

Pennzoil Looks To Capitalize On First Cup Race Deal Since '01

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March 2, 2018

Pennzoil this weekend will entitle its first Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race since '01, and the Shell brand has a range of different promotional and B2B plans set to try to earn a return on the deal. Pennzoil last year was announced as the sponsor of Las Vegas Motor Speedway's spring Cup race, replacing Lowe's tool brand Kobalt. Fellow Shell-owned brand Jiffy Lube is the presenting sponsor of Sunday's race.

Shell execs said they view the race and overall motorsports program as equally split between business-to-consumer and business-to-business goals. Shell B2C North American Marketing Lead Patty Lanning said that the company realized it was lacking an asset like a race entitlement to further promote the Pennzoil and Jiffy Lube brands to end consumers, and host customers, prospects and employees.

Shell promotes its Quaker State brand through a race entitlement with fellow SMI track Kentucky Speedway, and the corporation saw an opportunity to replicate that model with Pennzoil at LVMS. For example, Quaker State got Kentucky Speedway to agree to paint its track walls green to match company colors. Pennzoil is doing the same at LVMS, where track walls will feature the brand's vibrant yellow color.

From a hospitality perspective, assets include a suite and an infield area by pit road that it's calling the High Roller Area and will feature bleachers and food and beverages for guests – another idea it copied from the Quaker State/Kentucky deal. Pennzoil will have numerous different types of signage, and a spot in the fanzone where Pennzoil will have brand ambassadors show off products, a show car, engine tear downs, program sign-ups, and a trailer that has racing simulators inside.



Track walls at Las Vegas Motor Speedway will feature Pennzoil's vibrant yellow color scheme
Photo: las vegas motor speedway

PLACING ITS BETS

Shell Senior VP/Commercial Sales Jim McCormick said that important business partners with connections to this weekend's race include Ford, GM and Fiat-Chrysler Automobiles, the latter of which is in the NHRA through Dodge and competes at LVMS's drag strip. He added that Shell wants to do more business with Toyota, which is another company that will have a presence at this weekend's race as one of NASCAR's three manufacturers.

Lanning added, "Obviously there's the media opportunity, but I think the bigger piece of it is to really leverage it with our customers and prospects and build that opportunity to not only entertain customers and consumers -- we leverage it through promotional activities -- but also prospects. We have a unique opportunity to share time with them and share a little bit more about what our brands all about." Shell's motorsports agency of record is Sport Dimensions Inc., and it also works with JWT on creative, Coyne PR on PR, MediaComm on media buying and The Kerry Group on at-track displays.