India Co-creates: A Status Update 2011-12

Younomy's India Co-creates is a series of reports that analyze how companies of India's key business sectors are using social media to co-create business value with customers and other external stakeholders. It also comes with our suggestions.

Two Wheeler Industry's Social Strategy

A Long Way to Go...

Spirited Community.(Image Source: Hero MotoCorp's Facebook Page)

Most two wheeler manufacturers in India have active Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and are running exclusive web 2.0 portals for their top selling vehicles. Though, some of them are reasonably successful at keeping the social conversation going, and have built active online communities around tours and racing, they have to go a long way in monetising the "likes" by providing customer support via social channels, enabling customers to configure, sourcing innovative ideas, and so on.

The report has just two types of content: 1) **Status Update:** how two-wheeler companies in India are using social media, web 2.0, and social business tools now, and 2) **Small Steps & Big Jumps:** how two-wheeler companies can use social media more effectively.

We monitored and analysed the social media networking activities and social media initiatives of the following leading two wheeler companies:

Bajaj Auto
Ducati
Hero MotoCorp
HMSIL
Hero Electric
Kinetic Motor Company
KTM
LML India
Piaggio
Royal Enfield Motors
Suzuki Motor Corporation
TVS Motor
Yamaha Motor India
Mahindra Two Wheelers
Harley Davidson
Garware Hyosung

Some of these companies are market leaders, others are new entrants, and a few do not seem to have heard of social media, for good or bad - we could not find them in Facebook, Twitter or Youtube, and they do not appear to make use of Web 2.0 tools.

We took into account only four major social media platforms (the presence of India Inc, leave alone the two-wheeler industry segment, in Google Plus or Pinterest appears to be negligible at present):

1. Facebook
2. Twitter
3. Youtube
4. Web 2.0 tools

Industry Overview
Just to give an overview of the two-wheeler industry, India is the second largest two wheeler market in the world, next to China. The two wheeler industry segment largely comprises motor cycles, mopeds, and automatic scooters. The yearly sales is pegged at around 13.5 million units.

India is home for Hero Motocorp, the world's largest two wheeler manufacturer with the total production capacity of about 7 million units per year. Apart from Hero, other leading domestic players in the market include: Bajaj, Kinetic, and TVS. These domestic players are increasingly facing intense competition from foreign entrants: Honda and Suzuki. For instance, Honda has already become the market leader in the scooter segment.

Status Update

Social Media Fact Sheet

Company	Facebook
Bajaj Auto's Pulsar	6,86,000 +
Ducati India	2000+
Hero MotoCorp	1,76,000+
Honda's Activa	3600+
KTM	52,700+
Piaggio's Vespa	40,700+
Royal Enfield	1,50,000+
TVS Motor Company	1,41,000+
Mahindra Scooters	1,00,600+
Harley Davidson India	2400+
Hyosung India	17,000+

As on May 2012
Younomy

Company	Tweets	Followers
Bajaj Pulsar (@my_pulsar)	800 +	1300+
Hero MotoCorp (@HeroMotoCorp)	690+	1,500+
Royal Enfield (@royalenfield)	12,000+	5,900+
Mahindra 2 Wheelers (@M2Wscooters)	1,500+	1,380+

As on May 2012
Younomy

Company	YouTube Subscribers	Video Views	
Bajaj Auto's Pulsar	7000 +	37,96,000+	
Hero MotoCorp	1,000+	5,71,500+	As on May 2012
TVS Motor Company	80+	77,500+	
Mahindra Scooters	35+	4,10,000+	Younomy

Priority: Brand Building

We first tried to find what are the key objectives of two wheeler companies in the social media space. From the business perspective, there could be as many as four broad goals: increasing revenue/sales through brand promotion, sourcing product ideas, providing support to customers, and promoting/evangelising a cause.

In the backdrop of the increasing competition, the leading players as well as new entrants in the industry are keen to use social media for brand development. We are yet to find an idea contest to crowd source ideas or the setting up of a community to provide customer support, and so on.

For instance, take the case of the market leader, Hero MotoCorp, and the new entrant, Piaggio. Hero Motocorp has launched a massive brand promotion campaign - Heroes Songs - that is extensively based on social media channels like Facebook and Youtube. This on-going campaign is inviting the public to sing the lyrics of "heroes song", capture it in a video, and upload it to their portal www.billionvoices.in. We do not have official figures as to the number of videos uploaded, but with the incentive of getting the chance to appear in the TV commercial of Hero Motocorp with A R Rahman, we can guess that the rate of participation is going to be phenomenal.

`Hero's Billion Voices campaign`

The new entrant, Piaggio Vehicles Private Limited (PVPL), a 100% subsidiary of Piaggio & C S.p.A of Italy, has setup an exclusive web 2.0 portal: onceuponavespa.com to create awareness about the Vespa legacy as "an ageless brand that is now a symbol of a distinctive lifestyle in market after market around the world". Onceuponavespa.com is a piece of web 2.0 art. The portal presents rich media Internet features to let visitors

explore about eight sections. The lucky participants of Vespa's contest win a trip to Italy and daily prizes. As on date, over 20,000 people have explored onceuponavesa.com

`Once upon a Vespa portal`

Generating Content and Conversation

User generated content, interactive content, multimedia content are the holy grail of social media. As pointed out, the Heroes Song or Billion Voices campaign, Hero Motocorp is generating video content from its fans. It published lyrics in all major local languages. Users can sing the heroes song, shoot their hi-res videos, and upload them at www.billionvoices.in.

Best Facebook coversations happen at Hero MotoCorp's fan page. Undoubtedly, the social media team of Hero have got the hang of the new, social media. They post not the typical "where are you going to take your Hero bike this weekend?" or "Did you know that Hero bike is..." but also interesting photos, news, and conversations around two-wheelers.

Equally impressive is the performance of TVS Motors in the generation of content and conversation. The company has exclusive Facebook pages for all its flagship products: TVS Wego, TVS Apache, TVS Jive, and Scootygals. Besides, the company also has a corporate Facebook page.

Among the most active Facebook pages of TVS is ScootyGals Facebook page that strikes a chord with its young customers. The conversations revolve around not just mobikes but also about exams and other contemporary real life preoccupations of school or college

going girls. TVS conducts polls on shopping, and contests with attractive prizes.

`A TVS Scooty Contest`

TVS has been at good at creating interesting interactive content. Babelicious break, is an example. Girls (or even boys) can choose an audio message from a list of funny, inspiring messages, and send them to the mobile phones or Facebook accounts of their friends and help them bust the stress! Such cool stuffs are good way to engage the customers.

Bajaj's **Do It Yourself** is an amazing idea. It publishes videos on tubeless tyre puncture repair, engine oil change, clutch adjustment, air filter cleaning, and so on. It also has a "know your bike" section that gives safe riding tips, and long riding tips, among others. They also publish stunt guides. What are the different types of stunts and so on.

Community Building

Only few products that seem to form a natural platform for building passionate user communities. The real world two wheeler communities of Harley Davidson are widely quoted for their success and vibrancy.

`Tattoo sporting fans of Harley Davidson`
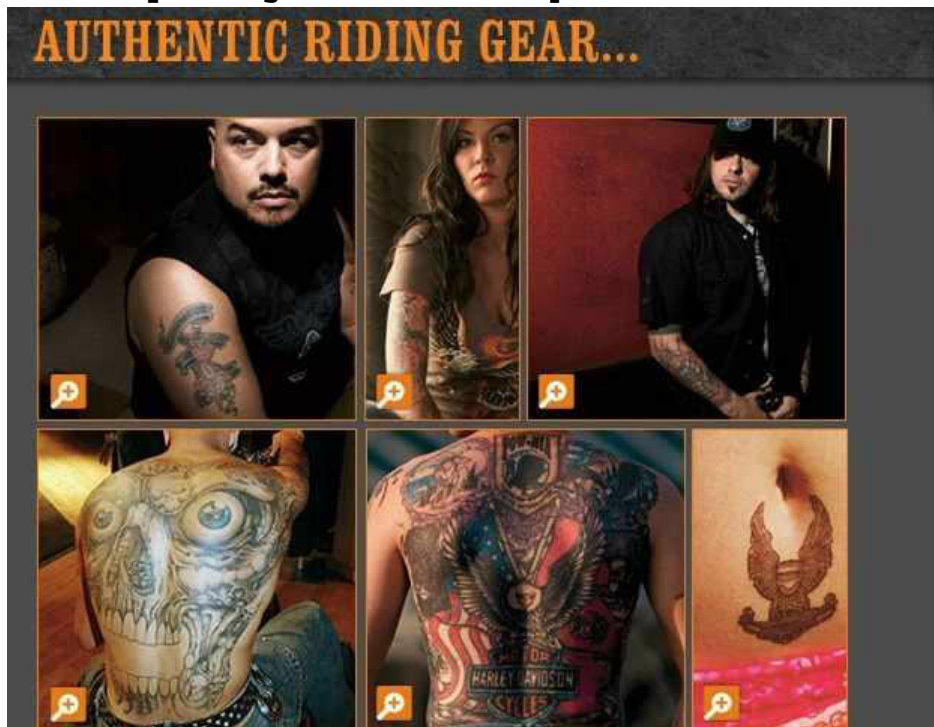
Invariably all two-wheeler brands are engaged in community building around racing. They

use all community building tools like event calendars, options to upload photos & videos of race bikes, racing events, and so on. Naturally, the most active racing community builders are motor sports vehicle manufacturers. Companies like Royal Enfield, KTM, and Ducati are doing a great job.

KTM, a leading international manufacturer of motor sports vehicles, which owns Duke brand of racing bikes, uses Facebook to let others know where the Duke Owners clubs are opened in Indian cities.

Royal Enfield promotes its non-competitive long drive trips through Facebook and Twitter. These are adventure filled; fun and leisure motorcycle rides through spectacularly scenic, off the beaten path places and on challenging terrains. Owners of Royal Enfield bikes can sign up to join the online community of Royal Enfield enthusiasts, customers and riders.

Harley Davidson promotes Boot Camp is another good example. Boot Camp event lets bike owners get under the skin of the world's most iconic motorcycles and talk to the people who build and ride them. Owners can register via website for Harley-Davidson Boot Camps in India.
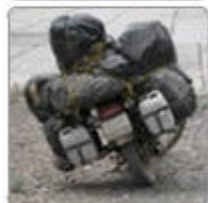
Bajaj's Travelogue

ABOUT ME:
Name: Nikhil Kashyap
Age: 27 Years
Profession: Media Professional since the last 4 years and a Biker since 9. What can I say? The open roads just put everything else on the back-burner.

MY AVENGER:
I bought this baby 2 years back and must say, it's sturdy as a rock! Three things that ensured I got back home in one piece:
1) Comfortable low slung seats and huge rear suspensions which made sure that i could ride for 6 hours at a stretch
2) Wide tyres that hung onto the roads no matter how slippery they got.
3) And all credit goes to the engine, which stayed true to the 'Feel like God' spirit, no matter how hard I pushed it.

Bajaj has created an interesting social space - travelogues - for customers to write their long drive experiences. Bikers can find from the travelogues the future long tour/riding plans of other bikers, the trip log, and statistics like the total distances travelled, the time it took, and expenses on fuel, etc of past drives. Since bikers can share their contacts, it gives an opportunity to social network with fellow owners.

TVS Motors' True Enthusiasts

DISCOVER YOUR TRIBE. CHOOSE YOUR FLAG

I DON'T OWN THE APACHE, HOWEVER, I AM A FAN

APPLY TO BECOME A TRUE ENTHUSIAST. ITS TAKES LESS THAN 10 MINUTES

TVS is creating a community of passionate users of Apache. The company has created an exclusive website http://www.

tvsapache.com/trueenthusiasts where riders can apply and get "The True Enthusiasts" title. The incentives for the true enthusiasts include: exclusive sneak peeks at new products, invitation to attend exclusive Apache RTR events, bike review opportunities, and more. True enthusiasts can create a profile page with photos."You will be the core group that will know of all happenings in TVS. There are many year-long activities planned for you," promises the community site.

Customer Support

Social media differs from the rest of the media channels, primarily in the opportunity it affords for companies to build one to one relationship with their customers. But, India's two wheeler companies are not using social media effectively in this regard. You can find many customer complaints unanswered, and blissfully ignored.

There is a of lack of understanding of the potential use of social media in building relations and in providing customer support. Here is an example: In its Facebook page, one of the two wheeler companies puts out an announcement:

> "The Facebook page serves as a platform for interaction and communication. In case you have any issues or concerns please send them to" customerservice@thenameofthecompany.com. "Posting on this page may not be the best way to get the information across."

> "Please note that this page is not intended as a place for receiving consumer complaints. Although we try to forward most of your complaints to our customer care department, if you have any questions about your motorcycle, you can reach us at: customerservice@thenameofthecompany.com"

This is another way of saying, use Facebook to talk something nice about us, so that all others can see them, but if you have any complaints send us a mail or call us or use any other means that is private.

Ask TVS is another great example of providing a channel for customers to submit their queries and complaints.

Let us take the example of support to stakeholders, customers can easily setup forums or online communities so that they can give an opportunity for the existing customers to share their problems.

Customer Support Through Communities

Social media teams of most companies are answering customer queries like: whether they can increase the rear size of their bike, where will they get spare parts, and what's the price of a particular model, and so on.

But the real benefit of using social media comes from the opportunity the company provides for existing customers to handle the queries of other customers. In the four wheeler segment, Hyundai's After Market website is a good example. This is one of the active customer-driven customer support portals in the automotive industry that has a large customer base and most of the customer queries are answered by other customers.

Yes, there are some formal community building initiatives taken by a few companies. One example is Royal Enfield's "Bullet in Board", a bulletin board-styled forum, where customers can share their knowledge, post technical queries or just showcase their passion for Royal Enfield with like minded folks. They can be a part of these discussions or browse through debates packed with loads of information, from the experts themselves in archives.

Royal Enfield's Bulletin Board
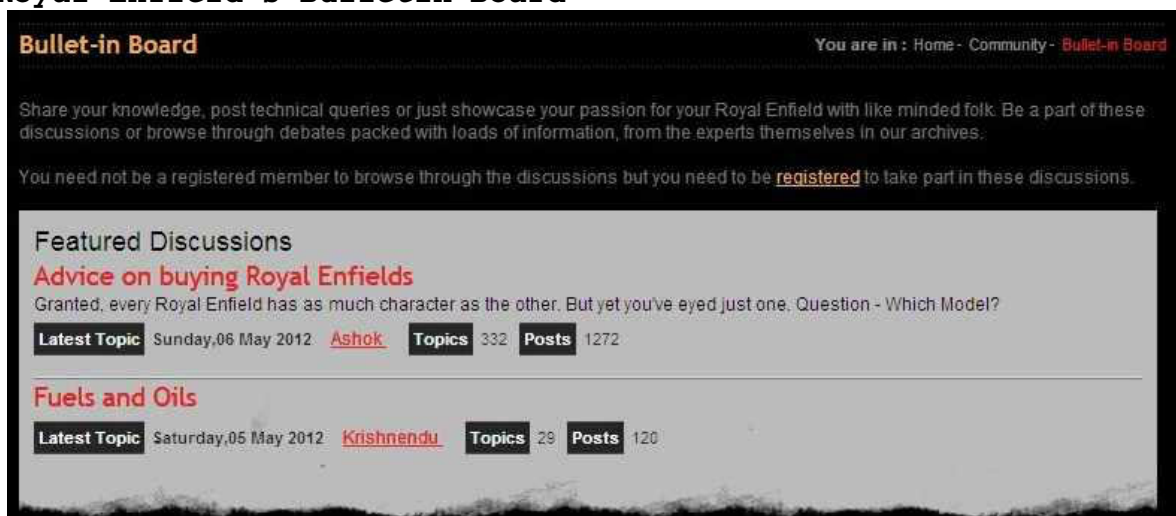
By registering with the community, the members can interact with thousands of Royal Enfield motorcycle owners.

Configurators

Some of the standard interactive tools of the websites of all leading two wheeler companies are: calculate the cost of the bike by inputting details like base price, find a dealer, and also, the color configurator.

Ducati's Product Configurators
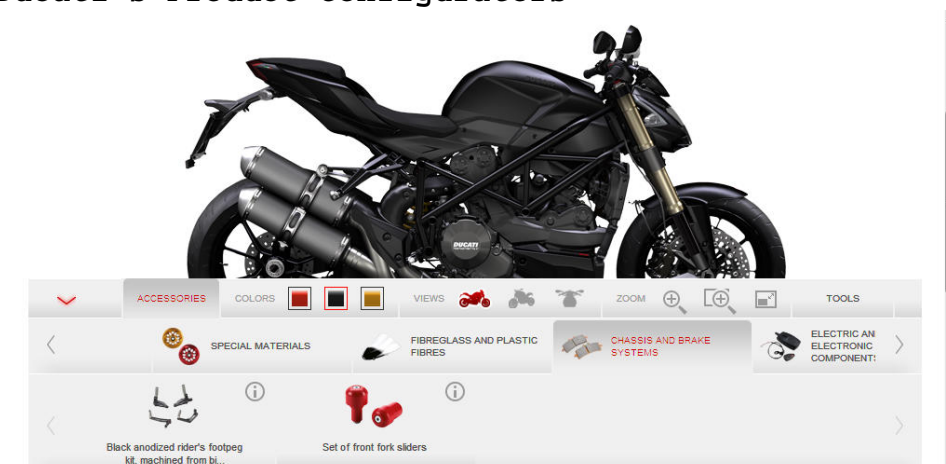
TVS Motors is a pioneer in introducing the elements of customization in India's two-wheeler market. The "99 colors" scooty project was the first one in the market. Customers can select their favourite color from a list of 99 colorus. In the Web 2.0 portal, Scootygals.com, customers can configure colours.

The website of Mahindra two wheelers has this option. At Mahindradurodz.com, customers can have a look at the Duro model in about five, six colours.
Bajaj presents available colors for its key products in its website.

Small Steps

At Younomy, we are propounding that there should be a strategy behind every social media activity so that there is going to be some business benefits. Someone said, "Without strategy, tweeting is just typing."

Our P6 Framework, a pioneering and comprehensive ideation platform, starts with "priority", and urges companies to identify the "co-creation hot spots", which are the areas that have appeal to both the producer and the customers. When companies know what their co-creation hot spots are, they can introduce conversations, content, and co-creation projects around those areas to get maximum result.

List Official Social Media Channels

Provide a page in your website that lists the official social media channels. Otherwiese, it becomes increasingly difficult to identify which one is the official Facebook page. People who want to follow you need some help in this area.

You can display some information about the correct, official Facebook page link, Twitter link. Example: Ducati India, which provides the links to their official social media presence. Since there are many FB pages, there is a confusion as to which is the right page.

KTM is also publishing it in the front page itself.

What's your rules of engagement

Provide a page for rules of engagement in all your social media channels, and at relevant sections of the website, so that you can moderate social conversations transparently. Royal Enfield's facebook page has a model. When you have the rules, it helps you take decisions whether to delete a post that is written in nasty language or a spam.

Have a Customer Support Page

Even if you are not going to open a customer support portal, you still can have an exclusive facebook app or section where customers can post their issues.

Have a style guide

Just because you are targeting younger audience, you cannot use your language in a way that is not widely accepted. One Facebook poll of a two wheeler company asks its fans: "What do you feel on a Monday?" and one of the options to select reads, "what the f...!!!"

Even if companies are not going to open a portal, they can have an exclusive facebook app or section where customers can post their issues.

Big Jumps

Set up a holistic social media team

Companies have to set up social media team that should be represented by people from all functional groups and not just marketing or public relations. Do not ask your customers to contact your customer care department. This way, you are telling them that we the social media team is not in touch with the customer care or any other department, and it is not our job to follow up with your complaints. A social media team is a corporate communication team, investor relations team, customer relations team, product development team, and what not.

Provide a product configurator

Start finding ways to treat your customers as co-creators. Setting up a product configurator can be a good start. Product configurators let users pick and choose components. For a model, check out Ducati's website. Here, customers can find configurable accessories grouped under "touring", "picnic", "sports", and so on.

Customers can select or unselect - in short, configure - the colors, electric and electronic components, engine performance upgrades, touring (soft tank bag, soft rear bag, rider seat, etc), sundry accessories (bike cover, carbon fuel tank protector, rear stand, etc), chasis and brake systems.

Launch Idea Contests

That's TVS spirit! But then why don't two wheeler companies like TVS launch an idea contest or a social product development initiative?

Since two wheelers are one of the most polluting

vehicle segments by virtue of their population (If you take the vehicle mix in India, about 75% of them are two wheelers), and customers who use two wheelers do feel the damage they cause to the environment, companies can launch idea contests to invite people, experts to submit their ideas to reduce or avoid pollution.

Companies can target the students of engineering colleges, whose innovative prototypes are regularly featured in newspapers. Ask them to submit their designs and engineering drawings on sustainable solutions. Commit a certain prize amount or product development commitment to the contributors.

Build a customer support portal

Going by the current scenario, where Indian two wheeler market is witnessing ever increasing competition, one thing can become the top priority area: "support to customers". Forums and online communities should aim at encouraging customers to handle the support function to the maximum extent possible.

Authors:

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