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Brands should seriously consider Harley's model

The article by Marc Sani (February 1 issue) profiling George Gatto's experiences in both the bicycle and motorcycle industries is very telling as well as being very business savvy. Hopefully, all IBD Summit attendees who are at the brand level paid heed to the Harley-Davidson model. It just makes sense on all levels. It would solve so many issues that the bicycle dealers, consumers and brands are currently facing and have been facing for years.

It's a new world. Time for a change!

—Mark Bedel, ProBikes LLC
Monroeville, Pennsylvania
Via e-mail

Environmental benefits of bikes are overlooked

I have been concerned about environmental protection since college when I read Harrison Brown's *The Challenge of Man's Future*, in which he talks about running out of nonrenewable resources. One of my personal solutions was to use my bike rather than a car as much as possible. I am now 75 years old and the challenge to our environment has increased many-fold since my college days. The threat of climate change is now one of the biggest issues facing mankind. I recently took a Resilient Neighborhood class where we are taught ways to reduce our carbon footprint. I have always thought that I lived lightly on the Earth, but have been surprised to find out that there were many more steps I could take. Learning that in Marin County, where I live, community transportation is responsible for 63 percent of emissions, I have taken a big step: I am going carless and I am transporting myself almost 100 percent by bicycle (with occasional use of public transportation). Also for the first time, I

am thinking of buying an electric bike so I can travel even farther by bike.

As a member of the bicycling community, I have always been proud of the bicycle as a tool to alleviate our environmental problems. Then in the '80s I was so proud of our mountain bike pioneers when I read that their bicycle was enabling people in undeveloped countries to travel long distances to administer health care and other services. Now again I am so proud of the bicycle industry's introduction of the electric bicycle as I see it as a very important contribution to addressing climate change. In fact, in my *Resilient Neighborhood* handbook the bicycle and the electric bicycle are mentioned many times as ways people can reduce their carbon footprint.

Now I have a thought for the bicycle industry. I do feel that many consumers are making decisions on how to change their lifestyles to help alleviate environmental problems, but I note that very little is mentioned in our major bicycling publications (both in ads and articles) about the wonderful contributions the bicycle and now the electric bike are making to help solve these problems.

My question is: Would more public attention to the connection of cycling and the environment not only encourage more people to do their part toward environmental solutions by biking more but at the same time help sell more bikes? For example, citing the World Watch Institute's article "Power to the Pedals": "A bicycle commuter who rides four miles to work, five days a week, avoids 2,000 miles of driving and (in the United States) about 2,000 pounds of CO₂ emissions, each year. This amounts to nearly a 5 percent reduction in the average American's carbon footprint."

—Marilyn Price
Founder and former executive director of
Trips for Kids
Via email

25 years ago this month ...

Bell Sports anticipates raising \$23.1 by going public with 1.7 million shares of common stock. Key stockholders were set to sell 1.3 million shares of common stock to generate an additional \$19.5 million. Proceeds from the stock sale would go toward repaying debt and improve the brand's ability to borrow at more favorable rates.

Fork makers battle it out for market share, with some predicting that a shakeout would thin out the growing list of manufacturers, which included Trek, RockShox, Specialized, Tange, Answer/Manitou, Marzocchi and others.

Bicycle Retailer & Industry News turns 25 this year. To mark our silver anniversary, we are looking back at the pages of those early editions. Look for a deeper historical look later this year with our 25th Anniversary Issue.



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