

# Chapter Four

## Brand Consistency

Imagine.

You step through the double-glass doors into a wonderland, another world entirely. There is no other like it anywhere.

A sense of adventure and amazement emerge from the musky scent of leather with overtones of carnauba wax and something else, something familiar. Machine oil. You fill your lungs and the smells roll over your tongue.

Beside you is a looking glass, a bottomless pool reflecting shades of black and deep orange. Beyond are row upon row of floating raiment, like apparel apparitions – bumpers, and racks, and waterfall quads of coats and jackets and T-shirts, dozens and dozens of T-shirts. Between the displays and along the walls are lines of gilets, gadgets, and gewgaws and the regalia of the open road – boots and rain gear and protective headwear both soft and hard – skull caps, face masks, and modular helmets with retractable sunshields.

But that is not why you came. You know why you are here. The sacrifice and the doing without are at an end. Today is the day.

There is a man there beside you, someone familiar, who smiles at you because he knows what it is that you are thinking. He has felt what you feel. He gently places in your one hand a shiny bauble, while he grips the other.

You stare at the bauble and all that it represents. You knew who you were when you got up this morning, but you feel as if you have been changed since then. Now, at this moment, for the first time in your brief spin upon this wonderful planet, you are the owner of a Harley-Davidson motorcycle.

When you live for excitement, then the commonplace may seem quite dull and stupid. You know you can never go back to yesterday. You were a different person then.

Today, you ride a Harley.

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Excerpt from ***Rebuilding the Brand: How Harley-Davidson Became King of the Road***, by Clyde Fessler (Robert Grede ghostwriter) [Triple Nickel Press, 2012]