

Bahnstormer

It's been a decade since Bahnstormer opened its doors for the first time. Director Alistair Walker shares his thoughts on the first ten years



The recent alterations at Alton included lifting the showroom ceiling.

Ten years. In many ways it feels like yesterday; the excitement of the various elements of a new business falling into place, each one feeling like a milestone in its own right. In other ways, looking back at the press cuttings from the launch of Bahnstormer back in 2007 is a bit like when you have to change your passport. You're suddenly faced with two images of yourself, but 10 years apart and you know then that it wasn't yesterday at all!

Together with Paul Davies, my co-director for 7 years at Bahnstormer, we had been planning to do something with BMW Motorrad. He was a seasoned operator in the BMW retail network whilst I was working within BMW UK as part of their motorcycle division, so we both knew what we were facing with the BMW brand.

However, taking this a step further (or more of a great big leap) to running our own business was a completely different proposition but we were ready for change.

There is nothing like it really. That first customer who steps in through the door of a new business brings such an emotion of joy. Ok, it's not elegant to start with, like a baby giraffe finding its legs; not pretty but we got there!

Funnily enough, it's the same feeling today when you look around and see so many customers, many good friends now, take the time to visit us and choose their new motorcycle or just drop by to meet and have coffee. I absolutely love it.

As with any business, its success is very much down to the team you have around you. People who share the same passion and have the same vision are worth their weight in gold and we are lucky to have retained many of the team that we opened the door with originally.



The Biker Cafe is a great communal area.



Director Alistair Walker, always happy riding motorbikes

And when we look back at the photos of what we have done over the 10 years, I can confirm with absolute confidence that we have had a lot of fun.

The source of this fun is mainly doing cool things with customers and riding bikes; the things that brought us together in the beginning.

Looking forwards now and the business is undoubtedly getting bigger. We hope to retail over one thousand motorcycles this year, riding on the wave of new and exciting products that BMW Motorrad are bringing out.

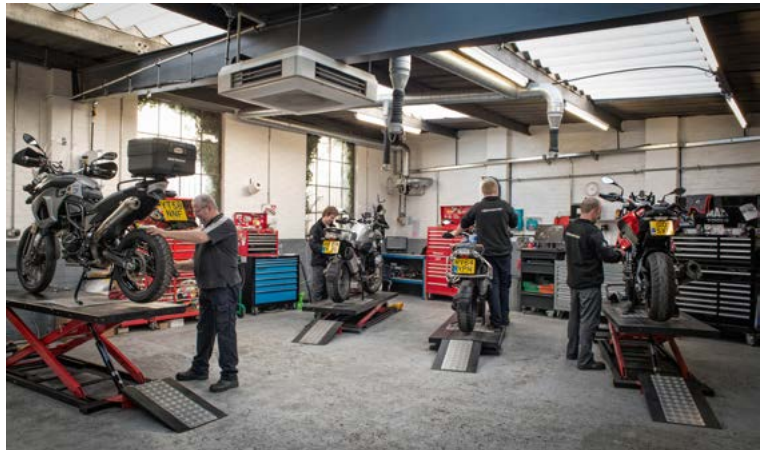
The addition of another BMW Motorrad Centre for us in Maidenhead has helped to increase our geographical reach and thankfully increase the Bahnstormer family of staff and customers.

So, we are bigger and I get less time to spend talking to our customers but the feeling is the same; I can't wait to get out on the bike, be it track, off road or just some touring through beautiful scenery in the sun.

Bring on the next 10 years!



Parts and clothing area at Maidenhead



Maidenhead's spacious workshop



Our customer events are always popular, none more than Off Road Skills

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