

DIVERSITY+



By Alisa Clickenger

THE NEW, DIVERSE FACE OF MOTORCYCLING

This past weekend I had the fortune to be able to attend the 6th Annual Beautiful Biker's Conference in Las Vegas and write about it (see pages 46-47). I say fortunate because of the feeling of the community developed while there and the valuable information received. More than 100 women in all shapes, sizes, colors, and riding backgrounds came together and forged friendships, shared resources, and celebrated our love of motorcycling. And during the short 48 hours of the event, we learned that love of the open road is something that unites us despite any cultural differences we might have.

If 100+ women gathering for an event doesn't grab your attention, then Porsche Taylor's social media following should: Taylor and her Black Girls Ride brand have over 55,000 followers. Make those devotees, because there are very few places in the industry where there are such diverse images of riders, and content geared towards them, and women gravitate towards inclusion. In an era of our industry looking for ways to bring new riders into the fold, why aren't we actively courting this multicultural crowd? Is it because we don't understand them as customers?

I applaud Porsche Taylor for seeing a void in the marketplace and quitting a lucrative branding job at Adidas to follow her passion and create a movement. If her primary sponsors Indian Motorcycle, Slingshot, and Russ Brown Attorneys are any gauge of the marketplace, they, too, see the value of marketing to the underserved portions of the riding population. In an era of all of us in the industry trying to attract new customers, it seems a no-brainer to make a few adjustments to serve these customers.

Taylor has three tips to make a more inclusive and welcoming retail environment. First, and simplest, dealers can start with a friendly word for everyone who walks through the door. Take it a step further than hello and actually engage with the consumer. This seems obvious, but even as a white woman arriving on my own two wheels I have been in plenty of dealerships where I wasn't even greeted when I walked through the door.

Second, Taylor suggests asking simple organic questions about customers' riding styles before making product suggestions. Don't assume all riders from a category all ride the same. As we saw last weekend, every make and model of motorcycle was represented in the diverse faces of the attendees. Third, Taylor suggests earmarking a part of your marketing budget to work with multicultural community influencers to create events. These events will introduce your dealership to riders you might not otherwise have access to.

Wanting to explore the diversity conversation further, Joanne Donn (www.GearChic.com), Porsche Taylor (www.BlackGirlsRide.com) and yours truly Alisa Clickenger (www.WomensMotorcycleTours.com) are launching an online moto talk show "Talking Moto" Episode 1 will air Monday March 25th at 5:00 pm Eastern time. We're each willing to donate an hour of time out of our busy schedules in order to create a new, inclusive conversation around motorcycling. If your dealership does the same, in your own way, imagine where the industry could be in another few years. 



Porsche Taylor (www.BlackGirlsRide.com)



Joanne Donn (www.GearChic.com)