

Fastest brand partnership

PARIS, FRANCE: Nissan and Sony join forces for the ultimate racing experience.

Gran Turismo 5 offers gamers a realistic experience of handling a race car. As far as its fans are concerned, it isn't a racing game, but more a racing simulator. The Nissan 370Z is a high-performance sports car that is available in regular showrooms. It is positioned as the sports car anyone can drive.



Like many gaming audiences, the GT5 gamers are a dedicated and extremely loyal bunch. Having fought in previous editions of the game to become the world's fastest drivers, there was pride and honour at stake in the new edition.

By contrast, the 370Z audience were younger, less status driven and were driven by success. They were dubbed 'passionate achievers', this is a group that finds more reward in working to achieve a goal, rather than in the prize for success in the end. The target audience in this group were also heavy gamers, and more likely to be found playing a Playstation 3 than watching television.

Success viewed as important

A common insight for both groups was that success was important, but that success had to be worth fighting for. Therefore, the two brands came together on a gaming platform that rewarded those who took part but gave the ultimate expression of success, or passionate achievement, to a winner.

The keyword here was 'hero'. The idea was to make a hero of the game, a hero of the car and a hero of those that play GT5 and those that drive the Nissan 370Z. GT Academy would take the world's fastest virtual racers to a real driving challenge at Silverstone, home of the British Gran Prix. Virtual race winners would be given the opportunity to enjoy the experience of being a professional racing driver. Millions of virtual gamers would become twenty real-life racers and from this group one number one professional driver would emerge.

Time trial

Ahead of the official game release, GT5 game developers created a one-lap time trial demo version of the game. The GT Academy 2010 allowed consumers to download a special time trial version of GT5 to their PS3, driving the new Nissan 370Z. The twenty fastest racers in each country entered a national virtual championship where the two winners would take part in the racing challenge at Silverstone circuit.



At Silverstone, the rookie-racers could drive a Nissan 370Z GT-R and single-seat racing cars. Famous names from the world of racing; Eddie Jordan, Johnny Herbert, Sabine Schmitz and Rob Barff acted as judges and mentors who selected and eliminated the drivers until a winner was decided.

GT 5 and Nissan's GT Academy took ownership of the PlayStation online network for a month as well as associated Facebook fan groups and Twitter feeds. Daily highlights of the Silverstone racing as well as video diaries and inside track info from the judges appeared on YouTube and PlayStation Network.

Every element of the platform was filmed for distribution online, on TV for programming and local PR and also in the game itself for its release in November.

Results

GT Academy saw 1.5m people download the time-trial demo, making it the most popular game demo in PlayStation history. It also achieved a record of sorts for the world's biggest test-drive, with people spending over an hour each driving the new Nissan 370Z in the game.

The GT Academy attracted 50 000 Facebook fans, 13 000 Twitter followers, and more than nine million video views of GT Academy 2010 content across YouTube and other video platforms. GT Academy 2010 distribution deals for the video content were been set-up with Channel 4, Channel 9 and M6 to name a few.

GT Academy will also be repeated in 2011 as Nissan and PlayStation's first global platform in the US and Asia.

This campaign was shortlisted in the 2011 [Festival of Media Awards](#) in the 'Best Event/Activation' category.

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