Advertising and Sponsorship Manager Report – GTC AGM 2022

A better year all round as we continue to move out of the pandemic restrictions but now we see the Bank of England predicting a drop in GDP, rising interest rates and the UK economy potentially falling into recession. These factors will impact on advertising and sponsorship revenue going forward but for last year we continued to be reasonably well financed in those areas.

Zerb continues to be popular with advertisers and its is gratifying to see the return of the bigger companies including Arri and RED. Marc from RED said the following in an email to me:

"We've almost cut all press advertising completely for 2022, but we made sure we would be able to still support Zerb as we believe it's a great publication and also like to be able to support the GTC where we can!"

Thanks to the tireless (and apparently sleepless) work of Rob Emmanuel, Zerb was out in time for BSC Expo this year which is going to be a focus for us going forward, as that show is arguably the most relevant show in the UK for our members and advertisers who were definitely attracted to the prospect of it being published a week or so beforehand.

GTC In Focus advertising has seen a recent upturn and whilst it is a long way off the levels of Zerb, it attracts a different advertising market on the whole and the ability to have a magazine that is directly engaging members through it's content appeals to the more "service industry" based advertisers. This is something I will continue to try and develop. We were fortunate with the delayed BSC Expo that GTC In Focus fell immediately before, allowing for advertising relevant to the show. With the advent of Graham R's "Kit Roundup" I am hearing more from companies who want to be involved which has then a knock on for advertising and sponsorship.

While we never set out to make the magazines "cost neutral" I am trying to make them as cost effective as possible, trying to reduce the level of support that has to be made by the GTC itself.

Sponsorship is still going well. We gain as many sponsors as we lose which is not a bad position to be in and they provide a good source of income to the GTC. What is encouraging is that although we have lost a few smaller companies during the pandemic they are still in business and just chose to tight their fiscal belts. We have not seen any sponsor businesses forced to close which is good for our sector as a whole. Please can all members prioritise sponsor companies and mention the GTC whenever they engage with those companies. You might even find a better deal comes your way!

We do currently have a situation whereby our VW discount deal is on hold because of supply chain issues but the alternative deal offered by Citroen dealer 'Slip End Garage' (introduced to us by a member) is live and they seem to be receiving regular enquiries from members. The GTC does derive a small income from both of these deals, so it is important that members channel their enquiries through the appropriate dealerships.

We continue to have regular publishing meetings, web and print, and that allows us all (Me, Roger Richards, Rob Emmanuel and Nicola Risdon) to have a better understating of what's going where and also how we can bring the various shopfronts into alignment. We know that members engage across all platforms so it makes sense for there to be cohesion. I have taken on the role of managing those meetings and holding us all to account. This is key in providing the best value for our advertisers and sponsors.

Nic is working with the web developers to move Sponsor News to a more prominent position this year, further enhancing visibility to regular and casual users of the website. Many sponsors now ask for evidence of visitor numbers so we do need to try and push people to the website when we can, I know that the socials team do that too, but wherever we can we need to promote the online presence.

Hannah and Peter perform miracles with sometimes very minimal content from our sponsors to get their news out across the social channels. This is an area of the business which is growing for us and whilst sometimes hard to quantify, our sponsors and advertisers are very aware of what we are posting.

I'd like to close by saying that what I do would be pointless without the amazing help and support from the "outward facing" team I work with; Nicola Risdon on the website, Hannah Mellish and Peter Newman on social media, Roger Richards and Rob Emmanuel in publishing and the support of Sophie Day and Andy Reik with the financial side of it all.

Simon Edwards

Cheltenham, May 2022