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→ **STREET
LANCE/SYM SHOWS
THREE NEW RIDES**

And news from Tourrest, Motovox,
AGM and Gorilla Alarms

→ **V-TWIN
RACINGBROS SHOCKS
HD PERFORMANCE**

New products from Arlen Ness, BDL,
Cometic, Avon Grips

THE BIG RECAP: Dealer Expo 2014

NEWS FROM THE EXHIBIT FLOOR, NATIONAL RETAIL
CONFERENCE, TOP 100 GALA AND MORE

→ **OFF-ROAD
XTREME GREEN'S
CONSUMER DEBUT**

Plus: how Motoped takes
the road less traveled

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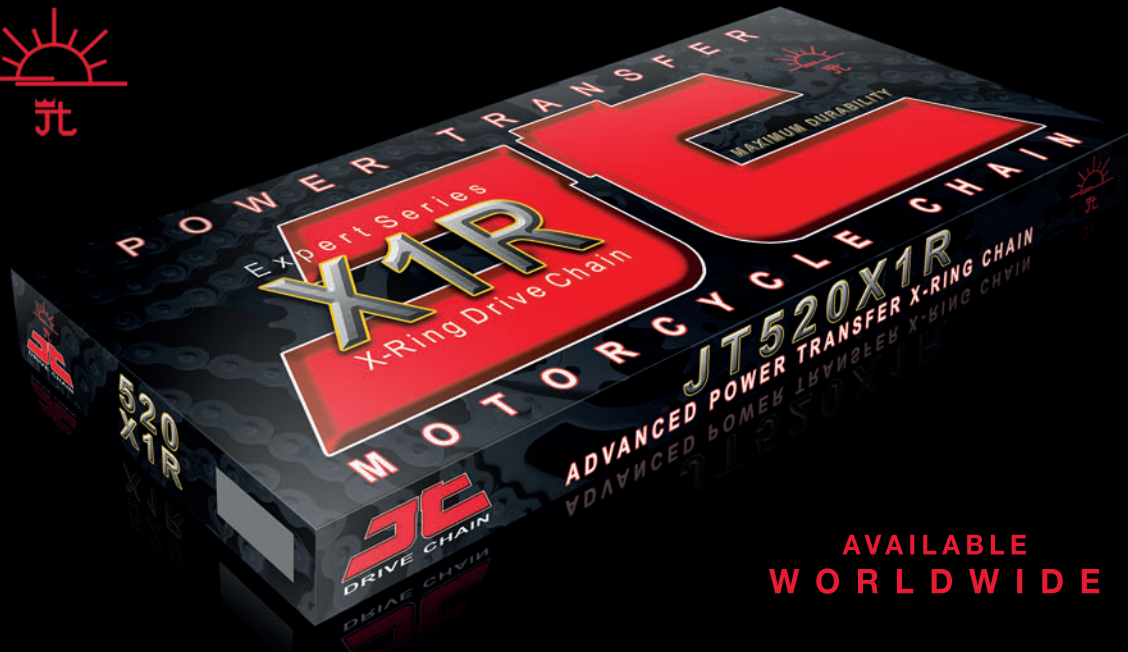
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One more before I collapse

AS I WRITE THIS I've just returned from Dealer Expo, the National Retail Conference and the Top 100 Awards Gala. Before I crawl into a cave for the next two weeks to recuperate, I'd like to acknowledge some people.

The Lightbulb Moment Award goes to the attendees of the Retail Owners Institute workshop on maximizing cash flow. At about the 23-minute mark I saw about 80 dealers "lean in" and crane their necks to see what Dick Outcalt was writing on a white board. It was as if there was a comment cloud above the room that read, "Oh crap, I thought I knew how to do this, but I don't."

The Yes He Said That Award goes to industry legend and our very own Mike Vaughan, when he told the audience what he had wanted to say for a long time: "Dealers, stand up for yourselves. Don't let the OEMs push you around."

The Remember What This is About Award is given to the incomparable Don Graves, who reminded everyone that this is an industry based on fun and that the best dealer is a rare hybrid of business and enthusiast.

The Most Poignant Moment Award goes to Dick Bureson, when he decided not to talk about the late Mike Stanfield the owner-operator but rather Mike Stanfield the man, and someone we should all emulate, before Jenni and the kids came onstage to accept the

DJB Lifetime Achievement Award in Mike's honor during the Top 100 Gala.

The Rev It Up Award goes to our anchor, Mark Rodgers, for giving about 300 dealers a loud wake-up call, inspiring them to act and running them out of the ballroom ready to take on the new selling season. Mark, you are an inspiration.

THANK YOU... MMI, for being the Official Technical School of the conference and conducting a mind-exploding workshop on EFI and diagnostics; Kevin Shockency, you are the man ... *Dealership University*, for a packed house at the three-part local store marketing workshop; Rod, Tory, Brad and Eric always deliver ... *Mel Selway and SSI* for showing dealers (and me) how to organize inventory ... *Stonecarpet* for that very cool Model Store floor ... *Wendy Gavinsky* for a superb seminar on using Facebook ... *Kristian Richardson*, for an eye-opening session on exporting and the help that's available from the Commerce Department ... *Bob Clements and the rest of the Dream Teamers* - wow, that panel discussion is going to provide editorial fodder for months to come.

And thank you, Robert Pandya, our Top 100 emcee, for that joke. You know which one.

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History of the Brand HJC

HJC launched in 1971 in Korea and became the leading brand in the United States by 1992. Ten years later, it was the best-selling helmet brand in the world. How did it grow so fast?

George Hong, president of HJC America, cites a number of factors, including the company's continued introduction of new products, product innovation, multiple factories (each of which is dedicated to producing helmets for a specific price point) and uninterrupted R&D.

HJC typically introduces about five new helmet models a year among the full-face, open and modular categories. When you consider the number of sizes available (XS to 5XL) plus all the graphic combinations, the number of different helmets offered by HJC reaches into the hundreds.

"We have a helmet for every price point,



HJC typically introduces about five new models a year among several categories.

style and size," Hong says.

The company owns factories in Vietnam (opened in 2008), China (opened in 1997) and in Korea. Vietnam produces the entry-level, low-end \$99 helmet, China the mid-range models and Korea the high-end lids.

HJC invests 10 percent of its revenue on R&D, Hong says. This enables the company to employ nearly four dozen engineers and designers and operate its own wind tunnel.

HJC holds more than 50 U.S. and worldwide patents, and over the years has been able to produce helmets studded with such features as internal visors, lighter weight, enhanced noise control and increased aerodynamics.

—Mike Vaughan

REARVIEW — The show's been everywhere, man

For those of you who only remember Dealer Expo as an annual conclave, here's some history for you. Motorcycle Dealer News founders Bill Bagnall and Larry Hester started the Motorcycle & Accessory Trade Show in Anaheim, Calif., and over the last five decades these events have been held nationally and regionally—up to as many as five a year:

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1983	Long Beach CA	Houston TX	Cincinnati OH	
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Mark Rodgers is a best-selling author, speaker and premier expert on dealership sales. He can be reached at mark@peakdealershipperformance.com

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Let's chat!

LIVE ONLINE SUPPORT CAN REVOLUTIONIZE YOUR DEALERSHIP AND HELP YOU SELL MORE, FASTER

IN ORDER TO SELL more motorcycles faster, your dealership must embrace new technology.

I know, I know. How many times have you heard that before? You already have a dynamic, mobile-friendly website, you use email in creative ways to stay in contact with your customers and you text-message reminders and notes to your favorites.

But let me ask you this: Does your dealership's website provide visitors the opportunity to engage in live online chat support with a real human being at any time, day or night?

If the answer is no, you're not alone. But that doesn't mean you're off the hook.

A handful of larger, progressive powersports dealers — such as **Woods Fun Center** in Austin, Texas, and **Milwaukee Harley-Davidson** in Wisconsin — have already begun incorporating online chats to assist customers and potential customers with questions, concerns or comments. Chats also allow those dealers to establish new relationships, obtain contact information and pronounce their inimitable marketplace superiority.

"Our site gets a tremendous amount of traffic—about 10,000 unique visitors per month—and the live chat gives us another way to engage with customers," says Alex Van Wey, marketing manager for **North County's House of Motorcycles** in San Diego, which has been offering live chats for about a year.

Welcome to the future

Because more engagement means more sales, online chat is the perfect topic on which to begin a series of articles about what I call "T3," a customer conversion strategy that starts with **technology**, evolves with a real conversation (**talk**) and peaks with face-to-face interaction and hopefully a handshake (**touch**).

Online chat takes the form of either an automated response system or live

reps provided by a third party and trained in your store's products and services. But it should not be used to make a sale. Much like a real-world chat, the exchange of names and establishment of rapport is critical. Online chats open a door; they don't close a deal.

Online chats, preferably with real people, won't close a deal but they'll open a door.

I recommend finding a company that uses people, not robots, to staff chats. One of those companies is Engage to Sell, based in Eau Claire, Wis. Engage to Sell collectively generates 1 million leads for its motorcycle and automobile clients per year and as many as 40 percent of those leads result in appointments at the dealership. Even if the trained individual on the other end of the chat is unable to fully answer a customer's query at a specific time, the customer is usually thrilled simply to make direct contact.

Speed is critical, too. If you don't engage in chat within five or six seconds of initiation by the buyer, your odds of conversion are greatly reduced.

The average percentage of monthly visitors to a motorcycle dealership's website that opt for online chat remains in the single digits, according to Jody Graffunder, general manager at Engage to Sell. But that's still two to three times the number of leads generated by a dealership without chat. Online chat support eventually will become a common element of all websites.

While most dealerships promote live chat on their home pages, pop-up invitations initiate as much as 80 percent of all online support chats. Many dealer sites don't provide pop-ups right away, though. "You wouldn't run out to the parking lot, open the customer's car door and ask for his name and email address, would you?" Graffunder asks.

"We set up an algorithm in the chat software that pays attention to a specific patterns displayed by the visitor—pages visited, time on pages, things like that—that results in the invitation to chat. These are customized for each site we service," Graffunder says.

Kind of makes the online contact form seem prehistoric, doesn't it? Today, such passive old-school communication tactics are for dealers who don't have relationships with their customers.

Granted, some buyers are more receptive to initiating a chat than others. In transcripts of online conversations Harley-Davidson dealers have shared with me, some chatters resist answering a lot of questions and revealing personal info, while other (usually younger) customers display no hesitation in interacting via chat.

Transcripts from every chat facilitated by Engage to Sell's call center for North County's House of Motorcycles arrive in Van Wey's inbox at all hours. He then forwards them to the proper personnel to be acted upon. So far, the dealership has been able to close sales on 10 percent of all chats and reports no negative feedback from customers. "You can be very effective with live chat, as long as you stay on top of your emails," Van Wey says.

Costs for live chat services vary based on current and anticipated web traffic. Van Wey admits the technology's not cheap, and Graffunder understands that some dealership owners might be hesitant to surrender a key segment of their operation to a third party. "I pay attention to bottom-line results," Graffunder says. "Are we making dealers money? That answer always needs to be yes; otherwise we have no purpose." 1

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T2 250i (top) and the Fiddle III (above)

Tourest converts anything into a touring vehicle



FOR customers who want to take a passenger along on a bike that's not designed for touring, Tourest (www.tourest.com) comes to the rescue. Its comfortable wraparound seat mounts easily on standard sissy bars, making your passenger way happier and much more secure.

Tourest seats fit Harley-Davidson touring models, Softails, V-Rods, Sportsters and Dynas. They also fit a variety of Triumph cruiser models. The U.S.-made seats feature two mounting heights, as demonstrated by Tourest reps at Dealer Expo.

Lance/SYM highlights new rides

IN AN impossible-to-ignore sea of white scooters and motorcycles nearly smack-dab in the middle of the DealerExpo show floor, Lance/SYM (www.lancepowersports.com) shone the spotlight on three recently released models that showcase the company's "value with variety" philosophy.

Pushing its way to the front of the trio, the Lance Cabo features aggressive, off-road looks and knobby tires. Lance's sporty Cabo is ready for the road as well as some mild dirt riding. A varied palette of eye-catching colors, LED running lights, and a digital instrument cluster finish off the looks. Launched at the end of summer, scooter comes in three displacements, 50cc, 125cc and 150cc, with a respective output range of 1.9hp/7,500 rpm, 8.38hp/7,500 rpm and 10.3hp/7,500 rpm.

For stopping power, the Cabo features a 190mm disc with wave rotor up front, and a 130mm drum in the rear. The Cabo is designed to carry 333 lbs. and deliver gas-sipping mileage between 87 mpg and 117 mpg, depending on model. Claimed top speeds for the twist-and-go are 30 mph (restricted) for the 50cc, 59 mph for the 125 and 65 mph for the 150, which are respectively priced at \$1,599, \$1,999 and \$2,299.

Continuing the aggressive styling but scaled up to a light motorcycle, the T2 250i offers a fuel-injected, four-valve engine with a ceramic coated cylinder that delivers 25hp/7,500 rpm that tops out at a claimed

87 mph (with a 275-lbs. weight capacity). For stopping, the beach features 288mm disc up front and 222mm disc in the back.

Available in yellow, white and black, the streetfighter-styled bike also includes an instrument panel featuring an analog tach with digital speedo, odometer, fuel gauge and coolant gauge. To shave down pounds, the T2 offers aluminum wheels front and rear and a diamond type unibody frame, bringing the motorcycle's total weight to 381.4 lbs. MSRP for the T2 is \$3,799.

Rounding out the new offerings, SYM's Fiddle III offers a shift from aggressive styling to more classic scooter lines for customers looking for a stylish ride around town. An ample, stitched bench seat covers storage space and a gas tank, and a front glove box and rear rag add to the scooter's carrying capacity. In a nod to old-school scooters, the Fiddle III includes analog speedo and gas gauge, and a foldout bag/helmet hook on the leg shield.

SYM/Lance scaled up the fuel-injected Fiddle III to 200cc from the Fiddle II's 125cc. For handling, the SYM offers both front and rear discs and the tires have been scaled up from the Fiddle II's 10 in. hoops to a more reassuring 12 in. tire size. Poised for a spring launch, the Fiddle III will retail for an MSRP of \$2,699.

All three models come with a 24-month warranty. —Dave Kopf

GORILLA OFFERS COMPACT, HIGH-FEATURE BIKE SECURITY

GORILLA ALARMS now offers a more compact, but still feature-rich, alarm package specifically designed for the needs of motorcyclists. The 9 Series alarm kits now fit into a much smaller form-factor—a round unit 1.5 inches deep and 2.75 inches in diameter—but still offer a full list of features.

Digital accelerometers provide shock and tilt detection to alert the system if the bike is struck, lifted off its side stand, or otherwise disturbed. A current detection circuit triggers the alarm if the electrical system is tampered with or the bike is somehow started. New wiring includes more refined, OEM-style wiring har-



nesses—which, combined with the smaller alarm unit, make it even easier to install (and hide) the alarm system on a modern motorcycle where space is a premium.

Finally, a two-way pager with LCD screen allows the owner to monitor the motorcycle from up to a half-mile away for added piece of mind.

The 9 Series Gorilla Cycle Alarm retails for \$135 for the base kit, while the pager-equipped kit retails for \$270. Riders can also buy the base kit, then later upgrade to the pager version for about the same price if so desired. —Bruce Steever



Dowco's makeover. Dowco debuted its new corporate branding in Chicago. The new ID encompasses packaging, visuals, a website redesign and additional collateral.

Motovox's RBX-150 focuses on fun

A THREE-QUARTER motorcycle with some sharp teeth, APT Motovox Group's (www.motovox.com) RBX-150 has its sights set squarely on the scooter purists with too-cool attitudes that forget about the fun factor.

That said, looking at the top end and price, the RBX-150 might have a higher-priority target in mind: the Grom. As the name indicates, the RBX-150 is powered by a vertical 150cc overhead valve engine with race-tuned intake and exhaust that, according to Motovox, produces 12hp. The Grom offers 8.9hp output from 125cc, and priced at \$1,999, Motovox is hoping that price-to-performance package will prove attractive to buyers.

Clad in a sporty styling package with metallic red livery, the RBX-150 includes an Angel Eye Halo/LED projector headlights and an analog instrument panel. The transmission is a standard five-speed manual, and



with a stated 250-lbs. carrying capacity, Motovox says it will top out at 60 mph. Dual-piston hydraulic disk brakes mounted to proprietary, one-piece cast aluminum wheels bring the not-so-mini motorbike to a halt.

Targeted for a May launch, the RBX-150 will come in additional colors with a 12-month warranty.

-Dave Kopf

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> SPEED READ

Blind spot monitoring fails for motorcyclists. Automotive blind-spot monitoring systems detect motorcycles 26 percent later than passenger vehicles, according to new research from AAA.

(To read the entire story, visit www.dealernews.com and enter searchterm AAA)

Horex shuts down. Things went from bad to worse for Horex Motorcycles in late 2014 when the premium German brand, built around an unusual narrow-angle V6 engine, closed its doors and dismissed its staff. The company filed bankruptcy in September, and attempts to source new funding apparently were unsuccessful. Many riders won't miss the \$30K roadster, but it's always a shame to see a brand fall in our tightly knit industry. —Bruce Steever

AGM offers versatile luggage options

NEW TO the United States, AGM luggage has earned a place in Europe with more than 12 years of service in Germany. Primarily aimed at cruiser riders, AGM's bags incorporate several smart features that make the bags easier to use and more flexible than many other options.

The Voyager series, starting at \$260 and consisting of 15-gallon, 16-gallon and industry-leading 20-gallon capacities, is a prime example of the advanced engineering that goes into each AGM bag.

Three sleeves provide options for various seat shapes and styles to easily slip over and around the sissy bar. Paired quick release straps are then looped around contact points on the motorcycle for extra security. The bag can be run in front of the sissy bar when riding solo or mounted behind the sissy bar for two-up, and the mounting straps quickly convert into backpack straps to carry the luggage when off the motorcycle. Each bag is crafted from 600-denier ripstop



nylon for durability, uses foam inner panels to hold its shape, and includes both water-resistant zippers and a standard rain cover. Nice touches such as a standard cargo net, coated metal hooking points and reflective striping show great attention to detail.

Finally, the various bags in AGM's lineup can be lashed together modularly to increase luggage capacity when needed.

—Bruce Steever

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Hot times at Avon Grips with new Fly By Wire

AFTER a year and a half in research and development, then six months in production, Avon Grips chose Dealer Expo to introduce its Fly By Wire replacement heated grips—just in time for cold weather riding times.

These grips are direct replacements for 2008 and up Harley-Davidson models already equipped with heated grips, and demand is expected to be high. Super warm and quick to heat up, they provide the comfort riders expect and the superior function they need.

“On the high setting, you almost can’t touch them without a glove on,” said company owner Dave Kelly.

Cosmetically, the look is ultra clean, even compared to Avon’s own prior versions. That’s because there’s no wire to run and clutter up the look. On the clutch side, bike owners simply use the existing wires.

—Marilyn Stemp

Belt Drives keeps on keeping on

THERE’S ALWAYS something new at Belt Drives Ltd. President Steve Yetzke says the company recently added custom features to its 2-inch belt drives for Softails and baggers, adding more options to the product line. Each drive comes with four different dome covers, and other components can be customized, such as black powdercoating of the motor plate, hard anodizing parts or adding color.

“We have the capability to make them look however the customer wants,” says Yetzke.

After taking on GMA brakes several years ago, BDL leveraged the company brain trust to re-engineer that line, providing valuable research and development for the latest

redesign of their Jamar off-road brakes. These brakes are all about heavy-duty performance with their high heat and high demand applications.

And Yetzke is delighted with this news: BDL just bought out Blower Drive Service, a company among the foremost leaders in automotive supercharging since 1969. BDL had supplied components to BDS for years. Besides, “I’ve wanted a blower company since I was 50,” says Yetzke.

Why should we be interested? “Next year sometime I’m going to find a way to adapt this for motorcycles,” Yetzke adds.

—Marilyn Stemp

COMETIC MAKES A GOOD THING BETTER WITH DELKRON

SINCE THE late 1970s, the Delkron name has had a solid reputation in the V-Twin aftermarket for Harley-Davidson Shovelhead and Evo engine cases. Then as now, the word ‘bulletproof’ was often used to describe Delkron’s components. Adding Delkron strength and durability allowed engine builders and racers alike to push the horsepower envelope on the race track. It didn’t take long for street riders to go looking for the same thing.

When Cometic Gaskets bought Delkron a handful of years ago, they committed to bringing the brand back in a big way.

Said Cometic Sales Manager Jason Moses, “Cometic is already a well established brand. Delkron, too, is a very viable product line and we can lend our success with Cometic to getting the word out about Delkron.”

Delkron’s crankcases are their stock in

trade, specifically those for Shovelheads and early and late Evos. Check out the Big Bore and Pro Street 2 x 4 versions, as well. Fully assembled engine blocks are offered along with transmission cases for Softail and FXR models.

For today’s Twin Cams, choices include top end kits, cylinders, pistons, billet heads, cam plates and more. Oil pumps for high flow applications and a variety of accessories round out the line. And though Cometic has products for two-wheelers of all makes and models, Moses said he’d met with more V-Twin dealers than metric at Dealer Expo, perhaps indicating the persistent interest in Delkron products.

It’s been said many times but it’s never been truer or easier to obtain: there’s no replacement for displacement.

—Marilyn Stemp

Arlen Ness shows inboard brake rotor system, engine dress-up kit at Dealer Expo

BILL Brazzillo couldn’t stop talking about all the new products Arlen Ness has on deck.

The recently released inboard brake rotor system was conceived to go with Ness wheels in terms of design, for the kind of seamless flow you expect from this stalwart brand. It’s unique, says Brazzillo, because it’s different. “There nothing else like it on the market in terms of both engineering and design,” he says.

In the final stages of production for imminent release is the Ness engine dress-up kit, a complete package including covers for rocker

boxes, transmission, lifters, pushrod tubes, and more. They’ve done all the work so you get all the glory.

Also on tap for early 2015 release is the new Ness exhaust line, designed by Ness and manufactured with the performance expertise of Magnaflow’s 45 years of automotive and hot rod traction. It includes a complete line of V-Twin systems, all offered in both chrome and black. Says Brazzillo, “It’s the best kind of team effort. Ness handles the looks and Magnaflow does the performance.”

—Marilyn Stemp





Dealernews editors posted more than 70 articles from the 2014 Dealer Expo and National Retail Conference. Read them all at www.dealernews.com > Dealer Expo Update

RacingBros launches high-performance H-D twin shock applications

DON'T WORRY if you've never heard of RacingBros. They are the first to admit that they are a tiny company. But despite the young firm's humble beginnings building bicycle and scooter suspension components, RacingBros is poised to make a bigger splash in the U.S. heavy-weight motorcycle segment.

The Taiwanese suspension specialist unveiled its new Harley-Davidson "Bazooka" twin shock application at Dealer Expo. Unlike many replacement shocks for The Motor Co.'s products, the Bazooka shock range combines high-performance suspension architecture with custom build-ready shock lengths. Each shock is built using separate oil and gas chambers for consistent performance and flexible mounting options. In comparison, a cheaper emulsion-style shock was not even considered, as these lower-tech dampers quickly lose performance and require near-vertical mounting.

In addition to the separate chambers divided by a free-floating piston, the Bazooka shocks are built with high-quality machined construction and low friction seals. Shock lengths are available from 11.5 inches to 14 inches in half-inch increments, providing options for everything from raised performance builds focused on improved handling to long and low custom styles.

And adjustability is top-notch, with options including four-way adjustable reservoir shocks (preload, rebound and high- and low-speed compression).

Retail pricing for the new Bazooka shocks starts at \$650 per pair for preload- and rebound-adjustable coil shocks, while the fully-adjustable reservoir units sell for \$1,200 per pair. —Bruce Steever

> SPEED READ

Kuryakyn boosts Bahn.

Tuxedo-finished Rocker Cover Accents for H-D engines are the latest adds to Kuryakyn's Bahn line. Installation doesn't require removal of the rocker boxes and accents don't need to be removed for top-end motor maintenance once they're installed.

GearBrake adds distributor.

Tedd's V-Twin will handle GearBrake's new product line, the company announces.

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Xtreme Green celebrates consumer coming-out party



XTREME GREEN Products Inc. (www.xgpinc.com), a manufacturer of specialty electric vehicles largely for the fleet market, unveiled offerings now targeted toward consumers at the 2014 Dealer Expo.

After selling electric vehicles to police forces, security firms, agricultural operations and any outfit that is sick of paying princely sums for gasoline, Xtreme Green showcased an ATV and side-by-side that aim to attract riders who might not necessarily have considered an e-ride before.

But it turns out there are some substantial benefits to electric-powered ATVs and SxS rides, according to Joseph Worrell, regional sales manager for the company. For starters, hunters know that the smell and sound of an ATV can spook deer long before they get even close their quarry. That's not an issue for an electric vehicle that produces no emissions and next-to-no noise. In fact, Worrell says that police departments using its vehicles have reported catching lawbreakers in the middle of committing crimes, because they were never heard.

Additionally, after years of having the likes of police officers and parks managers dish out damage on pavement and in the dirt, the company says its vehicles' solid metal frames and four-wheel, independent wishbone suspensions can eat up abuse and ask for seconds.

The heart of Xtreme Green's SxS and ATV is its long-lasting batteries. Both vehicles



feature a 5KW-72 volt electric motor that is powered by a 100-amp hour, 72-volt lithium iron phosphate battery propulsion system controlled by a computerized management system that oversees all aspects of the battery's performance. Two years in development, the management system continually monitors the battery for factors such as temperature and voltage to ensure they do not get strained or put off any heat.

That results in increased performance and longevity, critical requirements for fleet vehicles that are supposed to go and go, and then go some more. For a typical off-road adventure, both the ATV and SxS will last roughly 40 to 60 miles on a charge, depending on terrain, according to Worrell.

In terms of prolonged life, the batteries are rated at between 2,000 and 3,000 full charges. If a user were to charge the bike every day, that would put the bike between 5.4 years and 8.2 years. Considering the typical rider won't hit the trail every day, that life-cycle translates into an even longer-lasting vehicle. Add to that the fact there is no gas to buy, or clutch, oil or filters to replace, and both vehicles become even more attractive in terms of TCO. Besides, less maintenance means more riding time.

Both the SxS and ATV come with a standard one-year, bumper-to-bumper warranty, and the batteries are separately warranted for two years with full replacement. Extended warranties are available. —*Dave Kopf*

INTERPARTS SHOWS STRONGER, MORE AFFORDABLE OEM REPLACEMENT AXLE KITS

THIS JUST IN: Aggressive ATV and SxS riders can be tough on their equipment! Yes, that's right; hard riding breaks things and rough roads can be especially tough on drivetrain components. Thus, Interparts not only makes a range of OEM replacement axles that save money compared to stock pieces, but it makes them stronger, too.

Engineered in Plainview, N.Y., and built from non-remanufactured, high-strength steel components, Interparts axle kits are available for the latest SxS models, with prices starting at under \$150 for complete kits. Learn more about Interparts' driveline components at www.interparts.com, then order them from distributors such as WPS or MTA. —*Bruce Steever*

SPEED READ

Final push against CPSC ROV standard. The MIC and Polaris are two of several organizations calling on industry members to push back against CPSC efforts to impose a mandatory product standard for ROVs/SxS vehicles. More info can be obtained at the ARRA website: www.arra-access.com

WPS and FLY partner with MX championship. Western Power Sports and FLY Racing are premier-level partners of the Lucas Oil Pro Motocross Championship sanctioned by AMA Racing. "Our shared enthusiasm and vision for the sport of motocross—to elevate the experience—is something we are excited to be a part of going forward," said WPS/FLY CEO Craig Shoemaker. The series kicks off May 16 at the Hangtown Motocross Classic in Sacramento, Calif.

Polaris buys Pro Armor. Polaris in November continued on its acquisition quest by buying Pro Armor, maker of ATV hard parts like seats, bumpers, roll cages and doors. The company employs 90 people in Riverside, Calif., and posted \$15 million in sales in 2013. "The addition of Pro Armor to Polaris' aftermarket brand portfolio allows us to extend our channel and customer reach in the performance side-by-side and ATV markets," said Steve Eastman, Polaris vice president of PG&A.

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View the latest product intros from **Hornet Outdoors**, **Arisun tires**, **SilverWolf Vehicles** and other exhibitors, visit www.dealernews.com and click on either "Dealer Expo Update" or the Aftermarket tab.

Motoped's Pro rides the road less traveled

MOTOPED (www.motoped.com) rolled its unique two-wheelers onto the Dealer Expo floor, unabashedly playing in the foggy nether-realm between traditional motorcycles, bicycles and mopeds. Designed for unique fun, Motoped's Pro caters to road and dirt riders.



The motocross-styled Pro comes in two displacements, 49cc and 125cc, which respectively produce 2.47hp/7500 rpm and 7.8hp/7500 rpm, to drive a two-speed internal automatic transmission. With a 123 lb. vehicle weight, the enviable power-to-weight ratio becomes obvious. Also, riders can go into bicycle mode with the Pro's jackshaft pedal drive. Alternatively, the pedal drive can be removed altogether, which was done on Motoped's display model in Chicago.

Everything hangs off a heavy-duty frame constructed of 4130 Chromoly, attached to

a 6061 aluminum swing arm. What will really catch the eye of anyone looking to take some bigger hits is the Pro's suspension, with adjustable DNM USD-8 forks up front with 8 inches of travel, and an adjustable DNM Burner-RCP2 shock in the rear.

Acquired by APT MotoVox in September, Motoped is also showing off a trio of special models it is preparing for release. The 49cc Cruiser features laid-back, boardwalk-ready styling that includes a brushed stainless tank with brass filler cap, along with a serious nod to bicycling heritage in the way of wooden fenders and a leather Brooks saddle.

The 49cc Survival Bike aims to offer utilitarian riding on the road and in the dirt with a universal rack that can carry 50 lbs. Attached to the rack as standard are two, side-mounted

one-gallon fuel tanks that, along with the primary tank, puts the Survival Bike's range at between 400 and 500 miles. The Black-Ops version of the Survival Bike complements that SHTF riding range with a shotgun rack, crossbow with bolts, rope, shovel, hatchet and nine knives, making the Black-Ops the most fun vehicle of the impending zombie apocalypse. —*Dave Kopf*

Editor's note: Motoped debuted a year ago in a Kickstarter campaign that surpassed its financial goal. Under APT MotoVox management, Motoped initially offered its bikes via an ecommerce site and is now ready to support a dealer network. For more information, enter searchterm "MotoVox" on Dealernews.com

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E.T ride home... and to the office

For urban commuters looking to find a faster way to catch a train and then zip to their final destination, folding bicycles offer a solid value proposition. But what if you add an engine? That's a question that Acetech Technology Co.'s unique-looking E.T folding electric scooter (www.etscooter.com) is trying to answer.


Styled like a dependable droid from "Star Wars" or "WALL•E," the E.T is clearly not about performance; it is an exercise in functional, powered transportation. When unfolded the E.T's small tires carry the rider at a maximum speed of 21 mph, which is plenty fast for bike lanes and paths, and mechanical disc brakes with scaled-down rotors fore and aft bring the scooter to a stop.

The scooter offers riders familiar twist-and-go controls with a twist-grip throttle and front and brake levers. There's even a horn. The E.T has a front LED headlight and tail-light integrated into the saddle.

A 48-volt, 11-amp hour lithium battery powers the E.T, and requires between three and five hours to charge. Range at full charge is roughly 21 miles.

When riding, the rider rests his or her feet on two foot pegs located near the rear wheel. Those pegs conveniently swing down to double as a rear wheel stand when the rider wishes to park the scooter. Once the rider is ready to get on the bus or train or head into the office, folding the E.T is a snap: The rider lifts a "fold" lever that



allows the seat tube to fold against the main "frame" and those two items then fold and swing to the side of the fork. The rider can then hold onto a grip and wheel the E.T around on its rear wheel. —Dave Kopf 

“There is nothing worse than sending a scooter customer away because the apathetic parts or tech guy doesn't want to help find a part. There are a ton [of scooter riders] out there, so you may as well make some money and keep your shop busy.”

— Comment on MIC markets story on Dealernews.com

Reconsider those neglected markets, MIC says

There's a saying that a journey of 1,000 miles begins with one step. For dealers, the journey to better sales begins with an improvement of just 1 percent, according to the Motorcycle Industry Council. But you have to pay attention to changing rider demographics and cater to potential customers you may have neglected in the past.

Here are a few key statistics revealed in the MIC presentation, "The Data-Driven Dealership," last month at Dealer Expo 2014:

- The median annual income of American riders is \$64,000.
- More riders are married—63 percent—than ever before.
- Most American riders (65 percent) have attended college.
- The percentage of rider households that own one bike is the highest ever, at 75 percent, while the number of households that own three or more bikes has dropped.
- 17 million people ride motorcycles—but don't own one.

Dealers have to rethink how they market their stores and products. "We've got to get that second motorcycle back into the garage," said Scot Begovich, senior vice president of membership relations for the MIC. That can mean getting women on their own vehicles, or making the purchase attractive to the 17 million riders who don't own their own bikes. Or holding "friends and family" events to bring non-riders into the dealership. And BTW, those friends and families no longer see their rider cohorts as daredevils with a death wish: MIC stats indicate that 64 percent of them now view riders favorably.

Then there are the neglected potential rider groups. Scooters make up 10 percent of the American two-wheeler market, but dealers often view scooters as a low-end product, rather than entry-level products that will lead to bigger sales down the road. —Holly Wagner

Read the expanded article at www.dealernews.com/dealernews/DXPO14MICmarkets



Fired Up seeks U.S. distributor

HEATED gear company Fired Up is seeking both dealers and a U.S. distributor. The Canadian company has been building its brand for the past year, and its motorcycle gear includes a leather jacket, compression vest, leather gloves and a two-piece touring suit.

Rather than using wires for heating elements, Fired Up (FiredUpX.com) utilizes a mesh layer fitted with carbon fiber filaments. Rechargeable batteries cause the filaments to emit light that, in turn, heats the mesh layer. Riders can turn the heating element off and on by pressing a small exterior button. The button glows different colors to indicate whether the heating element is set to low, medium or high. Battery life can last anywhere from three to eight hours depending on the external temperature and which heat setting is selected.

The gloves (\$299), whose seven layers include a 3M Thinsulate layer and a Hippora waterproof membrane, are also available in a general-use winter version (\$349) for conditions as cold as 35 degrees below zero. The compression vest (\$229) is intended to fit easily under other protective gear, so it has a



slim design. The mesh layer and battery zip out so the vest can be washed.

The touring suit (\$1299) consists of pants and a jacket, which connect via a 360-degree zipper. The black leather jacket (\$799) has traditional styling and the small lighted power button is the only badging on it.

—Beth Dolgner

Olympia Gloves intros referral program



OLYMPIA GLOVES' new Friends with Benefits dealer referral program is designed to entice new referrals while rewarding the dealers who make the connection.

The program offers 10 percent off the first order from a referral who is a new customer. In turn, the referring dealer receives \$50 when they place an order over \$500. The caveat is that the referring dealer reward is only applicable for those retailers who have not made an Olympia (OlympiaGloves.com) order in the past 18 months.

Among Olympia's newest are two touchscreen-friendly options. The Weatherking Extra Touch (\$99.95) and All Season II

Touch (\$79.95) are leather, but the ends of the thumb and forefinger are compatible with touchscreens. The Weatherking has a Gore-Tex insert for waterproof, breathable and windproof protection, while a Primaloft layer ensures additional insulation. The long gauntlet is adjustable with two Velcro straps, and a silicone gel anti-shock skid pad provides extra abrasion resistance.

The All Season II is fitted with a Wind-Tex liner and lightweight Thermolite insulation. Designed for year-round wear, the glove has an adjustable gauntlet and the same silicone gel pad. Both the Weatherking and the All Season II come in black, with sizing from S to XXL.

—Beth Dolgner

> SPEED READ

LS2 Helmets' Stream has a bevy of features while maintaining a low price point of \$129.99, we noticed at Dealer Expo.

The Stream is a full-face polycarbonate helmet that carries both DOT and ECE approval. There are three intake vents, a washable liner, a quick-release chinstrap, inflatable cheek pads, a drop-down sun shield, a non-scratch visor and an antifog design. Available in a range of 11 colors and graphics, the Stream's \$129.99 price point includes a 50 percent margin for dealers.



Gravitate Jeans' patented design features denim paired with a bull denim-Lycra insert to provide extra stretch at the inseam. The boot-cut women's line will feature new colors and patterns with new offerings in plus sizes. Jeans are available for pre-ordering now for delivery in March.

Read more at <http://www.dealernews.com/dealernews/DX14gravitatejeans>



Safari Impex's new gloves feature kangaroo leather palms and sport styling. Model 11A has carbon fiber and Kevlar knuckle protectors and will retail for \$45. Model 8B offers TPU knuckles for \$44.



more from Bruce Steever
blog.dealernews.com/BruceSteever

MMI details EFI in half-day Master Class

ONCE TECHNICIANS enter the workforce, the dealership world quickly proves they can never stop learning. The huge amount of new technology being unveiled with each new model year requires constant education for any technician to stay informed on the latest systems, tools, and, of course, the problems that can arise once the units get into the field.

With that in mind, Dealer Expo and the National Retail Conference partnered with Motorcycle Mechanics Institute to present a half-day Master Class on electronic fuel injection and electronic diagnostic systems.

This seminar-format Master Class, only available at the NRC in Chicago, was hosted by Kevin Shockency, education content director for MMI (photo, right). Shockency's background includes both formal automotive and motorcycle technician training, but he's also a passionate rider who earned plenty of laughter opening the Master Class by telling of how his first motorcycle got him kicked out of his parents' house at age 18.

The EFI program started by refreshing the basic fundamentals and history of fuel injection. It may have been a refresher course for some, but attendees engaged in discussion of the many reasons how and why the industry has moved to digital fuel injection—both good and bad.

In examining the basics of EFI, Shockency also covered a range of topics in detail. Instead of simply explaining which sensors operate where in a modern EFI system, the Master Class explained the function and technology behind each type of subsystem. This

helps illuminate both the function and failure modes of each component to help technicians identify problems in the field, he said.

Key topics included EFI mapping algorithms, EFI terminology and motorcycles that debuted or use each type of system. Other hot topics leading to debate were the problems caused by E10/E15 fuels, maintenance issues and rider error vs. mechanical fault.

Once Shockency covered the input side of the EFI equation, the real work was showing how fuel injection uses this data to control the machine as a whole. ECM outputs on a modern bike are increasingly complicated between traction control, power modes, exhaust valves and idle speed control, so the Master Class discussed each in turn. Modern ride-by-wire systems were also covered, touching upon some of latest new technologies such as electronic clutch control, braking control and multi-axis traction control.

Finally, the core of Master Class was its coverage of EFI diagnostic tools and troubleshooting scenarios. Besides the basics of reading DTCs and P-Codes, Shockency demonstrated the proliferation of computerized servicing tools. Each OEM now uses some form of computer tool, and to become a skilled technician these software and hardware combinations must become second nature. Shockency covered both the primary usage of these tools but also explained why incorporating these tools in routine services—such as taking the time to create baseline settings—not only makes a technician's job easier, but can be a great upsell for the



dealership, too.

The final portion of the presentation covered common EFI diagnostic situations that cause troubleshooting problems regardless of brand. These common issues often present without traditional codes, making knowledge of both EFI technology and OEM graphical diagnostic tools even more important. During this segment, many attendees were quick to nod their heads in agreement or have 'A-Ha!' moments out loud.

Participants in the EFI Master Class earned special certificates of completion from the National Retail Conference in partnership with MMI. —Bruce Steever

THE SLIME STORY: DEALERS HEAR HOW TO SELL IT



SLIME IS widely known throughout the industry, but many folks still have plenty of misconceptions regarding the green tire-plugging stuff. To help teach dealers about some of the highlights and abilities of Slime, representatives were on hand at Dealer Expo to answer questions, demonstrate the product... and send plenty of attendees home with samples to test.

According to Slime, some of the most common questions about the product involve cleaning, balancing and applications. Slime assures us that cleaning the product out of a repaired or treated tire is easily accomplished with soap and water. For off-road applications, Slime does not affect tire performance, but Slime does not recommend full-time installation inside high-performance street tires.

More importantly, the folks at Slime have a lot of information to help the dealer sell it. Slime is the official tire sealant of the SCORE Baja rally. Slime is also crafted using a wide range of recycled material, from the tire fibers in the Slime itself to the bottle it comes in. Slime's tire repair kits are also the only road repair kits rated highly enough by OEMs to be used in vehicles that lack spare tires—including the Ford Mustang, the Chevrolet Camaro, and the Tesla Model S. —Bruce Steever

Excess inventory? Take a DIM view, Mel Selway says

ADDRESSING and dealing with the sources of your shop's dead inventory is central to reducing it, said Mel Selway, a retail and inventory specialist who delivered a Breakout Forum presentation, "The DIM View: Dead Inventory Management," at the National Retail Conference in Chicago. He provided direct inventory management methods that shop managers and employees can implement immediately to make a discernable difference.

An avid rider and retail systems professional, Selway said, "I like to find novel means of solving problems because the world changes. We should leverage those changes to our advantage."

Selway's firm, Parts Analysis, Renovation & Training Services Inc. (P.A.R.T.S.* Inc.), offers asset and business management services. In addition to focusing on effective management of business assets, he also designs dealerships, develops layouts for parts and service departments, and coordinates store relocations.

Selway's seminar focused on helping shop owners deal with dead inventory—items that not only take up space but cost money. First, he said, it's important to identify dead inventory, then evaluate how it found its way into the dealership. Once that's established, managers must take steps to reduce it and further prevent it in the future.

Selway places great emphasis on what he calls detailed written procedures. "If you document your standard routines you'll have a more efficient process," he explained. "Documented procedures are vital."

This documentation applies to inventory control, return policies, special order policies, receiving procedure and lost sales tracking, for example. In short, the more you know, the better control you have over your business assets. —Marilyn Stemp



Selway spent the weekend showing dealers how to manage their parts inventory in the popular Model Store Room exhibit at Dealer Expo. Top 100 Dealer **Road Track and Trail** won the SSI fixtures used in the Store Room during a special giveaway drawing held Dec. 5.

VP LAUNCHES NEW ADDITIVES AND A NEW POINT-OF-PURCHASE SYSTEM

VP RACING FUELS, well known for its... well, racing fuel, has launched a new range of fuel treatment products aimed at consumer sales. The firm also continues to update its methods for marketing and selling race fuel at the dealership level, easing both storage and selling of high performance fuel.

The brand offers several new products for consumer use, many aimed at alleviating concerns and symptoms of low quality or ethanol-added pump gas. According to VP, ethanol continues to be a hot topic for customers and dealers in the powersports industry, so demand for these types of products continues to grow.

Fuel Stabilizer with Ethanol Shield does exactly what it says on the bottle, but comes from the respected name for added consumer awareness. Fix-It Fuel is designed to run through partially clogged or poor running fuel systems to clean out gum and varnish without expensive disassembly, making it a go-to choice for bikes that just need a little help cleaning out the residue from poor fuel. Octanium is a high-performance fuel additive designed for off-road racing. Besides offering a cleaning fuel blend for more efficient combustion, Octanium boosts octane by up to a full eight whole numbers.

VP also continues to offer new racing fuel products to meet the needs of small, high-performance engines. New products include C50, a fuel specifically engineered for 50cc mini racers, and T2, a new two-stroke racing fuel already premixed with high-quality synthetic oil.

To help dealers better market, store and sell these fuels, VP Racing has created new POP systems, including a Fuel Cage Program that uses a lockable cage installation similar to the way you would see propane sold. Besides putting the fuel out front where a customer can see it, this sidesteps the problems encountered with local fire authorities. —Bruce Steever

> SPEED READ

Workshop Hero still a main attraction. Anyone that has had to deal with cleaning or restoring a heavily rusted part knows what a pain it can be. Most chemical baths are dangerous, and physical methods are either difficult, expensive, or both. Workshop Hero a couple of years ago created Metal Rescue Rust Remover Bath to address these challenges, and still enjoyed a very active booth on the Dealer Expo show floor as it demonstrated the product to dealers.

Update on vehicle recalls:

- > Triumph has recalled 2014-15 model year bikes because the engine control unit may improperly activate the fuel injectors.
- > Yamaha recalled a small number of YZ-FR6E and EC bikes from the 2014 model year due to a tire and wheel defect.

For more information on recalls, visit www.dealernews.com and click on the **REGULATORY** tab.



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

blog.dealernews.com/DaveKoshollek

Make it personal

MONEY MATTERS, BUT EMPLOYEES LIKE TO BE APPRECIATED, TOO

THE HOLIDAYS ARE that time of year when most of us reflect on what we appreciate most. For me, it's family and friends, good health and the work I do in an industry that I love. That got me thinking about the many times that my students, who are dealership employees, tell me they don't feel appreciated by their manager and/or owner.

To cultivate ideas on how to correct this situation I picked up a book titled "1,001 Ways to Reward Employees" by Bob Nelson. In it, no surprise, are 1,001 ideas on how to show employees you care—with and without cash. That doesn't mean money doesn't matter. It does, but get this: according to a study of more than 1,500 employees by Gerard H. Graham, professor of management at Wichita State University, the most powerful motivator to reward employees was personalized, instant recognition from their managers. Sounds simple enough, but only 42 percent of survey respondents claimed their managers routinely used an informal, personalized way to compliment and congratulate them on a job well done.

That's too bad, because in another study titled "People, Performance and Pay" by the American Productivity Center and the American Compensation Association, it was noted that it takes a 5 to 8 percent salary adjustment to change an employee's behavior, but only a 4 percent adjustment when combined with personalized rewards. That tells me dealerships may be able to keep their payroll costs in check if their employees know they're appreciated.

If you're looking for low- and no-cost ways to reward and recognize great employees, managers and owners can consider the following:

- Call an employee into your office just to thank them, with no other agenda.
- Give a great employee some time off with pay.
- Know and use employees' names. This is especially relevant for owners and general managers.
- Compliment with purpose and detail, which shows you've been paying attention. For example, one could say, "I like that you (observed actions) because it's good for our customers and good for the store, and I thank you for that."
- Carry a notebook and document the good, the bad and the ugly. Compliment good behavior on the spot and put all notes into the employee's file. This will provide managers with the solid data they need to do a really good performance review.
- Give credit where credit is due. That means never, ever take credit for an idea that was provided to you by another employee.
- Reward great employees with a paid offsite lunch with the manager and/or owner.
- Reward employees with the opportunity to buy store merchandise at dealer cost.
- Pay for an employee's powersports magazine or online subscription.
- Reward team performance with an outing. I used to do this at MMI and it was really appreciated by my staff and their spouses. I've found that when the spouse is happy that their loved one is working for you, chances are better the employee will be happier, too.
- Pay for attendance at a powersports retail or trade show—the Progressive International Motorcycle Shows and Dealer Expo come to mind.
- Give them cash. I know a service manager who piffs his service advisors with a five-dollar bill for every upsell. Now that's instant gratification.
- Make informed decisions by mingling with your team. In the book "The One Minute Manager," authors Blanchard and Johnson note the importance of managing by walking around. I've found that in many dealerships parts and service managers spend too much time in their offices and not enough time walking around to observe staff performance. When do-

ing walkarounds, it's important not to make snapshot decisions. You'll need more than a minute to know whether the observed behavior is a common occurrence.

- Compliment in public, criticize in private. These are powerful words to live by and will serve you well.

In closing I leave you with the top five motivational techniques appreciated by the respondents to Graham's survey. These would be performed by the manager or owner.

1. Personally congratulate employees who do a good job.
2. Write personal thank-you notes about good performance.
3. Publicly recognize employees for desired performance.
4. Hold morale-building meetings to celebrate successes.
5. Use employee performance as the basis for promotion. **D**

DAVE SAYS: In my earliest days working at MMI I had to juggle entry-level and factory-level classes that ran back-to-back, causing the Harley school to open at 7 a.m. and close at midnight five days a week. We had to reset the rooms after each class. That heinous routine lasted about 3-1/2 months each winter. On a routine call one day to John Stark, my direct report at Harley-Davidson Motor Co., he mentioned that I sounded exhausted and exasperated. I admitted I was burnt to a crisp and was now second-guessing my occupation. To my surprise he made a personal call to my boss at MMI and relayed his concern for my welfare. The next day my boss called me into his office to say thanks for the hard work and that he wanted to send me on a vacation anywhere I wanted to go. I'll never forget how good that made me feel, that my efforts were both appreciated and rewarded. A month later I took a five-day vacation in San Diego, which recharged my batteries and ultimately led to a fulfilling 16-year career at the school.

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Read Holly Wagner's full story on Dealersnews.com (searchterm: Model Store)

Air out that showroom, Millennial designers tell retailers

YOU KNOW THAT STORE you love? The one that's crammed with vehicles, accessories and leathers? News flash: your grandkids and their friends hate it.

If you want to bring in a younger clientele, lose the clutter, said Sarah Kendzior and MinJung Park, winners of the Model Store for Millennials competition sponsored by Dealer Expo and Dealersnews. Students at the University of Minnesota's College of Design were asked over the fall to submit renderings of a powersports dealership that would 1) attract the young Millennial customer, and 2) pique the interest of a Millennial who is not currently a rider or enthusiast. The Dealer Expo Model Store for Millennials showcased a collection of student submissions.

In approaching the design challenge, "What I thought first was Harley-Davidson. As a Millennial consumer, that isn't a store I want to go into. I think of my dad and my uncles. Old



Student design competition winners MinJung Park and Sarah Kendzior spent the weekend talking to dealers and learning about the industry.



shows a new model as a focal point could be accompanied by touchscreens that show different options like colors, accessories and upgrades. They also suggested the following to attract young Millennials who may or may not ride:

- For the store as a whole, **create a unified theme based on a color scheme and stick to it.** Then use things like product placement and directed lighting to highlight specific products, and touchscreens to show the available variations. "If there are too many colors in the store it will interfere with the theme," Park said, creating visual chaos that repels younger customers.
- Store designs should include **open and non-threatening entry displays;** think of department store windows that show a specific look, brand or theme. Inside the store, retailers can build **display areas that focus on specific segments** and lead

people. I know there is a store in Mall of America. I just don't want to go in there," said Park.

"I think of my dad in a bar with a beer and [wearing] his vest," added Kendzior.

The ideas the two Retail Merchandising students came up with for the Model Store for Millennials exhibit (sponsored by Specifier Products, makers of Stonecarpet), are a big departure for most retailers.

Millennials want an experience that's entertaining, but an environment that's less like an amusement park and more like a museum or gallery. "You're spending as much as you would on art, so why don't you show it that way?" said Kendzior.

Students pointed to uncluttered, focused shopping environments that shows a limited range of physical products and then use technology to offer variations of color, size and other features while taking up minimal floor space. A display that

customers through them to a retail counter at the back—forcing customers to walk through the store and see a range of products. Ever notice how staples like milk are at the back of the supermarket? It's the same idea.

- Specialist retailers can use neutral backgrounds like gray for road bike shops, greens and tans for off-road, or blue for watercraft. **Keep the background color scheme basic and minimal, to let the products shine.** Retail floors can be designed with creative themes like the "organized maze"—again, a design that holds together based on a theme but leads customers through a variety of segments—or simply angling all the display vehicles in one direction to create an arrow effect. The impact is even greater if the theme shows up in designs on walls and display racks.
- Gear and apparel displays should highlight new styles. **Put together an entire look** and show it off, instead of a rack full of different helmets, boots or gloves. —Holly Wagner



HOW TO MAXIMIZE YOUR FACEBOOK PRESENCE

DIVAS SNOWGEAR has more than 75,000 likes on its Facebook page. That success helped company owners Wendy and Travis Gavinsky earn a spot on the 2014 Facebook Small-Medium Business Council, and the duo shared their insights during the National Retail Conference in Chicago.

More than 30 million small to medium businesses have active pages on Facebook, and the Gavinskys outlined tips that tend to generate not just page likes, but also fan engagement—adding up valuable likes, comments and shares that help a Facebook page get more exposure. For example:

Posting. A claim post allows fans to redeem a special offer by entering their email address (with the added benefit of growing a dealer's contact list). Posting a photo or even a series of photos has proven to be an effective means of generating responses. While dealers need to be strategic about

their own posts, every dealer Facebook page should include check-in capability, allowing customers to make their own Facebook check-in post when they are at the dealership.

Facebook Insights lets page managers see how much traffic is coming to the page, how many people are engaging with a post and how each post is performing. Travis Gavinsky stressed the need to analyze the information to see what types of posts generate the biggest response, as well as noting the days and times when the most people are visiting the page. Knowing



what kind of post to make and when to make it can result in a lot more engagement, and Gavinsky recommended that dealers should aim to engage 10 percent of their total fans on a regular basis. —Beth Dolgner



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NPA's Woodruff: Auction prices stable, but volume will increase

AUCTION PRICES are expected to remain stable, while the volume of bikes and other items coming to auction should increase.

Jim Woodruff of National Powersports Auctions told dealers gathered at a special Motorcycle Industry Council program in Chicago that volume increases will reflect the gradual recovery of the repossession market. He said after 2008, repossessions followed on a one- to two-year delay, but now they're starting to level out. In fact, Woodruff said default rates are about half of what they should be. "We are a little bit more optimistic than fragile," he said. "There is optimism going into 2015."

Prices rose in 2013, and there was an 8 percent increase in average wholesale prices. Ironically, Woodruff said most segments individually were down but the product mix has shifted to lead to the increase. Domestic cruiser prices are continuing to grow, but at the expense of ATVs.

Even now, he said, more motorcycles and fewer ATVs were being consigned to auction.

Auction volume rose 11 percent in 2014, with a 2 percent increase in bidder participation. The volume growth occurred in repossessed vehicles and dealer consignments.

"We consider that to be healthy signs in both cases," Woodruff said, adding that the

increase in repossessions mean banks are writing more paper.

Woodruff also said OEMs are coming around on pre-owned dealer efforts, as well as coming to auctions to reach into inventory for potential recalls.

"OEMs finally understand a healthy secondary market is good for a healthy credit market and healthy new market," he said.

—Vince Guerrieri

(...silence...)

Response (or lack thereof) to Retail Owners Institute's Dick Outcalt, when he asked dealers attending the Retail Management Workshop, "What is profit?"

(Read the full 'retail zen' article online at www.dealnews.com > Dealer Operations > Management)



KAWI PAVILION A RESOURCE FOR ALL

DIGITAL MEDIA offers a fast and efficient way to market to a target audience, and a company can easily track the effectiveness of such efforts. But not everyone is an expert, and many retailers are still novices when it comes to digital marketing.

Dealers who hadn't yet learned to leverage the power of digital had an opportunity to learn the craft direct from Kawasaki, and it didn't even matter if they sold Kawi at their stores or not. Indeed, this may have been the first time an OEM has extended a helping hand to get dealers from other brands up to speed.

Kawasaki's big pavilion at the center of the show gave attendees the chance to revive and refresh, check email, refill their water bottles and catch their breath, and then participate in two presentations each day: "The Digital Dealership" and "The Path to Purchase."

Session presenters Kevin Allen, manager of public relations and brand experience, and Jonathan Miller of Fuse Marketing, addressed why digital marketing is so important, discussed digital trends and offered specific tips for success. Attendees learned how to leverage OEM content, make the most of their company website and turn shoppers into buyers.

“Sole proprietors have so much liability. You sell things that people who are stupid operate.”

— Retail attorney Bob Mintz in the National Retail Conference Dream Team panel hosted by TCF-IF, on why powersports retailers might consider other forms of incorporation.

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DEALERS WIN BIG IN CHICAGO

IT WAS A FESTIVE Top 100 Awards Gala as New Jersey's Motorcycle Mall (r) won the coveted Dealer of the Year for 2014. They were followed closely by three strong Harley dealerships: hometown hero Woodstock (Ill.) H-D, J&L H-D from South Dakota and Ohio's A.D. Farrow Co. The backdrop for the Dec. 4 dinner gala, hosted by Robert Pandya, was the historic Palmer House Hilton in downtown Chicago.

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Dealers came from around the country to vie for Merit Awards in a dozen categories. Dick Burleson did a heartfelt presentation on DJB Award recipient Mike Stanfield before the family came to the stage. The evening was presented by WPS and sponsored by HiFlo Filtro, JT Sprockets, Parts Unlimited, HJC, Joe Rocket, K&L Supply, Stonecarpet, Wolf Brand Scooters, American Heritage Motorcycles, Lonski and Associates, MTA and Pacific Coast Sunglasses.

› SPEED READ

Digital advertising assistance from MIC. My Powersports Dealer will offer dealers targeted digital ads that not only promote their stores in their local markets, but also on major websites like CNN, Yahoo! and eBay. Through the magic of cookies, the ads will reach consumers who have self-identified as powersports enthusiasts with messages promoting participants.

Dealers pony up \$6,000 to participate. Working with data broker Experian, that money will buy web space at vastly discounted rates. MIC will add a 5 percent service charge to members, and 15 percent to nonmembers, to cover credit card processing.

To read the entire story, visit www.dealernews.com > Dealer Expo Update

DX1 on the cloud. Dominion Powersports' DX1 dealership management platform was recently featured at a Microsoft event to demonstrate how Microsoft Azure improves platform development. DX1's complete dealership management platform combines operational and marketing functionality, bringing together separate applications in one interface. Since it is built on Microsoft's Azure cloud platform, DX1 eliminates the need for dealerships to host and manage servers, saving both time and money for dealers. For DX1's staff, the Azure cloud platform allows them to introduce new features on a more frequent basis and to pinpoint and troubleshoot an issue quickly.



Send them... a trophy? The Thank-U Company thinks that customers deserve a trophy rather than another e-mail. The company has found that customer appreciation tokens are making a resurgence, and they can lead to both increased loyalty and dealer branding. Some dealers are giving customizable trophies to everyone who purchases one of their vehicles.



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

blog.dealernews.com/ToryHornsby

What's a customer worth?

WITH A SMALL RIDER BASE, YOU NEED REFERRALS TO BE SUCCESSFUL

I WAS REALLY IMPRESSED by the number of dealers who attended the National Retail Conference at Dealer Expo. The seminars were the day before the show started, and I wasn't sure what to expect in terms of dealer attendance. However, all the seminars were full and I've heard great reports from those attending.

If you were one of the dealers that attended training, it says a lot about you. The future belongs to those who desire to learn and improve. This may sound harsh, but if the Great Recession did anything positive, it reduced the number of dealers who didn't care to improve and thought training was a waste of time.

My seminar focused on referrals. The quickest way to double your business is to get each customer to refer one new customer to you. That, in effect, would double the sales of your dealership. But getting referrals ain't easy.

The ACV Exercise

Before working on increasing referrals, you have to understand the importance of them, which starts with knowing your *annual customer value*. Most dealers don't really know what their average customer is worth, but it's easy to figure out. I've ran the numbers for several dealers lately, including a metric and a Harley-Davidson dealership.

The metric store had 3,425 customers that did business with them over 12 months, with total sales of \$5,901,663. Dividing total sales by the number of active customers that year ($\$5,901,663 / 3,425$) means its average customer is worth \$1,723 in sales. I also divided the store's total gross profit of \$1,767,300 by its 3,425 customers and found that each one is worth \$516 in gross profit. The Harley dealer's average customer value was \$2,857 in sales and \$914 in gross profit.

I call this The ACV Exercise and it proves that every customer you have is worth a substantial amount of

sales dollars and gross profit. *Every. Single. Year.* This is why referrals are so important; they expand your customer database and are worth far more than a single sale.

The ability to get more referrals starts with your staff. I've visited and called many dealerships throughout the country, and some of the staff members I've observed just aren't very likeable. If your front line employees, those

of dollars to try it. However, at this point I'll respond to marketing that's related to golf, because I now play, and I've spent a considerable chunk of change over the last several years. It's the same for the powersports industry, only on a much larger scale.

By the way, only 9 percent of the population play golf, but less than 6 percent of the population ride motorcycles. So you can't have a 'churn-and-

The ability to get more referrals starts with your staff. If your front line employees aren't nice, likeable and pleasant ... you're hiring wrong.

who come in contact with customers, aren't nice, likeable and pleasant... you're hiring wrong. Moreover, you're probably not getting repeat business or referrals. Your front line staff needs ongoing training in product knowledge, communication skills, selling skills and more. Have you ever referred a friend or family member to someone you didn't like? No.

Speaking of friends and family, do you know the top reason a person starts riding for the first time? It's due to the influence of friends and family. If someone doesn't ride, there's no amount of marketing, no matter how good it is, that will get folks to decide to spend \$10,000 or more to give it a try.

I've proven that myself with golf. I never considered myself someone that would play golf. I thought it was for people with nothing better to do than to dress badly. A little over six years ago, a persuasive buddy of mine talked me into going with the guys to play golf, even if just to hang out. He had an old set of clubs he let me use. I had fun and have played regularly since.

Before then, no amount of marketing would've gotten me to spend hundreds

burn' business model. You can't afford to lose customers because there aren't that many fish in the sea to replace them. You have to build loyalty with your customers to keep them coming back—and sending in their friends and family.

On top of staff training and customer service, marketing to your past customers is uber important as well. And while a portion of your marketing should focus on generating new customers (who already ride), the person most likely to spend money in your dealership is the person who's done it before. Therefore, marketing to past customers is absolutely more important than trying to generate new customers.

If you want a litmus test to see how you're doing, pull up your entire customer list. How many total customers are there? How many have done business with you in the past 12 months? I bet it's a much smaller percentage than you like. How can you win back those inactive customers? How can you keep current customers coming in? Market to them to get them back in the dealership, and train your staff to offer the best customer service. ①

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from THE ARCHIVES



We're sure that the creative department at Metzeler had a reason for driving a bike through their showcase tire, guarded by a model in her stocking feet striking a pre-Travolta pose, but maybe they just liked all three images. We do, too. From the 1969 archives of Motorcycle Dealer News.

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Dealernews TOP 100

EXCELLENCE IN
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TOP 100 SALES STATS

The Class of 2014 posts a healthy mix of new/used sales, F&I, PG&A and service work



ESTIMATED COMBINATION NEW/USED UNITS SOLD BY
TOP 100 DEALERS IN A 12-MONTH PERIOD.

TOP 100 DEALERS
(ALL BRANDS) SELL
AN AVERAGE OF

498

NEW UNITS* PER
YEAR.

TOP 100 HARLEY-DAVIDSON STANDALONE
DEALERS SELL AN AVERAGE OF



358 new AND 274 pre-owned

UNITS PER YEAR.

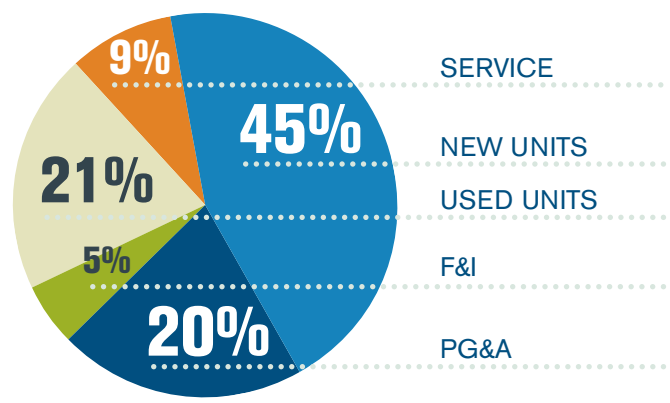
TOP 100 DEALERS
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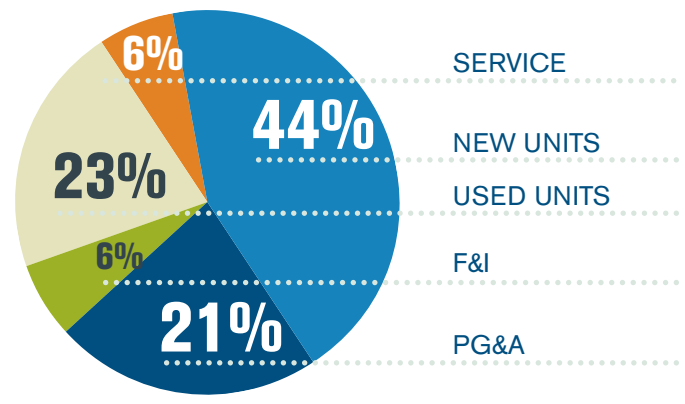
PRE-OWNED UNITS
PER YEAR.

REVENUE BY
DEPARTMENT:
ALL DEALERS

*Note: 27 of the Top 100
Dealers of 2014 posted
Service Dept. revenue
percentages exceeding 10%
of total store revenue.*



REVENUE BY
DEPARTMENT:
HARLEY-EXCLUSIVE
DEALERS
ONLY



Source: Dealers' own data as submitted on Top 100 entry forms. New/used units include street and offroad motorcycles, ATV/UTV, scooters, PWC, snowmobiles, trikes and go-karts.

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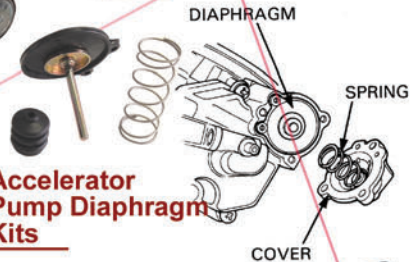
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