

THE VOICE OF POWERSPORTS RETAILERS

# Dealernews

VOL. 49, NO. 11 NOVEMBER 2013  
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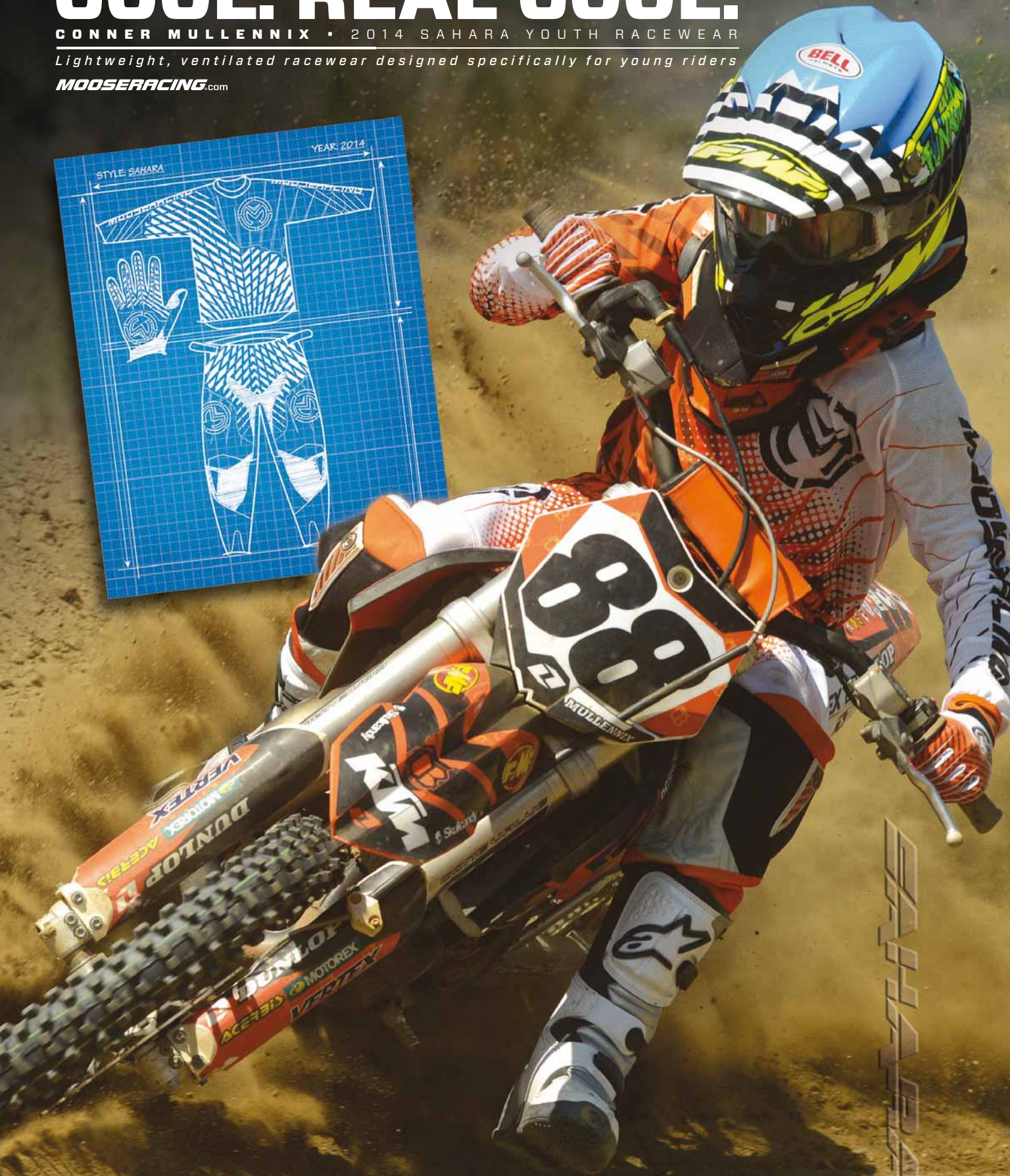


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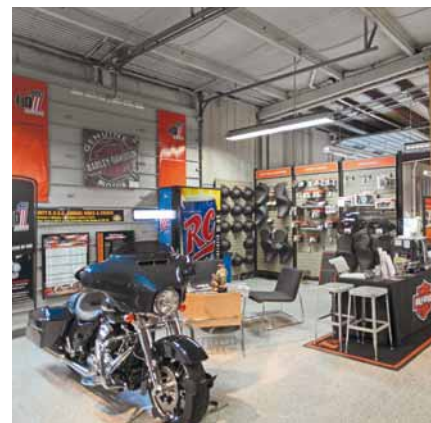
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### On the cover

When we first walked in at McHenry H-D, the dealership was busily hosting an open house on a Saturday. Still, just 18 seconds passed before we were greeted. "That's okay, I guess, because it's an open house," said GM Chris Hoak. "It really should be less than 10." We knew this was a tightly run shop but we didn't understand how performance-oriented it was until we talked with Hoak, owner Doug Jackson, and a dream team of department managers. Our story begins on page 34. *Photography by Jeff Barger*



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# FROM THE EDITOR

Mary Slepicka

## THE DISCIPLINE OF SHOWING UP

IT'S LATE OCTOBER, we're down a staff editor, two are traveling, another one's on vacation, and I've got a head cold. But the issue has to get to the printer, the e-newsletters have to blast out, the website "news monster" must be fed, annual strat plans are due, and we've got about five research projects in play, including one that has to be tallied and analyzed by oh, like, a week ago.

This "perfect storm" of being overwhelmed happens only once in a great while, but every time it does we are reminded of the single guy running the service shop, or the owner couple who every day has to turn the lights on, open the store, position the stuff, sell the stuff, order the stuff, repair the stuff, finance the stuff, tally the proceeds, sweep up, lock up and turn the lights off. And then we on Dealernews are humbled.

This isn't fun. I thought this was supposed to be fun. When's the last time you went for a ride? When's the last time you took a day off?

Well, think about this: Perhaps now is not the time for you to take a day off. Perhaps now is the time to just keep going.

You may be working seven days a week, but if you're turning the lights on in the morning and off at night it means you're still in business — and that's quite an achievement, given the last few years. The discipline of "showing up" gives you the strength and the perspective to set the stage for a brighter and, yes, maybe a different

future. According to our latest Dealer Sentiment Index (see page 8), more dealers are either experiencing a healthier sales environment or they expect it down the road. What's your future going to be?

On Sept. 11, 2001, I called my father — a Great Depression teenager, a World War II veteran — and asked, "Dad, I don't know what to do. What should I do?" He said, "Turn off the TV and go to work. Get on with your day. Show them that they haven't licked you. That's what being an American is all about."

That discipline applied then and it still applies today.

Show your market what you're all about. In bad times, better times and rebuilding times, the ones who stay "in it" are putting one step in front of the other. Ask your OEM and distributor reps for help. Talk to other dealers (and other retailers). Punch the numbers into Excel. Challenge your assumptions. Take five minutes and start a list. Map out the calendar and drive your future. Even if you're going below the speed limit for now, you're still moving forward. Cheers to you.

— Mary Slepicka

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## New vehicle intros driving dealer optimism

THREE-TO-FIVE-YEAR OUTLOOK STRONGEST SINCE DEALERNEWS/BAIRD RESEARCH BEGAN MONITORING DEALER SENTIMENT ONE YEAR AGO

**NEW PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS** have been driving much-needed unit sales at dealerships across the country, but again, the mood you're in depends on the brand you're selling, according to results from the Q3 Powersports Dealer Survey conducted by Baird Research and *Dealernews*.

Vehicle manufacturers producing fresh and innovative products are helping dealers weather overarching market headwinds – bad riding weather earlier in the year, a volatile economy and more aggressive competition, among others. Dealers reported mixed inventory status, with lower inventory levels largely correlating with brands that successfully released new products during the summer, according to researchers.

That said, the Baird/*Dealernews* Powersports Dealer Sentiment Index rose for the second consecutive quarter, indicating that dealer outlooks are actually improving. This seems to be because many franchised dealers are now able to look past short-term challenges and are growing more encouraged over future opportunities, said Craig Kennison, director of research operations at R.W. Baird.

### NEW MODELS ARE KEY.

Dealers continue to report that innovative new-model intros are driving customer traffic and retail sales, often at the expense of other brands. "Polaris is hitting on all cylinders," Kennison noted. "The 2014 Harley bikes represent the best upgrade in years. BRP dealers love the new Spark PWC, and Honda appears to [have] spurred strong demand with the Pioneer."

In late October, both Polaris and Harley-Davidson posted strong third-quarter financial reports, with Motor Co. recording a 20 percent sales gain in third quarter and Polaris Q3 revenues exceeding \$1 billion. (Both articles may be viewed on [Dealernews.com](http://Dealernews.com); click on the "OEM" tab on the home page.)

Dealers acknowledged that inventory is slightly high, except in the SxS category, but it has improved over previous quarterly reports. Motorcycle and PWC inventory levels remain higher than dealers' goals.

### TRAFFIC STILL UP AND DOWN.

Dealers attribute lower than desired showroom traffic to an uncertain economy, lack of new products with some brands, and increasing competition from online retail, especially in gear, accessories and in used vehicles (for pre-owned vehicle interest, see [CycleTrader.com](http://CycleTrader.com) data, page 14). There was a "slight lift" in parts and service, researchers reported.

Several brands emerged as winners with compelling new product intros during the summer. "Dealers indicated a good response to products from Honda (Pioneer), Polaris (Indian, RZR XP1000, Ranger), Harley-Davidson (Project Rushmore) and BRP (Spark, Spyder, Maverick)," Kennison said. Many Yamaha dealers noted strong demand for the new Bolt.

"The introduction of many new models has made it a pretty solid summer," said one multiline dealer.

"Across the board, business was up in July and August," noted a BRP dealer. "In September sales traffic slowed and major units were down, but parts and service were up year over year."

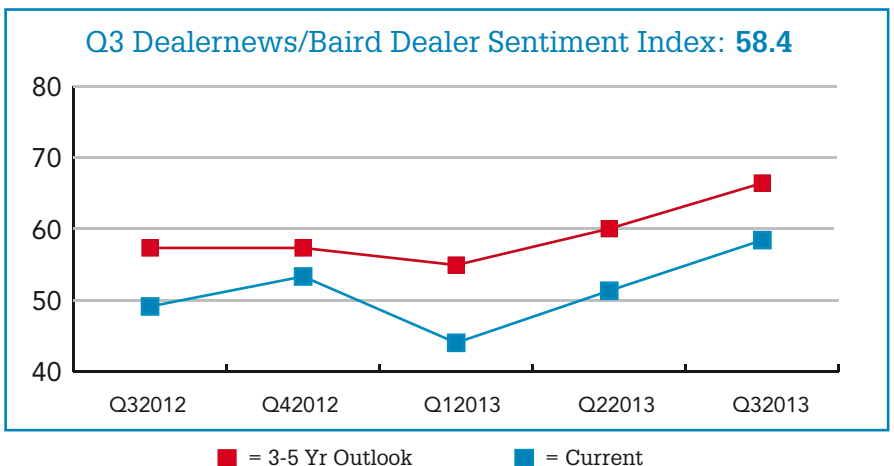
"The introduction of the Brutus line of

commercial-oriented side-by-sides has helped demand in this dealership, as I am in an agricultural market," said a Polaris dealer. "Also, the introduction of the RZR 1000 has doubled the traffic."

Harley dealers were especially revved up over the 2014 models. "Both new and core like the new features," said one dealer. "This has spiked great customer interest, especially the infotainment, the bag lids and liquid cooling on the heads."

Other dealers reported a struggle with balancing inventory levels. "We sat on a lot of inventory through the spring and summer," said a Polaris/Yamaha dealer. "Many units were on lot six to 10 months at least. We dealer-traded to others more than we were retailing. Just in August/September we picked up, and we're selling more. And now, due to not ordering as many, inventory is low."

It wasn't yet clear what an early fall cold snap and snowfalls in the Upper Midwest would have on Q4 sales, as many dealers were banking on a long autumn and extended riding season to help move inventory that they couldn't sell during the cold, wet spring. (continued on page 10)



**DEALER SENTIMENT UP.** Dealers responding to the Q3 survey indicated they were more "satisfied" than they were in July. Current conditions and three-to-five-year outlook metrics reached their highest levels since Baird/*Dealernews* began tracking "sentiment" one year ago. However, dealer commentary illustrates that lackluster products and pressures on profitability continue to weigh heavily. "Not surprisingly, dealers of brands with new products driving demand reported that they were the most satisfied," Kennison noted.





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## SPEED READ

Responses in the Q3 survey also pointed to a challenge in securing customer loyalty. "Impulse buying is way down," said one Polaris dealer. "Seems like [customers] are making at least two trips to the store now, where it used to be one."

### INVENTORY OUTLOOK MIXED.

Inventory remains challenging, especially when it comes to getting the new models on the floor. Several dealers commented that OEMs need to provide them with more ordering flexibility to adjust as market conditions fluctuate.

"Ordering once a season with the ability to change items only before the true season starts is of little help," noted a BRP dealer.

"The problem has been twofold [with Honda]: lack of availability, and due to lower price points there are lower profit margins. Volume is needed to offset the profit margins, but due to availability, weather, economy, volume is not at the levels that make the new product profitable at this point," said a Honda multiline.

"The introduction of the Spark PWC is great, but the dealerships are still stuck with unrealistic numbers of units to sell," said a BRP dealer. "The Spark units don't have great profit margins, but the POP advertising kit is very expensive and is mandatory. Dealerships won't be able to

cover the cost of the POP with the margins on the Spark."

Aggressive product introductions in the SxS category have kept stock turning and balanced, dealers said, but they added that inventory is still a bit high in other categories. Still, most categories improved from the Q2 report.

"Dealers generally reported they were more comfortable with inventory levels of Polaris products, except for Indian, where dealers can't get enough bikes," Kennison said. "Honda dealers want more SxS inventory [because] they can't keep the Pioneer in stock. Solid retail trends for BMW scooters have dealers looking for more inventory."

### RETAIL FINANCING STABLE.

Dealers reported that the overall financing environment appears positive. More dealers this quarter indicated that the financing environment had become "less difficult": 25 percent of respondents vs. 11 percent in Q2. The majority of respondents indicated no change in the availability of retail or wholesale financing: 55 percent of dealers said availability was "about the same" for retail financing vs. our last report in July, and 76 percent of dealers said wholesale financing was "about the same" compared to last summer. — Mary Slepicka

## Q3 DEALER SENTIMENT INDEX DEALER COMMENTS

"We continue to lose accessory and garment sales to the Internet, and have to compete with the discount independent repair shops that are willing to work for a fraction of our labor rate. It is a difficult time to be a brick-and-mortar motorcycle business."

"People are going to the Internet and seem to be buying on price only. You can throw MSRP out the window."

"It looks as if the manufacturers have a ton of noncurrent inventory at the warehouse by examining the availability of 2013s to order."

"Some days are good, others just terrible. It's difficult to put a complete month together."

"New products are creating great buzz. The future is looking better than in years. [OEMs] need to allow dealers to make better margins on the low-cost new models, though."

"Self-service showroom dealerships: Take a scanner coupon to the checkout, scan it, pay for it and drive around back to the Customer Service Delivery door where they slide the box into your truck. That's where most of us are going, I believe."

"This is the year of heavy discounting to reduce/eliminate off-season flooring costs."



## DEALERNEWS

**CALIFORNIA** – Top 100 Dealer **Ducati Newport Beach** has earned Ducati North America's top sales award for a third year in a row. The 9,100 sq. ft. dealership moved more than 200 Ducati motorcycles in the last year.

**CONNECTICUT** – Mike's Famous **Harley-Davidson** in New London has expansion plans all bottled up – it's moving into a former Coca-Cola production facility in December. The new 55,000 sq. ft. store on five acres will feature a showroom that reportedly can accommodate 200 vehicles.

**IDAHO** – Twin Falls-area **Expedition Motorsports** is gearing up for a move to a better location in town. The motorcycle and ATV repair and accessory sales business has bought and is renovating a former computer repair shop.

**ILLINOIS** – A teen faces charges of starting up a Honda CRF70C at Peoria's **Grayboy** and riding it right out the front door. He told authorities shop workers had escorted him off the premises one week earlier for starting up the bike on the showroom floor.

**NEW MEXICO** – **Shade Tree Customs**, which specializes in building and repairing café racers and choppers, is giving Albuquerque riders more reason to get their kicks on Route 66 by opening an 88-seat restaurant in the city's Nob Hill district.

**PENNSYLVANIA** – Top 100 Dealer **Off-Road Express** has launched an Indian Motorcycles dealership in its home market of Erie.

**TENNESSEE** – A Maryville-area family has a new home for the holidays thanks to Top 100 Dealer **Smoky Mountain Harley-Davidson** and its Harley Owners Group. The dealership is the sole sponsor of the Habitat for Humanity house.

**ALBERTA, CANADA** – Inventory liquidation has begun at **Walt Healy Motorsports** in Calgary. The 83-year-old dealership is set to close in March.

## WHAT'S TRENDING... ON DEALERNEWS.COM

### DEALER OPERATIONS > MANAGEMENT

**India's Hero to sell motorcycles, scooters next year in U.S.** Pricing, models still to be determined, but they will be distributed through Erik Buell Racing, of which Hero owns a 49 percent stake.

**McGraw teams with Ziios for in-contract extended service offering.** Dealers that offer insurance provider's Western Service Extended contracts can complete deals for new and used units directly from the Ziios DMS platform.

### DEALER OPERATIONS > SALES

**Arctic Cat sled sales up.** OEM records 5 percent boost after debuting 10 snowmobiles for 2014.

**Husqvarna bringing 10 of 14 new models to U.S.** Entire lineup features polyamide rear subframe, which offers rigidity while allowing more flex than traditional aluminum.

**BMW releases Adventure evolution for R1200 GS.** For the first time on a BMW production bike, the maintenance-free cardan shift drive is on the left side.

**Triumph updates Bonneville, Thruxton, Scrambler.** Lines offer new color options and revised exhaust systems.

**Erik Buell Racing unveils 1190RX sport-bike.** Advanced components will allow

EBR to compete with European, Japanese brands, Bruce Steever reports.

**Ural unveils limited-edition Gaucho Rambler.** Vehicle package includes a coffee pot, two mugs, two plates and a frying pan.

### DEALER OPERATIONS > SERVICE

**Motor Co. offers 110 Twin-Cooled motor as bolt-on upgrade.** Screamin' Eagle says it's time to start modding the 2014 bikes.

**Service webinar for Suzuki dealers now available to everyone.** SMAI session on driving service promotions and sales, conducted with Dominion Powersports Solutions, now available on YouTube.

### DEALER OPERATIONS > MARKETING

**Social media provider promises to boost dealers' business with customer videos.** Company creates a testimonial page for new vehicle buyer, then helps the dealer share the pages in major social media streams.

**New merchandising program for Gear Gremlin.** Modular wall display available as dealers place minimum orders.

**Lunasee adds POP.** Includes a lightbox arrangement that spins a motorized sample LERTape setup to wow customers in your parts department.

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## TOP VIEWED PRODUCTS on [dealernews.com](http://dealernews.com)

(To read more, click on the "Aftermarket" tab on the Dealernews.com home page)

**Bell** debuts Bullitt, Qualifier helmets, updates Custom 500 open-face lid

**HJC** boosts technology on new IS-17, CL-17 and offroad FG-X helmets

**Kuryakyn** offers new parts for H-D customs, trikes and tourers

**uglyBROS** seeking high-end dealers for its higher end moto-fashion

**Joe Rocket** expands classic line with new jacket, lots of gloves

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## NUMBERS

# 1.1026

Third-quarter sales (\$billion) for Polaris, a 25 percent gain over the same period in 2012. Success with off-road and snowmobile intros helped offset a 6 percent drop in motorcycle sales, the company reported.

# 48,529

New models sold by U.S. Harley-Davidson dealers in third quarter, up 20.1 percent over Q3 2012 and boosted by the introduction of the Rushmore bikes.

# 210,228

GSXRs recalled by Suzuki to replace the front brake master cylinder. Model years 2004 to 2013 are affected, according to NHTSA.

# 29,046

New Harley-Davidson touring and CVO models recalled for inspection and possible repair of the hydraulic clutch system.

# 165

Weight, in pounds, of a prototype carbon fiber and titanium freestyle MX (FMX) bike developed by Australia's Unit and Triple Eight Race Engineering teams.

# 140

Weight, in pounds, of a four-piece, snap-together personal watercraft developed by partners who previously worked at S&S, Harley-Davidson and Cisco Systems and are trying to get \$6 million in funding to begin production.



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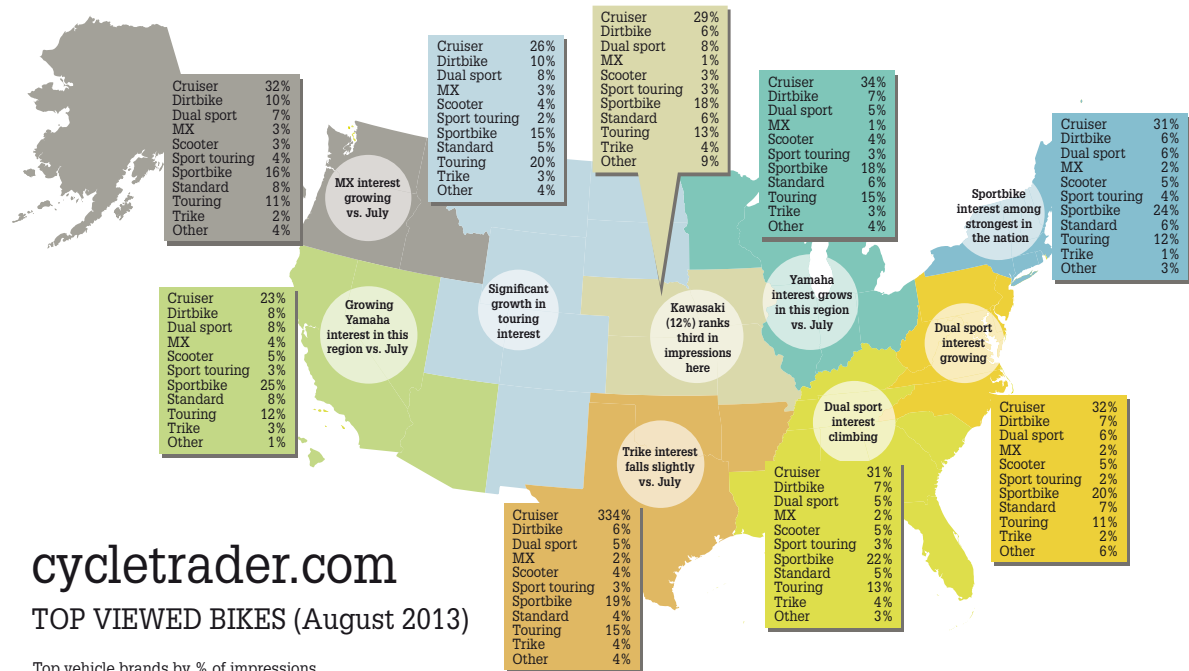


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## cycletrader.com TOP VIEWED BIKES (August 2013)

Top vehicle brands by % of impressions

<b>Central Plains</b>	Honda 24%, Harley-Davidson 23%	<b>Northeast</b>	Harley-Davidson 18%, Yamaha 14%	<b>Rocky Mountain</b>	Harley-Davidson 24%, Honda 15%
<b>Great Lakes</b>	Honda 19%, Yamaha 17%	<b>Pacific</b>	Honda 20%, Harley-Davidson, Yamaha 15%	<b>Southeast</b>	Honda 21%, Yamaha 17%
<b>Mid Atlantic</b>	Harley-Davidson 18%, Honda 18%	<b>Pacific Alaska</b>	Yamaha 20%, Honda 18%	<b>Southwest</b>	Honda 21%, Harley-Davidson 20%

Consumer study of vehicles enthusiasts are reviewing 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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## TO HELP YOU SELL: Shoei's new RF-1200 a 'significant leap' over previous helmet model

UNDER THE TAGLINE of "the evolution of perfection," Shoei North America's new RF-1200 features a clean-sheet design that offers a significant leap in performance compared to the outgoing RF-1100 model first introduced in 2010.

Compared to the RF-1100, the new 1200 is significantly lighter and more compact. In profile, the new helmet's dimensions actually fit inside the perimeter of the older model. The lower edge now features a cutaway design to minimize weight, which is claimed to be a full 50-60 grams lighter for a size medium.

The RF-1200 is claimed to be the lightest Snell-rated helmet that Shoei has ever built, thanks to the compact design and multi-layer AIM+ shell construction.

From Shoei's wind tunnel development, the more compact RF-1200 offers significant aerodynamic improvements. Overall wind noise is very quiet without resorting to noise-reducing insulation that could damp critical environmental warnings. The narrow

shell also cuts through the air nicely for minimal drag and lift as well as reduced buffeting.

Ventilation receives a large boost due to a third intake vent positioned dead-center on the forehead that works in concert with four exhaust vents incorporated into a new rear spoiler. (Shoei's engineers found that the spoiler design was more effective at creating the vacuum effect to pull stale air from the helmet.) As on other Shoeis, the ventilation works through a series of channels to distribute the cooling air flow across the rider's head. While the system doesn't offer the "wind-in-your-hair" feeling of some racing models, the ventilation is effective. Finally, a new chin vent keeps air flowing to the rider's face, while the included chin curtain and breath guard work to manage airflow for cooler conditions.

Due to the helmet's compact shell, sight lines of the new helmet are exceptional, especially when looking up in a full tuck. Several improvements have made their way into the RF-1200 shield system. The CWR-1 shield itself is new and features reinforcing ribs on the top and bottom edges to stiffen the shield, which adds a robust and durable feel when operating the visor. New QR-E baseplates are feature an indexed adjustment system to align the shield in addition to the spring-loaded shield pivots which hold the shield snugly against the gasket. Said gasket is also updated, now using a dual-lip/dual-bead design for maximum wind- and water-proofing.



The final series of updates cover the interior of the RF-1200. Using a three-dimensional shaping for each liner component, the RF-1200 offers a firm but comfortable shape for a wide variety of head shapes. The liner now features Max-Dry material across most of the interior for sweat absorption and dissipation. Ear pads can be removed to expose audio-ready pockets and the cheek pads feature Shoei's Emergency Quick Release System pioneered by the X-12 racing model.

A range of initial graphics and the usual array of solid colors will launch with the helmet for 2014, with pricing starting at \$485.99 for solids up to \$589.99 for graphics. Although the price has increased nearly 10 percent compared to the outgoing RF-1100, the new 1200 offers performance improvements to carry it suitably into dealer inventories.

—Bruce Steever

## Ride in Peace

**Nick Prianos**, owner of **Gin's Speed Shop** in Fayetteville, N.C., killed Oct. 6 in a motorcycle accident. The shop opened earlier this year and has seven employees.

**Rick Shaw**, Daytona 200 mileage leader from 2003 to 2012, who died Oct. 17 while working with amateur racers at the Speedway.

**Mike Slagle**, former sales manager at **Quaid Temecula Harley-Davidson**, killed Oct. 19 in a motorcycle accident. The dealership is planning a memorial ride Nov. 24.



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# All new. All business.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE NEW DEALER EXPO

By Tracy Harris

**DEALER EXPO IN 2014** will be a brand-new show addressing the industry's current – and future – needs. It's a complete restructuring of the industry's largest and longest running event, and it would not have been possible without the active involvement of the many dealers, manufacturers, distributors and service providers who were very vocal about what they needed.

Dealer Expo 2014, to be held Dec. 5-7 at Chicago's McCormick Place, will showcase next year's new product introductions not only with exciting displays but also with valuable demonstrations on how to order, stock, merchandise and sell.

Dealer Expo 2014 is now timed according to the retailers' new buying cycle. Many dealers – even those in colder climates – now make most of their decisions on what lines to carry during the latter part of the fourth quarter so they can be inventoried by January and ready to sell as soon as the outside temperature hits 45 degrees. (If you're a dealer in the Mid-Atlantic or Midwest you know some customers want their bikes out of storage by mid-February!)

Dealer Expo 2014 will provide a comprehensive retail symposium that will provide new ideas, new methods and new conversations for running your businesses successfully in the new economy.

Dealer Expo 2014 will celebrate our industry's achievements – from the 23rd Annual Top 100 Dealer Competition Awards Gala to the 50th Anniversary of *Dealernews*.

Dealer Expo 2014 moves to its new home in downtown Chicago – a major city within easy driving and flying reach, with affordable hotel rates, easy show shuttle services and a variety of entertainment options.

We know time is money. Dealer Expo 2014 will be designed so that you can get in, get your business done, and get out. Or, stay a while and enjoy the show. It's up to you.

### **SO, WHAT DID THE INDUSTRY ACTUALLY SAY?**

There's been a lot of conjecture about what the industry – manufacturers, distributors and retailers – told us when we asked them to help us build a brand-new Dealer Expo. Here's what I can tell you.

The manufacturers and distributors made it clear that their participation hinged on Dealer Expo's ability to bring in more buyers as well as more international participants. Period. Every decision on location, timing and what the show would provide had to be based on delivering retail and international attendance, they said.

However, when it came to selecting new Q4 dates for Dealer Expo, the manufacturers and distributors requested that we stay away from the European shows (EICMA, Internot) and SEMA, all of which are held in October and November. They also requested that Dealer Expo not conflict with PRI, held in mid-December. Why? Because these are important events for manufacturers and distributors selling products into international markets and, in the case of SEMA, specialty automotive.

The dealers, service shop owners and other retailers – our attendees – made it clear that they wanted to see new products, and they wanted to learn how to market and sell those products to gain a competitive edge. They also wanted opportunities to further their business training and then connect with colleagues.

For most retailers, going to a national show is a ques-





## WHERE POWERSPORTS CONNECTS

tion of timing and cost. From March through October, it's riding weather – you're staffed up and selling. In January and February, dealers in colder climates are staffed down, and daily activities involve handling incoming inventory, merchandising the showroom and otherwise getting ready for the new riding season.

So Dealer Expo had to fit in a timeframe that would coincide with your main ordering season yet still be held during a time when you can get away from the shop for a day or two.

Finally, dealers told us that Dealer Expo had to be affordable – and that included low transportation costs since so many of you drive to the show, direct flights for those of you who travel by air, cost-effective hotel rates (stay with me, here, because we've got a surprise for you), and a range of food and entertainment options. Dealers said they wanted a major market that was affordable and readily accessible.

## AND EVERYONE SAID: "FUN IS IMPORTANT!"

### THE DECISION – AND YES, IT WAS A BOLD ONE

After many months of research, we knew what we had to do to move our industry forward. We restructured Dealer Expo to put an even higher emphasis on new products than we had before. We placed the nation's largest trade event in a destination city – a major, easily accessible market but with affordable options. And we made a bold decision to host the show in early December, after the retailers are done with Black Friday sales and their holiday inventory is set.

Why Chicago? Well, the more we learned, the more apparent it became that Dealer Expo had to be in a major market – a central U.S. location easily accessible for those who drive, with two major airports welcoming direct flights from just about anywhere in the world. (That's right; no more time-consuming and expensive connections.) That city also had to have a facility large enough to accommodate Dealer Expo in a downtown area convenient to hotels and attractions.

We looked at dozens of cities. Some were dropped because they were on extreme sides of the country, which would increase costs and travel times for retailers on the opposite coast. Others were discarded because

they didn't have enough exhibit space – and we wanted all exhibits in one big hall. Still others didn't have the airport capacity, or accessible public transportation, or enough affordable lodging.

We did the math. We looked at the maps. Chicago is our choice. And once you get there, we know it will be your choice, too.

**So here's Surprise No. 1.** Dealer Expo has negotiated room rates at Chicago's best hotels that will range from \$119/night to \$149/night. And that includes the big Hyatt McCormick Place, accessible to Dealer Expo through a heated skywalk, and the luxurious downtown hotels which will be accessible to Dealer Expo via a convenient 7.5-minute shuttle bus service that drops you off... inside.

**And here's Surprise No. 2** – and this one is for the exhibitors. Dealer Expo is the beneficiary of the City of Chicago's new program for shows to secure affordable and much more relaxed labor rates and rules for booth setup, maintenance and tear-down. Talk to your sales representative for details. Ask the hard questions. You'll be pleased with the answers.

We will be releasing more information in early 2014. If you're a retailer, lock in Dec. 5-7, 2014, in Chicago, and then go on with your business; we'll remind you when it's time to think about it again. If you're an exhibitor, talk with your sales rep for details on how Dealer Expo will help you boost your business easily and affordably.

Dealer Expo will be the largest, most newsworthy, most informative and most compelling business event in the powersports industry. That's our promise. And we will prove it to you.

Thank you to everyone who gave so generously of their time, their thoughts and their ideas. We're putting them into action. Are you ready?

**Tracy Harris**

Senior Vice President  
tharris@advanstar.com



# Crank up the heat!

EXTEND YOUR CUSTOMERS' RIDING SEASON — WITH A LITTLE EXTRA VOLTAGE

By Beth Dolgner

**HEATED RIDING GEAR** is made for enthusiasts who want to get in every available day of riding, even if it means bundling up and bracing for the "Are you crazy?" comments from friends. (Admittedly, it's also for riders who think anything under 70°F is sweater weather.)

There are a number of heated options, including some new products that debuted just in time for the winter. Here are a few ways to make the riding season last as long as possible.



## VENTURE HEAT DEBUTS WIRELESS REMOTE

Venture Heat's 12V heated jacket liner (\$269) is part of the company's Grand Touring Collection. The liner is operated wirelessly so the wearer can control the three different heat settings through a button mounted on the handlebars (see below). The heating elements are located in the front, back, sleeves and collar, and they are constructed of a thin microfiber designed for less bulk. The liner, which also doubles as a windbreaker, comes with pre-wired glove connectors.

Other new additions to the Grand Touring Collection are 12-volt heated pant liners (\$170) and 12V Grand Touring heated vest (\$180). Venture Heat has a wide range of other heated gear for powersports, including specific options for snow sports. [www.ventureheat.com](http://www.ventureheat.com)



## MOOSE RACING GETS A GRIP

Although it not electrically heated, the new Pursuit Handwarmer (\$28.95-31.95) from Moose Racing is worth mentioning. The Handwarmers mount to ATVs and have built-in pockets for warmer packets. The 600-denier nylon is water resistant and easy to clean up. [www.mooseracing.com](http://www.mooseracing.com)



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## GERBING GROWS ITS COREHEAT12 OPTIONS

The EX jacket (\$399.99) is new to Gerbing's Coreheat12 line of 12-volt heated apparel, and it includes a Cordura shell and a maximum heat of 135°F for cold-weather protection. Plus, there is soft armor on the back, shoulders and elbows for protection from the asphalt.

The EX pants (\$224.99) have the same waterproof Cordura construction and impact protectors. The matching EX heated gloves (\$189.99) complete the EX options in the Coreheat12 collection.

In the Coreheat7 collection for 7V power, the softshell vest (\$224.99) has a micro-poly lining and a maximum heat of 135°F Fahrenheit. The vest is available in both men's and women's sizing. [www.gerbing.com](http://www.gerbing.com)



## BUT THERE'S MORE

There are still a slew of go-to heated products for the winter, like the Synergy liners and gloves from TourMaster. They use carbon fiber wire heating elements for optimal heat dispersion and flexibility. The Synergy line includes 12-volt options like the 2.0 Electric Jacket (\$234.99; see image at left).

Heat Demon's heated vests are available with battery packs for self-contained heating (\$299.95) and their footwarmers (\$89.95) keep toes warm.

And finally, brand loyalists can opt for gloves and liners from Harley-Davidson, including the Dual-Source Heated Jacket Liner (\$260) that can be powered from the bike or a battery pack.



## FIRSTGEAR ADDS PANTS AND POUCHES

Firstgear's heated gear powered by Warm & Safe already features a lot of options, right down to heated socks. You recall the new WindBlock pants (\$219.95), which are designed for slipping on underneath jeans or chaps (*Dealernews*, September 2013, p. 16 and shown here). Firstgear is also offering Portable Heat-Troller Belt Pouches in a single (\$12.95) or double (\$14.95) design. The pouches house the Portable Heat-Trollers battery packs that power Firstgear's heated options. The protective pouches include a clip for attaching to a belt or tank bag. [www.firstgear-usa.com](http://www.firstgear-usa.com)

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# Casualness = casualty?

WHY A 'WHATEVER' CULTURE WILL RUIN YOUR BUSINESS



**Tory Hornsby** is the executive vice president of Dealership University and Powersports Marketing.

## On the Web:

Read more of Tory Hornsby's columns on sales leadership and management at [www.dealernews.com](http://www.dealernews.com)

**I RECENTLY HEARD** a story about a boy from L.A. (you know, lower Alabama). He was the son of a traveling horse trainer who went from stable to stable, ranch to ranch, farm to farm, race track to race track, training horses. The family was very poor, and due to all of their traveling the boy's schooling was constantly being interrupted.

When he was a senior in high school he was assigned the task of writing a paper about what he wanted to be when he grew up. There was no question about what he wanted, so he wrote a seven-page paper describing his dream of owning a large horse ranch.

He wrote in great detail about his goal of having a 250-acre ranch, and described where all of the horse training would take place, where the buildings would be, and a specific floor plan for his 5,000 sq. ft. house, even drawing out the floor plan. He put his heart into the assignment.

Two days later the young man received his paper back. There was a large F on the front with a note to see the teacher after class. Once the class ended, he went to the teacher and asked, "Why did I get an F on my paper?" The teacher told him that his writing was based on an unrealistic dream that someone like him would never be able to achieve.

The teacher lectured him about coming from a traveling family that was very poor. "You have no resources, and owning a horse ranch requires a lot of money" the teacher said. "You'll never be able to afford the land, much less the breeding stock, the food, paying the large stud fees, and that doesn't even include the house! There's no way you could ever do this."

The teacher then told the young man to rewrite his paper using a more realistic goal, one that wasn't so much of a dream, and that his grade would be reconsidered. The boy went home and thought long and hard about what to do. While he couldn't afford to get an F on the project, he knew exactly what he wanted in life. Finally, after holding on to the paper for an entire week, he turned it back in with no changes at all.

As the young man handed in his paper, he said, "You can keep the F. I'll keep my dream."

Of course, the young man did achieve his dream of owning a large horse ranch and ultimately received an apology from the teacher. The success of this young man is in large part due to his deliberate intent. He deliberately and intently shaped his life around what he wanted.

## 'WHERE THERE IS NO VISION...'

Deliberate intent is in short supply these days. Our world is full of people that, at best, just show up.

There's no plan, no vision and their end result is ultimately dictated by whatever happens. If customers come in and people buy, it's a good day; if they don't it's a bad day. Whatever happens, happens.

Operational casualness in any business is a cardinal sin, but in a motorcycle business (and especially in your sales department) it quickly creates a 'whatever' culture. In other words, if you don't care enough about your dealership to develop the systems and processes that dictate how your business runs, your staff won't care, either.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Your vision is your plan, your goal, your dream.

Too many folks complain about their dealership's operation, their staff, their traffic. They have missed the fact that their life and business is the culmination of their own decisions. You're either making the decisions to build an incredible culture with your staff and drive sales, or you're simply the passenger waiting on something or someone else to come drive it for you.

Listen up: You design your life by the choices you make. The choices are yours. You get to choose happiness or sadness. You choose decisiveness or ambivalence. You choose success or failure. You choose courage or fear. You choose the ability to create a vibrant sales culture that's customer oriented or not. But it doesn't just happen; it is completely designed by you.

Every moment and every situation provides you with a new choice. How will you drive sales moving forward? Don't pull the 'business is slowing down, it's time to check out' card. That card has a big fat F on it. It's time to tell operational casualness to "keep the F," because you're keeping your vision. **D**

My July 2013 article really struck a chord with some dealers. It was written specifically to dealer principals and managers on how "the root of your dealership's problems is you." I hope it struck such a chord that it leads you to do something about it. You can find that article at

on the *Dealernews* ezine (access it here: <http://www.dealernews.com/dealernews/dealernews-digital-edition>, or download the issue on iTunes)



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# Best for you, or best for me?

IT'S THIS ON-THE-SPOT DECISION THAT IMPACTS THE LONG-TERM REPUTATION OF YOUR SERVICE DEPARTMENT



## FUEL FOR THOUGHT

Dave Koshollek teaches sales and service classes for dealers. Contact him at [dakoenterprises@cs.com](mailto:dakoenterprises@cs.com), or via [editors@dealernews.com](mailto:editors@dealernews.com).

## On the Web:

Visit [www.dealernews.com](http://www.dealernews.com) to read Dave Koshollek's many other columns for service and parts department professionals.

**IT SEEMS LIKE MANY** of the poor customer service stories I've been exposed to lately could have gone off better if the customer service person just slowed down for a moment and asked himself, *What's best for this customer?*

Let me give you two recent examples and then you decide: Was the outcome best for the customer or best for the customer service person?

**EXAMPLE 1: OIL CHANGE WAIT** - A man and his wife were attending a four-day major motorcycle event, and their bike needed an oil change. The dealership service department was swamped; the service advisor said they could do the oil change but the wait would be four to five hours. The couple checked in the bike and sat outside for the duration.

*Best solution for the customer or for the service department?*

**EXAMPLE 2: TIRE CHANGE FIASCO** - A friend of mine believes in buying tires from the dealership but prefers to remove the wheel himself so he can check over the bike and save a little labor.

Before heading to the closest dealer in town, he called to make sure they had the tire in stock. He reached the parts department first and asked whether they had a one-size-wider tire (a 140mm) in stock for his bike. The parts guy said, "I don't know. I'll transfer you to service."

The service advisor seemed to be pretty green because after my friend repeated the entire request, he responded, "I have a 180mm. Will that work?" It took another few minutes to sort out the confusion before my friend found out that the dealership does not stock the tire.

My friend then called the next closest dealer, which understood the request and had the tire but could not mount it until the next day. That didn't suit my friend's travel plans. It was getting late in the day, so he frantically called a local independent shop which completely understood his desire to install a wider tire and had the tire in stock but would not stay late to mount it because it was 30 minutes to closing time. Frustrated, my friend gave up.

*Best for the customer or best for the four customer service people at the three shops?*

## DECISIONS UNDER PRESSURE

Was the handling of these customer requests truly best for the shops involved? Of course not.

You can imagine that the traveler needing the oil change told plenty of other riders not to use that dealership. And my tire change friend pretty much wrote off the independent shop, lost confidence in the inexperienced personnel working at the closest dealership and is now wondering what it will take to get a little extra accommodation from the second

dealership that couldn't squeeze in a measly 15-minute tire change.

That leads me back to the original question, *Best for me or best for my customer?* and a mantra I use when I need to make a decision under pressure: *Treat all customers well and the dealership foremost.* That means at every pressure point we must ask ourselves, "What's best for the customer *and* best for the dealership?"

It may have been a nuisance to pull a tech for a quick oil change but the goodwill generated would have elevated the dealership's reputation. I was there that day and witnessed the service advisor standing around, doing nothing. He could have pushed the bike into position, gotten the oil and filter from parts, and left the little work remaining to the tech. I actually asked the service advisor if the store could shuttle the couple back to the event (which was only two miles away) and was told the parts runner was busy picking up, you know, parts. So, no.

For the tire change fiasco, the first tip is *do not transfer customers to another department or employee unless absolutely necessary.* If you do, explain the situation to the next person so the customer doesn't have to repeat his or her story. Like an oil change, mounting a tire is no big deal. The service department always should be able to complete minor jobs like this during just about any work day.

In both cases, there was a major motorcycle event in town known by the dealerships months in advance. The shops should have staffed up so no customer would be left in the weeds.

## DUMB CUSTOMERS...

Now, you may be reading this and thinking, *Dumb customers should have gotten their oil changed before going to the event and not expected so much when they wait until the last day to get a new tire.* And you know what? You're right! But would you rather be known as the "Get it done!" shop or the "Get lost, sucker!" shop? Because that's what the customers are thinking. I know you folks are busting your butts out there, but it's these little things that will pull down your reputation.

Take a tip from Brett O'Connor, service manager at **Tucson Harley-Davidson**. His service department doesn't close until the work is done. Rarely are there carryovers to the next day unless they're approved by the owner. O'Connor has several A-techs and a handful of B- and C-techs, and he operates the department like a skilled medical professional doing triage. He is constantly on the move, monitoring the workload and 'jobs finished' status, and making adjustments as needed to achieve results that are best for his customers — and best for his dealership. **D**

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## HERE'S SOMETHING YOUR TECHS CAN DROOL OVER

Matco Tools is giving everyone a reason to upgrade their current tool storage with the introduction of a limited edition camo toolbox. The exclusive 4s toolbox features a digital camo graphic and Camo Green gloss paint, creating a unique, camo-textured appearance.

"We wanted to design a toolbox that was going to be unique — an option for techs that really turned heads," says Chris Cremer, Matco tool storage product manager. "Matco's special edition camo box has the features and benefits of our high-quality, 4s line of tool boxes but with a design that will make a statement."



The limited edition camo option will be added to Matco's line of toolboxes. Every model features a T-shaped center shelf that is fully welded to all sides for brute strength and total stability. Each Matco toolbox is handcrafted in the U.S. The company says its toolboxes also feature the most configurations on the market.

The camo toolbox is available in double and triple bay configurations, with prices ranging from \$5,495 to \$6,995, depending on size and features.

The company also has a new MSCX service cart, which offers 16,458 cubic inches of lockable storage capacity with a "barn door" style door that swings open 270 degrees and can be held with magnets, giving users quick and easy access to tools. Quick-release gas pistons allow the lid to be laid back in seconds if you're working in a tight area. [www.matcotools.com](http://www.matcotools.com)

## REKLUSE OFFERS HIGH-TECH CLUTCH PACKETS FOR HARLEYS

Rekluse this fall unveiled the EXP and TorqDrive kits that bring the company's proven racing auto-clutch technology to the motorcycle V-twin market.



The company claims the kits radically improve the motorcycle's ease of use, eliminating stalling, improving low-speed handling and increasing launch traction. And thanks to the adjustable nature of the Rekluse clutch design, the system can be tuned to deliver lighter clutch pull, increased torque capacity — or a compromise between the two.

The TorqDrive clutch pack further distinguishes itself with its higher number of thin clutch plates, which immediately put more working area into the clutch system for better durability via lowered operating temperatures and reduced basket wear.

Pricing for the new Harley applications was pending at press time. For more information, visit [www.rekluse.com](http://www.rekluse.com) — Bruce Steever



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## YOSHIMURA SUPPORTS FRANCHISED SHOPS WITH NEW ACCESSORY KITS

What if someone took the time to make a product that was available to franchised dealers only? Something that would drive customers back into brick-and-mortar storefronts? Something cool that people actually wanted? Yoshimura believes it has done exactly that.

Building on the ideas pioneered by the Yoshimura Suzuki specials sold through Suzuki dealerships across the country this past year, the company has now created the Speed and Style Kit for the new Honda Grom.

The kit includes an RS-9 slip-on exhaust, fender eliminator kit, anodized Yoshimura hardware, and finishing plugs and graphics kits for both colorways of the 2014 Grom. The kit retails for a special combination

price of \$899, compared to the regular price total of \$1,040.92. The margin differential is even better, with the usual dealer price of \$731.90 dropping more than \$170 when ordered as a kit.

The hook is that these kits will only be available to licensed Honda dealers with strict controls regarding online sales and advertising.

Yoshimura reportedly intends to sell the kits to Honda dealers via Parts Unlimited and/or Tucker Rocky (where it was showcasing the Grom kit this past summer), with the same restrictions in place. Depending on the success of this program, Yoshimura says it's the beginning of a new way to support dealers, and that new kits for additional brands will be coming soon. — Bruce Steever

## LOW MAINTENANCE AND REAL-WORLD WATERPROOFING FROM SPRINT FILTERS

Tell your café racers, custom bike builders and any other customer who builds or rides bikes with exposed engine elements: Just because your motorcycle features exposed pod-style air filters, there's no reason to put the vehicle away when rain threatens.

Better yet, there's no reason to spend time and money constantly cleaning and re-oiling your filters, either.

Thanks to Sprint Filters and its over 60 years of experience manufacturing air filters, there are now fully air filter options for custom machines with exposed intakes. The P08 WP features a precision filtration medium that is not only capable of setting records at the Bonneville Salt Flats but can be cleaned within seconds using compressed air, simplifying maintenance. A special

PTFE treatment adds total waterproofing to the filter media, making it ready to race on clear or rainy days without the addition of water "socks" or other covers.

A full range of air filter sizes and fittings are available, starting around \$75 retail.

[www.sprintfilter.net](http://www.sprintfilter.net) — Bruce Steever



## CAMERA DETECTS THOSE THERMAL TELLTALE SIGNS

You've got a clogged radiator, or perhaps a cylinder that's missing intermittently. Either way, you've got a problem that will leave a thermal telltale that would easily help you find the exact location, if only you could easily check the temperatures of the area quickly.

You could use an indirect infrared thermometer, but wouldn't you rather just see the results directly? The Predator line of thermal imaging cameras from General Tools and Instruments reportedly does just that.

Each Predator camera enables real-time imaging of heat sources with an accuracy of 2 percent of measurements. Images are displayed in a 3.5-inch LCD display and can be saved in .jpg format for easy storage and diagnosis later on the included 2GB MiniSD card.

The Predator cameras are built to withstand impact, water and all the other common abuse that tools can take, and can run a claimed five to six hours on a single charge.

Finally, a variety of accessories expand the functionality of the unit, such as additional lenses to change viewing angles, mounts, charging adaptors and advanced reporting software.

The Predator camera is an expensive addition for most shops, starting at about two grand for the base model, but the convenience and pure tech appeal make it worth consideration. [www.generaltools.com](http://www.generaltools.com) — Bruce Steever

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# MIGHTY IN MCHENRY

(CAUTION: DEALERSHIP MAY APPEAR LARGER THAN ACTUAL SIZE)







By Georgia Krause • Photography by Jeff Barger

“Being a small store in the world of Harley-Davidson is sort of out of the norm,” says Chris Hoak. “We have to maximize what we have to work with.”

So instead of trying to retail like one of the megastores, cramming more products into a finite number of square feet, **McHenry Harley-Davidson** fills its store with expert staff and continuous opportunities to enhance its customers’ riding experience.

Good thing exceptional customer service doesn’t take up much room.

Located three miles east of the intersection of Illinois Routes 120 and 12, McHenry Harley-Davidson sits close to the Illinois-Wisconsin border, about 50 miles northwest of Chicago. It’s a smaller dealership than other Harley stores. Its building is a snug 10,000 square feet – half of which is dedicated to the service department. New motorcycles, sales, apparel, parts and accessories, and office administration departments rub elbows in the other 5,000 square feet. In good weather, pre-owned bikes are displayed outside the store, which adds a few more feet of retail space.

Doug Jackson and his partners, Arnold Horwich and Tracy Lancaster, acquired the McHenry dealership a little over a year ago. Hoak is the store’s GM. McHenry is a secondary retail location to **Woodstock Harley-Davidson**. The group has a third Harley dealership just across the state line in Lake Geneva, Wis.

Owners and managers alike understand that their customer’s riding experience continues to grow for years after they’ve purchased

their vehicle. Service, accessories, clothing, camaraderie are integral to Harley ownership, and the successful retailer is the one who makes the effort to keep customers engaged after the bike sale. McHenry H-D’s efforts to create a unique customer sales culture are apparent as soon as you enter the store.

“We know and greet our current customers by name when they walk in the door. We take our time with each customer. When a new customer asks where the parts department is, we never point and say, ‘Over there.’ Instead, we introduce ourselves and walk with the customer to the parts department, then introduce the customer to the parts employee,” Hoak explains.

It’s a small courtesy that communicates such large respect for the customer, thereby strengthening the relationship.

## VISUAL MERCHANDISING

Hoak has configured the front of the store with a natural traffic flow that encourages customers to meander around the new bikes (they usually have around 25 models on the floor), exchange a few pleasantries with the sales staff, check with the accessories folks for new chrome stuff and maybe consider some new riding wear. As typical with Harley fixtures, you won’t see static walls or permanent display cases anchored to the floor.

“The departments aren’t really di-





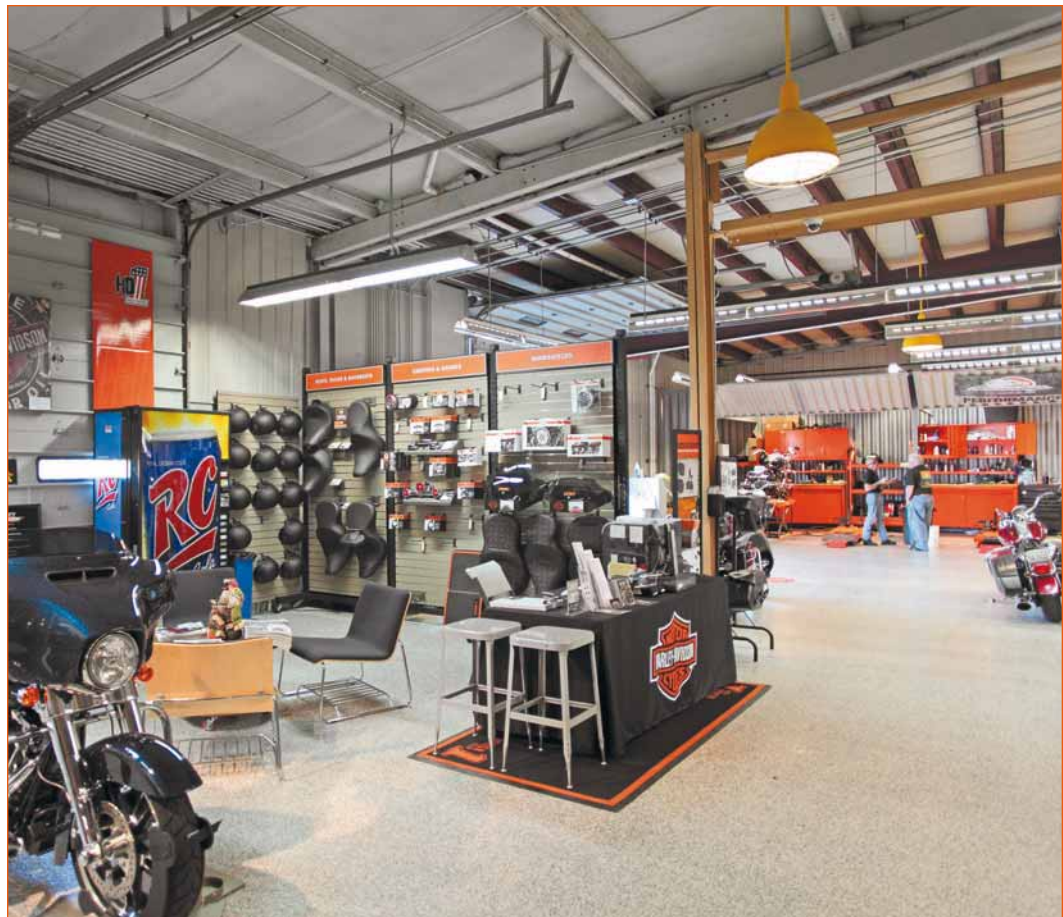
ABOVE: Notice how all the showroom models face customers as they walk in the door, as if they are welcoming old friends.

LEFT and BELOW: Your friendly neighborhood service department.



TOP: Managers Chris Hoak, Kim Kotowski, Paul Christiansen

ABOVE and RIGHT: Merchandise is thoughtfully arranged to create best 'buy' suggestions for customers, whether they're in the parts department or in the service lounge.





vided," Hoak says. "Each section blends into the other, making it very easy for customers to wander and shop."

In the middle of the showroom space, MotorClothes Manager Susan Elsey has created a fashion boutique using expertise gained from previously working with high-end women's wear. She defines the men's and women's apparel departments by positioning several tall mobile panels so they work as display walls in the center of the store. Freestanding hanger racks and low display tables are highlighted by spot beams, making the area feel like a designer shop.

Elsey uses visual merchandising cues, such as matching hangers and coordinating accessory placement that shoppers associate with better quality retail to support the specialty atmosphere of the area.

Current season styles are displayed as fashion stories. For example, a new outerwear item is layered over a shirt, cuffs are rolled and styled into jeans pockets, and accessories added to finish the presentation. Menswear is placed at eye level and arranged to show brand designs. T-shirts neatly occupy a four-sided module rack that displays the shirt's artwork next to corresponding tees — all sized, stickered and stacked with tight precision. It's proof: merchandising techniques that sell power suits elsewhere work perfectly when it comes to selling motorcycle gear.

## DIRECT ACCESS TO SERVICE

For many McHenry H-D customers, though, the real enticement is what Hoak calls the Gem of the Dealership. Walk in any door and you will see it: The service department is immediately visible and accessible. No locked doors, no gatekeepers, no hiding. Just walk toward the light and you'll find a row of immaculate service bays laid out in a configuration that feels like a string of garages lined up on a side street in a small town. Indirect lighting is positioned behind overhead panels that suggest opened old-school garage doors, while overhead task lamps provide work light. Rows of bikes waiting for service are parked across the 'street.'

Each bay is equipped with two lifts for efficient time management, and attention to safety procedures is clearly evident. If it's true that cleanliness is next to godliness, McHenry's shop is a division of hog heaven.

The department's arrangement is genius and an inspired piece of customer service. Because nothing blocks access, customers are welcome to watch and talk with the service technicians while their bike is being serviced. Questions or concerns are resolved as the work is done.

Direct communication between the technicians and the vehicle owners builds customer confidence in the service department's work. What customer doesn't experience greater satisfaction when he knows he is listened to? If they prefer, customers can wait and watch the service activities from a lounge area that offers beverages, TV and Internet access. The lounge is also a comfortable area to discuss repairs and add-ons with the service writer or chrome consultant.

## NO 'SALESMAN BREATH'

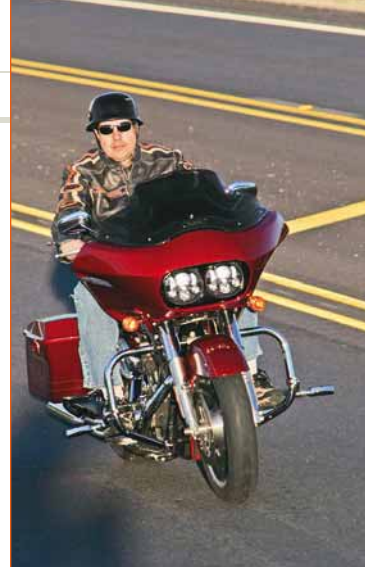
Still, thoughtful merchandising and proactive communication isn't enough to amp up customer service to the level Jackson and Hoak want. Jackson feels strongly that customer service depends on hiring the right people.

"Everyone talks about customer service, but how many really understand what it means and how it reflects on their business? Business owners and managers understand how much it costs in real dollars and time to get a customer in the door," Jackson says. "I don't think anyone wakes up in the morning wanting to do a bad job at work, but what most managers don't get is that a customer will stop doing business with you completely because of the actions of one employee.

"Our core business is made up referral and repeat business. We are in this for the long haul, so everyone who works for us knows the value of our relationship with each customer," Jackson adds. He reminds the team that "customers don't care about what you know until they are sure you care about them."

Employees are encouraged to find out what customers need and fill those needs, but Jackson cautions them from covering their customers in what he calls 'Salesman Breath.' "We are here to help but not force anything on people. That's part of earning and maintaining our customer's trust. We take our time with each customer and treat them the way we'd want to be treated."

Hoak adds that it is important to hire



McHenry Harley-Davidson is on the move – relocating in the spring to a larger site (above) about a quarter-mile away. The newly purchased building provides 15,000 square feet for retail and another 3,000 sq. ft. for offices, training and meeting rooms.

The expanded showroom will accommodate more new and pre-owned units, parts will spread out, and soft goods, well, let's just say there's now a dedicated space for Susan Elsey's much anticipated new garment steamer.

A 3,500 sq. ft. structure on the property will provide bike storage, giving this Northern Illinois dealership an opportunity to finally ramp up off-season storage programs with winter maintenance and custom work, says GM Chris Hoak (top photo).

McHenry H-D's new site will also provide additional outdoor space for the many events it hosts, like the McHenry Marine Corps Toys For Tots parade, and a gathering space for informal rides led by Kim Kotowski's women rider group, Property Of No One.

Oh, and the new street address? It starts with "1903."





Owners Tracy, Arnold, Doug

DEALER @ A GLANCE

# McHenry Harley-Davidson

2103 W. Route 120, McHenry, IL 60051  
815-344-9300 • www.mchenryhd.com

**OWNERS:** Arnold Horwich,  
Tracy Lancaster, Doug Jackson  
**GENERAL MANAGER:** Chris Hoak  
**EMPLOYEES (TOTAL):** 16

**YEARS IN BUSINESS:** 9  
**YEARS AT CURRENT LOCATION:** Previous owner since 2004; with current owners since May 2012

**ANNUAL REVENUES:** \$6.5 million  
**DMS USED:** Talon

**NEW VEHICLE BRANDS/FRANCHISES:**  
Harley-Davidson

**MAJOR AFTERMARKET BRANDS:**  
Harley-Davidson, Vance & Hines, D&D, Rinehart, Parts Unlimited/Drag Specialties, Tucker Rocky/Biker's Choice

**HOURS OF OPERATION:**  
Monday – Saturday (closed Sunday)  
10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

**WINTER HOURS:** Closed Sundays and Mondays

**ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED:**  
Toys For Tots; Property of No One Women's Rider Group

**STORE SIZE:** 10,000 sq. ft.  
**SHOWROOM SIZE:** 1,500 sq. ft.  
**ACCESSORIES/APPAREL DEPT SIZE:** 3,500 sq. ft.  
**PARTS DEPT SIZE:** 3,500 sq. ft.  
**SERVICE DEPT SIZE:** 5,000 sq. ft.

**SALES DEPARTMENT**

**SALES MANAGER:** Chris Hoak  
**F&I MANAGER:** Barbara Stoffel  
**ASSOCIATES:** Paul Christiansen, Kimberley Kotowski

**PARTS DEPARTMENT**

**PARTS MANAGER:** Corey Hespeler  
**ASSOCIATES:** Jim Holshouser, Dave Rosales

**ACCESSORIES/APPAREL DEPARTMENT**

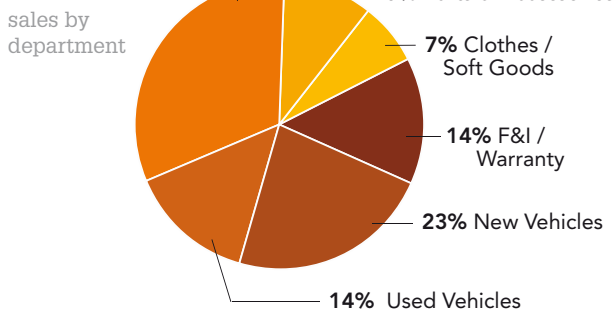
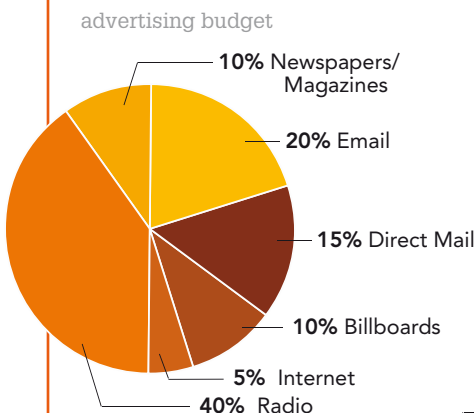
**MANAGER:** Susan Elsey  
**ASSOCIATE:** Jessica Hendrickson

**ECOMMERCE/MARKETING DEPARTMENT:**

**MANAGER:** Jim Holshouser

**SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

**SERVICE MANAGER:** Brian Powell  
**TECHNICIANS:** Six techs, one service writer, one rental, one detailer  
**BAYS/LIFTS:** 5 bays/10 lifts  
**SHOP RATE:** \$85/hour



people with the right skills for their position, then make sure they get continuing support to do their job well.

"Training is an ongoing part of our lives at McHenry Harley. Whether it's the online or offsite training The Motor Co. offers, or sending employees to seminars to improve their expertise in their field, it's an investment we can't afford not to make," Hoak says. The ROI on that investment is a team that understands the product, understands the business and gives customers a great dealership experience.

**'I'M PART OF THE DEAL'**

"This store is the reason I bought my Harley." He wasn't really directing his comments to anyone in particular, just a regular guy relaxing

during a charity event at McHenry H-D on a late summer afternoon.

"I like to stop in on my way home from work, see what's going on. The people here make it OK to hang out and talk, like I'm part of the whole Harley deal," he tells *Dealernews*. "That's what I was looking for when I decided to buy my motorcycle.

"And, you know, I don't have to buy anything when I'm here, but I usually do."

That's the kind of customer relationship that helps McHenry Harley-Davidson stand out from other motorcycle retailers in the Northern Illinois area and what makes it a Top 100 Dealer.

"Anyone can sell a bike anywhere, anytime," Jackson says. But what other bike retailers may not offer is McHenry H-D's commitment to exemplary customer service and their Harley experience. **D**





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# DISTRIBUTOR REPORT CARD 2013

DEALER SCORES FOR THEIR PRODUCT SUPPLIERS LOWEST IN FIVE YEARS, BUT INDIVIDUAL DISTRIBUTORS SHINE IN SELECT CATEGORIES

A Dealernews Staff Report

**IF THERE IS ONE THING** the 2013 Distributor Report Card tells us, it's that today's powersports retailer is an increasingly tougher customer. Dealers want ordering flexibility and are ready for new and wider product ranges, according to the results of this year's survey. But it is still evident that the relationship between dealer and distributor rests squarely on the individual sales rep's shoulders.

Industry-wide scores (all responses) continue to decline from the 2011 and 2009 "grades," with dealers expressing dissatisfaction with the availability of merchandising/point of purchase programs and training support. They want more, and they want it now.

## ABOUT THE REPORT CARD

Dealernews surveyed retailers in August and September, asking them to grade their distributors on criteria ranging from ordering, customer support, product quality and more. More than 700 responses were received, rating 44 distributors using a 10-point scale (1=low, 10=high). Scores were then tabulated and averaged. Report Cards for distributors with the highest number of responses are presented on this and the following pages.

The Distributor Report Card is to be considered a biennial "pulse taking" of the dealer-distributor relationship. **D**

## SUMMARY

	Advantage Performance Distributing	Biker's Choice	Custom Chrome	Drag Specialties	Helmet House	K&L Supply	Marshall Distributing	MTA	Parts Unlimited	Sullivans	Tedd Cycle	Tucker Rocky	WPS	2013 Industry Avg. (44 cos. rated)	2011 Industry Avg.	2009 Industry Avg.
<b>PRODUCTS</b>																
Availability	7.2	7.4	4.0	8.1	7.5	8.7	7.6	7.3	8.4	8.4	8.0	8.0	7.9	<b>7.6</b>	7.8	8.1
Timely Introduction	7.1	7.3	4.5	8.0	7.2	8.4	7.5	7.2	8.2	8.3	7.6	8.2	7.8	<b>7.5</b>	7.8	8.1
Product Variety	7.1	7.5	4.7	8.3	7.1	8.3	7.5	7.0	8.7	7.6	9.1	8.5	7.7	<b>7.6</b>	8.0	8.1
Strength of Product Lines	7.2	7.4	4.6	8.2	7.7	8.5	8.8	7.2	8.5	8.0	8.3	8.1	7.8	<b>7.6</b>	8.0	8.3
Price Competitiveness	7.1	7.4	5.2	6.5	7.0	7.6	7.9	7.6	7.1	7.8	6.9	8.1	7.8	<b>7.3</b>	7.8	8.4
Quality of Catalog	7.0	7.8	5.8	8.2	7.4	8.3	8.2	7.1	8.5	8.3	8.0	8.3	7.9	<b>7.6</b>	8.1	8.4
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>																
Customer/Dealer Support	7.6	8.2	5.0	7.3	7.2	8.6	8.2	7.7	7.2	8.3	7.1	8.2	8.1	<b>7.6</b>	8.1	8.7
Response Times	7.4	8.1	5.1	7.6	7.4	8.6	8.3	8.0	7.7	8.4	7.0	8.2	8.1	<b>7.7</b>	8.1	8.7
Ease of Ordering: Website	7.7	7.9	5.0	8.4	7.3	8.4	5.8	7.2	8.5	7.6	7.7	8.3	8.4	<b>7.5</b>	7.9	8.3
Ease of Ordering: Phone	7.8	8.3	5.8	8.1	7.8	8.8	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.2	8.7	8.4	<b>8.1</b>	8.5	8.8
Returns/Credit Policy	7.6	7.6	5.0	4.8	7.3	7.6	8.0	8.2	4.9	7.3	5.6	8.2	7.8	<b>6.9</b>	7.5	8.2
Sales Support/Reps	7.3	8.0	5.0	7.0	7.0	8.6	7.8	7.7	7.5	8.3	6.1	8.0	7.8	<b>7.5</b>	7.9	8.7
Sales/Tech Training	6.5	6.6	5.0	5.9	6.5	8.3	6.5	6.4	6.3	6.0	4.2	7.1	6.5	<b>6.2</b>	7.1	6.8
Merchandising/POP Offerings	6.4	6.8	5.0	5.4	6.1	8.2	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.1	4.2	7.1	6.6	<b>6.0</b>	7.0	6.7
On-Time Delivery	8.3	8.3	6.2	8.7	7.9	8.4	8.5	8.3	8.6	8.8	8.3	8.5	8.4	<b>8.2</b>	8.5	8.9
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>																
Communications	7.5	8.3	5.2	7.5	7.3	8.4	7.9	7.4	7.6	8.7	7.1	8.4	8.1	<b>7.7</b>	8.1	8.8
Consistency	7.7	8.3	4.9	7.8	7.5	8.3	8.3	7.7	8.1	8.4	7.6	8.4	8.1	<b>7.8</b>	8.2	8.7
Credibility	7.8	8.3	5.0	7.6	7.6	8.7	8.2	7.9	7.9	8.4	7.3	8.3	7.9	<b>7.8</b>	8.3	8.8
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>8.3</b>

## Advantage Performance Distributing

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>		
Availability	7.2	7.6
Timely Introduction	7.1	7.6
Product Variety	7.1	7.2
Strength of Product Lines	7.2	7.4
Price Competitiveness	7.1	7.6
Quality of Catalog	7.0	7.8
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>		
Customer/Dealer Support	7.6	8.7
Response Times	7.4	8.7
Ease of Ordering: Website	7.7	8.0
Ease of Ordering: Phone	7.8	8.9
Returns/Credit Policy	7.6	8.1
Sales Support/Reps	7.3	8.6
Sales/Tech Training	6.5	7.6
Merchandising/POP Offerings	6.4	7.5
On-Time Delivery	8.3	8.6
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>		
Communications	7.5	8.5
Consistency	7.7	8.1
Credibility	7.8	8.4
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>8.1</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	36	36
<p><i>Dealers commended Advantage for its customer support and website ordering process, and gave the distributor high marks for consistency and credibility. But they'd like to see a new catalog, and more product training is key.</i></p>		
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>		
"It's hard to find Gold Wing accessories."		
"Their customer service email is not monitored closely enough. I had a problem and it was the next day before I got a response."		
"Get a new catalog!"		
"Would love to support this company more."		
"Need better margins."		

## Biker's Choice

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE	2009 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>			
Availability	7.4	8.1	8.6
Timely Introduction	7.3	8.2	7.8
Product Variety	7.5	8.3	8.5
Strength of Product Lines	7.4	8.4	8.8
Price Competitiveness	7.4	8.3	8.5
Quality of Catalog	7.8	8.5	8.1
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>			
Customer/Dealer Support	8.2	8.6	9.0
Response Times	8.1	8.5	9.1
Ease of Ordering: Website	7.9	8.3	9.4
Ease of Ordering: Phone	8.3	8.6	9.6
Returns/Credit Policy	7.6	8.4	8.7
Sales Support/Reps	8.0	8.1	8.7
Sales/Tech Training	6.6	7.2	6.4
Merchandising/POP Offerings	6.8	7.3	5.7
On-Time Delivery	8.3	8.7	9.1
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>			
Communications	8.3	8.5	8.4
Consistency	8.3	8.6	9.0
Credibility	8.3	8.6	9.0
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>8.5</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	57	65	11
<p><i>Biker's Choice gets high marks for communication, consistency and credibility, along with on-time delivery. More than one dealer stated that the distributor's apparel lineup needed refreshing.</i></p>			
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>			
"It's always been a great relationship."			
"The only complaint I have is with their apparel line. They need better prices."			
"Great road rep."			



## Custom Chrome

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>		
Availability	4.0	5.9
Timely Introduction	4.5	6.0
Product Variety	4.7	6.4
Strength of Product Lines	4.6	6.2
Price Competitiveness	5.2	6.4
Quality of Catalog	5.8	6.9
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>		
Customer/Dealer Support	5.0	6.5
Response Times	5.1	6.3
Ease of Ordering: Website	5.0	6.2
Ease of Ordering: Phone	5.8	7.2
Returns/Credit Policy	5.0	5.9
Sales Support/Reps	5.0	6.2
Sales/Tech Training	5.0	5.2
Merchandising/POP Offerings	5.0	5.0
On-Time Delivery	6.2	7.1
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>		
Communications	5.2	6.3
Consistency	4.9	6.2
Credibility	5.0	6.5
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>6.2</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	26	33
<p><i>Custom Chrome still has a loyal following but more dealers are expressing concern over nonavailability of product.</i></p>		
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>		
<p>"Back orders are a bit of a problem, but it's not my primary line."</p>		
<p>"Out of stock on most parts needed."</p>		

## Drag Specialties

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE	2009 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>			
Availability	8.1	8.1	9.2
Timely Introduction	8.0	8.2	8.6
Product Variety	8.3	8.5	9.4
Strength of Product Lines	8.2	8.5	9.1
Price Competitiveness	6.5	7.7	8.7
Quality of Catalog	8.2	8.3	9.2
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>			
Customer/Dealer Support	7.3	7.5	8.6
Response Times	7.6	7.6	9.0
Ease of Ordering: Website	8.4	8.5	9.5
Ease of Ordering: Phone	8.1	8.5	9.3
Returns/Credit Policy	4.8	6.2	7.6
Sales Support/Reps	7.0	7.8	8.7
Sales/Tech Training	5.9	7.1	7.0
Merchandising/POP Offerings	5.4	7.2	6.6
On-Time Delivery	8.7	8.6	9.0
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>			
Communications	7.5	7.9	9.0
Consistency	7.8	8.1	9.1
Credibility	7.6	8.0	9.1
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>8.7</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	54	84	35
<p><i>Drag is heralded for delivery but still gets panned for what dealers perceive to be restrictive return policies.</i></p>			
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>			
<p>"I feel they do not care about credible small shops. I now buy more products manufacturer-direct because of their policies."</p>			
<p>"GREAT COMPANY! They do everything right! I applaud Fred for his anti-Internet policies that give us brick-and-mortar mom &amp; pops a fighting chance!"</p>			
<p>"Too many online tire sales through various online-only vendors come with Drag Specialties tags on the tires. Those places sell at or below what I can buy some of those same tires for."</p>			

## Helmet House

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>		
Availability	7.5	7.0
Timely Introduction	7.2	7.5
Product Variety	7.1	7.7
Strength of Product Lines	7.7	8.3
Price Competitiveness	7.0	8.0
Quality of Catalog	7.4	8.2
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>		
Customer/Dealer Support	7.2	8.1
Response Times	7.4	8.0
Ease of Ordering: Website	7.3	8.0
Ease of Ordering: Phone	7.8	8.2
Returns/Credit Policy	7.3	8.1
Sales Support/Reps	7.0	8.1
Sales/Tech Training	6.5	7.6
Merchandising/POP Offerings	6.1	7.2
On-Time Delivery	7.9	8.0
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>		
Communications	7.3	7.9
Consistency	7.5	7.6
Credibility	7.6	8.1
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>7.9</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	38	69
<p><i>Helmet House needs to strengthen its touring line, a few dealers noted, and offer more training and merchandising programs.</i></p>		
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>		
"We love Helmet House! Our rep is the best."		
"We've been trying to get the rep in for years."		
"Their prepaid freight policy is the worst of all our helmet vendors."		
"They are good, hardworking people who put themselves in the dealers' place."		

## K & L Supply

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>		
Availability	8.7	8.3
Timely Introduction	8.4	7.7
Product Variety	8.3	8.0
Strength of Product Lines	8.5	8.2
Price Competitiveness	7.6	7.8
Quality of Catalog	8.3	8.0
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>		
Customer/Dealer Support	8.6	8.4
Response Times	8.6	8.5
Ease of Ordering: Website	8.4	6.6
Ease of Ordering: Phone	8.8	8.4
Returns/Credit Policy	7.6	7.9
Sales Support/Reps	8.6	7.8
Sales/Tech Training	8.3	6.9
Merchandising/POP Offerings	8.2	6.6
On-Time Delivery	8.4	8.1
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>		
Communications	8.4	8.1
Consistency	8.3	8.2
Credibility	8.7	8.6
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>7.9</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	34	62
<p><i>K&amp;L was one of the stronger performers in this year's survey, and achieved a rarity — higher scores in nearly all categories compared to dealer ratings two years ago. The distributor was especially commended for its rep network.</i></p>		
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>		
"Overall, a good company to deal with."		



## Marshall Distributing

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE	2009 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>			
Availability	7.6	7.7	8.2
Timely Introduction	7.5	7.4	7.8
Product Variety	7.5	7.6	7.8
Strength of Product Lines	8.8	7.6	7.8
Price Competitiveness	7.9	7.9	8.5
Quality of Catalog	8.2	8.0	7.9
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>			
Customer/Dealer Support	8.2	8.4	8.8
Response Times	8.3	8.4	8.9
Ease of Ordering: Website	5.8	8.0	8.0
Ease of Ordering: Phone	8.3	8.4	8.9
Returns/Credit Policy	8.0	7.9	8.8
Sales Support/Reps	7.8	7.9	9.0
Sales/Tech Training	6.5	6.9	7.1
Merchandising/POP Offerings	6.2	6.9	6.4
On-Time Delivery	8.5	8.5	9.4
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>			
Communications	7.9	8.3	9.2
Consistency	8.3	8.4	9.2
Credibility	8.2	8.5	9.3
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>8.4</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	35	71	17
<i>Marshall saw its scores for quality of catalog and product availability rise this year.</i>			
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>			
"Good distributor. Been buying from them for over 30 years."			
"We prefer using [Marshall] over any other company."			
"New website not easy to use. More steps to do than old website."			
"Absolutely need more product. Always a pleasure working with the reps."			
"When the economy was in recession, Marshall was the only company that would work with their dealers on open parts accounts. For that reason we will remain loyal to them, as they were to us."			

## MTA

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>		
Availability	7.3	8.1
Timely Introduction	7.2	7.9
Product Variety	7.0	7.0
Strength of Product Lines	7.2	7.8
Price Competitiveness	7.6	8.2
Quality of Catalog	7.1	7.5
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>		
Customer/Dealer Support	7.7	8.3
Response Times	8.0	8.2
Ease of Ordering: Website	7.2	7.9
Ease of Ordering: Phone	8.4	8.5
Returns/Credit Policy	8.2	8.2
Sales Support/Reps	7.7	8.4
Sales/Tech Training	6.4	6.9
Merchandising/POP Offerings	6.2	6.8
On-Time Delivery	8.3	8.5
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>		
Communications	7.4	8.1
Consistency	7.7	8.3
Credibility	7.9	8.5
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>8.0</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	27	28
<i>Although several dealers specifically cited frustration over former NHJ product lines no longer being supported, the distributor's scores for Product Variety remained unchanged from two years ago.</i>		
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>		
"Best rep. Very knowledgeable of his products."		
"MTA purchased NHJ and dropped the ball with all the product lines that made NHJ stand out."		

## Parts Unlimited

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE	2009 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>			
Availability	8.4	8.1	8.6
Timely Introduction	8.2	8.1	8.5
Product Variety	8.7	8.7	9.0
Strength of Product Lines	8.5	8.5	8.9
Price Competitiveness	7.1	7.5	8.0
Quality of Catalog	8.5	8.5	8.9
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>			
Customer/Dealer Support	7.2	7.2	8.0
Response Times	7.7	7.3	8.3
Ease of Ordering: Website	8.5	8.2	8.9
Ease of Ordering: Phone	8.5	8.2	8.6
Returns/Credit Policy	4.9	5.0	5.5
Sales Support/Reps	7.5	7.5	9.3
Sales/Tech Training	6.3	6.8	7.2
Merchandising/POP Offerings	6.1	6.6	6.9
On-Time Delivery	8.6	8.3	8.9
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>			
Communications	7.6	7.4	8.3
Consistency	8.1	7.9	8.5
Credibility	7.9	7.7	8.5
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>8.3</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	75	159	115
<i>Parts achieved higher scores in several categories this year, including ease of ordering, on-time delivery and product line availability.</i>			
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>			
"Great rep. Best web ordering site."			
"They are really arrogant. [We] don't like working with them."			
"Customer service for returns difficult."			
"One way to do business — their way!"			
"Excellent rep and super phone support."			
"We love our rep, but their customer service and return policy is the worst."			

## Sullivans

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE	2009 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>			
Availability	8.4	7.5	8.1
Timely Introduction	8.3	7.5	7.9
Product Variety	7.6	7.1	7.6
Strength of Product Lines	8.0	7.5	8.0
Price Competitiveness	7.8	7.2	8.3
Quality of Catalog	8.3	7.9	8.5
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>			
Customer/Dealer Support	8.3	7.9	8.5
Response Times	8.4	7.9	8.6
Ease of Ordering: Website	7.6	7.5	7.7
Ease of Ordering: Phone	8.5	8.1	8.4
Returns/Credit Policy	7.3	7.3	8.7
Sales Support/Reps	8.3	7.7	8.8
Sales/Tech Training	6.0	6.6	6.9
Merchandising/POP Offerings	6.1	6.6	7.1
On-Time Delivery	8.8	8.0	8.8
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>			
Communications	8.7	7.9	8.6
Consistency	8.4	7.8	8.8
Credibility	8.4	7.7	8.8
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>8.2</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	25	54	21
<i>Sullivans received higher scores, compared to two years ago, in a dozen categories, and was notably lauded for overall relationship qualities, strength of product lines and catalog, and on-time delivery.</i>			
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>			
"They have great support and service, I wish they had more things for sale."			
"[Our rep] is tough but she is the best. Don't ever lose her!"			



## Tedd Cycle

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>		
Availability	8.0	7.9
Timely Introduction	7.6	7.1
Product Variety	9.1	8.3
Strength of Product Lines	8.3	7.7
Price Competitiveness	6.9	7.2
Quality of Catalog	8.0	8.0
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>		
Customer/Dealer Support	7.1	7.2
Response Times	7.0	7.4
Ease of Ordering: Website	7.7	7.4
Ease of Ordering: Phone	8.2	8.4
Returns/Credit Policy	5.6	6.3
Sales Support/Reps	6.1	6.4
Sales/Tech Training	4.2	5.9
Merchandising/POP Offerings	4.2	5.8
On-Time Delivery	8.3	8.5
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>		
Communications	7.1	7.3
Consistency	7.6	7.9
Credibility	7.3	8.0
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>7.4</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	21	42
<p><i>Tedd Cycle gets high marks for product variety and strength of product lines, but dealers say they want stronger rep support, training and POP offerings.</i></p>		
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>		
<p>"I am friends with Tedd. He is getting better over the years and is starting to be only game in town for vintage aftermarket parts, even though quality has always been an issue."</p>		
<p>"Products are being made better than in the past. Good quality vintage parts."</p>		
<p>"Sales reps can learn the product better. I can read the catalog."</p>		

## Tucker Rocky Distributing

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE	2009 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>			
Availability	8.0	8.2	7.7
Timely Introduction	8.2	8.3	8.0
Product Variety	8.5	8.7	8.2
Strength of Product Lines	8.1	8.4	8.0
Price Competitiveness	8.1	8.2	8.3
Quality of Catalog	8.3	8.6	8.5
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>			
Customer/Dealer Support	8.2	8.5	8.8
Response Times	8.2	8.4	8.7
Ease of Ordering: Website	8.3	8.2	8.7
Ease of Ordering: Phone	8.7	8.5	9.1
Returns/Credit Policy	8.2	8.4	8.3
Sales Support/Reps	8.0	7.9	8.7
Sales/Tech Training	7.1	7.3	7.7
Merchandising/POP Offerings	7.1	7.4	7.7
On-Time Delivery	8.5	8.5	9.0
<b>OVERALL RELATIONSHIP</b>			
Communications	8.4	8.4	8.9
Consistency	8.4	8.5	8.7
Credibility	8.3	8.5	8.8
<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>8.4</b>
No. of Dealers Reporting	87	156	83
<p><i>Phone support and website ordering scores increased vs. 2011.</i></p>			
<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>			
<p>"Their rep works well with us."</p>			
<p>"Wish they had selection."</p>			
<p>"One of two distributors that was willing to exchange stale products for ones that sell."</p>			
<p>"My favorite supplier by far. Easiest to do business with. Need to add more brands and parts in a few areas in the dirt side."</p>			
<p>"There are too many excellent distributors with reps who make themselves easily available [for us] to mess around with our very difficult Tucker rep."</p>			

## WPS / Western Power Sports

	2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE	2009 SCORE		2013 SCORE	2011 SCORE	2009 SCORE
<b>PRODUCTS</b>				<b>AVERAGE SCORE</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>8.4</b>
Availability	7.9	7.8	8.2	No. of Dealers Reporting	61	112	33
Timely Introduction	7.8	7.9	7.9	<i>WPS scores improved in product availability and ease of website ordering.</i>			
Product Variety	7.7	7.9	7.8	<b>DEALER COMMENTS:</b>			
Strength of Product Lines	7.8	7.8	8.1	"Our excellent relationship with WPS is due solely to the professional persistence of our outstanding rep. He kept showing us how we could <i>not</i> afford to <i>not</i> do business with WPS and truly earned our business."			
Price Competitiveness	7.8	7.9	8.7	"WPS has earned our business with better deals, customer service and creative ideas in designing sales programs to fit our needs. No other distributor would do that. WPS had only 5 percent of our business; they now have 90 percent."			
Quality of Catalog	7.9	8.3	8.7	"The only thing I would improve on is one-day shipping."			
<b>DEALER SERVICES</b>				"Need to return customers' phone calls."			
Customer/Dealer Support	8.1	8.1	9.2				
Response Times	8.1	8.1	9.1				
Ease of Ordering: Website	8.4	8.1	8.6				
Ease of Ordering: Phone	8.4	8.4	8.7				
Returns/Credit Policy	7.8	7.9	8.8				
Sales Support/Reps	7.8	7.9	8.9				
Sales/Tech Training	6.5	7.1	6.7				
Merchandising/POP Offerings	6.6	7.0	7.2				
On-Time Delivery	8.4	8.4	8.8				
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BY JOE DELMONT

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**ACTIVITY WAS SLOW** in August on the **Destination Powersports** sales floor as unit sales dropped year-on-year (YoY) from 57 to 37 units. But reduced costs helped the dealership post an increase in earnings for the month. Earnings for the year also were up substantially over the same period in 2012.

For August, Destination PS earned \$23,261 on total revenues of \$440,096. That's an increase in net income when compared to the earnings of \$15,092 produced in August 2012 on higher revenues back then of \$548,355.

Gross profit (GP) this year was \$120,934, or 27.5 percent of total sales, compared to \$115,377, or 21 percent of total sales in August 2012. The improved GP is primarily the result of an improved product mix, says Bill Shenk. A gross profit margin of 26 to 30 percent of total revenues reflects a solid year, he explained.

So far the dealership is performing much better than it did in 2012. Earnings through August were \$204,858 on total revenues of just over \$4 million, compared to earnings of \$126,536 last year on total revenues of \$3.9 million.

Although total revenues YoY were about flat, last

year the dealership sold 406 units, nearly six percent more than the 382 it had sold through August 2013. But dealer inventories were too high last year, so some of the units had to be sold at lower margins. Therefore, unit sales revenues were about flat by August 2013: \$3.130 million compared to \$3.152 million last year.

### DEPARTMENTAL INFLUENCE

Floor traffic remained stable in August but was up more than 16 percent for first eight months of the year. Traffic on the show floor has improved, Shenk said, because the parts and service departments are functioning at a higher level – this brings in more customers who in turn visit the show floor.

"I believe traffic is up because parts and service are back on track," Shenk said. "They were off last year, and we weren't selling — we weren't good on the phone. Now they're getting traffic in, and that shows on the show floor even though August motorcycle sales here and in the state of Florida are way off. Florida motorcycle dealers are off by about half, and we are up 16 percent. That's the result of a huge handoff from parts and service." ▶

### Month-Over-Month Comparisons and YTD Totals: AUGUST 2013

SALES	% of Total Dollars			% of Total Dollars			% of Total Dollars			
	Aug-13	Dealer	Top Gun	Aug-12	Dealer	Jul-13	YTD 2012	YTD 2013	PVS	DLR
<b>Units Sold (New &amp; Used)</b>	<b>37</b>			<b>57</b>		<b>39</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>382</b>		
Sales	330,562	75.1	74	457,637	83.5	327,804	3,152,053	3,130,211	8,194	77.9
F&I (net)	13,034	3	3	19,154	3.5	20,762	142,829	149,046	390	3.7
Parts	33,654	7.6	8	28,016	5.1	21,605	204,104	232,261	608	5.8
Accessories	31,524	7.2	9	19,705	3.6	23,214	237,738	244,375	640	6.1
Service	31,322	7.1	6	23,843	4.3	21,051	195,849	263,222	689	6.5
<b>Total Sales</b>	<b>440,096</b>	<b>100*</b>	<b>100*</b>	<b>548,355</b>	<b>100*</b>	<b>414,436</b>	<b>3,932,573</b>	<b>4,019,115</b>	<b>10,521</b>	<b>100*</b>
Total Cost of Sales	319,162	72.5	75.0	432,978	79.0	322,716	3,029,103	2,982,639	7,806	74.2
Gross Profit	120,934	27.5	25.0	115,377	21.0	91,720	903,470	1,036,476	2,713	25.8
EXPENSES	% of Dept. Gross Profit			% of Dept. Gross Profit			% of Dept. Gross Profit			
	Aug-13	Dealer	Top Gun	Aug-12	Dealer	Jul-13	YTD 2012	YTD 2013	PVS	DLR
<b>Payroll</b>										
Total Sales (5.25/4.0 Empl)	20,718	30.8	38	23,491	30.4	18,685	188,278	207,062	542	34.1
Total P&A (2.20/2.5 Empl)	9,937	41.7	42	6,823	42.4	6,986	58,895	74,120	194	40.6
Total Service (4.50/5 Empl)	18,829	60.1	62	14,058	59.0	16,581	123,149	161,346	422	61.3
Flooring	10,590	15.7	10	14,272	18.4	4,448	60,934	69,186	181	11.4
Admin Payroll	7,507	6.2	6	8,451	7.3	7,881	56,926	58,952	154	5.7
Advertising	2,853	2.4	4	3,624	3.1	3,060	26,542	25,481	67	2.5
Administration	13,728	11.4	13	15,378	13.3	14,027	135,110	136,715	358	13.2
Rent	12,859	10.6	10	14,072	12.2	13,454	106,979	102,818	269	9.9
Co. insurance	2,251	1.9	2	2,042	1.8	2,679	16,881	27,587	72	2.7
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>99,272</b>	<b>82.1</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>102,211</b>	<b>88.5</b>	<b>87,801</b>	<b>773,694</b>	<b>863,267</b>	<b>2,260</b>	<b>83.3</b>
Misc. Expense	0	0	4			0		0	0	0
Additional Income	1,599	0	1	1,926	0	1,745	-3,240	31,649	83	0.8
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>23,261</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15,092</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>5,664</b>	<b>126,536</b>	<b>204,858</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>5.1</b>
<b>Net Profit + Misc Exp</b>	<b>23,261</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>15,092</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>5,664</b>	<b>126,536</b>	<b>204,858</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>5.1</b>

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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## “You can sell a lot of units if you lower the price enough. But you give up profit at the same time.” —Bill Shenk

Parts, accessories and service performed nicely in August, YoY, with total revenues from these three segments up almost \$25,000, or nearly 35 percent, over August 2012.

The main reason? Better staffing. Last year, Shenk replaced both the parts manager and the service manager. The new team was in place by September 2012, and results are now becoming evident.

“Steve and Rob, the parts and service managers, both have experience in both departments,” Shenk explained. “We’ve got a good, solid team... and customers are responding... and they are selling more... and we’re making more money.”

### UNIT SALES

The lackluster performance in unit sales could be attributed to slow PWC sales: 17 new units were sold last year by the August timeframe, compared to eight in the first eight months of 2013. Last year’s PWC sales were fueled by price “blowouts” to get rid of excess PWC inventory.

“Last year, we made about \$3,000 more profit by selling nine more PWC. That’s a lot of work for very little more money,” Shenk noted. “That’s because we were inventory-driven last year. We had a problem that had to be fixed: too much inventory. So we fixed it. You can sell a lot of units if you lower the price enough. We blew out a lot at lower margin — that’s the reality.”

Unit inventories were smaller this year — 242 compared to 286 last year — causing a reduction in flooring costs by almost \$4,000.


### NEW LOCATION...AT LAST

As this issue was going to press Shenk was preparing to open a much larger and newer facility in a much better location. The two-acre site is located on Hwy. 41, the main street through Punta Gorda, and is only about a half mile from the existing store.

“Things are coming together so cool,” Shenk said. “We’re under budget, and we should be able to open before the end of the year. I’m so stoked about it; it’s really happening.” **D**

*EDITOR’S NOTE: The Dealer LAB project is a joint effort between Dealernews and PowerHouse Dealer Services, a consulting firm operated by former dealer Bill Shenk. The Dealer LAB details his efforts to return a Florida powersports dealership to profitability after purchasing it in mid-2009. The dealership now has several lines, including Yamaha (motorcycle, ATV, UTV and PWC), Kawasaki (motorcycle, ATV, UTV and PWC), Suzuki (motorcycle and ATV), BRP (Sea-Doo PWC and Can-Am ATV), and Polaris (ATV, UTV and Victory bikes).*

*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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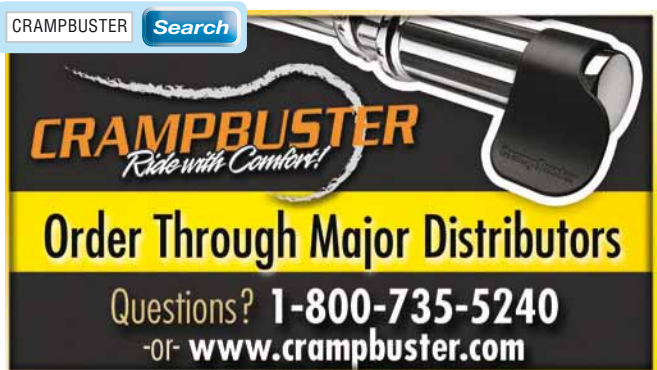


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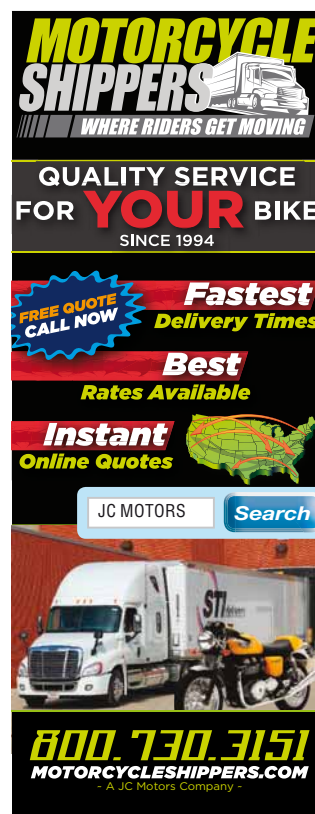
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# Polish the stinkin' motor!

AH, SUMMER MEMORIES: RALLIES, HONORS... AND, OH, A COMPLAINT ABOUT CUSTOM BAGGERS



Rick Fairless is the owner of Stokers Dallas, Stokers Icehouse and Stokers Ink.

## DEAR GRANDMA AND GRANDPA,

I hope ya'll are doing well. We are good and hot down here in Texas as I write this. It's 100-plus degrees, but this is Dallas and we grew up with it and we're used to it.

I was traveling a lot this summer. The American Victory Rally was held in August in Spirit Lake, Iowa, where Victory Motorcycles are made. It's a cool deal because there are several thousand bikes in attendance and they are 99.99 percent Victory Motorcycles. (I passed a bar with 200 bikes in the parking lot – 198 Vics, one Fat Boy and one Gold Wing.) Victory was giving tours of the factory where riders could see where their Vic was born. It's a great rally, and Lena and I really enjoyed it.

## HALL OF FAME

The week before the AVR, I was in Sturgis. This was my 27th year in a row to attend. This year I took Lena (Bigun) with me. It was her first trip. The first year I went was 1987 and Bigun was 7 months old. That year I rode my 1982 Shovelhead. This year was Lena's first year and she rode that same 1982 Shovelhead, along with my other custom bikes. It made me very proud.

She had a blast. She was like a big Great Dane puppy, just running around trying to see everything and meet everybody. At one point she told me this was the best trip she'd ever been on. I told her, "Sure it is, I'm paying for your room, I'm paying all your expenses, buying your food, and you're riding around on all my high-dollar RF custom motorcycles. What could be better than that?"

Suddenly she was at a loss for words.

The main reason I took Bigun was because I was inducted into the Sturgis Motorcycle Hall of Fame. I wish you could have been there. It's a huge honor and I am very proud to be a member.

(Hey, Grandpa, recently, me and Ran were talking and he asked me how much money would I pay to spend one more day with you and Grandma. Without hesitation I said, "Every dime I got!" Ran agreed, and you know he's a lawyer and he has lots more money than me. Heck, the mailman has more money than me, but I have more fun!)

Anyway, the Sturgis Motorcycle Hall of Fame is something I will be proud of for the rest of my life, and I'm very happy that Bigun was there to share it with me.

It was a very classy ceremony and I just kept thinking somebody was gonna come up, tap me on the shoulder and tell me that they made a horrible mistake and that I should probably leave the premises, PDQ! But that tap on the shoulder never

came and I was inducted, so I guess it's all legal. Without a doubt this was one of the highlights of my goofy life.

I work very hard to make the Fairless name something to be proud of. Actually, when I sign autographs, I sign *Fairless* first then I sign *Rick*. Bigun asked me one time why I did that. I told her that I could care less about my first name but my Fairless last name is very important to me. My Grandpa gave me that last name and I don't want to do anything to screw it up — and she had better not screw it up, either.

## ALL SHOW, NO 'GO'

While in Sturgis we saw lots of cool motorcycles, many of which were custom baggers. OK, hold on; can I point out a couple of things here? I don't understand why most of the so-called custom bagger builders I see are running bone stock motors. It's like they spend all their money on frames that lay on the ground, sound systems that rattle every window in the neighborhood, 26-to-30-inch sky-high wheels, air ride front and rear, and enough chrome to light up Sayre, Okla.

Then when it comes to the motor, it looks like an oversight. Almost like they said, "Well, the bike's about done now — wait, what about the motor? Oh yeah, I forgot, we'll need a motor. Hey, let's jerk the motor out of that '98 Road King sitting in the corner over there. It'll be perfect!"

Come on, boys! Here's my message to those so-called custom builders: *Polish the stinkin' motor, why don't ya!*

Dang it, man, the motor is the heart of every motorcycle. It's the centerpiece, the jewel that everything else is built around. Paint it, polish it, powdercoat it, blow it, stroke it, shave a couple of fins off the bottom cylinder or something! That's my message to those cats. It's like they spent all their money on the "show" and forgot about the "go"! Remember, if you don't touch the motor, then it ain't a custom motorcycle.

Hey, Grandma, do you cook in Heaven? I sure do miss your cooking. My favorite supper was when you'd fix chicken fried steak with cream gravy, red beans, fried potatoes and onions, "cat head" biscuits with Burr Rabbit syrup, sweet tea and pecan pie with homemade ice cream.

Dang it, why do I do that to myself? Now I'm all misty eyed and I'm missing ya'll so bad I could just bust a gut. I guess I better go for now before somebody walks in my office and thinks me and the ol' lady are fighting again. Oh yeah, Ma says "Hey." Love, Rickey

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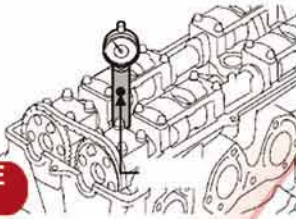
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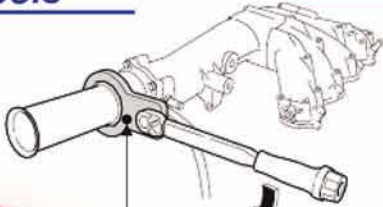
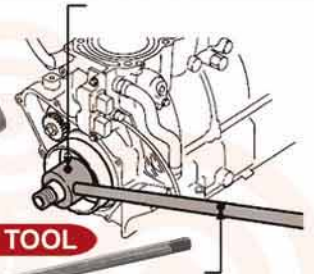
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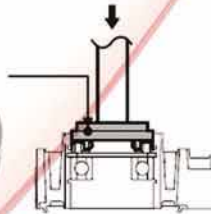
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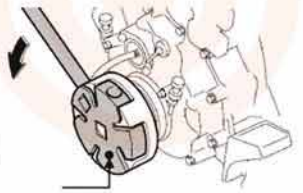
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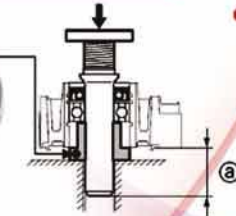
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