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EUROPEAN SURF/SKATE/SNOW BUSINESS

#82 JUNE / JULY 2016 €5

ADIDAS' BJORN WIERSMA TALKS ACTION SPORTS

SELLING TECHNICAL SKATE PRODUCTS

EUROPEAN MARKET INTEL

BRAND PROFILES, BUYER SCIENCE & MUCH MORE



TREND REPORTS: BOARDSHORTS, CAMPING & OUTDOOR, SWIMWEAR, STREETWEAR, SKATE HARDWARE & PROTECTION

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European Skateboarder
Of The Year



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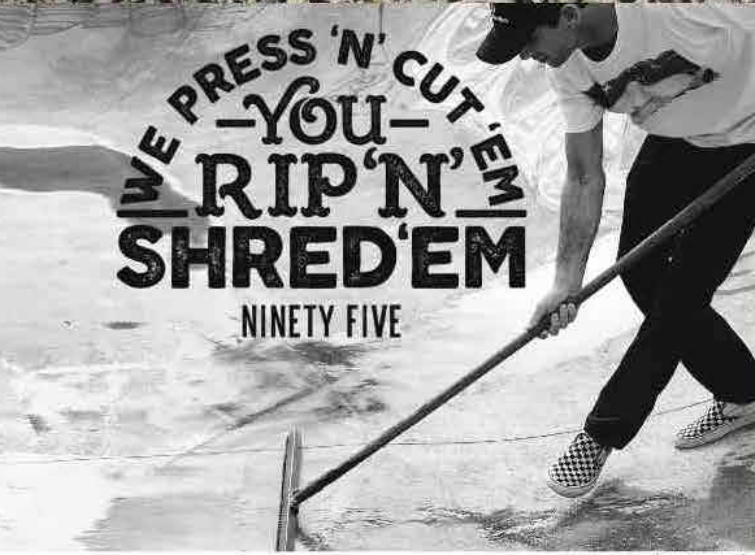
LUCAS PREMIERE ADV



La marque
aux 3 bandes

LUCAS PUIG - FAKIE INWARD HEELFLIP





photos: steele

sector 9
SKATEBOARD CO.



**AMERICAN
BOARD
MAKERS**
SINCE 1993

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HELLO #82

At the time of writing, Europe is finally seeing some much needed signs of summer. April and May, on the whole, were wet across the continent, spelling unseasonably green countryside and poor spring sales for boardsports retail. However, now the sun shines bright and rumours are rife of El Niño's tail end heating both our oceans and air right the way through the summer. All is forgiven.

Our business is entirely dependent on Mother Nature and with the Wanderlust trend that's sparked a heightened lust for travel in Millenials, spurred on by their need to document just how "at one" with nature they are, SOURCE explores a new trend category in our Camping & Outdoor trend report.

Adidas, a company steeped in sporting history also have a renewed focus for this summer. Headed up by skate industry heavyweight, Bjorn Wiersma and under the company's Originals umbrella, adidas have launched an EMEA action sports division. Bjorn takes to the hot seat for this issue's Big Wig interview to explain all.

Also in this issue, we look at trends in boardshorts, swimwear, streetwear, skate

protection and our Skateboard Editor, Dirk Vogel looks at how the new technology skate brands are introducing into their decks, wheels and trucks gives retailers great sales arguments for selling high end products. We also have our regular features; Corky from Stockholm's Coyote Grind Lounge claims this issue's Retailer Profile after their second place finish at last year's Vans Shop Riot series. Titus from Germany won the competition in 2015 and their head of buying, PV Schulz gives us an insight into his buying tricks and tips.

Our summer tradeshow edition is thoughtfully put together to provide retailers with an extensive overview of SS17's trends to assist them in placing their orders. Retailers should also send their staff home with SOURCE as homework to ensure all shop staff are up to speed with next summer's trends.

Always Sideways,
Harry Mitchell Thompson
Editor

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On the cover: Bryce Campbell from Parlour Skate Shop in London.
Photo by Normen Luzinsky

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PICTURE LAUNCHES IN JAPAN

Starting this September, Picture Organic Clothing will deliver to Japan for the first time, with 12 stores taking on the brand following the Interstice show. Their partner in Japan is Hasco who is also the distributor of Jones Snowboards, Rome Snowboards and owns a number of local snowboard brands.

GLOBE TO BE DISTRIBUTED BY BUCHER + WALT SA FOR SWISS MARKET

As of July 1, Globe will have their Swiss business run by Bucher + Walt SA instead of Dac Sport. Bucher + Walt SA have been in the business for over 50 years and will handle the brand starting with the 16/17 winter season.

WSL HOLDINGS TO ACQUIRE KELLY SLATER WAVE COMPANY

Kelly Slater Wave Company has taken a giant step forward after agreeing to the World Surf League Holdings acquiring a majority stake. Both parties want to create new possibilities and opportunities for the ever-growing surf community.

TORQ SURFBOARDS ANNOUNCES COLLAB WITH CHANNEL ISLANDS SURFBOARDS

Torq Surfboards has announced a partnership with Channel Islands Surfboards, which will see the company produce CI's best selling Pod Mod surfboard. Torq's General Manager Sebastian Wenzel announced the news at the company's dealer meeting in Mundaka, Spain and explained how CI were looking to enter the "every day surfer" market and with Torq, they could do that with a versatile board, at a lower budget and thanks to the X-Lite material, regular surfers needn't worry about dings.

NORTHCORE PURCHASES THE POWERSTROKE BRAND

Surf fitness product, the Powerstroke Band, has been purchased by surf and adventure equipment specialists, Northcore. The popular surf fitness training device used by surfers of all levels will be added to Northcore's wide-ranging product inventory and has been renamed Northcore Powerstroke.

SIA SNOW SHOW DECIDES TO STICK WITH JANUARY DATES

SIA has gone back on its decision to move its 17/18 Snow Show to early December 2017. Snowsports Industries American announced in December 2015 that it would be shifting its annual snowsports show to the beginning of the season to "better align with the current buying season." President Nick Sargent said that after months of feedback and information gathering, SIA will be upholding its January show time for foreseeable future.

VANS ANNOUNCE JOSH YOUNG AS VANS UK SKATE TEAM MANAGER

Vans have appointed Josh Young, EMEA team rider and part of the Vans family since 2007, as the new skate team manager for the UK. Sports Marketing Agency Alternative 138 GmbH Launches In Europe Danielle Reiff-Jongerius and Bastian Dietz have officially teamed up to create a new marketing agency that specializes in cycling, winter sports and tourism communications on a pan-European level: Alternative 138 GmbH.

WILCO PRINS SUCCEEDS FRÉDÉRIC BASSE AS EUROSIMA PRESIDENT

Frédéric Basse served as president of EuroSIMA for nine years and has been replaced by Wilco Prins, Rip Curl's European CEO. Basse resigned because he believed the surf industry needed a "new and fresh approach in many ways". Prins has been with Rip Curl since starting out with the company as an intern in 1997 and is now charged with running the EuroSIMA operation.

BODY GLOVE ANNOUNCES NEW LICENSING AGREEMENT WITH BIC SPORT

Body Glove step into the surf hardware and SUP market by linking up with world leading board manufacturers, BIC Sport. The companies will share their combined 80 years of industry experience and knowledge to produce some innovative and top quality products on a global scale. BIC will design, market and distribute surfboards and SUPs globally with the Body Glove branding.

WILLIAM FINNEGAN'S SURF NOVEL 'BARBARIAN DAYS' WINS 2016 PULITZER PRIZE

Author and journalist William Finnegan has won the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Biography for his memoir on surfing. Finnegan has been a staff writer at the New York Times since 1987 and is a senior writer for Surfer magazine, and his book 'Barbarian Days: A Surfing Life' is being widely acclaimed as a stroke of brilliance.

FREERIDE WORLD CHAMPION ESTELLE BALET DIES IN AVALANCHE

The snowboard world has been rocked by the news that 21-year-old professional Swiss snowboarder Estelle Balet was killed in an avalanche on while filming above Orsieres on the Swiss/French border. Balet was recently crowned the World Freeride Champion in Verbier.

FALLEN FOOTWEAR CALLS IT A DAY

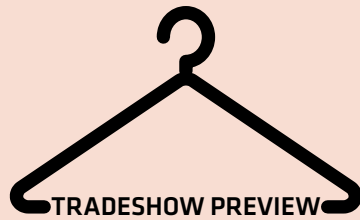
Fallen Footwear founder Jamie Thomas has announced that the current season will be the company's last. Fallen had 13 amazing years, supplying skaters with great skate shoes. We wish the whole team the best in their next endeavours.

SPORT ACHAT NANTES

Sportair's new show to serve the west coast of France on the from September 18-19 has already attracted action sports and outdoors brands to book space. Additionally, distributors including Hoff, Surf Systems and Greendoor will be there for this launch edition.

DEELUXE APPOINTED NEW AUSTRIAN DISTRIBUTOR OF SHRED OPTICS AND SLYTECH PROTECTION

Anomaly Action Sports SRL, parent company of Shred & Slytech has appointed Deeluxe Sportartikel Handels GmbH to distribute the two brands in the Austrian region.



BRIGHT, BERLIN, JUNE 28-30

BRIGHT XXIII is once again at Berlin's Arena, right next door to SEEK, in the heart of Berlin, with over 250 exhibitors taking over 2,600 sq metres of exhibitor space. The combination of the two shows in one location has made the Berlin Arena Europe's main hub for streetwear and contemporary men's fashion and one of the main draws of Berlin fashion week. This winter's show saw visitor numbers up 30% up on last winter's show, with the international draw remaining strong with over 50% of visitors coming from abroad. Apart from their carefully selected portfolio of brands such as Vans, Converse, Levis, Volcom, Electric, DC, Makia, Pro-Tec Element, Neff, Obey, Aevor, The Hundreds, Huf, Etnies, Santa Cruz Altamont and Diamond Supply Co, there will be lots of interesting newcomers and retuning brands on display for summer. Such brands include Volcom, Nikita, 40ies & Shorties, SLVDR, People Footwear, Polar Skate Co, Quasi Skateboards, Palace Skateboards, DQM New York, Magenta Skateboards and Official Headwear.

The indoor skateable area introduced this winter will continue for summer. This new set up has really reinvigorated skateboarding at the Bright show, and as we go to press the program of events for the area is being finalised. For the summer edition the outdoor area on the river Spree will include a massive floating swimming pool to keep you cool between meetings. Other things to look forward to include: Berlin-

based Solebox founder Hikmet Sugoer will host a special Sneaker Collectors' Market, while Drago Publishing from Rome curates an exhibition that features international photography heavy-weights including Boogie, Estevan Oriol, and Letizia Battaglia. From current skate hotspot Paris, Thomas Busuttill the mastermind behind De Paris Yearbook, Of London, and Aus Berlin, is in town. He will be launching the latest Yearbook and there's going to be a panel discussion about the influence of streetwear and skateboarding in current fashion trends. As always there's a full program of night time parties and skate events all over Berlin: Starting out with the Bright Opening Party with a DC Skate Session, followed by a Volcom created skate contest ending on a boat with BBQ and Live music. There's also another SEEK & Bright Extravaganza coming up - this time in cooperation with Highsnobiety, and finally there's going to be the official closing party hosted by Obey. Ticketing will once again be shared between Bright, SEEK and Premium and Wallet is to be used to send out the electronic tickets for the first time. Registration is possible until midnight Saturday June 25. Afterwards, registration will be possible at the tradeshow entrance only, for a fee of €20. Opening times are Tuesday and Wednesday 10am - 7pm and Thursday 10am - 5pm.

www.brighttradeshow.com

SEEK, BERLIN, JUNE 28-30

Across the road from Bright, SEEK is a key destination for buyers at fashion week to view over 200 brands exhibiting. The hall is all on one floor and all the stands are of a standard size and build and minimalist design with just the brand name and products on display. All other brand marketing is kept to a minimum inside the hall. This gives all brands an equal opportunity to attract people walking the hall. Brands include: Deus ex Machina, Dickies, Herschel, Stance, K-swiss, Levis, Polar Stuff, wemoto, RVCA, Nixon, Mizu, Element, Iron and Resin, and Brixton. Boardsports brands at this show are looking for a more

boutique style retail base. For the summer, catering stands have now moved outside meaning additional space has been freed up enabling more brands to exhibit at the show. A soon to be launched Premium Group app will help visitors to navigate through all three shows and collect the contact details of brands or anybody they meet during the event and will also enable exhibiting brands to do their lead tracking through the same app. Opening hours are the same as Bright.

www.seekexhibitions.com

SHITFOOT MONGOLAND, BERLIN, JUNE 28-30

After a break over the winter, Shitfoot is back again for this summer at the same location - Urban Spree on Revaler Straße. Like last year a raft of Europe's finest skater-owned companies are due to pitch up, hang out and skate while squeezing in a spot of business at the event organised by Alex Irvine (co-owner of Witchcraft Hardware) and Sean James of Perus. With no entry fee or barcode scanners anyone can take a quick trip over. Their two night mini-film festival is back again, only this time it will be projected onto the tradeshow at night and will

premiere Dutch squad Bombaklats latest skate flick and Finnish skate shop Beyond's latest venture, 'Beyond Journal', with musician Jonny Wanha responsible for the soundtrack. The Aus Berlin book from the De Paris & Of London Yearbook stable, is to be launched and the on-site art exhibition will feature a constantly evolving display from artist Sara, which will also incorporate the work of other skate artists. Don't forget to pack you board!

info@shitfootmongoland.com

JACKET REQUIRED, LONDON, JULY 27-28

Jacket Required, the premium menswear show returns to The Old Truman Brewery in London's East End for a preview of Spring/ Summer 2017 lines. With over 300 brands, the show reflects the strength and creativity of the UK market. The approach since day one has been to strip out any large branding paraphernalia and marketing propaganda - a straight forward rail and table set up against white washed walls - an honest aesthetic so the product can speak for itself and rise above the add-ons. The layout for the show remains the same with the 'action sports' area still in the same place. Included amongst the brands on display are Brixton, Critical Slide Society, Deus ex Machina, Dickies, Element, Globe, Herschel Supply Co, Huf, Iron & Resin, Levis, Polar Stuff, RAEN Optics, The Hundreds, Uppercut

Deluxe, and WeSC. Brands returning after a break are Gloverall, Levi's Made & Crafted, Altamont, Satta and Manhattan Portage and new brands to show include Bata Heritage, Dundas London, Levi's Commuter and Elliot Rhodes. If you're a brand looking to expand in the UK streetwear market then this is where you need to be. The show is easily reachable by tube, rail, bus or foot. Shoreditch High Street Station, Liverpool Street Station, Aldgate East Station and Old Street Station are all within walking distance. Opening times are 10.00 - 19.00pm on Wednesday and 10.00 - 18.00 on Thursday. Jacket Required is a strictly invitation-only trade event so register in advance to guarantee your entry

www.jacket-required.com

CALIFORNIA
Locos

CHAZ BOJÓRQUEZ
8.625" x 31.89"

GARY WONG
8.25" x 31"

DAVE TOURJE
8.35" x 29.5"

NORTON WISDOM
7.75" x 29"

JOHN VAN HAMERSVELD
7" x 25"

DUSTERS
california

California is a mirage... the LOCOS are a manifestation of the mirage...

This Summer, Dusters California collaborates with one of the most compelling groups of visual artists working in Los Angeles today, the California Locos. Five pioneering artists whose roots are in graffiti, surf, skate, punk, rock, as well as the contemporary art world, together and separately, embody the innovative, lively and rebellious spirit of Los Angeles through these five distinctive Dusters skateboards. For more information please visit us at www.dusterscalifornia.com.

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photo: Dwindle

SELLING TECHNICAL PRODUCTS: SALES ARGUMENTS FOR SKATE RETAIL

In this new series, we help retailers create convincing sales arguments for skateboard products featuring advanced technologies – and sell more, even at higher price points. **By Dirk Vogel.**

The longboard segment is an Eldorado for new constructions and inventive technologies, embraced by customers willing to pay extra cash for cutting edge innovation. On the flip side, the 'regular' skateboard market is a sobering reality check. "By and large, I would say that skating is a conservative industry when it comes to products. Skaters buy the same products over and over if they work well enough," said George Powell, Founder and hardware pioneer at Skate One (Powell Peralta Skateboards, Bones Wheels) in Santa Barbara, adding: "New skate innovations take a long time to gain momentum because of this inherent "it ain't broke, so don't fix it" attitude, and only the really good ones, marketed by the really determined developers ever change the sport."

When it comes to introducing new innovations into skateboard hardware, the level of acceptance varies by product category, says Franz Josef Hoeller, CEO at Fresco Distribution: "On the deck side, the acceptance is not huge as it's still a very price sensitive segment and the deck is the component you change a lot if you skate well. On trucks and wheels there's more acceptance." Speaking of "price sensitive," here's how boards stack up in European retail: shop decks currently run around €39.00, regional brand decks €49.00, non-tech pro boards around €59.00, and technical boards from €65.00 to €79.00. But as Ivan Moreno, CEO at Nomad Skateboards and La Dolce Vita Skate Shop, Zaragoza points out: "The price difference [for technology decks] is still between 15% and 20% compared to 'regular' decks. For somebody with limited resources, this is still a big gap!"

Then again, technical products are more than fancy marketing, but offer real-life benefits. And perhaps customers would also pay more for technology in skate products, if shops provided the right sales arguments? And just to make sure: A sales "argument" is not to be confused with a confrontation or sales spiel. It's about showing customers the benefits of technology by putting yourself in their shoes, and addressing their needs and their preferences. Taking it from the top, let's start with decks.

I. SKATE DECKS

Probably the hardest sell based on price point differences, technical deck constructions provide added snap and longevity by supplementing (or partially replacing) Canadian maple veneers with advanced components. The P2 wood construction used by brands such as Flip, Plan B, Creature, and Santa Cruz owes its "Spring Loaded Pop" to inlays made from Kevlar, also known as the material in bullet-proof vests (chemical name: Aramid). Dwindle Distribution's board brands (Almost, Cliché, enjoi, and Zero) rely on the Impact family of wood constructions, enhanced with carbon fibre in the shape of two discs above the trucks (Impact Support), carbon fibre inserts across the top veneer (Impact Light), and a combination of carbon discs and veneer for maximum strength (Impact Plus). Other technologies, like the Element Featherlight and Featherlight Helium series minimize weight through air pocket inserts, but we'll focus on selling strength-enhancing tech with the following sales arguments:

Slightly more money buys you much longer enjoyment. That shop deck for €39.00 was a great bargain, until it snapped on the first session. Meanwhile, technical decks such as Dwindle's Impact boards ship with a 45-day guarantee against breakage to sweeten the deal. "The cost to get into that technology is higher, but in the long run you're spending less money because you are buying fewer boards. With Impact Light and Impact Plus, I can say you're going to double the life of your board," states Eric Sentianin, R&D Hardgood Developer at Dwindle Distribution.

Skaters get the better deal. Believe it or not, but investing in technical decks actually puts skate shops at a disadvantage! "The shop has the short-term benefit of a higher sales-slip, but may have to wait a bit longer for the skater to return. The skater initially spends more money, but it is mathematics: If the deck lasts twice as long and is 50% more in price, the skater made a big deal, as he saves 25% overall. Not everyone gets this, unfortunately," said Jörg Ludewig, co-owner at Urban Supplies distribution.

More pop, prolonged stiffness. Exactly what those spam emails for boner pills promise, tech decks deliver. “These decks retain their pop a lot longer, they remain stiffer a lot longer, they are more durable and thus can be used longer than a standard 7-ply,” said Jörg Ludewig. Scientifically, the main reason is that wood is subject to corrosion from environmental factors such as moisture, while carbon fibre remains unaffected. “That added consistency stays for the life of the board. You’re going to end up getting a razor tail before you end up losing pop on these decks,” said Dwindle’s Eric Sentianin.



Photo: Enuff

The pros swear by it. Even the folks hooked into limitless supplies of boards swear by technical constructions. “[Almost Skateboards pro] Chris Haslam has been a huge advocate. Before, he had to bring ten decks for a two-week trip, plus his luggage. Now with Impact, he can just take two or three boards, and in some cases he’s even re-gripping the same board,” said Eric at Dwindle.

II. SKATE TRUCKS

The truck segment is still ruled by the Holy Trinity of companies – Indy, Venture, and Thunder – sharing about 80% of sales in some regions. These mainstays offer technologies that reduce weight through alternative materials and hollowed-out constructions, including Independent’s popular Gravity Cast Hollow or Forged Hollow designs in their Stage 11 trucks. Dwindle’s brand Tensor Trucks has gained traction with the Maglight line of lightweight trucks, indicative of a trend toward lighter trucks for several reasons:

Light trucks compensate for wider boards and heavier wheels. Deck sizes are currently trending around 8 to 8.5 inches, inevitably adding heft to the set-up. The average trucks weigh about 340 grams, while the technical Tensor Maglight is only 231 grams thanks to a hollow kingpin and axle with magnesium hanger and baseplate for up to 29% weight savings. “On our team, Andrew Brophy rides Maglights, and he also rides a board that’s 8.5 inches wide, and a deck this wide is heavy. So Maglights help keep the weight down and he has much more spring in his step,” said Eric at Dwindle.

Truck technology is mostly “under the hood”. The overall construction of skate trucks remains unchanged – bottom-mounted kingpin supports pivoted hanger – and most technical improvements focus on materials. “The weight depends on the material, with titanium being light as hell, but pretty expensive as well. So those numbers of trucks are small,” confirms Jörg Ludewig. It’s a high stakes gamble for manufacturers. “When you double the price, like for titanium trucks, it has to have advantages that people actually believe in. For us at Tensor, introducing magnesium provides weight savings around 25 to 29% over aluminium, but it performs the same and the price is okay as well,” says Eric at Dwindle.

Andy King, Marketing Design at Enuff Skateboards tells of how the brand has been working with an in house 3D modelling technology (SolidWorks) which gives them “The ability to work out the precision turning circle to lean/stability ratio geometries without the need to sample time and time again, greatly reducing time frames, which ultimately allows for more stages of development, making the end product better.”

III. SKATEBOARD WHEELS

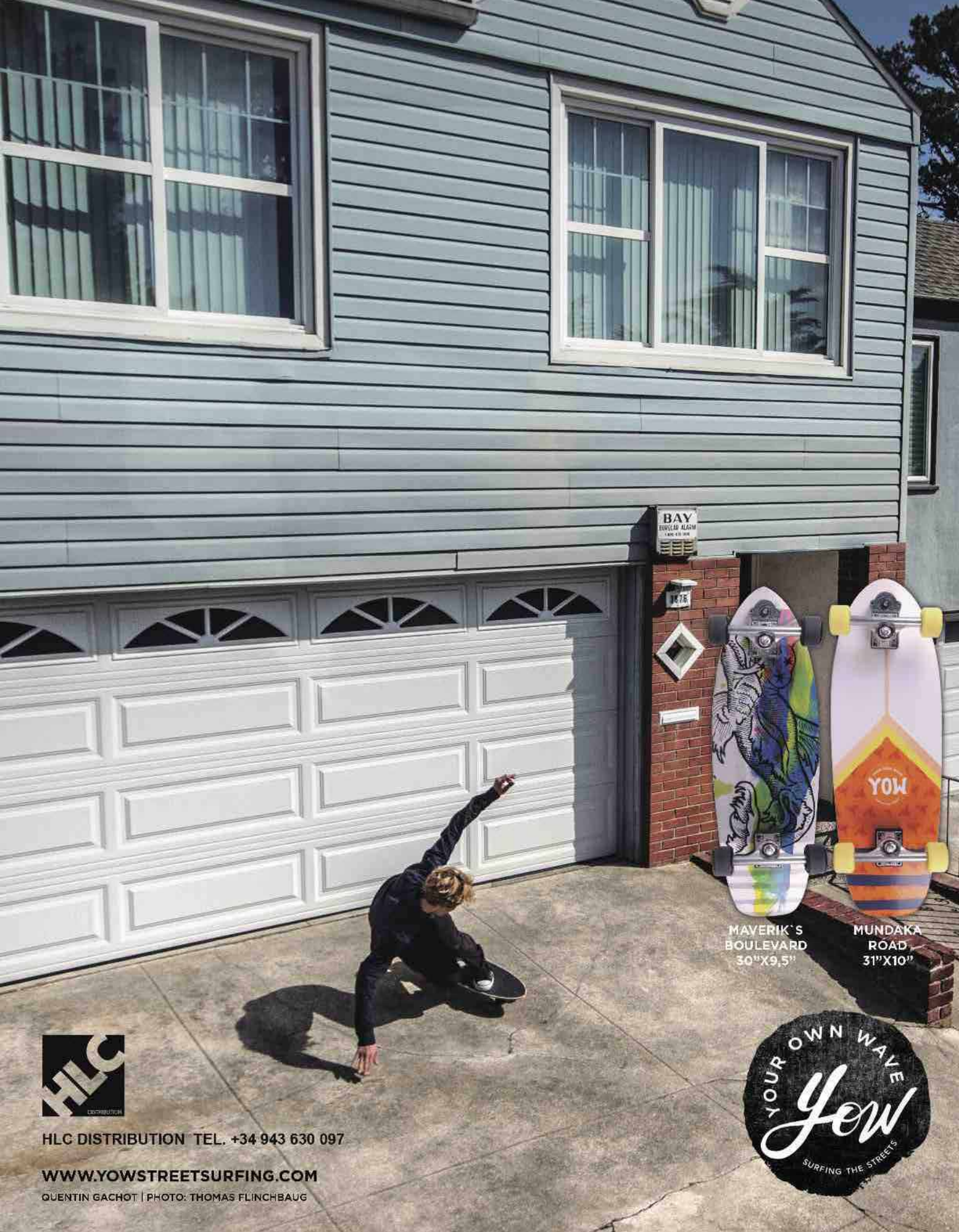
Last but not least, technology is probably the easiest sell in the skateboard wheels segment. Here, a set of cheap, OEM wheels can be had at €25.00 a set, while technically advanced wheels with proprietary urethane formulas sell for €55.00 and over – and successfully at that. “In wheels, there ARE technical sales, and dealers need to be able to differentiate between poor, mediocre, and excellent wheels,” said George Powell, who patented the double radius wheel, pioneered the white MDI high rebound wheel, and was first to develop special formulas for skateparks and technical street skating with his Bones brand: “To build a better wheel, you must control the chemistry yourself, and be willing to provide your customer with a product they will buy fewer of because they last longer!”

Bye-bye flat spots! Advanced urethane formula wheels not only offer up to 45-day warranties against flat spots, they also perform quietly to safeguard your ride. “What people need to appreciate is that when you’re doing a slide, like a lipslide on a ledge, and you ride away without having a flat spot – that’s technology!” said Eric Sentianin, who worked on urethane for Kryptonics wheels at Dwindle.

Ride like the wind. Much like in sports cars, technology is most appreciated when it gives you wings. “The major point, these wheels are faster! They are so much faster that we actually sell over proportionally more technical wheels like Spitfire Formula Four than regular wheels. If we had the same situation with decks I’d be stoked,” said Jörg Ludewig. “What’s more, premium formulas provide faster wheels with longer roll per push, longer wear, and most importantly, controlled coefficient of friction, or slide-ability,” said George Powell, inventor of Bones Wheels.

Do the maths, enjoy a longer ride. Investing in advanced urethane compositions such as Spitfire’s Formula Four or the Bones STF and SPF lines will pay major dividends. “The best Bones Wheels formulas last up to ten times longer than cheap wheels, but cost less than twice as much. Thus, from just a value standpoint, they are a ‘no brainer’ buy decision,” said George Powell.

In the next issue, our series looks at selling technically advanced skateboard footwear – perhaps an easier sell than hardware?
Stay tuned! 📺





THE WORLD IS SUPER

IN THE UNIT TEE & TOY BOARDSHORTS.



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photo: Rip Curt

BOARDSHORTS SS17 TREND REPORT

Post-modern and retro-futuristic, SS17 boardshort collections are muddying the waters with a well-balanced combo of vintage and technical. Distinctly retro styles packed with functionality are on the menu next spring. Boardshorts are once again proving to be an essential article for any wardrobe and judging by the design efforts of many brands, it looks like they've purposefully matched them to the rest of the outfits...Carte blanche for some tremendous in-shop cross merchandising.

A report by Denis Houillé.

TIMELESS

In the same mould as the T-shirt in the textiles industry, boardshorts are becoming a centrepiece that transcends the seasons, seducing the masses by involving various styles and product categories. In the water and out, they remain a prized space for brands to express their creativity and showcase their technical skills.

This is definitely what has forged the unique character of branded boardshorts - the ones you find in specialist shops. Aesthetic without being athletic, original but not bereft of style, durable yet amazingly comfortable... An authentic product for a sector that is equally so. For George Pedrick at Vans: "The boardshort market is very unique, as it is the original apparel item that helped spawn the action sports industry."

Next season's collections also seem to be proving to be special, with the timeless vintage look of the shorts obscuring the futuristic technical features. Even though it may look like they have already spent long hours in the sun and salt water, these new fabrics like poly-cotton, poly-suede and mesh each have their own set of innovations.

At the forefront of retro-modern, Lightning Bolt continue to feed off "this rich duality between the past and present, urban and environment, analogue and digital, the individual and the collective, manual and industrial, traditional and contemporary." Rhythm, by mixing poly-cottons with light fades target those "who want to have technical boardshorts but above all want that vintage look," explains Design Manager Jacob Byrne.

TONES AND FADES

The colour palette on the agenda for spring/summer 2017 has been boosted in complexity and aesthetics. Californian "good vibes" are being revisited by O'Neill who, bolstered by their American surf brand heritage, are releasing a large range of indigo, yellows, corals and

above all turquoise. According to their European design manager Jan Lindeboom, this colour will be prevalent in shops as it goes with everything.

We can also see Superbrand's Californian roots coming through in simplified looks where a subtle touch of the Western reminds us of their proximity to the southern frontier. Burton, whose summer lines just keep extending, are staying true to the natural tones of their winter range by integrating patches, ethnic prints and ikat. Brunotti are revisiting the theme of Californian origami through retro flowers, bold wave lines and explosions of palm leaves. Still in the same part of the world, this time with Reef, who are returning to "Vintage California", to a time "when everything was simpler, people didn't rush as much and surf spots were less saturated".

At Vans, stripes continue to please commercially speaking and amongst the strong colours this year we can see Baltic tones (variations of turquoise) and cherry tomato (solid red/orange). The guys at Urban Beach are using pure colours that oscillate between bright pantones and stealthy black and grey codes.

Teaming up with professional bleachers, Rusty have developed highly authentic vintage finishes on their top-of-the-range models where blacks are washed with acid and combined with bright tones like Cajun Red and the typical '80s Zests. Protest are also going for this rustic look that accommodates faded cotton complemented with prints that celebrate the beauty of nature. At Sooruz design, 70s VHS tapes have set the tone with mixtures of faded blues and beige.

Finisterre have gone for the more rustic and industrial aspects of the sea, evoking nautical themes reinforced with semaphores and Breton stripes.

COMFORT & ERGONOMICS

Quiksilver, by offering a double-layered boardshort, have managed to get the most demanding surfers on side using a unique process. "By putting two very thin layers of material together we have made an extremely light, highly resistant short that has reduced chafing to zero", reveals Ronnie Reyes, Design Manager at Quiksilver.

"No blah blah blah" either at Dakine for whom "each detail has a function within the product," assures Lifestyle Apparel Product Manager Karrie Blittersdorf. All fabrics used for boardshorts have impermeable, water repellent treatments, which absorb less water and control humidity better, all with the aim of reducing chafing and drying faster.



Thanks to nylon/cotton/elasthane mixtures, high performance has been attained without compromising comfort, durability and we get a “type of

MERCHANDISING & CROSS-OVER

Inspired by the carbon details on their surfboards, the Californians at Lost have developed a boardshort to rival the lightness and performance of their new boards. At Superbrand, many boardshorts reuse the graphics of their award-winning boards and will suit all budgets. With their technical shorts, Dakine are working on a similar level by offering prints nodding to their baggage range, which seems to merchandise pretty well. Finisterre are matching women's and men's swimwear to ensure that couples' outfits go well together. Finally, at Van's, George Pedrick confirms that: "We've made a concerted effort to infuse the entire boardshort line with a range of solids, stripes, and prints that can seamlessly merchandise with each other, as a category, or integrated along with the rest of the line."

POSITIONING AND TARGET

Versatility remains the key word when offering garments so comfortable that you'd love to wear at any opportunity, so stylish that you can wear them with anything and so timeless that they appeal to all age brackets within the surfing population.

This season Lost are broadening their product range, as much at a style level as performance and aims to cover “the complete spectrum of creativity and individuality that surfing inspires.” In the water, the café or town centre, Brunotti want these shorts to be suitable at any given time. Versatility is equally defended at TCSS who, through their boardshort lines, target “all surfers who like to have fun on all types of surfboard.” Patagonia are also appealing to the masses through a clever mix of fun, light, and basic everyday tones to please people of all ages who appreciate the value of a well-designed product.

The Surfaris collection from Reef is clearly designed to be versatile, timeless, stylish in the water and out, and ready to travel. The adventurous surfer is also Dakine's target, hoping to offer products that are wearable day after day to not miss a trick. Burton look to cater for customers of 25 and over living in urban environments during the week who'd rather escape into the wild on weekends.

But none of them wish to be dressed the same way. People in the 18-25 age range especially are always seeking something less mainstream than what the generalist brands offer. As Ces Wilson, Rusty Commercial Director underlines: “Some brands have put too much focus on the technical side of things and as a result it’s starting to look like mainstream sportswear.”

To get hold of stylish, technical garments that they can wear for months on end, consumers don’t hesitate to shell out. As Rhythm Design Manager Jacob Byrne rightly points out: “If a certain garment deserves a higher price point it usually doesn’t effect the sale if the detail and quality is there.”



Photo: Picture

In their first technical surf range, Picture Organic Clothing have chosen to immediately target the top of the surfing pyramid with the top-of-the-range model costing €119, testament to the level of technology and cuts that the brand are capable of producing. Down from there are the well-positioned mid-range stretch shorts as well as a highly anticipated range of women’s shorts...

For their fifth season in the boardshorts market, Dakine are targeting the crucial mid-range with options that seem to work wonders for retailers and consumers alike. Attentive to their best retailers, Vans are also concentrating on strategic pricing levels for their new generation of ERA boardshorts set for spring 2017.

Mambo are also sensitive to the affordability aspect of boardshorts with the exception of a special artist’s series that, because of its extortionate price, will be “put up for auction to raise money to stop Donald Trump getting into the White House!”

EVEN MORE ECO-FRIENDLY

Innovations to boardshort design flood in season after season but the advances in environmental and social terms are surely the most important development in recent years. The efforts made by brands – in all shapes and forms – are considerable and deserve the warm welcome their eco-friendly products receive in the shops and within the industry as a whole.

Patagonia, continually seeking to improve their products, are unveiling a world first with confirmation that 100% of its shorts range will now be stitched in American Fair Trade-certified factories. And as their Global Sportswear and Surf Product Manager reiterates: “by choosing fair trade products in your everyday purchases, you are improving the lives of entire communities.”

At the heart of oceanic conservation, Finisterre are continuing their partnership with Econyl®, which allow them to make products made from 100% regenerated polyamide mostly coming from fishing nets. Bolstered by a partnership with Bluesign (the sustainable textile industry accreditation guaranteeing eco-friendly manufacturing at all levels), Burton maintain their 100% certification for their products and manufacturing processes.

Within their eco-friendly range Blue, O’Neill are using Bionic fibres from plastic rubbish collected on the coast and riverbeds of China, a clean-up effort that prevents it from ending up in the oceans. The Surfcraft capsule from Rip Curl declared two models of 100% eco-friendly boardshorts alongside an eco series of T-shirts, shirts and sweatshirts that now makes up 1/5 of the range. At Volcom, Repreve® recycled fibres made of recycled materials such as plastic bottles, reduce the need for oil-based raw materials and emit less greenhouse gases. Quiksilver are also using recycled polyester in about 30% of their range. This ingenious partnership with a North Carolina recycling firm seems set to last, extending to other product categories. The folks at Sooruz only use recycled polyester in the production of their products. Straight from their wetsuit programme, Naturalprene is the fabric that Picture have chosen to use around the belt and hip to maximise comfort. Picture are proud to say they didn’t turn back to PFCs for treating their boardshorts with a water repellent finish – these perfluorinated compounds are widely used for water resistance but hang around for years, even ending up in tap water. Mambo are also paying particular attention to the disposal of dyes, fading acids and inks, which are products that we often eventually find in the oceans.

To guarantee the best practices, Superbrand carefully select their collaborators; “we only work with suppliers that we are affiliated with and who, like us, do not tolerate child or forced labour.”

Lastly, Dakine insist on the strategic approach of its manufacturing that, directly linked to the market, reduces the risk of overproduction and therefore waste. This green trend launched a few years ago seems to be steadily gaining ground and even surpassing the old processes at certain brands...a rECONversion that our industry can be proud of. 🌱

HIGHLIGHTS

- Versatile shorts for all conditions, all situations
- Vintage, authentic looks combined with modern tech
- Easy crossover and merchandising with other product categories
- Eco-design booming with many certified, accredited products



REEF **SURFARIS**
EVAN GEISELMAN JUST PASSING THROUGH
REEF RAYS

THE ^{NEW} TREKKER-M1 ACTION PHONE



EDOUARD DELPERO
L'ARQUET BEACH - FRANCE
TEAM CROSSCALL

TREKKER-M1

With its high quality finish and embedded technology, the TREKKER-M1 is reaching new heights. Its sleek and elegant design contains a 13MP/5MP resolution image sensor, which will accurately capture every moment and memory. Its waterproof and reinforced body means its embedded equipment will be kept safe whatever happens. The TREKKER-M1 looks good, is packed with technology and is as tough as ever.

DAS : 0,630 W/Kg III @LAURENT GADEN

CROSSCALL.COM #ACTIONPHONE



Photo : Heimplanet

CAMPING & OUTDOOR SS17 TREND REPORT

A spirit of wanderlust is in the air and people are flocking outdoors to make the most of Mother Nature. With or without a board, there's an increasing demand for equipment to endure the elements as a growing number of us look to get off the beaten track. Anna Langer takes a look at what's popping in this hot trend segment: Camping & Outdoor SS17.

By Anna Langer.

According to U.S. business outlet SGB Today, there were more than 1 million new households attracted to camping in the USA just last year; a major chunk of them being "minority and millennial groups," looking for "relaxation and stress relief". And since this new customer is seeking different aesthetics and also more (technological) functionality than previous generations, a new market opportunity has opened up that, for example, Burton Snowboards had instantly recognized and catered for by launching their very first collection of camping goods last year, which has quickly become a staple of their range and expanded ever since.

SLEEPING

When you're looking to spend more time outdoors, the natural instinct is to look for a place to stay – or simply bring it with you. Heimplanet have not only understood that but made it easier than you could have ever imagined: "Our inflatable tents provide you with a particularly easy set-up – simply roll it out, pump it up and welcome home." Thanks to a geodesic design the tents are especially wind stable, allowing them to be pitched almost anywhere where the view's nice. There are four different sizes and layouts available for varied needs and group sizes, and a special Cairo Camo Pattern that "enables you to hide out while camping in one of our tents, improving your chances of going undetected out in the wild. The unique design is inspired by traditional Arabian patterns."

Poler Stuff also introduce a new 2+ tent with "the same spacious design as our one man tent, only wide enough to accommodate 2 big people, or if you're feeling snugly, even 2 big people and a child, or possibly even 3 smaller sized people." The tent comes with two doors, two vestibules for stashing gear, fully taped seams on the fly, and just

one pole that snaps together and is simple and efficient to set up.

For everyone still fond of their boy scout tent, Nikwax Tent & Solarproof provides a great upgrade for any camping kit made of synthetic fabric, reviving water repellency and adding protection against harmful UV rays.

EATING

Since not everyone heading outdoors has a true adventurer lurking somewhere inside them, and starting a fire from scratch can be a challenge, if conditions are not perfectly aligned, stoves are great companions. Especially when they are portable and practical, like the Petromax Rocket Stove, which "combines stack effect and wood boiler principle, thus achieving an extremely efficient combustion of biomass thanks to an optimal air supply." The L-shaped design allows simple filling with wood and pinecones, while the cast-iron top is stores heat and can be used for cooking. And thanks to the two handles, it can be taken almost anywhere.

For those who are take outdoor living seriously, outdoor mobile tech company, Crosscall make bombproof smartphones. Extra battery life, waterproof and drop-proof... it's no wonder backcountry behemoth Xavier De La Rue joined their ambassador team!

Photo : Burton



Swedish stove manufacturers Primus Campfire stoves are even smaller and weighing in at 3-4.5kg are also a bit lighter, but need a gas canister to fuel the two-burner flames, which needs to be transported as well. All three models are easily set up and closed with a snap and the Onja Stove also features a duo valve version that fits most gas cartridges with a valve on the market.

Once you have your fire burning, you will want something to cook or fry something on, such as the Petromax Fire Skillet made from high-quality cast iron. This may not be the lightest material to carry around with you, but it sure does make your meals taste great! Poler Stuff’s Squillet is a pan made out of cast iron as well, with a low profile design that is not only great for “easily flipping your spatula”, but also for packing it away with your gear. And for those looking to bring all the comfort of their home to the wild outdoors, Poler introduce their very own Sandwich Maker: “It had to be done. You can now make Poler grilled cheese sandwiches, tuna melts, ham and cheese, you name it. Simply put a sandwich inside and cook it on the open fire. The result is something more than the sum of its parts and will delight young and old alike with melted goodness.” Yum!

Mizu supply the perfect tool for your outdoor dinner; a sturdy set of 18/8 stainless steel fork, knife, spoon and even chop sticks, that comes in a zip-top neoprene pouch for easy transport and storage. Bon appetite.

DRINKING

It’s easy to stay hydrated while you’re hiking by a river, but since you might not want to bend over and drink like a deer all day long, bringing a bottle would be a clever idea. And not just any plastic or glass one that breaks and pollutes, but one you can reuse and make your best friend over time. The new Mizu V-Wide Series of double walled vacuum-sealed bottles was developed exactly for that, with function and durability as top priorities, offering: “Four sizes from a small, versatile travel mug to an epic two-litre growler.” Of course the whole rest of their range is perfectly suited for any adventure as well, and their made to order, limited edition collection “Blue Steel” even donates 5% of the profits to the Surfrider Foundation (Spring/ Summer) and Protect Our Winters (Fall/Winter), so make your money count.

For tea, soup and other hot drinks that are supposed to keep their temperature, the new Hydro Flask TempShield™ insulation is a great way to keep that constant for hours. And the pro-grade stainless steel won’t retain or transfer flavours, ensuring your beverage remains pure in taste.

If you do plan on staying by the river and are a fan of super-light weight packing and/or a minimalistic lifestyle, LifeStraw is for you. This personal filtration system supplies you with clean water free

from bacteria direct from the stream through the straw, using an advanced hollow fibre technology – a highly efficient filtration method that works without batteries and doesn’t require any chemicals such as chlorine or iodine. The LifeStraw Go can even remove bacteria and protozoa from microbiologically contaminated water to make it safe to drink.

LIVING

While it’s vital to cover and ensure essential survival, we wouldn’t venture outdoors if we weren’t planning on enjoying it too, and with both demands and opportunities alike growing, there are some quite amazing little helpers available out there.

GoalZero’s Lighthouse Mini Lantern is an ultra-lightweight portable light with up to 500 hours runtime that can be charged by USB. And there’s also the Feuerhand Baby Special 276 storm lantern - these traditional lanterns are made in Germany from zinc-plated material that protects against corrosion and come in several colours. The heat-resistant glass provides a gentle light lasting up to 20 hours.

For running around the campsite at night, the Poler Cyclops Headlamp is a great solution that takes up very little space while offering three functions: an eye beam spotlight, internal LED body glow, and eye beam with body glow.

The Poler Napsack will keep you warm and toasty and with zippers at the shoulders you can stick your arms out, and a cinch at the bottom allows for full leg movement. You can wear it like a puffy coat around the campfire, and then crawl right back into your tent without ever having to leave the warmth of your bag. And for all the digital nomad adventurers out there, it even features a phone-sized chest pocket and pass through hole for your headphones to run internally. The PallyHi NapBag follows a similar idea, providing a “super versatile towel/dressing room/lounge equipment for the everyday adventurer.” It’s made from a heavyweight 600 gram Merino blend that’s not only toasty warm, but hard-wearing too.

For those who are take outdoor living seriously, outdoor mobile tech company, Crosscall make bombproof smartphones. The jewel in their crown is the Trekker-M1, which has extra battery life, waterproof and is drop-proof... it’s no wonder backcountry behemoth Xavier De La Rue joined their ambassador team! The Outdoor Tech Buckshot Pro speaker is water resistant and comes with a built-in microphone, Bluetooth functionality and 10 hours playtime. It can also be used as a flashlight and powerbank, providing extra power for all USB charged devices. GoalZero’s Nomad 7 Plus Solar Panel goes one step further and harnesses the power of the sun: “Reengineered to be lighter and smarter, the Nomad 7 Plus has innovative technology to charge USB devices directly from the sun.” So what are you waiting for?! Pack up your bag, set up camp and enjoy your life outdoors! ☺





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Photo : Osiris

SKATEBOARD FOOTWEAR SS17 TREND REPORT

The skate footwear market moves quickly these days. With major athletic players claiming more and more market share, endemic skate shoe companies are renewing their focus on quality products built for skateboarding. Our Boardsport SOURCE Trend Report has the core skate shoe styles that retailers can rely on for Spring/Summer 2017.

By Dirk Vogel.

What happened? Within the last year, the skate footwear brand landscape has radically changed. Time-honoured brands have gone out of business – including the recent demise of Fallen Footwear – while rumours of future company implosions are rampant.

“The skate footwear market is a tough one these days. Even though the exposure has been good with mainstream events like Street League, Dew Tour, X-Games, and big budget videos like We Are Blood, the small shops are ordering less, sometimes closing and the smaller brands are suffering,” said Antoine Soulé, DC Shoes EMEA Footwear Product Line Manager. One key success factor right now is support for core skate retailers, says Don Brown, VP of Marketing at Sole Technology: “éS focusing on supporting skate shops is creating strong success. Our sales have doubled every year since our re-launch in 2014 and continue to grow. Skate retailers are stoked that we’re 100% skate, 100% skater-owned and operated and easy to deal with.”

From a technological features standpoint, endemic skate footwear brands across the board are responding to the situation by going back to the essence. “We’re putting our main focus on the quality and performance of our products, delivering the kinds of shoes and innovations that skateboarders need today,” said Joe Marckx, Director of International Sales at the DVS Shoe Company. The timing could hardly be more perfect, said Emily Nutbourne at HUF: “We are finally in a situation where consumers aren’t just concerned with a group of three or four ‘big’ brands, they’re seriously interested in what younger, fresher players have to offer. And the big brands have noticed, allowing their own design to be dictated by what these newer brands are offering. The rubber toe cap, for example.”

Speaking of rubber toe caps, will this major trend continue? Or is it already played out by spring/summer 2017? Let’s dive right into trends, with a quick look at prices first.

PRICING AND VALUE

Keeping in mind what Antoine at DC Shoes said about stores ordering less product, it all comes from heightened price sensitivity among consumers. For basic shoes, the sweet spot is between €65 to €75. Some brands can offer quality at lower prices, including OSIRIS: “€50 seems to be a key price tier. We’ve had great success with our Protocol and Relic shoes in that space,” said Tony Chen, President at OSIRIS.

“On the other end of the scale, we’ve just introduced the AV Rapidweld Pro Lite in SP16 at €100. We are really seeing the skaters adapting to a higher price point and being open try new technology. I feel there is a lot of room for growth at both ends of the scale, with some brands commanding up to €140 in stores right now,” said Darryl Charles, Vans Action Sports and Energy Merchandiser.

“We’re putting our main focus on the quality and performance of our products, delivering the kinds of shoes and innovations that skateboarders need today.”

**Joe Marckx, Director of International Sales,
DVS Shoe Company.**

MEGA TREND: FOCUS ON TECHNOLOGY

In apparel as much as in footwear, one of today’s biggest value drivers – and justifications for higher price points – is technology. Leading the charge, athletic companies, drawing on synergies from other sports such as running, are raising the bar: Nike released the tech-laden Nike SB Eric Koston 3 Hyperfeel, Converse introduced abrasion-resistant Metric CLS technology, and adidas injected skate shoes with GEOFIT collars and heel stabilizers. Core skate shoe brands also focus on building the perfect skate shoe with more tech, divided into three main categories: Impact resistance, light weight, and longevity. “Our Performance line now offers six technical toe-caps to enhance endurance and two formulas of impact-absorbing evolution foam,” says etnies President James Appleby, pointing out the Jameson and Marana Bloodlines, and the new high-tech Helix model.

For impact resistance, many companies are going the route of including impact-cushioning insoles made from EVA and other foam materials (seen at HUF, Diamond, DC, DVS, Vans, éS, New Balance, and more). Other brands have reengineered footbeds from the ground up, including Globe: “We are increasingly using EVA and open cell foam lasting boards across various models. In using these materials in place of fibre boards as traditionally used, we make the shoe more comfortable, lighter in weight, and provide additional cushioning and flexibility,” said Matt Wong, President of Global Product at Globe. These tweaks in construction also afford lighter weight shoes, which we are seeing this season from brands across the board, usually indicated by variations of “Light” in model names. And for longer lasting shoes, skate brands shield uppers in a variety of new materials and seamless constructions, including Vans Rapidweld technology, DC Storm Textile, HUF Infinity Rubber, DVS Vaporcell compound and éS footwear STI Thermothane toe piece, which is similar to skate wheel urethane.



Photo: Vans

LIFESTYLE STORIES

It’s no secret that a sizeable chunk of skate footwear revenues comes from non-skaters. With the ‘sneaker hype’ losing steam, the focus is shifting to skateable shoes that look stylish and feel comfortable – whether people skate in them or not. Peter Frericks at C1RCA sums up the formula as, “skate lifestyle with light canvas in a still clean looking skate shoe based on a vulc outsole.” DVS Shoes dedicated an entire new line to the approach: “Our new LITE(LT) Series represents a greater commitment from DVS to the lifestyle category. The shoes feature inspiration from those key trends in modern footwear like sock top, no-sew upper treatments, progressive fabrics and knits, lightweight compounds with increased flexibility, cushioning and energy return. Our goal is total, intuitive comfort,” said Brent Phelps at DVS. At Diamond Footwear brand director Juston Tucker is stoked on, “the ‘All Day’ shoe for Brandon Biebel, a

skateboarding/lifestyle hybrid shoe that features a fully breathable knitted upper paired with a classic suede toe.”

COLOURS: WHITE ON WHITE KICKS

Summer time in Europe sees skateboarders adopting loftier colour palettes – black shoes still reign supreme, though – and more playful prints. The meteoric rise of all-white shoes continues from last summer season, when white Vans were sold out(!) in the U.S. on the strength of endorsements from men’s magazines and viral videos. For 2017, the hot trending combination is (drumroll!!): all-white uppers and natural gum soles. Also trending for SS17: dark greens, off-whites, muted pastels, light greys and blues, and playful use of neon and primary colours for contrast. Also, watch out for the éS SAL in baby blue! Meanwhile, designers at New Balance Numeric are injecting a new colour into shoe walls: “We are using a good amount of burgundy as a nod to New Balance heritage. Burgundy allows you to have the traditional ‘dark shoe’ look that dominates skateboarding without having to solely use black or dark grey,” said Nick Pappas, Footwear Product Manager.

CUTS AND SILHOUETTES: ATHLETIC AND SCULPTED

Next season’s silhouettes fall into two camps: Overtly technical designs with innovative materials and mesh inlays in an athletic, runner-inspired silhouette on one side (think éS footwear SESLA). And classic, heritage designs injected with tech “under the hood” on the other (think Vans Pro Skate line). What both have in common is the focus on performance: “Right now we definitely see a desire for more technical product, but also keeping a classic look to the shoes,” said Darryl Charles at Vans, while pointing out the AV Rapidweld Pro Lite and new Wafflecup in the Pro Skate line. Across the board, clean-looking shoes such as the Globe Eagle model, HUF Hupper 2 Lo, and the re-released éS SLB model are combining classic lifestyle (see Trend: Lifestyle) with shreddable performance. Toe sections in SS17 are for the most part non-stitch and pointed. The rubber toe cap trend seems to have peaked in 2016, but still retains some staying power. On that note, the lifestyle runner silhouette is also alive and well in models such as the Premier DVS, Globe Dart and etnies Scout. And for a sleeper trend, Tony at OSIRIS pointed out: “We are definitely seeing a resurgence in demand for more chub tech style shoes. This fall, we introduced the PXL which is an updated version of our old Pixel model. It features a large airbag and a multi panel heel cup, and for Spring 2017, we’ll be introducing the Idem, another tech shoe, built on a PU pylon midsole.” Time will tell, but look out for wider cup sole shoes giving vulc styles a run for their money.

OUTLOOK

Skateboard footwear is changing rapidly and not just in terms of products. “The skate footwear market is considered technically a war zone. The skate footwear market is an ever-changing market place, with the only constant being to expect the unexpected,” said James Appleby, etnies Vice President. According to consensus in the industry, the changes will continue, at least for the foreseeable future. “Skateboarding runs on about a 10-year cycle, meaning every 10 years or so, we see the trends change dramatically. But with the increasing popularity of ‘smaller’ hardware brands like Polar, Palace, WKND, I think skate footwear will also go through more changes,” said Nick at New Balance Numeric. 6

HIGHLIGHTS

- Skate-appropriate product
- Price-sensitive consumers
- Technology justifies premium price points
- HOT: White shoes & gum sole!
- Black, burgundy, splashes of neon
- Tech performance & materials
- Sleeper Trend: Puffer shoes?
- Lightweight shoes, longer lifespans



GREG LUTZKA
F/S / FLIP PHOTO:DURSO

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BIG WIG INTERVIEW ADIDAS’ BJORN WIERSMA

Adidas has created a new European action sports division at the company under the adidas Originals mantle, headed up by Bjorn Wiersma. Now through Bjorn and a string of shred industry vets, the new action sports division is being run with skaters and snowboarders at the centre of it. We speak to Bjorn about how adidas are using tech influences from their other sports, ask him about the new setup and find out why the company is placing such importance on the new action sports division. **By Harry Mitchell Thompson.**

Could you start off by telling us about your background please, Bjorn?

First and foremost I’ve been a skateboarder for over 25 years. That passion ultimately got my foot in the door at the other big player in the athletic footwear market. I started as an intern in the now defunct ACG department and ultimately worked my way through the company. In 2005 I joined the SB start-up and stayed there for about eight years in a variety of brand and business roles.

Last year I started a new adventure with the adidas brand by making the move from Amsterdam to Herzogenaurach. A picturesque little town located an hour and a half from Munich. In my current role as the Director CTC Western Europe Action Sports I lead the category while making sure our go-to-market process is fully aligned from a

brand, sales and merchandise perspective. It’s exciting times to be part of the adidas brand right now.

Adidas has recently transitioned from an overall action sports structure to an EMEA management structure. Please could you tell us the reasons behind this decision?

The action sports market has clearly changed where board riders have become a lot less relevant. Our consumer has a clear understanding of what’s going on in every corner of the world and he or she pretty much shops anywhere. It means we need to approach them in a similar matter by bringing consistency and alignment in every market across the globe. That alignment ultimately starts with bringing in regional teams that provide the right level of strategic coordination.

Why was this restructuring important?

Being part of a large corporate company obviously has its benefits. But as much as we love our spreadsheets and powerpoints we do believe it is critical to stay connected with the roots of this culture. Just being able to speak the same language as our core retailers makes a huge difference. Understanding their needs while also being able to explain them our corporate strategy is critical. Specialty is the backbone of this industry and we need to treat it with care and with the right level of investment. Without specialty the future of skateboarding will be very different. It is something the global adidas leadership team acknowledged hence the investment in a dedicated, centralized Western European team as well as dedicated sales leads in the key markets. All comprised of individuals that have a background in skate or snowboarding.

Who are the key players in Adidas’ EMEA Action Sports management hierarchy?

We just hired Matt Farr as our Sales Director WE overseeing our Western European sales efforts. Matt comes from our NA region where he managed a part of the adidas key account business. He’s been with the company just over a decade. From a brand perspective we have industry veteran Neil Chester managing our sports marketing efforts. His work at Converse Cons and the connection with Polar should not have gone unnoticed and his early involvement with Blueprint and Sidewalk prove his knowledge goes way back.

We’re currently recruiting for a senior brand marketing person, which we hope to fill shortly. So from a functional perspective we’re close to having the centralized European team together. Obviously we work close with the local markets as ultimately it is their role to execute things on the ground. Since the beginning of 2016, we’ve had a team of dedicated local account managers in place. Their role is to work closely with our specialty accounts and build a solid, sustainable business. So far the Originals account managers predominantly serviced our skateboarding accounts. They did a great job but obviously having someone in place that is able to dedicate 100% of his attention is making a huge difference.

The team is small but it makes us nimble, creative and reactive. More importantly, the short communication lines with our global team make us able to react quickly to market changes or opportunities. Also, as an Action Sports category we sit under the wing of our bigger brother, Originals led by Morgan Boeri. It means we are able to tap into their resources. The benefits of this synergetic set-up are tremendous.

Adidas is now well established in the skateboard market. Which products have been pivotal to this?

Our key franchises Busenitz, Seeley and Adi-Ease have been the foundation to our business. This year Dennis Busenitz will be celebrating his 10th year with the company and it is something we will not let go unnoticed. Expect special releases on his iconic Busenitz Pro. During the 70s skateboarders would naturally gravitate towards the Nizza, a canvas basketball shoe that due to its grippy-ness and rubber toe protection became popular. Those insights are still valid 40 years later as shown through the recent popularity of the Matchcourt. A shoe that drafts off similar design cues, however updated with modern product technology - making it 2016-proof.

Gonz was already wearing adidas shoes on his first cover for Thrasher magazine in the early 80s before officially joining in the late 90s. He’s been a huge influence to the brand, the skate team and our product development. This summer Lucas Puig will launch his third signature shoe, inspired by archival indoor court shoes.

The classic look combined with modern technology make this the best board-feel-meets-protection combo to date.

How are adidas leveraging R&D from other sports to make your action sports offering?

Innovation is an important part of our DNA. Whether that is in our running, football or outdoor department. Whenever we play, we play to bring something new to the table. And we do not keep it to ourselves. Collaboration plays a huge role in our corporate culture so whenever another product category comes up with a great technology, the others benefit. As an example, our Boost cushioning technology was born in our running department and has made its way across the different categories of the company, including skate- and snowboarding.

When can we expect an adidas Snowboarding film?

In anything we do content plays a key role. So for adidas Snowboarding you can definitely expect more content pieces to come out. Whether that is through a full-length film is to be discussed. Away Days was a lengthy project and from a snowboarding perspective we’d rather dial up the frequency of content drops. That being said, the full-length film remains the Holy Grail, so who knows...

And for snowboarding - adidas have made a big play there, with a strong team and impressive snowboard boot line. Could you talk us through your strategy here - how do you intend to keep growth at a manageable rate, and how much potential for growth is there?

Anyone that has been up a mountain has seen the potential is substantial. For now we take it step by step, we are not in a rush. First and foremost we want to do the right things by working close with the core retailers while making sure we bring product to the market that is of amazing quality and makes the difference. The global team has worked hard and, coming from the demo events earlier this year, the reactions to our FW16 product have been great.

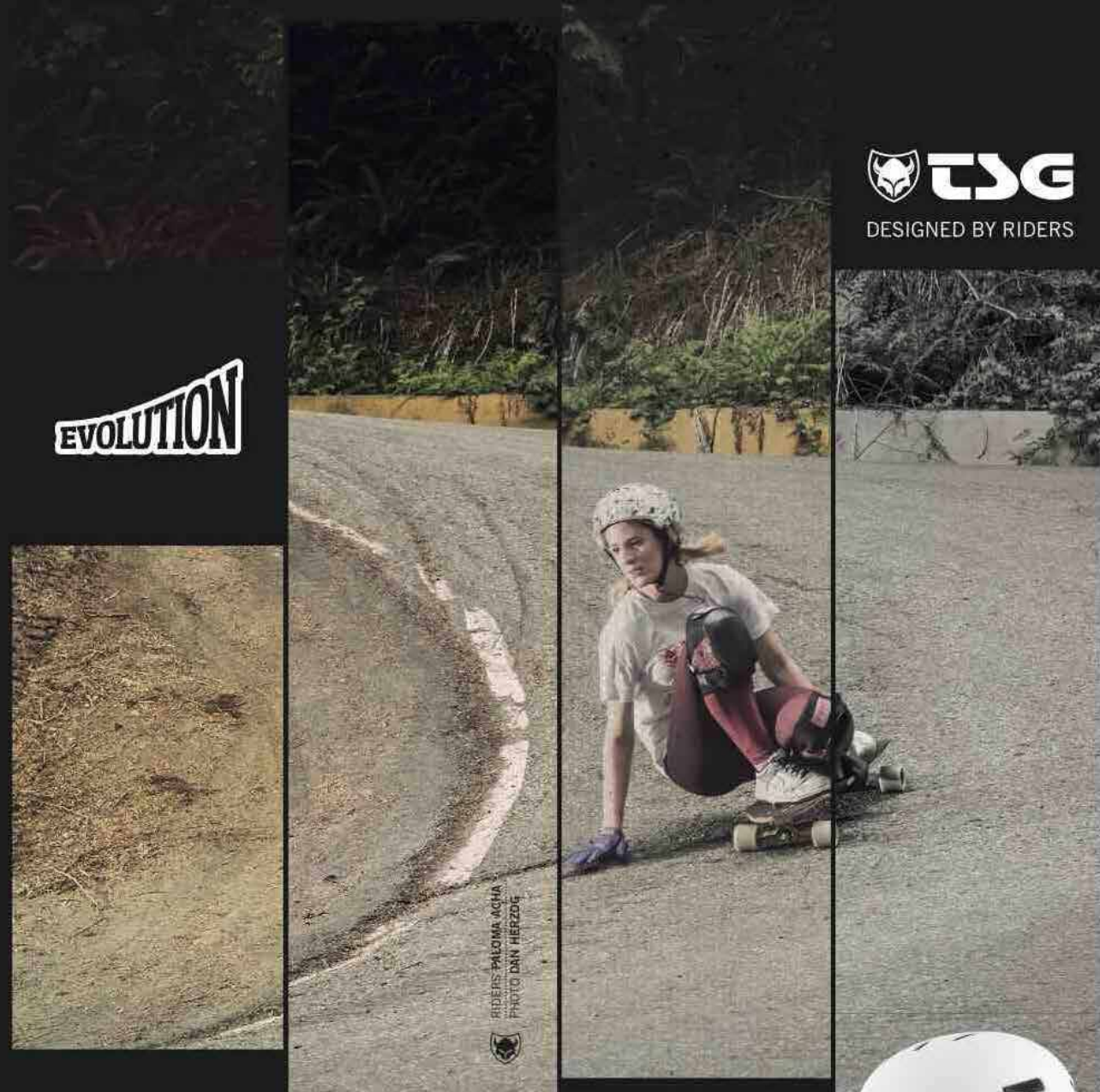
Do you have plans to move into any more action sports?

Skateboarding will always be the backbone of anything we do. That being said there is already a whole new generation of boardsport athletes out there that grew up with the 3 stripes and is wearing our product. Ultimately it is our goal to bring inspiration to that whole new generation of kids. So whether you are a surfer, skateboarder or bmx rider, it really doesn’t matter. And we truly believe that building that excitement starts with providing the right support and showing commitment.

What does a large conglomerate such as adidas bring to the boardsports market?

Obviously a huge amount of experience. Adi Dassler started creating shoes close to a century ago, so those years of craftsmanship are clearly sensible throughout the company and its culture. The archive is impressive, however we are conscious of not becoming the heritage brand. Skateboarding is all about progression and we are dedicated to bringing innovation to our product and skateboarding culture. The benefits of having a ton of R&D knowledge available in our company is incredible and I believe it shows in our product.

Providing fundamental support to the sports the company is active in is not so much a question, it’s simply a given. There is a same sense of responsibility towards skateboarding and the culture as a whole. Whatever we do needs to enrich skateboarding, push participation and really get that next generation of kids on a skateboard. Obviously by staying true to the core values that this amazing culture infected me with 25 years ago. 🌀



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useful bits of your noggin. The design curves anatomically around the head for a great fit and tailored wearing comfort. Available in more than 30 colours and graphic designs. CE EN 1078 certified.

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Photo : Pro Tec

SKATE HELMETS & PROTECTION SS17 TREND REPORT

While falling over is all part and parcel for all action sports, skateboarding undoubtedly has the hardest landings. And hence calls for appropriate protection. Anna Langer takes a look at trends and new products for the segment in Spring/Summer 2017. **By Anna Langer**

HELMETS

Protecting yourself is always a good idea and if the odds are bone against concrete, it should be a no-brainer. And customers are using their brains increasingly to learn more about the product they're seeking, according to Koroyd: "Consumers are paying more attention to the impact performance of helmets before purchasing. They have a wider range of protective materials to select from and are well informed as to which technologies are marketing based and which are offering innovative solutions." And while EPS is still standard for most helmets, Bern feel it's time for an update in quality: "We are giving a higher quality product, with thinner engineered EPS and more modern design lines to recognize that the skateboard community is not only a lot more picky on styling - but realistically have increased their skill level to the point that they truly are requiring real technical advancement - and retailers as well want to have more of a story and increase their average sales price." Nutcase add a new flexible EPS system called FlexForm in their new model The Zone" and many brands incorporate MIPS for added rotational impact protection.

Bern work with "hybrid foams, that combine hard and soft materials to increase the levels of protection," in a scientific approach. Koroyd add that "the traditional hard vs soft discussion is moving more towards a total performance requirement from the consumer, lightweight, breathable, flexible and with clearly defined impact performance - these attributes are not mutually exclusive anymore." TSG also prefer to mix "both materials. The contact with concrete is so close and unavoidable that a hard shell on the outside is a must." Pro-Tec see that their team prefers "soft traditional skate style helmets because they fit so well," but are still looking for the perfect ingredient "to make certified versions that feel the same or very close."

The product's fit plays a vital role too, for purchasing and safety alike, which is a priority for most brands. "Comfort is always up on the list for important features in a helmet; if it doesn't fit right, it doesn't protect you right," say Rekd and Bern agree: "Fit has been a major focus for us, all of our skate helmets now use a new formula of

die-cut padding" that "provides a more comfortable fit as well as reduces the overall weight of the helmet."


DESIGN

"In protection, black is the new black," TSG report tongue in cheek, since black is the best seller. Bern also see "earth brights" coming back, "with a move to satin finishes that offer the impression of matte with the bonus of anti-scratch surface," which is also a big trend for Nutcase, who feature solid colours and matte finishes for next year.

There are also some brighter options like red, aqua and a rich, deep pink from Nutcase or four different semi-transparent models from Rekd, who also feature "junior colours to cater for our younger customers." Pro-Tec take "inspiration from the American car and motorcycle culture. Fades, flakes and other things that add a special customized look," while TSG teamed up with skateboard artist Jimbo Philips and continue to work with Tanner Goldbeck.

And we also see a little nod back to the past with a re-release of Pro-Tec's "retro pads" in bright red, yellow and blue as well as an old-school design mixing red, blue and yellow as a tribute to the first TSG pad designs in the 80ies.

PADS

Knee pads also get a slight material update. TSG add "an extra layer of PU like D30 or Arti-lage to the EVA foam," to increase shock absorbing performance and improve the wearing comfort. "Arti-Lage mimics the property of human cartilage. Soft and flexible at normal use but building a hard protective shell at impact," they explain. Amplifi have teamed up with Swiss high performance fabric supplier Schoeller to introduce their game changing new fabric Ceraspace™, a unique composition of special ceramic particles anchored in a polymer matrix as a 3-dimensional coating for their kneepads: "super low friction for easy sliding on even the roughest asphalt and rocks, with extremely high abrasion resistance to keep your pads in one piece (not to mention your knees!)" 

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BUYER SCIENCE

Titus has 35 doors across Germany and are a powerhouse in European skate retail. They were crowned the 2015 Vans Shop Riot champions and as the competition gets underway for 2016, we spoke with the Head of Buying, PV Schulz to talk buyer science. PV has been running the buying operation at Titus for eight years now and before that held positions with Stüssy, Eastpak, Nike and Dickies. A true industry vet, PV tells us what is up.

How many stores does Titus operate?

There are 35 Titus stores spread across Germany. 21 of them are run by the Titus GmbH from Münster, 14 by franchise partners.

How long have you been the buyer for Titus, and what positions have you held previous to this?

I've been the head of buying for Titus for eight years now. Before this I was Sales Manager at Dickies for northern Europe. I sold my first skateboards at the end of the 80's when I was manager of American Sports in Hamburg. And I have been in touch with the scene ever since then. After ten years in retail, I switched to wholesale and had positions at for the likes of Stüssy, Eastpak and Nike before I joined Dickies.

During your time as a buyer, what have been some of the most important lessons you have learned on how to cater for your customers?

Trends come and go faster and faster. Meaning you need the right product in sufficient quantities at the right time. We no longer have one big trend like we had in the 80's and 90's; today you see skateboarders in a lot of different outfits, so your assortment has to have a broad offering. To play this game efficiently and to be profitable is much more difficult than in the past. So we try to please our consumers with authentic stores and authentic people working in them and an assortment that covers their needs as good as possible.

How does your buying strategy differ for online Vs bricks and mortar stores?

Due to the limited space in our stores the number of brands and items is much lower than our online shop. Our task is to identify the brands and products on trend in different locations all the while ensuring they support our ethos of the 'home of skateboarding'.

How do you feel about moving from a two season to four season buying period?

Our orders for spring and fall are much larger than the ones for summer and winter due to the short distance from the delivery to the sales period. So for us this doesn't mean a big change because we are already used to buying shoes four times a year and we just add some small clothing orders as refreshments, mainly styles that can still be sold the following season.

How do you adapt your buying strategies for new trends in the market?

Once we recognize them, we give it a try. If it shows good results we dare to buy larger quantities. The most difficult part is to foresee the slowdown and to adapt your orders in time.



Titus' Head of Marketing Julius Dittmann with Head of Buying, PV Schulz

Which brands are doing it right at the moment?

Element has seen the best development in the last few seasons. They fit perfectly to our heritage because they were absolutely linked to skateboarding from day one and their importance in the hardgoods area is as meaningful as it is with apparel. They are a company absolutely stoked on skateboarding, but their apparel reaches so much farther afield that the core skate scene – and this diversity of customer is what you need to succeed today.

Which new brands can we expect to see in Titus in the coming months?

This spring we didn't add apparel or shoe brands because we didn't see anything exciting out there. But we always add new hardware brands. We added the skateboard brands ISLE, WKND, Prime and Salut and tools from Reflex.

How could brands support skate shops more effectively?

Replenishment is the most helpful support. Marketing support such as video premieres or sending a team around helps. The days where these kinds of things were much more effective and where stores like us could build brands by just offering them are definitely over. We are living in a world where every development happens faster and faster. Yesterday it was Facebook, today it is Instagram, tomorrow it will be Snapchat and who knows what it will be the day after tomorrow. So support is very welcome but the needs can switch very fast. 📱

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photo: Globe

MEN'S STREETWEAR SS17 TREND REPORT

New hype brands and fast fashion conglomerates want a slice of the streetwear market. But for Spring/Summer 2017 men's streetwear collections, endemic boardsports brands are banking on authenticity, sustainability, and timeless classics.

Trend Report by Dirk Vogel.

It's no secret that the economic crisis has triggered a shift in priorities among boardsports consumers. They spend their money first of all on boards and equipment, second on shoes, and last on clothing. Many purchase their outfits not in boardsports retail, but at 'fast fashion' chains, where on-style product sells at lowball prices, thanks to monstrous production cycles churning out 52 collections per year.

Instead of fuelling the hype machine, boardsports brands are slowing down the pace. "We try to make garments which survive the crazy fast fashion rhythm which is imposed on our industry by the so-called fast fashion companies like H&M, Zara and Co. We want to make the difference with better product quality and social awareness," said Patrick Kressner, Men's Designer at Berlin-based Iriedaily. Awareness is a good thing – also see our focus on sustainable production below – because too much "fast" clothing is slowly but surely killing our planet. Something Bleed clothing's CEO, Founder & Designer Michael Spitzbarth says can be avoided by simply wearing garments for longer: "We aren't guided by any fast-moving trends and try to create timeless products, which are easy to combine with each other. That's also a part of sustainable production."

Nevertheless, new brands keep barging onto the market, and whereas a few years ago, one season would be dominated by one or two strong trends, kids these days are rocking a kaleidoscope of fashions and micro-fashions: Light denim jeans, the 1990s revival, hippie-rock-grunge, dad hats, big logo print sweaters, and that whole "communist athletic" look brandished by skateboarder/designer Gosha Rubchinskiy are all in play – all at the same time. How can retailers and brands stay relevant? "There are all kinds of different fashion trends but there is also your own identity. We are also observing and adapting to new fashion trends but in a more timeless manner," said Marion Maier at Ragwear, adding: "As a retailer, you should be able to expose the essence of the streetwear – independent from seasons."

This going back to the essence mainly boils down to one recipe for brands and stores: Don't try to be everything to all people, but stay true to yourself... and the customers will find you. "We like to work by pulling not by pushing, meaning not trying to force anyone to like us. It's the

more honest approach," said Joni Malmi, founder of Makia. Boardsports brands can also draw power from their history, instead of trying to hop on every new hype train. "The streetwear market is teeming with new emerging brands that seem to rise from near obscurity. The challenge is to be able to distinguish ourselves from other brands while remain authentic to our heritage which at the same time is also our advantage that we as a brand have from others," said Roland Slavik, Merchandising Manager Men's APP/ACC at Vans.

THE MARKET

A quick look at the market also encourages retailers to prioritize proven sellers over fast fads. "There are many streetwear trends which are not selling well and shops need to be careful. Best example is the baggy trend, which everyone says is coming back but if you look at the numbers, it's not so visible. It's not an easy time but from my point of view, retailers need to have some of those trends but they have to understand it's not the volume business but important in terms of image," said Guillaume Dartenuc, European Marketing Director at Volcom. Speaking of volumes, the market is still weighed down by overstock in wholesale and retail (don't expect the dreaded 30% OFF sale signs to disappear anytime soon). The situation is made worse by a disastrous winter that caused retail losses up to \$572 million in the U.S. and \$120 million in the UK, where sales of hats, gloves and scarfs dropped by 32% (Planalytics).

THE CONSUMER

Knowing the customer has never been more challenging – and more important, said Ken Nelson, Creative Director at Neff: "Fashion is more accessible than ever due to social media and online resources. This accessibility creates a more diverse pallet of styles and trends emerge at a faster rate than before." What's more, the current generation of young men ranges among the most fashion-conscious consumers in history. "Outfitting and attention to detail have become more important than ever. The young kids are really thinking about their outfits and are very careful what they wear, making sure it all goes well with each other, from head to toe," said Roland at Vans. With that said, consumers also appreciate what's real and time-proven, which brands can use to their advantage.

“The opportunity right now is to deliver a clear message and stay true to your roots. Look to refine the offering and push for brand integrity... rather than trying to be all things to all customers at a price point,” said Dan Preston, Apparel Head Designer at Globe.

THE 5 MAJOR SPRING/SUMMER 2017 THEMES

The following trends will influence and cross-pollinate one another other wildly in Spring/Summer 2017 collections:

1. That 1990s throwback. Turn up the Biggie Smalls because the Nineties are back, but with a few contemporary updates, says Ken at Neff: “They will have a modern twist, but stay along historic lines. We will start seeing baggier fits, utilitarian function and silhouettes,



Photo: Santa Cruz

distressing, bold colourful prints, and nostalgic graphics. Overall, wilder graphics and colours are beginning to make a resurgence. This includes crazy texture print and patterns.” Add to that list riffs on designer label logos as well as nylon sports jerseys, and as Dan at Globe points out, “drop shoulder, boxy anti fit, with wider rib seems to be the key at the pointy end of tops... completed with a beaten-up curved brim baseball cap, aka a ‘dad hat.’”

2. Athletic uniforms. Big league sports and varsity styles, previously the domain of jocks and cheerleaders, are breaking into streetwear collections. Coach jackets, polo shirts, and technical hats have already spilled into the streets, next in line are baseball varsity jackets – for instance from Dickies – and nylon sports jerseys (see 1990s Throwback). Big logos – after years of absence during the vintage-chambray-ridiculous-beards phase – are back with a vengeance: “With more and more cheap, quick-to-market brands it makes sense that established brands use their logo to create an identity that allows the audience to align themselves with a certain culture,” said Rhythm’s Brand Manager, Jacob Byrne.

3. Work wear goes the extra mile. Keeping in mind earlier statements about longer-lasting clothes instead of “fast” fashion, boarders have always gravitated towards work wear for major bang for their bucks. This has always worked for leaders such as Dickies: “Dickies has

never claimed to be a boardsports brand but a lifestyle brand, and I think people influenced by both are finding ways to incorporate both streetwear and skate in to their own style,” said Kev Penney, Streetwear Marketing Manager at Williamson-Dickie. In SS17 collections, work-inspired influences reflect in robust, timeless styles, including Makia’s collection of classic layering pieces and weather-resistant jackets perfect for conditions in their native harbour town of Helsinki: “We went back to our roots in Spring 2016 and decided to stay there. Makia is now completely focused on what we know best; urban casual streetwear designed to endure the rough weather that we have to deal with up north.”

4. Longer jackets, shorter shorts. The popular men’s wear formula of long top paired with skinny bottoms continues, but with some crucial updates. Whereas tops ranged on the form-fitting end of the spectrum for past seasons, they are now getting more relaxed, all the while extending their length below the waist. In jackets, Dan at Globe sees, “a close race between modernized 90s vibe flyweight anorak shell jackets and bombers.” Meanwhile, “the shorts remain a little shorter as you have already seen in the last couple of seasons,” said Michael at bleed.

5. DIY touches and skate flavour. Here’s another emerging throwback trend, this time to the 1980s when pro skaters customized their clothes by cutting off sleeves, sewing on patches, wearing skate pins, and printing their own designs on shirts and sweaters with eccentric off-centre logo placement. These influences culminate in the Santa Cruz patched cut-off denim vest. “Inspiration is drawn from a broad range of sources from nomadic Californian Kustom Kulture through to the heritage-inspired styles derived from the brand’s rich and iconic back catalogue of graphics and apparel,” said Lowri Holness at Santa Cruz apparel/Shiner distribution. Across collections, skate graphics add true street flavour by ways of large prints that utilize new parts of garments (lower back shirt prints, side prints).

“We try to make garments which survive the crazy fast fashion rhythm which is imposed on our industry by the so-called fast fashion companies like H&M, Zara and Co. We want to make the difference with better product quality and social awareness.”

Patrick Kressner, Men’s Designer at Berlin-based Iriedaily

FABRICS: QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE

Summer and spring is when flannels take a break and Hawaiian prints and florals adorn lightweight shirts. These styles flourish in SS17, joined by geometric patterns often executed not as prints, but on a fabric level. Marion at Ragwear points out, “special knitted melanges and jacquards with contrast stitching in the sweat group.” Patrick at Iriedaily concurs: “We decided to concentrate on striped and checked woven patterns this season.” Next to stylistics, an emphasis on quality – longer wear over “disposable” fashion – and sustainability keep gaining momentum in fabrics. It’s about time, as anyone who has seen the documentary “The True Cost” about fast fashion understands. More and more collections use certified production methods (bluesign), and companies such as Iriedaily have joined the Fair Wear Foundation. At Bleed, Michael Spitzbarth is proud: “We have expanded our range of animal-free materials, which are both, fashionable and functional. Our club jacket features the special mix out of organic cotton and TENCEL, our denim-look linen shirts with a stand-up collar and our linen/organic cotton shirts which are both, good looking and functional.” And let’s



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“There are many streetwear trends which are not selling well and shops need to be careful. Best example is the baggy trend, which everyone says is coming back but if you look at the numbers, it’s not so visible.

Guillaume Dartenuc, European Marketing Director at Volcom

not forget: “Overall we can see that people are skating more in denim again. Non denim is still strong, but denim is back. Apart from seeing a lot of 90s inspired lighter denim washes coming back we also see that mid-worn in finishes are very popular,” said Filip Elerud at Levi’s, who explained the technology behind the Levi’s Skateboarding Collection: “The materials used to make these jeans are far superior to any jeans you’d find at a big box retailer. Our fabric is woven with Cordura, which has the look, comfort and feel of traditional 100% cotton denim, but developed for exceptional abrasion resistance. We also use Lycra T400, which ensures that the jean maintains its stretch over time, adds strength and further abrasion resistance.”

CUTS & SILHOUETTES: MIX AND MATCH

Following the shift from major trends to multiple micro-trends, cuts and silhouettes are trending all over the map. But one shift can definitely be pinpointed in jackets, says Patrick at Iriedaily: “The narrow long silhouettes almost disappeared in the collection. The upper garment silhouettes are getting more classic and a bit more



Photo: Makia

relaxed in terms of fit.” And while shorts mainly end above the knee this season, pant fits come from close-cropped and pointed all the way to slouchy. “We see pants getting slightly wider leg openings and the slim and skinny look being replaced by more slightly looser fits,” said Roland at Vans, while adding: “We stayed close to our main vehicle of inspiration which is skateboarding and will be focusing on our authentic chino as the main style.” But no matter if they’re jeans or chinos, next season’s pants are either cropped above the ankle or worn as Dan at Globe points out: “The rolled up look is now one of the most popular styles for fashion-conscious men... across all fits.”

COLOURS: INSPIRED BY WATER AND NATURE

The colour of the season is navy with brands like Makia leading the charge: “We go all the way with the maritime theme again this season and so navy is the driving colour and jackets with a light wax treatment takes a huge role in the collection.” Fuelled by work wear and military influences, hot colours include Ecru and Military Green, as well as earthy colours: “Dirty and dusty versions of fashion pastels paired back with Black and earth to give them some grit,” said Dan at Globe. But it’s not all bright and sunshiny out there, said Lowri at Shiner: “The Santa Cruz Black Collection is defined by a strong monochrome palette and darker graphic content.”

PRINTS: BIG, BOLD, SKATE-INSPIRED

Unthinkable five years ago, when chambray shirts without visible branding dominated, but they’re back: Big logos are making a splash in prints this season. “There is a certain trend cycle in fashion and right now the big logos fashion tendency is definitely in the air,” said Marion at Ragwear. For Patrick at Iriedaily, it’s part of a new self-confidence among board brands: “The logo and name branding is getting stronger and stronger again. Artworks need to show attitude and the t-shirt should still have the position as the platform of your message!” Print placements are offering new twists, including “lower front body placements echoing the classic big brands of the 90s” (Globe) and, “retro-inspired placements with back prints taking over from large front” (Santa Cruz). Aside from big logos and skate artwork, “prints are more quiet with one colour print in general, flower but one colour, geometric arts again with one colour print and not too much bright colour,” said Guillaume at Volcom, adding: “Easy to wear all-over and prints is what people are looking for.”

HOT TREND: BOMBERS & SOUVENIR JACKETS

Before going overboard on the coaches jackets everyone and their moms are rocking in 2016, keep an eye on bomber jackets. For the “jacket of the season” Guillaume at Volcom said: “Definitely, the bomber jacket with lot of different combinations: sateen, nylon, cotton, fleece version, with a big back embroidery or just solid. This is the jacket you need to have in your wardrobe!” Also watch out for lightweight bombers with Far Eastern embroidery – so-called Souvenir Jackets popularized by US-fighter pilots stationed in Japan after WWII – featuring dragons, flowers, exotic lettering and insignia. ⑤

HIGHLIGHTS

- Trend-agnostic consumers
- Pressure from fast-fashion
- Throwback to 1990s streetwear
- Big Logos making a return, back prints
- Sustainable fabrics and special knits
- Geometric patterns
- Athletic and military influences loom large
- DIY-influence – multi-prints and cut sleeves
- Pants rolled up, in variety of cuts
- Hot trend: Souvenir jackets and bombers



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COYOTE GRIND LOUNGE

Sweden’s skate scene is booming, and Stockholm-based Coyote Grind Lounge proved that by finishing 2nd at the Vans Shop Riot 2015. Having been open over a decade now, owner Hans ‘Corky’ Koraeus talks us through the highs and lows the shop has experienced and tells us how he’s making a core shop work in Sweden.

Please give us an overview of your store.

The skate shop Coyote Grind Lounge was started in 2005 by three older skaters seeking the skateboard shop vibe from the time when they were young skaters themselves. We couldn’t relate to the existing skate shops at the time. The Coyote Grind Lounge skate shop was a very obscure old-school shop in the beginning that wanted to go back to the roots of skateboarding. Over the years it has become more like a normal skateboard shop. But we have always aimed for a core skate shop feel. It’s very difficult to keep a skate shop in the core segment because economic forces are constantly dragging you into clothes, shoes and in a worst case scenario; into a mix with other action sports.

In 2010 during the start of the economic difficulties in Europe, many skate shops had to close down- two of the owners of our skate shop were forced to give up due to the economic strain. From that time on I was alone, trying to keep the ship afloat, in hope of riding through the storm and coming out alive on the other side. It came to be a much longer storm than expected but we finally see some light in the tunnel again.

How is the skate scene in Sweden?

The skate scene in Stockholm is great. When we started in 2005 we opened the shop just next to a concrete skate bowl park in the middle of Stockholm city. It was the first one built and now 11 years later there are over 20 concrete skate parks in Stockholm so things have exploded, and not just in Stockholm, but all over the country!

What have been the biggest changes to your store over the last year? Please talk to us about the tattoo store...

Last year we had our 10-year anniversary and we fancied something new with the store. There were many ideas flying around but finally we ended up with the concept of a tattoo shop and skate shop working together.

Out of all of the brands you sell, where does your most dedicated brand loyalty lie?

When it comes to skateboards we don’t see that much brand loyalty among skaters in general. Skaters are quite open to testing new brands. If I had to pick one brand it would be Bones Wheels where brand loyalty is still high.

You placed well at Vans Shop Riot in 2015 – how’s the team shaping up for 2016?

Yes, it was a great 2015 with our team taking 2nd place in the Vans Shop Riot finals in Madrid - it was a boost for the whole shop. So for the 2016 season we thought we had the team all figured out, but one of our key skaters has gone to work for the Vans store in Stockholm. So that was a real bummer and now we are trying to find a new key skater for our team.

What are the five products you couldn’t live without right now?
Bones wheels, Bones bushings, Bones bearings, Spitfire Formula 4, Indy trucks.

How do you support your local skate scene?
We have always had a strong focus on having a skate team and motivating them to travel and go to all the competitions around Sweden. Also by having skaters working in the shop we try to give them an opportunity to make some money working within the skateboard business as well.

How are you working with brands to give your customers something they can’t get online?
The business is for sure a lot harder now than when we started in 2005. Now anyone can start a brand and print their own clothes and skateboard decks. Opening a web shop is easier than ever before and so local skate shops have to compete with web shops around the world. And there are even people selling stuff in the skateparks without investing in a skate shop.

Luckily there are still people that do like and support the local skate shops and like the social interaction you can get from a real skate shop. ☺

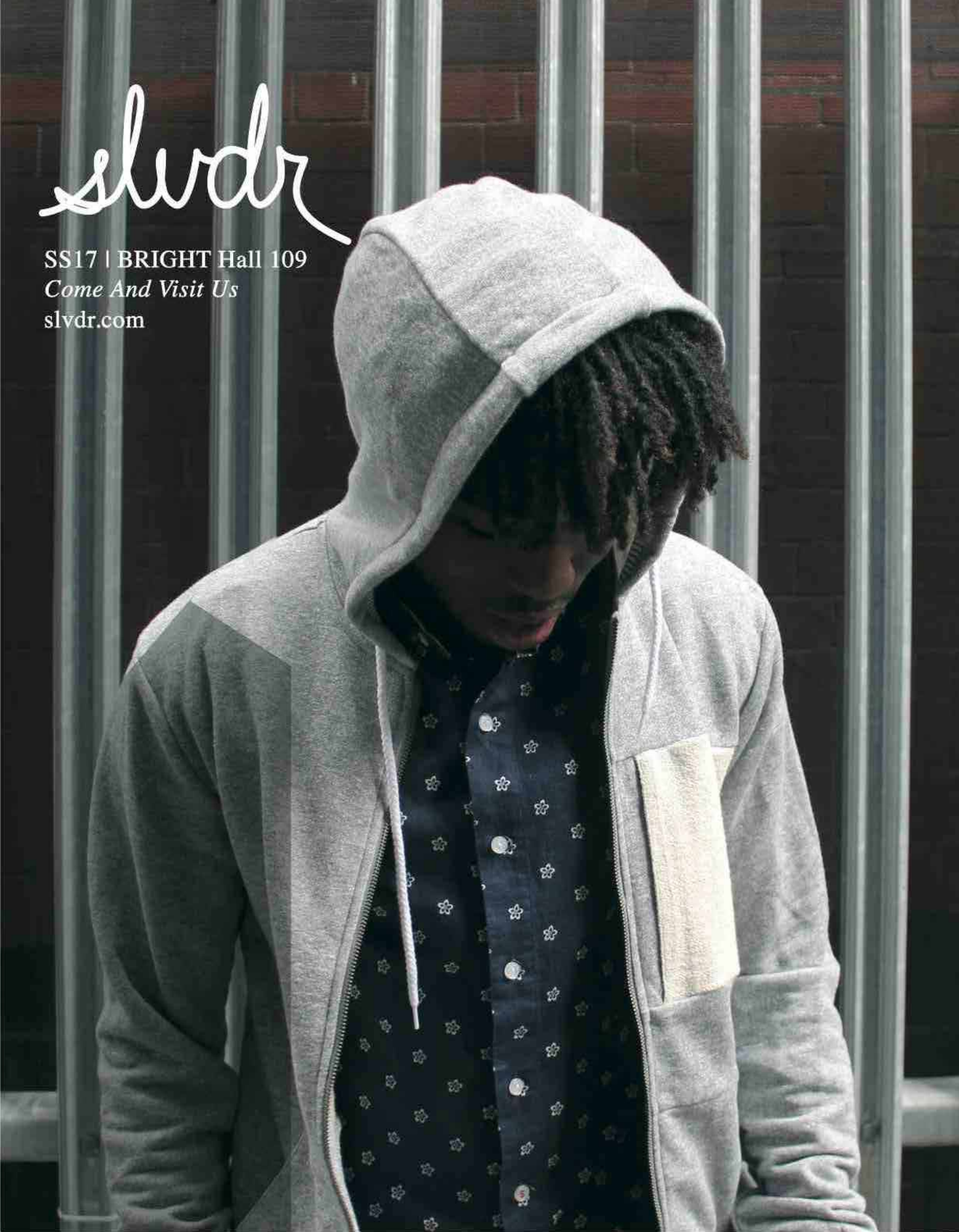




photo: Iriedaily

WOMEN’S STREETWEAR SS17 TREND REPORT

In the age of globalization, diversification is both cure and poison at the same time. Niches in niche-markets offer lots of success, catering for a special audience with an even more unique product. At the same time, these niches and specialties segment the market into more and more sectors, making things harder and harder to follow and overlook. **Anna Langer** has analysed the main trends for women’s streetwear in spring summer 2017.

The challenge is pretty clear. “The influx of vertical, fast fashion retailers has impacted the overall market, making fashion pieces more attainable than ever,” says Nikita Brand Director Stephie ter Hürne. “But meaningful brands pushing their products and stories are quickly making up the ground they lost to vertical retail a few years prior. This shift in the market is creating great opportunities for brands like Nikita in the streetwear space.” Michael Spitzbarth, CEO & Founder of bleed clothing agrees: “The women’s streetwear market is very fashionable, trend-oriented and also fast moving – the keyword is fast fashion. That’s all part of globalization and is spread through social media. It’s especially hard for small brands to keep up with that.” So instead of “chasing after every new trend” he’s focusing on “more timeless and functional products with good and durable quality.”

The activewear market is growing and expanding very quickly, says Marie Lauga, Global Head of Design at Roxy, which they’re answering with a designated fitness range for the “sportier customer. But we also feel that sport is influencing fashion.” She continues that today the market is also about “breaking the codes” and “using the sport codes in a feminine way.” Sneakers have already become a “daily uniform” for many women, thinks Amelie Robert, Merchandising Manager for women’s apparel and accessories at Vans. “On the other hand, customers are looking for feminine products. The woven items are performing well,” Marie continues, “products with lace or embroidery details are often our best-sellers.”

TRENDS

Such details play a vital part in many collections in spring/summer 2017, like three-dimensional braids, mesh and female artist-provided graphics from Nikita and Roxy are employing a “mix of prints, texture, colours,” regional crafts, hand worked techniques and culture influences. Ragwear’s collection follows a Mexican theme as well and Iriedaily sport “expressive all over prints on high quality materials,” says Marketing Manager Denise Graff. Volcom focus on “coastal living in the 60s and 70s,” with fitted ringer

tees and “bubble type; a kitschy vintage Hawaiiana pattern and hand drawn, geo filled leaf prints,” explain Megan LeBrasseur and Kelly Summer. Protest go for the “real beach flavour,” with tunics and dresses in many lengths that make a great combination with their swimwear, while Vans also draw inspiration from their Californian roots. They pair classic prints and patterns with staple tees and elevated wovens for the more sophisticated consumer, who is “curating her suitcase before heading to festivals.” Roxy address this with their Stephanie Gilmore collection, which is inspired by her way of life, travel and experiences, as well as her taste, incorporating some high fashion pieces that Marie has high hopes for. Next to that they feature a “70s nostalgic spirit capsule,” inspired by their athletes and their untamed attitude to life, “a touch of tomboy and a little bit rock ‘n roll.” Vans work with a lot of logos, “preferably on a large scale with a minimal execution,” for an “athletic revival” with influences from the 90s.

Bleed and Makia on the other hand prefer an “‘easily approachable’ everyday feel, that is somewhat timeless in both style and comfort,” as Makia CCO Totti Nyberg explains. And Michael from Bleed adds that “timeless products, which are easy to combine with each other,” are also “part of a sustainable production.” Ragwear are constantly expanding their organic collection that features vegan fabrics and trimmings, ecological dyeing, minimal water pollution and ethical work environments, while Iriedaily stay true to their roots in the German capital with their “sporty, feminine and sexy” urban Berlin streetwear style.

COLOURS

Next to classic summer shades like Apricot Blush and Bright Coral from Volcom, sun-bleached neutrals from Roxy, pastels and washed colours from Vans or ecru, light salmon and light olive from Iriedaily, red seems to be the colour of choice for next season. Chillli Red at Ragwear, Merlot at Volcom, Hibiscus Red from Roxy, “pops of red” in the Vans collection, muted red with a “Mediterranean touch” from bleed as well as a soft pinkish brown shade called “Café Crème” from Nikita.

Makia prefer an “‘easily approachable’ everyday feel, that is somewhat timeless in both style and comfort.” **Totti Nyberg, Makia CCO.**



Photo: Nikita

Other highlights include “Vintage Gold grounded with black” from Volcom and “pale gold” in the 70s spirit capsule from Roxy, as well as “classic black and grey shades” from Ragwear.

Makia stick to their usual maritime-themed colours with inspiration from the harbour area of Helsinki, mixing navy with grey and ecru. Nikita also stay close to home, incorporating influences from the industrial harbour in Iceland with watery blue-greens, corals, rust-like clay, and soft white, silver and grey.

PRINTS & PATTERNS

In between colour and pattern, melange fabrics and heather tones have been very successful last year and can be found in many products from Ragwear and Makia, “so that it’s easier to cross mix and match the collection together,” says Totti.

Volcom “capitalize on the blooming floral trend with a mushy floral”, which is a standout for Roxy who follow a feminine approach with watercolours, overlapping and transparency. Vans are also “going deep into tropical florals, directly inspired from iconic Californian patterns,” with a reinterpreted Hawaiian print. Ragwear mix “girly cute prints such as flowers” with dots to give sporty clothes a young, playful mood and Protest go with “ultra feminine floral playsuits and shorts.”

Worn plaids, yarn dye flannel shirts and animal prints from Volcom, sea-industrial inspired all-over prints from Nikita and stripes in many variations offer alternatives for less girly customers, like a “geometric jacquard striping pattern,” from Volcom, textured or tie died stripes from Roxy, Navy stripes from Makia and colour blocking from Iriedaily.

MATERIALS

When it’s hot outside, fabrics can’t be light enough, hence it’s no surprise that they play the lead in the spring/summer collections. Nikita go for soft printed viscose that is “light and summery, very breathable and airy.” Vans elevate their basics with “slub jerseys and vintage washes that have timeworn charm and will only get better with age,” while Volcom choose very soft knits and fuzzy fleece. Makia add light Merino, Iriedaily go with lightweight rayon, soft jerseys, lightweight nylons and chambray while bleed work with the vegan and vegetal silk Tencel.

Roxy add lace and crotch inserts to their woven fabrics, Nikita use cotton mesh for layering effects and Volcom mix Cotton Crochet trimming and crinkled Gauze with an “eyelet fabric that feels new as it is patterned with less floral, more geometric embroidered elements.”

Ragwear expand their use of bonding fabrics while bleed add a new material that’s made out of recycled fishing nets. Denim also sees some fancy additions, as Vans introduce “interesting denim fabrications, linking our heritage feel to the 90’s trend.” For a more sophisticated angle, Nikita use a super soft Lyocell twill for denim-like shirts and shorts and Protest feature jumpsuits in a lightweight denim.

SILHOUETTES

Jumpsuits stay as a hot focus for summer, in soft 70s denim worn with ringer tees at Volcom, as printed sets, “offering the perfect match between a feminine shirt and a super cute short” from Vans and with “monochrome all over prints in lightweight denim,” at Protest.

Volcom play with volume mixing swimwear and apparel, Vans offer options to layer flannels and fleeces with fashion tops and logo tees, Nikita add some slimmer silhouettes to complement their signature asymmetrical and oversized lines and Iriedaily combine Kimono inspired, short boxy tops with modern, slightly shorter pants as well as sporty shorts and lightweight skirts.

The most important staple of a female summer wardrobe is of course the dress. Printed and floaty from Volcom and Roxy, long and glamorous from Protest, or more casual, sporty variations of long shirt dresses from Vans, Ragwear and Nikita.

Jackets are on the more sporty side as well next summer, like short fitted club jackets from bleed, all-over printed bomber jackets from Volcom and a “super lightweight new oversized Summer Bomber with adjustable elastic draw cord hem,” by Iriedaily. Ragwear also see a big comeback of hoodies and crewnecks for the summer, which are “becoming more and more important.” Nikita also features a Plaited Crew “adorned with 3D braided pieces,” elevating the tomboy look with feminine details so the customer can have both at the same. Because, as a woman who can have it all these days – why would you limit yourself to just one style, if you can wear them all? **👉**

HIGHLIGHTS

Sports meets fashion

Soft & light materials

Washed out colours

Floral patterns



SKATE MEDIA ANALYTICS RIDE O’METER

Tracking action sports media content globally, through print, web, online videos and social networks, RIDE O’METER is showcasing a selection of the 2015 skate season highlights. **www.rideometer.com**
Skate media analyst : Valentin Marchal, Data engineers : Vincent Charpentier & Valentin Barit

WEB / TEAM EXPOSURE RANKING TOP 5

RANKING	TEAM	TEAM EXPOSURE	LOGO EXPOSURE	LOGO FACTOR
1	Nike	1 279 317 €	137 352 €	11%
2	Vans	610 616 €	62 875 €	10%
3	DC Shoes	553 257 €	56 910 €	10%
4	Converse	479 763 €	24 157 €	5%
5	Adidas	447 412 €	48 483 €	11%

This ranking shows the 5 footwear teams with the highest exposure over the period in international skate web press between September 2015 and February 2016. Nike tops the ranking with top athletes backed up by a huge flow team around the world and the iconic swoosh logo. Endemic brands such as Vans and DC Shoes sit in the ranking beside historic sneaker brands such as Converse and Adidas, who are stamping their mark on the skate market. There’s an average of 10% logo factor, except for Converse, due to a more discrete logo on their shoes.

Period analyzed: 01/09/15 - 28/02/16

VIDEO / RIDER AUDIENCE RANKING TOP 5

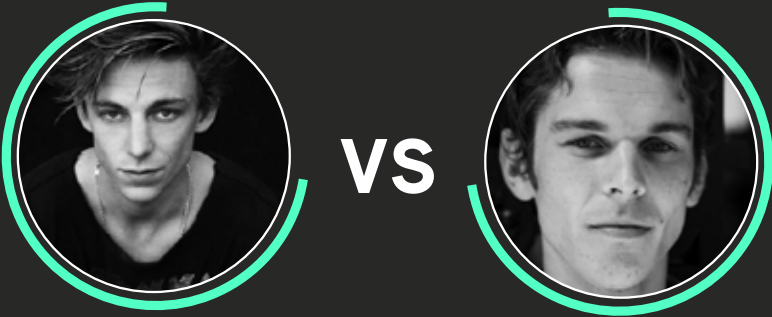
RANKING	NAME	NB VIDEO	TOTAL VIEWS	CUMULATED AUDIENCE (hrs.)	TOTAL PART (hrs.)
1	Ross MCGouran	38	22 755 377	812 391	0,57
2	Tony Hawk	59	11 165 566	532 262	1,01
3	Ryan Sheckler	65	5 171 967	126 372	1,24
4	Nyjah Huston	91	4 929 014	251 025	2,79
5	Torey Pudwill	64	3 931 158	120 960	1,56

Period analyzed: 01/09/15 - 28/02/16

This ranking shows the 5 skaters with the highest cumulated number of views between September 2015 and February 2016. The English skateboarder riding for Vans and Element, Ross McGouran, sits in first place, in front of the legendary Tony Hawk and Nyjah Huston. This is due to the buzz generated by the Lexus video featuring a hoverboard, which reached over 14 million views from just one video. Ryan Sheckler places third with successful webisodes produced by Red Bull.

SOCIAL / RIDERS MATCH UP

A pure European match-up, featuring top riders, Willow from Germany and Brit Ben Nordberg. They are the best social performers in the European skate scene but are two very different characters. Both claiming 175k fans over the 3 platforms, their fan bases are very different. Ben Nordberg, has a fashion driven image and his content gains top level engagement from his fans where Willow, with a more traditional skate fan base has 6 times less engagement.



BEN
NORDBERG

WILLOW

174 784	Total followers	175 652
117 011	Monthly interactions	39 929
6 287	Interaction per post	1 050
36%	Fan engagment ratio	6%
90 641	Monthly tagged interactions	26 024
44%	Tagged factor *	39%

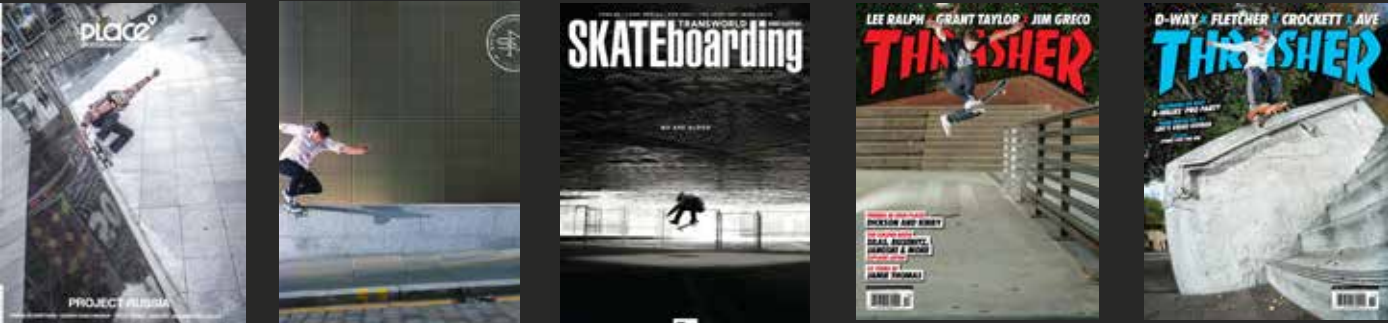
*Comparison between own rider posts interactions and interactions created by posts when tagged (Brands, Medias, Contributors & Riders).

PRINT / COVERS RANKING TOP 5

RANKING	NAME	COVER VALUE	NB COVER
1	ADIDAS	41 583 €	4
2	NIKE	41 298 €	4
3	MOUNTAIN DEW	31 912 €	2
4	CONVERSE	31 001 €	1
5	LRG	31 001 €	1

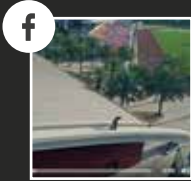
Getting the cover of a skate magazine is still a career climax for any rider. For sponsors, it also means a lot. This ranking shows the 5 brands with the highest value of rider exposure on the covers of international skate magazines between September 2015 and February 2016. Adidas comes in first with 4 covers including this great shot for Alexey Lapin, an ode to Russian skating. Mountain Dew sits third with great communication around their video projects : “We are blood” featuring Tiago Lemos for Transworld or the episodes of “Push” for The Skateboard mag.

Period analyzed: 01/09/15 - 28/02/16

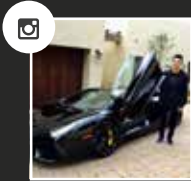


TOP POSTS

Here are the 3 best social skate related posts between September 2015 and February 2016, featuring Sean Malto’s “We are Blood” trailer, Nyjah’s new toy and finally, Sheckler x Justin Bieber.



SEAN MALTO
192 616 interactions



Nyjah Huston
91 107 interactions



Ryan Sheckler
47 070 interactions


 A woman with long, wet hair is walking on a sandy beach. She is wearing a black and white geometric patterned bikini. She is carrying a white surfboard under her arm. The background shows the ocean and a clear sky.

BRUNOTTI

BRUNOTTI.COM



photo: Rusty

WOMEN'S SWIMWEAR SS17 TREND REPORT

Bikinis, bathing suits or “one-pieces”, as they are called nowadays, have been staples of women’s summer attire for several decades now and while you may think things stay pretty much the same year after year, you couldn’t be more wrong.

As even though the concept itself stays the same, there’s a myriad of subtle little details and trends within in micro-trends, which **Anna Langer** has a had a look through.

For something made for the beach, there’s little more fitting than using that landscape and vibe itself as inspiration, hence we will see a lot of that next season. Volcom use “simple coastal living vibes” and have the “coastal beach scene from the 60s and 70s,” as setting for their swim collection. Lost work with the “free spirited California girl” next to a “Neo Bohemian trend, derived from Coachella, with its mood and feel of festival wear in swim fabrics and silhouettes,” and Roxy pay homage to the “spirit of wanderlust, from free-spirited nostalgia and soft, sea-washed colours to intricate embroideries and crochets.” Urban Beach base their range ‘Aloha ‘Aina – Aloha Kai’ on “Tahiti + Hawaii island hopping adventures, vintage surfing and bohemian bold florals, hibiscus and oversized palm prints,” while Rip Curl play with Ibiza vibes, the location they went to design their swimwear collection for 2017.

Urban Beach dive in a little deeper, taking “inspiration from under the Sea Botanicals and plant life,” for a range of “printed Seashells and Corals washed ashore.” Nikita stayed close to home for their swimwear comeback in 2017, which is “inspired by an industrial harbour in Iceland, so the colours reflect both the sea industry and the elements,” explains Marketing Manager Vicki Vasil.

Vintage stays on trend as well, with one pieces, high waist bottoms and high neck tops from Billabong, more one-pieces from O’Neill, a “fantastic fitting halter bikini which has a hint of vintage glamour to it,” from Urban Beach, Volcom’s “Hot Tropics One Piece with an oversized floral and cutout detail”, high waisted styles with crossed and smocked backs from Protest and a one shoulder one-piece and bikini set with one shoulder top from GlideSoul.

‘Mix & Match’ also continues to play important parts in the collections from Chiemsee, Hive, Protest, Rusty, Rip Curl, and Brunotti, who feature four different themes with each having six tops and bottoms to play around with. Rusty add that “in a world of Mix & Match, solids are just as important as prints so we make sure that our prints and solid colours talk back to each other,” says Connie Dixon, Ladies National Sales Manager. Hive, O’Neill and Rusty also feature reversible styles, “offering full versatility in terms of looks and styling – one bikini, four looks,” as Adrienne Fleming, Merchandiser for Womenswear at O’Neill Europe explains.

PATTERNS, PRINTS & COLOURS

Hand in hand with coastal inspiration, florals are staying one of the major patterns on women’s swimwear next summer. “Tropical prints which will match with our apparel and accessories line” from Billabong, and “watercolour flowers” from Brunotti, “woodblock florals” and colour blocking from Lost, “watercolours, overlapping and transparencies” at Roxy, “bohemian bold florals, hibiscus and oversized palm prints,” from Urban Beach, “exotic Hawaiian prints and jungle leaves” from Volcom, an “extra large all-over floral” from Rip Curl and “flowers, plants and funky colour-blocked palm trees combined with stripes,” from Protest.

Stripes are also popular on their own, black and white from Lost, “stripe origami” from Brunotti, textured and in “a tie dye inspiration” from Roxy, “nautical hand painted stripes” from Urban Beach, “bold retro surf stripes” from Volcom and a “chevron combination print” from Protest, next to “mattress stripes” and silver-striped combination from GlideSoul. Billabong, Rip Curl and Volcom also add some geometric patterns.

Nikita stayed close to home for their swimwear comeback in 2017, which is “inspired by an industrial harbour in Iceland, so the colours reflect both the sea industry and the elements,” explains Marketing Manager Vicki Vasil.

Rusty add that “in a world of Mix & Match, solids are just as important as prints so we make sure that our prints and solid colours talk back to each other,” says Connie Dixon, Ladies National Sales Manager.

In line with the bohemian-festival-inspiration, we will also see some hand-drawn paisley from Brunotti, embroideries and beads from Roxy, crochet, tassel and lace details from Lost, O'Neill, Billabong and Volcom. Finisterre use “photographic prints from images we have stacked up in the archives, using beautiful imagery from our shoots to create a collage on our fabric,” and Nikita work with all-over prints that “are reminiscent of sea-industrial materials: rusting metals, frayed rope, netting, worn wood.”

These natural inspirations are nicely supported by an ocean-inspired colour palette with lots of green (Chiemsee), “blue tones, multi-coloured brights and earthy coloured neutrals” from Hive, “shades of blue” from O'Neill, “deep blue hues” from Patagonia and “sailor blue – denim blue – deep blue – ice blue,” at Rip Curl. Those are paired with “vibrant shades of shock pink” (Patagonia), “burgundy and neon orange” (O'Neill) next to “seashell pinks, island greens and citrus yellows to refresh your soul for adventure,” from Urban Beach. Of course these traditionally bright, vibrant colours that “celebrate life” (Billabong) have their place as well and can be found in all collections. Finisterre mix their “soft French Riviera colour pallet” with charcoals, ocean blues and hues of red.



photo: Nikita

MATERIALS

No brand new materials on the horizon either, but a couple of helpful little tweaks to existing. Lycra continues to be the top choice for all suppliers, yet with some updates, like Brunotti's light weight Lycra, Lost's “soft textured Italian jersey Lycra,” and “sheen sparkle peppered Lycra”, “solid Italian tricots and jersey fabrics” from Volcom, a “high-quality, soft and snag-resistant nylon/Lycra blend,” from Nikita, a combination of matte and shiny Lycra from Rusty, and a new denim Lycra from Rip Curl that supports their Xtra life microfibre in the Mirage line.

More fashion-heavy pieces like Billabong's Designer Closet collection mixes “ribbed fabrics” with “shiny copper”, Brunotti play with fancy jacquards and crochets, which Lost play with beaded tribal prints. Roxy also work with different textures and details: “seersucker woven fabrics, solid bright light neoprene, hand made macramé, different crochet fabrics, printed textures and jacquards and a gold fabric used in the POP SURF collection,” explains Marie Lauga, Global Head of Design.

With the female population increasing their activity levels through

SUP next to classic water sports like surfing, their demand for appropriate clothing is growing, which is best met with thicker materials like heavy “SUP Lycra” and quick drying “SUP neoprene with UV protection,” as Brunotti offers. Roxy work with “solid bright light neoprene”, Hive with a “nylon elastane material called Power Mesh™”, a lining that “has great durability and stretch with outstanding shape retention.” And Patagonia showcase “Nanogrip performance swimwear” that is “lined with a soft nano microfibre that prevents slippage when wet.” GlideSoul combine neoprene with mesh and elastic bands and their special S-foam neoprene that adds 20% extra flex.

O'Neill expand their use of sustainable materials with “O'Neill Blue – Our Ocean Mission,” and “environmentally-friendly fabrics using high-performance yarns developed from recycled plastics” that are wicking, seamless and have a UV 50 protection. Patagonia also use recycled fabric and is the first global swimwear brand to be Fair Trade Certified, while Finisterre team up with Econyl®, “who create products made out of 100% regenerated polyamide from sources including recycled fishing nets,” says Marketing Manager Natalie Beck.

PERFORMANCE & SHAPES

Since nowadays the beach is as much playing field as it is a place to see-and-be-seen, and girls always want it all, there are different approaches to incorporating sports performance into their line. Billabong, Brunotti, O'Neill, Protest, Finisterre and Roxy feature dedicated capsule collections for their sports-oriented styles that are designed to keep up with their wearers' sporty action, with added features like UV protection, handy details like zippers or mesh panels, and designated patterns next to stand out colours. Hive, Nikita, Patagonia, and Finisterre design all their swimwear with an “active customer in mind”, in order to “meet the needs of active water women who require functional styles which are fashion forward,” says Kat Hogg, Designer & Director of Hive Swimwear.

Different fits and shapes also help to cater for the varied needs and body types of female customers. “Experience taught us that for most women it is not necessarily the size of the cup but the shape which determines how swimwear looks on the body;” Adrienne from O'Neill explains. Patagonia and Hive also offer “different levels of coverage on both the tops and bottoms,” says Laura Kinman, Product Line Director of Women's Surf at Patagonia. Urban Beach have reworked their classic Tankini “into a strappy, adjustable tank vest style,” that offers a bit more coverage and GlideSoul add “thicker bands under the bust and more fabric in the cups to provide better coverage” for the more supportive tops and a Power Mesh lining for the more sports orientated styles. 📌

HIGHLIGHTS

- Florals & Stripes
- One-Pieces
- SUP Lycra & Neoprene
- Mix&Match
- Ocean Hues



NIKITA

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BOOTH 108

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AND RAISE THE
ANCHOR

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SLVDR

SLVDR is a Californian lifestyle apparel brand made for those who appreciate the finer details of design through subtle, understated pieces while paying homage to their boardsports roots. Pretty Great LLC recently purchased Nikita, Bonfire and Sessions and company President, Rob Myers started SLDVR a number of years ago in order to design threads that suited surfers, skaters and snowboarders who no longer wanted to dress like a teenager. Rob tells us more about the brand.

Please give an overview of how and why the company began?

By 2008 I had been designing snowboard outerwear for about 13 years and was looking for a new creative challenge. I grew up skating, surfing and snowboarding but was getting to a point in my life where I did not want to look like a teenager any more. I saw an opportunity in the market for a customer who was growing out of the typical boardsports aesthetic but did not want to transfer right over to 'dad' style. SLVDR stands for Sal-va-dor meaning salvation in Spanish. So SLVDR was my creative salvation.

Who is on the management team, and what are their backgrounds?

Our main offices are in the U.S. and there we have a Director of Sales, Dave Kozak who has years of experience with Volcom and DC. We also have a Director of Marketing, Tim Swart with a long list of marketing and entrepreneurial experience including being a key partner in establishing influential brands like Clive bags and the forward thinking retailer in Encinitas, UNIV. For European sales we have been lucky to sign up with Ben Lima out of the UK who will be helping us gather up agents in the rest of Europe. We also have the support of our Munich office for customer service, sales and marketing support from Alex, Stephie and Sebi (respectively).

Who is SLVDR's target demographic?

Our customer is forward thinking, understated

with an appreciation for details and quality. Our customer has an edge but does not want to be a spectacle.

How is your European operation shaping up?

Solid, we have a few other brands within our umbrella company that are currently selling in Europe so we are confident in servicing the region.

What do you find important about the European market?

Similar to the rest of the world, apparel retail is going through a lot of change. The most important thing about the European market is making the right decisions about what retailers to partner with.

How do you support athletes and boardsports?

We do not actually support any athletes directly. We take a different approach through support of our Common Threads Projects. CPT takes gently used action sports products and donates to deserving youth. Surfing, skating and snowboarding played key roles in the development of SLVDR and it is the wish of the brand to help give the same opportunities for growth to others who might not have the means to be involved with boardsports. There are key life lessons that can be learned by participating in action sports - creativity, self reliance, self motivation, etc.. All of which will help one be successful later in life. Our goal is not to create the next world champ but the next great

accountant, engineer, teacher, designer...

Why should retailers sell your brand?

Well considered design, unique perspective, quality product and the ability to sell to a wide range of consumers - action sports, streetwear, street fashion.


What do you see for the future of your company?

We are looking for sustainable and long-term growth with key partner retailers and eventually adding new product categories as timing allows.

What do you see for the future of the industry?

Hopefully more cooperation between brands and retailers rather than competition.

Where can we check out your products and content?

Our SLVDR brand icon is the 'Common Thread' logo, representing a global community and illustrates that we are all connected in some way. Whether you live in Berlin, Hong Kong or Los Angeles there is a common thread that connects us all. To continue with this philosophy, we have a strong web presence. We have our own webpage and webshop (currently only available in the US) www.slvdr.com, and are present on most of the social media channels in order to stay in touch with our consumers and global community. So come check us out and let us show you the SLVDR world of handmade simplicity and organic creative. 



HIREC

Action sports tech company HIREC produce cameras and accessories for those who love to share their moments. They are placing a high level of importance on their relationships with their retailers, and with a management team coming from boardsports backgrounds, they are an interesting opportunity for retailers.

Please give an overview on how and why the company began?

HIREC is a hi-tech oriented outdoor and action sports brand. We started the brand in summer 2015 with our action sports cameras and water-resistant Bluetooth® speakers - we developed a product range especially for extreme sports. It was important to us, to offer a range of products that meets today's demand in terms of sound and imaging, regardless of outdoor conditions. With friends, family or by yourself, HIREC immortalizes your most beautiful memories.

How do you differentiate yourselves from others in the action camera/accessories market?

We have our roots in the boardsports market and are lucky enough to be cross-linked in the industry all over Europe and have been for many years now. The HIREC brand has been developed to answer a precise need of our retailers. Our main USP is the fair margins that we provide to retailers. We provide products for action sports enthusiasts with an accessible price point and margins that allow the shops to work with an acceptable profit. We develop our products knowing what a boardsport enthusiast expects from an action sports camera. Also, we do not intend to create competition to our core retailers with big consumer electronic chains.

What is your best selling category?

We are seeing a great success on the entry level and high level camera, as well as with the Outdoor Speakers.

What do you find important about the European market?

The European market of consumer electronics products in the boardsports industry has grown so fast, that it has become a big challenge to protect the core players. Now it is important to listen to those retailers who helped in starting the buzz and bring a solution adapted to their needs. We are lucky enough to be a European company coming from the boardsports industry with a pan-European distribution network. We will actually be able to react to the precise needs and requests of our clients in the boardsports industry.

How do you support athletes and boardsports?

Right now we provide some riders with products, who we've known for many years and who we have been working with for a long time. This helps them to shoot promotional content for themselves as well as for our brand. We are also very excited and proud to announce, that we just signed a sponsorship with the watersports-icon Fred Compagnon. We are expecting exciting and innovative images to come!

What other marketing are you running?

Right now, we are concentrating on product development, to bring the best quality product to the market, which answers precisely the needs of our customers. Also, we are training the sales force in the field so that our customers can get the best service possible. At the same time, we are working on POP, to present the brand in an appropriate and easy way in the shops.

Besides sponsoring we are running an advertising campaign as well as online contests. We are in a partnership with the French Skateboarding Federation. PR and tradeshow are part of our marketing mix and later into the development of the brand we will of course participate at events.


Why should retailers sell your brand?

The HIREC brand is a young and dynamic brand that is evolving rapidly. We provide good service, margins for retailers and accompany our clients with training and marketing support. We find solutions even for small retailers, who cannot afford to place big orders for this kind of product. We have no rigid rules, our goal is to support our core retailers the best we can.

What do you see for the future of your company?

We will continue to work on the development of the brand and its products together with the evolution of technology. Besides the evolution of existing products we will continue to grow the range with more consumer electronic imaging products for the boardsports industry.

What do you see for the future of the industry?

With the evolution of modern technology and boardsports being more and more fashionable, more consumer electronic products will come to the boardsports market in the future. People are more and more performance oriented and seek to share their moments with others. The market will continue to see products that will make it easier for users to create and share high quality content. 



AEVOR

Aevor bags, coming out of the FOND OF BAGS fold are a German bag company taking transparency, sustainability and relationships seriously. The products, like the management team are serious on function and quality, but know how to have fun with designs.

Please give an overview on how and why the company began?

FOND OF BAGS has been making bags its business since 2010. We started with ergobag backpacks for grade schoolers, which combined the ergonomic design of innovative tracking backpacks with all the functionality expected of a schoolbag. We use textiles manufactured from recycled PET bottles to make our products. Now we employ over 140 staff and sell our products in 20 countries. Our brand portfolio spans from kindergarten backpacks to business bags, and our aim is to design backpacks and bags for people at all stages of life.

We launched our new brand AEVOR in March 2016 to offer school kids and students an exciting brand to accompany them along the most important stages of their life journey. We wanted to create products that combine a new style of sports design with functional features.

What is the company ethos?

Behaving responsibly and with transparency are top of the list for us. We devoted a lot of effort to finding sustainable producers in Asia who share our huge enthusiasm for backpacks. We're a very open company and are more than happy to have people visit our office in Cologne or our producers in Vietnam and China. We're creative and don't want fit into the same mould as other bag manufacturers. In addition to this, we're always ready to listen to our customers and retailers. We see ourselves as one big family and want to create a bond between our customers, retailers, and staff.

What sets you apart from your competitors?

We started as a traditional start-up and are continuing to build upon this healthy start-up mentality. When working on our first collection for AEVOR in 2015, we wanted to offer a clear alternative to the heritage movement, which has been a steady feature of the backpack and bag market. Our approach has enabled us to discover new ways of designing and marketing our products. We tackled the subject in a way that was a little more casual and we didn't want to take things - or ourselves - too seriously.

Similarly, our team fosters very close links with our retailers and is prepared to offer greater engagement at POS than other companies do. Working together to develop products and marketing concepts is part of our day-to-day business and allows us to interact closely with consumers.

Could you tell us about the way in which you pick up the issue of sustainability?

Our products are designed by our team in Cologne and manufactured in China. During the product development phase, our designers, product managers, and buyers spend several weeks during the year on-site, working with our partners in the sewing rooms and gaining experience of a typical working day. We therefore gain a personal insight into working conditions at the workshops. When manufacturing our products, recycling is a key pillar of our sustainability strategy. We use fabrics manufactured from 50% recycled PET bottles. Less waste is therefore produced and

fewer natural resources are needed to produce a finished backpack.

What do you find important about the European market?

In March 2016 we launched the first AEVOR collection, focusing on the DACH region initially. We greatly value healthy growth and want to impress retailers with well-thought-out designs. Work on selling our products in Scandinavia is already underway. We have our eye on the rest of the European market too and are looking for retail partners who would like to support our vision.

Why should retailers sell your brand?

We offer a fresh new look for existing backpack portfolios, and as a young, agile company we are able to work closely with our partners. We sense that retail could do with a new market and will do everything we can to spread our enthusiasm to retailers. Retailers who take on AEVOR will become a part of our family.

What do you see for the future of your company?

Every day we work passionately on our products and marketing so that in future we can become a real love brand with real relevance for customers and retailers. We love backpacks and bags and are bursting with new inspiration that will be turned into new ideas and ultimately a fresh new product. Our team is growing every day and those who get to know us will quickly realize that we really have something going on here. 



HOMESCHOOL

Homeschool are an outerwear brand made by snowboarders for snowboarders, with an impressive management team spanning pros and industry vets. With a soft launch in the UK's The Snowboard Asylum last winter, they are ramping up their European game for next season.

Please give an overview on how and why the company began?

Homeschool started out from the desire to build technical product first with fewer compromises. The goal with homeschool is to build a product that can do anything with a style that is understated but reflects the action sports outdoor world we all come from, while tapping into the energy of snow, surf, skate, art and music things we are all into. A killer brand and story with a core following wrapped around a product that can hang with anything out there at any price point, in any condition with the added benefit of super breathability and clean style.

Who is on the management team, and what are their backgrounds?

Design: Daniel Clancey, Founder and CEO, background: design at Columbia Sportswear and RIDE. Sales: Gary Bracelin, Global Sales Director, background: Sessions, Helly Hansen. Marketing, Chris Owen background: Lib Tech, Quicksilver. Lyric Mchargue-Product Development Director, background: Nike. Fred Royle: EU Brand Director, background: Westbeach.

What sets you apart from your competitors?

A focus on product first and not hype. We built the product first and let people who care figure it out. We don't treat our customers like idiots. We utilize a unique technology that focuses on breathability and protection from the elements that is superior to just about anything out there. Our style is "clean and

mean" and is born and tested in the Northwest United States in some really heavy conditions. We are bringing back some of the raw energy this industry once had with a product that can handle anything.

You are working with 37.5, please could you tell us how this came about and plans for the future?

We are still one of the few companies in the world using this technology in base layer, mid layer and shell, the way it was conceived and designed. Most "systems" of base/mid /shell were not engineered together and therefore don't function effectively as a system. Ours does. The product breathes much better than traditional fabrics and begins working (breathing) at a much lower relative humidity than anything else. That means you don't get clammy and cold. We are strong believers in the technology and it gets better every year - it will be part of our technical story for the foreseeable future, especially as we find new ways to use it.

You started out exclusively in TSA in the UK, how is this changing for 16/17 and what does Homeschool find important about the European market?


We are experiencing the most growth internationally at over 100% this year. Blue Tomato will be coming on board this year and we are excited about that. We love TSA because they are a family business, good people and they understand what we are doing as a brand. It's a great partnership we hope to

build on going forward. Europe has some of the best mountains in the world and although there are lots of challenges to doing business here we are excited about it. We want to give people the opportunity to try our stuff no matter where they are. We want to take over the world.

What marketing are you running?

We have started focusing on a team this year and have signed Eero Niemela, Frank Bourgeois and still have Chris Roach on board who is, of course, a legend in snowboarding. We like grassroots because I've always felt the "process of discovery" with a brand is really important. We don't spoon feed our customers with huge logos, huge teams, etc. because we like the idea of "if you know, you know" and ultimately the product itself is the best marketing. Having said all that you will be seeing a lot more of homeschool in the coming years. Both on the hill and off.

What do you see for the future of the industry?

I see some of the fire and stoke coming back into snowboarding. It's been commoditized over the last decade and I see a "reset" happening. The big guys who are in it for the wrong reasons are pulling out and we are growing. It goes beyond snow as well. Everyone does everything now, so it's about giving people what they need to do what they do and be comfortable around a brand they can get behind. 

NEW PRODUCT

01-VONZIPPER PLIMPTON

A Blue Star Cadet turned esteemed member of the scientific community. The Plimpton explores interests as diverse as oceanography, aviation, and the wish to breathe under water.
eu.vonzipper.com

02-PENNY PATRIOT BOARD

The Patriot board takes its inspiration from the iconic American Flag. The striking stars and stripes design looks super cool and is fast, fun and built to handle anybody that wants to cruise or carve all day long. Available 22" & 27."
www.pennyskateboards.com/eu

03-LANDYACHTZ BATTLE AXE EAGLES

The Battle Axe Eagles is a classic shape with modern updates. Landyachtz has drop mounted this bamboo board for added stability and given it a rockered profile to increase carve. Wheel cut outs eliminate wheel bite. Cruise in comfort on either the 35" or 40" size option. Art by Andreas Preis.
www.landyachtz.com

04-SECTOR 9 SHARKBITE

The 29.5" Sharkbite comes out of the brand new Sector 9 Fundamental series. It is the one in all cruiser for slashing the bowl and surfing your home garage driveway. Construction: 7 Ply Maple New School Mould Top Mount. Components include 7.0" Gullwing Mission Trucks, 58mm 78a Nineball Wheels, ABEC 5 Greaseball Bearings, 0.25" Recycled Plastic Riser, 1.25" Hardened Steel Bolts and ERG Grip Tape.
www.sector9.com

05-DIRTY DOG ASTRO

New for release in August 2016, Dirty Dog Astro sunglasses bring a modern, frameless twist to the classic Aviator design, highlighted by Emerald Green Fusion Lenses.
www.dirtydog.com

06-GOLDCOAST PLUTON

New for 2016, the GoldCoast Pluton features the Power Slide™ easy mounting truck slot, the newly redesigned Century C80 trucks, and a Sun Burn™ UV sensitive graphic that changes colour in the sunlight. It's a drop through that is out of this world.
www.skategoldcoast.com

01



02



03



04



05



06



Penny innovated the plastic skateboard made popular by surfers in the 70's. In the garage of Ben Mackay, Penny's founder, a premium quality plastic skateboard was designed to encourage everyone to enjoy the pure fun you can get from skateboarding. With the right combination of strength and flexibility, combined with high quality components Penny Skateboards are built to let the good times roll on and on.



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It's a family affair.

It's interesting living in the UK at this time – watching all the Politicians rip themselves apart over the IN / OUT Referendum. Our EU brethren must look on in horror watching the unbelievable merry-go-round of misinformation after misinformation leading to accusation and counter accusation. By the time you read this it will all be over – or at the very least the Fat Lady will be warming up her vocal chords. Whatever your politics, whatever your views – In or Out – there is no doubt that this is all massively disruptive to business and is unsettling for just about everyone in the UK – whether in work, out of work, employee or employer. April economic figures do not make for happy reading. Retail sales fell. UK construction fell higher than predictions. The Bank of England cut its growth forecast and also admitted that estimates “could be significantly affected by a Brexit vote”. House price growth slowed “as a direct effect of the uncertainty.”

We really don't need this. We will all be happier when it's done and dusted and we can return to...the weather. Yes, well that is not helping us either. At the time of writing this (mid-May) we are being teased with glimpses of what is, apparently, going to come but the temperatures are still cold. It's almost June and, apart from the hardy, you're hitting the water after donning your 5mm winter suit. This also doesn't help our business. So what's going on in the big wide world of boardsports? First port of call was the South Coast in the midst of it all with Henry from Shore. “I'm feeling really positive. Business is moving in the right direction. As a family owned, independent company we don't have unlimited finances to rely on so we have no option but to get it right.” And get it right they seem to do as Shore are famous for their customer service: “I guess it's one of our USPs,” continues Henry, “we've built up an incredibly loyal customer base over the last 35 years and we keep those customers by treating them right and supplying them with everything they need as they grow. They reward us with repeat business whether it be online or through the door, something internet only upstarts can't compete with.”

Shore is a real watersports destination store with a serious online business. “Whilst overall 70% of our business is online the store is still doing great business.” That percentage shifts to about 50/50 when it comes to wetsuit sales so people wanting technical kit still desire the in store approach. Is it the same for all technical stuff...ie boards? “Surf is difficult with one or two big players shifting large volumes not leaving much for the independents. Prices are low, margins are difficult. Someone asked me the other day when I was going to Retire. It hadn't crossed my mind before so I asked Henry about his step dad's plans for retirement. (He's around the same age as me) “He's still pretty involved so we're not putting him out to pasture just yet,” concluded Henry. Henry's reference to a ‘family business’ gave me a lead for my next call. I head north to another family owned business to find out how it has been in Scotland. Thomas Stark had some vision when, 38 years ago, he opened a windsurfing shop (Mach Enterprises) at Tranent just south of Edinburgh. Over the years the business morphed and changed but stayed true to its boardsports roots and is now run by his son Brian, Brian's wife Sara and his sister Carolyn. A real family affair.

But how is this business after 38 gruelling years? “We're still here and we're still fighting,” says Brian “but jeez it's hard. Snow has been good because of the great season we've had in Scotland. We were still having a

good time right up until the last weekend of resort opening.”

What of the new summer season – has it started yet? How is skate doing? “Skate is steady. We're selling more completes at the moment and we're also selling to a younger audience. We've got 10 and 12 year olds coming in and spending £35 - £40 on boards. This is great to see and it's really refreshing that they want to buy from a shop – not online. It's an ‘experience’ for them and they're enjoying it. And we're enjoying it. It brings back that much needed resource...enthusiasm”. And Surf? “Surfboards are tough – really tough but we're still hanging in there. Of course the wetsuit business is steady for us and always has been, but it's difficult to cover all requirements for everyone and if we don't have it available they'll simply buy online.”

Brian has suffered more than most with ‘Showrooming’ and it's one of his pet hates. “It's getting worse. Really bad and I'm getting seriously p'd off about it. We have to do something about this – we need all the independents to start charging people for boot and wetsuit fitting”. Sadly I doubt that is going to happen any time soon and ‘Showrooming’ is here to stay.

So last on my family round up is a shop that shares (in part) the same name as Brian's business – Boardwise Cannock. Ian Gregorelli was a spotty little 14-year-old when I first met him. His Father, Victor, unknowingly shared the same vision as Tom Stark and, together with Ian, opened Grand Prix from their home in 1978. Seven years later Ian and Victor moved the business to Cannock where it still trades today some 38 years later.

A ‘not-so-young’ Ian is still true to his boardsports upbringing. The majority of the business is still derived from windsurfing (one of the few) but they're also active in surf, skate and snow. “The winter season has been pretty difficult. In store we've done the same as last year but online has been quieter.” (The two Boardwise stores have a collaboration with a single online presence). “Our focus at Cannock is primarily on in-store sales but even here we are impacted by events like Black Friday and other retailers going on sale. Margin has been squeezed again and it doesn't help with our key wintersports brand selling direct. This is all leading me to a change in buying pattern and we're looking to buy less and less on pre-order and try to hoover up at the end of the season.” Apart from winter how was skate? “It's not the biggest part of our business but it's always steady – we like that. Each month we seem to do the same – most of it is completes and it's really servicing local kids. We're happy enough with our skate business but don't see it growing much.” Similarly surf is not a major part of the turnover but is still regarded as important for the business: “It helps us sell wetsuits which is the bright light at this time. We're going really well on wetsuits in all areas – and in some new areas. Open water swimming and Tri are helping but the staple diet of wetsuits for boardsports and for the beach are still king.” Like Shore, Ian estimates that wetsuits sales are 50/50 online and in-store.

All these stores have one thing in common – well more than one. They are all family affairs, they've all be trading for over 30 years, they are all true to their boardsports roots and they were all born from the windsurfing boom. My own company shares that pedigree – I felt quite at home.

Gordon Way



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The INSEE, as well as Banque de France, have both favourably reviewed their growth estimates in the first and second quarter. With a predicted GDP increase of 0.4%, the recovery seems to have actually arrived. At the same time, this new estimate doesn't completely change what we can expect from growth in the coming months. Last March 30, the governor of Banque de France, François Villeroy de Galhau remained very cautious about the future. "Growth in France today is both resistant and insufficient: resistant because in 2016 it should be at least at last year's level, 1.2% and insufficient because it should have remained slightly above the average within the Eurozone, which is between 1.4-1.5%", he explained.

A major event in the second quarter, the Euro 2016 football championships in France should have a significant effect on the French economy according to a study carried out by the Centre de Droit et d'Economie du Sport. Indeed, both French and foreign supporters traveling for the event will generate significant extra activity during this period. According to figures released by CDES, hosting such an event should produce an economic boost to the order of 1.2 billion Euros for the country! Foreign supporters traveling to attend the event in France will provide the majority of the income. Given that France has a quarterly GDP of around 550 billion Euros, the boost provided by Euro 2016 in the second quarter could be around 0.2%. This represents a significant impact within an economic context where France is struggling to overcome the 1% growth per year hurdle.

"Ça va mieux" in France, François Hollande proclaimed last April 14 in 'Citizen Dialogues', a face-to-face programme with the French public a year away from the presidential elections. A formula sounding like a campaign pre-slogan for a president of the republic who has not yet declared his intentions for 2017 and who has promised that he won't run without a decrease in unemployment figures. The news seems to be in his favour with the announcement of a mega contract worth 34 billion Euros in submarine sales to Australia from the French group DCNS set to create "thousands of jobs". The number of job seekers in March has dropped by levels not seen in ten years. But the vast majority of French people do not think they "are doing better" as their head of state proclaims. According to a latest opinion poll from the Elabe institute for BFMTV, 83% say they disagree with the "ça va mieux" statement. With encouraging figures and green lights, the French are somehow still worried about their future; such is the situation France finds itself in in spring 2016.

As for retailers, the summary is also mixed. While for Thierry Tiquet from the shop Vague et Vent in Palavas les flots "the situation is pretty stable compared to last year," and "the start of the spring is quite satisfactory," with a summer season that is starting to pick up. Vincent Rebitzer from the shop Slidebox in Colmar and Strasbourg also asserts that: "the start of spring was quite satisfying compared to last year with a slight decrease compared to the first quarter." Although at ABS in Lyon we can see a slight increase in sales at the start of this season, others on the other hand are less optimistic like Alban Causse from the shop Be Golf in Mimizan: "The figures aren't great, the start of the season has stalled a bit." According to him it was the start of the year that was tough in general, figures down by 10-15%.

Everyone agrees that the global economic climate and France's moral are partly responsible for this situation and for the slight delay to the launch of the 2016 season. Alban also points to tougher and tougher competition

from the Internet, which is spoiling sales in shops. "Households are coming in more and more to get advice in the shop and then ordering online to find a better price".

In the skate and street segment, it seems like the core brands and technical equipment are the most sought after in shops. At ABS in Lyon the most visible brands at the moment would be HUF or Palace. At Slidebox, Vincent is talking about Thrasher and Stussy. On the other hand these two tell us that "more mainstream brands like Nike SB, Vans and Volcom are slightly down." Vincent adds: "the fashion trend for running is slowing down skate shoe sales in general." According to Alban in Mimizan: "People are more and more demanding on price and will buy their clothes elsewhere like at H&M...there are less and less brand sensations like in the past." In addition: "People are dressing themselves more from the Internet or from the big box stores." This trend is confirmed at ABS in Lyon where the best selling products are mostly "technical equipment such as skate decks and accessories..."

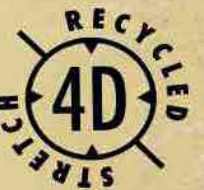
The same goes for the coastal retailers. For Thierry at Vague et Vent, "most of our sales revolve around technical products," with innovative products each season. Thierry tells us about the inflatable rig: "It's new for 2016 and will reach out to a wider clientele who wouldn't necessarily have contact with boardsports and that will make windsurfing more accessible." At Unclezaz in Anglet, Benjamin Genty Costa says: "There is a trend for high-performance foam boards like the Softjoy range from Madness that seems to have been confirmed this year. He adds: "also for inflatable stand up paddles because of the fun and practicality aspects of these particular SUPs". Alban confirms, "people mostly come into the shop for technical products. They want advice and to see our products. They need us to guide them in their decisions." This is his way of distinguishing himself from online sellers: "This is our strength and what sets us apart. We have to give the best advice we can to our clients using passion-driven arguments from specialists". It's the same story for Benjamin who says: "on the shop's website most demand is for clothes while in the shop it's more technical products. You need to see technical products before you buy them, which can be difficult on the Internet." Another trend that seems to be kicking off this season is the development of an electronics section, which is steadily taking hold in shops. "It's the first year that I've brought in electronic products and the rate of sale is pretty encouraging", says Alban. Consumers are nowadays more connected and this dimension is being integrated bit by bit into boardsports with cameras and their accessories or GPS trackers to analyse performances after each session. Benjamin from Unclezaz also talks about "SP Gadgets or Hirec being examples of brands that work well in shops because they offer excellent quality to price ratio." A new market then, one that is growing and that retailers are gradually starting to incorporate into their range to meet the demands of participants. A season then that has undoubtedly started slowly but promisingly as well in terms of positive economic indicators uttered at the start of summer 2016. A good run for our national team in the Euro 2016 on home soil, and maybe even victory, could inject a bit of growth hormone into household consumption this summer.

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The first warm spring days have been alternating with fresh powder on the glaciers, meaning the seasons are still playing tricks on us. Thanks to the changeable conditions, snow business continued far into spring, while the skate and surf season started simultaneously.

Lars Langer from Brandoffice trade agency in Munich concludes his winter season with Giro Goggles and Helmets on a positive note as well. "Re-order numbers were limited, but overall it wasn't a bad season at all. Since the winter before hadn't been that great either, most retailers ordered cautiously and were able to sell most of that. I had a lot of retailers who were pretty happy with helmets and goggles at the end of the season." In his experience, technology plays a major part here: "Shops that really get into new technologies like MIPS sold them really well, providing their customer with something that is actually really new – not just the seemingly 20th new colour combination." This also applies to goggles: "Shops that understood high quality coatings made good sales with them. And through that were able to noticeably increase the average price point." An effect that is also implied to the visor helmets, yet Lars stays critical: "There are some people saying that visor helmets managed to greatly increase helmet prices. Yet they're forgetting, that with every visor helmet sale, there is no goggle sold! Either way it is a new trend – whether good or bad, necessary or not, is up to everyone on their own."

In clothing, the trends themselves are quickly changing, as Johannes Beck from online skate shop skatedeluxe.de noticed, who deliver 50% of their goods outside of Germany. "At large we're absolutely happy with the textile sector. With the right brands and right product groups you can create very good turnover. However trends have become extremely fast paced, you always have to stay up to date and keep an eye on the fashion scene." The shoe market is staying strong too, he thinks, with Nike SB, "still setting the tone with new innovations and product stories." Johannes also sees good chances for Adidas Skateboarding, who are investing a lot, as well as ÉS, who "made a great comeback". At the same time he warns, "the other established shoe brands like Vans, Etnies and DC" not to loose touch. He also warns that brands who don't have strong marketing stories to tell about their products will lose ground. Brands "that characterised the typical look of the 90's and now profit from their heritage" like Dickies or Thrasher on the other hand will thrive, he thinks, as will "new, young, creative core brands à la Polar, Isle, etc."

At Santo Loco in Munich, shop owner and co-founder Ricardo Friesen is focusing on small brands, that aren't available on every corner - "that always works well" he says from experience. With a strong and growing scene of river surfers in the Bavarian capital, the shop has somewhat specialized in board and equipment for the waves at the Eisbach and the Floßlande. "River surfing is our passion, but it's very difficult. Yet I would say, sales are constant," he says. And they have been more or less for the last nine years, which is how long the shop has maintained its store right in the pedestrian precinct right in the city centre. "I'm very thankful to be able to do this together with my brothers. I don't think it would have been possible alone... We learned and experienced a lot in these nine years, it was an intense but also very precious time," he reminisces and thinks their success is mainly due to the fact that he loves what he does. "Never

give up and if things are impossible, God will help."

True to that motto, Santo Loco has always carried on and pushed through, whether they had a huge building site right in front of their doors – or even inside. "About two and a half years ago, we were able to reconstruct the shop and save a lot of space. This extra space was turned into a Surf Café! It was very important to us, that it would be a proper coffee place and not just a little corner with a couch and filter coffee. Unfortunately you can't really measure how that influences sales but we definitely see more advantages than disadvantages!" Which makes total sense, as it adds a truly unique "shopping experience" the customer won't get anywhere else, especially not online.

The online market has established itself on different criteria though and is still thriving, skatedeluxe.de expect significant growth in Q3 and Q4 compared to previous years due to their strong standing in marketing, usability and product portfolio. Yet competition has become tougher here as well, making it increasingly more important to specialize. "Some of my retailers have had excellent online sales with useful pricing and profits. Others didn't at all. Times where you could have a little online business by the side are long gone," Lars from Brandoffice confirms. Instead he had the feeling that the price doesn't necessarily matter too much in a purchase decision in-store. "First of all, the helmet or goggle has to please, which is very personal. Then the product has to fit well and only if that criteria is met, the price comes into play." Of course it's not an easy task for a shop to "balance this tightrope between size and range of the offer, compared to turnover. But if you never show your customers anything new and only rely on the standards that used to perform good, you can't be surprised if they get bored and shop online!"

The biggest challenge currently is posed by the longboard market: "After the sales success everyone stocked up their warehouses, small skateshops in the inner cities as much as big multi-sports chain stores and online giants like Amazon. It was obvious, that the market would be completely oversaturated at some point and that the hype around longboarding would flatten again," says Johannes. "On the other hand, skate hardware is picking up again, which we're super happy about."

Eventually every development has more than one side and a certain scope for interpretation, too. "I think that in general there's a bit too much complaining and whining, that's so easy and maybe also in some ways instilled. Instead, many should ask themselves, where happiness and contentment come from in the end, because that's what it's all about," Lars ponders and is backed up by Johannes: "Even though things aren't easy all the time, you should always believe in yourself and do everything you can to achieve your goals. At least we continue to be highly motivated and have a tight plan for the future, that we're determined to follow." Let's look forward to summer then!

Anna Langer

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Economically Italy is growing but at a very low percentage and speed. For example, industrial production grew by 0.7% in the first quarter of 2016 in comparison to the last quarter of 2015. It is growth but not enough, as the whole industry isn't growing fast enough to making a difference to the overall debt of the state, which isn't decreasing as expected by the E.U. Companies don't really feel this growth and salaries overall aren't on the rise, so purchase power is still the same as it was in 2015, meaning stores can't really push their turnover.

The boardsport segment isn't great either - during the first quarter of 2016 stores have felt there is just too much product on the market and feel way more pressure from outside our industry than ever before. Multi-chain and sport stores are now a bigger competitor than before as they carry a lot of the same goods as our industry, sometimes at better prices or with a wider selection. Diversity, customer service and being a cooler location is now more key for independent retailers than ever before. Having cool 'influencers' shopping at your store is now crucial.

Lukas Höller from Sub sums it up in a nutshell: "We need products that differ from the rest, something that customers need to buy at our stores. You can get running shoes everywhere, they won't save our business."

Retailer buying habits have to change; selection and product segmentation is now very important for the smaller retailers. Smaller stores need more 'core' marketed product to compete with online business. We also have to keep in mind that the independent retailer gives the 'cool' and 'hype' factor to a certain product, and the chain



In the first quarter of 2016, the Spanish economy continued to show positive behaviour, with a GDP growth estimated at 0.7%; better than the two preceding quarters. The progress continued leaning on the good spending behaviour of households and companies, which will have helped, among other factors, the positive tone of financial conditions. In particular, household have been strengthened due to the fall of oil price, growth of employment, and in a lesser extent, the introduction of various fiscal measures. In short, Spain continues to grow with modest rises in all economic indicators. This translates into salaries, and the information obtained during January and February of this year, reflects an average increase of 1.13%, which has an impact on consumption and purchasing, as our professionals confirm. Is this the case for Blas Palomo de Jorge 'Blaki', from Loco Locals Surf Shop in Málaga? "Sales have grown 7% compared to last year. It's still far away from what we had in the good times. Footwear is selling well, but technical product has declined. We think it might be related to the competition of online sales and the new independent local garages and repair shops. We also didn't have a good winter." Blas has a clear vision of the boardsports market - after all, his shop has been opened since 1992. "Shops helped surfing grow but once large sports shops came into surfing, the market exploded. They didn't care about the authenticity of the boardsports industry. They designed prices and specific products for these clients and as a result, the market has been saturated - we have lost the appeal and the exclusivity." The appeal and exclusivity is the distinguishing mark of Indi Basque Surfing in Donostia, a surf and skate shop run by Ioana Celayaran. "In our third season, sales have improved compared to last year,

store selling it in big quantities doesn't. Online business overall has steadily grown a lot over the past year and Italy seems to have become a very important market for European online retailers overall. Italians are now more confident and trusting of online stores than before and every store's online business in Italy has seen a good increase - for many stores it's also a way to gain more sales from outside the country as well.

As far as trends, longboarding is still trending but is seeing a decrease in comparison to SS15 and cruisers are seeing a heavy decrease in core stores as multi-channel sport stores and even toy stores have started to sell them heavily. Skateboard decks are selling well and with many cities investing more in skateparks we also have a growing active skate scene, which is a very good sign. As far as surf news, Vissla have started to sell in Italy and has had some good momentum. Surf stores are in to new brands right now and Vissla has the right style in this quickly, changing clothing environment, and the brand are also attracting some streetwear stores with their clothing line.

Accessories seem to constantly do well with watch sales seeing an increase over the last few seasons and underwear still seems to struggle in comparison to socks. The biggest clothing trend so far for SS16 is Thrasher, which is flying of the shelves. Online, Instagram and Facebook are now crucial tools for store owners to market their stores and products, and the rise of Snapchat in younger audiences is also noticeable, with many skate clips going viral on the platform. Get on it with your store, now!

Franz Josef Holler

especially our own apparel, which has sold very well, due to the identity that our brand reflects. During beach season, the usuals have sold very well: caps, towels, thongs, bags, etc. We sell a lot to foreign tourists, young people and families. They look for quality and they look for something different with good materials. We have also found that colours work well; people like powerful and beautiful colours." Ioana continues: "Skating and skateboard rental is what make us different from others - cities are a great place to skate! I'm very happy with my business, even if it there is a lot of competition and new shops around. There are also non-surf shops who sell surf product, such as large chains like Pull & Bear for instance, who offered wetsuits for girls last year." One of the main skating spots in Europe is located in Getxo, with a long tradition of skating. Kako from Kako Skateboard Shop, in the Las Arenas neighbourhood know the area well: "We are a core skate shop and our strength is on the technical side - hardware. Footwear has declined but in general overall sales are similar to last year. We don't depend on the type of client who looks for fast trends, we follow a very pure line in which lots of our products are available all year round without discounts or promotions. It is the only way a core skate shop doesn't lose its spirit." Kako has a clear opinion on the "less than upbeat economic state of the market. Large corporations damage small and core skate shops due to their objectives and globalization policy. We just stick to what we do and we don't ask for more." In conclusion, it seems that the identity and the pure code of boardsports continue to serve as good positioning strategies in the Spanish market, which continues to grow, albeit at a slow pace.

Jokin Arroyo Uriarte



After a late but pretty good winter season, the Austrian shops are happy with springtime so far. Simone Unterrainer, Senior Buyer at online giant Blue Tomato, reports: "The snowwear business was very good until the middle of March and for that period of time, we had an increase in turnover compared to last year. Other ranges like streetwear, shoes, and accessories were also going strong from the beginning." Stefan Lind from Freedom Skate Shop in Graz can't complain either, especially hardware like decks, trucks, wheels and pre-built skateboards are selling well while clothes and shoes are trading as usual. Also, Stefan is hoping for a better volume of t-shirt sales compared to last season. "Regarding shoes, Emerica is our number one, while Alien Workshop, Habitat and Baker are our best-selling boards. When it comes to wheels, Spitfire is getting more and more popular, especially the new Formula Four version. The tie-dye trend is still strong in the clothing range," which is surprising for the Freedom Skate Shop crew. At Blue Tomato, street-oriented brands like Carhartt and Iriedaily are received well in stores. Nike SB is still a top-seller within men's shoes, while Adidas originals clearly dominates within the women's shoe range. The well-known big players are still in high demand when it comes to streetwear and, according to Simone at Blue Tomato, are doing a great job. Online, the focus lies on summer products — Blue Tomato already notes an increased turnover in bikinis. Classic skateboarding is gaining more importance again, both with the online giants and at the core shop. Stefan from Freedom Skate Shop recounts: "It looks like the Penny board phase is over, at least at our store, sales are declining. Instead, it seems that more people are back on skateboards again." Blue Tomato's Simone sees some changes when it comes to longboarding: "We have to try to find the best range for the longboards and cruisers. It's no big secret that

the longboard segment is a bit challenging right now, therefore it is important to be sensitive. Anyways, skateboarding has to become more of a focus again!" Stefan from Freedom Skate Shop is optimistic: "More and more parks are being built, so we are hoping that the scene will thrive and prosper further." Skate shoes are also turning back to their roots it seems: At Freedom Skate Shop, cupsole models and slightly thicker Vulc shoes are slowly replacing the "as-thin-as-possible" trend, Stefan tells us. So, what's happening aside from rolling boards? At Blue Tomato, surf is developing very well overall. Spring suits are a trend here, which has been recognised early. The online shop is betting on the women's activewear segment, which according to Simone is becoming more and more relevant. "Other trends are functional streetwear, hybrid textures, outdoor and nature — to say it short, cool streetwear that offers high functionality. Not the worst trend for Europe and our changeable weather." Furthermore, Simone thinks that 'athleisure' will be interesting for our business in some way, and is a trend that should be kept in sight.

Finally, I'll finish off by coming back to skateboarding (in the broader context). When asked about contests and events in spring and summer, it becomes clear that the sport is still rather important for the local scene. Blue Tomato not only plans to host the BT Longboard Days and The Captain's Quest, an event featuring a miniramp in the middle of a lake, but also a BT Rail Battle Tour, which will be held at extraordinary spots in different cities. At Freedom Skate Shop, an indoor contest is coming up, as well as the traditional Go Skateboarding Day event. So then, happy summer shredding!

Barbara Mayer



It's a bitter pill to swallow this year and after a difficult winter hopes turned toward a nice spring to lift the spirits, but it seems the opposite came to pass. The winter seems to have been prolonged just as all resorts were closing down and everyone was looking forward to some warm, long days.

Without wishing to rub salt in the wounds after this tough season, we can now say for sure that the winter sports sector is in crisis. According to information received from an article published by Mr Laurent Vannat from the Swiss ski lifts, it seems as though the number of 'skier days' counted between 2004/2005-2015 has decreased by 19.5%. Within this decline we know that there is the domestic problem of lack of interest amongst the population of our dear country, as well as a reduction in foreign tourism. If we look at the number of overnight stays we can see that it's our European neighbours who have shunned us and although the Asian clientele has increased, they are unfortunately not big participants in skiing or snowboarding.

Climate change and the erosion of interest in winter sports are not the only factors in the crisis we are faced with. Firstly, there is the problem of price, which keeps rising along with the inherent rising costs of commerce, then there's the obvious competition from the Internet which, although it's been this way for a while, is reinventing the way we consume on a day-to0day basis. Alongside the big online sellers like Zalando that we are starting to see, in recent years more and more brands are selling directly to consumers through their websites. The change of direction is logical and we can't see what might stop it.

To battle against the system of price slashing on the foreign online market, many are staying passive, not really looking for solutions and only counting the losses. There are a few who are reacting, some in a relatively simple way i.e. trying to boost their level of service to the maximum to get one up on Internet services while others are employing a different tactic altogether.

This is the case for Zürcher Sport in Frutigen, whose policy is that it's advice that pays and it's charged by the minute. If the person is sure of what they are buying and can go into the shop, pick up what they want and head straight to the cash desk then they get a 20% discount, bringing the price closer to many online prices. However, if the person needs help, they still get the reduction but with a 72CHF/hour supplement added. This concept is explained at the door, as well as by the assistants themselves. For now the reaction has been mixed but overall they estimate to have kept 95% of their clientele and to have managed to stabilize their turnover. It's obviously a shock tactic, provocative in one sense but legitimate in another. For Beat Zürcher, the shop's owner, it was high time to fight back against showrooming which has become commonplace in our shops with retailers spending hours informing people and helping people try equipment so that they can then go off and line the pockets of French and German online stores. This system has been in place for over a year and seems to work. Is that really the answer? Hard to say for now but it's certainly food for thought.

Fabien Grisel

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- Provide any tools that the (Key) Accounts need or require for specific campaigns or general
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- Assist with tradeshow coordination where applicable;
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- Ensure product endorsement with key people/trend setters;
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<div></div> <div>13-16</div> <div>THE OUTDOOR SHOW</div> <div>FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, GERMANY</div> <div>OUTDOOR-SHOW.COM</div>	<div></div> <div>18-19</div> <div>AGENDA</div> <div>MIAMI , FLORIDA</div> <div>AGENDASHOW.COM</div>	<div></div> <div>23-24</div> <div>ITALIAN SURF EXPO</div> <div>SPIAGGIA DI SANTA SEVERA</div> <div>ITALIASURFEXPO.IT</div>	<div></div> <div>27-28</div> <div>JACKET REQUIRED</div> <div>LONDON, UK</div> <div>JACKET-REQUIRED.COM</div>
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<div></div> <div>19-30</div> <div>BILLABONG PRO TAHITI</div> <div>FRENCH POLYNESIA</div> <div>WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM</div>	<div></div> <div>20</div> <div>VANS PRO SKATE PARK SERIES WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS</div> <div>MALMO, SWEDEN</div> <div></div>	<div>SEPTEMBER</div> <div>7-18</div> <div>HURLEY PRO</div> <div>TRESTLES, CALIFORNIA</div> <div>WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM</div>	<div></div> <div>8-11</div> <div>SURF EXPO</div> <div>ORLANDO, FLORIDA, USA</div> <div>WWW.SURFEXPO.COM</div>
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BRIGHTTRADESHOW

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DEELUXE MONTAFON BANKED SLALOM



Wolfgang Zauriz (Deeluxe)



Toby Leyendecker (Mervin) and Pete Deeluxe) with their friend



Toby Leyendecker and Mathieu Perez (Deeluxe)



Serge Dupraz (Dupraz Snowboards)



Muck Müller (munchie Konsilium) and Elias Elhard



Marco Feichtner (Speaker+Pro = Pro Speaker)



Kolja (Board and Kleid Distribution) and Stephane (686)



Jan Prokes (Volcom) and Matheu Perez (Deeluxe)

PROWINTER



SportAir B2B Events Maker Mathieu Kurtz



Smith Optics Trade Marketing Coordinator EMEA Gianmarco Savoldi



Marco Sampaoli from Moon Mountain & Outdoor Network



K2 Snowboarding Sales Manager Andy Threimer



Head Snowboards International Marketing Manager for Snowboards & Protection Max Thurner



DPS Distribution Sales Manager Marco Gerosa for Blackhole Snowboards



Burton Sales Rep Italy, Massimo Tintori



Agnese Facchini from Moon Mountains & Outdoor Network

VANS DAAN VAN DER LINDEN SKATE SHOES LAUNCH, EINDHOVEN



Vans' Ben Sooprayen, team rider Kalle Berglind and Alexis Jauzion



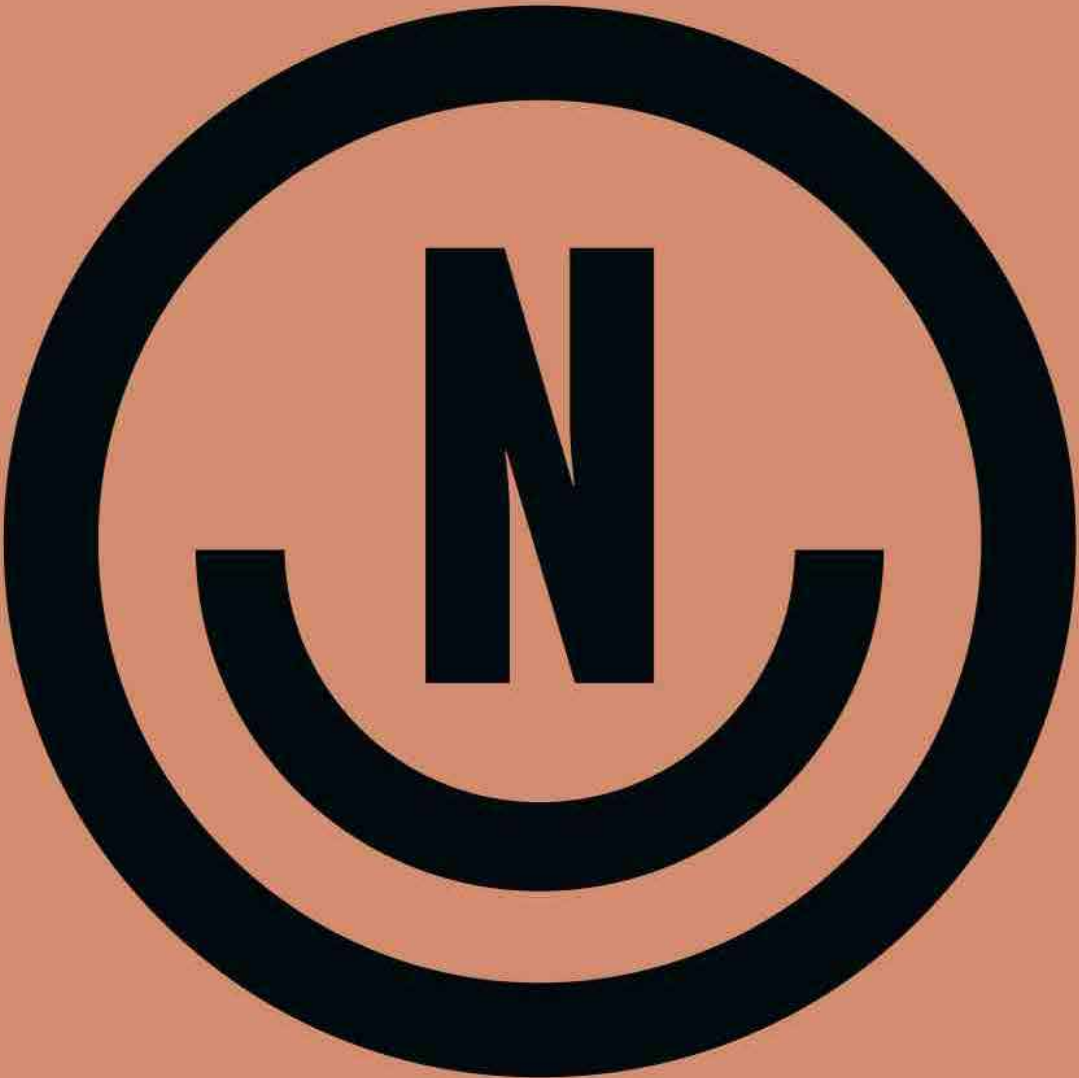
Vans new PR guy George Pedrick with Swedish team rider, Kalle Berglind



The main man, Daan Van Der Linden



Event MC & Euro Skate TM Danny Wainwright



N E F F

STUBEN LONGBOARD CLASSIC



Vökl Snowboards' Christoph de Pay



Nitro Snowboards' Mirko Holzmüller (Marketing, Communications & Team managment)



Mr. Titus Dittman, founder of the Titus Skateshops



Mervin MfG Demo Chief Toby Leyendeker and Muck Müller



Lib-Tech and Mervin Sales Rep for Austria, Didi Feichtner with Alex Schütte from Alpside-Fishing



Korua Snowboards Demo Chief Vitus Zenz



Good Boards from founder Josef Holub, Nina and Vice President Maik Friese



Crew

TORQ SURFBOARDS DEALER MEETING, MUNDAKA



Vague et Vent's Thierry & Hoff's Head Of Buying, Damien.jpeg



Tug of war



Torq's General Manager Sebastian Wenzel



Hoff CEO Marc Farhat

SHINER DISTRIBUTION 40TH CELEBRATIONS, BRISTOL, ENGLAND



Charlie Allen and Jim Thiebaud Deluxe Distribution



George Powell skate One Corp and Richard Novak NHS



Keith Cochrane Venture Trucks



Nils and Julius Dittmann.. playing away from home



RP, Leo, Mark and Roberta from Protec



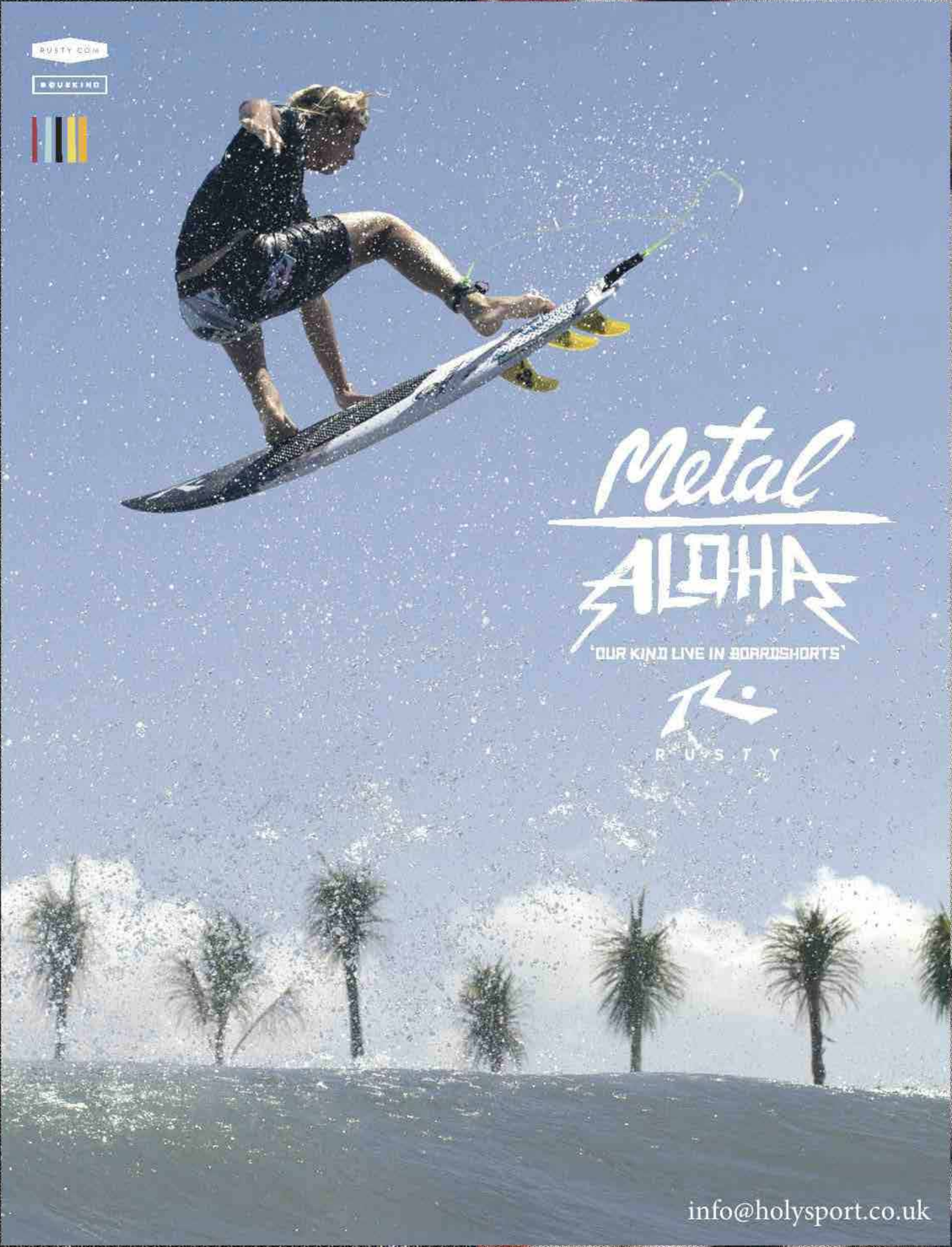
The Shiner brothers, Chris and Charlie



Vicki and Lowri Shiner marketing



Tony Vitello Thrasher in Chief meets his match





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