



by Genevieve Schmitt

Lifestyle Marketing

Personable promotions appeal to both sexes

Dealerships often mail out flyers to customers announcing sales and events, hang placards at the shop and run advertisements in newspapers. Have you thought about what image you're using to convey your message? Will the image appeal to women as well as men?

Consider this: Women influence

Learned in their book *Don't Think Pink*, "using a transparent approach will not only help companies serve the high expectations of their women customers, but in many cases will help them increase their market share with men as well."

Case Study: Dowco

Dowco, maker of covers for recreational powersports equipment, rebranded its line of motorcycle, ATV, PWC and snowmobile covers in 2004 to appeal to more customers, including women, using a transparent marketing approach. "We had different brands for each of the lines, and it was confusing to the consumer. People didn't know they were all associated with Dowco," says Angela Lettenberger, the company's product marketing specialist.


"We brought them all under the

didn't incorporate people."

Dowco's biggest challenge was making a motorcycle cover appealing enough to men and women for them to want to learn more about the features of a Guardian cover. "In terms of the actual sport, a cover is a boring accessory," says Lettenberger. "I think we've done a good job of bringing the product to life and marketing that effectively with action photography as well as the enthusiast images on the boxes and testimonials."

Because women often seek out advice from friends about new products, testimonials work well in relating information about a product. "We want people to feel passion. I think that's something people can relate to in terms of their riding experience."

Lettenberger says Dowco hasn't formally tracked the success of the new branding and packaging, but what she has noticed is the response of customers at trade shows. "In the past it was confusing to people. Now if they come by, they recognize us and say, 'Oh, there's Guardian.'"

Lifestyle images leave a lasting impression on people because people often can relate the image to something in their own life. This helps to increase the recognition factor of a particular product or company among both men and women. 

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In redesigning its 2004 packaging, Dowco learned that people and action trump static product shots.

80 percent of all household purchases, according to the National Association of Women's Business Owners (NAWBO). It makes sense to

shape marketing messages in a way that appeal to women without turning off men. There is a way to do both.

It's been proven that women relate to lifestyle messages and campaigns that evoke emotion. Targeting women by lifestyle, not necessarily by gender, is called transparent marketing.

According to Lisa Johnson and Andrea



Guardian name. With the new branding change, we refreshed all of our packaging to use a more emotive-based approach."

The packaging for the Guardian motorcycle covers now features a male rider or a couple enjoying a motorcycle. "Most enthusiasts or riders can relate very well to other riders," says Lettenberger.

The old package had a humdrum static shot of a motorcycle with a Dowco cover on it. "It was boring. It didn't have any action in it," says Lettenberger. "Most of the packaging