

Draw New Customers with Unique Expertise and Products

Be different! The parts, accessories and apparel you stock can give you a unique position in your market. For example...

- **Support customers who like to do their own maintenance.** Your shop isn't in the motorcycle mechanic education business, but a few pointers will be much appreciated. (At one of the clubs I joined, Tech Days were some of the most popular events. We could bring a bike and get maintenance help and advice from experts. Maybe you could host a tech day on a Sunday or Monday when you're usually closed, and get the local club to sponsor it.)
- **Use email to keep customers updated on new aftermarket parts & accessories or special discounts.** This is another way to show you care about the relationship, and it's a great source of content for your monthly newsletter.
- **Stock a good selection.** It's not just about getting the best margin from certain brands here - ask customers or check out online reviews to learn which brands resonate best with riders.
- **Carry the right sizes.** Each market is a little different - some sell out of the larger sizes first while others constantly run low on smaller sizes. Try to notice this and order accordingly.
- **Proudly display your shop t-shirts, hats, and other logo merch.** They should be on the same racks or shelves as your other stuff. Even if you sell your shop logo merch at cost, they're a cheap way to promote your shop.
- **Demonstrate your expertise.** Buyers can often find a lower price or wider selection online, so make expert advice your advantage. I tried on a new helmet in person once and found out I'd been wearing the wrong size for 30 years(!) - that advice was well worth whatever extra price I paid there. Personalized advice about the best gear for specific types of riding or weather and in-person tryouts deliver a better fit and a happier customer.
- **Specialize!** Most shops offer generic advice about the stock on hand, but customers quickly learn the value of expert advice. The best shops cater to a particular riding demographic - sport riders, tourers, commuters, etc. In some cases a large shop might employ experts in more than one area, but if you don't have the personnel budget for that, consider becoming the go-to shop for one type of rider. **Here's an idea:** anyone following motorcycle rider demographics knows that the riding population is aging. What about specializing in products

and advice for making bikes more comfortable? If your parts manager had special expertise in the wide range of windscreens, grip heaters, seat heaters, cruise control setups, handlebar risers and other gear, they could custom-design a solution for each customer - *even if you don't sell that customer's brand or model bike* - and your service department could install it!