



The Motorcycle & Moped Industry Council

Le conseil de l'industrie de la motocyclette et du cyclomoteur

COHV CVHR

Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council

Conseil Canadien des Distributeurs de Vehicules Hors Route

INDUSTRY WATCH

Motorcycle & Moped Industry Council (MMIC)

Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV)

By Jo-Anne Farquhar

The weather doesn't seem to be a big conversation starter in most places around the world these days. Get any two people together and the conversations usually starts with "can you believe" and continues with comments on sky rocketing fuel prices and how much more we're going to have to pay at the pumps.

We know that Canadians value their mobility and have a tendency to rely on personal vehicles as their primary means of transportation. But they are also increasingly interested in options that allow them to reduce their personal environmental footprint and more importantly now, to save money at the gas pumps.

As a result of high fuel costs we are hearing more and more about larger gas guzzling vehicles being sidelined and people looking for alternate modes of transportation. The upshot for the motorcycle and scooter industry is that it's noticing a significant surge in sales.

In fact, stats collected by the Motorcycle & Moped Industry Council (MMIC) on behalf of its member companies showed that at the peak of the 2008 spring/summer selling season motorcycle and scooter retail sales were up almost 13 percent over year-to-date sales in



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2007. Scooter sales alone year-to-date for June 2008 were up 22 percent compared to 2007.

In its annual report, the Motorcycle & Moped Industry Council (MMIC) and the Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV) reported that just under 171,000 new units of motorcycles and ATVs were sold during 2007 at an estimated retail value of two billion one hundred and sixty-three million dollars. This same report calculated that motorcycles and scooters made up 48.25 percent of these sales. And by dollar value, new motorcycle sales accounted for 49.88 percent of the total retail value of sales.

As part of the MMIC annual report, data is broken down into peak sales seasons as well and includes sales numbers from 892 authorized motorcycle dealers across Canada. These dealerships were responsible for 78.9 percent of the new 2007 motorcycle retail sales that occurred in the spring and summer between March and August and 21.1 percent in the fall and winter combined. So in looking at the market today and a 13 percent spring/summer increase in year-to-date sales this equates to an increase of 5,275 more motorcycles and scooters on Canada's roadways this year.

With facts and figures like these it's not hard to figure out that customers keen on letting their gas-guzzling cars sit in the driveway in favour of cheaper and more environmentally friendly alternatives are choosing two-wheel riding as an alternate mode of transportation.



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So the word “dread” -- the feeling you get in the pit of your stomach when you see your gas gauge moving closer to empty can be removed from your vocabulary. It no longer applies to motorcycle and scooter owners who are so rarely seen at the gas pump because gas-powered two-wheeled vehicles can stretch a litre of gas many times longer than a car.

Motorcycles and scooters are an easy solution as a cost savings option but the federal and provincial governments are also looking for alternate solutions. Transport Canada's through its Urban Transportation Sustainable Development Strategy, is challenged to find innovative and cost-effective ways to identify and mitigate safety and security risks in the transportation system without harming the environment or hindering economic growth.

MMIC statistics obtained from provincial ministries responsible for motor vehicle registrations indicate that over five hundred and twelve thousand motorcycles were registered for on-road use in Canada during 2006. In addition, another almost 44 thousand mopeds (scooters) were registered in that year. With numbers like these for 2006 and the significant increase in sales half way through 2008, we know motorcycles and scooters are here to stay and governments need to recognize two-wheel transportation as part of the solution.

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