

## The FIA targets expanded social media audience at the 2014 Sport Conference

On Day Two of the 2014 Sport Conference, the FIA provided its Twitter audience with a unique opportunity to put questions to star panellists during a session dedicated to the question 'How to attract young people into motor sport?'

The discussion panel featured two social media experts, Alex Trickett (Head of Sport for Twitter's London office) and Lorenz Beringer (former Head of Social Media, Bayern Munich FC) as well as key figures from motor sport, such as Darren Cox, Global Motorsports Director at Nissan, which is actively involved in the development of racing drivers through the use of gaming technology, Tom Phillips, Press Officer for the innovative new FIA Formula E electric racing championship and Stefano Domenicali former Team Principal of the Ferrari F1 Team.

Based on their area of expertise each proposed a number of methods for appealing to new generations of motor sport fans and participants, building from the traditional media platforms and from the conventional drivers development programmes currently in use across the sport, including the using of simulators and gaming technology as exemplified by the FIA's partnership with Polyphony Inc, the developers of the Gran Turismo video game. Following the opening discussion, the panellists then answered questions posed by the FIA's Twitter followers, using the #FIASportTalk hashtag:

The first came from @Amit\_Mandalia, who asked "how can sports like F1 & WRC utilise social media better to appeal to a younger generation & better engage with them?'

Twitter's Alex Trickett responded first, giving an insight into the use of social media on the micro-blogging site. He explained that institutions such as the FIA and motor sports organisers in general have a simple equation to solve in order appeal to the youth on social media: they must use it as a means of pursuing the on-track experience, connecting audiences to what happens before, during after and between races. Trickett continued by saying that the added value of social media is the possibility of sharing visual content on a live basis, mentioning the 'selfie' trend in particular. Former Ferrari Team Principal Stefano Domenicali backed up Trickett's argument by recalling his own experience of social media, pointing to the instantaneous nature of social networks, both in the dissemination of news and in terms of responsive, from followers and from the motor sport organisations concerned.

A follow-up question from @Amit\_Mandalia asked 'what needs to be done to help talented young drivers at grassroots level and how can program's like GT Academy help?'

Darren Cox then gave an extensive presentation of the Nissan GT Academy, pointing to the company's success with former gamer and now WEC and GP2 racer Jann Mardenborough as evidence.