

Sponsorship Mastery Week 6

For me it's all about

personal
connection.

That's the
biggest
thing for me.

And

, and just keeping that
connection and sometimes you
don't feel like doing it.

You know, you don't

,

you know,
you don't have to be
on your game all the time,

I

guess

, but you do have
to make the effort.

These
people
are giving
you money to do
something
that you, is your hobby.

You know, most of the time
it's

not
a living.

It's
not
a living until
you become a superbike

rider really or

a

GP

rider or whatever.

You know, every when, when

you're

still

going to work

and you're going to, you

know, you're

probably

gonna

have to go to work next year

because you don't know where
your racing money is coming

from,

then

it's still

just
a
hobby and these people are
giving up their money to
support your
pastime.

So I think
just
being humble
about that and
putting
the effort in
with those people is key.

And
making
it part
of their hobby.

Yeah
, the more
they're enjoying it.

Yeah.

Because,
yeah, you know, you
have people that start off
giving you a hand, giving you
a couple of
hundred
quid that
then

turn up every weekend
and then bring all the food
with them and

then
start them
buying your tyres as well as
giving you a couple
hundred
quid and then, just turn,

you
know
, it can snowball into
stuff just because people are
involved
and passionate about
it.

Yeah, I suppose
the
motivations,
when things
aren't going too well.
You know
, it's easy to do

your newsletter when you've
just
had a great weekend.

Yeah.

When you
went
crashed
or you,
you know, you qualified
badly
and then, you know,
you thought you'd do
well,
you know, part of your
original coaching, you know,
you know, you think
you're

gonna, you set
yourself

that, that target.
I'm gonna finish

inside the top
three.

I

always
go well at this track.

And then you finished
19th

because you don't know, got
duffed up in the

first

turn

and it all went wrong.

You know, it's having that,
putting

it

all

together,

I think, and then
still having to have those
communications
afterwards.

Yeah

, yeah.

Because sometimes it's bad
enough just talking to,
whoever's
driving the vano,
you know, about it, but
then
to put on a bit of a, you
know,

a
, business approach and
do your communication and
carry on as
normal
takes a bit
of discipline and takes a bit
of you know,
growing
up.

Yeah, yeah,
definitely.

And if you know
someone
that
can help you do that kind
of Stuff too, you know, if
you're
not
articulate in
, in
the way that you write stuff.

I mean
, I'm terrible at it.

I'm
pretty
terrible at it.

So I'm
more
factual
and to the point.
Whereas actually
, people
like a little bit of
fluffy
stuff all around it.

So I could be like
40.

You work that,
out.

Yeah,
yeah, yeah.

So I think it's, you know,
having
someone
be your
parents
or a friend or a sister or
a brother or whatever is a bit
more,
you know, that can.
A bit

more
of a storyteller.
I'm
not
a storyteller.
And whereas you, you know,
the
Racing
Review wants
to be a little bit
more
inviting, I think.
You know
, when you sort
of post that out to people or
put it on
social
media.
Yeah, yeah, that's
a
very
valid point.
Is if
you.
If you've got an area that
you don't feel is strong
enough,
then look for
resources, look for help.
Look
for.
Don't struggle on your own.
Yeah
, yeah.
You know, maybe
one
of your
sponsors
can help, you know.
You know
, the same thing.
If you're going to go to your
local
newspaper,
you know
,

maybe actually get friendly
with some of
them
and get
some tips off them or get
them to help you write

something.
You know
, you just go in with
the facts and figures of what
you've
done
the
weekend, and
they go, oh, yeah,
no
worries
, and type up
something and you just copy
and paste it
straight
out of
the newspaper and send it to
your
sponsors,
you know, that
kind of thing.
Don't struggle on your own.
I think
that's.
Don't try and do
everything on your own.
Definitely.
Because that where you're
at,
you
want to
concentrate
on riding motorbikes.
This is just a means
to an end, isn't it?
Yeah, exactly.
But the better you get
at it,
the
more
it becomes
an easier part
of your world and the more
longevity
you've got.
Because as I was saying
right
at the beginning
of the training, the
better
resourced you
are

, the better
the bike's going to be.
The better the things around
you,
the
more
opportunity
you've got to be competitive.
And if you're more competitive,
you've
got a
longer
time racing bikes.
Yeah, yeah,
definitely.

I
mean, that's where, like,
where, When I was
teammates
of
Elliot,
he was amazing at
it, but that, you know, it
took him some years to
realise,
you know, that from,
from being young, struggling
to
then
having to do these
things and
learning
the
process
and
learning how to
do your
own
little, you know,
he had a
little
binder,
serrate,
a
thing, you know.
Then
we put all
the binders
together
and sent them all out.
Went
around

the local
industrial estate, you know,
printed, I don't know, like
200
off on his
little
home
printer with some laminated
paper and stuff, you know,
and
all
that.

All
that kind of
stuff that you.
You kind of do.
But you have to do
these.

These things and learn how
to do this stuff to,

Yeah.

To get
anywhere.

To get anything.

Good stuff.

Excellent.

Well
, we'll leave it there.

That's great.

With your

little
bind
of the
stories.

Perfect.

What about
once
you've
got a sponsor, what do you
think
are the key areas
to keep them,
obviously,
managing the expectation,
you said before.

But what

do
you
think
are
the key areas to keep
a

current
sponsor, you know,
on board and renewing
and that aspect of
it
?

Well, you know, I think every,
the
difficulty
is every
sponsor is
different
with
what they, what they want.

But
knowing
that from the start
and
kind
of getting those.

Having a proper conversation
with about what they,
what
they want and what they
expect
and trying to gauge
them, you know, as a
person.

Which is why I think
keeping that
connection
with
someone, it's
not
just about
a transaction of money.

You know,
personal
sponsors
are, are people that are
interested
in what you do.
So to give them a
report,
at the end of
a
weekend,
you know, if they're not
there,
especially
, a report
at the end of the weekend.

It's personalised, you know,
like,
with most things you can
have a
generic,
roundup of the
weekend, but
you,
the
first
kind of paragraph or whatever
needs to be personalised to
Jeff and to
Jim
and
Sally
at,
you know, local spec savers,
you know,
whatever
, and have
something slightly more
personal about it.
And
putting
that effort
in, I think at the beginning
of those
relationships
helps the longevity.
If you
just
treat it as
a business transaction.
I think they
soon
become
bored if there's no
real,
real connection.
Yeah,
yeah, yeah, yeah.
I think that's
sort
of the most
important
thing
is making it personal.
And so is it also
fact finding as
well
?

Yeah
, I think so.
Knowing what
, knowing what they
are interested in.
Some people are
actually
interested in your growth,
other people
just
interested in the result.
Other people, are
not
interested that much at all.
You know, they
just,
they
want to know that you're
doing all right
and they're
not
too bothered.
And it's
, I guess it's to
gauge each individual person
to either
not
bother them
too much or to give
them
enough
information
that keeps them happy.
Yeah, there's lots of,
there's lots of in
betweens.
You know
, for us we've
got like a
WhatsApp group
with individual
sponsors, for example.
You know
, some people like
to be updated and want to know
what's going on over
the weekend, and others don't
. They know that we're
busy
on
the weekend and they'll see

things on social media
and
then
maybe
they'll
text us,
you know, to make sure you
get back to them over the
week.

You know,
Tommy
has a crash
or something like that.
I'll get a message from
Richard
RNG
going, is
everything all right?
You know, and I'll be
like,
yes, mate, no worries.

Blah,
blah, blah.
Text
them
back.
Yeah, it's
just
making sure
that you do that, Making
sure you have that connection,
not
ignoring people.

Yes.
And
at the end of the day
you do sit down and go,
yeah,
I'm fine, mate.
Actually
, everything's
all right.
Bike
was
a bit
trash,
but we
got back
up and we're all okay, you
know, roll on tomorrow.
Just.
I think that

little
bit
of a connection
is
great
with those kind of people.
Some people like, say will
leave your
weekend
or leave
you for
two
or three months
or they'll go, oh, you know,
every
couple
of weeks, why
don't you pop in for a cup
of tea?
You know
, it's just
having that.
Sit down and gauging people
on
a,
on a
personal
level.
Yes.
Yeah,
yeah.
And
that's
the,
that's it.
People do business
with people, don't they?
At the end of the
day
?
Yeah
, massively so.
They.
That's,
that's our guy
in the, in the race series.
That who we are
supporting
and it's the person, you know,
it's the connection, isn't it?
And that team and then the you
know,

they
then
get an
allegiance to the
manufacturer and some of the
products that the
manufacturer,
you know,
promotes and
all
of a sudden
you've got a converted
follower
in all those types
of things.

Yeah.

It's
also
good, you know,
when you talk to people
on those kind of levels is
it's
not
all about racing.

It's to ask them what they
did at the
weekend,
you
know,
what, what do they get
up to and have, you know,
because
you never know, you
might have another hobby,
you know, you both might
Like
windsurfing.

You know, there's
always
kind of stuff, you know,
that or
other
things that
can help you or help them
with something with a team
that the team does
actually.

Oh yeah, you do building work.
Oh,
great.
We're also sponsored by
Sharpe

and Fisher or
do
you know
,

I
mean there's
lots of other
conversations and
not,
not
just keep it about
business, you know,
not
keep it just about
motorbikes.
Like I say, they want to know
about
you as a, as a
person,
I think, and get to know
you and get to like you.
How much work do you
think
is.
So let's say that
you're
a
self funded or the bank of
mum and dad funded rider at
the
moment
who's looking to
have you know, a
sizable
chunk of their budget taken
up by sponsors in
2022,
there's the work in creating
and getting and gaining
those
sponsors.
But
once
you've got them, you
know, how much
do
you, do you
feel that they've
still
got
to then be on average some
will be

more
than others, but
on average, how much do you
think extra they're gonna

have to

do

?

Now
they've
got this
guy that's
helping
them fund
their racing.

I mean

, you've really got
to sort of set aside
half a
day, or a day a month
really, just,
just
, just
to be able to go through.

And by the time you've

written
a few
emails or
you've, you've text
a few

people, you've gone for a
cup of tea with a couple of
people,

you know, you're
going to want to spend
a

day
or two a month
really

just
chatting, really just
chatting about anything.
Because

it is, it is all
about
relationships
to keep that going.

Because you don't want it to
just be

a
one
off transaction
for that year, do you?

You know
, you want it to be
a continued support process
that, I mean
Valentino
Rossi,
he's got that little
tiny sponsor on his, on his
chest, which is
one
of the
smallest sponsors but
one
of the first ones he's ever
had.
And he's
honoured
that
all the way through
his
entire
career.
Even though the guy don't
think he, actually gives
him any money anymore,
do you know what I
mean
?
But when he
first
started,
that was the person, one
of the people that helped
him all the way
through,
you know
, and there's lots
of things like that.
I mean
, for us it's the same.
We try and keep sponsors as
a team, to be
loyal
to a
sponsor,
you know, because
you've got history, and
you
kind
of build on that
relationship as you go
forward.

And
actually,
especially,
like

I
said, a team for
us, I mean we've had
ups
and downs throughout the years
and we've carried
those
sponsors
with us.
And although the
sponsorships,
as you would expect,
has
sort
of grown over the years,
monetary wise, the results
are growing, but we've
also
had lots of peaks and troughs
where actually, you know,
one
year we finished, you know,
with
Tommy
2019, we finished
third
and then the following
year
where
we thought we were
probably
going to win it, we
finished
seventh,
you know,
and then back up to second
and then
God
knows what
happens next year.
But all that in the past as
well,
it's
been, you know,
that's
some
good years with
Hopper

and
then
after that
it was terrible with, like,
Taylor McKenzie
and then,
you know.
But
, all those guys have stayed
with us
consistently
because they believe in.
Yeah
, they believe
in what you can do.
And it's the
connection
that you have.
It's because most of the
people,
a
lot of the
people
you talk to, when it gets to
some of the bigger companies,
and
not
the people that
actually own the money, you
know, they're
just
people that
work for the
company
and have
access to that budget.
So it's
not
even about
the company, really.
You're
just
friendly
with whoever
happens
to hold the purse.
Yes.
And as long as
that.
So I think creating those
personal
connections

can

be personal sponsors

at

a small,
value.

And growing them

only

helps

you when you get to some
of the
bigger
companies.

Yeah

, you've sort of gone
through your apprenticeship.

Yeah

, pretty much.

Because you're

sort
of dealing with
200
quid, 500
quid, thousand quid.
And then, you know,
one
day you'll be having
the
same
conversation.

Someone will go,

well,

there's

10

grand,
you know, and it

will.

All of a sudden it will
just

jump out and buy you.

But it

will

be

the

same

conversation.

You

just,

you know,
your worth

has

just gone up.

You know,

like
you say,
you know, you've got a
package
and it's gone from
being worth
a thousand
quid
to ten thousand quid.

Yeah.

And it's
just
knowing
that and they know what your
value is,
sort
of.
The
bigger
companies
you deal with, they know
what the
value
is.

They just want it
for
half
the
price.

That's
their job.

Yeah,
well,
it is.

Yeah
, of course it is.
I mean,
like
anybody, you
know, if, if someone said
you could buy that car
outside, you know, it's
a
hundred thousand
pound car,
but how much money you got
on
you
?
I've got
50
grand.

What would that do?
Take it.
Wouldn't you?
Yeah
, you.
What about the relationship
side of
things
?
Obviously
, you've got
people that are staying
on for
a second
or third
year with you now.
So how much are you giving them
in them
understanding
what's happening, where you're
up to, what's going
on
?
What do you do to
keep them
involved
?
Yeah, so I myself, have
a
newsletter
that I send out
at
least once a month or
every few weeks
to
update
them
what I'm doing.
So they're getting a, A bit
of a
attachment
to you when
they're,
they can, they can
follow what you're doing.
You're
not
just giving
them a phone call every
six
months and asking them
for sponsorship.

So they're
already.
They know what you're doing,
they
know what you're
up
to.

And after every race, I send
them an
update
and some
pictures
so they're, they
can see what's going on,
they can see, how I'm
getting
on and
obviously
see themselves on the bike,
which,

all
the levers or
helmet or
wherever.

If you send them something
where they're
already
on,
then
it gives them
again, an attachment.

And,
yeah,
I mean, at the end
of the year, sent them
like a
nice,
nice gift set.

So they were, they were
over
the moon with that.

So it just keeps them
involved, doesn't it?

They want to be
involved
in what you're doing.

I mean
, that's why
they're supporting you.
Whereas if you, if you're
not
given

that involvement,
then
, they're going
to lose interest over time.
Basically,
yeah.
What about
mentions
?
You know
, social media is
something that everybody does
these days and I've seen
a
few
riders that go, you know,
thanks for everybody who got
me here, which doesn't tell
anybody
who it was that got
them there.
And what about
you
?
What do you tend to
do
?
Yeah,
again,
I try
and mention all my sponsors on
social
media,
so they're, they're getting a.
They're
getting posts on there.
And
obviously
if you was.
I haven't been on the podium
this year, but if I was to
get in the podium,
I'd
try
and give
at
least the main
sponsors
a
mention on tv,
because they're
watching

it, they're watching

it

live

, all the friends are
watching it.

I mean,

that's

why, why

they love it when you do
well

,

or

even if you're on
the grid and they've got
their branding on the side
of your helmet, it
all

helps.

Whereas if you, if you, if you

do

well

or get an interview or
something, you don't say,
oh, thanks to
all

my sponsors.

It kind of could be
anyone, couldn't

.
It could be Dunlop for
supplying the tires, couldn't

.
It couldn't

.
But your main sponsor is
not

getting, getting his
shout out, which he's

obviously

looking for,
especially

when you get

an opportunity like that.

But now I try and involve

all

my sponsors in

social

media,

try and get them out to the
races, but it's obviously

it's difficult this year

with

COVID
and these kind of
things, but
hopefully
next
year it'll be,
easier
getting
to the races and get
them involved.
Have you got any,
sponsors
that
aren't really into racing?
You know that they're
happy
to support you but you
know,
wanting
tickets
and things isn't really
high on their agenda?
Yeah, got
one
or two people
that are supporting me that
are doing it, I suppose
more
as a, as their brand
getting involved
in supporting
young
athletes.
So the actual company owner
is
not
interested in
Motorbike
racing
, but it's
a good image for the brand
to be associated with a
young
motorbike racer,
who's posting stuff on his
social media about them and
using them
obviously
to
get
, get to the races.
So they don't have to be

massively interested in motorsport as such. They're just doing that as an image being young trendy motorbike, Racer or maybe being Mao and whatever area they're trying to hit. But yeah, we've had one or two people that haven't been. Not into motorbikes as such that much, but they still love all the reports, race reports, and they love being involved, but they're not massively into bikes.

Yeah.

So you had an opportunity, to go and visit one of your sponsors at their head office.

How was that for you?

Yeah, I mean it's good to to meet first of all the, the manager and director of the company, but then also the team around him.

So whether it's the

marketing
director, or the
other
people you, you work with in
that
company
, but then also
meeting the team that are
working day to day in the
company.

So we went there, met the
director
and the media
manager and these things and
then
we went
around
the
office and met the other
workers, which was great
because
a
lot of them were
interested
in what I was
doing.
They wanted to know
what the
company's
supporting,
who they're supporting,
what they're doing.
And they wanted to get
involved
and show interest
and
so,
yeah, you,
you can
potentially
gain
followers from doing that.