

Student-designed helmets are head and shoulders above others

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Industrial design students like things that are both functional and beautiful.

Bike helmets don't necessarily fit that description because, for the most part, they make people look kind of dorky. The unflattering element of helmets causes people not to wear them as much as they should (and has even prompted one Swedish company to tinker with invisible helmets).

Fortunately, a group of BYU industrial designers are on a mission to add a bit of style and beauty to the functionality of helmets. The [students](#) have been tasked by the folks running Trek's Bontrager line to come up with some solutions to the ugly helmet dilemma.

Their goal is simple: create helmet concepts people actually want to wear.

"We want to create helmets that fit personalities," said Laura Britton, a Rexburg, Idaho, native who believes most helmets are geared toward racers and look too aggressive. "A big reason why so many people don't wear helmets is because they look goofy."

Britton is one of 15 BYU juniors working this semester on the new helmet designs being presented to Trek. While some are focusing on the look, other students are focusing on the function.

Spencer Reynolds and a few colleagues considered the needs of a bike-riding police officer for their designs. Reynolds figured cops (and many other recreational bikers, for that matter) could use a few additional items such as lights and possibly a camera.

"We're trying to reach out to those who don't want the standard racing helmet," said Reynolds, a junior from Ft. Walton Beach, Fla. "Not everyone wants the same thing."

A sampling of students and their helmet designs:

- Christian Poulsen created a police officer helmet (above) with design heavily influenced by heroes, such as Optimus Prime from the Transformer movies
- Carter Zufelt's "Maverick" helmet includes several options, like a pivoting visor and a lower, neck-covering portion that can be

removed with the push of a button

- Jordan Hosler had a female flower shop owner in mind when she reinvented an old style scooter helmet by adding textured leather and a clear plastic brim to create her "Vita" helmet

The students presented the final versions of their unique helmet concepts to the Trek folks this month. And while no one "won" the competition, the opportunity to work with a real client has brought real-world experience that is helping prepare students to excel in their careers.



Industrial design student Jordan Hosler works on her bike helmet design sketches.

In recent years, students in the program have taken on a range of

projects for a diverse group of clients. In the past few years, students have designed sink appliances for Whirlpool, lighting equipment for outdoor retailer Black Diamond, tablet concepts for Dell, weights/barbells for exercise equipment maker Everlast and futuristic speakers for tech company Logitech.

Students say any opportunity to work with professionals and get their feedback cannot be replicated in a regular classroom assignment.



Students in the industrial design program designed more attractive bike helmets for Trek.

"When you do catch their attention with something new and innovative, then that's really telling," Reynolds said. "Although they have the wealth of experience, we students haven't been biased by designing [helmets](#) for several years. We do have a valuable perspective that we bring to the

design table."

Provided by Brigham Young University

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