



Winning the web race

Abarth successfully relaunches its brand with innovative, web-based racecar experience delivered using the Adobe® Flash® Platform

In the 1960s, Abarth & C. Corp. produced sports cars that competed with Porsches and Ferraris on prestigious racetracks. With a glorious past, yesterday's winning passion is once again alive today. In 2007, Fiat Group Automobiles relaunched the Abarth brand. Forever synonymous with cars that have backbone and gusto and elicit passion among drivers, Abarth is back with a new line of cars that delights sport-racing fans.



Reigniting a brand

Speed is in the DNA of Abarth, and it is also an asset in its communications. Karl Abarth founded the company in Turin, Italy in 1949. In the 1960s, Abarth became very successful in sport car racing. In 1971, Abarth was sold to Fiat and became the company's in-house tuning and racing division. After decades of success, the name was almost forgotten in the 1990s.

The Grande Punto Abarth, a car that became available in September 2007, spearheaded the rebirth of the Abarth brand, along with a new image and the *Scorpion* logo. To launch the innovative new car and brand, Fiat needed an equally innovative marketing campaign that would appeal to its young, forward-thinking demographic. Abarth mainly targets a young audience with an average age of 27 who share a passion for technology and innovation. The campaign needed to be based on powerful, secure, and reliable technology.

With these goals in mind, Creative Director Matteo Righi and Coordinator Davide Danna envisioned a company website where users could experience the thrill of virtually driving an Abarth car on a racetrack. The team used rapid and fluid motions along with engine sounds as key components of the streaming, web-based

video content to make the experience as realistic as possible. They also presented the video content in high definition (HD) to deliver a full-screen, immersive experience that would appeal to the uncompromising tastes of Abarth's potential customers.

Create once, deliver anywhere

To implement the project, Fiat brought on ARC Leo Burnett, a division of Leo Burnett that develops marketing solutions based on innovative communication technologies. According to ARC Leo Burnett, the Adobe Flash Platform and Adobe Flash Media Server were the obvious choices for the project. Adobe Flash Media Server provides an instant-on, seamless experience for end users and enables content to be created once and delivered to multiple channels with ease.

The Adobe Flash Platform is the de facto web standard for delivering interactive content and video, with the widest reach in the world across operating systems and browsers on a wide variety of PCs and devices. Adobe Flash technology is on more than 98% of internet-connected computers, 800 million devices, and it delivers 80% of web video, so companies can be confident that their content is presented consistently, and in the format users want.

Company

Abarth & C. Corp.

Turin, Italy

www.abarth.it



In Partnership With

ARC Leo Burnett

www.leoburnett.com

Leo Burnett

Bright.Ly

www.bright.ly



Weebo

www.weebo.it



Challenge

- Successfully relaunch legendary brand
- Reach a young demographic and excite them about Abarth
- Let users experience the excitement of driving a car on a racetrack
- Develop a company website the delivers a strong and innovative statement

Solution

Use the Adobe Flash Platform, including Flash Media Server, to stream a virtual Abarth racecar experience in full-screen HD over the web

Benefits

- Doubled website traffic
- Increased visitor time spent on the site
- Appealed to young target demographic
- Delivered an almost-like-being-there racing experience
- Showcased company innovation
- Met the expectations of discerning target customer
- Increased the popularity of the Abarth brand

Toolkit

- Adobe Flash Media Server
- Adobe Flash Player

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Creative teams shot the video in HD at the race circuit in Balocco, near the city of Vercelli, using video cameras for close-ups on the driver and the pedals. Bright.Ly, a company specializing in digital advertising, handled production and post-production. Weebo, a Flash Video Streaming Service (FVSS) partner, then distributed the high-quality video using its proprietary, high performance Content Delivery Network (CDN) to manage video streams at 1.2Mbps.

Double the traffic, to the right demographic

The use of HD video streamed over the web to simulate a race aboard a Grande Punto Abarth has been an incredible success with audiences. In almost no time, traffic and bandwidth usage on the Abarth site doubled. And most importantly, statistical data shows that customers spend more time on the site, indicating that Abarth’s comeback has been successful.

Another measure of the campaign’s success is that young audiences are the most frequent visitors to the site. They have provided a wealth of feedback noting how much they enjoy the engaging online experience. For Abarth, it is clear that web-based video, Adobe Flash Media Server, and the rebirth of a legendary brand have joined forces to leave a permanent mark on the tarmac as well as on the web.

