

By Alisa Clickenger

MARKETING MAVENS

Tips To Making It Happen In Your Store

This month I had the privilege of interviewing Audrey Menarik of Moto Liberty in Dallas, Texas. Her passion for event marketing and the positive results she's generated at her store inspired me to dig deeper into the world of events to see if we could make it easier for dealers who don't have any idea how to get started to create their own events. I reached out to two other event marketing mavens, Tigra Tsujikawa, a powersports marketing consultant/professional enthusiast and Moira Zinn of Powertrip Industries, for suggestions.

The first step in planning a great event is to figure out what the goal of the event and who your audience is. (Hint: It's always best to have your core audience at the center of your planning). Next, figure out the nuts and bolts of your event and what, specifically, you'll need to pull it off in terms of space, staff, and supplies. Then take a look at the timing of your event because that dictates the timing of your marketing, yet it's a background item that many event planners forget about.

"Marketing isn't just a sign on your door, it's really the hook for engagement," explains Tsujikawa. "Be consistent with your messaging, so make sure your customer emails, your website, your social media, and your flyers all has the same event information. The messaging has to be cohesive. It has to form a chain that has consistent information in all channels. Then be sure to give people a way to sign up through all the touch points."

Tsujikawa also says to make sure that people who do come to the event walk away with something. It shouldn't just be a do-rag, either. Have a specific call to action like a special offer to try the service department in your dealership, road test a new model or an invitation to the next event. Bottom line: Don't let them walk away from the event without a reason to come back!


Zinn, whose company provides production and staffing for marketing events, spoke specifically about open house events. Choose to make it a party so it's an inviting atmosphere where people have a good time. Parties always mean offering food, but keep it simple and avoid items that are sticky or drippy, like ice cream, which you'll be wiping off the bikes long after the event.

"Remind your staff that it's about catering to everyone, and make it a safe place to spend money," says Zinn. "I know that sounds strange, but there are times when people who have never been part of the motorcycling community come in with a friend because it's a party, and then they kind of get turned off because they didn't get attention in some way as a buyer."

This message needs to be imparted to the entire staff. "Everyone at the dealership is in essence acting as a host for the party, so whether they're at the counter greeting people or taking money for accessories or if they're working in service, everyone there is hosting the party."

The more you get the word spread, the more likely you are to have people show up at your event. "If you have a raffle or a giveaway, that is an enticement for people, whether it's a helmet, or tools, or a certificate for money toward a larger purchase," Zinn adds. "Have them share something on social media in order to be entered into a drawing the day of the event. And then of course, have them need to be present to win."

Events need to be a party, they need to create a sense of community... and they need to provide a compelling reason for the customers to come back to your store.

"It all becomes enticement for them to be present, so it's seemingly more of the carrot, and then it also gets your dealership in front of their friends who may be people that you otherwise haven't engaged with," concludes Zinn. 

Moira Zinn

