

CLIENT: Various
PROJECT SCOPE: Off-Road electric motorcycles
PROJECT TARGET: Feasibility study
RESULTS: See below

A lot of people are interested in the potential for electric motorcycles, particularly if they have issues with noise. Two factions that suffer are Speedway and Motocross; both sports have a huge number of enthusiasts who are stuck with a problem.

Generally they don't like the thought of electric vehicles, equating power with noise and thinking that something is missing if they've got a quiet bike, and we sympathise with that viewpoint. But they also think electric bikes are "dead slow" and we have to disagree with that – and so do they once they've tried one.

With growing concerns over noise pollution a few of them are thinking they ought to explore the subject as one day it might be the only chance they get to ride if their favourite tracks ban noisy bikes.

The downside is that to get the performance they need good batteries and that is expensive. So they're caught with something that's good to ride, solves a looming noise problem (and the fact that petrol is getting more and more expensive), but is very expensive to build. And so, for now, they tend to retreat back to what they know best and wait for the day that either the price come down, or legislation forces them to do something.

We've had three such projects through the workshop. Two of them pulled the plug when they realised how much the bike will cost (although I think they'll come back one day). The third one is progressing well and has been out on the test track a few times but, as it's covered by a non-disclosure agreement with the client, we can't reveal any more details.



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