Building A Strong Personal Brand & Online Presence

Thu, Feb 16, 2023 1:55PM • 34:10

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

brand, motorsport, sponsors, formula sae, race, racers, social media, aligns, values, sponsorship, building, posts, grown, bit, nascar, racing, people, year, document, weekend

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Welcome to motorsport coaching the podcast for racers with racers. Miss motivate can help get you to the next level. Every episode she talks to the best racers of today and those that can get you there. She'll help you get better. Racing, new fitness, nutrition, sports psychology, sponsorship, social media, public relations and media training. Connect with Miss, motivate and motivate training.com.au That's M O t i v the number eight training.com.au. And now to help get you to the next level, Miss motivate herself Belinda rice Lee.

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Hello crew and welcome to episode 137 of the motorsport coaching podcast. I am your host, Belinda Rhys Lee. And we have had a bit of a hiatus as we've been busily working on 2023 with lots of clients getting ready for the season, as well as putting the final touches onto our sponsorship course. Over the next couple of weeks, we're going to be putting out two podcasts a week, just so you can get a little bit more information around what is in inside that winning sponsorship course. And if that course is right for you. So to kick things off, and today we've got a special guest with Rona VSLs came to talk to us about building a stronger brand and the relationship that it has with social media. So hope you enjoyed this session. And we've got some freebies, that is linked to the show notes, make sure you race over to check out is a values assessment. There's also more information about the winning sponsors cost, raise information if you wanted to work with her and get into more contact with her. And also a link to those assessment all will make sense throughout today's show. I hope you enjoy it. And stay tuned to next week. Hi, and welcome to the most Sport Coaching podcast. Hi, Belinda, thanks so much for having me. I'm really excited to chat with you today. I am too because you're not one of my favorite subjects, we're going to be talking about how to build a strong personal brand and online presence. Tell us about your love of branding. How did you get started? But and who are you basically?

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Yeah, sure. So I am probably just a little bit over the sort of the 10 year mark in my marketing and communications career, which is crazy to say, because when I set out at uni all those years ago, thinking I'd be doing this 10 years later, or even doing something for 10 years was crazy at the time. But for me, it started with just a love of writing and a love of creating a love of photography. And it's all just kind of

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morphed into what I'm doing now, which is a lot of content marketing, copywriting, brand work, and all of those things are so important. For you know, whether you're an individual person or a big corporate, it's all it's all who you are and how you present yourself to the world. So it's stuff that anyone can relate to and anyone can can take advantage of and use to their benefit. Yeah, we're definitely having a great skill set is a great mashup for exactly the role that you're currently doing at the moment. I guess over the time, what's been one of your favorite roles.

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Um, you know, funnily enough because I'm on a motorsport podcast, probably anything I've done related to motorsport has been sort of like my favorite work and

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a lot of that has been unpaid. A lot of that has been volunteer but I've learned so much from whether it's been volunteering with supercars in the media center, or working with Formula SAE. So that was something that I did at uni, jumped on board with my university's Formula SAE team ran the business side of

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our team and went to competition in 2013. And since then, I've been on the Organising Committee and running the business presentation event for Formula SAE and just, you know, seeing that competition grow and seeing the students get so much out of it is just it's one of my favorite things to do because it's just it was so beneficial for me when I was going through it so it's nice to be able to give back to that next generation of of engineers and and mechanics and everyone else coming through. You send me like you're all

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you're like oh

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is that how you doing yoga? So I feel old some days.

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But is that how you got started? With your love of motorsport and going down for volunteering route or how did you love of motorsports

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pretty much as far back as I can remember, my dad's has been a big influence in my life in that regard. So when my dad was, you know, in his early 20s, he had dreams of being a professional racing driver. And he had a stint in Formula Ford, which didn't go very far, unfortunately for him, but he's my dad's a mechanic by trade. So I grew up in a household where, you know, we did our own oil changes, we did our own everything on our cars, we never, you know, took our cars anywhere to get anything done on

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them. And of course, that translated to, you know, spending so much time in the US when I was a kid, watching nascar on the weekends. You know, so growing up with, you know,

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Dale Earnhardt and Marcus Ambrose, and you know, all of those guys racing and NASCAR for me is kind of some of my you know, early memories are watching NASCAR with my dad on a Sunday. And then it just sort of has something that's been throughout my life since and when I started at uni when I moved back to Australia. I found Formula SAE and absolutely love that. And then really just stumbled upon the opportunity to volunteer with supercars. And from there, it's just kind of snowballed, and it's just kind of been a part of my life ever since.

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And do you think there's a lot of difference between American Motorsports and Australian motorsports as far as branding and marketing and the professionalism I guess, even off the sport.

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One thing that I love about motorsport in Australia is it so much more accessible than anything you would ever get, you know, in the in the US, so you know, you go to a supercars around here, and you can get right down into the, into the garages into the pits, and you can chat with the teams, and you can walk in and say hello, and you can go to test days, and you can do that kind of stuff. And, you know, certainly growing up with NASCAR, if that was a thing, as just a regular fan, I never knew about it. So I love that it's so I love that it's so accessible here, and that if you're, you know, if you're a rice fan, you can just go and you know, we have so many different categories. We have so many great tracks around the country. It's there's something for everyone. And I think in the States, it's a bit more corporatized in a way that it's a much bigger business than it is here in that regard, if that makes sense. And is that how you found love you back into the garage one day meet your eyes met?

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Yeah, well, actually, it was in uni while I was at Formula SAE the first day we got to competition in December of that year, we got down to we drove down to Melbourne from Sydney and got to the track stupid early

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the next day, which I'm not a morning person. So the fact that I do stuff in motorsport, where it's often 5:36am Start Times is just insane. I always say the cheap things that get me out of bed early are either motorsport or an international flight to go back to the States.

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That's the only reason I voluntarily get out of bed early on a weekend. But just walking out on track, and just looking around and seeing everyone there and just feeling the energy. And I just said to myself, this is where I belong. And I can still remember that feeling, I can still feel that feeling when I think about it now. And another time you rapidly I mean it is motorsport was for the fastest 1212 hour we are doing the social media content. And working behind the scenes there. Tell us a little bit about that role there and what that entailed.

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Yeah, that was a lot of fun. A couple of years in a row. I went along and supported the bathro stole our media team in the in the media center. So just kind of doing any sort of extra work and help they needed. So that was three years in a row. I did that. And yeah, those are very early starts very long days. But the highlight of that for me with definitely. The year that kind of about 10 minutes before the race started. The media manager said, Ray, I need you to live tweet the entire race because things have changed. And I just need someone I need you to do it. And I just went oh my god, you need me to do what? Okay, sure. Yeah, yeah, I can do that.

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Fake it until you make it. I mean, you know, and obviously having a background in social media and comms and stuff. I don't think he would have said to me, Hey, I need you to do this. He didn't think I could do it. But it was still just sort of those moments of you just have to throw yourself in and go for it. And I couldn't tell you if thing that happened during that race because I got to the end of it and I just went

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Oh my God, that's over what did I just do, but it was such a great experience. And I still count that as one of my career highlights today.

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Fantastic. So we are here to talk about branding today. Tell us like exactly what is branding? And why is it important for most athletes to have a brand identity?

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Yeah, so basically your brand is who you are your brand is how everybody knows you. So whether you're a professional athlete, whether you work, you know, just an employee and accompany how you who you are with your friends, it all is a personal brand, and might sound strange to think about it that way. But it's, it's what people know about you. And it's how you present yourself to, to the world around you. So if you have a brand that others, you know, resonate with, they're going to want to work with you, and they're going to, you know, think that you are someone that can work well with them, and vice versa. So it's, it sounds really cliche, and it sounds really corporate speak and it sounds maybe a bit silly, but it's we all do it every day, we all already have a personal brand. It's just the idea of branding is how do you put that into a package that you can use to further your career and get to where you want to go?

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Fantastic. And so with Todd have been building a strong, personal brand, what are some steps? What are the first steps to building a brand?

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Number one, like you know, what I really need a brand I'm looking to become, I'm looking to take my racing from being an amateur, maybe up to the next step, I'm looking now to gain sponsors, I'm looking to now have more social media presence, and what's a few steps that they can start off with?

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Yeah, so I think a really great place to start with that, as you're thinking about, right, like I need to kind of maybe formalize this or, you know, really start focusing on, on who I am. And how I'm presenting myself is to actually think about who you are as a person, your values and how that can translate into

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everything that you do. So if you know you are someone who wants to be known for, you know, being a really fair racer, being really,

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you know, putting teamwork above all else, you know, having a lot of respect for the people and the drivers around you. So those are your values, those are the core things that make you who you are. And as long as you're aligning with those core values and those core principles of who you are,

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that's where you can start to translate that into into everything else. So if you're really aligned with who you are, as a person,

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everything I wouldn't say becomes easier, but it becomes clearer, it helps you make decisions, it helps you kind of pick the kind of sponsors you want to work with, or maybe the kind of people you want working on your team, or even the, the categories you want to drive in. Because if it's something that aligns with who you are, you're going to enjoy it, you're going to put more effort into it, and people are going to be able to resonate with that. And you're going to just have a bit of a happier time, all around, because you're doing things that you know, don't go against who you are as a person.

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And then

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I was gonna say from there, once you kind of know what your values are, you can then kind of go into, you know, your sort of more overarching mission and vision statement. So I am a marketer, I do have a marketing background. So, for me a mission and vision is just your vision is your overarching reason for getting up in the morning. Like what gets you up every morning and makes you go to the racetrack and makes you try to get sponsorship. And your your mission is what are you trying to achieve? What do you want to achieve this race this season in the next five years in this category, it just really helps you crystallize where you're going and how you're going to get there.

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Awesome. Yeah. So we're gonna go through all of these in the upcoming release versus course. In module two, we got values and then module three, we're going into brands and raise actually can be one of our speakers. And she's going to come in and to any of those questions that you do have around values and around and building your brand. And so if you're interested in that, we need sponsors course that link up in today's show notes.

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Mode

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didn't learn how to identify those things and how to get that all established. And one of the other things you mentioned, was around having a style guide. So what is a style guide?

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A style guide is one of my favorite things to work with, when I'm working with a new client, or if I'm working with a company. As a writer, it's so important that I am able to write as the brand or as the person that I'm working for. So if if I'm hired to write a blog post for a company, that blog post needs to read like it's coming from the company not coming from Rhiannon. So, having a style guide, is one of the first things that I asked for, because it tells me how the company or how the person

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wants to sound in their, you know, written word or speaking words on the page. So what that means in practice is, it sets out your your tone of voice, so how you you talk to someone and how you interact with them, in sort of every which way you you interact with them in so if, for example, social media posts might be super casual and super fun, you can use some emojis, you can maybe use some shorthand, or some, some jargon if you want. But then in the sponsorship document, it's a bit more of a professional setting. So it needs to be a bit more polished, and a bit more pulled together. So that's your tone. So that's kind of where you can change how you sound and how

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you put things together. But it all needs to come back to the same voice. So the voice is you speaking so it doesn't matter if someone's reading a social post, or your sponsorship document, they know it's you speaking to them. And that's where you kind of have to go back and do that value work and do some time on your mission and your vision to make sure that your voice your message that you're getting across comes, comes through no matter where you're you're putting it and then the tone and is where you can kind of have a bit of fun with it or change it as it needs to be for different channels. Because you know, think about what you enjoy reading on social media. If you are reading a social media posts, are you reading posts on someone's Instagram that felt really formal and really corporate? Would you interact with that, but if it's fun and engaging, you're more likely to like it or comment on it or or interact with it. So it's just

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giving you that structure to feel really confident in the communications that you're you're putting out with your fans, your sponsors, your fellow racers, and whoever else it is you need to be speaking to on a regular basis?

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Well, that's a great segue into the next question, which was around about how does your brand integrate with your social media? So we've spoken about like tone of voice and the language and getting that messaging across? Is there anything else that's why it's important to have a brand and that social media relationship?

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I think

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if you think about social media today, and how busy it all is, you know, everyone's got

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everyone's got every single social platform, you know, there are millions and millions of users across the world on social media. And your brand is how you identify yourself. It's how you stand out from everybody else who's posting at the exact same time on the exact same channel, maybe even saying the exact same thing or very similar things. So if you've got your brand worked out, and you've found your audience of people who want to resonate with you, that means you've got a captive audience. That means that the people who are interacting with you or interacting with you because they want to hear from you. And they care about what you say, and they care about your career, or they care about your race result last weekend, so having that brand, it all it's what ties it all together. And it's what you know, makes it possible for you to do what you do. So if you think about, you know, maybe the racers that you follow, or other professional athletes that that you follow, if you come across, you're scrolling through Instagram, chances are when you get to your favorite racing driver, you're gonna know immediately it's them because of the style of their image, the way that they write, you know, maybe the the logo on their page, all of that stuff is what pulls together as the brand and that's how you know immediately that you're a speaker that you're interacting with your favorite driver.

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Before you even kind of process it.

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Yeah, and I guess I just brought up a good point. I'm just making some notes here. Isn't that engaging? Um, a lot of people do offset their social media content to an agency or to actually help them with that content creation ideas?

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What?

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How does that work with helping promote your brand? And what kind of relationship if someone does outsource that part of their driving? Because we know most of these drivers just want to get out there racing?

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So that they should, if they're engaged with an agency, what kind of things should the agency be asking them prior to getting started with their content to ensure that their brand is being correctly represented?

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Yeah, and that's where that style guide, you need that document. Because, you know, as an agency, or if I'm working on behalf of a client, I need to know what the client wants me to say and how they they want me to say it. So

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one of the first things I would expect an agency to ask is, do you have a style guide? And if you say, yes, great, hand it over and start working with them on that. And if you say, no, then it's a chance for you to, if you if, look, I mean, if it were me, I if someone if I'm if someone comes to me and says random, I'd love you to help me with my social media, or I'd love you to help me, you know, with my press releases at the end of a race weekend, one of the first questions I would say is great, do you have a style guide? And if they say, No, I'd say okay, well, I can help you, I can help you, you know, put one together or, you know, would you put one together? And if you were to come back to me and say, Oh, no, I don't think so. Like for me, I would probably say, Well, I don't know if we'd be a good fit to work together. Because

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I can't do you justice if I don't have what I need to,

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to base things off of so certainly, for an agency that if you want to outsource some of that kind of stuff, which I think is a great idea, because

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everyone's an expert in this field. Yeah, everyone's an expert in their own field, like, you know, no one's gonna put me in, you know, a super team car and expect me to be able to drive it around the track, just like, I wouldn't necessarily expect someone who focuses just on driving to be really their social media, like it's just, there's no way so

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outsource it, definitely. But make sure you've got the things in place, and you can get the most out of it and get the most bang for your buck and not, you know, kind of just make everyone miserable in the process. If you don't have the right information.

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I was updating the sales page for the winning sponsors quarters yesterday. And one of the questions is Who is this cost? Not for one of those points was it if you don't have the time to actually put into developing you're off track?

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I guess, well, you know, side of things, then this isn't the course because unfortunately, or fortunately, drivers athletes don't understand how much time that it actually takes to do all of this off track development side of things. But once it is developed, it is there and it is a matter of tweaking it. So when it comes to developing that style guide, and during the values mission statement, how often or how long do you think that process should take? And how often do you think that I said should revise that process.

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Um, it's something that can, you can make it as in depth or as brief as you want it to be. It really just needs to be something that works for how you work and what works well for you. So

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you know, last week I worked with a client, we spent three hours in a workshop together actually going through mission, vision, mission, vision, values, their their motto, as a company, we worked through who their customers are, how their product offering aligns with those customers. We spent Yeah, a three hour really detailed session drilled down into all of it. And by the end of it, we had a really clear brand strategy that they're can now take away, they're getting a website, a new website built, they can now take this brand strategy to

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the team who's building the website and say,

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this is where we're at as a brand, we need the website to reflect this. So that's probably I think, a good amount of time to really think about

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kind of that core bit of work and then the rest of it will just be pulling it all together into you know, an easy to reference document

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or a workbook or whatever it is you think you would need to be able to make sure you're actually using it and sticking to it because it is one thing to have a document sitting there on the shelf that looks great and says all the things you want

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too, but then if you don't actually put into practice, then what's the point? So?

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Yeah, and I was so lucky to ask like, honestly, your brand does change, like when you're Asian, when you're 15, your values, and your brand can be very different. Like when you're eight, it's important to have a brand, especially starting out within karting in order again, to get sponsors. But of course,

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you pretty much know who you are a lucky, like your other hobbies, your interest, your even career path that you're wishing to pursue. And so your brain can change the colors and all of that. So I like you're saying it's revolving documentation that it's always sorry, evolving documentation that doesn't just sit there and be dominant, and it's developed once. It's something that you should regulate, as annually, potentially update that strategy, just to ensure that, you know, do you select that same shade of red? or Now I've grown a little bit more pink? And or have you now gone a little bit more professional? Because you're like, yes, you know, I was the funny kid. But now I really don't. And now I want to be known that I'm a serious racer, and not the act on tick tock, that's to say, no, it's got a million views because I do funny videos. So I

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pretty good idea to change that around.

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Yeah, so even if you know, you wanted to set yourself, start or end, once you kind of build it from the, from the beginning, you know, maybe set yourself you know, start or end of every season, and just kind of review and reflect on on where you're at and who you are and what you've learned over that year, and maybe how you've changed or how you've grown.

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And make those updates as you need to or, you know, maybe you switch to a different category, maybe you bring on a couple of new sponsors. And you think, Hey, this is a really great time just to stop and, and reflect. So, again, how it works for you. I was gonna documentation that we put out for free every year, which is just basically called the goal plan, which goes through your highs and lows of the previous years, and what learnings you've made, again, revising yourself as a driver as an athlete going through your brand. What are you looking forward to during this year. So I'll put a link to that workbook into the show notes if anyone wants it. Obviously, it was published in January, but the content is still the same. And a lot of racism still haven't started yet. So and it's good that just to sit down and reflect it is your matching it is is that that self reflection? Again? Well, like what worked, what didn't work? I always say that a good tool is to sit down with your phone and go through videos or bursaries or dummy accounts, like right back to, you know, the previous year and see the posts and see, you know where that what triggered that race meeting? And was it a great race meeting or wasn't a great race? I always do try and promote them to do it at every race meeting. And to sit down and do a debrief like we say that we always do a debrief around about the vehicle performance, but it's very important to also do a personal performance as well. Even if you had a successful weekend, you want to document that as to why it was such a great success. Was it that you slept right? Was it an eating was it that you're with a new race team, they got a new suit to new seat, you know, basically had great race results. And it doesn't necessarily mean that you had great race results, but it means that you walked away really positive. And when you know what pastic race meeting because of x y Zed. And sure there might have

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been two negatives about it. You can note those one or two negatives. But it's just a great reference point so that when you do revisit that track that you can get it back out, go back and revise what did or didn't work, and make sure that you're building upon that for the next time that you're there.

28:52
Yeah, exactly. And that's something that I do, you know, regularly with my clients and in my work is once a month review, you know what we've done on social media the month before we review our emails that we've sent out, we review websites, statistics, all that kind of stuff is so important, and especially if you're working with the sponsor, and part of your Sponsorship Agreement is, you know, five promotions a month across your socials, that sponsor is going to want to know how those posts performed and what

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you know, getting us a word here, ROI, return on investment.

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Strategy Plan for that as well. So there's meant to fill that in every month to do a social media audit around you know, again, all those likes and engagements, high posting thing and obviously providing sponsors with a report.

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Obviously, just depending everyone's situation is very different. But if they're racing early, like six times a year, they're not going to do it every month because they don't race every month so it might be after either every quarter

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Lay or again, it's just very individualized to how how often Exactly. And again, basically what is listed inside that Sponsorship Agreement? What is the agreement between you and your sponsor, to the expectations of these reports as well? And what kind of content do they want to know that we have a template, and inside the course, and we go,

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we've also got a new course it's launching in the first of July could motorsport is a business. And we go through basically all of that kind of stuff in a lot more detail around about doing these plans, and 90 days, planning, and all of those things to include all the financials, everything that we do like to run a small business is pretty much going to be it because motorsport is a business. Right, right.

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It is it certainly is. And if you're lucky, you can make a really good career out of it. So start now.

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Well, Ray, you've given us some golden nuggets, say I do. Thank you for your time before we wrap it up. Is there anything else you'd like to share with the listeners today?

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31:05
Look, I think

31:09
motorsport is it's such a passion for if you're in it, you're in it because you love it. It's early starts. It's late nights, it's long weekends. I don't certainly I don't know anyone.

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I don't know anyone in the industry.

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No social life. Exactly. You know, your social life as your team, your social life as the people around you. So I don't know anyone who got into motorsport because they wanted an easy job, or they wanted to not work hard. So well to make money.

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Or to make money. Yeah, what what do they say the easiest way to make a million dollars in motorsport is to start with 10 million.

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Yep. So it's,

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it's a great way to it's because of that passion, that's where, that's how you align that to your brand, as you pull in that passion. And you, you turn that into who you are as a person and how you want to come across, you know, in your career. So we've all already got kind of the bones of it in there. And we just need to, you know, pull it out and make it work for us in a way that's going to, you know, get us to the next level of where we want to go.

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So ready if people are interested in connecting with you. Where's the best to find you?

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Yes, so a couple of ways. I've got my website, react seven.com.au. So it's RH I, the letter x, s e n.com.au. And then you can find me on LinkedIn as well at Rhiannon Vaness on LinkedIn. Pretty obvious, it's me I've got a big Formula SAE banner at the top of my page, and then on Instagram, you can find me at React seven as well. And of course those three links will be also in today's show notes. So I do highly recommend if you're interested in developing your brand or getting started as we said she also does press releases social media content, copywriting, she is a lady of all trades. She's very good.

33:19
Thank you. I try.

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Really, I thank you for sharing your love knowledge and passion with listeners today.

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And we'll look forward to seeing inside that when he sponsors course and to cheer more around about branding and values.

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Yes, I'm excited. I can't wait. It's gonna be a really good time. I carry thanks very much. Thanks. Bye. Get ready for the race. Do you feel one step closer to being the next superstar behind the wheel. Motivate training.com.au For more mo T I ve the number eight training.com.au the green flag. Every episode gets you one step closer to the checkered flag. The motorsport coaching podcast getting you to the checkered flag faster

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