



# MOTOR SPORT<sup>TM</sup> BUSINESS FORUM --- NORTH AMERICA

## **Inaugural Motor Sport Business Forum North America Hits High Gear on Final Day with Lesa France Kennedy Keynote Address**

**ORLANDO, Fla. (December 9, 2009)** – The second and final day of the inaugural Motor Sport Business Forum North America (MSBF-NA) featured a Wednesday Keynote luncheon address by **Lesa France Kennedy**, Chief Executive Officer of International Speedway Corporation (ISC), that proved to be one of the highlights of a packed schedule at the Orlando Hilton for the first ever MSBF-NA.

France Kennedy joined Conference Chairman **Zak Brown**, Just Marketing International (JMI) Founder and CEO, on stage for an hour-long “coffee talk” exchange that was informal in setting but highly impactful in its delivery. France Kennedy touched on several of the binding themes that emerged during the two-day event, including planning and adjustments due to the economy, “green” initiatives, new media and the long-term plans and outlook for ISC and some of the related corporations at the nearby Daytona “World Center of Racing” and beyond.

“First of all, there's no doubt that all businesses have been challenged by the economy and we are not immune to it,” said France Kennedy, who also holds the positions of Vice Chair for both ISC and NASCAR as well as serving as Executive Vice President for NASCAR. “Whenever there is a situation like this, it has also provided an opportunity for us. We've taken over a half a million of our tickets and re-priced or restructured them. We've taken some of the tickets that were previously bundled and created new packages where the bundling wasn't as prominent. We find that about 2/3 of the people that are buying our newly structured tickets are brand-new buyers.”

France Kennedy told the attentive crowd that any new customer is likely a long-term customer.

“Our history tells us that if we can get them to that one event, that the product sells itself. Our challenge is getting them to that first event, and then it goes from there. We're accomplishing that through different opportunities and value pricing.”

One of the ways ISC is getting the word out about its new ticket packages and its race events in total is through some of the increasingly popular new media methods.

“People are consuming our sport in different ways now, like NASCAR.com for instance. Social media, I know especially for the younger folks, that is how they communicate. All of our tracks now have social media outlets where they communicate with potential fans and new fans, as well as the younger audience. We always have to be refilling the pipeline.”

A frequent and widely discussed topic at the MSBF-NA was the various “green” initiatives and solutions that just about all of the represented organizations have undertaken. France Kennedy made it clear that this realm is an important priority for ISC.

“One thing that we’re working hard to adapt to is ‘green’ initiatives. ISC has done a lot with renewable energy and partnering with NextEra to try to figure out our next steps. It’s a learning experience, and something that we’re all learning about. It’s very, very important to all of our partners and it’s also important just as a good global citizen. It’s about recognizing that change and making sure that you’re on board with it and trying to figure out how you can be accommodating to try to get to that goal.”

While France Kennedy said ISC is not expecting a fast turnaround in the economy, she was quick to point out that the down market may provide some opportunities.

“We’re going to be braced for a slow recovery but we’re also looking at some new opportunities. At Kansas, next to the Kansas Speedway, we’re looking at building a casino and a hotel with our gaming partner. It’s a little bit of a departure from our core business, but it’s also an enhancement if you look at the fans coming to the Kansas Speedway and extending their stay. It becomes more of a destination, bringing more tourists in than it already does. We’re doing the same in Daytona, where we’re looking at some other guest amenities across the street that would be complementary to the track. Over time we would like to develop some retail and dining.”

## **NOTEWORTHY**

- Event organizer **Simon Berger**, IM2 Events Founder & CEO, was pleased with the first North American edition of his proven MSBF series, which began in Monaco in 2003.

“As a debut event and the latest edition to the Motor Sports Business Forum, the event has gone exceedingly well,” Berger said. “Probably the most high-powered panel of speakers we’ve ever had, at any of the forums, globally. We had a great venue and super support. It’s good to be alongside PRI and I think everyone, from the feedback we’ve had, has done business, met new friends, forged new relationships. Thanks to the sponsors and speakers, incredible Keynote speakers **Bobby Rahal** and Lesa France Kennedy, and of course what topped it off for me was the Paul Newman Winning Through Giving Award that was given to **Jim France**.”

The 2009 Motor Sport Business Forum Europe is also being held in Monaco this week and concludes Thursday.

“It’s quite unprecedented, really, to be having two events logistically together in two continents with one in Monaco and one here in the United States,” Berger said. “We have four currently in four different continents with Asia/Pacific, the Middle East, North America and Europe. But the fact that these two are running together has been great because we’ve been able to feed back information to both sets of delegates about what’s been happening on different sides of the world. It’s quite incredible to think that the highest echelons of motorsport business executives are sitting at these two events at the same time, across the Atlantic from one another.”

- The highlight of The Walt Disney Company reception Tuesday night was the surprise

introduction of **The Paul Newman Winning Through Giving Award**, which was presented to Jim France, NASCAR Executive Vice President and ISC Chairman. The new award will be annually presented on behalf of the Paul Newman Family to an individual that best typifies Newman's passionate support of auto racing and selfless dedication to philanthropic causes. Brown, Berger and the Newman Award selection committee chairs **Sarah Gurtis**, Vice President of Marketing and Corporate Development for Camp Boggy Creek – a Paul Newman Hole in the Wall Camp located in Eustis, Fla. – and Newman's longtime friend, fellow actor and teammate **Michael Brockman** jointly presented the award to France.

"For those of you that don't know Jim well, he really is like Paul Newman," Brown said. "He is a very reserved individual who doesn't like his name in the lights, so this was quite an honor that he accepted that award and I think that it's great for the future."

Jim France is Lesa France Kennedy's uncle and she and Brown touched on the special honor during her Keynote.

"I'm glad that you mentioned about the Paul Newman Award last night because my uncle was so touched and honored by that," France Kennedy said. "I personally feel like it was very well deserved. He's a very unassuming person, he does have a great heart, he's a very giving person and he doesn't look for the recognition. He's not out seeking it, and I think it was well deserved."

A donation in the name of each year's Paul Newman Winning Through Giving Award recipient will be made to a charity of the Newman Family's choice. Stamford Hospice in Connecticut was personally selected by Newman's wife **Joanne Woodward** as the designated 2009 charity.

- Wednesday's second and final day of the MSBF-NA began with an opening address from Brown who recapped the previous day's progress and gave a word of thanks to The Walt Disney Company, Tuesday evening's Champagne Cocktail Reception sponsor. Brown was quick to commend the strong turnout of more than 260 delegates who made the trip to Orlando despite the economic challenges.

"I think the takeaway that I have from yesterday is that despite the horrific economy, motorsports is doing pretty well," Brown said. "If you look at some other business sectors out there, I think that we can stand proud that we've actually, as an industry, held up pretty well when you look at some of the other numbers that other industries have been taxed with."

## **QUOTEWORTHY**

**Lawrence Aldridge**, SVP, Corporate Alliances of The Walt Disney Corporation - "It's been a great event for the first time in North America. There is a great group of people together with great speakers and I think it's going to be really interesting as we go forward next year, how we make it even more engaging, how we bring some of the leading social networking and marketing techniques to share with people so we can share best practices across industries."

**Jeffrey Stern**, Managing Director of IFM - "Whenever you have a group of leaders and experts in the field together to talk about motorsports, talk about the whole direction of value in sponsorship, I think it's a fantastic opportunity. For the first year, they've done a wonderful job. It's been a good panel of people, very professional and it's got the American spice so there's a little bit of show business in it. JMI has done a fantastic job, IM2 has a very, very good traveling conference that they've established as well as yesterday evening's touching moment with the Paul Newman Award which I thought was very classy. On behalf of the IFM group we were happy to be here and happy to participate."

**Eddie Gossage**, President of Texas Motor Speedway – "It's a commercial every Sunday in the case of NASCAR and Saturday in the case of IndyCar, that carries the message and makes the drivers bigger stars. It's critically important. I remember a time when not all IndyCar or NASCAR races were televised. One of the greatest things that ever happened was that ESPN came along for NASCAR, and NBC came along for CART, and made big names out of these drivers, deservedly. They should have been big names and it helped the series as a whole. The downside is, in too many cases, we're becoming a studio audience and I think when we begin to start ignoring the live crowd, it's a dangerous thing. If there are empty seats, it doesn't look like a big event on television, so we need to fill those seats. If the consistent start times don't work for the benefit of the live event, at the gate, then it also doesn't work for television, I would argue."

"The race is the race, and it could be an extremely close nail-biter, or it could be a runaway and it falls on us as promoters to make the day exciting before the green flag drops and perhaps for awhile after the checkered flag drops. We try to do those kinds of things, our pre-race show for our Cup race was an hour-long concert by ZZ Top, we had a Chinook helicopter land on the front straightaway and in the pace car was a season ticket holder who was also the pilot of the Space Shuttle back in July. The fans loved that. So it's giving them the 'wow' factor long before the green flag drops."

**Jim Michaelian**, President and CEO of the Grand Prix Association of Long Beach – "We took some rather substantial measures about a decade ago, about the turn of the century. We took a look at our audience and realized there really was a disparity between our race attendees and the ethnic and demographic makeup of the Southern California market, which you know is a very diverse one. We began to implement a number of programs that would have direct appeal to various segments of that audience, assets that they would find really attractive in terms of welcoming them to our event. We started with the Hispanic market - we had about 6% of the Hispanic market as attendees back in 2000, and we've made a very vigorous attempt to be able to attract a substantial element of that particular marketplace. With the help of such stars as Adrian Fernandez and Mario Dominguez, and working with sponsors like Tecate, we began something called Fiesta Friday which was dedicated primarily at our Hispanic audience. There is a major concert featuring Hispanic artists, and we could see that there was tremendous movement of the Hispanic audience into that marketplace."

"We have a hotel inside, we have a shopping center inside, we have restaurants where you can sit out on the veranda and watch the race cars go by. What it does is it creates an opportunity where, let's say there's a family of race fans, you have the opportunity to bring the whole family because the race fan comes to watch those six races, meanwhile someone can go into the hotel lobby and the kids can go participate in go-kart race. What you see is an accumulation of a variety of different elements, all to attract those

who either aren't hardcore fans or are associated to people who are and still want to come experience springtime in Southern California."

**Ron Rogowski**, Director of Sponsorship for UPS – "It really comes down to being fully integrated around that whole B2B concept. Being the Official Package Carrier of NASCAR, we have some covered space within the garage, so more than likely a package coming in/out of a NASCAR event 38 times a year is touching. That's really our experiential marketing; we're not in the midway with a lot of the consumer brands, so that becomes how we connect. Hospitality becomes a very big part of this. NASCAR provides a tremendous experience with the assets we have. When the customer accepts the hospitality invite, they're not only going to have an experience of a lifetime, but we're going to take the opportunity to get this new capability stuff in front of them."

**Ian Carter**, President of Global Operations for Hilton – "Motorsports play a very different role than some of the other relationships that we enjoy. The thing that is differentiating about motorsports for us is the breadth of the calendar year and I'll be honest with you, it can be an obstacle at times, and at times it can work to our benefit. The benefit side is that it's such a long calendar year and that races take place in different parts of the country, so it does allow us to ramp up in market areas and take advantage of people coming in to a race market and staying at a Hilton. The downside is that it is a yearlong effort and program. With motorsports it allows us to have a national platform and be able to communicate nationally, but still be local and relevant."

**John Cutler**, VP Business Development for High Road Sports – "Luckily, what we've seen is that while the last year was extremely difficult, the last 90 days there's a lot more receptivity in the market and we're having a lot more conversations with a number of different companies in the technology and other areas. Very difficult, but I think the skies have opened up a little bit."

The new Hilton Orlando is the first hotel connected to the Orange County Convention Center. The convention center houses the ensuing Performance Racing Industry Show (PRI), December 10 – 12, which follow the Motor Sport Business Forum starting tomorrow. The PRI show includes 1,450 companies as part of the world's largest racing trade show. The hardcore racing technology showcase annually attracts approximately 40,000 buyers and attendees from 61 countries.

Learn more about the Motor Sport Business Forums at [www.msbforum.com](http://www.msbforum.com). Media may contact Adam Saal at (321) 890-2848 or [SaalGoodPR@gmail.com](mailto:SaalGoodPR@gmail.com) for additional information.