

# Bicycle Retail Industry Call to Action



Canadian Independent Bicycle Retailers Association  
Association Canadienne des Détaillants de Vélos Indépendants

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“CIBRA exists to bring independent bicycle dealers and our supplier partners together to advance our common interests, speak to policymakers with a united voice, and create practical education and training programs that benefit us all.”

**Together we are Better.**

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## Open Letter From Kevin Senior

President Bow Cycle,  
Chair of CIBRA

### Dear Fellow Bike Dealers and Supplier Partners:

I hope this letter finds you in the midst of what I hope is a very successful retail season. At my own business here in Calgary, we are off to a great start in anticipation of a successful year.

We have all experienced ups and downs in our businesses over the past few years. Despite the challenges we face, many of us in the bicycle retail industry continue to do our part in moving the industry forward.

In addition to my role as President of Bow Cycle in Calgary, I am also honoured to chair the Canadian Independent Bicycle Retail Association (CIBRA).

I serve on the CIBRA Board with four other dealers and three suppliers. I am grateful to our board for their support, commitment, passion, and dedication to the viability and value of our industry and the sustainability of CIBRA. You can take pride in having an exceptional group of industry professionals managing the industry’s association. It takes a lot of volunteer hours, but we’re making it happen.

For those who are unfamiliar with CIBRA, the association exists to bring independent bicycle dealers (IBDs) and our supplier partners together to advance our common interests, speak to policymakers with a united voice, and create practical education and training programs that benefit us all.

# CIBRA belongs to you. It's your association.

CIBRA continues to advocate on our collective behalf. In a short period of time, CIBRA has demonstrated its ability to access the political structure provincially and federally and has advanced our interests at all levels of the political process.

In an effort to reach out to stakeholders, both dealers and suppliers, the CIBRA board recently convened a series of town hall meetings in Calgary, Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal. Although we would have liked to have held more meetings, our resources allowed us to only hold a few. We will shortly convene a number of conference calls to give those who were unable to attend the town halls the opportunity to give us their thoughts.

Those who attended the meetings provided us with valuable comments and advice, and it was very much appreciated. We look forward to many more opportunities to hear the voices of those who were unable to attend. I assure you that we learned more about what we as an association need to accomplish.

## *The good news is, we're doing great work.*

The meetings gave us a chance to talk about the good work we've done for IBDs. We added a "shop local" program and we've maintained affordable membership rates. Members said they are impressed with the government relations work we are doing, particularly in getting the concerns of the industry on the radars of policy makers.

But we also learned that we have much more work to do. We also heard loud and clear that those in attendance are very interested in volunteering their time to help us in our work.

*We're making headway, but the fact is, we need you to get involved.* We've done some very worthwhile work, but there is much more to do. **We need more people to get involved.** We need to see you at our events; join our conference calls; and lend your expertise to our volunteer committees.



*"We need more members interested in working as a group. We need to bring people together, feel more positive, and exchange ideas for how to beat Canadian Tire, Wal-Mart, and the dot coms."*

– Martin Cardinal,  
Director of Sales Canada, Thule

## *We in the industry need to support CIBRA financially*

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Association work takes money, and frankly CIBRA is running on fumes. Over the last year, we've made many cuts—hard cuts—to keep us going. But without an injection of membership fees and sponsorship dollars, we won't be able to continue the work that benefits us all and that would be a shame and huge loss to both suppliers and retailers. We need CIBRA to address issues specific to bicycle retailing; the kind of issues other associations can't – don't – and won't address for us as an industry.

*If we don't reinvest in our association, we'll lose it. It's as simple as that. We'll have to deal with industry-wide challenges on an ad hoc basis, without a united front.*

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### *So it's decision time:*

*Do we invest in CIBRA, or do we let it fold?*

Folding the association means we won't have the chance to complete the work we've started on issues raised at the town halls such as those listed below. As you run through this list, I think you'll agree with me, and indeed those who raised them, that we are better to tackle these challenges together, as an industry, than individually.

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## **WHAT YOU TOLD US AT THE TOWNHALL MEETINGS:**

### **EBIKE REGULATIONS:**

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We heard a lot about ebikes during the town halls. As one member said, "Ebikes are a big question for me. I still don't know what they mean for my business." As ebikes become more popular with Canadians, IBDs will have to take a stand on the issue. We need a voice to speak for IBDs with government. *Ebikes may be regulated, and we need to ensure the industry is united in our approach to government.* It's the only way to be heard and it's the only way our interests will be considered.

### **CERTIFY MECHANICS:**

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Overwhelmingly we heard across the country the need for a comprehensive mechanic certification program. We need a consistent approach and we need it soon. The question we heard repeated at town halls was: "How do we find qualified mechanics, and how do we know they're qualified?"

*CIBRA will continue to work with the industry to develop a certification program to train and certify mechanics.*

## INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE MARKET:

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It is estimated that approximately 80 per cent of Canadians don't ride a bike. One way to improve sales, as we discussed in our town halls, is to get more people buying and riding bikes. Various suggestions and recommendations were raised at our meetings including taking advantage of the new federal government's approach to health and wellness strategies. CIBRA staff have been engaged with the new federal government on how we can be helpful in advancing their health policy initiatives.. These meetings are focused on the government's ability to provide tax incentives to those who purchase a bicycle, as an example. That's just one idea that was raised, and CIBRA is already engaged in a very big way. *CIBRA, supported by the membership, needs to work with government, healthy living advocates, and other allies to create more traffic in our stores.*

## GATHER STORE & INDUSTRY DATA:

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We heard from members about the need to cultivate data about the industry. "I don't know what I'm doing wrong because I don't know the averages," said one IBD. Everybody says they need better metrics to measure success. For example, what is a good sales-per-square-foot for an IBD? What's the average basket size? How do we measure success, and how do we avoid the mistakes other IBDs make? *As an association dedicated to independent bike retailing, CIBRA will work to partner with others to create a system to house, analyze, and disseminate data about the bike industry.*

## MARKETING IBDs:

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The town halls reminded us of the strength of IBDs. We make a positive impact on local communities wherever independent bicycle retailers are located. At the same time, we heard that independents struggle against the big box players. "Our customers, even though they love what we do for our communities," said one dealer, "they don't always shop with us." Members say we need a comprehensive, nation-wide marketing approach to promote the value IBDs deliver to communities and neighbourhoods. We need to do this with the support of our supplier partners. *IBDs need to work together - through CIBRA - to develop a combined marketing approach for our industry.*

## REGULATE SENSIBLY:

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As we encourage more Canadians to ride a bike, and more cities adopting bike lanes, the need for an organization to advocate on behalf of IBD becomes paramount. We can be sure that government will regulate cycling more than it does. In some cases, this is a good thing. In other cases, regulation will work against the interests of riders and IBDs. Whatever happens—and we can be sure changes will happen—we need to be at the table. *CIBRA needs a unified voice to speak for IBDs and suppliers to ensure that new regulations are based on a sensible and realistic approach.*

*"There is value in CIBRA.*

*It is a good thing we [IBDs] are together to work towards our common goals. I'm looking forward to seeing the future."*

– David Veilleux,  
Road Brand Manager at Devinci

## COMBAT SHOWROOMING:

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Independent bike retailers, like retailers in other categories, must find ways to deal with showrooming. Showrooming happens when a customer visits an IBD, finds the bike they want, and instead of closing the sale in the store, they purchase the bike online. Showrooming is an issue all IBDs must navigate—at the individual store level, and at the level of government. For example, we need to get government to change the law on importing parts. It's something we need to do as a group. *CIBRA will form a committee of members to develop strategies to help the industry shut down showrooming and protecting the border.*

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### **As you can see, our town hall meetings were very worthwhile.**

They showed that we all have common issues and concerns, and as a result, demonstrated why we need CIBRA as our industry's voice and what we can achieve for ourselves through it.

*But CIBRA cannot function — or even exist — without members.*

It is imperative that you join CIBRA and encourage others in our industry to do so as well. We have accomplished much in a short period of time, and as you can tell from this report we have much more to do.

Many of us are members of larger and broader associations who do great work for us on issues of employment standards and basic business issues.

## BECOME MORE COMPETITIVE:

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At the town halls, a number of members said they needed to learn to be more competitive. They need more training on how to market their stores, increase sales, and improve operations. They need to find ways to become more competitive with big box stores, and they need to develop strategies for outcompeting co-operative retailers moving into the bike retailing space. *CIBRA will develop training tools to help IBDs become more competitive.*

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*“Overall, the Montreal town hall was great. Unfortunately, not enough dealers came to the town hall. Lots of suppliers were there.”*

– Claude Bernier,  
Owner of Cycles Performance

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*What they do not do for us is advocate on issues that have a significant impact on our bicycle businesses. As the President of an independent business, I need CIBRA to represent my business at the policy table. I am sure you do too.*

I would also take this opportunity to speak to our supplier community: *We need your help, support, and commitment to keeping CIBRA sustainable.* Frankly, we will not last without more involvement from the industry.

*I have attached a membership application form and ask that you fill it out and send it in today.*

We need independent bike dealers and suppliers to purchase a membership, and as importantly, to participate. Members need to attend events and contribute time and intelligence to our committees.

We need suppliers to participate in our meetings and lend support—financial and otherwise—to CIBRA committees.

We have witnessed many other retail industries lose their association and eventually their industry. Independent booksellers in Canada are just one example. We don't want to see independent bike retailers eaten up by big boxes and online competitors the way independent booksellers were.

***Let's keep rolling.***

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*"We spend a lot of time competing against one another for market share. That's a normal part of business.*

*However, I believe the most important thing, by far, we can do to improve our businesses is to increase overall participation in cycling by working as an industry through CIBRA.*

*CIBRA can help us use our collective strength in critical ways.*

*As an example, we now have a federal government much more receptive to supporting alternative urban transportation options than its predecessor.*

*And in Bill Yetman, CIBRA's Director, we have a someone who has worked directly in government at the federal and provincial levels; someone who knows how to communicate effectively with politicians and civil servants on behalf of the industry. It would be a huge mistake for those of us in the Canadian cycling industry not to support CIBRA and the unprecedented opportunity we have to influence government policy and make Canada more cycling friendly than ever.*

*I strongly urge every Canadian bicycle retailer to join CIBRA now before we lose this opportunity. This is our future."*

– David Bowman,  
Président,  
Outdoor Gear Canada

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Despite the tenuous position of our association, I feel positive about the future and know you will join me in keeping CIBRA and the independent bicycle retail network strong and sustainable.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. I encourage you to join today.

Sincerely,

Kevin Senior

President Bow Cycle,  
Chair of CIBRA

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## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**JAMES WILSON,  
OBSESSION BIKES**

**JOHN WILLIAMS,  
LIVE TO PLAY SPORTS**

**RICK SNYDER,  
MIKE'S BIKE SHOP**

**PIERRE LAFERRIERE,  
SPORT OLYMPE**

**LUTZ BRODE,  
MICA SPORT**

**MICHAEL CRANWELL,  
GEARS**

**PIERRE GRENIER,  
LOUIS GARNEAU SPORTS**

## Canadian Independent Bicycle Retailers Association\* Supplier Member Application

Company Name		Manufacturer <input type="checkbox"/>	Distributor <input type="checkbox"/>
Address	City	Province <b>AB</b>	Postal Code
Business Telephone		Business Fax	

Primary Email Address		Company Website	
Toll Free #		Harmonized Sales Tax License #	
Contact Person (voting member representing your company in CIBRA)		Name of first principal Title:	
Do you sell directly to consumers?    Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		If so, please explain:	
Do you also operate a retail store on the same premises?    Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			

Canadian Bicycle-Related Revenue	Annual Membership Fee (Supplier)†
Under \$350,000‡	\$ 425.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
\$350,000 to \$1M	\$ 775.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Over \$1M	\$ 1,550.00 <input type="checkbox"/>

† MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE SUBJECT TO APPLICABLE TAXES

‡ COMPANIES WITH ANNUAL CANADIAN BICYCLE RELATED REVENUE UNDER \$350,000  
 ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO QUALIFY FOR THE \$425 MEMBERSHIP FEE.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Questions? Call Us!**  
 416.427.2870  
 1.866.528.2822  
 bill@cibra.bike

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ | Number of Employees:

Primary Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Company Website: \_\_\_\_\_ | FT \_\_\_\_\_ PT \_\_\_\_\_

How do you prefer to be contacted: \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred language: EN FR

Additional stores to be covered under membership (Please list store names/locations): \_\_\_\_\_

**WE AGREE THAT OUR COMPANY MEETS THE MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS AS SET OUT IN ARTICLE II, SECTIONS 2a-2g OF THE CIBRA\* BY-LAWS WHICH READ AS FOLLOWS: THE RETAILER MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY SHALL INCLUDE ANY CORPORATION OR PERSON WHOM:**

- ◊ IS AN AUTHORIZED FULL SERVICE BICYCLE RETAILER WITH A STOREFRONT IN A LEGALLY ZONED AREAS CARRYING THE APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENTAL PERMITS AND REGISTRATION FOR RETAIL SALES, HAVING NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS DURING MINIMUM YEARLY PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS;
- ◊ DOES NOT OPERATE, OWN, OR HAVE INTERESTS—WHETHER DIRECT OR INDIRECT—IN ANY MANUFACTURING, IMPORTING, AND WHOLESALING FACILITY;
- ◊ HAS HAD A MINIMUM OF ONE YEAR IN OPERATION IN THE CANADIAN BICYCLE TRADE;
- ◊ IS SOLVENT AND OF GOOD REPUTATION;
- ◊ HAS ITS PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS WITHIN CANADA;

INDIVIDUAL FRANCHISEES SHALL NOT BE ENTITLED TO VOTE AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF CIBRA BUT SHALL BE PART OF THEIR RESPECTIVE FRANCHISING NETWORK OR ORGANIZATION WHICH SHALL BE ENTITLED TO ONE VOTE PER FRANCHISING NETWORK OR ORGANIZATION. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I HAVE READ, I UNDERSTAND, AND I QUALIFY FOR THE REQUIREMENTS SET HERE BY CIBRA. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: \$175.00 + HST = \$197.75**

**2 YEAR MEMBERSHIP: \$300.00 + HST = \$339.00**

**METHOD OF PAYMENT (HST #866950017)**

Cheque  VISA  Mastercard  AMEX

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**HOW TO JOIN CIBRA**

**EMAIL TO: Bill@cibra.bike**  
**MAIL TO: CIBRA**  
 CANADIAN INDEPENDENT BICYCLE RETAILERS ASSOCIATION  
 43 HANNA AVE., UNIT 529 TORONTO, ON, M6K 1X1 CANADA

The Canadian Independent Bicycle Retailers Association (CIBRA) collects, uses, and discloses business contact information that includes the name, position, business address, telephone number, fax number, and business email of an employee of an organization. This business contact information may be used by the CIBRA to inform you, via electronic newsletters, phone calls, faxes, emails, and other correspondence, about industry issues, products and services, and other news of interest to your business. This information may also be shared with affiliated trade associations and select sponsors to help keep your company informed about products and services of use to your business.