

HAVAS Play



NEW

FORMULA 1
**THE NEW ERA OF
SPONSORSHIP IN
MOTORSPORTS**

The State of **F1**

Following Liberty Media's 2017 acquisition of Formula One Group, the sport has undergone rapid transformation, redefining fan engagement across the world.



From expanding the U.S. race calendar to the success of Netflix's *Drive to Survive* documentary series, new global audiences have been drawn to Formula One and the sport's enthusiast community has never been more diverse and passionate.

The 2025 season launch at London's O2 Arena showcased the power of spectacle and the broad appeal that the sport has achieved over the past years, with teams unveiling their cars in a thrilling event filled with lights, lasers, and live performances, including a stunning segment by composer Bryan Tyler.

Beyond the visuals, this event exemplified the growing role of brands in motorsport. Aston Martin's James Bond-style entrance and Lewis Hamilton's highly anticipated Ferrari debut demonstrated how personal brand stories resonate deeply with fans. Each team, through its unique car designs, reinforced its identity, with Ferrari, Mercedes, and Red Bull showcasing bold new looks.

The launch highlighted the importance of passion-driven activations, where brands like Aston Martin and Ferrari connect with fans on a personal level. It's clear that **the future of brand success in motorsport lies in building communities, igniting conversations, and cultivating deep emotional connections.**

Our Havas Play experts across the world have created this playbook on how brands are strategically navigating this passion-driven environment in Formula One. We will explore the strategies behind their sponsorships, fan engagement initiatives, and activations, examining how the evolving landscape of F1 offers new opportunities for brands to forge deeper, more authentic connections with fans. Ultimately, this transformation is about moving beyond traditional marketing to build a global community where fans and brands are intrinsically linked.

We tapped Havas Play leaders in three markets across their world for their perspective on the opportunities for brands in F1 fandom.

With more than +300 experts across +21 countries, the global Havas Play team is equipped to aid brands of all sizes and geographies engage with motorsports and deliver against their core business objectives.



Javier Garcia Lomas

Integrated Media &
Entertainment Supervisor
Havas Play Spain



Fabrice Plazolles

Managing Director & Chief
Creative Officer
Havas Play France



Vaibhav Sawhney

Director
Havas Play India

SPONSORSHIP STRATEGIES

Who's leading the way?

Several brands have gone beyond traditional sponsorship models to establish a significant presence in Formula 1.

RBC has entered the sport not only by placing its logo on circuits but also by developing sustainability initiatives and financial education programs for young motorsport talents.

Oracle has leveraged its partnership with Red Bull to optimize performance through advanced cloud-based data analytics, transforming its sponsorship into a key R&D opportunity.

Meanwhile, Casio Edifice has used its collaboration with AlphaTauri to reinforce its image as a leader in precision and technological innovation in watchmaking.

The presence of new industries in F1 sponsorship is becoming more prominent, with the cryptocurrency and fintech sectors expanding cautiously after the volatility of recent years.

Additionally, there is a growing trend of partnerships with software and data technology companies, indicating a shift towards more digitally integrated sponsorships.

Read on for some of the brands that are taking big bets on their motorsports partnership, and how they're leveraging the F1 community to deliver against their business objectives.



"Brands are redefining their F1 partnerships, moving beyond logos to create real value through sustainability, R&D, and innovation. From RBC's youth-focused financial education to Oracle's performance-driven data analytics, companies are leveraging F1 as a platform for industry-leading advancements."

Vaibhav Sawhney
Director
Havas Play India

KitKat x F1



The first Official Chocolate Partner of F1. The brand's message of 'Have a break, Have a KitKat' is contextually relevant with the many breaks in a regular F1 season

McDonald's x F1



As a new regional partner of F1 in Latin America, McDonald's will deliver exclusive offers to over 150 million fans in this key market through the brand's mobile app and 2300 physical restaurants across the region.

Lenovo x F1



Lenovo, F1's Official Technology Partner, holds naming rights for two Grands Prix per season. In 2024, it also made Motorola the sport's Official Smartphone Partner.

"With new industries like fintech, software, and even fast food joining the F1 ecosystem, the sponsorship landscape is evolving. Brands like KitKat, Lenovo, and McDonald's are tapping into unique fan experiences, driving engagement through personalized offers and technology integration."

Javier García-Lomas,
Integrated Media &
Entertainment Supervisor
Havas Play Spain



American Express



Amex, a regional partner until 2024, becomes a Global Official Partner of F1 in 2025, offering ticket resale and fan experiences. It also supports the F1 Academy in promoting female talent in motorsport.

Lego & Hot wheels



Through global Licensing deals with Lego and Hot Wheels (Mattel), F1 is aiming to connect with its growing younger audiences, establishing a future fanbase for the sport.

Santander x F1



The Retail Bank partnered with the Ferrari F1 team until 2024. From 2025, it became the global banking partner of F1 and the official banking partner of the Williams F1 team. They continue to support Carlos Sainz following his move from Ferrari to Williams, aligning with their tradition of backing Spanish talent.

Atlassian x Williams F1 Team



Williams announced its Atlassian partnership at the F1 75 Live event in London, marking its first title sponsorship since 2019. This is the first global sports partnership for the creators of JIRA, the renowned project management tool.

A SPOTLIGHT ON LVMH



It's difficult to discuss brands making a significant impact in F1 sponsorship without mentioning LVMH and its maisons!

A few months after the Paris Olympics – the first sport sponsorship in the history of the brand – industry observers were wondering if it was a single activation or the beginning of a love story with sports. LVMH's unequivocal answer came with the announcement of a massive entry into the world of F1.

LVMH's sponsorship is massive in terms of duration (10 years), in terms of brands involved (LVMH, Louis Vuitton, Moët Hennessy, Tag Heuer) and in terms of resources engaged.

"As Formula 1 establishes itself as a true cultural phenomenon, at the intersection of sport and entertainment, generating widespread enthusiasm, this unprecedented agreement between the world leader in luxury and the premier discipline of motorsport will come to life with the well named FORMULA 1 LOUIS VUITTON AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX 2025. Excitement will be at its peak, both on and off the track."

Fabrice Plazolles
Managing Director & Chief Creative Officer
Havas Play France

BEYOND THE LOGO

Digital-first partnerships & enhanced fan engagement

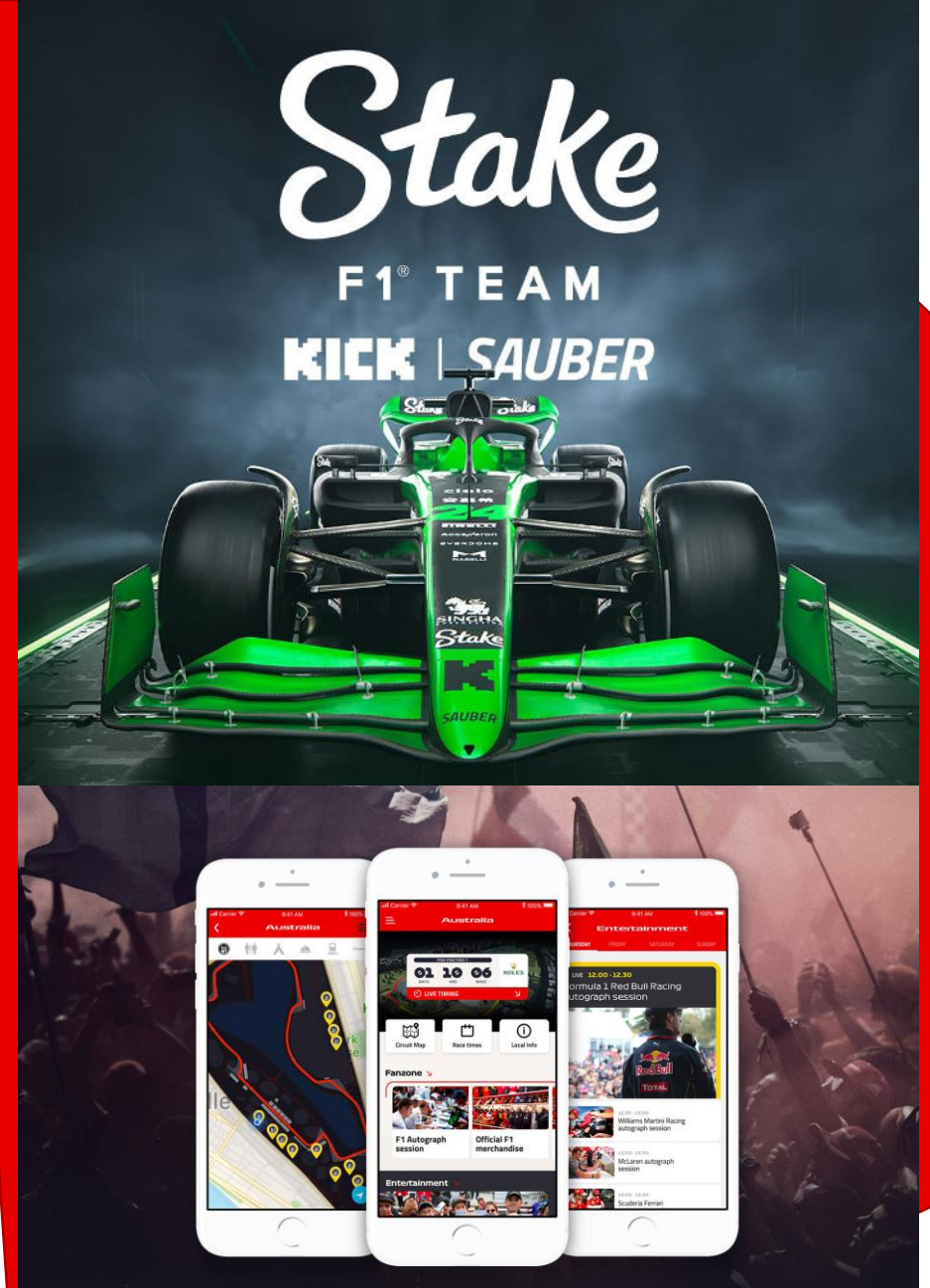
Brands are exploring new ways to engage with fans beyond traditional sponsorship placements.

Kick has entered the sport through its partnership with Sauber to form Stake F1 Team Kick Sauber, marking a shift towards **digital-first sponsorships**.

The platform has integrated its brand directly into F1, gaining high **visibility on Sauber's cars while leveraging its presence to connect motorsport with the gaming and esports audience**. Kick is also utilizing **content creators and live streaming** to expand F1's digital reach and engage younger demographics.

The official Formula One app has become a crucial tool for fan interaction, offering real-time data, exclusive content, and interactive features. It provides live telemetry, driver positioning, and race analytics, enhancing the viewing experience. Additionally, its integration with F1 TV Pro allows for exclusive access to onboard cameras, team radios, and in-depth post-race analysis. The app has also incorporated augmented reality features and fantasy league options, increasing fan engagement through interactive elements.

Future developments for digital activations could include further integration of **AR and VR technologies, predictive gaming, and enhanced e-commerce opportunities within the app, creating a more immersive and interactive fan experience.**



BEYOND THE LOGO

Brand activations gaining attention and driving conversation



01

Chrome x McLaren

The first brand to place its logo on an F1 wheel cover, generating massive buzz on social media.

02

HP x Ferrari

A title sponsorship that not only provides high visibility on driver suits and car liveries but also launched a special Miami campaign featuring an all-blue uniform.

03

DP World x McLaren

A sustainability-focused logistics partnership featuring the digital series "At Every Turn," exploring efficiency and innovation in F1.

FAN ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY BUILDING

F1 as a bridge between generations

To foster a deeper connection with fans, brands are leveraging new platforms and engagement strategies.

McLaren has expanded its presence on **Twitch**, allowing direct interaction between drivers and gaming communities.

Ferrari has utilized its partnership with **Spotify** to launch exclusive podcasts featuring interviews with engineers and drivers, offering fans deeper insights into the sport.

Netflix is exploring new formats beyond its successful documentary series, including **individual driver-focused documentaries** and **team-specific mini-series**, maintaining year-round engagement with audiences.

As expectations for direct and authentic interactions with teams and drivers increase, **the emphasis on personalized, multi-platform content strategies continues to grow.**

Brands that successfully integrate digital engagement with traditional sponsorship models are likely to establish stronger, long-term relationships with the F1 fanbase.



"Brands are embracing innovative, multi-platform strategies to foster deeper connections with F1 fans, from Twitch interactions and Spotify podcasts to Netflix's expanded formats, creating year-round engagement and authentic connections with audiences."



Javier García-Lomas
Integrated Media & Entertainment Supervisor
Havas Play Spain

FAN ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY BUILDING

Courting younger audiences with immersive experiences



Lego x F1

The new multi-year licensing partnership will see the **brand launch special pre-school sets along with regular brick sets for F1 fans of all ages**. With recent data showing a +4 million fan community of 8-12 year olds in Europe and American, F1 has entered this strategic partnership to connect with this growing community. Lego plans to engage its audience with Lego building competitions in fan zone areas, creating meaningful content for fans and their families.

Stake x Sauber

As the new title partner of the Sauber F1 team, Stake marked the creation of Stake F1 Team Kick Sauber with a striking green livery. The green livery is an ode to the brand's esports streaming platform – KICK. Stake, a global betting brand, leveraged its world-renowned ambassadors – Drake, Sergio Aguero and Karan Aujla – to announce the partnership. The strategy helped the team reach newer audiences in Latin and Indian communities. Karan Aujla, a very popular Indo-Canadian singer made the first ever Punjabi rap music video launch of an F1 car. "Try Me," featuring drivers Valtteri Bottas and Zhou Guanyu, garnered 50 Mn+ views across all platforms

"Strategic partnerships like Lego's collaboration with F1 and Stake's esports-driven activation with Sauber show how brands are tapping into diverse fan bases and creating interactive, meaningful content that reaches both traditional and emerging audiences."

Vaibhav Sawhney
Director
Havas Play India



TAKEAWAYS

Across diverse industries and geographies, key shared tenets of successful motorsports partnerships that meaningfully engage with passionate fan communities emerge:

01

Passion-Driven Engagement: To win in F1, brands need to go beyond sponsorships—create activations and stories that make fans feel part of the action, sparking deeper, emotional connections that last beyond the race day.

02

Evolving Brand Strategies: Sponsorships are shifting. Brands must move beyond logos and offer immersive, interactive experiences across digital platforms, keeping fans engaged year-round and becoming part of their journey.

03

Fostering Global Communities: F1 offers brands a unique chance to build global fan communities. By tapping into the emotional connection fans have with the sport, brands can foster loyalty and become integral to the fan experience.

04

Future Opportunities in Motorsports: As motorsports fans become more digitally engaged, brands must embrace new technologies and create interactive experiences to stay relevant and build authentic connections with an evolving audience.



Wondering how your brand can play meaningfully in culture?

Havas Play helps brands create entertainment, experiences, and activations that people want to spend time with—across the spaces that matter most, from motorsports to music, gaming, film, and beyond.

Reach out to start the conversation and make your brand a part of what moves your community.

***Gabriela
Domínguez***

Global Director, Havas Play

gabriela.dominguez@havasmn.com