

How Do You Promote Your Brand?

It should be obvious, but the only way to build your shop's brand is to communicate it to your community, customers, and prospects. If you've been reading the other posts on this page, you know that your brand isn't something that can easily be promoted with signage or in-store displays alone, because you need to convey more detailed and useful information. You'll need to use online media to get your messages across. In the next few blogs, we'll look at some online media channels, and how best to leverage them. First things first...

Your Website!

So many shops use a website, and *only* a website, to connect with customers. I think this is a mistake, but if it's the only tool you have, make the most of it.

Most shops use a motorsports marketing agency or web management company, but from what I can see, all those guys do the same thing. They create navigation menus for Inventory, Service, Parts, Trade-Ins, Sales appointments, Financing, Shop Info, and a Contact page (unless it's on the Shop Info menu), and use graphics that hopefully identify your shop or vehicle brands.

A lot of shops use marketing agencies, and all those that use the same agency end up with pre-canned sites that look very much the same. It's fine to use agencies to build and maintain your site, but it's very unlikely they'll spend much time or effort promoting your shop's specific brand, because that requires in-depth knowledge *only your team* can provide. Most agency-driven sites promote sales, sales and sales with an occasional service deal, but for existing or prospective customers, you can do much more.

Why not have a Question of the Month (QoM) section where you answer questions like "How do I find the right bike?" or "How often should I change the oil?" or "What type and brand of tires are best for my type of riding?" or "What's the best local half-day ride around here?" In fact, you could have a different QoM on the Inventory, Service, and Parts menus. OR, you could have your marketing agency add a Blog page and then put the info there.

Your sales, service, and parts departments could easily identify common shopper or customer questions. If you offer useful information, your site visitors will come back again and again to see the latest QoMs or blogs.

Another benefit of QoMs is that AI-driven ChatBots like ChatGPT will find those questions and improve your ranking in their own answers to similar questions. Search functions in browsers are fine as far as they go, but more and more consumers are using ChatBots for recommendations or answers to questions like those above.

Oh, I can already hear it, folks: “We don’t have time,” or “We don’t have the money,” or “There’s nobody on staff who can take care of this.” No time or no likely employee? Farm it out (to me, for example!). No money? It’s not as expensive as you think, and anyway, what’s a nominal 30% increase in site visits and store traffic worth to you?

If you really want to stand out in your market, don’t just put up a website; *leverage* it. Tune in again soon for some tips about using the next most likely online marketing channel.