

A New Year's resolution for the motorsport industry

Much was made in the press during 2009 regarding the future of the motorsport industry, in light of the recession and the withdrawal of a number of vehicle manufacturers from F1 and the WRC. Menard Competition Technologies' Managing Director, Kevin Lee, looks at some of the lessons learnt from a challenging year.

"The last twelve months have been difficult for some motorsport companies, but the industry has looked to its strengths and through innovation and lateral-thinking, ended 2009 in a strong position. The British motorsport sector has always been renowned for its ability to pioneer inventive solutions and last year demonstrated how resourceful it can be.

"The financial cutbacks that were witnessed across the sport, meant that the UK motorsport industry has had to again utilise its initiative and diversify its design and manufacturing talents into new industrial sectors, to guarantee its continued existence. Playing to their strengths, more innovative motorsport businesses looked to the defence and aerospace industries as extended markets for their engineering and manufacture services.

"For example, the need for rapid development and construction demanded by the military to deliver Urgent Operational Requirement – or UOR, as it is more commonly referred to by the Military of Defence - is a skill that is at the very core of motorsport sector's DNA. The progression of design and manufacturing processes such as concurrent engineering is an example of methods embraced by the motorsport industry, that can be transferred across to both defence and aerospace arenas, to add additional value.

"However, 2009 was not all bad news; whilst the very pinnacle of the sport was experiencing problems, growth was witnessed within a number of the lower formulae. Last year's Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC), GP2, and Superleague Formula series all saw numbers grow, fostering close, exciting battles through the season. Indeed, this collective success is an example of how stricter regulations and smaller budgets can attract an increased number of championship participants.

-more-

“In fact, as 2009 came to a close, the industry was very much alive and kicking with many motorsport companies looking forward to 2010. Growth within the sport continues to be reported in the media, giving a great deal of optimism to the industry and encouragement for greater growth in 2010.

“MCT will itself be very busy in 2010. The Superleague team is currently undergoing its annual engine refresh programme, in preparation for the forthcoming new motorsport season, but work also continues on a number of non-motorsport projects secured in 2009.

“This year is already looking a great deal brighter for the industry as a whole, with additional revenue opportunities available for those businesses wishing to expand into complementary markets. In addition, the sport will continue to require exceptional and forward thinking service. With a busy 2010 ahead, MCT will continue to deliver to its customers the innovative total solutions that have helped to secure its positions as a global leader within the motorsport industry.”