

Selling MotoErotica... Moto What?

According to David Evans, owner of MotoErotica, a TM dealership in Cumming, Georgia, "European bikes are really sexy. Some folks come in and say the bike should be in a living room!"

It all started innocently enough. Back in 1913, Evans' grandfather was riding Cleveland motorcycles around Georgia, delivering telegrams. Evans has always been into bikes, and as a youth he developed a taste for competition and soon found himself on a Hodaka Super Rat (Evans still races a Super Combat in the AHRMA series). "I always wanted to be the best motorcycle rider and mechanic at some point in my life. I went to a two-year vocational college and spent time in various shops."

From there, Evans built MotoErotica. What started as wanting to be a good mechanic evolved into becoming TM's #3 dealer. But what about that shop name?

"To a guy, what are some of the most desirable things in the world?" asks Evans. "A sexy motorcycle and a sexy woman. What are you going to spend the most amount of income on? What is going to cause you the most amount of pain? So you kind of blend them all together, and you have what I like to call MotoErotica."

"What amazes me," says Evans, "is that we have parents and kids here, and they never have a problem with the name. We've even had some moms ask if they could be on our web site." If you like Eurobike exotica, check out MotoErotica's site. It contains about 60 pages full of goodies, like pictures from the TM factory in Italy and show coverage from the Dealer Expo in Indy.

Yen For Lira

"One of the things that is helping out the European marketplace," says Evans, "is that the Japanese yen situation is reaching a point where we're can all be very competitive. Plus, buy a Japanese bike, and you start throwing stuff away — chain, sprockets, handlebars, grips, graphics, etc."

Unless the dealer brings this subject to a potential customer's attention, he or she never realizes it. "The TM has a performance pipe, a hand-ported cylinder, alloy bars, etc. You are going to spend \$4,000 putting all that stuff on your typical Honda," claims Evans, who says he likes to just present the facts, allowing the customers to sell the bikes to themselves once they know.

Freaking About Parts

What kind of reassurance do customers need regarding parts before they buy a bike they've never heard of? "When you sell European stuff," says Evans, "people kind of freak about parts. We make sure they realize that we have parts. We are probably the biggest supplier of LEM, TM and VOR parts on the East Coast. We don't have 52



of the same gasket — but we have three. If a guy comes in for an air filter for an old TM80, I want to make sure we have one for him. Sometimes, I will take a customer back into the parts department and tell them to ask for a part. They will say something like 'I want a piston for a 2000 TM 125.' I answer, 'Here you go.' We stock all the high-wear items like chains, sprockets, pistons, etc."

On Educating Customers on TM

It's not as though TMs are old CZs with rubber straps holding the kickstarts to keep them from vibrating, but TMs are different. A box-stock bike with a factory porting job and a 16:1 compression ratio demands respect in the maintenance department.

"We try to spend time with every customer and go over the bike with them," says Evans. If the customer is local, we try to set up a time for him to bring the bike back for its first maintenance, and we go through the drill with them at no charge. It's all to educate the customer and let them get the maximum performance and enjoyment out of their TM. It also makes them feel special."

The Future

"I'm excited to see the European market growing," says Evans. "I think that in this type of business, you have to reach out further than your neighborhood. You have to have a web site, area promotions and referrals to customers who bring in new customers. It's important to educate and treat customers with respect, as they are all salespeople in the field for you."

As this issue was going to press, word came in that partners John Ferrugia and Wayne Wooten had bought MotoErotica and were teaming it up with their existing dealership, Global Powersports. One thing that won't change is store's emphasis on TM and other exotic brands. — C. Emery

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