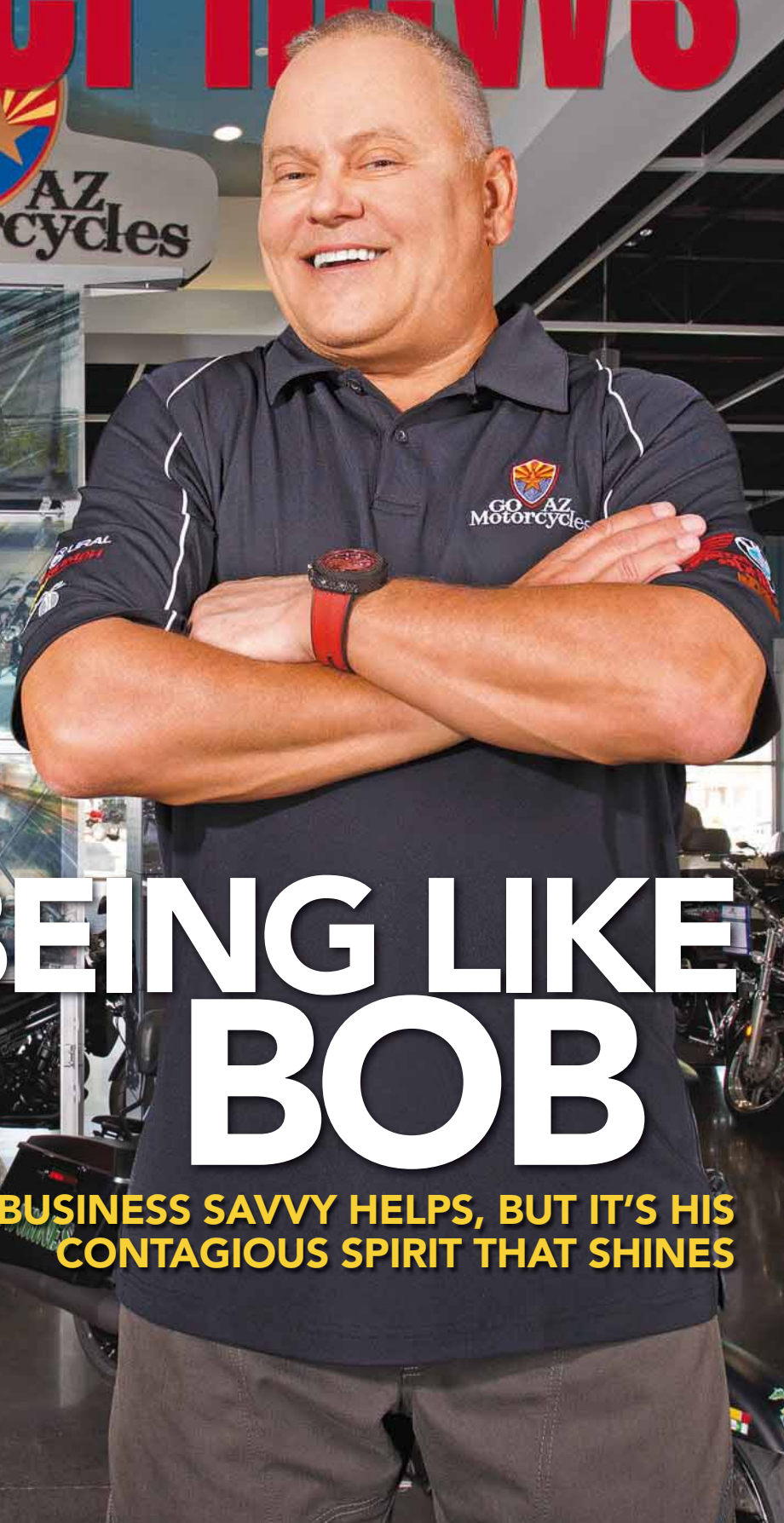


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Dealernews

VOL. 49, NO. 9 SEPTEMBER 2013
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SPECIAL REPORT: GEAR 2014

- TURNING INVENTORY
- DISPLAYS ON A DIME (ALMOST)
- THE 'SOFT SELL' OF SAFETY
- HELMET HEAVYWEIGHT BOUT
- ...AND MORE!

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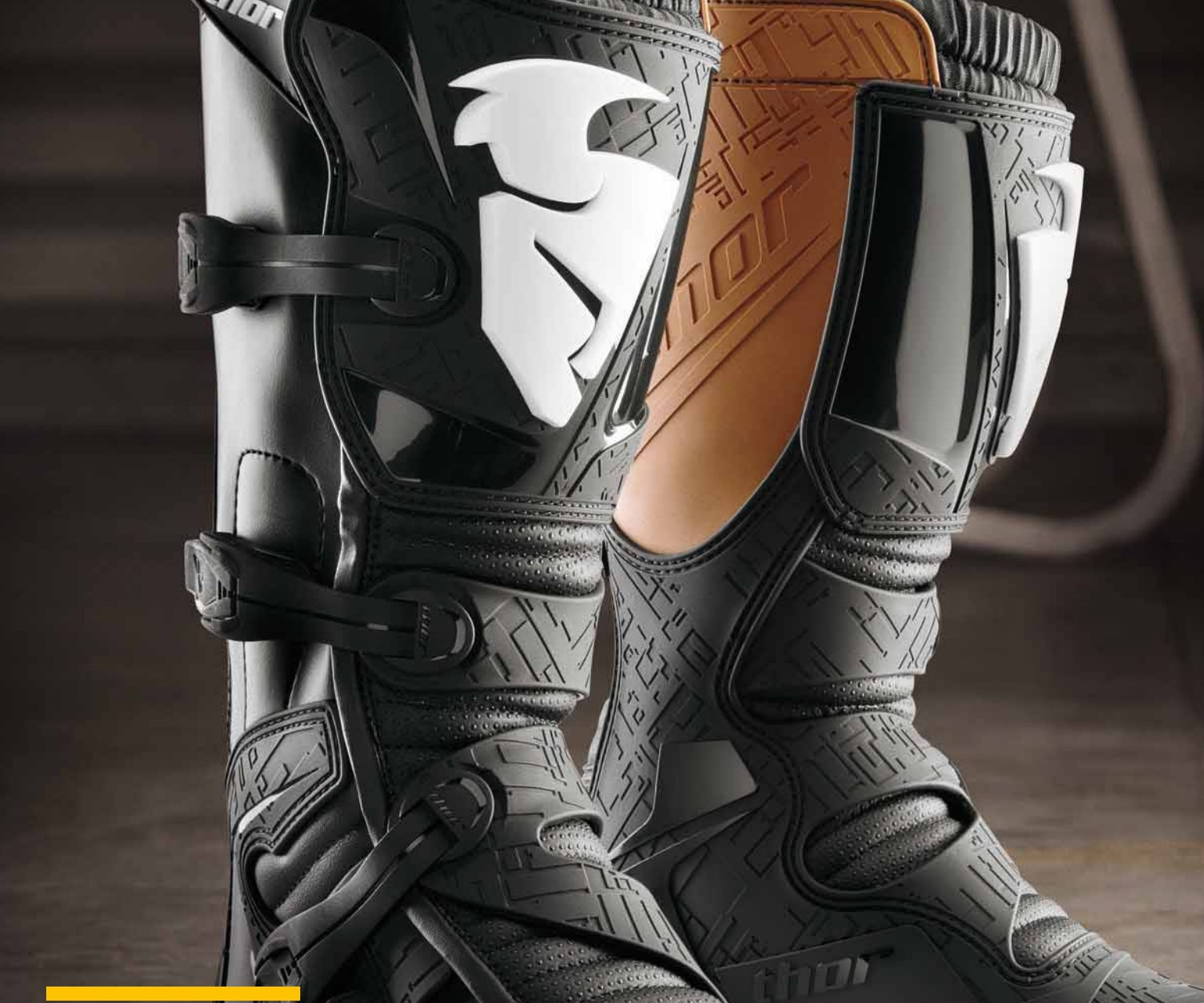
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You can succeed in anything if you do this one thing: Give the people what they want.” — Bob Parsons

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On the cover

"I've always been a fan of Bob Parsons the businessman," says our cover story author Genevieve Schmitt. "I've followed him since he started Go Daddy. It was an honor to interview him and to be in the presence of someone who has accomplished so much and doing it all now for the greater good. He inspired me on a personal level."

Photography by Scooter Grubb



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*Source: internal tests conducted in 2012 at Ladoux Technological Center



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FROM THE EDITOR

Mary Slepicka

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKING

IT'S TIME FOR SOME shameless self-promotion — which you actually may find interesting.

The Progressive International Motorcycle Show tour will kick off in late October and crisscross the country (a couple of times) before concluding in February. The "IMS" tour, as we call it, is the largest series of consumer events in our industry, giving the vehicle manufacturers the chance to showcase their 2014 models in front of a half-million people ... who actually pay for admission.

If an IMS show is coming within 200 miles of your store this fall and/or winter, it's a chance to put your marketing plans into overdrive.

The IMS tour is a sister property to *Dealernews*. Every year, we cross the IMS attendee data with sales numbers from R.L. Polk. We know from the 2012-13 report that a tour attendee is 33 times more likely to purchase a new motorcycle and 20 times more likely to buy a used unit than the general public within six months after attending an IMS show.

How's that for a qualified audience?

OK, here's where it gets ... easy. The IMS team has developed FREE promotional items you can display in your store to spread the word about a show coming to your area — posters, counter cards, even discount coupons. Dealers who participate in this program will receive four complimentary tickets to the show, and their stores will be listed on a special Dealer Locator on www.motorcycleshows.com. There are

also electronic ads, logos and other digital assets that you can use on your websites, social sites and in your emails to let customers know that you support the tour and that you have discount coupons available for tickets.

All you have to do is sign up — no fees, nothing. Just contact Ryan Adams or Daniela Juarez (see box) and let them know that you'd like to participate.

There are additional ways to boost your market presence through an IMS show. You can work the factory displays for your OEM — your staff has the local knowledge and insight consumers seek, and working the exhibit is a great way to generate leads for your dealership. You can even buy a booth and sell PG&A during the weekend, but that's up to you. (Ryan and Daniela are not salespeople.)

My recommendation is that if you're within 200 miles of an IMS show this season, sign up for the dealer program. It costs nothing but a little time, and the benefits could truly outweigh your initial effort.

Mary Slepicka, mslepicka@dealernews.com



DEALER PROGRAM CONTACTS

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GEAR 2014: ENTER KABUTO

HELMET BRAND (NEE OGK) FORMERLY AVAILABLE ONLY IN JAPAN ENTERS U.S. MARKET WITH DISTRIBUTION DEAL THROUGH WPS

KABUTO HELMETS are now available in the U.S. market thanks to a distribution deal secured with Western Power Sports/WPS. Four new helmet models made by the Japanese company formerly known as OGK made their debut in front of WPS sales reps in August.

WPS intends to position Kabuto USA (www.kabutousa.com) as a higher-end helmet line, competing with the Arais and Shoeis of the world but offering a more affordable price point for U.S. buyers, with MSRPs ranging from \$139.95 to \$479.95. Safety, stability, quietness, all-day comfort, good peripheral vision and an easy-release shield system are expected to be the main selling features.

The distributor was set to launch social media and event-based campaigns to support the brand's rollout in the U.S., James Richards, Kabuto sales and brand manager for WPS, told *Dealernews* in mid-August. "[Kabuto knows] we're good at brand building," he said.

Although Kabuto is new to the U.S. market, the OGK brand has been in operation since 1982 and due to the depth of its product line is the No. 2 seller of helmets in Japan, behind Shoei, Richards said. Previously, riders who wanted to buy a OGK/

Kabuto lid would have to order a (non-DOT) model directly from Japan. The new U.S. line features four new western headforms, all of which meet and/or exceed DOT and Snell, Richards noted.

The four offerings are the FF-5V Aerodynamic Racing Helmet (\$429.95 - \$479.95),

See more Gear, Helmets and Apparel starting on page 14

the Aeroblade III comfort full-face (\$349.95 - \$399.95), the Kamui full-face with inner shade (\$249.95 - \$299.95) and the Avand II three-quarter (\$139.95). All carry a five-year warranty. The FF-5V and Aeroblade III are manufactured in Japan; Kabuto is able to achieve a lower price on the Kamui and Avand II by manufacturing those two models in China, company executives noted.

No matter where manufacturing is located, the four models share the same DNA, which includes advanced composite shells, COOLMAX interior pads, incorporation of Kabuto's patented Wake Stabilizer that controls disturbed airflow to make the helmet more stable, and a patented SAF quick-change shield system. All styles are offered from XS to XXL in a variety of colors and graphics, and are ready for dealer ordering, according to WPS. — *Mary Slepicka*

GOT DISTRIBUTORS?

We've got the coverage – from the Tucker Rocky Dealer Show, WPS National Sales Meeting and the Parts/Drag National Vendor Presentation. Visit www.dealernews.com/dealernews/distshows2013

AUCTION WARNING

BBB TIES TWO MORE COMPANIES TO AUCTION HOUSE UNDER SCRUTINY

The Better Business Bureau of St. Louis has linked two new auction names, **Equipment Plus Auctions** and **Recreational Complete**, to two auction houses that drew multiple complaints and lawsuits from dealers who said they lost money due to unethical sales tactics.

The BBB has merged its files on Equipment Plus and Recreational Complete with its files on Midwest Public Auction and Extreme Auction Services, which got a grade of "F" in September 2012 after the BBB investigated complaints. That advisory now applies to the two new names as well.

Auctions have continued monthly at the same Poplar Bluff, Mo., address under the two new business names. That, along with the companies having several employees in common and the ongoing presence of Midwest Public Auction owner Donnie M. Smotherman, prompted the BBB to merge the files, treating all the names as one business.

"The BBB has learned that the businesses not only shared the same auction facility, but also shared several of the same employees, including Smotherman, the former owner of Midwest who now appears to be in a management position with Equipment Plus," the bureau stated. "Both the owner of the Poplar Bluff warehouse and the auctioneer who calls the auctions said they have current contracts with Smotherman for auctions at the Cravens Road site."

A BBB investigator tried to contact management of the auctions operating under the new names.

The Missouri Attorney General's office is investigating dealer complaints against all of the named auction companies. St. Louis television station KSDK aired an interview with agency CEO Michelle Corey on the situation in mid-August. — *Holly Wagner*



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SPEED READ

WHAT'S TRENDING ON DEALERNEWS.COM

DEALER OPERATIONS > SALES

- **Harley-Davidson debuts largest-scale new model launch in its history** Project Rushmore bikes pass faster, stop quicker and see farther at night, and include features designed to attract new riders.
- **Indian unveils redesigned Chiefs in big Sturgis blowout event** Dealers start taking orders for shipments due to arrive in September along with assorted PG&A.
- **Polaris reveals RZR 1000XP with a reported 107 hp** OEM said it developed the engine with dual 48mm throttle bodies with new long-tip fuel injectors.
- **Yamaha's PWC lineup features most powerful motor yet** WaveRunners' Super Vortex High Output is a 1812cc, four-stroke, four-cylinder supercharged and intercooled engine.

DEALER OPERATIONS > MANAGEMENT > BUILDING YOUR BUSINESS > VEHICLES

- **Motorcycle, ATV sales up in June** MIC says industry's not 'back in black' yet, but it's made some progress.
- **Chrome Capital set to expand with \$20M investment** Expect more funding announcements as TestRide company expands pre-owned H-D leasing program into California, other states.
- **World of Powersports fuels military business, now adds ambulances** Central Illinois dealer takes on off-road ambulance line.

DEALER OPERATIONS > SERVICE > SERVICE RESOURCE CENTER > REPAIRS

- **Kawasaki recalls 11,000 Ninjas to fix the stalling issue** Problem related to improper setting in the ECU, OEM says.
- **Four manufacturers issue ABS-related recalls** Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Triumph issue separate recall notices for a related manufacturing problem.

DEALER OPERATIONS > MARKETING > MARKETING RESOURCE CENTER

- **N.J. lawsuit against Delaware dealer won't be dismissed on jurisdiction** Judges reasons that dealer markets heavily to consumers in adjacent states.
- **Iron Pony launches rider training school in Ohio** Cost is a break-even but gets new customers into the Top 100 Hall of Fame dealership.

TOP VIEWED PRODUCTS on dealernews.com



High-top styling in Cortech's new Vice WP riding shoe

Drayko unveils CE-Level 2 armored jean for U.S. market

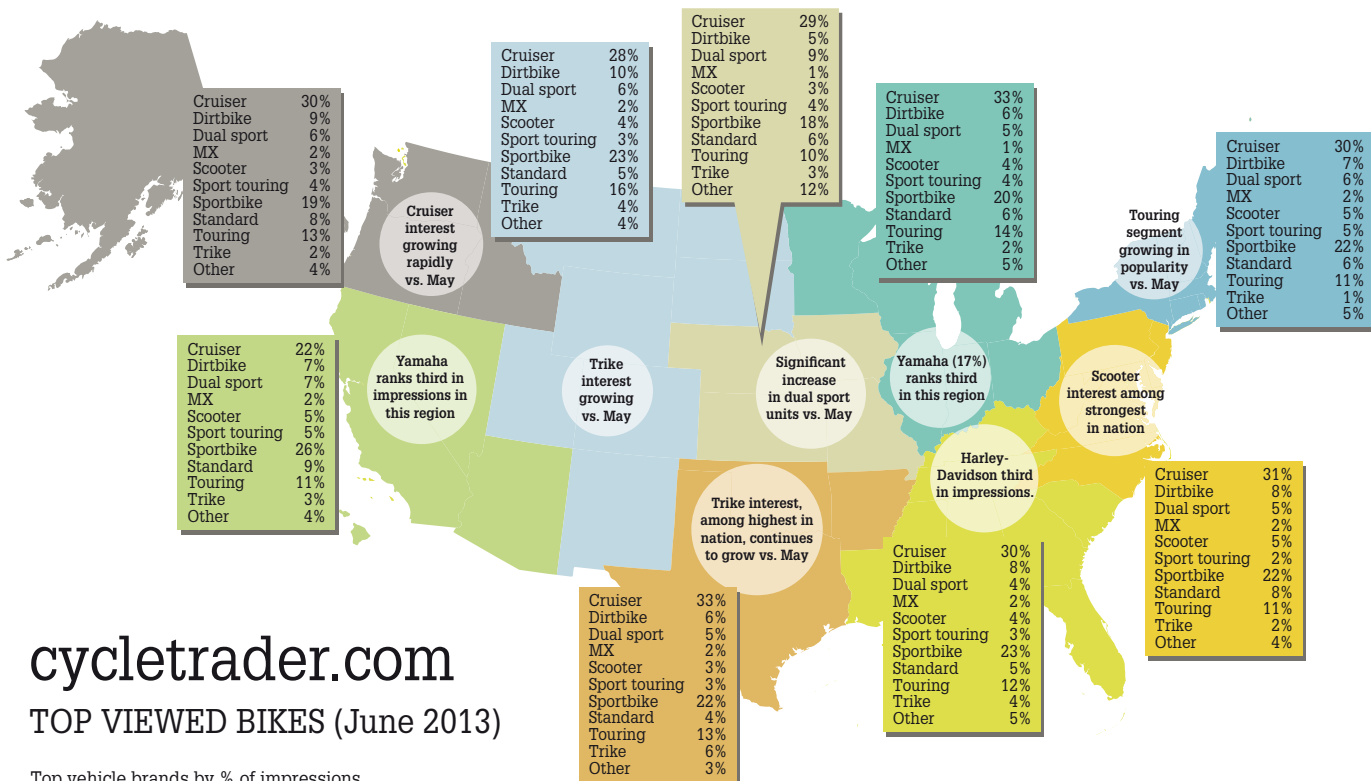
Pro Taper debuts Metal Mulisha SX line

Motul reformulates, updates branding of motorcycle lubricants

Aeromach offers a 'doggone' good riser

Ogio, Red Bull team for lightweight luggage line



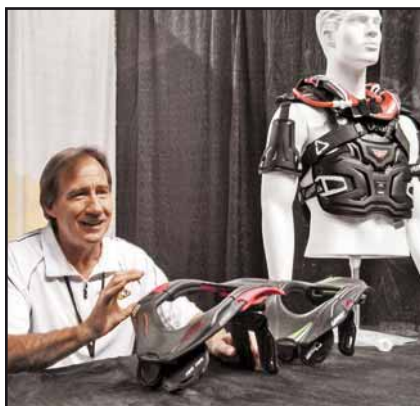


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TOP VIEWED BIKES (June 2013)

Top vehicle brands by % of impressions

- Central Plains** ● Honda 26%, Harley-Davidson 22%
- Great Lakes** ● Honda 22%, Harley-Davidson 20%
- Mid Atlantic** ● Harley-Davidson 20%, Honda 18%
- Northeast** ● Harley-Davidson 17%, Yamaha 16%
- Pacific** ● Honda 21%, Harley-Davidson 17%
- Pacific Alaska** ● Honda 19%, Yamaha 19%
- Rocky Mountain** ● Harley-Davidson 27%, Honda 20%
- Southeast** ● Honda 23%, Yamaha 17%
- Southwest** ● Honda 20%, Harley-Davidson 19%



LEATT DEVELOPS NEW NECK BRACE, CHEST PROTECTOR FOR FLY

The new Five Five neck brace developed by Leatt for FLY, shown by Leatt's Phil Davy (above) in front of WPS reps in mid-August, takes about 30 seconds to set up and not much longer to adjust it to a customer's frame, and has softened material that lets the rider's chin and side of his helmet strike and "dig in" rather than slide to the side. It also doesn't require extra padding. A new CE-Level 2 Pro Lite Chest Protector will be available through FLY as well. (And that new kids all-in-one? Look for it this fall from Leatt and in 2014 under the FLY brand, Davy said.)

Consumer study of vehicles enthusiasts are viewing online at CycleTrader.com. Study conducted by Dominion Insights, which collects data and reports to dealers and OEMs. Find out which specific models received most consumer interest at <http://dominioninsights.com/dealernews>.

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GEAR UP!

NEW LINES FOR 2014 COMBINE WITH OLD LOOKS FOR FRESH UPDATES



Speed and Strength intros fashion-forward Speed Strong jacket

Speed and Strength made waves at the Tucker Rocky show in late July by introducing the new Urge Overkill adventure-touring line for 2014, marking the brand's first offering in that segment. Still, there were a number of new designs that more closely matched Speed and Strength's usual sportbike style.

One of those is the Speed Strong armored soft shell jacket which looks, at a glance, like a heavyweight hoodie. Designed with entry-level pricing (\$169.95), the Speed Strong takes its cues from popular fashion styling.

Underneath that style are the reinforced AR-1000 shoulders, elbows and back areas, as well as removable soft armor. Other motorcycle-specific features include ventilation, belt loops for pant attachment, and reflective trim. (Sizes: S-3XL) www.ssgear.com.

Honda goes retro with Heritage casuals

Honda is getting in on the vintage craze by introducing the new Heritage Collection T-shirts through Parker Synergies. The line has kicked off with four styles, each featuring a classic Honda: the Z50, CR125, RC166 and CB750. Each year, Honda will add signature bike designs to the collection. For now, the shirts only come in men's sizing, from M to 2XL, and they carry a retail price of \$26.95. www.parkersynergies.com.



Harley-Davidson Footwear adds Maddison boot for a cause

Harley-Davidson Footwear introduced the ladies' Maddison boot in August. Specifically designed for the Harley-Davidson MotorClothes Pink Label Collection, a portion of the proceeds from Maddison sales will be donated to various breast cancer support groups.

To emphasize the Pink Label name, the Maddison features the Harley-Davidson logo embroidered in pink, as well as other touches of pink stitching on the leather. Buckled straps and a three-inch stacked heel pair with a back zipper. www.harleydavidsonfootwear.com.

Reevu rearview helmets now available in U.S.

Reevu's FSX-1 modular and MSX-1 full-face helmets have the distinction of allowing a rider to see behind them with a rearview mirror design. The English brand says it is the first to offer a motorcycle helmet with a built-in, fully adjustable system that allows a rider to see the full view behind.

The view from the back of the helmet is bounced through a series of surfaces to a mirror that clips inside the front visor. Reevu says its helmets not only allow a





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riders to keep his head facing forward, but it also offers a much broader view than the side mirrors on a motorcycle.

Both the FSX-1 (\$479.99) and MSX-1 (\$399.99-\$479.99) are ECE- and DOT-approved and carry extra perks like a quick-release retention system, removable and washable liners, and a zip-out neck collar. Reevu USA is handling dealer distribution in the U.S., and both models have various color and graphics choices. www.reevu-usa.com.

Nolan updates N43 with N44 model

Nolan has updated several models for 2014, but nothing has received as much of an overhaul as the N43 N-COM. In fact, the revamp is so big that Nolan has renamed the crossover helmet the N44, which will retail starting at \$380. The helmet has some of the same features as its predecessor, like a removable chin bar, an internal sun visor, and N-COM communication system compatibility. The N44's most visible upgrade is the new peak for shading, which is removable and adjustable. A wide array of color options includes solids, graphics, high-visibility and matte finishes. www.nolanhelmets.com.

Wolf Moto USA has exclusive U.S. distribution deal

Wolf Moto USA handles U.S. distribution for gear brand Wolf, and among its sport-touring offerings is the Outlast Titanium jacket. The nylon outer shell is Teflon coated with a Texland "HUMAX Z 8000" membrane so it is waterproof but breathable. The Outlast Titanium (\$459.95) has all of the soft armor you ex-

pect in a motorcycle jacket, along with Clarino shoulder overlays. The thermal lining is removable, and front and rear venting gets air flowing when the heat rises. Wolf also has a matching Outlast Titanium pant (\$349.95) and glove (\$159.95), both of which are waterproof.

www.wolfmotosusa.com.

Warm & Safe gives high-tech upgrade to long johns

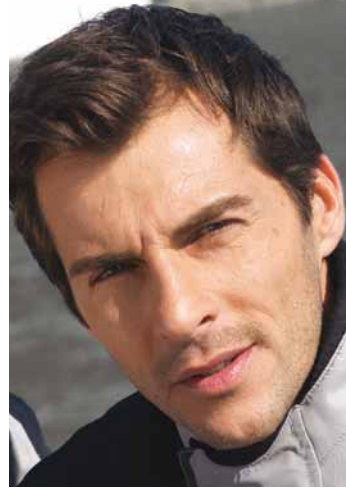
Warm & Safe's newest heated offering comes in the form of Generation WindBlock pants available for both men and women. The pants (\$214.95) are a thin, lightweight style designed to fit under jeans. The front panel is made from Gelanots, a stretch material that acts as a wind block. The heated zones cover the thighs, knees and rear. Men's sizing starts at S and goes up to 3XL, while the women's pants range from XS to XL. www.warmnsafe.com.



MSR's MAV1 helmet includes Metal Mulisha, Rockstar styles

The new MAV1 helmet for 2014 comes in five color options as well as Metal Mulisha and Rockstar Energy Drink designs. The MAV1 is a lightweight helmet, weighing in at 3.1 lbs., with a polycarbonate shell. The removable, washable inner liner and cheek pads are color-coordinated to the graphics. The Snell- and DOT-approved MAV1 retails for \$149.95 in the five regular colors and \$169.95 for the other two designs. www.msrmx.com.

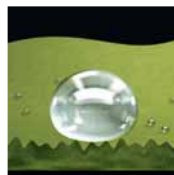
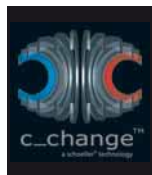




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24
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7

Answer Racing introduces entry-level MX line

If it's good enough for their sponsored motocross riders, then it must be good enough for everyone. That's the approach Answer Racing is taking to its new Synchron line of jerseys, pants and gloves.

Answer outfitted racers in the entry-level apparel, which comes in seven color combinations. The pants (MSRP \$69.95 youth, \$75.95 adults) have perks like pre-curved knees and stretch panels. The jerseys (\$24.95 youth, \$25.95 adult) are made of a moisture-wicking fabric and have extra-long tails. Synchron pre-curved gloves (\$17.95 youth, \$19.95 adult) complete the ensemble.

www.answerracing.com. **D**

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Apparel department at Top 100 dealer Powersports East. Photo by Denmark Photography

Gear and apparel: By the numbers

TAKE THE GUESSWORK OUT OF ORDERING BY DOING THE MATH

By Beth Dolgner

NO ONE WANTS to be left standing with a lot of odd leftover gear: Boots that would only fit a giant and jackets in colors that match a brand you don't even sell. You can minimize the amount of gear and apparel that winds up on the clearance rack by ordering the right combination of sizes, variety and quantity.

The bad news: There is no one formula for perfect ordering. Every dealer will have a different combination that works best for them. The good news: Figuring out that combination is less mystical than some might think; it comes down to the direct reflection of both your customers and your showroom floor.

SIZE MATTERS

Knowing what variety of sizes to order is a matter of knowing your customers, so keep track of the sizes that sell the most and order accordingly. Typically, the popular sizes for men will be large and above, while women tend to fit small to large. Each dealer's ideal sizing spread can even vary based on subsets within the customer base, so what works in motocross apparel might be different from the appropriate sizes in cruiser apparel.

"You can't stock five of each size. Weigh it in favor of who your average consumer is," says Steve Jones, senior projects manager of Gart Sutton & Associates Inc. "Are they larger, smaller, younger, older? We're seeing more of the better dealers hiring people who have

experience in clothing stores because of their expertise in the types of customers in the market area and their expertise in displays and fitting the customer."

Kristen Kunzman, assistant general manager at **Skip Fordyce Harley-Davidson** in Riverside, Calif., has handled ordering for 14 years. And here's what she's found: *A waist never lies.* Belt sales are the best determining factor when it comes to sizing. "[Belt sales] will tell you a lot about what size your customers are," she says. "Belt sizes go one size up from what pants size they are wearing. In women's belts, the biggest selling size for me is large, so I know my most popular size in women's clothing is medium. A waist says so much about sizing."

Running reports of what has sold in the past can go a long way toward knowing what sizes to order, but Rod Stuckey, founder and president of Dealership University and Powersports Marketing, suggests also tracking what you *don't* sell. "You can generate a report of lost sales to provide a perspective to find out if you're missing sales to women or of 3XL because you don't have enough," he says.

Noting each time a customer asks for something specific that you don't carry can show whether there is a real demand for something that should be stocked in the future.

Knowing each product also makes a difference. Every manufacturer has a different idea of what "large" really means, and not all materials fit the same. Styles that have a tailored fit will probably run a ▶

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size smaller, as will styles made with non-elastic materials.

"Get that product in your hand. Play with the material: Stretch it out and see how long it is. Those are keys to ordering the right size," Kunzman suggests.

RIDING VS. CASUAL

Riding gear will almost always outnumber casual apparel on a showroom floor. Part of that, Jones says, is because of what's available from manufacturers. "We have relatively small amounts of non-safety clothing, which are usually T-shirts," Jones notes. He suggests that a dealer should approach ordering the same way, reserving at least 70 percent of available floor space for riding gear.

However, Kunzman is quick to note that what works for men may not work for women. At Skip Fordyce, the gear/casual apparel split is "probably 60/40 for men; women is more 50/50," she says. "We carry a lot more variety of fashion in actual clothing [for women]. Men come in and they go straight to get what they want. Women are going to look around and really shop; you've got to have more variety for women."

While women may prefer more variety in casual apparel, just how much of a dealer's stock should be female-oriented? Again, it comes down to knowing the customer base. "Different markets do better with women's apparel than other markets," Stuckey says. "I would defer to looking at the data and trying to get an idea of what segment of the customer database is female, and attempt to keep a similar ratio of inventory available in the showroom."

Kunzman suggests increasing the women's section as the holidays approach. "A lot of men will come in and buy the women's stuff for Christmas," she notes.

DEPTH OF SIZING TRUMPS VARIETY

Knowing what to stock and how much of it to have on hand is a careful balance between too much and not enough. "I would always recommend to a dealer that they minimize the variety of clothing in favor of depth of sizing," Jones says.

That depth of sizing doesn't have to be big, but it needs to be enough to fill the shelves. Stuckey notes that "you just can't afford to be sloppy and carry ten of something, but at the same time if you don't have a full selection — if your racks and grids aren't full — it actually has a negative effect. It looks like a garage sale, or like you're going out of business."

A quick turnaround time for ordering makes it easier than ever to keep those shelves full. Having at least two of each size in stock is a must. "What's a good idea is if you have one to show and one to go. Then if you sell it, you still have one there and you quickly reorder," Stuckey says.

Confused on styles? Let your staff and top customers weigh in. Kunzman makes it an event, providing food and giving customers an exclusive look at new gear. "I've brought in some of my best customers to ask their opinions. You can get pre-orders from that, too. They help your sales, but they also give you a lot of insight," she says. **D**

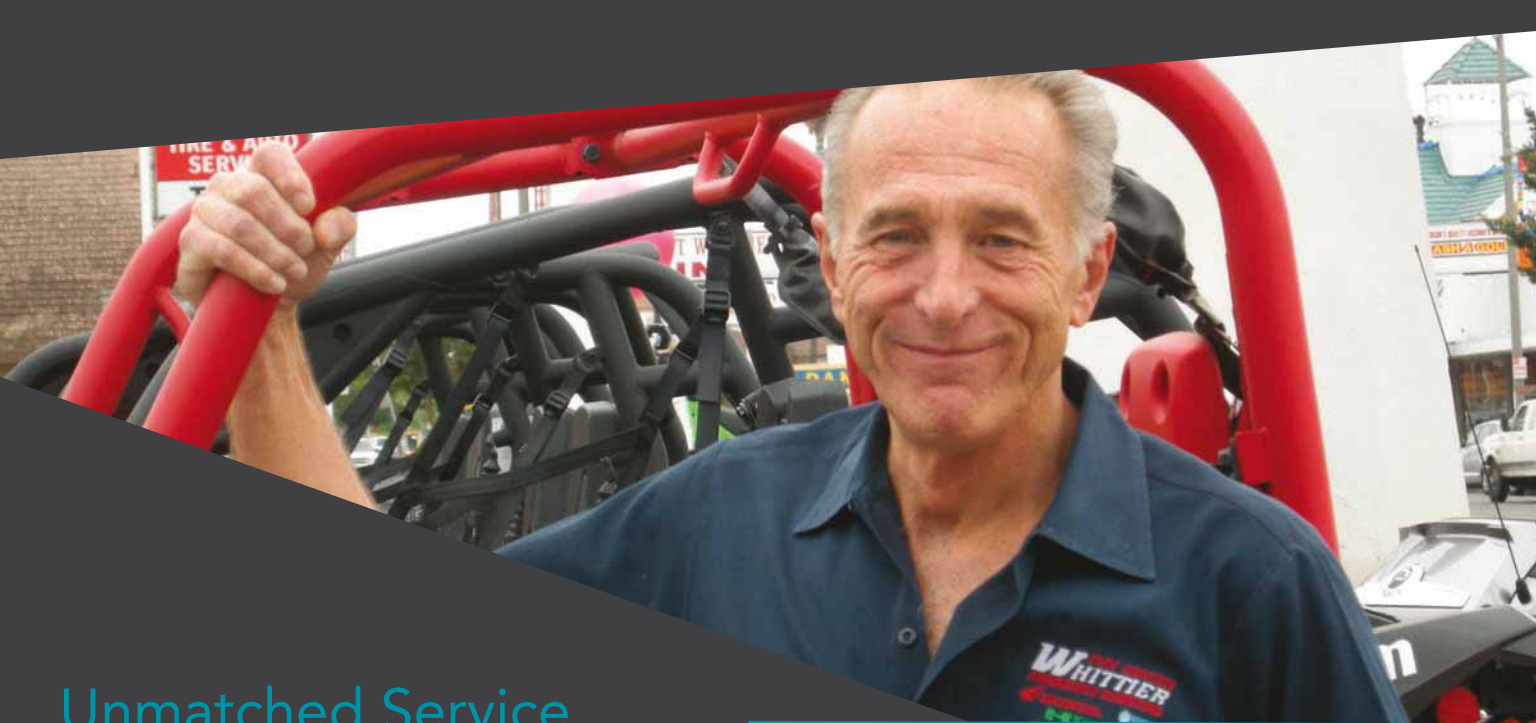


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The Soft Sell of SAFETY

SAFETY FEATURES MAY HELP YOU SELL MORE GEAR, BUT PRACTICE YOUR APPROACH

"SAFETY ISN'T SEXY, so it's really hard to sell safety." The quote comes from Brian Weston, managing director for Arai Helmet Americas. When it comes to selling riding gear, that sentiment is echoed across the board.

Talking about the safety aspects of helmets and gear tends to get a little touchy, largely because of the negative images it can evoke. Highlighting safety features means highlighting the *what ifs* of riding, and no one likes to think about what happens in a crash.

So the trick is to focus on how those safety features improve the actual riding experience. "We really don't like to sell safety *per se*," says Eric Anderson, CEO of Vroom Network. "The reason people are riding motorcycles is for the escape, the adventure and the adrenaline. But, on the other

hand, we want you to be prepared to be comfortable, and part of being comfortable is looking the part."

Looking the part means wearing the appropriate gear, but a rider is unlikely to be swayed by a list of how the gear will help in a crash. "Part of that presentation is in regard to safety, but it's not your opening statement. It's a soft sell," Anderson says.

Rick Menapace, president of PMG, is familiar with that selling strategy as Arai's strategic marketing firm. "Not only is a better fitting helmet safer, but it's also a more

pleasant experience," he says, citing reduced noise and a more comfortable ride as selling points.

The soft sell of safety still requires some hard knowledge. The greatest resource dealers have is their distribution rep, and combining that with hands-on experience is even better.

"I used to tell reps I'd agree to purchase stuff, but they had to come train my team on it. Having the reps as a resource is huge," says Rod Stuckey, a former dealer principal who is the founder and president of Dealership University and Powersports Marketing.

Cody Wolf, who handles sales and marketing for EVS Sports, says that dealers can also ask manufacturers for more intensive training. He says that companies can "assist and educate with video calls or conference calls so that those parts managers can look at that customer and gauge what he's doing, and know, based on our product line, what they're going to need."

Online resources are growing, too, with everything from marketing videos to user reviews. However, having information available doesn't mean that everyone is going to take advantage of it. Stuckey suggests putting staff members in the spotlight to encourage learning about new gear. "Nobody learns more than the teacher," he says. "When you hold department meetings, make one of your staff members do a live presentation."

Translating that knowledge to a customer can be a tricky business. Anderson warns that it is important to convey information in a conversational style; don't preach. Customers do not want to be talked down to, and often they know more than you think. "Customers are more educated than ever, and they have a big advantage over most employees: Employees have to learn about everything, where a customer might have just one particular brand or interest," Stuckey warns. "If the employee tries to be a know-it-all, you could be in a position to lose credibility and trust."

In addition to conversations on the sales floor, inviting reps to talk about their new gear at bike nights and other events is a good way to engage in safety discussions without it feeling like a classroom lecture. Safety may not be sexy, but more enjoyable, worry-free riding is always appealing. **D**



Arai Helmet Americas has released six new videos filmed at Arai's headquarters in Omiya, Japan. The series includes the company's history and philosophy; but there are also segments that focus on safety features. The videos are online at www.AraiAmericas.com, filed in the Video Library of the News/Media section. The series is also offered to all qualifying Arai retailers for use in their stores and websites.

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Helmet heavyweights

SHOEI AND SCHUBERTH TAKE AIM AT THE SAME CUSTOMER. SO WHICH BRAND SHOULD YOU STOCK?

By Bruce Steever

SCHUBERTH HAS BEEN pushing hard over the last few years, unveiling new and updated models every season. In response, Shoei has been launching its own share of all-new and updated models. When you compare the latest offerings from each brand, the similarities in specification are obvious, and it becomes apparent that both companies have the same potential customers in their sights.

So which helmet line makes the most sense for your store's inventory dollars? Let's take a look at three different helmet pairs from the two brands and see how they stack up.

RACING-SPEC

The first helmet type we'll examine is the pure racing model. Mission objectives here are relatively simple: maximum sporting performance on the racetrack. Ventilation, vision and safety are the primary features to compare. Shoei should be able to leverage its broader experience in the racing world to win this contest hands down, but things aren't always that simple.

Shoei's X-12 (Retail \$681.99-\$839.99) is, in isolation, a highly technical helmet that shows off all of the craftsmanship expected from 50 years of development.



But it also appears to be resting on its laurels a bit. A plethora of intake and exhaust vents work with an updated rear spoiler system to provide ventilation, but while they certainly look effective, the many vents don't outperform the more elementary system on the previous X-11 model. The new system still moves air through the helmet but lacks that "wind in the hair" feeling expected from a racing model designed to prioritize ventilation.

The new faceshield does provide a useful increase in viewing angle and the self-adjusting baseplate system is brilliant — certainly one of the best in the industry. The emergency quick-release system is a welcome addition for racers and street riders alike. Finally, the weight also slightly increased compared to the X-11, due to the newer Snell 2010 requirements.

Compared to the Shoei, the Schubert SR1 (MSRP \$899-\$969) is proof that a clean-sheet design can sometimes best the establishment. Even when compared to the focused X-12, the SR1 shows an absolute purity of focus for the racing environment. Ventilation is less elaborate but flows more air through the helmet.

The shield system is less elegant but locks securely. Wind noise and aerodynamic control is evident in every component, from the vent



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70/100-19.....	33.91
90/90-21.....	50.46

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90/100-16..... 40.27
110/90-19..... 63.28
120/80-19..... 61.79
130/70-19..... 67.00

SX TIRE RETAIL \$

80/100-21.....	50.46
100/100-18.....	63.70
110/100-18.....	68.32
120/100-18.....	77.77
100/90-19.....	67.42
110/90-19.....	70.95
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GEAR
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SALES

toggles to the adjustable rear wing. And the rear of the shell features a unique cutaway design, perfect for the aggressive rider position required on a racebike. Finally, the SR1 is lighter than the X-12, thanks in part to the use of the ECE standard than Snell.

For racers (and street riders) looking for the sharpest racing helmet, Shoei may itself be bested by the newer SR1. The Schubert offers some of the best racing features yet available, and offers fit and finish worthy of its price tag. The Shoei does carry a solid price advantage for consumers and greater name recognition, but just not quite enough to justify stocking the X-12 compared to the SR1.

Of course, if the X-11 was still being sold today, Shoei would've actually fared slightly better in comparison. Anyone want to bet that the "X-13" will be impressive? But for now: **Schuberth 1, Shoei 0.**

STREET-SPECIFIC

Moving from the racetrack to the street brings a different set of design objectives. Here, pricing is more relevant despite the fact that an all-around street helmet actually has a greater list of objectives than the racing helmets above. Helmets need to maintain low weight, good visibility and decent ventilation while still offering rider-friendly features such as audio systems and integrated sun visors.

Schuberth's **S2** (MSRP \$699.99-\$749.99) has only been available for a year, yet it has already gained a "strong" reputation — pun intended. The helmet features the same S.T.R.O.N.G. fiber construction as other Schuberths and is a sporty design that still offers all the prerequisite features such as the adjustable sun visor, great ventilation and an extremely quiet design. The S2 is ready for Schuberth's audio system and comes standard with an integrated antenna built into the shell. And like other Schuberth models, the S2 is extremely quiet on the road. Also notable is the ratchet-type chinstrap, which is rare in the U.S. market. In short, the S2 is exactly what one might expect from the German firm known for its touring refinements.

Compared to the Schuberth, the new Shoei **GT-Air** (MSRP \$549.99-\$670.99) appears to be slightly outclassed in the tech department. It lacks the trick internal antenna and in-house audio option but makes up for it with a sportier design and peerless functionality. The shield design uses Shoei's clever self-adjusting shield system and the

best internal sun visor we've yet seen.

The GT-Air features an aggressive shell design that cuts through the air very effectively and the ventilation appears simplistic but pulls an amazing amount of air through the shell. Emergency release cheek pads are included just like the racing sibling and the entire liner features perfect stitching and plush materials. The combination of style and function expressed by the GT-Air is what makes it feel like such a high-quality item, and even though there are many helmets with similar features, the Shoei is in a different league altogether.

While the newest helmet doesn't necessarily make it the best, the Shoei's well-honed development pays off. The GT-Air is all but perfect for nearly any use you could find for it on the street and cheaper to boot. Score update: **Schuberth 1, Shoei 1.**

MODULAR-TOURING

Anyone familiar with Schuberth should be expecting this to be a landslide as we reach this final comparison. Schuberth pioneered the flip-face style of helmet, which needs to do everything a street helmet should but also provide the magic of opening to the elements. However, assumptions can be proven wrong.

The Schuberth **C3 Pro** (MSRP \$769-\$799) is the definitive flip-face helmet. Graceful design, a large Pinlock-style shield and plenty of great tech features like the new audio and



antenna system adopted from the S2 are all present in this latest model. The improved liner is more comfortable and, more importantly, fits a larger segment of the riding public now. And the lack of wind noise is magical. With the chin bar snapped firmly in place, the lower deflector in the front works with the snug neck roll to hermetically seal

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you away from the roar of the wind. Earplugs are always recommended, but the C3 Pro makes you wonder if you really need them.

While the updated C3 Pro is excellent, Shoei didn't leave the previous Multitech modular helmet alone. Updated and renamed the **Neotec** (MSRP \$648.99-\$662.99), Shoei's answer to the C3 is also a shockingly good helmet that is just as capable as the German competitor. The Neotec fits a few more head shapes than the C3 Pro, but otherwise the two helmets are closely matched. Both models show little compromise despite their modular construction. They are quiet, reasonably light, and function well in everything from sport-riding to long-distance touring. Both feature outstanding ventilation systems better than top-of-the-line racing helmets from some brands. And both helmets offer top-quality construction befitting their lofty price points.

Overall, the Schubert has some distinct advantages, but the pricing and ability of the Shoei keep things even. While it may seem a cop-out, it's hard to pick a winner in the modular class, which leaves this whole comparison in a **dead heat**.

So how do you pick the brand to stock?

- **Know your customers.** If you have customers buying helmets based on graphics, Shoei offers more options compared to the understated German brand. But if your customers are looking for more refined and subtle options, Schubert may be the better fit.
- **Know your helmets.** Both brands are premium lines full of exciting features, but make sure you understand the differences in shape between the rounder Schubert and the more oval Shoei lines.
- **Know your price points.** While Schubert does offer some unique features like the internal antenna and audio systems, the Shoei line maintains a distinct price advantage.

At the end of the day, you can't expect to stock a single line (of helmets, brake pads, boots, etc.) to cover all your customers. Make sure you have the products that best serve them, not just the products that are the easiest to stock or that are easy to order from a single distributor. **D**

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Showroom of dreams

YOU DON'T NEED A BIG BUDGET TO AMP UP GEAR AND APPAREL DISPLAYS. BUT A SENSE OF HUMOR HELPS — ESPECIALLY IF YOU WANT ONLINE TRACTION.

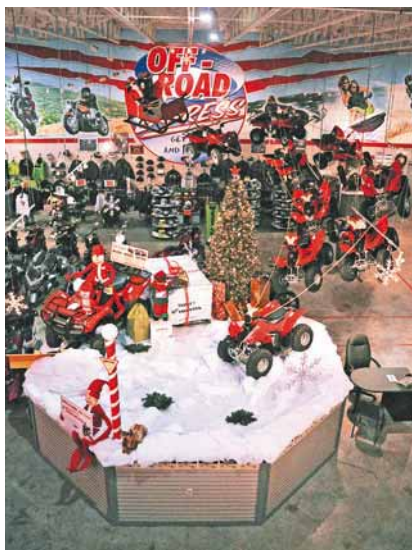
By Beth Dolgner

BUILDING GEAR AND APPAREL displays that attract attention — on the showroom floor and on social media — does not have to mean spending a lot of money or time. Usually, it just takes creativity, planning and a new look at old things.

OEMs can be eager to contribute to displays because they recognize the value in setting a scene that draws attention. As Gregory Rushin, sales manager at **Off-Road Express West** in Waterford, Pa., says, "With all this factory help that's going into making displays bigger, better and more productive, we try and utilize as much as we can from the factory. If the brand gives us a great POP, we don't put it in a closet. We use it."

Rushin ought to know what works: Off-Road Express West is known for its engaging displays, and even won the Best Display award during the 2013 *Dealernews* Top 100 competition.

But not every display can or will revolve around an OEM piece. Coming up with fresh designs sometimes means looking at old pieces in new ways.



ABOVE: Off-road Express West's holiday-themed ATV display was deemed "an engineering feat" by Top 100 judges during the 2013 competition. TOP: A fall hunting scene, with a political bent.

MAKE NEW FROM OLD

Certain older displays from manufacturers can be disguised as long as there are no traces of former branding left over. Often, the makeover simply involves the generous use of spray paint.

Jennifer Robison, national retail specialist for Tucker Rocky Distributing, compares remaking purpose-built displays to Halloween costumes: A few inexpensive tricks can create the perfect disguise. "If you're not carrying that brand anymore, you may not want to repurpose it because it's obvious what you're doing. But something that doesn't have a specific brand tie can be remade with spray paint," she says.

Sometimes, finding a great prop for a display takes just a few dollars and a lot of imagination. Utilizing old elements for a display is not constrained to purpose-built pieces. Rushin, for example, says Off-Road Express West gets a lot of use out of a card-

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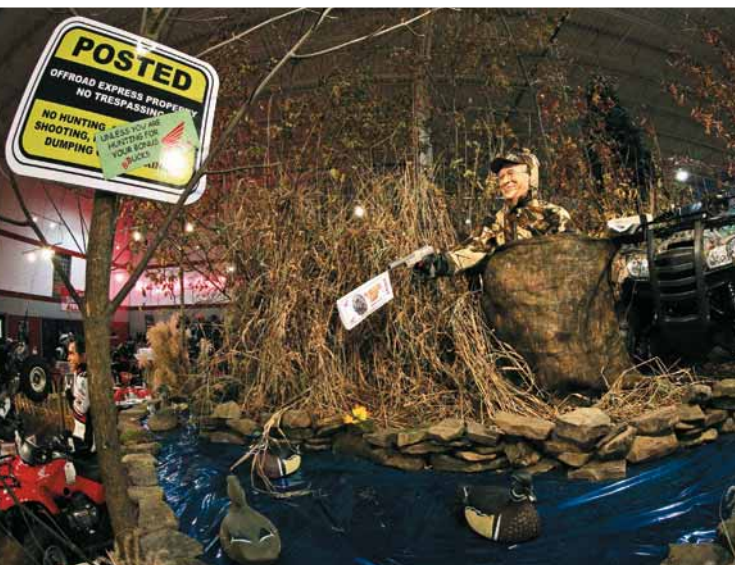
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Top 100 Dealer Off-Road Express West infuses its main displays with timely humor — like these from the 2012 election season, showing political personalities in a recreational environment. (We'll let you guess their identities.) A showroom display that injects some amusement can have an extended life as customers take photos and then post the images on social sites — so be careful to keep the humor lighthearted and well-intentioned.

board dowel that was left over when they installed new carpeting.

"That was used as a tree in one element, and we've used that so many times as a log, a tree, a telephone pole," he says. "I can guarantee nobody can say, 'Oh, that's what they used last year.' It was just a piece of scrap lying around after we did some carpeting in the showroom."

That kind of ingenuity can be applied to many things lining back-room shelves. Rushin says constructing pieces from scratch can be an inexpensive solution, even if there's a little more elbow grease involved. "We make a lot of our props. A lot of them are simple wooden structures that are hacked together, but it's what you do with it that really makes it a display," he notes.

FOLLOW RETAIL TRENDS

Dealers already take a lot of cues from retail stores, like dressing mannequins in coordinating gear. But those mannequins can do a lot more than just stand next to a rack or straddle a bike; insert them into a lifestyle scene to make the presentation more relevant.

"Furniture stores have living room setups, and if you go to Ikea you go through a maze of room setups before you get to the product," Robison says. "It does wonders for people who don't have the natural ability to create a collection. Not having a mannequin would be a mistake for your sales."

And those mannequins, Robison adds, don't have to be expensive. The biggest hurdle is finding a mannequin style that's easy to dress in full riding gear. Displays need to be changed on a regular basis to remain effective, and the easier that change, the better. (BTW, don't forget boots. Who rides barefoot?)

No matter how great a display is or how many elements are incorporated into it, no one will notice if the area is badly lit. Robison encourages dealers to install LED lighting, which, unlike fluorescent lights, brighten a store and make detail on gear and apparel stand

out. "Lighting is the best thing that you can consider updating your showroom with," she says.

LED conversion can get costly, "but if you convert to LEDs you won't be replacing the bulbs every few months, you'll be doing it every few years," Robison notes. "They'll be brighter and they won't make your store hotter."

CHANGE THE SCENE

Displays need to be changed at least once a year, but seasonally is a better standard, according to Robison. Involve the entire staff — because the products highlighted in a gear and apparel display should correspond to your upcoming sales projections for new models. Is off-road going to be the focus? Adventure-touring? Synch up your unit sales with your displays.

Rushin enlists the entire Off-road Express West staff in the brainstorming process, and offers a gift card bonus to the staff member who comes up with the next display idea — which must include a plan for successful execution.

Getting staff excited about building creative displays goes beyond the idea. Rushin suggests conjuring themes that fit your customer base and staff interests. Humor works well: During the 2012 presidential elections, the dealership created a series of vignettes featuring mannequins wearing Halloween masks of politicians. It generated a lot of buzz — and more sales.

Sure, it was fun for the staff to build a duck hunting scene featuring a gun-wielding "Dick Cheney," but it also increased traffic, both on the showroom floor and on social media channels. "The more customers you can bring in, the higher your gear and apparel sales are going to go up. That's exactly what a display is for," Rushin advises.

And remember that a display can have extended life online. "When you see people take pictures of a display, you know they'll hit Facebook and Twitter," Rushin says. **D**



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Are we nurturing or nagging younger riders?

THOSE THIN-POCKETED TEENAGERS ARE YOUR FUTURE CUSTOMERS



FUEL FOR THOUGHT

Dave Koshollek teaches sales and service classes for dealers. Contact him at dakoenterprises@cs.com, or via editors@dealernews.com.

I ATTENDED MY first Born Free motorcycle event in June and was overwhelmed and overjoyed to see thousands of 20-something guys and gals enjoying the sport of motorcycling — much like I did 40 years ago when it all began for me.

Honestly, I haven't seen so many skinny-tired choppers in one place since Daytona '76 (see photo). Add to that a good mix of trendy cafe bikes and the fact that there was a healthy spread of all brands, and I have to say it has given me renewed hope for the growth of our motorcycling culture, which desperately needs a youthful injection of riders.

Admittedly, a pretty good percentage of the bikes I saw were cobbled together. I did see more than a few with critical components like front brakes removed and compilations of parts that were never made for

each other. I know there were some dangerous two-wheeled contraptions there, but I bet the owners love their bikes and are as proud of them as I was of the '56 Panhead I chopped way back when (which, upon reflection, was a sorry piece of work). I lived through my experience and so will most of the young guys I saw at Born Free that day.

Another cool aspect of the Born Free event was the friendliness of everybody I encountered. Unlike days not long ago when bike shows seemed to be made up of mostly self-centered profiteers seeking to make a financial killing with \$40,000-plus customs, Born Free cultivates the sport with a lot of homegrown creations that are not too expensive to build and are just plain fun to ride. I mean, who would have thought so many old metric twins would be resurrected to live again? Cool, baby!

That leads me to our role in parts and service to attract younger riders and nurture their interests until the day comes that they too will buy a modern motorcycle. Are we nurturing new riders, or nagging them to death because we don't personally like what they ride now?

And that, my friends, reminds me of my very first trip to a Harley dealer.

It was 1967 and I was 15 — the proud owner of a '47 Servi-Car, Harley-Davidson's first official trike. I was doing a little motor work and needed some top end gaskets, so I rode the bus to the downtown dealership.

I was excited to buy parts for my newly acquired pride and joy, just like the grown-ups do. When I entered the showroom, the parts guy was at the opposite end of a long counter talking socially with someone he obviously knew. No problem, it gave me time to check out the new Sportsters and grab a brochure. Someday I hoped to have enough dough to buy that XLCH in HiFi Blue.

But after 15 minutes, my youthful exuberance wore off and my painfully short patience got the best of me. So I crab-walked over to the parts guy, interrupted his conversation and said, "All I need is some gaskets. Can you get those for me so I don't miss my bus?" Well, the parts guy fired back, in an especially aggravated tone, "Look punk, if you want to do business with us you better learn some manners. I'll get to you when I'm done. Got it?" What could I do? I needed gaskets and this was the only place in town. I waited, got my parts, and missed my bus.

A few weeks later, I'm complaining about my dealership experience to another rider and he tells me, "Yeah, that dealership sucks. That's why I go to West Side Choppers. They carry Harley parts and will trade parts and labor for your old parts." Sounded good to me. So I went there the next week and met the owner, "Ralphy," who took a liking to me. He recommended good used parts instead of new to save me a little scratch. He took my old stock parts in trade for the custom parts I wanted. He had his mechanic give me advice when I wanted to perform some of the work myself and even told the one person who was trying to intimidate me to back off, that his shop was neutral ground with no B.S. club business allowed.

Thinking back, Ralphy made the difference at a critical point in my motorcycling life that kept me involved, enthused and wanting more. Unlike some shops that hate doing business with thin-pocketed teenagers, Ralphy enjoyed nurturing the younger guys who frequented his shop, and we were all the better for it.

We should all be a little more like Ralphy. We shouldn't nag or criticize new riders, even if they ride a two-wheeled abomination and they're ignorant and impatient. We were all that way once. We should treat them like friends, take an interest in their bikes and do the things they can't, like rebuild their transmissions, change their tires and sort their electrical systems. And we should use our expertise to guide them away from dangerous customizations so they hang around long enough to mature in this motorcycling world, grow their personal wealth and return to the dealership to buy a bike, parts, service and gear. And maybe be the best customer we ever had. **D**



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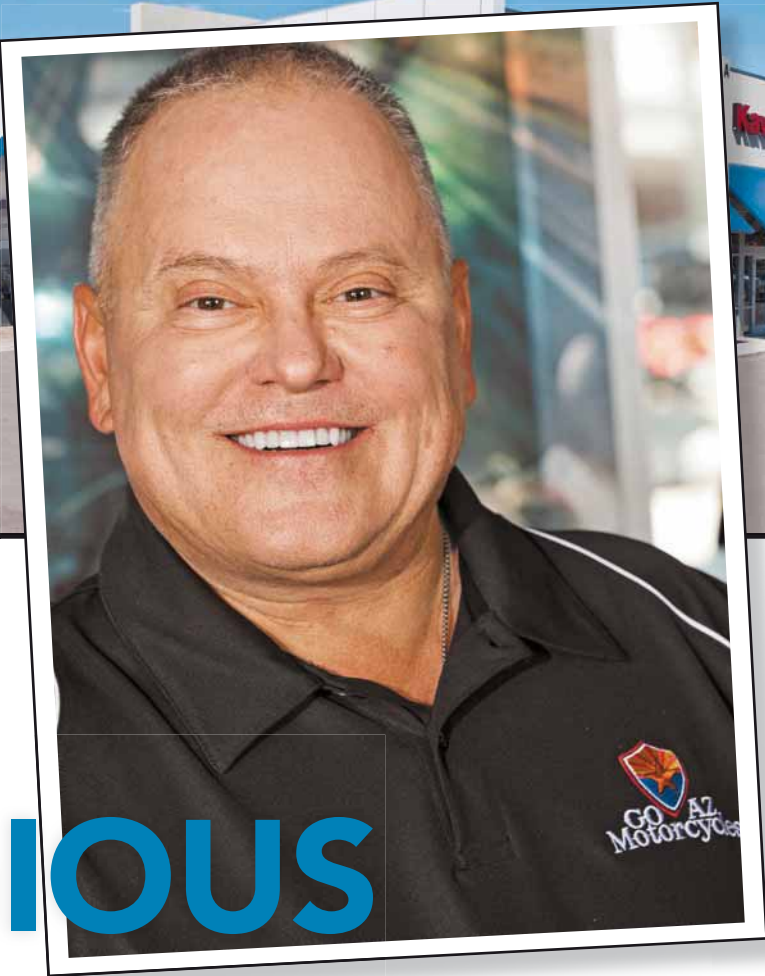
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Storefront photos courtesy of Go AZ Motorcycles and Harley-Davidson of Scottsdale



BOB PARSONS' CONTAGIOUS SPIRIT

HOW HE'S PARLAYING WHAT HE LEARNED SELLING SOFTWARE AND DOMAIN NAMES INTO SELLING MOTORCYCLES

By Genevieve Schmitt
Photography by Scooter Grubb

IT'S HARD NOT TO GET EXCITED when listening to Bob Parsons talk about his businesses. The rhythm of his baritone voice, the smile that slips through periodically and the glimmer in his eyes are accents on a conversation that has Parsons hopping out of his chair every so often, hands gesturing in the air, when talking about the success of the two Top 100 motorcycle dealerships he owns in Scottsdale, Ariz. — **Go AZ Motorcycles** and **Harley-Davidson of Scottsdale**. He's practicing what he preaches.

"Our No. 1 job here is to create excitement and take care of our customers and be that special place for them, and after that we think about making money," he says.

If excitement is part of this 62-year-old's formula for making money, then he's never sat still. *Forbes* lists Parsons' net worth at

\$1.5 billion. He could easily sit back and retire — and he did for a short time in the mid-1990s after selling his financial services software company to Intuit for \$64 million — but Parsons had too much energy, so he came out of retirement in 1997 to launch GoDaddy, a domain registrar and web hosting business. Today more people have their domain names registered with GoDaddy than any other registrar in the world.

That success, plus Parson's passion for two wheels, re-ignited seven years ago, fueling new ventures into motorcycling using the business philosophies that propelled him to where he is today.

"You can succeed in anything," Parsons explains, "if you do this one thing: Give the people what they want. They make the decisions for us. If you are off-base, they will tell you. If you listen and try to

HOW GO AZ CAME TOGETHER

It's not easy assembling nine manufacturer lines in less than four years, but leave it to Bob Parsons and his team to pull it off. Here's a timeline on how the different brands were acquired and when.

2008

- Go AZ Motorcycles founded in June
- Initial brands: BMW, Ducati, Vespa
- Originally located in a small strip mall in North Scottsdale
- Gina Marra hired as general manager in September

2009

- Purchased single-line Honda store (Canyon Honda) at beginning of the year
- Purchased KTM and Aprilia store in North Phoenix (Motohouse KTM Aprilia)
- At end of 2009, purchased Hayden Road location (old car dealership) and moved the Honda store onsite; it remained a single-line store.

2010

- Purchased new 26,000 sq. ft. facility, referred to as Northsight, located behind current campus. Moved BMW, Ducati, Vespa, KTM and Aprilia there, and added Triumph.
- Moved Honda back to Canyon Honda store location on Butherus Drive
- Began construction on current facility on Hayden, adding three new buildings
- Purchased Kawasaki franchise; moved it to temporary location on 87th Street in Scottsdale

2011

- Construction project completed on Hayden facility. Moved BMW, Triumph, Ducati, Honda, KTM, Aprilia, Kawasaki and Vespa onto new campus

2012

- Acquired Ural franchise
- Built track/training facility; opened in September
- Bought Harley-Davidson of Scottsdale



Gina Marra, GM of Go AZ Motorcycles, and Justin Johnson, GM of H-D Scottsdale.

make it exciting, they will tell you."

Parsons and his team at Go AZ Motorcycles, including general manager Gina Marra, are listening well: In the five years Go AZ has been in existence (most of that time with the country in a recession) this nine-line dealership has won multiple industry and manufacturer awards — and boasts annual revenues of \$20 million.

"The biggest difference is we are selling the Go AZ experience," Marra says. "I want customers to feel this is more of an education dealership. It's not a dealership where they are going to be sold on something, especially with an entry-level rider. It can be intimidating to buy a new motorcycle. It's a soft sell here. We find out the customer's wants and needs, and guide him or her along in the process."

Go AZ Motorcycles launched in 2008 when Parsons saw an opportunity to buy a BMW and a Ducati dealership that was going out of business. Over the next four years Vespa, Honda, KTM, Aprilia, Triumph, Kawasaki and Ural (see timeline, left) were

added, with all brands eventually housed in one new location.

THE TURNAROUND PROJECT

In January 2012 Parsons purchased Hacienda Harley-Davidson, located next door to Go AZ, and renamed it Harley-Davidson of Scottsdale. Parsons is proud of the turnaround there. "When I bought that dealership, their customer loyalty was in the bottom 5 percent of all dealerships in the country," he says. "We are now in the top 5 percent in a little more than a year. Our allocation of bikes from Harley has been increased 300 percent."

"Bob is huge customer-centric; he's all about the customer," says Justin Johnson, general manager of H-D Scottsdale. "We came into a unique culture that wasn't necessarily as customer-centric as what we expected. It was a challenge to come in and change the culture to 'we're here to serve the customer' versus 'the customer is here to serve us.'"

A good example of this customer-centric



Go AZ Motorcycles unveiled its indoor training facility in 2012.



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Above: The team at Go AZ Motorcycles. Right: Harley-Davidson Scottsdale staff.



philosophy in action began one day when Parsons overheard a conversation in his new Harley dealership.

"I went by the service area; it was a Wednesday," Parsons recalls. "I heard the service guy say to a customer, 'Bring it in next Tuesday.' I said, 'Next Tuesday?!' Then I asked the service guy what we needed to do to get more techs in here, and he said he wouldn't do that because the techs' living depends on getting enough work — and they all get paid by the job. If they don't have work, they don't get paid.

"I changed that immediately," Parsons continues. "We are the only dealership that pays them downtime if they don't have work, and you know how much downtime I'm paying? Almost nothing!"

After beefing up parts inventory levels, an extra lift was installed in each service bay so when one motorcycle is waiting on a part, the tech can be servicing another. "I want these technicians to get up in the morning and say 'Yes, I get to go to work!' and that is not necessarily the norm in our industry," Johnson says. "Bob also green-lighted an open invitation for training for our technicians, which is huge as it's really expensive for continuing education for them. They sincerely appreciate it."

Similar upgrades were made in the Go AZ service area, even painting the logos of the brands the techs work on in their service bays. "Gives it the 'wow' factor when you walk in," Marra says. "The techs are proud of the brands they work on."

COMMUNITY PARTNER

When the employees are enthusiastic, it naturally spills over to the customers. It's an environment Parsons is proud of, and he's already started giving back. Last October, just 10 months after opening Harley-Davidson Scottsdale, the first-annual Bob's Biker Blast

was held. The all-day party featured a performance by George Thorogood and was free for riders with a motorcycle endorsement and their passengers. Non-riders paid a \$20 fee, which was donated to the Phoenix Children's Hospital, just one of the charities with which the dealerships' partner.

"It's really fulfilling for our team to be part of the environment Bob has built with the charities, giving back, and being a good community partner," Johnson explains. "That's special. People see that. Talk about setting us apart."

Parsons' goal is to create a motorcycling destination, and that's already started with a new training facility that includes two motorcycle simulators, a demo track and underground storage, all located behind the dealerships.

Future plans include moving H-D Scottsdale to a new, larger facility on a parcel Parsons owns across the street; construction is tentatively slated to commence within the next 12 months. After it's completed, the current Harley dealership building will be leveled to allow for the buildout of another new facility to further expand the services available to riders and their bikes.

Parsons recognizes he's got the capital to make these improvements and that some dealers are still bouncing back from a tough four years. His advice: "You have to make a difference. You have to be something special to your customer. You have to have an edge, and the edge we have in the motorcycle business is that ours is a *relationship* business. If you have a good relationship with a core group of customers, you have an edge.

"So work to develop whatever edge you have, and have a group that is dedicated to you — and that you are dedicated to," he continues. "Make them feel special. That is something that any dealership can do, and it can make a big difference." **D**

GO AZ? GO WOMEN!

"It's always been in the back of my head: How do women really feel when they walk through the door? It can be so intimidating. They have Garage Parties at the Harley dealership, but there are really no metric dealers catering to females. Why aren't we doing it?"

That's the question Go AZ Motorcycles' general manager Gina Marra asked herself earlier this year. Marra wanted answers, so she called a meeting with Go AZ's marketing director, Misti Graham, tasking her with developing ideas that would attract women to the dealership.

Graham used International Female Ride Day, started seven years ago by Vicki Gray and her Motoress.com online community, as a kickoff to a month's worth of women-focused events held in May, now officially known as Women Rider's Month across the industry. On May 3, more than 60 women riders on all brands of bikes paraded out of the Go AZ lot with a police escort, embarking on a 50-mile scenic ride to a lake, with dinner to follow.

Word spread about the ride mostly through social media. Many of these women were visiting Go AZ for the first time because of this ride. In their gift bags, they'd learn about six other events for women riders held that month, including two Girls and Gear seminars, two Bike Buying 101 workshops, a Team AZ "riding at low speed" seminar, and an Apparel Roundtable where Marra and her team gleaned info on what women want to wear and see stocked in the store.

Did it pay off? "We definitely saw a boost in social media. Our female likes on Facebook skyrocketed the month of May," Marra says. "We're watching sales. We're seeing a lot more traffic by women."

(Note to readers: I'm a leading expert in helping companies attract women to their dealerships and to their brands. My advice for anyone making the effort like Go AZ did? Follow-up is key here. You can do all the parties, workshops and seminars you want, but none of it is valuable unless you follow up afterward. Did you gather each participant's contact information? Is your sales staff following up by email or phone to gauge interest? Are you tracking sales by females in the months to come, finding out how they first learned of your shop? The best laid efforts are all for naught unless there's follow-up, today, tomorrow and beyond. — G.S.)



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DEALER @ A GLANCE:

Go AZ Motorcycles

15500 N. Hayden Rd., Scottsdale, AZ 85254
 Tel. 480-609-1800 • Email: gina@goaz.com
 www.goaz.com

Owner: Robert Parsons
GM: Gina Marra

Employees: 57
Years in Business: 5
Years at Location: 2
Store Size: 35,000 sq. ft.
Annual Revenues: \$20 million
DMS: Lightspeed
Vehicle Franchises: Aprilia, BMW, Ducati, Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, Triumph, Ural, Vespa

Hours of Operation:

- Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.
- Saturday, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- Sunday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

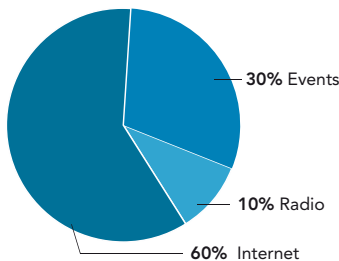
SALES
Manager: Brian Ruiterman
F&I Manager: Charles Cherrier
Employees: 14
Showroom size: 14,000 sq. ft.

PARTS & ACCESSORIES
Parts Manager: Jay Tucker
Parts Employees: 8
Accessories Manager: Ale Franzetti
Accessories Employees: 2
Size: 10,500 sq. ft.

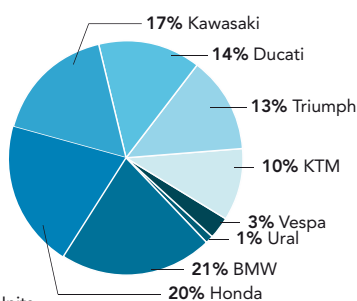
SERVICE
Manager: Louie Franconi
Technicians: 11
Lifts: 22
Size: 10,500 sq. ft.
Shop Rate: \$98/hr

PLUS:
Distributors: Helmet House, Parts Unlimited/Drag Specialties, Sullivans, Tucker Rocky, WPS
Sponsorships: Valerie Thompson Racing
Community Involvement: Scottsdale Healthcare, Phoenix Children's Hospital, Boys & Girls Club of Arizona, several other local charities

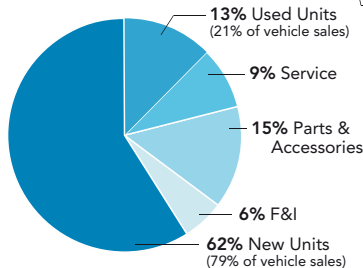
advertising budget



sales by brand



sales by department



DEALER @ A GLANCE:

Harley-Davidson of Scottsdale

15600 N. Hayden Rd., Scottsdale, AZ 85254
 Tel. 480-905-1903 • Email: info@hdfoscottsdale.com
 www.hdfoscottsdale.com

Owner: Robert Parsons
GM: Justin Johnson

Employees: 60
Years in Business: 2
Years at Location: 2
Store Size: 30,000 sq. ft.
Annual Revenues: \$30 million
DMS: Lightspeed NXT
Vehicle Franchises: Harley-Davidson

Hours of Operation:

- Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.
- Saturday, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- Sunday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

SALES
Manager: Brad Taylor
F&I Manager: Jeff Goins
Employees: 13
Showroom size: 8,000 sq. ft.

PARTS & ACCESSORIES

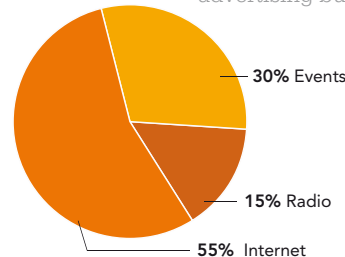
Manager: Randy Fyffe
Employees: 8v
Size: 9,000 sq. ft.

SERVICE
Manager: Mike Taylor
Technicians: 10
Lifts: 25
Size: 11,000 sq. ft.
Shop Rate: \$99/hr

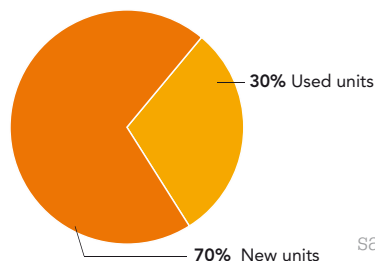
ECOMMERCE
Manager: Randy Fyffe

PLUS:
Distributors: CFR, Drag Specialties, Tucker Rocky
Sponsorships: Harley Owners Group
Community Involvement: Make-A-Wish Foundation, Fight Night, Phoenix Children's Hospital, Scottsdale Healthcare Foundation, Wounded Warrior, Combat Vets

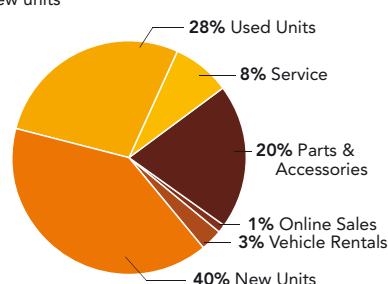
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sales by category



sales by department



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DESPITE SOME foul weather in Florida during the second quarter, **Destination Powersports** of Punta Gorda, Fla., posted another strong month in June and rang up some impressive gains during the first half of 2013 compared to the same time last year.

In June, the dealership reported a net income of \$28,344 on total revenue of \$444,120, compared to earnings of \$16,729 on sales of \$531,934 during June 2012. That's a 69.4 percent gain in net income despite a 16.5 percent drop in total revenue.

Interestingly, cost of sales dropped from \$411,730 last year to only \$307,913 this year, a decline of \$103,817, or 25.2 percent. That yielded a gross profit of \$136,207, up from \$120,204 in 2012.

The decline in unit sales and parts is not seen as a serious problem. "I look at what we sold and if we got more gross on those sales," says owner Bill Shenk.

"A couple of things happened," he continues.

"New units are the lowest margin item we sell with the highest carrying costs and highest interest expense by far, as a percent of gross profit created.

"On the other hand, service labor is our highest percent gross followed by parts and accessories. New motorcycle sales were down (our worst gross percent-

age), used were up (our best vehicle gross profit percentage), parts gross was up and service gross was up (our best percentage of revenue and our best floor-traffic builder of qualified buyers)."

Inventories were leaner in June. This year, the dealership had 238 new and used units on hand, down from 311 units in June 2012. Inventory of units this year was valued at \$2.2 million, down from \$2.97 million last year.

All of the reduction in inventory is in new units — mostly personal watercraft and boats. "We still have way too much new based on our sell-through," Shenk says. "It is a tough balance in a small marketplace, between representing the OEM's full line and making a profit.

"By any other industry standard, 180 days' average age of inventory is totally unacceptable if you intend to show a profit. Our target is 180 days aging, and we are currently way too high at 240 days."

Indeed, half of the inventory of new units is over 180 days on the lot. "That makes it hard to get top dollar from the consumer for those units as well," Shenk points out. "Fresh, young inventory always averages the highest gross profit."

Month-Over-Month Comparisons and YTD Totals: June 2013

SALES	% of Total Dollars			% of Total Dollars			% of Total Dollars			
	Jun-13	Dealer	Top Gun	Jun-12	Dealer	May-13	YTD 2012	YTD 2013	PVS	DLR
Units Sold (New & Used)	41			50		50	303	306		
Sales	328,843	74	72	431,606	81.1	418,861	2,305,439	2,471,845	8,078	78.1
F&I (net)	22,668	5.1	4	18,335	3.4	18,012	106,652	115,250	377	3.6
Parts	28,340	6.4	6	33,725	6.3	27,601	162,156	177,002	578	5.6
Accessories	29,626	6.7	9	27,092	5.1	35,032	204,931	189,637	620	6
Service	34,643	7.8	7	21,176	4	34,086	155,571	210,849	689	6.7
Sales	444,120	100*	100*	531,934	100*	533,592	2,934,749	3,164,583	10,342	100*
Cost of Sales	307,913	69.3	74.0	411,730	77.4	398,943	2,242,144	2,340,761	7,650	74.0
Gross Profit	136,207	30.7	26.0	120,204	22.6	134,649	692,605	823,822	2,692	26.0
EXPENSES	% of Dept. Gross Profit			% of Dept. Gross Profit			% of Dept. Gross Profit			
	Jun-13	Dealer	Top Gun	Jun-12	Dealer	May-13	YTD 2012	YTD 2013	PVS	DLR
Payroll										
Sales (5.25/4.0 emp)	26,360	33.0	38	29,060	36.2	24,900	140,454	167,659	548	34.6
P&A (2.20/2.5 emp)	9,987	41.5	43	7,152	41.5	11,183	46,788	57,197	187	40.2
Service (4.50/5.00 emp)	21,021	60.7	55	19,281	91.0	23,223	98,975	125,936	412	59.7
Flooring	8,768	11	9	7,352	9.2	10,944	39,556	54,148	177	11.2
		% of Dept. Gross Profit			% of Dept. Gross Profit			% of Dept. Gross Profit		
Admin Payroll	6,084	4.5	6	6,257	5.2	7,704	40,804	43,564	142	5.3
Advertising	2,658	2	3	2,847	2.4	3,514	21,988	19,568	64	2.4
Administration	19,666	14.4	12	14,873	12.4	17,199	99,825	108,960	356	13.2
Rent	13,124	9.6	11	13,287	11.1	12,598	78,353	76,505	250	9.3
Co. insurance	2,516	1.8	2	2,359	2.0	3,301	12,613	22,657	74	2.8
Total Expense	110,184	80.9	83	102,468	85.2	114,566	579,356	676,194	2,210	82.1
Misc. Expense	0	0	0			0		0	0	0
		% of Total Dollars			% of Total Dollars			% of Total Dollars		
Additional Income	2,321	1	1	-1,007	0	1,873	-3,476	28,305	93	0.9
Net Profit	28,344	6.4	4	16,729	3.1	21,876	109,773	175,933	575	5.6
Net Profit + Misc Exp	28,344	6.4	5.2	16,729	3.1	21,876	109,773	175,933	575	5.6

Notes: Top Gun = The top performing dealerships in the PowerHouse training group. PVS = Per Vehicle Sold. * Totals equal 100 because of rounding.

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New units in June created \$25,016 in gross profit. The flooring cost on that inventory was \$7,685, or 31 percent of generated gross profit; in comparable industries it must be less than 10 percent. Less payroll to handle the transactions on those units of \$8,255 leaves a contribution to feed "the goose" of \$9,076 from over \$1.5 million in inventory exposure, or 0.5 percent contribution to overhead per dollar invested.

Used vehicles created \$32,114 in gross profit with flooring costs of \$1,083, or 3 percent of generated gross profit. Less payroll for those transactions of \$10,597 leaves a contribution to dealership overhead of \$20,434 from \$274,000 in inventory exposure, or 7.5 percent contribution to overhead per dollar invested.

For the six months ended June 30, the dealership earned \$175,933, up 60 percent from the \$109,773 in earnings it captured during the same six-month period last year. First half revenues grew 7.8 percent to \$3.2 million, up from \$2.9 million in the first half of 2012.

The big revenue gainer for the six months was in service. Revenues increased \$55,278, or 35.5 percent, climbing to \$210,849 from \$155,571 last year.

Accessories was the only category in which revenues declined, dropping to \$189,637 this year from \$204,931 in the first six months of 2012.

"There is a time lag in building trust with customers. Last year, when the old staff fell apart, we hurt our customer relations," Shenk notes.

"We have a much stronger team today, and happy customer word-of-mouth is creating more business opportunity. Accessories is coming back slower than I expected, though."

Expenses for the first six months of 2013 increased by \$96,838, or 16.7 percent over last year. The big expense increases were in sales payroll (up \$27,000), service payroll (up \$27,000), flooring (up

\$15,000), administration (up \$9,000), and insurance (up \$10,000).

The PHD payroll system "is unique in that it allows us to pay above industry norms to top performers, but at the same time it protects the dealership during tough times," Shenk says.

"The way I look at it is that sales payroll is down as a percent of gross profit created — gross profit is the only thing you can pay from

"Our target is 180 days aging, and we are currently way too high at 240 days." — Bill Shenk

long term — from 36.2 percent of created gross profit last year to 33 percent this June."

Parts is flat at 41.5 percent and service is way down at 60.7 percent of revenue created, from a previous 91 percent.

New and used unit sales were about flat for the six-month period: 306 units this year compared to 303 units last year. Revenue from unit sales was \$2.5 million compared to \$2.3 million in the first six months of 2012. **D**

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Dealer LAB project is a joint effort between Dealernews and PowerHouse Dealer Services, a consulting firm run by Bill Shenk, detailing his efforts to return a Florida powersports dealership renamed Destination Powersports to profitability. The financial information in this report is taken from the dealership's Composite Report supplied by Shenk and is prepared as part of the dealership's participation in the PowerHouse Dealer 20 Group. The Composite Report is produced from the store's monthly financial report. In preparing these Dealer LAB reports, Dealernews reviews the dealership's unaudited P&L statement and Balance Sheet and its Composite Report.

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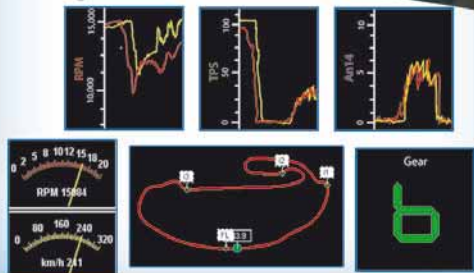


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Periodicals postage paid at Duluth, MN 55806 and additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to **DEALERNEWS**, P.O. Box 6050, Duluth, MN 55806-6050. Canadian GST number: R-124213133RT001, PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40612608. Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: IMEX Global Solutions
P. O. Box 25542
London, ON N6C 6B2
CANADA
Printed in the U.S.A.

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An open letter to young Rickey

HERE'S THE ONE THING YOU WON'T DO, BUT WISH YOU HAD

DEAR YOUNG RICKEY FAIRLESS,

Believe it or not, I am you at 56 years old. I know, you're only 15 years old right now and you can't fathom being 56, but it will happen quicker than you could ever imagine.

I am writing to give you a little insight and advice on your future. I can tell you that your future is good and that you will be a very happy — strike that, a *mostly happy* man. But you have to go through some hard times to get here. Maybe I can offer you some words of wisdom to help make your journey in life a little easier, and maybe you'll understand some things a little better.

I know you have it pretty good right now, and please enjoy this special time in your life. I mean, you gotta swell girlfriend (Teresa), a nice motorcycle (Honda CL100), and lots of riding buddies (Hix, Pork, Nelson, Lips Wilson). I also know that your brother, Randy, is your riding buddy and your best friend, and I can tell you that he will be your best friend for the rest of your life.

Enjoy this time being a teenager, because your life will get complicated soon enough.

Listen, you've lived with asthma all your life and you need to know that it won't get no better. The medicines will get better and the doctors will be able to control it ... to a point. Later this year you will get really sick and spend several months in a special chest hospital in Tyler, Texas, for people with severe lung diseases. You and your Ma will even be told by a knucklehead doctor that you will not live to be 30 years old. Don't believe it. Yes, you'll struggle with severe asthma for the rest of your life, but it ain't gonna kill ya, so don't sweat it too much, pal.

I can tell you that you have a great work ethic and that it will pay off for you in your future. At 19, you will go to work for the Glidden Paint Co. Rickey, I wish you/I would have gone to college. You don't realize it, but in the future, college is so dang important that without it, the odds are not good for success.

Look at it this way: there are thousands of colleges in this country, and tens of thousands of kids graduate from college every year. Well, every dang one of those kids is ahead of you in securing a good job because you only have a high school education. I wish you would go to college, Rickey, but you won't.

You have never been the sharpest knife in the kitchen and you never will be, but don't fret too much because things work out pretty good for you, anyway. Your work ethic is so good that once you're given an opportunity by Glidden Paint, you make the most of it. You will work your way up from stock boy to the No. 1 sales representative in the country. You will make a good living in the paint business for 20 years, and then you'll retire. In that 20 years you will not

miss not even one single day of work! I'm proud of you/me for that accomplishment!

The real world will not be easy. You'll fight thousands of battles, but you'll win more battles than you lose. By the way, your brother, Randy? He's a big shot attorney now and he makes a lot more money than you do. Randy goes on to college and then law school. You starting to get the picture?

You're probably wondering if you will ever have a family. Yes, Rickey, you will have a swell family. You will marry Susan, your high school sweetheart and the love of your life. You'll marry her a couple of times, actually. You will raise five kids and you will love each one of them with all your heart.

Rickey, I can tell you that you are a really good dad, but you make some mistakes that you'll wish you could do over. Kids are the best thing in the world and you need to realize that, but you won't.

Listen to this very carefully: Your kids are more important than your work, period. End of discussion. I wish you would remember that, but you won't. It will seem like work is the most important thing in the world, because that's how you make a living to take care of your wife and kids. But trust me, you should make more time for your family. Your work will still be there.

Rickey, it's a good thing that you love motorcycles because they are your future. There will never be a day in the rest of your life that you don't own a motorcycle. You'll actually retire from the Glidden Paint Co. so you can open your own motorcycle shop. You will also open a beer joint in conjunction with your bike shop.

Rickey, you will absolutely love owning your own motorcycle shop — but son, it ain't gonna be easy. You will be successful, but you pay a huge price for that success. You'll work every day, seven days a week, 15 hours a day for the rest of your life. Your personal life will be nonexistent and your family life will naturally suffer because you are so devoted to Stokers Dallas. If there was only one thing I could change, it would be for you to spend more time with your family, but you won't. But, hey, the motorcycle business is what you were born to do.

You will also own a tattoo parlor and a custom parts company. You also will be a radio host, a motivational speaker and, even though you never went to college, you'll lecture at some major universities around the country. And you will also be a pretty good writer.

Rickey, you have a dang good life in front of you. Yes, you will go through hell and high water to get here, but you could have done a lot worse. Enjoy your life, boy, because it's gonna be one heck of a wild ride. **D**



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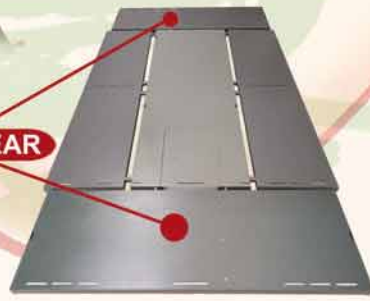
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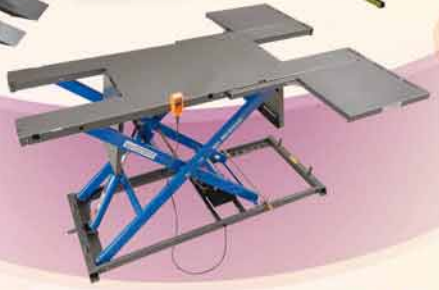
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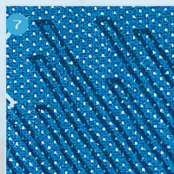
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