

SUCCESS CASE

# COUNTERING PIRACY

How Content Protection helps LALIGA fight back against content theft



# Turning the tide with Content Protection

Unchecked audiovisual piracy risks gutting the sports and entertainment industry — depriving organisations and clubs of vital revenue and compromising the viewing experience for fans. It presents a huge problem to rights holders everywhere, leading to a loss of broadcasting rights and sponsorship agreements — and causing major damage to brand reputation and revenue streams.

After struggling to manually find and remove pirated material, LALIGA implemented Content Protection — a suite of software solutions designed to quickly detect, block, and take down illegal content across every digital channel.

Since implementation, Content Protection has helped LALIGA turn the tide in the league's fight against piracy — removing millions of illegal sources of content and stimulating new growth from broadcast rights.

**128,000**

UNAUTHORISED STREAMING  
LINKS REMOVED

**7M**

PIRATED CLIPS TAKEN DOWN  
FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

**7,000**

ILLEGAL CONTENT ASSETS  
BLOCKED FROM MOBILE APPS

“Piracy causes losses of more than 60 billion euros and more than 400,000 jobs in Europe every year. It's a global problem that affects all levels of society, from the competitions that own the rights, to the population itself through unpaid taxes — not to mention the criminal activities that are related to piracy.”

**GUILLERMO RODRÍGUEZ**  
DIRECTOR OF ANTI-PIRACY OPERATIONS, SPORTIAN

# Safeguarding content assets across LALIGA



Piracy was costing LALIGA a fortune in lost revenue. In fact, it's estimated that illegal streaming was costing the league up to €200 million in a year while starving the Spanish content industry of 20,000 new jobs.

But with more and more digital channels making piracy difficult to track, LALIGA was struggling to keep up — and the threat to its intellectual property was risking a devastating knock-on effect for everyone.

LALIGA clubs faced significant financial losses if earnings couldn't be maximised from broadcasting rights and sponsorship deals. Meanwhile, broadcasters were suffering as illegal streaming leads to lower legitimate viewings and a decrease in advertising revenue.

That impact for fans is major, too. If broadcasters lose vital funding to ensure best-in-class coverage, the depth and breadth of content available to audiences is restricted. More broadly, any major financial losses for the league and clubs also limits their investments in transfers, stadium improvements, and overall development necessary for greater experiences and engagement.

Allowing the problem to go unchecked puts the entire sports and entertainment industry in jeopardy: LALIGA needed a faster and smarter approach to anti-piracy. Working with clubs and broadcasters to assess the impact of piracy, LALIGA introduced Content Protection — a combination of advanced monitoring tools and expert analyst services — across the entire digital ecosystem for Spanish football.

# 360° protection of every digital channel

Content Protection, offered by Sportian, enables LALIGA to combine the latest AI and Machine Learning technology with 24/7 expert assistance to combat piracy across every digital channel. By using human-led detection in tandem with digital tools, LALIGA is also addressing the more inventive methods of piracy — such as logo misuse and content altering — to remove previously undetected piracy.

## HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

### Specialised to identify piracy

Sportian antipiracy protection services are powered by specialized tools which can create portraits of illegal content providers, enhanced by artificial intelligence and advanced technical support. This speeds up the detection of illegal activities, and leads to faster removal of piracy sources or blocking of access to illegal sites. All technical details of detected content are recorded to identify future incidents and stay one step ahead of pirates.

Each tool covers a different remit of digital channels to provide 360° monitoring:

- ◆ **Vento/Marauder:** Monitors social media platforms in real time to identify pirated content. The tools also collect evidence to share with the rights holder and hosting companies to prompt removal of pirated material from accounts and pages.
- ◆ **Lumière:** Tracks websites and streaming channels in real time that host illegal content to help quickly identify instances where unauthorised broadcasts of matches are being streamed, and take them down.
- ◆ **Blackhole:** Detects cardsharing and IPTV platform servers that are distributing illegal content, specifically targeting those that distribute matches without proper rights or licenses. The rights holder can then take legal action, collaborate with law enforcement agencies, or work with internet service providers (ISPs) to block access to these servers.

### Access to 24/7 expert assistance to remove pirated content

Sportian also provides LALIGA with on-demand access to technical monitoring from over 50 expert analysts who constantly investigate the sources of illegal content from all channels. This way, LALIGA is able to ensure all identified illegal content is blocked and removed immediately.

Strong partnerships with digital platforms are equally important to ensure immediate action. Content Protection has technical and legal agreements with over 70 platforms for faster, more accurate removal of pirated content without set limits, and with no requirement for prior approval. Through collaboration agreements and a dedicated legal team, Content Protection is helping LALIGA to effectively prosecute offenders and deter future instances of piracy.



# Greater protection, greater media value

Using Content Protection, LALIGA has regained control of Spanish football's intellectual property rights — ensuring the integrity of its brand and the exclusivity of its offerings. Better safeguarding content against piracy has also meant an increase in revenue potential by maintaining the value of broadcasting rights and sponsorship deals. By protecting these avenues of growth, LALIGA has created new job opportunities across the league's media sector.

## 01

### INCREASED VALUE OF CLUB ASSETS

Content Protection has helped LALIGA successfully remove over 7 million pirated clips across social media platforms, 4 million videos from YouTube, and more than 128,000 streaming links so far. This significant reduction in illegal content distribution has helped to safeguard the reputation and value of media assets for the league and its clubs — all while enabling greater revenue growth.

## 02

### IMPROVED PARTNERSHIPS WITH BROADCASTERS

By collaborating with broadcasters to crack down on piracy, LALIGA has improved the agreements and distribution rights for digital content. With enhanced content protection, broadcasters can invest confidently in LALIGA coverage and offer premium viewing experiences to fans for greater engagement. The increased trust and cooperation between LALIGA and broadcasters has not only bolstered revenue opportunities, but also facilitated the growth of the league's fan base.

## 03

### GLOBAL PROTECTION FOR THE LEAGUE

Outside of Spain, LALIGA has successfully expanded its efforts to combat piracy by collaborating with other countries, from Denmark to Uruguay, to obtain blocking orders. This cross-border cooperation has been instrumental in tackling piracy at its source and strengthening LALIGA's anti-piracy strategy. By proactively seeking legal measures to block pirated content in different jurisdictions, LALIGA has achieved greater protection of its content worldwide.

**“By having access to a piracy tool that pairs 24/7 monitoring with a team of analysts and legal experts, LALIGA has been able to reclaim content, protect its broadcasting rights, and foster a piracy-free environment. Overall, Content Protection empowers rights holders to take back control of their intellectual property, secure their revenue streams, and ensure a premium fan experience.”**

**GUILLERMO RODRÍGUEZ**  
DIRECTOR OF ANTI-PIRACY OPERATIONS, SPORTIAN

## WHY SPORTIAN

Content Protection is just one of the products and services we've developed to transform how teams, broadcasters, and fans engage with the sports they know and love. All Sportian solutions can be interconnected through its unique digital ecosystem, to help sports and entertainment organisations to improve performance, boost fan engagement, and strengthen broadcaster relationships.

To find out more about our services, get in touch.

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