

SCGB

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WEEKLY

THE WEEKLY DIGITAL MAGAZINE FOR THE ACTIVE LIFESTYLE



RUN WITH CONFIDENCE THIS WINTER

*Eric Larsen
Polar Adventurer - Boulder, CO*



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Sleigh Ride Sweater
Photo courtesy Krimson Klover



HEADSWEATS GETS STYLISH WITH WOMEN'S PERFORMANCE HEADBANDS

With a dedication to expanding its women's-specific offerings, Headsweats created a new line of Women's Collection active performance headbands, to be offered in a mix of colors and patterns.

For more than 17 years, Headsweats has evolved to take a dominant role in accessorizing the triathlon, cycling, running and endurance markets. During this time, the company developed partnerships with high profile

events and brands such as the Tour de France, U.S. Military Endurance Sports, Loudmouth, Challenged Athletes Foundation and Team Red, White and Blue.

As a leader in performance headwear, this collection incorporates new style cues into the durable and technical construction of the Headsweats band, giving female runners, cyclists and athletes a sense of personal style choice. The headbands were generated by the Headsweats design team to function as a fun alternative to a hat or visor, while still wicking moisture during demanding physical training.

Mike McQueeney, Headsweats president, expressed that the company experienced an overwhelmingly positive response from its initial Women's performance collection. "Our Women's Collection debut encouraged us to add even more stylish headwear options for our female athletes," McQueeney said.

The Active Performance Bands will be available in two styles and thicknesses. The one-inch wide Energy Band, \$15, featuring Eventure Stretch with a velvet lining, is available in 12 colors and patterns. Eventure Technology is Headsweats' proprietary family of technical fabrics, lending to the new Energy Band a dual stretch, lightweight, breathable fabric that offers a high level of moisture management.

Also new to the Women's Collection is the three-inch Endurance Band, \$15. The Endurance packs a single layer of Headsweats' Eventure Stretch fabric, and will be available in Black or White, along with four sublimated print options.

Active Performance Bands are being marketed to retailers in pre-packs of six or 12, with the option to reorder top-selling patterns or styles in singles.



Ghost 8

BROOKS RUNNING INSPIRED BY BERLIN STREET ART

Brooks Running launched a limited edition Ghost 8 design celebrating the city of Berlin - and the runners who log their miles in Germany's edgy capital.

Made unique by the graphiti-inspired graphics, the 2015 edition shoe is a bold splattering of color taken from street art that adorns trash

bins, telephone boxes and building walls along with other urban notes found in Berlin.

Renovations to the Ghost 8 include a full-length Segmented Crash Pad for smooth heel-to-toe transfer, helpful considering the concrete-laden streets many Berliners run on. Updated this season with a newly engineered mesh upper, the new version should fit and function better than past models. Its no-sew upper eliminates nearly all seams, hugging the shoe closer to the foot with a naturally compressed feel.

"In Berlin, art is a treasure found on every street corner," said the company. "The Berlin Ghost captures this vibrant street art scene as though the runner sprinted across the wall or through the haze of spray paint."

An image of the Berlin skyline traces the heel of the shoe while tag-esque text reads "Brooks" and "Berlin" on the top toes and side tread.

The Berlin 2015 Ghost 8, \$130, is available for men and women for a limited time, staying true to Brooks Running's vow to "seek the right balance of art and science."



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Safari Tent

BAREBONES' NEW FALL GLAMPING ESSENTIALS

Barebones, exclusive designer of tent, garden and light products that serve humanitarian efforts as well as taking first-world camping to a new level, brings a slew of new offerings for the fall camper. Noteworthy among them are the new Trailblazer flashlight, Backpack Cooler and Safari Tent.

Part light, part saber, the Trailblazer Flashlight, \$100, came at the perfect time as Fall campers plan their cool-weather trips into the mountains and the newest installment of the cult classic Star Wars has you thinking how cool it would be to own a light saber.



Trailblazer Flashlight

The Trailblazer has a light spectrum output of 4000k lumens, with three shine settings. A steel belt clip on the handle makes the 1.4-pound flashlight easy to attach to the rest of your gear. Run time varies from 2.5 to 24 hours depending on the brightness setting you have it operating on. Plus, a hidden USB port makes cell phone recharging possible

from the device. Lastly, the new Trailblazer features an articulated head allowing users to move the direction of the light.

Barebone's mini version of the Trailblazer, the Scout Flashlight, \$60, also features the secure steel belt clip, three brightness settings, but no movable head.



Backpack Cooler

Although Barebones brought new roller and medic coolers to market this fall, campers might prefer the Backpack Cooler due to its portability. The pack holds up to 50, 12 oz. cans and boasts a built-in bottle opener. Side pockets have magnetic closure and the zippers and hardware are rust-resistant. The outer shell of the pack is also water-resistant and has a removable tear-mesh inner liner. It holds the cold for 48 hours give or take and costs \$150.

Famous for its non-canvas, nylon material that is naturally mold and mildew repellent, Barebones' offers the house-like Safari Tent, \$2,000, that spans a roomy 126 square feet of living space. Large enough to sleep eight people, Barebones thought to add two doors on opposite sides of the tent to promote walk-through room and circulation. The set up isn't bad either, as the tent stands on a skeletal pole structure with nylon joints that eliminate the need for tools. The Safari, like all Barebones tents, is made to fit the All Weather Cover, \$250, said to shoulder the brunt of 90 mph wind and 1,000 pounds of weight on the roof.

Other Barebones camping offerings for Fall 2015 include the Barebones Mug, the High Wind Kit with durable tent stakes, the antique-looking Forest Lantern, and Lunch Bag Cooler for daytrips.



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K2 SKATE LAUNCHES NEW LIFESTYLE SKATE SERIES



Uptown Black Angle



Midtown Blue Angle

K2 Skate introduced its new Lifestyle Series of inline skates to bridge the gap between fitness-oriented and aggressive performance skaters. Blending together approachable skate performance with premium features and detail, the Midtown and Uptown Lifestyle skates cater to a wide range of needs.

K2 said in years past customers had to decide what type of skater they were, before investing enough time into the activity. Skaters either leaned towards fitness and cross-training, with a focus on efficiency and speed to complement their biking and running regiments; or towards aggressive skates which focus on maximizing performance in the skate park and urban settings. The difference between these two demographics inspired K2 to create the Lifestyle Series, which blends the extra support and maneuverability required for aggressive skating with the high-performance capabilities of fitness skates, thus attracting a variety of experience levels and skaters.

The first in the series is the Midtown, \$260, available in two distinct colors. Aimed at beginner skaters looking to enter the sport as well as seasoned skaters looking for an approachable model, Midtown product features:

- Free 247 Frame
- Rockered-Optional Frame
- 80mm Wheels
- Velcro Cuff Closure
- ABEC 5 Bearings

The flagship of the Lifestyle Series is the Uptown, \$300, built around a rich black leather upper reinforced with a ratchet buckle cuff closure for increased performance. The Uptown has a shorter 243mm frame for maneuverability for high-speed urban skating. In addition, the skate features subtle glow-in-the-dark accents to the upper and laces, providing some enhanced pop during night skating sessions. Uptown components include:

- Glow in the Dark Features
- Free 243 Frame
- Rockered-Optional Frame
- 80mm Wheels
- Ratchet Buckle Cuff Closure
- Stiffer Upper
- Shock-Absorbing Footbed
- Detached Brake Provided
- ILQ-7 Bearings

"Our customers genuinely enjoy being outside and are looking for products that complement their lifestyle and thirst for fun," said Chris McCullough, global brand director for K2 Outdoor. "To us, these are quintessential K2 lifestyle customers, and we're proud to introduce a new series of skates that will resonate with them both from a visual and performance perspective."

The complete K2 Lifestyle Series is available this holiday season with planned consumer launch activities to kick off in November.

TASC PERFORMANCE INTRODUCES ACTIVEWEAR FOR PLUS SIZE WOMEN

Tasc Performance came to the fitness apparel scene in 2009 with the mission to reinvent performance apparel through the use of natural fiber -- bamboo, to be specific. In another push to revolutionize the fitness apparel industry, Tasc introduces a new line of plus size activewear released mid-September.

Tasc looked at the numbers to find that full-figured women, who make up approximately 50 percent of female consumers, are often faced with the daunting task of finding high-quality options made specifically for their body types. Particularly in the category of fitness apparel, options for plus size women are weak.

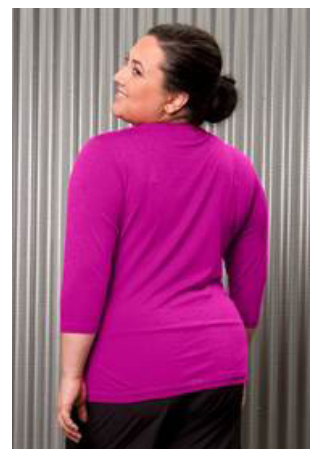
Debuting its new line of apparel, Tasc's collection of high-performance activewear ranges in sizes 16 to 22 featuring its signature bamboo-based material. Included in the line is a mix of style-driven performance tops and bottoms made from BamCo fabric -- an all-natural, breathable, anti-microbial alternative to polyester that combines bamboo fibers with cotton or merino wool.

Employing extensive research and development in-hand with actual

users, Tasc was able to directly design to the needs of the full figured woman. The biggest take away was that current plus-size apparel options do not fit or flatter curvier body types, also not specifically cut or designed for women with larger busts, mid-sections, arms and legs.

"Women in the size range of 16 to 22 told us their vision," said Lisa Evans, Tasc Performance EVP of Sales and Marketing. "Women tried it on and tested it out. They gave us their feedback and we listened. Then, we created what women wanted -- activewear that fits well and feels good."

President of Tasc Todd Andrews, said, "We are constantly coming up with new ways to expand and elevate our products and offerings, including our signature BamCo and MOSO tech fabrics, while reaching consumers who have different needs. We are excited about this next chapter for the Tasc brand and will remain dedicated to offering tailor-made products for full-figured consumers."



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Krimson Clover

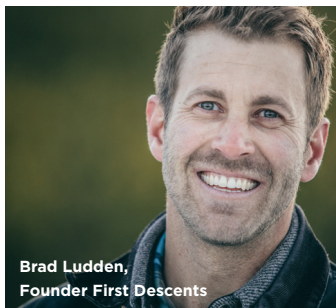
ISN'T ALL ABOUT LOOKING GOOD

By Aaron H. Bible

Krimson Clover, the Colorado-based lifestyle brand known for its high quality women's sweaters and apparel, is donating a portion of its proceeds to First Descents – one of the most inspiring and progressive outdoor-based organizations working with those living with cancer.

This winter season, Krimson Clover will donate five percent of the proceeds from its new Sleigh Ride Sweater to First Descents, for its work getting cancer patients active in the outdoors. This means those who purchase a sweater will automatically make the holidays special for someone else as well.

"The program that First Descents offers is a life-changing experience for their deserving participants. What they do is simply amazing," said Rhonda Swenson, founder and owner of Krimson Clover.



Brad Ludden,
Founder First Descents

First Descents has been offering young adult cancer patients and survivors outdoor adventure experiences, empowering them to climb, paddle and surf beyond their diagnosis, since 2001. Brad Ludden, a professional paddler whose life was impacted by his aunt's battle with cancer in her 30s, founded First Descents and began by offering young cancer patients kayak trips. He found that delving into "extreme" sports

outdoors enabled young people to defy their cancer, reclaim their lives and connect with others doing the same.

First Descents expanded over the years, now offering mountaineering, surfing, rock climbing and kayak programs in 11 states and four countries, and serves more than 1000, 18-to-39 year-olds each year. The trips enable participants to start "living beyond their disease," giving them hope, self-confidence and meaning, while mitigating depression and anxiety.

Female owned and operated, Krimson Clover merges a passion for luxury knitwear with a commitment to social and environmental responsibility. The brand continues to expand its presence with increased sales growth nationwide. The company opened 130 new accounts (to 900 total nationwide) and created 20 new jobs in



Sleigh Ride Sweater

the last year - while remaining obsessive about craftsmanship, quality and self-expression.

Krimson Clover also distinguishes itself with its commitment to supporting women in business and its priority of environmental sustainability. Swenson's team works with several female-owned manufacturing facilities in Asia.

Krimson Clover sales were up 40 percent in 2013–2014 and almost 50 percent in 2014–2015. Swenson attributes this growing success to the clothing's chic yet wearable designs. "I've always loved textiles and creating pattern and color. That's definitely what sets us apart," she said. The garments' designs are inspired by her travels as well as the passionate, adventurous women who wear them.

"We love to work with women," Swenson said. "These women in China are total powerhouses, they're just amazing and they align with our ethos."

Many of the selected fabrics feature custom hand-painted designs, and yarns that are sourced from partners that respect their animals, employees and the environment.

"In sourcing our natural-fiber yarns and fabrics, we make a point of finding materials that are as environmentally friendly as possible," said Swenson. Krimson Clover wool comes from free-ranging sheep raised on low-intensity farms, and products are manufactured in clean facilities that use recycled water and eco-friendly dyes. "Sustainability is an ongoing process and a big priority for us."

After nearly three decades in the sweater business (and several previous brands, including Chompas, Eir Sports, and Nevé), Swenson, originally from Austin, TX, launched Krimson Clover in 2010. The venture combines her lifelong passion for knitting and textiles with a risk-taking spirit. Swenson is a passionate traveler and outdoor athlete who claims to have inherited her wanderlust from her mother, and her ability to embrace life in the moment from her father.

Swenson also gives back personally by volunteering at the local Eagle County Habitat for Humanity in Vail, CO. She co-founded the Luna Women's MTB Ambassadors team, being a retired competitive cyclist, and serves on the board of the Ski Industry Association (SIA).

"Our clothes look great and make you feel one of a kind, with little worry about what you're wearing. Which leaves more time for hiking, skiing and traveling," she said. "People need to get out and live life."

This year's fall collection reflects a renewed commitment to outdoor and winter sports apparel, including hand-painted base layers, sweater dresses, patterned tights, novelty sweaters, scarves and snowflake socks -all made from luxury natural fabrics such as cashmere and Merino.

Krimson Clover is a Boulder, CO-based company specializing in luxurious, feminine clothing for the fashion and resort industries. It distributes throughout the U.S. and Canada via specialty retailers and upper-end catalogs.



Rhonda Swenson,
Founder and Owner,
Krimson Clover



OUT *living* IT

First Descents Surfing, Kayaking,
and Climbing beyond cancer.



Founders Kristin Armstrong, Left, Joe Savola, Middle, with friend and General Manager of AceCo Precision Manufacturing Eric Jensen, Right.

K-Edge Redefines Working at Home

The husband and wife team at Idaho's K-Edge manufacturing know the importance of detailed cycling accessories, quality control and getting home in time for dinner.

By Jahla Seppanen

K-Edge, maker of precision chain catchers, camera and computer mounts, and other cycling accessories, is redefining what it means to work from home. This Boise, ID, manufacturer was founded by the husband and wife team of Joe Savola and Kirsten Armstrong - the two-time Olympic gold medalist (2008 and 2012) for women's individual cycling. Together they unknowingly created what would become K-Edge, when inventing the first chain-catchers for Armstrong's bike during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Trials.

Today, the company still headed by husband and wife, not only manufactures all products domestically, but at their home base in Boise. "The only outsourced components of the K-Edge line are the aluminum anodizing for their color options and the injection molded co-polymer insert for the K-Edge Garmin computer mounts," said Savola in an interview with SGB.

However, "outsourced" doesn't hold its traditional meaning of overseas sourcing. The co-polymer Savola referred to is produced by Adaptive Technologies, Inc., based in Nampa, ID, while the other "outsourced" components come from Anodizers Inc., also located in Boise. "We're proud to keep all of our manufacturing in the Boise Valley," Savola added.

As members of the outdoor industry, Savola and Armstrong understand the nature in which travel is a component of the job. For Armstrong, who grew up in an army family that constantly moved, only to grow up to be a competitive cyclist and move for training and competition, the importance of having a home-base is essential. In regards to their company, the decision to make K-Edge a local Made in the USA brand had to do with quality control that would allow for more time with the family, at home.

Savola said, "A major advantage of manufacturing locally is quality control. If there's an issue or an improvement that we want to make with a K-Edge product, we can go out on the machine shop floor and work with the engineers and machinists to address it. That means no long plane trips, no time away from the family and no late night conference calls."

Another advantage Savola laid out is an increased ability to adapt to market innovations and time-to-market. "Because we have our own manufacturing facility, we are able to react quickly to market changes.

For example, in Spring 2014, we had knowledge that Garmin was about to introduce a new, larger cycling computer. Within four weeks, we were able to design, prototype and manufacture a computer handlebar mount that supported the new Garmin. And we were able to announce with product availability on the exact same day Garmin introduced.”

The new K-Edge Computer Mounts for Garmin were introduced this 2015 season at the Eurobike and Interbike trade shows. Other product highlights from the upcoming line are the Go Big Camera Mounts for GoPro and Single Rung CX Chain Guide.

In the past, the company’s mounts and chain catchers have been used by champions at the Tour de France, World Cups, Ironman and Olympics. Tricking down to the consumer level, cyclists gain an edge (the Kristin Edge, to which the company was named) by upgrading to the simple yet elite level performance of K-Edge accessories. The old saying, the devil is in the details, rings true for the world of performance cycling, when a dropped chain can be the difference between Gold or bust.

Savola sees “a huge opportunity to bring back manufacturing to the U.S.,” adding that the bulk of the cycling industry’s products are manufactured out of the country. “K-Edge has gained a tremendous amount of respect and notoriety worldwide for being Made in the U.S.,” he said. “But the biggest challenge we face is maintaining a cost structure that allows us to be price competitive in the global cycling market.”

For the most part, it’s true - outsourcing is a popular cost-efficient option employed by many outdoor and performance brands. But K-Edge is optimistic, and judging by the company ethos of home and family, Savola and Armstrong will work to keep operations.

Savola explained, “With the plethora of manufacturing options available overseas and used by our competition, we’re continually looking for ways to maintain competitiveness by investing in automation and more efficient processes. We also know that staying ahead of our competition with higher quality and new products helps us maintain the leadership position that we have in the cycling market.”

All companies whether made in the U.S. or globally experience their unique challenges. K-Edge has proven that their consumers look for quality and care, which has allowed the business to flourish almost completely by word-of-mouth. “I also believe that the consumer is willing to pay a bit more for the quality products that we provide,” he said. “That’s what it’s going to take though, more companies making products in the U.S. and the consumers supporting this with their pocketbooks.”

Savola concluded, “Honestly, there are not many drawbacks to making our products in the U.S.” This may be undercutting the battle of maintaining a competitive cost structure or manufacturing to meet growing demands, but it might also be that during the workday, Savola and Armstrong know they get to go home when the clock hits five. They know that family is fundamental and a home is worth working hard for.

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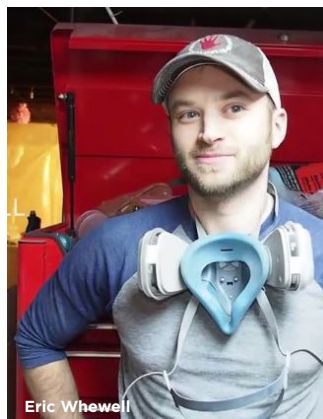


Eric Whewell Senior Designer Boa Technology

Eric Whewell is one of seven senior designers on the Boa design team in Denver, CO, and is a champion of the philosophy to design first with the end user's desires and needs in mind. Whewell has been at Boa for about three years and played a pivotal role in the design and direction of iP1 and the new low power system, to be released in January 2016. He graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Art in 2005 majoring in industrial design.

For those who may not know, Boa Technology Inc. is the manufacturer of the award-winning and patented Boa Closure System, initially invented to replace the traditional lacing of snowboard boots. The Boa Closure System today is found on millions of products for snowboarding, cycling, golfing, athletics, outdoor sports, utility and healthcare. The company was founded in 1999 in Steamboat Springs, CO, and operates from its headquarter in Denver and from subsidiaries in Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Mondsee, Austria.

What inspires your designs beyond the outdoor industry? I like seeing how architecture and automotive design tackle similar questions we get every day. Weighing the importance of what the future looks like, while remaining appropriate to today's more conservative tastes, and preserving function first. Buckminster Fuller pushed the envelope of acceptability in his era, but continues to inspire us to move that needle today. Moving an



aesthetic forward while defining what a brand's core attributes are is a tough game to play.

What's the coolest part of working on this design team? Our team has this great vocabulary to describe the intricacies of each of our designs. I'm sure, from the outside looking in, it could seem confusing. The silhouette (face, first read), and profile (grip, discovered once touched) of each design are the main attributes that define the character of our dials. We want each of those to correlate with the target category and segmentation strategy for the system.

Favorite day of the week? Thursday is bowling day, our office team has a lot of fun.

What's your best product failure been? Fortunately we have a great team that checks each other's work often, so mistakes don't make it out the door. Although I think I could be blamed for pushing the limits on branding at times. I'm often attempting to question what premium branding is in our space, and pushing the line in terms of fitting within our brand standards.

Everyone knows how BOA works. What's something we don't know about how it's made? Our product team 3D prints our work up to four times a day to iterate subtle changes. This results in hundreds of prototypes before the final version is done. I have bags of discarded systems that didn't make the cut. We also work in double scale quite often. So we'll have huge dials on our desk that look like cartoon versions. This is mainly caused by the ridiculously tight tolerances we work with. Those tolerances really push our mold makers to the limit, and are so far from achievable in RP that we just double the size to solve the problem.





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mountaineer, and author



THE NORTH FACE RELAUNCHES REINVIGORATED SUMMIT SERIES

By Thomas J. Ryan and Aaron Bible

With an infusion of cutting-edge technologies and the most rigorous development process ever undergone in high alpine terrain, The North Face unveiled a new take on its iconic Summit Series collection after a yearlong hiatus. The company provided an exclusive look at the collection at Outdoor Retailer Summer Market but somehow managed to keep the line under wraps until now.

Highly targeted at the core mountaineering and climbing community, the collection will be available in limited quantity at 90 of the brand's top specialty dealers.

“We launched Summit Series in the Fall of 2000 as a collection of styles that represent the pinnacle of The North Face products,” said Joe Vernachio, global VP of product, in an interview with SGB. “With new technologies and innovations developed by The North Face in the last few years we saw an opportunity to make products in a new way and thought

the Summit Series collection was the logical collection to put the most innovative product.”

Some of the innovation highlights include the use of DryVent, the brand's most breathable waterproof membrane. Five styles also utilize the unibody design/build process to reduce seams (and fabric waste).

“Unibody design means that there are pieces in the line that are made from a single pattern piece,” said Vernachio. “This reduces seams, and creates a garment that is less bulky, weighs less, and has an incredible fit,” said Vernachio. “Additionally, we are using FuseForm throughout the line to seamlessly engineer benefits into various garments. For instance, our L5 Shell has seamlessly engineered zones for added durability.”

Overall, the six-layer collection is comprised of layers L1 through L6, named according to the way each piece is designed to be worn.

The Summit L1 Top and Pant are base layers made from engineered fabric to provide zonal warmth and moisture management, as well as articulated construction for mobility.

The Summit L2 Jacket is a mid-layer made with Polartec Thermal Pro with Hardface Technology fleece, and has an engineered knit back for targeted warmth and moisture management.

An ultralight down mid-layer, the Summit L3 Jacket is insulated with 800-fill RDS down. The face fabric uses FuseForm construction for targeted durability with minimal seams and a digitally printed color that uses less water than traditional dyeing process.



Summit L1 Top



Summit L1 Pant



Summit L2 Jacket



L5 Shell Jacket



L5 Shell Pant

construction for increased warmth and weather-resistance, and FuseForm construction for targeted durability.

All of the products were designed outside the traditional timetables of product development. Said Vernachio, "The purpose behind this unique approach is simple: to take the time, outside the boundaries of annual due dates, to create a truly best-in-class line of product."

Including heavy involvement by its athlete's team, The North Face RD&D team behind the collection were guided by a design ethos of: "Respect. Inspire. Evolve." According to the brand, the line Respects the athlete's culture and the environment that they play in; it Inspires athletes through the product design, feel and function; and it Evolves by pushing the limits in innovation and technology.

"We went directly to our mountaineering and climbing athletes to ask them what their essentials are, and the responses from everyone were very clear: they needed six essential layers that they would be able to utilize in the various conditions one finds during high-alpine pursuits," said Vernachio.

To test the entire Summit Series, Conrad Anker, Hilaree O'Neill, David Gottler and Renan Ozturk journeyed to Langtang National Park in Nepal in February 2015. One of the results of this expedition was the groundbreaking motion picture, Meru.

"Our athletes and their sports have always been our greatest inspiration for creating innovative, best-in-class gear," said Vernachio. "From protection to zipper placement, we're always referencing climbers feedback on prototypes as we look to make a perfect final product, and the new Summit Series collection is no different in that regard."

He added, "Once it was built, the athlete team was in the product and testing it in high-alpine pursuits in order to provide us the essential feedback we needed to ensure that the final product you see today is the most innovative line of mountaineering and climbing gear available."

Conrad Anker called out the "fine-tuned FuseForm fabric" as well as the integrated system as coups for the new line. "The Summit Series is pure and simple, elegant and refined, durable and rugged," Anker told SGB. "If you want to experience the harshest climates, this is the kit for you." And at the end of the day, no one knows this better than Anker. ■

The warmest synthetic mid-layer, the Summit L4 Jacket is insulated with ThermoBall, a synthetic, proprietary The North Face insulation released last year that retains warmth when wet. Minimal, unibody construction reduces seams and its quilt design prevents insulation migration and cold spots.

The Summit L5 Shell and Shell Pant are the most advanced shell outerwear The North Face has built, using a waterproof-breathable DryVent 3L membrane. The shell and pant have localized FuseForm construction for targeted durability with minimal seams and articulated, one-piece construction for alpine mobility.

The final layer of the line is the Summit L6 Jacket, an 800-fill RDS down belay parka that uses welded, Z-baffle



Summit L3 Jacket



Summit L4 Jacket

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FOR THOSE WHO

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THE NORTH FACE LAUNCHES “NEVER STOP” GLOBAL CAMPAIGN

By Thomas J. Ryan

Representing its first global brand campaign, The North Face unveiled “Never Stop,” featuring cinematic footage designed to “take viewers on an emotional journey inspiring them to discover the exhilaration that lives at the outer edge of their physical and intellectual possibilities.”

“Never Stop” features athletes Conrad Anker, Paige Claassen, Xavier De Le Rue and Tom Wallisch climbing, mountaineering, skiing and snowboarding while blending with cultural, creative and emotional scenes of a photographer, marine biologist and scientist to generate a narrative of exploration.

“Never Stop” is about exploring your potential in whatever endeavor inspires you,” said The North Face athlete Jimmy Chin. “For me, pushing myself in the mountains has been an important part of my life and something I am passionate about, but photography has been an equally incredible journey to find new perspectives and push myself creatively.”

Added The North Face President Todd Spaletto: “Whether it’s the epic or the everyday, we want to inspire people to find the thing they love, and relentlessly pursue it. Building on our previous U.S.-based campaign, ‘Never Stop’ features people who embody the spirit of exploration.”

The campaign also celebrates the heroes of the U.S. Department of the Interior’s 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC).

As part of the campaign The North Face is donating \$100,000 to the Department of the Interior and the 21CSC.

Four conservation corps organizations will each receive \$25,000: Student Conservation Association, American YouthWorks, Conservation Legacy, and Team Rubicon - selected on nominations submitted of inspiring corps members caring for public lands in communities across the country and inviting others to participate in active outdoor stewardship.

The four winners are:

LaJuan Tucker, American YouthWorks:

Tucker’s program encourages young people to pursue conservation careers and preserve the great outdoors.





Anthony "Chako" Ciocco, Conservation Legacy: Ciocco leads the AncestralLands program on the Navajo Nation under Conservation Legacy's Southwest Conservation Corps. Under his leadership, Navajo youth work to rebuild damaged ecosystems.



Jeremy Taitano, Student Conservation Association: Inspired by damage caused to coral reef and marine life of his home in Saipan, Taitano joined the Student Conservation Association (SCA), whose mission is to build the next generation of conservation leaders.



Team Rubicon: Founded by two marines following the devastating 2010 Haiti earthquake, Team Rubicon seeks to provide veterans with three things they lose after leaving the military: a purpose, gained through disaster relief; community, built by serving with others; and identity, created by joining a new mission.

The Department of the Interior is the nation's largest land manager, stewarding approximately 20 percent of the nation's lands, while the 21CSC works to provide jobs for youth and returning veterans and create the next generation of outdoor stewards. Since its launch by the Obama Administration in 2010 as part of the America's Great Outdoors program, REI, American Express, American Eagle Outfitters, CamelBak, The Champion Foundation, Youth Outdoor Legacy Fund, and the Coca-Cola Foundation have joined the movement.

"We appreciate our continued partnership with The North Face, this year highlighting conservation heroes who are making a difference in their communities," said Interior Secretary Sally Jewell.

The North Face's donation builds on last year's support of the 21CSC when the brand donated \$250,000 to support jobs for young adults and returning veterans working on projects to protect and enhance public lands from Golden Gate National Recreation Area in California to Everglades National Park in Florida.

The "Never Stop" campaign will be distributed globally throughout the fourth quarter in more than 10 markets including the U.S., Canada, Germany, U.K., France, China, Korea, Australia, Nepal and Singapore. ■

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Photo courtesy Great Outdoor Store

HOLIDAY SELLING FOR SPECIALTY RETAILERS

Specialty Retailers from GOA speak to shifting gears for the holiday selling season, with emphasis on displays, Small Business Saturday, connecting with the community and sticking to a buying plan.

By Jahla Seppanen

The holiday season is synonymous with the buying season. An NRF survey done in 2014 found consumers will spend an average of \$460 on gifts for their family, up 6.5 percent from \$432 last year; and \$80 on gifts for friends, up from \$75 last year. The influx of customers looking to spend on family, friends, and even pets flock to outdoor retail stores on the hunt for deals. This chunk of the calendar is also ripe with key retail sale dates, such as Black Friday and Small Business Saturday, along with competitive promos, giveaways and markdowns. For outdoor specialty retailers, the season brings both advantages and challenges as local shops square up against big box chains.

SGB spoke with owners and principal buyers at specialty retail shops across the U.S., all members of the exclusive Grassroots Outdoor Alliance (GOA), to learn which holiday sell-through strategies are in place to skyrocket sales and diminish inventory this season.

Casual Adventure Arlington, VA Eric Stern, Principal Buyer

"It's getting to be the time of year when people are buying for others, and nowadays, people have a lot of lists," said Eric Stern, principal buyer at Casual Adventure, serving outdoor camping, hiking, travel, tactical and scouting in Arlington, VA. "The challenge is, beyond that list, what else can we provide for the customer themselves or for stocking stuffers to compliment holiday items."

Stern revealed his strategy of buying within a brand has been a great success among customers, who ordinarily come in looking for one staple apparel piece. "If we buy the Patagonia Better Sweater, we'll buy vest, quarter-zip, jacket, matching gloves, scarves and hats, too." Stern also buys within certain colors, to tie each independent piece or accessory to a complete outfit. "It gives us more perspective of how can we enhance what someone already wants," he added.

"We display the set on a mannequin, so we might have the hat, scarf and gloves all together so people can see the play of colors. We also compliment the style or fabric of the outfit with gear and accessories from other brands, like a messenger bag." Stern added, "You have to accessorize," Stern said. "And buy in different colors. It makes it more interesting to have a red, a green, and a purple to compliment personalities."

Stern's belief is that display is key, especially during the holidays, as shoppers are even more visually driven due to the overwhelming presence



Eric Stern, Principal Buyer, Casual Adventure



of product from all sides of the retail chain. His word is tried and tested. Casual Adventure was founded in 1945 and has stayed in the family since then. Eric is a fourth generation great grandson of the original founder.

The tradition of keeping operations in the family speaks to an advantage all specialty retailers should make use of during the holiday season - you are members of your community. "We've been here for 60 years. We really try to embed ourselves into the community. These are not just customers, but friends, long-time clients and ambassadors of our stores," Stern said. "It's about hammering home the idea that we are your neighbors. Even more than the knowledge of product, it's the interest in what the customers are doing. Establishing rapport."

Stern added, "As a small business we tend to get lost on Amazon Monday and Black Friday, so we key into Small Business Saturday."

Core brands that stand out for holiday resurgences in style, aesthetic and technology include Mountain Hardwear and Arc'Teryx. Stern's footwear prospective puts Ugg and Sorel at the forefront, with more women's casual footwear like Olukai projected to sell.

Great Outdoor Store Sioux Falls, SD DeAnn Echols, Owner

DeAnn Echols, owner of Great Outdoor Store has an arsenal of sell-through techniques set specifically for the coming holidays. Great Outdoor's seasonal calendar begins with the release of a 22-page holiday



James and DeAnn Echols, Great Outdoor Store

catalogue of products, gift ideas, and coupons, released the second week in October. "That gets a phenomenal response," said Echols. "We mail close to 3,500 and an keep an additional 3,000 in store, making our ratio return for coupons really nice...customers are looking forward to that."

Following the catalogue, the shop hosts a big kickoff anniversary sale the first week of November, which Echols accounts as one of the shop's biggest sales year round. "We highlight specific vendors, do giveaways,

register for prizes, and have some minor discounts for the sale," she said. This year will be the 32nd anniversary of the South Dakota-based specialty retailer. Their celebratory sale ordinarily runs Wednesday through Sunday.

But what's even bigger this year is the prospect of starting a loyalty program. Echols said, "It's been something we have been talking about, and hope to implement in October, when catalogue coupon-ers come in.



Then we can get those customers signed up for the loyalty program.

Programs like this reinforce that customers will return to your shop, and that your shop recognizes their dollars mean something more. "This is typically the season where people are spending more, and those dollars will seem to have more value with a loyalty program."

Echols also spoke excitedly about innovative shopping experiences that can uniquely promote sell-through, including a Ladies or Men's Night, where Great Outdoor creates a casual atmosphere and really helps people shop for the right gifts. She projects this to occur during November, saying, "Our holiday shoppers start early, before Thanksgiving."

"And being locally owned," Echols continued, "we always do Small Business Saturday. It started with American Express, but has taken a life of its own."

The last key to Echols' holiday strategy is to "go all out merchandizing." Many specialty retailers are unique from Big Box stores in that their locations are special. "We are in an old train depot. I make it really fun inside, with a big display, and light the outside as well." Her advice: give the store a fresh look, even as early as September. "We literally change and move everything. I really try to make it a fun, festive atmosphere."

Manzanita Outfitters Prescott, AZ Jenny Moore, Apparel and Softgoods Buyers David Wheeler, Founder and Owner

For Arizona's Manzanita Outfitters, the bulk of holiday sell-through techniques comes in the form of packaged deals and brand giveaways. Jenny Moore, apparel and softgoods buyer said, "One thing we do that is always huge is buy three get one free for socks." Brands taking part in this



Jenny Moore, Apparel and Softgoods Buyer



promotion include Darn Tuff, SmartWool, Fox River, and Inkenji. “We give away close to 100 pairs of socks from each company, so if you think about it, we’re selling three times that.”

As for packaged deals, Manzanita created pre-packaged daypacks from various brands (i.e. a small Camelbak daypack will be accessorized with a first aid kit, two granola bars, electrolyte gels and a water bottle.) These cannot be amended or swapped out with other products, and are advertised as pre-made gifts.

The shop also does packages in hardgoods. For instance, offering a choice of PFD or paddle when purchasing a kayak, canoe, or SUP.

“We’re making decision for our customers,” said Moore, “and they appreciate us for that. We make it easy for a spouse coming in to buy for someone else because it’s already decided. Then they see the dollar amount of buying everything together and see it’s a deal with the package.” Moore added, “It’s silly, but a lot of people don’t think about all the pieces that need to go with a pack or boat.”

Manzanita prefers to have brands agree to partner on these packages, but will create groupings despite pre-arranged partnerships. “In the end, we’re still making the same amount of money, marking off a \$4 granola bar loss compared to profiting \$100.” This being the first year Manzanita is participating as a member of GOA, Moore looks forward to, “seeing a lot more brands that are willing to do promotions with us.”



David Wheeler, founder and owner of Manzanita Outfitters

David Wheeler, founder and owner of Manzanita Outfitters emphasized the importance of planning sales throughout the season. “Don’t do everything in the beginning,” he said. “Rather than throw everything out there at once, we’ll gradually introduce items, which gives us wiggle room to find where the ‘sweet spot’ is. Then if I see something is or is not working, I’ve got the inventory to adjust.”

It is equally as important, according to Wheeler, to show restraint and discipline much earlier, while buying. “Don’t get yourself into a position where you need to do something drastic to get out,” he said. “If you’re trying to make corrections in late November and December, it’s really too late.

You need to understand your inventory. Take past history and forecast forward. Feel what direction you think your particular market is going and hold the line and buy accordingly.” Wheeler advised, “if you get a 2 percent discount to add \$1,000 to your order, don’t take it.”

Like other GOA retailers, Wheeler speaks to the need to highlight the local. “Everyone is thinking of friends and family, especially for the holidays. Don’t let them forget that we see them as friends.”

Backcountry North Traverse City, MI Tracy Mayer, Owner, Softgoods and Footwear Buyer



Tracy Mayer

Year-ago buying is a huge factor in specialty retail sell-through for the holidays. Owner and Softgoods/Footwear Buyer Tracy Mayer of Backcountry North speaks to the planning that goes into holiday promotions for her shop. “The big sale holiday is Black Friday, and we don’t participate much because that is the time big box stores have their biggest sales.” Mayer continued, “Deals, specials and promotions are not how we operate. We’re brick-and-mortar, which is all about unique products and servicing our customers.” She added, “I don’t need to spend hours chasing discounts. I can let all the biggies battle it out for that jacket, but you’re going to lose that battle. That is a waste of our time.”

The trap for many specialty retailers can be disguised in promotions, while the extra purchase can hinder optimal sell-through. Mayer said, “Whether it’s Columbia or The North Face, there will be certain promotional items. But it depends on how it sits with our current line. We do not go ahead and blindly participate in the deal...you should have other ways of making margins.”

The best part about being a specialty retailer is the ability to diverge from the plan and think on your feet. “You can be reactionary,” Mayer said. “Since you’re small you can make a determination depending on weather, other competitors, or inventory. But know you have to be ready to make that determination. You have to pull the trigger.” Mayer’s approach: make a list of actions that prepare your shop for a number of seasonal divergences. Then act.

Backcountry will also participate in Small Business Saturday. “We are an early participator. We have an iPad ready to register an AMEX early, and we see repeat customers who purposely come in Saturday morning to shop with us because of it.”

However, the deals won’t mean anything if the product isn’t fresh. “Our goal is for our customers to say ‘I always see something new,’” said Mayer. For the holidays, this means lots of accessories and outdoor apparel and gear that grosses into general Men’s or Women’s gifts.

The Take Away

The take away for specialty retailers hoping to boost sales from year-ago earnings? As Mayer said: “We don’t have to follow any rules.”

Specialty retailers thrive by being responsive to customer, weather and trend shifts. They are friends of the community, relating to buyers as long-time neighbors. They imagine new events and gift packages that make it simple to find the right gift. And most of all, they celebrate their smallness in big ways. ■

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INDUSTRY CALENDAR



Jeremy Taitano holding two red spotted Newts in Maine. Photo courtesy The North Face

OCTOBER

- 5-7 OIA Rendezvous
Seattle, WA
- 5-7 Shop.org Digital Summit 2015
Philadelphia, PA
- 8-9 The Retailing Summit
Dallas, TX
- 15-17 Imprinted Sportswear Show
Ft. Worth, TX
- 27-30 NASGW Annual Meeting & Expo
Reno, NV
- 29-31 ADA Fall Buying Show
Baltimore, MD

NOVEMBER

- 4-6 NBS Athletic Show
Ft. Worth, TX
- 22-24 Sports, Inc. Athletic Show
Las Vegas, NV

DECEMBER

- 1-3 MRA December Lansing Market
Lansing, MI
- 2-4 FFANY
New York, NY
- 8-9 MRA December Cincinnati Market
Cincinnati, OH

JANUARY 2016

- 4-6 ASI Orlando
Orlando, FL
- 5-7 Archery Trade Association Show
Louisville, KY
- 6 Outdoor Retailer Winter Market Demo Day
Salt Lake City, UT
- 6-9 CES Show
Las Vegas, NV
- 7-10 Outdoor Retailer Winter Market
Salt Lake City, UT
- 11-13 MRA January Novi Market
Novi, MI
- 12-15 NBS Winter Show
Ft. Worth, TX
- 14-16 Surf Expo
Orlando, FL
- 17-20 NRF Retail Big Show
New York, NY
- 19-22 SHOT Show
Las Vegas, NV
- 22-24 Imprinted Sportswear
Long Beach, CA
- 24-26 Sports Licensing & Tailgate Show
Las Vegas, NV
- 27-29 PGA Merchandise Show
Orlando, FL
- 28-31 The SIA Snow Show
Denver, CO

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Melbourne, FL 32935
t 321.254.0091
athleticdealersofamerica.com

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Flintlock Ridge Office Center
11 Mile Hill Road
Newtown, CT 06470
t 203.426.1320
nssf.org

National Sporting Goods Association
1601 Feehanville Drive I Suite 300
Mount Prospect, IL 60056
t 847.296.6742
nsga.org

Nation's Best Sports
4216 Hahn Blvd.
Ft. Worth, TX 76117
t 817.788.0034
nbs.com

Outdoor Industry Association
4909 Pearl East Circle I Suite 300
Boulder, CO 80301
t 303.444.3353
outdoorindustry.org

Sports & Fitness Industry Association
8505 Fenton Street I Suite 211
Silver Spring, MD 20910
t 301.495.6321
sfia.org

Snow Sports Industries America
8377-B Greensboro Drive
McLean, VA 22102
t 703.556.9020
snowsports.org

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