

Kawasaki



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Let the good times roll.®

IRVINE, Calif. (June 10, 2016) – Kawasaki was on a rocket ride at the end of 1972, with blistering ¼-mile records for the Mach III 500 H1 and Mach IV 750 H2, national race wins, and an AMA 500 Motocross title to its credit. All of these successes targeted performance enthusiasts, as did the national advertising campaign “Come Out Ahead on a Kawasaki.” The payoff? Kawasaki moved into the number-two sales position in the US.

Nonetheless, Kawasaki had its sights set broader and higher – to become a brand appealing to casual riders and families, while still maintaining the hardcore loyalists who lived for the wail of a high performance. In 1973, the path forward had two parts: 1) Expand the product range with casual recreational products like the Jet Ski® watercraft, commuter motorcycles and playbikes; and 2) Advertise that Kawasaki’s bandwidth was not only wide, but rooted in fun.

But how to do it? Created by advertising agency Cunningham & Walsh, the “Kawasaki lets the good times roll” tagline was an absolutely perfect fit. In February ’73, the new slogan launched in the form of two 30-second commercials aired on national network television and local spots in selected markets – mostly during sports shows, primetime adventure series and feature movies – plus one-, two- and three-page black-and-white and color print ads. TV and print reigned supreme for reaching consumers, and the campaign always showed Kawasaki Good Times in an amusing manner that was fun to watch. A gorilla commuting on a streetbike? Check. A trail rider motorboating through a river? Even better. Newlyweds riding side by side on their new Kawasaki motorcycles? Perfect!

Cunningham & Walsh went right on innovating with a series of earthy vignettes inspired by American artist Norman Rockwell, each including a first-person storyline. In one piece, Murray, the bored travel agent at World Wide Travel, comes face to face with a new Z1-B motorcycle parked in front of his agency. He imagines climbing aboard and returning to his Wyoming hometown, scooping up his long-lost flame Maggie, and taking her away. “Business got boring, so I’m traveling,” he’d explain. This and other ads in the campaign showed Kawasaki products in

relatable, real-life settings that inspired readers to imagine themselves in that exact same position. Did it all work? Absolutely! Let the Good Times Roll” campaign was so effective that Kawasaki trademarked the tagline, and it soon became an essential part of the company’s DNA. It remains that way today, because 33 years later, the Good Times are still rolling strong.

ABOUT KAWASAKI

Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. (KHI) started full-scale production of motorcycles over a half century ago. The first Kawasaki motorcycle engine was designed based on technical know-how garnered from the development and production of aircraft engines, and Kawasaki’s entry into the motorcycle industry was driven by the company’s constant effort to develop new technologies. Numerous new Kawasaki models introduced over the years have helped shape the market, and in the process have created enduring legends based on their unique engineering, power, design and riding pleasure. In the future, Kawasaki’s commitment to maintaining and furthering these strengths will surely give birth to new legends.

Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A. (KMC) markets and distributes Kawasaki motorcycles, ATVs, side x sides, and Jet Ski® watercraft through a network of approximately 1,100 independent retailers, with close to an additional 7,700 retailers specializing in general purpose engines. KMC and its affiliates employ nearly 3,100 people in the United States, with approximately 300 of them located at KMC’s Irvine, California headquarters.

Kawasaki’s tagline, “Let the good times roll.®”, is recognized worldwide. The Kawasaki brand is synonymous with powerful, stylish and category-leading vehicles. Information about Kawasaki’s complete line of powersports products and Kawasaki affiliates can be found on the Internet at www.kawasaki.com.