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— AHM CEO Rob McNish

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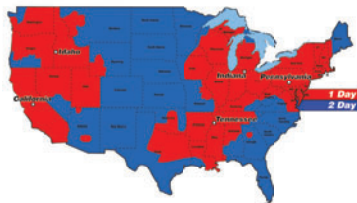
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BIKER'S CHOICE



FROM THE EDITOR

Mary Slepicka

Where's the good news?

GOOGLE MOTORCYCLE and tell me what you see.

Pages upon pages — *man injured, passenger thrown, fatal crash*, the list goes on. The industry has a perception problem and it is rooted in reality.

Indeed, the lifestyle is inherently risky. But today the bad news surfaces quicker than the good news ever will. And that's a problem when your current customer base is in decline and you have to get new ones. Consider the son or daughter wanting a dirtbike for Christmas. The husband telling the wife he wants to get a bagger so they can take weekend trips. The commuter considering a scooter. A City Council reviewing a zoning application for a new multiline.

How are we going to welcome new customers if original, good intentions are shouted down by the sheer volume of bad news?

I'll start. Chime in when you want (email: editors@dealernews.com).

Equate protection with fashion. I applaud brands that have brought out protective apparel that can rival anything on a fashion runway with materials that enhance comfort and shield from the elements. Yes, there are always going to be pinups of a girl in a bikini (or less) straddling a custom bike. Let's at least make sure she gets dressed before someone starts the engine.

Be approachable. Want to attract newbies? Make those showrooms more open, less intimidating, more fun. So say students in our recent

Model Store for Millennials competition (the results of which you'll see at Dealer Expo in December).

Be inclusive. Yes, we know you're a 'real' rider. But guess what — you now are an ambassador for a lifestyle and an industry that depends on it. Help other riders, don't dis them. Remember, someone mentored you.

Support your local dealer. Every aftermarket brand has a consumer-facing website or marketing program. How about mentioning that they can get that new accessory at their local dealer... who contributes to their local community... and who pays local taxes?

Come together. V-twin dealers in the Midwest are going to have to start talking to ATV dealers in the Northeast who are going to have to start talking to sportbike dealers in the West. There's power in numbers.

Get out of your vacuum. Join the Chamber of Commerce or the local Rotary. Talk to high schoolers about safe riding and proper gear. Lobby your local, state and national representatives. You can't survive if you don't get involved.

The powersports community generates millions of dollars every year for people in need, through charity rides, events, auctions and more. And this industry is populated by thousands of small and family-owned businesses — neighbors, if you will. There's a lot of good news to tell, if we would just start telling it.

Mary Slepicka, mslepicka@dealernews.com

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IT'S TIME FOR...PATENT REVIEWS!

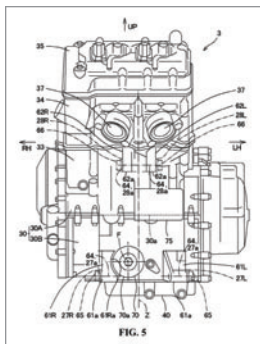
LET'S FIND SOME BIKES BEFORE THEY ACTUALLY GET HERE

AS NEW BIKES unveiled at October's Intermot show in Germany were being announced (or seemingly more often, leaked ahead of schedule), Senior Editor Bruce Steever compared the latest crop of motorcycles against patents filed by the various OEMs to see where the future and the present match up. Some things have been very highly publicized and were of little surprise, but in examining some of the newest patent applications pending, it's clear that the manufacturers still have plenty of tricks in their sleeves.

HONDA

It is a poorly kept secret that Honda has been working on a new adventure-touring machine. Rumors from around the Internet talk of minimal weight and a compact liter-class parallel twin, with high levels of dirt-ability aimed squarely at KTM. While final details will emerge to prove the rumors right or wrong, the patent applications support this theory.

Patent No. 2014/0083789 (shown here) shows a new parallel twin engine



differing from the existing CB500-series motor in several key areas. The language of this patent states that the motor is designed to minimize the engine's vertical dimensions, which hints at

the purpose of maximizing ground clearance, as well as specific details that are designed to protect component from loose rocks and rough road debris.

Patent application 2014/0209405 shows this parallel twin in a new frame design featuring a robust central downtube splitting in front of the motor to cradle the engine. Straddling this dirtbike-style frame are motocross-style split radiators and, to further fuel the adventure bike theory, the two-into-one includes a high-exit right hand exhaust muffler.

Completing the adventure-ready patent applications are 2014/0167387, which shows a combination grab rail, luggage mount and tail rack assembly similar to other machines in the ADV class, and 2014/0209060, which is a very distinct air cleaner assembly. The new airbox curves around a motorcycle's headstock and extends left and right past the frame spars. The patent states that compacting the airbox laterally allows for improved airbox volume while providing for improved rider ergonomics and "securing the capacity of the fuel tank," all important factors for an adventure bike.

Other new Honda patent applications reflect Honda's usual focus on advanced new technologies.

No. 2014/0053671 highlights a super-compact transmission design that could be Honda's MotoGP-developed seamless shift transmission. Instead of the usual sliding dogs and shift forks, the shift mechanism engaged each gear internally, with selection pawls moving axially to the transmission shafts.

Hidden among patent applications for self-adjusting mirrors (which track the rider's helmet to ensure the mirrors provide a full view whether tucked low or sitting upright) and high-speed cameras that film the road surface to provide accurate speed readings (yes, really), Honda also has some audacious ideas. Consider patent application 2014/0188342: a huge 163-page document describing a steer-by-wire system for two-wheelers that could be incorporated into the front or rear wheel assemblies, "...performing highly robust control for enhancing the stability of the posture of the vehicle body by steering of a front or a rear wheel." Combined with 2014/0265224, which is a design for a hinged and motorized steering stem design complete with a steering actuator motor and "Balance-Assist" and "Travel-Assist" modes, it appears that Honda may be trying to make a motorcycle that can provide slow-speed stability control and perhaps even eliminate low-speed tipovers. Even if such an uncrashable motorcycle proves impossible, an actuated steering stem that can adjust rake

on the fly would be a major breakthrough, allowing for a single bike to switch between sportier geometry for agility and a longer wheelbase with tour-ready stability.



KAWASAKI

You might have heard a rumor about Kawasaki making a supercharged supersport motorcycle reviving the H2 name. In fact, you had to be under a rock to miss it. The sheer amount of wild guessing about the new bike on the Internet was easily sidestepped with a quick trip to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to peek at patent 8,707,931, which shows the engine and supercharger assembly in clear detail. Check out 8,646,438, which details the intake design of the centrifugal supercharger.

Kawasaki is also clearly interested in electric motorcycle design, with more than 10 different patents covering everything from frame design to motor controllers to battery and motor cooling of a still generic electric motorcycle package. It's a fair bet that Kawasaki will be entering the e-bike market soon.

Stepping out further into unusual chassis designs, Kawasaki also filed patent applications 2014/0167382 and 0183836, both of which show a highly unusual swingarm front suspension and steering system. Rarely seen outside of oddball motorcycles such as Yamaha GTS1000 or the Bimota Tesi, a swingarm front end would certainly help distinguish whichever motorcycle mounted the system.—Bruce Steever

Want more? Read about Suzuki and Yamaha patent activity on Dealernews.com: Searchterm=patent

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TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SUZUKI DEALER MEETING

Suzuki is committed to two things, executives told dealers: developing new products and clearing away old inventory.

Dealers asked to commit to all product areas.

Pricing strategy designed to give Suzuki dealers a competitive edge, and includes price reductions on certain models, and even price protection.

Regional co-op program will include TV, radio and digital, compared to just digital in previous program.

OEM demo truck will stop at dealerships en route to major events to promote brand, host demo rides.

Parts ordering system now accommodates Windows users

(For full dealer meeting coverage by Mike Vaughan, visit www.dealernews.com, Searchterm=Suzuki)

There's no tiered licensing on cars. A 16-year-old, if he has the money, can buy a Porsche with a lot of horsepower. I think we are being singled out."

— Jay Hall, owner of Hall's Cycles in Springfield, Ill., and president of the Illinois Motorcycle Dealer Association, on moves by the state legislature to institute a tiered motorcycle licensing program. Contribute to this discussion on Dealernews.com (search term=licensing)



RON BISHOP, long distance offroad racer, Motorcycle Hall of Famer and former owner of Ron Bishop Motorcycles in Escondido, Calif. "Ron's greatest legacy will likely be his 40-plus years of racing the Baja 1000 but he had many other racing achievements," said Don Emde in a statement released by the Trailblazers organization. "He was also a longtime motorcycle dealer in Escondido, and had created many useful motorcycle products through the years." Bishop had recently been named to the 2015 Trailblazers Hall of Fame.

WHAT'S TRENDING ON DEALERNEWS.COM

HOME PAGE > AFTERMARKET

BMW supports online sales. New PG&A website for the OEM will direct consumers to the nearest BMW dealer with an online presence.

Bell enhances impact protection. Bell makes headlines with new "progressive layering technology" that will manage high, medium and low speed impacts, as well as rotational impacts. And then it introduces its first offroad helmet.

LeMans has a new VP-sales. Jeff Derge brings 26 years of industry experience to the position that governs all of Parts Unlimited and Drag Specialties sales, including 16 years on the retail side.

DEALER OPERATIONS > SERVICE

Kymco recalls about 540 MXU700 ATV models from the 2013-15 years. Fuel cap may not vent properly, causing a fire hazard.

Arctic Cat recalls 40,000 ATVs. Component in the front gearbox on all model lines from the 2008 and 2009 years may not meet company standards, OEM tells CPSC.

DEALER OPERATIONS > SALES

See all the new model intros from Inter-mot and more on the Sales home page at Dealernews.com



ARIZONA – **Sprockets DIY** is a new self-serve garage in Phoenix that will charge shadetree mechanics \$35 an hour to rent a lift and tools to work on their bikes.

FLORIDA – The massive **Six Bends** complex in Fort Myers is set to have a grand opening in early November. The 16.5-acre site houses the former Fort Myers Harley-Davidson.

NEVADA – **Las Vegas Harley-Davidson** becomes the first dealership to sell vehicles in the city's tourism corridor now that it has opened a 55,000 sq. ft. store on The Strip. The dealership had to apply for a special zoning permit to get the location.

VIRGINIA – **Richmond Harley-Davidson** has moved into new, much larger quarters in Ashland. Its sister store, **Steel Horse Harley-Davidson**, is in Midlothian.

WISCONSIN – **Mondus Motorsports** in Hudson has a new name, new owners and will be in a much larger facility when the new **St. Croix Motorsports** moves to a 21,000 sq. ft. space in New Richmond next year.

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MotoAmerica sets 2015 races, without Daytona

COSTA MESA, Calif. – MotoAmerica in early October released its 2015 race schedule, and Daytona was not on the initial list.

“Our aim is to have a nine-race 2015 MotoAmerica Road Racing Championship,” said Chuck Askland of MotoAmerica. “We are working on confirmation of an additional venue and hope to have this completed very soon.”

The 2015 MotoAmerica Road Racing Series schedule is as follows:

- April 10-12** Circuit of the Americas (Austin, Texas; two classes, MotoGP support races)
- April 17-19** Road Atlanta (Braselton, Ga.)
- May 15-17** Virginia International Raceway (Alton, Va.)
- June 12-14** Barber Motorsports Park (Birmingham, Ala.)
- Aug. 7-9** Indianapolis Motor Speedway (Indianapolis, Ind.; two classes, MotoGP support races)
- Sept. 11-13** New Jersey Motorsports Park (Millville, N.J.)

A WSBK support race is scheduled for Laguna Seca in California; however, a date had not yet been set at press time.

AMA earlier announced it would end its relationship with Daytona Motorsports Group and instead sanction MotoAmerica, a new North American road racing series affiliated with KRAVE Group LLC, a partnership that includes three-time MotoGP champion Wayne Rainey.



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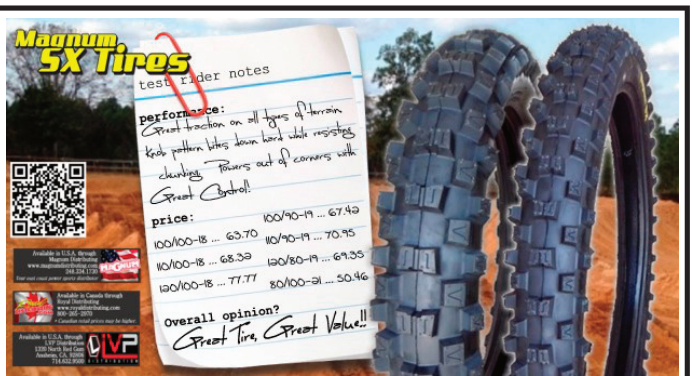
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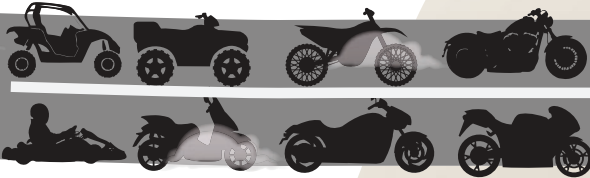
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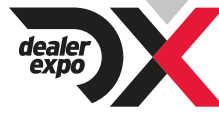


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DECEMBER 5-7, 2014

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**TOP 100
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**PARTY AT
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What are you hiding?

DON'T OVERLOOK (OR UNDERUSE) THESE ASSETS DURING FOURTH QUARTER



A former dealer principal, **Rod Stuckey** is the founder and president of Dealership University and Powersports Marketing.com. Have a question about marketing best practices? Contact him via editors@dealernews.com



NATIONAL RETAIL CONFERENCE
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Wish Rod and the team at Dealership University "happy holidays" in person, and receive the best gift of all: **free admission to Dealership University's three-part local store marketing workshop** being held Dec. 4 at the National Retail Conference in Chicago. For more information, visit www.dealerexpo.com.

THERE IS AN OLD ADAGE that you can never be too rich or too thin. A recent Harris poll has Americans choosing richer vs. thinner, 43 percent to 21 percent, both of which are apparently much less important than smarter, which came in at 14 percent, just a tick higher than younger, at 12 percent.

What I find interesting about this study is that the survey is posed as, "What Americans would choose if *gifted* to them," which is much different than what they will work, persevere, and make sacrifices to achieve.

Similarly, dealers will happily take more sales during this holiday season if the market and economy allow for it to happen — basically, if sales are gifted to them. Shockingly few will fight for a record-breaking holiday season which, by the way, can be the difference between hitting your annual goals and coming up short. So for the upper 20 percent of dealers who will fight for holiday sales, here are some marketing assets that often are overlooked and underutilized this time of year.

When most people think of the term *marketing*, traditional advertising such as print media, radio, television and billboards come to mind. When most business owners speak of *assets*, they usually refer to those found on the company's balance sheet, such as cash on hand, accounts receivable, inventory, furniture and fixtures.

THE OFFICIAL DEFINITIONS

Marketing is the business activity of presenting products or services in such a way as to make them desirable. *Asset* refers to somebody or something that is useful and contributes to the success of something.

Take off your financial statements hat and put on your marketing hat. Shift your thinking in reference to the term *marketing* to include much more than traditional advertising — to any business activity that makes your products or services desirable. Think of assets as somebody or something that is useful and contributes to your success. Every dealership, yours included, has hidden marketing assets that are already being paid for and which can play a huge role in your success just by using them to the fullest.

By leveraging these hidden marketing assets, you can make tremendous gains toward achieving the goals of your holiday marketing efforts without spending a fortune on traditional advertising.

HIDDEN ASSETS

First, you have your **existing customer list**. Don't make the mistake of forgetting the customers who have taken the time to visit the dealership and hand you money. Your customers expect you to market to them, and if they never hear from you, that can

easily lead to a decision to do their holiday shopping elsewhere. It costs a lot less to maintain a current customer than acquire a new one; yet year after year, too much marketing is geared toward obtaining new customers. By now you should have thousands of email addresses in your database, thousands of likes on your Facebook page, thousands of physical addresses to send direct mail. All of which should be part of your holiday marketing strategy.

Another common hidden marketing asset is **your staff**. Your employees have a far greater impact on increasing closing ratios and value per customer than the market, weather or economy. The goal of leveraging your hidden marketing assets is to make more sales and profits without spending a ton more money on traditional advertising. You've already spent the money on your facility, inventory, computers, website, etc., so why not maximize the opportunity of every person who comes through the door and train your staff?

It's amazing how many dealers still refuse to invest in training their team. As the late Zig Ziglar used to say, "The only thing worse than training employees and losing them is to not train them and keep them."

Facility merchandising also is a hidden marketing asset. The outside of your dealership represents the all-important, holiday-spirited, first impression. In fact, your location is arguably the most important of all of your assets. Units with red bows, ATVs pulling trailers decorated like Santa pulling a sleigh, holiday-themed signage and banners, layaway options, special holiday financing, lights and more can all create excitement and convert a passerby into a prospect during this holiday season.

The inside is just as important. The layout should easily guide customers' direction as they hear holiday music and feel the cheer before being promptly and courteously greeted by a smiling energetic staff member wearing a Santa cap.

There are many other hidden marketing assets you're already paying for, such as your **website** and your **telephones** (see my August 2014 Dealernews column), which can be optimized this holiday shopping season.

Having a successful holiday season isn't about executing one magical marketing campaign that will increase sales by 100 percent; it's about doing 100 things just 1 percent better. This means capitalizing on money that is already being spent to get a maximum return on that investment. This means having fun this holiday season, taking action and focusing on the proven best practices that generate the most profitable return. A strong finish to 2014 certainly is realistic in November and December, especially if you're willing to work for it.

LEADING POWER DRIVE ENGINEERING



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jtchain.com

DEALER EXPO NEW PRODUCT PREVIEW

HUNDREDS OF VEHICLES, PG&A, SERVICES TO DEBUT IN CHICAGO. HERE'S A PEEK:

A Dealernews staff report

MORE THAN 4,000 POWERSPORTS RETAILERS are expected next month in Chicago for the 2014 Dealer Expo and the inaugural National Dealer Conference presented by Dealernews. (And if you haven't yet registered, visit www.dealerexpo.com). This year's "Dealer Expo Week" actually features five days of events (see Dealer Expo @ a Glance). And once you get on the show floor, there are a number of brand-new features and resources, including Kawasaki's social media pavilion, the Model Store for Millennials, the Model Store Room with inventory management training, and the New Product Demo Stages.

At the hub of this unprecedented dealer event are the exhibitors, many of whom will be showcasing brand-new product lines Dec. 5-7 to get your inventory set for 2015. Here are just some of the products that will be available in Chicago.



SYM USA

SYM USA/Alliance Powersports is bringing in its Taiwan-made T2 250i "pure adrenaline" machine, which offers 25 hp with a top speed of 87 mph and a whopping 96 mpg. It offers aluminum front and rear rims, a diamond-type unibody construction and multifunction digital instrumentation.

The bike is available in yellow, blue, red, black and matte gray for an MSRP of \$3,799. SYM says it offers margins of 11.2 percent with a suggested initial order of "at least three" for your showroom.



HORNET OUTDOORS

Hornet Outdoors' line of patent-pending rear cargo racks and box side rails basically double the storage capacity of a Polaris Ranger, RZR or Sportsman by enabling a user to personalize the vehicle according to its specific use, or variety of uses. Most of the products don't require any installation tools.

These "Made in the USA" racks and side rails offer sturdy steel tubing, one-piece welded construction, powdercoated finish, and a fairly affordable MSRP range. Custom attachments are available for a spare tire, fuel can, chain saw and other items. Hornet offers a 30 percent dealer margin, and at Dealer Expo will be offering free shipping for three or more orders, and additional discounts for larger orders.



JANUS MOTORCYCLES

Janus will debut to dealers its Halcyon 50, a motorcycle ideally suited for the urban commuter and a key draw for younger customers. The vehicle is made of a tubular steel cradle frame with hand-formed aluminum fuel and oil tanks; six-speed, water-cooled two-stroke engine and hydraulic front suspension. It features a leather seat and battery cover, and upgrades include leather saddlebags, polished tanks and a stainless-steel exhaust. Four color options are available for this MSRP \$5,300 bike.

BELL HELMETS

Bell Helmets is making lots of news in Chicago. The helmet manufacturer has collaborated with fellow exhibitor Cardo Systems to make an adaptor compatible with Cardo's line of communication and entertainment systems and Bell helmets. The adaptor will fit into the recess of the Bell Mag-9, previous models and 2015 model, plus the newly redesigned 2015 Qualifier DLX. The Bell adapter fits into the helmet and is designed for quick attachment of devices such as the Scala rider devices for bike-to-bike intercom or smartphones streaming music.

Bell's brand-new Qualifier DLX helmet is causing a lot of buzz with such enhanced features as a slide in the injection mold for the communication port and an upgraded interior. Plus, the helmet will come standard with the Bell Transition SOLFX Photochromic shield, which adapts to light conditions.

Cardo Systems' Scala rider bike-to-bike intercom systems allow users to communicate with fellow riders at great distances, conduct mobile phone calls, listen to the built-in FM radio, receive streaming stereo music from their smartphones, get directions from their GPS devices and control most of these features in a safe manner by voice command.



POWERMADD

Larger than PowerMadd's Star Series, this new plastic Sentinel handguard protects the rider's hands from debris, and blocks out the wind. The vent cover can snap out to offer air flow.

It is "designed to be the most stylish, durable and functional handguard to date," the company says.

The Sentinel is made with two different plastics, offering a stiff spine for durability and a softer body for flexibility. The mounting system is easy to install and made of 6061 aluminum.

The handguard is available in nine colors and will work with the Sentinel Armor, Gauntlet, Flare, Hand Wrap, Mirror and Large Mirror products on various ATVs and snowmobiles. The Sentinel Handguard retails for \$40 with the mount kit sold separately.

ABUS MOBILE SECURITY

The new 8077 lock from Abus is made of temper-hardened steel and houses a 13mm steel bolt and a 3D alarm sensor that uses brake disc recognition to arm. The alarm is at least 100 decibels. The lock (which retails for \$179.99) takes two AAA batteries (included), with light and sound signals to indicate battery life. The X-Plus 8077 lock, which includes a carrying case, may be paired with other X-Plus cylinder locks, and one key can be used to unlock them all, if desired.

PERFORMANCE MACHINE

While you're at Dealer Expo, check out PM's new Dixon and Supra designs, the latest addition to the company's Image Series of forged wheels for Harley-Davidsons. The long-legged Dixon is available in chrome, contrast cut and contrast cut platinum with a retail price starting at about \$1,250. The new "fast movement" Supra



has a vortex of nine speed spokes and is available in the same finishes for the same pricing. Matching components for each design include discs, belt sprockets and Super Gas air cleaner faceplates.



SYMTEC/HEAT DEMON

Heat Demon makes its entry into the UTV market with a heated steering wheel kit, and has updated its offerings in heated grips, thumb warmers and seats. The steering wheel, which offers "plug and play installation," according to the company, uses a patent-pending rotational power

device technology. It will retail for \$379.99. The grip and thumb warmers are benefitting from a partnership with ODI Grips. Heat Demon also is offering a clamp-on grip to replace glue-on and push-on/cut-off products, at the same price points. The seat heaters now feature a safety cutoff feature.

AMERICAN SPORTWORKS

The new Landmaster LM202 light-utility vehicle, on display at Dealer Expo, is the company's latest addition to its lineup of rugged, go-anywhere products.

The Landmaster family is suited for customers who want to maintain residential, vacation or small commercial properties. Medium-duty jobs like moving mulch can be handled with ease with the 300 and 400 series vehicles, and the more powerful 650 and 700 units are suited for heavy-duty chores. There's even an electric LM48V for offroad chores that has a street-legal version, the company says.

FULMER

Fulmer's latest foray into outerwear takes its cues from racing but offers freedom of movement, without the bulk. The TJ19 jacket (MSRP \$199.95 with a 50 point margin, according to the company) features a water-resistant poly twill outer shell, expansion gussets in the shoulder, zipper ventilation, a waist adjuster, belt loops that attach to pants, microfiber-lined collar and cuffs, and a reflective trim. It also offers removable shoulder, elbow and spine protectors, insulated liner and hood.

Fulmer is making things even more interesting by bringing to Dealer Expo its new smartphone- and keychain-controlled LED Accent Kits. The light kits contain 10 strips with 60 red, green and blue lights — leading to the possibility of more than 1 million light combinations that can be set to music. The kits range from \$120 to \$200, and Fulmer says it offers a 40 point margin.

LEADER MOTORCYCLE

Leader Motorcycle, which already offers mounts for electronic devices on the brake/clutch, handlebar and windshield, now provides mounts that attach to rear-view mirrors for vehicles with less room in the cockpit area or riders who need it higher than on a bar or reservoir.

The bracket is made of machined aluminum and is chrome-plated in the United States. The two-piece bracket requires no special tools to install and features UltraSecurity and Get the Vibe Out. The bracket fits mirror stems (or any other bar) 3/8 to half-inch in diameter and can be mounted left/right or inward/outward. Accommodated accessories include GPS devices, phones, cameras, drink holders, clocks and more. The mounts start at \$89.95 MSRP.

Leader tells Dealernews it is seeking "master dealers" and will be offering consignment and qualifying-purchase options with point-of-purchase display.



LS2 HELMETS

The new FTR Road Race Helmet is manufactured from tri-composite fiberglass, and features an eye port about half an inch taller than most helmets. A 3mm flat shield with tear off posts is standard equipment. The helmet is available in white, matte black, gloss black and three graphics. Pricing had yet to be determined at press time; however, LS2/Allwin representatives told Dealernews that dealer margins start at 50 percent.



The company's new FF386 modular provides more helmet for less money. It features a retractable Full Eclipse sun screen, Pinlock-ready shield with LS2's Short-Shift quick release, full metal latch system and rider-friendly controls. This helmet model offers "big margins," according to LS2/Allwin, and provides customers with fit and features they would expect to find on helmets costing twice as much.



FOWLER DISTRIBUTION

The new Duchinni retro jacket offers a windproof and weatherproof polyester shell, breathable and removable quilted thermal drop lining, removable shoulder and elbow armor, a pocket for back armor (sold separately), Velcro cuffs, and belt and a zipper to attach the jacket to pants. The jacket (MSRP: \$129.99) comes in black/white, black/blue, black, green, black/red, black/orange, in sizes up to 3XL (5XL for black/white). Dealer margin is 40 percent with no buy-in, according to Fowler, 50 percent with product range commitment.



GRAVITATE JEANS

These rider-designed jeans feature a patented insert that gives wearers a full range of comfort and motion, according to the company. The jeans, available in both men's and women's styles, reduce gathering, pulling and tugging in the legs, thighs and seat. Plus, they look good off the bike, too. Available in indigo or black with an MSRP of \$79.95 and an attractive margin: 33 percent for distributors, 50 percent for retailers. In addition to its regular lineup, Gravitate will be showing its new fall 2014 styles for women.

OLYMPIA SPORTS CO.

Olympia Sports introduces a new all-weather glove and improvements to its All-Season gloves. The new Weatherking cold-weather glove has a dyed leather shell, Gore-Tex insert, PrimaLoft insulation and double wrist straps. It also features touch-enabled tips on the thumb and index finger, embossed palm and thumb patches, reflective knuckle trim, a shield wiper and skid pad. Suggested retail is \$99.95.



The All-Season II Touch will keep the Wind-Tex liner and Thermolite insulation inside of the Olympia leather glove. It adds touch-enabled tips on the thumb and index finger for touch-screen electronics, embossed palm and thumb patches for grip, reflective knuckle trim, a shield wiper and an anti-shock skid pad. MSRP is \$79.95. Both products offer 40-50 percent margins, the company says, and new packaging features benefits copy on the front to facilitate the sale.

BIKER BOOT STRAPS

For your customers who don't want their pants to billow up when they're riding, Biker Boot Straps will roll out its new and improved lineup of function-marries-fashion boot straps at Dealer Expo. This fourth-generation boot strap is the result of dealer and customer feedback over the last year. "We have updated the male part that plugs into our now-patented [No. 8839494] interchangeable clip for added strength, and have thickened the rubber straps" for enhanced durability, founder and owner Michael Screens told Dealernews.

Each pair is packaged on a boot-shaped card that explains the benefits over conventional boot straps. At least seven new bootstrap designs will be revealed at the show, including new military versions.



S&S CYCLE

The new S&S billet air cleaner kit offers improved performance for Indian models with Thunder Stroke 111 engines. The kit bolts on with no modifications, offering easy installation. Plus, it features twice the surface area. The kit offers five more horsepower, according to Dyno tests, and 104 cfm more than stock. Kits are available for Indian Chieftain Classic, Vintage and Roadmaster for an MSRP of about \$300. Covers (\$129.95) are offered with the S&S logo or in throwback script.



The logo for HJC Helmets, featuring the letters 'HJC' in a bold, italicized font inside a white oval, with the word 'HELMETS' in a smaller font below it.

#1 IN THE WORLD



MEET YOUR NEXT HELMET

The all-new CL-X7 packs more advanced technology and value into its shell than any other helmet in its class. Fourteen front-intake ports force cool air into the helmet's advanced ventilation system, then out the four exhaust ports at the back, cooling as you ride. The lightweight polycarbonate composite shell is 3D modeled to deliver maximum fit, comfort and style. And features normally reserved for much pricier helmets, like an oversized eye port and SuperCool® liner make the CL-X7 a shoo-in for your next helmet.

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MOTORCYCLE & BIKE EQUIPMENT

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sullivansinc.com

For more information visit www.Dealernews.com/readerservice

BOBSTER

The new Chamber sunglasses from Bobster offer 100 percent UV ray protection. The narrow nose bridge and "Asian fit" means they sit higher on your face to avoid the bottom of the glasses resting on your cheeks. Lenses and frames are polycarbonate, with metal logo on the outside temple. The Chamber sunglasses come with anti-fog smoked, yellow or clear anti-reflective lenses and retail for \$39.98.



DOWCO POWERSPORTS

The Guardian WeatherAll Plus motorcycle covers now include reflective elements for increased nighttime visibility, graphics on the front of the



cover, an access port added to the front wheel area to allow for a cable lock to be passed through and a Guardian-branded drawstring backpack for easy storage.

Existing features include lifetime limited warranty, a

heat shield, reflective vent system prevents moisture build up, polyester webbing belly strap to prevent the cover from coming off in high winds and sewn in alarm pockets.

A total of 11 covers are available, including one for the Can-Am Spyder and an XXXL trike fitment that covers conversions up to 119 inches long and 61.5 inches wide, including those by California Sidecar, Champion GL1800, Hannigan, Lehman, Motortrike and Roadsmith, Dowco says. The covers range from \$87 to \$160 retail.



SPEED-WAY SHELTERS

The signature product for Speed-Way Shelters has been redesigned with arched steel cross-members to allow for better protection and added internal clearance. The covers are portable, offering assembly in about half an hour, and made of polyester with polyurethane coating and taped seams to keep it water-proof. It's also flame-retardant, and the frame is powder-coated for rust protection. The shelter comes with an interior light and a carrying case. The shelters come in two sizes, standard/sport, which is 43 in. x 108 in. x 64 in.; and specialized touring, which is 54 in. x 136 in. x 76 in. They retail for \$325.95 for standard/sport; \$425.95 for specialized touring.

BIKE BRITE MOTORCYCLE SPRAY WASH

Bike Brite's Motorcycle Spray Wash is the signature item in the company's line of cleaning solutions. It cleans and degreases motorcycle parts, while keeping rust from forming. The product, which retails for about \$13, is now available in an ergonomically designed 32-ounce bottle, a response to customer feedback, and features a comfort grip. It's also available in half-gallon and gallon containers.



LEATHER THERAPY

Leather Therapy Finish fills minor scratches and abrasions on smooth leather and vinyl and protects from wear and tear while providing a surface sheen and barrier to the elements. The product can be used on everything from saddlebags to seats, boots, jackets and other leather items.

STENS CORP.

Stens, a company that dates back to 1969 as a parts distribution company, will be at Dealer Expo offering its golf cart parts and accessories, including a new lineup of parts for Yamaha vehicles.

Stens has a private branded offering of golf cart accessories: Stens Cart & Course. "Our new accessories lineup will contain everything from seat kits, cargo boxes, and light kits, to steering wheels, mirrors, and hub caps....and much, much more," the company said.



MAGURA USA

Magura's HC3 190 Radial has been re-engineered with patented Hard Core Braking Technology to reduce internal friction in the master cylinder while improving compatibility with ABS.

The "3" refers to the mechanical lever ratio, offering in effect three piston diameters. It's made of an aluminum alloy with a repositioned lever securing bolt.

The HC3 is available in 11-19 mm for the brake master, and 11-16 for the clutch master. Price of \$829 includes HC3 radial, reservoir kit, brake or clutch switch and banjo bolt.



YUASA BATTERY

Yuasa's bringing its newly popular GYZ series of absorbed glass mat batteries available for motorcycles, ATVs and UTVs. These batteries offer increased power and longer shelf life to accommodate accessories such as GPS units and audio systems.

The batteries have multiple connections and built-in brass nuts, offering more conductivity than stainless steel, the company says. The batteries come in six sizes from 224 to 500 CCAs for V-twin and metric bikes, and offroad vehicles. They price at \$120 to \$180 retail, depending on model.

SILVERWOLF VEHICLES

The High Torque Electric 4WD Motor Kit from SilverWolf Vehicles Inc. will convert a standard golf car into a four-wheel-drive utility/hunting vehicle. The kit reportedly makes the golf car powerful enough to do a burnout with the front tires, but maintains low noise levels with no fuel odor.

The sealed AC hub motors bolt to the front suspension, adding an electronically differentiated independent drive system to the front wheels. The 4WD en-



gages by using a dash-mounted switch – which can be turned on and off as needed – that controls the amount of torque provided by the motors.

The kit can be adapted to gas UTVs and other vehicles for hybrid applications. Retail pricing for two motors and controllers is \$2,195. A wiring harness and suspension adaptor (not included with the kit) starts at \$149.



MUSTANG

Following a soft launch at the Sturgis Rally this past summer, Mustang Seats is distributing its new Vintage Touring saddles for Indian Chiefs, which puts the rider 1.5 inches farther back from stock. There is also a matching passenger seat.

The company also will be showcasing its new seat for the BMW R1200 GS Adventure Tourer plus its lineup of saddles for Harley's Rushmore bikes.

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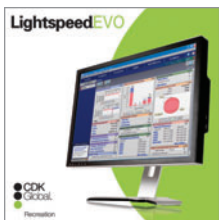
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DOMINION POWERSPORTS/CYCLETRADER.COM

For dealers with TraderOnline accounts, CycleTrader.com has added five lead management email options. Dealers can now send leads in specific formats to five separate email accounts, which will help them more easily manage and act upon leads and maintain their customer database, the company said. Before this update, dealers could only obtain leads in an XML or text format, which limited the information they received and required more work on the part of their lead management systems.

Now, dealers can choose to have both the XML format and text versions sent to the additional accounts, and Get Best Price and Request Price leads will be automatically added to the dealer's lead management system.



DYNOJET RESEARCH

With the service and performance department taking on a greater role when it comes to the health of the entire dealership, it's always good to catch up with Dynojet Research on what can be offered to customers. The company's PowerCommander is a plug-and-play fuel management device that uses OEM connectors and harnesses. It includes pre-programmed maps specific to the make and model. It can also add up to 10 personally built maps. Maps can be added and changed right on the bike, or downloaded from a computer.

ZXMOTO USA

ZXMoto's bodywork fairing kit is made of injection-molded plastic and offered in non-factory colors or unpainted. It can be sold as entire kit or in individual pieces. The kit is available for Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki, Yamaha, BMW, Ducati and Harley-Davidson from 1998 forward. The kit prices out at \$299 to \$659 with a 30 to 40 percent dealer margin, according to the company.

GLOBAL VISION

Global Vision Eyewear will bring to Dealer Expo its Black Soft Touch Frames and Temples with Black EVA Foam Padding under its G-Tech line. G-Tech Lenses have seven to 13 layers of titanium dioxide and silica applied onto shatterproof polycarbonate. Cleaning is easy and the lenses are scratch-resistant. Customers "will receive total UV protection while enjoying enhanced contrast with minimal glare," the company said.



ARISUN

Arisun's latest offering, the After Shock cross terrain tire, is designed for off-road enthusiasts who want a UTV tire for any terrain. The tire features radial 8-ply construction and siped tread, featuring a large footprint. The tires also have gaps between knobs for ease in cleaning.

GOLD EAGLE MANUFACTURING

Gold Eagle, based in the Chicago area, has been in operation for more than 80 years but only recently started providing products specific to the powersports market. The company's new Sta-Bil 360-degree Protection fuel additive protects metal parts against corrosion, and is safe to use in all motorcycle, ATV, snowmobile and PWC tanks, according to the company.

The 4 oz. bottle treats up to seven gallons and retails for \$5.99. Retailers can purchase the bottles in counter display packs of eight. The company also offers an Octane Boost formula.

THANK-U

Marketing and follow-up service provider Thank-U has designed a four-sided folio to add to its line of customized and chrome engraved customer appreciation gifts.

The folio includes a dealer-signed thank-you card, vehicle purchase information, a customized pocket plaque, refer-a-friend and hours and contact information. The company also will send reminder postcards for extended service reminders and birthdays.

DEALER EXPO @ A GLANCE

- Wednesday, Dec. 3 Motorcycle Industry Council half-day dealer program
Pie in the Sky pizza party (evening)
- Thursday, Dec. 4 National Retail Conference presented by Dealernews
Top 100 Dealer Awards Dinner Gala (evening)
- Friday, Dec. 5 EXHIBIT HALL OPEN
Millennium Park event (evening)
- Saturday, Dec. 6 EXHIBIT HALL OPEN
Annual Industry Party and salute to the legends of the industry (evening)
- Sunday, Dec. 7 EXHIBIT HALL OPEN
Toys for Tots motorcycle charity run

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LS2
PROTECTING DREAMS



Mark Rodgers is a best-selling author, speaker and premier expert on dealership sales. He can be reached at mark@peakdealership-performance.com



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From Mark: On my Dealernews.com blog this month, I cover what happens when you lose a customer's trust, and how you can win it back.

SAVE THE DATE!

Mark will present a three-hour sales workshop, "Accsellerating the Sale," free for registered dealers and retailers on Dec. 4 in Chicago. www.dealerepo.com

A matter of trust

ESTABLISHING TRUST WITH BUYERS IS THE ULTIMATE 'ACCSELLERATOR,' AND HERE ARE NINE WAYS TO DO IT

TRUST IS A WORD that so many sales professionals have a hard time grasping. And it is something you need if you want to close more sales, faster.

For peak-performing salespeople, selling is not combative, antagonistic or adversarial. Things like, "I got him," or "He's a lay down," or "I buried that guy," are indicators of someone who participates in what I call "gotcha selling," which will get you in the end. It shortens your career, diminishes your customers' experience and hurts profitability. Selling shouldn't be something you do to your customers.

With trust, you can build greater credibility with buyers and boost self-confidence. Trust also is the ultimate lubricant for your sales engine, accsellerating your performance to new levels. So how do you get it, and how do you know you have it?

IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK

Gaining your customers' trust is easier than you might think. But if you're one of those rabid salespeople who approach every person entering the dealership the same way a great white shark circles a baby seal, you'll need to make some adjustments. Here are nine ways to establish trust with customers:

Keep your promises, no matter how small. "I need to put you on hold for five seconds." "I'll call you back with a price." "I'll check with service and get back to you." Trustworthy people do what they say they are going to do.

Be open and approachable. Remember that not every conversation needs to result in an actual sale. Someone walking into your dealership for the first time wants a person he can ... wait for it ... trust. Be that person. Ask why he stopped in, what he's looking for and how you can help. Sales success is a series of small successes.

Go easy on the jewelry. Even Mr. T has cut back on the bling these days. I'm not a fan of pinky rings and other badass male jewelry, but I know others who are. If that's you, tread lightly with a tasteful ring or a single gold chain. A little goes a long way.

Dress better than average. Research suggests you should dress about 10 percent nicer than everyone else to improve your likelihood of hearing "yes" more often. But I don't want my banker to look like a biker, nor do I want a biker to look like my banker. Clean, pressed and stain-free clothing is key. Jeans are fine, and I like button-down shirts with button-down collars because the button-down is considered the most casual of all the collars (and it doesn't smack you in the face when you're blasting around the block).

Maintain a professional-looking office. Be neat and post your credentials, awards and recognitions.

You want your buyer to feel confident in the financial commitment he's just made. One hand-drawn photo of Daddy on a motorcycle is cute and a great conversation starter; a long row of photos from the latest family vacation is overkill.

Work for the customer. Don't tell the buyer that you're on his side; show him. Move quickly and with purpose. Maintain eye contact. Follow up with the information you promised. Even invite him to comparison shop. If he trusts you, he'll be back.

Don't call your customer "buddy" or "pal."

That's why we have names. If you don't know the customer's name or already forgot it, ask. Using "Buddy," "Pal" or, worse, "Sport" suggests you don't care to know your customers. So why should they trust you?

Don't default to the most expensive models.

Buyers will let you know if they want to look at a more expensive bike. Everyone else will appreciate the fact that you're not angling for a big commission.

Have the interests of the customer in mind.

Some customers prefer a little time to see, touch and think on their own, unencumbered by the presence of a sales professional. So don't hover, stare or repeatedly ask to help. Be patient; good things come to those who wait.

KNOWING WHEN YOU HAVE IT

How will you know you've gained a buyer's trust? Just pay attention.

- *He doesn't question your sources.* That's how people behave when they're comfortable around each other. The skepticism disappears, along with questions like "How do you know?" or "Where did you get your information?"
- *He or she shares information freely.* At this point in the seller-buyer relationship, he may even give you more information than you've asked. When customers start telling you details about their job or comparing their experience in your store to the dealership on the other side of town, you know you're in. Similarly, when they tell you what they're looking for in terms of a monthly payment or what they paid for their last motorcycle, this relationship is headed in the right direction.
- *Price is no longer the main focus.* You've now navigated the biggest obstacle toward gaining trust in any sales transaction. Congratulations.
- *OK, this going to sound weird: Hearing four-letter words come out of your customer's mouth.* That's as good a sign as any. I don't know about you, but I save the profanity for people I feel comfortable around.

Now go out and sell something, dammit!

D

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POWER IN NUMBERS

AMERICAN HERITAGE MOTORCYCLES BOOSTS INDIAN, VICTORY PRESENCE IN CHICAGO AND BEYOND

By Marilyn Stemp • Photography by Jeff Barger



From left: George Gryparis, Jason Mroz, Mike Velinske, Trevor Dexter, Jason McCune, Ralph Andrade, Mike Farrell

EVERYONE LIKES THE IDEA of the historic, multigenerational motorcycle shop. You know the type: born out of pure passion, persisting through ups and downs for decades, and run by the original owner's descendants several generations on. It's a story that resonates with authenticity and commitment, and customers feel a kinship with those stores.

Despite its name, American Heritage Motorcycles can't claim such origins. In fact, this Indian/Victory dealership in South Elgin, Ill. — the first of up to a dozen dealerships that will bear the American Heritage Motorcycles name — has been open less than a year. It's the flagship store for a group of entrepreneurs who are developing dual-branded Indian/Victory dealerships throughout the Midwest. Another AHM dealership just opened near Cleveland, and two more will join the ranks before the end of 2014 in the Chicago suburb of Countryside and then in Loveland, Ohio, near Cincinnati.

New dealerships like AHM may, at first glance, have little in common with old-time legacy shops. But look closer. Echoing the historic cues that Indian Motorcycle evokes so well in its advertising, the South Elgin AHM retail location, with its hardwood floors and warm furnishings, is distinctly different in look and feel from flashy modern shops; subsequent AHM stores promise similar surroundings.

But the distinction is more than skin deep, said CEO Rob McNish.

"We're taking a real long-term approach to running these dealerships and we're laying the proper foundation, not only for the manufacturers we represent but also for our own people and the customers we intend to keep for life," he said.

The foundation McNish refers to is a two-pronged approach that places the very best customer experience on par with optimal career development for staff. "One goal is to create a motorcycle dealership experience that is among the best if not the best for customers," he said. "And the other is to create a working environment for our people that is also second to none and that attracts and develops the best people in the industry." Simply put: happy employees make for happy customers.

But like most things that sound simple, it's easier said than done. McNish and his four partners bring a multitude of business management experience to the forefront in framing their vision to motivate great employees while building customer relationships for the long haul. The group includes McNish as CEO, Jeff Sinclair as dealer principal, Celia Sinclair handling interior design, Dan Finkelman with expertise in retail and Terry Sullivan with background in private equity. The team claims a gearhead vibe, too: McNish grew up around Harleys and Indians, and other partners had careers in the automotive industry.

The AHM concept took shape after McNish and Sinclair worked as management consultants with Polaris and came away from that impressed by Polaris's internal business practices and the commitment of the executive team. It also became clear that Polaris needed more dealerships to provide proper distribution, particularly for Indian. Getting stores up and running fast was important, too.

"When we approached them with putting a number of dealerships in key markets quickly it would be fair to say that Polaris saw that as an opportunity to expand more rapidly," McNish said.



The partners had studied successful dealerships and learned that operating a motorcycle shop is a complicated business. "When I see an owner/operator who came from racing or being an enthusiast or being mechanically inclined, and I see them not just running a full-blown dealership, but running it well, it's a testament to their management capabilities," McNish said. "I have a lot of respect for the complexity they're managing."

This research was also a reality check. "I don't think for a minute that we're going to waltz in and replicate that without a lot of hard work," he added.

THE BENEFIT OF A COLD-WEATHER MARKET

Why start in Chicago? According to McNish, Chicago is the largest metropolitan market for motorcycling, statistically, and it's relatively close to Harley-Davidson's home base of Milwaukee. You can't compete with Harley without strong engineering, design and marketing — all elements a company like Polaris has, McNish said. This led the AHM group to consider stores in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton and Pittsburgh. "These are all very attractive markets," said McNish. "Large cities with great motorcycling populations."

You might think Midwest weather is not conducive to riding, but McNish has a theory about that: In regions with long winters, when the good weather comes around people are determined to make the most of it, making cold weather markets good for motorcycling. So once locations were mapped out, the group next focused on maximizing the inherent efficiencies of multiple dealerships, such as inventory benefits and the sharing of physical assets like dynos and trucks. Staff can move between stores for special events, cover for each other and share talents, presenting further opportunity for staff development, one of AHM's key goals.

The ability to aggressively pursue staff development is an advantage AHM has over legacy mom-and-pop shops where succession is assumed, not planned. At AHM dealerships, McNish said there is room for people whose name isn't on the door to succeed and grow, to rise as high as their talents can take them. "We want people who love business, enjoy motorcycling and respect the heck out of motorcyclists," he said.

Part of the promise of creating an environment of professional development is in having senior leaders at the executive level spending time in the stores working with staff to improve operations and best practices and that's easier when the distance between stores is less. A regional network of dealerships also benefits customers, allowing them to stay connected and continue the relationship as they travel or move.

The partners are drawing on successful methods that can have positive effects in any type of business. "There is a lot of magic to what

one of my partners calls 'standard work,' simplifying the operations of a business by developing standard approaches to doing things, whether they're called best practices, standard practices or just good practices," McNish said. "If you can groove a store to standard practices, we believe it will do a better job for customers and once determined they should work everywhere."



INVESTING IN CUSTOMERS OVER TIME

The South Elgin store — the first AHM to open — sits in Kane County at the western edge of the Chicago metropolitan area, where incomes and housing values exceed the state av-

erage. And it's the template in this respect, says the store's general manager (and our cover model), George Gryparis. Though smaller than the others in square footage, the store looks elegant. He has trained his modest staff of five full-time and two part-time people to service and sell both Indians and Victorys.

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"We've been in the learning stages of establishing our policies and procedures, best practices and a solid customer base. We're developing confidence in the market that this is a great place to do business with," Gryparis said.

As shops selling both Victory and Indian motorcycles, AHM dealerships have motorcycles that appeal to a broad range of buyers, from the style-conscious nostalgic rider to the aggressive performance enthusiast. But attitude matters, too. "The shops that are doing it right stay with a customer through life, generation to generation, every season of the year," McNish said. "They're helping their customer with whatever their needs are, and that's far more important than any single transaction. But it takes courage and patience to treat customers as someone to invest in over time and not just someone with money in their hands today."

AHM is convinced that Polaris is committed to sustained investment over two or three product development generations to establish the



product line and customer base. This is where having affordable used bikes figures into the equation, because many new riders start out that way. Then as experience grows, they trade up. McNish believes

that AHM dealerships may ultimately sell as many used Harleys and Hondas as they do new Victories and Indians, and that's fine with him. "I love my customers who come in already at the stage to buy the Indian, but the customers who will make us successful are the ones who come in at 25 and aren't there yet," he said.

If all goes as planned, there will be plenty of time for observation. "When Jeff [Sinclair] and I put our ownership group together, we were very clear: this was a long-term commitment to build a business, oper-

ate a business, try our darnedest to be the best motorcycle dealer network in the country and then continue growing it. Our expectation is that we'll be involved with this through to retirement and beyond."

So decades from now, dealerships under the American Heritage Motorcycles banner just might be those legacy shops. **D**

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



SAVE THE DATE!

The 2014 Top 100 Dealer Awards Gala will be held Thursday evening, Dec. 4, at the Palmer House Hilton in downtown Chicago. The Dealer of the Year, Merit Award winners and the DJB Lifetime Achievement Award winners will be revealed. For more information or to buy tickets, visit www.dealertextpo.com

What Service does right

BEST PRACTICES FROM EXPERIENCE ... AND THE TOP 100 ENTRIES

THE 2014 DEALERNEWS Top 100 Dealers have demonstrated extraordinary abilities as powersports retailers. And I'll bet that each of those businesses has a strong service department.

More than just a place to service, repair and enhance vehicles, the service department is the backbone of a successful dealership, attracting, retaining and cultivating clientele.

Here are some service department best practices I have gleaned from the latest class of Top 100 dealerships and my own experiences.

SHOP LAYOUT

- Two lifts per tech are no longer a luxury; they are a must if the service department is to be proficient. Two lifts allow a tech to start and stop work without moving the bike when parts have to be ordered, owner approval has to be acquired or the dealership wants to offer "while you wait" service.
- Light intensity should be 80-100 ft. candles when measured on the lift, 36 inches above the floor.
- Air-conditioned service departments pay for themselves: Techs are more efficient, and you tend to attract a better class of employee.
- Air supply, oil guns and an exhaust extraction system in each bay reduce W-Time.
- A service library in a convenient area helps techs do the job right the first time.
- A special tools area uses metal tags to identify the tech who is using the tool. Some dealerships keep special tools under lock and key, and the service advisor or parts counterperson checks them in and out.
- Rather than yelling at the advisor or having to walk over to the service desk, some dealerships use a tech-to-service advisor alert system: a flag, light or buzzer to alert the service advisor.
- Security cameras can record vehicles in for service, how they were handled and any undesirable activities (like theft). Lowlifes think twice when the camera is looking their way.

SERVICE MARKETING

- Seasonally appropriate accessories are on display in the service reception area. Examples: fuel stabilizer and battery tenders in the fall and windshields and soft luggage in the spring.
- Display accessories that can be installed in 30 minutes or less for no charge during a routine service. These are always easy upsells.
- Free storage and reduced fees for parts and labor to active military, police, EMTs and firefighters. They deserve it.
- "How-to" customer clinics that provide insider information about the special services you perform, performance options and the technical aspects of

complex accessories. You'll almost always recoup your investment in follow-on parts and labor sales.

- Ensure the service department is well represented on the dealership's website with your areas of service specialty listed. To cultivate customer relationships, post service staff bios that provide the years of experience, training accomplished and favorite personal pastimes.

PROGRAMS AND PROCEDURES

- Appointment reminder calls the day before to reduce no-shows and late arrivals.
- A Quick Service program to attract and capture "whim work" when the customer just happens to stop by. It's as simple as setting up the shop with two lifts per tech and performing the work that takes two hours or less "while they wait."
- Complimentary vehicle pickup and delivery attracts business. Some shops have a routine of east on Tuesday and Thursday and west on Wednesday and Friday to be more efficient.
- Use tank and fender covers while servicing the vehicle. It reduces costly damages and demonstrates professionalism.
- Morning huddles to re-prioritize work, follow up on parts needed and assign jobs to techs.
- Vehicle checks performed on every bike in for service. The day before an appointment, check for outstanding safety recalls and service needs pertinent to mileage or age.
- Make follow-up calls to every service customer three to five days after the work is done to gauge customer satisfaction. If problems arise, address them and don't make promises you can't keep.
- Do a 360-degree inspection of the vehicle to determine service needs and owner "wants."
- To inspire additional sales, interview customers using questions such as, "Is there anything you want our tech to take a closer look at? Are you and your passenger totally comfortable on longer rides? Any longer trips planned? Are you happy with the power and sound, or would you like more? What are your thoughts about enhancing the look of your bike?"
- Track productivity, efficiency, proficiency and W-Time. It's tough to improve if you don't measure your progress.
- Create a continuing education plan for each employee, and lay out a plan for training that will increase the employee's value to the dealership.

These were just a few of the many best practices that Top 100 dealerships are implementing. If you have a good one that I neglected to mention, email me at dako1998@gmail.com and I'll get it into Dealernews with a nod to you!

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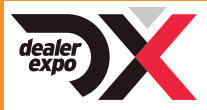
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Dirty Boys and the Freak Show

REMEMBERING BEING A KID, AND STILL BEING A KID AT HEART



TIE-DYED TALES

Rick Fairless is the owner of Stokers Dallas (a Top 100 dealer), Stokers Icehouse and Stokers Ink.

On the Web:

Now you can read Tie-Dyed Tales anytime on Rick's new blog page at www.dealernews.com. And see Rick at the 2014 Dealer Expo, Dec. 5-7 in Chicago.

DEAR GRANDMA AND GRANDPA,

I hope y'all are doing swell up there in Heaven. I'm sorry it's been so long since my last letter. We have been really busy here at Stokers Dallas. Fall is finally here and it's cooling down some. We actually slow down in the summer when it's 100 degrees every day. But now it's fall, which is good, except I know the ugly winter won't be far behind and I don't like that at all. It seems like Nov. 1 is the slow down day and I'm not sure why. I think maybe because that's when people start thinking about the holidays.

Personally, I love the holidays, but professionally, I HATE the holidays. I mean, our weather here in Dallas is pretty good all winter long, but business slows way down. We still get good crowds on the weekends when the weather is good throughout the holidays, so please tell God thanks for that.

So the State Fair of Texas was in town. Sue and I go every year and we really look forward to it. I remember y'all taking me and Ran there when we were young kids. The way I remember it is I was always a good boy and minded my manners, but Ran, I seem to remember, ran around like a wild Indian, although he might remember that a little differently, I guess.

Back then they still had the Freak Show. They had this one dude that they advertised as having four eyeballs. Me and Ran thought it was maybe a human oddity or something cool like that because it appeared that he had two eyeballs in each eye socket. But Grandpa, you spoiled that for us when you said that he had crammed a glass eye in each of his eye sockets to appear as a second eye on each side. They also had that little girl with a beard. Now that was cool because she was about our age at the time, 10 or 11, and we couldn't grow a beard. You can't find cool stuff like that anymore at the fair thanks to a politically correct world!

Me and Sue didn't see any cool stuff like the Freak Show this year, but we still had fun. They had an aquarium where you could actually feed and pet the stingrays. Sue loved it until later when she discovered that it made her hands all sticky and slimy. Gross was the term I think she used. Grandma, why is it that girls don't like to get all dirty and messy? Us boys don't mind. It's kinda cool, really. Sometimes at home, while we're doing the dishes, I'll spit in the sink just to make Sue squeal. Or last night she asked me to hand her a fork and I tried to give her the one that she had used while cooking. She wanted a clean one, so I wiped the dirty one across my pant leg and she squealed like a stuck pig. It was funny! Grandpa, did you ever do stuff like that to gross

out Grandma? Sometimes when Sue tells me to go wash my hands I'll rub them on her head and announce that they're clean now! Did you ever do that, Grandpa? I bet you did, just not in front of us grandkids.

Bigun still hasn't had her baby yet, but it's due anytime now. It'll be fun having a second grandchild. Our first grandchild, Blyss, is three now, so she's lots of fun to be around. When she first started talking she would call me Papa and I kept correcting her to call me Grandpa. Sue would say, "Just let her call you what she wants to call you." "Nope," I'd say, "I'm gonna be called Grandpa just like I called my Grandpa and eventually I'll wear this baby down!"

Well, now that she's three, I'm proud to say that she calls me Grandpa! I'd forgotten how much energy a three-year-old has and how many questions they ask. The world is new to them and they're trying to figure everything out. Just the other day Sue told her that she (Grandma) had a tummy ache and Blyss asked if Grandma had a baby in there. I laughed out loud, but Grandma told Grandpa to shut up. (Not nice Grandma!)

Hey, Grandpa, Ran was in town for a case he's working on and we took a few hours and went for a ride. It was cool because we don't get to ride together more than once or twice a year. It's funny because when we ride together now it's exactly the same as when we were teenagers. We each know how the other rides and we can anticipate each other's moves before we even make them. I know exactly when he's gonna start leaning for the corner and exactly when he's gonna start braking for a light and exactly how he's gonna ride between gears. I guess that we pretty much ride the same way now on our Victory motorcycles as we did on our Honda and Yamaha 100s when we were 15 and 16 years old. I reckon that's a good thing!

I guess I better go now. I gotta go work at our Big State Fountain Grill tonight. That's the 1948 soda fountain/grill that Sue and I bought in downtown Irving. We're pulling double duty trying to get the employees squared up on our new business. But, that's another headache I'll tell y'all about another day!

Love y'all!
Rickey

P.S. If you see God, please ask him to smile on us poor chumps down here in the motorcycle industry. The economy is ever so slowly getting better, but maybe God can throw it in high gear and get this dog off the porch! **D**



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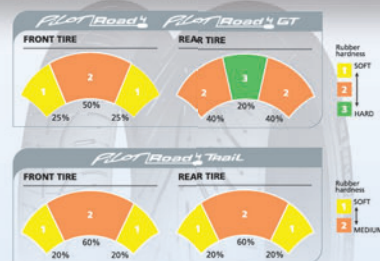
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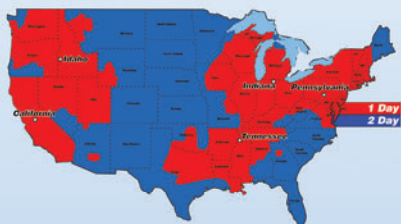
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