

# U.S. employees watching Olympics instead of working

By Charles Passy, SmartMoney

Forget the narrow defeat suffered by the U.S. men's swim team in the 4×100-meter freestyle relay over the weekend. Or that Jordyn Wieber, America's best hope for all-around gold in female gymnastics, failed to even qualify for the event.

When it comes to this Summer Olympics in London, the real loss may be felt much closer to home.

Productivity experts are predicting that this year's games could result in a summer slowdown perhaps unlike any other in history, with millions of American workers devoting portions of their day to track and field instead of, say, tracking customer orders. The wasted time could result in a \$650 million hit for U.S. companies, according to an estimate by Captivate Network, a digital media company.

Much of that loss will come from employees watching games during work hours on their computers or mobile devices. Some 12 percent of American workers said they plan on viewing the Olympics at the office, according to a survey commissioned by Captivate. A similar survey by Yahoo! Sports showed a figure as high as 43 percent. In addition, Yahoo! Sports found that 25 percent of workers planned to leave early to follow the games.

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