



A MANIFESTO *for* CHANGE

U N I T E

A united bicycle industry's declaration of the need for change, in the quest for a sustainable future and prosperity for all parties.

This Manifesto represents the thoughts and ideas of more than 200 industry members who gathered at The IBD Summit in January, 2015. The Summit's objective was to inspire and, hopefully, spark the flow of new ideas. This list is a starting point from which to build, in hopes that the industry would unite and begin to take action toward a more sustainable future and a prosperous industry.

The Bicycle Industry Collaborative Call to Arms

The following 12 tenets represent the most immediate calls to action. These recommendations would ask all parties to set aside their respective agendas to initiate a more cohesive and cooperative course of action for industry growth. The recommendations target strategies to foster new growth and guarantee the long-term health of all parties. These initiatives are in no particular order or priority as presented below.

1. Protect and Fuel the Specialty (IBD) Channel

There is no one single area of obvious collaboration more needed between retail and supply than competing with multi-channel retailing. Customers wish to buy locally, but most are shopping online first. The industry must work together to deliver an exceptional experience from the brand through to the IBD. The long term health of our channel also depends upon a robust and enforced MAP pricing environment. Such a model protects margins on both sides, preserves brand integrity and generates more discretionary dollars to invest in growth.

2. Improve Communication

Transparency between suppliers and retailers has never been more important. Retailers constantly seek more visibility into product transition strategies, they desire more marketing tools that better distinguish their brands' value stories, and they want to be seen as a more

important resource to their wholesale partners on the fast changing retail landscape. Suppliers on the other hand, need more timely sell-through data for demand planning as well as direct feedback on product needs and go-to-market strategies. Robust communication would deliver efficiencies in inventory, healthier margins, and improved products that ultimately enhance the customer experience.

3. Re-engage with Youth

As our core Baby Boomer demographic ages out, we're not seeing corresponding youth to replace it. A new outlook and rekindled outreach to kids is needed and it will take cooperative efforts between supply, retail and community in order to engage them. Organizations such as National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA), Safe Routes to School, Trips for Kids, and the Boy Scouts of America are doing great things but we need additional help and support from local retail and their suppliers. It's time to reconsider and re-connect with this important audience.

4. Reach Out to New Participants

The age of entitlement retail has passed and engagement is the new way of retail. It means we have to get out of the stores and into the communities and recruit new customers. Women represent just one of our greatest opportunities as an industry. Mountain bike parks, event rides, bicycle tourism, and rideshare programs are all great avenues for finding new cycling enthusiasts. These efforts require investment at the retail level and therefore will require the support of suppliers – in many cases via improved margins or direct local marketing investment.

5. Cycling Safer for Everyone

Continued support for PeopleForBikes will eventually unite millions of individuals, thousands of businesses and hundreds of communities to make cycling safer for everyone. But greater participation from retailers at the state and local level is vital. Retailers are uniquely positioned to present the business of bikes to all levels of government. More suppliers are needed to support the efforts of PeopleForBikes. There can be no more sitting on the sidelines in the hopes things will change.

6. Create National Campaigns

National promotional campaigns could encourage more people to ride more often as a healthy means of recreation and enjoyment. These campaigns could recruit a new group of customers who have never cycled. Using all forms of media to promote a simple message that touts the benefits of cycling could also attract corporate sponsorships and partnerships as well as new ambassadors for the industry.

7. Build Loyalty

Loyalty programs offered at retail and supported by the suppliers can create an impactful way of bringing those customers back into stores for additional information on where to ride, community, new products and much more. Most importantly it lets these new customers know that they have invested in the lifestyle of cycling and not just a bike. We have an opportunity as an industry to help these people stay connected, but it is incumbent upon us to give them reasons to get back out and ride.

8. Change Attitudes

Too often as an industry we fall down and turn away what could be our next best customer. We need to embrace all customers—young and old, novice or racer, man or woman, black or white. That attitude would appeal to millions of new customers who could potentially sustain the industry for years to come. It starts in the trenches with retail staff, but suppliers, product managers and engineers also have a role to play. Products must attract new cyclists at an affordable price without intimidating new riders.

9. Get Mobile

The industry is behind the curve when it comes to connecting with a new era of customers who have gone mobile. Millennials have taken to their phones and tablets as a primary source of information and purchasing technology. Overall, the industry's mobile resources lack excitement and we are at risk of losing customers to more progressive marketers. Consumers are tech savvy and search for information constantly. Applications that connect on a local level and deliver a quality experience citing important resources could make cycling much more appealing to a broader audience.

10. Maintain and Develop More Trail Access

Access to trails and bike paths is a vital aspect of getting people on bikes but it requires a coordinated effort in order to keep it moving forward. The International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) is fighting the good fight for our industry. But it needs more resources in the form of contributions, visibility, manpower and more increase their clout and to keep access available. Retailers and supplies assume enough is being done but that needs to change. Sustained investment over time will have an immediate and sustainable impact on the industry.

11. Enhance the Customer Experience

Whether it's lackluster selection, limited inventory, poor customer service, or less than inspiring merchandising, we are turning away current and prospective customers every day. This is an area that is within our control today and it starts with ownership and the creation of a culture that focuses on a quality experience for all customers. It is incumbent upon the retail community to step up their game and to create a unique and special experience for our customers every time someone comes through the doors. Suppliers have the opportunity to play a role in this quest as well, by carefully selecting retail partners that deliver on that enhanced consumer experience.

12. Embrace New Categories and Opportunities

While most stores are unable to serve the needs of every category of cycling, too often minds are reluctant to the prospect of new opportunities. This creates alternative channels or sends customers online to find the products they are want. To build a sustainable future, we need to be open to new ideas, new product categories and reaching new customers.

Conclusions:

What is holding us back from making any number of these tenets a reality? In most cases the limiting factor is ourselves and the numbers of hours in the day. So study this list and choose one initiative to work on this year. Thankfully, many of you have long included some of these suggestions in your business plans. We salute you and encourage you to share your successes with others. For those of you who have held back, now is the time to move. Take ownership of these recommendations and aim for improvement. And for those who think these are all for naught and nothing will change, please reconsider and embrace a new way of thinking. If we hope to effect real change across our industry, everyone needs to participate.

Your endorsement of this document confirms that you support our 12 recommendations and that you want to be a part a new direction. Go to the following link and type in your name and company so we can add you to the list of supporters.

Change starts here.

The Manifesto for Change is presented by:



and is currently endorsed by:



To learn more about the discussions and feedback that helped shape the Manifesto go to: interbike.com/manifesto