



**JOIN THE
WINNING TEAM**
Become a Honda Dealer.

Contact our
Dealer Development
team.

CLICK HERE



[Home](#) > [Blogs](#) > [Service Providers](#) > [Are the motorcycle brands you sell really just commodities?](#)

Are the motorcycle brands you sell really just commodities?

Fran O'Hagan, President - Pied Piper Management Co.

December 12, 2011

Filed under [Service Providers](#)



Wandering around this year's Long Beach motorcycle show, I was struck by how dramatically the U.S. motorcycle market has changed — and is still changing. Remember when the four Japanese brands and Harley-

Davidson seemed responsible for 95 percent of what was happening, and niche brands like BMW, Ducati, Victory and Triumph were really just curiosities? Today the four Japanese brands and Harley-Davidson are still heavy-hitters, but the brands that used to be curiosities have come on strong with no end in sight for their growth.

Maybe it goes back to that word, "brand." I've personally been a very good retail motorcycle customer over the years, and I can remember buying sport bikes because of their horsepower, their weight and their handling prowess. I didn't buy those bikes because of the manufacturer who happened to sell them. The danger of course — for that manufacturer or the dealer — is that being the best commodity is a title that is fleeting. If the purchase is strictly based upon the physical product, what happens when the next "best" product is sold by someone else?

Contrast that to what some of those previous niche brands have been doing. ... A visitor to the Long Beach show today will no longer walk away thinking that brands like Triumph or BMW are only niche players. Not only do they have a full lineup of products to sell today, but they have also established and communicated what they stand for as brands.

Some customers will still chase products that are the lightest, fastest, most comfortable, etc. regardless of manufacturer, but as a manufacturer or as a dealership wouldn't you rather also have plenty of customers who are attracted by the brand itself?

Related Content

Last 5 stories in Service Providers

- [Protect yourself and your customers from credit card fraud](#) - December 13, 2011
- [The show is over. What now?](#) - November 22, 2011
- [Change you can profit from](#) - November 15, 2011
- [QR Codes: Effective marketing tool or just another gimmick?](#) - November 15, 2011
- [What's new when customers walk into your dealership?](#) - October 31, 2011

Other stories that might interest you...

- [Triumph brings its Tiger, other models to the IMS](#)
- [Jan. 17, 2011 – New CEO focuses on brand awareness](#)
- [Harley-Davidson finalizes MV Agusta sale](#)
- [New Harley dealer rides in as long time owner sells](#)
- [Triumph Joins Destination Daytona](#)