

BOARDSPORT

#85 FEBRUARY / MARCH 2017

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EUROPEAN SURF/SKATE/SNOW BUSINESS

**SALOMON'S** DAVID PITSCHI

**WHO BUYS** YOUR STUFF?

**NIDECKER ACQUIRES** FLOW SNOWBOARDING

**BRAND PROFILES,** BUYER SCIENCE & MUCH MORE



**TREND REPORTS:** FW17/18 SNOWBOARDS, OUTERWEAR, GOGGLES, WETSUITS, SKATE HARDGOODS

# CUSTOMIZE YOUR COMFORT

THE V-66

JAMIE LYNN SIGNATURE COLORWAY



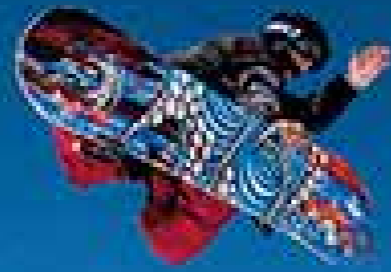
REACH AROUND CUFF STRAP / TONGUE LOCK  
DOWN SYSTEM / HEAT MOLDABLE LINER

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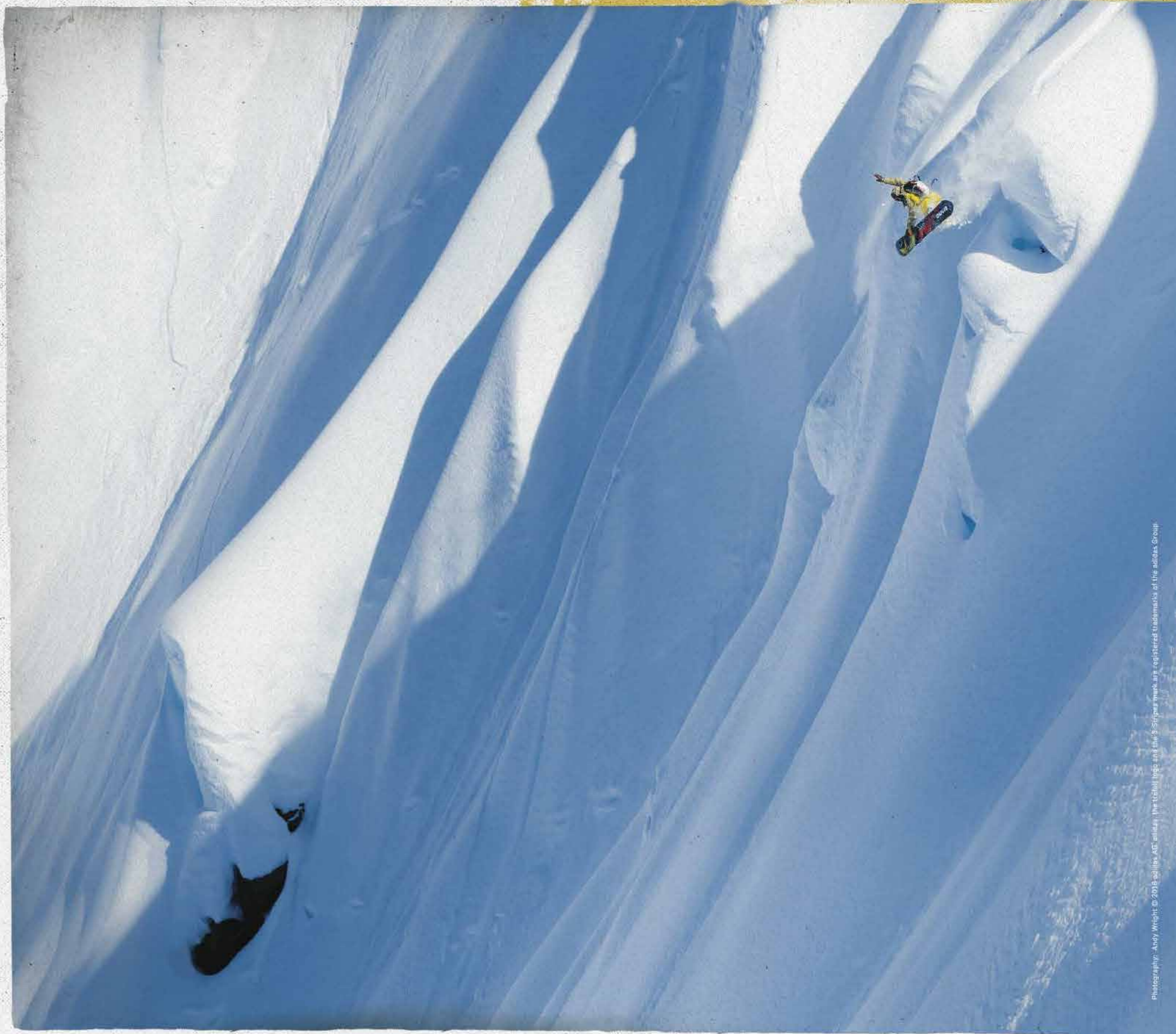
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GIRO



**KAZU KOKUBO**

METHOD IN THE MAJOR STRETCHIN IT JACKET AND PANT  
HAJNES, ALASKA



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# BRAVING THE ELEMENTS

HALLDOR HELGASON  
IN THE SERGE BEANIE  
AND RIPPER MITT



N E F F

US

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## HELLO #85

I'm writing this issue's editorial whilst stuck at Geneva airport thanks to the UK's inability to deal with snow, sandwiched between Vans' Snowboarding Days event in Les Arcs and the on-snow demo in La Clusaz.

As London shuts down over 2cm of snow, the Alps are under siege by the white stuff and it's a welcome relief for retailers across Europe. We've now seen three consecutive Decembers that have been relatively untouched by snow, leaving consumers who don't want a snowboard for Christmas if there's no snow on the ground. In an ideal world, we'd simply shift Christmas until late January to meet our new weather pattern. But alas, instead we need to change the mentality. Luckily, this winter has been cold enough for the majority of resorts to produce good quality snow on piste and whereas it's not waist high turns before Christmas lunch, many got to experience fun bluebird piste shred for Christmas – something equally as fun. And it's this message we need to hit home; there's plenty of fun to be had snowboarding, no matter the conditions.

Sitting here at Geneva I'm still buzzing after a couple of days of solid piste bashing with good crew at the Vans Snowboarding Days in Les Arcs. Shredding with Jamie Lynn,

Markus Keller, Victor de le Rue et al made the corduroy cruising serious amounts of fun and as my focus turns to La Clusaz (and the predicted 70+cm of snow that awaits me), butterflies start to twitch.

We (retailers, brands and media) need to remind the consumer that snowboarding (in all of its guises) is fun. And for all ages: We know that 'returners' are the demographic with the money, but it's their kids who are our future, and it's invigorating to see the rising number of kids shred options from snowboard brands. Just as snowboarding flirted with mainstream popularity in the naughties, and surfing and skateboarding continue to influence popular culture, snowboarding will again return to popularity en masse. It's our job to make sure we are here with open arms when it does. And as athletes and media ramp up their efforts in preparation for next season's Winter Olympics in PyeongChang, Korea it provides us with the perfect global stage for our industry to capitalise on this opportunity.

Always Sideways  
**Harry Mitchell Thompson**  
Editor

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**On the cover:** Will Radula-Scott of The Riders Lounge & Method mag. Photo by James North.

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**PHUNKSHUN WEAR ENTERS BASE LAYER MARKET**

For Winter 2017/18, Phunkshun Wear debuts base layers, continuing to utilize their signature progressive environmental technology and eye-catching design. Similar to Phunkshun’s accessories, the Aviator Base Layer top is made with breathable, sweat-wicking Repreve fabric, providing UPF 50+ protection and odor control in a fashion forward cut that looks just as good at apres as it does on the lift line.

**BRIXTON APPOINTS MARCO MESEM DIRECTOR OF EUROPEAN SALES**

Brixton have welcomed a new member to their team in the form of Marco Mesem as European Sales Director. Marco has worked for a number of top brands including Nike, Zalando, and Sole Technology and is bringing over 15 years of knowledge and skills to this new role.

**ARBOR ADDS ANDI REIF TO GERMAN SALES TEAM**

Andi Reif is the new sales representative in southern and western Germany for the American-based skate and snow brand, ARBOR. Andi, with Okey Dokey Distribution, is well-versed in selling sustainable brands in sportswear and boardsports, currently selling for brands including Bleed, Lovjoi and Jeckybeng.

**RIDERS LOUNGE HIRES WILL RADULA-SCOTT AS SOUTHERN AREA SALES AGENT**

The Riders Lounge, UK distributors for CAPiTA, Union, Deeluxe, 686, Coal, Sandbox, Mizu & more have hired Will Radula-Scott to work as Southern Area (England) Sales Agent. He replaces Rich Wilder, who is joining Nike SB as their UK Sales Lead.

**AU REVOIR TO CLICHÉ SKATEBOARDS**

France’s longest-running skateboard brand is closing its doors. Cliché Skateboards was launched in 1997 in Cliché in Lyon, France, by Jérémie Daclin and has been responsible for pushing the European skate scene for the best part of two decades. It’s with heavy hearts that we say au revoir to Cliché.

**LAAX IS NAMED THE ‘WORLD’S BEST FREESTYLE RESORT’**

Switzerland’s LAAX has beaten other infamous freestyle resorts such as Whistler, Breckenridge and Mayerhofen to be named the ‘World’s Best Freestyle Resort’ at the World’s Best Ski Awards. The resort also successfully bagged the title of ‘Switzerland’s Best Ski Resort’ at the awards for the fourth consecutive year.

**RMBLR – THE LAUNCH OF A NEW BRITISH MADE OUTDOOR LIFESTYLE BRAND**

New accessories brand and the brainchild of Rob Brigham (Managing Director, Ellis Brigham) and Fred Royle (ex-Westbeach ex-Homeschool European Brand Manager), RMBLR nods its head to English heritage topics spanning the industrial revolution right the way through to 90s rave culture and the Hacienda nightclub in Manchester. Influenced by outdoor pursuits in the British countryside and built to withstand the elements, RMBLR products are handmade in England and will be available via the company’s website and in select Ellis Brigham stores.

**BURTON EUROPEAN GM HERMANN KAPFERER TO RETIRE**

Burton’s European General Manager, Hermann Kapferer is retiring after spending 32 years with the company. Assuming Hermann’s duties will be Oliver Zaletel, the current VP of Shared Services, who will head up Human Resources, Finance and Operations and the current VP of Sales, Franck Waterlot will lead the sales and product portions of the company. Both Oliver & Franck will report to Burton President, John Lacy.

**MILLER DIVISION APPOINTS CAVIDA-SPORTS AS GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR & XTREME VIDEO FOR UK & FRANCE**

Miller Division have appointed CAVIDA-SPORTS Gmbh as their exclusive distributor for Germany and Xtreme Video for the UK & France. Miller joins a roster of other boardsports brands at Cavidia including Osprey,

Santa Cruz, Seawag and SharkBanz. XTREME VIDEO is a major player in the French market distributing brands such as GoPro, Xsories and, Superbrand.

**ANIMAL TO OPEN NEW STORE IN BRISTOL**

British brand, Animal, opened a new clothing store in the build up to Christmas in the award-winning Cabot Circus Shopping Centre in Bristol.

**NSP TO BE DISTRIBUTED BY SURFCLOUD IN ITALY**

Surfcloud has announced the latest addition to their roster, with NSP to be exclusively distributed by them in Italy.

**BLUE TOMATO OPENS 30TH SHOP**

Blue Tomato have opened their 30th store across Germany, Austria and Switzerland in the German city of Münster. The shop has expanded from its origins as a small garage shop in 1988 to one of the biggest omnichannel action sports retailers in the world. As with most retailers, they have expanded their business into the world of e-commerce with an online store that reaches up to 90,000 visitors a day.

**BURTON SNOWBOARDS OPENS STORE IN AVORIAZ**

Burton have recently been celebrating the opening of their first French store. The launch was a huge success with over 200 customers visiting the store for its official opening which included a screening of the newest edit from the brand, “Loo\$e Change”, snacks, drinks and competitions. The new store is located in the centre of Avoriaz.

**BURTON WELCOMES BACK THE STEP ON BINDING**

After a decade in hiding, Burton has welcomed back the step on binding for 17/18 winter. The product, which Burton is dubbing the ‘next generation’ in snowboard bindings is going to be targeted towards high end accounts and the brand says it has been working on it for four and a half years. Burton team rider and snowboarding legend, Terje Haakonsen is standing by the product and the brand say the safety and performance is on par with, if not better than their other bindings.

**THE FWT REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO SAFETY BY PROVIDING SNOW SAFETY EDUCATION AND EQUIPMENT TO RIDERS**

The Freeride World Tour has renewed its partnerships with three prominent organisations within the realm of mountain safety to ensure the protection of all FWT athletes. The FWT has renewed partnerships with ISTA (International Snow Training Academy) and ABS Avalanche Airbag, and by signing a new agreement with RECCO AB (search and rescue devices).


**COLOUR WEAR CHANGES NAME TO WEAR COLOUR**

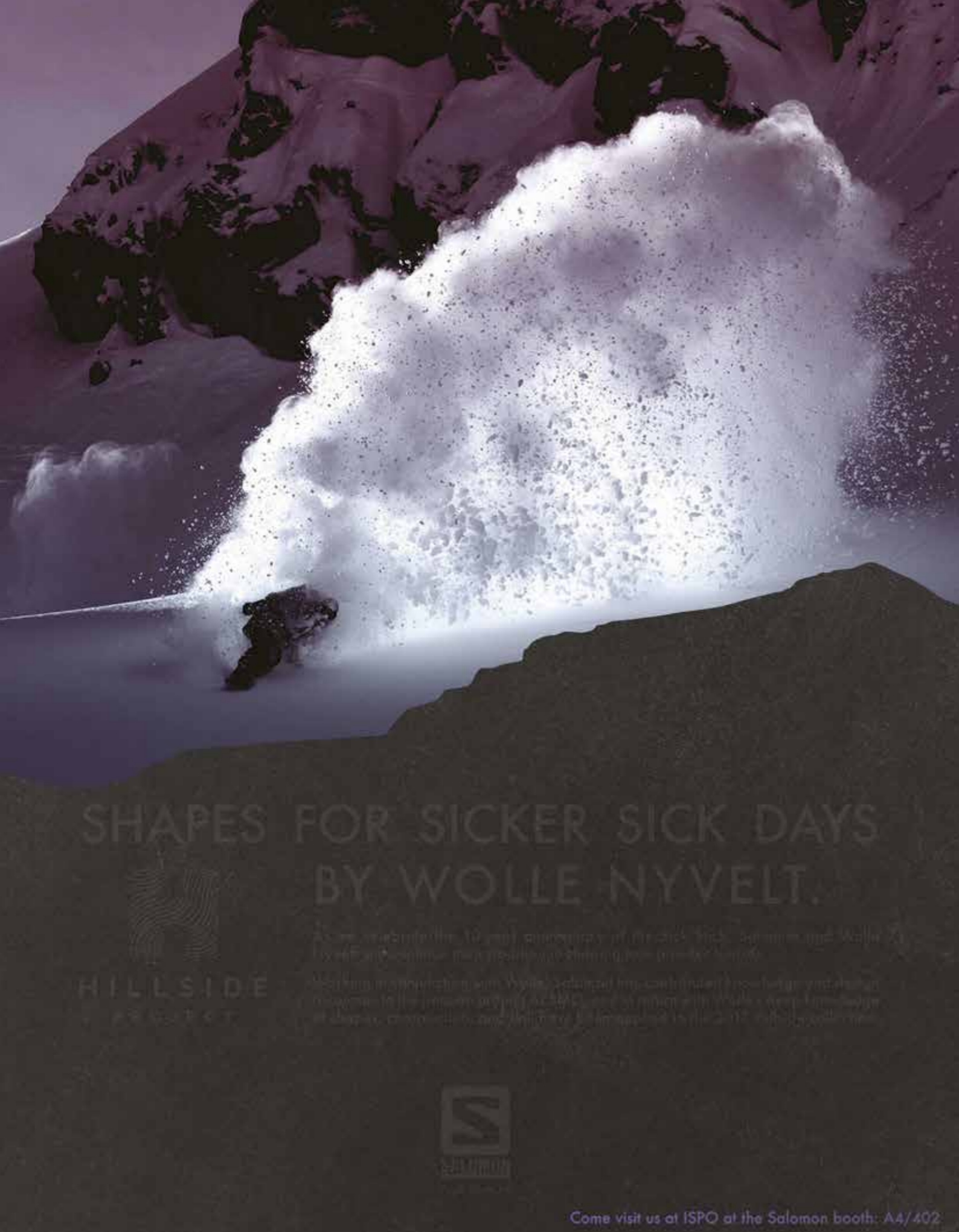
Swedish outdoor apparel brand Colour Wear are changing their name to Wear Colour for their 2017 FW collection. The brand says: “Everything is changing and so are we. This is a natural progression for us and an opportunity to reinforce who we are what we stand for. The reason for changing our graphic profile is to strengthen our identity, who we are and what we stand for.”

**VANS WORLD PARK SERIES BACK FOR 2017 – SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED**

The Vans World Park Series is back for 2017 and has just released its tour schedule. Stopping off in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europa and Oceania, it’s the first contest of type and its 2016 debut saw huge global interest on social media. For 2017, the tour swings through Europe, hitting Sweden on May 27. The finals will be held in the USA, but details of where are TBC.

**ALUMINATI SKATEBOARDS HAS LANDED IN EUROPE – ADDS NEW SALES AGENTS ACROSS THE REGION**

Aluminati Skateboards is making a push into the European market with the addition of sales rep to cover Spain, Germany, France, Italy, the UK and more. 

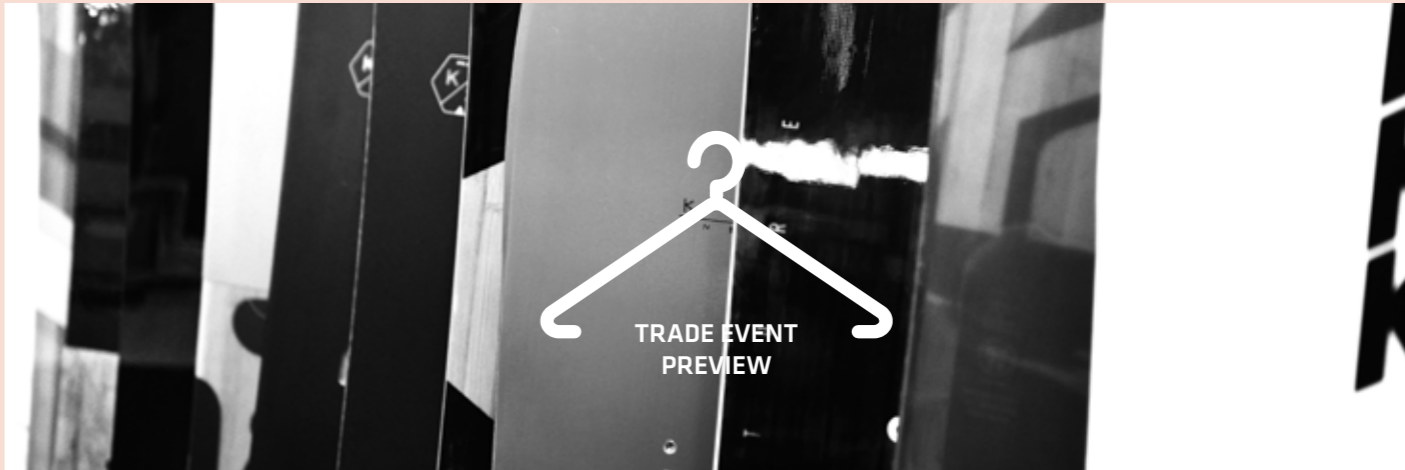


SHAPES FOR SICKER SICK DAYS  
BY WOLLE NYVELT.

HILLSIDE  
A PART OF



Come visit us at ISPO at the Salomon booth: A4/402



## ISPO, MUNICH, GERMANY, FEBRUARY 5-8

ISPO is returning to its early February slot for 2017 but with its traditional Sunday to Wednesday schedule. The action sports categories will continue to be located at the east side of the complex in halls B5, B6 and A6 where it moved to last year, so don't forget Messestadt Ost is your get off point on the U Bahn. ISPO continues to be the pre-eminent winter sports show globally with significantly more visitors than any of the other major continental sports shows and within Europe the next biggest winter trade event has 1/16 of the number of visitors. Last year 2,645 exhibitors and over 80,000 industry professionals attended the show. ISPO is Europe's one opportunity for a big tribal gathering of the action sports communities. All other trade events are either niche focused offering opportunity only for the already converted or are purely national in scope. Likewise, the size of the international audience attending the show was underlined last year with 87% of exhibitors and 65% of visitors coming from abroad, from countries all around the globe.

Following last year's hall reorganization which essentially saw outdoor and action sports swap halls, ISPO has introduced the Polygon concept into the Action Sports hall B6. Polygon is ISPO's new standardized exhibition layout that brings a fresh inclusive community feel to the hall. To achieve this Polygon offers four sizes of stands, the smallest in the middle and the tallest and biggest around the perimeter. So the hall is now accessible to brands whatever their size. With the standardization of exhibitor spaces the hall has been reorganized with two wide corridors running from one end of the hall to the other with the snowboard brands grouped at one end and then areas for skate and shoes. Also in the hall are the community platforms; Longboard Embassy, ISPO Inspire, Tailgate Munich, Job speed dating, the blogger lounge, central bar and chill out area, a product presentation area, the Monochrom City and the ISPO action sports awards display.

For its fifth year, Tailgate Alaska has been expanded yet again as demand has grown. As always this platform showcases new brands and innovative products from the snowboard market. Tailgate will also feature educational clinics, presentations, legends' stories and daily seminars on products and trends, snow science and backcountry safety. Tailgate is all about sharing insight and helping to educate buyers and shop staff on the backcountry market. Retailers who visit will benefit from the focus this platform brings to this increasingly important and growing niche. With more than 50 partners ISPO Inspire is now one of the biggest collaborative platforms at the show and is run by Brands for Good and Greenroom Voice, two of the most innovative and specialised agencies in CSR. The platform will have exhibits from over 50 brands, programs and projects and including global NGOs such as Amnesty International and Skateistan and will be showcasing brands, which are already putting CSR within their core

business development objectives. Additionally GreenroomVoice's new Transparency Tool will enable all related information to be displayed in one graphic at Inspire.

In hall B5 the focus is on apparel, accessories, scooters, helmets and the ISPO Brandnew Awards. ISPO brand new is the biggest platform for sport startups worldwide. Many of today's successful sports brands started here and this is an opportunity for retailers to find the products of the future. Hall A6 with its focus on optics, water sports, freeski and apparel also includes the Snow Summit, Waterports village and the Cold Water Surfing platforms. The Snow Summit is all about free skiing and backcountry. The platform will act as a central meeting point for industry, bloggers, designers, artist, athletes and journalists from this community and enable retailers and show visitors to come to one location and find all the up and coming brands in the segment. As last year the platform sponsor is Mips Technologies AB and this year the media partner is ARGE Freeride Festival, Europe's biggest freeride test event. A program of scheduled presentations will be released closer to the show and Mips will offers its Mips Technology Workshop.

ISPO Water Sports Village, the platform for all water sports at the show has changed locations within the hall to give the platform space for more exhibitors. Kayaking, stand up paddling, wakeboarding, swimming, diving and surfing will all share the area around a 200 sq metre heated pool. This will be the focus of all the water activities and allow products from all water sport brands to be presented and tested in the element they were made for. Retailers should visit the village not only for the brand exhibits but also for the action packed schedule of events in the pool and interviews with top athletes. Each day there will be four test periods in which retailers can try out the material that is exhibited on the stands around the Water Sports Village. Bathing shorts and towels are supplied so all you need to do is turn up with the kit you want to test as the changing rooms are directly beside the pool.

New for this year, the Cold Water Surfing platform is being relocated close to the Watersports Village and an Ultimate Surf Gear exhibition will be added, with four product categories on display: Technical surf innovations, Yulex wetsuits, Sustainable surfboards and Sustainable/upcycled accessories. NGOs who fight ocean pollution such as Surfers Against Sewage, Surfrider Foundation and Parley for the Ocean will also be on display. A daily surf-specific program with expert talks, presentations and discussions from 1-2pm will be followed by beer and movie sessions from 5-6pm. With much of Europe's coastline fitting into the CWS category retailers should drop by to look at the dedicated CWS product offerings. The Camp de Base presented by Outdoor Sports Valley, in partnership with Sporaltec, the Auvergne Rhône-Alpes Region, and Union Sport & Cycle, which will see 21 French >>>



»» brands clustered together. The OSV has organized three fashion shows to be held during the first two days of the trade show. Around the pool in the watersports village, and every evening from 5:30pm, retailers and brands our welcome to join the after work party.

With all markets so much in flux it’s critical boardsports retailers and brands are out there interacting with other sports communities. This is where an event the scale of ISPO offers real value. ISPO is still

**SNOW SHOP TEST, ANDALO, ITALY, JANUARY 29-31**

Snow Shop Test, the number one B2B event in Italy for the ski and snowboard market moves back to Andalo between Trento and Bolzano, for this January’s event, with two and a half-days of testing and networking. As with the other on-snow demos in Europe, the attraction of testing product on snow has made this event a must visit for all key snowboard retailers in the Italian market. As in previous years the first one hundred retailers to register receive free accommodation, food and lift tickets. This year the timing of the event shifts back to its traditional dates in the calendar before ISPO, so retailers can test on snow and then finalise their orders a week later at ISPO.

At time of going to press, brands confirmed as exhibitors included Never Summer, Sims, ISPO, 32, Slash, Rome, Electric, 686, DC, Capita, Union, Quiksilver, Roxy, Northwave, Drake, Arva, Vaude, Thule, Ride, K2, Line, Bataleon, Arbor, Dinosaurs Will Die, Bolle, Cebè, Nike Vision, Dragon and Salomon. Go to the website for an up to date list. Last year’s event was attended by 90 retailers and 102 brands who had

the biggest sports show on earth; even North America doesn’t have a single show to rival it. With all these different sport communities and nationalities congregated in one place ISPO uniquely offers opportunities and connections to develop your retail and brand business.

[www.ispo.com](http://www.ispo.com)

1293 products on test.

Sunday afternoon registration starts a 4pm and is followed by the ISPO workshop from 5.30pm to 7pm. Afterwards the traditional Grappa tasting evening takes place for the exhibitors. The testing starts on Monday at 9am and finishes when the lifts close at around 4pm. The evening starts with a welcome drink from ISPO and is followed by the annual Snow Shop Awards ceremony, with awards for the ISPO Best Snowboard Shop, Pointbreak Best Shop Activity and The Source Lifetime Achievement Award.

The second and final day of testing finishes at 4pm. Partners for the event include 4ActionMedia (4Snowboard, 4Skiers, 4Outdoor, 4Snow), ISPO Sportpress (Pointbreak, Sport4Trade and Outdoor), Prowinter Neveltalia, Snow Passion and Boardsport Source.

[www.snowshoptest.com](http://www.snowshoptest.com)

**SPORT-ACHAT WINTER, LYON, FRANCE, MARCH 6-8**

Sport-Achat is held in Lyon at Hall 2 of Euroexpo and is designed to work alongside Sport Air’s other business-to-business events ASAP (a clothing specific event held in Annecy) and Snow Avant Premiere (the on snow demo test). After attending these earlier events retailers can then go to Sport-Achat to finalise their orders. Last winter 305 exhibitors, 620 brands covering 20,000 square meters of exhibition space and 3748 visitors took part in the show. A similar number are expected this winter. Situated in Lyon, the show is perfectly based to allow retailers from across the Alps to attend.

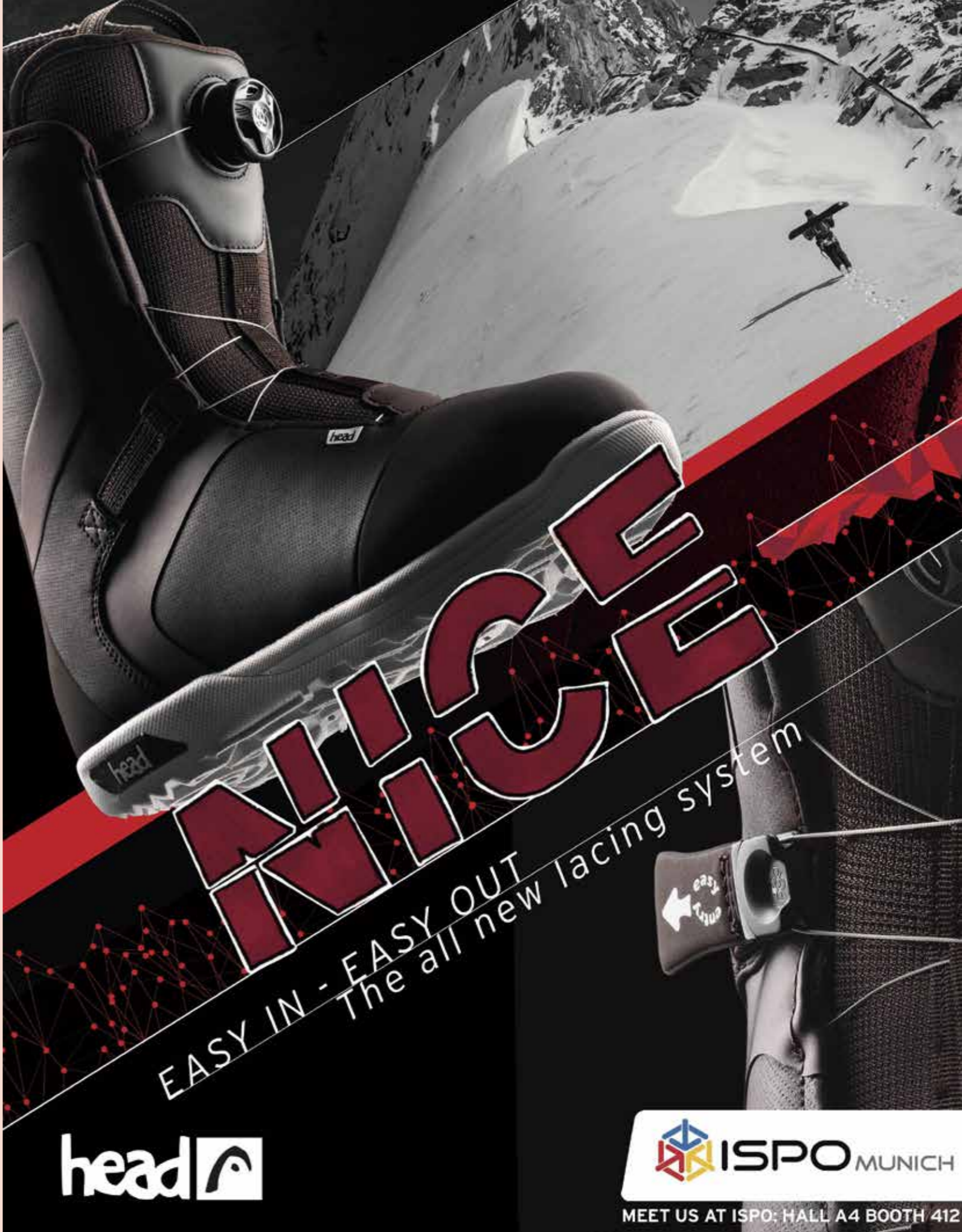
Now in its sixth year, the show is divided into four category areas: Ski, Snow, Outdoor and Sportswear with the ‘Crème Fraiche’, the space for new brands supported by FIFAS, OSV and EuroSIMA situated right at the entrance to the show. Sixteen companies exhibited at Crème Fraiche last year, and more are expected this time round.

At the time of going to press 85% of the show is already reserved and there are 34 new brands exhibiting. Brands attending from the snowboard market include: 686, Airhole, Barts, Bataleon, Bench, Black Diamond, Bolle, Capita, Carve, Coal, Dainese, Dakine, DC,

Deeluxe, Douchebags, Drake, Douchebags, Eivy, Fox, G Form, Gnu, Giro, Head, Hirec, Jones, K2, Karakoram, Level, Lib-Tech, Lobster, Nixon, Nitro, Nidecker, Northwave, Now, Oakley, Ortovox, Out of, Osprey, Phunkshun, Picture, Plum, Poc, Pow, Protest, Patagonia, Pull In, Quiksilver, Ragwear, Ride, Rip Curl, Roxy, Santa Cruz, Smith, Salomon, Slytech, Sinner, Slash, SP Gadgets, Spy, Switchback, Sweet Protection, Union, Wear Colour and Westbeach.

The show is open from 9am till 7pm on the Monday and Tuesday and 9am to 6pm on the last day. On the Monday evening from 7pm all participants are invited by the Sportair team to the Sport-Achat opening party for fun and networking. Sport-Achat is a must visit for the French winter sports industry as the vast selection of products and brands makes the show an effective, fast and efficient use of time. There will be daily seminars covering topics such as: new technologies, innovative fabrics, sports and fashion synergies. Sportair can offer discounted rates on hotel rooms and vouchers for trains.

[www.sport-achat.com](http://www.sport-achat.com)





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## NIDECKER ACQUIRES FLOW SNOWBOARDING

### Please explain the key attractions of Flow to Nidecker.

Flow has been connected with Nidecker since day one as Shiro Trading (owner of Prydegroup and Flow sport) distributed Nidecker in the 90s. Nidecker and Flow also used the same patent on the back entry system.

But what ultimately led to Nidecker's acquisition of Flow, was that Flow complements our brand portfolio nicely and also runs with a similar strategy to the Nidecker brand.

And Flow fits with Nidecker on all levels; product-wise thanks to the binding category with the speed entry system and boots. Whereas Nidecker is known for its snowboards and Flow for its boots and bindings, both brands make all three categories and can now complement each other in these segments. It works distribution-wise as Flow is stronger in certain regions and Nidecker in others, so now both brands can work together to build upon this.

### How does Flow fit into the portfolio of brands in the Nidecker group?

Our goal is to cater for all types of consumer; from the most core to the occasional enthusiast participant and from the big mountain rider to the freestyler or on-piste carver. So for us it was important to make sure that we integrated a brand that targets a certain profile of consumer. And for Flow the target is clearly the occasional enthusiast participant, which is the same as for the Nidecker brand, but in a different way.

### Please tell us about the new management team at Flow.

Acquisitions are never easy when it comes to organisational changes, especially when one company is based in California and the other in Switzerland. So we are currently in a transition period, but what I can tell you is that I will manage the brand starting from now. How it will be finalized is still to be sorted, but we expect the transition to be complete by the end of the season.

### What opportunities do you see in the beginner and also the older market?

We're interested in all participants, but are focusing on two things: First of all, carving because it's what most people like to do and it talks to every demographic - now it's cool to carve on the piste and I'm sure that a lot of snowboarders who switched to skiing, thinking snowboarding

was dead, will return thinking that it's cool again. And the second focus is beginners, because except for Burton, no other brand speaks to the beginner in their marketing.

At Nidecker we create a lot of tools to make sure that beginners select the right product (because it's not just a question of price point) and that they are perfectly set up on the board. We've done a lot of research to find an easy and clear way to know your stance, your angles and what board you should ride depending on your weight, shoe size, level and the type of riding you want to do. All of these tools are of no use to core brands, but for us they are the basics of snowboarding and I think that more than two thirds of snowboarders aren't set up on their board correctly or they don't have the board they should have. And it's without this service that people are buying from online retailers and receive a board or pair of bindings at home without the knowledge of how to mount everything properly. For us this is massively important, otherwise it's like playing a guitar whilst wearing a pair of boxing gloves.

### How will you use Flow technology across the group?

Flow is a company full of very interesting technology and for us it's important to create bridges between brands when it's useful. We are integrating two pairs of bindings and one boot with Flow technology. But we have also implemented a strap, which was developed two years ago for Now Bindings on the Nidecker Carbon two strap binding. So yes it's important to combine technology, but each brand takes the lead and exclusivity for the launch of each technology.

### How does the Nidecker group see the future for the rental market?

The rental market is another big subject for us. I believe that rental will increase drastically in the future. But for us it's not just a question of price, it's a question of the system and Flow will help us with not just the product, but everything else that comes along with that. We are working to revolutionize the rental market. ☺

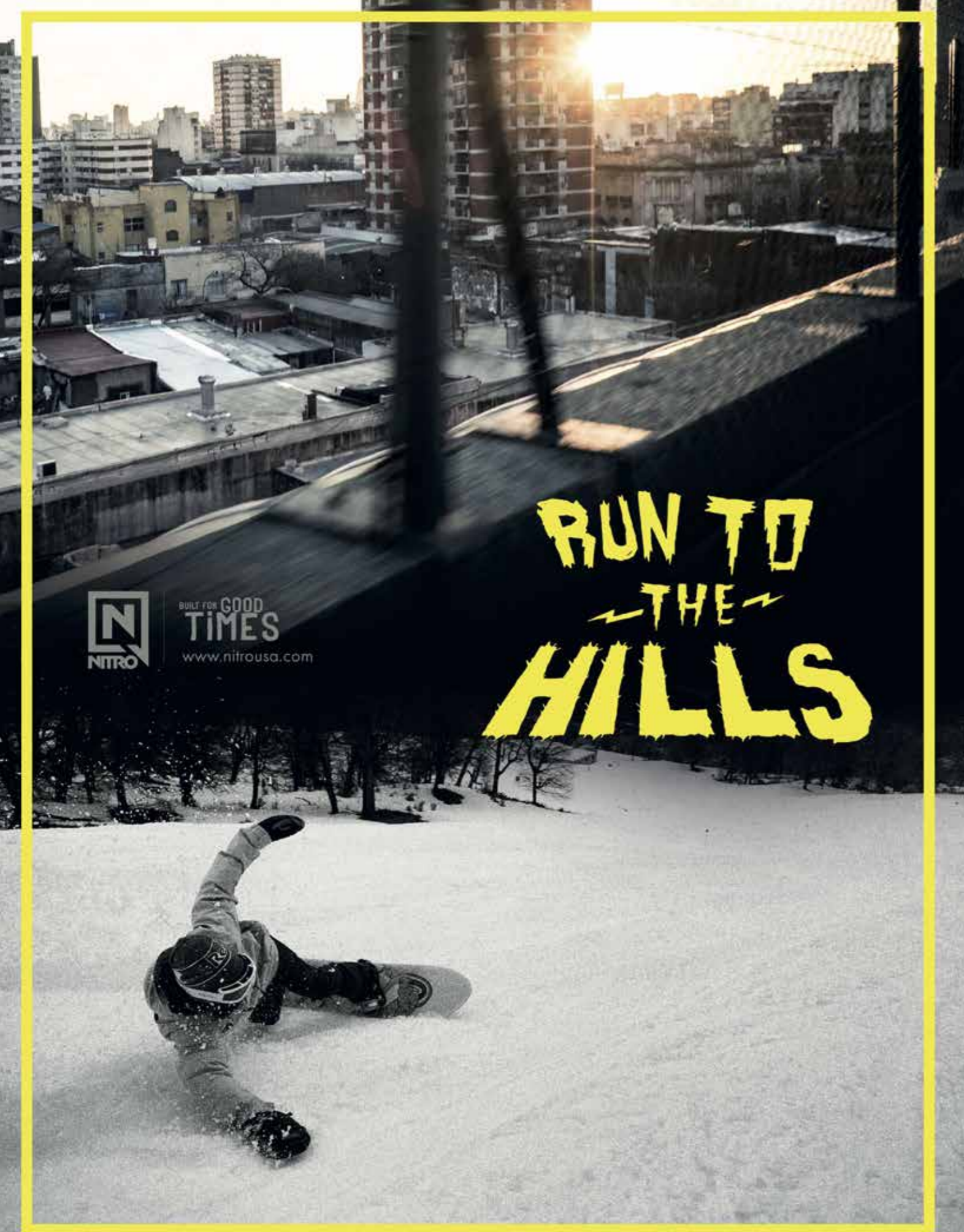


photo: Lib Tech

## SNOWBOARD FW17/18 TREND REPORT

Wood, steel. Carbon, perhaps. A little layer of fibreglass. The sandwich of expensive materials that pulls deeply on our heartstrings. Just why does it evoke so much anticipation, opinion, joy, jealousy and pain? Well, you'll need more than 3000 words to answer that one, but for now, **Tom Wilson-North** takes a look at the best of FW17/18's snowboards in our Trend Report.

### STATE OF SHAPE

Evolution in shape continues. The biggest single shape trend next year centres around geometric post-blunt nose and tail forms, extra long front contact points and taper in all its forms, even after the kick on the nose. Korua's Tranny Finder (available in a lightweight carbon version next year) embodies it, and Burton's Dump Truck and Jones' Mind Expander do it well too. You'll also see unique geometrics from West Snowboarding, Nightmare and Technine, which are well worth a booth visit at ISPO - and, for Lib fans, you'll be pleased to hear that the T-Rice has a new and updated shape.

Flip the coin and there's throwback-style, nostalgic shapes which are either reinventions of archive boards (like Winterstick's old-is-new Roundtail and the retro SIMS Blade), or full on category comebacks, like Jones' long, straight Lone Wolf swallow, which goes up to 174cm. Speaking of which, there are swallows abound next year too; Bataleon's Surfer is reminiscent of a 1960s Cadillac, Endeavor's Archetype is all about straight lines and a deep tailnotch, and Rossgnol's gloss-drip Sushi 145 mini-swallow is a Fish-style board loaded with tech which needs to be seen to be believed.

The next big trend for mainstream snowboards is sort of a mirror of the bike industry; instead of having a cross-country and a downhill bike, now you have the long-travel enduro which does it all. In the same way, by avoiding any type of freestyle- or switch-favouring compromise on shape, these types of unashamedly directional boards negate the need for a quiver entirely and focus on what the middle-aged snowboarder demographic wants to do; ride pow and bomb the piste. Remember how fast the Yes Optimistic sold last year? Same deal. Look out for Burton's Deep Thinker, which has 7mm taper and an aggressive sidecut, Lib's tapered (and excellent value) Cold Brew or Drake's Battle which sits in a similar vein with steazy Peter Szalay graphics.

*"There is a new generation of riders out there, bored by sloppy rocker-type decks and a general lack of actual riding technique. And things have been too focused on what the top riders are doing in the air rather than what can be done on the slope. So this carving board trend is much more tangible for a lot of snowboarders out there." Nitro's Tommy Delago*

FREESTYLE CARVING

Now it’s got a decent name, the carving trend is locking in and leaning over. “There is a new generation of riders out there, bored by sloppy rocker-type decks and a general lack of actual riding technique. And things have been too focused on what the top riders are doing in the air rather than what can be done on the slope. So this carving board trend is much more tangible for a lot of snowboarders out there”, says Nitro’s Tommy Delago of their new Woodcarver and Diablo sticks. Nidecker are also showing a premium carver called the Concept, Vimana are introducing a tapered and directional version of their Continental and Palmer’s Honeycomb reissue looks to be an absolute trench-digging machine. There’s also (finally) a fresh and colourful Dupraz line of D1 variations.

Other shapes that caught our eye were Gnu’s steezy Jamie Anderson shortboard, Korua’s bold and effective Tugboat with huge nose and channelled base, Roxy’s brand new Torah Bright and Mahee’s ‘V’ base. “This is kind of like the hull of a speed boat, explains Mahee’s Creative Director Ben Rousseau. “The apex of the ‘V’ in the centreline is protected by a third metal edge which runs the length of the board, delivering a faster and much more controllable ride off-piste.”



Photo: Bataleon

CAMBER

Nothing much new here. As last year, the camber trend remains towards positive, flat or directional hybrid-camber boards. Reverse is retreating to freestyle, backcountry or pow-only applications.

MICRO-LINES

As esoteric and out-there shapes become more and more prevalent, there has been a tendency for brands to group together these funky-looking decks into capsule collections. One such next year is Salomon’s Hillside Collection, to celebrate ten years of the Sickstick. “We’ve

contributed knowledge and design resources to Wolle Nyvelt’s passion project AESMO, and in return Wolle’s deep knowledge of shapes, construction, and skill have been applied to Hillside,” says Salomon’s PLM Baptiste Chaussignand. Over at Neversummer, The Shaper Series is a new set of boards inspired by the Twenty Five and Swift models with a heavy focus on dynamic turning. You’ll also see Nidecker’s carving lineup, an expanded Quiver Series from Nitro and a new iteration of Burton’s well-received Family Tree. Finally, Amplid’s Centrifugal Collection is a three-board-quiver “designed to maximise the enjoyment a rider gets from toying with centrifugal forces generated during turning,” according to Amplid’s Rich Ewbank. The trio have particularly great names too; they’re called the Pentaquark, Surfari and the UNW8.

POWSURFERS

Tune into Instagram and bindingless snowboarding is everywhere; it embodies the rootsy, minimalist and hippiesque vibe so prevalent at the cutting edge of our sport today. Traditional snowboard companies are getting involved with bindingless boards: Pogo’s new Asueto combines a high end Ptex base with 3D shape, and Arbor’s new Terrapin – which saw daylight as an early release this year – is a high volume powsurfer by Brian Iguchi which boasts 50mm of taper and innovative uprise fenders in the nose.

DARK STORM

An interesting subtrend that we identified in aesthetic treatments was that of haunted, vintage, subtle and filme noir style graphics being much more widespread than regular treatments from the natural world (ie the usual stuff like mountains, trees, leaves). Whether this darker theme is a reflection of unease of an uncertain future or just designers trying to provide interesting alternatives to black is anyone’s guess. However, it does mean that topsheet interest is added via matt/gloss/reflective layering (see Niche’s beautiful Story or Capita’s all-new Navigator) or subtle pop colours (Nidecker’s Mellow, Concept and Rave). Additionally, use of transparency merges well with this aesthetic theme, with visible tech and see-through windows common in most mid-to-high end snowboard topsheets. Otherwise in graphics the classic themes remain popular; cartoons, line drawings and modern art at the busier end of things, and wood and solid matts for the plains. There are more tattoo-style graphics out there as well. “This year we did Thibaut Roux Mollard’s pro model with Sasha Masiuk, a very famous Russian tattoo artist,” says Verdad boss Démir Julià. “She has over 470,000 followers, so hopefully this’ll put us in a good position in Russia”. Collaborations continue to be hot; the best one we saw for next year was the link up between West Snowboarding and hip hop group IAM. “We’ve listened to IAM since the back in the days of copied Panasonic tapes, so this band has been part of our entire snowboarding life,” says West’s David Lambert. Tattoo artist Baron Sigmund von Ofen is on graphic duties on this one.

KEEP IT CORE

Surprisingly, look forward to gigantic leaps forward in snowboard construction next year. Particularly in cores. At Amplid you’ll see a new multidirectional composite core layer called Antiphase which promises to erase chatter, and Head are using a light and stiff new synthetic honeycomb material called Hexlight. There’s a new Quad Carbon V pattern from SIMS, and a new wood, bamboo and basalt core for extra woosh on Borealis’ ultra-premium Shaman. Rossignol are using their L.I.T.E Frame urethane profiling with L.I.T.E Grip which, in conjunction with their tweaked RadCut shape, “crashes through Magne-Traction barriers. We’re bringing grip on demand or necessity, not permanently”, claims Rossi’s Category Manager Arnaud Repa. There’s also an upgrade to the Kush-control urethane features in Flow’s cores. Meanwhile, Nitro’s successful Slash gets a new lightweight balsa heart with beech stringers, and Wi-Me use a new fibreglass-free composite and prepreg resin process borrowed from the aerospace industry for toughness and bonus eco points.

# 3D SNOWBOARDING



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Photo: Ben Gavelda

*It's like it's 1993 all over again; small snowboard brands abound. 2017 sees many little companies bringing new shapes, distribution strategies and attitudes to market, all the while leveraging modern B2C engagement channels to create huge buzz.*



Photo: Head

**ORIGINAL RESIN**

Resin, interestingly, is a hot topic right now. And no, we don't mean the sticky Afghan variety. New resins used in snowboard manufacturing are recyclable and have some fairly interesting properties. "Our Theme board has our new resin which we're calling Recyclamine," explains Niche's Ana van Pelt. "It's as durable, lightweight and fun to ride as ever, but now at the end of its life cycle, we can reclaim and fully recycle all the board's structural components and turn them into new things, like binding discs or surfboard fins." We saw a similar VOC-free resin from Yunika, 55% recycled biomass Greenpoxy resin from Borealis, and Burton are going linewide with their proprietary and planet-friendly Super Sap. They're also rolling out a new eco hardener from Conorra called ReRez on their Working Stiff, which allows them to reuse and better recycle scraps left over from the shaping of the board. "This is just the tip of the iceberg for this material- we're excited to push this out across our line", enthuses Burton PLM Lesley Betts.

**COMPONENTRY**

What about the rest of the snowboard? Well, as you'd expect, there are incremental increases in base material qualities...West upgrade the line to Iso Sport's NHS base, and Lobster move their pro-models and Sender decks to a 7000 base. Endeavor will be revealing their Seamless Sidewalls v2, which are made with a much quicker and more efficient process, and Light are showing a gorgeous new see-through coloured stretch-resistant gloss topsheet. Seems less is more on topsheets; neither DC nor Plum will be using them, the latter screenprinting between two layers of varnish to save weight.

**GRASSROOTS**

It's like it's 1993 all over again; small snowboard brands abound. 2017 sees many little companies bringing new shapes, distribution strategies and attitudes to market, all the while leveraging modern B2C engagement channels to create huge buzz. "It is a pretty amazing feeling to be able to do what ever you want and not have to cross any red tape," explains Joe Sexton, founder of Public Snowboards. Korua's Nicholas Wolken agrees: "We're stoked. Small companies are healthy competition for big established brands and it's pushing snowboarding in directions that are more relatable to end consumers again." In the US, Joe Suta is the guy behind Nightmare Snowboards (who are also responsible for alternative tradeshow Parts & Labor). He sees a big difference between the big guys and the little guys. "Most other snowboard brands create their product for people who want to go on vacation to be a 'snowboarder' for the weekend, Nightmare builds boards for people who live snowboarding, not for the weekend warrior. Stop flooding the market and use your own core values to stand up for a new industry with fresh and new responsible ethics," he told us. It's something of a renaissance, especially for the small builders. Hightide is a Canadian company who build everything out of their shop in Pemberton, BC - they cited their size as an advantage, allowing them rapid prototyping turnaround. Smaller brands also allow B2C custom builds, and we saw Winterstick and Wi-Me launching custom build programmes next year, Winterstick building theirs out of a new factory at the base of Sugarloaf, Maine. Whilst grassroots is well and good, a few more established brands raised an eyebrow to the trend, questioning new companies' reliability

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NEW WAYS OF SELLING

Ask anyone working in a snowboard shop today, and you'll get the same answer. Showrooming is the biggest challenge to retail today, both online and off. How do we stop your client wasting your team's time and getting great - free - advice, then to just go pick up the board cheaper elsewhere? Luckily, solutions are out there, and most of them involve picking the right suppliers. "We believe that retailers are looking for brands with limited availability and a clear brand proposition," says Amplid's Rich Ewbank. "The only way to avoid showrooming is to make sure that your products aren't available from every pile-em-high warehouse on the internet, Ebay or Amazon at heavily discounted prices. The retailers' search for something different and for more limited collections which can help to make their shops unique, is helping small brands like Amplid to get their foot in the door". Snowboarding has so far been able to mostly avoid the rise of "online direct sales only," seen in other industries. B2C snowboard brands have been unable to get a foothold so far, so the traditional BBC reseller model remains the norm. However, with an ever-decreasing amount of retailers who are able to carry wide product lines, more and more brands are turning to direct sales in some way in order to provide



Photo: Nitro

product to the people who ultimately want to use it. Saying that, our conversations with brands generally - fortunately - showed a reticence to compete with their retail network by selling direct. But in today's market conditions, who knows. Expect to be presented new distribution models in the short- and middle-terms. There's been much rumblings out there about two-year product life cycles to dissuade discounting and allow retailers to make margin for longer. But so far, take-up has been slow. "This idea comes from the ski industry. And we are not willing to follow ski ideas. But we are

willing to offer fresh new products each season," huffs West's David Lambert. Bataleon's Dennis Dusseldorp agrees: "I can't see it happening anytime soon either. It would only work if all the brands cooperated and we know that many brands are run by suits far away from the snow who just want to see yearly growth on an Excel sheet." That said, next year you'll definitely see more carryover products in shops - Korua, Hightide, BuddyBuddy and Jones will all have timeless SKUs, Jones with 8 - count 'em - carryover board models "including the five most expensive models we produce," confirms Marketing and Team Manager, Seth Lightcap. "We have heard dealer request for carryover models loud and clear."

*"The only way to avoid showrooming is to make sure that your products aren't available from every pile-em-high warehouse on the internet, Ebay or Amazon at heavily discounted prices."* **Rich Ewbank, Amplid**

SPLITBOARDS

Splitboarding continues to perform well, and next year sees a clutch of noteworthy new models. Burton extend their Family Tree line to include a blunt, setback and geometric Dump Truck Split, and Capita debut their Neo Slasher which is the uphill cousin of their cult favourite Charlie Slasher freerider. Everything is getting a bit lighter too, with lightweight splits top of the list at Amplid and Goodboards...but hopefully not at the expense of edge and base thickness. Whilst there's tech innovation in splitboard bindings and skin systems every year, the boards themselves seem to have arrived at a standard of acceptable quality. Now it's about democratising the marketplace and growing the userbase. "To push this segment and our Powder Division boards forward, we are piloting our Powder To The People program that puts powder boards and splitboards into stores for hire at great prices. We want riders to be able to demo this stuff as easily as possible," says Rome's Philipp Kammerer.

CONCLUSION

So there you have it. Snowboarding technology is moving forward, and the boards are looking better and easier-to-sell than ever - which is definitely A Good Thing in a marketplace full of new challenges.

However, as we all know, the days of people waiting all summer with baited breath to see the new gear are over. Now, anyone very interested sees the stuff as soon as the catalogues leak online - around Christmas - so by the time it's in the shops nine months later "it's old news and really ought to be on sale." So in the absence of shorter lead times, our main market for selling at full-price has become, oddly, anyone except those 'very interested' people. Which means we're selling to once a year participants, or casual / occasional riders. It's now our job to convert these guys and girls into loyal and returning regular snowboarders.

With that, let's try and keep things somewhat positive. So over to Yes's Alex Warburton to finish. "We hear too many stories about the dire state of the industry, but in reality we're enjoying the most creative and eclectic time in our sports' history. Smallish boutique brands are a reflection of that. This is coming from a smallish boutique brand, mind you..." ☺

HIGHLIGHTS

- Geometric shapes
- Freestyle carving
- Lightweight splitboards
- Eco-friendly resins





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## SNOWBOARD PICTORIAL FW17/18



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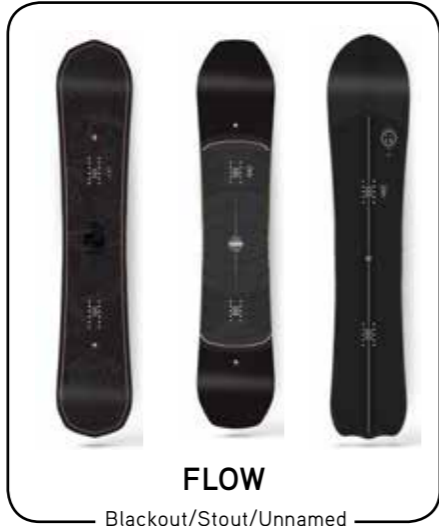


FANATIC

Twin / Twin  
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A-ONE

Deck



FLOW

Blackout/Stout/Unnamed



GNU.

JA Freespirit/Money/Mullair



GOODBOARDS

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**ROME**

Kashmir/Mountain/National



**ROSSIGNOL**

Magtek/Diva/LF



**ROXY**

Smoothie/Sugar/Rollover



**SALOMON**

Huckknife/Sickstick/Villain



**SIMS**

Blade/Juice/Tom Sims



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WEST

Ahab/Iam/Supreme



WI-ME

Shredamie/Trump/Work for freedom



WINTERSTICK

Roundtai / Domestic / Birdseye  
Gumtree / Maple



YES

PYL/Standard/Typo



YUNIKA

Fighter/Matryoshka/Totem



JONES

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## Mind Expander

Alternative All-Mountain Shredder  
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Breaking new ground in board development requires an open mind and a willingness to explore both in the shaping room and on the hill. These two templates are early concepts that eventually led to the Mind Expander. Nick Russell had his mind blown open testing the first prototype Mind Expander in Chile.

Photo - Andrew Miller

MIND EXPANDER  
8-21-15  
JERRY SONE



## SNÖDROPPE, TIGNES

Formerly known as Bazoom, SNÖDROPPE sits at the foot of the Grand Motte glacier in Tignes, meaning it has access to snowboarder footfall in both summer and winter. Having now been in business for 30 years, the shop is now under ownership of long-standing staff members, Loulou and Nono who run the business from a fountain of snowboarding knowledge spanning four decades. Loulou explains how SNÖDROPPE focuses 100% of their attention on their bricks and mortar store and works on partnerships with both historic and upcoming snowboard brands.

### Please give a brief history of your store.

Pierre Lavagne set up the shop under the name "BAZOOM" in 1986, and so it began! A few years later Didier Schmidt (a member of the French ski team) took over, catering for the snowboarding phenomenon that was taking the world by storm. He surrounded himself with the right people who would turn it into THE shop for snowboarding equipment. The name change to "SNÖDROPPE" came about in 2013 after a takeover by longstanding shop team members LouLou and Nono. In 1992 Loulou arrived back in Tignes from the U.S. where the snowboard craze had exploded, then met Nono (a shop customer at the time) who was an accomplished, passionate rider and the team was forged.

### What percentage of your sales are from online business compared to your brick-and-mortar sales?

The percentage of hardgoods we sell is between 60-70% and for softgoods we feel like we act like a showroom before people go and buy online or at jumble sales, which really stings. But ultimately we don't sell online. We're too small to make it work well so we try and make up for this with customer service/advice; we spend a lot of time with our customers talking about our products and the advantage of being at the base of the glacier in Tignes is that we can offer real-life tests. Selling a feeling can never beat getting on the board and sliding!

### Which brands are doing it right for you at the moment?

As we are aficionados of the sport - rooster tail and backcountry addicts - the shop is focussed on a range of products more suited to this kind of riding through historical brands (we've been working with Burton for 28 years), from the first Craig Kellys, Jeff Brushy and Terje models to the current day Family Trees, as well as Jones, Borealis, Rossignol, etc in addition to some newcomers. We are also helping small brands such as "EASY Snowboard" this year who we really believe in.

### So you're big on building a rapport with brands. How is that nowadays?

Given the situation with Brexit etc, we've had to revise how we work and deal with the more generalist brands that please everyone - even though they are still great brands. We always try to work with brands who have a bit of a track record.

### What makes your store different and in what ways does your store excel beyond your competition?

With the market becoming tougher and tougher we are distinguishing ourselves through our know-how and experience - we ride what we sell Perhaps we are idealists but we still believe in this despite the all-powerful Internet. With such a strong foreign market we've turned towards dealing with English instructors in resort such as Rebel Alliance Snowboarding, a small school run by Simon Cooke, a top instructor who feels the same as us about the equipment as well as how to put across his knowledge. It's thanks to collaborations like this one that lots of clients become very good customers in the shop and even friends. And this is really cool.

### Having access to mountain lifts that open in both winter and summer, how do you differentiate your summer offering from winter?

In summer the shop goes into 'big bike' mode with 'commencal' mountain bike rentals and accessory sales. Like in winter, we listen to our customers and their requests are taken into consideration. It's getting harder and harder to make a living from this passion of ours, but ultimately it is still what drives us - to have amazing fun with our customers and ultimately to take care of them.

### How do you stay in touch with the wants and needs of your customers?

The search for new products and new brands takes place partly in tradeshow but mostly by watching what our customers who come from all around the world are wearing, then we adapt. 📍

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## SKATE HARDWARE FW17/18 TREND REPORT

Skateboard hardgoods are far from “business as usual” these days. For big picture perspective and hot product categories, read our 2017 Skateboard Hardgoods Trend Report.

By **SOURCE** Skateboard Editor, Dirk Vogel.

The skateboard hardgoods segment is undergoing the biggest period of change since the early 1990s. The recent demise of well-established board brands – including European mainstays Cliché Skateboards – and a string of bankruptcies among independent skate shops across Europe are symptoms of larger trends. Behind the scenes, the skate hardware category is under pressure from rapidly shifting currency exchange rates, as well as disruptive business and distribution models.

*Things are changing continuously and more rapidly than ever. It's not necessarily all about new brands Vs established brands. It seems to be about being good at what you do on the front end in creating demand and the back end in running a solid business that people can rely on.* **Bod Boyle, President of Dwindle Distribution**

These disruptive models are exemplified by a new breed of hardware companies. ReVive Skateboards, an Ohio-based brand founded by Andy Schrock, controls its own distribution and invests zero dollars into traditional magazine advertising. Instead, the company – also home of Force Wheels and AmGrip – runs all marketing online. So what's the big deal? It's that ReVive's YouTube vids have generated over 387 million views(!) and a following of 1.1 million subscribers, dwarfing any established skate brand while growing sales at a fast clip. Equally disruptive, some U.S. skate brands are manufacturing their boards in Europe under license, increasing price competitiveness by up to 20%.

The largest board brands in the industry are reading the signs of the times. “Things are changing continuously and more rapidly than ever. It's not necessarily all about new brands Vs established brands. It seems to be about being good at what you do on the front end in creating demand and the back end in running a solid business that people can rely on,”

said Bod Boyle, President of Dwindle Distribution (Almost, enjoi, Blind, Tensor, etc.), adding: “I think the main thing we see is something that has always been in skating: constant progression. Whether it's brand trend, graphic trends, riding trends, everything.”

### The European market: Prices and participation

A quick survey reveals a tense competitive environment. “The market is still very price-sensitive and although most US brands sell [decks] for £55 to £60 the biggest volume of sales is in the £45 to £50 market,” said Chris Allen, Director at Shiner Distribution in the UK. Most brands and distributors in this report named underpriced decks as the main problem right now. “You see a lot of decks at €49 and below. But does anyone know where and from what that €39 deck is being made – or does anyone care?,” asks Jörg Ludewig, Co-owner of Urban Supplies distribution in Wiesbaden, Germany, adding: “Branded decks backed by reliable and well-known factories are usually between €59 and €65, with technical construction decks reaching up to €79 and €85.” On a positive note, the European market seems to be bucking the trend of declining participation currently rampant in the United States. “Participation in street is as strong as before and always will be. Park has seen a good increase as there are now more facilities. Vert skating is good in areas where there is a vert ramp but these are still few and far between,” said Chris at Shiner. In terms of percentages, Franz Josef Holler at Fresco distribution in Italy sees, “street and park is dominating with 95% – including bowl and miniramp. And maybe 5% is vert. Most kids that skate at parks and reach a certain level also skate street.” Speaking of kids, Bod Boyle at Dwindle noted: “Interestingly we are seeing that our youth completes in smaller sizes continue to grow, year on year.”

As for riding styles, the biggest trend in Europe revolves around the “ride everything” ethos. “Most skaters at the moment ride all type of spots: skatepark, DIY, street, pipe. It's a generation of complete riders, so they need a polyvalent set up. Between 8 and 8.5 [inch] board sizing, 54 mm wheels, medium trucks,” said Vincent Legoux, Skateboard Team Manager for HOFF Distribution. At HLC Distribution (Jart Skateboards,

“You see a lot of decks at €49 and below. But does anyone know where and from what that €39 deck is being made – or does anyone care?” **Jörg Ludewig, Co-owner of Urban Supplies**

Iron Trucks), Marketing & Communication Manager Borja Iriarte is on the same page: “Everything counts, any spots is good enough. The boards are super functional and more people use wider boards to skate street and trannies.” Jamie Smith from Enuff Skateboards also reported that, “trends in boards and trucks are leaning to be slightly wider with wheels that accommodate most terrains.”

**And speaking of trends, let’s get straight to the 6 Trends Changing Skateboard Hardgoods in 2017:**

**1.DECKS:**

Wider and shaped. A few years back, decks went from 7.5 inch toothpicks to wider, 8-inch rides. But the shift continues: “There is a constant increase in the deck sizing. The main range is now 8 to 8.25 inches. We still sell some seven-point-something decks, but this is slimming down in favour of 8.3 inches and above,” said Jörg at Urban Supplies. In the process, classic popsicle shapes are getting an update with, “wider, slightly longer wheelbases and lengths of board with fuller noses and tails,” said Bod Boyle at Dwindle. Vincent at HOFF notes an interesting trend towards, “1990s decks remastered with longer noses. And some guys are also putting on rails now.” Speaking of remastered, Madrid Skateboards brought back a line of early 1980s pro models – hello, Claus Grabke! – with widths up to 10 inches.



photo: Dwindle

**2.FEWER PRO MODEL BOARDS:**

As the number of board companies declines, many riders are finding themselves without board sponsors. (Eric Koston spent over a year as a free agent before recently launching his Numbers Edition brand.) The remaining brands cut budgets and team rosters, which brings down the number of pro-endorsed boards. The new iteration of Alien Workshop carries no pro models, an approach pioneered by early 1990s company ACME. Instead of big name endorsements, brands add value and differentiation to their decks on a product level. “Fancy custom finishes like embossing on graphics, split stained veneers, things that stand out as special finishes,” said Chris Allen at Shiner.

**3.technical decks slowly increasing:**

Tech constructions such as P2, Impact, and the new Fly Flight Board construction from Powell Peralta that retails at €99.99 are slowly but surely gaining acceptance in our price-focused market. “Tech boards have remained consistent in sales and usually represent about 15% of total decks sales,” said Bod Boyle at Dwindle. Borja at HLC is also optimistic: “We are selling our technology decks super good, and our new glue 2XS is the main difference – and one of our best weapons.” But keeping in mind the upsurge among decks aimed at young riders – who inherently weigh less and break less boards – Jamie at Enuff added some perspective: “The cost of these decks often puts them out of reach of younger riders which at this time is our target audience.”

**4.WHEELS:**

Technology-driven performance. While technology remains a hard sell in boards, customers have come around in the wheel segment. “We have seen the times when a wheel just had to be round and very cheap, now we sell Spitfire F4 wheels in huge numbers and sometimes cannot get enough. The skaters understand that a better – unfortunately also more expensive – wheel gives them a better performance and lasts a lot longer,” said Jörg Ludewig at Urban Supplies. Technology also allows for a previously unattainable riding experience, said Chris at Shiner: “Bones Softslide wheels are a soft wheel that slides the same as a hard wheel which until now has never been possible.” Nils David Gebbers at 24/7 distribution also teased: “Watch out for a new Bones wheel in 2017!”

**5.TRUCKS:**

Lighter and wider The truck segment remains in the hands of Indy, Thunder, and Venture. But Chris at Shiner said: “Customers are increasingly asking for trucks that are more than a standard truck. Lights with forged baseplates, Hollow lights, Titanium trucks. Also coloured Pro trucks have become more popular. Weight is 350 grams average.” Speaking of lighter trucks, the Tensor series has gained solid traction, said Bod Boyle: “We sell about 50% aluminium Vs 50% Mag Lights. The magnesiums are quite expensive compared to the industry standard aluminium trucks, it’s rewarding to see that people are willing to pay the extra for something that will perform significantly better.” Borja at HLC also sees customers opening up to home-grown options such as, “Iron trucks, the first European brand to manufacture trucks here.” In terms of widths, Jamie at Enuff noted: “With the upward trend in wider board sales wider truck sales have followed suit.”

*“Most skaters at the moment ride all type of spots: skatepark, DIY, street, pipe. It’s a generation of complete riders, so they need a polyvalent set up. Between 8 and 8.5 [inch] board sizing, 54 mm wheels, medium trucks,”* **Vincent Legoux, Skateboard Team Manager for HOFF Distribution.**

**6.ACCESSORIES:**

The full package. Decks remain an expression of personal style and riders are putting a lot of love into sticker jobs and griptape art. “We are seeing grip tape trends! Coloured and clear grip really came back around this past year,” said Bod at Dwindle. At Element, Romy Bertrand also confirmed a major trend towards, “clear grip.” As the perfect way to keep clear grip clean, Borja at HLC recommended: “The must-have skate accessories will be the MOSAIC grippe cleaner, it works perfectly.” Jamie at Enuff summed it up: “A good skate tool and a block of wax are all the essential accessories you ever need for a good skate sessions with your mates.” And with a bit of tongue-in-cheek, Jörg Ludewig asked: “Are Thrasher T-shirts an accessory? At least they are a must have!” Concluding our trend report, Nils at 24/7 had a piece of advice on how retailers can make skate hardgoods great again: “Be diverse, be unique, don’t set up your wall and give 60 to 70 of your 90 slots to rubbish, cheap, big logo shop boards and wack-ass brands!” Amen to that. 📌

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- All-terrain skateboards
- Retro-shaped decks
- Fewer pro model decks
- Youth-sized completes trending
- Technical urethane formulae
- Lighter, wider trucks
- Clear griptape
- Hot trend: Rails

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**GIRO**



photo: Dragon

## GOGGLES FW17/18 TREND REPORT

Technology is all the rage these days – and everywhere, not just in your electronics but also in your snowboard gear. Especially goggles, which are becoming more tech every year, which in turn renders clients more tech-savvy as well, demanding proper explanations and knowledge from sales staff. **Anna Langer** looks into the trends to watch out for next FW17/18 season.

### TRENDS

“We have entered an era where the consumer is demanding a goggle loaded with features and benefits,” says Giro and we definitely agree. “The greatest developments in the market are rooted in addressing the persistent demand for greater versatility and performance. Riders want systems that allow them to readily swap out lenses to adjust to changing conditions, as well as lenses that enable them to see better by enhancing clarity and optical precision,” adds Shred, summing up the major trend for the FW17/18 season – technology. From the production of lenses to their application, the frame construction to the materials used and the way the goggle sits on your face, all the big names are upping their tech game to provide riders with the best possible vision in all conditions.

Counterbalancing this high-end trend, there is a strong movement towards cleaner looks and style with focus on “ease of use” (Bern), “wearability” (Ashbury) and “simple, classic, smart design,” (Summit). With that comes a surge of (all) black models that we’ll get into more detail a little further down.

Younger brands like Ovan and Melon focus on giving the customer exactly what they want through “absolute customization” with modular systems that offer parts separately to switch up styles.

### LENS TECHNOLOGY

Charging downhill or corking over a kicker, vision is vital and not seeing something could be fatal. So enhancing contrast and visibility are the main factors in lens development. Giro developed their VIVID lens technology together with Zeiss, “to provide the best contrast and performance enhancing lenses in the market. The VIVID lens is scientifically tuned to enhance colour contrast, accentuate contours and variables in terrain, while reducing eye fatigue, and increasing reaction time.” POC are “more focused than ever on lens technology,” and working hard with Zeiss to “really take contrast to a new level.” Melon introduce lenses by Zeiss across all of their goggles and Rossignol add a SONAR lens, increasing contrast, colours and visibility, to their Toric Zeiss lenses.

*“The greatest developments in the market are rooted in addressing the persistent demand for greater versatility and performance. Riders want systems that allow them to readily swap out lenses to adjust to changing conditions, as well as lenses that enable them to see better by enhancing clarity and optical precision.” Shred*

Head launch their own lens technology, called TVT – Trans Vision Technology for FW17/18 that enhances contrast and has a mirror coating attached to the inside of the lens, making the TVT lenses scratch resistant. Dragon expand their LUMALENS technology from two to every lens (except clear and dark grey tints) and Smith enlarge their ChromaPop snow lens collection to 11 tints for the FW17/18 line, including a photochromic option. Shred developed a range of new variations of their Contrast Boosting Lens and Spy add new tints in their Happy Lens technology, that “uses long-wave blue light to enhance colour, contrast, and clarity—making colours more vivid and your surroundings more defined” and is also meant to “improve mood, increase alertness and promote a healthy circadian rhythm.” Oakley introduced their revolutionary Prizm lens technology last year, which dramatically enhances details and now offer a “complete line-up of Prizm Snow lenses to cover all weather from bright sun to snow/ overcast.” The Prizm Inferno system takes this one step further and is expected to “be a leading innovation this season. It was built to fight fog with a simple two button function: one to power on the unit for the day and one to activate an Inferno heating cycle of three minutes.”



Photo: Giro

Sinner combine the characteristics of the polarized SINTEC® lens that increases contrast and reduces 99.9% of glare and reflections, with the advantages of the photochromic TRANS+® lens, that darkens to changes in light conditions in their double spherical lens SINTEC/ TRANS+® lens. VonZipper pair their WILDLIFE lens, which offers maximum acuity, clarity and definition by filtering out specific blue light wavelengths with their new Stellar Chrome with a 17% VLT “that will make you flash like a super star!”

Quiksilver introduce photochromic lenses in their middle range from Q1 to the Fenom Art series, Zeal expand their Automatic lenses that are both polarized and photochromic and Spektrum widen their offer of photochromic and polarized lenses as well. Summit have a new polarised lens for the Xpose II that dramatically reduces glare and increases clarity.

Ensuring clear vision everywhere and at all times, Shred use their patent pending -NoDistortion™ technology with a small, semi-permeable valve to prevent lenses from warping and distorting as a result of the pressure differential between the double lens chamber and the current atmospheric conditions. With Prizm Inferno, Oakley take it even further, equipping their goggles with a “heated lens technology developed to combat goggle fogging and improve performance and safety by enhancing vision.” Spy opt for a more passive approach

against fog: “Scoop ventilation technology that utilizes the Venturi effect to maximize outside airflow and keep fogging at bay.” And Electric The Masher’s state of the art lens venting system and anti-fog lens treatment will keep you seeing clear all day long.

**LENS SHAPES**

After spherical lenses have dominated the goggle market for years, there was a resurgence of cylindrical options in the last couple of years, for a cleaner, flatter look. Most brands offer both styles in their collections, only Zeal make their entire collection spherical. VonZipper also offer “Toric Lenses, which are a mix between Spherical and Cylindrical that enables riders to have the best of both worlds boosting visibility and visual acuity.” Giro, Head, and Rossignol have toric lenses as well.

Spy, Giro and TSG feature a new cylindrical lens that is injected, instead of bent, resulting in “quality optics and protection you would typically receive from a spherical lens.” Oakley introduce the new Line Miner goggle: “a cylindrical lens design that provides the ultimate peripheral view. Sitting closer to faces than any other Oakley goggle, Line Miner puts less pressure on noses and provides unrivalled helmet compatibility.” Bern use cylindrical lenses in their kids collection and TSG introduce cylindrical goggles for men, women and kids, “that combine the optical quality of an injected lens and the classic low-profile styling found in a thermos formed lens.

**LENS TINTS**

Some of the highlights for lens tints include Purple/Blue mirror and Red/Black from Bern, Green Chrome and Blue Chrome from Melon, Orange Fire and Silver Chrome from Summit, Bronze Fire and HD Sunrise from Ovan, Happy Rose with Dark Blue Spectra™ coating from Spy, Violet and Green as well as Platinum and Red by Smith and a Prizm HI Pink Iridium for low light conditions by Oakley.

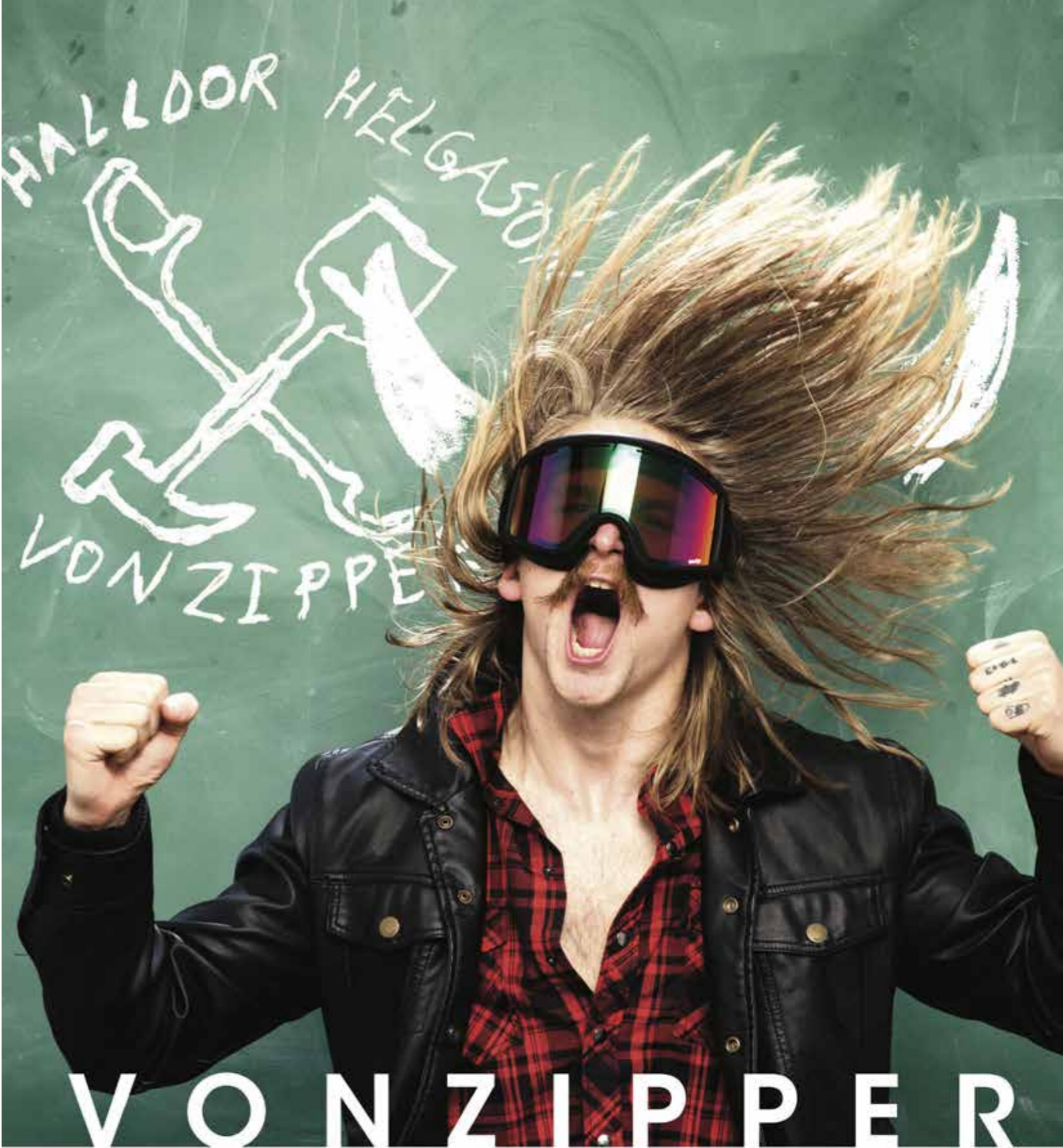
Spy recommend their “Happy Yellow” for cloudy days, paired with Lucid Green coating for intense contrast, Quiksilver and Roxy offer the HD lens tint, “a kind of pink – amber mix of tint, which offers you the best contrast to your eyes, with less tiredness for your eyes. This is our most popular lens tint, and advised for all weather.” Carve opt for lowlight rose and bronze and all round grey, Brunotti and Sinner feature orange and Giro have an “infrared lowlight lens.”

Of course there are a bunch of more classic shades available in FW17/18, including a “black smoke lens” that is “super dark, yet surprisingly versatile” from Ashbury, the Automatic Plus G lens with a grey base from Zeal and “simple black” from TSG. Smith add their “very popular Black to the ChromaPop Sun collection” and Spektrum offer a full “Black Line which is a line adapted for high alpine and glacier use where we are applying polarized smoke lenses.”

**QUICK-CHANGE FRAMES**

Gone are the days you had to bring a spare pair of goggles in case you bailed and didn’t have an hour of time to dry them out. Dragon expands their super-quick Swiftlock system to their X2, X2s, and NFX2 and Smith offer four models in their interchangeable series for FW17/18. Giro experiment with a magnetic change system on their Axis & Ella models, “utilizing locating magnets and a press fit secure system.” Summit improve their magnetic lens change system across the Evolve, Xpose II and Xpose IIs models and TSG continue their “Magnetic Interchange Lens System with self-locating rare earth magnets embedded in the lens and frame for fast, on-the-fly lens interchange.”

Spy’s Quick Draw lens change system “eases the stress of traditional gaskets that lenses have to fit into” and their premium Lock Steady™ even works with gloves on! Zeal feature a “never before seen quick-change Rail Lock System (RLS)” on their brand new Portal frame, Ashbury has a new model with quick changed system called Sonic, Bern equip their Jackson / Juno models with LensPOP, Spektrum offer a new “SnapSwitch lens change system for easy changes when the weather shifts,” Shred call their system 1-2-3 Shred Replacement



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CLEAVER 1-TYPE | WILDLIFE

System and Head use a speed snap lens exchange system for their top of the range models.

Yet lenses aren’t the only thing you can or may want to change. Melon Optics have specialized in customisable goggles through their “Switchfast Frame system, which allows customers to switch out and change to different straps in a matter of seconds.” Ovan start playing in this segment too with their new R.A.D system, which stands for Rapid Adaptive Design: “The R.A.D system was developed to allow total customization of the goggle via easily interchangeable components.”

FRAMELESS

For many models and brands, quick change systems and frameless designs go hand in hand. For Head the “whole line is determined by a very modern and clean, frameless lens design,” yet the two don’t necessarily have to go together.

Still almost all brands have some variation of a frameless design in their line. Dragon and Carve do a variety of frameless models, Brunotti have half and totally frameless versions, Bern add two frameless solutions, VonZipper will launch a new size of their Frameless ALT Model and Giro introduce a clean frameless EXV design “to engage the millennial market” that demands great styling with all the tech.”

Quiksilver sport a new frameless cylindrical model, the QS\_RC and Roxy also introduce a new frameless goggle with a cylindrical lens, the Feelin’. Sinner too are “working on a frameless goggle with a bamboo strap,” that is least harmful for the environment.



Photo: Melon

FRAMES

TSG mix frameless and low-profile frame designs, as do Spektrum who feature “both frameless models and more conventionally framed styles,” and Smith continue their semi-rimless frames.

But none of this is completely new. The biggest innovation in FW17/18 are frames that can be worn with or rather on top of regular optical glasses, a category that is becoming more important with the demographics of winter sports enthusiasts ageing. Dragon have two models dedicated for customers that need to wear glasses, the D10TG and D30TG, and Sinner the Visor III OTG. Electric also cater for those with glasses, thanks to their oversized spherical lens design on The Masher, but the goggle stays low profile to prevent bulk.

MATERIALS

Since TPU works well in low temperatures it’s still the main material for frames, but there are some new additions when it comes to foams and venting materials, that “help with moisture management, venting, and durability” (Giro).

Bern introduce PLUSfoam®, “an industry exclusive material that is 100% recyclable,” and at the same time “super low weight (108-113.6 grams depending on frame size),” making for a great fit, feel and huge field of vision in their frameless series. Shred use “epoxy reclaimed from the snowboard manufacturing process to produce the nylon base material used to create their goggles’ rig, adjusters, and pins,” that is not only extremely tough and durable but also reduces their ecological footprint. Spy use a “ventilation technology that utilizes the Venturi effect to maximize outside airflow and keep fogging at bay.”

Sinner concentrate on comfort with a “soft, 3-layer overlapping, hypoallergenic foam on the inside that creates a superb fit,” and Zeal use specialized mesh that allows the frame to sit closer to the face.

*The biggest innovation in FW17/18 are frames that can be worn with or rather on top of regular optical glasses, a category that is becoming more important with the demographics of winter sports enthusiasts ageing.*

COLOURS

Next to the typical array of colours that brands are offering, FW17/18 sees a lot of black colourways as well - the “pitch-black trend” (Head). Quiksilver show dark colours, black frames and black lenses in the Phantom collection and Zeal expanded their all-black Dark Night collection. Summit have a “Black is the new black” line, Spektrum launch a “Black Line for high alpine and glacier use”, Summit turn the success of their monochrome black Vs black strap design into a new “Black is the new black” line and TSG feature a fully black goggle for a “discreet look” as well.

Brands doing helmets and goggles including Bern, Brunotti, Giro, Head, POC, Smith, Spektrum and Shred cross-match the colours, details and designs on their offerings. Quiksilver, Roxy and Rossignol link their assortment to their snow outerwear, while Smith and Spektrum also tie their goggles with their sunglasses.

Colours range from the full rainbow to neon and back to more muted, subdued shades. Patterns include camo dots and acid-wash (Ashbury), natural, animal, geometric, metallic and oil prints from Sinner, a “zebra print in red wine” from TSG and a minimalist “split” graphic from Smith.

OUTLOOK

With such a variety of technical features, styles and looks, everyone one can find the perfect pair of goggles for them next year. Just make sure you have to right choice for your customer available! 🕒

HIGHLIGHTS

- Tech tech tech
- Contrast enhancing lenses
- Quick & convenient lens changing
- All-black styles
- Over-The-Glasses models

The advertisement is split into two main visual sections. The top section shows a skier in mid-air against a blue sky with a mountain range in the background. The bottom section is a close-up of a person wearing a black helmet with 'TSG' and 'D4' logos, and a grey ski jacket. In the top right corner, there is a black box with the TSG logo and the text 'DESIGNED BY RIDERS'. In the bottom right corner, there is a white box with the ISPO logo and 'HALL A6 BOOTH 516'. Below the helmet image, the text 'GOGGLE TWO' is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Underneath this, a paragraph describes the 'Magnetic Interchange Lens System' and mentions 'Michael Schärer'. At the very bottom, another white box says 'DISCOVER MORE AT' followed by the website 'ridetsg.com'. On the left side of the helmet image, there is vertical text: 'RIDER MICHAEL SCHÄRER - REPHOTO (PHILIPP RÜGGLI)'.

## GOGGLE PICTORIAL FW17/18



Anon - Circuit



Anon - M3



Anon - WM1

Ashbury - Cross  
KaleidoscopeAshbury - Darrell Mathes  
Warlock

Ashbury - Knit Bullet



Bern - Eastwood



Bern - Jackson



Bern - Monroe



Brunotti - View



Brunotti - Odessey



Brunotti - Deluxe



Carve - Firsttracks



Carve - Platinum



Carve - Titanium



Dainesse - Frequency

Dainesse - Spectrum  
Wide Lens

Dainesse - Spectrum



Dirty Dog - Bullet



Dirty Dog - Mutant



Dirty Dog - Velocity



Dragon - D30TG



Dragon - NFX2



Dragon - X2



Electric - Charger XL



Electric - Electrolite



Electric - Masher



Giro - Axis



Giro - Ella



Giro - Contact



Head - Globe



Head - Horizon



Head - Solar



Melon - Chief



Melon - Jackson



Melon - Parker



Oakley - Lineminer



Oakley - Wind Jacket

Oakley - Lineminer  
with PrizmOvan - Ptarmigan  
Ben tour

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*Melon*

|   |   |  |  |   |
|---|---|--|--|---|
|     |    |     |    |    |
| Ovan - Ptarmigan Camo Smk   | Ovan - Ptarmigan Night Owl Sun  | Quiksilver - Hubble  | Quiksilver - QSR   | Quiksilver - QSRC   |
|     |    |     |    |    |
| Rossignol - Maverick  | Rossignol - Maverick  | Rossignol - Maverick   | Roxy- hubble   | Roxy - Popscreen  |
|     |    |     |    |    |
| Roxy - Feelin   | Shred - Nastify   | Shred - Wonderfy   | Shred - Simplify   | Sinner - Duck Mountain  |
|     |    |     |    |    |
| Sinner - Mohawk   | Sinner - Visor III OTG  | Smith - IO Reactor   | Smith - Squad XL   | Smith - Vice Klein  |
|   |  |   |  |  |
| Spektrum - G004   | Spektrum - G007   | Spektrum - G007  | Spy - ACE  | Spy - DOOM  |
|   |  |   |  |  |
| Spy - MARSHALL  | Summit - Xpose II   | Summit - Xpose II  | Summit - Xpose II  | TSG - Goggle one  |
|   |  |   |  |  |
| TSG - Goggle AMP  | TSG - Goggle Two  | VonZipper - Cleaver  | VonZipper - Fishtank   | VonZipper - WLT WFC   |
|  |  |  |  |   |
| Zeal - Nomad  | Zeal - Automatic Plus G   | Zeal - Portal  |  |   |

WILL MAYO

PHOTO: RANDY WILLIAMS

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## BUYER SCIENCE

Jan Mönch has been working as a sports buyer for eight years now and for the last two of which, Jan has been heading up the buying division for Planet Sports.

SOURCE has spoken with Jan to find out the method behind his buying strategies and he gives us insight into the ever-changing retail landscape.

### How long have you been a buyer for Planet Sports and how did you end up in this position?

I joined the Planet Sports buying team two years ago. During the acquisition by the 21sportsgroup, functions changed a little bit, and now I am in the position as the hardgoods buyer for snowboarding, surf, skate, wake, wetsuits and protection for Planet Sports and for bike for 21run.com. Before this, I was a buyer for six years for another big sports retailer based in Munich.

### Looking back at past seasons, what have been your biggest lessons on writing orders and selling products?

Looking back at eight years of sports buying experience, the biggest lesson is that everything is getting faster and more extreme. Trends are more short-lived: they are popping up more and more quickly and disappear much faster. At the same time, these trends are stronger; the volumes we can sell during single trends are getting higher. It's a challenge to forecast the duration and possible volumes, without any sales experience on these new trends. Even the end of a trend is more a hard cut, than fading away. Often just cutting down the order in upcoming seasons is not enough. To be profitable is much more difficult, than in the past.

### Talking figures, what have you learned from specific snowboard product categories in the last two years?

Thankfully snowboarding is a constant for us. We are growing in every main category; boards, bindings and boots. Of course we know that the snowboarding market is not growing. I think the main reason is that most of the big sports stores have disregarded or even given up on snowboarding in the last few years. We can benefit from this now.

The best performing brands and products are the ones with additional value. These are often small brands that don't produce volumes like big brands such as Burton, but high average sales prices, resulting in higher sales per customer make them interesting to us. What's terrifying is the lack of kids products. It's well known that snowboarding has a serious shortage of young people. I hope that our sale figures are not representative for the whole sport in this sector.

### Over the past years, have you changed your brand line-up and main brands?

We have scaled down the range of brands in most categories. Below the line, many small brands were not profitable. And we tried to avoid too many substitute products and comparable brands. As a result, we have more budget for new products and can guarantee better stock availability on top sellers.



### What's your process for finding new brands?

That varies: Magazines, tradeshow, discussions with customers, colleagues, friends, industry and "being on the mountain/in the water". In recent years, online research has become more important; information about customers and their buying behaviour and interests may result in finding a new brand.

### Which tradeshow do you attend, how important are they for your decision-making and how much product do you actually get to test before buying?

For me as a hardgoods buyer, ISPO and the Shop's1stTry are important for our winter categories. The softgoods and shoe buyers also go to fashion tradeshow in Berlin. In order to get a better idea about real innovations, I visit additional tradeshow like the Outdoor show and this year I have been to PaddleExpo. Testing products is still very important and I enjoy it. I test about 20 Snowboards every Season. Not in order to find the best product, it's more to check if all these innovations work or if they are only a marketing story.

### American action sports retail has been through a tough few months – do you see this dripping into the European market? What can you do to safeguard against it?

We noticed a slight shift from retail to online in previous months - but nothing alarming. For sure, the purchase behaviour is changing. Mobile possibilities grant easier and faster access to products for the customers. A masterplan to safeguard against this situation does not exist for anybody. The challenge is to adapt to these changes. Being part of the 21sportsgroup will help PlanetSport a lot for being prepared for the future. ☺

LUKE DILLON  
Flagship Rider  
Photo by: Dan Swenson

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- OFZ ENTRY (OVERHEAD FRONT ZIP)**  
OFZ gives complete flexibility in the back panel. Minimum restriction maximum performance.
- MAX DRY**  
Fast drying polypropylene liner means a lighter, drier suit for every session.
- LIQUID SEAL SYSTEM**  
Flexible, specialised liquid compound that guarantees seam security.
- FURNESS LINING**  
Hollow fibre heat source lining.
- FLEXTREME**  
Softest most flexible core available.
- THERMA DOME**  
Tri core technology, a Neoprene core containing micro air filled cells for significant thermal advantages.
- STORM KEEPER ZIP**  
Specialist zip featuring offset teeth that forms a minimum water penetration (mwp) seal.




photo: Rip Curt

## WETSUITS FW17/18 TREND REPORT

The search for perfect, uncrowded waves is forcing surfers to explore colder, more remote places and their equipment is not going to hold them back. More comfort, warmth and freedom of movement are making a daily surf (or two) possible in the iciest of waters. To quote West's motto "There is no such thing as cold water, just bad wetsuits." The choice is an important one... but manufacturers are pulling out all stops to simplify the task for you. **A report by Denis Houillé.**

### THE WATER'S GETTING COLDER

It's no secret that surfing has officially abandoned its label as a summer sport, sweeping away all the generally accepted clichés that the mainstream like to attribute to it: sun tanning, swimming costumes, light-weight clothing, long hours spent lying on the beach towel... Winter surf codes are now associated to the exact opposite with their deserted beaches, all-over 5mm protection, icy waters, strong offshore winds, ideal weather systems, frost... It doesn't matter which hemisphere you are in, people now want to surf all year round whether it's right where they live, in their favourite holiday destination or in search of a new spot as remote as they can get.

In the not so distant past, people would simply not be prepared to surf in certain places: the equipment just wasn't good enough to stay warm in the water for long enough. But now, with the technological advances made in the foams, assembly and the durability of wetsuits, this problem is no longer a prohibitive one and the demand is exploding in globally throughout all 12 months of the year. Thinner, warmer and easier to slip into, winter wetsuits are providing superlative comfort for these new surf destinations where the waves are just waiting for you to arrive.

Overall, the whole "watersports market is growing in countries where the temperature prohibited it just five years ago," observes Jamie Brimacombe, Xcel's European Sales Manager.

In Nordic countries, which have long coastlines (Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland), surf has democratized and is no longer the reserve of a handful of stalwarts. People surf on the weekends at

*"There is no such thing as cold water, just bad wetsuits." Jackson Leahy, Designer at West Europe.*

the slightest hint of swell, as a family, comfortable and warm in the 6-degree water. For the brands taking the plunge into this icy pool, the new challenge is proving interesting on two fronts: to successfully offer warm enough products (without compromising flexibility, look or comfort) and to seduce a new clientele who are either setting off to conquer unknown territories or sometimes even just to discover their own home spots.

*“Gul plans for its styles to last two seasons, giving the retailer a chance of selling product without resorting to clearance to make way for new models.”* **Mike Pickering from Gul Wetsuits**

CONSOLIDATION OF THE MARKET

The current economic climate and the difficulties of running a business have forced all the players in the neoprene game (suppliers, manufacturers and retailers) to consolidate. Despite an increase in the cost of raw materials and pressure from strong currencies, many manufacturers prefer to absorb these increases rather than let them affect the public retail price. So, by influencing financial policy and management throughout the whole sector, this consolidation will realign budgets and simplify operations for future prospects.

“Gul plans for its styles to last two seasons, giving the retailer a chance of selling product without resorting to clearance to make way for new models,” explains Mike Pickering from Gul Wetsuits. It’s a similar story at Rip Curl where they did everything they could to simplify and adapt what’s on offer to meet customers’ needs over the collection’s three levels. In the technical department, Jonathan Cetran talks about wanting to “make things easy for retailers so that they all know how to sell this wetsuit or that one.”

Finally, at C-Skins, Brand Manager Mark Brown summarises: “The economic climate over recent years hasn’t lent itself to retailers carrying huge amounts of stock so it has become increasingly important for us to focus on this”.

CONSUMER EXPECTATION

No matter what the destination or latitude, “People are just as excited heading to cold water surf trips as they are the tropics,” states Gabriel Davies, Surf Category Manager at Patagonia. To face up to these extreme conditions, demand for thicker products is on the rise and this is seen throughout the twelve months of the year as Joe Turnbull, Commercial director at O’Neill observes, with constant increases in spring/summer as well as autumn/winter sales. At Brunotti they have also noticed that products, and sports in general, can be seasonally non-specific, with Hans Schaap in Design noticing that “many boardsports are no longer bound to one particular season,” but can be practiced 12 months of the year without having to go very far.

Demand from the female contingent is also on the rise and “more and more girls love to surf all year round and want stylish wetsuits,” observes Benoit Brecq from Marketing at Madness. Cut, colour, texture...welcome to “wet-à-porter” as Co-founder of Saint Jacques Wetsuits Stan Bresson likes to call it.

Mathieu Desaphie at Sen No Sen says that customers are looking more and more at the quality of the products they are buying and the motto “buy less, buy better” means that the business couldn’t be going any better.

After their successful introduction of summer models, Picture Organic Clothing have adapted their wetsuits for cold-water use “in countries where you can go snowboarding in the morning and surfing in the afternoon,” exclaims Julien Durant, one of the three co-founders. A great opportunity for some cross merchandising...

*“People are just as excited heading to cold water surf trips as they are the tropics.”*  
**Gabriel Davies, Surf Category Manager at Patagonia.**

COATING AND LINERS

You might have noticed, on the inside and outside of wetsuits, materials are improving and being refined to exploit their properties as best as

possible. On the outside, the coating gives a smooth black skin, which sees the assault of nature’s elements slide off to prevent the product from ageing. At Alder, they talk about “smooth skin” neoprene whose wind stopping properties are excellent.

Red, orange, blue or white, liners have become legitimate selling points as well as being so darn eye catching. Their downy structure means they retain the least water and most air possible against the skin. At



photo: Sen No Sen

Alder, FDL liners rise to this challenge thanks to “a high density of polypropylene whose fibres store a maximum of air when dry and hold hardly any water when warm,” explains production manager John Westlake.

“Unlike these downy foams,” as Joe Turnbull from O’Neill describes them, the Firewall liners from O’Neill are composed of thermal nylon. The advantage of this is that it contains warm air but no water and so doesn’t need to be soaked in water to stay warm; think of it “more like technical underwear than a marine sweater,” adds Joe.

Xcel, thanks to its exclusive association with the American manufacturer Celliant, has employed an intelligent fibre. The effect is (clinically proven) to convert body heat into infrared energy that increases the amount of oxygen in the blood and improve circulation for maximum warmth.



The other benefit that many of these liners carry is their antiseptic function. By integrating an antibacterial fabric containing an active substance, the everyday inconveniences of wet areas (moulds and bad smells) are stabilised. At Ion Wetsuits, “a pyrithione zinc treatment fights off bacteria,” explains Carlo Rauen in charge of Neoprene Development; we find this on their premium models and booties.

Lastly, these liners, mostly composed of recycled polyester, also play an ecological role in the sense that they reduce the quantity of neoprene needed to maintain such high performance. Better still, their texture brings added elasticity and durability and has played a major role in the evolution of wetsuits in recent years. At Soörüz, the statement from production manager, Yann Dalibot is revealing: “We now use a 4/3 when five years ago we’d need a 5/4.”



photo: Ion

FUNCTIONAL PANELS

Neoprene panels are highly strategic and can be key in terms of warmth, flexibility as well as durability. Better still, they are the crucial factor in ‘fit’ and the overall ergonomics of the wetsuit, which is a deciding factor when buying one. Even before trying it on, at Gul “the 3D panels make a real difference in how the wetsuit sits on the hanger and attracts the customer,” explains Mike. The layout of the neoprene panels also seems to determine the unique style of the end product.

Construction methods just keep evolving and a product’s life span keeps extending. But a snag or fault here or there is still a possibility for all brands, but at Rip Curl their customer’s wetsuits can be repaired and serviced to get as much use out of them as possible. At Tiki Wetsuits, it doesn’t even matter what brand or model it is, they can repair it using their 40 years of experience. This is surely the best form of guarantee you can offer to customers. O'Neill carries out a ‘fit check’ every season on all different thicknesses and models throughout its whole collection. So lots of the bosses’ different prototypes are passed down to the design team before getting the final go ahead to be sold. At Patagonia they are also striving for the ‘perfect fit’ so that their models fit a wide range of shapes and sizes. For winter 17/18, all front zips will be blessed with an improved asymmetric entry point for comfort. At Picture, to ensure good wetsuit ergonomics- during paddling and when in action- the designers drew inspiration from triathlon models to optimise freedom of movement. After a few years of reticence, one section of the surf population seems ready to abandon zippers. At C-Skins, brand manager, Mark Brown states that “zipless models have come and gone in the last 20 years

but this time they seem to be here to stay thanks to successful fabric innovations.” A first for 2017, Rip Curl have their first zipless model with integrated cagoule.

PRICE & POSITIONING

When faced with extreme conditions, no one seems to be put off by the top-of-the-range so it’s necessary to have these models around the €500 mark in stock. Most of the sales volumes will hit the RRP between €300-€400 as Phil from Tiki Wetsuits notes: “There’s a very key mid-level price point. This is the market for the one or two times monthly surfer – not willing to commit to a top end wetsuit but needing all the warmth and reassurance of a quality winter wetsuit.” In this segment, value for money will be crucial. Ultimately this leaves little space on the racks for entry-level models priced between €100-€150 which mostly only sell during the summer months anyway. At this level, Mathieu Desaphie at Sen No Sen warns us that: “When you buy a really cheap product, someone on the other side of the world pays the price.”

ECO-DESIGN

Totally abandoning oil-based neoprene will still take time to spread through the whole industry but those who took a chance on the green gold as soon as it was discovered (Patagonia, Vissla, Picture then Soörüz) are not about to backtrack after such conclusive results in the water. Insulation, stretch, drying time: the standard achieved this season by rubbers from ecological sources are proudly challenging neoprene, and for almost the same price.

For Patagonia, eco-design dictates decisions right the way to the top of the company. Feeling justified for going down this road eight years ago, they set about spurring on all their competitors to do the same by making their discoveries public. A blessing when you consider that no less than 200 fabric tests were carried out by Patagonia to find “THE optimal rubber consistency in terms of flex, longevity and U.V. resistance,” recalls Gabriel Davies. At Finisterre, “the best product is one which lasts over time,” says the brand’s founder Tom Kay and this goes for all product categories. Rip Curl, a frontrunner with its Resurrection Programme, is pulling out all stops to “tie together the loose ends between production off-cuts and wetsuits that are returned by customers at the end of their lives.”

Elsewhere in the production cycle, manufacturers are putting all their effort into limiting their dependence on plastic and their carbon footprint. The Xcel offices in Haleiwa are run on solar power. Laminating glues as well as printing inks are now all water-based and solvent-free guaranteed. Reducing transport is a big step forward and by sending products straight from the factory to the main retailers, some manufacturers are saving precious miles.

Packaging is another area where plastic use can be easily bypassed using corn starch or soya fibres, which do the job just fine, and biodegrade really quickly. Finally, in the shop, recycled and recyclable cardboard hangers are now used to display the collections. Drawing on its 40 years’ experience, the wetsuit market continues to evolve and reinvent itself for all of our sakes and for that of the planet. A luxury that is priceless in both cases. 🌱

HIGHLIGHTS

- Consolidation and simplification
- Durability, longevity and reparability
- Non-neoprene wetsuits working
- Improved fit for all shapes
- High-performance liners

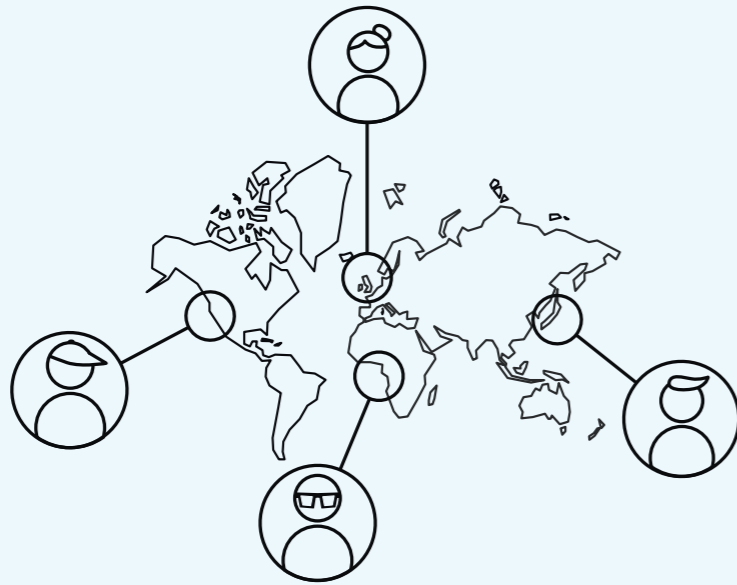


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## WHO BUYS YOUR STUFF? PIONEERS OF CUSTOMER RESEARCH

Ten years ago, sending a newsletter was like pulling teeth. Businesses would pay a fortune to agencies every month, send over their artwork and copy, go back and forth with the amends – and then wait. It would literally take two or three days to send a simple newsletter. Then MailChimp came along and turned the whole process on its head overnight. These days, online businesses can communicate with their customers and audience better, quicker and much cheaper than ever before. Who Buys Your Stuff? is doing the exact same thing for customer research. **By Ernest Capbert.**

One of the biggest challenges your an online business will have is to understand who your actual customers are. I'm not talking about followers on Twitter or the people who like you on Facebook. It's nuts for anyone to build a businesses strategy around this group of people. You have to look past your audience to better understand the people who are not only engaging with you on social media, but also regularly opening your newsletter and – most importantly – those who buy from you several times a year.

You might already think you know these people. If so, who are they? Do you fully understand them and what they are interested in? If we asked different departments within your business to describe your customer, would we get a consistent answer? These are important questions that need to be answered. The people who buy your stuff are going to be different to the people who follow you on social media. They are the actual customers who spend money with you, not necessarily the audience who interact with your brand. This is an important point that should not be overlooked.

Building a business strategy without a clear and quantifiable understanding of who your customers are is completely bonkers. Your creative agency, design director, PR agency and marketing director all need to know this. Otherwise, how are they coming up with the

creative? On what assumptions are they basing their strategy? What's behind their approach, other than gut feeling and guesswork? Here's a challenge for you. Ask your designer how they came up with next season's range. Are their designs based on a quantifiable understanding of your actual spending customers? If all they can show you is a couple of trend reports and clippings from magazines then I'd run for the hills.

Here's what Ed Burstall, the managing director of one of London's most successful retail venues, Liberties, had to say about customer research: "I laugh sometimes when I read those stories about 'we're going to target millennials'. A company's proposition needs to be edited into somebody's life with all the right pieces." I could not agree more with Ed. Investing in finding out who your spending customers are allows you to present your business to them in a more effective way. This is the turning point where you will begin to waste less money and less time. This is where the positioning becomes incredibly clear and where real growth can happen.

We speak to businesses every day that have these broad, assumptive and varied pictures of who their customers are. When we ask them our one simple question, they come back with vague answers. Some say their customers are millennials, others tell us they are yummy

The advertisement features a background image of a surfer in a dark wetsuit with a blue pattern, holding a surfboard in the ocean. In the foreground, a similar wetsuit is displayed on a mannequin. The top right corner has the 'PICTURE' logo with a mountain icon and the text 'RIDE FOR FUTURE ORGANIC &amp; RECYCLED PRODUCTS'. The bottom section has a dark blue banner with white text and icons: 'NEOPRENE FREE' (with a leaf icon), 'SOLVENT FREE' (with a crossed-out flask icon), and 'PETROL FREE' (with a crossed-out fuel pump icon). At the very bottom, it says 'An eco-friendly wetsuit solution for cold water surf session !' and 'WWW.PICTURE-ORGANIC-CLOTHING.COM'.

who buys your stuff?

mummies, or outdoor enthusiasts who are also affluent and between 20–45 years old. Please think about this age range and actually go there in your head. Have you seen the way a 20 year old engages with the world? It’s miles apart from a 45 year old, totally different. Any business trying to execute a plan based on this kind of thinking is going to be disappointed.

It’s one thing to understand your business proposition and be clear about what you do and why. However, you need to take this one step further and understand your actual customers, then edit that proposition into their everyday lives, intelligently and strategically. This is often the missing link – the massive disconnect between brand strategy and how this relates to people who spend money with you. Rather than continuing to point out where you might be going wrong with customer research, I’d like to give an example to show how this stuff can be applied to your business.

#### ACTIVE IN STYLE

They are one of the UK’s fastest growing women’s active wear brands. When we went to meet with them, they believed that their top spending customers were women between the ages of 25 and 45 years old. Generally speaking, women who are 25 are not married, they’re out at the weekends, they have late nights, and they go out drinking and dancing until the early hours. The next morning they might go out for a run, then relax in the evenings with friends at the pub and eat whatever they want.

Then contrast this with the typical life of a woman who is 40 years old. She is married, has kids, understands the importance of saving, owns her own home, splits her time between her family and work, has occasional evenings out with her husband, and when it comes to exercise – well, it doesn’t happen as much as she’d like to. Instead, a weekend yoga session followed by a Starbucks coffee often hits the spot.

I am generalising here. I’ll say that again – I am generalising – but this does illustrate the futility of speaking in such broad demographics. Businesses who claim they appeal to women between the ages of 25 and 45 are going to do a poor job of relating to them and engaging with them. Their messages will be watered down, and the products will be too broad and sometimes irrelevant.

Three weeks later, we came back with our research for Active in Style and found that their customer was not 25, nor were they Bugaboo-owning yummy mummies ordering Starbucks coffees. Instead, we found that women who actually buy from them, the ones who were driving sales and were hyper-engaged with the brand, were between 28 and 33 years of age. Even more specific than that, we found out they were engaged or in a serious relationship, had thoughts about having a family one day, but that right now it was all about them and their careers and killing it when they worked out.

What did Active in Style do with these findings? Credit to them, they decided to get busy and built an aspirational world around these women. They came up with new content and strategies to speak to them, they edited their business into these women’s lives and found new ways to place their brand and products in front of other women

who fit this exact profile in major cities across the UK. This totally worked for them and they experienced a noticeable spike in key metrics, engagement, traffic and conversions.

This stuff isn’t rocket science and it’s not something new. The truth is that the most successful businesses on the planet have a clear understanding of who their customers are. Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon, says: “What has worked at Amazon is putting the customer first.” But until now, customer research has been incredibly time consuming, expensive and difficult to implement. Our way of doing research no longer means six months of focus groups, having a bank balance the size of Amazon’s, or 200 page reports that are impossible to understand and even more impossible to put into action.

Instead, we use technology and data to help regular online businesses find out who their customers are in less than three weeks, for a cost of £5 per customer.

#### HERE’S HOW IT WORKS:

1. We have cultivated a way of asking your customers the right questions to deliver a high response rate and watertight answers that build a solid customer profile.
2. We then use our own technology to Hoover up publicly available information to bring their profiles to life.
3. Lastly, we use third-party technology that understands how these people communicate on social platforms and then comes up with words and strategies to better reach these customers and to find more of them.

*“Ask your designer how they came up with next season’s range. Are their designs based on a quantifiable understanding of your actual spending customers? If all they can show you is a couple of trend reports and clippings from magazines then I’d run for the hills.”*

This whole process takes three weeks, costs £5 per customer and is delivered over a Skype call. If you’re an online business operating without a clear idea of who your customers are then you don’t have to anymore. We’ve worked with over 20 retailers and succeeded in making customer research fast, inexpensive and fun. It’s made these businesses more customer-centric, strategic and focused on creating growth. There is no longer any excuse for online businesses not to know who buys their stuff.

Who Buys Your Stuff? is bringing customer research to online businesses around the world. In the next and final edition, we’ll be hearing from Ernie on some of the most common questions online businesses have when it comes to customer research. 📧

SOORUZ RIDERS VISION

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more informations on [sooruz.com/organic-wetsuit](http://sooruz.com/organic-wetsuit)

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Photo : Vanessa Andrieux



## BIG WIG: SALOMON’S DAVID PITSCHI

Salomon Snowboard’s David Pitschi has gone full circle with the brand, from pro rider to Global Brand Manager. SOURCE Editor Harry Mitchell Thompson talks to David on a range of subjects spanning Salomon Snowboard’s role at Amer sports through marketing strategy and where David sees opportunities for the industry.

**Please tell us about your background in boardsports David - you’ve gone full circle with Salomon, right? Team rider to global brand manager...**

I’ve been part of the boardsports industry, more specifically the snowboard industry since 1989 when I started competing in Swiss snowboarding contests. I met the distributors of Billabong and paid for my lift passes by taking orders at the Bespo tradeshow (local trade show in the 90s) for them. Then when Salomon started making snowboards in 1995-1996 they needed to have riders to test their product and I was offered a sponsorship deal I couldn’t refuse, at the time I got to ride with Jason Ford and Aleksi Vanninen, it was like a dream. After that I was hired by Billabong to manage their snowboard team and progressed into being the winter department marketing manager. Then Salomon asked me to manage the Salomon Snowboards brand globally. So yes, it’s full circle indeed, over the course of 20 years and I’ve always been involved with Salomon snowboards. They have always been an inspiration in innovation and product development for me, it’s a real privilege to be working with such a passionate team.

**Please tell us about the team you work with and how snowboarding fits within Salomon and its parent Amer sports.**

The Salomon Snowboards team is a group of very talented and motivated individuals; from the development and innovation side to the graphics and commercial structure everyone is passionate about snowboarding. They all ride and when powder days happen the whole office tries to make it to the mountains. That’s one of the key points within Salomon as a multisport company; everyone is passionate about the sport they are working in. With snowboarding we have total independence in building our products and stories. We have the advantage of a big structure too. We have the luxury of having so many different engineers and experts in different sports and access to all their technologies. With the Annecy Design Centre, Salomon brings us a lot of technological benchmarks and know-how in pattern making.

We also have the advantage of being part of a solid commercial structure with a good distribution and we can rely on a solid four seasons business to support our structure.

*We will start thinking like magazines, where there are around three different readers per magazine sold - we will have the same with our boards, where consumers share their product.*

*We’re getting towards the end of our downward cycle and we’ll see some traction soon - by being inclusive and getting more kids into snowboarding.*

Salomon Snowboards has a younger target consumer than Salomon in general so we are a key element in understanding teenager behaviours and their habits. Salomon Snowboards fits within the brand as the youthful influencer that maintains the interest for the brand as they grow older and engage in different outdoor activities. It’s a real asset for us as a team and for Salomon to have so much expertise to share and take influence from.

**Talk us through where Salomon is at with the rental market.**

Salomon snowboards has developed a specific rental system called UNITE. Anyone who wants to rent a board and has no idea on what to get can actually find the perfect set up by answering four simple questions: Gender, Size, Style and Budget. We also developed the rental collection to be proper snowboards that are built to perform for years. Our unique board-to-binding interface is also a great selling point for the rental shop. There is a growing interest in good quality rental for the UK and France. We try and give the consumer a great experience from the first time they step onto a board by giving them easy access and lifting all the barriers to entry. Rental in a general sense is a major part in the future of snowboarding with the young consumer steering away from the classic system of ownership and moving towards sharing and multi-person usage. We will start thinking like magazines, where there are around three different readers per magazine sold - we will have the same with our boards, where consumers share their product.

*The one thing that transcends generations is the importance of style - snowboarding will always be focused on style, whatever progress we make, style is always a key element.*

**How are you segmenting your marketing initiatives between athletes, movies, ad campaigns and events, and where do you see potential for growth and development?**

Our marketing efforts are very team and video focussed. We have a very strong team that works closely with our development team to bring the best product to the consumer. We essentially speak online and produce content in partnership with the media so we all gain from a collective effort. This year we produced Reckless Abandon with Bode Merrill and Jesse Paul. The release of that movie was a big success and gave us a lot of good publicity. Jesse Paul ended up getting rookie of the year and Bode rider of the year.

All our events are tied to an athlete; if our signature pro comes up with an event concept we get behind it and help them promote the event. We believe that heroes still drive the sport. Our campaigns are always set in three pillars: the Athlete, the Product, the Story. When these three pillars all work together you have a very powerful message that resonates. It’s vital that all of our stories are true and genuine.

**Do you have different marketing campaigns for targeting core snowboarders and occasional enthusiasts, or do you keep one unified strategy?**

We have a unified strategy where we want to promote full spectrum snowboarding with a focus on freestyle. We usual have two major stories a year to cover our main product focus for the year. Our main investment is toward the core and freestyle but we do have a specific powder story we build with Wolle. We created the Hillside project; A collaboration with Wolle Nyvelt to build the best powder boards. We’ll have activations around Wolle, his prototype factory and the boards throughout the year. With the resources we have we became creative in promoting more niche stories, for example with our splitboards we created a satellite Facebook page where our tech savvy consumers can come and exchange their experiences about splitboarding - that way the split community has its specific platform.

**What’s your general assessment of the state of the snowboard industry? Where are we at, what got us here and what opportunities for growth do you see?**

The industry is definitively shrinking and the median age of the rider is getting older, I think that once the punk and disruptive energy that snowboarding had in the early 2000s had ran his course we have become an acceptable sport and our efforts to initiate or to convert people to snowboarding should have evolved too. Snowboarding has become too ‘cool’ to be accessible and ski teachers and ski schools encourage beginners to get on a pair skis with so many valid arguments, meaning anyone who is undecided will be driven to skis.

But the good news is that there are more kids snowboarding now than five years ago. So there’s still a healthy industry. It’s roughly three times smaller than the ski industry and it’s a healthy size; I don’t think we’ll grow massively anymore but if we manage to maintain our current size there is still lots of good things to do on a snowboard. We’re getting towards the end of our downward cycle and we’ll see some traction soon - by being inclusive and getting more kids into snowboarding. Snowboarding is always going to be there, there will always be people that will need to experience the feeling of a backside air and the power of a smooth powder turn where the hand slightly grazes the snow.

**How different is the modern day professional snowboard athlete compared to back in your day?**

They are exactly that, ‘athletes’. Today, to be a professional snowboarder requires such extreme physical commitment that you can’t afford being half fit and having a good season. The competitive riders have to travel the world hitting massive kickers spinning more rotations in one jump than we used to do in a full day. Back in the day we could have a career by being a well-rounded snowboarder with a mix of contests and filming. Now riders are even segmented between slopestyle Vs pipe. The impact on the body and the intensity of the calendar makes it obligatory to be a well-oiled athlete. Also the kids today reach such a level at such a young age that it seems like the turnaround in riders is a lot faster than before. Every year brings its load of newcomer riders that storm the scene for three to four years and disappear. I also think the mind-set has changed somewhat; there are more kids that enter snowboarding as a career plan and use it to become recognised. In the 90s if you were a snowboarder you were hated and that was something that drove us to snowboarding. There was this sense of challenging the establishment and being a rebel. Look at Shaun Palmer and Chris Roach, they where our heroes. The one thing that transcends generations is the importance of style - snowboarding will always be focused on style, whatever progress we make, style is always a key element.

**How is Salomon working with snowboarding as a progressive, competitive sport?**

No Salomon does not have any involvement with the competitive side of snowboarding, We have made a strategic decision to focus on the content creation side of snowboarding because we believe the creativity of snowboarding comes without the frame of rules and we want to express that.


That said the importance of competitive snowboarding is big. We need to find a way to create a true governing body to simplify the calendar and create a true World Champion. 



photo: Dakine

# WOMEN’S OUTERWEAR FW17/18 TREND REPORT

Nothing calls for a wardrobe clear-out better than a new-season collection of outerwear fits, shapes and colours. Begone, clingy pant. Away, foul boxy jacket. Vamoose, rancid fleece. FW17/18 is all about variety, versatility and refinements; read on for a closer look as **Tom Wilson-North** examines the evidence in our FW17/18 Trend Report.

**AESTHETIC SUMMARY**

Before we start, a quick disclaimer; there’s not a hygge reference in sight. No, the fast fashion and household furnishing houses can keep their dumpy bathrobes, fluffy blankets and vanilla chai lattés. Boardsports outerwear is wholly incompatible with this done-to-death-before-it-even-started tabloid trend, thank god.

What is new are two nascent trends we identified which have meaningful roots in catwalk and contemporary art, and translate well to our industry. The first we are calling HARDENED. This is about the raw, plain and matt look so beloved by the high fashion scene of late. The raw dull metal and bashed brass by Versace surfaces as chunky alu zip fronts and pocket poppers, and the military thing popular at Gigi Hadid for Hilfiger, and to a lesser extent Pinko, comes out as varied-front asym jackets (Dakine) and drummer-inspired jackets (all over). It’s androgynous without being goth but textures like wool and quilted fabrics, and darker colours like slate, quarry, oyster and of course true black definitely play the biggest part of the palette. “Yeah, us too,” confirms L1’s Jon Kooley. “We’re drawn to that harder look with a feminine twist, the same way a girl can grab her boyfriend’s old Harley shirt and the moment she puts it on it changes from this dirty old shirt to something sexy. That’s kind of the place I go when designing the

L1 women’s line, this slightly more masculine styling with feminine silhouettes and colour palettes.” A good illustration of this trend is the resurgence of the women’s onepiece. Nikita are showing a utilitarian-look, waxed black canvas 20K onesie called the Mondran, and Picture Organic’s Xena One Piece is in the same vein offering fully taped seams, top technical performance and styling lifted from female pilots’ flight suits.

The second major trend we identified for boardsports next year is LUXURY/SPORTS LUXE. Think shiny soft tracksuit-style materials, neoprene and drawstring pant waistbands, varsity mesh hems and cotton cuffs. Whenever there’s a major mainstream sporting event taking place, fashion designers stamp their take on it, and a couple of months later it echoes back into snowboarding as collection inspiration - although you can probably appreciate the irony that boardsports were probably part of that inspiration in the first place. Anyway, it’s here, and in this iteration of the trend, sporty is streetified with opulent, shiny and OTT bling. Think satiny souvenir jackets, soft finish bombers with florals and metallic finishes. A truly luxe feel entwines the 686 women’s line, and Rojo’s beautiful collection uses “unique threads and weaves - soft and luxurious fabrics which are highly rated for alpine adventures, but also unique trims and features,”



686



686



3CS



Bench



Bonfire



Bonfire



Brunotti



Burton

*“The Search Series is all about strong and durable mountainwear, made from a selection of recycled and eco-friendly materials, that will stand the true test of time.”* **Edouard Cousty, Mountainwear Product Manager, Rip Curl**

explains Director David Salvesson. Brunotti were big on details too, like the striped interior linings and neoprene tags that we noticed in their No Matter The Conditions capsule collection, and the pearl feather print jacket with gold accents paired with matching gold snow pants was pretty out there. The faux-fur at Protest slotted right in too, as did their unique slim-fit softshell pants with a skinny cuff that slides easily into the snowboard boot.

**LONG LASTING**

Less of a trend, more of a new industry direction. Boardsports clothing manufacturers are facing up to the fact that making all this gear year after year isn’t exactly the best thing for our beleaguered planet, and perhaps it’s time to create tougher garments that will last longer and not end up a the back of the cupboard in a year - or, worse in a landfill. And if those tough garments are made in an eco way, so much the better.

Rip Curl are doing it exactly right with the launch of their Search Series. “This collection is all about strong and durable mountainwear, made from a selection of recycled and eco-friendly materials, that will stand the true test of time. For the first time, we made PFC free products, with a PET recyclable membrane and Rudolf Eco DWR (PFC free water repellent). And way more. All in all, we managed to retain the best performance level and add an eco-friendly construction for a lower carbon footprint,” says Rip Curl’s Mountainwear Product Manager, Edouard Cousty. Dainese’s new bomber Trailknit construction is a similar step in the durable direction, and 686 trim down their collection to try to make products that are bought once then kept for a lifetime. Likewise, Norrona continue with their Loaded Minimalism design philosophy to ensure usage year after year.

Durable products need a durable identity, so expect this type of production to sport visual cues to the toughness factory. At 3CS, course brushed oxford and twill textures underpin the handfeels, which conjures up a feeling of old world quality and longevity.

Furthermore to the long-lasting thing, we’re seeing a blur in the lines of seasonality. “Seasons are so... last season, says O’Neill’s Bernhard Ritzer. “Today we’re buying product when we need it. Seriously, who still runs out to the stores to get that full winter wardrobe in August when it’s 30° out? Our new medium and lighter weight products can be worn all year round. Awesome versatility: comfort for leisure as well as function for sport. It’s an extra layer when you’re in your shorts, or an under layer when you head to the slopes. Good for you, good for business too. It generates sell-through earlier in the season, then combines well with the snow line, so it has a longer shelf life.” Likewise, Brunotti’s NOOS (Never Out Of Stock) program features key fleeces and synthetic tees and can be ordered winter or summer, bringing an end to some parts of seasonality.

**SILHOUETTES**

In silhouettes, there are some key refinements that you’ll need to understand before doing your women’s outerwear buy. Firstly, the tailored look of more form-fitting jackets and pants is coming back.



Dakine



Dakine



DC



Holden



Horsefeathers



Horsefeathers



L1



Light

Jackets are shorter and more fitted (Nikita & Westbeach), but have idiosyncratic detailing to enhance their uniqueness, like tails which drop even further (Holden). When it comes to pants, the two options out there remain slim or skinny. No-one talked about baggy or loose this season. L1's Heartbreaker Twill is a perfectly-executed example of the skinny look, and their boyfriend fit - which is a relaxed slim fit with more room in the seat and thighs - is offered in one style called the Siren. Roxy have some great new pant options too, with high waistlines and neoprene belting.

Up top, the oversized puffa is back, drawn from catwalk looks seen at Moncler and in the mainstream at Pull&Bear and Topshop. Holden and Bench both have nice examples of this look. Generally in jackets things are cleaning up somewhat with sleek, flat fronts gracing the pages of Dakine & Strafe's lookbooks. And Billabong's overhauled Soffya jacket gets a fur lining and super clean quilted wave pattern up front. Minimal and effective is here to stay.

STREETWEAR STYLE

In men's, streetwear looks are declining in popularity, whereas this look is working well for women's. Central to this theme at Nikita is the Maple jacket. "It's important for us because it showcases our denim-look, streetwear-inspired waxed canvas. Available in black or blue, the Maple features Thermore Classic Compact insulation, our highest 20K waterproof rating and a bevy of other features," enthuses Nikita's Stephanie ter Hürne. Protest push this look a little further, and are offering their snow range as part of their streetwear range; no cuts in quality or durability, just way more use of treated denim, stretch fabrics and softshell mountainwear. Lastly, there's a great piece from 3CS called the Pret A Porter jacket which strikes a perfect balance between street-inspired and snowboard-functional.

*"The bib pant has thus far eluded most womenswear lines due to the fact that they are deeply unflattering, making the wearer resemble a North Atlantic fisherwoman wearing a Mrs Beeton apron"*

JAPAN

We noticed that there is a lot of influence coming from the Land Of The Rising Sun. Fabrics, prints, cuts... you'll see lots of Japan in women's outerwear next year. We can't pin this trend down to a specific catwalk movement or look, but it links in well to the values of sleek minimalism and simplicity cited above. And let's face it, the Japan segment of today's snowboard videos is always the best bit.

Burton will be showing antique boro treated prints; boro is a patchwork of traditional Japanese workwear cloths stitched together, like bluey denim and narrow white-and-grey stripes. Likewise, Brunotti are using a Japonisme bird print, L1 are using a kimono print with ravens and cherry blossoms as liner detailing, and Holden are using Toray Textiles' Mountain Cloth as the face fabric for their key Rambler Moto jacket.

BIBS FOR DAYS

Ubiquitous in menswear, the bib pant has thus far eluded most womenswear lines due to the fact that they are deeply unflattering, making the wearer resemble a North Atlantic fisherwoman wearing a Mrs Beeton apron. FW17/18 will be remembered as the year where brands Got It Right, opening up a whole new door of steez, comfort, waterproofing and convenience for female snowboarders.

"We developed a new technical and feminine bib pant that perfectly completes our street-inspired collection while answering to the needs



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of the most demanding freeriders. Those girls really want to push the boundaries; we want to make sure they can do so,” says Roxy’s Product Manager Marion Bertrand. Bibs are generally pretty technical pieces; we liked Nitro’s high-tech Yamanouchi Bibs with their lightweight 2L material, which are reflective of a general lightweight and durable material trend in bibs and beyond. Meanwhile, Strave’s Scarlett Bib has a halter-top for easy bathroom use and Westbeach’s Rapture Stretch Bib Pant has 20/20 stretch fabric, Recco and a mesh back panel to ensure you don’t overheat.

**COLOURS**

As every year, a full spectrum is available in women’s pants and jackets, but there’s clear theming towards certain colour stories. Keep an eye for soft neons, alpine brights and jewel tones from brands with a younger audience. More established brands with longer histories going for a heritage feel play more with tones such as petrol or spice colours like saffron or paprika. There’s also use of brick red, fatigue and dry leaf green here – look out for Light’s Bone Brown which feels really modern – as well as some contrasting gold and silver metallics and shiny matt blacks.

Pop colours of coral, red, pink, blue or green alongside blacks, whites and earth tones will remain popular, and colour blocking is trending back for womenswear too. White is an important theme for the mountains again this year, and there is an extension of urban chic colours like grey and khaki, particularly in our Hardened trend mentioned above.

*“Snowboard jackets are expensive. So why just use them for snowboarding? Next year’s generation of riding wear is geared for cross-discipline functionality, whether that means walking the dog, commuting or wearing around town.”*

**TECHNICAL INNOVATIONS**

Girls get colder than boys, so it’s no surprise to see brands addressing the chills. Nikita’s approach is bifold, with Thermore Classic compact insulation spreading out almost linewise for bulk-free warmth. Meanwhile, they pop Radiant Heat handwarmer pockets at the inside of the lower back. Bonfire are doing the same and adding in the nape of the neck; these two places are where the skin is particularly thin, so warmth is crucial for comfort and long days on the hill.

In laminations, 3CS launch their proprietary ClimaTech Hybrid membrane, the result of a three-year partnership with a Korean chemical company. This mix of expanded PTFE and microporous PU up the ante in waterproofing, breathability and durability. Same deal with Nitro, who expand their use of 37.5 throughout their womenswear line.

**CROSSOVER APPEAL**

We touched on streetwear style earlier, but true crossover products are becoming more and more of a thing next year. Snowboard jackets are expensive. So why just use them for snowboarding? Next year’s generation of riding wear is geared for cross-discipline functionality, whether that means walking the dog, commuting or wearing around town on chilly evenings. Burton’s investment in the insulator and hybrid fleece categories is symptomatic of this shift, and baselayer specialists Mons Royale are amping up their use of merino and synthetic blends to make layers suitable for snowboarding, gym visits and lurking around Starbucks.



**NIKITA**  
FALL/WINTER 2018

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Rip curl



Rip curl



Rojo



Rojo



Roxy



Westbeach



Westbeach



Phunkshun Wear

In crossover jackets, we liked 686’s Womens GLCR Bliss Down Jacket. It’s an activewear-inspired and fully packable 100% Responsible Down insulated jacket with an extra-tall internal collar designed to, as the cliché goes, take you from the mountains to the streets. Bench’s 3-in-1 jacket is purposed with a similar job in mind.

PRICEPOINTS

Whilst we saw some fancy feature and fabric upgrades to affordable price points, the real action in women’s outerwear is happening at the top end. “We heard the demand for a premium female shell jacket loud and clear, which got us to work promptly on the technical and slope-ready 2-in-1 ‘Alpine’ with fully taped seams and 3M padding”, confirms Protest’s Anjet Wesselink. From Billabong their Kirima and Kiana outfit shoots up to big 30K/20K numbers, the top end of the Rip Curl line receives a substantial overhaul, and 686’s first signature Klaudia Medlova pro models are crammed with tech features and look the bee’s knees.

PRINTS

Whether you’re a high fashionista or camper-van inhabiting dread, chances are you’ll buy a piece of snowboard clothing with a print on it next winter. It’s not that prints are particularly ‘back’... more they never went away. As the catwalks indulge themselves into floral and animal print meltdown, with print melanges and colour clashes abound, snowboarding keeps things a little less scary and more commercial. Horsefeathers have an easy-on-the-eye Strawberry Camo, Nitro uses a techy print called X Ray Floral and Rojo created an art canvas which they turned into a yardage piece as part of their Boarding for Breast Cancer collab jacket. Bench keep things more classic with subtle worn-looking texture prints on their fabrics, and Billabong use a Navajo print and some basic painted stripes.

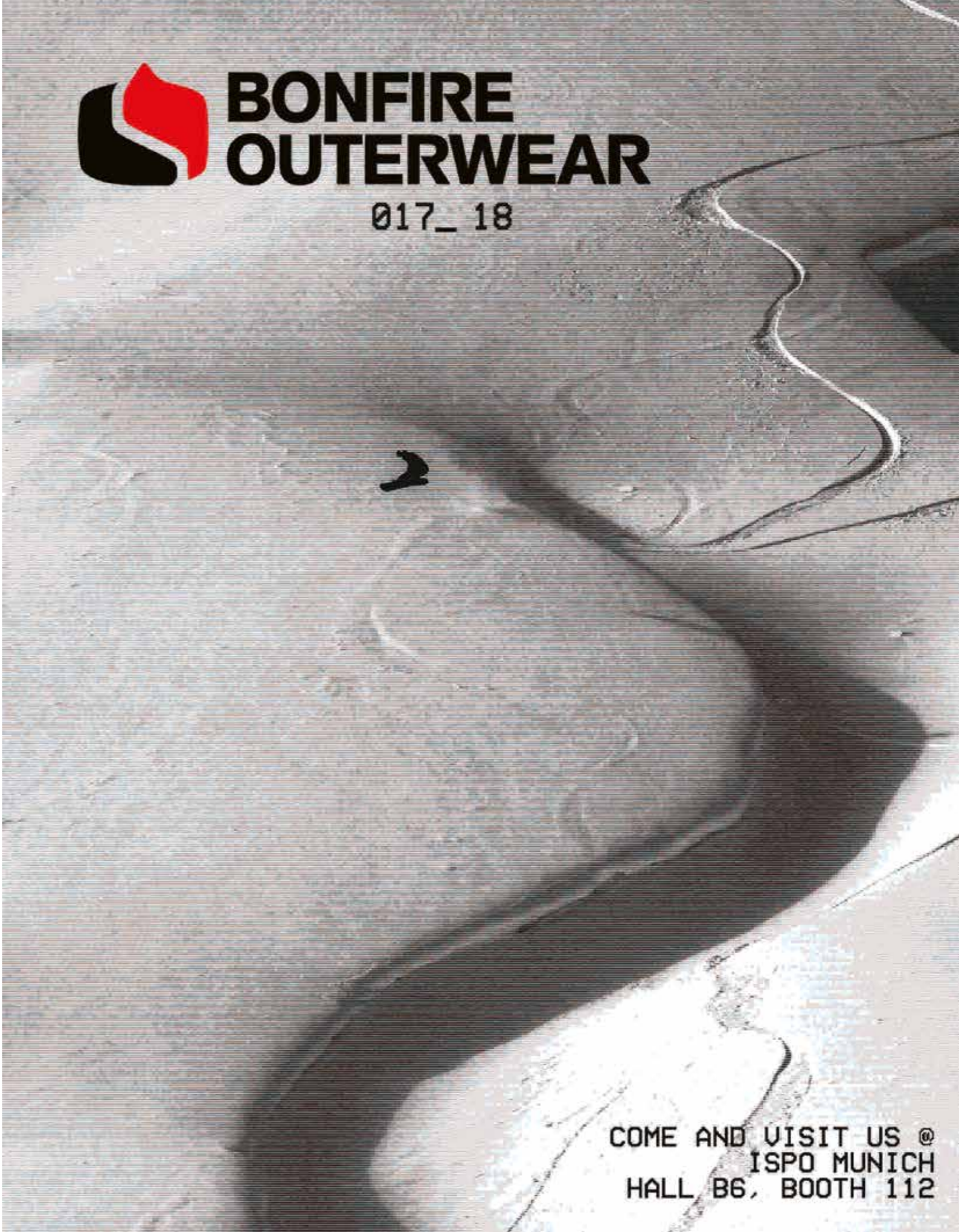
At Roxy, “we have added more details and depth to photo prints and the results filled us with enthusiasm. Our latest favourite, the Cloudnine print, is a clever combination of neon colours and a deep blue. It has unique vibrant though soft and dreamy touch,” says Marion Bertrand. There is a lovely (and Japanese inspired) Ginko print from Supernaturals, and plenty of eclectic and bold print clashes from DC. Finally, expect to see mixed-print mashups from Burton; we loved their blends of different camos, their monotone florals and their folky hand drawn motif repeats.

CONCLUSION

Well, it’s a lot to take in. Women’s outerwear isn’t just shrunked and pinked versions of menswear anymore; as represented by the opposing trends across the genders, these are definitely two very different markets with very different consumer ideals and market demands. The Hardened trend shouldn’t be too difficult to sell through with commercially safe colours and styles. And by all means go for Luxury/ Sport Luxe too... just perhaps don’t go in too deep on the gold satin puffa jackets, though. 6

HIGHLIGHTS

- Heat retention technologies
- Print mashups prevail
- Premium price point investments
- Big Japanese inspiration





PHIL HANSEN

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ISPO MUNICH  
HALL B6, BOOTH 112



photo: 686

## MEN'S OUTERWEAR FW17/18 TREND REPORT

It seems that everyone is eager to get a slice of our boardsports outerwear market, from supermarkets to generic sports brands to the fast fashion houses. Now more than ever it's important to differentiate your brand and your channel, shut out the noise and focus on the real-deal snowboard gear that's stood the test of time. Here's a recap of the best of the bunch, along with an injection of the latest and greatest, in our Men's Outerwear Trend Report FW17/18.

**By Tom Wilson-North.**

### SUMMARY OF NEW LOOKS

We identified two major aesthetic trends around next winter's outerwear. The first is BACK TO THE NINETIES. Think big-logo slogan midlayer hoodies in bold graphic style (Bench), pullover jackets (Airblaster and Templeton), post-Soviet athletica, large lettering and bold fonts, chunky metal zips and coppers (Protest) and reboots of boxy fits. It's all very Kid n Play. There isn't a Fila outerwear capsule yet, but anything could happen.

The second trend we call DRAB ARMY. This is that minimal and faded look with a focus on plain fabrics with only the merest texturing, whether printed on or from the material itself via face fabrics like wovens or wale corduroy. "We see most of our fabrics trending towards more plain weaves while keeping things fresh with some streetwear influenced textures," confirms Dakine's EMEA Marketing Manager, Markus Otto. Minimal long mountain parkas

and simplified down jackets, strongly in evidence across major collections next year, also slot into this trend.

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*"Overly skinny pants trend out, so there will be fewer 'two pencils shoved into a kiwi' silhouettes on your local mountain next year."*

---

Coach jackets are still out there, but starting to be replaced by thicker gas station jackets with zip fronts, smaller collars, shorter lengths and dominant badging. The ubiquitous bib pant trend continues next year, de rigeur when matched with a black balaclava, garish long sleeve flannel and mediocre Instagram account. The only bibs which are trending out are the super-baggy, sack-of-potatoes cuts; slimmer bibs are definitely more popular.



32



3CS



686



686



Atrip



Atrip



Billabong



Bonfire

“Whatever you see trending in skateboarding you can be sure it will make an appearance in snowboarding at some point.” **Jon Kooley, L1**

Conversely, overly skinny pants trend out, replaced by articulated regular fit pants; long jackets still look good with these wider cuts, but there will be fewer ‘two pencils shoved into a kiwi’ looks on your local mountain. Also in pants we noticed a reduction in kneeblocking (and colourblocking in general), being replaced with tone on tone or mixed fabrics in the same colour. Onepieces are also edging their way back; we saw a gorgeous one from Brunotti which is well worth a look.

In colours, Scandinavian design and pure Pantone card classics are evident at Picture Organic Clothing, and we saw Warm Yellow playing an important role, particularly from Light. Amongst the really core brands, toned down and mellow colours are definitely the most popular. Browns, khakis, army greens. Halldor Helgason’s brand atrip apparel use the vile but somehow alluring 448C heavily, and there’s traditional skateboard colours at L1. “You know, my biggest inspiration is and has always been skateboarding. Whatever you see trending in skateboarding you can be sure it will make an appearance in snowboarding at some point,” says L1’s Jon Kooley. So the corer the look you want, the more muted the colour palette. As usual.

Crossover remains a strong story for multiple brands, but after some hit-and-miss, commercially questionable designs in recent years the future is “apparel that you can snowboard in” rather than “outerwear that looks like streetwear.” There’s hence less use of waterproof denim, and more of a premium, clean, sleek look in rideable hoodies, softshell pants and integrated-face-mask fleeces. The crossover style plaid wool 10K jacket from Protest was particularly nice.

That clean look extends to the high end too. “We took our cues from the sneaker geek world and sought to mix athletic performance with a keen attention to texture, colour, and trim. Clean lines, technical features, ergonomic fits, subtle patterns, and rich colour,” explains Bonfire Marketing Manager Vicki Vasil.

If none of that is floating your boat, stop by the Sessions booth at ISPO for a look at their unmissable Metallica collab jacket. “Yeah, but the Metallica piece is much more than a functional, technical garment. It speaks to both the brand and band’s legacy & new beginning. We’re both reenergizing our presence in our respective markets - it’s not only strategic, but just meaningful. And the print inside is a collage of album covers,” explains Session’s Nick Visconti. What’s not to like about that?

**LININGS**

Lots of brands cited improvements to their linings as key technical stories next year. Burton’s marketing push centres on their existing Living Lining tech which trickles out wider into the line, and O’Neill



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- Superior yarn density 56 F



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- Superior tenacity thread
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- 2x thicker thread
- Tearing strenght improved



Recycled powder skirt



Recycled cuff



Ultimate durability,  
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Bonfire



Brunotti



Burton



Dainese



Dakine



Dakine



DC



Holden

*“The ubiquitous bib pant trend continues next year, de rigueur when matched with a black balaclava, garish long-sleeve flannel and mediocre Instagram account.”*

have a new warmth retention liner called Firewall Magma. With a name like that we expect great things, and they promise crossover thermal tech from their cold water wetsuit division, which absorbs energy to retain 25% more body heat than a conventional liner. Finally, Holden are using a material called S.Café in their linings, which combines upcycled coffee grounds into yarn, and dries twice as quickly as cotton as well as having anti-microbial odour control and UV protection.

Also notable is the lack of linings in certain pieces. Paclite jackets are on the rise and visible from most brands. These do-it-all windbreaker solutions are a versatile and useful layer. Billabong’s reversible Tradewinds windcheater has an angular and esoteric shape, with functional trims, and 686’s Multi jacket is an extra durable option which uses Gore-Tex. It’s a little thicker and tougher than the rest, and is perfect for backcountry or splitboard use.

**PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENTS**

It’s been a while since snowboard outerwear has been taking cues from the high end sneaker market, so no surprise we’re seeing knits - as featured on the key Nike Roshe & adidas Yeezy models - appear on outerwear. “We are inspired and proud to have created our new ProKnit technology series,” beams Picture Organic’s Julian Durant. “Proknit is made from one piece of woven jacquard fabric, without seams and uses body mapping to permit varying fabric density across specific areas, giving the user maximum breathability, double the stretch, and unparalleled waterproofing when backed with our R-PET membrane.” There’s a new seamless knitted construction from Dainese too, which promises to be more form fitting without compromising comfort or ergonomics.

Elsewhere in funky tech stories, we really, really liked Sessions’ genius external media pocket, which flips down to give full and immediate smartphone screen access...perfect for chairlift selfies (or ‘chelfies’, as they’re apparently known). Brunotti have a new system called Blast which they designed with the Technical University in Delft to regulate body temperature, and a new lightweight fibre called CLO-i borrowed from industrial freezing systems. Elsewhere in materials, there’s widespread use of Polartec’s new Neoshell which gets the thumbs up across the board, particularly from Aspen-based outerwear company Strafe, and DC are adding Sympatex at the top of their line for extra breathability. There’s a focus in this area from Airblaster too; “as more snowboarders get out and earn their turns,” explains brand manager Jesse Grandkoski, “many are starting to realize that no matter how dry they are on the outside, they’re actually getting wet from the inside.”

**Horsefeathers**

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**EIGER JACKET**



ULTRATECH 3-LAYER 20K, OUTER C6 DWR COATING,  
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Horsefeathers



Horsefeathers



L1



Light



Nitro



Nitro



Norrone



Picture

Lastly, there’s a significant technical upgrade to the Westbeach line, culminating in their new signature 30K/30K Paramount Jacket with integrated Recco technology and ergonomic design. Find it up at the top of their range.

**PRICE POINTS**

Price points are generally fairly consistent for brands who increased last year, and brands who haven’t yet gone up will realign. This is, of course, mostly due to the USD currency rate - most raw materials that go into outerwear are priced in dollars. Hence price increases, or quality decreases. “We prefer not to downgrade details or fabric performance, and we really believe our consumer isn’t looking for a cheaper product,” says Light’s Gerd Weisner.

Whereas last year saw developmental emphasis at the premium end, next year sees increased activity around the ‘value’ price point. Activity means demand, and for the most part brands are responding with low-cost solutions to real-world problems of function, fit or tech. Airblaster and Nitro have overhauled their value price points with some really interesting offers, and DC’s “The Resistance” series loads plenty of features into versatile fabrications and hybrid “outer or under” layering options.

This is a good thing. Decent snowboard jackets shouldn’t have to cost €450. In an age where we’re constantly exposed to price cuts, red stickers and MEGA HUGE SALES we are hearing more about consumers who suffer from “discount fatigue”. These guys - and let’s hope they are a growing crowd - are no longer impressed by sales and instead evaluate feature sets to MSRP before purchasing.

**NOT DOWN WITH DOWN**

Next year the snowboard outerwear industry seems conflicted; it wants to offer cosy down insulation, but the abhorrent image of ducks and geese being liveplucked whilst contributing the aforementioned lovely toasty feathers is not particularly marketable. Thus the advent of responsible down, like the Allied Feather and Down branded feathers in Holden’s Redwood Down Jacket. “Allied’s sourcing and proprietary cleaning technologies give Holden customers peace of mind. The down is also traceable via a QR code, showing where and how the down is processed,” explains Holden’s Sales & Marketing Director, Mike LeBlanc. Over at Picture Organic Clothing, they’ve canned animal down completely, switching the down lines to Sorona synthetics which dry quicker than regular feathers. And means the waterfowl can remain happily content on their ponds, lakes and Christmas dinner tables.

**DURABLE IS THE NEW ECO**

Whilst “being eco” remains a vague aspiration for pretty much every brand selling snowboard outerwear nowadays - partly due to a reconfigured consumer ideal and partly from a genuine desire to stop trashing the planet quite so much, some brands are choosing to make products with longer lives as well as using the ‘standard’ set of eco-componentry. Over to Patagonia’s EMEA Head of Product, Paul



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25 Years of  
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Picture



Protest



Protest



Quiksilver



Rip Curl



Rip Curl



Sessions



Sessions

Anderton: “The theme for our whole outerwear collection is ‘Crafted to Last’. We want to make outerwear that is durable and repairable, that can endure misadventures and has longevity that can be passed to the next generation. Simple, durable, reliable, wearable equipment that is meant to stay in play.”

Traditional workwears thus become more popular due to their high abrasion durability and tear resistance. There is a re-emergence of duck canvas and heavy twills - which are also compatible with the DRAB ARMY look described earlier - and high tech fabrics like those used in Norrona’s new Lofoten ACE Gore-Tex jacket. Try as they may, Norrona’s R&D team couldn’t cut that stuff with regular scissors during their developmental process. Sounds like a challenge to me.

Continuing on this durability theme, pop colours and acids predictably trend down. “We believe in good, strong basic colours with strong pop colour accents. People want to buy something they can wear for years to come. You simply can’t do that with some of the crazy trendy stuff people were throwing at snowboarding a few years ago. For us it’s about keeping it simple and classic. Each detail is in its place and for good reason and all our silhouettes & colours can withstand the test of time and trends,” says 686’s Brent Sandor. Likewise, Rip Curl’s durable palette goes slightly more timeless with deep greens and ochres playing an important role for them.

**DWR**

Durable Water Coatings are applied to outerwear face fabrics to make them hydrophobic and create the visual ‘beading’ effect of water dripping off the piece when snow melts. And there are big steps forward in DWR next year. Thirtytwo will be treating all their apparel and outerwear with their new proprietary REPEL treatment, and Nitro will use an eco C6 DWR on their Alagna 3L shell. Rip Curl also go eco with their PFC-free Rudolf Eco DWRs. Why PFC-free? Well, PFCs aren’t great for factory workers, and they hang around without breaking down for a long time in the environment. So we were pleased to see Picture Organic partnering with Chemours to develop a coating called Teflon EcoElite, which they claim is the world’s first renewably sourced, PFC-free durable water repellent. And yes, don’t worry, it’ll still do the nice beading thing when you’re getting rained on on the chairlift.

**PRINTS**

Prints are always interesting to look at in detail; whether you like them or not, prints give a quick snapshot of a collection’s vibe, and a highlight of ‘what’s hot right now’. But not everyone feels that way. “Fuck, if I see another floral jungle print I will projectile vomit,” laughs 3CS Creative Director, Brad Scott. Fortunately for young Brad, snowboard outerwear prints are not quite so garish next year. In camos the subtle watercolour camo from Bonfire is great, and the snow camos from Bench (and many others) make a reappearance. There are also plenty of pin-dot patterns, particularly on black or



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COMPATIBLE HOOD

30K/30K

RECCO  
TECHNOLOGY

FULLY SEAM  
SEALED

PERFORMANCE  
3-LAYER SHELL

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Mons Royale



Pally'Hi



Phunkshun Wear



Super.natural

navy. And Quiksilver are doing a print based on detailed macro photography of a marine iguana’s skin for their new Toray Textile mega-stretch Travis Rice collection. Finally, we liked L1’s abstract prints lifted from the tanks of 1960’s motorbikes, and Airblaster’s Japanicana print which combines Japanese Shibori and Indigo with the classic Americana bandana.

**BASELAYERS**

Another reflection of the crossover trend - making gear that works beyond snowboarding and for different sports too - are the changes happening to the baselayer market next year.

Merino continues to be the big story, with a strong second-year baselayer programme from Norrona and an expanded range from specialists Mons Royale who move some pieces in their range to a blended merino/nylon fabric for increased versatility. “The introduction of some new fabrics to the range means we’ve been able to create garments from wool that can genuinely be worn as outerwear,” says founder Hamish Acland. “Our new Transition range allows you to shred in the freedom of a hoody, but with added warmth and protection.” We also saw a blended merino wool and polyester fabric from Supernaturals.

But synthetics remain the biggest part of the market. Thirtytwo have a full baselayer programme called Ridelite which is lightweight, stretchy and bulk-free, and there’s a killer ninja suit style onesie from Horsefeathers using their Nanosilver Stretch fabric. And Dainese will integrate 1621.1 standard back protection into their performance Dryarn Trailknit bases to allow users to cut down on layers but remain protected against slams. Finally, Quiksilver and Phunkshun both use the new Repreve fabric, constructed from recycled water bottles, in their bases.

**CONCLUSION**

So, there you have it. Next year there are plenty of fresh technical stories, some killer must-have pieces and a solid attempt at being reasonably planet-friendly by pretty much everyone. But be careful and prudent in your buy next year; avoid the fakers and those just in our industry for a quick buck. “The key to our success has been staying true, and not faking clients. The brand DNA and sincerity is so important these days,” confirms Horsefeathers’ Marketing Manager Tomáš Koudela. Snowboarding and skateboarding were born from originality and a sense of creative uniqueness, so celebrate your look, try to understand exactly what it is that your customer base wants, and don’t be afraid to do something different to win the outerwear category next year. 📌

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Long-lasting function & fashion
- Linings with meanings
- Versatile crossover layering





MADE FROM BOTTLES  
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www.phunkshunwear.com



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brand profile

## RESERO

Resero is an avalanche safety company started by freeride behemoth, Xavier De Le Rue. The company currently offers two products, one that releases a rider's snowboard when caught by an avalanche, preventing the snowboard from acting as an anchor. And the second product is a whistle, which is much more reliable and accurate than a phone when needing to reach emergency personnel.

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

The company started early in 2013 while riding in Verbier, where after exchanging on how to improve safety for riders, we came up with two conclusions. When caught in avalanches, the snowboard plays the role of an anchor and keeps you under the surface. Being able to release it would mean more chance to come on top of the snow and survive. This idea became Resero XV.

While testing it with alpine rescue professionals, we identified another important point, which could help save lives; an instant notification for when getting lost or for accidents that happen while doing outdoor alpine activities didn't exist. The sooner people know about your accident, the bigger your chances are of survival. So we developed the Resero Whistle.

### Please explain what sets Avalanche Float products apart from its competitors?

Our products answer professionals or occasional users' needs by bringing new pieces into the safety puzzle with products that were missing until now.

Resero XV is the first market ready product that solves the anchor effect for snowboarders. We also cooperated with the Munich Technology University team led by Dr. Veit Senner to develop a similar solution for skis. After a couple years of development we are now presenting a fully integrated snowboard solution with top avalanche airbag brand at ISPO.

Resero Whistle is a wearable device that you can activate easily when an accident happens

by pulling the handle. This will send an instant SOS message with GPS location and your vital info to the rescue professionals responsible for the area and to your friends nearby. This is a single and always accessible movement.

RW uses an extended proprietary network when GSM doesn't work. It's easier and offers more than a phone would and the battery will not die on you. Originally developed for professionals and freeride enthusiasts, we realized kids could use this when they go to ski school or are outside with their friends. It's for usage both on and off the slopes.

### What safety regulations and standards have you had to comply with? Is there a chance of the release mis-firing?

Our certification is done according to European standards (CE, TUM, etc.) following the same regulations as other avalanche safety brands. We've tested our products with rescue professionals in real avalanches to prove the system works. Certified components from European suppliers already used for avalanche and automotive safety are used. Thus chances of misfiring are about the same as chances that your car airbag misfires.

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

The company was founded by Xavier De Le Rue - multiple Big Mountain Rider of the Year and Freeride World Champion and is the visionary responsible for product concept and media.

Dmitry Gavva (former VC/PE executive, -CEO, development, IR).

Dmitry Romashev (former ILF executive, Legal, IP).

Other experienced professionals on the team

include: Yan Berchten (founder and former CEO of SnowPulse - COO), Anthony Lamiche (mountain guide; product development and testing), Matthieu Giraud (brand development) and there are 30 developers all over Europe in software/database, electronics hardware, mechanics and industrial design.

### Where are you manufacturing your products?

We have production in Germany, next to Jettingen (Bavaria). We work with seasoned and experienced production teams who know about quality and safety standards.

### What marketing campaigns do you have in place for the next 12 months?

We are introducing Resero products at ISPO 2017. The Resero Whistle has been picked amongst ISPO Brandnew finalists. We already have a partnership with Verbier resort and are installing our infrastructure there. Starting from the end of February we will start operating Resero with alpine professionals at a few selected resorts around Mont Blanc.

### What is the product RRP?

Resero XV: €400. Resero Whistle: €99 or €25 to rent for one week.

### What do you see for the future of the avalanche safety industry?

Using cutting edge technology we will improve the products already existing on the market to reduce the chance of getting trapped under avalanches (Resero XV) and to alert and be rescued without losing precious, vital minutes (Resero Whistle). We see avalanche safety equipment that a rider uses to become an integrated safety platform connected to other fellow riders and local rescue professionals. 📶

AVALANCHE-FLOAT.COM



## COBIAN

Cobian is a family run sandal company with heavy influences from the California beach lifestyle. Now being distributed in Europe through Hoff, SOURCE has profiled the brand, which was started by founder John Cobian in 1995.

**Please give an overview on how and why the company began.**

The company was founded by John Cobian in 1995. Growing up along the beaches of Southern California, John and his brothers had developed a passion for surfing, as well as the California beach lifestyle that goes along with it. Cobian’s passion and endeavour is to create the world’s most comfortable footwear while maintaining a meticulous eye for style.

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

Cobian is a family-run company. In the management team we count: John Cobian - CEO and founder of Cobian, former president of Flojos sandals. Claudia Cobian – CFO and John’s brother, Charley Cobian - Operations & International Sales Manager and Aubrey Kuepper is VP of Marketing.

**What is the company ethos?**

In the walk of life, we at Cobian believe that ‘Every Step Matters’. Although our customers have enjoyed Cobian’s signature comfort and value for more than 20 years; in reality, our company’s mission is to serve as a platform to support those who seek to overcome challenges and inspire others to do the same, preserve the planet, transform impoverished communities into a place of refuge and encourage others. If you share our vision of making a difference in the lives of others and enriching the world we live in, then you will be glad to know that a portion of every pair of Cobians you purchase is helping to make a difference.

**What sets you apart from your competitors?**

At Cobian we put our focus on comfort, quality and durability. In an industry where companies tend to lose focus with their mass array of products, Cobian sticks with what it knows: Comfortable and stylistic sandals. The goal is to provide our customers with sandals durable enough to be worn at the beaches, but refined enough to be worn in the city. While remaining true to our surf values, it is our endeavour to branch out into the ever-expanding fashion market; at the heart of the Cobian brand is a passion for people.

**What kind of organisations does Cobian work with and support?**

We created the program ‘Every Step Matters’ to invest in non-profit welfare organisations and to support the good cause. For over 20 years our customers have enjoyed Cobian’s signature comfort and value, but our main mission is to serve as a platform to support others who seek to care for the needy, steward our planet, overcome personal challenges, provide hope and inspiration to others and much more.

Within this program we partner with organisations like Surfer Not Street Children, Movember Foundation, Surfing the Nations, The Young and Brave Foundation, Wild Oceans, Friends of Bethany Hamilton, and many more. Together with us, every consumer can give something back to the world, the nature and the people in need.

**What do you find important about the European market?**

Every country in the European market is different, so it is important for a European distributor to be able to address every country’s request in the best manner and to have the right support team in each country. For the flip flop sales in the European market the weather obviously plays a big role, no matter which country. When the summer starts late, sales for sandals start late and it will be hard to catch up the lost time. The customer also has a large panel of products to chose from now. So it is even more important to stick to our values of comfort, quality and durability, to stick out in the wide offer available to customers and to give them what they are really looking for.

**How do you support athletes and boardsports?**

Cobian is lucky enough to be able to work with a team of ambassadors and team riders, who share the same values and who we love to work with. This team includes amongst others, surfing icons such as Bethany Hamilton & Jeff Clark, Derek Rabelo as well as the twin sisters Casey and Jessica Kwiecinski. We also have a team of groms to support junior surfing, including some young talents like Kade and Dane Matson as well as Rachel Presti. In the SUP Team we are supporting Zane Schweitzer, Izzy & Giorgio Gomez. We are probably looking to expand the team throughout Europe as we are growing presence in European stores. 📍



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## SALTY CREW

Thermos is a household name and the company invented the vacuum bottle back at the start of the 20th century. The company is now honing in on the action sports/outdoor segment here in Europe and they have some very exciting plans in the pipeline.

**Please explain the idea behind and MO of Salty Crew.**

Salty Crew is a movement. A movement back to the beach and the ocean. As our society runs a hundred miles an hour, Salty Crew is a reminder to slow things down and get back to a place where time stops. Cares and responsibilities are lost at sea. Salty Crew is a “Surf Fish Dive Sail” adventure apparel brand, with purpose-built product for the seafaring, and the sharing of an authentic story of those who choose to stay Salty.

**Who is on the management team of Salty Crew, and what are their backgrounds?**

Tom Ruiz - Sales Director (Former Volcom and Depactus)  
CJ Hobgood - Marketing and Team (2001 Surfing World Champ)  
Jared Lane - Brand Management (Founder)

**How is the brand working in Europe?**

We do not have distribution outside the USA at this point. One of the reasons for our recent partnership with Globe International is to access the resources and infrastructure for wider distribution. Globe has an established reliable sales, marketing and distribution network in Europe that we can now access. These resources give Salty Crew a great platform to plug in to and we can focus on branding and marketing for Europe. We are looking to start this process soon.

**Could you tell us any details on how Globe's new stake in the company is going to impact on business?**

Globe has taken on a lot of the heavy lifting, giving the Crew the best resources to focus on the product, marketing and branding side of the business. The timing could not have been better as the brand has seen immense growth in 2016. We now have the bag of tools we need to execute without the learning curve that younger brands are faced with.

**Please give us a product category overview.**

The product offering consists of; tees, jackets, fleece, hats, technical shirts, technical jackets, board shorts, technical fishing shorts and utility fishing board shorts.

**What marketing are you running?**

We have an amazing team comprised of some of the best surfers, fisherman, and free divers in the world. Our social media is almost a running diary of where the Crew is, real time in their adventures at sea, with a hint of product story telling. Our Instagram in particular is a very unique time line of the brand and team and its story. The feed is a captivating experience for the viewer. It shines a light on the brand, the people involved and the roots in which Salty Crew was conceived.

**Why should retailers sell your brand?**

Salty Crew has been recognized a few times recently in industry reports as “Best Emerging Brand” and shown up very high on brand ranking reports from sources such as Transworld Business and Mitch's Boardsport

Report. The brand at retail is performing at a very high level. The uniqueness of the brand and its story has set it apart in the current retail landscape. The brand's point of difference on the product side has been received as a great new addition to not only action sports related retail but the outdoor, boating, and fishing markets as well.

**What do you see for the future of your company?**

At this point our USA distribution is mostly set and we are focused on better servicing and growing within our current distribution model. A big opportunity for Salty Crew will be expanding internationally especially in Europe where we have been hit up a lot for distribution. It seems like, just like the USA, there is a real appetite there for a new brand with a unique outlook.

**What do you see for the future of the industry?**

I think despite challenges in retail and for some of the bigger brands in our industry, our success to date shows there is still a core customer craving a brand that is real. Our brand started from our passion for what we do, the fact we're out there doing it and that is what resonates with our retailers and customers. I think if we can do it, others can, and hopefully could be the start of a whole wave of young fresh brands to reignite our industry and retail. Either way we're stoked to be doing what we're doing and can't think of a better industry to be doing it in. 🌊

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## THERMOS

Thermos is a household name and the company invented the vacuum bottle back at the start of the 20th century. The company is now honing in on the action sports/outdoor segment here in Europe and they have some very exciting plans in the pipeline.

### Please give us a brief Thermos company history.

More than 100 years ago Thermos became a name and synonym for an iconic insulation principle. The starting shot for the company was made in Berlin at the beginning of the 20th century. German glass specialist Reinhold Burger experimented with double walled insulation bottles and created the vacuum bottle - a 2-in-1 concept that revolutionized the beverage supply and started its triumphant procession around the globe. The Thermos Company was founded 1904 in Berlin. In 1907 the Thermos bottle Company started in Schaumburg, Illinois and since then has expanded to more than 120 countries and presents itself as a worldwide genuine brand.

### And now the brand is making inroads into the action sports/outdoor field?

The Thermos bottle itself is highly reliable and a versatile icon. Especially for ambitious outdoor activities that requires reliable temperatures of content, simplicity, durability and portability. This makes Thermos products a great partner for sports and outdoor. Our classic Stainless King Series as well as the Light & Compact Series are our spearheads for the outdoor segment. Having such great products in the range makes the step to the sports/outdoor segment a logical one. Besides the insulation products, we offer a wide range of U.S.-made, BPA-free Tritan bottles with different lid systems for optimized sports and everyday performance.

### Who runs the brand in Europe?

Thermos acquired the German traditional brand ALFI a short while ago. Since then the ALFI GmbH in Wertheim is working with Thermos on building the brand over here. ALFI with its more than 100 years of history in insulation bottles is well known for its iconic high end coffee bottles, mugs and even a sports/outdoor related product line. ALFI is winner of the "Red Dot Design Award", is named "Brand of the Century", and is still producing its high-end items in Germany (Wertheim) and together with Thermos combines into a complete product supplier for insulation products.

### The brand has some excellent collaborative partners in the States – what can we expect in Europe?

Thermos in the U.S. is working as an exclusive partner to create a special line for Under Armour. This "hydration" line is made for sports and product management and is working closely with athletes to create products that work in a highly dynamic environment and helps the user to achieve optimum hydration. We are working with Thermos to adopt the line for the European market to target sports accounts and expand our range.

### What sets you apart from your competitors?

Having a brand history that dates back to 1904 Thermos has built upon technology and competence to produce high-end products. We can claim to be the genuine brand that created the vacuum technology for bottles. Thermos also runs the business with four main goals: 'Quality' matters, 'Living Green' matters, 'Giving back' matters, 'Safety' matters. These great

rules combined with iconic products makes us different.

### What do you find important about the European market?

The European market has a very wide range of channels to land our products – it's not limited to e.g. specialist trade shops. Our product range is made to fit any sales channel in each country.

### How do you support athletes and boardsports?

At the moment we are not running an athlete team. Our plan for the following seasons is to start building a competent team of people from different parts of the sports world (mountaineering, skitouring, sltboarding/backcountry, running, bike, etc.), who test and promote our product and give us feedback to make our products better for each segment.

### Which demographics does Thermos focus on?

With the wide range of products that Thermos offers, we cover all age groups and genders.

### Where can we expect to see Thermos marketing throughout this winter season?

We'll start the winter season with some smaller activities around Shops 1st Try and ISPO and will start building a wider presence on certain events during the summer season - Outdoor tradeshow will be our key focus for tradeshow in 2017. We will also launch a new website with Thermos.eu and will build a presence in magazines, set a sports related PR team and work with customers on in-store activities to promote the brand. ☺

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## Distributors in other countries wanted

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NEW PRODUCTS

01



01- ALUMINATI'S TATONKA CRUISER

Aluminati's Tatonka cruiser is featured on the goby deck, their smallest cruiser that is the perfect on-the-go ride. Grab your Tatonka cruiser, join your posse, and continue the endless search for something gnarly. [www.aluminatiboards.com](http://www.aluminatiboards.com)

02



02- PHUNKSHUN AVIATOR SHIRT

For 2017/2018, Phunkshun Wear has moved into baselayers. One of the key products in the line is the Phunkshun Aviator shirt, which is constructed out of REPREVE fabric, a fibre made from recycled water bottles. The Aviator baselayer is breathable, moisture-wicking, odour repelling, UPF 50+ and available in 16 colourways. [www.phunkshunwear.com](http://www.phunkshunwear.com)

03



03- HEAD ONE BOA SNOWBOARD BOOT

A boot with clean lines and a wide opening shaft for easy entrance. The fresh One Boa is an easy-riding entry-level boot with an on-point profile. The new N.I.C.E. construction makes for extremely comfortable entrance and exit. Add to this a mellow forward lean and flex and you have a stylish boot that makes riding easy. [www.head.com](http://www.head.com)

04- DAKINE THE BARON MITT

This is a mitt from their Highline Series, which features gloves and mitts made with premium materials for ultimate warmth, breathability and comfort with a clean, classic aesthetic. The Baron Mitt has GoreGrip® technology that offers outstanding tactility added to the waterproofing and breathability that Gore-Tex® promises. It also has Primaloft® insulation, 360g wool lining and it's built with DWR leather on both shell and palm. [eu.dakine.com](http://eu.dakine.com)

04



05



05- SWITCHBACK UNIVERSE BINDING

Built on the all-new AERON base platform featuring an industry first construction method of over moulding forged aluminium with the highest grade polyamide Nylon, The Switchback Universe is ready to take on a whole galaxy of shred. [www.switchbackbindings.com](http://www.switchbackbindings.com)

06- AIRTUBE CINCH (RED LOGO MASK)

The Airhole Cinch 2 Layer comes equipped with a DWR coating on top of a 10,000mm water and wind resistant membrane, combined with 100% recycled polyester outer fabric. The direct injected Airhole allows the wearer to breathe free, providing the ultimate protection and warmth. [www.airholefacemasks.com](http://www.airholefacemasks.com)

06



JOHN JACKSON | P: SILVANO ZEITER

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# NEW PRODUCTS

**01-POW WARNER GTX LONG GLOVE.**

Another product that’s built to last from POW, The great feature with this glove is the Merino Liner that it comes with. Other features include Buff Thumb material to wipe your goggle, Gore warm technology, an over cuff design for total coverage and wrist leash compatible. The Warner is available as a Glove and a Mitt (Long Cuff) as well as Glove and Mitt (Short Cuff). RRP for Glove including the Merino Liner is 80 euros.  
[www.powgloves.com](http://www.powgloves.com)

01



02



**02- BENT METAL BINDING WORKS FOREST BAILEY TRANSFER BINDING**

Forest Bailey is one of three Riders with his own artist collab for Bent Metal. His new BMBW Transfer colourway is another great representation of what is becoming known as this burgeoning artist’s “geometric blue period”. The Transfer is the medium flex binding in the line combining an engineered polymer highback and a responsive aluminium/boron fibre plate that gives you a precise freestyle/freeride performance.  
[www.bentmetal.com](http://www.bentmetal.com)

03



04



**03- PICTURE TEMPO HIFI HELMET**

The Tempo Hifi offers increased sustainability as it uses recycled a polyester lining and recovery EPS from the car industry in combination with increased technicity from composite fusion technology with a unique pyramid design, thanks to a collaboration with Kali  
[www.picture-organic-clothing.com](http://www.picture-organic-clothing.com)

**04- RIP CURL SEARCH SERIES**

Ultimate durability combined with eco-friendly construction for a lower carbon footprint. Fresh from the Rip Curl design lab this season, the all-new Search Series is the best choice for the rider looking for strong, durable mountainwear made from a selection of recycled and eco-friendly materials that will stand the test of time. A product of The Search tested by Rip Curl’s world class athletes.  
[www.ripcurl.eu](http://www.ripcurl.eu)

05



06



**05- LANDYACHTZ REVIVAL SERIES**

The Revival Series is about finding lost and forgotten timbers and repurposing them into high quality skateboards, using discarded material to create skateboards that are both beautiful and fully skate-able. By sourcing unique materials and pressing them into boards at their micro factory in the Kootenay region of British Columbia, Landyachtz are able to create boards that are pieces of history. Instead of being forgotten, Revival Series wood is rejuvenated, reclaimed and repurposed to live again under the feet of skaters.  
[www.landyachtz.com](http://www.landyachtz.com)

**06-NOW BRIGADE BINDING**

The Brigade is a tribute to the NOW riders who have helped test, design and push the brand forward since day one and for 17/18 we’re introducing the retro colours in reminiscence of the good old days. All NOW bindings features our award winning Skatetech.  
[www.now-snowboarding.com](http://www.now-snowboarding.com)



# NEW PRODUCTS

01- NORTHWAVE DOMAIN CR SNOWBOARD BOOT

The new freeride dedicated CR soles are made in collaboration with Vibram to provide superior grip and stability for hiking, allowing riders to traverse frozen slopes and gnarly ascents during mountaineering. Front and rear crampon compatibility makes these soles unique for extremely technical and difficult hikes. The boots is compatible with step-in crampons, strap-on crampons and hybrid crampons. This boot also comes with Domain reinforcement.

[www.northwave.com](http://www.northwave.com)



02- AIRHOLE DRYLITE (WOODLAND CAMO)

Updated for 2017, Drylite fabric is UPF 50, moisture wicking, and quick dry. This style is versatile in both cold and warmer conditions, lightweight and packable. The laser welded Airhole allows the wearer to breathe free, providing the ultimate protection and warmth.

[www.airholefacemasks.com](http://www.airholefacemasks.com)



03- ELLIOT BROWN LADIES KIMMERIDGE WATCH

Elliot Brown make virtually indestructible watches. The Kimmeridge womens collection due this May sets a new bar in the female watch sector. Shock proof, tested in water at 200m and utterly gorgeous.

[www.elliottbrownwatches.com](http://www.elliottbrownwatches.com)



04- DRAKE SUPERSPORT BINDING

This is a totally redeveloped binding with their brand new tool-less ladder ratchet and ankle strap, improving security and strength. The screws are directly injected into both the ratchet and ankle strap, this guarantees that your straps remain where they should be. The Light Saber base plate with its contact points reduced to a minimum gives you a better feeling while riding. The heelcup positioning is also totally tool-less: three different positions are adjustable with two levers located on the baseplate. The new base plate also gives you the opportunity to adjust the highback independently from the ankle straps.

[www.northwavesnow.com](http://www.northwavesnow.com)



05- GIRO - THE COMBYN SUB POP COLLAB

The low-profile, skate-inspired CombynTM is a top choice for our team athletes and dedicated park and pipe riders alike. The Combyn utilizes Soft Shell technology, a design that combines an impact-absorbing dual-density Vinyl Nitrile (VN) liner with a proprietary, flexible outer shell. Whether you're a fan of Nirvana, Iron and Wine, the Shins, or Wolf Parade, this limited edition product collection will keep you riding comfortably while sending a message that's pure counter-culture.

[www.giro.com/subpop](http://www.giro.com/subpop)



06- SNOKART KANVAS BOOT & HELMET RUCKSACK

A premium wintersport boot & helmet rucksack. Inspired by the original Alpine winter adventurers, this bag combines heritage styling with contemporary features and an urban street look. It's constructed from tough waterproof fabric with functional real leather straps and metal buckles. It's airline cabin friendly and has plenty of space for boots, helmet, goggles and lots of travel accessories.

[www.snokart.com](http://www.snokart.com)



discover at EMO hall BG stand 20

COMING FALL 2017



# MARKET INTELLIGENCE

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At the time of writing this, value of the £ has plummeted to lows not seen for 30 or 40 years. Brexit's first major impact is being felt. Confidence in the UK and our currency is at a significant low point. Price rises are rife across the industry and across the UK in general. At the same time the Government have just managed to persuade Nissan to build a new car in the UK so the pro Brexit lobby are holding this up as a "told-you-so" banner and acting as if nothing else matters. It does. It does matter. We're not out of the woods yet.

For the first time in our company history we had a blanket price rise across the board – every product. Unprecedented changes call for unprecedented actions. Retailers were great and, almost to a man, did not moan and groan with only two retailers changing their orders. Hats off to UK boardsport retailers.

That said, over the summer we lost three more specialist winter sports retailers – two closed for good and the other...well, read on.

One retailer who is not doing so well is Boardwise in Edinburgh. It would be fair to say that the start to the season has been an absolute disaster for Brian, Carolyn, Sarah and the team. Gutted would be a good word to describe Boardwise Edinburgh. Gutted because of a fire that ripped through the shop in late August destroying everything; the stock, the fittings, the computers, the lot. "Everything has gone. Everything. It will be months before we are up and going again," lamented Brian Stark. "For this to happen just before our busiest time of year is a complete disaster." So what does the future hold? "We'll be back. We are fully insured and so from that perspective things will be OK. But not to be able to service our loyal customers is upsetting – to say the least." Brian estimates that it will be some considerable time before they are trading again from Lady Lawson Street. "Putting this all back together is going to be hard work. I am just thankful that nobody was hurt. And we'll bounce back."

At the time of writing this (October) Boardwise Edinburgh has re-started online trading using the Boardwise Cannock stocking lines. And look out for an opening party in March 2017 - there's some pressure now Brian!

It's such a shame for Boardwise Edinburgh because the season appears to have got off to a pretty good start – it's still really early days but indications are good.

I asked Matt at Absolute Snow why he was so positive: "The price rises were a concern but do not seem to have slowed anything down. We're off to a strong start and we are considering placing re-orders already." So is the currency situation helping you pick up business from Europe? "I'm sure that there is some business coming in from the EU but my feeling is that where we have previously lost customers to the EU we are now winning them back. This is great as it gives us an opportunity to demonstrate what great customer service we offer and hopefully we can keep them on board and buying in the UK."

Is there anything in particular that's performing well? "Hardgoods are good and softgoods are slow – but the weather hasn't been cold and people are always prepared to buy their hardgoods early." And women's? "Yes – improving significantly. I'm really pleased with this as we expanded our range and it appears to be working well."

Matt isn't alone. Stuart from Board Basement (Exeter) was, like Matt,

extremely positive about the start to the season echoing Matt's thoughts: "Finally after six long years we are winning back UK customers who have been shopping abroad. The GBP (Great British Public) are keen to buy in the UK. The hype is helping with some great movie launches and a lot of promotions that have really helped drive sales – particularly hardware."

Board Basement were originally set up to be an online only store: "We soon found people visiting the warehouse looking for personal service and advice. We've continued firmly in that vein and are well established as a 'destination store' as well as online – although we are also very much a warehouse which has a certain appeal with the customers."

With store visitors increasing year-on-year, what's the trick? "Word of mouth appears to be the key. When you visit our store, or call us, you get a positive interaction with people who really know what they are talking about. You can't call Amazon and ask for advice and that's why we, and others, will survive. There's always room for a store that can offer the human touch. Logistics companies can have all the logistics nailed but having real enthusiasts to talk to enthusiasts is something that cannot be bettered. The beauty is that we are having a good start to the season on the back of a great 2015 and I can only see this continuing. We moved into skate recently and whilst it's not a major part of the business it's showing good solid potential and is something for us to build on."

What of the future for Board Basement? The only dark side that Stuart sees is the advance of showrooming: "This is going to get more of an issue but you become pretty adept at spotting the showroomers and handling them accordingly. We're also in a good position as we are not High Street based – so we don't really get walk-ins – people have to make a decision to drive to our store."

Never one to linger on negatives he had one last comment about the 'returners'. "There's a distinct increase in custom amongst those who have taken a few years off to have kids etc and are now returning to the sport, and are bringing their kids to the snow. These customers usually have money to spend together with a bucket load of pent-up enthusiasm and a thirst for all things new - it bodes well for the future!"

Not wishing to close this month on negative issues – but they are, sadly, a fact of life. It is really sad to report that City Surf Cardiff have closed their doors. Their Facebook page sums it up "After 30 years of fun, with regret we've closed the door for the last time. Thanks for the support and the good times". These guys were (are) legends in the industry. So sad that another one bites the dust.

Finally did, did you hear the one about the snowsports retailer who, after many years, finally decided to step out of the wintersports business and focus on his bike business? He contacted all suppliers to explain the situation and most of them understood and (sadly) accepted the order cancellations. Of course there's always one who sets themselves apart and insisted that the stock be delivered. What was the result? The retailer in question simply dumped the stock on the market. As far as I can see that appears to be about the only bad start to what, so far, is turning out to be quite a decent kick off to the winter season.

Did you hear the one about... there will be more to come I am sur

Gordon Way

Photo // Carson Artac



Splitboarders // Byron Bagwell & Brock Butterfield





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2016 was an intense year for France, as much on a political level as economically, socially and culturally. The start of 2016 was certainly eventful: Employment reform was the talk of the town. More flexible working hours, a new overtime system, capped compensation from tribunals, rules about economic redundancies, various points that caused a lot of reaction throughout the country. On an economic level, Banque de France as well as Insee had both reviewed their growth estimates for the better in the first and second quarters. With a GDP growth forecast of 0.4% the comeback seemed to be on the cards. A major event in the second quarter was the Euro 2016 football tournament in France, which had a significant impact on the French economy. Fans travelling to the matches from all over France and abroad generated considerable additional activity during the period. Even though Euro 2016 finished on a sour note for the French football team, it did bring some joy to France during the month of competition. Euro 2016 was also a chance to show France in a good light on the international stage. Indeed, 78% of French people thought that the Euros in France were a success. However, on July 14 in Nice while everyone was gathered to watch the traditional Bastille Day firework display, France once again fell victim to a terror attack causing the death of 80 people and leaving another 200 injured. Another shock! France, her population and economy had still not recovered from the multiple attacks of 2015 before being targeted by terrorism again.

On a political level, the end of 2016 was particularly eventful: To begin with in the U.S., Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton seemed neck-to-neck in the polls. Never before had a presidential election revealed so much contradiction or as many ups and downs. Americans were left stunned, disorientated and finally decided to elect the ultra-conservative Republican candidate Donald Trump as new president of the world's number one superpower. This decision threatens to have direct and indirect effects on all other countries in the world.

In France the run up to the 2017 presidential election is already well underway. At the end of November all attention turned toward the opposition and the centre-right's primaries, choosing their candidate in the form of François Fillion after various twists and turns. Once again the candidate who is most conservative on paper has disproved the polls by eliminating the ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy and pipping Alain Juppé at the post who incidentally was a candidate largely favoured in the polls before the election and considered more moderate. In December it was the current majority's turn to go into its own primaries causing another lot of upsets. A huge first in the 5th Republic as François Hollande pulled out of the left's primaries, deciding not to run for his own succession. From then on, there was space for his prime minister, Manuel Valls, to resign and set about launching a campaign for the primaries and, in so doing, for the presidential race. The current government is trying to manage the end of its mandate as best it can by trying to paint the rosiest picture it can to get its candidate into the second round of the presidentials next May.

As for our industry, the boardsports market in 2016 represented a marketable image more than ever before. French people are attracted to these sports and the image they convey. Lots of adverts are testament to this trend and throughout the year international brands used the various sports and their images to sell products that are sometimes far-removed from our world. For retailers in general the 2016 winter was rather tricky. While weather conditions were quite favourable for urban,

coastal and inland shops, it's clear that resort shops were not helped out at all. However, despite the lack of snow, the results were in fact pretty acceptable. The winter 2016 sales period generally saw better attendance than the catastrophe in 2015. But the period did suffer from a progressive loss of steam, coming up against people's eroded budgets. As Yann from Nozebone in Paris underlines: "The number of visits during the sales period was pretty good. People are holding out more and more for this period and are in search of the best deal."

As for resorts and ski-orientated shops, "the lack of snow had a direct impact on our turnover which was down on 2015 over the whole winter season", Laurent from Snowproblemo in Saint Lary confides. The February holidays, often crucial to the success of a season in the mountains, were unfortunately not able to make up for the slow start to the 2016 season. Even still, at Ride & Style they noted a "slight increase compared to the same period last year."

Spring was even more of a mixed bag. For Thierry Tiquet from the shop Vague et Vent in Palavas les flots: "The situation was pretty similar to last year," and "the start of spring was quite pleasing." At ABS in Lyon we can see a slight increase in sales in spring 2016 while others like Alban Causse from the shop Be Gold in Mimizan were less optimistic: "The figures were not great, the season had trouble getting going." Everyone agreed that the overall economic climate and French moral in spring 2016 were largely responsible for the situation and for the slight delay in the launch of the summer 2016 season.

However, the summer 2016 season was up and running by mid-June.

Julien from Au Spot noticed that: "Despite a really quiet June 2016, the last 15 days of the month were excellent with a turnover that ended up 4% over that of 2015 for the month."

One thing is for sure, the weather, and in particular nice weather, directly influenced people in whether to go on holiday or not. Lovely sunny days, small waves and pleasant temperatures at the end of June and beginning of July finally attracted holidaymakers into shops to really kick-start the summer. The good run of the French national team in Euro 2016 definitely influenced the general mood reigning over the summer.

The weather in autumn 2016 was pretty favourable with high temperatures until the start of November and with really good surf conditions along the whole Atlantic coast. Indeed, Michel Borel from Freeride shop in Bidart told us that: "September was good actually and October was pretty decent." It's the same story a bit further up the coast for Fred at Cocoa Beach in Saint Pierre d'Oléron as well as for Philippe from Chattanooga in Paris who declared: "The 2016 autumn was pretty good with a high number of visitors in the back to school period." While the Indian summer is beneficial for most shops, the white gold was highly anticipated once again by resort-based shops to kick their winter season off properly. The first flakes soon began to fall in the mountains, starting off the season quite early in the mountains, however a somewhat baron spell causes some concern.

Overall, 2016 was an up and down year politically, economically, socially and culturally. While the start of the year looked problematic for retailers, the summer and autumn seem to have proved to be quite fruitful. Let's hope that the snow comes in abundance this year and everyone comes down to the shops to make their selection, kit themselves out and get good advice throughout the whole winter 2017 season.

Benoit Brecq

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2016 was an unusual year, and not just politically. Yet despite a refugee crisis and heated societal debates, the boardsports scene in Germany seems to be thriving. Jens from 58 in Ulm, in the south of the country says that after they found their niche “2016 was a lot more successful than 2015. Despite a little decrease in sales, the overall result was a lot better.” Nino from Mantis in the harbour city of Hamburg way up north is even more positive: “This year was very good in my opinion; hardware developed very positively and through the Thrasher hype a lot of ‘regular’ customers came into the shop – once again the mainstream client found interest in skate shops.” This mainstream type of customer is mainly interested in the “classic hype brands; Fucking Awesome, Thrasher and Huf. And stocking Levi’s Skateboarding has worked well for us – a pair of pants is a popular product! And Dad Caps are once again a great seller.” Of course a city with such a huge open connection to the whole world through one of the largest international container harbours is prone to pick up on new trends and adapt very quickly. And a lot faster than other parts of the country, where trends pick up much later. Thrasher was everywhere though and Joerg from Urban Supplies distribution based out of Wiesbaden is amazed at the outcome: “I don’t remember the last time we saw a hype like this – customers went ballistic for Thrasher!” As well as Thrasher, Joerg says skateboards also continue to work well, which he sees as very positive, “given what happened to the longboard market, at least for the masses.”

In Ulm, longboard sales are levelling out on a normal scale again. With skateboards, 58 has the most success with European and German brands, with US brands lagging behind. Unfortunately this also applies to the snowboard market: “With no snow from October – December the snowboard market is bobbing about – if you sell for the regular price. It’s alarming how early prices are reduced, no matter by whom. Apparently some seem to be able to exist from love and air alone, with the word ‘return’ not in their vocabulary. But as a Swabian, I would like to earn money,” argues Jens and is focusing on service, in which he’s investing regularly. The ongoing deterioration in prices is also the main negative factor that Joerg sees: “SALE SALE SALE everywhere, with increasingly crazy discount rates. There are still far too many goods out there, meaning far too many discount sales. Most seem to operate under the motto of ‘If everyone thinks about themselves, everyone is taken care of’.”

The sales issue is one that’s been spoken about widely for this issue’s article. Hence it’s even more surprising to hear about Nino’s approach, which works quite differently. “I don’t see sales as a major problem and honestly I have to say that everyone who reduces their stuff too early can only blame themselves. We notice that it really isn’t necessary to slap a sales tag on everything right away. A lot of those who do so are scared by the big players discounting their offers and think they have to follow suit. But I disagree!” At Mantis, brands who work with discount retailers who reduce too much too early are simply thrown out of the shop’s range: “A brand’s image is completely destroyed if they aren’t careful when looking after their distribution channels to ensure their products aren’t discounted too heavily,” Nino thinks. In Ulm, Jens shares these views and asks: “What would the big brands be without bricks and mortar retail? If you continue to push your own D2C channels and cut margins, you will only have advertising windows in the cities, which

serve purely to lead you into the virtual shopping world, which is all about your revenues. Good night is all I can say to that...”

Of course there is a typical client always on the hunt for a bargain these days, which needs to be catered for. And Mantis is doing so with two big ‘sale’ events a year and only a couple of products on sale at all times. “I really don’t think that it’s necessary to discount a collection that has been in shops for as little as two months.” Nuno also doesn’t see massive competition through the big online shops. “They speak to a very different customer. The customers we have in our shop wouldn’t buy from the big online shops. If they really want something super special that they can’t get in the core shop, they would rather buy it from a smaller, ‘cooler’ website.”

‘Cool’ being the key word here, as image is becoming more and more important again. “If you are a ‘cool’ shop frequented by pro skaters or other well-known people, or are known for stocking the most unusual and exclusive brands, you excite and encourage people to visit your store. You often hear people proudly telling friends where they buy their stuff from.” Allegiance to just one shop nowadays is long gone, although Mantis is trying to bring back a bit of the vibe that skate shops used to give the youth. “I’m trying to bring this experience back, that coolness that a shop needs to survive. I still find that very important and love the feeling of walking into a shop that sells cools stuff and is run by cool dudes who are really into what they’re doing and not just concerned with numbers or being super ‘cool’.” For that, they’re building up their video corner again, so that kids and teens can hang out there before or after skating. Or even when not skating at all, just hanging out, looking at new gear and telling their friends about it.

Physical stores are still vitally important and especially for kids. Not just for chilling and socializing, but also for actual shopping. “Terms of payment are still not very accessible for kids online. They still always need to ask their parents to provide the plastic, yet with their pocket money they can simply walk into a shop and buy something for themselves,” Nino says. Those aged between 18-25 are the main online shoppers, he suggests – not their main target customer, which spans from 13 to 39.

In Ulm, Jens won new customers through their quality service. “The SUP market has been booming for a couple of years now but the sale of boards is only secondary as windsurf and online shops managed to destroy the prices in the shortest of time. So we focus on courses, tours and company events next to selling accessories (neoprene, booties, etc.), which is a much more lucrative market that also brings a new circle of clients in and increases frequency.” 58 is promoting and pushing this service sector, video premieres, and contests with their own catalogues, booklets or flyers. “We are very actively engaging the customer and hence are highly frequented and talked about.”

Sales alone aren’t everything. They never have been and never will; boardsports is about so much more and passion still runs strong through its core.

Anna Langer

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A tumultuous 2016 is coming to an end and contrary to expectations, the sentiment in Austria is positive - at least for 53.3% of the population, who didn't follow a global trend and voted for Europe and against right-wing populism. Austrian boardsports retailers sigh with relief, too, now that sales seem to recover slowly, and are confident both about the past year and the future.

René Obojes, who owns Innsbruck-based sales agency Fabrik 13, is not only positive, but rather euphoric: The year was "tiptop - we are growing at a good pace with an increase of 20% this year and cannot complain at all." The growth mostly traces back to Toms, because "these shoes sell extremely well from April to September in all kinds of shops. Retailers told us, that for them, the product is almost without competition - there is no considerable competing brand, which is superb for us. The social aspect behind the product is also unique in the business." Carhartt parkas and beanies were "super strong during the last months," and watches and glasses by the relatively new brand Kapten & Son are selling well, too. "Thanks to the early start of winter this November, we also have good reorders for some products. Electric is growing thanks to our strong partnership with Blue Tomato."

Moreboards' Paul Dollinger is happy that "the established boardsport brands know pretty well how to fill the gap between logo t-shirts and snowboard jackets. Fresh and edgy European brands with boardsport/freestyle aspirations and an interesting story to tell are exciting and good additions to the range. Now we don't need to order fashion or outdoor brands to fill a gap in our range anymore." According to Paul, the only "flop, if I would even call it that," was the "weaker beachwear summer, because of bad weather - especially at the beginning of summer - we missed out on some really hot phases here." At the time of writing, the Christmas and snowboard season are only starting right now, so the guys at Moreboards are

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Just like each year, the time has come to take stock and once again it's a pretty mixed bag. We've known for several years that we are in a transitional period but 2016 definitely seems to be a unique year. Geopolitically speaking the surprises just kept coming and economically speaking, while everyone desires long-term stability, it's the reality of the interim and last-ditch desperation that were order of the day. Changes were quick, far-reaching and radical, from now on "you are in or you are out", no more half measures.

Obviously the biggest change is in the growth of online business, which despite being around for some time, continues to expand as well as transform. The appeal of buying online is increasing but buying habits are changing. To simplify, we could say that customers want to buy their products online for an extremely competitive price and at the same time benefit from all the services offered by a specialised shop with a physical presence. This forces online shops to offer better service and costs them more money. We are starting to distinguish between products that are bought online and those which are more likely to be bought in shops. For example, in these articles we find footwear, and I'm not talking so much about sneakers, which because of their low price and ease of return are commonly snapped up online but about technical shoes (e.g. ski and snowboard boots). This is because there are obvious advantages to being properly fitted as well as the advice and technical input you get in physical shops. Other specific products that demand advice and precise explanations such as splitboards with their different interface systems as well as safety equipment (transceiver, airbags etc) also belong to this category. For this reason I think that to some extent we are seeing a return to in-shop consumption and this

"understandably still cautious with overall projections."

Regarding hardware, a well-chosen range is very important for Moreboards and at least sales remained "at a solid level." Paul notes: "Here, we are innovative and try hard to offer our customers exciting products, which worked out well again in 2016." Like René, Paul sees a trend towards sustainable and fair products: "What works in the long run are products where the functionality and the style are right, the brand story is authentic, and prices and sales mechanisms work. If there is an ethical or sustainable attribute added to the product, that helps, too."

Any major changes for their range for 2017? René says not: "We changed our concept completely in 2012; we were very much into boardsports back then, and now we have developed into a supplier for action sports, streetwear, skate, shoes, accessories and fashion stores. Thankfully we set our course early enough. We think that the increase is a direct result of that." At Moreboards, regarding the range, there are no bigger changes planned as well, and Paul is pretty positive about the future: "For the start, we are expecting a long and snowy winter and following that, a mild spring season and a better summer than 2016 with lots of holiday and beach vibes! This way, we can live through all four seasons intensely together with our customers and offer them perfectly aligned products. The four different seasons are definitely a strength of our geographic location."

So, let's harness the latest optimism in our country and hope for Paul's prophecies to come true. To a snowy Christmas and a sunny New Year!

Barbara Mayer

seems to show in visitation numbers, however, the problem is that the Internet is a tool used by customers to compare prices and exert pressure to drop them. Retailers will probably be able to complete the sale but will more than likely have to reduce their margin.

If we were to summarise sales trends this year we could say that in general we have had the right weather conditions to suit the different sales seasons but they didn't always arrive at exactly the right times. Spring/Summer stuff was sold at reduced prices in summer because the spring wasn't very nice while winter sales had trouble getting off the ground due to the Indian summer. The arrival of the snow in November was the only exception, playing its role as a trigger for sales. But people quickly shifted their attention away again with the arrival of stable, sunny weather and foehn wind.

In skateboarding products we can see a drop in longboard and cruiser sales while the rest remains stable but with margins that are so small these days that we are asking if it's really worth continuing to sell them. Some shops that were renowned back in the day for their specialisation and hardgoods sales are now looking more and more like clothes shops. The explosion in sales of brands such as Thrasher, mainly due to a few American celebrities sporting the product, is a concrete example of this with the astronomical quantities of the brand being sold and becoming a saving grace for more than one shop this year. Let's hope they'll be able to bounce back and find the new diamond in the rough once all the hype has died down. 2017, you can come in now, we've been looking forward to you.

Fabien Grisel



R. Chris Rasmann P. Ashley Barker

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As 2016 is coming to an end it happens again, Italy will have a new Prime Minister earlier then expected as Matteo Renzi lost the constitutional referendum with a clear defeat and had to step down immediately. This now means that State President Mr Mattarella has to nominate a new Prime Minister or call a new election early. It's very likely the Finance Minister, Pier Luigi Padoan will take Renzi's seat and guide Italy into 2018. Padoan is EU-friendly and should give us stability and have a decent majority within the parliament and therefore be able to govern in a decent matter. Italy still suffers from a lot of youth unemployment, high tax, a very slow growing GDP and many people are also scared by the immigrant situation. These factors combined is why especially a lot of young Italians didn't feel well represented by our ex-Prime Minister and his party, which ultimately meant he was forced to step down.

Boardsport business in 2016 struggled a lot during Q1 & Q2 with slow sell-through and a decrease in turnover for many retailers. Q3 and the now ongoing Q4 show better results and retailers, as usual, do better business during fall and winter seasons thanks to 'back to school' and Christmas. For many, summer goods suffered from too much competition from big box stores and even shoe sales slowed down in the first six months of the year.

2016 also forced some stores to close down and especially in the more rural locations as online business once again saw big growth and as kids no longer show any allegiance to one retailer. This does mean the surviving shops have become stronger and online business in general saw growth for all stores who invested in their online presence.

In general we also noticed the trend of the 'hype' and 'cool' skateboard brands who have now made their way into nearly every streetwear/sneaker and street/fashion store. Thrasher and Huf, for

example, seem to be everywhere right now and kids are constantly asking for these brands.

But it's a much different story in the specialist snow stores, where the number of doors has decreased a lot and they suffer from the big online competition with their huge selections and discounts. Most snow storeowners say the lack of margin and the short season with sale starting right after Christmas makes their business a real struggle. Most say they're in it for the passion and not for the money. Black Friday still seems to grow and most retailers feel obliged to participate as the discounts are just everywhere. Some stores even offered up to 50% of on all products.

Surf during 2016 stayed stable, but stable is not enough as the industry has lacked growth for many seasons now. Not many stores are investing in hardgoods as most is ordered on demand and doesn't leave much space for growth.

Local brands are still a thing but less sp in hardgoods where more and more local brands are disappearing, although in streetwear we have some positive movements. Doily Noire from Milan, for example, are a fresh new streetwear label making their way into many stores with a great team of ambassadors. Others even grow outside the country such as the established luter brand from Milan, which showed their latest collection at the new Complex trade show in the US. The latest addition to the Italian skate shoe market is New Balance Numeric, who are building a skate team now and will be in stores very soon, distributed and marketed by New balance directly.

That's it for 2016 - see you at Bright to kick of 2017. Cheers!

Franz Josef Holler

## OPPORTUNITIES



*Sole Technology is a globally recognized leader in authentic action sports footwear and apparel and is one of the largest private action sports companies in the world holding the top brands **Etnies, Emerica, 6S, Altamont and ThirtyTwo**. Our action sports footwear, apparel and accessories are renowned for comfort, style, function, innovation and durability. Sole Technology is the first and only footwear company owned and operated by a former world champion skateboarder. All Sole Technology products are created by action sports enthusiasts and are therefore truly authentic.*

**For our EMEA HQ in Amsterdam, Etnies is looking for an European Marketing Manager**

Your key responsibility is to successfully manage all the marketing related activities for Etnies in Europe in order to increase sales volume and provide a solid foundation for future growth.

Amongst others you will:

- Develop, implement and evaluate effective (key account) marketing strategy;
- Based on (key) account strategy, and according to the distribution strategy, develop local retail activation plan including Windows, GWP, Tour stops, Online and Catalogues;
- Manage and execute Events/ Tradeshows in conjunction with direct markets/distributors and sales department;
- Manage all PR activities and build PR relationships;
- Keep track of marketing budget;
- Be the point person for all marketing related enquiries internally and externally.


**Qualifications**

- You have a minimum of 2 years of international marketing management experience preferably in the action sports industry;
- You are disciplined and organized, able to evaluate opportunities with both bottom and top line oriented thinking, and be able to take appropriate action to insure success;
- You have a Bachelor's degree in marketing or achieved through working experience;
- You have excellent written and verbal communication skills in English and German and preferably Dutch.

Think you got what it takes? Please send your CV and cover letter to [wouter.alsma@soletechnology.eu](mailto:wouter.alsma@soletechnology.eu)

For more information about our brands log on to [www.soletechnology.com](http://www.soletechnology.com)





### Online Marketing Coordinator (m/w)

Schwerpunkt SEO

Blue Tomato ist der führende Omni-Channel Händler in den Bereichen Snowboard, Freeski, Surf und Skatel! Wir bieten dir einen aufregenden Job in einem dynamischen Unternehmen mit flachen Hierarchien, angenehmer Arbeitsatmosphäre und der Möglichkeit deine eigenen kreativen Ideen einzubringen.

#### DEINE AUFGABEN

- Konzeption, Planung, Steuerung und Optimierung von SEO-Maßnahmen (on- und offpage)
- Entwicklung intelligenter Linkbuilding Strategien und deren operativen Umsetzung
- Keyword-Recherche und Potentialanalyse
- Koordination von internen Fachabteilungen bei der Umsetzung der Optimierungsmaßnahmen
- Monitoring aller wichtigen KPI's: Webanalyse
- Reporting und Controlling aller Maßnahmen
- Optimierung von Landingpages
- Content Marketing Maßnahmen
- Beobachtung der Markt- und Wettbewerbssituation

#### UNSERE ANFORDERUNGEN

- Erfolgreich abgeschlossenes Studium in den Bereichen Kommunikations- oder Medienwissenschaften, Wirtschaftsinformatik, Informationsmanagement, Medientechnik bzw. eine vergleichbare Ausbildung
- Erfahrung im Bereich Suchmaschinenoptimierung
- Kenntnisse im Bereich Webanalyse sowie der gängigen SEO-Tools z. B. Sistrix, Searchmetrics, Google Analytics
- Routine im Vorantreiben aller suchmaschinenrelevanter Maßnahmen (Content, Keywords, Landing Pages, Linkbuilding)
- Know-How von Content-Management und HTML von Vorteil
- Sehr guter Umgang mit Computern und multimedialen Angeboten; ausgeprägte MS Office Kenntnisse
- Sehr gute Deutsch- und Englischkenntnisse
- Analytische, zielstrebige und proaktive Arbeitsweise
- Projektmanagement-Erfahrung von Vorteil


#### WAS WIR DIR BIETEN

Blue Tomato bietet dir eine Stelle in einem sportlichen und aufstrebenden Team sowie einen aufregenden Job in einem dynamischen Unternehmen mit flachen Hierarchien, angenehmer Arbeitsatmosphäre und der Möglichkeit eigene Ideen einzubringen. Zusätzlich stehen dir die Türen für Weiterbildungsmöglichkeiten offen.

#### BEGINN & ORT

Ab sofort, Vollzeit in unserem Headquarter in Schladming oder Graz (Steiermark/O).

Blue Tomato ist bei der Quartiersuche behilflich



# WIMANA

SCANDINAVIAN FREESTYLE MACHINES

THE FASTEST GROWING  
SNOWBOARD BRAND IN EUROPE  
VISIT US AT ISPO B6.209

AGENT OPPORTUNITIES  
IN FRANCE, ITALY, GERMANY AND AUSTRIA



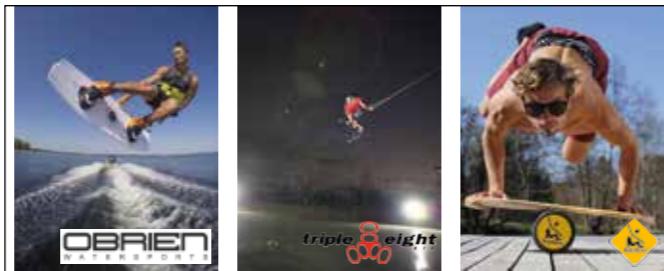
## WANTED



Hala Gear is leading the Inflatable SUP technology. Known for burly and responsive river boards that have helped to define whitewater SUP. Hala's **Carbon Hybrid Inflatable™** technology, **performance shapes** and **top-tier accessories** have competitors wishing Hala would keep out of Europe, but the ever increasing demand means that we are outgrowing our B2C business model in the EU.

Serious inquiries please email Jimmy Hostetler at: [jimmy@halagear.com](mailto:jimmy@halagear.com)

[halagear.com](http://halagear.com) [facebook.com/halagear](https://www.facebook.com/halagear) [@halagearsup](https://www.instagram.com/halagearsup)



We, POD International, are a European distributor for several watersport and funsport-oriented brands. We are based near Munich, Germany and hold an additional office in Styria, Austria. Currently, we are looking for:

| Obrien Watersports  | Triple8 Water Helmets   | RollerBone Balance Boards   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Agents / Distributors</b>  | <b>Agents / Distributors</b>  | <b>Agents / Distributors</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Italy</li> <li>Czech Rep. + Slovakia</li> <li>Hungary</li> <li>Slovenia + Croatia</li> <li>Serbia + Montenegro</li> <li>Albania</li> <li>Romania</li> <li>Ukraine</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all Europe (except FRA, GER, AUT, POL, HUN)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all Europe (except ESP, FRA, GER, AUT, GRE)</li> </ul> |

Please respond in English or German with your CV to the following email: [florian.schnabl@pointofsports.eu](mailto:florian.schnabl@pointofsports.eu)



## DISTRIBUTORS & AGENTS WANTED

Airhole is looking for distributors and agents in:

Norway  
Lithuania  
Latvia  
Ukraine  
Slovakia  
Hungary  
Italy  
Greece  
Turkey

If you are interested please contact:

[sales@endeavordesigninc.com](mailto:sales@endeavordesigninc.com)

Airhole is the quintessential accessory for the cold. Airhole allows breath to flow freely, preventing condensation, keeping your face warm.

#Airhole

[www.airholefacemasks.com](http://www.airholefacemasks.com)



## European Distributors Wanted

Proof has been pioneering sustainable eyewear since 2010, with its unique mix of sunglasses and accessories made from FSC certified woods, plant-based acetates, repurposed skateboard decks and recycled aluminum. Proof embraces the idea of being global citizens by doing good around the world, and the goal of its Do Good Program is to give back on a project-by-project basis. American based and owned, Proof is an established company with a strong social media following, outstanding distributor support and high quality products. Proof is ready to expand into the European market and is looking for experienced distributors to become part of the Proof team.



## SALES AGENTS WANTED !

We are looking for sales agents: all over Europe.

If you are interested, please contact:  
Export Sales Manager / Jan Skutnik : [jan@hoff.fr](mailto:jan@hoff.fr)  
Phone: +33 (0)7 68 35 50 32

Started in 1997, San Diego (California) COBIAN Footwear is recognized as one of the leading sandal brands in the footwear industry.

Our mission is simple :

provide our customers with the highest level of comfort available in the casual footwear market. By incorporating innovative ideas, high quality materials, and strict manufacturing standards, the Cobian brand continues to be set apart. Our footwear is durable enough to be worn at the beach, and stylish enough to be worn in the city.

While remaining true to our surf roots, it is our desire to branch out into the ever expanding fashion market, representing surf in the fashion world and fashion in the surf world.

This is what gives Cobian our unique "Surfrique" style. At the heart of the Cobian brand is a passion for people. It is this passion that motivates us to serve our customers and show love to the people around us.

## DISTRIBUTORS WANTED

[www.dirtydog.com](http://www.dirtydog.com)

**Dirty Dog Eyewear**  
Established in Australia, United Kingdom and New Zealand

**LIFESTYLE AND SPORTS SUNGLASSES, SNOW GOGGLES, HELMETS AND OPTICAL FRAMES**  
Export Distribution Centre in the UK currently selling to over 20 countries.  
Please submit distribution proposals to [richard@dirtydog.com](mailto:richard@dirtydog.com)

## WANTED: Distributors & Agents

Established in 2010, the fast growing **Swiss Standup Paddling Brand** Indiana SUP is looking for distributors and agents in:

**South Europe / Eastern Europe  
Scandinavia / GB / Benelux / Worldwide**

Interested? Please send us an email to:  
[sup@indiana.ch](mailto:sup@indiana.ch) or visit us at **ISPO Booth A6.354**

[f](https://www.facebook.com) [i](https://www.instagram.com) [You Tube](https://www.youtube.com)

JetPilot's entire history can be contained in one simple sentence: Four friends with a passion for innovation set out to build the best riding gear and apparel for those who live the life.

We, POD International, are a European distributor for several watersport and funsport-oriented brands. We are based near Munich, Germany and hold an additional office in Styria, Austria. Currently, for JetPilot we are looking for:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Agents (m/f) for</b>  | <b>Distributors for</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UK/Ireland</li> <li>Portugal</li> <li>Suisse</li> <li>Czech Republic + Slovakia</li> <li>Slovenia + Croatia</li> <li>Bosnia/Herzegovina + Serbia</li> <li>Romania</li> <li>Baltic States</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ukraine</li> <li>Belarus</li> <li>Russia</li> </ul> |

Please respond in English or German with your CV to the following email: [florian.schnabl@pointofsports.eu](mailto:florian.schnabl@pointofsports.eu)

**POD INTERNATIONAL**  
[www.pod.international](http://www.pod.international)

## OPPORTUNITIES



### AGENTS WANTED


ENDEAVOR IS LOOKING FOR AGENTS IN:

|             |           |
|-------------|-----------|
| GERMANY     | LITHUANIA |
| AUSTRIA     | LATVIA    |
| SWITZERLAND | UKRAINE   |
| ITALY       | SLOVAKIA  |
| BENELUX     | HUNGARY   |
| SPAIN       | GREECE    |
| NORWAY      | TURKEY    |

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT:  
SALES@ENDEAVORDESIGNINC.COM




WWW.ENDEAVORSNOWBOARDS.COM



### AGENTS & DISTRIBUTORS WANTED GLOBALLY

Mellow is the first electric drive that fits any skateboard. With quality made in Germany we are bringing the asphalt surf to the next level.  
Contact us on: sales@mellowboards.com



www.mellowboards.com



### DISTRIBUTORS WANTED

AUSTRIA • BELARUS • BENELUX  
CROATIA • CZECH REPUBLIC  
ESTONIA • GREECE • MACEDONIA  
MOLDOVA • MONACO  
MONTENEGRO • PORTUGAL  
ROMANIA • SLOVAKIA  
SPAIN • UKRAINE

Penny Skateboards is the market leader in the plastic cruiser category, now sold in over sixty countries with more than 600,000 boards sold last year alone. Penny Skateboards was driven by the desire to put the fun back into skateboarding. These premium plastic skateboards get more people skateboarding as they enable the rider to relax and have fun without boundaries or expectations. Built with the highest quality raw materials and fine attention to detail, Penny Skateboards are designed to look good, perform well and above all be fun to ride.

Z-Flex Skateboards has a 40-year history of quality, style and stories. Z-Flex is focused on supporting and building skateboarding, creating undeniable connections for all skateboarders.

The original Z-Flex team was led by the infamous skateboarder Jay Adams from his hometown, Santa Monica, California aka Dogtown. The Z-Flex legacy is not only focused on our core cruiser range but is carried through to decks.




INTERESTED? CONTACT US:  
AANGUS@ABSOLUTEBOARDCO.COM




### DISTRIBUTORS & SALES AGENTS WANTED!



We are looking for sales agents and distributors all over Europe.  
If you are interested, please contact:  
Export Sales Manager / Jan Skutnik : jan@hoff.fr  
Phone: +33 (0)7 68 35 50 32

CARVE is an Australian based and owned company, established in 1998.

This ever growing brand has embedded itself into a wide range of sporting and lifestyle markets, with a presence locally & in the international market place, with a core goal to supply quality products that won't buckle the bank account.

With an over 50+ strong team covering a wide range of sports & lifestyles including Surfing, Snowboarding, FMX, MX, MTB, Kiteboarding, Golf, DJ's & Musicians.

Carve has set it's sights on building a team to complement it's range of eyewear.

Marquee team riders Clay Marzo, Stu Kennedy & Trent Munro fly the Carve flag on the world stage with a host of local chargers & young guns from a range of sports building the brand from the grass roots up.

Join the evolution!

# TEMPLETON OUTERWEAR

NORTHERN ALPS



REAL SNOWBOARDING SINCE MMXII

timeless fashion combined with casual function  
supported by  
authentic brand image

## SEARCHING WORLDWIDE FOR DISTRIBUTORS & AGENTS

please contact  
sales@templeton-outerwear.com  
or visit us at  hall B6.204

WWW.TEMPLETON-OUTERWEAR.COM



EVENTS #85

SURF / SKATE / SNOW / SUP TRADE

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>24-26</b><br><b>JANUARY</b><br><br><b>SLIDE</b><br>TELFORD, UK<br>WWW.SLIDEUK.CO.UK                                    | <b>26-27</b><br><br><b>JACKET REQUIRED</b><br>LONDON, UK<br>WWW.JACKET-REQUIRED.COM                 | <b>26-28</b><br><br><b>SURF EXPO</b><br>ORLANDO, FLORIDA<br>WWW.SURFEXPO.COM                       | <b>1-3</b><br><b>FEBRUARY</b><br><br><b>REVOLVER</b><br>COPENHAGEN, DENMARK<br>WWW.REVOLVER.DK                          |
| <b>3-4</b><br><br><b>AIR + STYLE</b><br>INNSBRUCK, AUSTRIA<br>WWW.AIR-STYLE.COM   | <b>5-8</b><br><br><b>ISPO MUNICH</b><br>GERMANY<br>WWW.ISPO.COM                                     | <b>8-12</b><br><br><b>TRENTINO ROOKIE FEST</b><br>MONTE BONDONE, ITALY<br>WWW.WORLDDROOKIETOUR.COM | <b>10-16</b><br><br><b>FREERIDE WORLD TOUR</b><br>VALLNORD-ARCALIS, ANDORA<br>WWW.FREERIDEWORLDTOUR.COM                 |
| <b>18-19</b><br><br><b>AIR + STYLE</b><br>LOS ANGELES<br>WWW.AIR-STYLE.COM  | <b>20-22</b><br><br><b>AGENDA LAS VEGAS</b><br>USA<br>WWW.AGENDASHOW.COM                            | <b>6-8</b><br><b>MARCH</b><br><br><b>SPORT ACHAT</b><br>LYON, FRANCE<br>WWW.SPORTAIR.FR            | <b>6-11/18-25</b><br><br><b>SWATCH FREERIDE WORLDTOUR</b><br>FIBERBRUN<br>WWW.FREERIDEWORLDTOUR.COM                     |
| <b>18-25</b><br><br><b>SWATCH FREERIDE WORLDTOUR</b><br>ALASKA<br>WWW.FREERIDEWORLDTOUR.COM                               | <b>23-30</b><br><br><b>BASELWORLD</b><br>BASEL, SWITZERLAND<br>WWW.BASELWORLD.COM                   | <b>TBC</b><br><br><b>QUIKSILVER PRO GOLD COAST</b><br>AUSTRALIA<br>WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM         | <b>1-9</b><br><b>APRIL</b><br><br><b>SWATCH FREERIDE WORLDTOUR</b><br>VERBIER, SWITZERLAND<br>WWW.FREERIDEWORLDTOUR.COM |
| <b>4-9</b><br><br><b>WORLD ROOKIE FINALS</b><br>KITZSTEINHORN,<br>ZELL AM SEE-KAPRUN, AUSTRIA<br>WWW.WORLDDROOKIETOUR.COM | <b>26-27</b><br><br><b>PERFORMANCE DAYS</b><br>MUNICH, GERMANY<br>WWW.PERFORMANCEDAYS.EU            | <b>TBC</b><br><br><b>RIP CURL PRO</b><br>BELLS BEACH, AUSTRALIA<br>WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM         | <b>TBC</b><br><br><b>MARGARET RIVER PRO</b><br>AUSTRALIA<br>WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM                                     |
| <b>TBC</b><br><b>MAY</b><br><br><b>RIO PRO</b><br>BRAZIL<br>WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM                                       | <b>TBC</b><br><b>JUNE</b><br><br><b>SUMMER X GAMES</b><br>AUSTIN, TEXAS, USA<br>WWW.XGAMES.ESPN.COM | <b>TBC</b><br><br><b>FIJI PRO</b><br>FIJI<br>WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM                               | <b>TBC</b><br><br><b>ITALIAN SURF EXPO</b><br>SPIAGGIA DI SANTA SEVERA<br>WWW.ITALIASURFEXPO.IT                         |
| <b>TBC</b><br><br><b>BRIGHT</b><br>BERLIN<br>WWW.BRIGHTTRADESHOW.COM  | <b>TBC</b><br><br><b>SEEK</b><br>BERLIN<br>WWW.SEEKEXHIBITIONS.COM                                  | <b>TBC</b><br><br><b>JACKET REQUIRED</b><br>LONDON, UK<br>WWW.JACKET-REQUIRED.COM                  |   |

SURF EVENT TRADESHOW EVENT SNOW EVENT SKATE EVENT

29 - 31 GEN.  
ANDALO

WWW.SNOWSHOPTEST.COM

SNOW  
SHOPTEST

TEST MATERIALI  
SHOP AWARDS  
FREERIDE FORUM  
NETWORK & PARTY

organizzazione  
PRO SHOP TEST SRL

Paganella  
SKI

ISPO

SCIARE

source.

pointbreak

action

SKIPASS

Sequense

PROWINTER

L'evento trade dedicato a negozianti ed operatori del mercato snowboard e sci

- MARCHI PARTNER SNOW SHOP TEST 2016 -

5150 688 anon. ARBOR arva ATLAS bca BENT-METAL black crows BLACKHOLE bSBlackShop BOA BON FIRE BURTON

CAPITA coal colltex DEELUXE DC DRAGON DRAKE EDELRIE ELAN ELITE electric eliteve FACTION

FALKE FATCAN FIFTH SEASON FLUX FT FUNKY GIRO GNU GUASTO KALI K2 L1 PRESSION GIGGS

LA SPORTIVA LIB TECHNOLOGIES LINE #LOBSTER SEMBOARDS LUPINE MADSHUS Majestic MONTROW NEVER SUMMER VISION MIKITA NITRO northwave

NK ONEILL outdoor OSIRIS PLANKS PLUM PROPER QUIKSILVER RIDE RINE SCS ROXY SALOMUN salomon SCOTT

skialper SLASH BY GIO SMITH SPACECRAFT SPORT4TRADE MALIBU SPY+ TUBBS THULE TUBBS UNION VAUDE

# EXTREME DESTINATION

## CIRCUIT OF WALES

1. MTB – Mountain biking ●
2. BMX ●
3. Tower sport complex ●
4. Outdoor rope courses ●
5. Zip wires ●
6. Parkour area ●
7. Camping ●
8. Live music stage ●
9. Outdoor bars ●
10. Moto-X ●
11. Virtual reality experience ●
12. Trampoline park & pit gym ●
13. Go-karting (Indoor + Outdoor) ●
14. Paintball ●
15. Water park & wave rider ●
16. Indoor ski ●
17. Restaurant & bars ●
18. Skate park & mega ramp ●
19. Hotel ●
20. Extreme lodges & accommodation ●
21. Bungee jumping ●
22. Indoor climbing ●
23. Drift zone ●
24. Retail outlet village ●



### NEVER IGNORED // GET ON-BOARD

World-Class EXTREME Destination to be built in Wales!

The Circuit of Wales and EXTREME plan to develop a world-leading sports, leisure and entertainment destination. This £425m, 336 hectare multi-purpose project is located in South Wales. EXTREME's unique world-class offering which includes a collection of indoor and outdoor action and adventure sports, leisure facilities, a variety of food and beverage offerings alongside retail outlets and themed accommodation will breathe life, regeneration and create an incredible destination for the local area.

EXTREME is an iconic lifestyle brand that encompasses action sports, music and art. With the franchise continuing to grow, the group offers sports marketing services, content creation and event activation's, consumer product licensing opportunities and is developing a growing portfolio of large scale sports and leisure real estate projects.

Driven by a great team of passionate entrepreneurs, marketers and athlete's EXTREME sponsors and supports over 100 ambassadors, delivers over 80 annual events and runs multiple media platforms all of which reach millions of people every day. Collectively these engage fans and create reasons for them to hang out and collaborate with the brands we represent.



REAL ESTATE

//

MARKETING

//

LICENSING

//

EVENTS

//

STUDIO



// FACEBOOK.COM/EXTREME



// @EXTREMEOFFICIAL



// EXTREMESPORTSCOMPANY.COM



// +44 (0) 207 2441000

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NIKE SB BRUIN HYPERFEEL  
AS WORN BY GUY MARIANO  
FOR ULTIMATE BOARDFEEL

