

BOARDSPORT

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EUROPEAN SURF/SKATE/SNOW BUSINESS

#88 AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2017 €5

FINISTERRE'S TOM KAY

STATE OF WAVE PARKS

BRAND PROFILES, BUYER SCIENCE & MUCH MORE



TREND REPORTS: SURF APPAREL, WETSUITS, WATCHES, SUNGLASSES,
ACTION SPORTS CAMERAS & ACCESSORIES, LONGBOARDS, SUP, WAKEBOARDS & BACKPACKS.



RE- SPECT IS- EARNED



JOHN JOHN
FLORENCE

PHOTO: PETER KING
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DAKINE

LEASHES.
TRACTION.
BOARD BAGS.





20 YEARS BEING ON-BOARD

EXTREME is an iconic lifestyle brand, that exists to inspire. Encompassing action sports, music and art, it is fuelled by passion and creativity.

For over 20 years we've been disrupting the status quo by inspiring fans and brands to step out of their comfort zones. Each year EXTREME supports over 100 sponsored ambassadors, activates 80 events and with an average reach of 100 million people and 50 million video views per month, our digital media platforms offer engaging content in relevant formats for our ever-growing fan base.

EXTREME's unapologetic attitude and youth focus has created a truly unique business that offers services in the following areas:

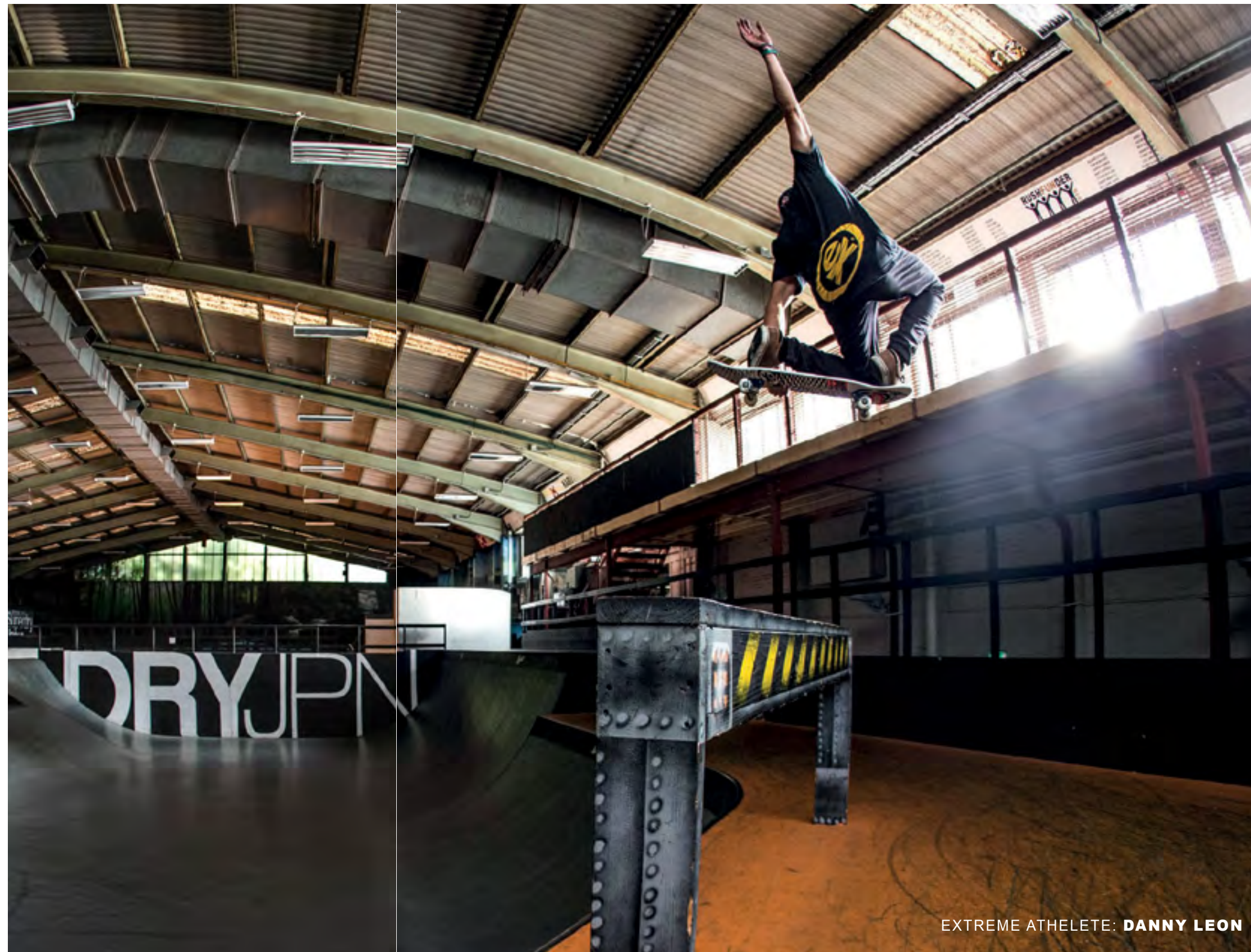
MARKETING & CREATIVE SERVICES

DIGITAL & MEDIA NETWORKS

EVENTS & ACTIVATIONS

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DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT



EXTREME ATHELETE: **DANNY LEON**



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HELLO #88

A real mixed bag of trading conditions took hold this summer, from the record breaking heat waves of August, the continuing refugee crisis in Italy through to the ongoing Brexit saga, European boardsport retailers are, now more than ever before, having to make hay while the sun shines.

Finding one single topic for this issue’s editorial was a tough one, and also a sign of the times. There’s no main trend sweeping through European boardsports, everything is becoming more and more fragmented, the parameters of consumer habits and interests forever blurring and adapting. And it’s plain to see just what’s led us here; the internet - breaking down barriers, supplying everyone with information (overload) and generally making the consumer much more connected. Our daily news website is a constantly evolving beast, forever needing to be fed with up to date news, and our distribution strategy is constantly being tinkered with to make our content appears in the news feeds/ inboxes of our audience at a time most likely to be read. It’s something we’ve invested heavily into here at SOURCE, and it’s been an interesting and beneficial process. But it’s with this age of information overload, this glut of information, that we here at SOURCE take greater pride than ever in producing this printed magazine. Something tangible, something finite, full of information, but not too much.

This issue marks my sixth year at the magazine, and is the 34th issue I’ve had the pleasure of working on and I can safely say that producing a printed magazine every other month is the most rewarding (and stressful!) part of my job. August’s always a tough month to pull together a magazine as most people are on holiday. I hope you’ve managed to disconnect, put your phone and laptop down and enjoy a printed magazine or two.

New for this issue we take our first look at wakeboarding – a sport with strong ties to surf, snow and skate and a market, which thanks to the advent of ‘wake parks’, is seeing strong growth.

Another hot topic in boardsports right now is the rise of the ‘Wave Park’, and with many different technologies and companies looking to get in before the gold rush, Dave Mailman (former Quiksilver Europe Marketing Director, Epic TV Surf Report presenter & ASP Europe President) delivers his first in a series of articles examining just what’s on offer, how viable the business model is and what the future holds.

Always Sideways,
Harry Mitchell Thompson
Editor

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On the cover: Hoff’s Benoit Brecq surfing Hendaye - photographer Eric Chauche

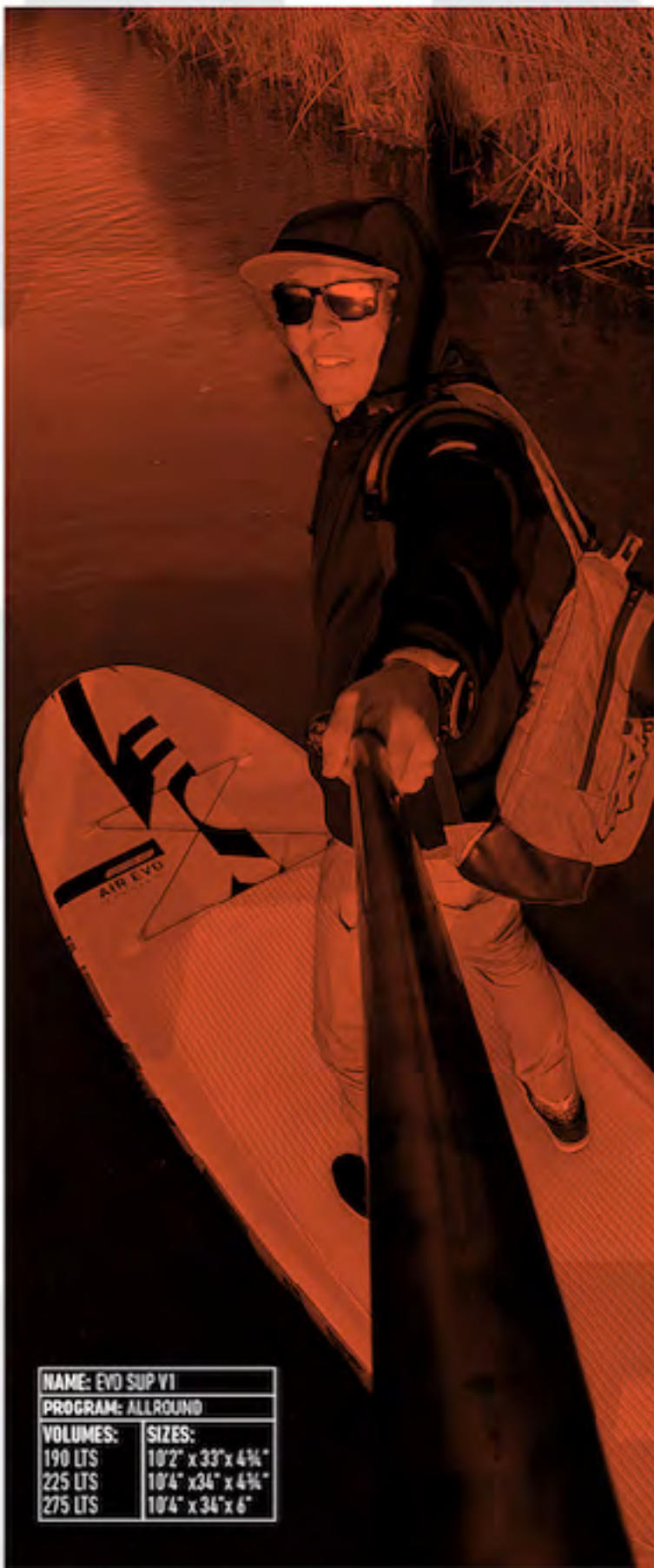
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AIR EVO V1

After countless market surveys RRD decided to introduce a new inflatable Stand Up Paddle board in its collection. This new type of quality board will be sold at very affordable prices to allow all people to be able to practice this beautiful sport. It's an inflatable board that is suitable for multiple type of riders, from beginners to regular users, looking for a multi-purpose freeride board.



NAME: EVO SUP V1	
PROGRAM: ALLROUND	
VOLUMES:	SIZES:
190 LTS	10'2" x 33" x 4 1/4"
225 LTS	10'4" x 34" x 4 1/4"
275 LTS	10'4" x 34" x 6"



WSL APPOINTS FORMER RUGBY, NBA & WOMEN'S TENNIS ASSOCIATION EXEC AS NEW CEO

The World Surf League have appointed Sophie Goldschmidt as the next CEO of their organization. Goldschmidt has previously held executive roles at the Rugby Football Union, National Basketball Association (NBA), Women's Tennis Association (WTA), and Adidas. The new CEO will be relocating from London, where she most recently worked at CSM Sport and Entertainment as Group Managing Director and was responsible for developing and driving new business initiatives and commercial growth across the company's global operations, in addition to managing the group's brand development and marketing. During her tenure as Vice President at the Women's Tennis Association, Goldschmidt was involved in negotiating a groundbreaking deal for a title sponsor that was the largest sponsorship in the history of women's sports.

STEVE DOUGLAS TO JOIN EMPORIUM A/S DISTRIBUTION

Skateboarding legend Steve Douglas will now be working with Danish skateboarding distribution company, Emporium A/S Distribution. Responsible for the distribution of brands such as Almost, Lakai Footwear, Official, Primitive and Royal Trucks, the move is part of the company's strategy to grow in Denmark and Scandinavia.

RAEN TO BE DISTRIBUTED IN FRANCE & DACH BY EYE GENTS

Eye Gents GmbH have taken on the distribution of Californian eyewear brand RAEN, for France and the DACH region (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) across all distribution channels. Eye Gents aim to bring independent eyewear brands with quality product and unique stories and value propositions to the market.

DICKIES MOVE INTO WOMEN'S CATEGORY IN EUROPE

Dickies recently announced they'll be moving into the women's streetwear category. "Quite simply we saw that more and more women were choosing to wear Dickies. Instagram is full of girls choosing the boyfriend fit and after the success of a collection of special Dickies Girl products with a couple of our retailers we decided to create a collection of Dickies styles from the men's collection."

UK ONLINE RETAILER WETSUIT OUTLET RECEIVES £5MILLION CAPITAL INJECTION

UK online water sports retailer, Wetsuit Outlet (the trading brand for B2C Distribution) has secured £5million of growth capital from a leading small-cap UK investors, Mobeus Equity Partners. A major exporter worldwide, Wetsuit Outlet sells technical clothing and equipment into over 160 countries offering premium brands such as Musto, Henri Lloyd, Gill, O'Neil, Red Paddle, Crewsaver, Billabong and GUL.

PATAGONIA DONATES \$150,000 TO PUNTA DE LOBOS THROUGH ITS PERSONAL SURF INFLATION VEST PATENT PROGRAM

Patagonia announced earlier this year that those using their inflatable PSI Vest for surfing big waves must pay a fee for an environmental cause and they've announced that it's thanks to this fee that they've been able to donate \$150,000 to Fundacion Punta De Lobos.

SURFTECH COLLABS WITH BLOOM TO RELEASE ECO FRIENDLY TRACTION PADS

SUP and surfboarding manufacturing company Surfttech have announced that they will be collaborating with performance-based materials manufacturer, BLOOM, to create a range of traction pads constructed with environmentally-friendly foam.

FINISTERRE LAUNCH #WETSUITSFROMWETSUITS CAMPAIGN

Finisterre have launched their #WetsuitsFromWetsuits campaign, where they've begun a search for a full-time Wetsuit Recycler to work in collaboration with Exeter University's centre of excellence for Materials Reengineering and make wetsuits from old wetsuits.

PLANET REEF IS BACK IN 2017

Reef will be bringing the party to Amsterdam this September for the eight edition of the Planet Reef event. Hosted on the Ocean Diva and promising to be a celebration of live music and all things water sports, tickets are available now with 1500 spots up for grabs.

INTRODUCING NEW FRENCH SKATEBOARD BRAND: CAPZOO SKATEBOARDS

A new skate company called CapZoo Skateboards from Capbreton, South-West France, has been launched by Edgar Do Van Kia (18 years old) and his father Didier with design handled by former Rip Curl graphic designer, Bichon.

HAVAIANAS FLIP-FLOP BRAND SOLD FOR \$1.1 BILLION

Arguably one of the most recognisable flip flop brands in the world, Havaianas, has been sold in a \$1.1bn deal. J&F Investments, the controlling shareholder of Havaianas maker Alpargatas has sold its stake in Alpargatas to Brazilian banking groups Cambuhy Investimentos Ltda., Itaúsa (Investimentos Itaú SA) and Brasil Warrant Administração de Bens e Empresas SA

LEUS TOWELS TO BE SOLD IN SELECT RETAILERS IN FRANCE & SPAIN

American towel brand, Leus Towels are to be sold in select retailers in France, Northern Spain and Barcelona from July 2017. The brand will be working with sales agents in both countries and will also be available to purchase from all Quiksilver Boardrider stores. Leus arrive in Europe fully for 2018.

HLC TO PRODUCE AND DISTRIBUTE FLIP SKATEBOARDS

HLC will now take over the production and distribution of FLIP skateboards in Europe from their facility in Spain. Founded in 2001 by Igor, Iban and Ander Iraola, HLC have seen their state of the art facilities grow and grow since its inception.

NORRØNA LAUNCHES COLD WATER SURF CATEGORY

Traditionally known for producing quality outdoor adventure gear, Norwegian brand, Norrøna, have now expanded their range of products to include wetsuits suitable for the arctic conditions that the country has to deal with. The range also extends to apparel and accessories that are designed to suit the needs of serious cold water surfers.

PUKAS SURFBOARD FACTORY IN BASQUE COUNTRY DAMAGED BY LARGE FIRE

A large fire broke out at the Pukas Surfboard factory near San Sebastian in the Basque Country on June 19 at 5pm. Fire fighters battled the fire and managed to extinguish the blaze at around 10:30pm. No Pukas staff were injured and Pukas released these words on their Instagram account: "Good news is everyone is safe. The fire might have taken a big part of our work and hearts, but we are standing still and willing to grow. Pukas is surf and we will surf."

ROARK REVIVAL RECEIVES INVESTMENT FROM OLUKAI

Californian surf lifestyle brand Roark Revival has received investment from Hawaiian surf lifestyle company OluKai.

EUROPEAN FREELANCE MANUFACTURERS CAN NOW SHAPE AT XHAPELAND, PORTUGAL

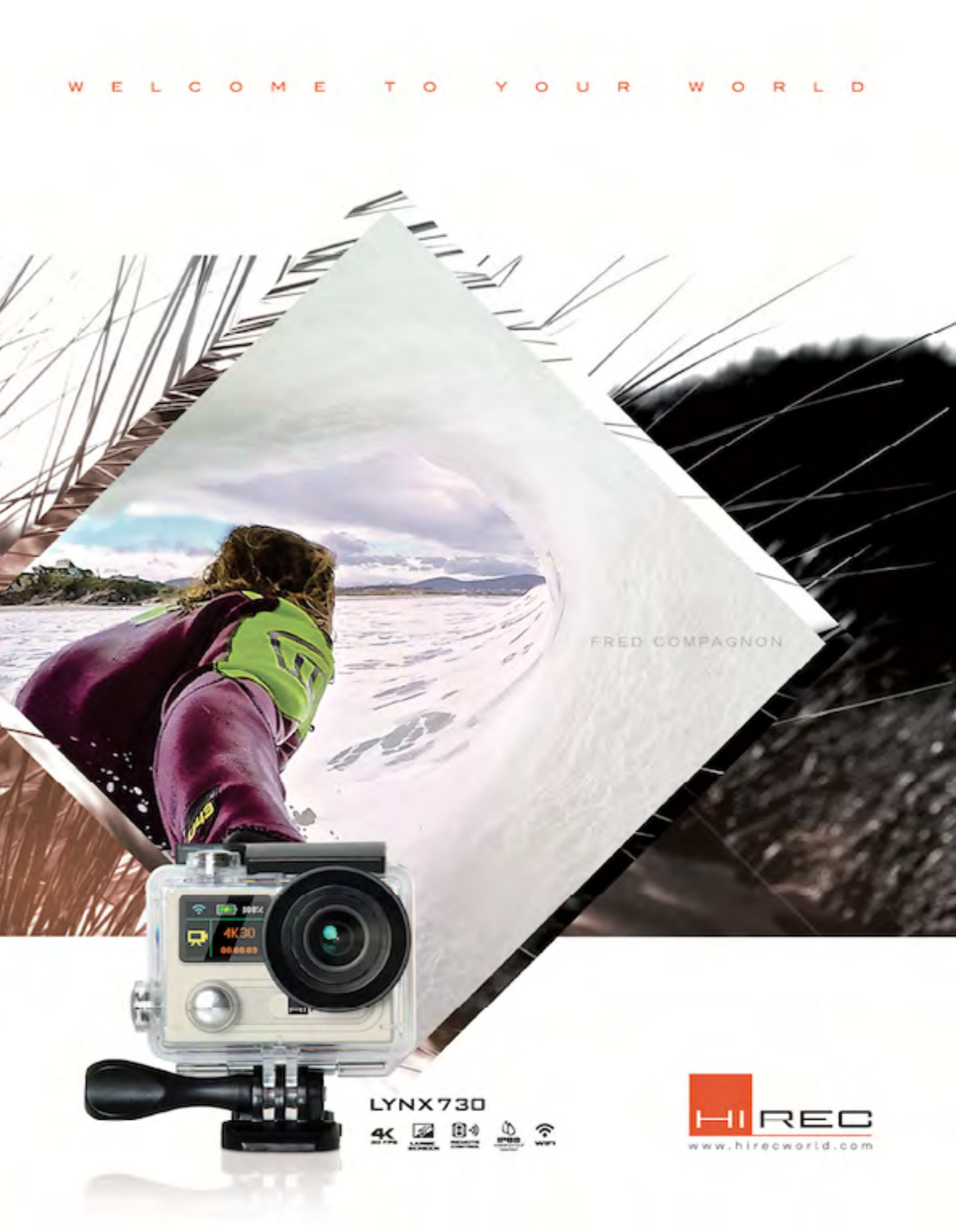
Surfboard manufacturing factory, Xhapeland, based in Cascais, Portugal will be offering independent shapers the chance to work within their premises in a designated co-working space.

BIRGIT GRUBER APPOINTED NEW PR CONTACT FOR DAKINE EUROPE IN GERMANY & AUSTRIA

Birgit Gruber has been named as the new PR contact for Dakine Europe in Germany and Austria. Having previously been PR Manager for Burton's European Operations, Birgit knows her way around the challenges that are unique to the European market with its many publications, languages, cultures, and names to remember.

OTIS EYEWEAR APPOINTS SCOTT LEWIS AS GLOBAL BRAND MANAGER

Otis Eyewear have appointed Scott Lewis to fill the newly created roll of Global Brand Manager. Lewis has served at many positions for different action sports brands including Oakley, Spy, Globe and Fox. battled the fire and managed to extinguish the blaze at around 10:30pm. No Pukas staff were injured and Pukas released these words on their Instagram account: "Good news is everyone is safe. The fire might have taken a big part of our work and hearts, but we are standing still and willing to grow. Pukas is surf and we will surf."



MAGIC QUIVER, PORTUGAL

Located in the World Surfing Reserve of Ericeira, Portugal Magic Quiver surf shop is a business focused on forging partnerships and innovating boardsports retail as we know it.

What’s the story behind Magic Quiver?

Long story short, I'd like to think of the shop as a platform for an alternative side of surfing. Something more casual and raw. At Magic Quiver we curate a an eclectic blend of brands and surfcraft. The idea is to offer something interesting, fresh and authentic that arouses curiosity.

Were brands receptive to Magic Quiver in Portugal, or has it taken them a while to get on board?

At the beginning it was actually pretty easy to get good brands into the shop because the brands we were focusing on, no one was really interested in. Other shops weren't into them. For example, I think we were the first shop in Portugal, maybe even Europe to sell brands like The Critical Slide Society or Banks. Most other shops were selling the usual suspect, so the brands we work with were keen on having a store in Portugal, but it did come with a lot of effort, in terms of paperwork, shipping, currency exchange etc.

Brand partnerships are super important to what you do. You’re the only people in the area who do Patagonia, The Critical Slide Society or Oh Dawn.

The shop started as a traditional retail business, but I’ve learned over the years that it’s a pretty tough business and especially when you’re in a seasonal spot like Ericeira. But the industry isn’t really set up for a seasonal business; the way you buy and sell product, I think it works if you have a year round business, in a city for example. But with payment condition terms, it’s not really suitable for a place like Ericeira where you have a really short season. We had trouble making it work and instead switched our focus away from the classic pre-ordering one year ahead, receiving the product, selling it, going on sale two months later model, and started to really look at other ways of dealing with those brands. Demanding a little bit more flexibility from their side and a bit more understanding for the situation.

How is winter in Ericeira?

Actually last year we stopped buying in full winter collections, because we realized it wasn't really viable at all. So now we focus on Spring and Summer and a little bit of Autumn with apparel and mostly skip winter.

You’ve also had some top shapers come through.

The concept of the shop, as the name implies, is all about the surfboards. Surfboards in a more eclectic sense than just your high performance short boards, which you find in most shops. The idea was to bring shapes to this area that weren't already available in this part of the world and it seemed like a good idea to bring these guest shapers here because the production costs are pretty low here in Portugal and Ericeira has some really good surfboard factories and craftsmen.

How many boards do these guys shape in a week?

It depends. In the first couple of years, it was just around 10-15 boards because the clientele wasn't here yet. Even if the shapers were really famous in California or Australia, people just hadn't heard of them here in Portugal or even Europe. The numbers are growing , we had Gary McNeil here in March and he made 26 boards in a couple of days. He'll be back in September and we're pretty sure this time it'll be increasing again.

And you’ve also turned the retail space into a café/bar space.

The whole retail concept in a seasonal town just wasn't making enough money, so we decided to add drinks to give a bit more life to the shop. If it's a shop just selling boards and clothing, people come in, they browse and they usually don't come back the same day, or the next. Whereas a café/ bar, you can pop in several times a day and it brings a lot more footfall into the shop.

Tell us about diversifying into accommodation with the Magic Quiver Surf Lodge.

I was running accommodation and the shop, and we realized that the clientele from the shop was the same as the apartments we were renting out. We'd get a lot of people in the shop asking us for recommendations on where to stay and, and something with a similar vibe to the shop. We sent a lot of people from the shop to the apartments and vice versa, and after a while we decided to put it all under the same brand and now we offer a more holistic experience. ☺

www.magicquiver.com



WETSUITS SS18

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

Each season has its thickness of neoprene, and summer in Europe plays by the same rules. During the high season, the product offerings get wider and the colourways multiply in order to outfit men, women, and children, basically everyone who wants to take advantage of the joys of the ocean in comfort. Here's a look at a summer business that's showing no signs of weakness. A report by **Denis Houillé**.

THE HIGH SEASON

It's no secret that the summer market is still enormous. From holidaymakers worried about outfitting the entire family in neoprene to seasonal surfers hungering for the hottest high end new thing, and locals entrenched in their habits, there has to be something for all tastes, all budgets... and all body types.

So, in spite of the higher water temperatures in Europe in summer, neoprene sales don't drop off, quite the contrary. For certain manufacturers, the spring/summer season outperforms even autumn/winter in terms of sales volume (from 30% to 50% according to the brands). This is due notably to the women's and children's segments, which experience a real boom at this time of year when the interest in surfing is at a peak. Picture Organic Clothing doubled its product offering this season (in terms of stock-keeping units) "essentially to satisfy the demand from women" admits one of the brand's three Co-Founders, Julien Durant. The design department at O'Neill continues to create lines "specifically for this new generation of athletic women who want to bring more personality, elegance and confidence into the water," specifies Jan Michaelis, European Marketing Manager at O'Neill Wetsuits Limited. At Rip Curl, the number of products increases along with the temperatures, notably because of the expanded offering of colours and the addition of summer products (wetsuit vests, rash vests, longjohns, etc.) At the same time, and this is a market-first, the French designers from Saint Jacques Wetsuits are getting ready to release a neoprene skirt called: "Jeanne" that

will actually be a 3/2 long sleeve spring suit with a skirt. Welcome to "wet-à-porter"!

For next season, manufacturers like Circle One for example predict "an even larger choice of colours in the kids line – a direct request from our retailers," explains General Manager, James Trevelyan. The same thing at Adler where all women's models come in three different colourways in order to seduce a maximum number of clients! Fit and cut will be the decisive criteria, precisely for women as confirmed by Benoit Brecq from the marketing department at Madness: "The cut of our "boot cut" long sleeve shorty for ladies has been designed to suit every woman even if you are not shaped like Alana Blanchard..."

As for Madness, there is no better crash test than surf schools admits Benoit Brecq: "The models are always in use there and dry in direct sunlight!"

ATTRACTIVE PRICES

Fathers, mothers, and children, all (at the same time!) want a wetsuit that fits their size and their taste. When outfitting this whole surfing population, price is a determining factor. So, the manufacturers do everything they can to offer well performing wetsuits at very aggressive prices.

“We pay particular attention to stretch panels at the back of the lower leg and arm so the suits are super-easy to put on – this can make all the difference to a shop sale.” **James Trevelyan, Circle One General Manager**

photo: Picture



At West, the quality to price ratio is exploited to a maximum in order to satisfy all of the different levels of product. The same thing at Circle One, where the approach consists of offering the best in terms of materials and cuts at the best price, no matter the customer. Therefore, entry-level and mid-range products constitute a large part of summer sales, except perhaps for Rip Curl which is the exception to the rule according to the head of their Technical Division Jonathan Cetran who says it is “the only brand to sell more high end than entry level product over the course of the season.”

There are many part time surfers who are looking for a good quality wetsuit above all, manufactured by a renowned surf brand. By integrating high end details (lining, stretch, or seams) in their entry-level products the specialist neoprene manufacturers are able to remain attractive to a price sensitive seasonal clientele. In the short or medium term, their surfing ability will evolve along with their demands in terms of equipment, and if they get truly bitten by the surf bug, then they’ll be looking to buy new gear adapted to changing seasons.

TAILORED TECHNOLOGY

Wetsuits are made to be worn in cold water and as the head of the Technical Division at C-Skins, Mark Brown reminds us: “Major technical advances are made in winter and then they are brought into the S/S lines.”

But in 2017, the ultimate in technical irony is that wetsuits now work too well and even at 2mm can be “too hot for the season,” attests the neoprene specialist at Alder, John Westlake.

So, manufacturers adapt by offering simplified models, which still perform just as well. The last few years has seen lining technology advance considerably on summer models; the fleece fibres are shorter in length for lighter, faster drying wetsuits with less water retention. This is a true added value in wetsuits from specialized surf brands. The thermal, hydrophobic, anti-irritant and anti-bacterial properties that make them so successful are also what help customers easily tell them apart from the rest of the summer offerings (mass market, beach accessories, etc.)

Neoprene technology is no longer a secret for O’Neill, which adapts its rubber and breaks it down into three parts: “Firstly, an exterior hydrophobic layer that keeps your wetsuit dry, then a neoprene core with microscopic air cells that increase insulation and reduce weight, and finally a pre-treated internal layer for maximum flexibility while maintaining its original form.” Jorge Imbert from Quiksilver emphasizes the importance of interior and exterior coatings that both help to protect the neoprene from overexposure or overstretching.

Other properties, such as paddling comfort are very important. To make sure they get it right, the designers study strategic seam placement so that the neoprene is flexible enough in the areas where it needs to be the most (shoulders and armpits).

*“Seams don’t stretch as much as the neoprene around them so curving seams and anatomically placing seams to points of less resistance is the aim.” **Mark Brown, C-Skins Technical Division Manager.***

DURABILITY ABOVE ALL

The high frequency of use of summer models, as basic as they may be, must in no case alter the quality of the product. Starting with the resiliency of the colours over time, and most notably the lighter tones, which have a tendency to fade faster. In the same way that manufacturers optimise the shape memory of neoprene in order to guarantee its capacity to retain its original form. In reality, a battery of tests is performed on prototype wetsuits before they ever see the light of day in the marketplace. In the product development workshops at O’Neill (Area 52) a dozen of each model of wetsuit is tested before it goes into production, which rules out any errors where materials, assembly or fit is concerned. It’s the same process at Rip Curl (one of the only brands with its own factories) where uncompromising tests are performed “600 hours for a new neoprene, 200 hours for a new wetsuit” specifies Jonathan Cetran.

As for Madness, there is no better crash test than surf schools admits Benoit Brecq: “The models are always in use there and dry in direct sunlight!”

Nowadays and from experience, the manufacturers know the weak points and the stress points on their models and how to anticipate for wear. At Adler, John Westlake “has a look at every wetsuit sent back for repairs, thankfully very few,” and “makes sure that the problem doesn’t happen again.” Every effort is put into assembly and precisely into areas with the most wear. The wetsuit industry uses some of the strongest stitching techniques: after being glued beforehand, they stitch the neoprene halfway through its thickness without poking all the way through. The procedure is even more complex on summer models, which are even thinner and demand a very particular attention to detail as Mark Brown from C-Skins describes: “Seams don’t stretch as much as the



“We don’t look at wetsuits as fashion accessories, but more like a piece of functional equipment. So, inherently we prefer an understated look.” Tiki Wetsuits’ Phil Bridges

neoprene around them so curving seams and anatomically placing seams to points of less resistance is the aim.”

Quiksilver stands out as well with strategically placed reinforced areas “at the end of each seam, flap, zip and panel whether it’s inside or outside,” specifies Wetsuit Manager, Jorge Imbert.

In summer, since one session per day is never enough, quick dry linings are definitely favourites. But, that doesn’t mean you can skip the step of rinsing the wetsuit with fresh water after use. It’s still good to remind clients that salt and sun aren’t a good mix and risk altering the quality of the neoprene much more rapidly; rinse with fresh water, dry in the shade, if possible in a light breeze.

Another point, at Circle One, “We pay particular attention to stretch panels at the back of the lower leg and arm so the suits are super-easy to put on – this can make all the difference to a shop sale,” says James Trevelyan, the General Manager.



photo: Typhoon - Dan Sedgwick

IN TUNE WITH THE SEASON

They’re all on vacation for two months, and as soon as there is the smallest bit of swell they don’t want to hear anything about horseback riding or volleyball. They want to go surfing. Of course, since last year, they’ve grown and will “obviously” want new colours in order to give it their all in the water! It’s not a surprise that the kids models sell the best with extreme colour contrasts like grey/red or black/green at Adler. The mix of orange with black or dark blue seems to please the youth, too.

Strong summer sales allow brands to offer more colourways, which is always refreshing in the shop. Yet, even amidst all the summery tones, black and other more subdued colours remain the most popular. Men’s and women’s models are still offered in more sober tones and they’re well liked... as the success of the Quiksilver Originals monochrome models attests over the last several seasons: “For next year, four new colour treatments are on the programme,” says Jorge.

Tiki Wetsuits are concentrating on dark, unified tones. “We don’t look at wetsuits as fashion accessories, but more like a piece of functional equipment. So, inherently we prefer an understated look,” admits designer Phil Bridges before specifying that the “navy line worked well this summer.”

It’s the same at Brunotti: “All the softer tones work well! Sober looks and not too overboard on the logos,” specifies Head of Product Hans Schaap. Picture also cites a mix of tones (bi-colour weaving) which seems to please just as well in the outdoor lines as their wetsuits.

Finally, we can say what we want, but black has never been as popular as affirmed by Onda Wetsuits. “Black is a timeless colour, people will always continue to wear it and buy it,” says Pedro Towers from product development. We see the same approach from the newcomers at Déjà Vu Wetsuits, who swear by “full black, no logo, very simple, minimalist and retro”.

At West, things are rather conservative, too. “Darker colours are in highest demand and we only use clear colours under the arms”, declares Sales Manager, Patrick Wattin. On the other hand, on the beach you won’t be able to miss the wetsuits from Saint Jacques, which are trying “to head off the beaten path and away from the standardized neoprene market,” with the help of stripes, original prints, as well a strict attention to details (embroideries, magnets, pockets, belts) describes Founder, Stan Bresson.

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

Considerable progress has been made in the processes of neoprene conception and lamination. Nowadays, the entirety of the production progress is closely monitored, optimized and allows avoidance of enormous costs in water and energy. Working on the efficiency of the cutting of the neoprene sheets, brands like Circle One have managed to reduce by 10% the amount of waste compared to 2016.

Neoprene of natural origin has become a reality thanks to Patagonia and after 200 material tests, everyone agrees that the consistency of the rubber, as well as the qualities of flex, resistance and UV protection surpass those of traditional petro-chemical based neoprene. Just as eco-friendly, most of the linings are now made solely from recycled, hydrophobic materials, which ward off humidity, dry quickly and in the end give a nice feel to the product.

In terms of recycling, there is no lack of initiatives like the Resurrection programme from Rip Curl, which gives a new life to neoprene off-cuts left over after production: wallets, labels, drink holders, etc. The same thing goes for recycling used wetsuits, which in turn find numerous new uses: soles of shoes, beach bags, bracelets... and lots of others are being studied according to the Australian and European designers working under the logo of The Search.

A notable mention on the eco side of wetsuits is UK brand Finisterre, who although aren’t producing summer suits have embarked on a mission to find a full time wetsuit recycler. #WetsuitsFromWetsuits will look to make new wetsuits from old wetsuits.

In the end, the ultimate objective is for products to last as long as possible. This is why on the inside of wetsuits we often find precious advice on how best to take care of the neoprene so that consumers are as well informed as possible from the beginning. Just in case there is a tear, many brands offer to repair the wetsuit for free for two years after purchase (like the specialists Sen No Sen), and many offer a lifetime guarantee. What a great way to maximize your investment down to the last centimetre.📍

HIGHLIGHTS

- Explosion of surf demographic
- Price sensitive market - aggressive entry-level offering
- Boom in women’s & kids
- New colourways
- Eco & repair

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THE STATE OF WAVE POOLS

WHAT'S SO COOL ABOUT SURFING IN A POOL ?

The Holy Grail of surfing is discovering a perfect wave. Bruce Brown captured the most renowned moment of surf discovery when the stars of the Endless Summer trudged across kilometres of South African sand dunes, before finally stumbling upon the long, peeling walls of Cape St. Francis. The next best thing, and some would say even better is having a perfect wave to surf on demand.

"I mean you dream of this stuff as a kid... to sit here and see it, within my lifetime is like the coolest thing ever." – Stephanie Gilmore, 6x WSL World Champion.

How did we get here?

The technology has come a long way since 1927, when the first wave pool was built at the Gellért Baths in Budapest, Hungary. Phil Dexter designed the first model 'suitable for surfing', which opened at the Big Surf Waterpark in Tempe, Arizona in 1969. In 1985, the Wildwater Kingdom in Allentown, Pennsylvania hosted the first-ever pro surf contest in a wave pool. Tom Carroll won in gutless waist high slop. Douglas Murphy, the founder of Murphy's Waves from Glasgow, Scotland designed Typhoon Lagoon, the first truly adapted for surfing on a modern shortboard, a major attraction at Disney World in Florida since 1989. Soon after, someone pulled into the first viable wave pool tube at the Seagaia Ocean Dome in Miyazaki, Japan. But Murphy remained the king of the artificial wave for the next two decades.

The next revolution came in 2010, when Wavegarden started literally making waves in the Basque Country with the prototype of its first Lagoon design. By 2013, Surf Snowdownia, the first ever commercial 'Surf Park' opened in Wales, and soon after hosted the most legitimate surf contest ever held in a wave pool. Meanwhile, the Kelly Slater Wave

Co. was hard at work developing the world's most perfectly shaped artificial wave. Like surfing's Santa Claus he delivered the first images on YouTube just before Christmas in 2015. The surfing world was in disbelief, but substantiated rumours of a ten minute wait between waves dampened the enthusiasm of many who thought the 11-time world champion's team had delivered artificial surfing nirvana. Not to be outdone, the designers and engineers at Wavegarden dived into work on their Cove design. The first footage was released in May 2017 with rave reviews from WSL pros like 2014 World Champion Gabriel Medina, Josh Kerr, Jeremy Flores, and current ranking leader Matt Wilkinson who said, "You can get barrelled, come out and do some turns, and look out the back and there's just another one, and another one and another one." Today, we can say definitively that wave pool technology is capable of producing a very high quality surfing experience.

"As we see it, the vision is clear: build authentic, sustainable and profitable surf experiences to grow the surf industry and provide the mental, physical and emotional stoke of surfing to those that do not have access to the ocean." **Surf Park Central**

The more forward-thinkers also think wave pools are great centrepieces for real estate developments, and the perfect playground for ultra-rich individuals or private companies to have for the enjoyment of their families, friends or co-workers.

Can wave pools be a financially viable business?

This statement from Surf Park Central, “the ultimate surf park and wave pool industry resource” about their second ever Surf Park Summit indicates the wave pool industry knows what it needs to do to succeed: “As we see it, the vision is clear: build authentic, sustainable and profitable surf experiences to grow the surf industry and provide the mental, physical and emotional stoke of surfing to those that do not have access to the ocean.”

While every manufacturer gives that vision their personal twist, they agree wave pools are the perfect addition to any resort, hotel complex, commercial centre, or theme park, and that they’ll be an essential part of the training programs of wave-starved countries with Olympic surfing aspirations. The more forward-thinkers also think wave pools are great centrepieces for real estate developments, and the perfect playground for ultra-rich individuals or private companies to have for the enjoyment of their families, friends or co-workers.

Some aspects of the wave pool business model definitely work. As in any business, once you have a viable product, its success is mainly a question of vision, location, funding, communication and management. Typhoon Lagoon at Disney World in Florida, the Siam Park in Tenerife, Wadi Adventure in the United Arab Emirates or even the original Big Surf Waterpark in Arizona are examples of surfing wave pools within amusement or waterparks that are economically viable attractions. However, in those cases surfing isn’t the main draw, and surf sessions are limited to a certain number per day.

Can the ‘Surf Park’ business model be profitable and help the wave pool industry grow?

Although they haven’t been in operation for very long, Surf Snowdonia in Wales and NLand in Texas are proving with the Wavegarden Lagoon that surfing wave pools don’t have to be part of an amusement park to survive. The team at Wavegarden told Source why that is: “The foundation to creating a financially viable man-made wave involves: high wave frequency and high user capacity; a diversity of good quality waves in a variety of sizes to meet the needs of all user groups; low energy consumption; and a range of professional services (surf school, high performance coaching) and amenities (surf shop, restaurant, etc) to ensure surfers and spectators enjoy their experience, tell their friends and come back again.”

What is the target market?

The wave pool industry insists that bringing the sport to people who don’t have access to the ocean, and teaching them to surf is a key element of the business model. An equally large part of its success may be as a potential alternative to long haul surf travel. Many surfers are willing to venture far from home to surf perfect head high waves in the Maldives or other similarly exotic destinations, and are already willing to travel to surf them where there are no oceans at all.

Larry Christensen, a typical 45-year old Californian, surfing family man recently took short trips to Mexico and Costa Rica when the swell and weather forecasts guaranteed great surf. His next destination was Austin, Texas to the NLand Surf Park. Why? Because, as legendary Hawaiian surfer Fred Hemmings Jr. the head instructor at Big Surf in Tempe, Arizona said in a 1969 article in Time magazine, “The surf is always up.”

What did Larry have to say about his time in Texas? “The Nland park was super fun. We did three hours, two days in a row and it was epic! I would go back for sure, but I want the Cove park! That thing looks next level!”

Cultural metropolises like London, Barcelona, Sydney or New York will soon have their very own Wavegarden Lagoons or Coves, which makes them arguably bigger draws for surf tourism than the Maldives, the Mentawai islands or Mainland Mexico.

While purists argue that wave pool surfing will never be the same as surfing in the ocean, industry manufacturers respond that the actual act of surfing on a wave is exactly the same. As Willy McFarland from American Wave Machines claims: “The feel of the wave is the exact same experience you would have in the ocean with paddling, duck diving, and wave selection.” However, they’ll never be able to replicate the years of experience it takes to read ever-changing ocean line-ups, or the feeling of standing on a deserted beach at dawn watching lines of new swell fill in.



photo: Wavegarden / Pacotwo

Will the growth of the wave pool industry help the surf industry?

Although it’s a very reasonable argument, it’s still too early to say if more ‘Surf Parks’ will translate into major sales increases for the surf industry. Nonetheless, with 1999 World Champ Mark “Occy” Occhilupo acting as their Surf Industry Advisor people like Aaron Trevis, the CEO of Australia’s Surf Lakes are very optimistic, and see it as a source of “long term exponential growth for industry and retailers”, which “could be the biggest deal since surfing began.”

It will undoubtedly help sell products essential to the actual act of surfing: boardshorts, wetsuits, leashes and surfboards, but not necessarily surf apparel. Giving everyone access to a wave pool and therefore democratizing the sport will by definition make it less exclusive, and therefore make “surf fashion” less appealing. However, it might make newcomers feel like they’re now part of the “surfing tribe”, encouraging them to buy a t-shirt or cap from their favourite surf brand. If surfing ever becomes as popular as basketball or European football, we may find the WSL selling t-shirts with the names of the Top 34 Men’s Championship Tour and Top 17 Women’s Championship Tour surfers on back is as viable a business model as it is for the NBA or FIFA. Perhaps, it will be a boon for the brands, with fans buying the Quiksilver Flores t-shirt or the Rip Curl Fanning jersey, or maybe the inclusion of surfing in the Summer Games will have everyone buying copies of their national team’s rash vest with the name of their favourite Olympic surfer emblazoned on the back. The jury is still out on the effect wave pools may have on the surf fashion market. 6

This is the first in a series of surf park articles by **Dave Mailman**, former **Quiksilver** Europe Marketing Director, Epic TV Surf Report presenter & ASP Europe President.

SET UP YOUR COMPANY IN THE SURF CITY

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- Because it is a city that you can get around by bicycle.



RAEN

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Handmade for today.



photo: Dragon

SUNGLASSES SS18

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

Whether or not the sun is shining, sunglasses are a great category for any retailer. Customers use them for various purposes besides their dedicated boardsports; be that fishing, biking, hiking or just looking fashionable. And with the new trends for next year, there's something in store to fit any style and type out there - from understated classics to bold and out there. **Anna Langer** takes a deeper look.

TRENDS

"The market is evolving and prepared to take risks in terms of frames, where the combos and new features will make their way, but also in terms of lenses, with new technologies and colours" says Pedro Fernandes, European Brand Director of VonZipper, which means we can see a big variety of shapes, models and approaches on the shelves next year. This includes smaller and rounder options, new takes on Wayfarers and Aviators, Visors and Shields, as well as semi- and frameless models, and combinations of "rounder and softer lens shapes with contrasting sharper edged frames" as Dragon describe their "unique dynamic look".

Acetate stays strong as a material, especially hand made, but is more often mixed with metals and other materials, adding "fun elements to give the frames a unique look" as Tanner Dame, CEO of Proof Eyewear states. The overall growing awareness for ecological issues also fosters more sustainable, petroleum free approaches from plant-based materials as Raen, Ovan and Zeal highlight.

Colour trends include more subtle shades, gradients and transparent all the way to clear, and classic tints for lenses, balancing a new revival of mirror coatings in all shades of the rainbow. And while sunglasses from boardsports brands have always fused performance qualities with lifestyle aesthetics, Oakley see a "new trend in the way people use products. With more efficiency and flexibility in school and the workplace, people spend more time on health, wellness, and being active" and hence seek even more efficiency and flexibility from their eyewear, which they answer with their new CrossrangeTM Collection.

At CHPO, "we are using bigger frames and rounder shapes (as on the Vanessa sunglasses) with both black and mirror lenses. Another trend is that the lense is placed on top/outside the frame instead of inside it (McFly). The overall look is clear cut Scandinavian with discrete details (Copenhagen) combined with our roots in skateboarding, music and art," says the brand's , Marketing Coordinator & E-commerce Manager, Johanna

*For a bolder look, **Dragon's** surfboard resin inspired collection or their collaboration with the Aysymbol gallery look really impressive.*

Electric CEO, Eric Krane is noticing "the migration of the sport consumer to more sophisticated styling overall. To service this, we are launching several new lifestyle pieces that are flatter, rounder and have more vintage heritage that a basic wayfairer style."

LENS TECH

This is of course reflected in lens technology as well. Polarization has become a standard that all brands offer (at least) in their premium segments. "Polarized is becoming more and more important" says Melon Optics International Sales and Brand Manager Neil Slinger, suggesting they will only sell polarized lenses in future. Quiksilver specialize on "green polarized as it is the best colour option to use on water (fishing, sailing etc...)," says JP Bonnemason, Global Eyewear Product Manager. Ovan implement a 100% Japanese fused polarization-coat in their signature OV6 lenses, including an "anti-



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*“Anything goes regarding shape - we see large square, small round and anything in between”
says **Christian Grund** from **Raen**.*

reflective layer and Oleo-phobic coatings, that fights finger prints and makes lenses easier to clean”, says CEO Mikko Huttunen while Dragon use a sandwiching layer to protect their polarization from being scratched off.

Otis Eyewear launch a new L.I.T Lens in Spring, “which is one of the world’s first to combine the durability and scratch-resistance of naturally sourced mineral glass, precise and vivid light improvement technology, AR coating” as well as polarization, says Global Brand Manager Scott Lewis.

Colour and contrast enhancement are important features as well, achieved through the Oakley Prizm™ technology, Spy’s Happy Lens™ technology, Dragon’s Lumalens technology, VonZipper’s Wild Life Lenses and the Amplify Lens Technology from Melon. POC Eyewear continue to “focus on providing crisp vision and high contrast optimized for different settings” explains Mikael Odén, Product Manager.

Proof Eyewear introduce a “new lens program to better fit our eco mindset, shifting to a cellulose based material for the lenses” that is biodegradable. Sinner developed two sunglasses made from bio plastic, featuring SINTEC® polarized lenses. And Zeal continue their polarized Ellume lens, that is “as sustainable as it is technical.” On the more fashionable side, Quiksilver and Roxy offer flat lenses from Zeiss with a great antireflective treatment that is the “best option to be trendy and comfortable,” according to JP.

LENS TINTS

“Mirrored lenses are hot again, while the last couple of seasons we saw a boost in the demand for subtle smoke and amber tinted lenses, mirror is gaining ground again. Silver and Gold bridge the gap between style and standing out,” says Neil from Melon. Oakley add “rich hues of Iridium® such as Tungsten, Ruby, Sapphire, and Jade”, Horsefeathers feature a new Mirror White, Sinner go for gold, silver, pink and blue revo, and Carve offer “colours that support and enhance the new finishes along with subtle coordinate Iridium lenses.” Still colourful but less flashy are green and rose tints from Proof and colour gradients from VonZipper, “that are clearly a market trend” states Pedro. Otis have “brown, grey and blue with both L.I.T technology”, polarized and classic, Spektrum focus on “personal favourites brown, green and smoke” and Brunotti concentrate on “brown and grey lenses for the optimal view.”

FRAME COLOURS

“Unlike previous years where coloured frames have dominated, this year we have moved to a more subtle colour approach,” says Dirty Dog Operations Manager Tom Lazarus. Carve opt for “rich and earthy with a touch of the industrial” from Gold to Gunmetal, Zeal use triple injection “to allow for more subtle colour details” and Raen highlight “tasteful and unique acetate colour combinations”.

The trend for matte finish from previous years continues, with Matte Rose from Raen, combinations of Reds and Burgundy and Sea-Glass from Otis and a fade colour story from Spy, with “a soft matte black finish that fades into a pop of colour on the temple tips,” explains Keith Asher, Senior Product Designer. Melon feature solid and frosted matte next to transparent gloss.

Translucent frames are emerging as a new trend of their own, combined with matte from Zeal, “beautiful and bold” as Garnet, Seaweed, and Slate from Spy, “see-through temples to show off custom core wires” from Dragon or “partly see through patterns” in Jade and Rose from Raen. Brunotti feature a full glass frame and Raen combine tortoise with new crystal colours. “Blacks and Torts still rule the preferences of the consumers,” says Pedro from VonZipper, hence we can still see a lot of variations of this pattern.

For a bolder look, Dragon’s surfboard resin inspired collection or their collaboration with the Asymbol gallery look really impressive. Horsefeathers feature “exclusive prints such as Havana, Cheetah, Strawberry, or Zebra”, Quiksilver implement patterns from the boardshorts and tees, while Roxy tie with the Pop Surf collection.

SHAPES

“Anything goes regarding shape - we see large square, small round and anything in between” says Christian Grund from Raen. Dirty Dog find that “square-consumers are now developing towards round and oval,” and Dragon also see a “tendency toward rounder, more unisex shapes.” This includes “Lennon” style Round sunglasses with modern materials

from Horsefeathers, vintage rounds with key hole from Quiksilver and combos with “double bars and metal accents” from Proof. “Shields are a growing trend” for Oakley, that offer “better comfort and protection” according to Quiksilver and POC agree that “larger lenses and frames, which offer an exceptional field of view, are clearly a focus.” Melon feature “customisable semi-wraps” and Spy redesigned their iconic Tron 2, for “unprecedented vision with a huge shield.” Yet “Wayfarer shapes are timeless” too, argues Oakley with their Frogskins® Lite line, as are Aviators, which Quiksilver make their version “more square”.

Carve reinvent the classical with “new shapes drawn from retro influences”, Otis bring new energy in stem and bridge designs of 50’s-inspired frames and Ovan also believe that “traditional frame styles will continue being popular, but metal / acetate combo frames and more aggressive wire frames keep getting more popular.” Spy also find that “classic silhouettes are really inspiring all aspects of eyewear. You are seeing softer shapes of frames and lenses, along with thinner temples for a more sophisticated look.”




photo: Sinner

PRESCRIPTION

Sophisticated is one of the key words for prescription glasses, that need to be “light weight with comfortable fits so they can be worn easily all day,” as Epokhe explains. “Optical frames are trending thinner, and we’ve seen our aluminium collection do really well” adds Proof, who also introduce a new, sleek Wood Rx frame.

Quiksilver and Roxy focus on vintage metal frames and a mix with acetate, Raen feature metal in their prescription range for the first time and Otis launch their first optical collection in 2018, with “hand-made Japanese frames in classic acetate styles, mixed materials and titanium wires. In prescription collections, we see amazing combinations and evolutions of classic design with innovative details, stems and colours.”

At the same time, people are “becoming more comfortable with wearing an optical frame that is a little more ‘out there”” says Epokhe, and Spy agree that “larger plastic frames are everywhere,” arguing that “eyewear is meant to be shown off”, offering bold styles with a lightweight frame. VonZipper also feature “strong bulky models, to mixed combos of classic acetate and metal frames,” as well as a classic reinvented cat eye model frame for women. Oakley’s main focus is “to solve the problem of frames not fitting all face shapes; the result was the development of TruBridge™ Technology” and Raen also state a focus on fit and sizes. 

HIGHLIGHTS


- Lifestyle aesthetics with performance features
- Matte finish
- Translucent frames
- Round lenses
- bold prescription frames



MICK FANNING | KIRRA

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SUNGLASSES 2018 PICTORIAL



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Bliz - Matrix



Bliz - Rapid



Brunotti - Denali



Brunotti - Manaslu 1



Brunotti - Manaslu 2



Carve - Noosa



Carve - Rival



Carve - Verve



Cheapo - Copenhagen



Cheapo - Mc Fly



Cheapo - Vanessa



Dirty Dog - Maverick



Dirty Dog - Noise



Dirty Dog - Voidl



Dragon - Baile



Dragon - Fakie



Dragon - Mix



Electric - AV1



Electric - The Dude



Electric - Zombie S



Epokhe - KOFE



Epokhe - LEV



Epokhe - NON



Gloryfy - 42ndstreet



Gloryfy - Headliner



Gloryfy - St Pauli



Horsefeathers - Cartel



Horsefeathers - Foster



Horsefeathers - Nomad



Ion - Hype



Ion - Icon



Ion - Ray



Melon - Drifter



Melon - Echo



Melon - Halfway



Nectar - Isla



Nectar - Kilgo



Oakley - Crossrange patch



Oakley - Crossrange shield

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BRIGHT, BERLIN, GERMANY, JUNE 28-30

The floor layout at Bright was further simplified to help with the visitor flow, which gave a definite path to walk around the show. At Bright the focus is now on four segments: Street n Skate, Outdoor Aesthetics, Bright Urban and Accessories. The decline in the importance of skate hard hardgoods to the show was underlined by Bright not offering a skateable area inside the show this summer. Outdoor Aesthetics, which was the focus of the Bright Diaries show issue this summer continues to offer retailers a look at brands in this crossover segment which gives clothing based retailers a more performance-based option. The popular accessories offering had grown again this year with a number of new brands on offer. Street n Skate and Bright Urban continue to be the mainstay of the show as Bright cements its position and remains one of Europe's key destinations for streetwear and contemporary men's fashion. Talking to brands there was a feeling that the winter show is stronger in Berlin and this was due to the

attendance being lower in the last two summer shows and higher in the intervening winter show. RVCA exhibited photographs from Mark Oblow alongside the artwork of Charle Collet and the exciting films of the VHS Crew. Swanski was exhibiting as his brand Turbokolor celebrate their 10th year and Forbidden Grip Art with its NobodyListen pop up. Evening entertainment stretched into the early hours, with the Bright / DC's opening Smoke on the Water party at the Else where best trick was won by Justin Sommer. Wednesday saw the Volcom event at Hoppetosse, on the boat right in front of Badeschiff (the hub between Seek and Bright) where they also exhibited their Jade Jagger line. Adidas held the ever-popular Skate Copa Court with its skateable wave obstacle with the Adidas team round the corner at the Schleusenufer. The next show is January 16-18, 2018

www.brighttradeshow.com

JACKET REQUIRED, LONDON, UK, JULY 26-27

Jacket Required returned to the Old Truman Brewery on Brick Lane in London's East End to showcase SS18 men's, and for the first time, women's streetwear and accessories. Organisers implemented a new layout this time round, which led visitors on a curated path from start to finish with no options for deviating as before. A little Ikea-like some commented, and this saw the usual action sports hall lose a corner to bar space and after Hectic brands (Stance & Poler Stuff) switched into the main hall last time round, Sole Tech brands (éS, Etnies and Emerica) followed suit on their return to the show, along with Santa Cruz, Happy Socks and start up The Cords + Co.

Remaining in the original hall were Nixon, Dickies, Element, DC/ Quiksilver, Volcom and Globe from the action sports space. The show had fewer numbers from the action sports industry, but the general

feeling from exhibitors towards their visitors was one of 'quality over quantity', with visitors having already done their research and not simply stopping off on a whim. Some exhibitors opened new doors with the show, but the majority of brands asked use the show as a chance to see existing accounts and tell their marketing stories. The first morning started slowly, but by the end of day one, the main hall was packed with buyers, exhibitors, press and others drinking beers and chatting. The show has firmly cemented its spot on the UK streetwear calendar, and is attended by key streetwear buyers and a considerable number of personnel from European action sports brands, even those not exhibiting at the show.

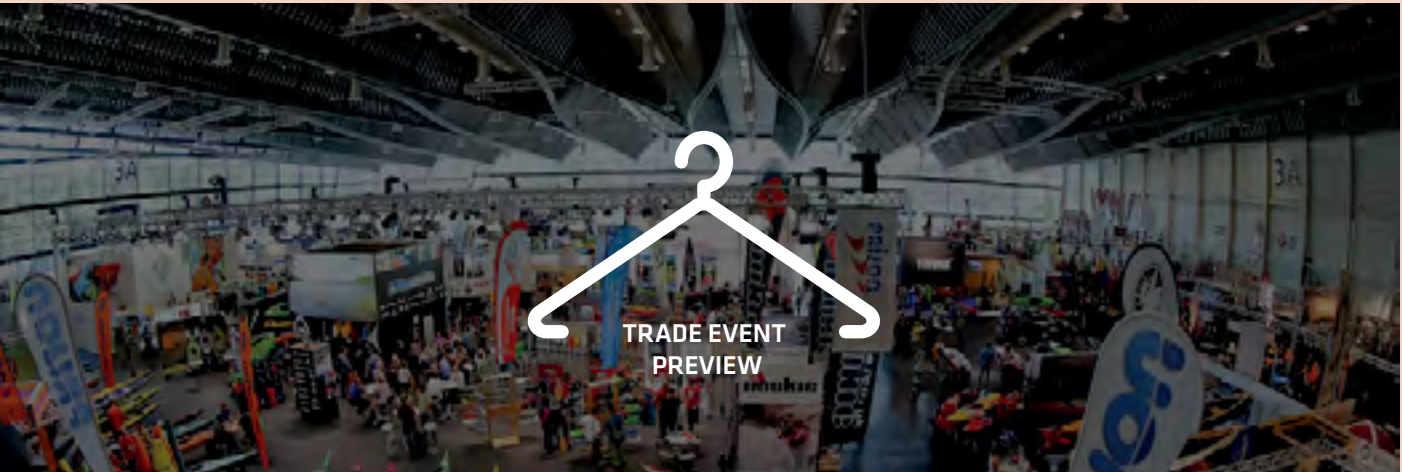
www.jacket-required.com

OUTDOOR SHOW, FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, GERMANY, JUNE 18-21

With its new earlier timing there was an air of anticipation, but attendance levels didn't really change. Brands put this down to the Germany's Pentecost/ Whitsun holidays and the long bank-holiday weekend which saw retailers wanting to stay in their shops rather than take the time to visit the show. However maybe the Outdoor show, even though it's seen as being in the 'in demand' sports sector, is feeling the effect of the general trade show malaise. With the show now out for tender to exhibition fair grounds across Europe, maybe show owners the EOG are looking to freshen up the show with a switch of venue. The show still remains the key summer event for the outdoor industry with more than 21,000 trade visitors from 90 countries. This year's show was reorganised with a concerted push into the action/outdoor crossover market, with attending retailers appreciating the new segmentation created by the three new themed

areas, The Hangout, The Lifestyle collection, and The Watersports area. The Hangout in the open-air Grounds West was full of brands offering outdoor cooking equipment, games, furniture etc. The Lifestyle collection area had exhibitors who target the urban/outdoor crossover market and the watersports area had brands from SUP, swimwear, canoeing, kayaking and accessories and was larger than ever before with trial SUP runs on the Messe Lake. So for brands from boardsports looking to grow into the more generalist outdoor market and for boardsports retailers looking for new lines for their consumer base, this remains a key summer show. Next year is the 25th anniversary edition of the show and will take place from June 17-20, 2018

www.outdoor-show.com



PADDLEEXPO, NÜRNBERG, GERMANY, SEPTEMBER 19-21

This is the 15th edition of Europe’s only specialist paddle sports tradeshow, attracting brands from SUP, kayaking and canoeing. The three-day event brings together retailers from all over Europe to Nurnberg who gather to see the latest product and technologies on offer. For this year the show organisers have moved the event a month earlier to fit in better with the industry ordering cycle and change to a Tuesday-Thursday slot from the traditional Friday-Sunday slot, making it easier for retailers to leave their shops and attend.

In 2016, 282 brands including most of the key players in these industries exhibited on 135 booths, with the 8400 square metre hall sold out, attendance was slightly up on previous years with 1,550 visitors from 44 nations with international visitors making up 54% of the total with most coming from Switzerland, Italy, Czech Republic, UK and France. For 2017 the number of confirmed exhibitors at time of going to press has increased to 294 brands on 148 booths. So more brands and exhibitors than ever before, a sign that the show is cementing its position as Europe’s paddle show. The show gives retailers the opportunity to see more brands in one location than anywhere else in Europe. This enables retailers to make the best purchasing decisions possible – additionally retailers can also find the latest new products.

SUP products make up approximately 30% of the Paddleexpo exhibition area. SUP board brands at the show include Starboard, BIC/ SIC, Red Paddle, Naish, Mistral, Fanatic, JP-Australia, NSP, Focus, C4 Waterman, RRD, Boardworks, Light SUP, Lokahi, Halagear, Indiana, Jimmy Lewis, Aquaglide and Aquadesign. Additionally many specialist SUP accessories, clothing and wetsuit brands can also be found. So for retailers, Paddleexpo is a one-stop-shop window for all they will need to buy in and it’s all under one roof in a single hall, simplifying the selection and buying process for retailers. As Horst Fürsattel, Founder and Manager of Paddleexpo puts it: “In more than 30 years in paddle sports business I have heard many good reasons why it is a smart idea to attend a trade show like Paddleexpo. For me, the

most important reason is: time. First, having all players in one hall means maximum results in minimum time. And second, even more importantly: finding out that a supplier is not what you have expected will cost you a lot of precious time, time that is gone forever. Minimize the risk of wrong decisions, meet your business partner in person, get in contact with the people you need to trust and choose the right suppliers right from the start. This saves more time than most business people imagine.”

New to show brands include Airboard, American del Advantage, Aquatec Europe, Bestway, Biondo, Black Project, Bote, F2, Garmin, Infinity SUP, Kona SUP, Kobus, Norden SUP, Okai SUP, Scubajet, Secumar, Shark SUP, Vertics Sleeves, Zar Mini and Zulupack. There is now a larger meeting area in the traditional kayak/canoe section and a new “Paddler’s Lounge” in the Stand-Up-Paddling area of the hall. These will provide additional space for brands and retailers to meet and discuss this year’s business. In the evenings there will be live music at the after-work stand parties on the first night, and the industry dinner will take place on the second night. The event dinner is open to all attendees and last year over 2,000 people sat down to a buffet and watched movies and live presentations and the annual ‘Coolest Products of the Show’ awards, presented by KS Publishing. It’s the biggest get-together of the SUP community you will ever see under one roof.

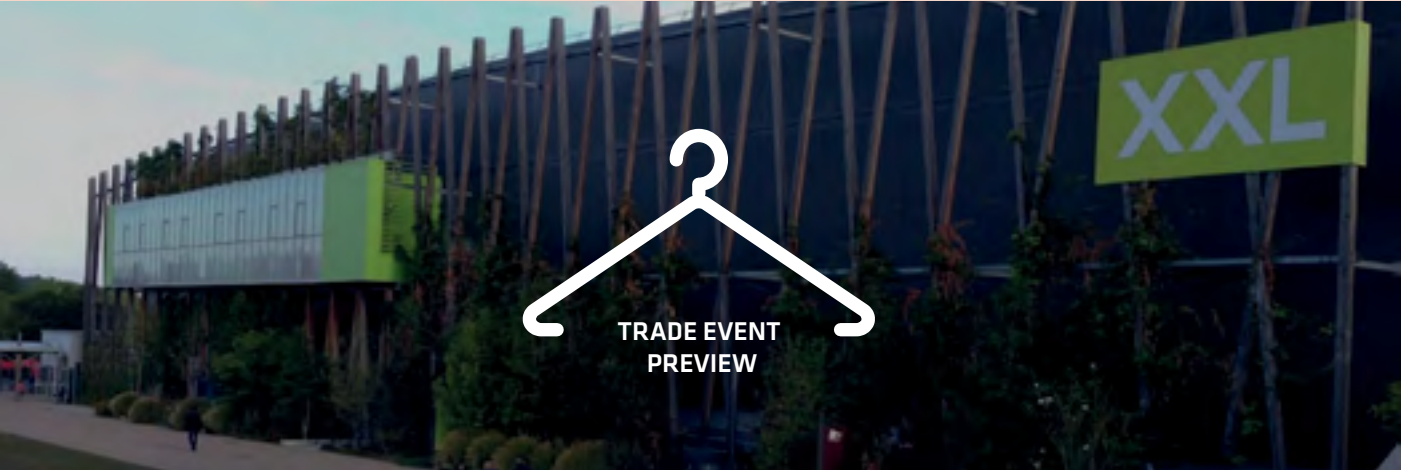
Opening hours are 9am - 7pm Tuesday and Wednesday and 9am - 4pm Thursday. Trade professionals can attend the fair at no cost and can register in advance on the website. Action sports retailers should take the time to visit the show and look at this market as it’s a product category that many of their customers are interested in, whether it be inflatables for lakes and rivers, or hardboards for the ocean.

www.paddleexpo.com

SPORTS ACHAT, FRANCE : LYON, SEPTEMBER 11-12 / NANTES, SEPTEMBER 18-19

Last summer saw the launch of a new show, Sport Achat Nantes by Sportair, to fill the gap in the market for an action sports trade show in the west of France. The show was well received by the industry so for this year, like last year, the Nantes event will be held the week after the ever-popular Sport Achat Lyon event that is in its fifteenth year. Sport Achat Lyon concentrates on mountains, outdoor and trail-running whilst Nantes’ emphasis is water and street. Last year in Lyon

290 brands covered the 8,000 metre squared exhibition space at the Eurexpo and for this summer’s show almost 300 exhibitors will unveil their Spring Summer 2018 collections. New exhibitors at Lyon include: Anita Active, Kuox, Cousin Trestec, Sportiva, Martini, Bivouac, Nite Ize, Klean Kanteen, Leatherman Suprabeam, Sog, Darchstein, Gumbies, Made in Colors, Newland of Italy, Oaks Valley, Soussou 4Fun and Skike. At the entrance visitors will find exhibits from winners of this



summer’s awards, the new Crème Fraiche brands and the Expo Shoes area with exhibits from climbing, trekking/hiking, lifestyle-relaxation, mountaineering, running and trail-running.

In the conference area four presentations will be held with two 30 minute info spots on new products, one focusing on cycling and the other on outdoor. Alongside the show as always will be Bikeexpo in an adjoining hall. Opening hours are from 9am to 7pm on Monday and from 9am to 6pm on Tuesday.

Sport Achat Nantes was launched last year with the support of FIFAS (French federation of Sport & Leisure Industries), EuroSIMA and the OSV and for its first edition attracted 283 brands in 3,500 m2 of exhibition space. This was the first new show for action sports in Europe for a number of years and in particular provides the surf and SUP industry with a real opportunity to exhibit their brands at a location next to the Loire river and only 50 kms from the Atlantic coast. Returning exhibitors this year include: West wetsuits, Surftech, Surf Logic, SP, Sniper, Sinner, SIC Shred, Sector 9, Rip Curl, Rayne, Quiksilver, Prohibition, Osprey, Ocean & Earth, OB five, Madrid, Madness, Hirec, Freewaters, Flying wheels, Eivy, Cool Shoes, Chilli, Catch Surf, Carve, Circa and Ari’Nui. This year new exhibitors at Nantes include UWL, Anita Active, Bamboo Des Tropiques, Grain de Sable, Pacsafe, G-Shock, Cabaia, Gumbies, J & Joy, Made in Colors, Ragwear, Oaks Valley, Gumotex, Bic and Skike. The Nantes exhibition

area is right next to the river enabling live SUP testing and on the day before the show the Nantes Paddle Experience public open day is being organized by Exponantes The trade show has moved to a Monday/Tuesday slot to make the show even more attractive to retailers and Sportair has visited 220 shops in France to talk to them directly about the importance of attending the event. The show opens each day with a welcome coffee and Monday evening is the after show BBQ.

Right by the entrance is the Crème Fraiche new brand area where exhibitors include Gumbies, Australian flip-flops and Waph lacing systems. New this year will be the launch of Bikeexpo Nantes held at the same time in the hall next door, so together these shows will provide a real pull for retailers from across Europe.

Nantes has good air connections across the continent, with direct flight connections including Lyon and Bordeaux in France, Geneva in Switzerland, Malaga, Barcelona and Madrid in Spain and from the UK there are connecting flights from Birmingham, London, Manchester and Southampton. So brands, distributors, agents and retailers in the water and urban business should take the opportunity to visit the show as there is no similar event for these industries anywhere else in Europe.

www.sportair.fr

EUROSIMA SURF SUMMIT, SEIGNOSSE, FRANCE OCTOBER 5 - 6

The 16th edition of the EuroSIMA Surf Summit will welcome executives and professionals of the action sports industry for a program of presentations and discussions from seven inspiring entrepreneurs and individuals, to discuss this year’s theme of commitment. On the first day, Justine Dupont and Carlos Burle will talk about the risks of facing some of the biggest waves on the planet.

This sense of commitment carries on in the life lessons of Edouard Frignet and his 35 years of leadership at WL Gore. He is followed by Alexandre Mulliez, Innovation and Marketing Director at Auchan. Day two starts with Stim Co-Founder Frédéric Arnoux, who will present a revolutionary approach to boosting innovation. He’s followed by Mnemonist, Vincent Delourmel who will teach us how to train our memory to be more efficient and take us into the extraordinary world of “The Magic of Memory.” Finally, Frédéric Tain, Editor in Chief of Sport Guide will give the closing presentation on the future of our business and will reveal key sports retail figures. The two days of

conferences will also provide many opportunities to meet and network amongst your peers. Once again the Surfing Lounge exhibition with displays of innovative products and services that showcase the skills and creativity of EuroSIMA members will run alongside the summit.

On the final evening the annual Waterman’s Ball will be held at the Hossegor Casino. During the event, participants will enjoy the annual EuroSIMA Surf Industry Awards ceremony, which recognizes and rewards the male and female European Surf Athletes of the year as well as the industry’s innovation of the year. The Summit is also part of Hossegor Surfing Week, which runs from October 5-15 and includes a variety of consumer events in the area that celebrate surf culture.

The Surf Summit is also on the first two days of the Quiksilver & Roxy Pro France, so many surf industry professionals will be in town.

www.eurosima.com



BUILT TO LAST



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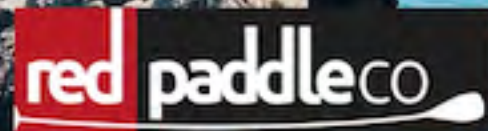
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At Red Paddle Co, we're passionate about freedom and fun – and once you've tried our inflatable stand up paddleboards, we're sure you'll feel the same way. We live, sleep and breathe SUP, and we love discovering new ways to make SUPing easier, more accessible and more enjoyable. We've never been so excited about our range of super-stylish, super-sturdy high tech boards, which we've subjected to extreme testing to prove their rock-hard rigidity (it's a long story, but it involved a 22-tonne industrial digger...).

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WWW.REDPADDLECO.COM



photo: Fanatic

STAND UP PADDLE SS18 RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

The PADDLEexpo tradeshow in Nuremberg, Germany is now the not-to-be-missed meeting place for SUP in Europe for brands as well as retailers. As a preview to the tradeshow, BoardSport SOURCE gives you a sneak peak at the significant SUP trends for 2018. By **David Bianic**.

For once, the Old World is a few paddle strokes in front of the rest, because since 2003 Germany has been offering a warm welcome to paddle sports at PADDLEexpo, proving that Europe has a solid paddling background. After a first appearance in 2008, the SUP industry has become an integral part of the show and in 2011 gave it a new lease on life: "SUP is now 30-40% of PADDLEexpo", affirms Horst Fürsattel the organiser of the show and a long time kayak enthusiast. "Some traditional kayak-canoe companies are now strong in SUP as well, so it cannot be determined exactly," specifies Horst. But it's a figure that isn't misleading, since all of the booths for 2017 were sold out in the space of two weeks.

For German distributors, this High Mass is not to be missed for any reason. Isn't that right Gerd Weisner? "The whole paddle scene in one spot creates a lot of good vibrations. The tradeshow is small but well organized," assures the director of GTA Distribution, which manages the Light Board Corp. in the territory. The German-speaking Swiss from the Indiana brand will be there too, with wide eyes and open ears: "We expect international shop and resort owners looking for a Swiss quality brand, to see what new products suppliers are offering, to check out what media and project options are on the market, what kind of products and prices competitors offer and on top we expect some fresh input for little improvements of details", recounts Maurus Strobel cofounder of the brand.

Boardworks Brand Manager, Andrew Mencinsky is looking forward to unveiling the brands' new direction at the show: "We have rebranded Boardworks and have designed our 2018 line into a collections strategy, utilizing four distinct market segments. Each collection tells a unique story and we look forward to sharing our story at Padle Expo."

The support of exhibitors extends well beyond just the simple Germanic circle, since the English guys from Red Paddle Co. also identify themselves as loyal supporters of the show: "We were one of the first brands to support Paddle Expo, back in the days it was called Kanumesse", remembers John Hibbard director of the brand. "I think our first year was 2009. We spent that year and probably the following three years explaining what SUP was and then what inflatable boards were all about." The background work paid off and now everyone benefits, as confirmed by Sylvain Aurenche communication director for French brand Lokahi: "Last year was a good show for our development in Germany, but also some interesting meetings with people from other countries."

EVERYONE TO NUREMBERG

Over the course of three days, Nuremberg will be the centre of the SUP universe at the end of September. It will be the moment to check out the latest trends spread out over close to 10,000m2 and

*“You need your F1 vehicles of desire in order to reap the kudos as a leading brand player.” **Steve West, Mistral***

to exchange ideas with the players in the sector, in the language of Goethe (German) of course, but also in English since more than half of the visitors are international. While we wait, this small sampling of responses from the 20 or so brands contacted will give you, our retailer friends, a glimpse of the direction that the SUP market is headed in Europe.



photo: Boardworks

Already mentioned last May in our SUP Trends 2017 (Boardsport SOURCE n°86), the showcasing of hardboards is being confirmed, without necessarily ignoring inflatable boards, which have been a true market booster the last few years. As such, Steve West of Mistral expects to see “a migration of iSUP users to hardboards in search of higher performance, added longevity and reliability of construction.” To that effect, Benoît Tréguilly in charge of Marketing at BIC Sport confirms that numerous clients “get tired with inflating or deflating the boards, and dealing with the on-going maintenance and short life-span inherent with inflatable boards.”

But we can't ignore the facts and “the biggest part of the market is inflatable touring and all around fitness models. What sets us apart from all the cheap iSUP companies is quality and innovative products as well as premium SUP racing products,” affirms Gerd from Light Board Corp. The same thinking holds true at Norden, for whom “the market will open up again for standard board constructions next to the iSUPS”, because, “there are indications that the iSUP market is

pretty saturated,” according to Director & Designer, Andy Wirtz. Even 100% inflatable brands like Tripstix want to distance themselves from the overly leisure image of iSUPs: “We believe that more and more paddlers will focus on the performance oriented categories like wave, wind-SUP or race,” claims Director, Stephan Klare.

PUSHING ENTHUSIASTS UPWARDS

At the very top of the pyramid, race boards are hitting a ceiling in terms of brand image, technology and expertise, but also in prices. For manufacturers, it's now a question of taking advantage of their work on these elite models, which are used as a base for the rest of the line, starting with NSP on the shoulders of another win by Travis Grant in the Molokai 2 Oahu Paddleboard World Championships, the most prestigious of all open ocean races: “We are sharing our strength from race into our touring and flatwater boards,” confirms Andreas Mencke the Commercial Director. The same idea at Light Board Corp. Gerd Weisner assures us: “What we learn in the development of race products is integrated into our Tourer models... Sensation of speed is kind of our mantra.” Steve West from Mistral sums up that position perfectly, affirming that: “You need your F1 vehicles of desire in order to reap the kudos as a leading brand player.”

*“The most commercial category will remain the inflatable 10'6 all-round,” assures Maurus Strobel from **Indiana**.*

As a result, at SIC they want to democratize downwind, affirms Director, Anthony Scaturro: “Downwind paddling is not just for elite athletes, it's actually a great recreational paddle and so fun to get out on the water with a group of friends and get a little help from the wind and swell.”

If the balance of power between hard and inflatable seems to be shifting somewhat, we must be realistic: iSUPs still massively dominate the sector in terms of market share. “The most commercial category will remain the inflatable 10'6 all-round,” assures Maurus Strobel from Indiana.

iSUP: ADDED VALUE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

With ‘no name’ iSUP brands flooding the market with cheap product, respected iSUP brands are changing their offerings to cater for more niche segments of the market, while providing quality designs and materials not on offer from cheaper brands around for a quick buck.

Therefore, at the French brand Anonym, they've found that “all good kayakers have started river SUPing,” points out Founder Matthieu Guyonneau, who is investing in whitewater, in spite of very surf oriented roots. All brands offer fishing models as well, or at least accessories for dropping a line in the water. Fanatic introduce the indoor Fit Mat model from Fanatic, “an updated Fitness SUP board,” Marketing Director Karin Gertenbach tells us. In the same vein as the Fly Air Fit Platform for group SUP yoga lessons, Indiana is offering a SUP Yoga Island capable of hooking up eight boards, an accessory “which is selling better and better”, assures Maurus Strobel. Red Paddle Co. is pushing the team sport aspect even farther with their “multi-person (boards) such as the 15-foot tandem, the Dragon and the XL model” (22' and 17')!

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BOARD RIDING SINCE 81



photo: BIC

It is these issues that cause faults further along the production line or into the lifecycle of the product. Our current warranty rate for boards is 0.002%," reveals John Hibbard. Another solution that has been implemented at SIREN SUPsurfing, is the addition of a stringer in the PFT Belt System: "The belt runs around the whole body [deck & bottom] making the board unbelievably stiff," which allows the use of a lighter single layer drop stitch while obtaining the rigidity of a double layer. Indiana offers an equivalent system, with a 10cm wide fibre strip on the top and another in Dyneema on the bottom. Another innovation is the patent pending Airline system from Starboard: "An

This added technological value doesn't only apply to progress in performance, but also in comfort, starting with comfort of inflation at SipaBoards whose Air auto-inflating model won the gold medal at the last ISPO in the Action Watersports category. "The heart of the board is the removable compressor, right where the inflation valve on a normal SUP would be", explains Marketing Director, Marja Feldin: "With the wave of a hand, the board pumps itself up to perfect pressure. One charge lasts for three inflations."



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*“Due to the frequent contacts between paddle blade and rail, the rail construction has to meet very high requirements,” specifies **JP Australia’s** European Marketing Director, **Philip Mackenbrock**, but that “changing the construction to make the rails more durable often results in an altered flex of the boards.” Therefore, the Alutex gives added solidity without extra rigidity, for a better sensation in the waves.*

HARD BOARDS: BETTING ON PREMIUM

“Once people have learnt to SUP and are “hooked”, they do often switch to a hardboard choice”, says Karin from Fanatic, before specifying that “the European market has until now not really suffered as heavily as the US and Australia with over-supply in hardboards,” and is experiencing small but consistent growth. Steve West from Mistral says, “the reality is at what point do you stop pursuing an ambition to produce an inflatable board, which performs like a hardboard, as a pathological road map for development, when in reality, the cost-benefit-performance equation simply does not add up. If you want hardboard performance - buy one.”

For SUP surfing oriented brands, the reconciliation between SUP paddleboard and traditional surfing makes sense, since SUP constructions are copying the latest trends in shortboard performance: “For our small surf pro SUPs we will use our new SGT-Surf Glass Technology. Put simply, a light EPS core with a vector carbon net and unidirectional carbon stringers, laminated with clear epoxy resin. Basically looks like a surfboard, feels like a surfboard”, Andy from Norden assures us.

European distributor Leonardo Lazzeri from JLID reminds us that for an historic brand like Jimmy Lewis, showcasing the quality of construction is primordial: “We are using only a top quality

construction called I-Beam PVC sandwich fiberglass or carbon”, before adding that “only 3% of the production has any defects”.

As for JP Australia, they’ve been working on rails, something few else have, and notably reinforcing them with two new types of construction: Alutex on the pro models and basalt on the Wood Edition boards. “Due to the frequent contacts between paddle blade and rail, the rail construction has to meet very high requirements,” specifies European Marketing Director, Philip Mackenbrock, but that “changing the construction to make the rails more durable often results in an altered flex of the boards.” Therefore, the Alutex gives added solidity without extra rigidity, for a better sensation in the waves.

Although associated with higher performance, hardboards are a boon for the rental market since they target your average Joe via soft top models that represent an attractive market for the brands, confirms Thierry Kunz of Nidecker and once again, Andy from Norden: “They last rental places and schools at least three years without having to change them.” BIC is showcasing a new technology called TOUGH-TEC: “The ideal choice for rental or school operations”, assures Benoît Tréguilly who says these models are produced with “no resin, no fiberglass, simply a PE shell thermoformed around an EPS Core.” The same idea at Bote, only destined for a high-end clientele with the introduction of the Gatorshell technology, as good looking as it is resistant: A thermoformed board without any stitching on the rails and six times more resistant than the traditional epoxy models by Bote.

From a durability standpoint, the SUP world is opening up to the question of environmental issues, like Starboard’s association with the NGO Sustainable Surf as well as earning the Deep Blue Life label for their neutral carbon footprint. NSP is also recognized by Sustainable Surf with “over 90% of our boards to feature the Ecoboard Project logo,” points out Andreas Mencke. “One key part of this is NSP’s use of a bio based epoxy resin from Sicomin epoxy systems, a high performance bio epoxy resin which has 28% of its molecular structure derived from plant and vegetable matter.” The brand is also developing a new generation of Cocomat boards, incorporating a layer of coconut fibre made of waste from certified organic and fair trade plantations.

GRAPHICS: MORE DOESN’T MEAN BETTER

Technology, performance, price... All of these rational factors that push the consumer to purchase a board or not, don’t always outweigh the effect of graphics or other decorative elements on a buyer’s impulse. On this point, all of the brands agree that nowadays “less is more”, after years of questionable aesthetic choices, often inherited from a very flashy windsurf culture. Starting with F-One, which “has always valued quality versus quantity” using stylish and sophisticated graphics “with a deep inspiration in our Tahitian roots”, specifies SUP Brand Manager, Belar Diaz. The SUP surfing models are continuously moving closer to standard surfboards, notably with the likes of “clear finishes, bamboo, unfinished carbon” at Fanatic. The same idea at Ari’i Nui since “we all come from the surf, we are all surfers, and we tried to transmit our history in the spirit of the brand,” reminds Marketing Director, Benoît Brecq. For Bonz, the surf spirit shows through “an inspiration from a Californian dream he lived during his youth,” by designer Thomas Cantoni. “Our hot graphic for 2018 is the Razzle Dazzle,” RRD tells us, is “a special camouflage used during the two World Wars – a very unique design.”



photo: JP Australia

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“We all come from the surf, we are all surfers, and we tried to transmit our history in the spirit of the brand,” says, **Benoît Breccq**, **Ari’i Nui** Marketing Director

photo: Red Paddle Co.



The continuity of a decoration is also a commercial guarantee specifies Julien Leclerc from Nahskwell: “One of the most important points is the lifetime of a design, because we don’t want to change every year, to avoid the loss of value year after year, which is better for retailers and customers, and the same thing for our shapes.” The artwork can also be there to highlight the shaper’s craftsmanship and experience, explains Anthony from SIC: “The lines of a board should be beautiful, so that the graphics are there to accent them.” The days of our eyes bleeding from overcharged, super bright graphics are over. Amen!

HELPING RETAILERS

All of these efforts would be for nothing if the shops weren’t there to deliver the message. Now it’s up to the brands to keep them from paddling against the current by giving them some well deserved help. Starting by making sure that the products they’ve promoted are available, which is “not always a given”, reminds Karin from Fanatic, although the brand makes sure to have a fully stocked central warehouse in most of its markets, “allowing dealers the opportunity to re-order during the season.” BIC ups the ante with “the dependability of its customer service,” a real asset for continued business since “the end user realizes that buying lower quality products results in many warranty claims that are often not fulfilled properly,” adds Belar from F-One. As part of their new brand strategy, Boardworks “have an entirely new and experienced team at Boardworks and at Confluence our parent company. The authenticity of our team allows us to create a new strategy focusing on service for our partners.”

One that subject, Becky Hunter from Riber is proud to announce that their Deluxe range “comes with a 2-year manufacturer’s warranty.” The majority of brands offer a range of support to retailers ranging

from shop demos, to online information and promotional material in stores. “We have developed a complete range of SUP and paddle displays. We realize that many retailers have real difficulties with the diversity of models on the market,” says Aquadesign Director, Terry Barbier. At NSP, they know that SUP also needs recognizable faces and stars, of which they have a few of the best with the likes of Travis Grant and Titouan Puyo who they use to their advantage during paddle clinics and in-store promos. Even better, Steve from Mistral thinks: “Retailers for the most part undervalue their own use of local team riders,” and advises them to spend money on social media to remedy the situation. Indiana is very active in that area, putting out their “Dude Proof” product and tutorial videos on a regular basis. As for Red Paddle Co., they have a dedicated online space especially for retailer training called Retailer University, which allows them “to not only learn more about Red products but also earn rewards,” points out John Hibbard.

The last asset in the hands of the retailers are stable retail prices, at least in the hardboard segment and on inflatables, which will soon attain a price limit: “In the past five years the competition between the different drop stitch producers, mostly in South Korea and China, has led to lower costs of materials,” points out Terry from Aquadesign.

Two conclusions can be drawn from this rapid overview of what’s on offer SUP-wise in 2018: A more fractured market, with more different ways to SUP and more niches than ever, which makes plenty of ways for retailers to get lost in the mix and their clients along with them. The silver lining is that the SUP market has never been more alive, which means that in this case maturing doesn’t mean running out of steam but actually gaining in strength. 🌀





photo: SP Gadgets

ACTION CAMERAS & ACCESSORIES

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

#ShootingMeShootingYou - thanks to modern technology and the digital lives we live, everyone is a photographer and action sports naturally provides great Kodak moments. Whether folks are shooting with their phones or investing in a designated camera to capture those special moments, retailers can benefit from this segment - especially for the Christmas sales period. By **Anna Langer**.

TRENDS

Arto Ekman, CEO of Black Eye believes that "the best camera is the one that you have with you at all times," and Guillaume Cazerres, Sales & Marketing Manager at ClipEyz agrees that "riders use their smart phone more and more for shooting action sports." And thanks to the developments of modern technology, they can achieve pretty amazing footage by doing so. Especially if they have the right accessories to complement the ever-evolving phone lenses, which can now match regular cameras for quality these days. "We created Hotshot in a direct response to the overwhelming amount of people who use their smartphone as their primary video and photo taking device," says Co-Founder Gantry Hill, whose company focuses on "attention to detail, with a compact design for portability in fast paced environments." Black Eye also aim to make all "products easily portable and easy to use."

Modern Technocracy's patented designs enable "users to mount just about any action cam, camera or smartphone. The reality is that action cameras are just one way to enjoy capturing and sharing content," argues Reno Makani, Founding Athlete & President, while Hirec's Marketing Manager Helena Scholl also notes that entry level and price point cameras are still selling well.

On the other end of the scale, 360° cameras are another big topic but Hirec's Helena thinks that "in action cameras it will take a little longer for people to understand how to use and edit these videos." Garmin Category Manager DACH, Anastasios Stoikopoulos on the other hand argues that "according to independent market research, 360° cams will see strong growth in the next few years," to which SP Gadgets

agree, offering products that fit all cameras directly or by using an adapter.

Yet "most 360° cameras on the market right now are not shock-and waterproof", adds Helena from Hirec, which is a vital factor for Action Cams, according to Cyclops Gear, who find "waterproof cameras without the need for a case" very important and growing in trend. Olympus have recently launched a new model in their Tough camera range as well: "It pushes the limits further in response to customers wanting to capture adventures in all environments. People are going further, higher, deeper, faster and want to capture these amazing moments to share," and the TG-5 is aiding that with an ultra-bright lens, a Variable Macro system, a range of accessories and a field sensor system combined with built-in WiFi for tracking and transferring data to smartphones, while being proofed against shock, crush, cold, dust, and water.

"the best camera is the one that you have with you at all times," Arto Ekman, CEO of Black Eye

Regardless of camera type, the sharing and editing of footage is becoming more and more important, as GoPro mention: "With QuikStories, we're making this step easy, fast and fun. After you shoot footage with your HERO5 camera (video or photo) the content copies to your phone and transforms into a QuikStory – an awesome video with cool transitions/effects that's synced to music, which you can

*“People want to see good quality images, but nowadays you don’t need a professional camera to capture them”. Hirec’s Marketing Manager **Helena Scholl***

share immediately or edit further within the Quik app.” Garmin agree that connectivity is becoming more and more popular in matters of live streaming, which they offer through the free VIRB® Mobile App that directly connects to YouTube or Facebook.

USABILITY VS OUTPUT

While professional cameras can still be tricky to handle for amateurs, the latest generation of Action Cameras does not ask the customer to pick between user friendliness or high quality. “GoPro are helping amateur photographers and videographers capture the best content so users can edit and upload with ease to any social media platform” says Jivo, who developed a wide range of accessories to help “GoPro users make the most of their action camera while recording their favourite footage.” SP Gadgets also aim to “make filming easier for people. Hi-tech often makes the filming part more difficult, so we focus on easy usability.” Hirec agree that the “most important thing is to be sure that everything will work perfectly and that the technology is easy to use. People want to see good quality images, but nowadays you don’t need a professional camera to capture them”.



photo: Hirec

As a lifestyle brand that came to be through the craftsmanship of a diverse group of 13 athletes and photographers and their real life travels, adventures and pursuit of capturing dramatic content, Modern Technocracy want to “incorporate innovation, durability and sustainability,” while Hotshot Handle combine “high quality, ease of use, and simplicity in design. In our opinion, there are so many tech products that function well but the design is completely overdone and complicated, not to mention obtrusive to carry around.”

When it comes to action footage on snow, there’s probably nothing easier than letting your goggles film what you’re up to, as the Cyclops Gear Snow Goggles allows: “We are increasing the resolution from our older model (Avalanche Snow Goggles) and also reducing the size of the recording technology which makes the goggles look and feel like your top of the line brand of goggles.”

Garmin on the other hand differentiate between technical specs that address the prosumer market, and putting “a lot of engineering power into easy usability, with functions like 4K in-camera stitching and voice control, to address the consumer market also. It is the mix of both, hi-tech output and easy usability, that we focus on.”

NEW MODELS & MUST HAVES

The new Garmin VIRB® 360 provides ultra-high-quality footage up to 5.7K in RAW mode or up to 4K with in-camera stitching and spherical image stabilization, spatial sound, G-METRIX™ with data gauges overlays, 360-photo with 15MP resolution, voice control, water rating up to 1 ATM and live streaming option in a compact design. Hirec also

offer new 360° cameras and new accessories, to improve the variety of videos and angles, that they highly recommend retailers have in stock.

GoPro highlight the Karma, their stabilisation system: “The Karma Grip is a handheld and wearable stabilizer that can be attached to almost any GoPro mount. The Karma drone folds into its own lightweight case, is very portable and easy to fly.” For even more different and unique angles, Jivo advertise their 8in1 Gogear advanced pack: “It’s packed full of the bestselling items required to get the most out of your action cam.”

Revl are launching an all in one camera, named the Arc, which they say is “the most stable action camera on the market with both physical and electronic image stabilization. It is also the smartest camera on the market, it uses motion and emotion awareness and artificial intelligence to help edit videos faster and analyze your activity-data, all through your mobile device. It also is able to do live-streaming, waterproof up to 33ft (10M), and easy to use.”

*“According to independent market researches, 360° cams will see a strong growth in the next few years.” **Garmin Category Manager DACH, Anastasios Stoikopoulos***

For best sellers at the counter, retailers are advised to have smaller items ready as well. At only 24.90 euros, the Clip Eyz 4-in-1 Lens Pack Pro including Fisheye/SuperWide/Zoom/Macro lenses is “the perfect gift on the counter desk,” says Guillaume. New models include a 2-in-1 Gun Pod Pro (mini Handle/tripod), the Power Slim (super slim power bank) and a Super Night Light Pro (LED torch).

Due to the universal approach, Black Eye products are also excellent for Christmas sales, states Arto, emphasizing the 3in1 and HD Wide Angle as well as the Pro Kit. In addition, they will be launching a high-end cinematic lens for high quality mobile video and photography as well as a multipurpose filming handle tripod.

SP Gadgets find their telescopic POV Poles are still their most important products and also Hotshot Handle argue that handles and mini tripods are essential for retailers: “It makes the smartphone shooting experience so much easier for a wide variety of activities,” explains Gantry. Modern Technocracy is also working on video and photography tripods as well as gimbals and recommend their PROKIT that is perfect for the traveling athlete, adventure photographer or weekend warrior who requires streamlined equipment options. “It easily transforms into six different mounts simply by reconfiguring its modular components,” argues Reno.

For the winter sports enthusiast, the new Boreas Snow Goggles form Cyclops Gear will fulfil various long lived dreams with their “new lighter and stylish snow goggles with frameless iridium lenses and 128 GB internal memory card,” while the CGX3 Action Camera with touchscreen and no need for waterproof case will also be interesting. In the first quarter of 2018, they will also introduce a new Zephyr Motocross Goggle, with more details to come.

The new GoPro Fusion will be available in limited quantities at the end of the year: “A VR (virtual reality) camera that shoots in 5.2K resolution and comes with a feature called ‘OverCapture’. Fusion captures the whole scene and you’ll be able punch out a standard HD video afterwards to watch it on a smartphone or TV. This also means you don’t have to worry about missing the action in your shot any more.”

OUTLOOK

It’s maybe a step too far to expect cameras to film completely on their own one day, but Black Eye expect that “augmented reality and the supportive products will open many new opportunities for the action camera segment,” and already anticipate the use of 360° cameras to be getting more mainstream, while ClipEyz see the future “in the smartphone industry. Where picture quality is getting better and better every year.” **SE**

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Photo : Finisterre

BIG WIG: TOM KAY, FINISTERRE

Finisterre Founder Tom Kay has nurtured the brand from a small outfit creating innovative fleeces above a surf shop in St. Agnes, to a widely respected surf brand with four retail locations across England, employing 50 people. The company, based in the Cornish village of St. Agnes, is now going toe to toe with the industry’s biggest surf brands and for this issue’s Big Wig interview, Tom explains how they’re managing to do so while remaining at the beck and call of the ocean. Read on for more on Tom’s background, lessons learnt, their #WetsuitsFromWetsuits initiative and exclusive news on a collaboration with Vans. **By Harry Mitchell Thompson.**

Tom, please could you explain your background and what led you to starting Finisterre.

I started the brand in 2003, born out a love of the sea, cold water surfing and where I felt there was a need for better product backed by a strong sustainability ethos. A love of the sea is something that my parents gave me from when I was young, and it’s played a big role my life ever since. After studying biology at university and a brief stint as a chartered surveyor in London, the brand began in a flat above a surf shop in St. Agnes with an innovative fleece, designed to keep out chill winds and warm up cold bodies. Finisterre is an old shipping forecast area and means end of the earth, so there is a certain romance to the brand, but in terms of what we do, we take a pioneering approach to making better and more sustainable product, innovating and seeking alternatives to what has gone before.

It’s been 15 years since these early days, and it’s exciting to see the places the brand and product goes. From our workshop here on the

cliffs in St. Agnes, I’m really proud that we’ve stuck to our guns, designing functional and sustainable product with a strong sense of style.

How has Finisterre changed since the early years?

On the one hand, it has changed a lot; we push and innovate products and fabrics, evolve styles and develop as a group of individuals brought together by a real sense of purpose. On the other hand, in terms of why we started, it hasn’t changed and remains true to its founding pillars; committed to product, environment and people.

Is there anything in particular you would have done differently?

Yes, many things! The majority of them are around my learnings of how to run a business, develop products and teams, things like that. It’s been a pretty tough journey and tested us more than I ever imagined, but I think if you start something that is trying to be different, that’s to be expected.

It’s been a pretty tough journey and tested us more than I ever imagined, but I think if you start something that is trying to be different, that’s to be expected.

What are the pros and cons of being based in St Agnes?

Positives are that you can walk out the door and jump in the sea anytime you feel like it and it’s a great inspiration and testing ground for the type of product we make. If you come into the workshop at Wheal Kitty, St Agnes, 200m from the sea, I think it feels like the place you’d expect it to. This is reflected in the culture too. Negatives are that with a degree of remoteness, I don’t want us to forget we’re up against some of the best brands in the world, so we have to be on our game.

You were early adopters of the ‘cold water surf’ terminology - how have you seen the market and people’s perception of the market change?

People have been ‘cold water surfing’ for years, and so as an activity it’s nothing new and we never claimed to have invented it, but if I think back to why the brand started, the product that I began to make and who it was for, it was for cold water surfers. Initially some people may have been a bit unsure, but you now see the term ‘cold water surf’ used a lot and I think in many ways it has opened a lot of opportunities for brands and retailers alike. It’s also really exciting to see people pushing boundaries and discovering waves in new (cold!) places.

What research have you conducted over recent years to better understand your consumer and how have you acted on it? Is it an ongoing process?

This is definitely an ongoing process, but we utilise an array of analytical tools and audience insights. Even when you know who your customer is, their habits, behaviours and preferences evolve. You need to keep on top of these. We’re fortunate enough to have quite close contact with a lot of our customers, and take their feedback and suggestions on board. This only helps us gets us better at what we do, and in turn, better serve them. It’s always good to meet them and hear what they have to say. On top of this, we carry out occasional surveys, which help us understand what’s important to them and what we could do to improve.

We’ve had the opportunity to work with Vans on an entirely new silhouette with them, and a collection that’s truly born from the needs of adventurous surfers.

Your store count is at four now - they must also be great for the learning process. What have they taught you about your products, your consumer and the business in general?

Yes totally, if I look back at what we’ve learnt in that time, it’s astounding. Our first store was here in St. Agnes when the guys next door moved out and we literally knocked a hole through the wall and created a small shop. We really try to bring the brand and product to life in a physical space, which we first did (and still do) here in St. Agnes. From this we opened a store in London - a major step up in every way! We really went for it, three weeks before Christmas and a fellow lifeboat crewman did the fit out with his team from St. Agnes. It was a real baptism of fire, but somehow we pulled it off and opened when we were supposed to. The feedback on the London store has been great. We’ve been there for nearly three years now and our learnings have been around bringing the product stories to life, building tight retail teams and also meeting customers face to face, which is so important. As well as St. Agnes and London, we now have stores in Falmouth and Bristol too.

You’ve got some exciting new collabs in the pipeline, please could you elaborate?

The RNLI + Finisterre collab that has just launched is one I’m really proud of. I’ve been part of the volunteer RNLI lifeboat crew here in St. Agnes for 15 years now and so to collaborate with the RNLI on a limited range was a big moment. The collaboration takes Finisterre’s fabric and design ethos and overlays it onto the unbelievable story of the RNLI. It’s a great fit and brings our shared love of the sea together

in an exciting range. We also have a very different collaboration coming up with Vans. It’s a great partnership with a brand with such a strong heritage in surfing, and one that’s supported surfers and the surf community since day one. We’ve had the opportunity to work on an entirely new silhouette with them, and a collection that’s truly born from the needs of adventurous surfers; out there, on the road and enduring the elements. In this sense we brought our knowledge of fabrics and functionality to the table and we’re looking forward to seeing the reaction to the shoes.



Photo : Noah Lane testing out new eco suit in Shetland

#WetsuitsFromWetsuits - please explain the rationale and why it’s important to Finisterre.

We’re now recruiting for a full time wetsuit recycler. This is a genuinely pioneering position and embodies our outlook of using innovation to achieve a more sustainable way of working. The rationale is that while there are some great alternatives to petroleum based suits (we are trialling an eco suit now), the main problem is what happens to a wetsuit at the end of its functional life – this is not really built into wetsuit design, and everyone has a pile of old suits in their shed or garage. UK surfers alone (around 500,000 of them) are buying a wetsuit at least every other year. This means there is an additional 350 tonnes of old neoprene laying around every year, probably on its way to a landfill. Whilst there have been some interesting down cycling projects (yoga mats, mouse mats) we want to see if we can make wetsuits from wetsuits, and introduce closed loop manufacturing to the watersports industry. The exciting thing is that we really don’t know where the initiative will lead, but the role is mentored by a professor from the materials re-engineering department of Exeter University and is supported by Innovate UK, so we’re going to a really scientific level of research and hope to find solution. Watch this space!

Could you also talk to us about your wetsuit programme?

We launched our wetsuit programme over three years ago with a pioneering field tester programme, where we engaged 300 regular surfers who tested a suit for a winter. At the end of the winter they gave us their feedback, which ultimately meant we built a better production suit the year after. A wetsuit is a very difficult product to make and so we felt it important to have a direct dialogue with the community. The brief with our first suit was to maximise time in the water and durability. Three years on, I feel we achieved this, but as with all products we continue to evolve and refine every year. We’re currently testing an eco suit – again this is something we are very keen to do, but don’t want to rush a product to market without full testing and making sure it does what it should. For AW17, we’ve also launched the women’s tester programme, looking to speak to the female surf community and build them a better wetsuit for AW18 and beyond. We’re all excited for this. 🌱

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WATCHES SS18 RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

Have you been keeping up with the latest boardsports-specific timepieces?
The category is moving forward like clockwork with technical innovations and fashionable styling.
Time for our Watches 2018 Retail Buyer's Guide by **Dirk Vogel**.

Looking back in time, watches have not always been a logical choice in boardsports. Flip through magazines from the 1970s and early 1980s, and you'll be hard-pressed to find riders wearing watches. 'First of all, that's because watches back then could not deliver the type of waterproofing and impact protection our athletes require. And second, watches were not really a great fit for the boardsports vibe. Actually, not wearing was considered cool as it signalled, "I'm on my own time, bro."

"Nixon's roots are action sports. We purpose-build product designed and engineered for the boardsports community and that point of view has continued to stay relevant in conjunction with faster fashion trends."
Angélique Couéraud, Nixon's EMEA Senior Manager, Communication & Advertising.

Fast-forward to today and watches have not only become indestructible multitasking devices that predict the tides and track your ride via GPS while connecting to your smartphone. They have also become cool accessories. "Now watches are more like fashion pieces than functional devices. It's not just about telling time anymore, it's about capturing an aesthetic and bringing customers innovative design features," said Anton Janssens, Managing Director & Co-Founder of Komono. What's working in favour of endemic brands is that boardsports culture has proven its staying power. "Nixon's roots are action sports. We purpose-build product designed and engineered for the boardsports community and that point of view has continued to stay relevant in conjunction with faster fashion trends," said Angélique Couéraud, Nixon's EMEA Senior Manager, Communication & Advertising.

Our brands are also actively reaching out to wider audiences these days. G-SHOCK's current "No Comply" campaign in the run-up to the brand's 35th brand anniversary connects the worlds of hip-hop and skateboarding in videos featuring grime artist, novelist and London-based skateboard icons Lucien Clarke and Benny Fairfax. "Our G-SHOCK product DNA is pretty unique. We are proud to offer our customers an unbreakable watch!" said Christian Dittrich, Junior Key Account Manager for G-SHOCK watches at Casio. The latter point is what it all boils down to next season, as customers value durability above technical functionality. "Personally I don't know a surfer who really cares how many waves they caught, how fast they went or what distance they paddled. We ride because it gets us stoked and we make watches that will tell the time and take a beating no matter how harsh the conditions," said Ian Elliot, co-founder of UK-based brand Elliot Brown Watches.

PRICE POINTS & MARKET

Consumers can find boardsports-themed watches starting at €25 these days, but the main price windows break down as follows: Around €49 for fun, lifestyle-driven watches; between €55-100 for entry level performance; then a hot window around €149 for substantial performance and elevated style; all the way to a premium segment above €200 that goes as far as €550 for select models. Please keep in mind that these prices are for men. Xavier Faucher, Global Product Manager of Roxy Watches, breaks down the women's: "For girl watches, the sweet spot is below €100 and even below €80 for a basic time function. It's hard to go above €100 without details or any technology. Over €100, we propose full stainless steel products with multifunction or chrono movement, or Italian leather bands, and strass accents."

“Trends are followed or chased. I want our design team to look past things like that, and make stylish, adaptable objects. Things that you can wear to work, to the skate park, to a festival. Style isn’t a trend, you have it or you don’t!” **Komono’s Anton Janssens**

From a market perspective, here are three interesting initiatives: First of all, Freestyle, makers of the original surf watch since 1981, “will be introducing new product and marketing stories every month. We are moving away from the traditional seasonal newness introductions in favour for new product excitement all year long,” said Marty Pomphrey, Freestyle’s Global Sales And Marketing Director. G-SHOCK is supporting brick-and-mortar retailers, explained Christian Dittrich: “We are segmenting our watches in the categories Basic, Style and Limited. So if customers want to sell watches out of the Style segment, we enter a selective distribution agreement with rights and duties for both parties. This SDA policy helps to support stationary retailers. Customers who have only an online shop and no retail store get only access to our Basic assortment.” And third, Nixon is keeping it core by selling Nixon tide watches at specialty surf shops and limited edition 1980s and 1990s-themed artwork pieces exclusively at skate shops.



photo: Elliot Brown

SEASON TREND: BIG WATCHES

Next season’s trending watch is not only big on style, but also big in format. At a time when massive logos are re-trending in fashion, watches are switching gear from subtle to loud with a number of generous statement pieces in 2018 watches collections. Quiksilver has created the Timebox model that sums up the formula for large watches with generous accents: “Featuring a 48mm wide stainless steel case, a hardened scratch resistant mineral crystal with anti-reflective coating and a screw down case back for a 100m water resistance. The case is fitted with either a stainless steel bracelet with a locking deployment buckle or with either an Italian leather band,” Xavier Faucher, Global Product Manager of Quiksilver Watches. Komono also does it big with the Magnus II watch as part of the newly launched Metropolis collection, while Nixon introduces the Regulus, and G-SHOCK pairs digital tech and watch dials with the GA 700 model.

3 TYPES OF WATCHES FOR 2018

1. Fun and fashion-driven.

Often available at entry-level price points, these watches march to their own stylistic drummer – even bucking the main season trend. Among fashion-driven watches, “the major trend to stand out is about slim and minimalist watches,” said Rip Curl’s Dylan Andre while pointing out the Cambridge for men and the Super Slim for girls while explaining: “The main difficulty making a slim watch is the waterproofness.” Colour pops are also a major criterion in this category, together with fun patterns and styles like the Rasta-themed edition of Freestyle’s Shark model. “We are seeing significant growth in the modern interpretation of 80s colour palettes and patterns,” said Marty at Freestyle, whose Shark collection is segmented by strap into Classic (silicone), Leash (Velcro closure), and Clip (nylon with locking clip attachment). At Quiksilver, the Diamond logo on the strap is more than just a gimmick: “The Diamond deluxe pattern inside our silicone straps lets the air go in between the strap and your skin. It improves comfort and helps avoid sweating and prevents bad odours.”

2. Technical performance.

Watches in this category have to keep up with whatever punishment the next session may bring, whether it’s surf, skate, snow and anything else. This performance aspect led G-SHOCK to formulate the Triple 10 approach almost 35 years ago: Watches had to endure drops from 10 meters, resist 10 bars of water pressure and offer 10 years of battery life. Nixon caters specifically to surfers with the Base Tide Pro, offering “durability, water resistance and long battery life at an affordable price. All of which endorsed by a world class team of artists and athletes.” Ultra-technical performance models for 2018 include Rip Curl’s SearchGPS or the Nixon Mission model with tide and GPS functionality plus support via custom apps. Most interestingly, next season sees an influx of performance watches that are analogue – not digital – but still offer functions like Komono’s Walther Retrograde Monday-Sunday index system. But tech or no tech – rugged performance is still key. “Triple seals, shock protected Swiss movements, marine grade stainless, solid strap bars, toughened sapphire or mineral crystal. It’s why we’ve been approached by British special forces to develop their issue watches,” said Ian at Elliot Brown Watches.

3. Elevated timepieces.

These top-shelf watches look great with an evening suit, but can also hold their own when worn with a wet suit. Next season’s standout premium models include the Nixon Porter Leather, G-SHOCK’s golden GA 710GB, Quiksilver’s Timebox, Rip Curl’s Drake, Elliot Brown’s Bloxworth 929-012-R01 for £525(!), the Komono Magnus II and Harlow in pink slate, as well as the Roxy Avenue model for women. “It features a stainless steel case with hardened scratch-resistant mineral crystal and comes in two different options. A stainless steel band with a locking deployment buckle or an Italian leather band.” Speaking of bands, Komono has expanded their cognac leather and gold effect mesh strap ranges and “introduced a line of leather straps: now any KOMONO watch is customizable for under €40.” Christian at G-SHOCK puts a finger on a season trend: “Big cases and decent or really creative designs are still in demand. Also watches with a cordura and Nato wristband are popular.” Colours in this segment remain in dark, understated territory – either brushed metal or black coating – plus a notable trend towards navy blue and dark brown watch faces paired with white, nautical style lettering and symbols.

HOT TREND: NEON RUBBER

Time for one more thing? Watch out for an influx of neon rubber models in 2018 watches collections. “Neon rubber has been huge for us – accessorizing with existing lines and adding a fun factor for wearers,” said Ian Elliot, Co-Founder of UK-based brand Elliot Brown Watches, who have also just launched their first women’s line, called Kimberidge. Colourful rubber also creates an interesting aesthetic when paired with metal accents, for instance in the Rip Curl Aurora model or Freestyle’s Shark Classic line that signal a building trend. But then again, who cares about what’s trendy, said Komono’s Anton Janssens: “Trends are followed or chased. I want our design team to look past things like that, and make stylish, adaptable objects. Things that you can wear to work, to the skate park, to a festival. Style isn’t a trend, you have it or you don’t!”

HIGHLIGHTS

- SEASON TREND: Big statement watches
- Segmented retail distribution strategies
- Movement in women’s collections
- Fun watches with waterproofing
- Black and dark colourways
- HOT TREND: Neon rubber bands

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photo:Eastpak

BAGS & BACKPACKS SS18 RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

Style, functionality, durability and smart design features – boardsports bags and backpacks deliver the full package. 2018 Retail Buyer's Guide by **Dirk Vogel**.

The history of boardsports-specific bags and backpacks can be traced back to the great mid-1970s skateboard boom. When endemic brands such as Sims, Robinak and Santa Cruz Skateboards began producing their own bags and "skate packs", they were more than just marketing gimmicks. Right from the start, they included nifty design features such as straps, pockets, and compartments to meet consumer needs, which at the time greatly revolved around carrying all that safety equipment required at concrete skate parks.

The formula that worked more than 40 years ago still holds true. "Consumers are looking for more from their everyday products. Their accessories need to be multi-purpose, giving them the ability to commute to work, go out at night and even go for an outdoor hike or weekend camping trip. We try to design our products with intelligent functionality so they serve multiple use cases," said Tim Apgar, International Marketing Manager, Herschel Supply Company.

At the heart of these use cases, boardsports-proven performance and stylistics give bags from core brands the extra edge. As Grandy Bastien, Rip Curl's European Bags Product Manager explained: "Rip Curl is 'the ultimate surfing company'. We have a full range of travel bags, backpacks and accessories named "F-light" that are really qualitative. Light, durable with water repellent materials, surf organizers and lots of others technical features, so this is our ultimate base."

PRICE POINTS & MARKET

Depending on features and materials, current price points for boardsports backpacks stack up from €25 for basic "back to school"

styles to a hot price point window around €65-€75 for advanced bags and day packs (see Season Trend), all the way to premium bags well beyond the €100 threshold. Major news is a consumer trend towards premium offerings with exclusive materials and stylistics, served by brands such as Evoc, Fjällräven, Pacsafe, Heimplanet, Nixon, DaKine and category behemoth Eastpak whose exclusive leather Padded Pak'r Natural Lab bag retails for €420.

Confirming the premium trend, Evoc's International Marketing Manager Jan Sallawitz said: "We get the impression that the days of basic labelled OEM, 'me too' €49.95 packs are over, luckily!" Heimplanet founder Stefan Clauss is on the same page: "We believe that more and more consumers actually look for a smart purchase, which means that people are willing to spend a little more for products that make a difference. We defined three factors as 'the difference' – quality, functionality and design."


Current research by Technavio estimates the global market for outdoor activity backpacks at \$2.53 billion in 2016 with five-year growth projected at \$620 million to reach \$3.15 billion in 2021. So-called day packs – these are 15-35 litre backpacks, smaller than full hiking packs – are a hot category, expected to reach \$1.44 billion by 2021. Another hot growth segment consists of tech-equipped "smart backpacks" featuring sensors, WiFi hotspots and device charging capabilities, poised to reach \$3.59 billion in 2021. Half of all backpacks are sold during "back to school" season around August each year (NPD Group), and the hashtag #backtoschool is up 30% year-on-year according to NetBase.

*"Consumers are looking for more from their everyday products. Their accessories need to be multi-purpose, giving them the ability to commute to work, go out at night and even go for an outdoor hike or weekend camping trip." **Tim Apgar**, International Marketing Manager, **Herschel Supply Company***

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“We get the impression that the days of basic labelled OEM, ‘me too’ €49.95 packs are over, luckily!”
Jan Sallawitz, Evoc’s International Marketing Manager

SEASON TREND: MULTI-FUNCTIONAL DAY PACKS

Next season’s trending backpack is a versatile and compact version of larger hiking or outdoor packs with the same wealth of pockets and compartments, plus enough room to pack for a three-day trip. These can be city trips or outdoor trips, supported by plenty of space for laptops, water bottles, phones, eyewear and clothes as well as ruggedized construction. “The frontier between urban and outdoor aesthetics is slowly disappearing, or at least merging, and cross functional packs are emerging. Fabric innovations, water resistant constructions and assembly are definitely key criteria in the decisions consumers will make,” said DaKine Marketing and Merchandising Manager Flavien Foucher.



photo: Pacsafe

FOUR TYPES OF CUSTOMERS

1. School kids and students.

“Kids want a bag big enough for their books to go in, and it’s becoming much more important to have a separate partition for laptops,” said Jarrod Clarke, EU brand manager for Doughnut Accessories, adding: “There is a trend away from the heritage look, and a definite move to contemporary styling such as roll-top bags. Parents are looking for a well-constructed quality bag that will last.” On that note, remember that school kids only spend \$20 of their own cash for school supplies (NRF Survey), so retailers should mainly talk to parents. “More and more end-consumers are looking for good quality durable products – which is an asset for a brand like Eastpak offering 30 years warranty on most items,” said Domitille Parent, Product Director at Eastpak. Also keep in mind that school bags are a bit bigger, “mid to large volume at 25 litres and over with dedicated compartments for laptop, wallet, glasses,” said Alexandre Berthonneau, Product Line Manager at Billabong.

2. Athletes and active participants.

Board riders want bags and packs that accompany them on missions and excursions – no matter if in urban, coastal or outdoor environments. “You need to have great accessories to enjoy your session. We have the legitimacy and the quality for that,” said Grandy Bastien at Rip Curl. At Evoc, Jan said: “For our backpack design in general we follow our concept of the EVOC Big 5. E is for Ergonomy, V is for an optimum in Ventilation, O is for the Organization of the pack or bag, C stands for the adequate Carry system for its defined field of use and the star in our logo stands for uncompromised quality.” Trending features include straps to secure helmets and other accessories, wet compartments, camera pockets, and padded sections for laptops and gadgets. “We take pride in the little details. The Waterlock, our surf bag, comes with a changing mat that is a tie to our surf roots and culture as a company,” said Duke Johnson, Director of Product, Bags and Accessories at Nixon. A hot trend among core practitioners are small over the shoulder bags and the hip packs, including the Daniel Poole “Smuggler”, Eastpak “Doggie Bag”, and Mi-Pac “Gold Bum Pack”.

3. Lifestyle customers.

They may not be active board riders, but lifestyle consumers are ready to pay for top performance. “Consumers and retailers look for something that we would define as modern outdoor products,” said

Stefan Clauss at Heimplanet, emphasizing his brand’s mix of forward-looking design, materials, and features. Lifestyle consumers also like outdoorsy, canister style backpacks by the likes of Herschel, DaKine, Rip Curl, Doughnut, and Fjällräven with their “Greenland Top” model. “Made from robust G-1000 HeavyDuty Eco, it is just as suitable for bike rides to work as it is for weekend hikes along your local trails,” said Philipp Kloeters, Head of PR Fjällräven International. Doughnut’s “Colorado” pack includes one of next season’s coolest accents: “We incorporate original climbing rope into the top flap attachment.” High-end materials include Cordura, waxed canvas, high-tensile yarn, and recycled polyester produced from old PET bottles.

4. Travellers.

Getting on an airplane – and keeping all your belongings together – is a high-stress situation these days. Travellers welcome bags providing easy access to phones, travel documents, and glasses, while holding laptops, cables and changes of clothes in a bag that still passes as carry-on. Keeping it all secure is where Pacsafe excels: “On average most people carry around with them somewhere between €1,000 - €1,500 of tech every day. Within the Adventure Traveler we are leading with the Dry Collection which is the first ever dry bag collection to feature Anit-Theft Technology. These are perfect for the boardsports community who are adventure travellers by nature with the need to secure their gear when they hit the water or the snow,” said Simon MacGregor VP Marketing and ecommerce at Pacsafe, emphasizing features such as PopNLock, Roobar Locking Systems, eXomesh slashguards, and RFIDsafe blocking pockets and material.

HOT TREND: HYBRID BAGS

The season’s second hot trend consists of hybrid bags that morph from one carrying style to the next, including Fjällräven’s “Greenland Kjenken” hybrid, Mi-Pac’s tote backpack, DaKine’s Cyclone series that shape-shifts from duffel bag to backpack or backpack to over-the-shoulder tote bag in an instant. Anja Herwig, Founder and Designer at Urban Tool said: “Our backpacks are lightweight and often have special features like multiple wearing options, backpack function can be changed to shoulder bag function, or modular concepts.” Daniel Poole also has a cool backpack that transforms into a messenger bag. “We see more innovation in bags as a necessary feature and we only produce unique back pack designs,” said Laurence Poole, Sales and Marketing Director, while pointing out the brand’s unique Impact Protection System to safeguard gadgets.

STYLING & COLOURS

In terms of styles, 2018 bags fall into three categories: First, classic hiking and heritage styles. Second, futuristic and pod-shaped designs. And third, fun and flair-driven packs, explained by Mi-Pac’s Leigh Kilby: “The ‘90s are back with a vengeance! Lots of MTV and Saved by the Bell Style prints and Transparent and Furs are also back!” Nevertheless, next season’s colours remain on proven ground: “Our customers like dark colours like black, grey, dark blue, khaki and dark brown, we follow their requirements,” said Anja at Urban Tool. In terms of patterns, camouflage is hot next season, either as full prints and also used as colour blocking on straps (Eastpak) and panels (Nixon), while orchid and floral prints are still in bloom next to cool artist collabs like Nixon’s custom jacquard artwork from Andy Davis. And for final proof that this segment never ceases to surprise, Eastpak presents a fully transparent backpack that reveals all content to the outside world. Remember where you heard it first... 🌐

HIGHLIGHTS

- SEASON TREND: Multi-functional day packs
- Customers demand premium products
- Wet & dry compartments
- Dark grey, black, olive & camouflage
- RFID protection, security features
- HOT TREND: Hybrid bags (tote/backpack)





photo : Jucker Hawaii

LONGBOARD SS18 RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

Dancing boards, female pros, off-roading: Our 2018 Longboards Retail Buyer's Guide has all current trends. By SOURCE Skateboard Editor **Dirk Vogel**.

Just when you thought you'd seen it all, skateboarding keeps delivering new concepts off the beaten path. Quite literally, as next season's "off-road" longboards – splatter-proof and equipped with heavy-duty all-terrain wheels – unlock a wealth of new terrain out in greener pastures. And how about stubby drop-through cruisers or symmetrical dance shapes that are all the rage now?

The gold rush is officially over, but the category is far from finished. "The casual market seems to have settled to a more sustainable level this year, seeing consistent interest without the large rider influx of a few years past," said Nathan Pauli, VP Sales & Marketing at DB Longboards, adding: "Core participation is small but stable, supported by a solid circuit of well-organized downhill events and freerides." Speaking of "rides", industry insiders agree that market growth in the next few years largely hinges on new infrastructure. "Skateparks will be very important for the development of surfskate, as it is such an experiential activity," said Peter Shu, Director of Marketing and Media at Carver Skateboards. Pablo Castro at Loaded is on the same page: "Pump tracks and boarder-cross events are definitely adding some cool variety to the kinds of terrain that longboarders can ride." And Bob Tanner, Director of Global Marketing at Sector 9 sees a two-fold effect, as specialized parks will "lead to not only more potential participants but also to current riders upgrading their equipment."

MARKET & PRICE POINTS

In order to activate participants, plenty of endemic brands are supporting European events and event series, including Madrid Skateboards with the Big Mountain Series and Bella Joyride, "specifically targeted to women riders, which was awesome to see," said Shane Maloney. On that note, 99.9 per cent of brands in this

article agreed that women's longboarding is having a growth spurt. And what's more: "We are not just seeing female consumers, but a larger presence and platform for women athletes, managers, and even brand owners. Women are coming into skateboarding in a very integrated, sustainable, and lasting way," said Nate Shute, Marketing Manager at Arbor, who are releasing the first female-specific board in their Solstice Collection. Sector 9 even issued a pro model longboard for Tia Blanco. "As a World Surf League competitor, Tia has a global reach and we're confident her model will be embraced across all the continents," said Bob Tanner.

As for price points, the hot price window is around €149 for completes right now, but premium boards and components sell for over €300, depending on brand and features. There are no general rules to ideal price points and retailers know their customers' budgets best. But keep in mind that impact from big-picture economics – mainly exchange rates and trade agreements – is a factor at the moment. "The fallout from the Brexit vote continues, with the consumer becoming more price conscious than ever. £100-£125 completes sell really well. High-end aftermarket decks for over £135, wheels over £50, and trucks at £60 and up are steady," said Richard Auden at Vandem MFG. Meanwhile, the team at Quiksilver said: "We have dropped our Rapa Nui range back down to €179 and our New Wave Surf Truck at €169. We saw the need in this financial climate to reach out to the consumer."

SEASON TREND: STUBBIER RIDES

Customers are gravitating towards shorter, more manageable boards next season. The hot ride for 2018 implements longboard construction, but at a length approaching cruiser board territory,

CRUISER & SURF SKATE



FUNNY BOARDS



OLD SCHOOL BOARDS



*"The casual market seems to have settled to a more sustainable level this year, seeing consistent interest without the large rider influx of a few years past," said **Nathan Pauli**, VP Sales & Marketing at DB Longboards*

*“Our two new cruiser shapes – The Insider and The Outsider – get a full bottom pearl sheet that not only looks quite unique, but also serves extraordinarily well as a slick bottom!” said the team at **Globe Europe***

preferably with “surfy” trucks. “Carving surfskates are the big trend. Pocketable boards that really surf the street!” said Benoit Brecq, Marketing Manager at Flying Wheels, pointing out next season’s 29.5 inch Eyethorn model as a “pocketable board for street and cruising in collaboration with artist, Plot.” Enrique Becerril at Miller Division also notes: “People want small and versatile skates that permit them to move in the city and include them in their day to day life.” Arbor created a winner with their “Drop Cruiser” – yes, a cruiser with drop-through construction – in the Flagship Series, while also offering downsized versions of bestsellers like the Axis, Timeless and Fish. Retailers, look for cruiser-type boards from all major players next season, including Urskog (Barr), Globe (Blazer Series), Aluminati (Mullet), Jucker Hawaii, Quiksilver, Landyachtz (Dinghy), Sector 9, Madrid, Dusters, Loaded and more.



photo : Miller Division

MATERIALS

Exotic woods, bamboo, coconut, aluminium, fiberglass – these past seasons saw board manufacturers adopting a wealth of new raw materials into longboarding. And they’re not done. Globe is doubling down on mother of pearl, expanded from ornament to full bottom material: “Our two new cruiser shapes – The Insider and The Outsider – get a full bottom pearl sheet that not only looks quite unique, but also serves extraordinarily well as a slick bottom!” said the team at Globe Europe. Over at Sector 9, Josh Rolf, Product Development Manager, has been “experimenting with flax and hemp as an alternative to fibreglass for a while now,” together with basalt fibers. Urskog is keeping a low carbon footprint with ECO Veneers and water-based glues, while Moonshine MFG is implementing “vertically laminated Paulownia wood cores, lightweight and durable.”

Dusters continue their collaboration with the California Locos, which will see a longboard and cruiser put together with some interesting features. “We took one of one of our bestselling longboards and a new 80’s inspired shaped cruiser and implemented design by legendary California Locos artist, John Van Hamersveld. Both boards feature full top and bottom graphics with florescent ink, mix matched wheels, and an inlayed bottom opener to crack open your favourite beverage.”

THE THREE MAIN CONSTRUCTIONS TO STOCK IN 2018

1. Symmetrical dancing shapes

Ideal for customers with difficulty knowing their board’s nose from its tail. Just kidding, because dance shapes with double kicks and well-placed rocker are no joke next season, with a sweet spot around 37 to 39 inches in length and functional flex. Watch out for dancing boards from DB Longboards (Dance Floor Flex), Mindless (Hamu), Loaded,

Moonshine (Elixir), Original Skateboards, Sector 9 and more brands ready to get on that dance floor.

2. Built for speed

Also keep an eye out for downhill and racing-ready constructions – drop-through trucks optional – at just around 40 inches (remember boards are getting shorter) and turn-friendly trucks. A variety of shapes are on the menu, but make sure they’re “anything but pintails,” said Mike van Mosel, Brand Manager at Goldcoast Europe. Landyachtz charges into premium territory with the Triple Beam model, while the Arbor Flagship models, Landyachtz entire downhill line or Loaded’s Icarus are season highlights in this category.

3. The big board that shreds

Hybrid boards that combine longboard-type wheels and trucks with street-inspired shapes into a shreddable package continue their winning streak. At Sector 9, where cruising and carving are 70 per cent of sales, Bob Tanner outlines how board lengths are trending: “The average board length across our entire SS18 release is just over 35.5 inches and bamboo continues to be our most used and best-selling material.” All major brands are re-upping their hybrid boards, including Arbor’s “expanded offering of Hybrid shapes including a new Pro Model offering from European based Team Rider, Axel Serrat.” Also keep an eye out for Mindless (Lakota), Globe, Lush, Jucker Hawaii, Uitto, Urskog, Arbor, and Landyachtz (Revival Series).

HARDWARE & ACCESSORIES

ATOM also offers their off-road wheels as a kit. Further hardware highlights for SS18 include Carver’s evolution of their truck line: “Keep your eyes peeled for the new surfskate truck system, the C5, which will be hitting the market come 2018,” said Peter at Carver. Sector 9 offers completes built with Gullwing Sidewinder Trucks, while Flying Wheels are proud of their Cutback carving truck and Mindless boasts the Talisman V2 truck. Pointing out a growing trend, Dave Price, International Sales-Landyachtz Longboards said: “We just released a narrower, 160mm Kodiak as we see more and more riders going with narrower trucks and shorter wheelbases for downhill.”

In wheels, Shane at Madrid lists the season’s major seller: “Slide wheels like our Cadillac Swingers which are great for freeriding. Also race wheels like our Venom Cannibals.” Sector 9’s Josh is also stoked on, “Buttersauce wheels with the new durable slide formula we came up with and how it works with the Cosmic Core.” Moonshine has some White Lightning wheel innovations for 2018, and Orangatang showcases the Kegel, In Heat, and 4President wheels. And what else do well-stocked retailers need? Cool accessories, like Miller Division’s protection series featuring, “coloured helmets that fit really good, gloves and protection kits with the best quality price ratio.” Aluminati nailed it with their new door and wall hangers for longboards and cruisers, while Sector 9’s ratcheting skate tool makes a great stocking stuffer for a shredding Holiday season.

On that note, our friends Urskog now make natural soap that’s also a great gift. And when it comes to purchasing longboards and other consumer goods, Urskog CEO Christoffer Stivén said: “We can no longer live in a world where consumption is everything, where we buy a product today and throw it away tomorrow. We have to think more circular when it comes to consumption; instead of throwing things away buy quality and sell or donate it to a new happy owner once you are tired of your product.” ☺

HIGHLIGHTS

- Growth in women’s segment
- Stubby longboards
- Speedy carver boards
- Shred-ready hybrids
- Narrower trucks, slide wheels
- Off-road longboards



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SURF APPAREL SS18 RETAIL BUYER’S GUIDE

From the streets of downtown to the edges of the beach the styles are on show, the looks are mixed and the lines are more and more blurred between the surf, retro, street, casual and skate universes...

But one theme resonates more than the rest; it’s the big 90s comeback.

It was a key period that left its mark on the existence of every brand, the career of every designer, the adolescence of every consumer... A flashback to a future, that’s not so far away. By **Denis Houillé**.

80S / 90S: LIKE A DUCK IN WATER

In 2018, the influence of the 90s has never been stronger. Surf, punk, folk and funk trends battle as if they were vying to reach the top the music charts! The origins of the brands, exploding at this time, are reappearing as if time had stopped. With a certain amused nostalgia, the designers in our industry are diving with precision back into a time of pomp and circumstance when the beaches were less crowded, designs were more daring and the rules of the game hadn’t really been defined yet...

In the meantime, the industry restructured itself, the prêt-à-porter world passed on its codes of practice and the arrival of mass retail channels undercut and perverted the whole thing... Nonetheless, surfwear continues its march forwards from downtown to the line-up, from prêt-à-porter tradeshows to the essence of surfing itself, without showing too much concern for anything else.

The encounter between the 90s and 2018 has lots of fun surprises in store with lines that inspire everyone, in so much as creativity, colour bias and typography contrast between collections. The do it yourself spirit continues to claim its etymology far and wide in illustrations, majorly reinforced by big marker pen lines and other thrash effects. Like a duck in water, designers are preparing collections capable of touching the heart and soul of anyone who lived through that time period or who looks upon it with fond admiration as they would a documentary film. This universe is the playground they created, and have been able to observe the evolutions that have followed it. So, for 2018, it’s time to set the record straight.

DARING COLOURWAYS

In a true ode to the 1990s, retro washes, vintage treatments and other things like tie-dye will be very popular again this season, especially on t-shirts. The 90s vibe is also a staple in terms of colours. From fluro tones to vintage fluro, from graphic designs to original lettering, the pieces are astonishing and no two are alike.

“With all the crazy stuff happening in the world our inspiration mainly came from finding freedom, getting creative and having fun.” **Jan Lindeboom, O’Neill Men’s Business Category Manager**

However, designers aren’t just copying the same styles of the era, but have managed to reinvent themes, going back to their roots, while incorporating modern manufacturing techniques. The typographies of the time are being refreshed on the palette, which is making them irresistible and incredibly modern. The same thing goes for materials, they’re not satisfied with just reusing corduroy and washed denim from back in the day. They’ve been reworked, made more elastic, waterproof and durable.

The colourways chosen for the season are rather invigorating, with fluorescent blue, pink, green and yellow, as is the case at Maui & Sons. At Rusty, things are oscillating between two distinct themes; one composed of typical 80s fluro colours, the other built around darker works from the 90s. While at Rip Curl, the colourways follow

“A line that covers functional simplicity, performance and pieces which are more travel savvy and fun.” - **Gabriel Davies, Patagonia Surf Division Manager**

the pace of deliveries, staggered over the course of the season, changing from neutral and organic tones in Spring to bright and pastel colours in Summer. Superbrand is using light washes of grey “onto which we add depth with greens and blues”, specifies Jason West from the design department. More 70s, orange, blue and mustard tones make for an interesting dynamic, to which are associated different nuances of blue, with pink, yellow and mint greens.

The sun faded treatment used notably by Deus Ex Machina that appeared this season was a client pleaser and we’re waiting to see reds, yellows and greens re-emerge, accompanied by classic blues to stabilize the balance of colours. Also, at O’Neill they’re proposing very seductive military tones (khaki, black, white, red fruit wash). Quiksilver is evoking a mixture of shiny vintage on the lifestyle side and deep blue and grey nuances for the performance aspect.

MATERIALS AND MORE

A 90s best seller, almost on the same level with denim, corduroy is a not-to-be-missed hit. Be it on shirts, pants or jackets, you can’t pass it up / do without it. Certain brands have even made it their specialty. At Billabong, the jerseys and poly / cottons are complemented with chambray and corduroy to keep that 80s spirit. Finisterre, for whom keeping the oceans clean is a daily preoccupation, is putting forward the use of “lots of recycled plastics with UV protective and quick drying properties” as well as “super light jackets and lots of seamless products.” O’Neill is also weaving bionic fibres thanks to plastic waste recovered from the ocean, and via ECONYL old fishing nets are being recycled into brand new nylon! For Spring 2018, Reef has developed a comfortable, light, and water-repellent four-directional perforated stretch fabric for their shorts and boardshorts.

THEMES & INSPIRATIONS

“With all the crazy stuff happening in the world our inspiration mainly came from finding freedom, getting creative and having fun,” is the vision shared from within the design department at O’Neill, which at the same time helps us keep our feet on the ground. The men’s department at Protest also cites “a return to nature, liberty and the art of living,” which is materialised stylistically in the form of skilfully washed tees and tops, as well as shirts with a raw cotton look. Rip Curl is going back in time too with an utterly pleasing return to modern retro-surf. Inspiration at Superbrand comes from opening the window onto the coast of Southern California and the distortions that appear from looking at it through a modern eye.

Always loyal to the universes of surfing, fishing and sailing, Salty Crew is doubling down on inventiveness and trying to touch “everyone who works at sea and in the ports, and who’s out in the line-up on every lunch break,” puts forward Josh Barrow. Finally, in the design department at Finisterre they say “we’ve plunged our heads underwater to find our inspiration.” Get ready to see tones inspired by “jelly fish, coral, as well as products made from recycled plastic!”

FROM DOWNTOWN TO THE BEACH

In light of the sell through rates, technical and multifunctional clothes seem to be highly appreciated by a larger and larger customer base, who are looking for this extra added value in surf clothing. Hybrids have never been as popular! Every client wants to have an outfit to wear that’s just as well adapted to the corner café as it is to the middle of nature and on the shores of their favourite surf spot. So, at O’Neill, they’re emphasizing “very functional pieces that you will be able to wear the whole season” while dealing with variable climates.

At Protest, the crossover of looks is the heart of the matter, and from surfable shorts to polyester / elastane shirts, which offer “streetwear looks with sportswear comfort,” these mixes are performing well. Quiksilver is also widening its offer of technical clothing “with products that work in different climatic conditions, while still easy to wear on a

daily basis” affirms Ronnie Reyes the International Head of Design at Quiksilver.

Passenger Clothing notes: “The adventure surf trend has notably increased especially in accessories and utility products as well as transitional multi use apparel pieces”. Patagonia has put to good use their hours of research and development to create “a line that covers functional simplicity, performance and pieces which are more travel savvy and fun,” offers Gabriel Davies the Surf Division Manager. Right in the middle of this trend towards multifunctional clothing, the surf influence is discreet in the cuts and the details, but formidably efficient in the choice of materials. Maui & Sons, faithful to their roots notes using a material in their shorts that is “a very technical, ultra-rapid drying stretch in order to transpose beach shorts onto the street,” as explained by Global Design Director, Lacey Corkery. The same thing for Finisterre products, which “even if they’re rife with technology, they’ll also be very popular in bars,” explains Sales Manager, Hennie Aylwin. New to the market, are the British folks at Surf Perimeters who are offering very technical products with a very contemporary look. Finally, amongst other new things for 2018, in the shorts aisle, O’Neill cites a jean hybrid (lighter and more stretchy than the real thing), which seems to seduce fans of denim as much as fans of surfing.



photo: Passenger

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY DESIGN

In the end, consumers are well informed nowadays and know how to tell the difference between brands that have done their homework, and the rest; those that use recycled polyester in their technical shorts and that weave their fibres from plastic collected from the depths of the ocean. The initiatives are numerous, and so remarkable that they tend to trickle down through the rest of the production chain, which is the case at Patagonia where they help their partners and suppliers obtain the Fair Trade certifications.

By their ethics, the brands in our industry set themselves apart from the fast fashion trend, which the guys at Passenger remind us is the second most destructive industry after oil. Once again, it’s the consumer who, based on their purchasing power, will have the last word.

Women’s Surf Apparel trend report will be published online at www.boardsportsource.com 

HIGHLIGHTS

- Strong 90s influence
- Multi-use, multi-climate, hybrid products
- Strong colourways
- Strength of denim



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WAKEBOARDING HARDGOODS SS18

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

The wake market can be split into a few different categories, each with their own product requirements and demands and brands are seeing similar growth trends: wake park products are on the up, boat and cross over declining, wakesurfing is becoming very important and wakeskate is pretty stagnant. A report by **Tim Woodhead**.

The increase in the wake park market is predominantly down to the huge growth in new wake parks opening and traditional cable ski tows being transformed into wake parks. Ten years ago the wake park category was almost non-existent in terms of specific product designed for riding at wake parks. Mystic are a brand heavily involved in the sport and note: "The growth in wake park riding continues to amaze us. We're expecting a bright future for this discipline in wakeboarding with so many levels of growth."

Wakesurfing growth is down to the fact it's mega fun, user friendly and doesn't require perfect weather conditions. This market is awesome for the older demographic who can afford to buy a boat and hence have no issues spending top dollar on wakesurf equipment, to the point where many users now have a quiver of wakesurfs.

There is a shift away from the crossover board, as Ronix mentions: "We have to look at boat riding and cable riding as two entirely separate worlds. There is no such thing as a boat board that will suit the needs of a cable rider, so for 2018 we have a clear distinction between both."

There is one noticeable trend in 2017, which is definitely going to carry into 2018 and onwards. People are starting to ride considerably bigger boards and all the bestselling products in 2017 have been the

XL sizes. Slingshot first entered this large board category a few years ago with their Nomad board and they reckon, "the longboard category has grown exponentially in the past few seasons amongst all silos of the sport. Cable, boat, and crossover. We are seeing riders of all ages and sizes re-think the length of their board and size up at least one level if not more." One of Liquid Force's most popular boards has been the Daniel Grant Eclipse, which starts at size 151cm, much bigger than the average of 145cm for the 2016 season.

Wakeboarding often takes its lead from other boardsports and over the last couple of years riders' stance width has become narrower. This is especially true with the younger generation of park riders.

BOARDS

Wakeboards are currently seeing notable changes in size and shape rather than material and construction. Most brands have now adapted to the damage equipment sees at wake parks. Pretty much everybody is using sidewall protection to help with dings and damage boards see to their edges as well as some kind of additional base protection. Hyperlite notice, "construction materials are always being updated to provide the most durable park boards. From sintered bases to urethane or ABS sidewalls we ensure Hyperlite boards will last and withstand the beating they endure at a park."

*"The growth in wake park riding continues to amaze us. We're expecting a bright future for this discipline in wakeboarding with so many levels of growth." **Mystic***

The **Slingshot Shredtown** and **Liquid Force Trek 3D** both utilise removable liners. This means riders can wear their liner to walk around the wake park and slide into the boot outer when on the start dock.

The key advantage of the ABS sidewalls is explained by Jobe: “With all the abuse that the consumers gear is taking, it’s always tough to find a board that can withstand it all. To combat this, we use an ABS sidewall, which can take a serious beating on obstacles. This is key for a board so it doesn’t just split open and delaminate.”

O’Brien use an impact resistant urethane for their sidewalls and a high density polyethylene to create what they call a High Impact Base. Slingshot also make use of the urethane sidewalls: “11 of the 12 models in our line-up feature the Ballistic base built specifically for park riding, all models feature Slingshot Fusion Sidewalls made from high durametre urethane to protect the core.”



photo : Triple 888

Ronix have used their edge protection to also increase the speed of the board: “In 2017 Speedwalls were well received, focusing on giving the rider more top water speed by a vertical sidewall. We continued adding this to new shapes for 2018 and will stay a viable technology piece, also adding to durability for the sidewall, giving the board a durable bumper along the whole edge of the board.”

With plenty of snowboard technology already in wakeboarding, some companies make good use of this, like Goodboards: “We use the same sintered base as we do on our snowboards. This gives our customers the ability to correct any damage themselves with a repair stick.”

The flex in a wakepark board is certainly an interesting point, most brands are well aware that you can no longer just add some flex to a board and call it a wake park model. Riders are after certain types of flex, for example how much it snaps back, where the board flexes etc. DUP Wakeboards say: “Boards will continue to get longer, stance options narrower. Varying flex patterns are trending. No longer do people just want more flex, consumers are now demanding a variety of different flex options.”

Ronix have developed their FlexBox tech, allowing them to control where in the board the flex is and how responsive the flex is, especially in terms of how much the flex snaps back, which helps make the board more responsive for pop off the water, off rails and to hold a press.

Both O’Brien and Humanoid are using Paulownia Wood cores, which they say significantly increases flex and durability. Humanoid state: “We reduced the amount of glue lines and wood plies built into each wood core and the result is pretty drastic in terms of performance compared to a traditional foam core wakeboard.”

Whilst the majority of wakepark boards aim for flex variations it is the opposite in the boat market and CWB have some interesting tech to maintain rigidity in their Mike Dowdy pro model: “We use Carbon Torsion Tech, which is a carbon tow in the shape of an “X” under each boot. This helps the board maintain rigidity while edging up a wake.”

So wakeboards are seeing longer models, narrower stances, tweaks on construction to improve durability and a lot of work going into flex patterns to make sure all rider styles have a product to match. When making your pre-order it’s so important to make sure you cover all flex patterns to ensure you meet the demands of all rider types and style.

BOOTS

All brands have pretty unique features and selling points for their boots and there’s a big choice of quality product for buyers to look at. Key buying decisions have to start with how many of your customers want removable liners or boot / binding combos, get this wrong and you could be left with a ton of product.

Hyperlite have been super strong in the boot / binding combo and have a new development to improve their boots for 2018: “We call it the Fusion Plate System and it’s featured on our new RIOT Boot and the updated Team X Boot. Essentially we have figured out how to take true footwear with an insole, midsole and outsole and pair with a traditional plate.”

The likes of Slingshot, Liquid Force and DUP use a removable liner, rather than the full boot being removed. DUP state: “For 2017 the Heritage boot was our number one seller. The heritage boot was adopted by most of the team this year, and when we see that happen, we know it’s going to flow through the retailers and consumers too. Removable boot liners, lace up shell and a classic look.” The Slingshot Shredtown and Liquid Force Trek 3D both utilise removable liners. This means riders can wear their liner to walk around the wake park and slide into the boot outer when on the start dock.

Slingshot made some pretty major changes to their boots and boot attachments for 2017 and will continue to develop this in 2018. The gummy strap was well received in many shops and a great progression from Velcro straps. Their new K9 mounting system helped eliminate heel lift and maintain the true flex of the board. One of the key reasons Slingshot changed their mounting system was in regards to aiding the flex and feel of the wakeboard. In the past a wakeboard had a certain level of flex, but once the boots are attached to the board the flex stats can change completely.

Ronix have long used intuition liners to give heat mouldable custom fit boots and in 2018 they will continue to improve the custom fit their boots give: “We wanted to change the status-quo by creating our heel and toe panels in 3D. We are able to injection mould the toe box and heel counter to the exact shape of the rider’s foot, creating an absolute perfect fit with minimal room for error.”

HELMETS

At pretty much every wake park it’s a rule that all users have to wear helmets and this has helped to create a whole new market for the wakeboard industry. Buying a helmet is relatively inexpensive and is

DUP
A T L A S
SIZES: 138, 142, 146
100% Paulonia Wood Core | NEW Dyna 4 Base
360° Polyurethane Side Walls | 3 Stage Rocker



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photo : Triple 888

LIOR SOFER

Bern say: “It’s mandatory to wear lids at most parks now, and more relevant within wake than many other watersports is the importance of self-image. Regardless of whether your starting out or stomping huge airs, participants quickly realise that if they don’t look the part, they’re not in the gang. Rightly or wrongly, this is how it is.”

often one of the first purchases that new people to the sport make. We are seeing wakeboard companies like Mystic and Liquid Force create their own headwear ranges and well established protection brands like Triple Eight, Sandbox and Bern are entering into the market.

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Helmet sales are becoming a key retail sector for the wake industry and people are not afraid to spend money on a decent lid. Bern acknowledges that wake represents a huge opportunity and focus their design on providing solutions for the sport. This includes combining the foam to make sure any water drains away in an instant. Bern utilise a three shell size system, which gives people more options and the ability to all have a low profile fitting helmet.

Sandbox have also come heavily into the wake market and done well, especially with their unique colours and prints, which are totally bespoke to Sandbox and impress on the shop floor. Apart from increasing the prints on the helmets, they are producing stronger Velcro and more durable fit pads, which will improve how their helmets work in the water environment.

Triple Eight are selling their own range of wake helmets and also producing all of the Liquid Force helmets and their key design feature for the wake industry is the use of their Sweatsaver Halo Water Liner. They have managed to incorporate the comfort of their sweatsaver liner into a CE Certified water helmet. Triple Eight have two models for wake and Liquid Force are using this technology in their Hero, Recon, Flash, Fooshee and Nico models. The result is a very comfy and lightweight design.

The helmet market, especially in terms of aesthetics can be fickle and a colourway or pattern can quickly fall out of favour and sit in your stock room. Triple Eight combat this by “keeping our line simple and clean for retailers with a couple of key colours and great finishes in each style, rather than heavy graphics that can quickly fall out of favour.”

All wake parks have to invest in a range of hire helmets and Sandbox have invested some R&D into this, with their Park Property Rental

helmet: “No other brand is making a cool looking park specific rental helmet. We’ve been able to lower the cost on this unit while taking nothing away from the quality, look and performance of the helmet’.”

DESIGNS & PRO MODELS

Wakeboard brands give a varying amount of freedom to their pro riders when it comes to board design and aesthetics. Key importance to DUP is that they maintain a common aesthetic on all boards to make sure there is some consistency in the branding. Their brand new ATLAS by Lior Sofer is a whole new shape, flex and rocker for DUP. They are very excited about its flex and edge hold, Lior is a rider that does everything at a wake park and that is the market this is aimed at (rails, kickers, air tricks!).

Slingshot continue to gain lots of input from their team: “Team rider Wes Jacobsen has designed several models again this season: The Coalition, The Shredtown, The Super Grom, and the Windsor.” The Terrain has been a great seller for Slingshot in recent years and for 2018 they added carbon through its belly and is endorsed by Arron Gunn who dominated every wake park contest he entered in 2017.

Hyperlite are seeing less and less impact from names on products and their best sellers usually come from the team inspired boards. Apart from the HashTag which is the Nick Davies pro model and has a brand new shape and construction for 2018, with graphics that suit Nick’s fun and crazy style.

Ronix are continuing to push the techniques used for graphic application, they love nothing more than unique textured materials, scented scratch and sniff inks, glow in the dark inks and many more. Liquid Force believe their Peak will continue to be very popular in the wake park market and they give total freedom to Nico Von Lerchenfled for the graphics on his pro board.

CONCLUSION

The key trends in terms of category growth are a decline in the crossover board market, brands are concentrating less and less on making equipment that can work at a wake park as well as behind a boat and instead are powering all their resources into making top equipment for each specific target group. All equipment for the wake park is on the rise, wakesurfing is growing at a decent rate, wakeboards for boats are stagnant or in decline and wakeskating is remaining small and with practically zero growth.

Helmets are becoming a great sector for shops and brands are investing in R&D for wakeboard headwear protection. A big mover in the boots and bindings design is the way in which they mount to boards with brands really trying to remove any heel lift and maintain the true flex of the board. Ⓢ

HIGHLIGHTS

- Helmet sector booming
- Shift to larger boards
- Narrower stances
- Less and less crossover boards
- More & more flex options





DEGENERATI

The Degenerati are a dirtbag snowboard outfit brought to the market by Rome’s Matt Stillman and Philipp Kaemmerer: “The idea of a degenerate illuminati centres around being all knowing but mostly concerned with cheap thrills and steep hills.” Producing snowboards, apparel and accessories, the Degenerati are for those who put snowboarding above all else.

Please tell our readers the idea behind Degenerati.

The idea behind Degenerati is to create a season-to-season capsule collection of goods driven and designed by vagabond snowboarders; van life, hand-built parks, summers spent lurking on glaciers and beyond. Live fast, pack light and never turn down the opportunity to ride.

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

Matt Stillman and Philipp Kaemmerer in North America and Europe respectively. Both have backgrounds in team management, digital marketing and experiential marketing.

Why and where did the need for The Degenerati come from?

The inception of the Degenerati was brought about from a visit to Portland, OR to ride Mt. Hood. We noticed there was something different going on with the crew out there. They seemed to know the best shortcuts and life hacks for every occasion; where the drink specials were, when the sidehits at Hood were going to be prime, where to stash their lunch on the hill, how to skate past the lifties and ride for free. Pretty much living the dirt bag boarder program but doing it in style, making everything look easy. Ultimately the word was coined during some permutation of late night nonsense and found its way onto the 2016 Rome Artifact, Artifact Rocker, Katana Binding colourway and the coaches jacket. The response to the term was instant and we knew we had something special

on our hands. As we began designing the 2017 Rome collection we realized Degenerati needed room to breathe on its own, thus spanning the beginning of The Degenerati.

Please explain the ideas behind your designs - is there any symbolism going on there? A running theme for seasons to come?

The visual direction behind Degenerati is steeped in mystism and the occult. The idea of a degenerate illuminati centres around being all knowing but mostly concerned with cheap thrills and steep hills. The primary mark, the eye logo, is very much based on the Eye of Providence which is traditionally said to represent the all-seeing eye of God overlooking humanity. Our version has had a long night or two and isn’t so impressed with what it’s seeing.

The secondary logo incorporates a more detailed eye surrounded by an Ouroboros. The Ouroboros, or snake eating its tail, is a symbol of the cyclical nature of time and how we are all destinted to repeat our pasts. Time is a flat circle so why not enjoy ourselves?

The product itself is all designed to incorporate these visual elements while being rugged, classic snowboard focused gear.

What categories are you working across?

Hardgoods, apparel and accessories principally. The nature of the capsule collection lets us have a fluid approach to yearly collections as we see fit. In this year’s collection, there are two board models, four mittens, two light

weight jackets and several apparel pieces designed to integrate together. We also have bolts and laces which are must haves for any rider.

Doing anything interesting with POS?

Currently nothing novel, but we designed all hang tags and packaging to have unique shelf appeal which adheres to the brand’s visual identity.

Are you working with an athlete team?

We have a team of riders who reflect who we are and the things we care about. Riders who have traded customs and traditional comforts for life on the road spent chasing the thrill are the cornerstone of the brand. The team is a natural reflection of those ideals. Oivind Fykse, Tobias Himmelstrup, Corey Caswell, Jesse Gomez and Tony Vesscuso to name a few.

Why should retailers sell your brand?

Because snowboarding is and always will be for the bold and the ones who put snowboarding above all else. The ones who decide to rally the van eight hours just for one spot, the ones who will surf couches and pay rent in beer rather than be bridled by a ‘real job’. The Degenerati is for senstation seekers who live to ride. The gear is minimal, highly functional and all designed to work as one kit, equally at home on the hill or at a house party.

What are your views on the current state of snowboarding?

Less talk more boarding and the rest will take care of itself. 🌀



SALT & STONE

Targetting adventurers from snow to surf and skate, Salt & Stone's sun protection and skincare products are made entirely from natural plant-based products, cutting out harmful and toxic chemicals. The combination of organic UV absorbers and natural oils not only protects but moisturises at the same time. Endorsed by some of boardsports biggest names, including Craig Anderson, Jack Freestone, Dion Agius, Owen Wright, Pat Moore, Kai Neville, Jake Blauvelt, Corey Wilson, Gigi Ruf, Blake Paul, Austen Sweeten and more, we interviewed the man behind Salt & Stone, Nima Jalali.

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

We wanted to create a plant-based sunscreen and skin care line for everyday use. We were sick of all the chemical filled products on the market and felt there was a place for something more premium with a better-looking packaging and name.

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

Corey Wilson and Kai Neville are partners in the brand and they both create content and manage the surf team. I run the business end with Lyndon Cabellon heading up sales.

What is the company MO?

Salt & Stone is dedicated to the things of wander and wonder. We create essential skin care products for all who are called to explore, escape, and revel in their experiences. We never compromise and use only the finest plant-based, natural, non-toxic, and antioxidant rich ingredients. The result is a superior collection of products that optimise your body and enhance your daily journey.

Please tell us about your product lineup.

We rolled Salt & Stone out with three products. SPF 30 sunscreen lotion, SPF 50 tinted face stick and an organic all natural lip balm. All

the products are water resistant to the highest degree.

What technological/health considerations have you had to make for producing a sunscreen?

We conducted all necessary clinical testing that is required by the FDA. We also carried out rigorous testing with our team and worked on the formula until we perfected it. We feel we have created a superior, safe sunscreen for every day use. We are proud to say we don’t use harsh chemicals like oxybenzone and strictly use plant based ingredients.

How are you looking to operate in the European market?

We are in talks with a few distributors right now.

Please tell us about the relationship you have with action sports athletes.

We have a crew of athletes we endorse in surf, skate and snow. On the surf side, we have Craig Anderson, Dion Agius, Jack Freestone, Owen Wright and more. Skaters such as Alex Midler, Erik Ellington, Sammy Winter. We also have snowboarders Pat Moore, Jake Blauvelt, Gigi Ruf, Blake Paul, Joe Sexton, Austen Sweetin, Joe Sexton and more.

How else are you marketing the brand?

We are partnering up with Slow Tide on a

collaboration and doing promotions with other brands like Tavik to spread the word. We are also doing a lot of social media marketing at the moment and plan on rolling out print ads in Monster Children, What Youth, and Wasted Talent soon.

What POS are you offering for retailers?

We have some really elegant countertop displays with a high-end wood finish that makes our product really stand out.

Will you be operating outside of the boardsports market?

We have been working with retailers like Colette, Need Supply, Ron Herman and other non-boardsport shops. We feel the product is not only limited to boardsports shops.

Could you talk a little about pricing?

Right now we sit right in the middle. Our SPF 30 lotion is 17.99 USD. A lot of all natural brands are at 25 USD and a lot of the cheaper guys are 10 USD, so we’re kinda right in the middle. We want to keep our stuff affordable even though our ingredients are mainly organic and premium.

Can we expect you to enter different product categories?

Yes. We are going to be releasing an all-natural deodorant soon as well as an SPF lip balm. 🌀

NEW PRODUCTS

01-IRIEDAILY NEW MOMENTUM JACKET

Iriedaily's Spring/Summer 2018 collection is Berlin's answer to the 90's streetwear revival and features new styles such as the New Momentum Jacket. This vegan, diamond stop nylon windbreaker with a quick dry feature is packable as a hip bag and proclaims IRIEDAILY'S DNA to the fullest: STAY DIFFERENT. A must-have for men and women. www.riedaily.de



01

02-NORDEN SUP EXPLORER TOURING

A great board for flatwater, open ocean and river SUPing. With a storage net in the nose and tail you can pack anything you need for your journey. A full EVA deck gives you great comfort while paddling and allows you to move around on the board without losing grip. A keel shaped nose cuts the water for superior speed and ease. Its flat middle section with extra width gives it great stability, tucked-in rails maximize manoeuvrability. Additionally, when compared to traditional raceboards, the Explorer Touring has a little bit more rocker, which enhances the board's surfing performance by minimizing the risk of nose undercutting on swells.

www.norden-surfboards.com/standuppaddling



02

03-PROTEST PRAIRE BIKINI

A high neck bikini top offers a trendy, modest, and striking look that's guaranteed to be all the rage for summer. The Praire provides a confident and secure feeling and look. High neck bikinis are also perfect for surfing. Discover the high neck style in Protest's Praire bikini with Brazilian fit.

www.protest.eu



03

04-RESTUBE QUICK RELEASE

There are situations in water when you want to disconnect quickly from anything you're connected to. You can now disconnect easily from your Restube buoy or your safety leash if needed even when they have 100kg of tension. The device is small and lightweight and easy/intuitive to use. You can use it as often as you want to and was designed with surfing, SUP and lifeguards in mind.

www.restube.com



04

05-STANCE KALANI SOCKS

In the early 90's Taylor Steele released a VHS that is now considered a true time capsule within the surfing community. The 35 min tape, entitled Momentum, showcased a blend of punk music and surfing during a time when discovery was going to your local surf shop and plugging in to the VCR. The surfer's style mixed with unheard selection of punk bands was so infectious that it ended up catapulting not only the surfers in the film, but the bands along with it. The Kalani pays tribute to this era of surf shop hangs and endless rewinds with stills from Taylor Steele's short film Momentum. Part of part of Stance's Surf Legends pack.

www.stance.com



05

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MARKET INTELLIGENCE

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SWISS

Could we be setting the world on fire? Maybe... maybe not! Winter is on our doorstep! At the time I am writing this (early August) the sky is blue and the sun is shining (never let the facts ruin a good story) and the board business is revving up for winter. And there could well be some blue skies ahead for UK winter sport retailers as, once again, the weakness of the pound against the euro will give them a helping hand. At this moment in time 1 pound will get you 1.10 euros with some analysts predicting parity (1:1) by the end of the year and if you are a silly tourist then you are already getting well below parity. Whilst this may be “good news” for UK winter sports retailers who have historically had to compete with our Euro brethren targeting the UK market, it’s not such good news in the long term as, once again, when this all filters through there will have to be price rises... again. Good old Brexit. Don’t you love a good referendum?

As it’s Summer what better than to start with a winter sports retailer in the off-season! Matt from Absolute Snow runs one of the largest online winter sports retailers in the UK: “Although it’s our quiet time of year and we focus on stock clearance, compared to last year, sales are up a bit – but not enough to give me any great hopes for the season ahead.” Matt sounded a bit cautious. Why? “I’m concerned for the upcoming season. I cannot really put my finger on why but none of us are absolutely sure how the consumer is going to react to the price rises - some of which are significant.”

So a cautious outlook from Matt. Anything new? “Yeah – we’re out of skate. Sad but true, we’re dropping skate from our offering and we’re consolidating on mountain sports which is our core strength. We’re going to focus on the things we do well and make sure we continue to improve our service and systems.”

Turning back to the current (summer) season I dipped my toe back into the Poole area and spoke to Andy Gratwick from Easy Riders. Andy is one of the key people in both kite and SUP in the UK because, as well as running the school, he is also a trainer (instructors’ instructor) for both kite and SUP – in other words he’s very well placed to comment.

Easy Riders started in 2003 as a pure kite school, then branched into (and out of) waterski/wake, into windsurfing and more recently SUP’ing. “We are about 60% kite, 40% SUP and a little bit of windsurfing. The wake/ski thing died for us because we just could not make it work for some reason.”

What is really interesting is the gender split “We’re a completely non-elitist organisation and I think this has particularly helped appeal to the regular, female SUP’er. It’s 75%-80% women between 18 and 60 years old with the majority in the 35-50 year age group – and we’re busy!” And kite? “It’s completely different – whilst SUP is made up of mostly locals the kite business is almost all ‘out of town’ customers, predominantly male (75%) between 30 and 50. We run youth camps and kids clubs but it’s small.”

What of the future for both sports? “Kite is in danger of following windsurfing and becoming too technical – that’s the biggest threat. I see SUP’ing as potentially becoming the ‘cycling of the sea’ and has huge opportunities for growth.

As this issue has covered wakeboarding I thought it would be interesting to talk to Boards Basement who, whilst predominantly a winter sports store, have this year ventured into the water sports business. Talking to Gus about this change in direction I simply asked why? “We had nothing to do in the summer – whilst we have always sold skate shoes, sandals and sunnies the summer months were always quiet. So this year we decided to try our hand at water sports and ventured into wakeboard and surf.”

And how’s it been? “I can’t say that we’ve set the world on fire but we had a firm strategy to go out with a full price offering to gain a good view on the market. We’re happy enough and no complaints. Whilst I don’t see the water sports side ever overtaking the winter side of the business we are getting a good footfall through the door – the fact that we do no local advertising and yet people are finding us speaks volumes about our approach to the business.”

So what of surf and skate? “We’ve got great surf shops locally and some of these guys are our friends so we really don’t want to step on their toes. We’re selling surf because our customers are asking us to! We’ll keep it small and niche”. And skate? “We’re not a big skate shop but we have an interest and we’ve always had a skate offering so we’ll keep it that way and will continue – but, once again, it’s not going to set the world on fire.”

What is really interesting in talking to Gus is that the business has evolved from a pure online business with no showroom or shop to a full bricks and mortar shop (and warehouse) with a great online presence. “The increase in sales in store is massive and we’re now fully catering for that. People want to talk to people. They want good service. They want the time and attention – and we give it to them and they reward us with their custom. It’s working.” This is truly gratifying to hear this – perhaps there is a glimmer of hope for the bricks and mortar business after all.

So it’s early August and if the West Country isn’t busy at this time of year then it never will be. I spoke with Paul at Zuma Jay in Bude, Cornwall and it was obvious they were busy – I had to call a few times and when I finally got hold of him I just asked him for a really quick comment: “I am hopeful,” he said laughing, “it’s still early days, but very hopeful. It’s not kicked in yet but it always does and whilst we’re not setting the world on fire [that phrase again] I have never seen the town so busy. The restaurants are full, the ice creams are selling and we just need the customers to find us now.” Overall it seemed that there was a good buzz and Paul was certainly happy: “Yeah – it’s certainly not doom and gloom and we will keep stoking the fire in the hope that we can set the world alight” [again!].

Gordon Way



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MARKET INTELLIGENCE

GERMANY	UK	FRENCH	ITALY	SPAIN	AUSTRIA	SWISS
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The weather isn't beautiful yet, but the sky is starting to clear up for the French economy. More than eight years after the beginning of the subprime crisis, and after five years of practically running in place, the activity in the Hexagon this year seems to be stepping on the gas a little. Effectively, the economic recovery is well and truly confirming itself in the Hexagon: growth is accelerating in 2017 and should reach 1.6%, a level unseen since 2011, which will allow the reflux of unemployment numbers to proceed since good news continues to accumulate on the employment front in France. After the announcement of a spectacular rebound in the household service sector, the bar of 2 million hires was passed in the second trimester. This increase is essentially due to the dynamism of permanent CDI contracts, but also to the good orientation of fixed-term CDD contracts longer than one month. With an increase of 1.6% of GDP, the Hexagon is gradually drawing nearer to the level of growth of the Euro zone, as evaluated by INSEE (the French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Research) at 1.8% for 2017, which is being propped up by a promising international event, thanks to the return to good fortune of Russia, Brazil and China.

As far as our industry is concerned, the national economic tendency seems to be felt as well. In fact, the month of June seems to have been rather good. Audrey, from All Troc in Soorts-Hossegor told us: "We've had great weather in June and we've had a great pre-season – it was much better than last year."

We got the same feeling a little farther north in Messanges at Desert Point where Bastien confirms, "the months of May and June were particularly good this year. We had some very nice weekends with a higher traffic and better sales than the same period last year." Even if both of them noticed a minor slow-down at the very beginning of July, the first wave of summer tourists on July 14 was well and truly present, with once again a solid influx in the stores. In fact, Bastien from Desert Point told us: "Early July was a bit soft compared to a superb month of June, but that's how it is every year." Audrey from All Troc added, "the first vacationers arrived the weekend of July 14 and came directly to the store to get kitted out."

We hear the same tune at Uncle Zaz in Saint Jean de Luz, where the store has only been open for a few months, but the early arrival of summer visitors seems to have been felt as well. Raphael, the store manager, confided, "we've noticed a large in-store influx from July 10. We're surrounded by almost a dozen campgrounds and our clientele arrived early in the season."

Concerning the range of best-selling products this season, the opinions are rather divided. At the Glisse-Proshop in Montpellier, it's neoprene, and notably the high end that seems to have been the biggest draw for clients. In effect, David the storeowner told us: "Our clients are really looking for rather technical products and the evolution in high end neoprene allowed for good sales in this product range, notably from the brands Rip Curl and Ion." Raphael from Uncle Zaz also mentioned good sales: "The neoprene aisle worked pretty well, with a nice level of sell through of products from Madness which is an important brand for us." David from Glisse-Proshop added, "we've also seen an explosion in sales of products for women with all of our women's neoprene lines." The women's market definitely seems to be standing out this summer, as Raphael from Uncle Zaz adds, "the women's textile sector and notably all of the women swimsuit ranges from the different surf

brands, and most specifically from Rip Curl have had good sell-through levels at the start of the season." The same opinion is reflected at Desert Point, where Bastien confirms, "the beautiful weather at the start of summer incited women to purchase bikinis rather early in the season, with our Protest aisle working fairly well with women."

Yet, one thing seems rather clear – the weather conditions were favourable to inciting clients to buy boards. Indeed, Audrey from All Troc confided, "we had superb conditions for surfing, with good sand banks at the start of the season, as a result we sold quite a few boards. Above all, clients are looking for comfortable boards, ideal for summer with quite a bit of volume. So, we sell lots of egg or mini-mal shapes, round with lots of volume." She ended by saying: "But above all, it's our large selection of over 300 boards in stock and the very attractive used market that we target currently which attracts our clientele and draws them into the shop." David from Glisse-Proshop is mostly in agreement with that. "We've sold quite a few surfboards at the start of the season", yet he added, "we've noticed an inclination towards high end epoxy boards which are more and more popular with our clients. It's most likely the comfort, strength and performance aspects that appeal to our clients." Bastien from Desert Point confirmed: "We're selling more and more boards with technical constructions. It's pretty significant, notably on boards with swallowtails, which are coming back into fashion especially on technical epoxy boards, while not long ago it was more on retro twins." As for brands, shops have mostly been mentioning Torq, Lib Tech & Firewire.

Farther north, in Brittany, Philippe from Surf Avenue in Rennes agrees with that analysis, but looks at it from the point of view of the stand up paddle market: "Stand up paddleboards continue to attract more and more people." The shift towards inflatable boards is being confirmed once again this summer: "As for stand up paddle, inflatable boards represent a large majority of our sales. It's the practical aspect that convinces our clientele. What's more, with the technological progress in FUSE construction for example the boards perform much better than in the past." Shops spoke in particular about the brands Red Paddle Ari'l Nui & Fanatic, which seem to have had a good sell through rate. Still speaking of the SUP market, but a more niche, less mass market aspect of it Philippe spoke to us about foil boarding: "Be it windsurfers, kitesurfers or stand up paddleboarders, people who are really into those sports are asking more and more about this new sport. Even if it's still rare, we're seeing an increasing interest for this new thing."

Even if the trends may have varied slightly at the start of the season depending on the kind of store, where it is located or the different clienteles, they all agreed on what their clients were looking for.

Once again this summer, prices seemed to be a dominant factor. They all were in agreement that their clients paid more and more attention to prices. While certain high end, well marketed, technical products are sought after by certain clients influenced by marketing, sponsored riders and pretty videos, the immense majority of clients are looking for a good deal and the best value for money. Once again this summer, it's the reception of clients, the range of products and how well the staff advises customers that will have helped shop owners make the difference and have a successful season in 2017.

Benoit Brecq



MARKET INTELLIGENCE

GERMANY

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It was almost a textbook summer in Germany this year. The Germans witnessed what they usually search for when holidaying: sunshine, blue skies, high temperatures and mild summer nights. But unfortunately due to extreme weather conditions – heavy rainfall, thunderstorms and extreme high temperatures – it was really hard for retailers. I'll take a look at a cross section of German action sports shops.

For Nina Kreiner from Attitude (core skate shop) in Bremen the summer sale season went well. Two of her shop riders skate for Robotron (German skate company), meaning their deck sales were strong. Although the weather far North wasn't ideal, the need for skateboard hardware was healthy. The apparel section also fared pretty well. Since Nina took over the shop two years ago, they no longer sell longboards, because Titus are right across the street and a Blue Tomato store also in town. Nina has refined her products by including small trending brands and eliminating some well known companies which go directly B2C or sell all products to every store locally.

On the other hand, Marc Hausen from Boardjunkies in Braunschweig is moving from 410sqm and three storeys to a two floor shop in the centre of the city. The newly located store will bring a new drive to Boardjunkies. "A reinvention after ten years is fun and motivates the staff," says Marc. The online shop with just 5% of sales is very poor, which leads Marc to question if this tough market is even worthwhile for him. The store brand 'Boardjunkies' became a huge factor over the last few years and meanwhile brings the second-best turnover. When Marc goes to Walhalle skate hall in Braunschweig, he notices that a lot of people shop online at Titus or Skatedeluxe, although he sells similar or even the same products for the same price at his store.

We hand over this question to Johannes Beck from Skatedeluxe: Johannes, do you think that more people from cities without a skate store use your online shop or benefit, in general, from your wide selection and the constant availability of your products?

"It's a mix – of course it's an advantage for kids that live one to two hours outside of a bigger city with a skate shop. When they face a broken deck they can order online, which is much easier for them. And our portfolio includes almost everything a skateboarder desires and is delivered to their home the next day. This is why we also ship to Berlin, Paris and London. Skatedeluxe has developed very positively, in apparel and also in the skateboard hardware sector, which has recovered very well – shoes and accessories are stable. Because we cover all of Europe, it's hard to say if the 30°C in Germany really had an impact on the sales. But in general good weather means good hardware sales."

Apart from that collabs such as HUF x Peanuts, or Adidas x Hardies did well. Skateboarding seems to attract the mainstream once again – the Thrasher flame hoody and Vans Old Skools have taken the high street by storm. Old school shaped decks were trending over the last two or three years and still generate good sales. The longboard sector is still struggling though.

The market for surfing is becoming more and more established and can be found all over the German-speaking mainstream media. Michael Fritsch from Cologne is a real luminary in this sector and with his Frittboards he makes surf shops on the French Atlantic shore look

ordinary. Surfboards, wetsuits, board bags, fins and leashes account about half of the range of goods. The demand for surf equipment has permanently increased over the last 15 years: "In our first shop there were three boards and now we have 350 surfboards and another 300 in storage to be sold online or to replenish our stock. It's supply and demand for us, but as everyone knows, hardware profits are smaller than on apparel, so it's difficult, but we are the only people locally specialising in hardgoods and we love what we do."

The desire to travel makes the hardware sales independent of seasons. "When people plan a trip they don't care about the weather back in Germany. The prices for flights are decreasing year by year; a trip to Morocco, South Africa, the Maldives or Sri Lanka is no longer a big adventure. A while ago a trip to France was adventure enough. So we now also sell surfboards pretty well in winter." For Michael Fritsch it's important that the brands produce good products with high quality. "All brands hustle – some succeed more, and others less. Social Media is still on the up, however it would be better if people took advice from sales advisors in stores instead of their social feed."

Tobias Hammer from Riders Heaven in Sonthofen in the Allgäu sells surf, snow and SUP equipment, bike apparel and accessories in his 350sqm shop. He had a really good summer. The good weather was close to perfect for watersports. "SUP and surf are the sectors we've built the most and will continue doing so. We present flip-flops on a huge wall and SUP rental is growing even though we aren't located on a lake. We work together with a SUP school where customers can test simple boards. We notice that they still tend to buy the high quality equipment. Our surf market trading area is big and we have 50 to 70 boards in our shop. We even have customer visits from Karlsruhe who appreciate our surfboard knowledge. This is why we want to expand this division. Our entire staff has a SUP teaching degree and is a professional for imparting advice and is an expert when it comes to equipment."

Giso Merkl and his shop Adrenalin in Regensburg did better this summer than the last one. He was also surprised by the increasing wakeboard sales in spring. The SUP equipment sold well too, although this meant a lot of work. Here we have to fight against cheap brands which offer 300 euro (or less) boards including paddle and case. This is the reason SUP customers expect prices around 400 – 500 euros and not 1000 euros for high-quality equipment. Only in depth advice helps to point out the specific differences in quality and informs shoppers to be sure of what they are buying. Everyone that buys a SUP board at Adrenalin gets free lessons as well.

The SUP trend is present and skateboarding is alive due to new locations and labels. Nevertheless the action sport business isn't getting any easier. The snow section is still the problem child and retail struggles with staffing issues, digitalisation and e-commerce. The ones who are able to redefine themselves, stay up to date, find the right audience, create a stylish shop and make the right moves online will keep their customers and find more. The world is turning and so is the skateboard wheel. The ones who stand still will fall off. Innovation, marketing and quality will pay off – see Tesla!

Jochen Bauer

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MARKET INTELLIGENCE

GERMANY	UK	FRENCH	ITALY	SPAIN	AUSTRIA	SWISS
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Italy is once again facing a huge problem with way too many refugees arriving by boat and despite our government asking for help, the European Union has no clue how to solve the problem. This problem will not fade away and Europe has to find a solution together, because southern Europe will not be able to face this by itself. It is a European and global problem. But instead Italy is suffering from huge expenses on refugees in a time where our economy is flat, meaning tough times for Italians and especially those who run small businesses, affected by huge tax pressure.

Spring was very slow for most boardsports retailers and stores are now facing big financial problems. Fabio Degasperì from Centone says: “If snow hardgoods and outerwear brands want to continue to work with us this Fall then they have to help us out with payment terms and taking back stock as we can’t operate by selling low margin product with a huge stock risk.” Distributors and brands should take note as Centone is a key account when it comes to hardgoods and outerwear for the Italian market. Other retailers such as Gianluca Tognoli from Frisco shop, a key skate shop states: “The times of the big pre-book orders are over, smaller orders and focusing more on re-stocking is the key, brands need to focus now more then ever on the needs of retailers to do well. We can’t pre-book 6 to 8 months in advance with huge quantities in a marketplace that changes so quick and where you don’t know what will sell next season.”

This spring was definitely the return of logo prints and besides Thrasher, which is still selling extremely well, brands like Stussy and Huf are making a big comeback with logo prints on t-shirts, hoodies and caps. Kids are tired of the no-logo hype and want to show allegiance to brands again. This is especially prevalent with US streetwear brands with a strong background in skateboarding performing well.

GERMANY	UK	FRENCH	ITALY	SPAIN	AUSTRIA	SWISS
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Spring-summer, two words that mean a challenge for most stores involved in the Swiss boardsports market. While winter is clearly oriented towards one sport, product offerings during the summer season vary greatly depending on the type of store and where it is situated. Retailers must constantly rethink their product mix because trends change quickly and there aren’t any “cash cow” products like there are in winter (if we can still put snowboards in that category). The two big hardgood categories are still skateboarding and water sports. To keep it simple, in general we can see a rather strong skateboard presence in urban areas, while aquatic sports are more developed in proximity to Switzerland’s lakes and rivers. It’s important to note that a large part of stores that are active in the winter boardsport sector aren’t at all in summer. Of course, I’m speaking about retailers located in mountain resorts that are either closed or sell mountain bike products instead.

Since the weather has played in our favour, we’ve seen good sales figures for the months of May and June, which have often been higher compared to the volume from last year. That’s the case for Balazs Bodonyi from Surfmachine in Bulle who is satisfied with his sales this year. Yan Bosson from SB Sport, Sandro Joss from Tip To Tail in Bern and Gerald Zimmermann from Breakpoint in Visp seem to agree as well. The skateboard business is still strong, with sales of street boards holding steady despite being very affected by online sales. Wooden cruiser boards are selling well, but as was the case last year the longboard market is getting tougher and tougher.

Obviously, the other boardsport that continues to expand is stand up paddleboarding. Very conspicuous on many Swiss lakes and some rivers, this product attracts lots of people. The combination of the “taking a relaxing stroll” and “getting a workout” sides of it, added to the aquatic aspect has definitely seemed to be a winning trifecta for the last few years. As a result, we’re seeing little SUP rental shacks popping up all along our riverbanks and lakeshores, with a steady

Asides from this, the number of doors selling streetwear has doubled in recent years and more and more shops are struggling to find a solution to customer retention. Some are innovating by introducing new sneaker brands while others are opting for hyped outdoor gear to attract new customers. Outdoor is a hot topic right now in Italy, with the big brands in the sector such as The North Face and Patagonia becoming more and more visible in streetwear stores.

Online business is still growing fast in Italy, but only the big players seem to make a profit from it. Many of the smaller businesses that run their online shop alongside their bricks and mortar store feel it simply takes up too much time and effort. Lukas Hoeller from Sub skate shop and SUBlime store in Bolzano says: “If you want to compete then you have to invest, otherwise you can’t be profitable. You also need to stock products others don’t.” Skateboarding sales are stable for the first two quarters of 2017 and skateboarding as a trend is still big in Italy, which makes it easier for stores to sell hardgoods and allows for more skate parks to be built, meaning beginner numbers are growing steadily. The newest skate park opening was in Trento earlier this summer with a decent concrete setup, and it’s well deserved for an area that’s been pushing hard for this for quite some time.

Surf is also stable but surf apparel has suffered with a lot of competition from the streetwear scene with t-shirts and shorts. We feel many stores want to change their brand portfolio sensing their customers are changing. Stores want to gain new customers with fresh new brands in order to compete against online, big box stores and fashion boutiques that now carry pure streetwear brands.

Franz Josef Holler

flow of customers. Accordingly, sales and rentals are going well, even in stores that don’t have direct access to a waterfront, which is the case for Tip To Tail in Bern, Sb Sport in Gland (although it’s not very far from the lake) and Hot Tension in Monthey.

Speaking of Hot Tension in Monthey and its owner Jean Claude Aebi, the summer season is very important and becoming so more and more. He’s overjoyed to see his sales figures go up every year at this time of year. He even admitted to us that his summer sales have recently surpassed his store’s winter sales figures, which is a fairly rare case in our sector in Switzerland. This is a direct result of his passion for kiteboarding, windsurfing and SUP, three sports in which he is now considered a specialist in French-speaking Switzerland. According to him, the sector is healthier than skiing or snowboarding and people who do those sports are passionate about them, making it much easier to sell them equipment. North has positioned itself as the clear leader in kiteboarding, and he works a lot with Fanatic and Red Paddle Co. in the SUP sector. If you believe Jean Claude, it appears as if windsurfing sales are even picking up, but here we’re talking about mostly inexpensive, entry level products, more so than high performance gear. This timid comeback is most likely thanks to the growth of SUP and people’s desire to explore aquatic environments on some form of board. On the other hand, freaks prefer to foil!

We’ll finish with news from the front with a follow up on the implantation of the Austrian giant, Blue Tomato in our Swiss cities. After Zurich, two more cities are directly concerned, Lucerne, which opened this spring and Bern with an opening soon. Are other locations planned and what sort of success will we see in the three stores cited above? It’s still a mystery.

Fabien Grisel



MARKET INTELLIGENCE

GERMANY	UK	FRENCH	ITALY	SPAIN	AUSTRIA	SWISS
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The summer of 2017 has been spared of silly season in Austria. What is usually the slow news period of the year is rife with political goings on: ‘New’ People’s Party, new party chairman, new elections in October. And it would seem things are also alive and well in boardsports this summer. Gernot Brandstätter from Surf Service Graz is pretty happy about his winter season, and summer is also going well: “The varying weather conditions at the beginning of the summer season boosted our wetsuit sales and also hardware in our core segments windsurf, kitesurf, SUP, and wakeboarding are obviously better than 2016.” Surf Service Graz are seeing a “great demand by the returners, who are looking for equipment for themselves as well as their kids. Big volume freeride boards with lightweight and high-performance rigs as well as junior rigs are popular.”

Surf Service Graz is benefitting from the current SUP trend, especially in the higher price segment: “The SUP segment, and here notably the I-SUP range, has become an essential revenue generator.” Discount supermarkets, which are trying to profit from this trend, are not a serious competition for Gernot: “When it comes to inflatable SUP boards the difference in quality is so obvious even for non-professionals, so the not-so-cheap boards, eg. by Fanatic or JP Australia, are selling especially well.” It is a similar story at Surfinasel in Vienna, the bestsellers are “definitely stand-up paddling boards, by far, they are becoming mainstream. Windsurf too is strong again, thanks to SUP,” Peter Bischetsrieder tells us. Surfinasel has launched their own SUP brand named Sup-Monsters last year (see BoardSport SOURCE 83), and presents new products on a regular basis. Peter’s first review is positive through and through: “The brand is selling better and better, thanks to its super good quality. A satisfaction rate of 99.5% is sensational.” Also, the SUP test centre that Surfinasel opened in May 2017 at Alte Donau in Vienna and has been received well by the Viennese. Gernot stresses some things that are crucial in this segment - and

I’m pretty sure this is true for others as well: “Cooperating with efficient distributors with a well-assorted stock, attentive service, and a well-engineered b2b order system.”

Now lets get to a different topic; new brands on the market. We asked Blue Tomato how they decide to take new brands into their range. Senior Buyer Simone Unterrainer explains: “Whether we decide for or against a brand depends on whether it’s a match.” She states that at the moment, it is important “to be open for upcoming trends (even if they are just short ones), and to have them on offer if they fit the broader context.” She also says that “apart from a brand’s general orientation and current trends, certain brand key figures are definitely deciding factors too.” Blue Tomato discovers new brands at trade shows (yes, that’s true!), in the daily business, and on the internet, eg. on blogs. Still, at Blue Tomato “online is the biggest sales channel, but the proportions are balancing out gradually.” In contrary to the shops cited before, the onliner sells apparel, surf (wetsuits and boards), and accessories like backpacks and caps well at the moment. In the skate segment, decks and skate shoes are most popular. And what’s coming in Fall/Winter? “Hopefully snow!” Simone doesn’t see any great innovations for winter. Camouflage is still big, bib pants may have potential, and “highly technical/high-priced outerwear will be an area of focus for us. Here, we had a particularly good performance online.”

Concluding, Gernot from Surf Service Graz guesses: “Thanks to a good sell-through of all high-quality products, there won’t be many sale products at the end of the season. This might minimise our turnover figures short-term, but intermediate-term, it will have a very positive impact on our revenue.” As I told you, good news!

Barbara Mayer

GERMANY	UK	FRENCH	ITALY	SPAIN	AUSTRIA	SWISS
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“Brands are sold on the high street and without shops they’d be nothing. They should take more care of shops when selling online. I’m not saying they shouldn’t sell online, but they should somehow recommend shops stocking their brand each time they make a sale online.” The person talking with such conviction is Sergio Monzón, with experience gathered over 13 years as head of the skate shop El Sótano in Logroño, and as a sales rep for fashion and skateboard brands. “Shops have to be taken care of, they generate employment, bring life to neighbourhoods and sell these brands.” Recently El Sótano changed premises and sales have risen. Sergio believes that this is due partly to the change in location and also keeping a careful eye on the market: “Nowadays you’ve got to get it right with brands and products; if you’re one step ahead and keep your eye on trends via social networking sites, it’s relatively straightforward. Fashions now last for a couple of seasons, in the past they lasted for a couple of years.” Sergio says he sells to all kinds of people, with an average age of between 16 and 25, who want the latest in fashion. From 25 onwards, they’re more refined, with clear ideas and aren’t led by what brands dictate. “Recently, footwear has shrunk, the sale of apparel has risen and technical material has stayed the same. People trust shops for these kinds of products.” Online sales continue to affect shops. Looking out to sea and the waves in San Sebastián, the Surf City on the Basque coast, Julen Larrañaga from surf shop and school Free Surf on La Zurriola beach confirms: “The market is completely saturated with poor quality product, a lot less professional service with no attention to detail and sporting know-how.” With regard to demand he says that “there’s a large number of neosurfers looking for highly effective material that helps them surf better, they don’t tend to look at the brand, but they do look at the price. Our typical customer is a man between 25 and

45 looking for advice he can trust and a long-lasting service. This is something only shops can offer. We are selling more neoprene and accessories. For boards, workshops and large stores are dominating the market for both expert and novice surfers.” Better sales and the evolution of surfing as a sport is also reflected in Salinas, one of the beaches with the best pedigree on the Asturian coast. A report was published recently in El Comercio, stating that surfing generates €5 million per year in the Salinas area and creates employment for 500 people. The municipality has eight surf schools, two international surf and music festivals attracting 100,000 visitors, specialist accommodation, a surfboard factory and various surf shops. La Abyss sells clothes, and accessories in Piedras Blancas and they also emphasise that the influx of visitors is constant. “We sell clothes all year round. With surfing in Castrillón business is guaranteed every single month.” However, not all that glitters is gold; large stores and online sales don’t help businesses in the sector who have to compete against large companies in the sale of apparel. “Many brands sell directly on their websites and promote discounts that we as a small shop can’t match. Nevertheless we still manage to stay afloat and carry on,” Carlos Meana comments, owner of Never Sport in Avilés. As far as the second quarter of 2017 is concerned, the most recent economic information would suggest that the GDP may have undergone a slight additional acceleration, with growth in household consumer spending positioned at 0.7% in the second quarter, compared to 0.4% recorded in the previous quarter. Social security affiliations went up in May, employment is doing well and overall Spain is performing well.

Jokin Arroyo

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MAUI HEAD OFFICE +1 808 205 4517
dealer [at] juckerhawaii.com

OPPORTUNITIES

DAKINE

DAKINE AREA MANAGER

POSITION: Dakine Area Manager (Savants)
LOCATION: Munich, Germany (Dakine Germany Office)
STARTING DATE: September/October 2017
HOW TO APPLY: please send your CV and cover letter to maur@dakine.com

Backed by a proven roster that includes some of the world's top action sports athletes, DAKINE has been an industry leader in action sports accessories for over 30 years. Founded in Haver and based in Newport, Oregon, DAKINE offers a complete range of innovative products, including sport specific to streetwear backpacks, bags, travel gear and accessories. From surf leashes to snowboard technical gloves, going through hiking mountain backpacks, DAKINE offers essential accessories for the ultimate outdoor enthusiast.

MISSION: Your mission is to implement marketing initiatives across the German and Austrian market that drive grassroots activities and create "on-brand" experiences for the end consumer. Your goal is to position the Dakine brand in retail and increase visibility at the POS significantly. You will be fully integrated in the German organizational structure and stay connected to the European marketing stream. Beside your main focus on retail marketing, you are connecting with national brand ambassadors, sports partnerships and our PR partner whenever needed. You will report to the German Sales Manager and the European marketing team.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Maximize sales, hit sales targets, and look for sales opportunities.
- Provide needed sales reports and analyze market and competitors.
- Develop and maintain sustainable business and customer relationships across several sales channels by understanding their needs.
- Provide best in class customer service through building relationships.
- Day to day sales contact for retailers in various sales channels.
- Drive successful sell-in and sell-out.
- Presence of all brand platforms such as retail events, and consumer events, and trade shows.
- Product clinics in exchange with our retailers.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum of 1-2 years work experience retail and focused in Sales or Retail.
- Love for traveling and be out in the market.
- Fluent in German and English, both written and spoken.
- A great work ethic and a strong sense of what is cool.
- Excellent market know-how in both Sports and Lifestyle segment.
- Driving license class B.
- Deep knowledge on some of the Dakine sports.
- Communicative, positive, person with a teamplayer character.
- Good skills with all office applications and Internet.

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- Attractive compensation package depending on your qualification.
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If you are an experienced distributor or sales agency in your market, and would like further information or to discuss the opportunity to represent OTIS Eyewear in your market, please contact OTIS Global Brand Director Scott Lewis on the details below.

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NIDECKER GROUP

SWITZERLAND COUNTRY MANAGER NIDECKER GROUP

SUMMARY OF POSITION

DUE TO CONTINUING GROWTH AND SALES MODEL EVOLUTION, NIDECKER GROUP IS LOOKING FOR A COUNTRY MANAGER RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPING NEW SALES STRATEGIES AND PROMOTE NIDECKER GROUP'S BRANDS IN SWITZERLAND.

NIDECKER GROUP is located in Rüschlikon, Switzerland - on the French-Swiss Riviera, close to the Alps and the Lake Geneva. The GROUP manages some of the best snowboarding brands in the world as Nidecker, Jones, Yes, Now & Flow and as well some internationally recognized Stand Up Paddle brands.

As Country Manager, you will be working and reporting to the BOARD in order to develop and apply new Sales Strategies for Switzerland. You will work closely with the Board Managers and define a marketing plan and budget to promote all the GROUP's Brands in Switzerland. You will be in charge of managing the Key Accounts, Premium Specialty Stores and the Sales Reps.

With our office in Rüschlikon and the best growing snowboarding brands in our portfolio, we can offer an interesting challenge for those who have experience in Outdoor Sport Sales and preferably the Snowboarding category. Upon successful completion, these new sales strategies would be applied, under your management, to European countries and/or major International Websites.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Development & execution of new Sales Strategies and Marketing Plan for Switzerland.
- Establishment & monitoring both online B2B & B2C platforms for Switzerland (with IT and marketing teams).
- Management of Key Accounts & Premium Specialty Stores.
- Management of the Sales Reps: establishment & monitoring stores portfolio, sales goals & turnover.
- Organization & Participation for Sales events: ISPO, Demo, Sales Meetings, Local Events & others.
- Reporting regularly to the BOARD Sales Numbers and Results against objectives.

QUALIFICATIONS & SKILLS

- Bachelor degree in Business, Commercial or equivalent.
- Experience in Sales of Outdoor Sports, Snowboard is an advantage.
- Fluent German and French speaking & writing; English is an advantage.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office products (Excel, Word and PowerPoint).
- Excellent communication and presentation skills.
- Ability for traveling in Switzerland: work during week-ends, supporting high density events in Winter.
- Personal interest for Outdoor Sports & Awareness for Outdoor Sports preferred.

This is a full-time position and is available immediately.

We are looking forward to see your application and CV.
joel@nidecker.ch NIDECKER SA, 2 Place de l'Industrie, 1180 Rüschlikon, Switzerland

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SINNER

SINNER is currently looking for a
COUNTRY MANAGER GERMANY
(German native, full-time)

WHAT YOU WILL DO

As SINNER's ambassador you are responsible for the whole German market covering office, sports and lifestyle accounts by managing sales and logistics to deliver their orders.

Through close collaboration with buyers and retailers you develop long-term and create new insights in the customer journey of our German target group. You generate sales reports and prepare of wholesale and retail results and report feedback to the export manager.

You work closely with our sales/marketing team of the Dutch HQ to optimize any sales opportunity, you build and manage a solid network of buyers across Germany and keep them up to date of new collections (including product information, color books, line sheets, etc.). Together with your reports you will develop and increase SINNER's presence in the market.

Your result-driven personality ensures optimal sales and strengthens our dynamic, international organization.

WHAT WE ASK

- You have a broad experience in the sports and lifestyle industries, industry and maintain a solid network of key buyers in department stores, shops, buying groups and online platforms.
- You are a dedicated, proactive people manager with high organizational and analytical skills able to analyze KPI reports, forecast stock needs and product forecast reports.
- You are a strong and convincing communication in meetings as well as presentations and you are fluent in German and English, both written and oral writing.
- You have a solid driving license and you are to travel with customers and build sales relationships.

WHAT WE OFFER

- You will be a part of the SINNER international team.
- We ensure personal and professional growth.
- Flexibility bonus based if needed, 1 competitive salary, company car and annual incentive bonus are guaranteed.

WHO WE ARE

- International, ambitious and growing, always striving for the best.
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- Fast to react to demands and follow our dreams.

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Application in response to this vacancy is not appreciated.

CONTACT THE HEAD OF HR: hr@sinner.nl
TELEPHONE: +31 (0) 20 610 1000
ADDRESS: SINNER B.V. is a limited liability company with its registered office in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.



<div>2</div> <div>SEPTEMBER</div> <div></div> <div>VANS SHOP RIOT</div> <div>ATHENS, GREECE WWW.VANS.COM</div>	<div>6-17</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>HURLEY PRO AT TRESTLES</div> <div>CALIFORNIA WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM</div>	<div>7-9</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>SURF EXPO</div> <div>ORLANDO, FLORIDA WWW.SURFEXPO.COM</div>	<div>11-12</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>SPORT-ACHAT</div> <div>LYON, FRANCE WWW.SPORTAIR.FR</div>
<div>18-19</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>SPORT-ACHAT</div> <div>NANTES, FRANCE WWW.SPORTAIR.FR</div>	<div>19-21</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>PADDLE EXPO</div> <div>NUREMBERG, GERMANY WWW.PADDEEXPO.DE</div>	<div>23</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>VANS PRO SKATE PARK SERIES WORLD CHAMPS</div> <div>SHANGHAI, CHINA WWW.VANSPARKSERIES.COM</div>	<div>TBC</div> <div>OCTOBER</div> <div></div> <div>VANS SHOP RIOT FINALS</div> <div>MILAN, ITALY WWW.VANS.COM</div>
<div>1-2</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>SPORTJAM</div> <div>SAN SEBASTIAN, BASQUE COUNTRY WWW.SPORTJAM.COM</div>	<div>7-18</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>QUIKSILVER PRO HOSSEGOR</div> <div>FRANCE WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM</div>	<div>20-31</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>MEO RIP CURL PRO</div> <div>PORTUGAL WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM</div>	<div>21-22</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>MOREBOARDS STUBAI PREMIERE</div> <div>STUBAI, AUSTRIA WWW.STUBAI-PREMIERE.COM</div>
<div>26-29</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>SKI AND SNOWBOARD SHOW SOUTH</div> <div>LONDON, UK WWW.SKIANDSNOWBOARD.CO.UK</div>	<div>27-29</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>SKIPASS</div> <div>MODENA, ITALY WWW.SKIPASS.IT</div>	<div>3-5</div> <div>NOVEMBER</div> <div></div> <div>SKIEXPO</div> <div>HELSINKI, FINLAND WWW.SKIEXPO.FI</div>	<div>25-6</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>TARGET MAUI WOMEN'S PRO</div> <div>HAWAII, USA WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM</div>
<div>TBC</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>O'NEILL PLEASURE JAM</div> <div>SCHLADMING DACHSHUN WWW.PLEASUREJAM.COM</div>	<div>TBC</div> <div>DECEMBER</div> <div></div> <div>AIR & STYLE</div> <div>BEIJING, CHINA WWW.AIR-STYLE.COM</div>	<div>TBC</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>WORLD SNOWBOARD DAY</div> <div>WORLDWIDE WWW.WORLD-SNOWBOARD-DAY.COM</div>	<div>8-20</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>BILLABONG PIPE MASTERS</div> <div>OAHU, HAWAII WWW.WORLDSURFLEAGUE.COM</div>



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CATCH *of the* DAY



ONE-EYED MONSTER

#88

SEEK, BERLIN



Dickies Kevin Penney and Heiko Bartel



Eastpac's Jonathan Demortier



Lightning Bolts MarianaTaveres and Sergio Santos.



Neff's Olivier Lemoine

BRIGHT, BERLIN



Adidas' Aleksander Rist



Cheapo's Viktor Telégin



Element's Guillaume Piveteau and Tina Fromling



Heimplanet's Steffen Clauss



Iriedaily's Mathias Rocker and Denise Graff



Makia's Totti Nyberg and Fresco's Franz Josef Hoeller



Mau's Stacy Demet, Nuno Fonseca and Jim Demet



Nikita's Seb and Alexandra Zwingel and Katharina Baumann



Nixon's Florian Fischer and Joe Pilkington



Poetic Collective's founder Tom Botwid

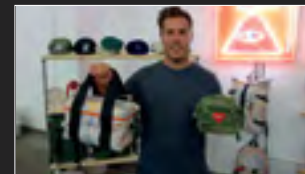


RVCA's Etienne Pinon, Greg Puget and Jan Holzer



Shiner's crew

JACKET REQUIRED, LONDON



Cool By The Pool's Mark Blackman



Element's Owen Dallimore



Globe's Josh Barrow



Quiksilver & DC's Ed Martin & Jennifer Herren



Shiner's Joe Bourne



Sole Tech's Dave Cridland



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