

MPO

Motorcycle & Powersports News



Outfitting Adventure Riders

*What you should stock
and how your staff
should talk about it to
improve the bottom line*

Plus

- Destination Dealer: BMW of Ventura
- OEM Update: Yamaha Viking VI
- Keeping Up Appearances: Cleaners & Polishes
- Product Focus: UTV Accessories

Accessorizing the



By Alisa Clickenger

Adventure motorcycling is bigger than ever. Whether it's local trail riders or those riders wanting to escape the shackles of civilization for a weekend or longer, getting off the beaten path on a motorcycle just keeps getting more and more popular. Because of the extreme variety of places one can ride a dual sport motorcycle, the potential for accessory sales is huge. What your dealership stocks and how your sales staff talk about it is your key to a better bottom line.

Gear Up and Ride

Rene Cormier, founder of Renedian Adventures, specializes in motorcycle tours of Africa. His experience is that the majority of riders arrive for his tours with almost entirely new gear. After all, it's human nature: who wants to go on the trip of a lifetime with old, crunchy gear? You're selling memories to them by convincing them to do big trips. And they will, on their own, make the connection, 'This is the trip of a lifetime. Why am I going to go on this trip with old boots, old gear, and a leaky rain suit?'

"If you can convince riders to do bigger, more life-changing trips, the consumer will make that connection on their own,"

says Cormier. "If the dealer can convince the riders to go on big rides, or organize larger trips themselves, the more time that these guys ride together on these events that are really quite special, maybe even trips of a lifetime, they will buy new gear."

It's the best possible sell – a soft one. Your dealership is in a great position to inspire your customers to bucket-list adventures while at the same time selling more accessories. The reasons for riding are endless. Co-market a tour with a company such as Renedian Adventures to bring your customers on the adventure of a lifetime. Hire engaging speakers for evening slide shows to inspire your customers towards their own two-wheeled dreams. Screen movies in the non-riding season or on rainy days. Improve upon your shop's merchandising by looping riding videos on your displays.

BMW Motorcycles of Ventura County is building a solid customer base by offering great motorcycle rides. (See their profile in this month's "Destination Dealership" article on page 24). There's a reason why popular websites such as ADVrider.com, HorizonsUnlimited.com and others are so

Adventure Rider



heavily used. People want inspiration, or at least to hear how someone just like them was able to go on amazing rides. It's a heroic opportunity for your dealership to make money and serve your customers well.

Walk the Talk

"If you really want to get into this, know your stuff," says Wolfman Motorcycle Luggage founder Eric Hougen. Salespeople need to be experienced in this genre of riding. They need to have some experience with the equipment and have some of their own adventure stories. Is a product good because it's good, or is it good because the marketing is telling everyone it is good?

It's easy for a dealership to stock whatever is popular, but in the long run

that's not serving your customers as well as you can. "Dealer credibility is incredibly important," says Grant Johnson, founder of HorizonsUnlimited.com. Sales staff needs to not only have an interest in this type of riding, but also they have to do it themselves in order to be effective. That's not to say that the entire dealership has to buy into the lifestyle, but you need staff dedicated to this type of riding so they can talk effectively to the customer.

There's no question that there's a type of vanity in the adventure crowd. While ruggedness is the vogue, it also means that the accessories have to have both form and function. Your typical adventure customers are older, more established, have higher incomes, and chances are they're already sold on something before they walk into your dealership.

Between the Internet forums, rider groups and magazines, most tend to know what they want, and already know the questions that they need to ask. An adventure riding salesperson will need to have experiences of their own to be able to back up alternate product recommendations, and hopefully the product knowledge to talk effectively with the customer. If what your sales staff says doesn't match what your customers are reading online, chances are you'll lose the sale.

Jeremy LeBreton, president of AltRider, encourages dealers to take advantage of product sheets and informational literature from accessory manufacturers. Helping your sales staff learn more about how things are manufactured, why those specific

materials are used to make products and how they are mounted will come full-circle. It will help your staff in the overall sales process of selling motorcycles by their knowing more about design efficiencies and what can be done to maximize performance of the machines.

Less is More

While selecting adventure accessories to stock it pays to choose items that fit across the widest range of motorcycles possible. "Certain brands are very, very focused on these [adventure] bikes, and dealers only have a limited amount of shelf space so it pays for them to look for something that works across the board so they can have one set of gear," says Michael Walshaw of BritKit, LLC, the US distributor for Kriega products. "There are a number of brands, Kriega included, that can pretty much suit any bike with the same amount of shelf space."

Grant Johnson spent many years traveling around the world on a motorcycle. He suggests that dealers

counsel their customers to keep their packing light, keep it simple and to not carry excessive amounts of stuff. "The customer who hears this from their dealer realizes later that the dealer was right, and then loves that dealer because he sold them the right thing," says Johnson.

Customers can pretty much get everything they need online. Why go to a dealer? Because of your expertise. Your shop is the only place where customers can attend packing seminars, touch, feel and play with the equipment they've read about online, and meet other travelers and "experts" that they can learn from in a fun, interactive environment. It's the only place where they can get social fulfillment from picking the brains of other informed enthusiasts, and in their eyes your staff are "experts." Make sure they are.

Rene Cormier sums it up best. "A lot of riders are looking for someone they can turn to for informed decisions. They want advice based on real world experience. If the dealer can deliver

A Motorcycle Adventure of a Lifetime

'Round the World motorcycle traveler and University of Gravel Roads author Rene Cormier now leads tours in Southern Africa. Partnering with adventure motorcycle dealers, he offers custom, co-branded motorcycle trip-of-a-lifetime motorcycle riders that are plug and play for dealers. For a dealership presentation on his motorcycle adventures or to inquire about private label tours, contact Rene at renedian@mac.com.

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T5K 2M2
(780) 707-7363
www.Renedian.com

that, they will have a loyal customer for life." ↙

Adventure/Touring Products



A staple in the Maxxis lineup, the Maxxcross IT is known as a very long-wearing intermediate motocross tire that performs exceptionally well in common intermediate to hardpack conditions. Its knob design offers precise steering for a wide variety of soil conditions.

Maxxis International/USA
www.maxxis.com



Firstgear Torrent waterproof luggage is made with strength and durability to withstand the rigors of on and off road use. They are precision cut and sonically welded to ensure optimal seam integrity. They come in multiple sizes and capacities and included webbing straps. Retail price: 70-liter \$89.95, 40-liter \$79.95, 25-liter \$59.95.

Firstgear/Distributed by Tucker Rocky
www.firstgear-usa.com

The SleepRite camping cot sets up quick and is comfortable. Under 5 lbs., it is small enough to fit on a motorcycle. Set up is intuitive and simple, and when it's time to hit the sack, this ultra light bed is wider, taller and longer than most other camping cots. Open: 78" x 30" x 6"; Closed: 18" x 7.5" x 5.5"; Cot height: 6"; Weight: 4.95 lbs.; Weight capacity: 300 lbs. Retail price: \$197.99.

TravelChair Company
www.TravelChair.com



Adventure/Touring Products



A 'round-the-world contender, Giant Loop's Siskiyou Panniers combine the convenience of hard panniers with all of Giant Loop's performance advantages. This bag is rugged, rackless and lightweight. Secures to passenger footrest mounts and rides on rear rack and/or pillion seat, and you can still ride two-up. Mounts/dismounts in minutes and backed by a Limited Lifetime Warranty. Retail Price: \$700.

Giant Loop LLC
www.GiantLoopMoto.com

The Ballistic Revolution jacket by Joe Rocket is highlighted by an 840D ballistic nylon reinforced RockTex 600 chassis and backed by CE approved armor (shoulders and elbows) plus removable high-density spine pad. The Revolution also features state-of-the-art environmental protection with an integrated waterproof mid-liner, Cynix insulated full-sleeve liner, and a hi-capacity Variable Flow ventilation system, providing one of the widest riding climate ranges available.



To ensure that all this protection stays in place are ride-specific tailoring and an integrated 10-point SureFit adjustment system. MSRP: \$199.99; Sizes: Small - 3XLarge; Colors: Black/Black, Black/Grey, Black/Red, Black/Hi-Viz.

Joe Rocket/Distributed by Sullivans Inc.
www.joerocket.com



The AltRider Hemisphere Saddlebag offers a sizable capacity of 45 liters, compatible with most dual sport bikes. 1050D nylon construction and military grade stitching on all seams ensure long term abuse of riding specifically designed for durability.

AltRider
www.altrider.com



Kriega bike pack motorcycle bags are durable, functional and adaptable. The Universal System enables quick and easy fitting / removal without modification or additional mounting equipment. These waterproof motorcycle bags are designed to fit all types of motorcycles. The new Overlander soft pannier systems provide the capacity of hard cases, plus offer the ALP quick-release mounting system. Kriega motorcycle hydration kits are designed to withstand extreme conditions, and have been used in countless off-road competitions such as the Dakar Rally and the Baja 500.

Kriega US/Distributed by BritKit LLC
www.kriega.us



The Scottolier eSystem motorcycle chain oiler increases the life of chains and sprockets by up to 7 times. It fits easily and quickly onto motorcycles and gives the user control over flow rate. Plus, it improves performance and significantly reduces the need for motorcycle chain maintenance. Retail price: \$279.95

Scottolier Distribution USA. LLC
www.ScottoilerDistributionUSA



Heavy gauge stainless steel skid plate with integrated polyamid nylon rails that absorb impact, protect bolt heads and provide a sliding surface for overcoming obstacles. Available for the BMW F800GS, R1200GS and KTM 1190. Retail: \$329 - \$450

Touratech-USA
www.touratech-usa.com