proven stable.

In the past, the ISU's emphasis was on providing a high level of service to media attending an Event, however over the last two years it has become just as important to service media covering the events remotely. With the possibility of watching the Events through live streaming, journalists can cover ISU Events from anywhere.

Television right holders, and in particular offsite commentators covering Figure Skating Events, receives a good level of service through the Commentator Information System accessible remotely. All journalists, editors and other media representatives are also serviced through direct emails containing essential competition information during the Events.

A number of media are also present on social media platforms and in particular on Twitter, therefore in 2015/16 the ISU used the medium to publish schedules, results, press releases and

other relevant information, while also sending the information through email. Of course the ISU will continue to look for ways to service the press by using all the technology available today.

Event coverage in March 2016 the major events (ISU Championships, Grand Prix of Figure skating Final, World Cup Finals etc.), however during the 2015/16 Season, the Team covered every single ISU Event in some form:

1. **Photographic coverage of every ISU Event:** the ISU signed a one year contract with Getty Images to cover all ISU Events, including the Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating, Junior World Cup Speed Skating, Grand Prix of Figure Skating, World Cup Speed Skating and Short Track Speed Skating and every ISU Championships. Consequently over 120 days of Events have been covered producing over 23,000 photographs which are now part of the ISU Photographic collection.
2. **Editorial coverage of every ISU Event (except the Junior World Cup Speed Skating Series and Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series):** this season the ISU worked with three reporters and one social media reporter. They covered Figure Skating, Synchronized Skating, Speed Skating and Short Track Speed Skating by sending press releases to the media and through Twitter coverage.
3. **Video of almost all ISU Events:** ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series was live streamed on YouTube. The following events were live streamed on the ISU Skating Channel and available on Demand: three Grand Prix of Figure Skating Events and all Figure Skating Championships. Six World Cup Speed Skating Events and all Speed Skating except for the World Junior Speed Skating Championships. Six World Cup Short Track Speed Skating Events, the European and World Championships.
4. **Social Media coverage of all ISU Senior Events:** over 4,800 Tweets, 390 Instagram photographs and over 1,000 Facebook posts were created to cover ISU Events in 2015/16.

Social Media

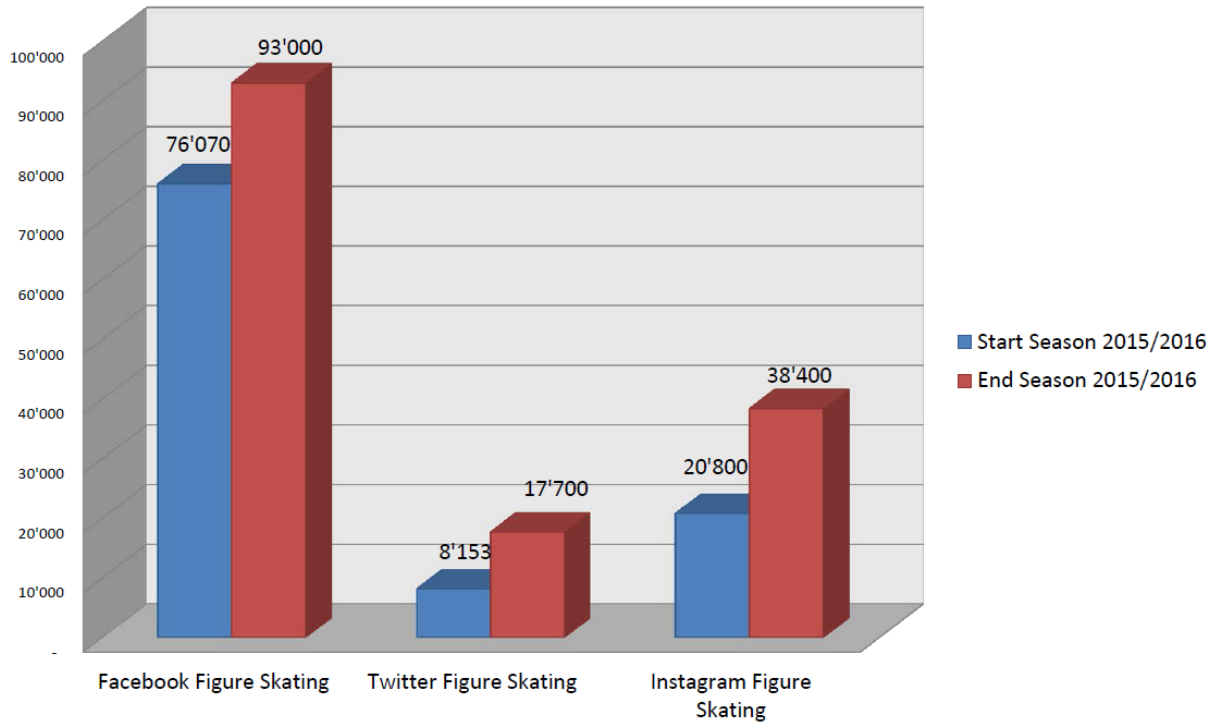
Sports organizations utilize numerous media to reach their stakeholders including television, radio, publications, and through online efforts. Over 2.3 billion people are active on social media platforms which have drastically grown in usage across numerous industries, and have become especially popular in the sports industry.

The ISU Media Team has been growing its social media presence considerably since the last Status Report back in 2014. At the time only four Facebook Pages were available and since two Twitter and two Instagram accounts have been added and the team is looking at other options. These platforms allow us to deliver our content to audiences in two ways:

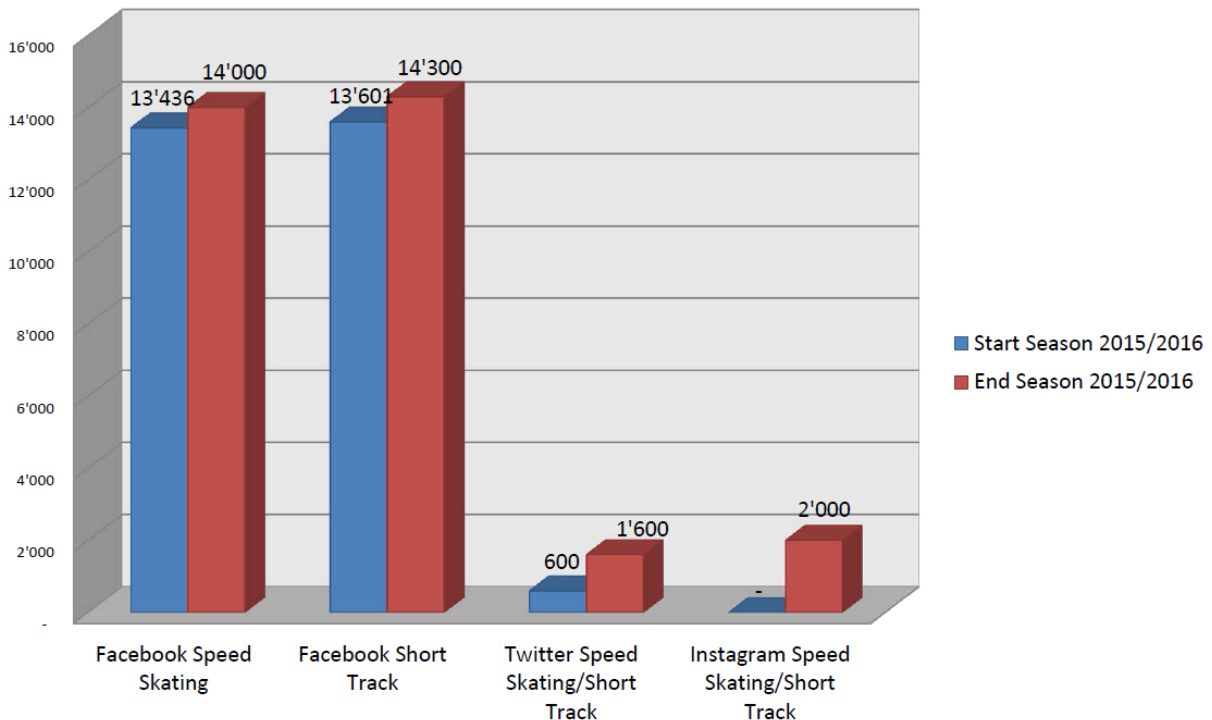
1. **By creating a loyal fan base:** These are fans that like and follow ISU pages, and interact on a regular basis with the content. They may be skating fans or fans of a particular athlete.
2. **By reaching a new public:** Whenever a fan engages with ISU content through social media, they also promote the content to their own network that become directly or indirectly exposed to ISU content. The Media Team has found that this group of people increased significantly over the last two years. They consume ISU Sports sporadically rather than regularly (for example only during World Championships or if a particular athlete did well in an Event). These people are just as valuable as the fans that follow ISU Sports regularly.

These distribution outlets enable the Media Team to make different content available for the users all year round. Event coverage during the season and other stories, news, photos and videos to keep the fans interested during the offseason.

Figure Skating Fan Growth

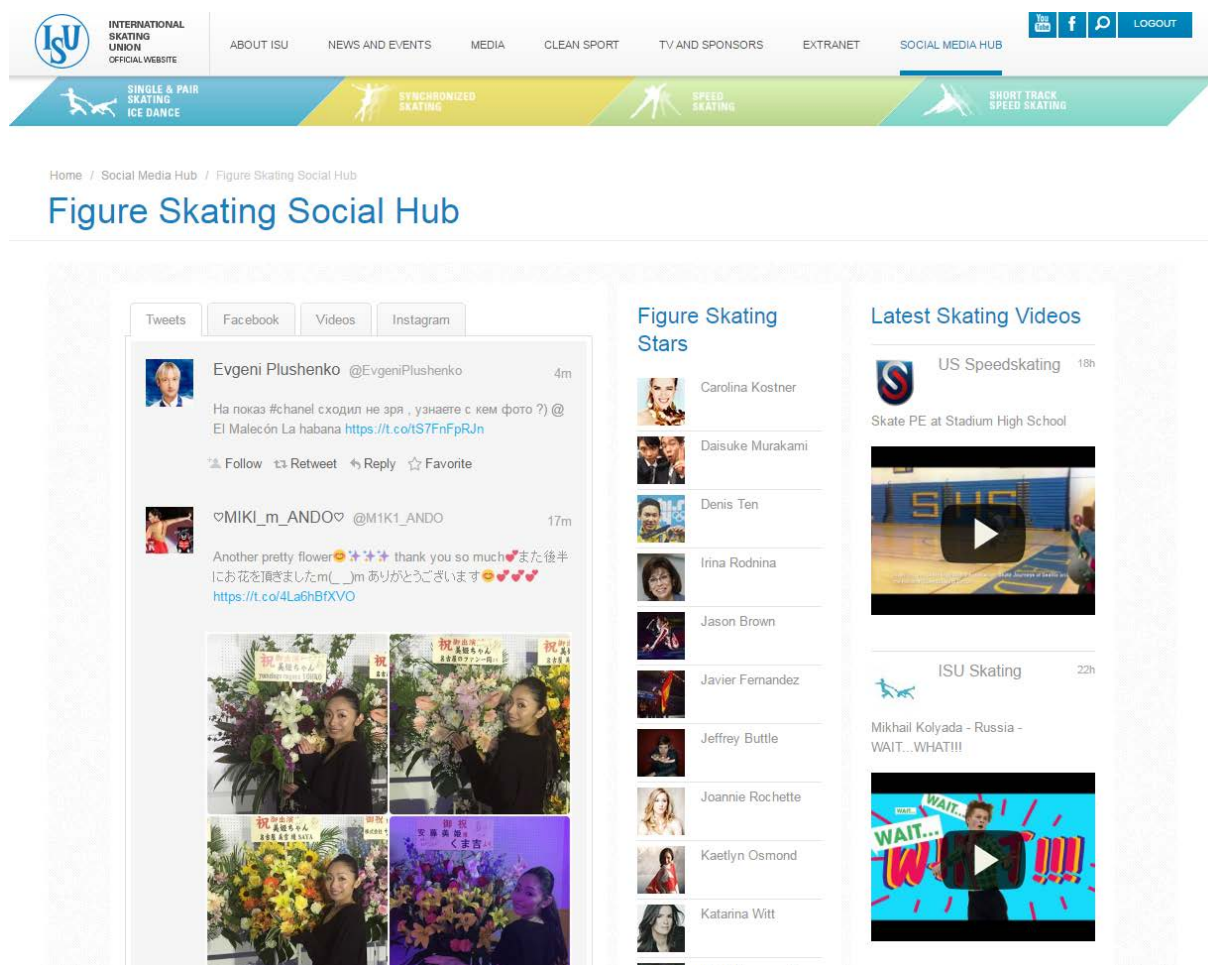


Speed Skating/Short Track Fan Growth



To cater to these particular attributes the Media Team has increased the amount of content produced and the quality for each Event covered through social media. Graphics, banners, artwork, polls etc. were created to promote ISU Sports and information such as schedules, results, standings, statistics and biographies in a visual manner that facilitate content sharing. In order to promote not just the ISU, but its Members and athletes, the Media Team has also created a dedicated section on the ISU website called the ISU Social Media Hub. The hub curates posts from athletes, ISU Members, NOCs etc. in a single place. This space provides

skating fans a one stop shop to find official social media accounts related to the world of skating.



Creating a presence in China

Since the announcement that Beijing would host the 2022 Winter Olympic Games, the ISU Media Team started to define a strategy to create a presence on social media platforms in China. China has its own platforms targeted at a Chinese audience that are very active on social media, therefore the ISU has contracted a Swiss company with a social media agent in China to open, run and monitor the ISU presence on Chinese sites: Sina Weibo, WeChat and Youku. Specific Chinese content must be created in order for the strategy to be successful, this will be a challenge for the small ISU Media Team but China is a big market with a lot of potential and must be explored. The accounts will be ready for the season 2016/17.

Videos

Video is essential not only in sport but also a key tool used by younger generations to communicate. Live streams, on demand videos, short and creative videos all play an important role and are in great demand. Television rights have been sold in key skating markets, making it very challenging to be able to fulfill the demand for videos showing field of play action.

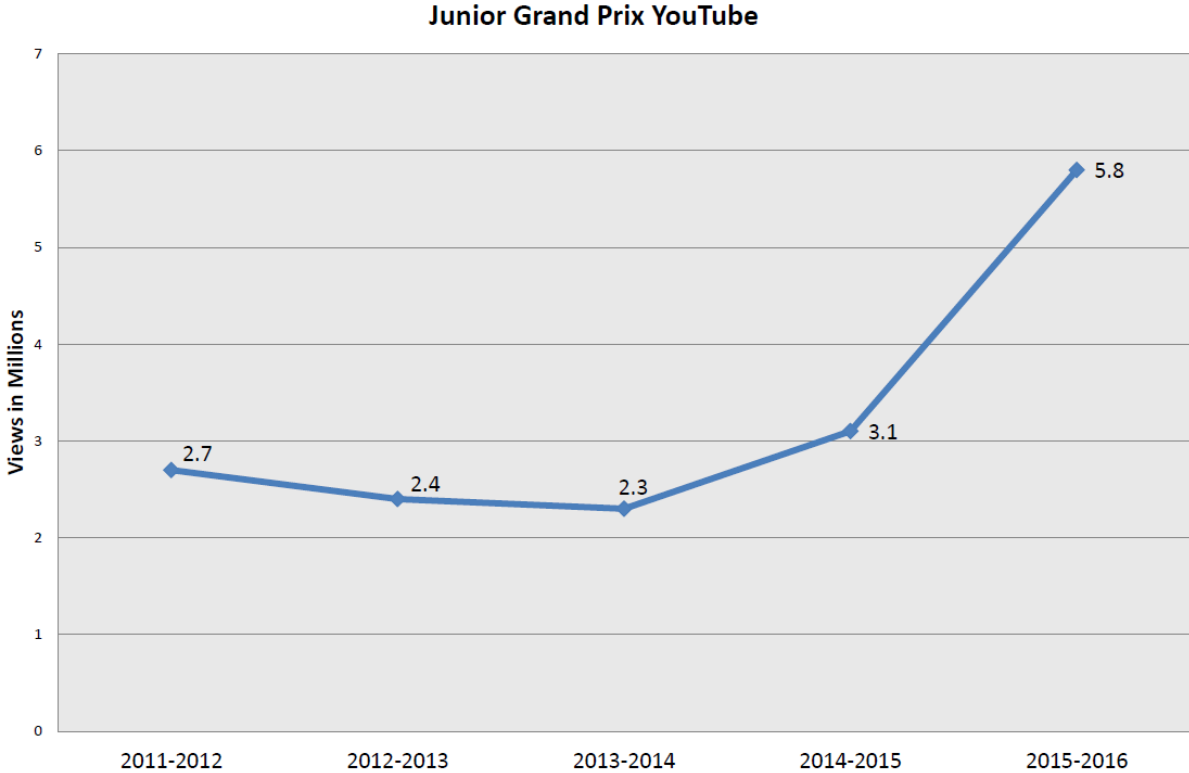
Social Media video campaign

A series of videos was produced over the last two seasons. The videos are fun, short and fresh showing a different side of the athletes. Three mini-series are part of the campaign, the first is “Wait...What!!!” where Skaters were asked questions in front of a camera. Athletes were also asked “What’s in my bag?” and the ISU also spent “A moment with” dozens of athletes. These videos promote the ISU Sports, Members and current stars and future champions. In the last two years over 180 videos were created and watched 700,000 times. These short clips (30-60 sec) are posted weekly on YouTube and promoted through Facebook and Twitter.

During the Season 2015/16, some of the social media videos were showcased at major events e.g. ISU World Short Track Speed Skating Championships, ISU European Figure Skating Championships and the ISU World Figure Skating Championships as part of the production and entertainment in the Event venue.

Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating on YouTube

YouTube hosts the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating live stream with 5.8 million views during the 2015/16 season. This has proven to be one of the most successful initiatives since it gives young athletes exposure and fans exclusive access to the series. All 7 events are shown live with more than a million views per season.



Live streams through the ISU Skating Channel

The ISU Skating Channel is the online live streaming solution for senior events in all disciplines. The Marketing department, in conjunction with the Media Team, has been successful at negotiating waivers with television right holders to open more markets for this live video feed. Through these negotiations, the World Cup in both Speed Skating and Short Track Speed Skating were shown across Europe.

Below, the table shows that the consumption of live streams is on the rise despite the necessity to geoblock major skating countries.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Total live video streams delivered	186'000	225'000	428'094	570'182	668'243
Total on demand video streams delivered	275'000	220'000	338'172	447'715	512'946
Total Streams	461'000	445'000	766'266	1'017'897	1'181'189

ISU Website

The new ISU website was launched in December 2013 in time for the ISU Championships and Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games. The website was quickly put to the test when it had to endure a cyber-attack, manage over one million visitors in three days during the 2014 Olympic Winter Games and face various technical issues.

The new website was developed to be mobile and tablet friendly which has proved necessary to keep up with the current trends. During the Season 2014/15 61,44% of the sessions recorded came from desktop computers, 25,57% from smart phones and 12,99% from tablets. In 2015/16 this number dramatically changes to show that the desktop access has dropped to 29.80%, while **smart phone and tablet** access increased to **32.13% and 30.08%** respectively. It is the first time that mobile access surpasses the traditional desktop access.

Technology changes very rapidly and in order for the ISU to keep up with the demand and trend, the now old website must be updated. This is also the case of other digital platforms that have been in use for over five years and the most pressing is the live results technology. Once these are up to date, the ISU can exploit the data feeds and create mobile applications including live results and other data. The Media Team is putting together a budget which will be presented to the ISU Council.

History Book

The ISU Communications Coordinator worked in close collaboration with the President's office and the History Book Coordinator Mr. Hawkins on the publication of the ISU History Book. This project started over two years ago in order to be published for the occasions of the 2016 ISU Congress. It has been an intense project that has taken up a lot of resources and a huge amount of time.

Figure Skating TV Directors/Moderators seminar

The Sport Manager Figure Skating and Media Coordinator organized a number of television Seminars over the last couple of years. The purpose of these seminars is to have the opportunity to have an open and honest discussion with the ISU television right holders that cover Figure Skating Events, on topics such as production standardization, future possibilities and ideas to improve the presentation of Events etc.

In 2014 the seminar was held in Saitama (JPN) and was aimed at Commentators. In 2015, the seminar took place in Shanghai and was used as a platform to exchange ideas and experiences which were especially useful for the Directors that are less experienced and have major events lined up, e.g. World Championships and OWG. In 2016 it was decided that the seminar would be aimed at European broadcasters and was therefore held in Bratislava (SVK). Moderators from Canada, USA and Europe participated in each seminar and attendees from Asia and Europe participated.

Ongoing Projects and recurring tasks

- **Speed Skating and Short Track database and statistics:** The ISU signed a contract with Infostrada Sports in 2011 in order to upgrade the biographies and statistics in Speed Skating and Short Track. All the data was imported into a new database which was launched in 2012. This solution made it easier to find current and historical information and statistics. In 2014 the database was designed to fit with the new website, include portrait pictures in the biographies and social media links. The contract is currently under renegotiation.
- **Online Media Accreditation System:** The ISU launched the ISU Online Media Accreditation System in September 2012. The system is aimed at all media: writing press, photographers, non-right holder, right holders and host broadcasters. The system was welcomed by the ISU media partners and TV Right Holders as it makes it easier for them to apply to multiple events. Initially, the ISU Online Media Accreditation System was used for ISU Championships only, but World Cups were also added during the season 2015/16 which increased the workload of the Media Team. Over 20 Events used the ISU Online Media Accreditation System and over 2,500 requests were processed through-out the Season.
- **Short Track Speed Skating Promotion:** During 2015/16 the ISU Short Track Speed Skating Event Coordinator, Marketing and Media Team tested various promotional strategies for Short Track Speed Skating events which proved to be very successful. A group of stars of different countries were selected for promotional photos and videos which were then displayed on social media and as part of the sports production on site. Although a number of positive comments have been received, the parties involved need to evaluate the results in detail in order to build a strategy for each discipline for future seasons.

Every year the small ISU Media Team composed of the Communications and Media Coordinator, Assistant Communications and Marketing (part time communications and part time marketing), Assistant Communications and Digital Coordinator and up to four freelance writers, perform a number of growing tasks throughout the season these are listed below:

- **ISU World:** published 3 times a year and sent to over 300 persons. The digital version is published on the ISU website and is read by over 1000 persons.
- **ISU Website:** maintaining and updating the ISU website on a daily basis with ISU Communications, news, events, pictures, videos and other content.
- **Media advisories:** the Media Team increased the number of media advisories during the season 2014/15 so Speed Skating, Short Track Speed Skating and Synchronized Skating Events have a similar coverage to Figure Skating (increased from approximately 90 per season to 150). The media advisories are drafted and sent to the media and ISU Members. These include information on media accreditation, previews and press releases related to ISU Events and Championships, promoting new initiatives etc.
- **Onsite media support at ISU Figure Skating Events:** Freelance writer attends all ISU Grand Prix and Championships and provides essential support to the Event Coordinator and the media, also provides the Quick Quotes service, updates Skater biographies, assists with the gathering of program elements information, and writes press conference highlights amongst other things. The ISU Communications and Media Coordinator attends the ISU Grand Prix Final, European and World Championships to manage key areas such as the

mixed zone, press center, assist ISU television Right Holders, organizes the President's press conference, provides other administrative and logistical support to the OC. The Assistant Communications and Marketing Coordinator attends major events to cover them on social media.

- **Onsite media support at ISU Short Track Speed Skating, Speed Skating and Synchronized Skating Events:** whenever possible the ISU Media team attends ISU Events and Championships in order to provide support to the local press officer, promote the Events through official ISU channels (social media, website etc.) or the Communications and Marketing assistant provides support to the ISU Marketing Coordinator/ Event Coordinators.
- **ISU Events preparation:** the ISU Communications and Media Coordinator liaises with the OCs and Sport Directors on media and communications matters related to the event which includes the preparation of media accreditations, media information documents and forms, processing all media accreditation requests from all ISU events, promoting the events through social media with the assistance of the OC or a third parties (e.g. OC agency, Infront etc.) etc.
- **Promotion of ISU Event Hashtags:** liaise with OCs regarding the creation of ISU rink boards when appropriate and promotional material to promote the various initiatives of the ISU directly related to the concerned Event.
- **Expand and update the ISU Communication strategy:** liaise with a number of ISU bodies and stakeholders. Negotiate renewal of contracts with current providers (e.g. Getty Images, freelancers, photographers and video production). Negotiate new contracts for new or additional projects with existing or new providers (e.g. website, email system, Infostrada, Swiss Timing etc.). Liaise with ISU staff and Office Holders to implement and adapt strategies (e.g. social media, short clips, commentator seminars etc.).
- **Moderate the news:** alert the ISU Director General and the ISU President of any potential "hot" topics.
- **General enquiries:** respond to general enquiries from the media, Organizing Committees, various press officers in a timely manner
- **Logistics and administrative tasks:** liaise with the photographers and the EBU crew that attend ISU events and arrange accreditation, transport and accommodation and general administrative tasks.
- **Media Guides:** create and update the ISU Media Guides for each disciplines following each ISU Championships.

May 2016