

How to get paid  
millions to drive your  
dream 'supercar'



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Is there such thing as automotivesocial mediaentrepreneurs? Can you makemoneyfrom featuring cars? Yep, you sure can!

The reality is that cars are one of the most popular and engaging online and offline pastimes. Fast cars, like Ferraris, Lamborghinis and Porsches, to name a few, are normally big-ticket attractions at car shows, luring fans worldwide who are eager to check out their good looks and amazing performance.

But would you believe that there's actually a way to make a living, reporting about something that makes most grown men turn into little boys? What's more, there are many roads (forgive the pun) that will enable you to drive cars for money.

The most obvious, and perhaps most lucrative way is to become a YouTube-based car expert. Plastering your YouTube page full of endless snippets from the car world, demonstrating what it's like being up close and personal with some of the best cars in the world and getting paid for it sounds amazing (where do I sign up?).

However, the reality is that you need amazing contacts, the ability to network like some of the best entrepreneurs in any business and of course a flair for being in front of the camera (it's not just the cars people want to see).

There are other paths, however. An alternate way to generate income as an automotive social media entrepreneur is mainstream advertising, where the reporter typically has a significant social media following and charges for “

shout-outs,” or structured advertising -- often from corporate or enterprise-type clients -- and standard advertising on or within their social presences.

Large and highly targetable social followings on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram are very appealing to advertisers. They know that the target audience for the car world is typically male dominated and between the ages of 18 and 30. Thus, the unsystematic scattergun-type message becomes more of a structured and targeted message.

The following individuals are some of the greatest in this field. Many boast personal social media followings greater than those of mainstream automotive manufacturers in their own right.

To compile this list, I chose based on these car guys' (and gal's) followers, reach, ability to monetize and personal networks.

## **1. Tim Burton**

Although many would-be car guys are hot on his heels, aka Schmee 150, remains the current undisputed car king of social media. His brand, Shmee150, was started by chance in January 2010, when Burton bumped into a Ferrari and Lamborghini with his new video camera in hand, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Six years on, Shmee has a significant social following and gets invited to many high-end manufacturer, club and individual events all over the world, which he often attends in his personal McLaren or Ferrari. Not a bad pair of cars for somebody who posts videos online.

Burd is a true entrepreneur in the sense that he runs a very smooth business with links on his website to book advertising and merchandise. His videos, however, are probably aimed more at a younger target market audience, where he has become an almost cult-like figure.

## **2. Paul Woodman**

Woodman is the CEO and founder of , with probably the smallest official social media following from our list. But he's arguably the best-connected entrepreneur here, enjoying relationships with many of the world's leading car owners and collectors, and direct relationships with manufacturers such as Lamborghini, Pagani and Koenigsegg.

Woodman has been on the car scene for many years and seems to be making the transition from attending events behind the scenes to being more in the public eye. He's also recently announced, on his website, a new .

Clever enough to leverage his position and relationship with manufacturers, giving away a new Fiat 500 for the launch of Lovecars. com, Woodman has the contacts and the power of a global site such that he may be a tip for the top in 2016.

## **3. Marco Bronzetti**

“ A point of reference since 2006” is the phrase that explains the man behind the brand Marchettino. Italian born and bred, couldn't have been better placed to start filming supercars: He's a stone's throw from such supercar manufacturers as Ferrari, Maserati, Lamborghini and Pagani.

Writing his captions in fluent English, Marchettino manages to fill his social channels with good, unique content and reaches out to more than 300, 000 subscribers on his YouTube channel, and nearly 6 million followers on Facebook.

Quiet and unassuming, Marchettino could be pushing for a place even higher up this list, though his presence in front of the camera shows his slightly nervous, but likable demeanor.

#### **4. Alejandro Salomon**

Salomondrin is the username on social media for this native Mexican, now-U.S. resident. This very funny, but very un-PC guy would probably top our list if he were a bit more politically correct -- not that he cares about that, it would seem.

Probably the fastest-growing car guy in terms of his popularity and the seeming adoration he seems to get from many of his vast Instagram and YouTube followers, Salomondrin is an acquired taste and is probably not going to have the appeal of the more mainstream car speakers, particularly with corporate advertisers.

However, judging by the success of his YouTube channel and the amazing Hyper 5 series he recently produced, this guy focuses just on making exciting and engaging videos and cashing in on the revenue.

He's a charismatic and entertaining entrepreneur who owns his own amazing personal car collection and has relationships with many people within the

industry. However, the question looms: Would you want your child reading on his profile about breasts and getting high?

## **5. Maximillion Cooper**

The second Brit on the list and another very well-connected one at that, Maximillion Cooper is the epitome of cool. Ex-racing driver, model and husband to A-lister celebrity, Eve, Cooper's vision to combine cars, music, fashion and entertainment was the inspiration for his hugely successful 3000 brand.

Unlike other members of this list, Cooper seems to use social media mainly for fun, with few links or references to his business ventures, though the man behind one of the biggest brands in automotive entertainment definitely warrants a place as one of our top social media car entrepreneurs.

## **6. Richard Thompson**

Is a professional photographer, though we think that he is much more than just someone who takes pictures of nice cars.

One of the hottest automotive social media gurus in the business, Thompson has amassed a huge online following, through targeting and networking, based around his amazing photography.

Now an official creative director for luxury Italian carmaker Pagani Automobili, Thompson always seems to be in the right place at the right time, mostly with his camera in tow, and often driving a very, very nice car.

## **7. Aimee Shackelford**

It's a man's world, unless you're a. k. a. " Petrol Girl," the social media queen from California. Associated with many collectors and owners and responsible for managing brands such as Gold Rush Rally, Shackelford is a force to be reckoned with in the online world.

Her personal following on social is relatively modest, but her reach goes out to some of the key influencers and decision-makers in the automotive world, making her one of the top choices for our list.

## **8. Nick Marelli**

Even the most diehard of car fans have probably not heard the name Nick Marelli, yet he has one of the largest automotive YouTube channels, with more than 200, 000 subscribers, together with an astonishing 5. 5 million-strong Facebook following.

is the brand in front of the name. A very private and unassuming character, so much so that we couldn't even get hold of a picture of him, Marelli could easily be one of the top automotive social media entrepreneurs in the world, but he chooses to have a slightly more reserved and behind-the-scenes approach.

Whatever it is he's doing, he's doing it well, and NM2255 continues to grow in his home country of Italy and throughout the world.

## **9. Larry Chen**

An automotive journalist and a real talent with a camera, contributes to several online publications. He's part of this list for his connections and his

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huge potential to grow and expand. Chen is best known for his behind-the-scenes images of monster trucks, hot rods and glamour girls. Nice job if you can get it.

## **10. Alex Smolik**

The sleeping giant of automotive Internet social entrepreneurs, is well known for his YouTube exploits in and around Paris, as well as his meticulous Facebook page that has nearly 4 million fans.

He's a true gentleman and businessman who has the ability to become one of the real contenders if he figures out how to focus more as a business than a hobbyist. Monetization comes from Facebook advertising and some YouTube revenue, but it could be far greater if he adopted more of his friends' -- Marchettino's and Shmee150's -- attitudes about testing and endorsing products and brands.