

News For Thought



Hello? Giving birth to a new catch phrase: "Hang up and RIDE!", motorcyclists can join the cell phone rage now that there's a new audio headset designed to fit under their helmets while they rumble down the road. The "scala-rider" from Cardo Systems (www.cardowireless.com) is a Bluetooth headset that includes a wind-resistant microphone that provides clear audio for listening and talking while riding at speeds of up to 75 mph. The scala-rider also allows users to accept or reject incoming calls without letting go of the handlebars, by using voice controls.

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In 2004 Governor (Maw Maw) Blanco pushed a helmet Bill through the Louisiana Legislature at the last minute stating that she was doing it because she cared about our safety. But, with many Operator Training course areas unaffected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, she is now showing her true colors. This will mean that the

State of Louisiana will have many Uneducated and Untrained motorcyclists on the road. The remaining balance of money dedicated to this course will be used as the Governor sees fit. This is a travesty for motorcyclists, and would be motorcyclists, all across this State. Presently, because of the governor's Executive Order No. KBB 2005-38 (Executive Branch Hiring and Spending Freeze) all statewide motorcycle operator training courses have been postponed. This is all related to the hurricanes. It appears that our DOE remaining courses (thru Dec. 31,2005) may be "dead in the water"

China leading the way in motorcycle sales

When most Americans think of motorcycle imports, they think of the Japanese brands Honda, Yamaha, Suzuki and Kawasaki – the "Big Four". But in fact, according to Business Wire, China has dominated the world's production of motorcycles since 1994, churning out 14 million motorcycles in 2003. Exports surged from more than 3.4 million units (US\$650 million) in 2002 to almost 9 million motorcycles (US\$1.45 billion) last year--a phenomenal increase of 123 percent in value, and representing 48% of the global output. This is astounding growth even for an industry that has shown consistent strength.

Chinese motorcycles and associated products are now exported to some 200 countries, many of them in the developing regions of Southeast Asia, South Asia and Africa, and developed countries in the Middle East. Sales to the favored U.S. and European markets are also increasing.

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Dealership Service only?

A bill (HR 2048) has been introduced in the US House of Representatives that would penalize any motor vehicle manufacturers who forces owners of their motor vehicle products to rely on the dealership for maintenance and upkeep.

In order to generate greater revenue, some motor vehicle manufacturers are intentionally designing vehicles to prohibit maintenance providers outside of the dealership network. No matter if you are in your driveway or at the corner wrench's shop, to be able perform certain aspects of maintenance in any manner at all was questionable. HR 2048, otherwise known as the "Right to Repair Act of 2005", puts penalties in place for any motor vehicle manufacturer who fails to provide proper training, diagnostic tools and any other special advice or tools to the owner of the motor vehicle or to a motor vehicle owner's approved mechanic. The legislation clearly states "the ability to diagnose, service and repair a motor vehicle in a timely, reliable and affordable manner is essential to the safety and well-being of motor vehicle consumers in the United States".

HR 2048 was introduced by Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX) on May 3, 2005 and already has over 50 bi-partisan co-sponsors. No Senate counterpart has been introduced yet. The MRF will keep you informed on the movement of this legislation.

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WASHINGTON STATE: A couple here were jailed for road rage recently, because they were charged with running a biker off the road. The driver of the car was charged with 1st degree assault for striking the bike with her car, causing him to leave the roadway and crash. Her husband was also charged, in his case with 4th degree assault, because THIS FOOL jumped out of the car, and went and TACKLED THE BIKER after he crashed! The biker was still lying on the side of the road, suffering from his injures. THIS CASE needs to be monitored, to be sure these people get what's coming to them. From the JUDICIAL SYSTEM, that is. www.aimncom.com

NIGERIA: The Nigerian "Motorcycle" Union received a letter from the Nigerian Commissioner of Information, asking their members to be law-abiding, to register their bikes, and to get their motorcycle licenses. He also commended this Nigerian biker group for their efforts in finding jobs for their members and others in the community. Doesn't sound TOO unfamiliar to this Gunny's old ears – most Sack readers who are in ANY biker association or club here in the USA have probably heard campaigns before about urging our people to get their motorcycle ENDORSEMENT! Just goes to show, no matter what country, continent or culture, bikers have similar issues, and we stick together to look after our own. www.aimncom.com

If they do it this way on the left coast.

Submitted by: Karen Simmons

Southern California law enforcement professionals assigned to detect new threats to personal security issues, recently discovered what type of information is embedded in the credit card type hotel room keys used throughout the industry. Although room keys differ from hotel to hotel, a key obtained from the "Double Tree" chain that was being used for a regional Identity Theft Presentation was found to contain the following information:

- Customers (your) name
- Customers partial home address
- Hotel room number
- Check in date and check out date
- Customer (your) credit card number and expiration date!

When you turn them in to the front desk your personal information is there for any employee to access by simply scanning the card in the hotel scanner. An employee can take a hand full of cards home and using a scanning device, access the information onto a laptop computer and go shopping at your expense. Simply put, hotels do not erase these cards until an employee issues the card to the next hotel guest. It is usually kept in a drawer at the front desk with YOUR INFORMATION ON IT!!!! The bottom line is, keep the cards or destroy them! NEVER leave them behind and NEVER turn them to the front desk when you check out of a room. They will not charge you for the card.

Reprinted from Full Throttle Magazine article

Information courtesy of: Sergeant K. Jorge, Detective Sergeant, Pasadena Police Department

ROSHOLT MOTORCYCLE CO.
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International motorcycle demand boosts Harley Davidson

The Associated Press

Milwaukee - Harley Davidson Inc. said Wednesday its third-quarter profit rose nearly 16 percent, citing robust motorcycle sales worldwide.

The results beat analysts' average forecast, and Harley Davidson shares jumped \$2, or 4.4 percent, to \$47.60 in premarket activity. Earnings rose to \$265 million, or 96 cents per share, from \$229 million, or 77 cents per share. Revenue increased 10 percent to \$1.43 billion from \$1.3 billion a year ago, driven by double-digit sales growth the United States, Europe and Japan.

Wall Street's mean earnings estimate was 90 cents per share, the average view of 15 analysts polled by Thomson Financial, on estimated revenue of \$1.43 billion.

Looking ahead, the company forecast shipments between 348,000 to 352,000 motorcycles for next year, a target it called "conservative" due to rising fuel prices and interest rates. Harley Davidson also said it was widening its long-term forecast for wholesale unit growth to a range of 5 percent to 9 percent annually, and annual earnings per share growth ranging from 11 percent to 17 percent.