

AUTOMOTIVE

Welcoming new era, McLaren Racing plays underdog

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The brand is doubling down on its resolve to win races, introducing a new mantra. Image credit: McLaren

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

British automaker McLaren Racing is engaging fans with exclusive reveals and stories of resilience.

Ushering in a new era is *Whatever It Takes*, a film casual in its delivery of messaging typically reserved for crisis communications campaigns. The underdog's most recent release addresses its racing losses of last year before bringing an early F1 livery reveal to digital audiences, starting the year off by beating others to the branding finish line.

Showing its cars

McLaren is getting real in its reflections on the intensity of F1 racing.

In a :60-second clip, footage of publicized criticisms about the team and their midrace misses rolls out over a series of scenes. Swelling music plays, and a narrator appeals to viewers' emotions.

"Have you ever been counted out before you even began; told you didn't have what it takes?" he says, at the start of the video.

"We were."

McLaren is ready to do whatever it takes

A racer is shown getting interviewed following a loss. His stumbling words, captured on tape, provide the context for McLaren's new mantra.

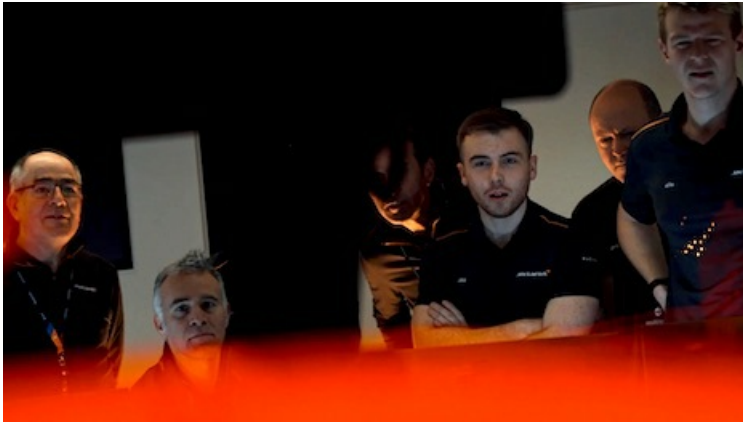
Moving forward, McLaren is doing "whatever it takes within the rules" to win, it shares across marketing materials. Calling the phrase a "racing mindset," its new era is tied back to Bruce McLaren himself.

Beginning in 1963, the late founder recruited F1 team members based on resolve and work ethic. The company states that back then, "talent was important, but hard work and determination more so."

Learnings from the brand's past are being applied presently. McLaren's musings on failure dominate the video, though elsewhere, its leaders point to what could be in store this year.

Following the death of Mr. McLaren during a test at its Goodwood facility, the group of athletes he gathered went on to become "one of the most decorated motor racing teams in history."

It is this history that the brand aims to honor in 2024, setting its sights on restoring glory through its F1 performance.



The team behind the racing is honored with the new campaign, their efforts and successes pointed out. Image credit: McLaren

Giving thanks to the public for sticking with its drivers so far, McLaren credits Andrea Stella, Italian engineer and team principal of the brand's F1 Team, with creating this battle cry. Mr. Stella is said to have shared his mantra of "whatever it takes" during his first-ever internal debrief at the company, as he described his vision.

Other members of the business who have provided raw materials for Formula 1 competitions are cheered on, including CEO Zak Brown. McLaren notes that its machinery, facilities and technical squad are being overhauled in hopes of a win.

British-Belgian driver Lando Norris, 24, and Australian driver Oscar Piastri, 22, are also singled out for their efforts. The representatives garnered more awards and points for the company in 2023 than any year since 2012, according to the automaker.

Visuals conclude with scenes of the athletes and the engineers working night and day to do better, to make the fans proud and to climb back up to the front of the grid, efforts that, as of late, have helped the team break the world record for the fastest pit stop ever.

Authenticity for the win

The campaign arrives alongside the launch of the new 2024 McLaren F1 livery, which debuted first of any team this year.

In a separate excerpt, the updated orange race car is run through what seems to be an endless amount of tests. The modern, sleek unit is shown off as "Whatever It Takes" comes across the screen and the sound of futuristic music fills the speakers.

McLaren's latest racing livery has launched

Though McLaren has tapped into its heritage before for campaigns and films ([see story](#)), this time, things appear personal.

Losing is a challenge that everyone can relate to, and it is this struggle that sits at the heart of McLaren's campaign. Its position is authentic, aligning with a trait many luxury shoppers deeply value ([see story](#)).

Stating that "we've gotten back up after every failure," the brand's explanation of the Whatever It Takes mantra is filled with sympathy-inducing descriptions of how hard it can be to not achieve one's goals, but also with expressions of gratitude for the fans who have stayed true. Calling defeat "crushing," McLaren asserts that it is the "people who make the difference" in the pursuit of victory.

In the end, F1 watchers and consumers of the automaker's road vehicles alike could be among those who resonate with the campaign's message.