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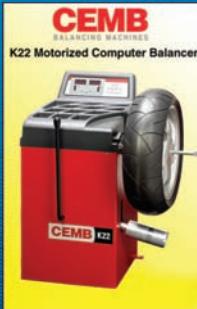
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Group Content Director

Beginnings

I'LL TELL YOU a secret: I never wanted to be editor of Dealernews.

Fourteen years ago, fresh after fleeing high-tech publishing (months before a market meltdown), I came to this magazine. My title was publishing director and my job was to provide back-end business support and direction for the team. My face wasn't supposed to be on the editorial page, nor did I want it to be. I had been a rider, had a license even, but was not yet versed in this particular business and was perfectly content being the off-stage producer as others much more market-

savvy remained in the spotlight. I'm not sure management even announced my arrival until a few months in, once I'd read years of back issues and memorized the client list.

Two years later, everything changed. Mike Vaughan was brought on as publisher and I was named editorial director. Luckily, Mike was my ace card and we became a pretty tough twosome to beat.

And Dealernews

evolved from the magazine into a website (over 15,000 articles to date—yes, I counted) and the DealerNEWS ALERT enewsletters, which pretty much changed the way everyone gets information in this industry.

Over the years my title changed from editorial director to associate publisher to content director, but, really, I was the editor. The proverbial buck stopped with me, and while I fronted occasional apologies I also had the good fortune of hearing the cheers when we did something well, which was often.

Over the last 14 years I've had the privilege of working with the best editorial and design teams in the industry, ones that starred Dennis Johnson, Arlo Redwine, Joe Delmont, Bruce Steever, Beth Dolgner, Tom Roderick, Vince Guerrieri,

Beth Demont, Cynthia Furey, Guido Ebert, Lisa Aviles and my beloved friend and journalistic compadre, Holly Wagner. You all made me raise my game.

I've had the honor to edit some of the best "minds" in motorcycling, including the incomparable Don Brown and Mike Vaughan, Dave Koshollek, Eric Anderson, Marilyn Stemp, Tracy Martin, Rod Stuckey, Tory Hornsby, Mark Rodgers, Todd Shafer, Jennifer Robison, Genevieve Schmitt, Steve Zarwell, Otis Hackett and the wonderfully irreplaceable Rick Fairless.

And for those of you who think there aren't strong dames in leadership positions, I present Tracy Harris and Leah Stevens of the International Motorcycle Shows. It's been a fun and challenging ride, and I can think of no better companions.

Ask anyone and they'll tell you: my absolute favorite part of this industry is the front line—the dealers. Each of you is unique, and all of you have stories to tell and management practices to defend. I look forward to the start of the annual Top 100 Dealer Competition (entries for this year's program are due mid-August, by the way). Visiting your shops is a delight. Hang on to what you've got, talk to each other and fight those who would threaten you—it's worth it.

This is my last issue as editor. After June 30, I'll be tackling new adventures, but I'll still be around, and you can always find me on Twitter (@maryslepicka) and on LinkedIn. And, OMG, maybe we'll become Facebook friends.

Fourteen years ago I came to Dealernews as a former motorcyclist who hadn't been on a bike in a long time. And while I'm not the type to don the chaps and head out rain or shine, I did get back to being a rider because of this job, and most weekends, now, you can find me on a two-lane road, heading somewhere and nowhere in particular. Thank you, dealers. Because of you, I am once again a customer. ☺

Mary Green Slepicka

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You're biased...

...AND SO ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS. HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

LAST MONTH I focused on the positive mental shortcuts (known as *heuristics*) that assist people in making good decisions. By understanding how your customers' brains are wired, you can accelerate your sales. Now, I want to explore biases, which are negative mental shortcuts. These cognitive illusions, much like optical illusions, twist the way people think about reality.

There are many types of biases at play on a daily basis in a powersports dealership. Three of the biggest: availability bias, present-value bias and confirmation bias.

Both buyers and sellers (yes, you!) can fall prey to these biases. And like heuristics, biases are built into our psychological makeup and are so pervasive that we rarely even notice them at work inside our heads. Today, it's time to start noticing them.

Availability Bias

I'll argue that the root of all bias is availability. People, myself included, have a tendency to give the most credence to what we can most easily recall. If we remember an occurrence quickly without much effort, we find it perfectly suited for whatever the question is before us. For example, a customer asks you to recommend an aftermarket exhaust system and you mention the one you sold two days ago. Your brain may have substituted the question, "Which one is the best?" with "Which one can you name first?"

So what does this have to do with selling more, faster? Your own bias toward the product and brand you most recently sold prevents you from providing careful analysis of the buyer's questions based on his or her needs and wants. Instead, you simply say what pops into your head. Stop it.

Present-Value Bias

As humans, we crave immediate gratification, which is easier than ever to obtain in a culture that allows you quick and easy smartphone video access

to practically any segment from "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon." This is called present-value bias, and two examples of how to leverage it are eBay sellers that use the "Buy It Now" function to bypass the auction bidding process and Amazon's "Buy Now with 1-Click" option. Each of these methods either shortens or eliminates a waiting period.

How can you use leverage your understanding of present-value bias to sell more, faster? By making it easier for your customers to say "yes" right now (easier to sign up, easier to pay, easier to choose options). Then make sure there is an immediate payoff for your customers (saving money, obtaining a free accessory, riding it home today). In other words, you should have a "Buy Now with 1-Click" button, too.

Confirmation Bias

Everybody tends to seek facts, stats and opinions that prove their own hypotheses or preconceptions. How many times has a customer entered your dealership dead-set on purchasing a specific product because he read a positive review about it in Cycle World? That buyer is a victim of confirmation bias, which can lead to poor decision-making by providing people with all the reasons they think they need to support their own aims, leaving nothing for them to refute.

If you are to ethically persuade your customer to purchase the product that truly fits his needs and not the one that a faceless magazine writer claims will be perfect for him, you must perform due diligence.

Ask your customer all of the relevant questions to make sure the product he has his heart and mind set on is indeed the one he actually needs. If not, it's your job to explain why and convince him to consider other options. On the other hand, if you're convinced that the product reviewed in Cycle World truly is the best thing for your buyer, acknowledge this bias and ring up the sale.

Remember, the same factors that impact your thinking—and your customers' thinking—also impact your thinking about your thinking. For example, sometimes we all fall prey to something called base-rate neglect. This is when we ignore statistics in favor of anecdotal incidents.

Have you ever heard a co-worker say something like, "Those covers don't sell!" as people around the room start to nod in agreement, cementing this as "truth" among new staff members, when a quick bit of research shows you sold four of them last month. Evidence, not anecdotes, is important here.

Anchoring

Another common bias, especially among buyers, is anchoring—as in anchoring to the first price quote they hear and then comparing that to all other prices.

When discussing cost with a customer, take into consideration whether he's done his own due diligence and researched the price of the bike he wants to buy. If so, those numbers could impact the sales conversation, and it's your job to explain why those numbers might not be applicable to the actual motorcycle under consideration. The bike you're selling might be priced higher than the customer's anchor price because the options are slightly different, or required taxes and fees vary.

Also consider introducing a second motorcycle into the discussion, one with very similar features but with a price tag that's \$1,500 less. Now, the customer fixated on spending X amount of dollars suddenly has the opportunity to spend much less than that!

There are two fundamental ways to leverage both heuristics and biases. The first is to understand what to say when, and the second is to point out to your target the potential harm of certain mental patterns. These are crucial components of maximizing your sales—and your persuasive—potential. **D**

Fifty Years of Good Times



Although Kawasaki is recognized as one of the “Big Four,” it almost wasn’t. Kawasaki Aircraft Company (KAC) got involved in the motorcycle business in the 1940s, initially manufacturing gears and small engines for several automotive, motorcycle and motorized bicycle companies. After many frustrating years of dealing with this unstable

Nebraska and City Cycles in Honolulu. But it was the wrong product at the wrong time, and sales were not encouraging.

Early in 1965, Hamawaki and his associates established an office in Chicago and began to resolve the many problems that confronted the fledgling company, least among them the name “Kawasaki,” which some local folks thought to be a Polish sausage company.

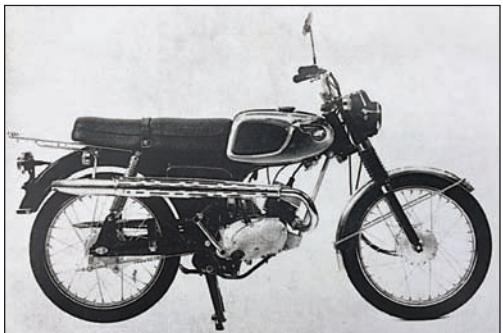
They were also faced with very real problems, such as an unsold inventory of unattractive products, distributorship issues, a poor record of parts supply and technical support, and a need for product with more appeal to U.S. consumers. With distribution in place, Kawasaki focused on product, dealer relationships and marketing. By 1967 American Kawasaki had established a functional distribution system stretched throughout the country.

The big difference between Kawasaki and its competitors was the company’s product and management philosophy.

“Market In” meant the market and American staff would determine what product was needed. The U.S. personnel would be responsible for all aspects of marketing and sales, while Japan would take care of design and production.

Starting late, Kawasaki knew they would have to build a solid dealer organization, develop extraordinary product and generate a unique position for themselves in the market.

To this end, in 1967 the Flying K logo was introduced. The following year Kawasaki’s neon green made its debut on competition machines—a blast of outrageous color in the sea of red, white and blue then gridding on tracks across the nation. To reinforce their racing presence, noticing that most published race photos were shot with



market, KAC in 1960 decided to develop and sell a Kawasaki-branded motorcycle.

Four years later, KAC seriously considered leaving the motorcycle business. However, a young employee, Yoji Hamawaki, was influenced by a visit

to a Honda dealership in the United States. He went over his superior’s heads to KAC’s Executive Director and convinced him that, although Kawasaki had been unsuccessful in Japan to date, they could still be successful in the booming U.S. market.

KAWASAKI MOTORS AMERICA

A few motorcycles had been sold in the U.S. as “Omegas” by the Ken-Kay organization located in California, Masek Distributing in



the bike leaned over in a turn, they became the first to start putting logos on the fairing lowers.

50 YEARS OF PRODUCT

The Samurai 250cc

and Avenger 350cc two-strokes, plus the W1 650cc four-stroke twins, were introduced to the U.S. in '66. Both bikes were significant departures from previous models, and enough to give the fledgling company some sales momentum.

The introduction of the first bike based on the "Market In," philosophy happened in 1969: it was the radical Mach III. The 500cc two-stroke triple, termed the "Rocket

with a sprocket," had a list price of \$995 and it virtually sold out, changing the high-performance game for everyone.

In 1971 the last and best of the legendary Kawasaki two-stroke triples was introduced: the 750 H2 Mach IV. Soon to become a victim of looming emissions standards, it was phased out in 1975.

Kawasaki had a banner year in 1973 with the introduction of the Z1 and Jet Ski™ personal watercraft. The Z1 again upped the ante for performance and set the direction for U.S. big-bore motorcycle standards over the next 10 years. It's also said to have been the inspiration for the term, "super-bike." With a list price of \$1,995, the bike netted KMC a 50% rise in sales versus an overall industry increase of 12%.

Jet Ski started a totally new market and

sport. Best of all, it created an entirely new category and accessory profit center for Kawasaki dealers. Over the years it became a commonly used name for most all personal watercraft.

Kawasaki introduced the Z1 LTD in '76. Arguably the first factory custom, its styling was quickly followed by every other Japanese manufacturer.

In 1978 Kawasaki introduced its advanced snowmobile, and the KX250, Kawasaki's first bike with Uni-Trak®, the unique, rising, rate rear suspension. The snowmobile, a liquid-cooled, oil-injected, low-slung missile took the industry by storm, and sold out the entire first year's 20,000-unit production in a declining market.

The first application of fuel injection on a production motorcycle happened in 1980 with the KZ1000 LTD Classic and in '81, the GPz1100 was introduced.

The Ninja® rocked the market in '84. The bronze and red 900cc rocketship was a fully-faired bike featuring a liquid-cooled, fuel injected, 16-valve engine, which delivered high-performance in an easy-to-ride package. Like its predecessors, it too set new performance standards and led the way for the competition. Like Jet Ski®, the iconic name soon became the generic term for the sportbike category.

The Vulcan® series was born in 1985. Named after the Roman god of steel and fire, the Vulcans were Kawasaki's first entry into the exploding V-twin cruiser market.

In 1987, another Kawasaki innovation debuted: the MULE™, a four-wheeled side-by-side, all-terrain vehicle. Initially intended as a true utility product, the MULE was soon adopted by off-roaders, evolved into today's Teryx™, and now is a substantial component of the OHV recreation market.

In '06, the Ninja ZX™1400 ushered in a

bigger, faster, quicker era to the world of superbikes, and was the fastest and quickest bike of the year. Two years later the basic bike was adapted for sport touring as the Concours® 14, bringing new levels of performance to the sport touring market.

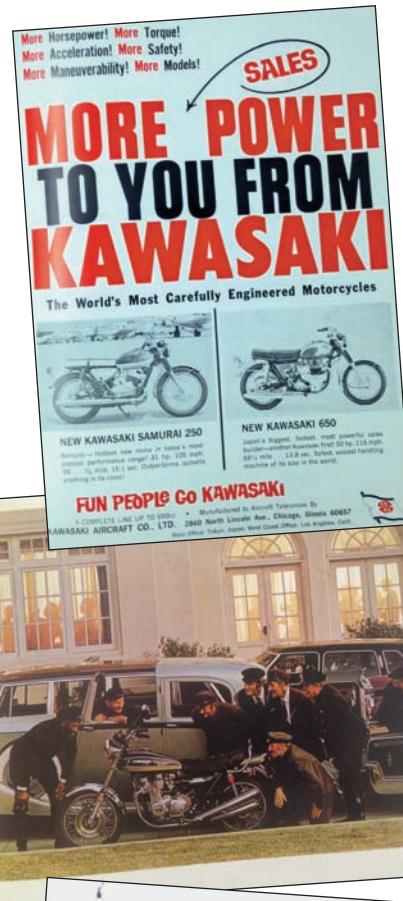
With the 2015 model-year introduction of the Ninja H2™ and supercharged H2R™, Kawasaki has once again changed the definition of high-performance. The two 998cc superbikes are the most powerful and innovative production bikes on the planet, with technology derived from several of Kawasaki Heavy Industry's various divisions.

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

In 1968 Kawasaki became the first to announce and implement annual model year changes, and the first to back dealers with a hold-back program of 3%.

Although Kawasaki's "Good Time" campaign has changed since its introduction in 1973, evolving along with the market's musical tastes and media choices, the fundamental appeal is still there. Kawasaki makes products that bring excitement into your life. As KMC employees can tell you, when they check into a hotel and tell the front desk staff who they're with, more often than not, they'll get, "Oh yeah, Kawasaki lets the good times roll!"

In 1975 Kawasaki's Lincoln, Neb., plant was the first to open a manufacturing factory





In '81 the first factory-sponsored, grass-roots racing support started: Team Green. By '82, Kawasaki was taking a truck, parts and products to various events in support of local dealers.

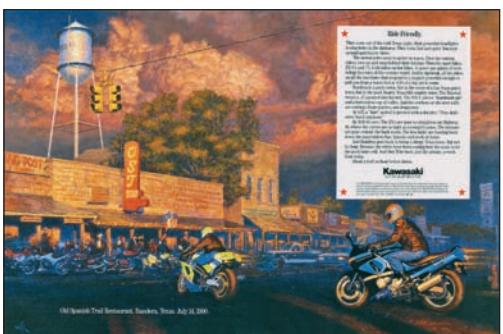
The next year, 2 million "Good Times" magazines were sent to motorcyclists across the nation. Dealers reported customers coming into their stores, waving the magazine and wanting a particular motorcycle.

In 1984 Kawasaki's "Ticket to Ride" first factory supported demo ride program premiered. This is how it worked: Consumers would go to their local dealership, make a \$25 deposit for a ticket, head to their local test track for a ride on a new Kawasaki, return to the dealership and retrieve their \$25. The dealer then had the opportunity to make a sale. By '86 the test ride program moved beyond the race track to major events across the nation.

In 1989 the “Hangouts” ad campaign was introduced. It tied PR, events and advertising together. Each ad featured a Kawasaki motorcycle in a known motorcycle hangout. Corporate would set up a display, offer test rides, and become a part of that hangout for the weekend. The campaign won accolades from the AMA and was deemed “Campaign of the Decade” by Motorcyclist magazine.

Throughout the past 50 years, Kawasaki has worked hard to develop cutting edge, practical products, designed to enhance whatever motor-driven lifestyle a consumer enjoys: two wheels, on-road, off-road, four wheels, or on the water. At the same time, they want to make sure their dealers have the best sales and marketing tools available.

Kawasaki looks forward to the next 50 years of "Letting the Good Times Roll."



owned by an overseas company in the U.S. By 1990 it would produce more than 1 million vehicles.

That year also saw the implementation of the industry's first corporate sponsored dealer communications council, giving representative dealers an

opportunity to tell management what they needed and what they didn't need, and to ask the tough questions. Company-backed extended warranties, and wholesale financing were also introduced that year.

By the '80s, Kawasaki was on a roll, winning superbike and motocross championships year-after-year. But they never lost sight of the prime goal of making business

easier with their marketing efforts focused on driving consumers to their dealerships.



50th ANNIVERSARY

Dealernews

MOTORCYCLE DEALER NEWS

VOLUME 1, No. 1

SERVING AMERICA'S MOTORCYCLE INDUSTRY

JUNE 1965

A TRADE JOURNAL IS BORN

Join us in celebrating the 50th anniversary of *Dealernews* with this special section devoted to the history of the magazine, the industry and American culture.

— *The Editors*

June 1965

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Growing Need for an Editorial Voice for the Booming Motorcycle Industry Spurs Publication

Sierra Madre, Calif., June 15, 1965 — Having been connected with motorcycling for over two decades and witnessing the fantastic growth of the motorcycle business in recent years, Wm. M. "Bill" Bagnall, editor of *Motorcyclist* magazine, has felt that the nation's 4,000-plus motorcycle and motorscooter dealers should have an editorial voice of their own. Thus, this is the first issue of *Motorcycle Dealer News*.

It will be *MDN*'s policy to publish articles of vital interest to you and your business and its successful future. *MDN* is not affiliated with any trade association nor consumer publication; however, we will be covering the worthwhile activities of both fields as well as reporting on legislative matters and every other facet pertaining to your business and the motorcycle industry.

This monthly magazine is being sent to you, the motorcycle dealer, free of charge. The cost of producing and distributing *MDN* is being borne by the advertisers, and we salute those firms represented in these pages who have shown that they share our enthusiasm right from the start for the real need for such a publication as *Motorcycle Dealer News*.

You, as the vital link in the motorcycle trade, are invited to express your views pertaining to both this publication and on any other subject related to the motorcycle business. For it is the healthy exchange of thoughts and ideas that spells progress.

Meanwhile, welcome to the first issue of *Motorcycle Dealer News*. We hope that you find it informative. We welcome your constructive criticism.

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50th ANNIVERSARY

FROM 1965:

Nothing happens in your business until someone sells something.

Orderly rows of motorcycles don't tell a non-rider the first thing about what you can do with a motorcycle.

— Frank Conner

If facts and figures and features were important, then automobile manufacturers would hire engineers as salesmen, drug companies would hire chemists and insurance companies would hire actuaries to do the selling. Instead, they all employ salesmen skilled in being able to cause people to feel and buy.

— Max Sacks

It is literally certain that the productive capacity of the world's major motorcycle firms will eventually have the capability of surpassing the requirements of the market in all model categories. — Don J. Brown

All your customers want is reassurance from you that they are not paying too much for the motorcycle, all things considered—and that means parts availability, resale value, warranty policy.

Motorcycle designers, with rare exceptions, have failed to give adequate attention to the qualities of durability and reliability, and have apparently been too complacent about these matters.

— J.B. Nicholson on the importance of after-sales service

The established dealer has forgotten what it is like *not* to know anything about motorcycles. Since he can't think like a non-rider, he finds that he has trouble drawing non-riders into his store. — Frank Conner, ad manager for CEMoto East, agency for Bultaco

What a motorcyclist does with his life materially affects others, and much of his motorcycling future depends on his understanding of society and how to get the most out of it.

— Norman S. Benedict, safety consultant

The next year or two will present the Moment of Truth for some, and it will be the survival of the fittest at all levels.

— Bagnall and Hester on the introduction of Honda's CB450, the company's first full-sized motorcycle for the U.S.

If the dealer is an "old timer" it may be difficult to understand this new generation that works thru your door. They probably don't have the mechanical interest or the understanding of, say, the riders of the sporting era that began after World War II. They do have the money, though, and they expect you to do the mechanical part.

— Richard C. Renstrom

1965

Bill Bagnall and Larry Hester launch **Motorcycle Dealer News** with an initial circulation of 4,000

There are **1.4 million registered motorcycles** in the United States

Suzuki offers first 12-month, 12,000-mile warranty

Harley-Davidson introduces the Electra Glide

Johnson Motors' **Don J. Brown** named director of operations at Suzuki

Arctic Cat introduces first slide rail track suspension system for snowmobiles

Former banker **Tom Cates** joins BSA as western region service manager

1966

Motorcycle Dealer News hosts industry's first trade show for dealers at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, Calif.

"Join the Swinging World of Yamaha" ad campaign debuts

Motorcycle **sales increase 27 percent** over previous year

BSA debuts Victor 441 Special based on Jeff Smith's championship bike

Texas Motorcycle Dealer Association launches

Kawasaki introduces Japan's first 650cc motorcycle

Robert H. Wehman launches **Spectro Oils**

Cutting prices will kill you. If one customer hears you've sold the same bike he bought to somebody else for less money, you're dead!

– Gary Olson, Sports Cycle Sales, Idaho Falls, Idaho

When Honda and Yamaha first entered the American market, they were able to convince key dealers of British and domestic makes that the inclusion of Honda or Yamaha as a line would not conflict with their existing lines or with their efforts to sell the other makes. Later, when Honda, Yamaha and Suzuki were able to attract new-to-the-business dealers, other major companies who represented larger capacity, higher priced models reversed the procedure with marked success, using the very same argument. In this manner, the various companies involved were able to vastly improve their geographical coverage by marketing their products through common dealers.

– Don J. Brown

I don't mind servicing an overflow after my customers and their motorcycles are taken care of, but this creates a problem inasmuch as the riders expect service from me even though they purchased their motorcycles from my competitors.

– Hobart, Ind., dealer principal

A far-reaching program of enlightenment could be presented to the public attesting to the fact that only a very small minority of the motorcycle riding population is interested in 'hell raising.'

– Jack G. Halterman Jr., retired dealer

Your company letter-head is a true reflection of you and your business for the many firms and people with whom you do business and have never met.

Just what are we going to use for a yardstick in measuring the safety of a motor vehicle? After 17 years of battling Los Angeles traffic, I would suggest a Sherman tank.

– Paul M. Brokaw on motorcycle safety regulations

The secret of any successful vehicle safety program lies in development of mature, technically trained and socially aware and responsible persons at all levels.

– Norman S. Benedict, safety consultant

By the end of the year, there should be at least one-and-a-quarter-million motorcycles and scooters registered in the 50 states.

– William Kennedy, president, Motorcycle Scooter and Allied Trades Association.

He estimated there were 5 million riders in the U.S., about 10 percent of them women.

1967

Fred Fox launches Parts Unlimited
Bell releases first full-face helmet
Suzuki debuts the **500/Five**, the first 500cc dual stroke
Don J. Brown named vice president of **BSA**
Evel Knievel and His Motorcycle Daredevils show debuts at National Date Festival in Indio, Calif.
Florida, South Dakota launch **state dealer associations**

1968

John Penton releases self-styled 125cc Six Day model with a 15.5hp Sachs engine, five-speed gearbox, Ceriani front and rear suspension, and Magura Six Day Trials controls
Drag Specialties distribution company now run by Lemans
Motorcycle Scooter & Allied Trades Association develops **associate membership for dealers**
BSA launches the **Rocket 3**
Safety Helmet Council of America announces first certification program

'It was a neat little industry'

WHAT WAS IT LIKE for the motorcycle dealers selling European and Japanese brands 50 years ago? We asked three who were there.

In 2014, in anticipation of the 50th Anniversary year of Dealernews, Contributing Editor Joe Delmont spent a day with three of the first foreign bike dealers in the United States:

- **Dillard Coleman** (r) who started in 1963 and owned Coleman Powersports in Falls Church and Woodbridge, Va. He sold the stores in 1999; they are now part of a six-dealership group from Louisiana to Michigan run by Coleman's daughter, Kimberly Coleman Harrison.
- **Bob Shenk** (l), who began in the business in 1956 when he was still in high school, with a JAWA franchise.
- **Ed Fisher** (c), who got into the business in 1950 in Parkesburg, Pa. He was a Triumph and Indian factory rider and worked for Triumph and Indian dealers.

Dealernews thanks Bill Shenk, Bob's son and owner of Destination Powersports in Punta Gorda, Fla., for hosting the day-long session. Photos by Brian Blanco Photography.



"It was a year or so before I got going."

How did you get started?

Coleman: We bought out a realtor who had been trying it for four months.

Shenk: I had been foolin' with motorcycles and scooters, and I traded a Cushman box scooter to some kid for this little motorcycle, and it turned out it was a CZ (but they called it a JAWA CZ 125). I was so impressed by that little stinker. One day, I was over at my cousin's house, and he had a cycle magazine, and a little, tiny ad says, "Be a JAWA dealer." So I wrote to them and asked about being a dealer. And they wrote back and said I had to buy a crate of two bikes, and it was going to be \$300 for the two bikes.

I sold everything I had and got those two bikes. I tried to sell one and I was riding one. It was a year or so before I

got going. You had to sell some before you could buy something else, but you know, you did it. And I was too dumb to know I couldn't do that.

Coleman: That's how most motorcycle dealers got started.

Fisher: In '52 I started riding this factory Triumph out of Baltimore, and the guy who took care of the bike I was riding—the service manager—said they opened a distributorship and were trying to set up dealers. He knew that I had a gas station and done a little tinkering with motorcycles, and he told me if I needed any parts to just let him know and he would bring them to the race, and that way I'd be selling some Triumph parts.

The second time I had him bring the parts, he said he was going to set me up as a dealer. That way, I could get my

parts wholesale. I had to buy one Triumph motorcycle and buy \$500 worth of parts, including a little Triumph sign, and there I was, a Triumph dealer.

What was your total down payment?

Fisher: The bike then was near a thousand dollars and I had it sold before I bought it. So I went to Baltimore, paid him for the bike and paid him for the parts. They shipped the parts, and Davy Jones helped me put the bike together, and I rode it home.

So that was my first [and only] bike, and now I'm a Triumph dealer but I don't have a bike. So I bought a new Thunderbird, which was a hot setup then, and I kept that 'til spring. I guess my brother, Harry, thought I would never sell it, so he bought it. Now I have two Triumphs on the road but no

1969

AMF shareholders approve merger with Harley-Davidson

New all-terrain vehicle market projected to be worth \$375 million. Latest

models feature six wheels, 30 mph top speeds and ABS plastic bodies

Midwest Mutual introduces first "canopy" multi-peril insurance policy for dealers

MDN launches Snowmobile Dealer News magazine

Honda dealers in Southern California form their own dealer council

1970

Motorcycle, Scooter & Allied Trades Association merges with Motorcycle Safety Council to form the **Motorcycle Industry Council**

Dick Mann wins the Daytona 200, on Honda, ushering in a new era of American road racing

1.1 million motorcycles are sold in the U.S., with 2.8 million units registered

Honda introduces the **three-wheel ATC**

Hollywood releases "**Easy Rider**," starring Peter Fonda, Dennis Hopper and Jack Nicholson

Triumphs to ride or to sell, and I have to buy another one, and I am still at this little gas station.

You're not having a lot of carryover inventory, anyway...

Fisher: No. Anyway, my friend, Rod Coates at Triumph, says I ought to build a shop behind my house. In 1955 I built a shop. I might have had a little more than 800 sq. ft. I had that for two years and put a showroom in it. And I was still riding the Triumph race bike.

How much time did you spend in racing vs. in the shop?

Fisher: I raced every weekend for a while, but Coates got busy at Triumph and did not have time to go racing all the time, and I was running the business, too. For the first year or two we did quite a few local races. And the first year I rode, I was still an amateur but I set the track record; it stood until Brad Henry broke it five years later on a little bike that Coates made. Funny little bike, curved forks on it, chrome frame.

I did have one employee in the first year and then a couple more, and then I bought seven acres between my old shop and house and Highway 30. That was in 1961. In 1963 I took on Datsun and built a shop along Highway 30. I didn't put Triumph up there right away, but they ended up there by 1972. In 1965 Toyota came by and I took them on, and I bought a place in Lancaster and took Triumphs in there, too. That's why I went to Lancaster—to get Triumph. That was a pretty good area for Triumph and someone was going to get it sooner or later, and I figured it might as well be me.

I gave up Toyota in '72; they wanted me to build a big new 100-car-a-month facility in Coatesville. I wasn't interested. I got involved in buying quite a bit of ground in northern Pennsylvania: built a campground, got a KOA franchise, ended up with 400 acres of farmland and timber. I sold all the acreage except for about 10 acres about

10 years before they started buying gas rights.

You sold before the run-up?

Fisher: Yah, I'm glad I didn't get involved in that. Anyway, I had cars, motorcycles, I quit racing professional but I rode Sportsman, Vintage.

"Honda changed everything."

When did you take Honda?

Fisher: In 1963.

Shenk: I took them on in '64.

Was there much of an industry at that time?

Shenk: We thought there was.

Fisher: I thought that probably was the way it was going to be forever. But Honda changed everything.

Shenk: Up until the end of World War II, it was Harley and Indian, and right after the war or soon after, as soon as some of these factories could get rebuilt, the imports started showing up. In '57 I took on Ducati and BMW in this little shack. I had room for about two bikes. BMW in those days was so fantastic in that it was so reliable.

The bike, or the company?

Shenk: Both. In those days, you had to be a mechanic to ride a motorcycle.

Fisher: That's right.

Shenk: If you weren't a mechanic, you were in trouble. They would sell you all the pieces you should take, the cables—you know, bolts and what-not—because bikes weren't all that reliable. But BMW was, and Honda came along. It was a neat little industry; it was a lot more, what you would say, family.

Fisher: Everybody knew everybody. Now you talk about a Honda dealer in Maryland, he don't know the dealers in Pennsylvania. Back then, you had that one big Triumph dealer meeting in Baltimore, and I bet there were close to 200 dealers on the East by then. You went every year for that dealer meeting and you didn't know everybody personally,

but you knew who they were and where they were from.

I had a lot of fun being in Triumph and the motorcycle business. I did. I traveled [as a racer]. When we went someplace, we stopped at all the dealerships and they were always real glad to see you.

Shenk: Rob Coates was the national service manager for Triumph. He could solve the problems of the dealers, problems they couldn't solve themselves.

Fisher: Davy Jones, he worked in service. He built my bike and he built Sherm Cooper's, which won the 150-mile race at Laconia.

"If you sign the deal, you're co-signing for your customer, and you've got to start paying if he doesn't pay."

Was the dealership your sole source of income?

Coleman: I was working for IBM as a customer engineer, taking service calls. I didn't come to "work" for the dealership until 1967; I kept my job because I wasn't sure what was going to happen. I had two partners, and one partner quit his job at the local department store. He was making \$80 a week and I told him if we didn't make \$80 a week from the dealership I'd make up the difference from my IBM salary. That's what happened from 1963 to '67. I had a good job; I hated to give it up, but...

Fisher: You wonder why he stayed with motorcycles? He liked motorcycles, that's why.

Coleman: The motorcycle business finally got so demanding that I had to make a decision. When I finally quit IBM the business was running sufficiently for me to have a pretty good idea where it was going to go.

What role did you take?

Coleman: We opened it just part-time and weekends. So all three of us

1971

Filmmaker **Bruce Brown** releases "On Any Sunday" and makes **Malcolm Smith** a national celebrity

Motorcycle Industry Council urges manufacturers to cease production and use of exhaust systems exceeding certain dB levels

Bombardier launches Operation SnoPlan, which promotes snowmobile safety and the development of groomed trails

New England Motor Parts Co. ("NEMPCO: The Biker's Choice") is launched

1971 SuperGlide, designed by **Willie G.**, solidifies Harley-Davidson as a leader in custom bike culture

1972

Kawasaki begins the **Superbike** era with the introduction of the KZ900cc-4

Federal government standardizes bike controls, passes the Noise Control Act

Anderson-Kittelson's low-end fiber-glass helmet dealer price: \$13.95

Don Emde wins the Daytona 200, the first son of a former champion to do so

1973

Dealers report sales increases as **gas prices near \$1/gallon**

Nearly 70 percent of dealers say they will start to expand accessory lines

Motorcycle Safety Foundation is created

The **Bimota** motorcycle brand launches in Rimini, Italy

Kenny Roberts, riding Yamaha, is Grand National Champion



50th ANNIVERSARY



worked in the evenings and weekends until one partner quit his job and came to work; then he was a salesman, mechanic, the parts man and the whole bit. The second partner, he was an auto mechanic, so he [then] became the mechanic. That left my other partner to be the salesman and the parts guy. My wife was bookkeeper. I sort of oversaw it; I had a financial background. I went to the bank and made the loans.

You could talk money with the lenders.

Coleman: Exactly. Which brings up another situation: We couldn't get financing for our customers. I'm sure we all went through that.

Fisher: It was all full recourse [loan and repayment].

Coleman: Did you ever deal with Banker's Finance in D.C., John Hostetter?

Shenk: I remember the name.

Coleman: You had to have full recourse. He would loan you the money, but when you sold the bike, you had to pay off the loan. In other words, if you sign the deal, you're co-signing for your customer and you've got to start paying if he doesn't pay. That was pretty standard in those days.

Fisher: He was the guy who put the lock on Seed Hitchcock's operation.

Coleman: Hitchcock went to Daytona one year and when he came back there were padlocks on his doors. He'd been selling bikes and taking the money from the bike sales and paying off other bills. That's a no-no.

Fisher: Remember when they would come by and count the inventory crates? And some guys would stack up the empty crates so it looked like they still had the bikes?

Coleman: And stack the crates six high so it would look like there's a lot of bikes there...

Fisher: I can't believe that a guy

would be stupid enough to do something like that.

Coleman: You know you were supposed to pay it off immediately. If he showed up and caught you with some sold, he would collect all the money on the spot.

Shenk: It's not your money; it's their money.

"I remember calling up the bank and saying, 'Don't worry, I'm going to pay it off."

Tell us more about dealing with the financial people.

Coleman: We couldn't get financing, so me and some other businessmen got together and opened up a bank. I gave the bank a lease for 10 years on a corner where I was selling used cars. They built the building. With the lease I gave them, they could afford to put up a building. That was just in order for me to try and get financing.

So you started a bank, owned part of it, and the bank would finance your customers.

Coleman: The bank got bought out by Citizen's Bank of Maryland after five or six years. We had eight branches at that point. And then ... we sat on the board of directors for a number of years, and then Sun Trust bought out Citizen's Bank.

How did you learn all the finance tricks?

Coleman: The school of hard knocks. Every time I had a need, I had to figure out something to get past it. I got in the trucking business because I couldn't get the bikes from the warehouses as fast as I needed them. So I bought a tractor trailer and as soon as the other dealers knew what I was doing they were like, "Can you bring back some of my bikes?" So I brought

back bikes and charged \$10/crate for anybody that wanted me to haul them into the Washington-Baltimore area. I ended up with three tractor-trailers and two drivers and a mechanic who maintained the trucks.

Did you make money at \$10/crate?

Coleman: Probably not. I had to pay fuel. But I got the bikes fast and that gave me some advantages.

Shenk: I didn't know anything about finances. I had to feel my way along. In our family, we all worked for the family until we were 21—either work on the farm or get a job, and then your wages went to the family and your expenses were taken care of. It was just the way we grew up. When I was about 12 I borrowed \$25 from my older brother and bought five baby pigs and raised them up, sold them and made a few bucks, and bought calves and raised them and sold them. Stuff like that was yours—you could keep that. And that's how I saved enough to buy the motorcycles. I was still working for my folks, so I ran the motorcycle business evenings and Saturdays. About 1960 was when I went full time, and by then I was on my own.

Coleman: I was born on a tobacco farm and my father gave me 10 rows of tobacco that were mine. When I went to market, my father would let me take the day off from school and he set up on top of the pile of tobacco. The buyers would pay more for that pile just to "help the kid." How did I learn about finances? Well, you got paid once a year, and you had to make that last 'til another year. I got so good at it I loaned my father money because he didn't make his [income] last for a year.

Were you charging him interest?

Coleman: No, but he did pay me back.

Shenk: I was in Maryland from about 1956 to the end of '60. In 1961 I moved to Harrisonburg and bought

1974

Kawasaki invents the **Jet Ski**
Federal government launches regulation of motorcycle helmets
Noise regulation is hottest industry issue
Vehicle Equipment Safety Commission shakes OEMs' nerves with proposed **design standards**
Triumph Tridents set new land-speed records at Bonneville Salt Flats

1975

5 million motorcycles now registered in the U.S.
The "store of the future" will be a mini-recreation center for the family, Motorcycle Dealer News reports
28 states repeal universal helmet laws
John Rossman, formerly with The Los Angeles Times and Newsday, is named editor of MDN.
23-year-old student rides **coast to coast** on 16.5 gallons of gas – riding a **Vespa Ciao**.
Jimmy Ellis wins the 250cc and **Steve Stackable** takes the 500cc in the Yamaha Supercross series.

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Zac Stealey (MX2) RH Racing Geartec Suzuki
Thomas Robertson (MX1) LR Designs Suzuki



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a repair garage and service station and moved my motorcycles in. The day after Christmas of 1963 it burned down, and it turned out I had no insurance. I moved but never followed up [with insurance]. Now I owed all this money on this pile of ashes. And I still can't believe I had the guts to do this, but I remember calling up the bank and saying, "Don't worry, I'm going to pay it off."

What did the banker say?

Shenk: For some reason, he believed me. And I borrowed money from individuals and paid stuff off. I think I owed \$30,000 [which] was a lot of money. The saving factor was that I was renting the building and the man who owned the building had insurance on it, so he rebuilt.

So your \$30K was for inventory.

Shenk: Inventory and stuff. I don't know how in the world I made it.

"I always bought the buildings that I occupied, and then I rented them back to the dealership."

How did you finance customers?

Shenk: In Maryland it was either cash or you went through Banker's Finance. When I went to Harrisonburg, one of the first persons I sold a Honda to was a banker. And we got to talking and I think he thought we were trustworthy, and he started financing my stuff. And I...

Fisher: Plus he wanted the business.

Shenk: Well, yeah! But it helped that he was riding and understood it. And then I had a little bit of experience with recourse. I think about the second time I went out to repossess the guy threatened to shoot me, and I just didn't like that at all. So I got dealing with this bank in Harrisonburg, and they would pick up the stuff. But I still had to sign the recourse, I had to be responsible for it.

Fisher: They did the repo?

Shenk: Yes, Boy, that worked nice.

Coleman: If they did the repo and would bring it back to you, you really didn't mind taking it back. But if you couldn't find the bike, you were in trouble.

Fisher: This guy, John Hostetter, was the first guy I got involved with.

Shenk: The same one I was talking about [earlier].

Fisher: Now, if he financed \$500, instead of sending you \$500...

Shenk: He sent you about \$450.

Fisher: And he put this other \$50 in a dealer reserve, your personal dealer reserve. And believe it or not, at the end of the year, if you didn't take anything out of that reserve, he would send you the money.

Coleman: And that was good money, because you needed it. That was in case you couldn't cough up money on somebody who went bad.

Did he pay you interest?

Shenk: No

You were just happy to get the money...

Fisher: Yes.

Shenk: When three-wheelers became popular, that's the first time we ever really made good money. Traditionally, you would make money maybe a little bit in March, pretty good in April, real good in May and June, and then July started tapering off into August, and you had a month or two on either side where you broke even, and then you started to lose money.

Coleman: You would lose all you made.

Shenk: When the three-wheelers came out, you sold them in the fall and the winter, and you might not make any money during the winter, but you didn't lose that money you made. That was the first time in my life I really made any decent money.

Coleman: I kept a record of the dealers who came and went over 30 years in Northern Virginia, and I stopped counting at 70. That's about two a year. That's how hazardous the motorcycle business

is. The manufacturers would sign up a new one as fast as they would go out of business. When a new dealer came in, the only way they thought they could compete with me would be to undersell me. But what they didn't know was I wasn't making any money. It would take them about two years and they would go out of business, owing about \$200,000 to their suppliers.

Shenk: You couldn't make any money, either, while they were doing that.

Coleman: I'll tell you the reason I made money. I always bought the buildings that I occupied and then I rented them back to the dealership. And when I moved and sold the property, I always made a ton of money.

So the dealership was a vehicle for your real estate activities.

Coleman: That's really true.

"Crazy things were going on."

So Honda was the first Japanese OEM to come into the U.S. market.

Shenk: Yes, but Yamaha wasn't too far behind.

Fisher: I started selling Yamaha from a guy in California in 1960, and he set up a guy near Philly and he shipped the bikes there.

Shenk: Who was the fellow from California who was head of Yamaha?

Fisher: Joe Hunt was a guy that bought a bunch of Yamahas in Japan and brought them over. He wasn't a factory distributor but he owned the Yamahas and he sold them to George Caswell, the guy I dealt with out of Philly.

So he was a reseller; he bought them in Japan for himself?

Fisher: Yes, he tried to set you up as a Yamaha dealer, but they had Yamahas from the factory.

Coleman: I saw Nissans, brand new cars, that came through some special deal. And they had the same warranty on

1976

Midyear motorcycle sales drop correlates to 18 percent decline in home sales
Motorcycle Dealer News article educates dealers on how to hire and treat female employees

Ed Lemco stages World Indoor Sitting Contest at his Honda dealership; winners sit on bike for 307 hours

Wayne Moulton creates first Kandy-Apple red KZ-900 LTD in Kawasaki's Nebraska warehouse

Suzuki debuts the GS750 four-stroke

AMA Superbike Championship created

1977

Yamaha Motor Corp. USA is founded
NHTSA funds study of rear-wheel steering on motorcycles

Bob "Hurricane" Hannah era begins in Supercross

TV news anchor Harry Reasoner slams industry, saying, "**If I were President, I might not outlaw motorcycles, but I'd think about it.**"

1978

Don Emde joins Motorcycle Dealer News as an advertising sales rep
Honda introduces the "radical" CX500 V-twin

Jeff Wetmore named editor of MDN

Husqvarna merges with Sweden's Electrolux
Stock motorcycles can run the quarter-mile in less than 12 seconds

U.S. bans use of lead-based paint



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them as the Nissans at the dealership. The dealers hated it, and I would have, too, but I was selling them out of my motorcycle dealership with the same factory warranty so the buyers could take them to the dealers that didn't sell them and get all the repairs done.

Shenk: Crazy things were going on.

Fisher: I sold some Volkswagens like that.

Where did they come from?

Fisher: They came here on a ship, that's all I remember. You knew it couldn't last long because the dealers had to get together and demand that the factory do something about it.

What was life like working with the OEs back then?

Coleman: I had a horrible time. As much as I love Honda, they wouldn't let me expand, and that is why I ended up taking on all the other Japanese lines. I wanted to grow.

Fisher: I can't believe Honda didn't want you to expand.

Coleman: They had this rule where you can't have two dealerships side by side with no competitor in between. When I moved from Arlington to Falls Church, they made me get rid of the Fairfax Honda dealership. Can you imagine? They wouldn't let me continue being a Honda dealer because I wanted to move just a few miles. I went to court, I don't know how many times, over Honda signing up another dealer in my territory. As I built the territory, they would say 'it's big enough' for another dealer, but I tell you, they are *my* customers, I built them and turned them to Honda. I felt if Honda wanted another dealership, I wanted to be the dealer.

I postponed a new dealer by two years going through the courts. I knew I wasn't going to win it, but postponing it was worth a lot of money to me —two more years of having an exclusive franchise. But I wasn't a fair-haired boy

at Honda, because I didn't roll over and play dead. They said I was getting too big for my britches.

You were a troublemaker.

Coleman: That's right.

But you were making a lot of money for them.

Coleman: Car dealers don't play that game. The bigger you are, the more they are going to let you have because they know you know how to do it. In Virginia, we've worked to restrict manufacturers, how they could set up dealers, how many miles apart they could be. So they can't get away with some of the stuff that they used to, for sure.

Were you into a lot of legislative activity, Dillard?

Coleman: Not a lot, but every time we had a chance that state officials would possibly listen to us, we gave them input.

"I just talked to the OEs when they wanted to tell me how great they were."

Dillard, did you try to have separate profit centers?

Coleman: Absolutely. It took me years, because we had to fight [the OEMs]. They would never pay you an hourly rate based on how long it took you to do. They finally explained to us how they determined how long it took to do a job: They had a perfectly clean motorcycle, every tool was laid out that was required for that job right on the bench, and they timed a factory mechanic that knew everything they could possibly ask. Maybe they timed it in an hour, but it would take any average guy three hours. We fought that for years, and one of the reasons [was that] they told you had to do warranty work no matter where the guy had bought his motorcycle. We had guys two states



away selling at cost, and then we would have to service his customers.

I finally came up with the deal: We won't refuse to service him, but we just can't get to him. Why would I put my customers behind guys who went out of state to buy a motorcycle at cost? So I just put them at the end of the line and they never got to the front of the line. But that's the only way I could figure out how to do it because they wouldn't pay you the warranty rate you required.

Fisher: I had a guy who beat Honda's flat rate on a timing chain. He could do it in half of Honda's time. I don't know how he did it, but it was very satisfactory.

Our shop worked on our vehicles probably as much as on customer work but it had to be done, and I always had a very good relationship, especially with Triumph and Honda. I always had managers who had to do the bad part with [the OEs]; I just talked to the OEs when they wanted to tell me how great they were. 

 **Read the full transcript, including the trio's advice for today's dealers, and view more photos on www.dealernews.com: searchterm=50roundtable**

1979

Women riders are the fastest-growing segment of buyers, dealers report
Lockwood Association introduces computer programs customized for motorcycle retailers

Steve Matchett named editor of Motorcycle Dealer News

Aspencade rally in New Mexico features a parade of bikes 65 miles long

Chrysler introduces the **SnoRunner**, a motorcycle on skis that can fit inside a car trunk

Ricky Carmichael is born

1980

Terry Vance and **Byron Hines** form a high-performance supply and race representative company

Kathy Weinert named editor of Motorcycle Dealer News

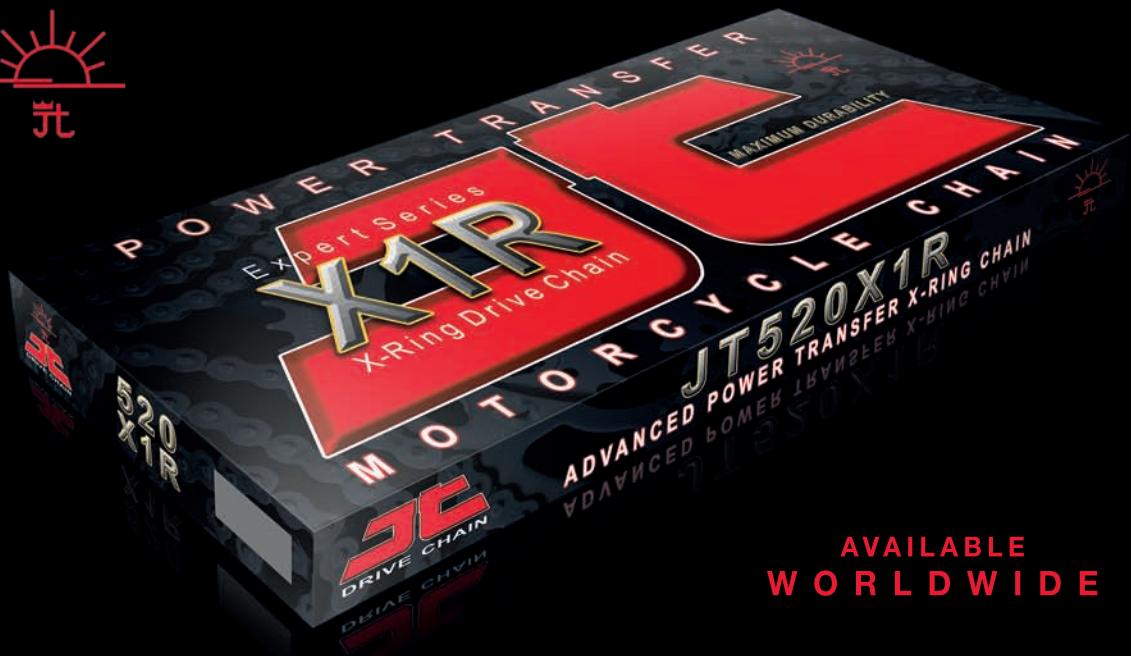
Dunlop K290 MX tires incorporate "twin block" tread design and rim saver

MSF sponsors first **International Motorcycle Safety Conference**

Craig Vetter begins first high-mileage contest

"On Any Sunday II" opens in theaters

LEADING POWER DRIVE ENGINEERING



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- Sprocket designs are optimised for light weight and high strength, perfectly finished in zinc or black enamel coating
- World's aftermarket leading sprocket for 30 years constantly improving Quality, Performance, Innovation and Value



- Race-developed for ultimate results
- Minimum weight and maximum strength
- Leading edge technology in materials and production ensures top class performance, strength, and durability
- Specially engineered to favourably compare with all types and brands of motorcycle chain in the market today
- Available in Black or Gold & Black finish



jtsprockets.com

jtchain.com

A woman with long, wavy, light brown hair, wearing a light-colored, short-sleeved blouse, holds a black rectangular Hayden oil cooler in her hands. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. In the background, a motorcycle is visible against a blue gradient background.

1984

There are **5,839 franchised dealerships** nationwide, employing more than 40,000

Motorcycle Dealer News launches **monthly ATV** coverage

AMA forms the **American All-Terrain Vehicle Association**

Suzuk
Olym

Rider on a modified motorcycle crosses U.S. using on

1985

700,000 motorcycles sold in U.S.

Average age of a motorcycle rider: **27**

5.4 million motorcycles registered in the U.S.

Don Emde named publisher of Motorcycle Dealer News

Musician Lou Reed becomes spokesman for Honda scooters

Gas Gas starts manufacturing trials bikes; it would launch MX line in 1989

1986

MDN finally updates its name to **Dealernews**

National Motorcycle Retailers Association creates **dealer bill of rights**

Helmets and tires are top-selling aftermarket products

Proposed **ban on superbikes** defeated in Washington

Buell introduces R1000 superbike



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50th ANNIVERSARY

in GEAR

BY BETH DOLGNER

We wore . . . what?

A LOOK AT GEAR THROUGH THE YEARS

A LOT of gear, helmets and apparel—aimed to protect or make a fashion statement—has graced the pages of Dealernews in the last 50 years. Some lines: definitely similar to what everyone wears today. Other lines: we scratch our heads in wonder. Here are some of our favorites from three particularly stylish decades: the '60s, '70s and '80s.



BUCO HELMET HAT AND COSMOPOLITAN PRINCESS HELMET

Described as offering "safety for those on the move," the Bucos was advertised as a "helmet hat." The Cosmopolitan ladies option, meanwhile, was made with "revolutionary new DuPont safety material," but its durability was hidden under a plush layer of velour. There was even a bow in the back for an extra ladylike touch. That sure is a lot for just \$17.95.



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Dealers Inquiries

RAWHIDE SPORTS

Box 3000

Gregory, South

RAWHIDE SPORTS SCABBARD

Was 1966 America still the Wild West? Those were days when off-road options were limited, and if you were a hunter, a motorcycle was still better than walking. (Though no one has quite figured out how a two-wheeled hunter would get anything he shot home afterward.) These days, scabbards are a little more practical, like the sturdy, waterproof one from Yamaha that mounts to ATVs

1960s



PREMIER NAUGAHYDE JACKET

In search of the elusive wild Nauga... These days, savvy marketers use terms like "leather-like" and "leather finish" for items that fall under faux. In 1966, though, the ad writer went for honesty. This "smartly-styled" jacket was also available in "feather-weight Zodiac Metalflake" in gold, red, blue, silver or charcoal. The Naugahyde jacket retailed for just \$19.95 and dealer cost was only \$13.50.



SUZUKI "HUSTLING HUSTLER" TEE

This slightly suggestive tee reportedly was part of a collection in which "each shirt contains a unique slogan tying in with various brands." We noted the stylish product placement on what appears to be (that's right) asphalt.

1987

Yamaha enters the sports watecraft market
Harley-Davidson tells International Trade Commission it no longer needs **tariff relief** to compete with Japanese brands
Analysts predict **continued slump** in industry sales
153,000 new scooters sold in U.S.
Hap Jones receives MIC Lifetime Achievement Award
Harley-Davidson stock (HDI) approved for listing on NYSE
Manufacturers form **Personal Watercraft Industry Association**

1988

Consent decree bans sale of three-wheeled ATVs from manufacturers to dealers
MIC launches **Discover Today's Motorcycling**
U.S. government issues tougher safety standards for **helmets**
Honda opens motorcycle safety training facility
State Farm limits insurance coverage for motorcycles over 500cc
Dealernews publisher HBJ sells magazine, expo businesses to **Edgell Communications**
Rick Johnson wins his second Supercross title, on Honda

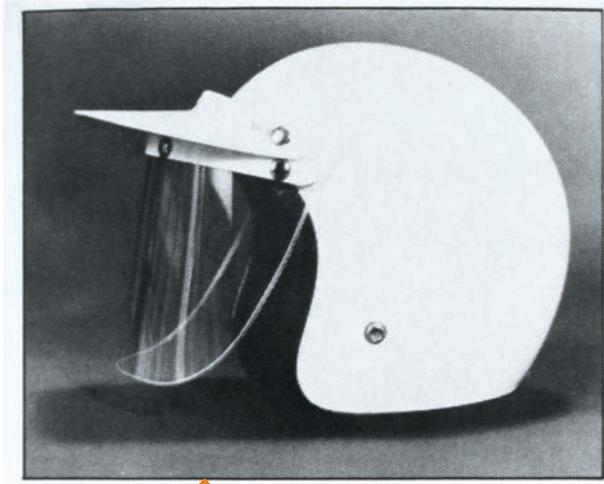
1989

Honda (1), Kawasaki (2) are **top-selling motorcycle brands in U.S.**
Harley-Davidson dominates over-900cc market
Don J. Brown predicts nationwide sales decline of 18-25 percent
Dealers protest Honda's **alleged curtailing** of superbike, ATV promotions
Leslie Frohoff named editor of Dealernews

1970s

CHEST GUARD ➤

Imported by International Accessories West, this chest guard was an early version of motocross and off-road safety gear. While modern-day chest guards still have the same objective and similar styling, technology and on-track testing have resulted in a very different product. For comparison, the Alpinestars Bionic Tech jacket offered more protection paired with specific comfort features for something much more elaborate.



DUCK VISOR ↑

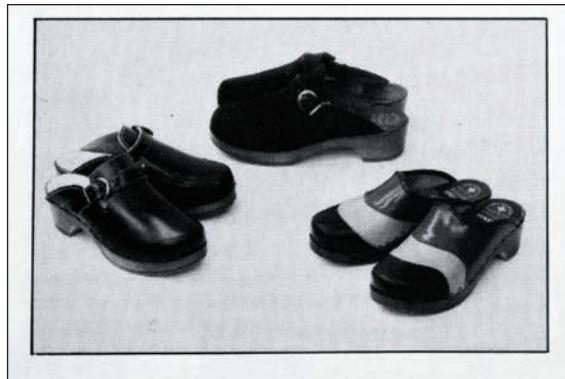
There were a lot of things about this little visor that made it worthy of inclusion. Styling aside, the MSRP of just \$3.95 shows how much things have changed when it comes to the value of the dollar. This visor was available exclusively from Helmet House, a distributor who is still going strong today, more than 40 years later.

CHEST GUARD
Chest Guard is of very light weight, strong, flexible plastic with sweat proof plastic lining easily cleaned. Fully protects collar bone, chest and arms. Imported and distributed by International Accessories West, Dept. MN, 4225-30th St., San Diego Calif. 92104, and International Accessories East, Dept. MN, 10 Park St., Hampshire, Ill. 60140.



HI-POINT MOTORCYCLE CLOGS ↓

As it turns out, Skechers Shape Ups were not the first shoes to promise a calf workout. While the idea of motorcycle clogs may be slightly mystifying, hopefully the original copy about these beauties—available from Penton Imports—will clear up any confusion: "Hi-Point clogs are replicas of those worn by Europe's motorcycle racers and spectators alike. Designed to strengthen the leg muscles, the sole is made of 100% leather or suede."



1990

433,000 motorcycles, scooters and ATVs sold in U.S. (*DJB Composite Index*)

Yamaha **Morpho** concept bike features forkless front suspension which will be introduced on GTS1000 two years later

50th annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally is held

Harley-Davidson introduces the **FLSTF Fat Boy**

National Motorcycle Museum inducts **Pete Hill, Bill Tuman and J.C. "Pappy" Hoel** into Hall of Fame

1991

First **dealer profiles** appear on the covers of Dealernews
Average age of a motorcycle rider: **32.5 years**

First antilock brakes appear on motorcycles

John Murphy named publisher of Dealernews, **Paul Eric Smith** is editor in chief

19,000 **new ATVs** are sold in U.S. (*DJB Composite Index*)

Military uses KLR250s for reconnaissance during Operation Desert Storm

1992

South East HarleyDavidson (Cleveland, Ohio), wins Grand Prize in **inaugural Top 100 Dealer** competition

More than 1,300 franchised dealers have **closed since 1984**, reports Don Brown

Dealernews publishes first **international issue**

Honda introduces **CBR900RR**, combining superbike power with light weight

Don Brown predicts **ATVs will surpass streetbike** new-unit sales

Robin Hartfiel named editor of Dealernews

Honda has highest dealer scores in Dealernews' first **OEM Report Card** survey, followed by BMW and Suzuki

1993

BMW introduces the R1100RS sport touring motorcycle

White's Harley-Davidson Buell (Lebanon, Pa.) wins the Top 100 Dealer Competition grand prize

Jeremy McGrath wins his first Supercross championship; **Kevin Schantz** is the World GP champion
AMA membership surpasses 200,000



TAURUS LEATHERS

The basics of one-piece leathers have changed very little, but in the 1980s presentation was as important as the product. Just look at the lightning bolts, the fog and those oh-so-perfect models. This is, quite possibly, the most heavy metal ad to ever grace the pages of Dealernews.



HEIN GERICKE RAIN SUIT

For him and her, or, as Hein Gericke said, "for serious riders only." Just one look at the models in the ad confirms that statement. No one would dare to find levity in the poses, his smirk, or her perfectly-teased hair. Serious, indeed.



MALCOLM SMITH PRODUCTS OFF-ROAD JERSEYS

Malcolm Smith had some serious 1980s panache. (And we wonder what their hairdos looked like after the ride...) These days, MSR is still a popular motorcross gear brand. MSR's latest, debuting 30 years after these jerseys, is the lightweight ventilated MAX AIR line of pants and jerseys.

1994

"Uncle Paul" Wunsch's column debuts in Dealernews

Bob Dron Harley-Davidson (Oakland, Calif.) wins the Top 100 Dealer grand prize

Triumph returns to the U.S. market. Grand National Champion is **Scott Parker**, on Harley-Davidson

Northridge **earthquake** in Southern California boosts motorcycle sales as a way to get around traffic gridlock

1995

C&S Harley-Davidson (Nashville, Tenn.) wins Top 100 Dealer grand prize

Average unit **sales and service revenue** for a new-unit dealership: \$700,000 a year

Safety progress: Motorcycle-related fatalities in decline

Motorcycle industry estimated worth: **\$4.8 billion**, 30 percent from PG&A sales

Personal watercraft new unit sales peak at 200,000

1996

Don Brown says industry will sell **644,474 new vehicles**, nearly half of them ATVs

BMW reports highest new unit sales in a decade

Worth Harley-Davidson South (Belton, Mo.), wins Top 100 Dealer grand prize

Las Vegas Motor Speedway opens **Women's Motorcycle Market Journal**, a newsletter for female riders, debuts

The **1 millionth motorcycle** rolls off Honda's Marysville, Ohio, assembly lines

1997

Gatto Cycle Shop (Tarentum, Pa.) wins Top 100 grand prize

6.5 million registered motorcycles in the United States

MSF, NHTSA co-sponsor development of a **National Agenda for Motorcycle Safety**

More safety progress: Organizations start developing common international methodology for investigating motorcycle crashes

1980s

MORE Coverage. MORE Satisfaction. MORE Profit.

Protective Asset Protection's enhanced XtraRide® Powersports Protection Plan offers you and your customers MORE.

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The XtraRide Powersports Protection Plan and GAP Coverage are backed by Lyndon Property Insurance Company, a Protective company, in all states except New York. In New York, the XtraRide Powersports Protection Plan is backed by Old Republic Insurance Company and GAP is not available.

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HISTORY OF THE BRAND:



**BRINGING FAMILY CULTURE AND A PASSION
FOR POWERSPORTS – COAST TO COAST**

THE ABILITY to adapt to changing markets is key to business survival. Longevity requires dexterity to keep up with evolving consumer demands, new distribution methods and lightning-fast marketing techniques.

WPS (Western Power Sports), now in its sixth decade, is a lesson in adaptability, maneuverability and commitment to customer, enabling the company to not just survive but thrive, and in doing so, alter the course of an entire industry.

EVOLUTION

IT WAS IN 1960 in Boise, Idaho, that Ray Brandt became Polaris Industries' first distributor for snowmobile sales in the snowbelts of the northwest corner of the country—encompassing California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon and Washington. Eight years later,

Brandt, acknowledging the competitive limitations of handling a single brand, authorized his son-in-law to launch an aftermarket division; Dwain Brobeck and his wife, Jean, became first-generation directors. In the late 1970s the Brandt siblings purchased the aftermarket division, making it a second-generation company.

The small aftermarket distribution business changed course in 1988 when Polaris decided

to sell directly to dealers. With the vehicle business gone, Western Power Sports turned its focus on aftermarket sales. Brandt and the Brobecks purchased California-based Sierra Motorcycle Products, which would provide them with a second location, additional product lines and an entry into the

bustling California market.

This was Western Power Sports' first step toward regional aftermarket distribution.

The company grew steadily, adding vendors and expanding its reach throughout the Western states.

ASK CRAIG SHOEMAKER what he likes to do, and he'll tell you: working, building relationships and going riding. Once you understand that, you understand the culture of WPS.

Shoemaker joined Western Power Sports' purchasing department in 1983. Over the next nearly 20 years, he would work his way up through the business, assuming greater



I firmly believe that the way employees are treated here at WPS is a direct reflection of how our employees treat our customers. We understand that in today's business environment, customers have more options than ever to conduct their business, and we want to ensure we're offering a level of customer service above our competition.

- Craig Shoemaker

responsibilities and honing his business acumen. In 2000, Shoemaker and his wife, Deanna, bought Western Power Sports; it was now a third-generation company. As owner and president, Shoemaker was able to make the decisions and execute nationwide expansion plans that would continue to ensure the company's growth and success.

In 2001 the Shoemakers constructed a new warehouse and corporate offices in Boise, and reached for new dealers to serve and vendors to represent. In 2002 Western Power Sports added a distribution facility in Memphis, Tenn., giving it access to markets in the East and South. In 2006 the Sacramento, Calif., office and warehouse facility was relocated to Fresno in order to service all of WPS' California customers with one-day delivery. Then came warehouses in Elizabethtown, Pa., (2009) and Ashley, Ind. (2011).

This nationwide expansion enabled the company to provide one-day delivery service to most major U.S. markets and two-day service to remaining locations. It was no longer just "Western" Power Sports; WPS was now the third-largest national distributor serving U.S. powersports dealers.

In the very near future, WPS will sport more than 1 million square feet of combined warehouse and office space among its six distribution centers, including expanded facilities in Indiana and an 85,000 sq. ft. add to its Boise headquarters.

POWERSPORTS DEALERS must strike a balance between their passion for riding and their quest to succeed in business. WPS mirrors the market it serves.

"We're a family-owned company," Shoemaker says. "We work hard, play hard, and are proud of our employees. We want to treat our customers like our grandparents, no matter what they do—we're always willing to do something for them, they're always right. As long as we treat our customers that way, they'll give us a fair shot to do business with them, and that's all we ask."

Shoemaker takes great pride in his staff. "Employees are the most important part of the company," he says. "My employees are the first and last point of contact with our customers, from sales and customer service to packing and shipping."

WPS by NUMBERS

5 (soon to be 6)
WPS distribution centers nationwide

10
PROPRIETARY BRANDS

FLY Racing, FLY Street, FLY Bicycle, FLY Snow, Sedona Tire & Wheel, HardDrive, Triple 9 Optics, Highway 21, Open Trail, GMAX

Over 600
VENDOR BRANDS

9
CATALOGS

ATV, Street, Offroad, Snowmobile, Watercraft, V-Twin/HardDrive, Apparel, Bicycle, FLY Racing

**More than
135,000**
SKUs

THE REP ADVANTAGE

WAREHOUSE space, type of product lines, product availability, the right pricing and on-time delivery are common to every successful distributor. What makes WPS stand out?

"Our people and our relationships," says Shoemaker.

"Our reps are constantly talking to dealers and they get input from them for various products or types of products.

"An off-road dealer's needs are different from those of a dealer whose focus is on street product," Shoemaker explains. "There are just a lot of things you need to look at. Everyone wants what you don't have, and swears they could 'sell a million of them' if they did."

There are more than 140 WPS and HardDrive representatives servicing powersports retailers across all 50 states, and many dealers would agree that the WPS rep is the best trained and most knowledgeable in the business: a hybrid product representative/retail consultant/high-energy enthusiast.

"If you try to do business as you did 10 or 15 years ago, you're not going to win," Shoemaker explains. "It's more competitive today than before. Knowledge and availability drive our sales."

Key to successful retail sales is a proactive and consultative relationship between a dealer and its distributor representative. Knowing how to seem a "bigger" retail operation in an e-commerce-driven world depends largely on strategically employing your distributor as your own "warehouse." That's where the WPS retailerrep relationship shines.

Rep training for current and new brands culminates in a week-long National Sales Meeting, held during the winter in Boise, that provides reps with face-to-face meetings with vendors and house brands, core retail and distribution sales training, and more. The 2015 week-long winter meeting, as an example, included six solid days of vendor presentations and Q&A.

Training is regimented and appreciated, as evidenced by the stability of the WPS rep force, from the newest hire to the longest tenured, including John Foeckler in Oregon and Larry Hamilton in Montana, both 30-year WPS veterans.

"We have a very low turnover and continue to add new reps as a result of our continued growth," Shoemaker says.



WE ARE





WPS



For more information visit www.Dealernews.com/readerservice

BUILDING BRANDS: FLY — FOCUS ON FIT

FLY RACING was born as a motocross brand in 1997. Producing gear was still a couple of years away; initially, WPS was selling other lines of gear, and the company wanted to take control by starting its own in-house brand.

Interestingly, the first FLY products were handlebars. “We started with handlebars and then did grips and levers, the whole time wanting to make clothing but knowing that when you pull the trigger on that, it’s 24/7/365,” explains Terry Baisley, Vice President of Sales at WPS.

FLY’s first wearable piece, the 747 helmet, was followed by the F-15 chest protector. Then, in late 1999, FLY launched its first pants and jerseys. The gear had arrived, but FLY staff knew that getting dealers to carry it and riders to wear it would be a new challenge. “When we started, we had a strong disadvantage in that most of the other brands had a 20- to 30-year head start on us,” Baisley recalls.

A grassroots campaign aimed at local racing began, while brand reps received training that they could pass on to WPS

evolutionary approach could be used for street gear. A snowmobile line followed, then mountain bike. Most recently, the FLY team developed gear for Hard Drive’s V-twin line.

GEAR HAS EVOLVED significantly since FLY’s inception, and much of that has to do with the materials available. In the 1990s most motocross pants were made of a material backed with a heavy denier fabric for protection. Today, high-tech materials are lighter but still durable.

“We from the beginning have really taken a focus on fitment, and fitment has a lot to do with material,” says Baisley. “We see new materials, especially in the last five years, that have allowed us to make gear where you just about feel like you’re wearing your pajamas with all this protective product on it. It’s very comfortable and the performance of the materials is just incredible.”

Those new materials have led to two of FLY’s most iconic pieces. The Kinetic pant changed the status quo for the MX gear market. With an affordable price point of \$109.95, top-level riders were competing (and winning) in Supercross and Pro Motocross races with their off-the-shelf Kinetic pants.

“We put a lot of technology into the pants to give back to the consumer something that’s a real value from FLY, kind of thanking everybody for being a part of our brand and helping it grow so fast. It took everybody

believing in it,” Baisley adds.

The Hydrogen line is iconic FLY gear, thanks in part to its association with Supercross stars Trey Canard and Andrew Short. “Our Hydrogen pant was developed by our designers in conjunction with Trey Canard and Andrew Short, personally. We found some ultra lightweight, full-stretch, four-way stretch materials and took special ways of seaming and paneling them, so it was literally like riding in your pajamas. But [the material is] protective and ultra light and flows a bunch of air,” Baisley says.

dealers. FLY reps attended as many racing events as possible to spread the word.

FLY almost immediately expanded into the BMX market, taking advantage of the large amount of product crossover. Baisley also had his children, who rode BMX, and his wife, who owned a BMX track, in mind: “It just made good sense: I surely didn’t want them riding in anything other than what we built.” And everyone knew that BMX riders usually made the leap to motocross.

As FLY’s MX business boomed, WPS realized the same



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN racer and designer is important for FLY. "We're able to develop a good relationship with the racer, which helps for your testing. You get good, honest opinions; no one's trying to tell you what they think you want to hear," he says.

These days, riders like Short, Canard and rising star Weston Peick are providing the feedback. At any given time, Baisley estimates that FLY is involved with 10 or more

series, including local, regional and national programs. This year, WPS and FLY are the official distributor and clothing, respectively, of the Lucas Oil Pro Motocross Championship.

"When we started this brand, everybody told us we were going to fail. And I would say that's probably what inspired Craig Shoemaker, myself and the entire rest of our team to win," Baisley recalls. "There's a difference between riders and racers, and we're definitely racers here."

BUILDING BRANDS: **HARDDRIVE — THE V-TWIN CHOICE**

THE FIRST THING to know about HardDrive American V-twin Products: It's not only a brand of V-twin parts and accessories, it's also a distributor of V-twin components made by other manufacturers. The second thing to know: Although relatively new to the V-twin market, HardDrive is not an untried upstart; as a division of Western Power Sports, it's far from that.

HardDrive is taking the V-twin market by storm, touting its solid commitment to wholesale-to-dealer-only sales, co-operative sales policies designed to build partnerships with dealers, and a goal to bring new V-twin products to market. Says WPS Vice President of Sales Terry Baisley, "We don't sell retail-direct, we believe in two-step distribution. And we're actively building a team to make it easy for our dealers to do business with us."

Adds Ronnie Wehr, HardDrive National Sales Manager, "We've done it right in the market for decades. Now we're taking our experience and expertise to V-twins."

WPS has long been known among metric, dirt and ATV riders as a reliable source and a stand-up company to work with. The foray into V-twin was driven by opportunity fueled by changes in the distributor landscape. "On the metric side there are several distributors, but on the V-twin side there aren't nearly as many options," Baisley explains. "Many were asking for a choice."

Just as WPS has consistently been strident in its sup-



port of brick-and-mortar stores, so, too, is HardDrive. Management is adamant about selling wholesale to dealers only through their own rep network. Why? "We have our own business plan and our own business model. It has worked for us and we're sticking to it," Baisley answers.

The intent is not only to be another source for V-twin products but also to break new ground by offering components not available from other distributors. HardDrive caters to the dealer's reality by providing a sensible selection of general service products bolstered by select performance

HardDrive Brands

Accel, ACTIA Diag4Bike, Airhawk, All Balls, Alto Clutches, Arnott, Avon Grips, Baker Drivertrain, Bagger Werx, Butty Buddy, Candlepower Cometic Gasket, Condor Counter Act, Cycle Pro, Daytona Twin Tec, DEI, Delkron, Deltran, Dobek, Dowco, Drayco, Dynatec, EBC Brakes, Energy One Clutches, Energy Suspension, EMD Cycle Designs France, Firebrand Exhaust, Feuling, First Shot, Fox Shocks, Freedom Performance, GMAX, HardDrive Parts, Hayden, Hardsacker, Highway 21, James Gaskets, J&M Audio, K&N, Kibblewhite, Koso, Kryptonite, Lick's Cycles, Lil Lightning, Lucas Oil, Lunati Cams, Lyndall Racing Brakes, Maxima, Michelin, Metzeler/Pirelli, Motion Pro, National Cycle, Novello Designs, Patriot Suspension, Powerstands, Precision Billet, Redline Oil, Sena, Shinko Tires, Spidi, Standard Motor Products, Streamline, Sully's, TC Bros, UClear, Voodoo Industries, Vortex, West-Eagle, Wild 1, Wiseco, Wizard Products, Yuasa, ZAN/Bobster

and custom components. Building from a grassroots basis means the company can fill gaps and flesh out product offerings judiciously, responding to dealer feedback and aggressively bringing on new vendors, many of whom have not yet been represented in the V-twin market.

Dealers of every size and persuasion should pay attention. One glance at the huge 2015 HardDrive catalog—intentionally featuring both a bagger and a bobber on the cover—shows the range of options. “We have our own line of HardDrive-branded products, says Wehr, explaining the expanding selection, “plus other well known manufacturers—companies V-twin riders know and trust—produce products for us.”

HardDrive offers a cooperative, flexible exchange policy, allowing dealers to try things that can create new profit centers in their shops with little risk. Dealers are responding to such initiatives that build alliances and give them more control.

HardDrive was new to Shannon, a dealer from Indiana, who listened to the HardDrive pitch at the Cincinnati V-Twin Expo last February. He left with a catalog and dealer application. With Evan, a Michigan dealer, HardDrive became one of his three top distributors in short time.

These days, customers know what they want and what it costs. If the shop can have the part tomorrow and match the online price, it gets the business. This raises the stakes for distributors, who have to draw on every resource to gain an edge that serves the dealers. HardDrive benefits from existing WPS vendor relationships to offer crossover components from such companies as Shinko Tires and Fox Shocks for V-twin applications. Addressing a trendier vibe are parts from the likes

of West Eagle and Lick's Cycle.

All of HardDrive's product lines (see list) are sourced with management's understanding that V-twin riders are a distinctly different market. In recognition of this, the HardDrive team is built with individuals having solid expertise in the V-twin segment. They've also stepped up training for their reps in a big way to efficiently deliver product knowledge and vendor specials to dealers.



Enabling this growth pattern is the sturdy footprint, infrastructure and experience of HardDrive's parent company, WPS, which can serve its V-twin dealers from its distribution centers in Idaho, California, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Indiana.

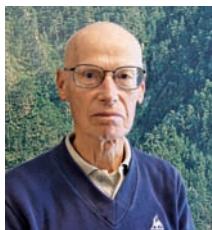
Says Wehr, “With the new 2015 catalog this year that's significantly larger and more comprehensive, as well as more time out in the field, it's time to let the industry know: we're here and we're not going away.”

WPS' 15 instances of double-digit growth in the last 16 years stands as a record that doesn't happen by chance, boding well for the HardDrive division. And in case you didn't notice, HardDrive conveniently abbreviates to HD—without a hyphen. It's likely that's no coincidence, either.

Builders of an Industry

TO SAY THAT the following is a mere selection is an understatement. This list, saluting those who helped build what has become the modern powersports industry, grows with each year, so while we salute the Builders on these pages, the our online archive remains alive, expanding as names and stories are submitted (please contact editors@dealernews.com with new information).

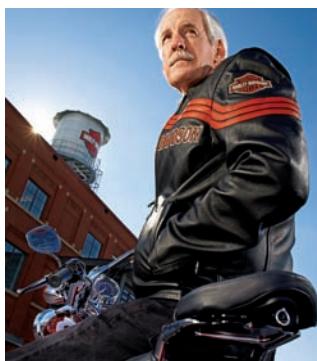
The editors thank the 50th Anniversary Blue Ribbon Committee—industry VIPs themselves: Mike Vaughan, Jeffrey Heininger, Jack Penton, Grady Pfeiffer and Robert Roper—for their invaluable assistance in identifying individuals to be initially recognized. Some of their comments are included (in quotations below each name).



ARNIE ACKERMAN

Motorcycle Aftermarket Group

"He has engineered brilliant teams to come together to change the outlook of a number of businesses within the industry." Founder of MAG; currently chairman of the Motorcycle Industry Council aftermarket committee.



BOB ALTHOFF

A.D. Farrow Co. group of dealerships, Columbus, Ohio

Repeat Top 100 dealer, advocate for dealer community, recipient of the Don J. Brown Lifetime Achievement Award

ANDY ANDERSON – *Anderson's Cycle Sales, Pontiac, Mich.*

BILL BAGNALL – *Motorcycle Dealer News*

Co-founder of what became the longest running business-to-business media brand in the industry, and an accompanying suite of trade events.

CHARLES BARNETT – *Barnett Tool & Engineering*

Influential in the design of clutches, cables, hoses and disc brake pads.

VAUGHAN BEALS – *Harley-Davidson*

"Gathered a brilliant team to resurrect the Harley-Davidson brand and establish new business rules that changed the industry and the way everyone does business."

PHIL BELLOMY – *Co-Founder, Helmet House*

► **Read the story: "History of the Brand: Helmet House" on dealernews.com**

1998

Nearly 258,000 snowmobiles sold worldwide

Average age of a motorcycle rider: **38 years**

Jeremy McGrath nabs fifth Supercross title, becomes first SX champion to win on more than one brand

Kegel Motorcycle Co. (Rockford, Ill.) wins Top 100 grand prize

Yamaha introduces the **YZ400F**

1999

Route 43 Harley-Davidson (Sheboygan, Wis.) wins Top 100 grand prize

Indian brand relaunches after 46-year absence, with new California-based owners and a limited-edition **Indian Chief**

Suzuki introduces the **Hayabusa**, with top speeds of 188 to 194 mph

Jeremy McGrath lists 77 Motocross/**Supercross** wins, breaking Bob Hannah's record

Chris Carr, riding Harley-Davidson, is AMA Grand National Champion

2000

Mike's Famous Harley-Davidson (New Castle, Del.) wins Top 100 grand prize

Kawasaki debuts the **ZX-12R** flagship model

Triumph re-introduces the **Bonneville**

U.S. Motocross des Nations team members **Ricky Carmichael**, **Ryan Hughes** and **Travis Pastrana** reclaim world MX championship after three-year losing streak

2001

Ski-Doo unveils radically new REV design as a Pro Open snocross sled

Bumpus Harley-Davidson (Memphis, TN) wins Top 100 grand prize

Mary Slepicka named publishing director of Dealernews

Chris Carr, riding Harley-Davidson, Rotax and ATK, named AMA Grand National Champion

Harley introduces the **V-Rod "liquid cooled" family** for the 2002 model year

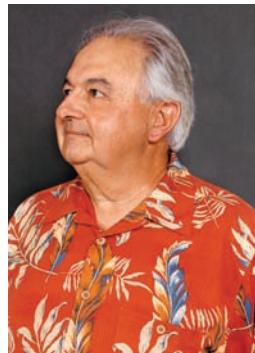
September 11: Ride in Peace



50th ANNIVERSARY

MARK BETTENCOURT – Bettencourt Honda Suzuki*in Massachusetts*

New England's oldest and largest Honda and Suzuki dealership, since 1948.

**BLAINE BIRCHFIELD**

"His grassroots efforts at the dealer and distributor level, on behalf of the aftermarket, have moved more product and made more deals happen in this industry. He continues to refine his talents for the benefit of the industry."

Listen to Larry Huffman's audiocast**interview with Blaine Birchfield at****www.dealernews.com****BRUCE BROWN**

Made a movie about motorcycles and of those who ride them, and in doing so brought the spirit of the ride to millions of consumers.

**DON J. BROWN**

BSA/Triumph, Johnson Motors and Suzuki executive who became the premier research analyst for the industry. Founding contributor to Motorcycle Dealer News, with his first article, "A Long Look Ahead: An Analysis of Motorcycle Merchandising in the Years to Come," appearing in the July 1965 issue. Senior Research Editor and creator of Dealernews' monthly DJB Composite Index, used by dealers coast to coast to project sales and inventory.

ED BURKE – First Capitol Sports Center, St. Charles, Mo.

Division manager-research and design at Yamaha, directing the design and development of 36 motorcycle models. "The mind behind the DT1."

KEVIN CARR – Romney Cycles, Romney, W.Va.

Yamaha, Suzuki and Kawasaki dealer. Cited by Suzuki as instrumental in building the brand in the United States.

CHRIS CARTER

ISDT Gold Medal Winner who became parts manager at Rocky Cycle and ultimately founded Motion Pro.

Read Motion Pro's "History of the Brand" story at www.dealernews.com

**TOM CATES**

Rider, tuner, industry leader. "A great friend of the motorcycle dealer and a mentor to many." Helped establish Honda in the United States, then served on the management teams at BSA and ultimately K&N Engineering. An elected member of the Motorcycle Industry Council board of directors.

WILBUR CEDAR

Accountant who became co-founder, with Bill Johnson, of Johnson Motors, helping to establish Triumph Motorcycles in the United States.

FLOYD CLYMER

Past owner and publisher of Motorcyclist and Cycle Magazines along with a well-known line of repair manuals.

2002

Big Valley Motorcycles (Reno, Nev.) wins Top 100 grand prize
79,300 **personal watercraft** units sold worldwide
New vehicle **sales up over 9 percent**, with all four segments of the motorcycle market—scooter, offroad, dual-sport and street—reporting increases.
There are **4,898 new-vehicle powersports dealers** in the United States, according to Hoovers
Average income of an AMA member rider: **\$84,000**

2003

New motorcycle sales pass **1 million** mark
Gregoire Sport de Notre Dame de Lourdes, Quebec, wins Top 100 grand prize
AMA Supermoto Championship created and sanctioned by AMA Pro Racing
Mike Vaughan becomes publisher of Dealernews, Mary Slepicka named editorial director
"American Chopper" debuts on cable TV

2004

Big Twin West trade/consumer show held in Las Vegas
More than 600,000 consumers flock to the **International Motorcycle Shows**
Nearly 110,000 **snowmobiles** are sold in the United States, 48,566 in Canada
Yamaha introduces the **Rhino** side-by-side vehicle
MidAmerica Motoplex (Sioux Falls, S.D.) wins Top 100 grand prize
Dave Koshollek's "Fuel for Thought" column debuts

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PAUL COLLINS

Applied the Kawasaki slogan, "Let the Good Times Roll." "He did amazing things to get the consumer closer to riding than most have ever done."

EDDIE COLE

Founder of Answer Products, Protaper, Manitou, SixSixOne, Tag Metals, Sunline and Filtron. Introduced Matrix Concepts. *"The start-up king. He creates a few 'gotta have it' products and then blasts the consumer with spot-on marketing."*

PETE COLMAN

Leading racer, tuner and builder, race director for a number of vehicle brands. Elected chairman of the MIC in 1970, was a founding director of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation and helped establish industry standards for appraising used motorcycles.



DAVE DAMRON – *Chaparral Motorsports, San Bernardino, Calif.*

Opened his own Suzuki dealership at the age of 21. Founder of what has become one of the largest combined brick-and-mortar/retail catalog businesses in the country.

THE DEELEY FAMILY: Fred Deeley Sr., Fred Deeley Jr., Trev Deeley

Started selling Harleys in 1917 in Vancouver, B.C. Later became North America's first Honda distributor. Named exclusive distributor for Harley-Davidson in Canada in 1973, an arrangement that would last to this year. Trev Deeley was the first non-American on the H-D board of directors.

EDISON DYE – Husqvarna

"Brought the brand, the racer (Torsten Hallman) and the new sport of motocross to the United States, and in doing so created an entirely new market for off-road motorcycling."



DON EMDE

Champion racer, industry spokesperson and advocate, past publisher of Dealernews

2005

MotorGP debuts at Laguna Seca Raceway
Dealers launch **fuel-efficiency campaign** to spur motorcycle, scooter sales
There are **6.7 million registered motorcycles** in the United States
Hully Gully The Ultimate Toy Store, of London, Ont., is Top 100 Dealer of the Year
Custom Chrome holds its 19th annual dealer show at Big Twin West in Las Vegas

2006

Route 66 Harley-Davidson (Tulsa, Okla.) is Top 100 Dealer of the Year
MX racing legend **Joel Robert** receives Lifetime Achievement Award
Ride in Peace: Dealernews co-founder **Bill Bagnall**
There are more than 9,000 MSF-certified **RiderCoaches** in the U.S.
The Motorcycle Industry, a **musical group** from Brooklyn, is founded

2007

Motorcycle **sales drop 10 percent** after 14 consecutive years of growth
Doc's Harley-Davidson (Kirkwood, Mo.) named Top 100 Dealer of the Year
Over **13,000 powersports retailers** in operation
Honda stops production of two-stroke MX bikes
SVA establishes revised **ATV design, performance standards** for youth riders and for vehicles that accommodate passengers, all to enhance rider safety
Dealernews and Brittany Morrow launch "**Road Rash Survivor**" posters to promote benefits of protective gear
Yamaha rolls out **Dealer Improvement Program** to help retailers with slowing sales

EARL FLANDERS

Founder, Flanders Co. Designer, manufacturer and distributor of handlebars and other accessories.

SKIP FORDYCE

– Founder, Skip Fordyce Harley-Davidson, Riverside, Calif.

Managed multiple dealerships representing multiple brands, including Honda, Triumph and Ariel. *"A master of promotion with a highly recognizable logo and company truck."*

FRED FOX



Head of the largest set of aftermarket distributorships in North America, Parts Unlimited and Drag Specialties, and conquering international markets with Parts Europe. The man to impress for the many parts, gear and accessory brands who want to succeed in this market.

EMIL GOMEZ

– Founder, EMGO

Veteran supplier of replica parts and accessories for new and vintage motorcycles



DON GRAVES

– Johnson Motors, BSA, Triumph, Kawasaki, Suzuki

Sales manager, mentor, builder of business for countless vehicle and aftermarket brands. Among his many achievements, he was instrumental in introducing Kawasaki Racing Green to the world.

Listen to Larry Huffman's audiocast interview with Don Graves at www.dealernews.com

BILL GRAY

– Kawasaki, RMK, Tucker Rocky

"Gray practiced his craft with pride, stretching back to his early days as a rep for Kawasaki and then RMK, through to the president with notable tenures at the industry's largest distributors and brands. Setting standards, training and mentoring, Gray had an impact on all those with whom he worked."

TORSTEN HALLMAN

– Husqvarna

"With Edison Dye's promoting talent, Torsten brought a new genre to North American dealers. It provided new bike sales, new race tracks. He was the originator of clothing specific to a segment of riding."

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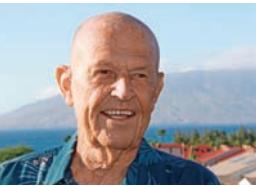
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50th ANNIVERSARY

**TOM HEININGER** – Webco Inc.

"A pioneer in motorcycle accessories for both bike and rider. He developed a live radio broadcast at Daytona every year during the 1960s and 1970s where everyone would attend the Hawaiian Inn party to get a minute or two on the mic."

Instrumental in securing industry participation and promotion of Motorcycle Dealer News and the accompanying trade shows. Past president of MIC.

LARRY HESTER – Motorcycle Dealer News

Co-founder of what became the longest running business-to-business media brand in the industry, and an accompanying suite of trade events.

JIM JINGU – Yamaha

"Yamaha's first public relations manager, responsible for many innovative dealer programs. Instrumental in putting Yamaha on the map in the United States."

BOB JONES, JIM JONES – J&W Cycles, Washington, Mo.

Recipients of the Don J. Brown Lifetime Achievement Award. J&W has placed in the Dealernews Top 100 every year since the competition's inception, a feat that has not been accomplished by any other dealer.

LOREN 'HAP' JONES

California-based Indian, BSA, Sunbeam, AJS-Matchless and Norton dealer who operated a wholesale accessory business on the side, eventually selling the dealership to build what became one of the largest distributorships in the nation.

HARRY 'J.R.' KELLEY

Founder, KK Motorcycle Supply. War hero, dealer principal, racer, accessory distributor, AMA president and ambassador for the motorcycle industry and lifestyle.

ED 'IRON MAN' KRETZ

National champion racer, pioneer Southern California dealer/distributor.

**ED LEMCO**

Dealer principal turned national dealer consultant, 20 group creator and trainer. Longtime advocate of dealer's rights.

WOODY LEON – Beaumont, Texas, shop owner

"A Texan who promoted motorcycles like few can do. He raced and sold, and sponsored events in the area."

'CAPTAIN JACK' ROBERT LOVE

Joined American Honda as a regional sales manager covering Kansas and Oklahoma in the 1960s and 1970s. Represented Triumph, Dunlop Tire, Carlisle Tire, Motorcycle Stuff, AGV Sports and CoverCraft.

ROGER MARSHALL

Started creating accessories for the newly popular sport of snowmobiling behind his John Deere farm implement business in the 1960s. Added parts and accessories for motorcycles, ATVs and PWC, eventually creating Marshall Distributing.

**ALAN MASEK**

Built Kawasaki "by the numbers," helped create what became the Motorcycle Industry Council, and introduced the "Less Sound, More Ground" motto.

**JACK McCORMACK**

Pioneer for Honda in the U.S. market, and placed the famous ad, "You meet the nicest people on a Honda" in LIFE Magazine. Served as district manager for Triumph and then helped form U.S. Suzuki. Sold his share in Suzuki in 1966 to establish American Eagle motorcycle.

WAYNE MOULTON

Triumph and Kawasaki executive, president of Vetter Fairing. "The father of the Japanese cruiser," he was responsible for the design and development of the KZ900 LTD.

**DAVE MUNGENAST SR.**

"The model motorcycle dealer, world-class Enduro rider, stuntman, AMA board chairman, AIADA board chairman and perhaps motorcycling's classiest promoter."

2008

Number of **U.S. households with motorcycles** jumps 26 percent from 2003 to 2008

Franchised dealers account for **\$17.5 billion in sales** nationwide, MIC says

J.D. Power & Associates says consumers prefer **single-line dealers**

More than a third of the 585,000 attending the **International Motorcycle Shows** are 18-34 years old

Erico Motorsports (Denver, Colo.) named Top 100 Dealer of the Year
SxS manufacturers form **ROHVA**

2009

The lead battle begins: MIC, AMA petition CPSC to delay new standards

Malcolm Smith Motorsports (Riverside, Calif.) named Top 100 Dealer of the Year

Manufacturers **cut production** as sales approach 39 percent drop vs. previous year

Dennis Johnson named editor of Dealernews

Honda develops **dual-clutch transmission** for larger sportbikes

Government allows sales, excise **tax deduction** on some motorcycle purchases to spur economy

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FAY MYERS

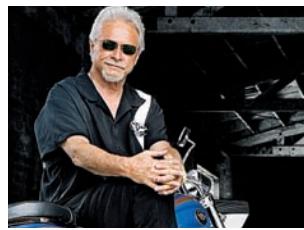
Founded Colorado-based dealership in 1942 and over the years carried Triumph, Ariel, AJS, Cotton, Parilla, BSA and other brands. Fay Myers Motorcycle World is one of the most influential dealers in the Rocky Mountain region.



LYNN NATHAN

Powersports East, Bear, Del.

Created the original MSF rider training curricula before it moved to the West Coast. With her husband, ran one of the most successful dealerships on the East Coast before handing day-to-day management to her daughter.



ARLEN NESS

American V-Twin motorcycle designer and entrepreneur, vanguard of the modern premium custom bike industry.

ED NICHOLS – *Founder, Nichols Distributing*

MAC DANNY 'NICK' NICHOLS – "Mr. Motorcycle"

A multiple world record-holder in drag racing, Nichols was known to many in the industry, especially in the performance and custom bike sectors. Was a fixture on the International Motorcycle Shows tour, representing industry brands and counseling riders on proper riding gear and motorcycle accessories.



TED NIELSEN – *Founder, Nielsen Enterprises, Lake Villa, Ill.*

Built what has become the largest off-road dealership in the Chicago area and one of the most influential in the Upper Midwest. Promoter and patron of countless regional off-road and snowmobile events.

CHARLES NORTHEY – *Sky Powersports, Florida*

Cited by Suzuki as influential in helping build the brand in the United States.



JOHN PARHAM

– *J&P Cycles, National Motorcycle Museum*

Recipient of the Don J. Brown Lifetime Achievement Award. Built J&P Cycles into an international retail distribution and mail order/online powerhouse.

JOE PARKHURST

– *Cycle World*

"His editorial contribution to the industry gave the dealers a head start on selling new models for the coming year. Saddleback Park became the headquarters for testing any bike the dealers sold."



JOHN PENTON

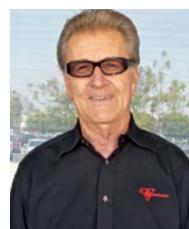
– *Penton Motors*

"His love of off-road provided the impetus to build and promote his own motorcycle. Today, he still influences scores of new riders and remains a role model and hero to many in the industry."

DUDLEY PERKINS

– *Dealer principal*

Champion hillclimb competitor, Harley-Davidson dealer, longtime AMA member and advocate. Considered by the AMA as "the grandest of the grand old men of motorcycling."



GRADY PFEIFFER

Master marketer for aftermarket brands, ambassador of the American V-twin motorcycle industry.

RAY PRICE

– *Harley-Davidson and Triumph dealer, North Carolina*

Parlayed a successful race career into the development of the most well-known dealership in the Raleigh-Durham area. Tens of thousands attend the Ray Price Bikefest every year on Labor Day weekend.

2010

Skagit Powersports of Burlington, Wash., is Top 100 Dealer of the Year

Yamaha announces it will move ATV production to the United States

Motorcycle outerwear begins incorporating **d3o armor**

Dealers revive **layaway programs** to help customers who fail to qualify for financing

Ride in Peace: Don J. Brown

Insurance group survey says 54 percent of riders want **ABS** on their next bike

2011

Industry rallies to help companies, workers affected by Japan earthquake and tsunami

Iron Pony Motorsports (Westerville, Ohio) is Top 100 Dealer of the Year

J&W Cycles owners receive inaugural **Don J. Brown Lifetime Achievement Award** for winning Top 100 every year since program's inception

MIC petition drive at Dealer Expo to **end lead ban** nets 3,000 letters

Polaris buys Indian Motorcycle

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50th ANNIVERSARY

BASIL 'BIG DADDY' PROSKIN*ACE Cycle World, Chicago, Ill.*

Started a dealership in 1947 that would sell Velocette, Triumph, BSA, Royal Enfield, James, Ariel, Norton, Ducati and Moto Guzzi, and eventually Honda, becoming the largest motorcycle dealer in the Midwest by the 1960s.

NORM REEVES

Multiline dealer in Los Angeles. One of the first to stay open 12 hours a day, six days a week.

GENE ROCCI – *Founder, Rocky Cycle***BRUCE ROSSMEYER**

Created one of the largest nationwide networks of Harley-Davidson dealerships in the country and a "destination" retail center for enthusiasts in Florida.

TOM RUDD – *Drag Specialties, Kuryakyn*

Mechanic and drag racer who grew a small parts and accessories store in Minneapolis into a major supplier of P&A, eventually selling Drag Specialties in 1987 and founding Kuryakyn two years later.

**MICKEY RUPP**

Mansfield, Ohio-based dealer and distributor. Manufactured, distributed and sold the Rupp line of snowmobiles, ATVs and mini-cycles, especially throughout the Midwest.

MAX SACKS

Business sales trainer, author, long-running columnist in Motorcycle Dealer News: "Persuasion: The Hidden Side of Selling, or How to Sell More Motorcycles."

PERRY SANDS

Custom builder and founder of Performance Machine, innovator in the design, testing and production of performance aftermarket parts. Father of Roland.

IRV SEAVER

One of the first "showcase" dealers, who built impressive showrooms, put staff in uniforms and offered consumer financing. Sold Cushman, Yankee, Royal Enfield, BSA, Triumph, Yamaha, Tohatsu, Suzuki and other brands before becoming exclusive with BMW; today Irv Seaver BMW Motorcycles remains one of the largest BMW dealers on the West Coast.

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- Rocket Brake Rotor **99.95**

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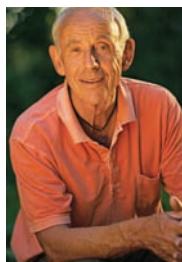
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RONALD SEIDNER

Bert's Mega Mall, California

Took over the shop bought by his father in 1959, added motorcycles in 1963 and eventually created the industry's first retail "mega mall." Cited by Suzuki as instrumental in building the brand in the United States.



MALCOLM SMITH

Soft spoken, hard riding, savvy businessman and industry legend. Top 100 Hall of Fame Dealer.

JAMES E. SETTLES – *Suzuki of Cincinnati*

Established creative payment systems, offered free bike storage, same day service and free riding instructions. Considered by Suzuki as an important dealer in its U.S. buildup.



MICHAEL STANFIELD

Freedom Cycles, Freedom Rally Racing

Recipient: Don J. Brown Lifetime Achievement Award (posthumous).

Unprecedented devotion to the sport and to the commitment of the retailer to the local community.

CRAIG SHOEMAKER – WPS

Worked his way up through Western Power Sports, then a midsized regional distributor, and eventually purchased and expanded WPS into what has become the third largest nationwide distribution company in the industry, fostering successful house brands and a new V-twin subsidiary.

JOE TERESI

Founder of Paisano Publications and the milestone Easyriders media franchise.

ERWIN 'SMITTY' SMITH

Top race builder in the 1950s and '60s who is also credited with fueling the vintage bike movement. Ran an Indian dealership in the Quad Cities area of Illinois.

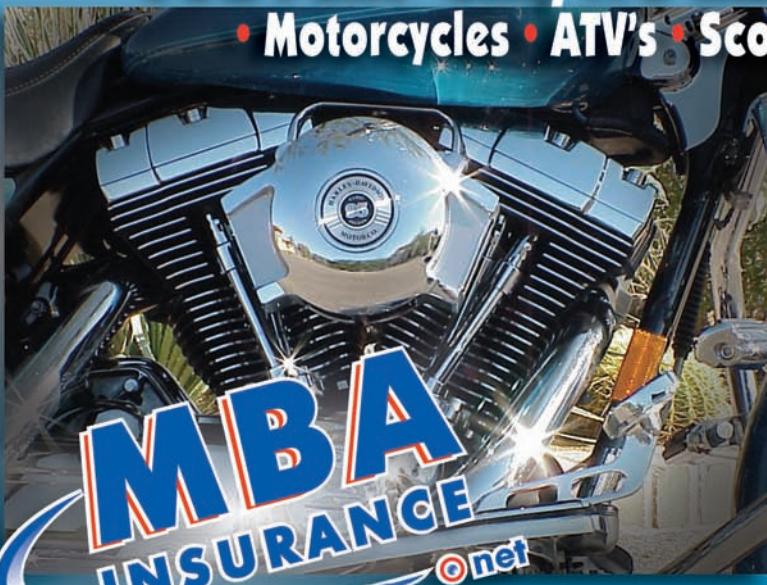
TERRY TIERNAN

Yamaha national sales vice president, instrumental for getting Yamaha involved in racing in the United States.

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50th ANNIVERSARY

DON TILLEY – *Tilley Harley-Davidson, Statesville, N.C.*

Known as the dealer's dealer. "Don was the epitome of what a dealer ought to be." Tilley's bike building achievements put Harley-Davidson racing on the map.

WILLIE TOKISHI

"Mr. Honda's No. 1 advisor and eventually vice president of community affairs. He took Honda to the community—for the brand, the image and the growth of motorcycling."

**SKIP VAN LEEUWEN**

Van Leeuwen Distributing

Sales rep for American Safety Equipment, then sales manager for Bill Robertson and Sons before founding his own distributorship.

TERRY VANCE

Championship NHRA racer and lifelong team supporter, co-founder of Vance & Hines.

**MIKE VAUGHAN**

Industry veteran spanning more than four decades, starting with Polaris snowmobiles and then eventually becoming director of marketing at Kawasaki, where he was responsible for convincing Japan to name the ZX900 the "Ninja." Became CEO of Triumph, and then publisher of Dealernews.

Continues as a writer and online columnist.

CRAIG VETTER

Creator of Windjammer Fairings, providing stimulus for the touring bike market. Designer of the Triumph X-75 Hurricane.

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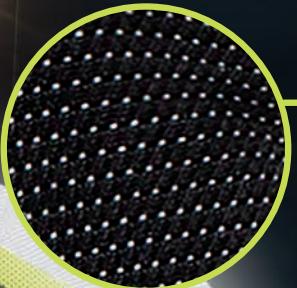
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50th ANNIVERSARY

WALTER VON SCHONFELD

Advertising and public relations executive for Indian, Berliner and Castrol Oil, and represented JAWA, CZ, Zundapp, Sachs, Victoria, BSA and Suzuki during his career.

IVAN WAGAR

Past editor of Cycle World. Member of the U.S. Motor Vehicle Safety Council, president of the Motorcycle Scooter and Allied Trade Association, and played a key role transitioning the organization into today's Motorcycle Industry Council.



BARRY WILLEY

National Cycle

Early designer and manufacturer of metric cruiser accessories, developing numerous innovations in windshields and ultimately influencing motorcycle designs themselves. The first industry leader to accessorize the metric cruiser.

ELDON WRIGHT – Johnson Motors

Among many accomplishments, helped establish Triumph in the United States.

'UNCLE' PAUL WUNSCH

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JOHN WYCKOFF

National sales manager of Dixie Distributing, and founder of Intersports Fashions West. Noted journalist and business author. Literally wrote the book on becoming a successful dealer: "Mind Your Own Business" (and the MYOB-2 Second Edition).

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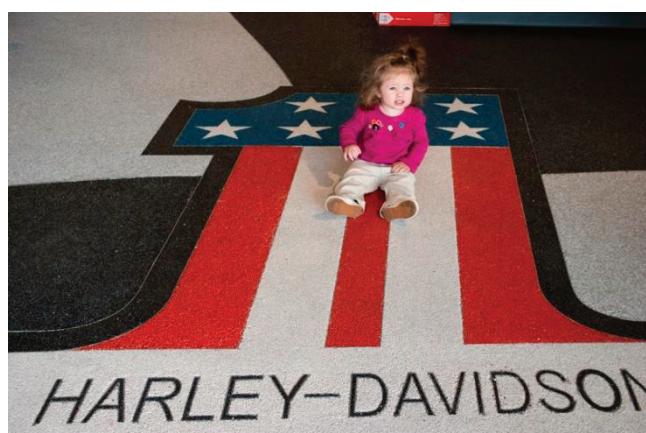
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2012

City Cycle Sales (Junction City, Kan.) is Top 100 Dealer of the Year
Suzuki reorganizes, emerges as **Suzuki Motor America Inc.**

John Parham of J&P Cycles receives DJB Lifetime Achievement Award
Median age for a motorcycle rider: **40 years**

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NPA used vehicle auction at Dealer Expo generates **\$1.9 million in sales in 90 minutes**

National Retail Federation study says millennials' use of technology is 'overestimated'

2013

McGrath Powersports (Cedar Rapids, Iowa) is Top 100 Dealer of the Year
Bob Althoff, owner of A.D. Farrow Harley-Davidson, honored with DJB Lifetime Achievement Award

Harley-Davidson launches **Rushmore** line, targets urban customers with Street models

Honda rolls out **125cc streetbike**, other models for new riders

Ride in Peace: Kurt Caselli

Steve Christini launches five bikes for next model year, starts signing dealers

NEW PRODUCTS FROM THE 1965 ISSUES

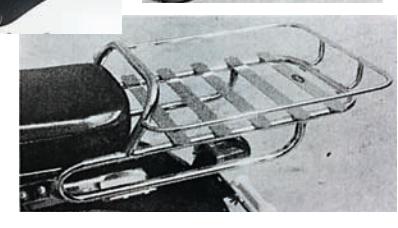
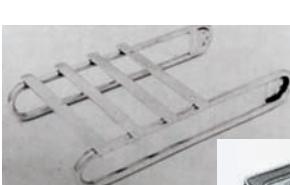
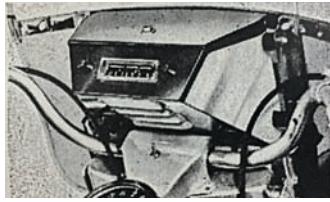
Uni-Rack adjustable rack fits more motorcycles than any other on the market. \$14.95 includes fittings. *Accurate Accessories*

Judson Cycle Tron integrated electronic ignition system, reportedly the first one designed specifically for motorcycles, guarantees that output will not fall off as engine speed increases. \$49.50. *Judson Research & Mfg.*

Sticky Stuff instantly reduces elapsed time and gives greater top end speeds. \$3.95 for a 20 oz. aerosol can. *RC Industries*

Aluminum Flywheel for BMWs, made from 60,000 lb. tensile aluminum, guaranteed explosion-proof. \$44.50 includes hardened socket head screws and wrench. *Bowman Products*

Honda 160/250 Carburetor Adaptors, "the quickest way to make your Honda 160 a real go-getter," offer fast installation. The sleek ram-type induction system assures peak power at all engine speeds. \$14.95 for a pair. *Webco Inc.*



2014

Motorsports Aftermarket Group merges with Tucker Rocky

Motorcycle Mall in New Jersey is Top 100 Dealer of the Year

Popular sales trainer, writer **Mark Rodgers** returns to Dealernews

Kawasaki launches the **300 hp Ninja H2R**, adds street-legal H2

Don Emde and friends re-create **Cannonball Baker's** famous cross-country ride

Ride in Peace: Michael Stanfield of Freedom Cycles, Freedom Rally Racing, recipient of the DJB Lifetime Achievement Award

Polaris debuts three-wheeled **Slingshot**

Women comprise nearly 1 in 4 motorcyclists/passengers

2015

Erik Buell Racing ceases operations in April

Several states work on **autocycle legislation** to cover registrations of reverse trikes, Elio, Polaris Slingshot

Ski-Doo's 2016 lineup features industry's **first adjustable ski**

Manufacturers increase enforcement of **MAP policies**

Electric motorcycle market heats up with new concepts, patents emerging from a number of large OEMs

Threats to dealer sales model in auto industry may have repercussions for the way powersports vehicles are sold in future


blog.dealernews.com/davekoshollek

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

Make the easy sale...easier

LAYOUTS AND PRACTICES THAT LET YOU GRAB THAT LOW-HANGING FRUIT

IN MY OTHER ROLE as a contract parts and service sales trainer for Harley-Davidson University, I've had the pleasure of working in and/or visiting dealerships across the country; Australia too. I've been to hundreds of service departments over the years, many of which have very progressive layouts and operating policies and procedures. I learn a lot of best practices from these visits.

Although, truth be told, I have never been to a "perfect" dealership. If I look around long enough I always find some activity, facility layout or display that misses the mark and consequently is missing out on the low-hanging fruit of easy sales. Let me give you some "less than best" examples from my most recent visits.

The 'Bad Part' Blunder

First off was an independent shop well known for its incredibly creative custom motorcycles and the gorgeous custom parts it manufactures and sells. I was drawn to a wall with several custom products on display. The experience was going great, until I happened upon a particular bolt-on part. There, scribbled on the product in white marker, were the words, "No good"—twice! I guess it was to make sure you didn't miss it the first time.

So you have a cool custom piece that attracts interested buyers who are then turned off by the store's hand-written notification that it is "no good." Now customers are searching for imperfections elsewhere. (This incident reminded me of a similar experience at a dealership which had chrome fork lowers on display with the chrome pits circled and marked, "Bad Part.")

Never display a bad part. It kills sales and destroys product credibility. If theft is a concern, you're better off applying sensor strips, installing security cameras or connecting products to the wall.

The 'No Sign' Scenario

Another less-than-best example was experienced at another dealership I visited, where the service reception area was nice and clean, but the display of accessories for installation during a 1K, 5K or 10K service was located on the wall behind the service advisor's desk, discouraging customers from taking a closer look at the very accessories the dealership is desperately trying to sell. I see this a lot.

In the opposite corner of the reception area was a glass cabinet that contained over \$2,000 worth of performance cylinder heads, cylinders, pistons, a flywheel assembly and an EFI tuning module, with no signage

of any kind. The shop might as well have used the cabinet to hold the tech's bag lunches—it was that ineffective.

What turns a dead display into a self-selling son-of-a gun? Signage with the component names, features and benefits, and most importantly, in the performance category, the amount of potential horsepower and torque.

A best practice is to display a group of performance components the shop has found

to be an excellent combination, along with a full-color dyno chart that has the performance-enhanced engine output and the stock power output displayed for comparison. Color the increase in horsepower (multi-cylinder engine) or torque (singles and twins) in green, so customers have no doubt about the power increase that can be enjoyed with that combination.

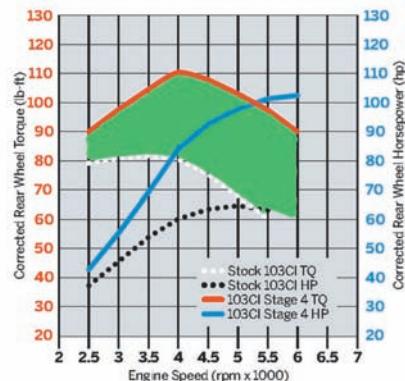
The 'Don't Get Up' Doldrums

Another scene I see too often: office-height desks for the service advisors. This gets them in the habit of not communicating with customers at eye-level and worse, not even getting up to great customers.

Common courtesy dictates that we greet people by standing up, shaking their hand and welcoming them to the store. Office-height desks discourage good manners. Bar-height service desks are better because they promote stand-up conversations. (I don't recommend customer stools because that encourages "customer parking," which interferes with conducting business with others.)

Take a look at the service reception area at **Tucson Harley-Davidson** (see photo). Note the service advisor islands, well-lit and accessible displays, and what customers love most: the option to ride in and up to the service desk. And when you arrive at Tucson H-D your service advisor will meet you, face-to-face, with a smile and a handshake.

If you're thinking, "I'll bet they're a busy service department," you'd be right. They don't miss any low-hanging fruit. Delicious thought, isn't it? ☀



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'MAPPING' the future

MANUFACTURERS, DISTRIBUTORS GET SERIOUS ON PRICING

FFIFTY YEARS AGO, advertised prices for a lot of items probably didn't make that much competitive difference. Advertising was mostly in newspapers and on the radio and local TV.

But that was when a 10-mile journey was a long trip, neighbors owned the local news and broadcast outlets, and the Internet? No such thing. There were price wars, to be sure, but the effect was mostly localized until discount mail order houses got into the game.

E-commerce ushered in an era of new competition that forced manufacturers to



blow. Then came the fly-by-nights: those who would sell anything trendy, looking for the next hot opportunity and then moving on to the next market. With no stake in the industry's future, they often sold at a discount, with no thought for margins or customer service.

Those in it for the long haul were faced with customers demanding explanations for even slightly higher prices. Customer support was lacking, price competition was cutthroat and brands were devalued.

"On our customer service side, our biggest problem is [that when] people who buy things from one of these sites, there is no product knowledge and [they] buy the wrong stuff. Then they expect us to take care of it," said Bob Lowry, FLY Racing manager at WPS. "The consumer expects us to eat it. We get some crazy, ridiculous requests, and they just blast you on social media."

That makes dealers an essential part of the sales process.

"We need people to sell our product [who] know what they're talking about. We were



Brands like FLY and Motion Pro rely on knowledgeable dealers who can properly educate a consumer.

"Our goal is to have more dealers. We are not looking to cut dealers off; we just want to make sure that they comply with MAP policies and understand that it is good for them." – Kevin Veltfort, Motion Pro

protect their brands from threats unheard of previously. In the retail arena, legitimate online sellers and third-party sites like Amazon and eBay put pressure on brick-and-mortar dealers. Free shipping struck another

running into a rash of phone calls from people who bought the product on eBay or another website and didn't know what to do with the product, or it didn't do what was promised. We got a ton of angry phone

calls," said Kevin Veltfort, operations manager at Motion Pro. "We came to the realization that most of [this] could have been avoided if they had gotten the proper information when they bought it."

Three strikes

In response, manufacturers began instituting Minimum Advertised Price (MAP) policies with varying degrees of enforcement. Some have been stringent and consistent; others established policies but did little to follow up, defeating their purpose.

Typically, MAP means retailers are forbidden from advertising a price more than 10 percent below Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price (MSRP). A few manufacturers allow 15 percent advertised

discounts, and some permit seasonal discounting. But even approved variances can trigger issues: "One of the most common reasons for MAP violations are that they did not have the most updated feed from the distributor," Veltfort said.

MAP policies apply equally



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SpeedMob, which distributes Airoh Helmets among other product lines, has gone one step further, instituting a gray market policy (see sidebar, right).

to physical and online retailers, although online enforcement means activity can be digitally monitored instead of relying on field reps and reports from dealers.

In the last two years, manufacturers have become more aggressive about issuing new

stand that it is good for them."

It's rare to permanently remove a retailer, and the few that earn that distinction tend to be outsiders.

"Nobody is permanently blackballed. We have an extensive list of people that are cur-

"We have an extensive list of people that are currently blocked. For the most part, these are people who should not be selling FLY product in the first place."

– Bob Lowry, FLY/WPS

policies and enforcing old ones. For those who violate MAP, the penalty typically starts with a manufacturer's warning letter stating the time allowed to comply. Continued non-compliance forces the manufacturer to cut off the retailer from the product line.

Tolerances, of course, vary by company.

"We've always taken the three-strike approach here. If we notify you and you don't comply, we put you on the list for 30 days. On the second offense we are going to shut you down for three or six months, and then we will decide if there is a third chance," said Tim Calhoun, president of SpeedMob. "I've never had anybody go past first. The first thing that typically happens is a conversation: 'Hey, did you know...?'"

The velvet glove is often more effective than the iron hand, at least with retailers committed to the industry, Veltfort said. Although 40 or 50 companies have made the black list over the last year, "Our goal is to have more dealers. We are not looking to cut dealers off; we just want to make sure that they comply with MAP policies and under-

rently blocked," Lowry said. "For the most part, these are people who should not be selling FLY product in the first place."

Price rounding

Then there's "price rounding discounting," a practice unique to online sellers. Most people don't think much about spending a few cents more or less on something, especially high-ticket items. But online retailers will make their prices lower by just a few cents, which pushes them above MAP-compliant retailers in search results.

"Let's say MSRP is \$109.95. MAP is \$98.955. Our MAP would be \$98.96. The violators would be at 94 cents or 89 cents. You search for an item, and we're big fat Americans, we want the best deal. By the time you get to the true MAP, you could be fifth, sixth, tenth on the list," Lowry explained. "The people doing this, they are smart people. They will change their pricing on Friday night when [distributors] are not working" so the prices remain over weekends, he added.

GRAY MARKET, THIRD-PARTY POLICIES INCREASE

DISTRIBUTORS and manufacturers that have had MAP policies in place for a while are adding gray market and third-party seller policies that feed the same effort.

On May 1, WPS began forbidding its retailers from selling on any third-party website except for eBay.

"eBay has tools in place that make it easy to track down and contact a violator. On Amazon, until you actually buy from the seller, we can't find them. We could not find the violators and we were spending crazy amounts of time doing it," Lowry said.

WPS has hired an enforcement company called PriceGrid. "It's less expensive and it's much more thorough. You can set up different parameters. We do brand first, then description, then SKU.

We supply the PriceGrid with our part number and MAP price," Lowry noted.

SpeedMob on April 1 activated a gray market policy to combat problems from foreign sellers. It will no longer service, warranty or offer parts support for any of its imported brands without a valid sales receipt from an authorized U.S. or Canadian SpeedMob dealer. Brands included in the policy at press time were Arrow Exhausts, Giannelli Exhausts, Airoh Helmets, USWE Hydration and STM/Mole Mechanica.

"Basically what we are saying is, if you buy from authorized U.S. or Canadian dealers, we'll bust our butts for you," Calhoun said. "If you bought it from anyone who is not authorized to sell in this market, we won't help you." —HW



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MAP enforcement is expensive, and takes a lot of time. Lowry joined WPS in 2010. "A couple of years later, myself and my staff found we were spending more time enforcing MAP," he said. "It was taking away from shows and meeting with dealers. We had to hire two full-time people to enforce MAP. They were just consumed with it, immediately."

Enforcement services

While none of the people interviewed for this article could cite a specific reason for the recent renewed emphasis on MAP, the enforcement wave seems at least partly online-driven. "The new tech services make it a different conversation," Calhoun said.

There are tools to use.

"Some manufacturers are enforcing MAP by using tools like Brand Protection Agency, Wiser and Bridge Below. These solutions allow manufacturers to upload their MPN and MAP and monitor pricing by crawling the Internet for listings on marketplaces, comparison shopping sites and websites that are advertised below MAP," said Curt McDowell,

business development for automotive and powersports at ChannelAdvisor.

Drop-shipping made it easier for people to set up in garages, storage units and other places where sellers store minimal merchandise. "Drop shipping is a major contributor. They have no overhead," said Lowry. "The ones that I've talked to, they literally look at 'I can make \$1, \$5, 78 cents on that.' They don't think about margins."

Some manufacturers have started to verify new retailers to make sure they are actual powersports dealers.

"In the course of implementing and enforcing our MAP program, we discovered there is a second and equally important policy that is required as a foundation for any workable MAP program, and that is a dealer qualification policy," Veltfort said.

Retailers applying to be Motion Pro dealers, for example, must provide a landline telephone number, email address and a physical store address in their advertising. They must maintain regular business hours and answer phones during business hours, and cannot work out of a storage or residential unit.

"These requirements are helping us to weed out unqualified dealers, improve the level of service our consumers receive, and be in a position to communicate with qualified dealers about MAP policy and violations," Veltfort said.

Compliance services are here to stay, and are likely to become a stronger force. "What's going to happen with MAP is that the majority of us who have not gone to a third-party enforcer will go to a third-party enforcer," Calhoun said. "The software has gotten sophisticated enough to tell us down to the hour and the day who took the price down first, who followed suit, when it was changed. It's pretty amazing what we can find out now." ☀

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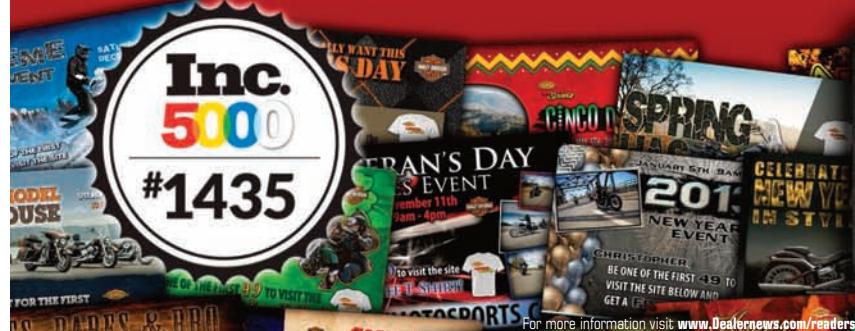
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A former dealer principal, **Rod Stuckey** is the founder and president of Dealership University and PowersportsMarketing.com

Seven rules to live (or die) by

ARE YOU A 'ONE-HITTER QITTER'? SPENDING A LOT, ONLY TO MAKE A BAD IMPRESSION? THEN YOU'D BETTER MEMORIZE THIS LIST

RULE 1: Focus on customer retention.

Acquiring a new customer is one of the most expensive and difficult challenges for any business. Yet for some reason there is an enormous temptation to quickly forget about that new customer after the sale is made. Instead, you seek more new blood.

A huge mistake is to view marketing dollars spent on existing customers as "giving it back," rather than as protecting an asset and stimulating more repeat and referral business.

The most likely people to give your dealership money in the future are the ones who've given you money in the past. Don't ignore them, don't make them feel that you are indifferent about keeping their business.

Rule 2: Create a new customer acquisition system.

Rule 1 being said, obviously you need to add new customers to your database in order to grow. Don't underestimate the power of referrals. Powersports is a passion-based industry and most riders get involved with the products you sell due to the influence of friends and family.

Think about how you became involved. Was it from a media advertisement, or were you influenced by others already in the sport? It ties back to Rule 1: If you create "WOW! experiences" for your existing customers, they will share them, and it will help you grow new customers through referrals.

Still, your new customer acquisition system does need some additional juice. Protecting and promoting your online reputation as well as using Google AdWords are hard to beat when it comes to spending your money in a targeted area, seeking riders who ride what you sell but haven't done business yet with you. Conquest direct mail can be a strong bolt-on as well.

Rule 3: Choose media carefully. Back in the day, nearly all dealers were in the

Yellow Pages and CycleTrader in print. Some chose to do TV, radio, billboards and direct mail. But other than those things, it was all about location, location, location. And while location is still important, the proliferation of online media, satellite radio and TV with a bazillion channels, smart phones, iPads, and other devices can make media choices overwhelming.

So consider return on investment first, and then align multiple media methods together to promote a consistent message.

Consider media just like the synergy example often used with horses: If one horse can pull 1,000 pounds and another horse can pull 1,000 pounds, then yoked together the two can pull 4,000 pounds. A "one and done" email will never generate the response that same email will get if followed by a second email, Facebook post, direct mail piece and a phone call.

Rule 4: Don't underestimate the influence of your message. Have you ever seen the Verizon commercials with the map showing all of the red shading that depicts their cellular coverage compared to their competitors? It's a pretty compelling message of why to do business with Verizon. That should be the goal of your marketing messages as well.

To explain: Why should I choose your dealership? Why should I come to your event this Saturday? Why should I choose your products, your service department? Dealers can spend all of their time considering which media choices to utilize; then, the message is an afterthought—or worse, left up to an underqualified employee or sales rep.

Rule 5: Prior planning prevents poor performance. Properly executing a successful integrated marketing campaign takes preparation and planning well in advance. If you're thinking about

doing a patriotic-themed Fourth of July promotion and you haven't begun your planning by the time you read this in early June, you're already behind. The most effective campaigns have a call to action and a deadline.

Hitching your wagon to a holiday or theme is a great way to do this, but it requires attention to detail with regard to deployment dates and campaign execution.

Rule 6: Get your staff involved. All too often the dealer principal signs up for a marketing program and the staff is either completely unaware, or somewhat aware but not fully in tune with said program. This leads to disconnect with customers, a lack of enthusiasm from employees, and even a downright fumble in which the dealer has invested big money to make a bad impression.

Building value in the campaign with your staff and training them on expectations shows that the dealership 1) is investing back in the business; 2) gets the team onboard with ensuring all deliverables are met on time; and 3) builds continuity between the marketing message and the customer's actual dealership experience.

Rule 7: Don't be a "one hitter quitter." The goal of your marketing program should be to touch your entire buying base 52 to 104 times per year. Deploying one ad and expecting it to rain gold is as absurd as going to the gym once and expecting to have six-pack abs.

Successful marketing is a process, not an event, and you need to make a plan that includes a specific strategy for both customer retention and new customer acquisition. Then you must stick with that plan, only making minor adjustments to optimize your investments based on your experiences. Don't abort the mission because you expected one campaign to make your entire year. ☀

Dealernews TOP 100

EXCELLENCE IN
POWERSPORTS RETAILING

A.D. Farrow Co. Harley-Davidson (Sunbury, OH)
 ABC Harley-Davidson (Waterford, MI)
 Advantage Powersports (Kansas City, MO)
 Adventure Harley-Davidson (Dover, OH)
 Adventure Motorcycle & Accessories (Weston, OH)
 Arkport Cycles (Hornell, NY)
 Arlington Motorsports (Arlington Heights, IL)
 Babbitt's Sports Center (Muskegon, MI)
 Bayside Harley-Davidson (Portsmouth, VA)
 Big St. Charles Motorsports (St. Charles, MO)
 Big #1 Motorsports (Birmingham AL)
 Black Bear Harley-Davidson (Wytheville, VA)
 Black Jack Harley-Davidson (Florence, SC)
 Black Wolf Harley-Davidson (Bristol, VA)
 Bob Weaver Motorsports & Marine (North Tonawanda, NY)
 Brewer Cycles Inc. (Henderson, NC)
 Bud's Harley-Davidson (Evansville, IN)
 Carey's Cycle Center (Riverdale, UT)
 Central Texas Harley-Davidson (Round Rock, TX)
 Central Texas Powersports (Georgetown, TX)
 Champion Motorsports (Roswell, NM)
 Charlie's Harley-Davidson (Huntington, WV)
 Cole Harley-Davidson (Bluefield, WV)
 Commonwealth Powersports (Prince George, VA)
 Cruisin' 66 (Ozark, MO)
 Cycle Center of Denton (Denton, TX)
 Cycle North Powersports (Prince George, BC, Canada)
 Cycle World of Athens Inc. (Bogart, GA)
 Cyclewise/Ducati Vermont (New Haven, VT)
 DHY Motorsports (Deptford, NJ)
 Dothan Powersports (Dothan, AL)
 Dreyer South Powersports (Whiteland, IN)
 Ducati/Triumph Newport Beach (Costa Mesa, CA)
 Filer's Powersports LLC (Macedon, NY)
 Freedom Cycles Inc. (Grandview, MO)
 Freedom Powersports and Marine Lewisville (Lewisville, TX)
 Freedom Powersports Dallas (Dallas, TX)
 Freedom Powersports Decatur (Decatur, TX)
 Freedom Powersports Hurst (Hurst, TX)
 Freedom Powersports McKinney (McKinney, TX)
 Freedom Powersports Weatherford (Weatherford, TX)
 Frieze Harley-Davidson Sales Inc. (O'Fallon, IL)
 Gail's Harley-Davidson (Grandview, MO)
 Gene's Gallery Inc. (Springfield, MO)
 Giesen Motorsports (Rock Falls, IL)
 GO AZ Motorcycles (Scottsdale, AZ)
 Harley-Davidson of Erie (Erie, PA)
 Harley-Davidson of Scottsdale (Scottsdale, AZ)
 Harv's Harley-Davidson (Macedon, NY)
 Hattiesburg Cycles (Hattiesburg, MS)
 Honda Kawasaki West (Fort Worth, TX)
 Hot Rod Harley-Davidson (Muskegon, MI)
 House of Harley-Davidson (Greenfield, WI)
 iMotorsports Inc. (Elmhurst, IL)
 Indian Victory Charlotte (Lowell, NC)
 J & W Cycles Inc. (Washington, MO)
 J & L Harley-Davidson (Sioux Falls, SD)
 Killeen Power Sports Ltd. (Killeen, TX)
 Liberty Cycle Center/LCC Powersports (Liberty, MO)
 Lexington MotorSports (Lexington, KY)
 Mad River Harley-Davidson (Sandusky, OH)
 Man O'War Harley-Davidson (Lexington, KY)
 Maxim Honda Yamaha (Allen, TX)
 McHenry Harley-Davidson (McHenry, IL)
 Midland Powersports (Midland, TX)
 Motorcycle Mall (Belleville, NJ)
 Myers-Duren Harley-Davidson (Tulsa, OK)
 New Haven Powersports (New Haven, CT)
 Off-Road Express West (Waterford, PA)
 Outer Banks Harley-Davidson (Harbinger, NC)
 Performance PowerSports (Seneca, SC)
 Pioneer Motorsport Inc. (Chaffee, NY)
 Ray Price Inc. (Raleigh, NC)
 Rec-Tech Power Products (Lloydminster, AB, Canada)
 Redline Powersports (Myrtle Beach, SC)
 Rexburg Motorsports (Rexburg, ID)
 Rick Roush Motor Sports (Medina, OH)
 Ride Center USA (Hazard, KY)
 RideNow Peoria (Peoria, AZ)
 Road Track and Trail LLC (Big Bend, WI)
 Route 1 Motorsports (Grant, FL)
 Rubber City Harley-Davidson (Cuyahoga Falls, OH)
 Select Cycle / Scooternerds (Greensboro, NC)
 Show Low Motorsports (Show Low, AZ)
 Sierra Cycles (Sierra Vista, AZ)
 Signature Harley-Davidson (Perrysburg, OH)
 Sky Powersports of Lake Wales (Lake Wales, FL)
 Smokin' Harley-Davidson (Winston-Salem, NC)
 Smoky Mountain Harley-Davidson (Maryville, TN)
 Sound Harley-Davidson (Marysville, WA)
 South Sound Honda Suzuki/South Bound Honda (Olympia/South Tacoma, WA)
 Southern Thunder Harley-Davidson (Southaven, MS)
 Star City Motor Sports (Lincoln, NE)
 Toledo Harley-Davidson (Toledo, OH)
 Vandervest Harley-Davidson (Green Bay, WI)
 Village Motorsports of Grand Rapids (Grand Rapids, MI)
 Waugh Enterprises Harley-Davidson (Orange, VA)
 Wildcat Harley-Davidson (London, KY)
 Wilkins Harley-Davidson (Barre, VT)
 Woodstock Harley-Davidson (Woodstock, IL)

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The 2009 campaign, "How do you want YOUR Dealernews?" featured the great Malcolm Smith, and showcased the expanding portfolio of Dealernews' digital offerings, namely the website and emerging e-newsletters, the DealerNEWS ALERTS.

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FINAL NOTE

The following was published in the July 1965 issue of Motorcycle Dealer News. Author unknown, but he's definitely spot on...even 50 years later. – The Editors

A MOTORCYCLE DEALER HAS NOTHING TO DO

A dealer has practically nothing to do
That is except

To decide if something should be done
Why it is done
What is to be done
When it is to be done
Where it is to be done
How it is to be done
Who should do it



To tell the right person what is to be done
Why it is to be done
How it is to be done
Where it should be done
When it should be done

And then set up workable procedures, records and like
So that it isn't necessary to listen to reasons why it should not be done
Or why it should be done in a different way
To prepare arguments in rebuttal that shall be convincing and conclusive

To follow up to see if the thing has been done
To discover that it has not been done
To inquire why it has not been done
To listen to excuses from the person who should have done it
And did not do it

To follow up a second time to see if the thing has been done
To discover that it has been done but done incorrectly
To point out how it should have been done
To conclude that as long as it has been done it may as well be left as it is

And wonder if it is not time to get rid of a person who cannot do a thing correctly
To reflect that the person at fault has a wife and seven children
And that certainly no other dealer in the world would put up with him for another moment
And that in all probability any successor would be just as bad and probably worse

To consider how much simpler and better the thing would have been had he done it himself
He would have been able to do it right in 20 minutes
But that as things turned out, he himself spent two days trying to find out why it was that it had taken somebody else three weeks to do it wrong
And then realize that such an idea would strike at the very foundation of the belief of all employees that a dealer has nothing to do
Then it is amazing how things don't seem to get off track much more

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