

PAID MEDIA - Xinyue Zou

Option 1: Complete a & b

a) Creative Brief

Client / Brand

Mattel – Hot Wheels

Project

Launch advertising for the limited-edition Hot Wheels × F1 “Icons” collection featuring die-cast models of legendary drivers (Michael Schumacher, Ayrton Senna, Alain Prost) and a new toy racetrack modeled after the Monaco Grand Prix Circuit, timed to the live reveal at the Monaco Grand Prix on Friday, June 5, 2026.

Target Audience

Primary: Adult toy and die-cast collectors and Formula 1 fans ages 18 to 34 who value motorsport heritage, limited drops, and high-display packaging. The majority are male (though with the release of the F1 documentary & F1 movie and women gaining greater influence in the sports industry, the female audience cannot be overlooked). Most reside in urban areas, grew up playing with Hot Wheels toy cars, are tech-savvy, follow race week content, and use collecting to showcase their taste and fandom identity. They are active on social media, regularly watch live F1 races, follow iconic drivers, and engage with luxury or performance brands like TAG Heuer, Ferrari, or Mercedes.

Secondary: Gift-givers within the same age group seeking premium, officially licensed collectibles with distinct brand attributes.

Media Placement (where this ad will appear)

This ad will appear in OOH (Out-of-Home) placements in premium, high-visibility locations tied to motorsport and luxury like airport terminals serving Monaco and Nice during race week, billboards near other urban Grand Prix cities (Miami, Austin, Las Vegas), and subway stations in major metro cities (NYC, London, Tokyo). This will also appear online through Instagram, YouTube pre-roll, and programmatic ads targeting F1 fan forums, Reddit, and diecast collector groups. And a high-impact print media placement will be secured in enthusiast and collectibles media that speak to motorsport and high-design audiences.

Goal

The primary goal is to drive awareness and anticipation for the 2026 limited-edition Hot Wheels x F1 “Icons” collection, positioning Hot Wheels as a brand that respects motorsport heritage and connects deeply with adult collectors (not just kids’ play), and drive early sign-ups/interest ahead of launch.

Current vs. Desired Perception

Current perception: “Hot Wheels is a fun, nostalgic, kid-forward car brand.”

Desired perception: “Hot Wheels can also be premium, collector-grade, motorsport-authentic and worthy of display, especially when partnered with F1 legends.”

Why we need this ad

Since this is a limited-edition release closely tied to a specific event, we need a highly impactful creative concept that immediately highlights its scarcity, authority, and heritage significance. This ad campaign will bridge the gap between childhood nostalgia and adult passion for F1, uniting childhood brand memories with the desires of adult collectors. As F1 gains global traction, especially among Millennials and Gen Z following the release of related films in the U.S., this partnership presents a strategic opportunity to reposition Hot Wheels as a cultural collectible, not just a toy.

b) Advertising Headline/Tagline

Primary Tagline

“Own the Apex.”

Print / OOH Placement

Print

- **Outlet:** *Autosport* (race-week issue, late May–early June 2026)
Placement: Full-page near the front or on a special Monaco Grand Prix feature spread.
Reason: *Autosport* reaches an audience that already understands racing language (“apex”) and values driver legacy. Placing the ad during Monaco week aligns perfectly with the campaign timing (June 5, 2026) and makes the line feel like it’s speaking to real F1 fans, not general consumers. It also supports the goal of repositioning Hot Wheels as credible for adult motorsport enthusiasts, not just kids.
- **Outlet:** *Robb Report* or similar luxury/collector lifestyle magazine.
Placement: Inside front cover or premium ad slot.
Reason: This version leans into the “displayable, limited, premium toy” angle for adults with disposable income who will actually buy a limited Hot Wheels × F1 piece as a collectible.
- **Outlet:** *The New York Times*, Sports Monday section (U.S. market awareness)
Reason: Less niche than *Autosport*, but helps to expand the audience base.

OOH

- **Location 1:** Digital OOH at Nice Côte d’Azur Airport, arrivals corridor (gateway airport for Monaco during race week)
Reason: Captures international F1 travelers and high-income fans arriving for the Grand Prix.
- **Location 2:** Large-format OOH near Monaco fan zones / race-week event footprint
Reason: Contextual relevance: advertising is talking about an apex while people are literally in Monaco for F1. It reinforces the “this is a special drop tied to this weekend” message.
- **Location 3:** Major-intersection billboards in F1-friendly metros (Los Angeles: Sunset Blvd.; New York: near Hudson Yards; London: Knightsbridge or Piccadilly digital screens)

Reason: U.S. and U.K. cities have strong F1 social media communities; big-format boards help position Hot Wheels as “grown-up and premium,” not toy-aisle.

- **Location 4 (transit):** Citywide buses or wrapped trams in host-city areas

Reason: Moving OOH with a short, punchy line like “Own the Apex.” works well because it’s readable, action-oriented, and photo/UGC friendly.

Strategy Note

“Own the Apex.” speaks directly to adult F1 fans and collectors because it uses an authentic racing term (“apex”) to signal insider status, precision and performance, while the verb “own” reframes the racing moment as a collectible moment. For this campaign, we are not just telling people to admire Schumacher, Senna or Prost—we are giving them permission to possess a piece of that racing perfection in the form of a limited Hot Wheels model and Monaco-inspired track. This slogan perfectly aligns with the campaign objective (elevating Hot Wheels from children's toys to authoritative racing collectibles) by cleverly merging action (“own”) with authority (“apex”). It also cleverly references the Apex team from the F1 movie to generate buzz. It is short enough for OOH and expandable in shared media (“how collectors own the apex”). The seamless integration of language, audience perception, and product scarcity makes this slogan the ideal choice for the launch campaign.