

THE GLOBALIZATION OF FORMULA 1  
THROUGH PR STRATEGIES

by

Mane Tshnavoryan  
Department of English & Communications

American University of Armenia  
Yerevan, Armenia

May 14, 2025

## Introduction

For a long period of time and much of its history Formula 1 (F1) has been synonymous with innovation, prestige, and an elite sporting experience traditionally rooted in its European origins. For decades, the sport has had a concentrated fanbase coming from Europe, with races taking place on iconic circuits like Silverstone in England, Monza in Italy, and Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium. And as its presence was concentrated within Europe, both the media coverage and the fan communities reflected a distinctly Western-centric worldview. This exclusivity limited not only the accessibility of the sport to fans from other regions but also the diversity of voices and cultural representation within the F1 community itself. However, countries like Japan, Mexico, and Brazil have hosted races since the 1960s and 70s, the sport's culture remained largely centered around Europe — both in its leadership and media image. It operated like a tightly held club that, despite occasional stops around the world, didn't fully reflect or engage with its global audience. Only in more recent years has F1 begun to reposition itself as a truly international sport with a deliberate focus on cultural inclusivity and regional connection. Recent developments in media and marketing strategies have introduced a new era for F1, which can now reach a wider audience and gain fans from previously unreachable areas. Over the past couple of decades, Formula 1 has undergone a strategic transformation that has reshaped its cultural and geographic landscape. Social media, streaming services, and globally appealing campaigns positioned F1 as a truly international phenomenon, capable of engaging diverse audiences. The sport has actively expanded into regions that once existed only on the periphery of F1's global map — including countries in Asia (China, Singapore), the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE), and cities in the US (Austin, Miami, Las Vegas). This expansion has not only brought races to new markets but has also contributed to a broader appreciation of cultural diversity within the sport.

One of the most powerful tools in this change has been the Netflix series *Drive to Survive*, among other media strategies that have brought millions of viewers around the world into the drama and intricacies of F1 racing. Along with social media campaigns on Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok, the series has been instrumental in introducing the sport to a younger and more geographically diverse audience. Focusing on personal stories, rivalries, and behind-the-scenes content, *Drive to Survive* rebranded F1 from just motorsport to a culturally relevant global entertainment product.

Meanwhile, F1 has been further expanding its calendar in new and strategically important markets such as the Middle East and Asia. This shift in focus also provides an opportunity to explore how these digital strategies are changing the fan experience, where traditional media and marketing methods no longer represent the main tools with which to engage. The global drive brings up some crucial questions regarding how this sport's branding and PR efforts have pulled at an audience outside of its comforts in Europe. Do these really engage fans out in regions like Eurasia, or are they perceived as superficial marketing tactics? Moreover, how do new supporters, in particular those from emerging markets, read F1's attempts to reach out to them digitally?

While many strategies contribute to F1's global expansion, this paper focuses on three key approaches that have played a crucial role in reshaping its public image: the Netflix documentary series *Drive to Survive*, high-profile brand collaborations such as those with Lego, Puma, H&M, Pandora and Hot Wheels, partnerships like Heineken, American Express and Tag Heuer, and the deliberate integration of celebrity appearances at Grand Prix events. Each of these elements serves as a powerful public relations tool aimed at capturing the attention of newer audiences and building emotional engagement with the sport. The research questions are investigated in this capstone project by studying how F1 uses social media and marketing campaigns to activate new fans

outside of Europe. In addition to surveys, interviews were included in the research process to gain deeper insight into individual fan perspectives and experiences that may not be fully captured through structured survey questions. While the survey offered a broad overview of fan behaviors and preferences, interviews allowed for more open-ended and reflective discussions on topics such as how fans emotionally connect with the sport, whether they see themselves represented in F1's global messaging, and how cultural background shapes their interpretation of campaigns like *Drive to Survive*. These one-on-one conversations made it possible to explore more nuanced perspectives, giving context to the broader trends found in the survey. By analyzing the interaction of digital platforms, regional fan perceptions, and the shifting brand identity of the sport, this study attempts to add value to the effort to better understand F1's transformation into a global cultural phenomenon. This research is especially timely, as F1 seeks to increase its presence within markets that have traditionally enjoyed less exposure to the sport. Moreover, exploring how digital platforms are playing a key role in engaging these fans, can provide a wider understanding of trends in global sports marketing. The rapid growth of the audience for F1 opens up new opportunities for the sport to reach an increasingly diversified fan base, which is of more critical importance as competition for global attention.

### **Literature Review**

Public relations plays a central role in shaping how Formula 1 presents itself to the world, particularly as it expands into politically sensitive and economically strategic markets. One of the most widely discussed phenomena in this context is sportswashing — the practice of using high-profile sporting events to rehabilitate or soften a country's global image. Yüçetürk and Keskin (2022) analyze how regimes like Saudi Arabia have used investments in sports, including F1, to project modernization and reform, while strategically diverting attention from human rights

concerns. Similarly, Crantz (2024) examines how UK media framed the Russian and Saudi Arabian Grands Prix, highlighting the tension between F1's branding as a glamorous entertainment event and the political controversies of its host countries.

This overlap between global expansion and public image management has led scholars to examine F1's role in legitimizing authoritarian regimes or suppressing conflicts. Næss (2019) brings this into focus by analyzing the ethical dilemmas faced by Norway's Government Pension Fund over investments tied to the 2014 Russian Grand Prix, revealing how financial interests in F1 often conflict with international ethical standards. Boratko (2024) builds on this by critiquing the sport's #WeRaceAsOne campaign, arguing that F1's claims to inclusion and equality are worthless when paired with its partnerships in Gulf States with poor human rights records.

Together, these studies show that F1's global public relations strategy involves more than sponsorships and branding — it's also about navigating a complex ethical landscape. However, while these sources highlight tensions between image and ethics, they do not account for how fans interpret or respond to these contradictions. Nor do they offer insight into how media strategies like social media and entertainment content factor into F1's efforts to sustain global loyalty.

Formula 1's image has long been associated with luxury, exclusivity, and elite performance. This branding has helped define F1 as more than just a motorsport — it's a cultural spectacle closely linked to wealth, technological innovation, and global prestige. Sturm (2014) describes F1 as a "high-tech global spectacle," emphasizing the way corporate sponsorships, media coverage, and curated aesthetics work together to portray the sport as a premium product designed for international, upper-class audiences. This positioning reinforces F1's identity as a global entertainment brand — but one that is historically Eurocentric and often inaccessible.

Capparelli (2016) further argues that F1 should be understood as an “industrial sports complex,” deeply embedded in economic, political, and media networks. His research reveals how the sport’s expansion is not just athletic but infrastructural, tied to multinational sponsors, national governments, and host cities seeking prestige through association. Lowes (2017) takes this further by showing how cities use F1 to promote a “world-class” image, leveraging the sport’s cosmopolitan appeal to boost tourism and international relevance. Hosting a Grand Prix becomes a tool of urban placemarketing, blending global sport with localized branding ambitions.

These sources help frame how F1 has constructed its global identity through an elite, aspirational image. However, they also highlight a potential branding challenge: as F1 tries to expand into emerging markets and engage younger, more diverse fans, its traditional image may not resonate universally. The question then becomes whether F1’s branding — rooted in exclusivity — can be effectively adapted for a broader and more culturally varied audience. This tension sets the stage for examining how digital platforms and entertainment media are being used to bridge that gap.

In recent years, Formula 1 has adopted a multi-layered digital strategy to reach new audiences and deepen fan engagement, particularly among younger demographics and in emerging markets. This shift reflects a broader transition in global sports marketing, where digital platforms and personalized content are increasingly essential to audience growth and loyalty.

Palermo and Delaine (2023) highlight how F1 has developed a “communication mix” that blends traditional media with dynamic social media strategies to maintain

relevance and emotional connection with fans. Their study of F1's official Instagram and Facebook channels shows that visual storytelling, short-form videos, and interactive posts (such as quizzes or driver Q&As) are crucial in building a digital fan community. These efforts enable fans to feel closer to the sport — even if they are far from a race track — and help construct a sense of belonging and participation.

This strategy is especially targeted at younger audiences, notably Gen Z fans who consume content primarily through platforms like TikTok and YouTube. Palermo and Delaine also discuss how generational shifts in online behavior have shaped how F1 presents its drivers and teams — often focusing less on racing stats and more on personality, lifestyle, and relatability. Such an approach has broadened the sport's emotional appeal and encouraged fans to follow not just the races, but the stories behind them.

A key example of this strategy is the Netflix documental series *Drive to Survive*, which has been widely credited with transforming F1's global fanbase. Danné (2022) explores how the series has introduced new viewers to the sport by emphasizing personal rivalries, emotional drama, and behind-the-scenes moments. Through the analysis of fan discussions, she identifies a dual response: while some viewers praise the accessibility and entertainment value of the show, others criticize its dramatization and question its authenticity. This tension reflects a broader challenge in F1's media strategy — the need to balance authenticity and storytelling in ways that satisfy both long-time fans and new audiences.

Digital engagement also opens the door to new forms of fandom participation. As fans interact with F1 content across multiple platforms, they are no longer just passive consumers — they contribute to the brand’s meaning by creating memes, sharing opinions, and advocating for drivers or teams. This participatory culture strengthens fan loyalty and makes F1 more than just a sport, it becomes a shared cultural space. Yet, as Palermo and Delaine note, the long-term effects of this engagement on brand loyalty and cultural perception remain under-researched.

While scholars have begun to explore these digital strategies, there is still limited research on how fans themselves perceive and respond to these efforts — especially in regions outside of F1’s traditional strongholds. Most existing studies focus on marketing outputs or content strategies, rather than audience reception and interpretation. This capstone attempts to fill that gap by examining not just what F1 publishes, but how fans in regions like Eurasia and the Russian-speaking world engage with, critique, and contribute to the sport’s evolving identity.

While the existing literature provides valuable insight into Formula 1’s branding, ethical positioning, and digital outreach, several gaps remain that this capstone project seeks to address. Most notably, there is a lack of research that centers the voices and experiences of fans themselves — particularly those living in regions outside of F1’s traditional European sphere. As F1 expands into markets across Eurasia, the Middle East, and Latin America, the sport’s PR and digital strategies cannot be fully understood without examining how audiences in these regions are receiving, interpreting, and responding to them.

Additionally, although scholars such as Palermo & Delaine and Danné have begun to examine F1's digital and entertainment strategies, their focus tends to remain on content creation and marketing logic — not on fan interpretation or emotional connection. There is also very little real data on how such strategies are shaping long-term fan loyalty, particularly in regions where economic, cultural, and technological barriers may complicate access to the sport. As a result, there is an urgent need for research that combines both content analysis and audience perspectives in order to develop a more holistic view of F1's global communication efforts.

Furthermore, while ethical debates around F1's partnerships and geopolitical choices have been well covered in sportswashing and CSR literature, scholars have yet to explore how these controversies are perceived by the fans who engage with F1 online. Do they notice these contradictions? Do they care? Or are they more focused on entertainment and community? Exploring these questions can provide deeper insight into how public image, authenticity, and digital storytelling intersect.

This capstone project contributes to this evolving conversation by combining media content analysis, online surveys, and interviews with fans from underrepresented regions. It aims to offer a deeper understanding of how digital platforms and global branding strategies — including *Drive to Survive*, brand collaborations, and celebrity appearances — are reshaping F1's relationship with its increasingly diverse fanbase. By focusing on audience reception and regional perspectives, this study provides a necessary counterpoint to top-down analyses of F1's PR strategies and helps expand our understanding of fandom in the age of globalized sports media.

## Research Questions

This research is intended to investigate the effect of the global marketing and social media strategies of F1 on the engagement and perception of the fans, outside of its traditional European market. It will study how digital platforms and campaigns resonate with emerging market fans to understand their success in building a truly global fanbase.

The primary research question is:

*To what extent have social media and marketing campaigns, such as the Netflix series Drive to Survive, brand collaborations, and celebrity appearances, driven F1's global expansion beyond its traditional European markets?*

The secondary questions are:

- What role do digital platforms play in engaging F1 fans in regions like Eurasia or the Russian-speaking world?
- How do fans in these regions perceive F1's efforts to reach them through social media and digital content?

These questions look to answer how F1 strategies further assist in globalizing the sport, and also explain how the new fan communities view and interact with the sport within the digital spaces. Addressing these questions, this research provides new insights into F1's continuing efforts to reach more diverse global audiences.

## Methodology

The aim of this research is to explore, through a mixed-methods approach, Formula 1's (F1) strategies for fan engagement in regions beyond its traditional European market — with particular attention to the Eurasian and Russian-speaking world. To achieve this, the study

incorporates three key methods: media content analysis, online surveys, and semi-structured interviews. This triangulation ensures a comprehensive examination of the research questions. The methodology seeks to address an existing gap in the literature by focusing on how F1's digital and marketing strategies impact fan engagement in emerging markets. While existing studies have primarily explored branding and sportswashing, little research has been conducted into the impact of these strategies on fan culture and perceptions in emerging markets

#### *Survey Design and Distribution*

An online survey was conducted to gather data from F1 fans across various platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, and VKontakte. These platforms were chosen to maximize outreach and ensure regional diversity. The survey featured both multiple-choice and open-ended questions to balance structure with opportunities for detailed, personalized responses.

Sample survey questions include:

1. How did you first become interested in Formula 1?
2. How often do you engage with F1 content on social media (e.g., Instagram, Twitter, TikTok)?
3. What impact has the Netflix series *Drive to Survive* had on your interest in F1?
4. Do you feel that F1's social media campaigns are tailored to fans in your region?
5. What type of F1 content (e.g., race highlights, driver interviews, memes) do you engage with most frequently?
6. How do you perceive F1's efforts to connect with fans outside Europe?
7. Have digital platforms increased your likelihood of attending a live F1 race or purchasing merchandise?

To increase engagement and data richness, the survey included comment boxes for respondents to elaborate on their answers, as well as visual aids such as campaign screenshots or social media posts.

### *Data Analysis*

Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns in fan responses, interview transcripts, and media content. Quantitative survey results were analyzed using basic statistical tools to detect trends in fan engagement across regions. This combination of qualitative and quantitative methods enabled a more holistic understanding of F1's digital strategies and their impact.

### *Interviews with Fans*

To deepen the understanding of fan engagement, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a select group of survey respondents. Participants were chosen to represent a range of fan experiences — from long-time followers to newer fans who discovered F1 through digital content like *Drive to Survive*. This diversity allows the research to capture nuanced insights across different audience profiles and levels of engagement.

Interview questions included:

1. Can you describe your experience as an F1 fan in your region?
2. How do F1's digital strategies influence your engagement with the sport?
3. Do you believe that F1's marketing efforts reflect an understanding of your cultural context?
4. What challenges, if any, do you face in accessing F1-related content or events?
5. How would you compare your perception of F1 before and after the introduction of campaigns like *Drive to Survive*?

### *Participant Selection and Ethical Considerations*

Participants were recruited through F1-related forums and social media communities. Care was taken to ensure a balanced demographic representation in terms of age, gender, and geographic location. Efforts were made to include fans from underrepresented regions such as Eurasia and the broader Russian-speaking world.

All participants were fully informed about the nature and purpose of the study. Informed consent was obtained prior to participation, and anonymity and confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the research process.

### *Media Content Analysis*

A qualitative analysis was conducted on selected episodes of *Drive to Survive* as well as posts from F1's official social media accounts, particularly on Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. The aim was to identify recurring themes and narratives related to global fan engagement and region-specific marketing.

This analysis considered:

- The portrayal of drivers and teams
- Language use and cultural references
- Visual imagery and campaign tone
- Patterns of regional targeting and audience appeal

The media content was evaluated for its contribution to the sport's rebranding as a global entertainment product, as well as its effectiveness in reaching audiences outside Europe.

In addition to *Drive to Survive*, the media content analysis also included posts and campaigns related to F1's collaborations and partnerships with major lifestyle brands such as Lego, Puma, H&M, Pandora, Hot Wheels and Heineken, American Express, Tag Heuer focusing on how these were framed across F1's social media platforms and official announcements. The analysis

also examined the presence and portrayal of celebrities at various Grand Prix events, particularly in promotional materials and event coverage. These elements were studied for their symbolic and strategic role in expanding F1's appeal to mainstream audiences and in generating media buzz beyond traditional motorsport circles.

## **Analysis**

### **F1's historical expansion & cultural shift**

The global expansion of F1 has led to greater cultural representation, with local elements being incorporated into race weekends — from traditional performances to localized branding. While critics still point to issues like sportswashing, there is no denying that this shift has helped many fans feel more connected to the sport than ever before. The internationalization of F1 has made it more accessible, both physically and emotionally, transforming what was once a closed club into a platform for shared global excitement. Fans who for years had only been able to watch the races on television were finally given the opportunity to attend live Grand Prix events in their home countries. This shift has helped F1 grow into a more inclusive community. As one fan on Reddit put it: *“It used to feel like something happening far away in Europe, but when the Mexican GP came back, it finally felt like we were part of it, too.”* Another fan from the UAE noted on Twitter: *“The Abu Dhabi Grand Prix is more than just a race now — it's a cultural event, and we feel seen by the sport.”*

### **Drive to Survive: Narrative Power and Fan Reactions**

One of the most significant forces behind Formula 1's global rebranding has been the Netflix documentary series *Drive to Survive* (DTS) (Drive to Survive, 2019–2025). Released in 2019, *Drive to Survive* documentary series offers a behind-the-scenes look at the world of Formula 1 racing. Produced in collaboration with Formula 1 and Box to Box Films, the series blends race

footage, team drama, and personal interviews to dramatize the sport's most intense rivalries and storylines. Unlike traditional F1 broadcasts that focus mainly on the competition, *Drive to Survive* highlights the human element — from driver emotions and team politics to off-track controversies — making it appealing even to audiences unfamiliar with motorsports. The series has played a major role in attracting new fans to F1, particularly in regions like North America, where interest in the sport had previously been limited.

Since its debut in 2019, the show has served as a dynamic public relations tool, by offering fans those behind-the-scenes look at the sport's emotional and strategic dimensions. While long-time F1 enthusiasts once relied solely on race coverage and team statements for insights, DTS opened a window into the interpersonal tensions, rivalries, and human drama that traditional broadcasts often overlooked. This emotional storytelling has not only made the sport more relatable, but also helped build fan loyalty by connecting audiences to individual drivers and teams.

The show's emphasis on narrative over statistics appealed particularly to newer fans. As one survey respondent explained, "*The series has significantly deepened my interest in Formula 1. It provided insight beyond just the races—highlighting team dynamics, driver personalities, and the intense behind-the-scenes drama.*" Another echoed the accessibility it created, writing: "*It became more interesting after watching DTS,*" while a third commented, "*After watching the show, I wanted to learn more about the history of this sport.*" Many respondents described how the show allowed them to become invested in F1 beyond just the Grand Prix weekends, bringing them closer to the human side of the competition.

However, not all responses were positive. Some fans expressed concern over the accuracy of the series. One participant remarked, "*I don't like the series as it's not accurate at all and spreads misinformation,*" while another noted, "*Just understood that DTS is marketing bullshit.*"

*If you really want to know something in F1, watch every practice, quali, and race.*” These comments reflect a growing sentiment among some parts of the F1 fanbase that while DTS is effective for outreach and engagement, it sometimes sacrifices nuance and factual integrity for entertainment value. For instance, the series has been criticized for manufacturing rivalries between drivers — such as the exaggerated tension portrayed in Season 4 between Lando Norris (a young British driver) and Daniel Ricciardo (a popular Australian veteran), who were teammates at McLaren at the time. While the show suggested friction between the two, both Norris and Ricciardo later stated that the conflict was overstated for dramatic effect (Drive to Survive, 2019–2025). In another case, audio clips from different races were edited into scenes out of context to heighten drama, misleading viewers about what was actually happening on track. This duality is key to understanding the layered impact the show has had on F1’s global audience: it creates access and enthusiasm, but also sparks debates about authenticity. This duality is key to understanding the layered impact the show has had on F1’s global audience: it creates access and enthusiasm, but also sparks debates about authenticity.

Another interesting layer of *Drive to Survive*’s impact is the way fans on social media—particularly Instagram and TikTok—react to these exaggerated tensions and fake rivalries. Very often fans actively anticipate and parody the dramatized storytelling style. Over the years, many F1 followers have become increasingly aware of how the series tends to overemphasize rivalries or inject tension into moments that were not necessarily dramatic in real time. As a result, fans now often joke about how specific events in the current F1 season will be reinterpreted or exaggerated in the upcoming *Drive to Survive* episodes. A popular example occurred when McLaren driver Oscar Piastri secured his first pole position (a term used to describe the position which lies at the front of the starting grid). In a live broadcast clip, his teammate Lando Norris was

seen watching the screen that displayed Piastri's achievement. The camera angle and editing created the impression that Norris was intensely jealous or upset, even though there was no evidence of real conflict. Social media users immediately picked up on this moment, posting memes and comments such as "Netflix won't miss this one" or "You just know *Drive to Survive* is going to turn this into a rivalry" (TikTok & Instagram user commentary, 2025). This kind of playful commentary reflects not only fans' media literacy but also their awareness of how reality is reshaped through entertainment narratives. It underscores the blurred line between authentic sporting moments and the constructed drama designed for broader audience appeal—and how fans themselves engage critically and humorously with that process.

A deeper analysis of several *Drive to Survive* episodes reveals a deliberate focus on cultural identity and national representation. When drivers like Sergio Pérez race in their home countries, the narrative often centers on immense national pride and heightened expectations. In the episode featuring the Mexican Grand Prix, Pérez is shown receiving applause from the home crowd, with fans waving flags bearing his name and wearing sombreros in the grandstands. The show highlights how local commentators praise him as a national icon, and even shows his father emotionally cheering from the paddock, emphasizing the personal and cultural stakes of the moment. Similarly, episodes highlighting Daniel Ricciardo emphasize his Australian charm and comedic personality, positioning him as a fan favorite beyond just his driving performance. In scenes set during the Australian Grand Prix, Ricciardo is mobbed by fans, signs autographs in packed fan zones, and appears in local media coverage celebrating his national popularity (*Drive to Survive*, 2019–2025).

The show's framing of Zhou Guanyu as the first Chinese F1 driver is similarly significant, presenting him as a symbol of cultural and historical relevance. In the episode covering his first

home race in Shanghai, *Drive to Survive* features fans waving Chinese flags and holding supportive signs, underscoring the sense of national pride. Notably, after the race, a special podium-style sign was placed for Zhou on the track, allowing him to pose in the exact spot he had dreamt of standing since childhood. This was an extraordinary gesture — typically reserved for race winners or podium finishers — that symbolized his emotional arrival on the global stage (*Drive to Survive*, 2019–2024).

While these home races are filled with celebration, connection, and meaning, *Drive to Survive* also subtly conveys the intense pressure that comes with racing in front of a home crowd. For many drivers, the expectation to perform well in front of family, national media, and thousands of local fans adds psychological weight that can be overwhelming. These weekends are among the most emotional and rewarding — but they are also some of the most mentally demanding events in a driver’s calendar.

The influence of *Drive to Survive* extends far beyond the screen. On platforms like Twitter, TikTok, and Reddit, the show has become a viral talking point — not only through traditional reviews but through memes, reaction videos, and fan edits. Scenes from DTS are clipped, captioned, and reshared, often exaggerating rivalries or emotional moments for comic effect. Popular formats include joking about Christian Horner (Principal of the Red Bull Racing Team) and Toto Wolff (CEO of Mercedes AMG Petronas F1 Team)’s rivalry, Carlos Sainz’s “smooth operator” persona, or dramatic slow-motion shots of Lando Norris crying. These memes shape how fans engage with the drivers and storylines, creating a digital ecosystem where emotional resonance often outweighs technical understanding. For many, the memes and viral content are the gateway into deeper fandom — what might begin as entertainment becomes a full-season obsession.

Through storytelling and dramatization, *Drive to Survive* has become one of the most effective tools in F1's recent history to rebrand the sport from elite and mechanical to emotional and human. It has expanded F1's digital footprint and introduced the sport to millions who may never have watched a race before. While it remains controversial for its selective portrayal of reality, its impact on global fan culture is undeniable.

### **Brand Collaborations**

In recent years, Formula 1 has embraced a series of creative collaborations with global consumer brands as part of a broader effort to transform its identity from a niche motorsport into a lifestyle-centered entertainment platform. These collaborations serve not only to increase visibility but also to engage new audiences that had previously felt disconnected from the world of racing. Through collaborations with companies in fashion, jewelry, and entertainment, F1 has opened new entry points for fans of all ages and backgrounds.

#### *Lego*

Lego has played a central role in attracting younger audiences to F1. With its detailed sets modeled after real F1 cars, Lego transforms the racing experience into something playful and educational. In addition to selling buildable sets, Lego's partnership with Formula 1 has proven to be not only visually captivating but also educational and experiential. Many of the official Lego F1 sets are designed to replicate iconic cars from teams like McLaren and Ferrari, allowing fans—especially younger ones—to explore the engineering, design, and branding aspects of the sport through creative, hands-on play. These sets often include moving parts and mini driver figures, subtly introducing concepts of mechanics and aerodynamics in a way that is both accessible and engaging. These products serve as an introduction to the sport for children, sparking interest at an early age through creativity and imagination. The Lego-F1 collaboration bridges the gap between

a highly technical sport and a child's world, allowing young fans to build, explore, and emotionally connect with teams and drivers. It's a subtle yet effective strategy for cultivating long-term engagement from future generations of fans.

One of the most successful moments of this partnership came during this year's 2025 Miami Grand Prix. In a twist on the traditional driver parade (where drivers usually circle the track on a truck to wave at fans), F1-Lego collaboration made it to another level and created life-size, drivable Lego cars. These cars weren't designed to replicate real F1 vehicles; rather, they were oversized versions of Lego's own miniature sets — blocky, colorful, and unmistakably toy-like. The drivers drove a full lap in these vehicles, which were equipped with GoPro cameras to capture the joy and chaos that unfolded. The footage quickly went viral: fans saw their favorite drivers laughing, bumping into each other, and behaving like kids again. The playful energy was contagious, with every team and the official F1 account sharing clips across platforms. Many drivers later commented that it was the most fun parade lap of their careers and expressed hope that it would become a recurring tradition. This stunt brilliantly blurred the lines between childlike nostalgia, brand promotion, and fan engagement — showing just how effective and multidimensional Lego's collaboration with F1 has become.

### *Hot Wheels*

Hot Wheels, another brand rooted in childhood nostalgia, has contributed to F1's outreach by creating miniature die-cast versions of iconic F1 cars. These collectibles aren't just for kids — they appeal to older fans as well, tapping into sentimental memories and motorsport culture. Hot Wheels offers a fun, affordable, and tangible way to interact with the sport beyond TV screens or live events. By partnering with such an accessible and well-known toy brand, F1 extends its presence into everyday life, ensuring that the thrill of racing reaches homes around the world.

However, while Hot Wheels has long been associated with children's toys, this collaboration is by no means limited to younger fans. The detailed miniatures of official F1 cars have also attracted a significant number of adult collectors, many of whom are loyal motorsport enthusiasts. For these fans, the miniature cars represent a form of memorabilia — tangible tokens of their passion for the sport, often displayed as part of personal collections. The appeal lies not just in the cars' design accuracy, but in their branding and emotional value. Through this partnership, F1 is able to tap into both the nostalgic play associated with childhood and the more serious, collector-driven culture of adult fandom. In doing so, Hot Wheels reinforces F1's presence across age groups and further integrates the brand into everyday fan experiences.

### *H&M*

In the realm of fashion, F1's collaboration with H&M introduces the sport into the mainstream clothing market. The capsule collections released through this partnership include streetwear and casual pieces inspired by F1 aesthetics, including graphic tees, racing jackets, and logo-heavy designs. These items appeal to a broad demographic, particularly younger, style-conscious fans who may not have previously followed motorsport. The H&M collaboration reflects a larger strategy: turning F1 into not just a sport, but a fashion-forward identity that people can wear and incorporate into their daily lifestyle.

This collaboration is also particularly valuable for fans who find official F1 and team merchandise financially out of reach. Authentic apparel from teams like Mercedes, Ferrari, or McLaren can be quite expensive, often priced as premium sportswear. Through H&M, fans can access more affordable, fashion-forward alternatives that still allow them to express their connection to the sport. By offering accessible price points, the collection democratizes F1

fandom, making it possible for a wider audience to participate in the culture and proudly wear their passion — without breaking the bank.

### *Puma*

Puma has long been associated with motorsport, but its ongoing collaborations with F1 teams and the league itself have recently taken on a more trend-oriented approach. Limited-edition sneaker drops, race-themed collections, and co-branded merchandise blend athletic wear with street style, helping F1 enter youth-driven spaces like sneaker culture and Gen Z fashion. Puma's role is both functional and cultural — it reinforces F1's sporty image while also contributing to its repositioning as a brand with mainstream appeal. By engaging with Puma's global audience, F1 is able to reach fans who might never tune into a race but will proudly wear a team jacket or shoes.

Additionally, Puma's deep presence in other major sports such as football (soccer), athletics, and basketball helps F1 benefit from cross-sport visibility. Fans who engage with Puma through other sports are more likely to encounter F1-branded products, creating crossover interest and expanding the sport's reach. This kind of strategic partnership not only boosts F1's lifestyle credibility but also embeds it more deeply into the global sportswear market, where identity and fandom increasingly intersect.

### *Pandora*

Lastly, Pandora adds a uniquely feminine and personal touch to F1's brand expansion. The jewelry collection includes F1-themed charms and accessories, offering a more intimate and emotionally expressive way for fans — especially women — to show their connection to the sport. This partnership stands out for its emotional resonance; jewelry has symbolic meaning, and incorporating F1 into it signals that fandom can be both stylish and meaningful. The Pandora

collaboration helps widen the scope of what an F1 fan can look like, breaking away from the stereotypical masculine image and making the sport more inclusive.

Together, these collaborations reflect a calculated and culturally sensitive branding strategy. By aligning with diverse and recognizable global brands, F1 ensures that its identity travels beyond the track and into fashion, toys, lifestyle, and self-expression. These products allow fans to form connections with the sport on their own terms, broadening the reach of F1 in both practical and symbolic ways.

### **Strategic Partnerships**

Beyond creative collaborations, Formula 1's long-standing partnerships with major international brands play a key role in reinforcing its status as a premium global spectacle. These partnerships are more than just financial arrangements — they serve as extensions of F1's brand identity, aligning the sport with values such as luxury, innovation, responsibility, and global citizenship. Through these connections, F1 is able to position itself not just as a sport, but as a cultural institution that touches multiple spheres of modern life.

#### *Heineken*

Heineken is one of F1's most prominent partners. It has been instrumental in shaping the sport's image as both entertaining and socially responsible. With campaigns such as "*When You Drive, Never Drink*" and "*More Than a Race*", Heineken brings a message of moderation and responsibility to a high-speed, high-stakes environment. The partnership reaches a wide audience, especially in countries where Heineken's branding is already strong. By associating itself with a globally recognized beverage brand that promotes awareness and safety, F1 not only expands its market visibility but also cultivates a more conscientious and socially aware public image — especially in regions where alcohol advertising is sensitive or heavily regulated.

### *American Express*

American Express, a brand synonymous with elite travel, global access, and exclusive experiences, aligns seamlessly with the prestige and lifestyle appeal of F1. This partnership helps F1 tap into a demographic of affluent, international consumers who value curated events, luxury services, and premium entertainment. Through special ticketing options, VIP hospitality experiences, and lifestyle promotions, American Express adds an extra layer of exclusivity to the sport while helping it reach non-traditional audiences, particularly those more engaged with travel and high-end leisure than motorsport itself. It's a strategic move that positions F1 not just as a race to watch — but as an experience to live.

### *Tag Heuer*

Tag Heuer, the luxury Swiss watchmaker, reinforces F1's image of precision, heritage, and high performance. With the iconic slogan "*Don't Crack Under Pressure*," Tag Heuer brings an emotional narrative of resilience and elite focus that mirrors the mental demands of F1 drivers. As a long-time partner, the brand has also produced F1-themed timepieces, worn by drivers and team members, further embedding itself into the aesthetic and ethos of the sport. This collaboration strengthens F1's association with timeless luxury and reinforces its appeal among audiences who admire excellence, tradition, and innovation. Tag Heuer's presence in F1 also underscores the sport's European roots while projecting those values to a global, aspirational audience.

Notably, beginning in 2025, Tag Heuer will return as the Official Timekeeper of Formula 1, taking on the critical role of managing race timings across each session and race weekend. This partnership is not only symbolic of high-performance precision, but also functional — placing Tag

Heuer at the heart of the sport's competitive infrastructure. It reinforces the brand's identity as a technical authority while further entwining it with F1's pursuit of excellence and split-second accuracy (Tag Heuer, 2024).

Together, these brand partnerships help F1 project a multidimensional identity — one that combines luxury, responsibility, excitement, and global connectivity. While they may not directly influence racing itself, they shape how F1 is perceived by the world, offering fans multiple ways to engage with the sport beyond the track.

### **Celebrity Engagement and Popularization**

Another prominent element of Formula 1's global rebranding strategy has been the increasing presence of high-profile celebrities at Grand Prix events. In recent years, stars like Zendaya, Tom Cruise, Gordon Ramsey, Camila Cabello, Kendall Jenner, Ed Sheeran, Will Smith, Paris Hilton, Naomi Campbell, Adele, Bad Bunny, Brad Pitt and many others have been seen walking the paddock, attending driver briefings, or appearing in media coverage surrounding F1 races. These appearances often go viral on social media, drawing massive attention from fans who may have no previous interest in motorsport. F1 has embraced these moments as part of a deliberate strategy to position its races as high-profile entertainment events — spectacles that combine sport, fashion, music, and celebrity culture into a unified experience.

From a promotional perspective, the impact has been significant. Zendaya's appearance at the Monaco Grand Prix or Bad Bunny's presence at Miami sparked global interest, especially among younger fans and pop culture enthusiasts. These moments offer a crossover appeal that helps F1 infiltrate social media timelines, entertainment headlines, and lifestyle coverage — spaces traditionally far removed from motorsports. By creating this kind of cultural fusion, F1 increases

its relevance and appeal to new audiences who may be drawn to the atmosphere and glamour, even before they learn about the drivers or teams.

One clear benefit of celebrity involvement in Formula 1 is its ability to draw in completely new audiences — often from outside the traditional motorsport demographic. Social media platforms, especially TikTok, are full of stories where someone became an F1 fan simply because they saw a celebrity they follow at a Grand Prix. For instance, in 2023, popular TikToker Madeline Argy attended a race and posted a video with McLaren driver Lando Norris (TikTok comment, 2023). One user later commented that this video was her first exposure to the sport — she was curious about who Lando was, what sport he was part of, and ended up diving deep into Formula 1 content. That curiosity turned into genuine fandom. While this is just one example, it reflects a broader trend: each celebrity appearance generates online content, and that content often becomes a discovery moment for new fans. Whether it's actors, musicians, influencers, or athletes, these figures bring their own followings into contact with F1 — creating organic interest, increasing online engagement, and contributing to the sport's growing cultural relevance.

However, the rise in celebrity integration has also drawn criticism from traditional fans and even drivers. Some argue that the focus on celebrity culture risks diluting the competitive spirit and sporting purity that F1 was once known for. The 2023 Miami Grand Prix, for example, was heavily marketed as an “American spectacle,” with red carpets, DJ performances, and will.i.am conducting a live orchestra — leading many to say the actual racing felt like a backdrop to the show. Critics on Reddit and Twitter pointed out that “it's turning into a fashion show, not a race weekend,” and that the growing media circus might alienate long-time fans who feel the sport is losing its authenticity.

Even some drivers have voiced discomfort. During the same Miami weekend, multiple drivers, including Lando Norris and Max Verstappen, criticized the lengthy and theatrical pre-race introductions, calling them “awkward” and “unnecessary.” The emphasis on celebrity status can create logistical challenges, crowding the paddock and distracting from the focus on performance. As F1 becomes increasingly tied to lifestyle branding and mass entertainment, a fundamental question emerges: how much is too much?

Despite these concerns, there’s no denying that celebrity appearances have played a major role in shaping F1’s new global identity. They help reframe the sport as a culturally relevant experience, but they also highlight a tension between entertainment value and sporting tradition. In many ways, this dynamic mirrors the broader transformation F1 is undergoing — a sport caught between its elite past and its media-driven, globally accessible future.

## **Survey Results and Analysis**

To better understand how Formula 1’s digital strategies and branding efforts are resonating with fans beyond its traditional European audience, an online survey was conducted among F1 fans primarily located in Eurasia, Russia, Eastern Europe, and the surrounding regions. The goal of the survey was to identify patterns in how fans engage with the sport online, how they perceive F1’s efforts to reach their region, and the impact of recent media campaigns such as *Drive to Survive* on their overall connection to the sport.

### *Demographic Overview*

The survey collected responses from participants of varying ages, genders, and national backgrounds. Most respondents identified as either 18–24 or 25–34 years old, aligning with F1’s current push to reach a younger, digitally active audience. Both male and female fans were represented, and while the majority of respondents came from Armenia and the wider Eastern

European region, there were also participants from Russia/CIS, Central America, and Western Europe, demonstrating a geographically diverse sample. These demographics reflect the growing reach of F1 across different regions and reinforce the relevance of examining fan engagement outside of F1's historic European heartland.

### *Pathways Into Fandom*

One of the central questions in the survey focused on how participants first became interested in F1. The responses varied widely, showing that there is no singular path into the fandom. Some respondents cited watching F1 as a child on television, indicating long-term fandom shaped by family or early exposure. Others noted that social media posts and coverage were key entry points, while a few mentioned being drawn in through news articles about F1 technology. These responses suggest that F1's appeal spans both traditional and new media, and that modern fans are discovering the sport through a combination of digital touchpoints, legacy broadcasts, and technological curiosity. This also affirms that *Drive to Survive*, while impactful, is not the only route through which new fans are introduced to the sport.

### *Social Media Engagement*

A strong pattern emerged around how fans engage with Formula 1 on social media. The vast majority of respondents indicated that Instagram is the platform they use most to follow F1 content, with TikTok, YouTube, Twitter (X), and Telegram also being widely used. In most cases, respondents selected multiple platforms, demonstrating a multi-platform media engagement style that aligns with younger generations' digital behavior. This data reinforces the argument that F1's fan engagement strategies must be cross-platform and tailored to the features and communities of each space.

When asked how frequently they engage with F1 content online, most respondents selected “4” or “5” on a 5-point scale, indicating that they follow the sport quite actively. This shows that digital content is not a minor element of fandom but a central one — fans are regularly interacting with race highlights, driver updates, memes, and behind-the-scenes footage. These patterns validate the importance of investing in strong digital storytelling and real-time content strategies, especially for reaching fans who may not have access to live races.

### *Perceptions of Regional Representation*

One of the more revealing questions asked fans to what extent they felt that F1’s social media campaigns are tailored to fans in their own region. Most respondents gave a score of “3” or “4”, suggesting that fans do see some effort from F1 to localize its content — but not a great deal. This response reveals an important tension: while fans outside Europe feel increasingly included, they still perceive F1’s global branding as largely Eurocentric or generic. This provides strong justification for the research questions at the heart of this capstone — that global expansion is occurring, but the depth of connection may not always match the extent of reach.

When asked how they perceive F1’s broader efforts to connect with fans outside Europe, responses were mostly positive, with the majority selecting “4” or “5” on a Likert scale. This shows a general openness to and appreciation of F1’s global expansion. However, it also implies a level of skepticism or cautious optimism, rather than full satisfaction.

### *Content Preferences*

Participants were also asked to select the types of F1 content they most frequently engage with. The most common responses included race highlights, memes, driver interviews, technical updates, and news about teams and regulations. This reflects the multifaceted nature of modern fandom: some fans prioritize entertainment and humor, while others are deeply engaged with the

sport's mechanics and strategic layers. This diversity of interest suggests that F1's digital strategy must remain varied — appealing to casual and hardcore fans alike, across different cultural contexts.

### *Impact of Drive to Survive*

The Netflix documentary series *Drive to Survive* was a central focus of the survey, as it represents one of the most influential branding efforts in F1's recent history. Most respondents indicated that they had watched the series, and several open-ended answers suggested that the show had a notable impact on their interest in the sport. One fan commented that the series had “*significantly deepened my interest in the sport*”, while another stated they became “*more interested in the behind-the-scenes dynamics.*” At the same time, not all respondents were equally affected by the show. One participant noted, “*not really big since I always loved the sport,*” highlighting that long-term fans may view *Drive to Survive* as supplementary rather than essential. These responses support the idea that the series has been effective in attracting new fans, but its impact varies depending on prior engagement with the sport.

### *Influence on Fan Behavior*

Finally, the survey asked whether digital platforms — including social media and online campaigns — had increased the likelihood of respondents attending a live race or purchasing F1 merchandise. Most respondents rated this influence a “4” or “5,” suggesting that F1's digital engagement efforts are not only building emotional connections but also driving real-world consumer behavior. The online fandom experience appears to be translating into economic support for the sport, validating the emphasis F1 has placed on digital expansion (Survey respondents, personal communication, 2025).

## Interview Results and Analysis

To complement the survey findings with deeper qualitative insights, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted with Formula 1 fans based in Armenia. The aim was to gain a more personal and nuanced understanding of how digital media strategies, accessibility challenges, and localized cultural representation affect fan engagement. Although not very big number of interviews were conducted, participants offered detailed reflections on their experiences, and many of the insights were consistent across responses.

One of the most consistent themes across interviews was the challenge of accessing F1 content in Armenia. Respondents noted that few local TV channels broadcast races, and that F1TV — the official streaming platform — is unavailable in the region. This forces many fans to rely on pirated streams or hope for sporadic coverage on local channels. One participant shared, *“I mostly watch pirated broadcasts, because there’s usually no other way to watch the races live.”* Another restated this by explaining the obstacles in trying to access even basic F1 media: *“SkySports limits its posts, so even a video on Twitter can’t be watched from Armenia. I had a lot of trouble creating an account on F1.com to read the posted articles.”*

Despite these barriers, the emotional connection to the sport remains strong. Most of the interviewees described the F1 Armenian fan community as small but passionate, with one participant emphasizing, *“I made some good friends with people from our F1 community and they’re very nice people.”* Another explained how discovering the community late in 2024 was a welcome surprise, since none of their personal friends shared the same interest. These testimonies highlight that while institutional access may be lacking, connection and fan enthusiasm remain vibrant — especially when fans manage to find each other online.

Interviewees also offered useful feedback on how F1's digital strategies have shaped their engagement with the sport. Participants spoke highly of social media initiatives and YouTube content, particularly lighter, personality-driven campaigns like *Grill the Grid*. One fan noted that F1's digital presence "*influences a lot, especially their social media strategies are very good.*" Another described how content like the recent Lego-branded race video helped them feel more connected to the drivers and the F1 world in general. These responses support the argument that digital strategies are helping humanize the sport and offering fans a wider range of entry points into the community.

However, the limitations of regional targeting also became clear. While participants praised F1's general efforts to engage a global audience, they noted that Armenia is rarely, if ever, part of that focus. One participant mentioned: "*There are no mentions of Armenia, nothing targeted towards Armenia.*" Even small moments — such as Alex Albon recording a Gulf gas station video filmed for Armenia — were seen as "*one of the biggest interactions Armenia has had with F1.*" This underscores a key tension in the sport's global expansion: while the digital content may be internationally available, true localization and inclusion are still lacking in certain markets.

When asked about the influence of Netflix's *Drive to Survive*, most of the interviewees responded with a mix of skepticism and appreciation. Only few of them felt that the series significantly altered their own perception of the sport. One noted, "*Didn't change much, because I know Netflix likes to overdramatize things,*" and the other added, "*I mostly use other sources to get to know more about F1.*" These comments suggest that more seasoned fans, or those deeply engaged with the sport, are aware of the show's entertainment-first framing and view it as secondary to more direct engagement like watching races or following news.

Still, many of them acknowledged the show's role in bringing new fans into the sport, particularly from non-traditional markets like the United States. One participant reflected, "*There's no doubt that DTS brought more fans into the sport... although their perception may be affected by the show.*" These nuanced responses highlight an important layer in the digital engagement discourse: while campaigns like *Drive to Survive* are highly effective at growth, they also raise questions about authenticity and how newcomers understand the sport through dramatized media.

Finally, a recurring concern across interviews was the financial and geographic barriers to participating in F1 events. The cost of traveling to a race, securing accommodation, and buying tickets was consistently described as extremely expensive, especially in comparison to average incomes in the region. One fan explained: "*Tickets and traveling to other countries to watch the race is pretty expensive for an average citizen.*" This highlights a central contradiction in F1's branding strategy: while the sport aims to be globally accessible online, physical access to the live experience remains extremely exclusive. The inaccessibility of F1TV and blocked social media content further compounds this feeling of distance.

## **Conclusion**

Formula 1's transformation over the past decade illustrates how digital public relations strategies can reinvent a long-established sport and radically expand its global audience. Once considered an elite, Eurocentric club, F1 has grown into a global entertainment product — thanks largely to its multi-faceted media efforts. Through behind-the-scenes documentaries like *Drive to Survive*, fashion and merchandise collaborations, celebrity integrations, and a strong social media presence, Formula 1 has reached younger and more diverse audiences, including those far removed from its traditional fanbase.

This research has demonstrated that these PR strategies are not only effective in building brand visibility, but also in emotionally connecting with fans across geographies and cultures. Survey responses and interviews with fans from Eurasian and Russian-speaking regions reveal the deep impact of accessible media on fandom: many discovered the sport through content like *Drive to Survive*, while others deepened their engagement through lifestyle campaigns, collaborations, and viral moments online. However, the findings also show a tension between entertainment and authenticity — with many fans appreciating the dramatization of the sport, while others remain critical of exaggerated narratives or limited accessibility in certain regions.

What emerges from this study is the understanding that F1's global success is not based solely on the sport itself, but on the ways it is narrated, marketed, and experienced. The expansion of Formula 1 is not just geographical — it is cultural, digital, and emotional. The sport now lives not only on the racetrack but across social media feeds, wardrobes, fan collections, and global conversations.

While this research offers valuable insights into F1's digital PR strategies and fan engagement in emerging markets, it also opens the door for future research into how these strategies are evolving. Further studies could explore other underrepresented regions, analyze the long-term loyalty of new fans, or investigate how F1 responds to ethical and political concerns raised by its global expansion. As F1 continues to grow, the balance between authenticity, entertainment, and access will remain a key challenge — and an opportunity — for its brand and its community.

## References:

Yüçetürk, C., & Keskin, Y. (2022). Sportswashing as a Method of Exoneration of Authoritarian Regimes: The Case of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *Karadeniz Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 14(26), 118-134.

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Yusuf-Keskin-2/publication/377111402\\_Sportswashing\\_as\\_a\\_Method\\_of\\_Exoneration\\_of\\_Authoritarian\\_Regimes\\_The\\_Case\\_of\\_the\\_Kingdom\\_of\\_Saudi\\_Arabia/links/6595d5682468df72d3f94b56/Sportswashing-as-a-Method-of-Exoneration-of-Authoritarian-Regimes-The-Case-of-the-Kingdom-of-Saudi-Arabia.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Yusuf-Keskin-2/publication/377111402_Sportswashing_as_a_Method_of_Exoneration_of_Authoritarian_Regimes_The_Case_of_the_Kingdom_of_Saudi_Arabia/links/6595d5682468df72d3f94b56/Sportswashing-as-a-Method-of-Exoneration-of-Authoritarian-Regimes-The-Case-of-the-Kingdom-of-Saudi-Arabia.pdf)

Sturm, D. (2014). A glamorous and high-tech global spectacle of speed: Formula One motor racing as mediated, global and corporate spectacle. In *Global Sport Media: Sport, Culture, and the Media* (pp. 68-78). Routledge.

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780203528020-6/glamorous-high-tech-global-spectacle-speed-damion-sturm>

Næss, H. E. (2019). Investment Ethics and the Global Economy of Sports: The Norwegian Oil Fund, Formula 1 and the 2014 Russian Grand Prix. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 158(2), 535-546.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-017-3751-8>

Capparelli, R. C. (2016). *The World Formula One Championship and North America: The Development of a Globalized Industrial Sports Complex?* [Doctoral dissertation, Birkbeck, University of London]. ORBIT Online Repository.

<https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/id/eprint/40212/>

Lowes, M. (2017). Toward a Conceptual Understanding of Formula One Motorsport and Local Cosmopolitanism Discourse in Urban Placemarketing Strategies. *Communication & Sport*, 6(2), 203-218.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2167479517697955>

Danne, M. (2022). Formula 1 in a Completely Different Light: How Do Fans Perceive Authenticity in the Netflix Documentary Series 'Drive to Survive'?. [Master's thesis, Lund University].

<https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1676975&dswid=8905>

Palermo, A., & Delaine, G. (2023). Formula One on social networks: A successful strategy. *Zer*, 28(54), 13-29.

<https://hal.science/hal-04505995/>

Crantz, C. (2024). When the Formula One engines roar louder than war: A qualitative case study of the UK news framing of the Formula One Grand Prix in Russia and Saudi Arabia regarding sportswashing [Master's thesis, Lund University].

<https://lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/search/publication/9151467>

Boratko, J. (2024). Rights out: Leveling Formula One's human rights commitments with its expansion in the Gulf States. *Suffolk Transnational Law Review*, 47(1), 29-57.

<https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/sujtnlr47&div=6&id=&page=>

Markopoulos, E., Markopoulos, P., Liumila, M., Almufti, Y., Romano, C., & Benitez, P. V. (2019, June). *A gamified approach towards identifying key opportunities and potential sponsors for the future of F1 racing in a declining car ownership environment*. SpringerLink.

[https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-20476-1\\_19](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-20476-1_19)

Person, Mark, A., & Dottori, S. (2023, December 5). *Sport public relations: 14: An evolution from media relations to dig*. Taylor & Francis.

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003455103-14/sport-public-relations-mark-dottori-alex-s%C3%A9vigny-norm-reilly>

Seale, J. (2025, March 12). “*you get hooked so quickly!*” *how formula 1: Drive to survive became the apex of TV documentaries*. The Guardian.

<https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2025/mar/12/formula-1-drive-to-survive-netflix-apex-of-tv-documentaries>

Shah, D., & Williams, A. L. (2024, September 3). “*Drive to Survive*” *Drives New Fans to Formula 1? Studying Viewer Experiences of a Sports Documentary and Its Influence on the Sport’s Fandom*. Sage Journals.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/21674795241280209>

Zhou, Z. (2023, December). *Analysis of the Marketing Strategy of the Formula One Group in the United States - Taking the Miami Grand Prix as an Example*. ResearchGate.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/381564013\\_Analysis\\_of\\_the\\_Marketing\\_Strategy\\_of\\_the\\_Formula\\_One\\_Group\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_-\\_Taking\\_the\\_Miami\\_Grand\\_Prix\\_as\\_an\\_Example](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/381564013_Analysis_of_the_Marketing_Strategy_of_the_Formula_One_Group_in_the_United_States_-_Taking_the_Miami_Grand_Prix_as_an_Example)

Person. (2024, November 22). *A 2024 overview of the Formula One marketing strategy: Brand Vision*. Brand Vision Insights.

<https://www.brandvm.com/post/formula-one-marketing>

Box to Box Films. (2019–2024). *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* [TV series]. Netflix.

<https://www.netflix.com/title/80204890>

Formula 1. (2025). *Formula 1 Partners*. Retrieved May 10, 2025, from

<https://www.formula1.com/en/information/formula-1-partners.2shz7bIVhGgS3ovP69N3Rs>

Tag Heuer. (2025). *Tag Heuer returns as official timekeeper of Formula 1 in 2025*. Retrieved May 10, 2025, from

<https://www.tagheuer.com/int/en/partnerships/fl.html>

LEGO Group. (2025). *The LEGO Group & Formula 1®*. Retrieved May 10, 2025, from

<https://www.lego.com/en-us/categories/fl>

---

### **Disclaimer on the Use of AI Tools**

During the writing of this paper, I utilized AI-assisted tools such as Quillbot, Grammarly and Chat GPT to enhance clarity, grammar, and flow. These tools were employed only for refining sentence structure, correcting punctuation, and suggesting synonyms to improve readability.

However, the intellectual content, analysis, and ideas presented in this paper are entirely my own original work. No AI was used to generate content or research findings.