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Recently, Harley-Davidson announced its “possible” entry into the electric moto-market, spurring a boatload of publicity about electric vehicles. Whether you have electric or hybrid motorcycles, ATVs, or boats in your showroom now, you most likely will in the future. Are you ready? Use these strategies to attract women and close the deal.

WHY SHE LIKES IT

EZ. Peasy. Just get on and ride. She’ll appreciate how easy it is to just get on and twist the throttle. That’ll be much more confidence-inspiring than dumping the clutch, killing the engine or lurching forward, common newbie issues with clutches.

Clean and low maintenance. No exhaust. No oil. No stinky gas. YES! Sure, some women will want a loud engine roar and the smell of gas and oil, but they are anomalies. Tell her she’ll never need an oil change, and watch her eyes light up.

If she’s a suburbanite with neighbors, most likely she will want to keep them happy with a quiet vehicle. Silence while riding can also lead to deeper thoughts and a closer connection with nature. She’ll be able to hear the birds singing, one of the things I love about riding my pedal bikes.

OVERCOME THE “BUTS”

“I’ll get stranded!” She may be worried about the fact that she’s limited on distance. This is where the hybrid has an advantage, so show her easy it is to make that switch. For the purely electric vehicles, explain how range works and that she can plan her trips accordingly. Ask her how she plans to use the vehicle — commuting, shopping, Friday night fun? Get her to visualize how close those places will be and how the vehicle range will handle it. Some models have optional “power packs” to give her more mileage and assurance that she won’t be stuck in the middle of nowhere.

Sticker shock. Her eyebrows may raise when you get to the price. Have a simple chart ready to show her how much she’ll save over five years in

gas and tax incentives. Depending on the model, insurance may also be less expensive than a gas-powered vehicle. A pretty good example describing cost savings is on the Zero Motorcycles website; the bottom infographic is excellent!

Trustworthy? Some may wonder if the technology is proven. Talk about how hybrid and electric vehicles have been in the market for years and development has come a long way. Describe the factory warranty and ensure her you’ll take care of any issues. Introduce her to your service manager, but let her know she probably won’t see him much.

GET HER IN AND ON

So you know she’ll love it, but how do you get her IN your store so you can tell her? As I mentioned in a previous article, **“Luring 3 types of women,”** she may already be coming in your store with friends and family. Invite her to sit on one and start it. As it’s running, talk about the benefits (not techy features).

If you spend money on advertising, make it succinct and a bit mysterious — pique her interest. Invite her to an event at your store, or even better, at another local business that attracts a high percentage of female customers; fitness center, salon, florist, bank. Where is she already running errands?

If possible, have her ride a demo. Some vehicles will require a specific endorsement, so ask the manufacturer if they have a set-up like Harley-Davidson’s Jumpstart. I lobbied hard to have that at Daytona the first year it was introduced. I will never forget the smiles, excitement and future sales it produced.

No matter how she comes in, afterward you MUST follow up with a call, thank you card and/or more info, depending on the depth of your initial conversation. At the end of **“3 Fibs about female buyers,”** a reader commented, “Tell the dealers we are serious ... I asked him to follow up. He never did. He lost a sale.” Are you confident this wasn’t your dealership?

A rider for 25 years, Leslie spent 15 years with Harley-Davidson (3 retail, 12 corporate) and created their marketing to women role in 2007. She spearheaded Women Riders Month and a Garage Party Campaign which drove 25,000 women to dealers. After two years at Trek Bicycles, Leslie now helps companies be strategic with their marketing. www.previshmarketing.com