

# Auto Racing: Sponsorship Activation Meets Emerging Audiences - US - 2023

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## This report looks at the following areas:

- Identifying auto racing fans, top series followed and origins of racing fandom
- Strategies to attract auto racing fans and opportunities to expand sponsor visibility
- Factors impacting racing fans and auto racing sponsorship
- Auto racing fan interests and methods of consuming racing content
- Auto racing fans' sponsorship awareness and attitudes toward sponsors

While just 13% of US adults say they follow "auto racing" as a sport, 42% report following any type of auto racing series, ranking only behind football for popularity. Among racing fans, NASCAR is the most popular, followed by Formula 1, IndyCar and Xfinity Series. Building upon enthusiasm from Netflix's Formula 1: Drive to Survive docuseries, auto racing is expanding via increased corporate investment, inaugural racing experiences and stepped-up media coverage. Auto racing sponsorship also plays a key role and fans are well aware of its importance. Race fans feel better about sponsors' products/services and intentionally choose auto racing sponsors when making purchases.

The persistent impact of inflation and reduced discretionary income remains concerning for race attendance and auto-related experiences. Despite rising costs, racing fandom is an all-in lifestyle, with many auto-related interests and opportunities for sponsor activations. Led by racing video games, classic/custom car shows and local racing events, race fans also have interest in racing simulators, racetrack ride-alongs, driver meet and greets and racing merchandise. It is particularly important to engage eager Gen Z, multicultural and female fans with unique and accessible racing experiences.



"Sponsorships have consistently played a key role in the business of auto racing. Boosted by strong response to Netflix's Formula 1: Drive to Survive docuseries, auto racing has attracted attention from a new wave of racing fans, giving companies and brands new opportunities to engage with an emerging fan base."

– John Lisec, Sports & Leisure Analyst

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## Table of Contents

### OVERVIEW

- **What you need to know**
- **This Report looks at the following areas**
- **Definition**
- **Market context**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Top takeaways**
- **Consumer trends**
- **Auto racing is a broad sports category with many racing styles, categories and fans**  
Figure 1: Auto racing series followed, by all and auto racing fans, 2022
- **New wave of racing fans eager for fun, unique experiences**  
Figure 2: Length of auto racing fandom, 2022
- **Racing fandom is an all-in lifestyle experience**  
Figure 3: Auto racing fan interests, by all and auto racing fans, 2022
- **Competitive strategies**
- **F1 Arcade pushes racing simulators to the forefront of fan experiences**  
Figure 4: Sportico Twitter post- F1 London arcade, 2022
- **Bubba's Block Party engages diverse auto racing audiences**  
Figure 5: Reba Hollingsworth Twitter post- Bubba's Block Party, 2022
- **NASCAR Chicago Street Race adds a new level of racing excitement**  
Figure 6: Front Office Sports Twitter post- NASCAR Chicago street race, 2022
- **Market predictions**  
Figure 7: Auto racing outlook, 2023-28
- **Opportunities**
- **F1: Drive to Survive sparks Gen Z, female racing interest, growth potential remains**  
Figure 8: ESPN PR Twitter post-F1 TV ratings-2022
- **Unique opportunities for sponsors to engage consumers with dynamic F1 sponsor logos**  
Figure 9: Front Office Sports Twitter post - Dynamic F1 sponsor logos, 2022
- **New racing series such as W Series, Extreme E provide product showcases, unique fan experiences**  
Figure 10: Extreme E teaser | Extreme E, 2021

### What's included

Executive Summary

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## AUTO RACING LANDSCAPE

- **Sponsorships to continue momentum built by new wave of racing fans**

Figure 11: Sports followed, 2022, and follows auto racing – Trended, 2021–22

- **Market value indicators trend in positive direction, yet concerns remain**

Figure 12: Front Office Sports/Sports Business Journal Twitter posts – Auto racing sponsorships, 2022

- **Key players in auto racing**

Figure 13: Auto racing series

## TARGET AUDIENCE: AUTO RACING FANS

- **Fans skew male, middle aged, financially healthy, toward parents**
- **Passionate core with sponsorship playing key role in expanding fanbase**

Figure 14: Profile of auto racing fans, indexed to all consumers, 2022

## FACTORS IMPACTING AUTO RACING

- **Docuseries, improved media coverage spark recent auto racing interest**

Figure 15: ESPN PR Twitter post – F1 TV ratings–2022

- **Increased corporate investment and inaugural racing experiences bring fans closer to the action**

Figure 16: Berlin Raceway Twitter post – SRX 2022

- **Persistent inflation tightens discretionary income for sporting events**

Figure 17: Disposable Personal Income change from previous period, 2010–22

## COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES AND MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

- **Mintel Trend Drivers**
- **Technology: taking auto racing to the next level with new, unique capabilities**
- **Unique access drives millions toward F1 fandom via Drive to Survive**

Figure 18: Sports Business Journal Twitter post– Drive to Survive, 2022

- **NASCAR’s media partnership with Barstool Sports uniquely engages young consumers**
- **Dynamic F1 sponsor logos provide new opportunities to engage fans with sponsors**

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Figure 19: Front Office Sports Twitter post – Dynamic F1 sponsor logos, 2022

- **Identity and Surroundings: targeted strategies to engage consumers**

- **Bubba’s Block Party engages diverse audiences in a fun, creative way**

Figure 20: Reba Hollingsworth Twitter post – Bubba’s Block Party, 2022

- **W Series, Extreme E, F1 Academy tackle motorsport gender inequity head on**

Figure 21: W Series explained | W Series, Our Mission, 2022

Figure 22: Extreme E teaser | Extreme E, 2021

- **Experiences: bringing racing fans closer to the action**
- **F1 Arcade pushes racing simulators to the forefront of fan experiences**

Figure 23: Sportico Twitter post – F1 London arcade, 2022

- **Miami Grand Prix brings South Beach flair to the F1 circuit**

Figure 24: Front Office Sports Twitter post – Miami Grand Prix, 2022

- **2023 NASCAR Chicago Street Race adds new level of excitement for Midwest racing fans**

Figure 25: Front Office Sports Twitter post – NASCAR Chicago street race, 2022

## THE AUTO RACING CONSUMER – FAST FACTS

- Auto racing fans are passionate, skew male, middle-aged and parents
- Auto racing interest is growing with many unique interests, niches
- Broadcast TV leads, fans seek further analysis via other platforms
- Racing fandom is an all-in lifestyle, with many auto-related interests
- Logos on cars, track banners remain key for sponsor visibility
- Auto racing fans are well aware of the impact, importance of race sponsors
- Auto racing fans are intentional about supporting sponsors with purchases

## EXPLORING AUTO RACING FANS

- Upward trajectory remains; continued growth of diverse consumers is key

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- **Auto racing is a true lifestyle brand with many niches, unique needs**  
Figure 26: Auto racing fans, by key demographics, 2022
- **Create partnerships with car lovers from all walks of life**
- **Engage with sports, music to highlight lifestyle branding of luxury cars, motorsports**  
Figure 27: Mercedes Benz x A\$AP Rocky x AWGE x PacSun, 2022  
Figure 28: Auto racing series followed, by all and auto racing fans, 2022
- **Modernize racing sponsor approach to expand fan bases in new directions**
- **Utilize activations to grow fan interest in underserved demos**  
Figure 29: Auto racing series followed – NETS, by age, 2022
- **Strong value for female empowerment brands to engage via auto racing**
- **Growth opportunities for female consumers are strong in open-wheel racing**  
Figure 30: Auto racing series followed – NETS, by gender, 2022
- **Team-based racing competitions can provide new look into auto racing**
- **Utilize racing team and car manufacturer-based competitions to stand out on the racing series circuit**  
Figure 31: Auto racing events followed, by all and auto racing fans, 2022
- **Top events play critical role in expanding fan bases**
- **Emphasize Daytona 500, Indy 500 and Monaco Grand Prix as learning tools for new fans**  
Figure 32: Auto racing events followed – Specific events, by all and auto racing fans, 2022
- **Broaden race-day experiences to appeal to young, open-minded consumers**
- **Think beyond traditional bleacher-style seating to include more social seating, ride-share tailgating options**  
Figure 33: Reasons for not following auto racing, 2022

## ORIGINS AND DURATION OF AUTO RACING FANDOM

- **New wave of auto racing fans is eager for fun, unique experiences**

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Full Report PDF

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- Sponsorship activations to play a key role in expansion of hands-on, tech-based experiential marketing within auto racing**

Figure 34: Length of auto racing fandom, 2022
- Emphasize sustainability, community impact to new, young race fans**
- Gen Z-targeted auto racing sponsorship activations are most effective when brand values align with consumer priorities**

Figure 35: Length of auto racing fandom, by generation, 2022

Figure 36: Length of auto racing fandom, by series followed, 2022
- Promote new race experiences such as ice racing to engage Northeast fans**
- Midwest auto racing fans are most loyal, Northeast fans are the newest to the sport**

Figure 37: Star Tribune Twitter post- Ice racing, 2021

Figure 38: Length of auto racing fandom, by region, 2022
- Fans are greatly influenced by media, value social component of race-day**
- Sponsor activations and media partnerships facilitate a significant portion of auto racing fan development**

Figure 39: Auto racing interest drivers, 2022
- Social media race streams, NIL deals, BeReal are key to reach young fans**
- Utilize social media platforms with intentional strategies to engage Gen Z**

Figure 40: Auto racing interest drivers, by generation, 2022
- Utilize fantasy sports, gambling to drive auto racing interest in Northeast**
- Auto racing is uniquely positioned to expand daily fantasy, gambling analysis**

Figure 41: Length of auto racing fandom, by region, 2022

**AUTO RACING CONTENT CONSUMPTION**

- Race analysis via websites, apps, podcasts is key for continued growth**

Figure 42: Method of consuming auto racing content, 2022
- Millennial race fans are well connected via digital media racing news**

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- Full Report PDF
- Infographic Overview
- Powerpoint Presentation
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- **Utilize location-based tech to personalize local auto racing experiences**

Figure 43: Method of consuming auto racing content, by generation, 2022

- **Cultivate young fans via tailored content, media partnerships**

- **Animated Cars auto racing broadcasts could provide unique entry point for kids**

Figure 44: Sportico Twitter post, Disney Television Animation News YouTube – NHL and Disney fully animated telecast, 2023

Figure 45: Auto racing followers, by adults and kids and gender, 2022

## AUTO RACING FAN INTERESTS

- **Auto racing fandom is an all-in lifestyle brand experience**
- **Increase presence of auto racing teams, racing simulators at classic/custom car shows, auto auctions**

Figure 46: Auto racing fan interests, by all and auto racing fans, 2022

- **Highlight auto racing merchandise to young fans via live stream commerce**
- **Fanatics Live launching in late 2023 will be important tool to engage new wave of Gen Z auto racing fans**

Figure 47: Auto racing fan interests and method of consuming content, by series followed, 2022

- **Celebrate female fans with experiential auto racing block parties**
- **Multi-brand companies such as P&G are key to activate memorable hands-on race weekend experiences**

Figure 48: Auto racing fan interests – Experiential, by gender and age, 2022

- **Target young fans, via tech-based racing experiences**
- **Esports, racing simulators are key experiential sponsor activations for 18-34 year old fans**

Figure 49: Auto racing fan interests – Tech, fantasy and gambling, by gender and age, 2022

## AUTO RACING SPONSORSHIP AWARENESS

- **Logos on cars, track banners, remain key for sponsor visibility**
- **Modernize access, visibility of trackside sponsors via digital signage, AR**

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Figure 50: Auto racing sponsorship awareness, by all and auto racing fans, 2022

- **Tailored sponsorship engagements are key for parents, single men**
- **Sponsor awareness varies according to platform, core demos**

Figure 51: Auto racing sponsorship awareness, by parental status and gender of non-parents, 2022

- **Promote value brands on-site, premium brands via social media, interviews**
- **Racing fans pick up on sponsor mentions in unique ways**

Figure 52: Auto racing sponsorship awareness, by financial situation, 2022

## ATTITUDES TOWARD SPONSORSHIP AWARENESS

- **Auto racing revenue is tied to sponsorships, more than other sports**
- **Sponsorships play a key role in auto racing, and fans are well aware of their importance**

Figure 53: Attitudes toward sponsorships – Awareness, 2022

- **Expand sponsors via financial growth, active lifestyle, sustainable brands**
- **White, urban, college-educated males with \$75K+ household income have greatest awareness of auto racing sponsors**

Figure 54: Attitudes toward sponsorships – Awareness, by media target demos (aged 25-54), 2022

## ATTITUDES TOWARD AUTO RACING SPONSORS

- **Fans feel better about brands when they are aligned with auto racing**
  - **Utilize auto racing events to build emotional attachments, relatability with consumers**
- Figure 55: Attitudes toward sponsorships – Sponsors, 2022
- **Promote sponsor product versatility through go-karting, ATV family experiences**
  - **Parents, particularly fathers, are receptive to auto racing sponsors and feel better about products/services when they sponsor auto racing**

Figure 56: Attitudes toward sponsorships – Sponsors, by parental status and children in household, 2022

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Executive Summary

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Infographic Overview

Powerpoint Presentation

Interactive Databook

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### ATTITUDES TOWARD SPONSOR PROMOTIONS

- **Auto racing sponsorship activations stand out from the crowd**
- **Racing fans are eager to participate in sweepstakes, contests involving drivers, upcoming races**  
Figure 57: Attitudes toward sponsorships – Promotions, 2022
- **Millennial fans embrace race-related commercials, contests, giveaways**
- **Auto racing sponsor activations stand out in the minds of race fans**  
Figure 58: Attitudes toward sponsorships – Promotions, by generation, 2022

### ATTITUDES TOWARD SPONSOR PURCHASE INTENTIONS

- **Fans are intentional about supporting sponsors when making purchases**
- **About half of auto racing fans choose, change or prefer to buy from auto racing sponsors**  
Figure 59: Attitudes toward sponsorships, purchase intentions, 2022
- **Black auto racing fans aged 25-54 are key demo for effective sponsor ROI**
- **Black fans choose auto racing sponsors when purchasing products/services more than White or Hispanic fans**  
Figure 60: Attitudes toward sponsorships, purchase intentions, by media target demos, 2022

### APPENDIX – DATA SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

- Data sources
- Consumer survey data
- Abbreviations and terms
- Abbreviations

### APPENDIX – THE MARKET

Figure 61: CPI changes from previous year, 2020-22

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- Executive Summary
- Full Report PDF
- Infographic Overview
- Powerpoint Presentation
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