

Optimove Insights :

2025–2026 Consumer Report on NFL Wagering Intentions

Insights

An in-depth analysis of betting
behaviors, preferences,
and trends among NFL bettors

www.optimove.com
info@optimove.com

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Executive Summary

Optimove Insights: 2025–2026 Consumer Report on NFL Wagering Intentions

Strong Season-Long Engagement

The 2025/26 NFL season is expected to bring continued high betting activity. Seventy-seven percent **(77%) of bettors say they plan to wager**, with weekly betting still the standard. Regular season games remain the top draw, followed by postseason events and the Super Bowl. Eighty-three percent of bettors plan to wager on the Super Bowl regardless of the teams, and 82% say they will keep betting even if their favorite team is eliminated.

Preference for Traditional Bet Types

Bettors continue to rely on familiar formats. Point spreads are preferred by 61%, followed by Moneyline bets at 52% and over/under bets at 47%. Complex formats like prop bets, parlays, and same-game parlays draw smaller audiences. Live betting has seen a decline, with only 25% participating in 2025 compared to 37% in 2024. Pre-game bets are gaining ground as the preferred approach.

What Influences Betting Decisions

Player performance, point spreads, and team loyalty are the primary motivators for NFL bettors. Promotions influence 41% of participants. Betting enhances enjoyment of the game for 86%, and 65% feel they had moderate or high success last season. More than half have paid for expert advice, and most rely on a mix of apps, social platforms, and tipsters to make informed decisions.

Budgeting and Responsible Gambling

Most bettors report having a budget in place, and 92% are aware of responsible gambling resources. Still, 63% admit to spending more than they could afford or intended to. Eighty-six percent (86%) believe their sportsbook offers effective safeguards, creating an opportunity for operators to build trust by promoting budgeting tools and responsible practices.

Mobile-First Behavior and Platform Preferences

NFL betting is largely digital. Seventy-six percent (76%) of bettors say they place wagers via mobile or online platforms. DraftKings and FanDuel lead in popularity, but loyalty is shared. Eighty percent (80%) of users rely on two or more sites weekly. Bettors value app usability and promotional offers most. Irrelevant marketing, poor app experiences, and annoying messages are common reasons for leaving a platform.

Communication That Connects

Bettors prefer communication through email and text messaging, selected by 40% and 25% respectively. Most users say their sportsbook personalizes both communication and the app experience. Bettors are more likely to engage with messages that are timely, relevant, and tailored to their interests.

Wager Sizes and Additional Participation

The majority of NFL bettors wager between \$11 and \$100 per game. Nearly all also engage in pools, contests, or fantasy football. Sixty-seven percent (67%) have already placed bets for the upcoming season. While loyalty plays a role in betting decisions, with 27% saying they will always bet on their favorite team, 80% say they also wager on games unrelated to that team. These behaviors highlight the importance of delivering mobile-first, personalized, and flexible experiences across all parts of the NFL season.

Why This Report Matters to Operators

This research gives sportsbook operators a data-backed roadmap for tailoring marketing, product design, and promotions throughout the 2025/26 NFL season. The findings highlight not only what bettors plan to do, but why and how they make decisions. Operators can use these insights to prioritize pre-game bets, budget-awareness messaging, channel preferences, and user-centric promotions that align with behavioral shifts and loyalty patterns.

The Opportunity with Positionless Marketing

To act on these insights, operators need to be faster, more flexible, and more personalized than ever. Positionless Marketing enables sportsbook marketers to execute personalized campaigns across multiple channels without delays. Whether adapting communications to changing user behavior, creating offers in real time, or responding to betting trends across devices, Positionless Marketing allows marketers to do anything and be everything. It replaces silos with speed and empowers teams to connect with bettors at the right moment, with the right message, no matter who the marketer is or what their formal role may be.

Methodology

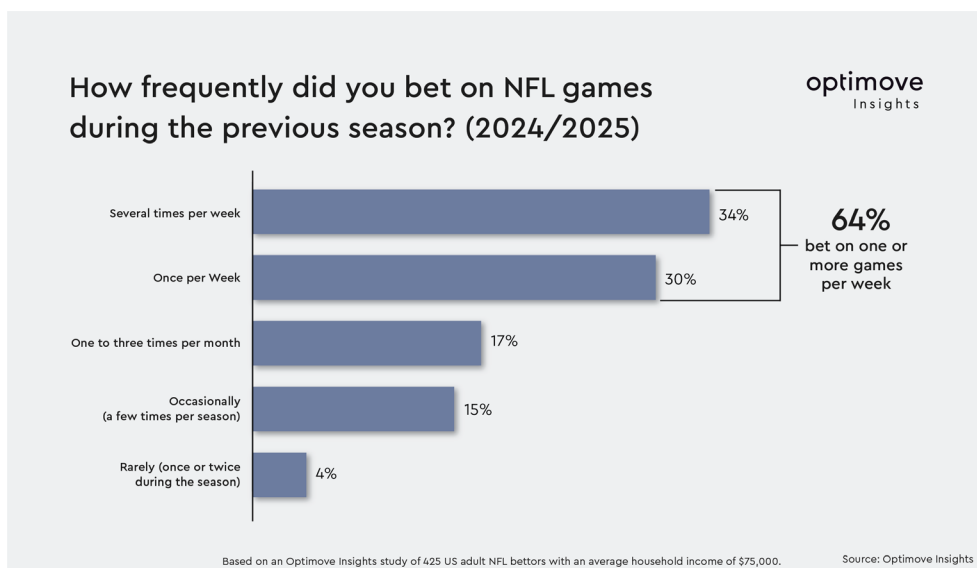
The Optimove Insights 2025–2026 Consumer Report on NFL Wagering Intentions was based on queries of 425 U.S. citizens who bet on NFL football fielded in August 2025. Respondents were ages 21-plus, and household incomes were \$75,000-plus.

This report, released August 2025, reflects the intentions and perceptions of NFL bettors ahead of the 2025–26 season. While it does not track actual behavior, it provides valuable insight into how players expect to engage with sportsbooks. These insights can help sportsbooks shape marketing campaigns and strategies throughout the season.

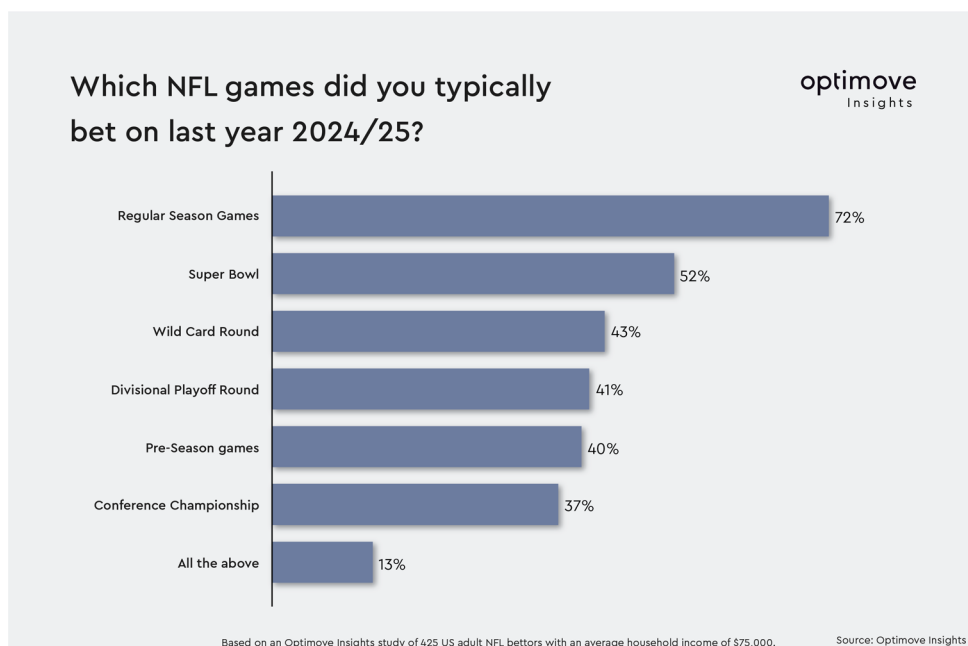
Detailed Results

I. Betting Frequencies and Preferences

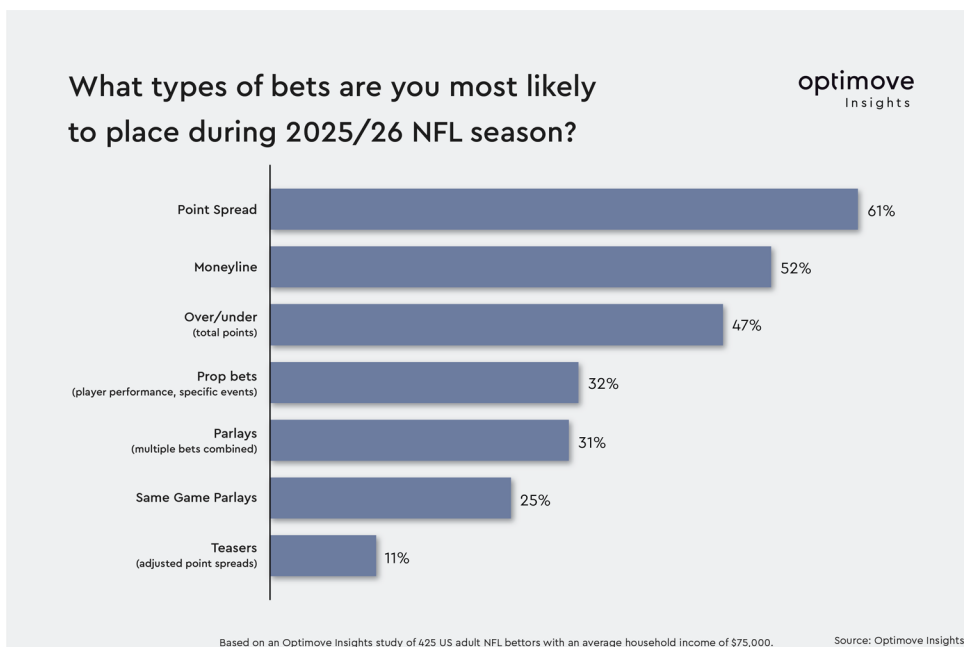
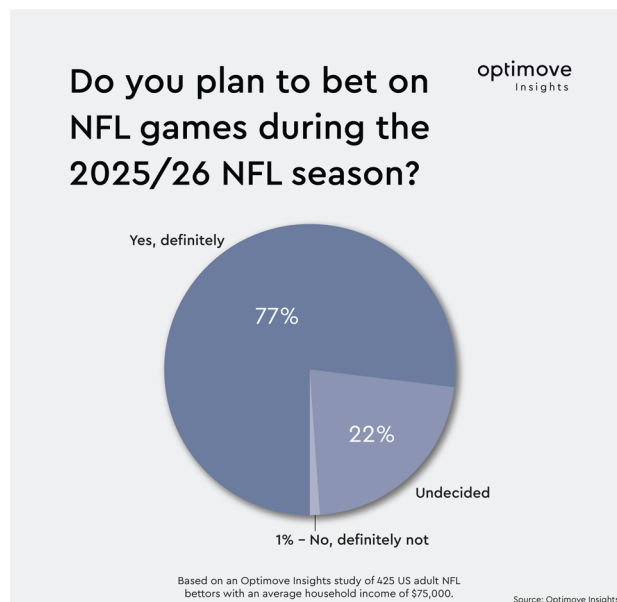
NFL betting remains a consistent part of fan engagement, with **64% of bettors saying they placed bets weekly** during the 2024/25 season. This includes 34% who bet several times per week and 30% who bet once a week, indicating a high frequency of participation.



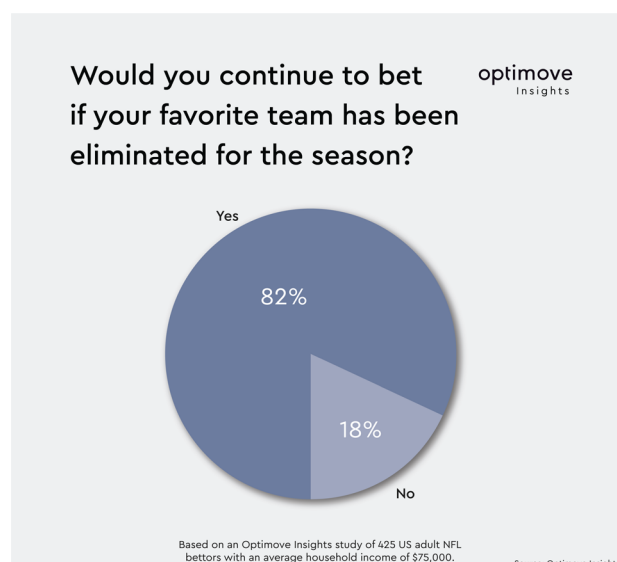
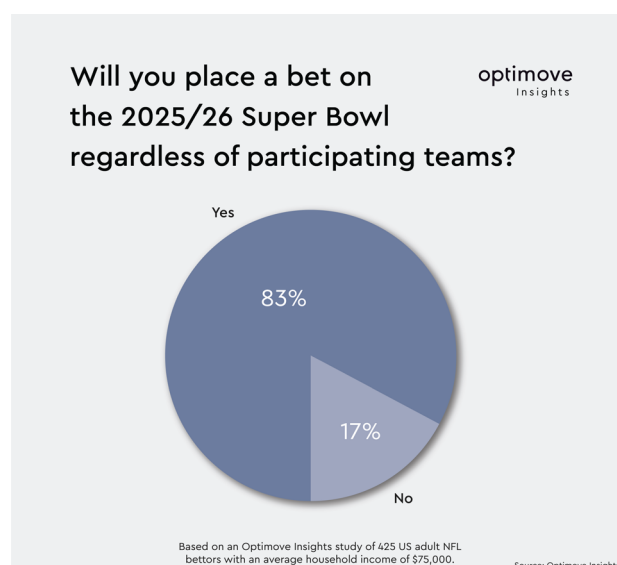
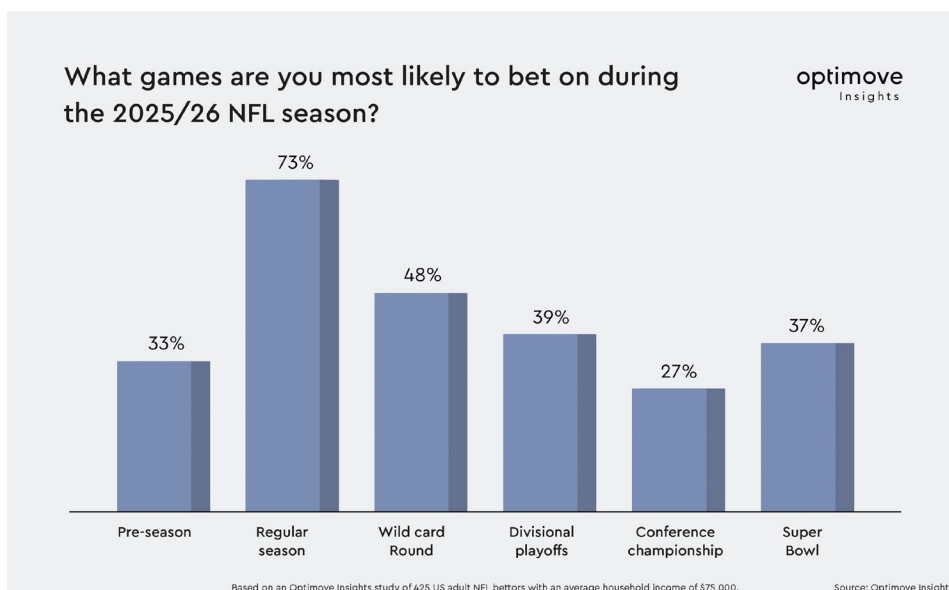
When it comes to game types, **regular season games dominate betting interest**, with **72% of bettors** saying they placed wagers during this period. Interest also remains high in **Super Bowl betting (52%)**, followed by postseason games like the Wild Card Round (43%), Divisional Playoffs (41%), and even pre-season games (40%), showing that bettors are engaged throughout the season.



Looking ahead to the 2025/26 season, betting intent is strong: **77% of respondents say they definitely plan to bet**, while only 1% do not plan to wager. Bettors favor point spread bets (61%), Moneyline bets (52%), and over/under bets (47%). More complex formats like prop bets (32%), parlays (31%), and same-game parlays (25%) trail behind.

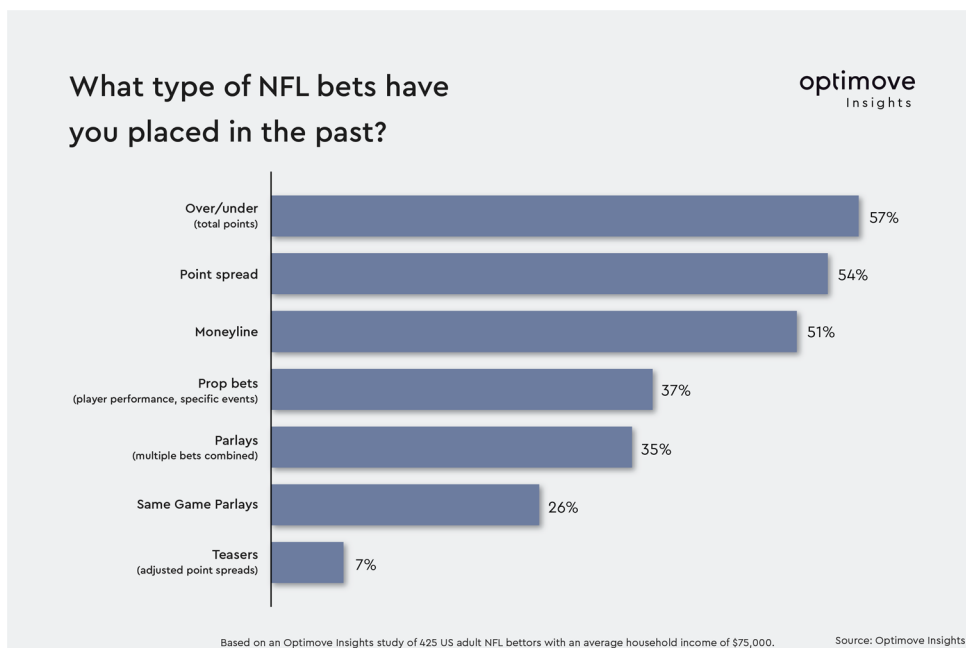


Regular season games are expected to continue driving the bulk of betting activity next season (**73% plan to bet**), and **83% say they will bet on the Super Bowl regardless of teams involved**. Notably, 82% of bettors say they would continue betting even if their favorite team is eliminated, suggesting sustained engagement throughout the season, independent of team loyalty.

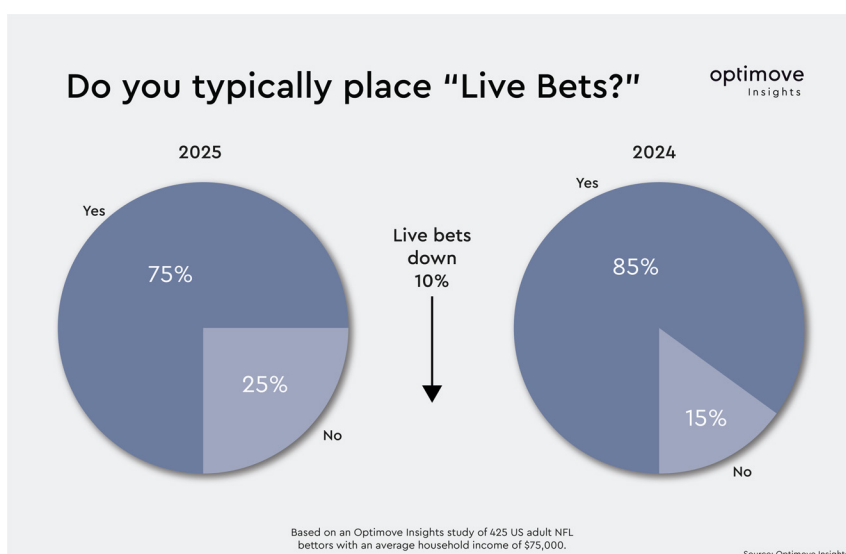


II. Types of Bets and Behavioral Shifts

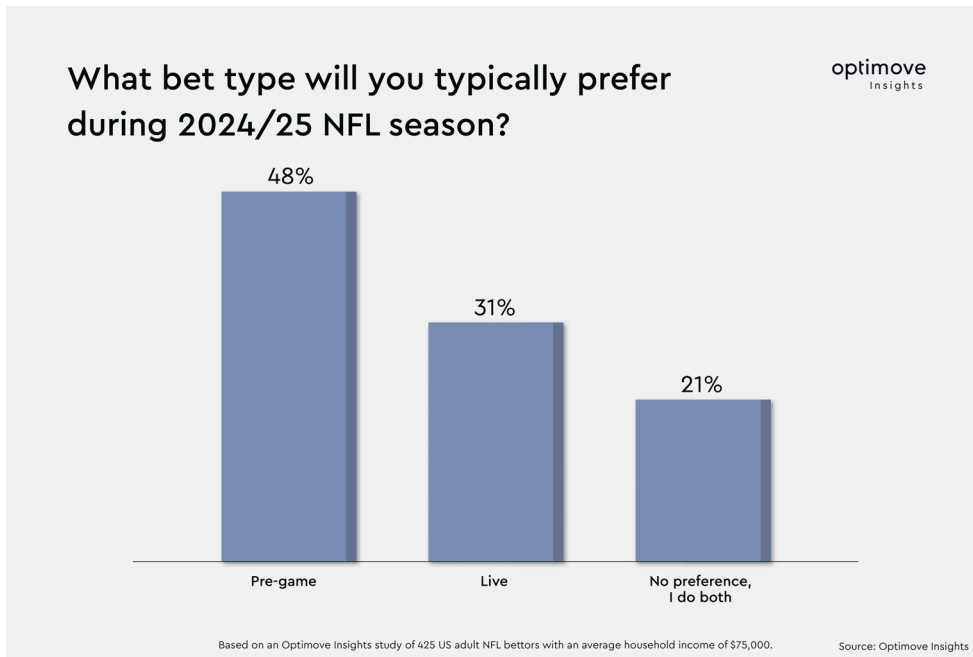
Bettor preferences span a wide variety of wager types, though traditional formats continue to dominate. The most common NFL bets placed historically include **over/under bets (57%)**, **point spread bets (54%)**, and **Moneyline bets (51%)**. More complex formats like **prop bets (37%)**, **parlays (35%)**, and **same-game parlays (26%)** follow, while **teasers** remain niche with just **7% participation**.



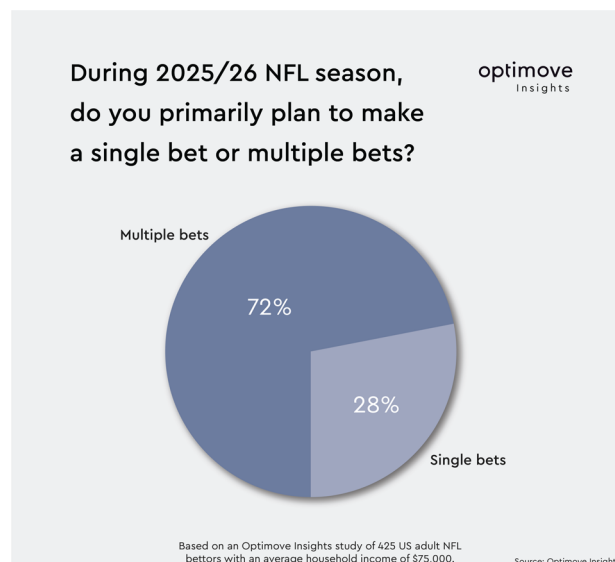
Despite the overall growth in sports betting, bettors who say they make **live bets (in-play)** saw a **decline in 2025**, with engagement dropping 10 percentage points compared to 2024. In 2025, **75% of bettors said they will place live bets**, down from the **85% who said they would place them in 2024**, indicating a shift away from in-the-moment wagering.



Preference data further supports this trend: **48% of bettors favor pre-game bets**, compared to **31% who prefer live bets**, while **21% enjoy both** without a strong preference.



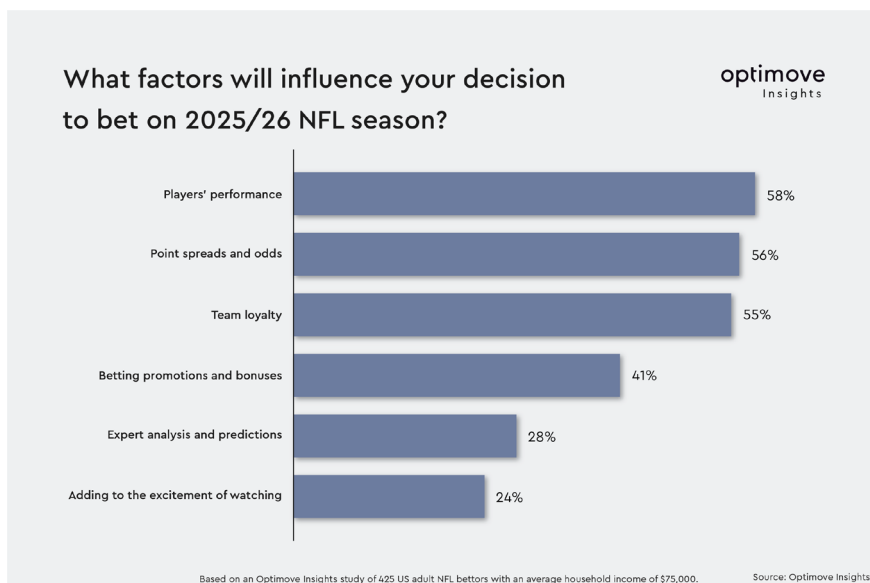
Looking ahead to the 2025/26 NFL season, bettors plan to stay active, with **72% expecting to place multiple bets**, while a smaller segment prefers placing a single bet per game.



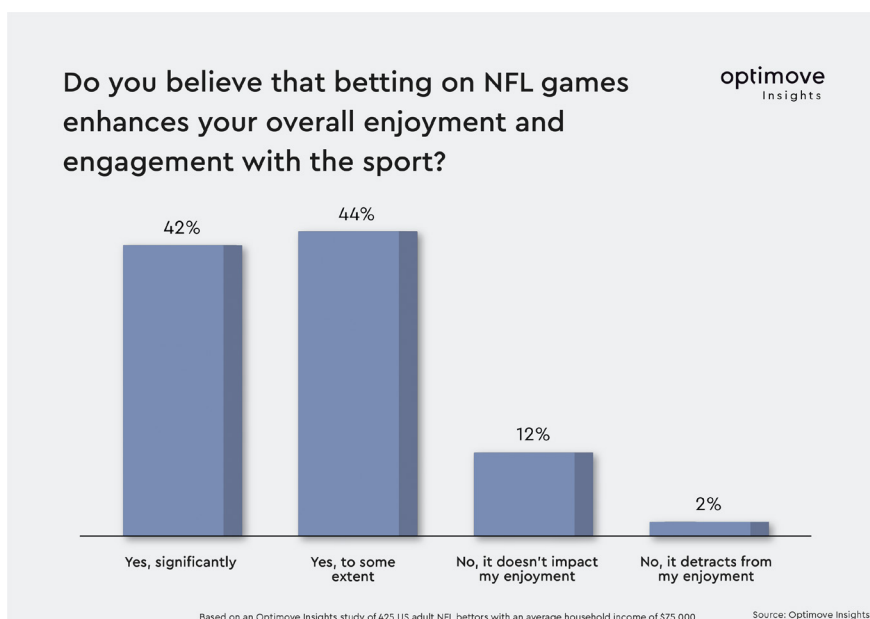
These findings signal a continued reliance on familiar bet types and pre-game activity, alongside a softening interest in live betting formats. Marketers should take note of these behavioral shifts when planning campaigns or messaging around in-play betting features.

III. Drivers of Betting Decisions

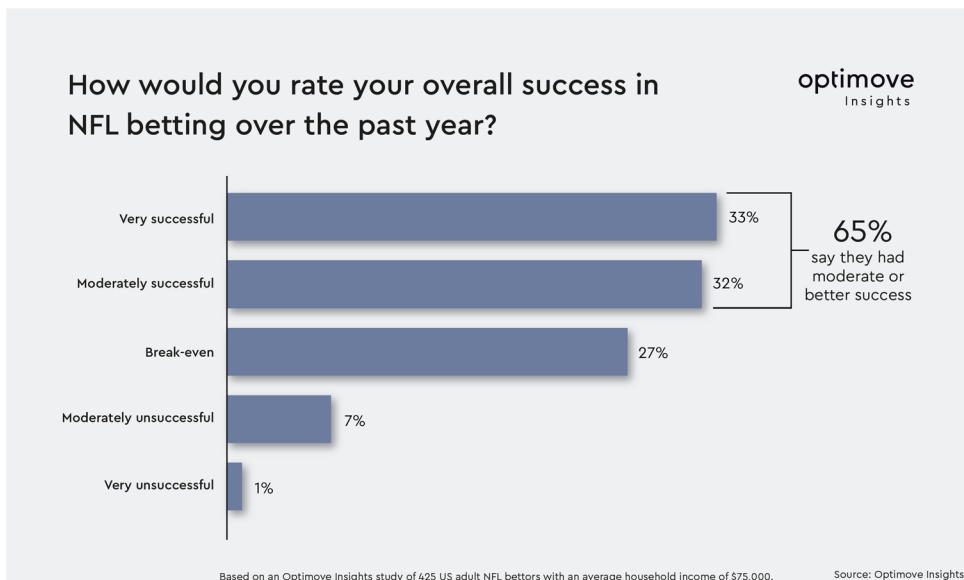
Bettors are influenced by a mix of personal loyalty, analytical factors, and external offers when making NFL wagers. **Player performance (58%)**, **point spreads and odds (56%)**, and **team loyalty (55%)** are the most significant drivers of betting behavior for the upcoming 2025/26 season. **Promotions and bonuses** sway 41% of bettors, while **expert analysis (28%)** and the **added excitement of watching games (24%)** play a smaller, though still notable, role.



Betting also deepens engagement with the sport: **86% say betting enhances their enjoyment**, with 42% noting it significantly increases their connection to the game. Only 2% believe betting detracts from their experience.

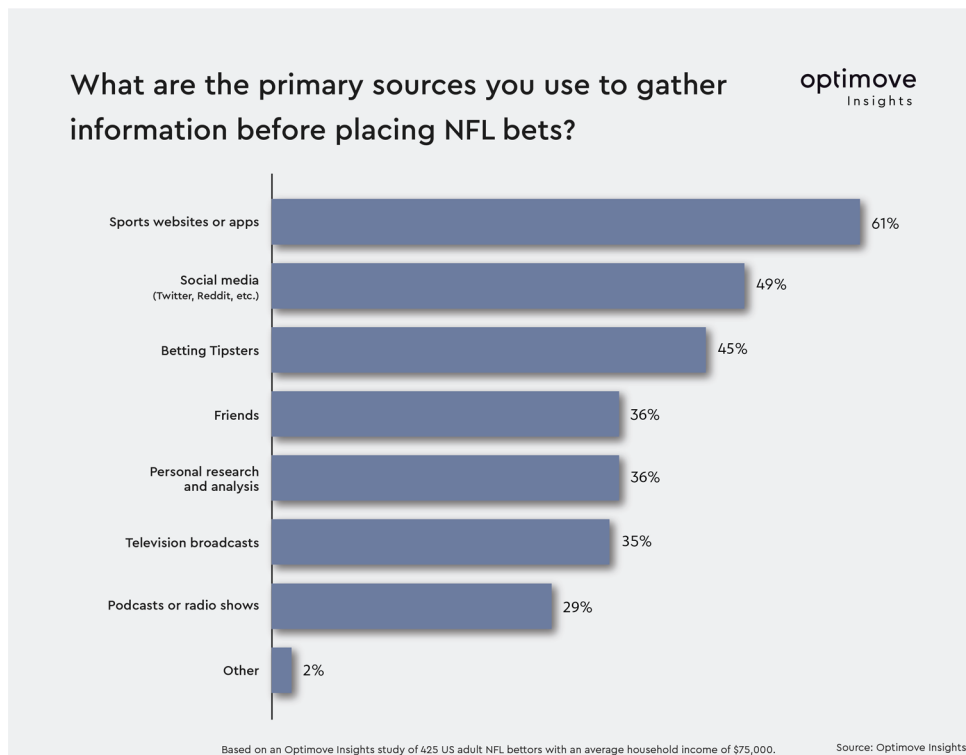


In terms of past performance, **65% report moderate to high success** in their previous NFL betting activities, while just 8% described themselves as unsuccessful.



This confidence may explain the willingness to invest in strategic insights: **57% have paid for betting advice or tips**. When it comes to research sources, **sports websites and apps lead (61%)**, followed by **social media (49%)**, and **tipsters (45%)**. This multi-channel approach shows bettors are actively seeking both data-driven insights and community perspectives to guide decisions.

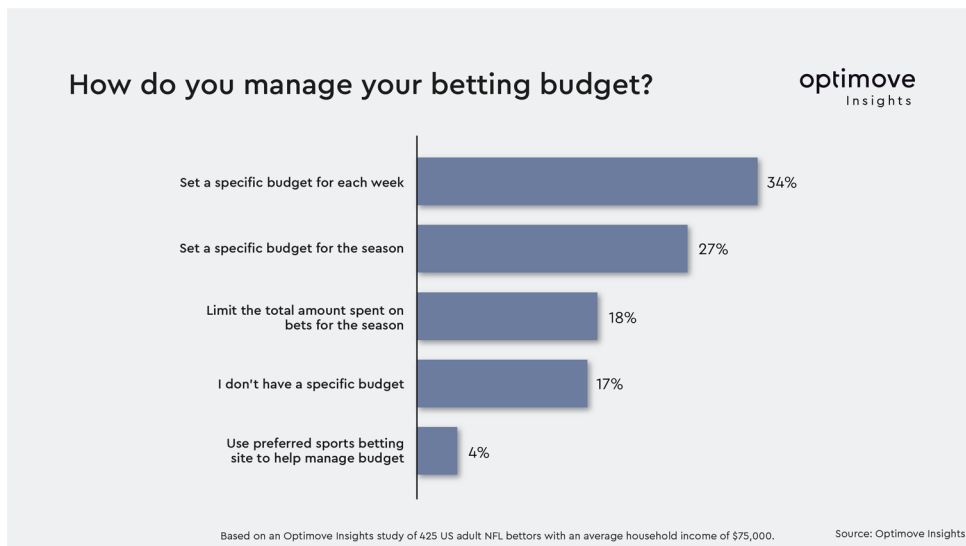
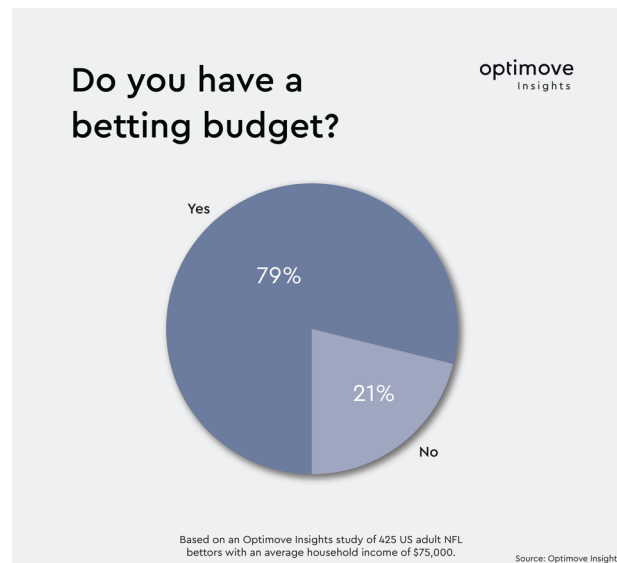




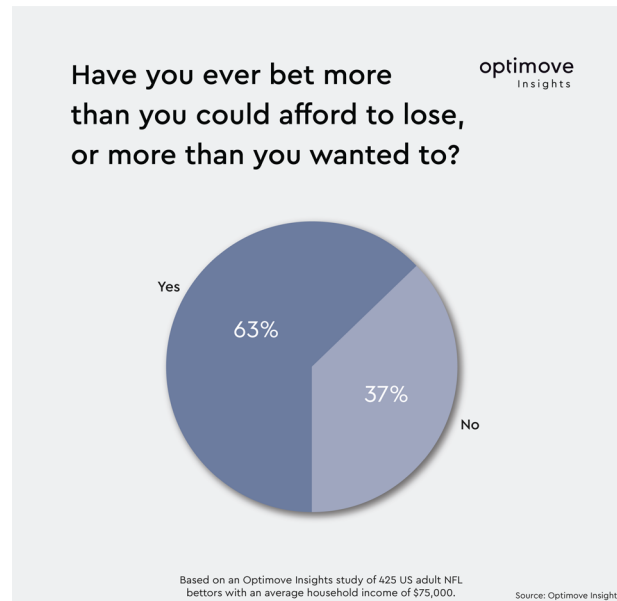
Marketers should take note: loyalty, information access, and promotions all play crucial roles in attracting and retaining active bettors.

IV. Betting Budget & Responsible Gambling

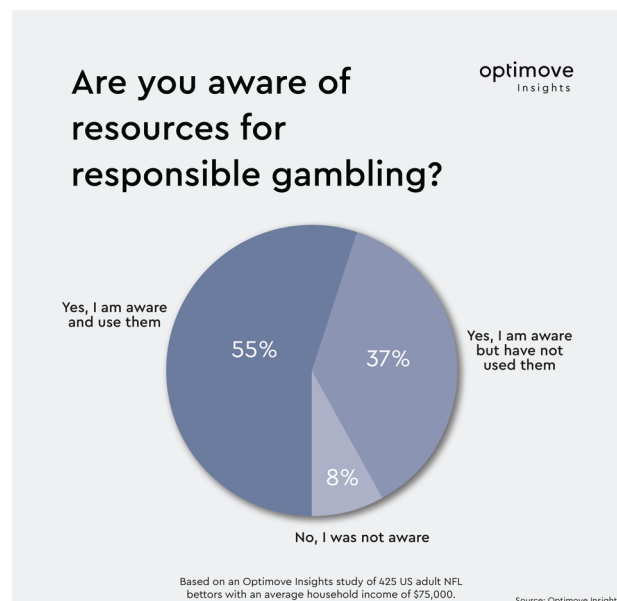
Most NFL bettors report mindful spending practices, though occasional overreach is common. **79% of respondents have a defined betting budget**, with the largest segment (34%) managing it weekly and 27% setting a seasonal budget. Another 18% link betting spend to their broader entertainment expenses, while 17% do not follow any specific budgeting strategy. A small minority (4%) use their sportsbook's built-in tools to manage their betting limits.



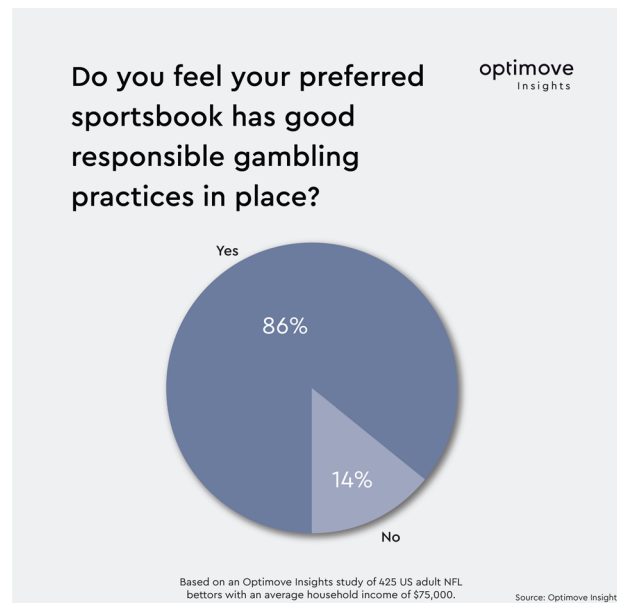
Despite the intent to budget, **63% admit to having bet more than they could afford or intended to**, highlighting a gap between planning and execution.



On the positive side, awareness of **responsible gambling resources is high at 92%**. More than half (55%) actively use these tools, while 37% are aware of them but don't utilize them. Only 8% were unaware such support existed.



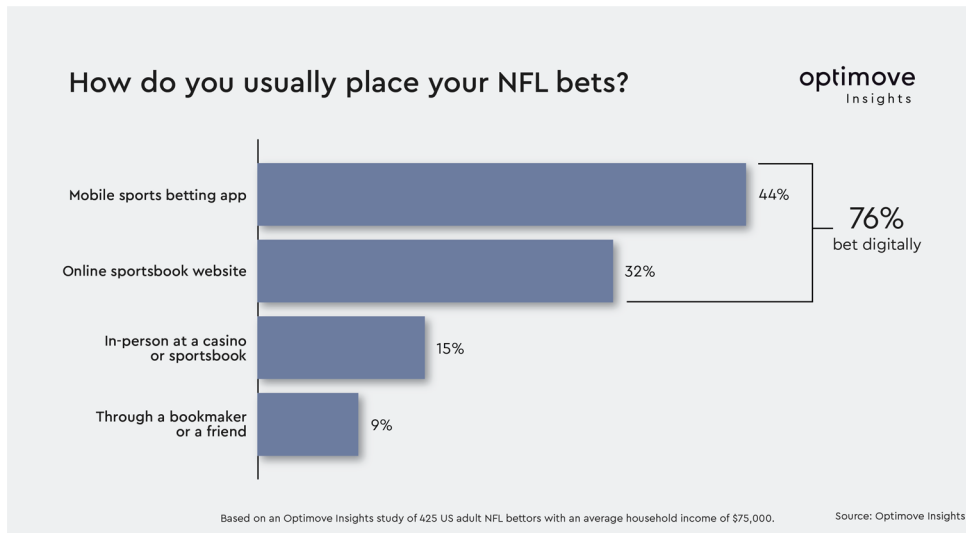
Additionally, **86% believe their preferred sportsbook has effective responsible gambling safeguards** in place. This indicates a high level of trust in the platforms bettors use.



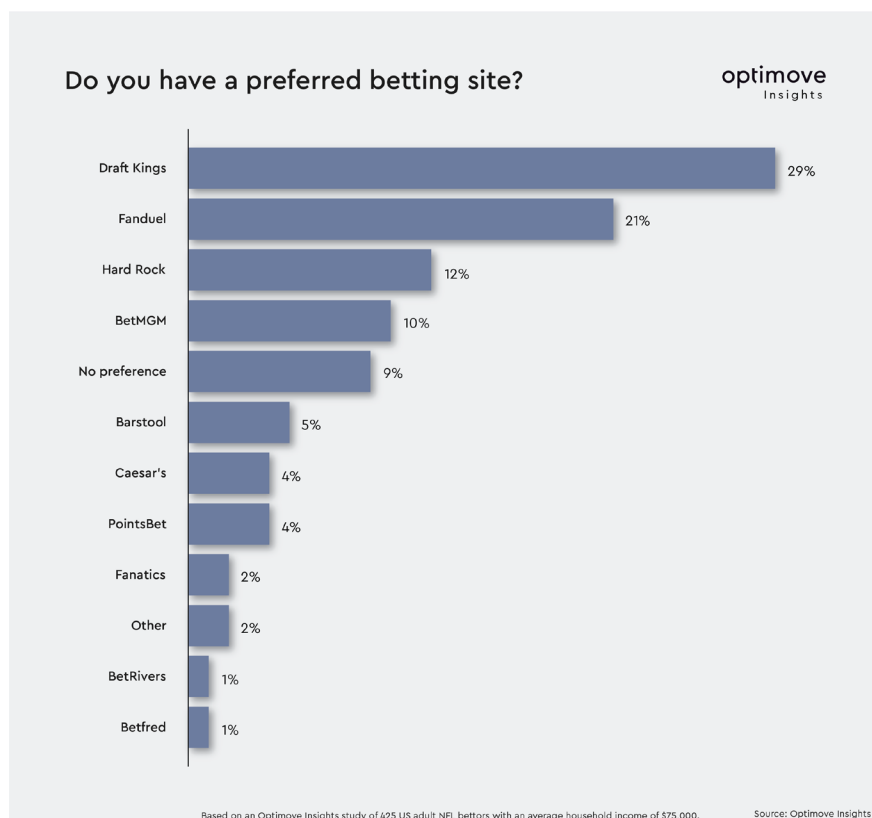
Marketers and operators can build stronger connections by aligning campaigns with responsible betting values, promoting awareness tools, and supporting users in staying within budget—reinforcing trust and long-term engagement.

V. Platform Usage and Site Preferences

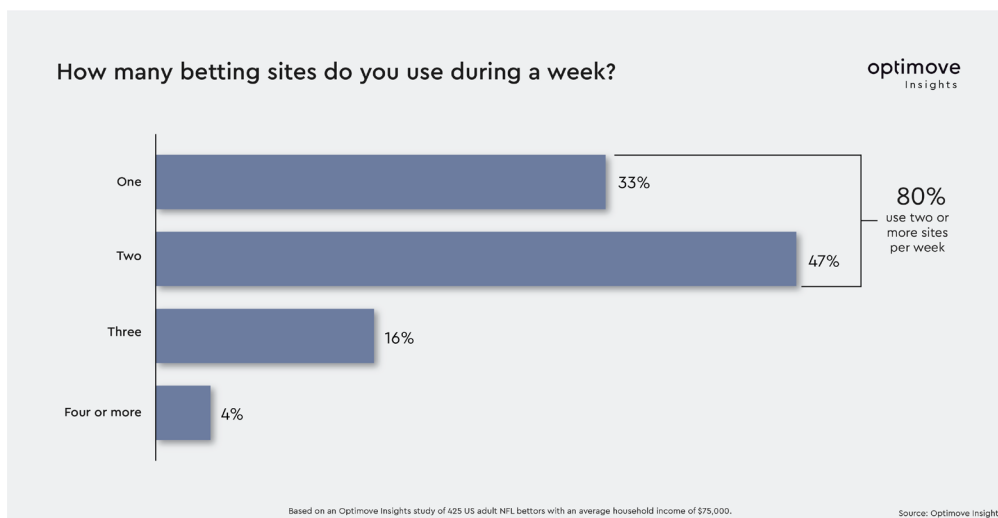
NFL betting is predominantly digital. **76% of bettors place their wagers via mobile apps (44%) or online sportsbook websites (32%)**, while just 15% bet in person at casinos and 9% rely on a bookmaker or friend. This highlights the critical role of seamless digital experiences in capturing and retaining betting audiences.



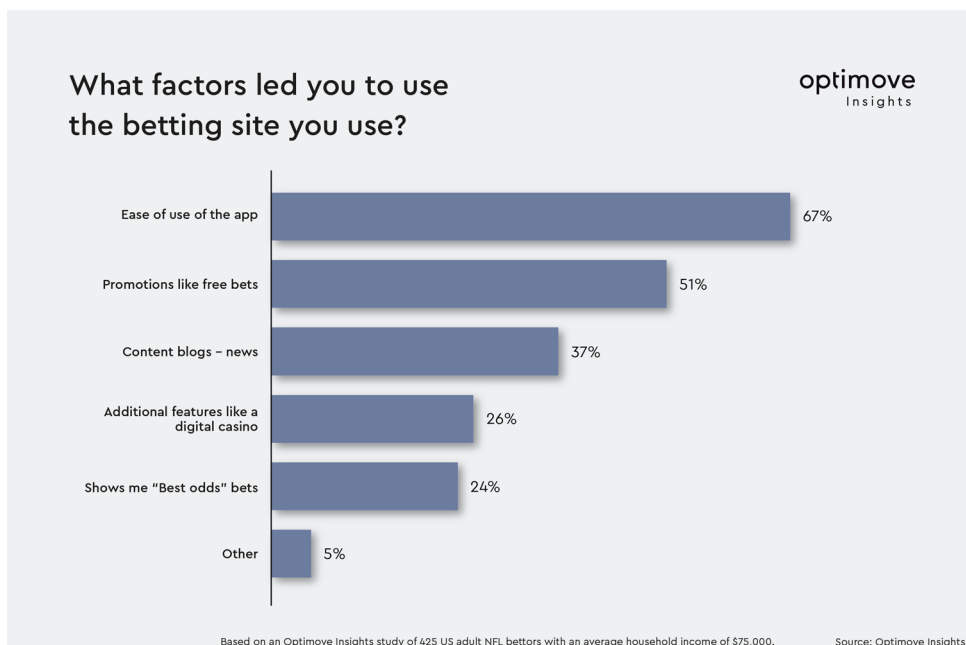
When it comes to platform preferences, **DraftKings (29%)** and **FanDuel (21%)** dominate. Other platforms like BetMGM, Hard Rock, and Caesars each attract smaller, niche segments. Notably, 9% of bettors do not have a specific favorite site.

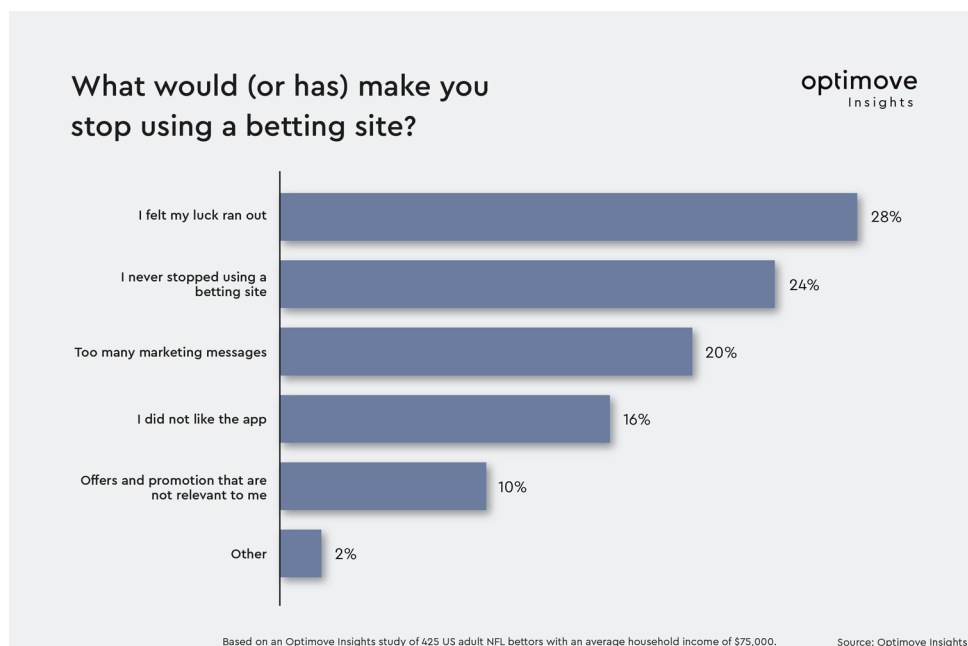


Multi-platform usage is high, with **80% of bettors using two or more betting platforms weekly**. This shows that loyalty is often shared, not exclusive, and bettors are actively comparing experiences, odds, and offers.



App usability is the top driver of site choice (67%), followed by promotions and bonuses (51%). However, there's a cautionary note for marketers: **20% of bettors stopped using a site due to annoying marketing**, and 10% due to irrelevant offers. A lackluster or frustrating app experience caused 16% to churn.

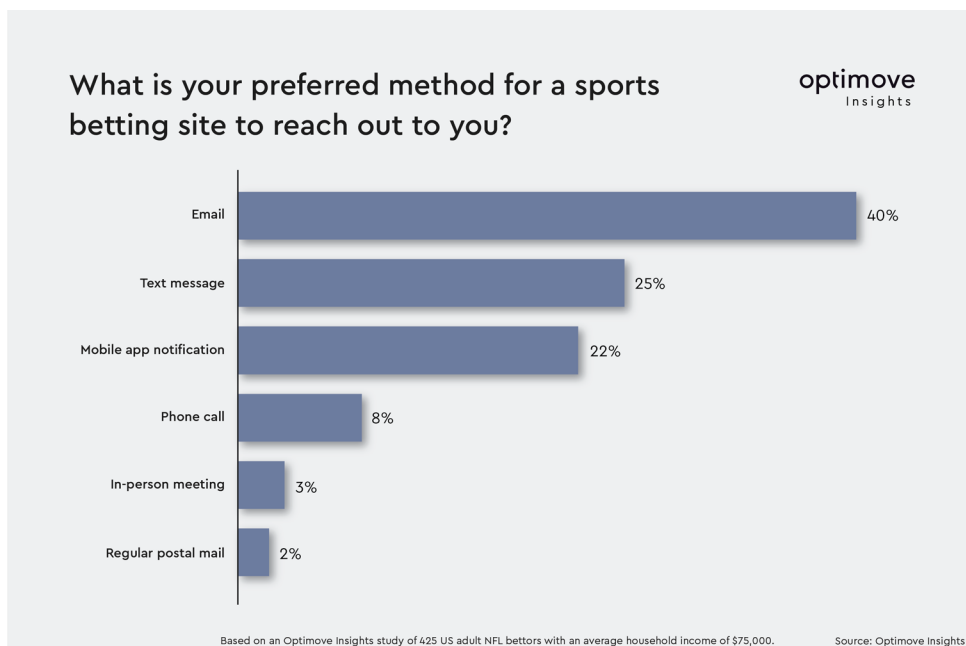




These insights reinforce the importance of personalized, relevant marketing and user-friendly app design. For sportsbooks, staying competitive in a multi-platform market means aligning experience and communication with user expectations—areas where Positionless Marketing can deliver fast, tailored improvements.

VI. Marketing Communication Preferences

When it comes to how sports betting sites should communicate with their customers, email is the clear frontrunner, with **40% of NFL bettors** preferring it as their primary channel. Text messaging follows at 25%, while mobile app notifications (22%) also hold a significant share—suggesting that bettors are open to real-time updates but prefer opt-in formats.

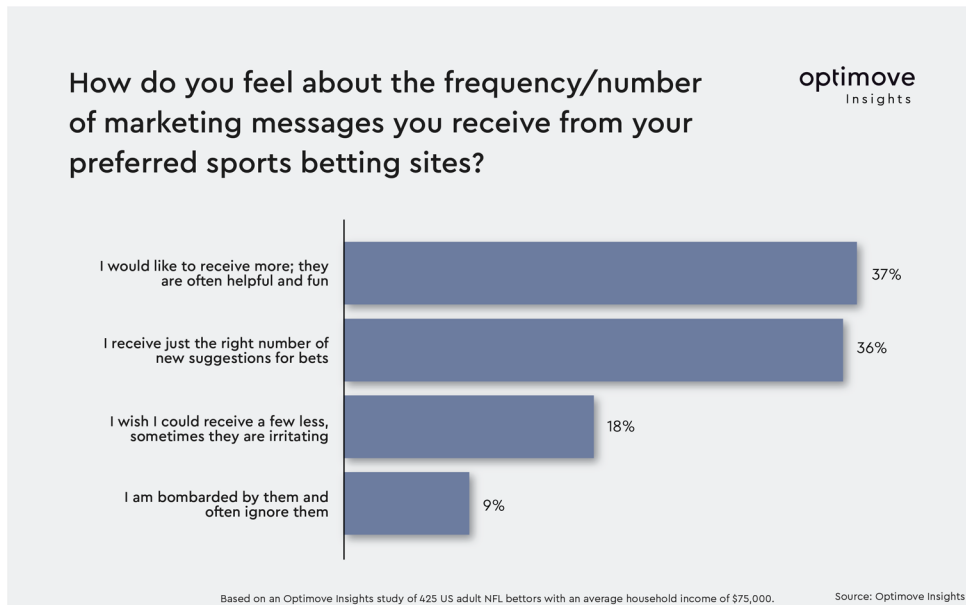


Less preferred methods include phone calls (8%), in-person meetings (3%), and regular postal mail (2%), reinforcing that digital, asynchronous communication is overwhelmingly favored.

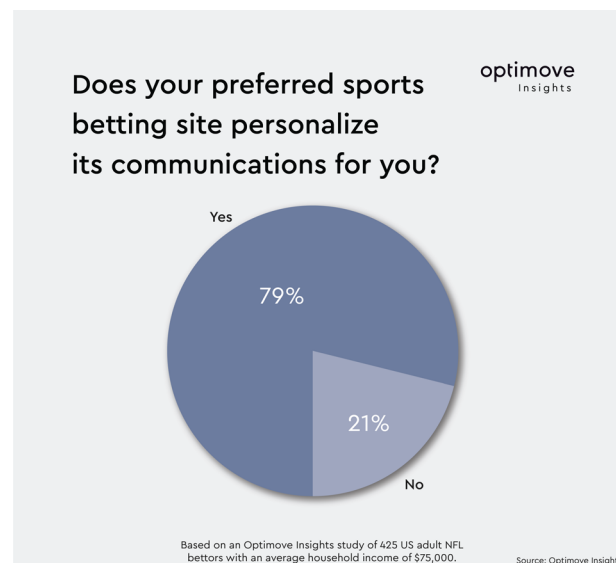
For marketers, this data underscores the importance of prioritizing **email and SMS strategies**—but also ensuring that messages are **relevant, timely, and respectful of user preferences**. Leveraging a Positionless Marketing approach ensures marketers can act quickly to adapt outreach across the channels bettors care about most.

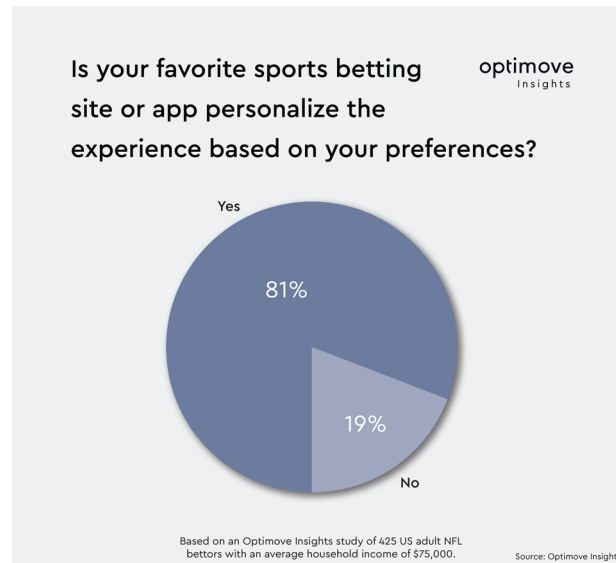
Personalized Communication: Volume, Relevance, and Timing Matter

Bettors are generally receptive to marketing communication from sports betting sites—when it's relevant and personalized. Over one-third (37%) of respondents say they'd like to receive more messages, finding them helpful and entertaining, while another 36% feel the current volume is appropriate. Only a small minority (9%) feel bombarded.

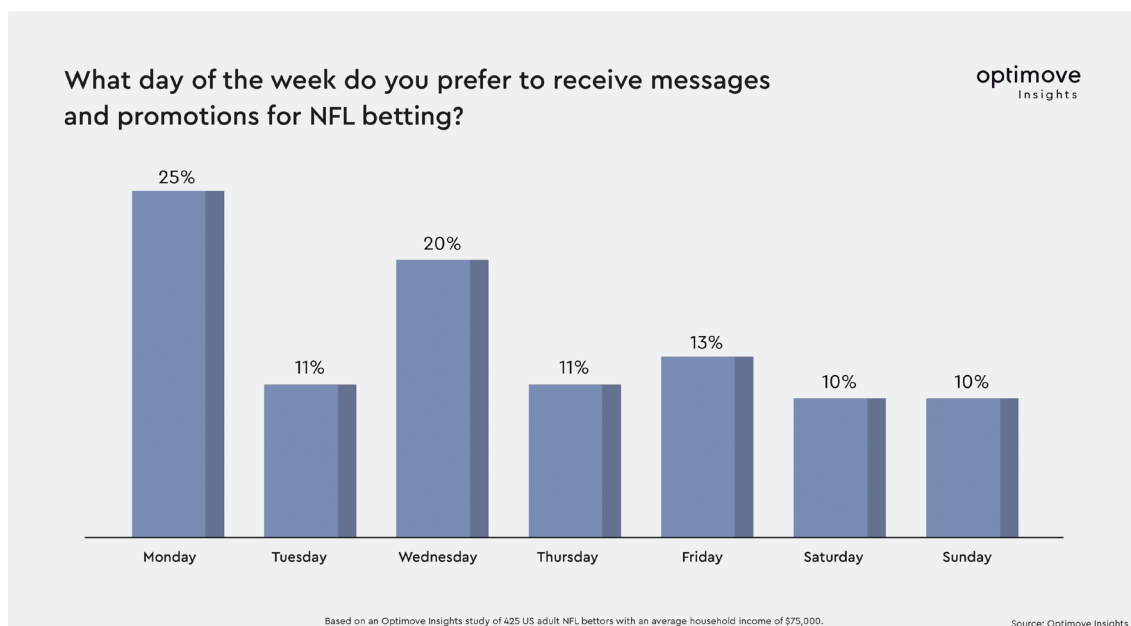


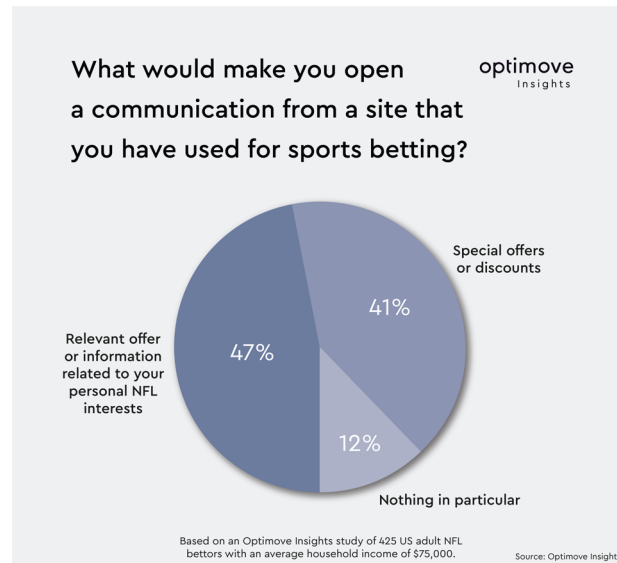
This openness to communication is grounded in personalization: 79% of bettors say their preferred betting site personalizes messages, and 81% report that their favorite app or site customizes the experience based on personal preferences.



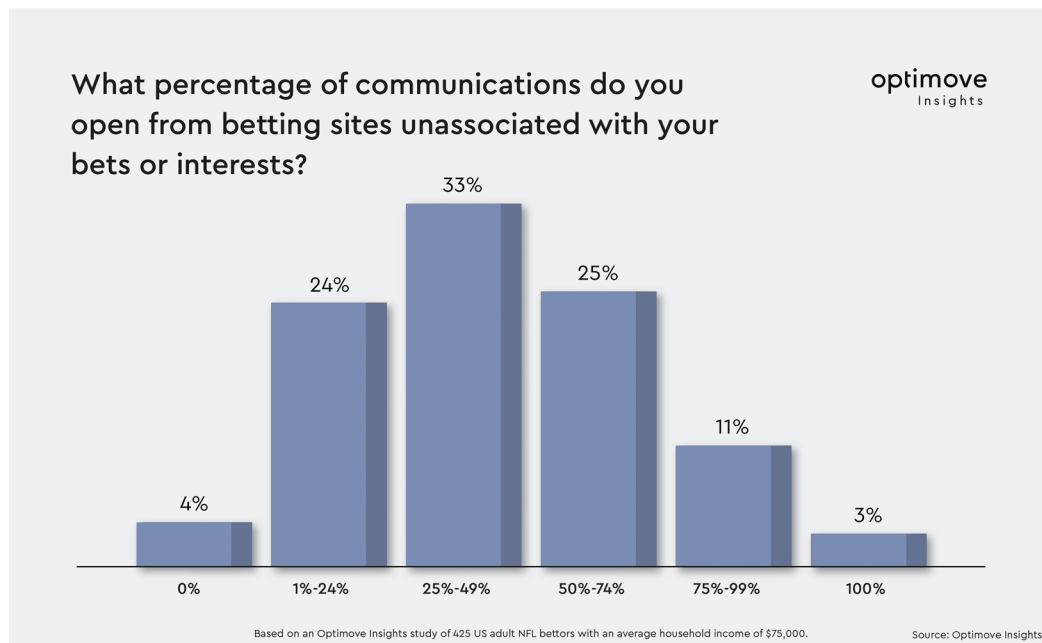


Timing and relevance also play critical roles. Monday and Wednesday are the top days bettors want to receive messages. When it comes to engagement, the most effective triggers are messages that reflect bettors' personal NFL interests (47%) and special offers or discounts (41%).



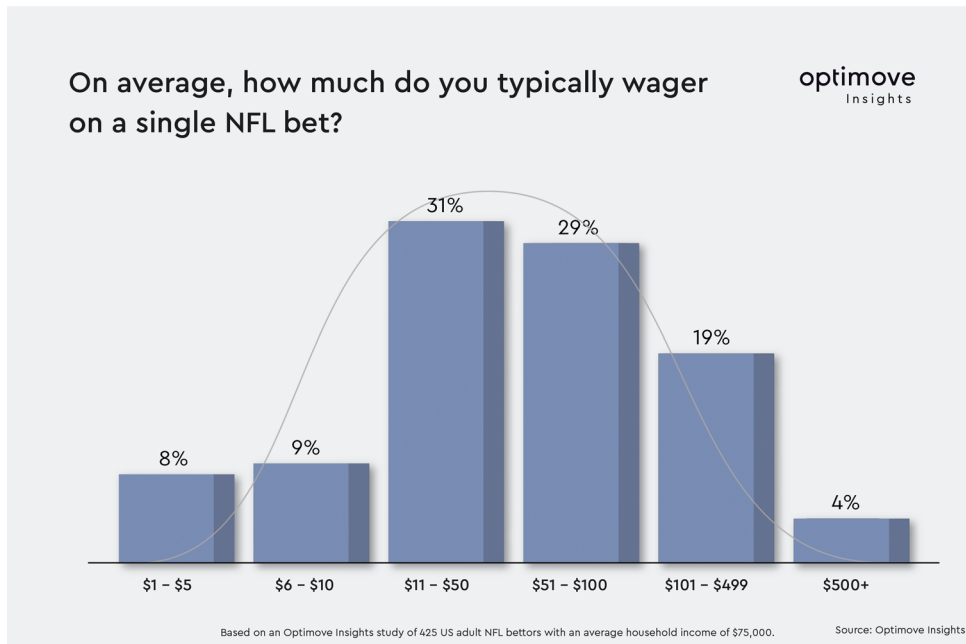


Even when messages are not directly related to their current betting activity, most bettors still engage, seventy-two percent (72%) open at least a quarter of them. This indicates that personalization and strategic timing can significantly boost interaction and drive loyalty.

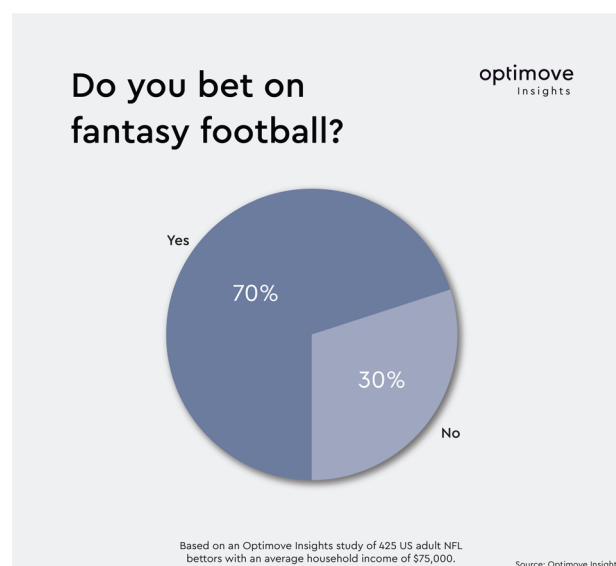


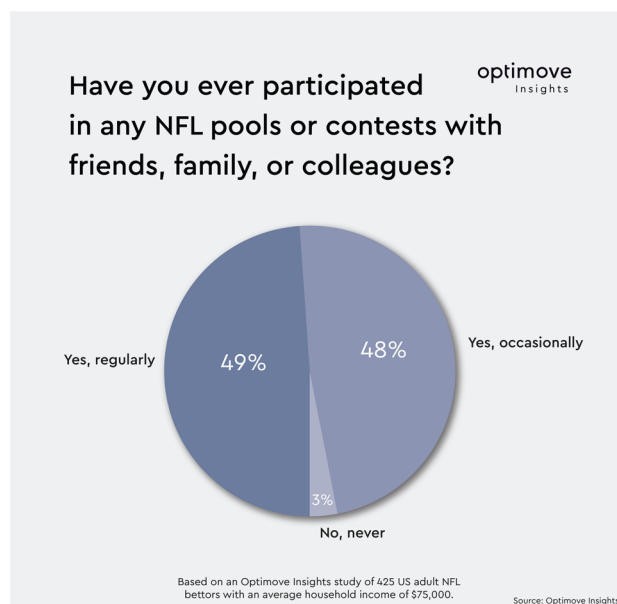
VII. Demographics & Wagering

NFL bettors tend to keep their individual wagers within a moderate range: **60% typically bet between \$11 and \$100 per game**, with 31% betting \$11–\$50 and 29% betting \$51–\$100. Only a small percentage (4%) report betting over \$500 on a single wager.

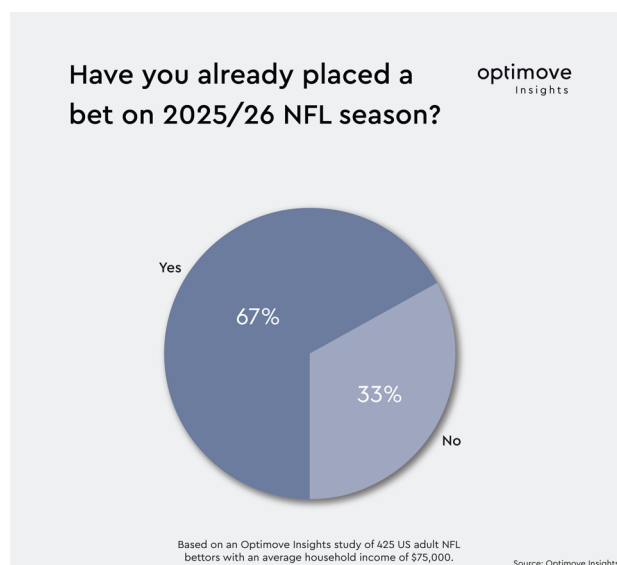


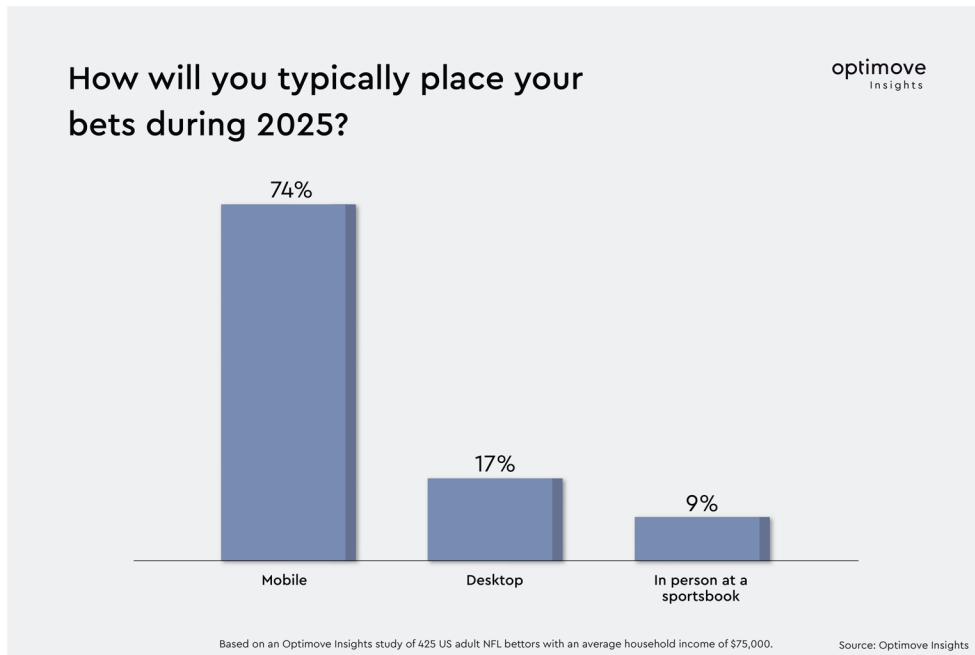
Beyond game-specific bets, **70% of NFL bettors also engage in fantasy football**, and **97% participate in NFL betting pools or contests**, either occasionally or regularly. These figures suggest that bettors are deeply involved in a wide array of football-related wagering activities.



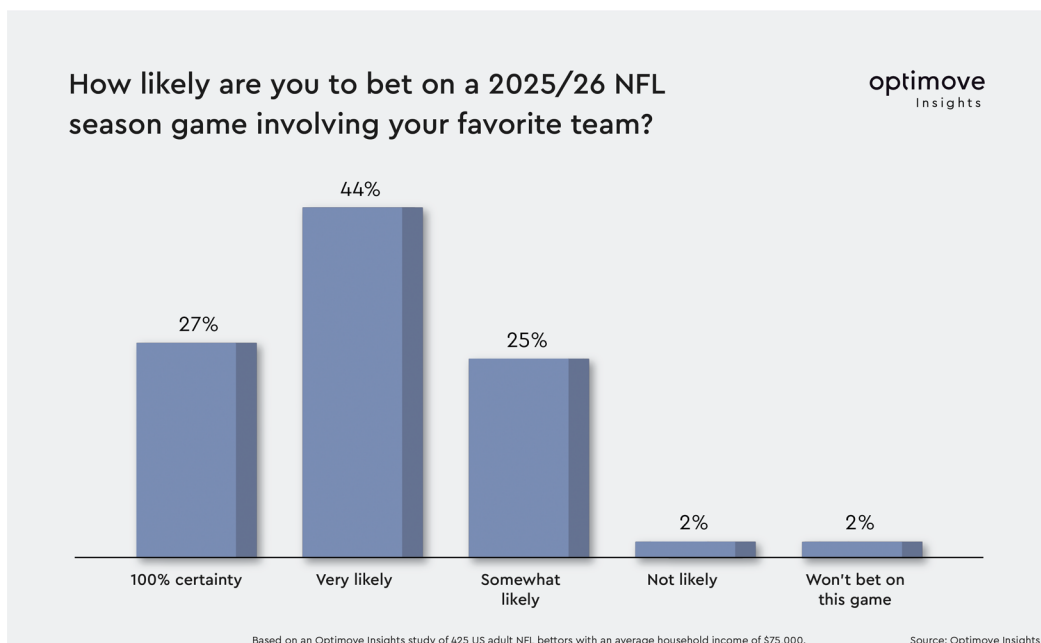


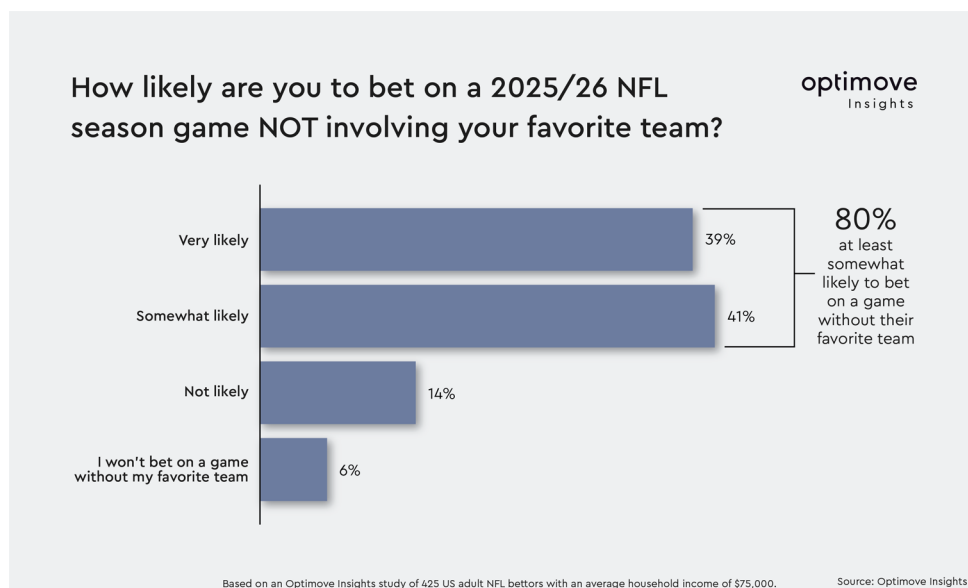
Looking ahead to the 2025/26 season, **67% of respondents have already placed bets**, indicating strong early-season engagement. The majority (74%) continue to use **mobile devices as their primary betting platform**, followed by desktop (17%) and in-person sportsbooks (9%).





Fan loyalty also plays a meaningful role in betting decisions: **27% are certain to bet on their favorite team's games**, while another **44% are very likely** to do so. Still, fans are open to betting more broadly—**80% are likely to wager on games not involving their favorite team**.





This section highlights the need for sports betting platforms to support both **loyalty-based betting** and **general NFL betting excitement**, with mobile-first strategies and fantasy/pool integrations being critical levers.

Recommendations for Marketers Based on the NFL 2025/26 Report

1. Emphasize pre-game betting over live betting

While there is interest in live betting, pre-game wagers are still tried and true. Bettors continue placing bets before kickoff. Campaigns and notifications should be timed around key moments leading up to games.

2. Promote traditional bet types that dominate engagement

Point spreads (61%), Moneyline (52%), and over/under bets (47%) remain the preferred formats. Marketers should center promotions and educational content around these core bet types, particularly during high-interest matchups. Complex formats like parlays and prop bets can be used as secondary engagement tools but should not dominate marketing strategy.

3. Build campaigns that go beyond team loyalty

While team loyalty is a factor for 55% of bettors, 82% say they will continue betting even if their favorite team is eliminated. This opens opportunities to engage fans throughout the full season with broader NFL content and offers that go beyond team-specific promotions.

4. Use behavior-driven personalization to win attention

Bettors are influenced most by player performance (58%), odds (56%), and promotions (41%). With 57% having paid for betting advice, marketers should lean into insights-driven messaging. Personalize offers and content based on player matchups, performance stats, and favored bet types to drive relevance and engagement.

5. Encourage trust through responsible gambling messaging

Awareness of responsible gambling tools is high at 92%, and 86% of bettors believe their sportsbook enforces good practices. But 63% admit to betting more than they intended. Campaigns should position tools like budget limits and safe gambling support as features of a trusted brand, not just compliance measures.

6. Personalize cross-channel communications

Email (40%) and text-messaging (25%) are the preferred channels. The most effective messages are those tied to personal NFL interests (47%) or contain special offers (41%). Marketers should tailor outreach based on favorite teams, recent bets, or seasonal moments like playoffs, and time communications for peak engagement days like Monday and Wednesday.

7. Protect loyalty through player experience

App usability is the number one reason bettors stick with a sportsbook (67%). However, 20% left a platform due to annoying marketing, and 10% because of irrelevant offers. Deliver intuitive experiences and use Positionless Marketing to adapt content in real time to minimize churn.

8. Support multi-platform bettors with unified campaigns

Since 80% of users bet on two or more platforms each week, marketers must deliver consistent messaging and value across channels. Offers and communications should follow the user across app, site, and social to reinforce engagement and avoid duplicated or conflicting experiences.

9. Engage bettors through fantasy and pool integrations

Fantasy football participation is high at 70%, and 97% of bettors participate in contests or pools. Integrating content, offers, and engagement opportunities tied to these experiences will deepen loyalty and offer additional cross-sell opportunities.

10. Use Positionless Marketing to act in the moment

NFL bettors are informed, research-driven, and responsive to timely promotions. Marketers must have the agility to respond instantly to lineup changes, odds shifts, and player milestones. A Positionless Marketing approach allows them to analyze, create, and launch across channels without delay—improving campaign speed, relevance, and impact.

About Optimove

Optimove, the creator of Positionless Marketing, frees marketing teams from the limitations of fixed roles, giving every marketer the power to execute any marketing task instantly and independently. Positionless Marketing has been proven to improve campaign efficiency by 88%, allowing marketing teams to create more personalized engagement with existing customers.

Optimove is recognized as the Visionary Leader in Gartner's Magic Quadrant for Multichannel Marketing Hubs. Being a visionary leader is a hallmark of Optimove. It was the first CRM Marketing Platform to natively embed AI with the ability to predict customer migrations between lifecycle stages in 2012.

Today, its comprehensive AI-powered suite is at the leading edge of empowering marketers to optimize workflows from Insight to Creation and through Orchestration. Optimove provides industry-specific and use-case solutions for leading consumer brands globally.

For more information, go to [Optimove.com](https://www.optimove.com)

About Optimove Insights

Optimove Insights is the research and analysis arm of Optimove, dedicated to uncovering emerging trends and helping B2C brands respond with data-driven, customer-led strategies.