

VALUATIONS & PRICING

TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE ASSETS: COUNT WHAT YOU CAN, THEN MULTIPLY IT

How to put an honest number on the assets you can count, from tickets to media coverage, and why reputation, credibility and audience fit can be worth several times more, with Megan Meyer, Matt Martelli and Hookit's Scott Tilton.

By Alex Striler · 6 min read · Read online at sponsorshiptactics.com/library/tangible-and-intangible-assets

Every racer has two kinds of assets. Tangible assets are the ones you can point to and count: logos on the car, helmet and suit, screen time, magazine coverage, PA mentions, tickets, hospitality. Intangible assets are the ones you can't count: your reputation, your integrity, how loyal your fans are, how credible you are with the people a brand wants to reach.

Most racers price only the first kind, and they often price it badly. The brands and racers who have spoken at my Sponsorship Summits approach it differently. Count your tangibles carefully, because that number is easy to defend. Then use your intangibles to show why you're worth far more than that number.

TANGIBLES ARE THE EASY PART, SO GET THEM RIGHT

Tangible assets have a value you can look up. Tickets are the simplest example, as I explained at a PRI Show seminar: "Tickets, they're valued at face value. If you give a sponsor 10 tickets worth 20 bucks each, there's \$200 of value. You do that 10 times in a year, there's \$2,000 of value. You just gave them \$2,000 of value, but you're charging them \$1,000 for the sponsorship. Well, they got a 50% discount. That's a really good sales pitch." [▶ WATCH THE SEMINAR](#)

Media coverage works the same way, priced against what the outlet charges advertisers. The hard part is collecting those prices, and Megan Meyer, the two-time NHRA world champion who co-hosts my Summits, has a simple system for it. Get the price while the outlet still remembers you. "You want to ask for the rate card whenever you do the interview with the media, the publication, podcast, whatever you're doing," she said. "You don't want to wait till it's a month later, a couple months down the road."

She logs every piece of coverage for the whole team in one spreadsheet: the date, the outlet, a link, a screenshot, the rate-card value and a contact at the publication. The same sheet becomes her year-end fulfillment report, so when it's time to pitch, the numbers are already there. "You want to make sure you actually know what those numbers are," Meyer said. "You don't want to forget or estimate."

[▶ WATCH MEGAN MEYER EXPLAIN HER SYSTEM](#)

WHEN YOUR TANGIBLE NUMBER IS ZERO

Plenty of racers add up their season and get almost nothing. No TV, no magazine coverage, the announcers don't know their name. That doesn't mean they have nothing to sell.

"Let's say you're not getting any media. Well, then your tangible value's zero. That's not good. But the good news is you still have an intangible value. That's your reputation, that's your integrity," I told the Off-Road Sponsorship Summit. "When you come knocking on the door, when you send an email or a message to somebody, if you put out a social post, do they believe you? Do they trust you? Do they like you? And that intangible value can have a lot more dollar value than your tangible assets."

If people trust you and you speak well of a brand, they believe you mean it. "The intangible value of that could be priceless," I said. "That's where you're going to get your money from." [▶ WATCH THE CLIP](#)

INTANGIBLES MULTIPLY WHAT YOU CAN COUNT

Intangibles can't be priced on their own. What they do is raise the value of everything you can count. At the PRI seminar I put rough numbers on it: "Let's say you added up everything you've done throughout the entire season, and you can only come up with \$10,000 worth of relative value of tangible assets. But you're a likable person, and you're trustworthy, and you have good contacts, and you're a great networker, and you have a good reputation... Well, your intangibles could be multiplied by 5 or 10 times. So your 10,000 value could easily be 50 or 100,000 to a sponsor who understands that."

Relevance counts as an intangible too: "If you're the only racer in the series that's promoting a certain type of product or company, man, that's huge." So does fit. A tire company backing a racer at a race makes immediate sense to the people watching. My bottom line: "You need the tangibles because that's part of your program. But the intangibles is where you make your real money." [▶ SEE THE FULL SEMINAR](#)

CREDIBILITY IS THE INTANGIBLE BRANDS PAY MOST FOR

Wing Lam of Wahoo's Fish Taco once gave me a surfing analogy for this. Paddle out at a famous break with a respected local and the other locals let you catch waves. Paddle out alone and you won't get one. Brands work the same way when they enter a sport. "If you stand alongside a legitimate legend and icon, somebody with credibility, whether it's a brand or a brand ambassador, then the consumers will let you in," I told the Off-Road Summit. When a respected racer like Rob MacCachren brings BFGoodrich into a series, fans assume the tires must be good.

That's why credibility can be worth more than anything you can count: "If you're not getting visibility and your value is zero on the tangible assets, that intangible value could make you worth a hundred, two hundred, three hundred thousand dollars if it's credible." [▶ WATCH THE SESSION](#)

Stories build credibility, but only when the sponsor is part of the story. "It's not how many times you want to race, how many times you got on the podium, how many times you were mentioned," I explained at another Summit. "It's how many times your sponsor was alongside you when you won, or how your sponsor helped you. If a story can be remembered and shared, now it starts to compound that value." [▶ WATCH THE CLIP](#)

THE DATA IS STARTING TO MEASURE INTANGIBLES

Until recently, "intangible" meant you had no way to prove it. Matt Martelli, CEO of the Mint 400, remembers what that felt like in sponsor meetings. "We would walk into a room and we'd talk about our value, and a lot of people are like, well, it's intangible, like how do you prove that?" he said. He could point to all the fans at the event posting on their phones, but he had no way to measure it. "With Hookit now I'm able to walk into those rooms and go, yeah, look at our impact." [▶ WATCH MATT MARTELLI ON THIS](#)

Hookit's CEO, Scott Tilton, says the platform has moved past pure exposure numbers toward measuring fit. When I suggested to him that tangibles get the rate card and intangibles are priceless, he said that's only "partially true." What brands care about now, he said, is whether the exposure reaches the right people. "It's not about having the most dollar value tied to a media exposure. It's more about are we reaching the right target consumer, does this athlete have the right fan following that aligns with our consumer focus." Hookit now looks hard at audience demographics and what he called brand fit and brand impact, partly because of what Tilton calls "a little bit of media value fatigue." [▶ WATCH SCOTT TILTON EXPLAIN THIS](#)

For racers, this means the line between tangible and intangible is shifting. Something you used to call priceless, like a loyal regional fan base that matches a sponsor's customers, can now be shown with audience data. That makes it easier to get paid for.

THE TAKEAWAY

- Total every tangible asset at face value or rate-card value, and log each item as it happens, with a link and a contact.
- Ask for the rate card on the day of the interview, not months later.
- List your intangibles in plain terms: who trusts you, who you can introduce a brand to, which customers you can reach and why they listen to you.
- Use audience and engagement data to turn intangibles like fan loyalty and audience fit into evidence.
- Price so the total value is several times what you're asking for. The tangibles make your number credible, and the intangibles are why you're worth more than it.

VOICES IN THIS ARTICLE: Megan Meyer — Two-time NHRA world champion and creator of Driven by Social Academy · Matt Martelli — CEO, Mint 400 · Scott Tilton — Co-founder and CEO, Hookit

Alex Striler runs SponsorshipTactics.com, a video library of motorsports sponsorship sessions with the brands that write the checks. Quotes come from recorded Sponsorship Summit sessions and interviews, lightly edited for clarity and length. Click any "Watch" link to see the speaker say it.

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