

Transforming athletic scouting with AI

Sevilla FC makes uncovering soccer talent faster and easier with Llama



At a glance

Sevilla Fútbol Club (Sevilla FC) used Llama to build Scout Advisor, a generative AI solution that transformed searching and analyzing the team's database of over 300,000 scouting reports into a fast, accurate conversational experience.



Industry

Professional sports



Use case

Enabling prompt enrichment, semantic search and summarization



Goal

Power systematic and efficient use of expert opinions in football talent identification and characterization



Llama version

Llama 3.1 70B Instruct



Deployment

IBM watsonx running on IBM Cloud

Results*

Reduced evaluation time for multiple scouting reports on an individual player from hours to seconds

Enabled identification of players based on a large dataset of human expert opinions

Positioned Sevilla FC as a global AI leader in the sports industry

Created consulting opportunities and new revenue streams

*All results are self-reported and not identifiably repeatable. Generally, expected individual results will differ.

The challenge

Scouting expertise is difficult to parse and share

2023 Europa League champion Sevilla FC is a leader in quantitative sports analytics. The team has developed a portfolio of machine learning and AI-powered tools for match analysis, player performance and fan marketing. The team's in-house solutions delivered excellent results with quantitative data but struggled with unstructured information from scouting reports.

Analyzing scouting reports took days

The qualities captured by expert scouts — characteristics like tenacity, endurance, attitude — are as unique as the players themselves. To evaluate a medium-sized shortlist of preselected players, recruiters would spend 200 to 300 hours combing through scouting reports. With a growing database of more than 300,000 unstructured reports, Sevilla FC needed an exponentially more efficient way to analyze, search and summarize information about potential Sevilla FC players.

The Data Department set an ambitious goal: use AI to make searching scouting reports as easy as describing the type of player you are looking for in your own words.



SEVILLA FC

Seven-time Europa League champions Sevilla FC uses cutting-edge technology and data-driven methodologies to stay competitive on and off the pitch. In addition to Llama-powered Scout Advisor, the team's Data Department fields in-house tools including AiFootball, AiFans and AiTicketing, fueling an innovative, data-driven culture that helps keep Sevilla FC at the top of its game.

- **Industry:**
Professional sports
- **Company size:**
550 employees

“Our in-house tools excelled at identifying and characterizing players based on structured numerical and categorical data. But they fell short with unstructured data, an invaluable scouting resource that encapsulates the human expert opinions that are crucial for comprehensive player evaluations.”

Elías Zamora
Chief Data Officer (CDO), Sevilla Fútbol Club

The solution

The team used Llama to turn days of scouting review into quick conversations

The Sevilla FC Data Department used Llama 3.1 70B Instruct and the IBM watsonx platform to create Scout Advisor, a generative AI application that provides conversational search tools, curated results and player summaries in an intuitive, user-friendly platform. The Scout Advisor pipeline uses natural language processing, semantic analysis and generative AI to review and enhance queries, search the scouting reports database and summarize scouting reports on the fly.







“Scout Advisor uses Llama 3.1 70B Instruct’s advanced natural language processing to bridge the gap between qualitative human insights and quantitative data analysis. This fusion enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of our scouting operations, ensuring that our recruitment strategies are both data-driven and deeply informed by human expertise.”

Elías Zamora
Chief Data Officer (CDO), Sevilla Fútbol Club

SEVILLA FC
SCOUTADVISOR

Extremo regateador 🔍 Encontrar 🔖 Seguimiento

32 JUGADORES ENCONTRADOS 🏷 Filtrar 📄 Ordenar por: Destacados

Jugador	Nacionalidad	Edad	Posición	Valor	Cifras ^①	Contrato	Similitud	Media
 M. EDWARDS Sporting CP	England / Cyprus	25	Extremo Derecho	25 Mill. €	31 1989'	2026	84%	C+
 I. HARRISON Leeds United	England	27	Extremo Izquierdo	22 Mill. €	35 2612'	2028	80%	B
 M. TERRIER Rennes	France	26	Extremo Izquierdo	35 Mill. €	27 2064'	2026	79%	B+
 N. GONZALEZ Fiorentina	Argentina / Italy	25	Extremo Izquierdo	28 Mill. €	28 1839'	2026	79%	B+
 MOHAMED SALAH Liverpool	Egypt	31	Extremo Derecho	70 Mill. €	35 2694'	2025	79%	A
 K. SULEMANA Southampton	Ghana	21	Extremo Izquierdo	22 Mill. €	25 1098'	2027	78%	B

Scout Advisor used Llama to search and summarize a growing database of over 300,000 unstructured scouting reports.

Llama learned the language of Fútbol — en español, también

Fútbol (also known as soccer) is filled with idiomatic phrases, unique vocabulary and insider jargon. Talent scouts add layers of professional lingo and individual idiosyncrasies, creating a lexicon that basic pattern recognition and indexing can't penetrate.

“The task we faced as a data science department was developing an application with semantic understanding that could automatically extract relevant content from the scouting reports,” says Elías Zamora, Chief Data Officer at Sevilla FC. “We selected Llama 3.1 70B for its text enrichment and summarization performance, particularly in the Spanish language. Llama aligned perfectly with our project requirements.”

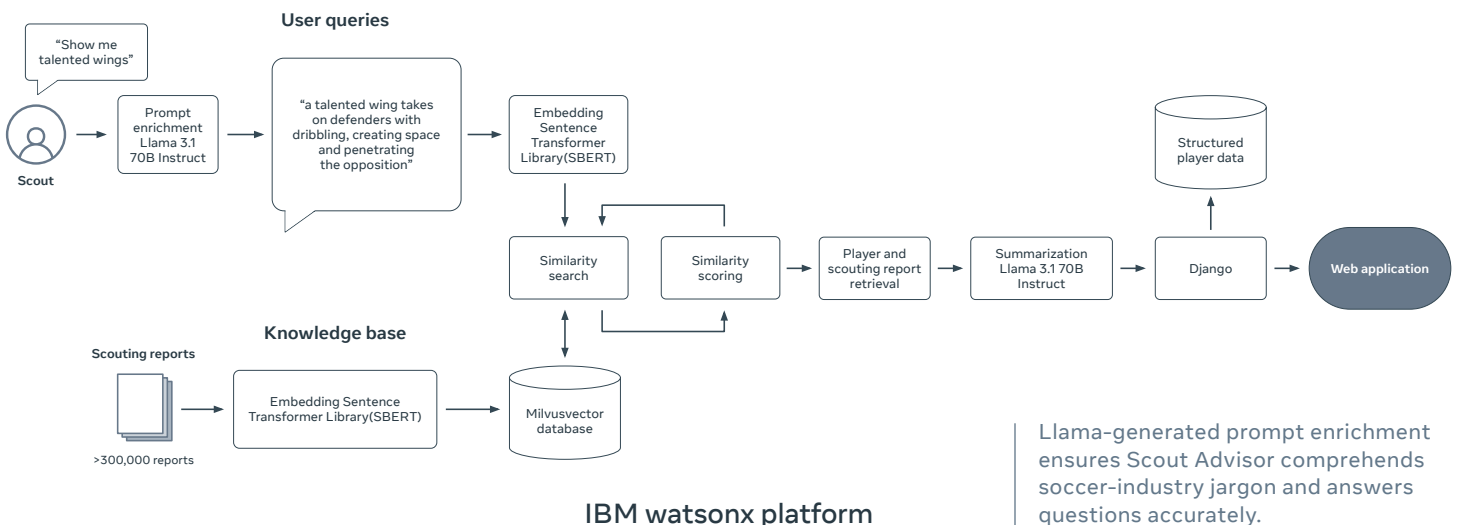
The Data Department uses a few-shot approach with Llama on Sevilla FC’s proprietary scouting data to perform two tasks in the Scout Advisor pipeline: prompt enrichment and summarization. Prompt enrichment ensures that idiomatic user questions have enough context for a thorough semantic search of Sevilla FC’s more than 300,000 scouting reports.

For example, a general-purpose model might answer “show me talented wings” with any number of responses from airplane pilot biographies and birds of prey to chicken recipes. Ask Scout Advisor “show me talented wings” and Llama will enrich the prompt with soccer-specific context like “a talented wing takes on defenders with dribbling, creating space and penetrating the opposition.”

The application uses the enriched prompt to perform a similarity search for relevant content in the Sevilla FC database. For every player identified in the database, the system pulls their scouting reports and injects them with the embedded prompt into the Llama-powered engine for answer generation. The result is a natural language response to the query along with a comprehensive summary of relevant player performance.

Scout Advisor

Llama-powered prompt enrichment, retrieval augmented generation (RAG) and summarization transforms qualitative sports analytics.



Open-source Llama models helped increase security

Sevilla FC's scouting reports and recruiting data are incredibly valuable and highly proprietary. A single player profile represents years of scouting effort. Each step in the Scout Advisor development and production deployment had to be secure.

Open-source Llama can run entirely locally without API calls to third-party sites. In addition, Llama models' weights and layers are transparent and open to modification, increasing flexibility for potential training, fine-tuning and optimization while reducing black-box concerns.

Llama integrated seamlessly with IBM's watsonx

Sevilla FC partnered with IBM Client Engineering to design, develop and deploy Scout Advisor on the watsonx platform — an enterprise-grade AI and data solution for building, deploying and governing complex generative AI applications.

The Data Department was able to build the Scout Advisor pipeline and rapidly test model performance head-to-head — a competition Llama won on price, computing performance and accuracy.

“With watsonx, the platform handles the underlying infrastructure and operational aspects, so we could focus on testing, developing and refining AI models. Llama 3.1 70B's advanced natural language processing and performance in text enrichment and summarization tasks made it particularly well-suited to our needs.”

Elías Zamora
Chief Data Officer (CDO), Sevilla Fútbol Club

“Open-source Llama enables us to customize and optimize models without the constraints associated with third-party APIs and to deploy within our secure environment. By eliminating the risk of data leakage, Llama helps ensure that our valuable information remains exclusively within our organization.”

Elías Zamora
Chief Data Officer (CDO),
Sevilla Fútbol Club



The outcome

Llama helped simplify player evaluations and create new revenue streams

By putting nuanced scouting information at the teams' fingertips, Llama-based Scout Advisor has helped reinvent how Sevilla FC tracks, analyzes and evaluates players. "This is a revolutionary tool for a football director," says Victor Orta, Sporting Director at Sevilla FC. "I don't need to review 45 reports for a player to know what my scouting department thinks of them. In perhaps two minutes, I can get all the information that I need to make a decision."

In addition to the dramatic benefits to recruiting and on-the-pitch performance, the team's pursuit of technical innovation has put them into a league of their own as a global leader in sports AI. Their achievements have created a reputation that's attracting players, fans and new business opportunities.

"The club's expertise in data and AI has opened a new revenue stream," says Zamora.

"We are now consulting with other institutions in the sports industry on their AI projects."

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"Our scouting and analysis teams are committed to finding the best players and young talent. They have worked tirelessly to build an impressive bank of data that we can now use to its full potential. Scout Advisor gives us a significant advantage in the recruitment process, allowing us to get the best fit for the team. It will be revolutionary within our club and throughout the sporting industry."

José María del Nido Carrasco
Club President, Sevilla FC

Conclusion

Planning for continuous improvement with Llama

The Sevilla FC Data Department plans to evaluate new Llama versions as they are released to improve Scout Advisor's prompt enrichment and summarization performance so the team remains at the forefront of sports AI. For organizations pursuing similar AI initiatives, Chief Data Officer Zamora has excellent advice.

"If there's one key takeaway from our experience," says Zamora, "it's that successful AI implementation requires a trifecta: a solid data foundation, deep business understanding and a well-educated team."



How can Llama help your business?

See how open-source Llama brings unmatched control, customization and flexibility to generative AI application development and deployment.

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