



COASTING BICYCLE DESIGN STRATEGY FOR SHIMANO

DESIGNING A NEW PATH TO GROWTH IN THE BICYCLE INDUSTRY

Project Date: 2006



The Trek Lime, Strategy by Shimano & IDEO, Design by Trek

While industry profits are increasing due to sales of high-end bicycles marketed to the biking elite, total sales of bicycles in the US significantly dropped from 2000 to 2005. As the leading supplier of bicycle components in the world, Shimano was uniquely positioned to organize for growth across the entire bicycle industry supply chain.

Together, Shimano and IDEO began a coordinated effort to design a bike, purchasing experience, and riding experience that would attract the 161 million lapsed and non-cyclists in the world.

The Shimano/IDEO design team conducted observation-based research, revealing a series of factors that influence casual cyclists' interest and participation: 1) A better riding experience - many adults missed the easy, joyful feel of riding a bike as a kid; 2) Product platform - a new feature set was needed, with automatic shifting and less visible mechanics; 3) The purchasing experience - independent bicycle dealers needed to learn to engage with a new customer base that included more women, amateurs, and inexperienced bikers.

IDEO and Shimano's resulting strategy spoke to these factors with the development of a reference design for a bike to inspire designers, original equipment manufacturers, and independent dealers. The bike is the embodiment of "pure riding," with innovative components from Shimano enabling lower maintenance and increased comfort.

The strategy also included a campaign called "Coasting" to raise awareness among casual bikers and educate independent dealership staff about the singularity and value of the new offering. In response to the strategy, three of the six largest original equipment manufacturers (OEM) delivered a Coasting bike in their 2007 lines. An additional seven OEMs have committed to Coasting product lines for 2008, powerfully demonstrating how an entire industry can innovate for growth.

AWARDS

2008 IDEA Gold Award, Transportation