



Category: Arts, Culture or Sport Campaign

Company: Shooting Star

Entry title: From Sidecars to Superstars

Brief and objectives:

Shooting Star was appointed to raise the profile of reigning British F1 sidecar champions Ricky Stevens and Ryan Charlwood. Sidecar racing is a support class in the British Superbike (BSB) Championship, but the sport does not enjoy the same prominence as the other classes.

Between January and November 2016, we were tasked with the following objectives:

- Raise their profile amongst motorcycle racing fans
- Achieve positive coverage in their local media
- Achieve positive coverage in the consumer motorsport media
- Build a positive relationship with the riders and the team as well as sponsors and key journalists
- Increase reach and engagement on the team's social media channels.

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

To establish brand 'Team Ricky and Ryan' we had to define clear values. Ricky and Ryan are best friends and fiercely loyal to each other, their team and supporters.

With this in mind we agreed the following brand values:

- Driven
- Genuine
- Loyal
- Cheeky

As sidecar racing is a relatively obscure sport there was little coverage of it, so it was important to bring it to the fore. We conducted an awareness survey online and trackside which showed only 41% of BSB fans watched sidecars. To improve Ricky and Ryan's profile, it was crucial to put their sport in the spotlight.

At the start of the campaign we contacted 10 key national journalists to find out how we could secure more coverage. It was clear that timely and accurate race reports and high-quality photography were key.

The pair did not have a profile on Facebook and the team's Twitter account was underused. To give them credibility among peers, fans, the press and existing and potential sponsors, we had to considerably grow their social media following. To ensure their followers were genuine and engaged Ricky and Ryan fans, we agreed the growth had to be organic. To

ensure the quality of the following, content had to regularly achieve a combined reach / exposure of at least 10 times the following and an engagement of at least 10% of the following.

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

We produced a social media plan showing Ricky and Ryan's progress as they made their bid for a second championship title, giving fans an exclusive insight into their life on and off the track. As part of the plan, we included several Breakfast of Champions competitions, giving fans the opportunity to meet Ricky and Ryan at a pre-race breakfast.

The pair also filmed themselves undertaking fun challenges against one another. We invited their fans to guess who would win and suggest further #RickyvsRyan challenges.

We also ran live Q&As, making them more accessible to fans, and used video and Facebook Live/Periscope to showcase seldom seen moments, such as Ricky and Ryan walking the track with their manager and discussing race tactics.

With the media, we focused on building face-to-face relationships with journalists by regularly attending race meetings. We negotiated a partnership with Motorcycle Racer magazine, securing the front cover spot which was a first for the sport.

BBC Breakfast's sports correspondent Mike Bushell has tried his hand at over 400 sports and was key to helping us showcase sidecar racing to a national audience.

Implementation of tactics:

We created a detailed timetable of activity (summarised below) and had to plan many of our actions around Ricky and Ryan's busy racing schedule. During the British F1 Sidecar Racing season they compete almost every other weekend while working full-time.

Month Action

January / Feb Agree brand values, build media databases and set up news release templates and social media channels

March / April Meet key journalists, create social media strategy and calendar, conduct brand awareness survey

May / June Build excitement early on in season by securing features and interviews with key media

July / August Approach charities which Ricky and Ryan could support to widen their appeal, launch #RickyvsRyan challenge on social media, repeat survey

September / October

Secure appearances at motorcycle-themed events such as Motorcycle Live to maximise reach and build up excitement prior to season finale, repeat survey

November Evaluate campaign success and report back on KPIs as well as lessons learnt and opportunities for the future.

Measurement and evaluation:

Between March and November, the team's combined Twitter and Facebook following increased from 686 to 7,648.

We increased reach from 20 times the pair's following to more than 40 times (47.6 times at peak time in October) and average engagement rate from 7.1% of the following to 10.9%.

Between 1st March and 30th November we achieved 72 print / online articles including a six page feature in Fast Bikes magazine and three broadcast interviews including a 4.5 minute piece on BBC Breakfast, when Mike Bushell took a spin in the sidecar.

A trackside and social media survey was run at the start and end of the season, showing:

- Spectators increased from 41% in May to 50% in October
- The number of British Superbike visitors who could blindly recall the 2015 British F1 Sidecar champions (Ricky and Ryan) nearly doubled
- The number of British Superbike visitors who could correctly remember who Ricky and Ryan were went from 16% in May, to 45% in October