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By

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**Identifying the Formula 1 Fan:  
A Netnographic Exploration of Their Communication, Interests and Brand  
Sentiments.**

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**Identifying the Formula 1 Fan:  
A Netnographic Exploration of Their Communication, Interests and Brand  
Sentiments.**

By

Hilary Rachel Fox, B.A. Comm.

**Report**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of the University of Texas at Austin  
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of the Requirements  
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**Master of Arts**

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## **Acknowledgements and Dedication**

It takes a village.

There have been a lot of people who have contributed in some way, shape or form to make this a reality for me. I'd like to start by thanking Dr. Burns - my professor, my mentor and my friend. Without him, this wouldn't have been possible. Thanks for keeping me in line and for putting up with me for so long. I'd like to give a special dedication to my Uncle Bruce for his endless support and love.

As for my skulk:

To my mother, for never losing hope in me.

To my father, for his encouragement along the way.

To my brother, for giving me strength.

To my sister, for always taking care.

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August 10, 2012

Abstract

**Identifying the Formula 1 Fan:  
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Sentiments.**

by

Hilary Rachel Fox, M.A.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2012

SUPERVISOR: Neal Burns

The following study examines the characteristics and attitudes of those likely to be fans of Formula 1 racing as the sport takes a renewed position within the United States. Formula 1 racing is a global past-time of many, but here in the U.S., the sport's footprint is not as prominent as it is abroad. However, since F1 racing will soon (Fall, 2012) be in Austin, Texas, it is of special interest to the City, to The University of Texas at Austin and to the fans of the sport. Thus, this author believes that the work described here is timely and may serve to increase our understanding of the impact of the Formula 1 event and of its fans – as well as its detractors; what are their attitudes and behaviors of Formula 1 fans with regard to lifestyle preference and social interests? This study provides a somewhat deeper look at these issues and

serves as well to suggest some future research areas.

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Background .....	2
Methodology .....	7
a. Primary Research .....	8
b. Secondary Research .....	12
c. Netnographic Research .....	12
Results.....	15
Discussion .....	34
Analysis and Interpretation .....	39
Implications.....	47
Summary .....	50
References .....	51

# **Identifying the Formula 1 Fan: A Netnographic Exploration of their Communication, Interests and Brand Sentiments.**

## **Introduction**

Formula 1 is generally considered as the pinnacle of motor racing. Called “Formula” because their construction and operation must always respect the regulations of the International Automobile Federation. The cars reflect the latest construction usually built from carbon fiber or other rarely used materials and are powered by the most powerful engines. Netnography, as defined by Kozinets (Kozinets, 2010), is a relatively new qualitative method devised specifically to investigate the consumer behavior of cultures and communities that are present on the Internet. The mixed method research approach in this study was to use a web-based survey as well as some observational data gathered online to assess the level of interest F1 creates and to better define those characteristics that suggest audience participation – or lack of interest.



## **Background**

Formula One (also known as Formula 1 or F1) will, for the purposes of this study be referred to as F1. The word “Formula” in F1 refers to the specific set of rules and the formulaic process with which cars and drivers must comply in order to be eligible for such racing (Williamson, 2011). Originally called Formula A in the late 1930’s, F1 is considered the oldest form of auto racing and a part of the larger category called open-wheel racing. Birthed by the Europeans between WWI and WWII, the cars and tracks would forever alter the auto and motor-racing category as well as the category known as extreme sports. It was not until after WWII, in May of 1950, that F1 was hammered out and the first world championship was held at Silverstone near Northamptonshire, U.K., and only a month prior to that did the first non-championship race take place. Pre-war car manufacturers such as Mercedes-Benz, Ferrari, Maserati and Alfa Romeo dominated the racing car scene (Williamson, 2011). Little did these car dealers and auto-racing vehicle makers know that they were not just building and engineering cars for ultra-competent and daring drivers; rather, they were the beginning of what started sports-fanatics’ cliques and the launch of social communities that we can refer to today in modern research categorization.

F1 racing has really not had an official home in the Americas; a fact that has contributed to the lack of support and audience F1 events attract in this country. Recently, however, groups of entrepreneurs and racing enthusiasts in

the United States have been interested in generating a fan group that could reach the level of interest and enthusiasm that F1 racing enjoys overseas. In just several months from the date of this writing, the new Circuit of Americas in Austin, Texas will be in use with an anticipated global fan participation and excitement that will rival that seen in Europe and perhaps exceed the attention and support of almost any other sporting event we have seen to date.

The number of fans that have been in constant support of this extreme sport has continued to grow since the pre WWII time period. In 2010, the global audience of F1 exceeded 527 million television viewers (Mintel, 2011). The surge of people anticipated to enter Austin's city limits during the period of time that defines the Austin F1 event will very likely stress the capacity of the City's police, traffic and related resources. Anticipated attendance will be greater than the daily rate attained during SXSW and exceed that number experienced for Austin City Limits or even a NASCAR race. The inclusion of F1 racing into the ESPN sports networks over the last years, has allowed the domestic audience to increase, produced greater awareness of the sport and provided a new American fan base. The diverse character of F1 drivers has and will continue to be a huge contributing factor to the global audience and fan population. Moreover, we, in Austin, can expect to have fans from all over the globe come and support their home team driver. There will be fans who have grown up on the F1 brand and culture that will make the trek to the Circuit of the Americas no matter the weather condition, plane ride cost and duration or business demands.

Sports and tourism have long gone hand in hand. People frequently travel to consume sports entertainment. The behavior has been a part of American life, perhaps initially coincident with baseball's popularity and, as the Summer Olympics in London demonstrate, a global phenomenon that continues to grow. We associate sports and tourism frequently, with the knowledge that people will travel near and far to catch a Super bowl, a World Cup and even a Grand Prix. The United States has had F1 races - but they have been scattered about the country with no grounded or well-advertised track that serves as a stable backdrop and a statement for what the sport has to offer. While the data describing the success (or lack thereof) that the Circuit of the Americas engenders will not be known until after the first iteration of it takes place at the Grand Prix in Austin in November, the evidence suggests that the U.S. is ready for this event. Perhaps Bernie Ecclestone, President and CEO of the Formula One Group, says it best when he stated:

“For the first time in the history of Formula One in the United States, a world-class facility will be purpose-built to host the event. It was thirty years ago that the Formula 1 United States Grand Prix™ was last held on a purpose-built permanent road course circuit in Watkins Glen, NY (1961-1980), which enjoyed great success. Since then, Formula One has been hosted by Long Beach, Las Vegas, Detroit, Dallas and Phoenix – and in each case on temporary street circuits. Indianapolis joined the ranks of host cities in 2000 with the addition of a road course inside their famed

oval. Lewis Hamilton won the last Formula 1 United States Grand Prix™ in 2007, signaling the end to eight years at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. This however, will be the first time a facility is constructed from the ground up specifically for Formula One in the US” (2011).

We may be asking ourselves at this point “Why Austin?” Well, fortunately the Austin Business Journal (2011) has asked a similar question and here are some of the reasons they offered as to why Austin:

- USA’s 15th largest city and is located 145 miles from Houston (4th largest U.S. city), 70 miles from San Antonio (7th largest U.S. city), and 180 miles from Dallas (8th largest U.S. city), population in this triangle is over 22 million;
- Perfectly located geographically for North, South and Central American visitors;
- Over 130 daily departing international flights within 180 miles;
- Over 250,000 hotel rooms within 180 miles;
- Hotels/downtown/Formula 1 circuit/airport located within close proximity of each other, which is nearly impossible for any other large city in the US;
- World class night life entertainment along renowned ‘Sixth Street’;  
and

- Voted Top Ten “Sports & Fitness Cities” in the USA (Sports Business Journal)

The benefits and purpose for F1 in Austin should be obvious by now. The \$250 million dollar track will seat over 90,000 people and the city alone will bring in upwards of 350,000 people or more during each annual Grand Prix weekend. The number of people that will enter the greater Austin area has been projected to be more than that of all of the UT football games during a season combined, way over the 100,000 population of a SXSW week and most importantly from all of this is the revenue and job creation that will be of most importance to Austin (Austin Business Journal, 2011). An additional \$400 million in revenue is what the city should expect. SXSW brings in about \$95 million in revenue annually, so as you can see the projected attendance and revenue is expected to be a huge success for Austin. The fans that will attend the Circuit of the Americas (COTA) track in Austin are largely unknown; what will these fans be like? Our specific knowledge of their characteristics, values and attitudes is limited. Typically, the ideas and understanding of the type of fan and audience that F1 attracts is based on our assumptions about those abroad who enjoy this past-time. This study will provide some insights concerning what the F1 fans are into, what they like to do, who they are and – within limits - where they are.

## **Methodology**

The methodology for the study includes survey techniques and examining a series of organically created communication forums where F1 fans chat with each other, tell each other their personal thoughts and gather advice and share stories with others with regard to F1 racing. New technologies and platforms for communication continue to evolve and enable new methodologies and approaches to market research and consumer insights. One of the newer types of consumer insights research is based on the methodological approach to understanding their culture online – essentially an online ethnography. This new approach to collecting qualitative research and data from online communities is called a netnography. My netnographic exploration will be of the Formula 1 community.

The data gathering tools in this study were a web-based survey (posted on Survey Monkey) and an exploratory netnography of online F1 fan communities in different major cities across the U.S. Overall, the objective was to assess the level of interest F1 creates and to better define those characteristics that suggest audience participation – or lack of interest. In addition, these research methods were also used to uncover the characteristics of the F1 fan: their attitudes, behaviors, lifestyle interests and engagement with the F1 brand.

The tools used for this study are outlined below:

- A. Primary Research: Survey Monkey
- B. Secondary Research: Simmons and Consumer Research Surveys
- C. Netnographic Research: F1 Meet-up Groups Online:
  - 1. Austin
  - 2. Houston
  - 3. Dallas
  - 4. New York City
  - 5. Los Angeles
  - 6. Las Vegas

#### A. Primary Research

E-mail invitations to take the Survey posted at Survey Monkey were sent to approximately 200 persons. The e-mail list was essentially a convenience sample composed from a list of previous survey respondents used in the Department of Advertising and Public Relations and consisted of men over the age of 18 years. Men were selected for this research since the assumption was that men were more involved with F1 racing. (During the netnographic exploration of the online Meetup Groups we did discover a significant level of female involvement. Although important, the emphasis on male fans is appropriate.) The survey and email invitation are shown in

Figure 1 – Formula 1 Racing Survey

The image shows a screenshot of a web browser displaying a survey preview. The browser's address bar shows the URL: [www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW\\_MODE=DO\\_NOT\\_USE\\_THIS\\_LINK\\_FOR\\_COLLECTI](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?PREVIEW_MODE=DO_NOT_USE_THIS_LINK_FOR_COLLECTI). The survey title is "Car Racing". The survey contains eight questions, each with radio button options:

- \*1. Are you a Formula 1 fan?**
  - a. No
  - b. Yes
- \*2. Have you ever watched or attended a Grand Prix?**
  - a. No
  - b. Yes
- \*3. Are you a FIFA fan?**
  - a. No
  - b. Yes
- \*4. Do you regularly watch or attend professional sports games (e.g., basketball, baseball, football, soccer)?**
  - a. No
  - b. Yes
- \*5. Have you ever attended a Super Bowl?**
  - a. No
  - b. Yes
- \*6. Are you a NASCAR fan?**
  - a. No
  - b. Yes
- \*7. Have you ever watched a NASCAR race?**
  - a. No
  - b. Yes
- \*8. How many days a week do you log in to Facebook?**
  - a. Never
  - b. 1-2 days a week
  - c. 3-4 days a week
  - d. 5-6 days a week
  - e. Everyday



Figure 1, cont. – Formula 1 Racing Survey

**\*9. Do you have a Twitter account?**

a. No

b. Yes

**\*10. What type of cellphone do you have?**

a. iPhone

b. Blackberry

c. Android

d. Sprint or Verizon Wireless

e. Other

**\*11. How many times a week do you watch sports television?**

a. Never

b. 1-3 times a week

c. 4-6 times a week

d. 7-10 times a week

e. 11+ times a week

**\*12. If you could attend one of the following events, which would it be?**

a. World Cup

b. Super Bowl

c. Formula 1 Grand Prix

d. NBA National Championship

e. NASCAR Race

**\*13. How often do you travel for leisure and vacation (not business)?**

a. Never

b. 1-3 times a year

c. 4-6 times a year

d. 7-9 times a year

e. 10+ times a year

**\*14. Have you purchased tickets or attended a sporting event in-person in the last 3 months?**

a. No

b. Yes

**\*15. Do you tend to drive aggressively or over the speed limit?**

a. No

b. Yes

**\*16. Have you received a speeding ticket within the last year?**

a. No

b. Yes

**\*17. Which of the following activities would you most like to do or try in your free time?**

a. Downhill skiing

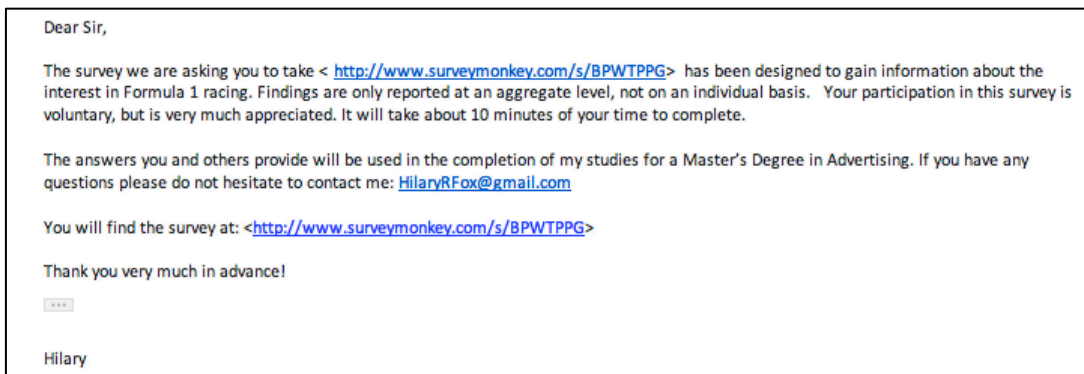
b. Mountain biking

c. Mountain climbing

d. Sky diving

e. Water skiing

## Figure 2 – Email with Survey Invitation



The survey was sent out via email with a week given to allow participants time to respond. The email instructed the survey participants to click on the Survey Monkey link in order to access a survey that was intended to explore the F1 fan base and their interests and characteristics. The invitation mentioned that the survey was part of the author's requirements for a degree and that the respondent's participation would be greatly appreciated. The list receiving the invitation best represents a convenience sample and consisted of email addresses drawn from the Department of Advertising and Public Relations' prior contacts. Approximately 125 emails were sent and 27 responses received. The survey asked about interest in F1 racing (respondents indicating if they were or were not F1 fans) and then offered questions dealing with additional lifestyle preferences and attributes. The survey asks about the respondents' interests in technology and social interests by asking the type of phone used, Facebook participation and whether or not they have a Twitter account. Gathering some

data concerning the respondents' interests in sports is of high importance since this report wishes to address that issue. The survey asks whether or not the participants watch Sports television and how often, as well as what sporting event they would rather see live, in addition to learning those sporting events they have already attended. The survey continues to ask about their leisure and entertainment preferences, income, education and age.

### B. Secondary Research

Secondary research was gathered from consumer insight surveys from Simmons Consumer Research Surveys (Simmons, Winter 2010). These reports were pulled and analyzed in an effort to better describe the F1 fan. The Simmons data set focused on characteristics and attitudes of those interested in racing. The Mintel research supported some of the Simmons attitudes and behaviors as well as further identifying the F1 fan. The data sets for the survey organizations may be found at the sites shown in the References section of this report.

### C. Netnographic Research

This portion of the research effort is best seen in the interviews from F1 fans in the U.S. The results include the geographic location of their Meetup Group. By definition . . .

“Meetup is the world's largest network of local groups. Meetup makes it easy for anyone to organize a local group or find one of the thousands

already meeting up face-to-face. More than 9,000 groups get together in local communities each day, each one with the goal of improving themselves or their communities” (Meetup.com, 2012).

The author joined six Meetup Groups that identified themselves as F1 fans by their organization’s name. These groups are specifically designed for F1 fans across the world to interact with each other, hang out with each other and engage in discussing what was the core reason for initially joining the group – to watch F1 races.

Prior to joining any Meetup groups, however, the author built a profile, joined the site and disclosed that she was a UT graduate student writing her Master’s report about the subject of F1 and its fans. In addition, as part of joining Meetup each member is automatically included on each group’s email distribution list, so any time any one within the group – of any city – posts comments on anyone else’s virtual “wall” in relation to F1 you receive an email notification – kind of similar to notifications from Facebook - but these are specific to your groups and the members within the groups.

The Meetup cities with F1 groups the author joined were: 1) Austin; 2) Houston; 3) Dallas; 4) New York City; 5) Los Angeles; and 6) Las Vegas.

Research questions and observations denoted were in reference to the way the fans interact in the community, their basic demographic information that was disclosed and any additional items, interests, groups that the member decided to make public and share with others. (Note: any information desired

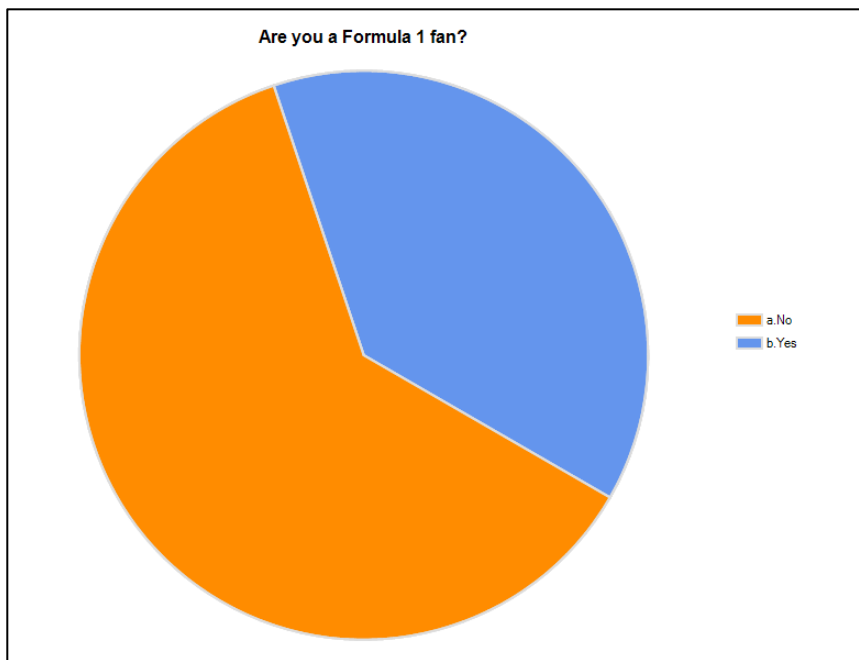
that might have not been dealt with by a respondent was left blank in the research field notes charts. The data summaries show: 1) whether those in the group are male or female, 2) where they are from and where they are currently located, 3) their last engagement with the online community, 4) the date they joined the group, 5) their interests and other Meetup Groups that they are in and 6) whether or not they plan on attending the Grand Prix in Austin in November of this year.

Additionally, with Meetup, for the purposes of this study, interests were cross-categorized with other groups that these F1 fans were in so that common interests and shared themes, etc., would be clearer. These findings will be explored further in the Results and Analysis section; however, it is important to understand that geographic location is also an additional indicator of interest and that although there are a plethora of common and shared interests; the geographic location of these local online communities also yield additional interests and commonalities shared by that of only the group due to its location (i.e. those in New York City would most likely not be in Desert Running groups like those in Las Vegas).

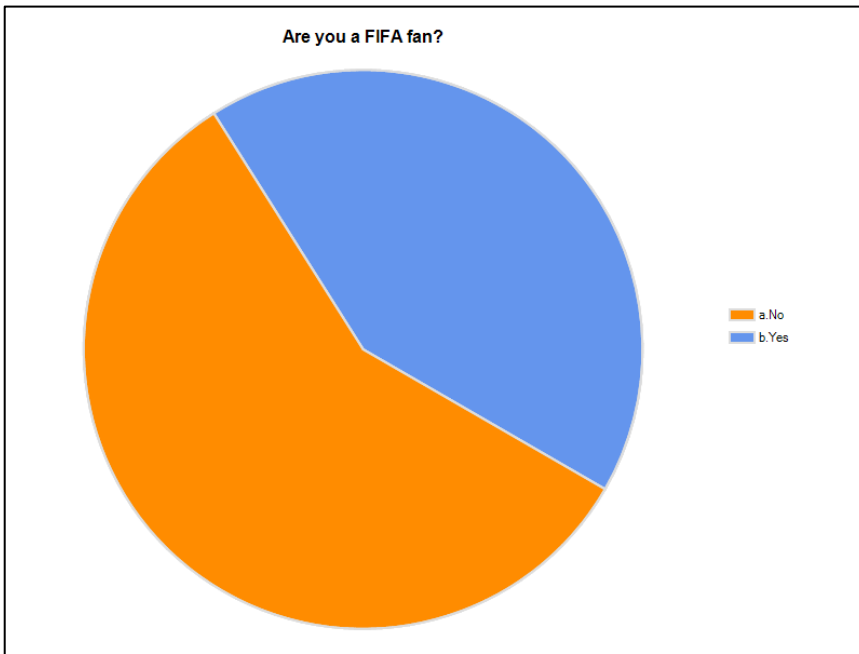
## **Results**

We used primary research to assess who the fans are and some of their characteristics. The secondary research was used to learn more of the traits and attitudes and behaviors of this “similar” sample group of people. Our sample showed a slight preference for F1.

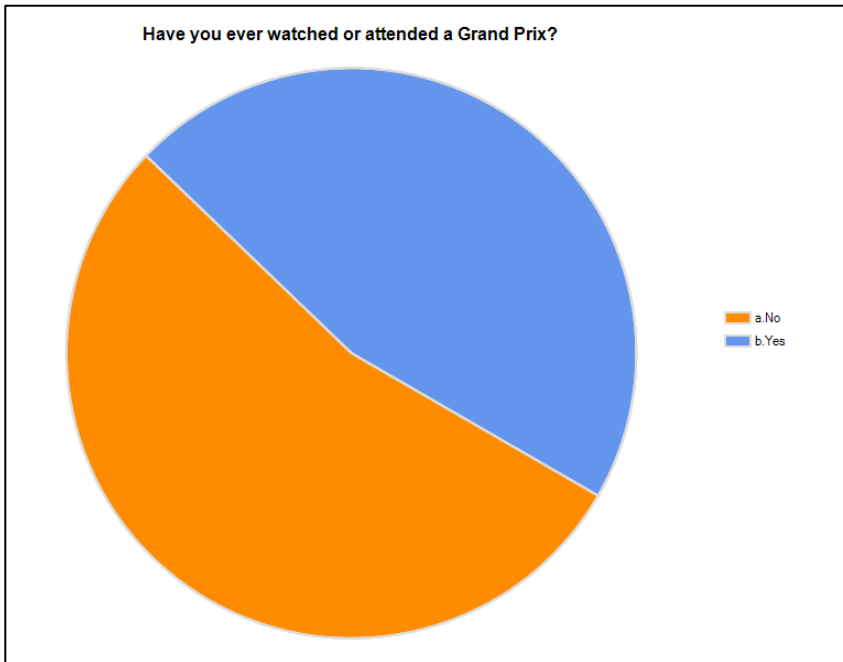
**Figure 3 – Are you a Formula 1 Fan?**



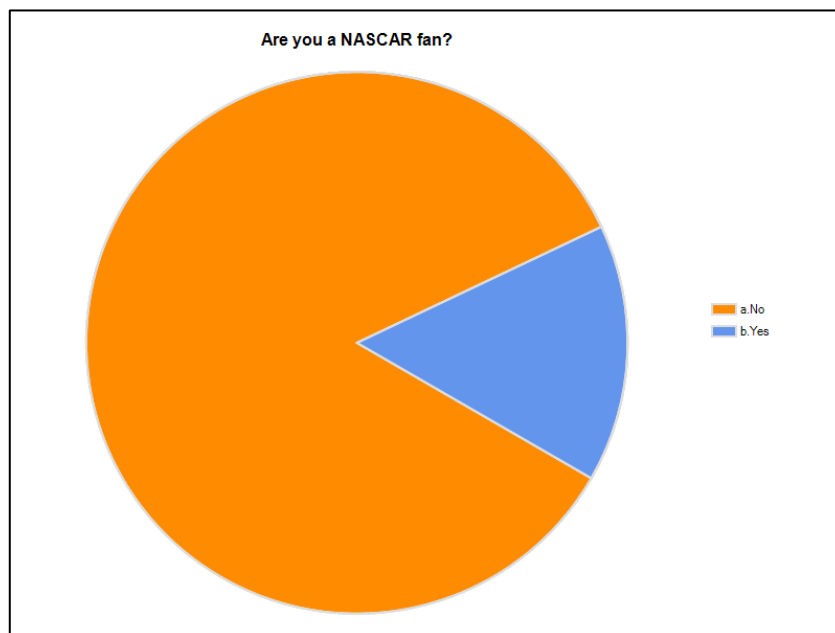
**Figure 4 – Are you a FIFA Fan?**



**Figure 5 – Have you ever watched or attended a Grand Prix?**



**Figure 6 – Are you a NASCAR Fan?**

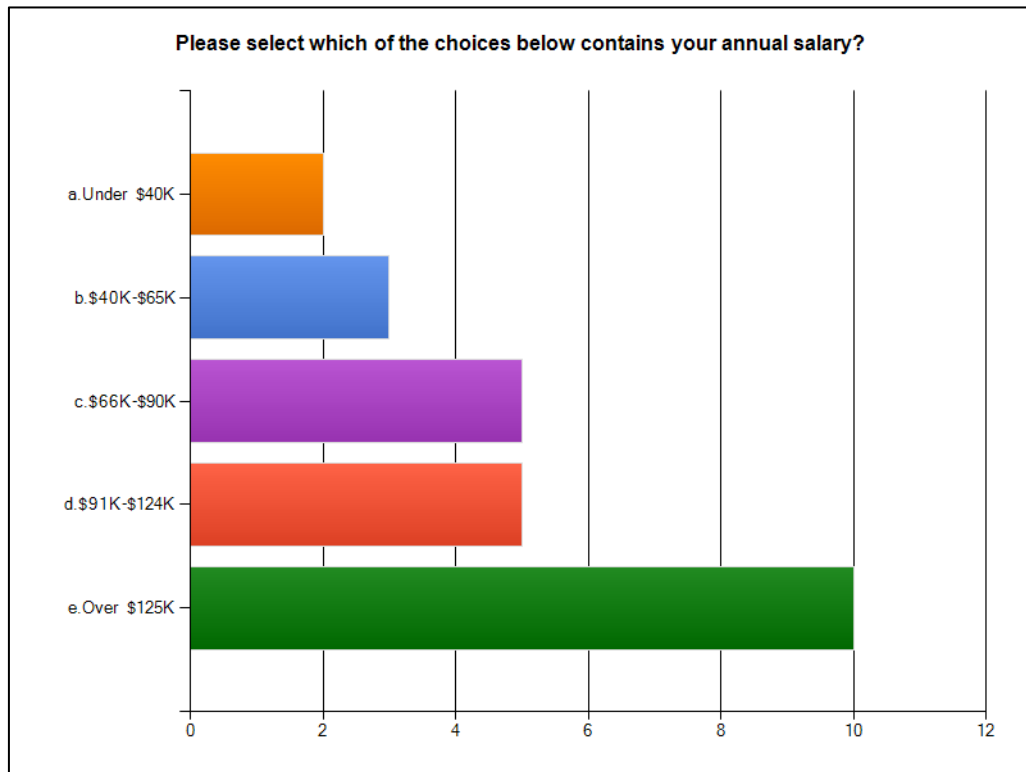


Since about half of our sample has watched or attended an F1 Grand Prix, it is not outrageous to see that they are not as enthusiastic about NASCAR. An assumption that has proven fairly on base from the data and observation, it can be said that most F1 fans are not typically NASCAR fans, as well. Thus, it is not too surprising to see that our sample was not heavily NASCAR oriented.

Gaining an understanding as to F1 fans' lifestyle preference and behaviors is important, but the data makes it abundantly clear that the average annual salary of these participants is an important variable.

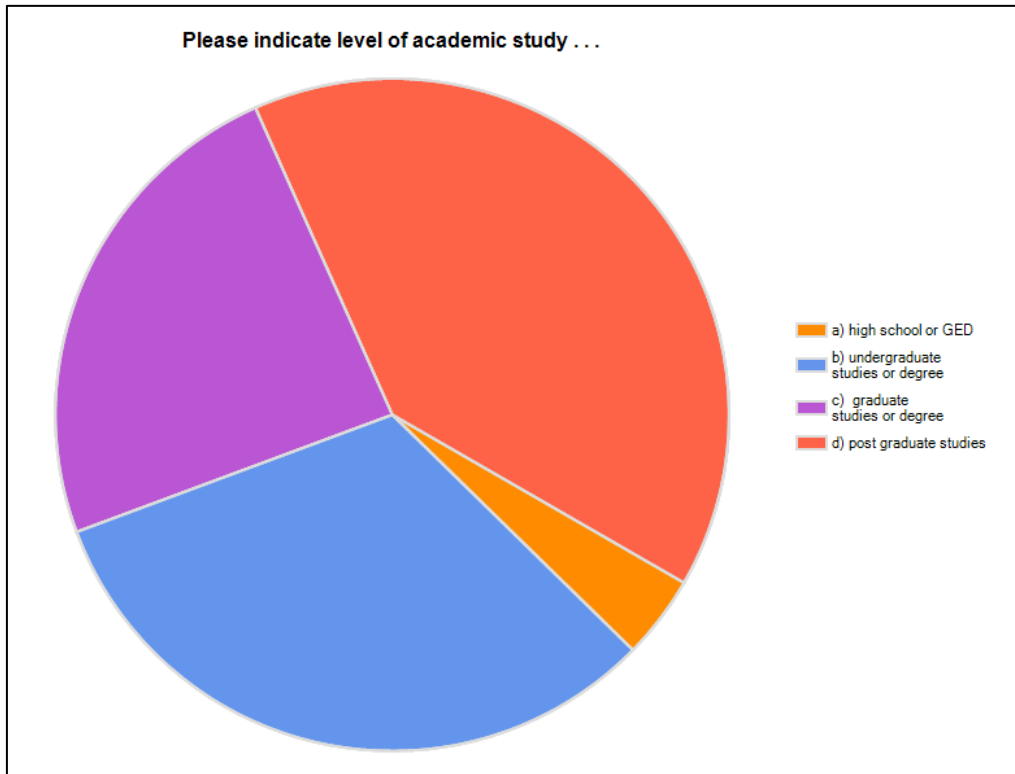
**Figure 7 – Salary Indication**





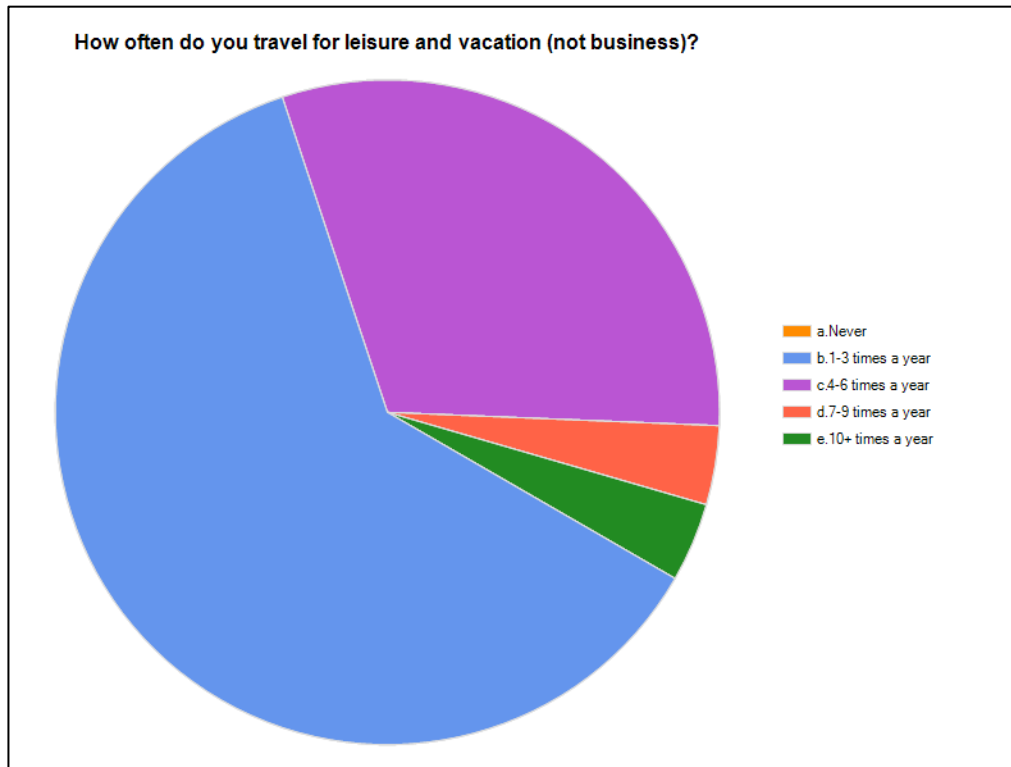
After reviewing annual salary data, it is not hard to believe that this fan also has increased levels of education. An assumption previously made was that F1 fans are a more elite crowd and participate in more affluent society interests: fine dining, wine, leisure in outdoors and in more extreme sports and activities, overall. The results below display education levels.

**Figure 8 – Academic Study Indication**



Another important variable that lends itself to lifestyle and behavior is travel and leisure. As mentioned previously, sports and tourism go hand in hand. Thus, travel and substantial income are necessary for an F1 enthusiast (note: an enthusiast is more likely to attend the F1 races in person).

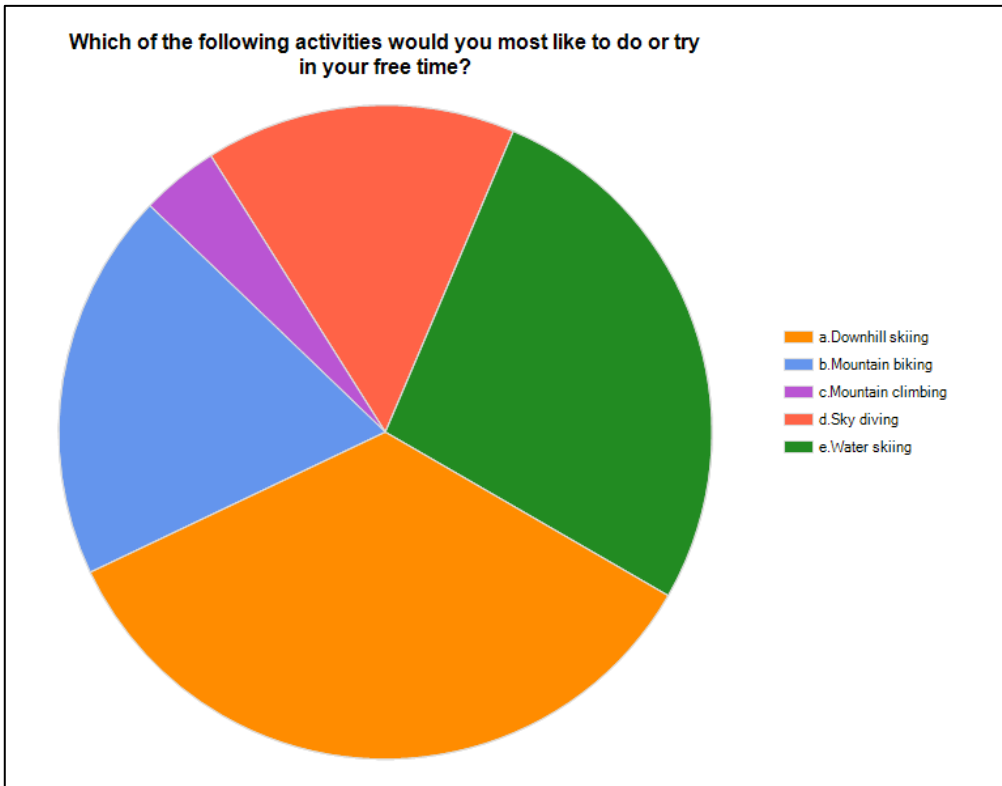
**Figure 9 – Travel Indication**



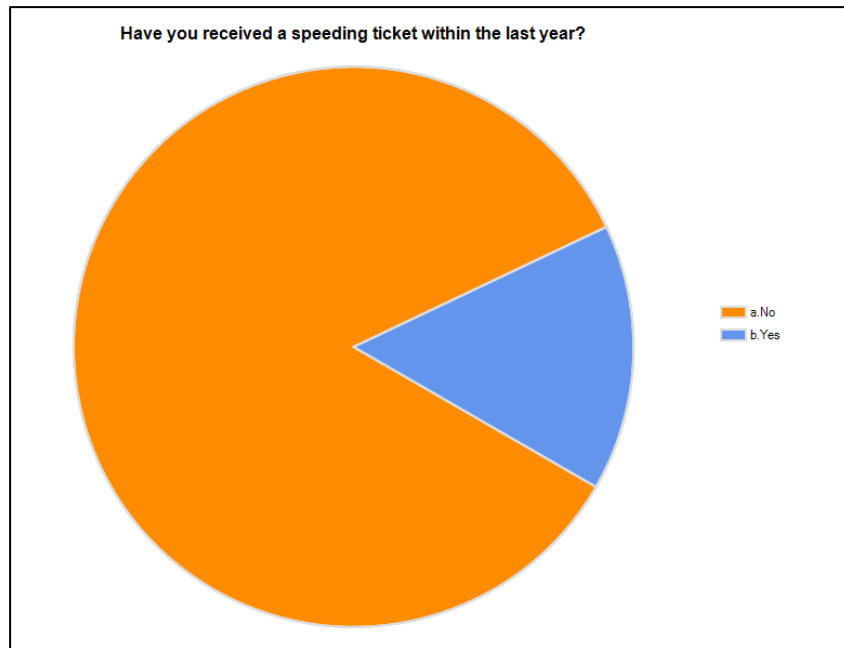
As the survey participants respond to the lifestyle, behavior and attitude questions posed, we can begin to develop a sense of who they are and what their basic identifiers consist of. Additional survey questions, such as the ones below, allowed this investigator to develop an understanding of their attitudes, behaviors and lifestyle preferences (including: technology, social media, interests, etc.). Responses to these survey questions allowed good estimates of respondents online and communication presence, how up-to-date they are with brands and technology, as well as affording us the understanding of their online engagement activity and presence. For example, logging on to Facebook more often than not reveals a type of audience that may be more confidently

considered to be considered heavily online and communicative. Owning an iPhone or Blackberry could reveal the importance this sample and fan put on communication mediums and level of modernity.

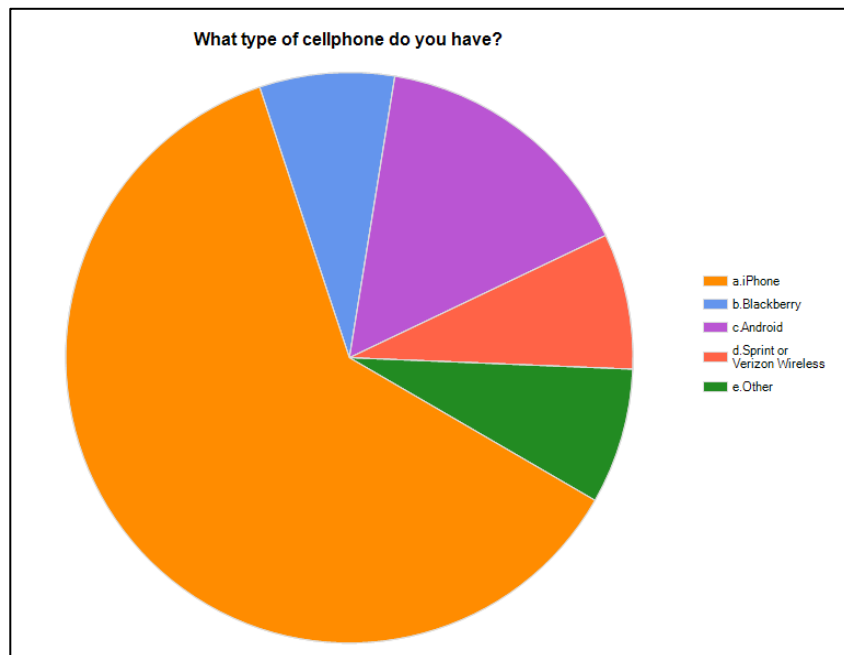
**Figure 10 – Free Time Indication**



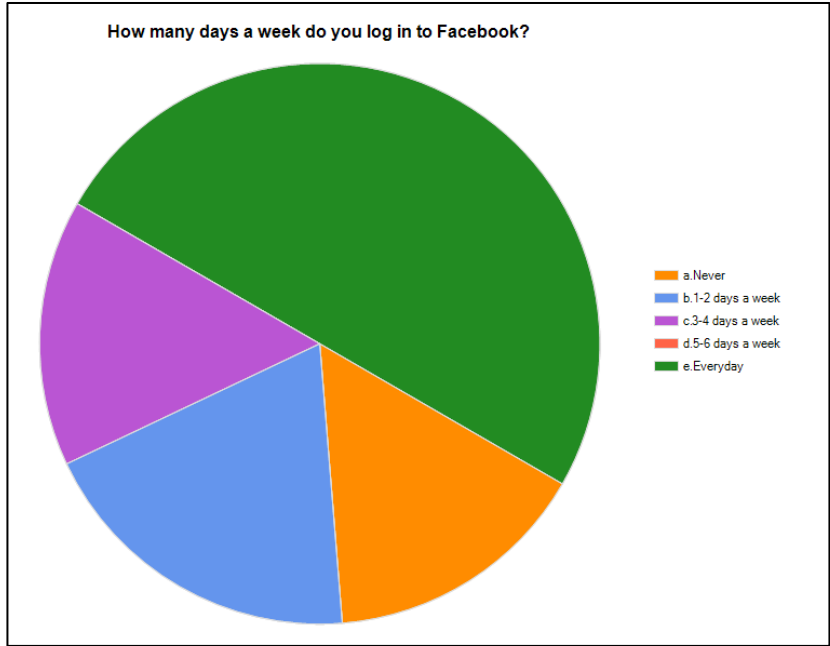
**Figure 11 – Speeding Ticket Indication**



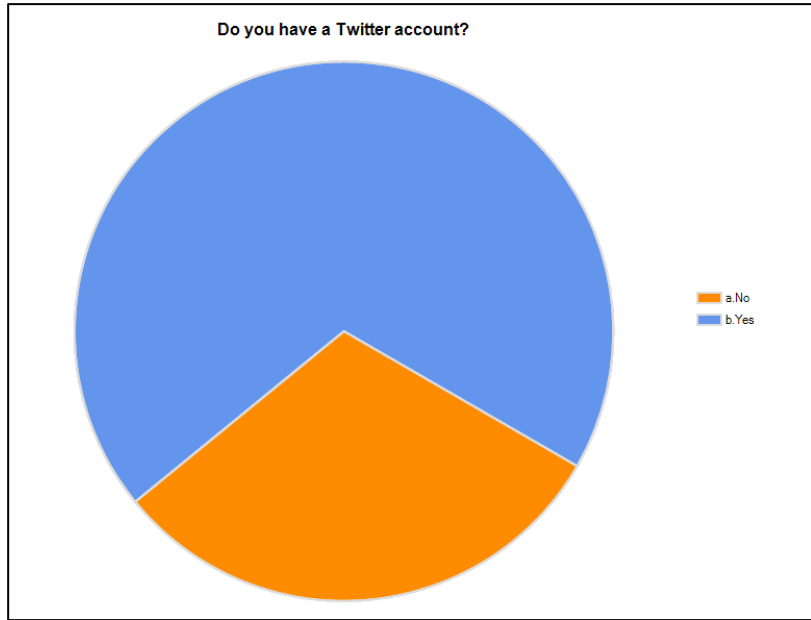
**Figure 12 – Cell Phone Indication**



**Figure 13 – Facebook Activity**



**Figure 14 – Twitter Account**



Using Simmons as a secondary research tool – the researcher was able to take the information and results from the primary data collected to form a basic idea of the most “typical” F1 fan. Understanding and identifying the basics that make up the fan and audience in general, if you will, allows a secondary research approach – of the mixed methods approach – to reinforce an existing notion. For example, the investigator has identified from the survey that F1 fans are more likely to receive an annual income of over \$50K – and that’s on the low side. The survey data denotes most of our fans are making in the upwards of \$100,000 annually. Understanding how the primary research sets the platform for the consumer survey research is crucial to understanding how to further identify this audience and sports fan.

When using Simmons, the researcher inquired about various types of attitudes and behavior information as well as about lifestyle preferences. These F1 fan indicators are gathered from the survey sample from Simmons and related to the total U.S. population as a whole in order to identify the market make up of this segment.

Attitudes and behaviors specifically examined in Simmons were that of the following questions and the answer is in reference agreeing with the statement and the responses are based on the population sizes that agreed:

- Like to learn about computer, technology, web
- I try to keep up with developments in technology
- I am brave, courageous, daring, adventurous

- I am dominant, authoritarian, demanding and aggressive
- I am intelligent, smart, bright, well-informed
- I am social, friendly, cheerful and likeable
- I buy recycled paper products
- I would pay more for environmentally-friendly products
- I like websites that show me local information
- Get more of my news from the internet
- I like to hear about products and services via email
- I like to look for new and interesting activities

These results shared above are those statements in which our fan type agreed with mostly. This segment built in Simmons came from the 2010 Winter Survey sent out to the U.S. population who has an annual income of over \$75,000 and have identified themselves as in agreement with those lifestyle preference inquiries above. These are all lifestyle preference questions that relate to the F1 fan, as they have self-identified with this.

Observations gathered from the online Meetup communities are displayed below according to their city and corresponding Meetup Group community. For the purposes of this research and results display, the researcher will denote the first ten F1 fans in each group's community roster and share the corresponding personal information as aforementioned. Since the F1 race is most timely with the Austin location, the researcher observed the entire community and denotes



the observations, just as the other city's members, but includes several more community members for the purposes of Austin.

**Figure 15 - Austin F1 Meetup Observations**

Austin Formula 1 Race Fans Meetup Group - Group Since 3/26/2011							
Gender	Last Engagement	Location	Hometown	Member Since	Attending Grand		Notes
					Prix in Austin?	Other Groups/Interests	
M	Over a month ago	New Jersey	Mumbai, India	6/11/12	Yes	Member of NYC Meetup, Watching F1 Races with others	References Schumi = GOD
F	Past 2 weeks	Las Vegas	Las Vegas	5/7/12	Yes	Entrepreneur, Technology	Organizer of LV F1 Meetup Group, in Montana for Summer break, F1 Medic
M	Past few days	Georgetown, TX	Georgetown, TX	3/26/11	Yes	Member of Buddhism Meetup Group, Cycling, Scuba, Sustainable Living, Watching F1 Races with others	
M	Past few days	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	6/25/12	Yes		Uninvolved
F	Past few days	White Plains, NY	Austin, TX	7/5/12	No	Member of Las Vegas Meetup Group, Cycling, Watching F1 Races with others	
F	Over a week ago	Austin, TX	Dallas, TX	6/19/12	Yes	Austin Adventure Network, Over 40's and Single, Cycling and Running, Dogs, Skiing, Hiking	
M	Over a week ago	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	6/25/12	Yes	20-30's Meetup Group	Group organizer for Houston, lots of wall posts
M + F	Past two weeks	Spicewood, TX	Spicewood, TX	7/9/12	Yes	Dogs, Great Danes	Husband and wife joined together, very active on wall posts
M	Past two weeks	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	7/25/12		Entrepreneur	25-34; good looking
M	Past two weeks	San Diego, CA	San Diego, CA	2/12/12	No		Mentions being a lifelong fan, Not Active
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	LA	3/18/12	Yes	30s and Single, Cycling, Beer	Very Active, good looking
F	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	San Jose, CA	5/19/11	Yes	Meditation, Garden Community, Camping, Backpacking, Reading, Hiking, Outdoors, Movies, Vegan	Has been watching F1 for over 30 years, Very Active
F	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	4/18/12	Yes	Wine, European Art, Multicultural Meetup Group, Art Enthusiasts, Foodie, Social	Speaks Spanish, Very Active
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	4/2/11			40+
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	Melbourne, Australia	3/11/12	Yes	Watch F1 with Others	
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	San Antonio, TX	6/8/12	Yes	Naturalhounds	Dreaming his whole life to see a F1 race, dogs
M	Over a month ago	Round Rock, TX	Fort Worth, TX	3/17/12	Yes	Watch F1 with Others	Photography, Home Theater, Movies

**Figure 16 - Houston F1 Meetup Observations**

Houston Formula 1 Race Fans Meetup Group - Group Since 1/23/2012						
Gender	Location	Hometown	Member Since	Attending Grand Prix in Austin?	Other Groups/Interests	Notes
M	Mandeville, LA	Austin, TX	2/20/12	Yes	Watch F1 with others	Not interested in NASCAR, can't find anyone in LA to watch F1 with
M	Orange, CT	Seymour	5/28/12	Yes	Member of NYC F1 Meetup Group	
M	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	1/23/12	Yes	Member of Austin F1 Meetup Group	Group Organizer
M	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	7/29/12	Yes		
M	Houston, TX		7/27/12		Movie fans, Social	
M	Houston, TX		5/3/12			Owns a Lotus, Newlywed
M	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	2/11/12		20-30's Meetup Group	
M	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	4/13/12		Dodgeball, Kickball, Soccer	
M	Houston, TX		3/24/12		Soccer, Capture the flag	
M	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	1/28/12		Tennis	20-30's
M	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	7/25/12		Cooking and Recipes	
M	Houston, TX		7/25/12		Houston Art Museum	
F	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	1/27/12	Yes	Watch F1 with others	watches every race
M	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	5/13/12	Yes	Road racing	
F	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	7/6/12		Superbiking and Road racing	
M	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	3/23/12			Uninvolved
M	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	1/27/12			Uninvolved
M	Houston, TX	India	2/11/12	Yes		Been watching F1 since he was 10
F	Houston, TX		7/6/12		Auto racing	Student at UH
M	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	4/11/12	Yes		Works for Teach for America

**Figure 17 - Dallas F1 Meetup Observations**

Dallas Formula 1 Race Fans Meetup Group - Group Since 3/7/2008							
Gender	Last Engagement	Location	Hometown	Member Since	Attending Grand Prix in Austin?	Other Groups/Interests	Notes
M	Past two weeks	Dallas, TX	Dallas, TX	3/28/12	Yes	Dining, Night Life, Adventure, Cycling and Riding	Over 50
M	Over two weeks ago	Dallas, TX	Dallas, TX	4/7/12	Yes	20-30's Meetup Group, Minorities of Austin, Dinner and a Movie, Volleyball	
M	Over two weeks ago	Dallas, TX	Long Beach, CA	7/7/12	Yes		45-54; Not active
M	Over two weeks ago	Dallas, TX	Indianapolis, IN	7/8/12	Yes	Over 40 and Single, Dogs, German Shepherds, Religion	40+, Super Active
M	Over two weeks ago	Dallas, TX	Hawaii	3/18/12	Yes	Hiking, 20-30's Meetup Group	Moved to be closer to the COTA
F	Over a month ago	Dallas, TX	Austin, TX	2/1/12	No	Sailing, Flamenco, Gypsy Culture	25-34
M	Over a month ago	Kyle, TX	Austin, TX	4/30/12	Yes		Moved to be closer to the COTA, Fan since 1993
M + F	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	Qunicy, WA	7/22/11	Yes	Motorcycle riders, Live Music, Owns a Muscle Car, Sustainability, Wine	Married; profile with husband
M	Over a month ago	Dallas, TX	Austin, TX	10/18/11		Cycling, Mountain Biking, Outdoors, Foodies, Wine	
M	Over a month ago	Dallas, TX	Austin, TX	3/25/12		Camping, Sushi	Watching F1 since he was 12

**Figure 18 - New York City F1 Meetup Observations**

NYC Formula 1 Race Fans Meetup Group - Group Since 3/2/2008							
Gender	Last Engagement	Location	Hometown	Member Since	Attending Grand		Notes
					Prix in Austin?	Other Groups/Interests	
F	A week ago	NYC		7/10/11		NYC Social and Culture Meetup Group, Adventure, Culture	
M	A week ago	NYC	Forest Hills, NY	10/15/11	Yes	Advernture, Technology, Spanish	Af-Am
M	A week ago	NJ	Ridgewood, NJ	4/27/09	Yes	Foodie, Technology, German speaker, German culture, Ron Paul, Business Intelligence, Entrepreneur	Attended multiple Grand Prix's in past
M	A week ago	NYC	NYC	7/17/11	No	NYC Karting Meetup Group	Not attending in person but will watch Grand Prix live in a bar
M	A week ago	NYC	NYC	7/8/12	Yes	Loves to travel, Entrepreneur, Kitsurfing, Boating, Adventure, Water sports, Wind surfing, Speaks French	Super Active
F	A week ago	NYC	NYC	3/3/12		Yoga, Speaks Chinese	
M	A week ago	NYC	NYC	7/5/11		Technology, Fitness, Watch F1 with others, Language lover	
M	A week ago	NYC	NYC	7/28/12			Inactive
F	A week ago	NYC	NYC	3/24/08	Yes	Speaks French, NYC Karting Meetup Group	

**Figure 19 - Los Angeles F1 Meetup Observations**

Los Angeles Formula 1 Race Fans Meetup Group - Group Since 3/22/12							
Gender	Last Engagement	Location	Hometown	Member Since	Attending Grand		Notes
					Prix in Austin?	Other Groups/Interests	
M	A week ago	LA	LA	7/22/12	Yes	Outdoors	
M	A week ago	LA	Toronto	7/23/09	Yes		Inactive
M	A week ago	LA	LA	3/24/12		Investments, Indian Meetup Group	
M	A week ago	NYC	LA	3/15/12	Yes		Has attended multiple Grand Prix's, Fan since 1960's, Attending GP in NJ in 2013
M	A week ago	Orange, CT	Seymour	3/15/12	Yes	Trail riding, Hiking, Walking, Rock Climbing, Walks in Woods, Exploring, Outdoors, Single, Enjoys Meeting People	Super Active
M	A week ago	LA	NYC	9/11/08	Yes	Manhattan Porsche	
M	A week ago	LA	Zurich	6/22/12	Yes	Hiking and Fun, Biking, Photography, Walking	In the U.S. on business
M	A week ago	LA	NYC	11/10/12	Yes	Technology, Biking, F1 Enthusiast	F1 Jargon
M	A week ago	LA	Mumbai	2/28/11		Enjoys watching F1 with others	
M	A week ago	LA	NYC	4/1/12	Yes	Technology, Single in NYC, Travel, NYC Social Groups, Diet, Fitness, Nutrition, Sports and Fun	
M	A week ago	NYC	LA	5/25/12		NYC Karting Meetup Group	Inactive

**Figure 20 - Las Vegas F1 Meetup Observations**

Las Vegas Formula 1 Race Fans Meetup Group - Group Since 5/7/12							
Gender	Last Engagement	Location	Hometown	Member Since	Attending Grand Prix in Austin?	Other Groups/Interests	Notes
M	Over 2 weeks ago	Las Vegas	Valley Stream, NY	6/6/12	Yes	Member of NYC F1 Meetup	Big time fan, going to Spain for F1 race
F	Past 2 weeks	Las Vegas	Las Vegas	5/7/12	Yes	Entrepreneur, Technology	Organizer of LV F1 Meetup Group, in Montana for Summer break, F1 Medic
M	Over 2 weeks ago	Fullerton, CA	Las Vegas	7/7/12	Yes	Member of LA F1 Meetup Group	F1 Fan for 8 years
F	Over 2 weeks ago	Henderson, NV	Las Vegas	5/15/12			Organizer of LV Gearhead Singles & Gearheads of LV
F	Over a month ago	White Plains, NY	Las Vegas	6/7/12	Yes	Road Cycling, Watching F1 with Someone	
M	Over a month ago	Las Vegas	Las Vegas	6/8/12		Single and Fabulous, Asians in LV, 20-30s Meetup Group	Asian, very active
F	Over 2 months ago	Henderson, NV	Las Vegas	5/24/12	Yes	Gearhead singles, Motorcycles, Dirt Bikes, Desert Runners, Exotic Cars, Adventure	

These findings will be explored further in the Analysis and Interpretation section; however, it is important to understand that geographic location is also an additional indicator of interest and that although there are a plethora of common and shared interests; the geographic location of these local online communities also yield additional interests and commonalities shared by that of only the group due to its location (i.e. those in New York City would most likely not be in Desert Running groups like those in Las Vegas).



## **Discussion**

A study on racing and its fans quickly evokes stereotypical descriptions; NASCAR, which is much different from open-wheel racing and Formula One, draws what many believe to be a more Southern and lower economic status crowd. In addition, these fans are often described to be there for the excitement and thrill of the crashes. These descriptions cannot be further from what many think of when they are describing F1 fans; these fans are considered to be wealthier, better educated and a bit more bourgeois. Essentially, from the primary research an understanding of the basic demographics and a few personal lifestyle preferences emerged. The secondary research efforts added more contexts to the attitudes and behavior of the fans. There are profound similarities and themes drawn between the survey data and the observations made when participating as a research-participant observer in the online Meetup groups. Basic themes and interests were shared among the various geographical online communities.

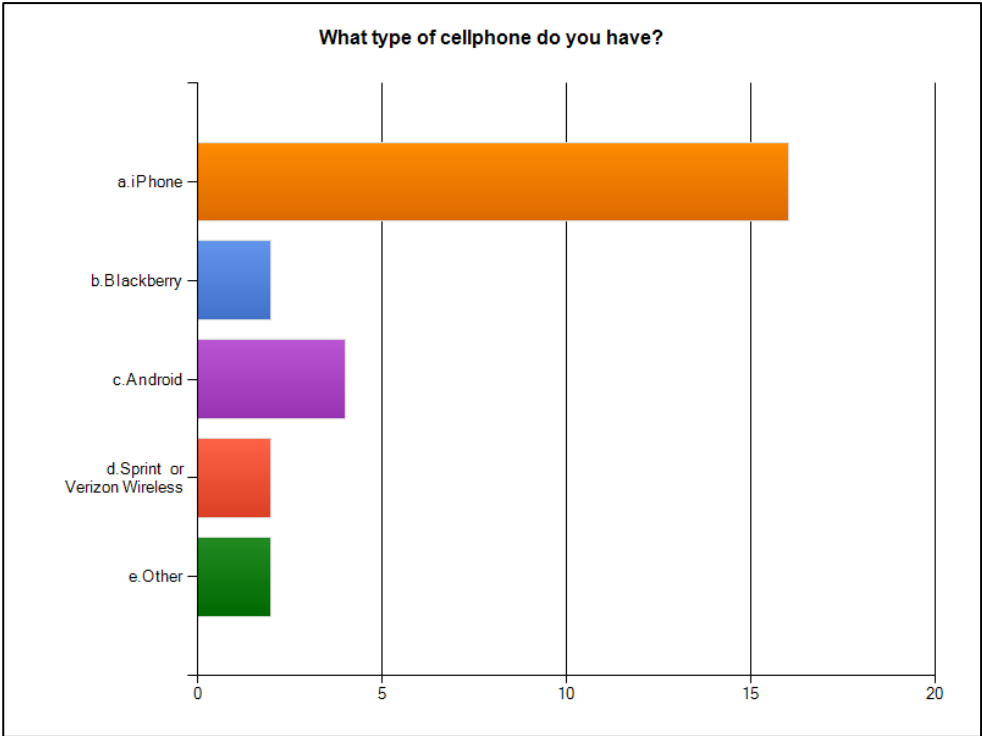
Using Simmons as a secondary research tool – the data were assembled to take the information and results from the primary data collected to form a basic idea of the most “typical” F1 fan. Understanding and identifying the basics that make up the fan and audience in general, if you will, allows a secondary research approach – of the mixed methods approach – to reinforce some existing notions. For example, the investigator has identified from the survey that F1 fans are

more likely to receive an annual income of over \$50K – and that’s on the low side. The survey data denotes most of our fans are making in the upwards of \$100,000 annually. Understanding how the primary research sets the platform for the consumer survey research is crucial to understanding how to further identify this audience and sports fan.

Gathering an understanding as to their lifestyle preference and behaviors is greatly important, but understanding the average annual salary of these participants is almost more important as that directly impacts a lot of the questions and understanding about this participant. Knowing that F1 is an extreme sport and involves high-speed auto racing and high risk involvement, the notion that these fans may have similar attitudes about their driving behavior on public roads as do their favorite F1 drivers do when racing could be a connection so the survey sought to gather information on whether or not the samples were aggressive in nature with their driving and if they had received any speeding tickets recently. The assumption here in this research is similar in that the audience may watch fast and aggressive driving and for that matter may drive a bit more aggressively than their counterparts, so that attitude was looked at as well.

Lastly, the notion that this audience sample is a bit more cutting edge is an assumption somewhat supported by the type of cellular phone these participants use.

Figure 21 – Cell Phone Type



The survey continued to ask about the respondents leisure and entertainment preferences: how many times a year they travel for pleasure and what time of extreme sport they would most likely do given the opportunity. An understanding about their personal nature and attitudes is a nice secondary lifestyle preference understanding as this leads into the notion of their affinity to the sport, F1 in particular.

Gathering an understanding as to their lifestyle preference and behaviors was greatly important, but understanding the average annual salary of these participants is almost more important as that directly impacts a lot of the questions and understanding about this participant. The survey asked how their

leisure and entertainment preferences: how many times a year they travel for pleasure and which extreme sport they would most likely do given the opportunity. Knowing that F1 is an extreme sport and involves high-speed auto racing and high risk involvement, the notion that these fans have similar attitudes about driving as do their favorite F1 drivers could be a connection; so the survey sought to gather information on whether or not the samples were aggressive in nature with their driving and if they had received any speeding tickets recently. This plays into the understanding of the type of race they are watching. The theory that children who watch violent TV and play violent video games proceeds to denote that the children are in turn then more violent. The assumption here in this research is similar in that the audience may watch fast and aggressive driving and for that matter may drive a bit more aggressively than their counterparts, so that attitude was looked at as well.

Lastly, the notion that this audience sample is a bit more cutting edge is an assumption that is made of this fan group, so understanding the type of cellular phone these participants have and use as gives us some insight into their technological background – this area goes into more depth in additional parts of the secondary research.

The research questions and observations helped define the way the fans interacted in their online communities. The basic demographic information that was disclosed and any additional items - interests, groups that the member decided to make public and share with others- helped define the likely F1 fan

characteristics.. (Note: If no response was received to the author's queries the space was left blank,) male or female, date they joined the group, their interests and other Meetup Groups that they are in, whether or not they plan on attending the Grand Prix in Austin in November of this year. I have also looked into their engagement with their online community site. For example, how long the group has been active and how long they have been a member since, as well as how often they visit this F1 Meetup group online and how active they are when they are online by understanding how active their wall communication is and their posting frequency or last time posted.

## Analysis and Interpretation

When reviewing the observations made in the various Meetup Groups and cross-categorizing them city over city as well as member over member within a city, the findings are profoundly similar and share commonalities throughout the entirety of the data. The chart below highlights two shared themes within the Austin F1 Meetup Group that are significant to not only the Austin community itself but lend themselves to the other geographical Meetup groups, as they are apparent throughout.

**Figure 15 – Austin F1 Meetup Observation Chart**

Austin Formula 1 Race Fans Meetup Group - Group Since 3/26/2011							
Gender	Last Engagement	Location	Hometown	Member Since	Attending Grand Prix in		Notes
					Austin?	Other Groups/Interests	
M	Over a month ago	New Jersey	Mumbai, India	6/11/12	Yes	Member of NYC Meetup, Watching F1 Races with others	References Schumi = GOD
F	Past 2 weeks	Las Vegas	Las Vegas	5/7/12	Yes	Entrepreneur, Technology	Organizer of LV F1 Meetup Group, in Montana for Summer break, F1 Medic
M	Past few days	Georgetown, TX	Georgetown, TX	3/26/11	Yes	Member of Buddhism Meetup Group, Cycling, Scuba, Sustainable Living, Watching F1 Races with others	
M	Past few days	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	6/25/12	Yes		Uninvolved
F	Past few days	White Plains, NY	Austin, TX	7/5/12	No	Member of Las Vegas Meetup Group, Cycling, Watching F1 Races with others	
F	Over a week ago	Austin, TX	Dallas, TX	6/19/12	Yes	Austin Adventure Network, Over 40's and Single, Cycling and Running, Dogs, Skiing, Hiking	
M	Over a week ago	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	6/25/12	Yes	20-30's Meetup Group	Group organizer for Houston, lots of wall posts
M + F	Past two weeks	Spicewood, TX	Spicewood, TX	7/9/12	Yes	Dogs, Great Danes	Husband and wife joined together, very active on wall posts
M	Past two weeks	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	7/25/12	Yes	Entrepreneur	25-34; good looking
M	Past two weeks	San Diego, CA	San Diego, CA	2/12/12	No		Mentions being a lifelong fan, Not Active
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	LA	3/18/12	Yes	30s and Single, Cycling, Beer	Very Active, good looking
F	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	San Jose, CA	5/19/11	Yes	Meditation, Garden Community, Camping, Backpacking, Reading, Hiking, Outdoors, Movies, Vegan	Has been watching F1 for over 30 years, Very Active
F	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	4/18/12	Yes	Wine, European Art, Multicultural Meetup Group, Art Enthusiasts, Foodie, Social	Speaks Spanish, Very Active
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	4/2/11			40+
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	Melbourne, Australia	3/11/12	Yes	Watch F1 with Others	
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	San Antonio, TX	6/8/12	Yes	Naturalhounds	Dreaming his whole life to see a F1 race, dogs
M	Over a month ago	Round Rock, TX	Fort Worth, TX	3/17/12	Yes	Watch F1 with Others	Photography, Home Theater, Movies

The orange highlighted areas denote the shared group or interest that the researcher believes is the most important finding throughout the entire Meetup netnographic research: U.S. F1 fans, geography aside, just want to watch F1 races with others. As mentioned in the Background section, the U.S. has been lacking a prominent F1 audience when compared to their abroad counterparts, so it is clear to see why F1 fans in the U.S. join these online Meetup groups, so that they may connect with others in their same city and watch their favorite past-time, F1, together. F1 fans are not as common as NBA fans or even FIFA fans, in the U.S., so the identification across these geographical groups in the sense that they just want to meet others who are interested in the same thing they are, if understandable, knowing they are a smaller population. Thus, the prominent reason for one to join an online Meetup Group. The selection to “Watch F1 with Others” was prevalent in all five other Meetup Groups observed.

The green highlighted data in the above Austin F1 Meetup chart, denotes two important people and their shared enthusiasm. Both of the green highlighted group members are organizers of other city’s F1 Meetup Groups. This conveys the level of enthusiasm and affinity towards the sport that these fans have. The thing about Meetup is that anyone and everyone can start a Meetup. Meetup Groups are started daily all across the world. The notion that one would start a Meetup Group symbolizes that these people are very interested in a organization

and would thus like to find others who feel the same way. Both of these members could be identified as F1 enthusiasts for all intensive purposes.

Several additional shared interests among just the Austin F1 fan community can be understood by referencing the chart below.

**Figure 15 – Austin F1 Meetup Observation Chart**

Austin Formula 1 Race Fans Meetup Group - Group Since 3/26/2011							
Gender	Last Engagement	Location	Hometown	Member Since	Attending Grand Prix in		Notes
					Austin?	Other Groups/Interests	
M	Over a month ago	New Jersey	Mumbai, India	6/11/12	Yes	Member of NYC Meetup, Watching F1 Races with others	References Schumi = GOD
F	Past 2 weeks	Las Vegas	Las Vegas	5/7/12	Yes	Entrepreneur, Technology	Organizer of LV F1 Meetup Group, in Montana for Summer break, F1 Medic
M	Past few days	Georgetown, TX	Georgetown, TX	3/26/11	Yes	Member of Buddhism Meetup Group, Cycling, Scuba, Sustainable Living, Watching F1 Races with others	
M	Past few days	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	6/25/12	Yes		Uninvolved
F	Past few days	White Plains, NY	Austin, TX	7/5/12	No	Member of Las Vegas Meetup Group, Cycling, Watching F1 Races with others	
F	Over a week ago	Austin, TX	Dallas, TX	6/19/12	Yes	Austin Adventure Network, Over 40's and Single, Cycling and Running, Dogs, Skiing, Hiking	
M	Over a week ago	Houston, TX	Houston, TX	6/25/12	Yes	20-30's Meetup Group	Group organizer for Houston, lots of wall posts
M + F	Past two weeks	Spicewood, TX	Spicewood, TX	7/9/12	Yes	Dogs, Great Danes	Husband and wife joined together, very active on wall posts
M	Past two weeks	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	7/25/12		Entrepreneur	25-34; good looking
M	Past two weeks	San Diego, CA	San Diego, CA	2/12/12	No		Mentions being a lifelong fan, Not Active
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	LA	3/18/12	Yes	30s and Single, Cycling, Beer	Very Active, good looking
F	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	San Jose, CA	5/19/11	Yes	Meditation, Garden Community, Camping, Backpacking, Reading, Hiking, Outdoors, Movies, Vegan	Has been watching F1 for over 30 years, Very Active
F	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	4/18/12	Yes	Wine, European Art, Multicultural Meetup Group, Art Enthusiasts, Foodie, Social	Speaks Spanish, Very Active
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	Austin, TX	4/2/11			40+
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	Melbourne, Australia	3/11/12	Yes	Watch F1 with Others	
M	Over a month ago	Austin, TX	San Antonio, TX	6/8/12	Yes	Naturalhounds	Dreaming his whole life to see a F1 race, dogs
M	Over a month ago	Round Rock, TX	Fort Worth, TX	3/17/12	Yes	Watch F1 with Others	Photography, Home Theater, Movies

The highlighted areas above convey three additional shared interests that the Austin F1 online community shares amongst each other. These again, are not only apparent in the Austin online community but are shared throughout all six of the online Meetup Groups observed. The blue highlighted members'



interests are all similar in the sense that they have self-identified as interested in outdoors, hiking, biking, cycling and camping. These are all outdoor activities and the majority of each geographic online community observed is representative of these shared interests. Understanding that these fans relate in their extracurricular activities reveals that these are like-minded people who get pleasure in similar personal activities. This information lends itself to the larger picture of the F1 audience and understanding what activities and leisure time these fans enjoy. One could even go so far as identifying the brands that are associated with these leisure activities and interests and find commonalities.

The red and green highlighted members' interest are interesting as they are personal identifiers and indicate a direct daily correlation to these members' lives even more so than an enjoyed interest selected as those interests may not get to play out in these fans' every day lives. The red denotes the shared professional approach and working style these members share: entrepreneurs. This notion that members are commonly identifying as entrepreneurs allows the researcher to understand the level of business acumen and professional success these members share. All other groups observed have self-identified entrepreneurs within. The green highlighted members in the chart reveal these members are also members of a canine Meetup Group. And, as mentioned previously, anyone who joins a Meetup Group in the first place is essentially looking to hang out with others who enjoy a shared interest. To want to seek out others in efforts to participate in leisure activity together reveals that these people

feel strongly about such an interest. Being in a canine Meetup Group is different than just owning a dog. These members actively seek out other pet owners and dog owners, specifically for the purposes of having their dogs Meetup and have what is known as a “puppy play date.”

The type of people and their demographics are often easy to be inferred when looking at the overarching group’s interests geographically. For example, when looking at the New York City Meetup Group interests identified are as follows: photography, fitness, hiking, traveling, auto racing, dancing, dining out, cycling, art, brunch, live music and coffee. Now, since the researcher is a native Austinite (having lived in the city for 8+ years now), understanding what the city has to offer and knowing what the city stands for, when observing the New York City F1 Meetup Group, it is clear to see the similarity in interests among the members and trends among cities, which is important when discussing how to yield an F1 audience. Furthermore, when comparing the interests that were just mentioned from the New York City F1 members’ Meetup Group to the actual other groups that the Austin F1 Meetup Group members are in, it is obvious where the overlap lies. The following are representative of the official Meetup Groups that the Austin F1 fans are also a part of: The Austin German Language Meetup Group, Gathering of Photographers, 101 Things to Do in Austin, The Austin Investor's Business Daily Meetup Group, Austin Cycling Meetup, Chocolate, Coffee and Wine Lovers, Austin Salsa Dance Meetup, Awesome Austin! I'm young, social, in Austin! 20's 30's fun, Austin Small Biz Operations

and Finance Group and The Austin Language and Culture Meetup.

In comparing the observational patterns amongst the groups, the secondary research data provided by Simmons consumer research surveys allowed a more detailed examination from the psychological and attitudinal perspectives. The data reveals the attitudes and preferences of those surveyed among the U.S. population based on their level of income. Drawing the assumption that more affluent people are more likely to be F1 fans than their non-affluent counterparts, the researcher can use this demographic indicator to make inferences about other preferences. The following chart shows the agreement indexes based on the percentage of those people that participated in the survey vs. the entire U.S. population in order to understand the possible potential sample size.

**Figure 22 – Simmons Consumer Research Survey**

Simmons Consumer Research Surveys, Winter 2010								
Attitudes and Technology by Gender and Income	Total	Male	Female	Income - 35K-40K	Income - 40K-45K	Income - 45K-50K	Income - 50K+	Income - 75K+
Sample	24,728	10,913	13,815	1,107	987	1,178	15,633	11,141
LIKE TO LEARN ABOUT COMPUTER TECH/WEB: ATTITUDES (HI-TECH) - ANY AGREE	53.80%	55.00%	52.60%	49.70%	59.80%	49.00%	57.10%	55.90%
<b>I LIKE THE IDEA OF DIGITAL TV: ATTITUDES (HI-TECH) - ANY AGREE</b>	52.20%	56.30%	48.30%	44.80%	55.90%	51.50%	56.60%	<b>57.20%</b>
<b>I TRY KEEP UP/DEVELOPMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY: ATTITUDES (HI-TECH) - ANY AGREE</b>	43.40%	50.20%	37.10%	34.90%	39.50%	40.20%	49.20%	<b>50.20%</b>
<b>LOVE TO BUY NEW GADGETS AND APPLIANCES: ATTITUDES (HI-TECH) - ANY AGREE</b>	26.40%	30.40%	22.60%	20.30%	24.30%	23.40%	29.30%	<b>30.70%</b>
AFFECTIONATE, PASSIONATE, LOVING, ROMANTIC: SELF-CONCEPTS - ANY AGREE	67.30%	61.10%	73.20%	65.40%	68.50%	61.00%	68.70%	68.80%
AMICABLE, AMIABLE, AFFABLE, BENEVOLENT: SELF-CONCEPTS - ANY AGREE	53.20%	50.80%	55.40%	52.20%	57.50%	47.70%	56.70%	57.60%
<b>BRAVE, COURAGEOUS, DARING, ADVENTURESOME: SELF-CONCEPTS - ANY AGREE</b>	47.80%	52.10%	43.80%	45.80%	50.70%	42.40%	49.30%	<b>50.10%</b>
BROADMINDED, OPEN-MINDED, LIBERAL, TOLERANT: SELF-CONCEPTS - ANY AGREE	60.30%	57.70%	62.70%	59.30%	64.20%	60.10%	60.80%	61.00%
<b>DOMINATING, AUTHORITARIAN, DEMANDING, AGGRESSIVE: SELF-CONCEPTS - ANY AGREE</b>	26.90%	27.50%	26.40%	29.80%	27.40%	28.00%	27.20%	<b>27.40%</b>
<b>INTELLIGENT, SMART, BRIGHT, WELL INFORMED: SELF-CONCEPTS - ANY AGREE</b>	67.40%	67.80%	67.00%	64.00%	63.40%	63.10%	71.90%	<b>73.40%</b>
KIND, GOOD-HEARTED, WARMHEARTED, SINCERE: SELF-CONCEPTS - ANY AGREE	78.30%	75.30%	81.10%	75.70%	77.80%	71.80%	80.50%	80.30%
REFINED, GRACIOUS, SOPHISTICATED, DIGNIFIED: SELF-CONCEPTS - ANY AGREE	42.30%	37.80%	46.50%	40.60%	43.60%	37.10%	42.40%	43.00%
RESERVED, CONSERVATIVE, QUIET, CONVENTIONAL: SELF-CONCEPTS - ANY AGREE	45.70%	46.60%	44.80%	47.90%	48.50%	45.50%	44.50%	42.80%
SOCIABLE, FRIENDLY, CHEERFUL, LIKEABLE: SELF-CONCEPTS - ANY AGREE	68.60%	65.00%	72.00%	64.50%	64.80%	62.90%	70.40%	70.20%
I BUY PRODS THAT USE RECYCLED PAPER: SHOP BEHAVIOR-ANY AGREE	41.00%	35.20%	46.50%	41.90%	39.50%	38.40%	41.20%	39.70%
I KEEP UP WITH CHANGES-STYLES/FASHIONS: SHOP BEHAVIOR-ANY AGREE	25.20%	16.90%	32.90%	20.40%	24.90%	20.60%	26.30%	26.70%
I BUY RECYCLED PAPER PRODUCTS: SHOP BEHAVIOR-ANY AGREE	36.80%	33.60%	39.70%	34.60%	34.90%	35.60%	36.40%	35.50%
WOULD PAY MORE/ENVIRONMENT FRIENDLY PRODS: SHOP BEHAVIOR-ANY AGREE	33.40%	32.10%	34.70%	33.20%	33.80%	31.80%	34.30%	34.30%
<b>I LIKE WEBSITES THAT SHOW ME LOCAL INFO: ATTITUDES (INTERNET) - ANY AGREE</b>	59.00%	57.30%	60.50%	52.80%	57.60%	59.40%	67.40%	<b>69.10%</b>
GO TO WEBSITES/HAVE NEVER BEEN TO BEFORE: ATTITUDES (INTERNET) - ANY AGREE	31.20%	31.40%	30.90%	30.90%	32.00%	33.30%	33.90%	35.50%
GET MORE OF MY NEWS FROM INTERNET: ATTITUDES (INTERNET) - ANY AGREE	40.60%	42.50%	39.00%	31.40%	32.50%	41.20%	49.30%	52.20%
LIKE TO LOOK FOR NEW/INTERESTING WEBSITES: ATTITUDES (INTERNET) - ANY AGREE	31.20%	32.70%	29.70%	26.80%	29.90%	31.10%	35.70%	37.10%
DOING MORE SHOPPING/INTERNET THAN BEFORE: ATTITUDES (INTERNET) - ANY AGREE	32.10%	31.40%	32.80%	20.80%	22.80%	26.70%	41.40%	45.70%
I RETURN TO SITES-MAKE IT EASY TO FIND/NEED: ATTITUDES (INTERNET) - ANY AGREE	59.70%	58.90%	60.50%	48.40%	54.20%	58.60%	71.30%	74.80%
TRUST INFO ON WEBSITES/HAVE HEARD ABOUT: ATTITUDES (INTERNET) - ANY AGREE	37.60%	37.20%	38.10%	31.30%	33.30%	36.00%	45.50%	47.30%
LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT PRDCTS/SRVCS BY EMAIL: ATTITUDES (INTERNET) - ANY AGREE	19.40%	18.00%	20.70%	21.00%	19.90%	18.40%	21.90%	21.60%
IT'S SAFE TO MAKE PURCHASES ONLINE: ATTITUDES (INTERNET) - ANY AGREE	40.40%	42.40%	38.70%	25.50%	32.10%	35.80%	51.30%	55.30%

For the purposes of this Analysis and Interpretation section, the key elements of this chart and its corresponding data have been highlighted in orange. The Simmons survey sought to uncover additional insights into the F1 fan basing the fan's demographic make up on including a higher than average household income (HHI). Per the Survey Monkey data, the understanding that the F1 fan has a higher education experience level than non-fans, as well as directly correlating to their HHI, it is an obvious correlation that F1 fans are more likely to be affluent; thus, the secondary consumer research pulls at the strings of the more affluent consumer. More specifically, the researcher identifies the following insights about the F1 fan:

- They are more tech-savvy
- They enjoy more localized and community based online functionality and engagement
- They respect the environment and are more interested in sustainability
- They enjoy being up-to-date with the latest digital gadgets and trends (i.e. cell phones, computers, etc.)
- They are more intelligent and more adventurous

## **Implications**

The relationship of sports to tourism is complex and involves the attractions in the community offering the event as well as the general following and historical interest in the activity/event. This study was initiated by the writer's interest in the consequences of the addition of Formula 1 racing to the cultural and sports scene in Austin, Texas. Thus, the promotion of the event to those who find Formula 1 racing personally relevant and supportive of existing interests is critical in terms of building audience — similarly it is important to involve/educate the local population about the benefits – as well as the issues – that can develop as a result of this addition. Tourism is increasingly recognized as a viable local economic development strategy because of its ability to bring new money into a region (Reed, M., 1997, Lerner, at al., 2000, Breidenhann, at. al., 2004, Lee, at al., 2008). Generally speaking the public is aware of that impact but maybe unprepared to deal with the consequence in traffic and community life style that events of this magnitude create.

The act of consumption is important as it relates to F1 due to the size of audience that the sport yields, no matter it's stomping grounds. This study begins to explore the types of F1 fans, their associations with the brand and their own personal preferences concerning entertainment, technology and life style. Some of these characteristics and preferences may simply be a function of being

an F1 fan. Others may share some of those characteristics but as our data suggest, they will be more evident consistently among the F1 fan group.

Understanding the F1 fan better is important for municipal authorities as well as race sponsors and those marketing organizations interested in increasing the level of engagement of the fans with their brand. . From a commerce perspective, understanding the common preferences of these F1 consumers – their desired brands and affinities and aspirations – represents a huge opportunity for those enterprises and their promotional partners (advertising and PR firms) who wish to reach that audience. The ease with which a well defined group of people – perhaps on the order of 250,000 - with common interests assembled in one place can be reached demands attention. This study has shown that the group share similar interests in outdoor activities, social interests, technology, personal preferences, etc. and that they are best reached in ways that resonate with them.

The excitement that Austin will generate from the 2012 Grand Prix and the interest that Americans may show in this activity may stimulate additional F1 tracks in other cities. With the interest in the drivers it may well be that American interest will be increased with a national team staffed with American drivers. The country rallies around American teams and patriotism in sports – the 2012 Olympics demonstrates that beautifully. F1 fans are aware of the lack of representation the Americans have given to the F1 competitors. The fact that F1 goes head to head with Indy and NASCAR brand loyalists also suggests that the

introduction of American F1 drivers would encourage greater attendance and engagement. The lack of domestic representation in this international series of events has, in all likelihood impaired the interest in F1 and its attendance. If and when that situation changes this writer would expect to see a significant increase in attendance.



## **Summary**

In all likelihood, since the first heavily attended competitive games were held some 3,000 years ago, sports and tourism have gone hand in hand. Many people who enjoy watching sporting events will travel and purchase tickets for the games. Being in the audience and traveling near and far to engage in sports has become a frequent and global phenomenon. Some believe that sports are at the core of a community's growth and stature. Sports entertainment and F1 in particular bring all kinds of people to their stands. However, looking at F1 more closely, as we did in this study it is clear to see the fans that F1 yields have more similarities than not. These fans are a part of something global but their interests and attitudes say they are not far a part emotionally. Those expressing greater interest in F1 are likely to be better educated, have higher incomes and be more conversant with digital technology. These American based fans will join their international counterparts at the Austin event and overall will serve as a solid predictor of future success.

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