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EUROPEAN SURF/SKATE/SNOW BUSINESS

109 NOVEMBER/DECEMBER
2021



**BIG WIG: PETER BAUER
TRADE SHOWS IN A DIGITAL WORLD**

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SPLITBOARD HARDWEAR, SNOWBOARD BOOTS, SNOWBOARD
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SNOW PACKS, MENS SURF APPAREL, SKATE SHOES,
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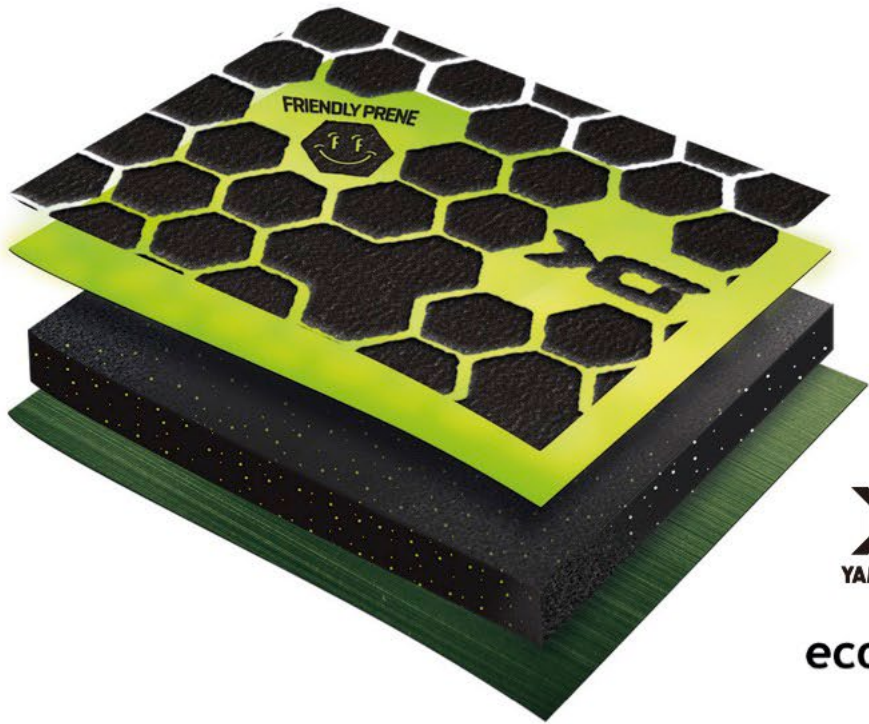


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It's mid-December and winter deliveries have been affected much worse this year than last as covid-related supply chain and logistics problems have finally caught up with us. Even though 12 months has passed, there is still a similar uncertainty in the air that was also there last December. However, we now have 1.5 Covid winters experience under our belt and the vaccination roll-out is also on our side. Last year's tentative pre-ordering by many retailers meant most brands underproduced for this season, but this combined with late deliveries has seen opportunistic brands scoop up some early in-season orders.

Our very own oracle, Source Publisher, Clive Ripley contemplates the ramifications of ISPO

moving its show from January to November. A concept, which at first seemed bizarre, has now been embraced by many as longer lead times become the norm. Head to page 34, where Clive takes a look at the future of trade shows in a digital world.

Highlights from our trend reports this issue include coverage on the booming splitboard market (p53) and it's also interesting to see just how radically the binding sector (p23) is evolving. Mr Amplid, Peter Bauer pulls a pew for this issue's Big Wig (p44) as we talk to the carve king on all things snowboarding and business.

If we spoke of pent-up demand last winter, this year it's palpable. Personally, after being spoilt by living in the Alps for many years, surfing had become my go-to daydream. But having not snowboarded since January 2020 - my longest break in 18 years - I've now started dreaming of surfing on snow for the first time in a long time. These thoughts have without doubt been inspired by the

slew of incredible snowboard content already released this winter with stand-out projects including Driven, Relapse, Elles, Chroma, Definitely Maybe and Oasen. And a notable mention goes to Ethan Morgan, Monster and the guys at Method Mag for creating the best season opener in recent memory. I couldn't be there, but the coverage from the event was stellar and it felt like an event the whole industry really needed.

One thing's for sure is those first turns on snow this winter are going to be sweeter than ever before. Never again shall I take a turn for granted, because you never know when it could be your last.

I never knew Marko Grilc personally, but this editorial is dedicated to all those who did and especially to his family. Gone too soon, but never forgotten. Rest In Powder, Grilo.

Always Sideways
Harry Mitchell Thompson
Ed-in-chief

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On the cover Scott McMorris, Oakley Sports Marketing & Communications Manager North Europe above a snowy Edinburgh, Scotland. Photo Will Nangle.



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NEWS

#109

ISPO Munich shifts dates permanently from January to November

This move by ISPO Munich, will have a significant impact on the tradeshow calendar with brands needing to have samples ready for the end of November. For many brands the new November date will work better with their own ordering schedules. This is not the first time winter tradeshow have examined this move but ISPO is the first to take the plunge. For 2022, this means that ISPO Munich 2022 will now take place from November 28 to 30, 2022; Monday to Wednesday.

Alder Teams up With Division Nautica For Spain & France

Alder Surf has appointed Division Nautica as distributor for Spain and France

The 50-year-old surf brand Alder is teaming up with Spanish distributor Division Nautica to serve and strengthen their relationship with retailers and surf schools in Spain and France. Division Nautica is a well established family run business, specialising in the distribution of kitesurf and neoprene across Spain for over 17 years and is excited to now include Alder wetsuits and neoprene accessories, Surfworx soft boards and Global hardware.

Deborah Palmer Keiser is the new chief operating officer at Boardriders.

Keiser will join the company on December 13 and she will be based at the group's HQ in Huntington Beach, California. Keiser succeeds Colin Smith, who has been serving as interim COO for the past few months. Most recently, Keiser was president at specialty bag and travel brand Timbuk2 and before that chief supply chain officer at Yeezy LLC,.

Sooruz teams up with Jorcani for Portugal, Spain & the Canary Islands distribution

As part of Soörüz's rapidly expanding international distribution network, Barcelona based Jorcani Sports will take over Portuguese, Spanish & Canary Islands territories. Jorcani is a major player in European watersport distribution with over 20 years experience working with brands such as Starboard, Severne, Airush, Surftech, Tahe, Sic.

Centrano take on Hydroponic distribution

Centrano are now distributors for Barcelona based Hydroponic's complete skate clothing and hardgoods lines across all of Europe with the exception of Portugal, Holland, Belgium and Spain.

Sportair Teams Up With Who's Next For New 360° RIDE Show

Outdoor brands will be given a dedicated space at France's longstanding fashion tradeshow, Who's Next. The 360°RIDE area is being introduced to the tradeshow by Sportair. The show in Paris will take place from 21-24 January.

Marko Grilc RIP

Professional Slovenian pro snowboarder Marko Grilc has passed away at the age of 38 through an accident on the mountain. Our

condolences go out to his fiancée Nina and his children Max and Emma. Grilo had a sensational career and in recent years had become increasingly known for his new stoke for snowboarding found through his family shred time.

Two Palms Hard Seltzer Launched by Leading Surf & Outdoor Lifestyle Industry Executives

Two Palms Artisanal, which quietly launched in its hometown in late April under the guidance of founders Derek O'Neill and Steve Veytia, is now being readied for a broader national and pan-European rollout. Hard Seltzer is the new power category in the global beverage market, having taken the United States and Australia by storm in the past 12 months.

SIGB Snow Test Returns For 2022 in Kühtai, Austria

After 2 cancelled years, the SIGB Snow Test is making a grand return. The test is set to take place in Kühtai, Austria in 6-11 March 2022. At going to press SIGB are inviting people to complete a registration form and register their interest.

GARA SPLITBOARDS HIRES RASMUS OSTERGAARD & launches new splitboard binding company

Ota Tyl, founder of GARA Splitboards is thrilled to welcome Rasmus Ostergaard as his right-hand man and global Chief Pleasure Officer. His task will be to develop the GARA brand and help bring more structure to the daily challenges of a rapidly growing business. Rasmus will handle global sales and marketing whilst Ota will focus on product development and production. You can reach Rasmus at rasmus@garasplitboards.com

Centrano distribution launches snow division

Starting with the Kemper snowboards distribution across all of Europe, Belgium-based Centrano is entering the snowboard market. Further deals with other snow brands are in negotiation and will be announced shortly. Kemper is one of the oldest names in the snowboard market and was originally launched in the Canada in 1987

Pleasure snowboard magazine launches English language version

This winter, Pleasure Snowboard Magazine is entering its 25th season. Celebrating two decades which have resulted in more than 200 print magazines full of unforgettable memories and witnessing snowboarding history. When Covid-19 came it forced the Pleasure Crew to rethink. So as of this winter Pleasure will be available in both its traditional German version and now a specific English edition

House of Vans Celebrates 10th Anniversary with Commemorative Book

It's been 10 years since Vans brought House of Vans into existence and to commemorate the anniversary, they've released a 200 page book "House of Vans – If These Walls Could Talk" that documents and reflects on the good times. Limited quantities will be available for purchase at Vans.com/family

OutDoor by ISPO moved to earlier date

OutDoor by ISPO will also be moving dates from the end of June to June 12 to 14, 2022 (Sunday to Tuesday) and this will be followed by a further move to the end of May or beginning of June in 2023.



The 30th Anniversary “TRIPLE DECADE”

30 years of history, 30 years of perspective

Born in 1992, “FLUX” was created with the concept of providing the “very best snowboard bindings for Japanese feet.” It was the pursuit of craftsmanship that would convince the Japanese snowboard community and bring about product quality of the highest caliber. From the beginning, FLUX has added a variety of new functions, new technology and innovative ideas from a global perspective.

Through the powerful combination of feedback from both Japanese riders, international riders and the development team, FLUX has now expanded beyond Japan to 26 countries around the world. Boots were added to the product lineup in 2017, with snowboards to be added to the collection in 2020.

Flux continues soaring to even further heights, impressing all snowboarders allowing them to make their dreams a reality.

Our products aim to push the progression and evolution of snowboarding giving riders the equipment to do what they thought was previously not possible.



www.flux-bindings.com

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TRADE SHOWS PREVIEWS

SLIDE OTS

TELFORD, UK
JANUARY 18-20, 2022

Slide is back after cancellation due to covid last year. And it's back as a joint show with the The Outdoor Industry Association, the organisers of the OTS summer show. The Outdoor Industry Association's members had been asking for a winter show and running the two together as a single show was seen as the most attractive option for both brands and retailers. As in previous years the show will be held at Telford and had by time of going to press attracted 79 exhibitors, with many of the major snowsports and outdoor brands represented.

Slide is the only opportunity for UK retailers to see so many brands under one roof, making it the key event in the UK snow industry calendar and an easy decision for specialist retailers. Slide is still very much an order writing show, with brands holding back-to-back meetings, so retailers should book ahead to make best use of their time at the show. Additionally Show organiser Lesley Beck commented: “The latest news from ISPO and the absence of a European show this winter means that our 2022 event is more important than ever to the UK trade”. So this is now the only opportunity for brands to showcase the latest product ranges and innovations and for snowsports and outdoor retailers to place forward orders to guarantee stock for delivery for the following season.

The renamed Slide & OTS Awards will recognise the hottest, most talked-about products at the show, with the winners in each of the 6 categories Snowsport Hardware, Outdoor Hardware, Softwear, Accessories, Fresh Brand and Eco awards on display with the finalists in a dedicated area for the duration of the show. Judges include the SIGB (Snowsport Industries of GB) member retailers, OIA (Outdoor Industries Association) member retailers,

WINTER PRO 2022

LA ROSIERE, FRANCE
JANUARY 9-11, 2022

This is a new b2b on snow demo in La Rosiere that is organised by Act Media and replaces the Rock On Snow Pro that was held annually in La Clusaz. Act Media, the publishers of Act Snowboarding has been involved in organising events including the Ride The Snake and Enjoy The Glacier in Les 2 Alpes since 2010 and has long term relationships with many of the snowboard brands.

La Rosière resort which is renowned for its snowfall is ideally located in the middle of Haute-Tarentaise, just above Bourg Saint Maurice and offers a 2,000m vertical drop (850m - 2850m). It's part of the the San Bernardo area with 170 km of slopes distributed between La Rosière in France and La Thuile in Italy.

This will be the first on snow demo of the year, with retailers meeting up to test more than 45 brand's 2022/23 range of snowboard products for the first time. At time of going to press the hardgoods brand list includes Amplid, Arbor, Bataleon, Bent Metal, Borealis, Burton, Capita, Deeluxe, Drake, Fjell, Flow, Furberg, Gnu,

Goodboards, Jones, K2 snowboarding, Karakoram, Lib Tech, Nidecker, Nok Boards, Nitro, Now, Plum, Raiden, Ride, Rome, Rossignol, Roxy Snowboards, Salomon, Sandy Shapes, Slash By GiGi, Thirty-Two, Union, Weston, Yes, and other brands include 686, Dakine, Volcom, Quiksilver, Roxy, Saxx Underwear, PAG, VonZipper, Electric, Spy and Mammut.

Winter Pro will be based on three sites right next to the slopes. The 700 sq

media and industry opinion-leaders. The exception is the Eco Award, the winner of this will be selected by POW UK.

The following side events are scheduled at the show, the SIGB end of day drinks at the central café between 6-8pm on the opening evening, on day two the Slide & OTS Winter Sustainability Breakfast sponsored by Equip from 8-9 in the morning with speakers on topics such as net zero and carbon neutral, And later on the same day the SIGB AGM and Slide & OTS Awards Announcement followed by an Open Forum discussion.

Telford is well served by the road and rail network. A free shuttle from the train station to the exhibition centre helps make the trip a seamless one and car drivers

are offered free parking. On-site hotels offer reduced rates for visitors meaning you can easily walk from hotel to show and back. Doors open at 9am and close at 7pm on the first two days and at 4pm on the final day and the show is free to attend for all visitors. Visitors are reminded that everyone will need to register to gain entry to the show and no one will be auto registered as a visitor, even if you have previously visited the show. So for all the key players in the UK snowsports market, Slide is still the place to be, see you in Telford

Additionally one for your calander, the SIGB Ski and Snowboard test is to be held at Kuhtai, Austria 7-11 March 2022. More info here: <https://sigb.org.uk/ski-snowboard-test/>

www.slideotswinter.co.uk

metre test village containing all the exhibiting hardgoods brands is located in front of the departure point of the Roches Noires chairlift, 30 m from the car park. Next to this will be the 200 sq metre reception hall which will be occupied by exhibiting accessory and textile brands and will also be the location of the receptions, breakfasts and conferences and just next to the reception room a further exhibition area for brands is reserved in Le Boréal restaurant. Additionally if required, showrooms for distributors and brands are also available in the apartments of the Le Sky residence, just above the Le Boréal restaurant.

The demo will be from 8am to 4pm everyday with the Roches Brunes chairlift exclusively for Winter Pro participants for the first hour of each day. And on top of the resort's terrain there will be a marked and secure splitboarding trail starting from the test village for Winter Pro participants and a snow test area (Table, box, woops, carving zone, Hip). During the event Mammut will be offering free avalanche safety training and avalanche transceiver testing and on Sunday a Banked Slalom Contest organized by Safety Shred Days will take place. In the evenings the Le Boréal restaurant will be the place to be.

There are regular shuttle buses between La Rosiere and the Bourg Saint Maurice station which is served by the TGV High Speed Trains direct to Paris, Marseille and Geneva. Nearest airports are Chambéry, Lyons, Grenoble and Geneva. Looking forward to seeing you there for the snowboard trade season opener, the first snowboard business event in Europe since spring 2020.

www.actsnowboarding.com

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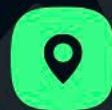


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TRADE SHOWS

REVIEWS

The Paddle Sports Show was Source's first trade show since ISPO 2020 and it was great to see people in the flesh again. For all the use of Skype and Zoom etc nothing beats developing business relationships face to face. For the first time in 18 months we have an events calendar page, so bit by bit a sense of normal is returning.

PADDLE SPORTS SHOW

LYON, FRANCE
SEPT 29-OCT 1, 2021

The launch of the Paddle Sports Show in Lyon provides the European paddle industry with a new show following Paddleexpo closing its doors in 2020. The organizer of the new show Philippe Doux, Founder of KS

Publishing, was a long-time partner of the Paddleexpo and ran the awards ceremony, so he understood what the paddle industry was looking for from a trade show. The new location of Lyon provided a great backdrop to kickstart the paddle industry trade event calendar with the Tony Garnier exhibition Hall right in the heart of the city.

With 83 exhibitors coming from 24 countries, the 7000 m2 hall was nearly fully booked with most of the brands one would expect as well as many new companies. British brands were few in number as many had postponed exhibiting at the show until next year when the complications of Brexit will have hopefully eased.

As before, exhibitors, distributors and retailers gathered to do business, catch up with each other and drink a few beers as has been the case in the past. The traffic figures for the show were 235 unique visitors on Day 1, 471 on Day 2 and 87 on day 3. Of these 49% of visitors visited the show for 2 consecutive days. These figures are pretty much in line with the old Paddle Expo show so a good result given the new location, organiser and covid

backdrop. Stands such as Red Paddle and Indiana were solid with back-to-back meetings and retailers and distributors who made it to the show were serious about doing business. As show organiser Philipp put it "Quality vs Quantity is what we hear the most from all exhibitors and visitors; both parties had time to really go far into their relationships & exchanges, which has been mutually appreciated." Brands I spoke to at the show all indicated they would be back next year, so it looks like this show has cemented itself as the key European trade event for the Paddle industry.

Throughout the show daily webinars & conferences in both French & English took place covering themes such as Increasing Paddlesports Access Development, Brexit and its Consequence and the Future of the Outdoor Industry. All 3 days were presented by Jean Yves Lapeyrière, President ECOE (European Confederation of Outdoor Employers).

Last but not least was the fun Paddle Industry awards party on the 2nd evening. The 11 categories in the Paddlesport Product of the Year Awards are presented by Kayak Session Publishing and chosen by a panel of independent judges. Winners from the SUP industry included Starboard with the Special Jury Prize, Fanatic with their Bee Board, Hold Up for their inflatable Pack Trekking tent attachment and Scoprega with Super F pump in Accessories

So all in all a great start. Paddle Industry put the event in your calendar. See you in Lyon, Sept 28-30th 2022.

EUROSIMA SURF SUMMIT

HOSSEGOR, FRANCE
OCTOBER 14-15, 2021

This year Eurosima welcomed the action sports industry to the 20th edition of its traditional 2-day conference at the Hossegor Sporting Casino, following last year's online only format due to the global health crisis.

The summit started at 10am with the opening address by Jean-Louis Rodrigues Eurosima President who reviewed the fortunate situation the industry finds itself in as a winner from the covid crisis. The opening speaker Emmanuelle Duez, the Founder of The Bosen Project, presented on New Types of Work Interactions and team Motivation. She believes after analysing the effects of the pandemic on the business world that leaders are now expected to manage complexity, to have the courage to take decisions and bear the responsibility for what they have planned.

After lunch Laurent Chambertin, former international volleyball player came to pass on his experiences in interpersonal relations within groups and the construction of the collective intelligence of a team. Then the leading professional organization in the French sports and leisure sector, the Union sport & cycle, came to explain its strategic alliance with Eurosima to represent, support and defend the interests of their companies. Pascale Gozzi, CEO of Gozzi Sports at Sport2000 and Union Sport & Cycle President, Jean-Louis Rodrigues Eurosima President and Virgile Caillet (Union Sport & Cycle General Delegate) all took in turns to explain their point of view in this round table conversation.

Friday started with Tiago Pires, who shared his experience in his transition

into a second career after over 20 years in the competitive circuit. Next up was the hotly awaited debate "Is Portugal the Next European Surf Hot Spot in Europe?" With Tiago Pires, Pedro Fernandes of Despomar, Patrick Stilwell, Creative Director of the Partners advertising agency, Cheyne Bradburn from the WSL Europe and Jean-Louis Rodrigues. It was accepted by the panel that the reason why Portugal is hosting a World Tour event is because Portugal has been able to unite surf brands, non-surf brands, and the government to invest in surfing.

Following lunch the CSR commitment of the action Sports industry was discussed by Aymeric de Rorthays Au Vieux Campeur General Manager, Audrey Querau Lamerie, the founder of Alltroc, Julien Martel – CEO and co-founder of Akewatu, Thibaut Haegdorens of RepareTaCombi.com, and Daniel Guntschnig Founder of Polyola and François Sorbier of Angell.

Alongside the conference, the 7th edition of the Surfing Lounge exhibition pulled together many creative and innovative products from the local Action Sports brands.

The Summit ended on Friday evening with the annual Waterman's Ball party. This year's theme was "Chic & Connect" and a charity raffle organized in collaboration with the French bicycle brand Angell raised funds (€1,050) for the benefit of the Water Family association. The highlight of the evening was the Eurosima Surf Industry Awards ceremony with Johanne Defay receiving the Best Female European Surfer of the Year Award and Joan Duru receiving the women's European Surfer of the Year award and Kauli Vaast, winning the Rookie of the Year trophy. Jérémy Flores was honored with the "Competitive Career Achievement Award" and Frédéric Basse received a large ovation for his "Lifetime Achievement Award."



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SNOWBOARD BOOTS 2022/23

In 2021, people learned how to stay local and make the most out of their own surroundings. The pan European shutdown of ski resorts forced more people to get involved with local outdoor sports. This will continue in 2022 and maybe 2023. The huge increase in demand for the gear that comes with that will potentially show its face again this winter. Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to next winter's Snowboard Boots 2022/23 Retail Buyer's Guide.



Despite the side effects of Covid-19, ordering/production issues, transport delays and delivery timelines, the first analysis shows little carry-over. Like Ride, K2, Vans and Rome, only black colourways on some best seller models or kids boots have seen a smart handling process to help retailers recover from last winter. Everybody has their own strategy to counter the pandemic effect and it is safe to say that brands have been creative to overcome problems, find solutions and anticipate future issues with long term flexible plans. For instance, Nidecker hired Mauricio Molina, a shoe-maker and boot guru, as product line manager to revamp their entire boot collection. For their 30th anniversary collection, Flux will not change anything as their factory anticipated early material supply to keep the production stable and in time. All in all, everyone wants to meet their customers' preferences. Flo Heim at Deeluxe states, "our goal is to bring a fresh and interesting new line every year and provide our customers with the best products possible. We want to do our best to keep people excited and supply them with gear that makes them stoked to go snowboarding". Words to live by.

GREEN ME UP!

These days, eco-consciousness is a strong topic. Some brands are leading by example while others are asking out the help of external agencies to follow the right path. Yet they unanimously agree that greenwashing is not the way to go for our industry. For example, ThirtyTwo is part of all of Sole Technology's eco initiatives that reduce the company's carbon footprint and focus on environmentally responsible business decisions. But as Tommy Delago at Nitro states

"If you seriously want to reduce your emissions, you need to look at the whole process from raw materials all the way to product disposal." Tommy Delago, Nitro

"If you seriously want to reduce your emissions, you need to look at the whole process from raw materials all the way to product disposal."

Besides plastic-free packaging and avoiding airfreight, brands are starting to source and develop new eco materials to build their boots. As far as it could go, Salomon managed to build "the all0-new ECHO boot with 20% of recycled material out of the total weight of the boot. This new boot also features the FuzeSurge midsole – a 30% biosourced EVA component" claims Baptiste Chaussignand. For Elias Elhardt's new signature model, Deeluxe is using Bloom Rise foam made out of algae. It replaces 90% of the EVA used in a regular snowboard boot. And DC are on the same tip with their algae bloom Impact Insole™. With the future looking greener, it will be exciting to see how boots continue to evolve.

Change has to start somewhere and the snowboard industry is taking a great step forward.

TECH TREND

Most of the brands offer specialized products and all terrain workhorses. The ultimate goal for brands is creating a product range

that is reliable, simple, durable, diverse and to keeps its promises in terms of efficiency and functionality no matter the terrain and conditions. In order to reach that goal, most of the brands took the opportunity to work on new materials and fabrics. For instance, “Nitro has expanded some constructions and materials that they started this year, also into additional models for 22/23: 3D knitted fabrics, thermo welded overlays and reinforcements while working on several mid-to-long term raw material projects during the Covid period” explains Tommy Delago.

With comfort and fit being a sensitive and ongoing quest in product development, most brands are following the out-of-the-box fit or customization path. You name it: K2’s “#winningwithfit”, Nitro’s “Ultimate Fit”, Rossignol’s “Precision Fit”, Salomon’s “Fit to Ride” or Head’s very own “Liquid Fit” technology, a revolutionary and sustainable snowboard boot customization system, already introduced this winter. Comfort and precision are key topics as always. Brands are always refining the heel hold in every situation but without compromising the comfort and blood flow in our happy feet. Burton revised their liners by incorporating a memory foam construction in the toe box to increase comfort where the boot interacts with the binding toe hooks and DC have added recycled mesh to create more sustainable and breathable liners.

Cushioning through the mid and outsole has been a development field for some time. Snowboard boots are the interface between the board/binding combo and the human body. Northwave’s “ETPU Shock absorber” or Salomon’s “FuzeSurge” midsole guarantee to keep your bones and joints strong and alive. Let’s not forget the search for the perfect grip, which can save your life while climbing down an icy ridge or hopping a few rocks while heading to your favourite chute. In that case, Vans switched to a new Winter Traction rubber compound on all of their boots for better grip and traction, Flux draws inspiration from snow tires’ structure, Northwave partnered with HyperGrip to provide great control and traction while Nidecker focuses on the latest iteration of Vibram’s Ictreack rubber and Salomon uses their Winter Contagrip, which Chaussignand claims “the best level of grip of natural terrain and icy conditions.” Safety first.

Last but not least, following DC this winter, Nitro will introduce Step On® compatible boots, the Profile and Cave models, which will “be a great addition in fit, function and style to the well-established functionality of the Burton Step On® system”, stated Tommy Delago. On their own ends, Burton focuses on their Step On® softer boot offerings, notably the new Photon Step® On Soft and Felix Step On® Soft.

LACING SYSTEM: BOA SUPREMACY?

All snowboard boot brands are working closely with BOA. Despite developing their own lacing systems and continuing to use them in their product lines. ALL brands believe in the reliability of the BOA closure systems and praise it as being practical, user-friendly and efficient.

BOA TX3 lace combined with H4 dials are the hot lacing system at the moment and it’s often combined with traditional lacing or even speed lacing. Rome uses “BOA TX3 woven laces to get the snug, dialled-in hold of BOA , but with a bit more give and flex which we feel snowboarding needs” adds Matt Stillman. With countless options for lacing systems, end consumers have the chance to find their favourite set-up. Brands have seen a lot of success in BOA boot offerings and therefore continue to offer a solid variety of BOA boots to satisfy the market’s demand.

“BOA TX3 woven laces to get the snug, dialled-in hold of BOA , but with a bit more give and flex which we feel snowboarding needs” Matt Stillman, Rome

COLOURS OF LIFE

Back in black, black is back! Despite black continually being the number one colourway, lots of manufacturers are making the effort and taking the risk to create popping pieces, either on the entire boot or through bright highlights and tone-on-tone earth pigments. Many agree that the “biggest volume (in a model’s sales) is not always the

“We want to do our best to keep people excited and supply them with gear that makes them stoked to go snowboarding” Flo Heim, Deeluxe



black colourway”, mentions Tommy Delago. Deeluxe, which is known at times for bringing up some monochromatic colour collection shakers, now adds some flashy highlight colours and appealing details “to bring a bit more colour to the collection, without trying to be super poppy”.

Still, Flux, Rome, Ride, Vans and Head boot collections are defined by timeless colourways and clean patterns. Northwave is offering Ethan Morgan’s new Decade pro model. Inspired by his successful DIYX event concept, it allows the customer to be the graphic artist. The winner of the competition will be a special guest at one of the DIYX events. At Vans, they use innovative skate tech and styling from their Winter MTE line that influences the snow category and vice versa, built specifically with snowboarders in mind. For the 22/23 season, ThirtyTwo collabs with Crab Grab, Santa Cruz, Spring Break and Chris Christenson.

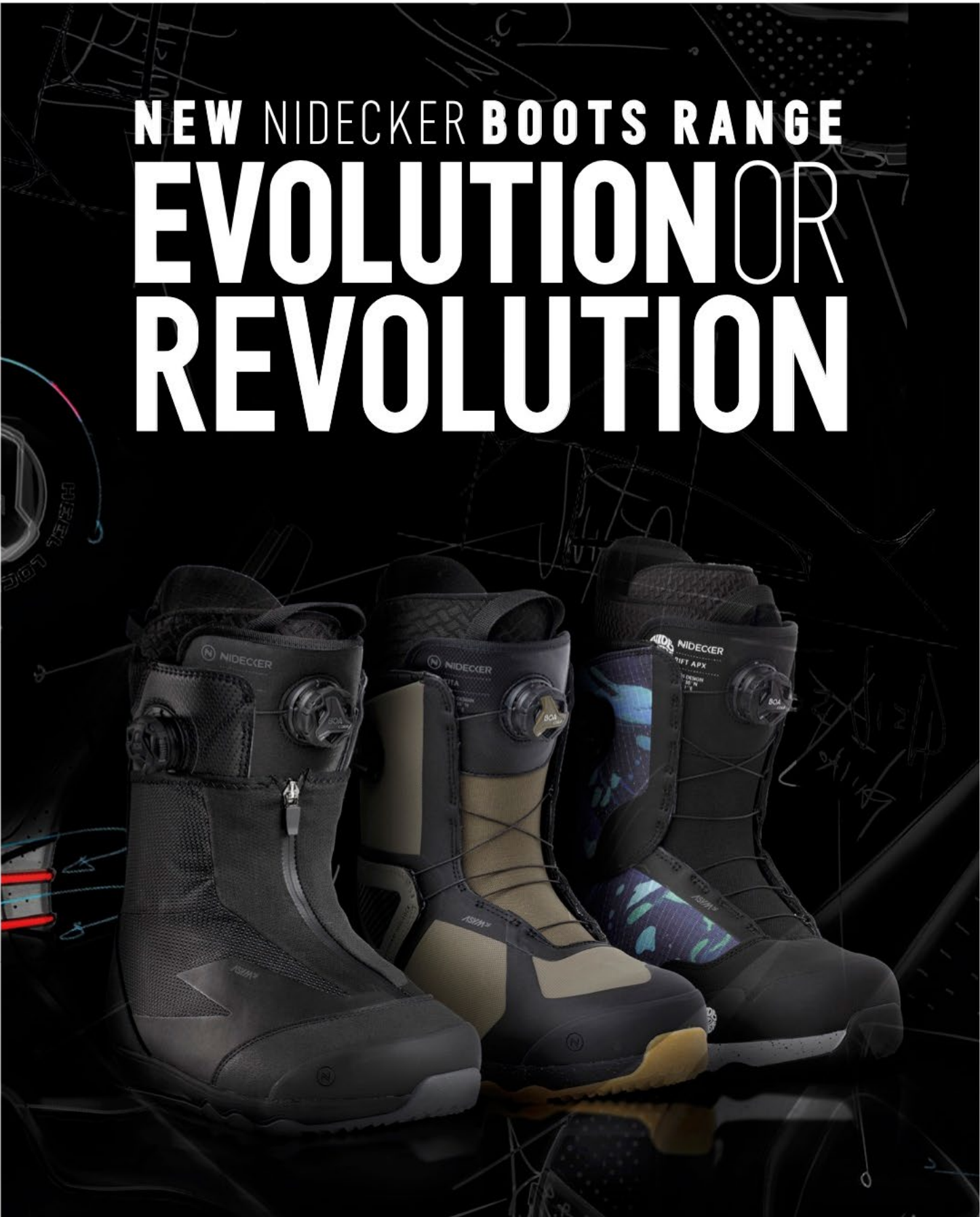
Overall, visual themes and design inspiration come from a large spectrum of shoe styles but skate shoes, sneakers, trail runners, outdoor shoes and expedition hiking boots are the main sources of inspiration. At Rossignol, Arnaud Repa even combines inspiration from ski boots for precise fit and resistance to forward lean, hiking boots for grip and stability and running shoes for printing techniques and fabrics. And Maurizio Molina at Nidecker rounds it off by stating “the ultimate goal is to create a product with a mix of high performance technology and a modern, cool design”.

It’s safe to say that the industry is taking risks and pushing the envelope with innovative products to push the sport. Snowboarding is alive and well. Brands are adapting to the current situation and showing faith in retailers and a strong commitment to end consumers. The community on the other side is as strong as ever, with riders as diverse as the range of cultures on planet earth, and the snowboard scene continues to produce some wonderful content on all fronts. Ladies and gents, it’s time to stack up the shelves, work together, inspire others and encourage people to get out there and have fun. ☺

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.
BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Carry over programs on black boots only
- 2 BOA über alles
- 3 Fit is the shit ! (Fit is the answer)
- 4 Colours and styles for everyone





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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

SNOWBOARD BINDINGS 2022/23

No matter a rider's style, bindings are an essential interface that bring everything to life. No wonder veteran manufacturers and newcomers alike work relentlessly to develop new designs while also refining proven models. Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Snowboard Binding 2022/23 Retail Buyer's Guide.



NIDECKER

For every brand, the search for the perfect interface serves as the foundation of its efforts. As Florian Lang at Nitro states: "Designing the 'ultimate interface' is the driving story of our binding program." Despite how challenging life on planet earth can be at the moment, brands continue to offer new designs and refined collections in order to be loyal to the retailers and the end consumers.

Whether discussing brick and mortar sales, ecommerce or sales through physical stores with an online portal, most brands believe it's all about finding the right balance and creating transparent relationships —while still placing a strong focus on retailers with a physical presence. George Kleckner states that "Brick and Mortar is the backbone of Union's business" and Lucien Vink at Flow asserts that "Brick & Mortar has been and will remain the cornerstone of snowboarding." Kleckner continues, "We are delivering retailers' product on time, complete and they are making full margin on it. When we perform, they succeed."

Brands also emphasize the importance of keeping their fingers on the pulse of the industry and local retail. Baptiste Chaussignand at Salomon argues that in the midst of the pandemic, "being close to our local organizations and managing our business with a sweet dose of common sense, is the right way to go."

WHAT'S UP FOLKS?

On the battle field, brands are throwing down lots of major moves — from fuelling innovation to controlling all stages of a binding's production. As an example of what brands have accomplished in these difficult times, Karakoram, a well-established splitboard binding provider, brought its

"getting quality bindings out the door in the face of adversity has forced us to take a lean approach to everything from our ordering processes to packing processes" Kyle Hansenkhan, Karakoram

first solid binding to the market this winter while also completing the first year in its new factory in North Bend, Washington. Revealing just what it takes these days to run a binding business profitably and sustainably, Karakoram's marketing director Kyle Hansenkhan comments, "getting quality bindings out the door in the face of adversity has forced us to take a lean approach to everything from our ordering processes to packing processes."

On another note, Kyosuke Ogata notes that winter 22/23, will be "Flux's turning point. FLUX will return to the origin of manufacturing and propose to pursue the 'fun of snowboarding' for Flux 30th anniversary."

Following others brands' recent binding developments, Nidecker is ready to introduce an all-new automatic binding, the SuperMatic. Lucien Vink reveals, "We're betting this will make Winter 22/23 a year of major disruption for snowboard bindings moving forward." Who said brands are keeping a low profile?

Talking about keeping a low profile, Bataleon does not! After a successful

soft launch and test period, they will offer a full binding line for 22/23. With a 50 SKU collection you can be assured that you will find a binding for every type of rider, terrain and budget. Pedal to the metal!

Brands are finding solutions, building new strategies, and investing in their vendors, but nevertheless, like Florian Lang at Nitro states, “the raw material and power shortages, as well as massive delays in shipping have caused the timelines to shift quite a bit this year, and will continue to impact our ordering/production and delivery timelines for 22/23.”

Given the pandemic’s impact on production, some brands are especially grateful for their business model and approach to operations. According to Kleckner, Union is experiencing “a constant evolution. Now more than ever we are happy to own and control our supply chain and manufacturing.” Fix shares a similar sentiment, as the brand controls its own production facility and can lock in raw materials and produce components well in advance of when they are needed. This enables Fix to be nimble and react to whatever challenges may arise with the pandemic.

TO CARRY OVER OR NOT TO CARRY OVER...

During the past two winters, brands began placing a greater emphasis on carryover offerings—especially models in black colourways and kid’s products. Numerous players are claiming that this is the way to go. Let’s go around the globe to see what the brands are doing.

At Now, rider-owned brand from the Pacific Northwest, JF Pelchat explains, “Most black bindings are carried over from 22 and for a good reason, I think this is a win-win situation for everyone and it’s more sustainable in the long run.”

In Europe, Peter Bauer, another Big Wig and lifetime ripper, explains that for Amplid “the concept of 2-season carry-over models was already introduced in our range already one year before covid. It turned out to be a very positive thing for retailers as well as for brands.”

The Japanese based brand Flux will have some carry over as well, as it is avoiding colour changes on entry price point models to mitigate sales risk and stock excess.

Some brands are placing an even greater emphasis on carry-over offerings. Rossignol, for instance, will carry over 80% of its collection while Flow and Nidecker will keep their carry-over strategy pretty similar for Winter 22/23 with 50% of their collections.

Then you can find the brands that keep on pushing things forward. SP has renewed or redesigned most of its models. Karakoram’s focus for 22/23 is on expanding its line and Union will be offering a line that is 100% new with NO carry over.

Whatever their strategy is for winter 22/23, retailers have the opportunity to deliver excitement - and fulfil basic needs.

THE GREEN WAY OR A DIRTY FOOTPRINT?

Despite all the recent challenges and the continual need to focus on keeping their head above the water, brands are taking greater action to reduce their footprint and rethink how they design, produce, ship, and sell their products. And while most brands admit that injecting plastic and producing waste is not the greenest way to handle their business, they are doing what they can to reduce their impact. Starting with raw materials, Now is working hard to make as many parts as possible from recycled plastic and also using material that can be recycled. And for quite some time now, Ride has been only using recycled aluminium for building its bindings.

“We are delivering retailers' product on time, complete and they are making full margin on it. When we perform, they succeed.” George Kleckner, Union

On the product side of things, brands have been offering lifetime warranties on baseplates or even all components for many years. This focus on building durable products is part of the solution for reducing a brand’s impact. As Flow’s Lucien Vink mentioned, “Flow bindings are designed to stand the test of time, which in and of itself contributes to a certain level of sustainability. We all want to continue to ride pow for as many years to come and we try to do our part.”

Then comes the packaging and shipping. Flux works with local suppliers to avoid shipping materials back and forth across the planet. And the

“We are a two strap company!”

EJoerg Schramm, Ride



SALOMON

same goes for Union which now has a full year of production in its new “BOX” facility in Italy. Union has completely redesigned all its packaging. George Kleckner explains, “This has allowed us to get 25% more product on a shipping container, as well as working with new FSC partners for any cardboard used.”

Last but not least, Nidecker is a proud member of 1% for the Planet, and gives back 1% of its total sales directly to sustainability-oriented non-profits to fight against climate change.

All hail the binding industry! Keep the good work up!

TECH OR DIE.

“COVID-19 and the lockdowns gave us the breathing space to develop the best line of bindings we’ve ever made,” says Now founder JF Pelchat. And based on all of the new models, components, technology, and refined offerings in the industry, this seems to also be the case for most brands. Among those with game-changing innovation, Head is pushing its LYT (read “Light”) weight materials which play a decisive role in their bindings. For Salomon, the brand asserts that its Shadow Fit technology remains the best way to connect your boots to your board.

While Ride claims “We are a two strap company!”, SP has just always done bindings with comfortable rear-entry based on its very own FASTEC Patent and Flow claims to basically be the inventor and market-leader of the modern-day, easy-in and easy-out binding solution.

Are step-in bindings snowboarding’s new Holy Grail? Burton’s Step On bindings are the brand’s biggest innovation in recent years, and the brand

STEP - IN SYSTEM
MODEL: X HB
ADVANCED RESOURCE COLLECTIVE





will continue to evolve this line over the coming seasons. We can also expect to see an increase in the number of other brands offering this pinnacle technology.

Clew, German-based binding brand, came up with its own system several seasons ago and K2 continues to put significant effort into its Clicker X HB collection.

Winter 22/23 will also see the landing of Nidecker's brand new SuperMatic, an automatic, universal and dual-entry binding, "that is so easy to use, and that will feel both revolutionary and yet satisfyingly familiar at the same time," explains Lucien Vink. "We firmly believe that Matic Series bindings are the future of snowboarding."

Word is out that Drake is also working on its own system with Northwave boots, which they are continuing to test this winter. More news on this as it develops.

"The positive outlook continues as the market's appetite remains strong." Matt Stillman, Rome

NO POP, NO STYLE?

For binding brands, black, white, grey and earth tones are the most popular colourways. Flow goes safe with tonal offerings but it also creates some poppy colourways and models with stronger visual graphics. Rossignol stays dark or uses black colourway. It also offers transparent design elements where a fabric allows it and has colour pops on cushion areas. Head uses simple colour themes - like black, white, and brown - to match a wide range of boots, boards, and clothing.

According to Ride, there's no need to reinvent the black colourway, the brand continues to offer black, gender-neutral bindings in sizes small, medium, and large. And it's the same for SP, as the brand focuses on durability, function, and performance rather than make up.

On the other hand, Flux will offer a 30th anniversary colourway for every model as a team colour. And Drake will celebrate legendary rider Gumby's 50th birthday with a dedicated graphic by his good pal Pentagram Pizza. Price War.

Thanks to full control by owned factories or same suppliers/vendors since many years, brands managed to keep a low profile the last two years but the situation is morphing fast. Currency exchange rates, raw materials, and transportation and logistic expenses, have, forced brands to add a few bucks to their price lists. Union's positioning is clear. As Kleckner explains, "Our goals are to focus on offering the best product on the market at each price point. It's doubtful prices are ever going down in snowboarding. I think it's the same for all brands." And while prices continue to increase for consumers, some brands are trying to insulate them from drastic changes. SP, for example, believes that "we need to support snowboarding and this means take a hit if needed". Despite all these challenges, Rome - a brand preparing for its 20th anniversary collection—reminds us that "The positive outlook continues as the market's appetite remains strong." says Matt Stillman.

This lays the stage for retailers to carefully examine what their customers truly need and then work diligently to get these products to them. And a great opportunity to do this can be found at the B2B on-snow demos, whether Shop1st Try in Austria or Winter Pro #1 in France, where retailers can test, touch and feel next winter's bindings.

And despite all of the challenges the world has encountered during the past two years, Lucien Vink at Flow provides a much needed sense of optimism, "All we can hope for now is lots of snow, good conditions and weather, and for COVID to lay low so we can all feel the stoke of being in the mountains again". Strap in!

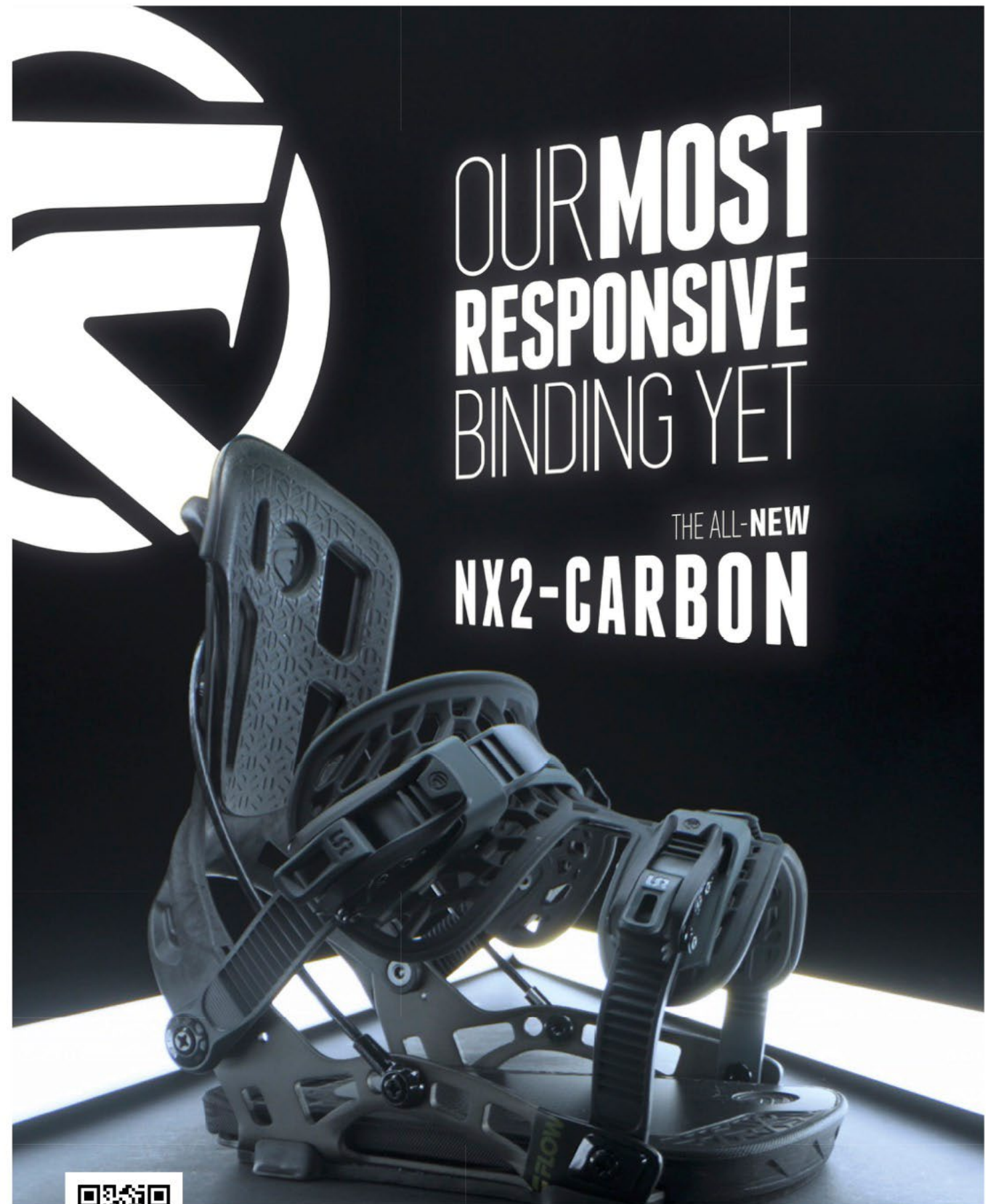
P.S.: For those who made it through this "binding science analysis", I want to dedicate these words to Marko 'Grilo' Grilc, who left us just days ago as we were writing this piece. Grilo was a positive and communicative high-energy character, who dedicated his life to the snowboard community, landed some major video parts, outstanding contest appearances and shared an unforgettable smile and laugh no matter what was up and what would go down. He did so much to support snowboarding as a whole and to share his passion. Rest easy Grilo. Much love. ☺

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Higher pricing
- 2 Carryover
- 3 Environmental effort
- 4 Step On race



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SNOWBOARDS FOR EVERYBODY



RIDER: SEVERIN VAN DER MEER AS SEEN IN CHROMA
PHOTO: SILVANO ZETTER



RIDER: HANA BEAMAN
PHOTO: ERIK HOFFMAN

EQUALLY PSYCHO



retailer profile

RETAILER PROFILE DOODAH

VANS
"OFF THE WALL"

Doodah is one of Europe's best respected boardsports chains, and being Swiss-based, they're one of the few who managed a relatively normal season of trading last winter. We caught up with co-founder Matthew Lee to talk snowboarding, ecomm, covid and much more.

What's the current Swiss situation Re. Covid? (December 7, 2021)

At the moment Switzerland is only reducing the sizes of public gatherings, making masks mandatory even with certificate and recommending home office. No lockdowns yet at least.

And we received up to 1m of snow in certain parts of the alps.

Matt, what's the current Doodah store count?

We have seven stores, Basel, Berne, Geneva, Lausanne, Lucerne, Zug, Zurich plus 2 Outlet Stores in St. Gallen and Landquart. We just relocated our store in Berne to a beautiful listed building in the centre of the city and integrated a Vans shop-in-shop, so we're pretty excited to see how this works for us.

How was last winter?

Last year was a good winter looking at the temperature and snowfall. We had a large dump right down to the lower regions with 30cm in the city of Zürich, which is very rare these days. On the Covid side we were very lucky, the Swiss government waited with the second lockdown until after New Year, so the Holiday business was saved. The resorts in Switzerland remained open, which was a boost for sales and probably for the mood of the nation. It would have been one of the best winters in years I guess, but I don't want to complain as other countries were hit so much harder with cases and restrictions as we were. We're very thankful to have had such luck.

Lockdowns seem to be looming, what word do you have from Swiss authorities that this winter will stay open for the Swiss?

At the moment it doesn't look like another lockdown, but I wouldn't put my money on it. The Swiss appear to be pretty relaxed compared to our neighbours, although new infections are rising and not enough people are vaccinated. If we can compare to last year then the resorts will stay open but our non-essential shops could have to close again. I'm keeping a positive mindset here.

What were last year's top performing brands and products?

In streetwear Carhartt and Dickies are very strong, the workwear style from the nineties is a good seller. Skateboards are definitely still strong, Polar is still favourite in the core scene. Capita and Union are still on top of the snowboard game, but Jones and Spark R&D coming in from the human powered side and are competing for the lead here. Outerwear is tough, but we're working well with the high-end technical clothing from Burton AK and FW

How much marketing are you doing around your pro team?

We try to do a fair amount of marketing with our riders. If we're planning a shop window with a brand that they ride for we'll try and find a suitable image of the rider and build a custom-made campaign around it, which is good for the rider who gets local coverage and for the brand as more customers can identify with a rider from the region.

We also try to support our team riders' projects and promote them with premieres (instore or in interesting locations). This year has been pretty busy, with Escape Videos "Escape 4 You", Severin van der Meer's "Chroma", David Djité's "Eudemonia" (not released yet), Gregory Betschon & Levi Luggen's "Gale" with a live performance of the soundtrack and Elena Koenz' "Pass per Pass"

What's the best way for a brand to sell on their website without pissing off their wholesale channel?

Oh this is a tough one! I understand the need for a brand to showcase all their collections and sell DTC, as it is rarely possible for retailers to buy into a large portion of the collection. And it wouldn't really make sense to put up a web shop and then not sell anything. Of course things start getting difficult when independent retailers experience cancellations due to delivery problems, but the brand's website is fully stocked. But at the end of day it is their brand and they can decide where to set their priorities. That said, the brand should follow a code of conduct though: pricing on par with the local RRP, dealer links (find your local shop), no discounts until end of season and a working B2B.

What opportunities do you foresee this winter?

I see snowboarding returning as a strong trend, but I've been saying that for the past three years! With the strong increase in a new generation of skateboarders, of all genders, I'm pretty sure these riders will want to go snowboarding in the winter if it is accessible and affordable for them. There are a lot of opportunities in the touring/splitboard sector as people are looking for options in closed resorts, but the production of bindings is limited so not everyone will be only skiing uphill. Touring boots for splitboards is a niche to watch, with a fair amount of interest within the core scene but not many opportunities to actually try and test the gear. Excited and not so excited about these boots at the same time! ®

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SKATE SHOES FW22

Skateboarding's popularity is still blooming with a surge in participation around the world thanks to the Olympics amongst other things. We take a look into what skate shoe brands will be offering in the coming season with our Retail Buyer's Guide for Skate Shoes FW22/23 by Source Skateboard Editor **Dave Morgan**.



After another turbulent year navigating Covid-19's twists and turns, skateboarding continues to be a driving force through the strangeness. Cariuama's Global Head of Public Relations, Michelle Katz has noticed that "the coronavirus pushed consumers to explore individual activities in order to stay active during quarantine. Consumers have looked towards sports like skateboarding as a result." Emanuel Labadie, Marketing Manager at DC noted that "the development of the practice of skateboarding and its democratisation plays in favour of a development of the business in spite of the complicated times due to Covid." With a lot of trade happening through E-commerce and online shopping, brands are still trying to remain relevant through adapting their marketing strategies more to online presence, however with shops now being open customers are able to physically shop for shoes once more.

It does seem with the general consensus that the market is better than last year - with things beginning to normalise. Bas Jansen, Senior sales and marketing manager EMEA at Etnies and Emerica said "skateboarding is firing on all cylinders right now and demand is high for both hard goods and footwear. We have seen very strong growth for SP22 and we feel this will continue for the rest of 2022." Philippe Clarisse, VP Europe for Globe spoke of the hardwoods boom giving them a good trend on their skate shoes: "We can see this phenomenon with the sales of our Vincent Milou Surplus shoe for example - the result of Vincent at the Olympics strongly favoured the demand and the sell-through of this style."

"Skateboarding is firing on all cylinders right now and demand is high for both hard goods and footwear." Bas Jansen, Etnies and Emerica

Shipping costs and delays are still the two big issues a lot of brands are struggling with, but as Simone Satragno, Marketing manager at C1rca said: "If every brand is suffering from the same issues, the problem is not as severe." With "freight costs increasing by at least 5 times", as Ronnie Mizzo, CEO of Fallen footwear said, shipments of shoes from Asia, alongside pretty much everything else, is still causing major disruptions in the industry. With the hope that the supply can again align with the demand for skate shoes and hardware, there is light at the end of the tunnel. General Manager at Osiris, Brian Barber, predicts that "we will continue to see supply chain issues from Asia and other regions until at least Mid-2022. We are trying our best to have minimal price increases, but this will continue to be a factor for everyone with the overall inflation happening from freight, labour and material cost increases." Francisco Javier Aguirre, system and concept inventor of NC SHOES has a different way of dealing with issues, intending to "avoid the Covid manufacturing chaos delays with the creation of our own structured assembly line in all the process, from 0 to the finished product."

PRICE POINTS

As to be expected with the rising costs in materials and shipping, price points for skate shoes are also increasing, however brands are striving to keep within affordable margins. Of course, the more technology involved in the shoe warrants a higher price tag, as the expectation is that the shoe will last longer/ perform better. Bas Jansen, Senior sales and marketing manager EMEA at Etnies and Emerica spoke about Etnies price points: “The sweet spot remains €75-€85 as usual, but don’t forget our best seller is above this threshold, the most durable skate shoe (The Marana) comes at a price, but you get what you pay for! “It seems that the majority of shoes are now priced within the €70-€85 bracket, with more technology-heavy shoes coming in slightly higher.”

David Atkinson, Senior Merchandise Manager for Action Sports at Vans was stoked to say, “we have managed to make some price decreases in some key areas of the line, so you will now see suede, full skate tech spec product starting at €75 – Skate Slip-On, Skate Authentic and Skate Era as well as the Chukka Sidestripe. The line tops out at €120 with our most technical shoe - a brand new version of AVE’s signature shoe with a knitted upper.”

MARKET

With the market still trying to adapt to the new normal, it’s great to see brands aiming to be more sustainable and eco-conscious. Globe for example, are prioritising this, as Morgan King, Footwear Designer said: “Ultimately we have one main theme, pushing our goals of making the most sustainable skate shoe in the market. Better for skateboarding. Better for the planet. To get to our end goal, we like to work in key story formats to showcase seasonal themes along with our sustainable underlying story.” Vans are also beginning a new program with ‘The Lizzie’ pro model, as David Atkinson, Senior Merchandise Manager for Action sports said: “The Lizzie is the first skate shoe we have made that is VR3 – Vans products that represent Vans most sustainable offerings and contain Regenerative, Responsible Sourced Renewable or Recycled materials. Without sacrificing any skate performance. We will begin to roll this out across more of the line in seasons to come.”

Cariuma have a similar eco-conscious theme, as their Global Head of Public Relations Michelle Katz explained: “European shoes and fashions are trending towards sustainability, as many European countries are leading the world in conversations about sustainability and shifting societal norms to accommodate our mounting climate crisis. Consumers are much more concerned about the quality, ethical, and sustainable nature of the clothing they are purchasing.”

DESIGN

David Atkinson - Senior Merchandise Manager for Action sports at Vans noticed that: “Bigger Pants means bigger shoes, and retro aesthetics are very much in – for us this has meant a rapid growth in the Half Cab, and we will be supporting this with lots of new product, marketing and special projects.” With the resurgence of the 90’s in both skateboarding and style alike, brands are trying to stay up to date by creating or resigning old classics to fit the bill.

Osiris are backing the 90’s flare too, as Brian Barberm, General Manager said: “Our continued theme throughout 2022 is the ‘Osiris Forever Collection.’ With this we have introduced 2 of our Original’s from the 90’s, the OG D3 and The Graff! They seem to have garnered the most demand and retro is still going.” State

“Bigger Pants means bigger shoes, and retro aesthetics are very much in – for us this has meant a rapid growth in the Half Cab” David Atkinson, Vans

Footwear have a different approach and a really rad concept for keeping the design of their shoes always current, as owner Kevin Furtado, explained: We offer for every season our “custom shop” program for a particular style” in which shops can personalise their order with their own shop’s logo and personal detailing.”

“We offer for every season our ‘custom shop’ program for a particular style, in which shops can personalise their order with their own shop’s logo and personal detailing.” Kevin Furtado, State Footwear



SIMPLISTIC OR TECH-HEAVY?

DC’s Emanuel Labadie spoke of their new shoe, “The Manteca 4, which features a wealth of performance upgrades designed to bring support , protection, and durability for skateboarding.” Similarly, brands like Etnies and Emerica are building tech-heavy shoes in a more slim-line profile such as Emerica’s new Collin Provost shoe “which is meant to be durable for all of Collin’s needs with a rubber ollie guard and our signature G6 Foam insoles” as Tim Cisilino explained.

Some brands however are sticking to minimalist styles, such as C1rca, State and Fallen, as their riders favour this silhouette, and there is still a demand for those wanting a simplistic shoe. NC however, are the epitome of tech-heavy shoes, with custom orthopaedic shoes created using 3D printers. Perhaps the future of the footwear industry if one can afford it!

There seems to be a constant debate within the skateboard community in regards to preference of a cupsole or vulcanised shoe - cupsoles tend to protect the wearer’s feet more, whereas vulc shoes provide greater board feel. However with new technologies such as Vans’ ‘Wafflecup’, which combines cupsole protection with vulcanised board feel & flexibility, it seems that brands are able to manufacture hybrid styles now to suit everyone. Ronnie Mizzo, CEO at Fallen explained that their “collection is approx 60% vulc. Our best-selling shoes are the Patriot Trooper and Bomber.” Osiris on the other hand, say their cupsoles are their biggest seller by far, however plans to introduce new vulc shoes are in the works for next year. As I said before however, this is a matter that comes down entirely to personal preference. There will always be a market for both styles of shoe. ☺

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 More eco-conscious
- 2 90’s big shoes & baggy pants!
- 3 New technologies to manufacture shoes
- 4 Shipping Issues and delays
- 5 The future looks bright!



Alex Papke Collection

Reflecting on recent travels by photographer Alex Papke, frames of non-skate subject matter taken in Argentina, Portugal, and Spain offer a glimpse into life behind the scenes on a skate trip. Our minimalist capsule is designed for the function and comfort you may need wherever skateboarding may take you next. Comfortable, durable and eco-aware crafted.

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GLOBE



TRADE SHOWS IN A DIGITAL WORLD

ISPO, the big daddy of the winter sports trade show season, has been rescheduled to late November. Is this just the beginning of a fundamental shift in the winter trade show market? SOURCE's King of the Trade Shows, Clive Ripley contemplates the effects Covid has had on the trade show model.

Prior to the onset of covid, trade shows were already feeling the pinch. Brands had been progressively moving budget to where return on investment was more definable. The impact of covid and the subsequent cancellations of the 2021 winter trade show season has caused a complete reassessment of the necessity and value of trade shows. Brands had no choice but to find alternatives. In the new climate they were forced to adapt their sales systems so that they could handle presale and ordering online using a variety of digital tools. Online showrooms immediately became a necessity rather than a luxury. Traditionally, showing next year's line to dealers and distributors had been the mainstay in the popularity of trade shows. However, this aspect of the trade show value chain is now significantly weaker. In particular the rise of digital B2B ordering systems has been a real game changer. This, combined with the overall move of business online, means that dealers are now much more comfortable making product decisions in the non-physical space.

In response, trade shows in Europe and North America experimented with a combination of hybrid digital and physical events but found they were unable to deliver the traffic that the physical trade shows previously provided. So, it was back to the drawing board for pure trade events to figure out how to make themselves more attractive to brands. No one doubts the value of face-to-face connection but the question is: what should be the backdrop and what else could be added to the trade show offering to increase the return on investment for exhibitors? Recently the CEO of a major exhibition company acknowledged that it's a "work in progress" as they experiment with different ideas, whilst ISPO, the big daddy of the sports winter trade show season, has already made its move with a change of date to a November time slot. Thus making the event consistent with the continuous shift of many pre-book deadlines to earlier in the calendar. Before announcing its decision, ISPO polled its client-base and an overwhelming number of brands supported the move. For many product categories, the new ISPO date means they have to receive samples earlier than they are used to but with the next show 12 months away, there is plenty of time to adapt schedules for those brands wanting to exhibit. For many brands, November time is also the month for European or global sales conferences.

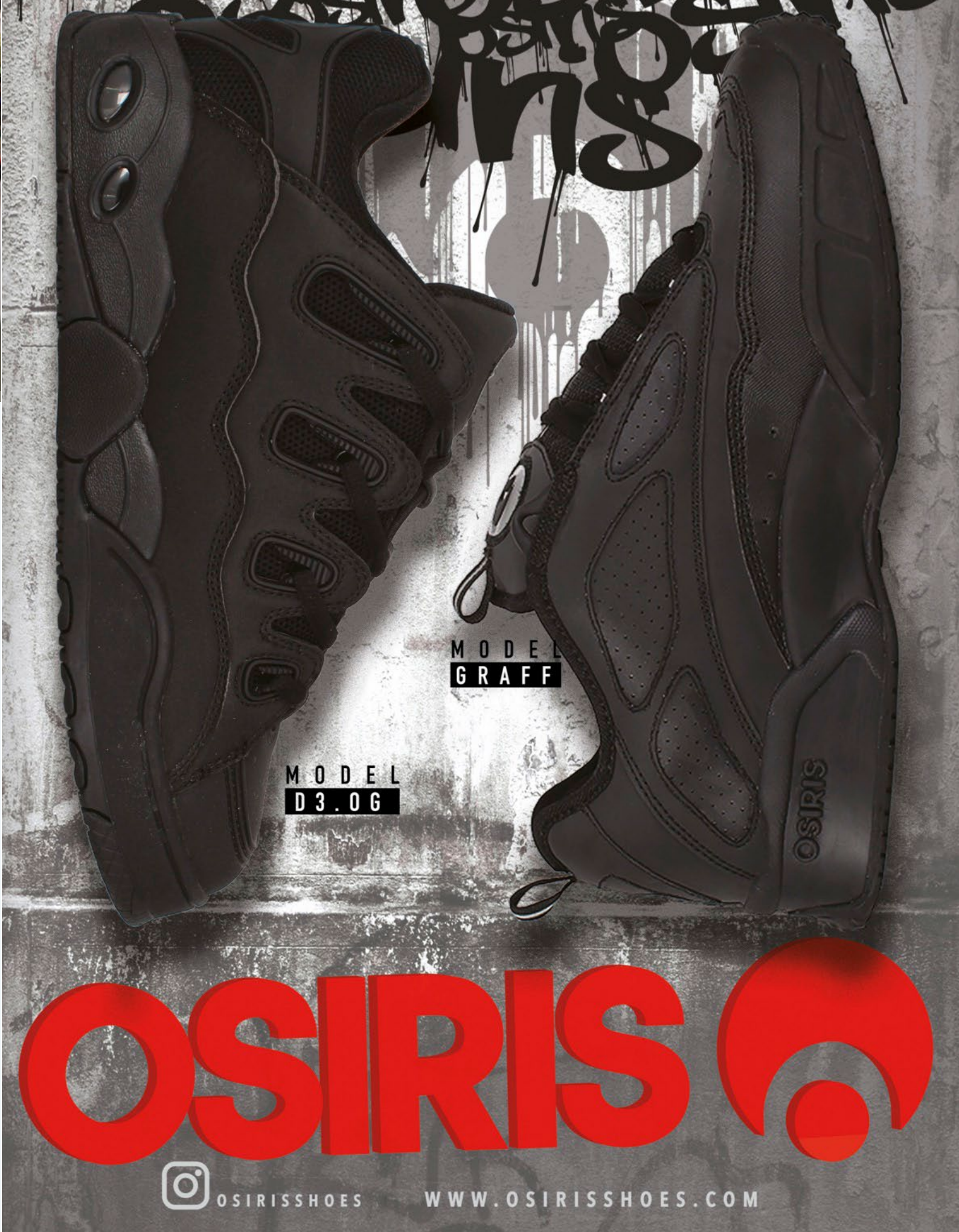
These could now take place around Munich, where the backdrop of the trade show means brands could meet two requirements in one go, saving on expenses and further raising the ROI on an ISPO booth investment. To make the show even more attractive, ISPO has also announced a restriction on stand sizes, meaning a more affordable outlay and therefore a more measurable return on investment.

Meanwhile, smaller more specialised winter shows, on snow demos such as Shops 1st Try and Winter Pro have continued to find support from brands as product can actually be tested in the environment it was designed for, so no better way to discover for yourself what really works or does not. Costs of attending these shows are lower and the whole face-to-face experience is energised by the opportunity the backdrop offers to go "shred with your buddies", doing what you love whilst talking shop. For the majority of the year, many brands and shops can feel isolated running their day-to-day business, so these smaller single sport shows are very important, building relationships and forming a real sense of community with everyone coming together for a few days.

This January, national winter shows will also return after a break of a year. These shows have the advantage of being close to their nation's retail base, so travel regulations don't really interfere, which is key to their survival as they have become very much meetings by appointment and order writing shows.

For retailers, the attraction of these different types of show vary; for the crossover retailers, who stock many product categories, a big multi-sports show enables them to see all the categories they stock in a single visit to a single location saving time and money. For core single sport retailers, visiting the small specialist show achieves the same purpose. Each brand and retailer has to work out their best option amongst a myriad of choices in this rapidly changing landscape.

One thing is certain, we are in the middle of a period of change. A process which had been slowly working its way through has been accelerated by covid. ☺





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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE TECHNICAL SNOWPACKS 2022/23

Closure of resorts last season boosted interest in the backcountry. Technical backpacks became essential in any rider's kit. Well-thought designs will prove their value all-year round. **By Rocio Enriquez.**



DAKINE

Last season's restrictions sent many eager snow enthusiasts off-piste. Splitboarding and touring gained popularity. The technical backpack benefited from this. When venturing the mountains on your own, you want to carry everything you need to stay safe. Lightweight and carrying comfort are crucial. Easy and quick access to your safety gear is rewarded. Off-piste adventures also call for versatility. Your pack needs to be as reliable on the hike up as on the shred down. Plus, a versatile pack that caters to different activities, can be used all-year round. "Users want a lightweight and sturdy pack that can go with them anywhere", says Thomas Gachet from Dakine. This ties in with another growing consumer expectation, sustainability. Users are checking the labels for fabrics and manufacturing. They want to make sure their purchase has the lowest carbon footprint possible. Lastly, users value aesthetics. Their demands on functionality and sustainability come with no concessions on style.

NEW FOR FW22

Most brands are carrying over their FW22 collections. They already have dedicated backcountry designs in their lines. Innovations are presented through feature updates and new materials. Dakine is changing raw materials to be more environmental. Nitro is making their packs lighter and adding new waist and shoulder straps and loops for skis. Jones has

"You can use our bags for several purposes. Our bag business seems to benefit from the boost of interest in any type of outdoor activity" Philip Haendeler, Nitro

expanded on pockets. They will also include accessory straps and burly front board straps. Mammut has created a special pattern for women's packs. They have narrower and shorter shoulder straps and a unique cut to fit the female anatomy. They have also worked on accessibility, like the fast ski fixation offered in their new FW23 style Aenergy ST

20-25. Evoc keeps pushing their LiteShield Plus protector introduced last season. "It offers the highest possible degree of spinal protection. Thanks to the segmented design, it allows for flexibility in every direction and maximum air circulation, while being very light", explains Alexandra Hlawitschka from Evoc. Picture stays true to their trinity of Safety – Protection – Versatility. Their packs have safety gear storage, a safety print and a heat formed back panel. Their waistbelt is removable, and they have a convertible hydration system / laptop sleeve. Arva presents a new touring specific backpack. It has been developed in collaboration with a well-known freerider, to make sure they bring the latest features.

Using high quality, abrasion resistant materials remains key. Brands are aware that a long-lasting backpack is the way to the consumer's heart. Longevity is not only key for performance, but for sustainability too. Consumers' demand for sustainability is driving the implementation of eco-responsible fabrics and practices at a fast pace. Recycled polyester is widely used. Water repellent coatings are free from PFC. There is a preference for Bluesign approved materials. Amplifi keeps using the MIPAN® regenerated nylon yarn introduced last season. Each kg of this recycled yarn saves up to 7 kg of CO2 compared to standard nylon. Dakine extends the use of recycled fabrics to 100% of their travel and snow gear bags. Arva also increases the number of packs made with recycled fabrics to 10, which is half of their range. Sustainability does not stop at fabrics. "In addition to recycled polyesters, we are using recycled buckles from production waste", announces Maxime Lemaitre from Picture. Amplifi uses the highest quality clasps and zips to promote the longevity of the pack. Other practices aim towards social responsibility.

RETAILER SUPPORT

Thanks to its versatility, the sell-out of technical backpacks did not suffer as much as other snow product categories. "You can use our bags for several purposes. Our bag business seems to benefit from the boost of interest in any type of outdoor activity", says Philip Haendeler from Nitro. There was still some impact and brands have had to address this, nevertheless. The best form of retailer support has been to increase the number of carry-over items, holding back the launch of new ones. They are also stocking as much as possible to allow for in-season re-orders. This might become a long-term practice, judging by the global supply chain situation. Even though FW23 is scarce in new launches, support for retailers will be there. Brands appeal to the newfound love for the back country. Some campaigns are Nitro's "Get Out", Evoc's "Explore to Ride" or Jones' "Made for Movement". Dakine will communicate heavily on the new signature pack + glove combos designed with team athletes. There will be ongoing social media campaigns, a wealth of visual assets, POS displays and sales boosting programmes. If the snow forecast for this winter is accurate, customers will hit the stores in search of the perfect pack. These new customers are educated. The best preparation for retailers is to learn about technical features well. ☺

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.
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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Increased interest in off-piste riding boosts backpack demand
- 2 Demand for functionality, versatility and sustainability.
- 3 High rate of carry over references.
- 4 Increased levels of stock to serve in-season re-orders.

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

MEN'S STREETWEAR FW22

As fall & winter are in play, it's time to get prepared and wrap up warm. We take a look into what's happening in Men's Streetwear for next seasons and an in-depth view of the market. Here's the Retail Buyers Guide for Mens Streetwear FW22/23 by Dave Morgan.



IRIEDAILY

Streetwear seems to be going strong currently, even with the pandemic's effects and constant changes. From what we've seen, the initial lockdowns spurring people to take up skating and other independent activities has boosted sales in streetwear, as Homeboy's Head of Marketing, Julian Wolf said: "Boosted by the first lockdowns, there have been continuously big peaks in board sports related market performance over the past few seasons. But I think that these peaks were still just the tip of the iceberg for fashion oriented board sports fans. New silhouettes continue to trickle down into the mainstream market and continue to drive performance. I think streetwear has a bit of an advantage here over the hardgoods market." Hydroponic Streetwear's Marketing & Skate Specialist Jordi Quinto agreed, saying: "Skateboarding is on a peak once again, so the market is in good shape at the moment. Many new young skaters starting means new customers to take care of, and that makes streetwear go up in sales."

It seems that the major problem within the industry continues to be sky-high shipping prices & delays, and it looks like this is having a knock-on effect to price points to, as Patrick Kressner - Head of Design & Product at IrieDaily said: "The Covid-19 impact and the global shortage of resources are influencing the prices none the better, that's for sure. The main problem at the moment is the extremely high shipping costs, which have increased 5-6 times. But also, the shortage of resources like organic cotton has become a booster for increasing prices. We buffer the increases as much as we can and try to increase our retail-prices just moderately."

"The trend will remain similar, but will evolve. Tops will become shorter, but still wider (boxie), while the baggy just keeps getting more and more on the radar of the masses." Julian Wolf, Homeboy

Homeboy averted problems by their choice of manufacturer - without having to ship products from Asia and having their jeans produced in Turkey, they have bypassed the shipping nightmares and fees everyone else seems to be struggling with. Brands like Revolution fortunately managed to adapt before, as Creative Director/owner said: "we changed our delivery system just before Covid so we are making fewer styles but deliver in more drops. This has fitted well with the new market situation." With brands having to change their methods in regards to shipping and deliveries, the future is uncertain, however it seems most streetwear companies have a strong relationship with their distributors & clients, and there is a universal understanding all round.

STYLES
It looks like baggy styles are still the way to go this coming season, with brands like Homeboy and their trademark 'Xtra Baggy' denim pants making a strong impression on the scene. Short-cut, yet very wide T-shirts or sweatshirts will accompany this style, according to Homeboy's Julian Wolf said: "The trend will remain similar, but will evolve. Tops will become shorter, but still wider (boxie), while the baggy



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- MARIO UNGERER
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just keeps getting more and more on the radar of the masses.” Brandit has an interesting technique for separating themselves from other brands as Brandit’s Head of Marketing - Madeleine Koziolk explained: “If you like an article of the cut, you get this article with us in at least 3 - 8 variants. From plain to camo to checker and almost always in a size range up to 7 XL. That is what distinguishes us.” With such accessible variations, one can choose the same article in several different styles to accompany their outfit choice so it offers for a greater amount of options.

LAYER UP

Layers are all the rage - instead of singular solid pieces, it seems the trend is layering up to allow for more creativity. Patrick Kessner at IrieDaily said: “We are definitively focusing on layering, because it gives so many options for your personal styling.” A perfect piece from their new collection for such layering would be the ‘Young Fella shirt jacket’ - a lumberjack style fleece lined shirt. Lumberjack-esque checkerboard patterns are a big hit from the coming season, with many brands reissuing old styles or creating new ones to fit the trend. “We absolutely rely on our proven check shirts. No matter if it is classic (red-black or black-white) or with pleasure in strong colours like royal blue and strong green, our sales figures confirm that check shirts belong in every closet,” says Madeleine Koziolk from Brandit. DC’s streetwear wing will be presenting an elevated offering of their premium basics, as Emanuel Labadie, EMEA Marketing Manager explained: “We’re harkening back to the heavyweight materials and constructions from the early days of streetwear and action sports.” It sounds like these premium basics will be able to fit into anyone’s wardrobe wanting solid construction and reliable quality. Saint’s Eden Palm spoke of some technological pieces in their coming season too: “We have included amazing new tech with things like compression socks and sleeves, as well as an armoured puffer jacket.” It seems there is still a need for tech-heavy pieces amongst the layering styles.

DENIM

Saint denim - initially a denim brand introduced to the MotoX scene, now delivers high quality, extremely hard wearing jeans that, according to Eden Palm, “deliver great value for money in patented denims 5 times stronger than a 12oz Levis 501 material.”

Hydroponic has a similar approach as Marketing & Skate Specialist-Jordi Quinto said: “Most of Hydroponic’s jeans collection is made with top stretch materials, looking for comfort while skating. We also add triple stitching and reinforced bartacks to the areas most subjected to skateboarding’s wear and tear.”

“The best thing a company can do for sustainability is to make high-quality products that will last for years, or that can be recycled so we can use their materials for as long as possible.” Madeleine Koziolk, Brandit



“It’s in our company’s DNA. We shifted completely to sustainable fabrics in our sourcing. Most of the products contain sustainable fabrics. We are Peta approved Vegan and members with ‘leader status’ of the FairWear Foundation.” Patrick Kressner, Irie Daily



It is good to know brands are putting more effort into longer lasting materials that will reduce more frequent consumption of clothing, and that will, in turn reduce the impact on the environment. Madeleine Koziolk from Brandit says it perfectly: “The best thing a company can do for sustainability is to make high-quality products that will last for years, or that can be recycled so we can use their materials for as long as possible.”

SUSTAINABILITY

The key priority for the industry right now (in my opinion) should be sustainability, and it’s reassuring to hear brands are taking this into account. Be it organic fibres, recycled materials or more durable, longer-lasting products, any attempt to consciously reduce their impact on the environment is appreciated. IrieDaily is truly leading the way in skate streetwear when it comes to sustainability, as Patrick Kressner proudly says: “It’s in our company’s DNA. We shifted completely to sustainable fabrics in our sourcing. Most of the products contain sustainable fabrics. We are Peta approved Vegan and members with ‘leader status’ of the FairWear Foundation.”

Santa Cruz are doing their bit too, as Joe Bourne, Brand Manager explained: “We’ve made great strides to tackle waste and improve our sustainable credentials. For starters we’ve eliminated 80% of plastic from our packaging, using home-compostable garment bags and natural string to replace kimbles. A growing portion of our jersey is produced using 100% OCS (Organic Content Standard) certified organic cotton and OEKO-TEX approved inks. Our remaining cotton products are sourced from BCI accredited farmers and all luggage is made with RPET recycled polyester.”

With more and more brands really giving the sustainable approach some consideration, the future is looking promising for reducing fast-fashion and using ecologically sourced or recycled materials. Every little helps, and hopefully brands like IrieDaily, Santa Cruz and Hydroponic amongst others, will encourage others to take up a similar approach. ☺

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Baggy, boxy fits
- 2 Layered styles to express individuality
- 3 Checked shirts are back
- 4 Sustainability is key!!



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O'NEILL



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

MENS SURF APPAREL FW 22

More than ever, the boundaries between surf clothing and outdoor equipment/outerwear are blurred. For fall/winter 2022/23, brands are picking and choosing from the best of two worlds, coming away with ultra-versatile pieces aimed at all audiences, from confirmed surfers to Sunday adventurers. **By David Bianic.**



and streetwear pieces “so our audience can grow” explains Product Manager Manon Jouanine, as well as continuing to push their Surf Heritage collection. It’s also worth mentioning that Hurley are preparing to launch an outerwear collection, clearing new ground in the mountains. We should also highlight an interesting route taken by Lightning Bolt who wish to “to deconstruct gender labels” by offering more unisex products. In the same spirit of fluidity, Brakeburn aren’t talking about surf apparel for the winter but about outerwear, a term normally reserved for snow.

THE KEY PIECES OF FW22

More specifically, here are the pieces that you’ll have to stock in your shop. The big winners are undoubtedly fleeces, puffer jackets and overshirts. “Layering is becoming more and more prevalent”, assures Dilan at Rusty on the subject of overshirting. Quilting at TCSS, insulated Thermore Ecodown flannel at Dakine, stretch flannel from ...Lost, the big shirt is a sure-fire hit. When it comes to polar fleeces, it just keeps evolving like at Hurley with their sherpa liner or at ...Lost with their tie-dye. Their thermal properties and comfort (normally at a reasonable price) make them timeless must-haves. More daring, Lightning Bolt are going for a long-sleeved polo in brushed fleece. We often forget to mention the lower half but as it happens, influences from workwear are apparent, especially in the twills and cords from TCSS. As for colours, if it ain’t broke don’t fix it, so most of the brands are rolling out their clothes in either a natural, earthy palette or in really bright tones.

MATERIALS FW22

The last paragraph was riddled with spoilers about the materials and fabrics of choice for next winter. Synthetics have incontestable heat-retaining properties and Hurley are employing them on the Windchill and Thermique fleeces while O’Neill are swearing by Polartec. Nevertheless, others such as Rusty are exemplifying a trend that diverges from classic fleeces in favour of fabrics like “cord, wool and lots of terrys”. Sam from TCSS confirms the rise of cord, “you’ll find corduroy in every category now”, sometimes mixed with elastane for more comfort and freedom of movement. Another retro-modern mix comes from Brakeburn who are combining a Borg liner (fake fur) and Rip Stop exterior.

Beyond recycled polyesters, there are other eco-friendly materials to be found: bio cotton (Better Cotton Initiative) from Hurley, some treated with EcoWash (reduced water consumption) while at O’Neill 80% of the collection is Blue Label certified (made of at least 50% sustainable materials). O’Neill have also thought about their products’ end of life with the highly innovative Bio-Field jacket that’s 100% biodegradable, even the inks, manufactured from a derivative of seaweed!

Patagonia are calling on the use of waste plastic for their Down Sweater puffer made of NetPlus, a ripstop nylon recycled from used fishing nets and stuffed with an RDS (animal welfare standard) down. We can’t really say that the surfwear sector is resting on its laurels with such a good selection of innovations, now can we? ⑤

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Fleeces, Sherpa liners, overshirts
- 2 Corduroy combined with tech fabrics
- 3 Workwear (trousers)
- 4 Biodegradable Materials

One man’s joy is another man’s misery. Such was the destiny of men’s surf clothing in the last two winters. While the outerwear category felt the full force of the pandemic in the winter sports sector with the total or partial closures of ski resorts, many people turned towards surfing in winter. So with the 2021/22 snow season looking like a return to business as usual (with additional masks and health passports) and bookings and sales taking off, will winter surf apparel suffer as a result and return to its “normal levels” of 2019?

According to Sofia Diaz, Brand Manager at Lightning Bolt in Europe, retailers are showing caution, preferring to order there and then rather than going for pre-orders. In addition to this we can see big differences between regions, confides Dilan Lambert, Men’s Brand Manager at Rusty who reveals “there were shortages of stock in certain places and in others major oversupply”. The situation is sometimes really chaotic, says Sam Coombes, Founder of The Critical Slide Society (TCSS) between “supply chain issues, unseasonably warm weather, lockdowns”. But in the last two years everyone-brands, distributors, retailers- have learned to live with this commercial volatility and are “making do”.

“From the water to the mountains and lifestyle in between” Rémi Chaussemiche, Dakine

WINTER 2022 WILL BE...

Without further ado, let’s look at what surf apparel will lean towards out of its various influences from outdoor/outerwear, streetwear and traditional surfing. Dakine define themselves as a brand whose world extends “from the water to the mountains and lifestyle in between”, which translates into a strong influence from “outdoor and riding activities”, explains Rémi Chaussemiche from Surf Marketing. For others like Hurley, it’s about adding more fashion

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BIG WIG INTERVIEW PETER BAUER - AMPLID

Amplid are one of the best success stories snowboarding has seen in the past five years. Fantastically made snowboards, forever pushing the boundaries of what's possible and fronted by one of the sport's most passionate and iconic figures; Peter Bauer slides into the Big Wig hotseat for this issue's Big Wig. Interview by Source Editor HMT.

Peter, for those who don't know (shame on them!) tell us about your background and what led you to starting Amplid. And don't say snowboarding!

I had been competing on the world cup circuit for almost 15 years, riding for Burton for the entire time. After my active career I got more and more involved in their board RnD, I learned a lot by seeing all the different factories and manufacturing methods. And at some point I simply thought it was time to start my own business. I saw the market being full of similar products, since it's quite simple to go to a factory and get your own graphics onto cookie-cutter OEM-boards. For me this was a clear indication to make something original, going away from off-the-shelf materials, developing own technologies to make your riding day an even better one. This was the starting point of Amplid, and our DNA and purpose from day one.

Tell us about the company structure at Amplid.

Amplid has several locations: I am located in the Bavarian Alps, about 15 minutes from two resorts - and in Fiss (Austria), where our base is 300m from the gondola station. These are strategically two perfect places for our RnD processes. It allows me to get around 150 riding days per season. Plus the Hintertux glacier is very close as well, where we can ride and test all year around. Your question is about the "company" - but I feel being placed where you can ride 12 months per year is an important part of a snowboard company, as it keeps staff happy and psyched, and the RnD on a top notch level. Our warehouse and customer service is located in Munich.

Our team consists of a bunch of competent, great and unique people.

Gregor Common - a well know industry veteran - is our Head of Global Sales. Conrad Albert, the "other Amplid owner", takes care of the finance stuff, business development and the overall strategic aspects of running a company. He lives right next door, so beside the fact that he is my daily partner in crime on the chairlift, he is a huge help for certain business disciplines which I am happy to hand over to somebody who's got the black dan in it. I guess we will hear more from Conrad in the next few months, as he is one of the founders

"Whatever hits the warehouse, pre-orders from retailers get served first. We are growing our online business well, but our B2B business grew a lot more during the past two seasons."

of Surf Town Munich, Europe's biggest Surfpark to come in 2023. Hopefully surfing won't distract us too much from our snow job ... Michi Hanauer is our visual marketing guru, who is responsible for CI, board graphics, website, etc.

All these guys are excellent riders by the way, and super fun to go ride and hang out with. Then we've got Sabine Thieme, Jenny Balling and Annette Lakos, who are the actual masters of operations behind the curtain, as they do all the ERP work, from accounting to customer service. They are invaluable as they really keep everything together in the daily grind. And finally we have Nina Albert, Conrad's wife, who has a heavy finance background, is super savvy in financial structuring and accounting and comes in from time to time to analyse and help optimizing our financial performance.

Amplid also owns and operates a merino business, called Pally'Hi (www.pallyhi.com), where we have a few additional people in the team. Most of the staff mentioned before are also involved with Pally'Hi, which is managed by Johannes Ritter.

How are you making your business more sustainable?

There are a couple of buttons we are pushing: Sustainably Harvested Wood - Wood cores are one of the most important materials in our snowboards. This is why we purchase all our snowboard cores from FSC-certified suppliers. These cores are made from responsibly harvested wood that meets the standards of the Forest Stewardship Council™ (FSC). FSC wood is verified to

"Shipping lead times and costs have been increasing painfully, and as a consequence retail prices will increase for the next year by at least 10%. Hopefully this will not be an obstacle for people staying active in the sport."

not be harvested illegally, in violation of traditional and civil rights, in forests where high conservation values are threatened, in forests being converted to plantations or non-forest use, or in forests where genetically modified trees are planted.

Digital Printing Technologies - Our boards with topsheet graphics are printed on new Kodak printers, which comply with AZO certification and meet the Oeko-Tex Safety Standard. Colours are solvent-free and UV bonding.

UV Lacquer - We have decreased the use of UV-lacquer down to 7% across our board range.

Silkscreen - We use water-based lacquer (with a maximum of 6% solvent) on our snowboards in order to reduce worker- and rider exposure to hazardous chemicals. Note that 100% solvent free colours need more solvent to clean the screens than you would need to actually print. As of today, that 6% ensures the use of solvent is kept to a minimum.

Non-Toxic Sidewall Finishing Solution - Used on all Amplid board models.

Basalt Fiber Stringers - This is similar to fiberglass, having better physico-mechanical properties than fiberglass, but being significantly more ecological than carbon fibre.

Flip-Flop Base Graphic Colours - Reduces material waste by offering two die-cut base graphic colourways.

Metal Edges - Are made of 20% recycled steel.

Side Walls - Are made of 20% recycled ABS.

Energy - Our production partner has a photovoltaic system which provides an average of 710.000 kW/h and feeds, in addition to the production facility, 150 households in the area. Estimated savings are approx. 456.000 kg of CO2.

Cutting down our footprint is an ongoing process. We're only as good as the impact we have, so we're investing to improve the lives of everyone that we engage with, all over the world. We want to make as little an impact as possible on everyone around us.

Go riding, as much as possible. I assume nobody chose the snowboard industry to become filthy rich. So let's get some priceless powder days into the accounting books!

Where are you manufacturing your boards?

We have been working with Playmaker in Taiwan for the past four seasons now. And the quality is incredible. We also have a person from Austria located in Taiwan, whom we share with our friends from Nitro. Mario used to be the technical director for two factories in Austria before, and he's been in the manufacturing business for 30 years - the Confucius of materials and processes. It helps facilitate communication, having a knowledgeable person on site. Working with such a large company provides easy access to experimental materials which you wouldn't get your hands on being a small fish. With Playmaker we found a partner who is keen on pushing the boundaries of traditional manufacturing processes. Most of the factories are afraid or simply not interested in leaving the path of their proven every-day routine.

Talk to us about the biggest challenges Covid threw at you and how you've overcome them.

In the beginning you told me not use the word "snowboarding". My intention was not to use the word "Covid" ... but since you asked: When Covid hit the market, the impact on our business was actually positive. Many countries did not open their resorts, so splitboarding was the only way to get up - and down - the mountain. We always have raw material in stock, as it's mostly a special order for Amplid. We had so many reorders from retailers, that we needed to place three additional bulk orders for splitboards in our factory. Having all materials in stock, we had an incredibly quick turnaround time of four weeks only, from the actual order until the boards hit the warehouse. The additional buzz on our splits, especially the Milligram, made the winter

20/21 and the last financial year a very positive one for us. But even our solid boards sold really well, mainly in Austria, Switzerland and North-America, where resorts were open.

An unnerving long-covid symptom though is shipping: Shipping materials to the factory, and shipping boards to our warehouse has been a big headache this season. Ports are lacking staff, there are not enough ships running at the moment, custom offices are completely overloaded with not having enough personnel. Everything takes longer than expected. All you can do is move your own deadlines forward to prevent delays. Every segment is suffering from delays right now. From automotive to computers to snowboards...



How are you balancing your DTC business with your wholesale business?

It's very simple: As long as you are faithful to your price policy and don't start discounting on your own website on December 27th, there is no competition with your brick and mortar retailers. With all our retail partners, who are running their own online business, you can find Amplid products in probably around 50 online shops. With Amplid.com it is 51 - so that doesn't really make a difference? We are also prioritising our retailers in delivery: Whatever hits the warehouse, pre-orders from retailers get served first. We are growing our online business well, but our B2B business grew a lot more during the past two seasons.

What are your best performing categories in Europe and where are you seeing the best growth year on year?

Splitboarding is for sure the most important segment for us. We make some of the lightest splits on the market with lots of useful tech and this is highly appreciated by the quite picky splitboard customer group. High end boards for surfing pow and corduroy is another category we are doing really well in. Amplid's so called "Centrifugal Boards" with our homegrown "Antiphase" dampening technology are a real blast - so much fun to ride, really addictive!

What are the biggest opportunities Amplid's facing right now?

Having the world's best splitboards - in my humble opinion - helps a lot, since this is one of the few growing segments in the winter sports market.

And the threats?

Shipping lead times and costs have been increasing painfully, and as a consequence retail prices will increase for the next year by at least 10%. Hopefully this will not be an obstacle for people staying active in the sport.

What message to do you have for the snowboard industry after your lifetime on the mountain?

Go riding, as much as possible. I assume nobody chose the snowboard industry to become filthy rich. So let's get some priceless powder days into the accounting books! ☺



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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE
SNOW HELMETS 2022/23

The acceptance of the helmet has resulted in more educated customers. Meeting their demands promotes the use of the helmet and contributes to an increasing demand. **By Rocio Enriquez.**



Helmet brands are expectant to see how their products perform with resorts and retailers open to the public. Of all snowboarding product categories, helmets did not fare too badly last winter. Restrictions at resorts sent a lot of eager riders off-piste. Nothing could bring the spotlight onto safety equipment more than braving the backcountry. The head, and the brain it harbours, seems to be the body part that riders are keener to protect. As R.P. Bess from Protec states, “wearing a helmet is a cheap way of protecting the CPU of your body”.

This increased awareness of protection has resulted in more educated customers. With education comes a more sophisticated demand that brands strive to meet. Helmet users want the best protection provided with comfort and wrapped up in a good look. Those are the basic demands; extra brownie points are granted to the brands that check-in with sustainability too. As a result, helmets are getting lighter and more low profile, while increasing the safety and performance features. Technology such as MIPS protection, ventilation systems or photochromic visors are becoming standard. The stylish looks are making it easy to integrate them into the overall look. The added comfort makes it easy to have the helmet on all day long.

NEW FOR FW22/23
Next season will be shy on launches. Products launched last season did not have a fair exposure and their market performance remains untested. Most importantly, retailers were left with an unexpected amount of inventory in their back rooms. Carrying over products allows them to replenish the gaps in sizes or colours to complete their offer. Yet, we find some innovations across the brands interviewed.

MIPS has become standard. Brands who had integrated it in selected models are expanding it within the range. Brands who hadn't tried it

“Wearing a helmet is a cheap way of protecting the CPU of your body” R.P. Bess, Protec

so far are giving it a go. “We are updating our Husk helmet to feature MIPS, following overwhelming customer demand”, says Chris Bellamy from Salomon. They make a note that MIPS comes in addition to their existing EPS 4D and Smart Safety 360 technology. Sandbox announces the integration of MIPS in selected models. Most of the few new styles that will be launched next season will feature it. Giro will be presenting the new Tor and Tenaya helmets. These are high-end, hybrid-shell helmets aimed at free riders. They feature Spherical MIPS and a unique look. “Hybrid shell construction allowed to play with texture, adding aesthetic value”, says Darius Heristchian. MIPS is also found in two of the three new launches announced by Smith. The Nexus MIPS is their premium tech offering in a lightweight, hybrid shell construction. The Summit MIPS is their triple certified ski helmet with Koroyd zonal protection and a set of valuable backcountry features. It comes with a Smith + Boa® custom fit system that stashes inside the helmet when stored. It also has an integrated headlamp router, an Ionic+ anti-microbial liner and a Smith cold weather beanie liner accessory. Sweet will launch the Igniter 2Vi MIPS, as part of the roll out of their 2Vi technology platform. This new style offers better performance and comfort while keeping weight and volume to a minimum. Anon will keep pushing their exclusive WaveCel impact protection technology launched last season. This is a three-dimensional cellular structure that creates a network of hundreds of interconnected shock absorbers. This network connects your head to the outer shell of the helmet, distributing the impact energy through it.

Moving away from impact protection tech, we find other novelties and updates worth mentioning. Dirty Dog introduces their CVAFT airflow technology. “The Dirty Dog CVAFT Ventilation System uses carefully chosen areas for the intake and exhaust of cooling air to ensure all-day wearability”, explains Tom Lazarus. Pret presents an exclusive collaboration with a new anti-microbial foam. The foam, integrated across all FW23 helmets, offers protection from the germs and bacteria found in our heads. Sandbox introduces a new comfort liner and ear pad lining made with grid fleece. “It improves fit and elevates comfort, as excess heat escapes through the grid lines and vents through our patented airflow tech”, explains Max Jenke. Triple8 is extending the integration of their new softer Halo liner to all helmets. They are also redesigning the goggle clip to be attached to the helmet, avoiding the risks of losing it.



Visors are a trend that hasn’t been ignored. Smith’s new proposal in this segment is the Survey Visor, which integrates a ChromaPop Visor. Cébé launches the Intuition helmet, with ABS construction, adjustable venting system on the top and a very comfortable padding. “The Multi-Use concept was key in the development, so it will also be available with a perfectly integrated photochromic visor”, announces Adélie Gaillard. Salomon is refreshing their Driver helmet. It will combine the comfort and field of vision of a visor style with the aesthetics of a goggle/helmet combination.

“We are updating our Husk helmet to feature MIPS, following overwhelming customer demand.”

Chris Bellamy, Salomon

There are some efforts in sustainability. Bollé extends their “React for Good” campaign from cycling helmets into snow ones. The first launch of this campaign will be the eco-designed Eco Atmos helmet, available in three colours. Salomon will be updating their MTN helmets to be made with 70% recycled materials. They will also be triple certified for snowboarding, climbing and biking. By preventing excessive purchasing, they tie in versatility with sustainability.

As for looks, Spy+ announces new colours on the Galactic MIPS model. “We are offering three new pop colourways inspired by 1987, and a rider signature model made with Trevor Kennison”, announces Alexis Ratajczak. Cébé celebrates their third year of collaboration with Superdry by launching 4 new helmets. Flaxta is relaunching their hybrid style Deep

“It improves fit and elevates comfort, as excess heat escapes through the grid lines and vents through our patented airflow tech” Max Jenke, Sandbox

Space to target wider user groups and integrate digital safety devices. Head is launching new artwork for their existing range, as a way to support their retailers.

Amongst accessories, we find pouches, spare parts and audio enabling gadgets. Head offers complimentary pouches with their top-of-the-line helmets. Cébé includes a pouch in the packaging of each helmet. Spy+ includes an additional brim in each helmet for customisation. Pret offers ear covers, goggle attachments and liners that are easily replaceable without the need of special tools. Salomon makes spare lenses and visors available in stores and online. Sandbox offers additional comfort liners in an array of fits. Anon offers facemasks that magnetically seal the face pane to any MFI compatible style. Smith’s racing helmets have an optional slalom chin guard. Sweet’s racing helmets also offer it, in this case made with titanium for the best combination of low weight and massive strength. Audio capabilities is at the forefront of helmet accessories. Sweet offers outdoor tech speaker/mic systems for all audio ready helmets. Smith has partnered with Aleck to integrate their audio systems in most of their helmets. Aleck pushes their Push-to-Talk system that allows you to communicate with your snowboarding group. “With the real time GPS, you can find your friends anywhere in the resort”, says Adam Janeka.

RETAILER SUPPORT

Closure of resorts last winter resulted in retailers holding on to a lot of unexpected stock. The best form of retailer support has been to postpone the launch of new references and carry over key existing ones. This offers retailers the opportunity to fill up the gaps in size or colour. Most brands have adopted this measure. Some of them, like Head, have expressed their intentions of keeping it up for seasons to come. This is a welcome practice in terms of sustainability too. Less seasonality equals less waste.

Unsold stock was not the only challenge that the pandemic brought about. Bottlenecks in the supply chains have been the cause of many delivery delays. This has altered purchasing and manufacturing schedules globally. “Everyone is at full capacity and there are backlogs. We anticipated and brought forward our cycles early”, says Katharina Acham from Head. They are not the only ones who are adjusting to earlier purchasing orders. Cébé also anticipated potential delays and was able to deliver on time. Smith has brought forward their timelines to ensure an uneventful FW23 delivery. Sandbox explains that they are asking retailers for earlier prebooks to meet the current purchasing order dates. Still, they are still giving them enough time to assess this season’s sell-through beforehand. Aleck saw the chip shortages coming. They purchased critical components six months in advance of their production run. Some brands opted for increasing production to make sure they have all the stock their retailers might need in-season. Sweet has ramped up their production capacity which will allow for a more flexible go-to-market process. Triple8 is stocking up as much as possible. Flaxta is looking into alternative logistic solutions to ensure next season’s timely deliveries.

Although problem-solving is taking up a lot of retailer support energy, brands haven’t forgotten about marketing support. A lot of this is dedicated to education. Users are more knowledgeable and communicating the technology efficiently is key to secure the sale. Head produces high quality videos about features, technology, fit and use. Salomon offers a range of demo tools to push their key technology, such as the helmet safety system EOS 4D. Cébé focuses their go-to-market strategy on in-store teams training about technology. Smith develops infographics that explain clearly how the technology works. There is marketing support in the form of POS props too. Giro offers a helmet and google holder that allows retailers to display the look efficiently. Triple8 has designed a helmet tree that can display up to 20 units and a gondola display that can hold helmets and pads together. Head offers metal helmet holders and highlight displays. Protec is working on new stands and supports with hangers for their helmets. Aleck innovates with a QR Code inserted in their new packaging, which delivers a “digital salesperson” experience in many languages. ©

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Customers more educated about technology
- 2 MIPS becoming standard
- 3 Demand for light weight and good ventilation
- 4 High rate of carry over references
- 5 Earlier prebooks to avoid delays

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

SNOW PROTECTION 2022/23

As the trend for off-piste riding rises, so does the demand for protective equipment. Body protection is still not as accepted as helmets, though. Brands hold the key. By delivering easy to wear pieces they will promote acceptance and secure the demand. **By Rocio Enriquez.**



The increased interest in backcountry explorations has put the spotlight on protective equipment. People are more risk aware. Demand for protection is growing, although not at the same pace for all categories. Helmets are experiencing a surge in demand, whereas body protection still faces some reticence. Most riders still find them restrictive, heavy and hot. Consumers are demanding thin, light, flexible and well-ventilated armour pieces. Combined with well-fitting, technical fabrics they will feel like a second skin. Free from restrictions of movements and heat build-up, riders will be eager to wear them. When choosing materials, sustainability will be rewarded.

NEW FOR FW22

Products launched last season did not enjoy the deserved exposure, and their market performance remains unseen. Brands keep researching and innovating, mostly in materials and environmental impact. Flaxta, Forcefield, Koroyd and Amplifi talk about new products in development. These new launches will be postponed. FW22 offered some serious progress and brands will focus on promoting them for FW23.

"The safety category is the one that requires more explanation and information." Alexandra Hlawitschka, Evoc

Flaxta's main focus is their Behold back protector. "It is the most ventilated, flexible and low profile back protector in the market", claims Ola Melin. Evoc keeps pushing their LiteShield Plus back protector, offered in backpacks and vests. "It offers the highest possible degree of spinal protection with excellent impact protection. It is extremely lightweight and, thanks to its segmented design, it allows for maximum flexibility in all directions and high air circulation", explains Alexandra Hlawitschka. Their offering is completed with functional shirts and crash pants with certified protection and perfect fit. Amplifi introduced the MKX protection

pad. Only 10mm thick, it has great shock absorption, is very flexible and creates no heat build-up. The brand has managed to implement a Zero Waste production process when injecting MKX parts in their products. Every offcut of material is carefully collected and upcycled into new products. Amplifi has also stepped up the game in backpacks with the super light Snowlite Airflow Backsystem.

Fabrics are becoming quite technical. Forcefield will push its GTech fabric. "It is a high-performance base layer manufactured using recycled ocean plastics", explains Patrick Lambert. Amplifi introduced the natural fibre Miharo in their base layers. Miharo offers odour managing properties with the added value that it is a fast-growing, renewable source. Blended with polyester it results in a fabric that absorbs odour, is anti-bacterial and works actively on moisture regulation, helping you stay dry.

RETAILER SUPPORT

Retailer support in this category has been defined by two main factors. On one hand, last winter's sell-out was heavily impacted by travel restrictions and resorts closures. On the other hand, there are unprecedented challenges in production and logistics worldwide. Stock management is the key. Retailers need brands to help them fill up the gaps in stock. They also need them to secure sufficient inventory to serve in-season re-orders, if this winter's sales pick up. Brands have listened. "We've had to adapt and remain flexible", says Patrick Lambert. Flaxta is looking for alternative shipping and logistic solutions to keep their options open in the future. A lot of retailer support energy is poured into offering new solutions to these new problems. Even so, product and brand communication is not forgotten. POS displays are an important part. Triple 8 has a gondola display that can hold the protection pads along with their helmets, offering a cohesive look. Forcefield and Koroyd also offer POS boards to showcase their technology. Evoc offers modular, individually customisable display systems. Flaxta and Amplifi take an individual approach, working closely with retailers to build POS materials that suit their needs. Education is crucial when communicating about body protection, both in-store and through digital channels. "The safety category is the one that requires more explanation and information", says Alexandra Hlawitschka. It is important to train retailers properly so they can communicate to customers in an efficient way. Koroyd has set up an online training portal and organises workshops for this purpose. Evoc uses videos to explain the technology and for manuals. Progress in the technology of these products is what will make them be accepted and adopted by customers. As Ola Melin says: "The safest protector is the one you use".

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Pads lighter, more flexible and better ventilated.
- 2 Fabrics aim for fit, thermal regulation and odour control
- 3 Efforts in sustainability
- 4 New launches postponed
- 5 Retailer support focus on education

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SPLITBOARDS 2022/23

Former SOURCE Editor Trey Cook's dusted off the quill & ink to take a measure of the booming splitboarding market.



It's safe to say nobody knows what the fuck's going on with the economy right now. As for last season? As SP Bindings' Bernhard Altmanninger puts it, "The '20/21 season triggered a massive run on splitboard products." West Snowboarding's David Lambert: "There were so many shops, which had never worked with us, calling us to order splitboards. At least now they know we make them."

And the future? Dupraz Snowboards' Sébastien Lozat: "Last season's craze for touring equipment has probably saturated the more casual rider market. The vast majority of these users will remain very occasional and will not renew their gear for several years. It is mainly the experienced user who will be ready to buy new equipment with better performance and improved hardware and is ready to spend more than they did on their previous splitboard setup."

BOARDS

With that in mind, let's take a gander at some of the new hype that's waiting for you in 22/23, starting with totally new splitboard models. GARA Splitboards' Rasmus Ostergaard: "We are adding a new swallowtail splitboard this season called the Antihero." Amplid's Peter Bauer: "Two new models -- the Milligram and the Millisurf -- with 'Stick Wall' along the board centre, which prevents the unnerving creaking sound when descending, and provides additional stability between the two board halves." Rossignol's Arnaud Repa: "New Escaper Split directional twin series featuring FSC woodcores, twin tips for switch landing, a balanced flex that is slightly stiffer under the front foot for added control and softer under the rear foot for smoother turns, RadCut for playful turn variations and seamless edge-to-edge transitions, a 4.4k sintered base and our most versatile AmpTek All-Mountain 50% rocker-50% camber

"There were so many shops, which had never worked with us, calling us to order splitboards. At least now they know we make them."

David Lambert, West Snowboarding

profile." Salomon's Baptiste Chaussignand: "We are introducing new shapes with a focus on the pleasure of riding while maximizing touring efficiency." GNU's Barrett Cummins: "The Banked Country and Barrett splits have the same advanced tech features as their solid counterparts. Progressive Magne-Traction edges are a proprietary Gnu technology currently only used in these boards."

Following a season of extraordinary uphill effort, many brands are focusing on weight. Stranda's Mats Drougge: "We're launching a Descender Fjäderlättm split (2890gram @ 161cm) with a full carbon construction. To counteract the nervousness often associated with carbon splitboards we added double aluminium stringers in the core." Head's Katharina Acham: "We are using our LYT Board Architecture in the VOY splitboard including a new lightweight wood core design with poplar wood. This weight reduction results in boards that are light, yet long-lasting and full of power." Telos' Ben Schwitz & Kolja Grischa Keetman: "We are still in final testing of some new sustainable materials for our award-winning carbon construction splitboards that could make them not only lighter but actually more durable than our current construction."

Koroyd is another lightweight material we’re hearing more about. Nitro’s Tommy Delago: “We’ve developed a weight-optimized Koroyd®/ carbon fibre construction for our new high-end splitboard, the Vertical, pushing the weight for a 158 down to a mere 2900 grams. Slightly narrower than its siblings, but also equipped with our signature hiking pods, this high-performance board is targeting the serious splitboarder.” Jones’ Seth Lightcap: “The Ultra Stratos Split is a new ultralight option for expert splitboarders built with our most advanced materials including two sections of Koroyd in the core that absorb chatter at a fraction of the weight of wood.”

As splitboards get lighter, the challenge of matching the ride of solid boards increases. Easy’s Nico: “All boards are based on sensation. We want our splits to give the same feeling as a regular board.” Never Summer’s Vince Sanders: “We’ll be bringing our new Triple Camber technology into splitboards like our new Lady FR Split. This centre camber helps with uphill skin traction while maintaining the functionality of Rocker Camber on the descent. It feels nimble, light underfoot and easy to turn in deep or wet snow, while offering the stability of triple camber at speed and in variable conditions. Nidecker’s Antoine Floquet: “Our new Escape Split is a high-performance and super versatile all-mountain splitboard featuring our Master Core boosted with Pop Carbon, N-7000 base and Karakoram Ultraclips 2.0 for ultimate lock precision, and we managed to put it all together at a very affordable price.”

Tommy Delago from Nitro reports they’re focusing on updated shapes as well. “Another major update is happening on the Slash Split, which has been redesigned to receive the 3D Surftech base shape like its solid counterpart, providing for the ultimate surf feel in loose snow conditions.”

And quite often it’s the little things that can make the biggest differences. West’s David Lambert: “We’ve made an improvement to our splitboard top sheets to keep snow from sticking to them.” Weston’s Sean Eno: “Our splitboards will feature a small hole in the nose that’s compatible with Pomoca’s Z Clip. For the tail, we’ve included a simple notch that centres and retains the tail clip. Slash’s GiGi Rüf: “Next winter we’ve upgraded to Union Clips & Hooks Pro, which secure your board’s connection better. Also, we reduced the aluminium tip protectors and extended the steel edges there. We’ve also adjusted the touring bracket on the ski to allow the ski’s tip to rise, which makes steep switchbacks easier.” Lib-Tech’s Barrett Christy Cummins: “The Travis Rice Orca Split is getting the Karakoram Ultraclip 2.0. These are lighter weight, with a smaller footprint and active joining to spring load the seam of your splitboard, eliminating the rattling, shearing and rolling inherent to passive slip-fit connections.”

But as much as we love new technology, there’s nothing like great visuals to motivate riders to fork over their credit card deets. K2’s Sebi Schmitz, “In 22/23 we are coming up with two new collections with a consistent design strategy influenced by many areas from all sorts of cultural movements.” West’s David Lambert: “Simplicity and fine attention to details are still the idea for the coming years. It has been

“We are introducing new shapes with a focus on the pleasure of riding while maximizing touring efficiency.” Baptiste Chaussignand, Salomon

our signature since the beginning.” Borealis’ Ben Hall: “As always, we focus on minimalist, nature-inspired designed, often showing the wood core, and using harmonious curves and colours.” Fjell’s Kjetil Bjørge. “Classic design with blue and white tops, black and white bases.” Endeavor’s Max Jenke: “The Patrol Split is only offered in our Legacy Collection which is black with minimal graphic hits.” Salomon’s Baptiste Chaussignand: “Simple, timeless and mountain inspired is the direction we took for the FW22/23 splitboard line.”

And the incessant struggle towards sustainability? Endeavor’s Max Jenke: “With the introduction of the Phonon topsheet, we eliminate the plastic topsheet and UV lacquer. We are developing more materials that will enable us to move away from petroleum-based to bio-based, and we’re working through strategies on how to make our snowboards circular.” Sandy Shapes’ Alessandro Marchi: “We are developing new processes to recycle production scraps. We’re currently testing new bio-

“Next winter we’ve upgraded to Union Clips & Hooks Pro, which secure your board’s connection better. Also, we reduced the aluminium tip protectors and extended the steel edges there. We’ve also adjusted the touring bracket on the ski to allow the ski’s tip to rise, which makes steep switchbacks easier.” GiGi Rüf, Slash



based epoxy with 50 to 70 % organic origin. We introduced a new bio-based plastic that’s 100% made of organic origin and upcycling.”

And yes, price still matters. Rome’s Matt Stillman: “The Uprise split is perhaps the most competitively priced splitboard on the market. This was a decision made after seeing an opportunity to help create an affordable split that rides like a way more expensive board.”

BOOTS

Brands are also lining up some great new boot models for 22/23. Deeluxe’s Florian Heim: “The all-new Xavier de Le Rue signature boot “XV” features a completely new construction that allows you to control the lateral stability of your snowboard boots.” Nitro’s Tommy Delago: “Our highly popular Skylab TLS boot has received a women’s counterpart. Nitro’s most anticipated new boot model, the Ronda TLS, boot is built for riders looking for a lightweight, split-ready resort boot.” ThirtyTwo’s Jon Takao: “We’ve made big updates to the Jones MTB, Hight MTB as well as the TM-2 Jones and Hight models which feature a lightweight and aggressive Vibram outsole and easy entry Full Zip Gaiter. The Walk Mode Collar is anchored with the BOA TX3 lace.”

And of course, loads of pimp new technology. Vans’ David Atkinson: “On our new Verse Range - a highly specific backcountry touring boot - you will see an adaptive rear drop cuff for unparalleled uphill performance whilst maintaining insane downhill performance.” Salomon’s Baptiste Chaussignand: “In FW22/23, for our renewed all-mountain program we have developed two evolutions of our heel lock system called Straight Jacket. The Straight Jacket PRO on the ECHO lace BOA and the Precision Harness which equips the Dual BOA and Power Lock boots.” Northwave’s Davide Smania: “The new Domain 2Spin will feature a double Spin closure system, one for the upper and the other dedicated for the heel “Locker” retention system.” Deeluxe’s Florian Heim: “We definitely see a rising demand for boots with the BOA® Fit System. Accordingly, our collection will feature more BOA® models. For the Deemon L3 BOA® we even teamed up with BOA® to come up with our own exclusive BOA® Fit System configuration.” Nidecker’s Maurizio Molin: “We are launching two brand new BOA closure systems, which are exclusive to Nidecker. Both systems – External Heel Lock and Internal Heel Lock – considerably improve heel-lock inside the boot.”

Boots, like boards, are seeing advances in sustainability. Deeluxe’s Florian Heim: “Bloom Rise foam is made out of Algae and will replace

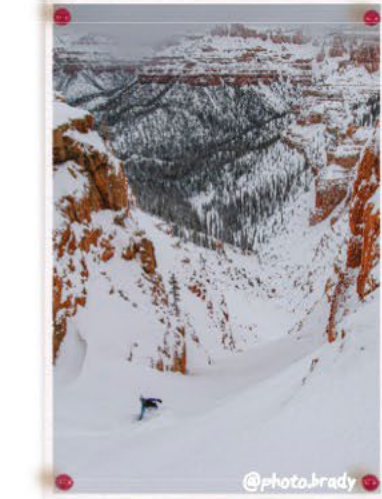
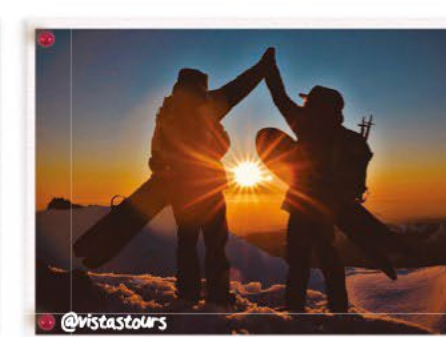


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Thanks for riding with us.

- Will + Becca
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90% of EVA used in a regular snowboard boot in Elias Elhardt's new Formative boot. Algae biomass does not require fossil fuel or arable land to grow, making it the perfect resource for creating useful materials." Salomon's Baptiste Chaussignand: "We are introducing the FuzeSurge midsole, an all-new EVA component which is 30% bio-sourced which has a lower impact in terms of CO2 and is less toxic for our product makers."

BINDERS

Get ready for some sick new binders in 22/23. Rossignol's Arnaud Repa: "Xavier De Le Rue's new signature series splitboard binding fuses lightweight construction, reliability and ease of use for demanding backcountry missions. And Marion Haerty, 4 times FWT champ, will be rocking the new After Hours bindings." Union's George Kleckner: "The all-new Expedition Charger features a pin-less dual lock system

"With the introduction of the Phonon topsheet, we eliminate the plastic topsheet and UV lacquer. We are developing more materials that will enable us to move away from petroleum-based to bio-based, and we're working through strategies on how to make our snowboards circular." Max Jenke, Endeavor

for fast and easy transitions with the flip of a lever." Karakorum's Kyle HansenKahn: "The Guide HB hardboot binding is built for hardbooters looking for a responsive ride and the lightest hardboot binding on the market. Fully compatible with the Prime System, so you can still use them with your Prime interfaces and Quiver Connectors."

And current bindings will be getting a variety of upgrades. Spark R&D's Dan Ventura: "Our touring brackets will now be over-moulded which offers silky smooth touring and doesn't wear down over time. Our Whammy Bar climbing wires are also getting some over-moulded updates, which makes for even smoother and easier climbing wire deployment when the skin track gets steeper. The lever arm on the Whammy Bar is now also moulded into the plastic rather than being

stainless steel, saving a few grams and eliminating the need for welding." SP's Bernhard Altmanninger: "Our SP Split will be equipped with the all-new, ultralight, 2-zone urethane ankle strap, making it even lighter and more durable than ever before. Flip the strap upside down to switch the upper and lower stiffness levels and optimize it to your personal needs." Nitro's Florian Lang: "Our Vertical split binding has an improved forward lean adjuster." Burton's Jan Grimm/Lesley Betts: "We're increasing the functionality and usability of the Hitchhiker binding by updating the FLAD lever on the hiback." Plum's Thomas Debray: "We've changed the material of our locking system from aluminium to POM plastic to make it easier to lock/unlock the binding for transitions."

Other binding innovations appear at the point of production. Enfuse's Jan Voracek: "We are starting our own production for the main components of the binding. This will help us reduce our production cost, so in 22/23 our bindings will finally be available for retailers."

ACCESSORIES

If I had a dollar for every time I read "custom cut skins by Pomoca" in our Splitboard Hardgoods questionnaire, I wouldn't be rich, but I could celebrate the end of this article with a couple of free beers. Which is good (the skins, not the beers) because it means brands are addressing one of the weakest points in the uphill equation. Other than that... Burton's Jan Grimm/Lesley Betts: "We're introducing a new 3-piece, telescoping pole for the demanding rider. This will also provide a lower cost option for the more price-conscious customer."

So there you have it. Equipped with all this great info and, of course, your trusty crystal ball, we're sure you'll have no problems knowing exactly what's going to happen in the next 12 to 15 months and easily dial in your 22/23 splitboard order. Yeah, right. In France they seem to sum it up pretty well when they respond to what sounds like a desperate task: "Bon courage!" ☺

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Booming sector
- 2 Innovation sores
- 3 Lighter, stronger



XV



XV

Xavier De Le Rue's award-winning, big-mountain brainchild, the XV, is back to push the boundaries of big-mountain riding. The super directional shape with a large, stiff nose and narrower tapered tail offers effortless float and maneuverability. Serrated Edge technology ensures incomparable grip and edge control for the precision and confidence to plant your front foot and pin it over anything in your path.



ANOTHER BEST DAY

rossignol.com



DAKINE WETSUITS

Last September, Dakine entered the wetsuit market and have since continued to develop new technologies, one of which is due to feature in Dakine's new Mālama line. Focussing on quality, durability, and sustainable, biodegradable eco-materials, the Mālama suits will be made from FriendlyPrene; a technology that Dakine isn't keeping to themselves, they're sharing it with any brand that wishes to use it. Read on for more product info.

Since the September 2020 launch, how has Dakine wetsuits been received?

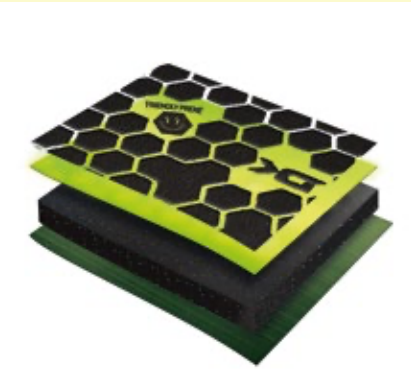
We've had a great launch. The suits have been very well received and we've brought the issue of durability back into focus. Alongside performance, Dakine has a reputation for incredible build quality, so it was vital to us to continue this through into the wetsuit program, but equally to re-balance what we were seeing with more and more disposable wetsuits on the market.

Please talk to us about your new FriendlyPrene technology

From a sustainability point of view, we know wetsuits are a long way from perfect. With FriendlyPrene we've taken a big step to solving the post-consumer wetsuit waste problem, and we're encouraging all brands to use it with no exclusivity or licensing requirements.

Who were your development partners and how did you work together to R&D the original idea?

To develop FriendlyPrene, we brought together the world's most highly respected neoprene maker: Yamamoto of Japan and our partners on Friendly Foam, EcoLogic LLC. The goal was a neoprene with the same or better flex, warmth, durability, and affordability as the best neoprenes on the market; a neoprene



that all brands would want to use to achieve the biggest positive effect.

Over the course of 2 years of development and extensive 3rd party lab testing, we've developed a material that performs the same as Yamamoto's industry benchmark #39 foam and optimised with Eco-One® enhanced biodegradation.

EcoLogic's Eco-One® technology enhances the biodegradation of FriendlyPrene in biologically active landfills (appropriate facilities not available in all areas). ASTM D5511 tests, representing biologically active landfills, on FriendlyPrene have shown 30% in the first 522 days. After the biodegradation takes place, the leftover material is biomass with trace amounts of biogas, that can be used to generate electricity and renewable natural gas.

When is FriendlyPrene coming to market?

The first suits featuring FriendlyPrene will land in mid-2022. The FriendlyPrene material will be available to all brands at the same time.

Which are your first suits to use the technology and why?

We're launching this in a new model, the Mālama, with Men's and Women's full suits in 5/4/3 hooded to 3/2. In following seasons, once we have introduced the technology at our other manufacturers, we plan to extend FriendlyPrene into our whole line.

How important do you feel sustainability is in the buying criteria of consumers?

It's very important. Sustainability has to now be one of the key issues in any design or buying decision. We feel we've gone past the point where this can be used as a marketing tool or added benefit, it needs to be integral to everything we do as individuals and as a company.

Until now sustainability has come with a premium price tag. Customers shouldn't have



to choose between sustainable and affordable, but we need cooperation between brands to make this widely available and lower the cost to achieve the greatest possible positive impact. Hence why we are putting planet before profits and making this available to all brands.

How do you intend to invite other brands to use the material?

We don't just want to share this innovation; we want to make a call to arms to all brands to work together to try our best to clean up our products with collaboration and openness. We have a responsibility to protect the environment that we're using these products in.

We no longer have the luxury to use advances in eco materials as marketing tools kept exclusive to increase profits at the expense of the planet. We want to invite brands and manufacturers to join with us to help everyone on this essential journey. The quicker we can get mass adoption of eco materials, the more affordable they become and the faster we will do the most good.

For more info, contact us at info@dakinewetsuits.com

Kemper
SNOWBOARDS

KEMPER

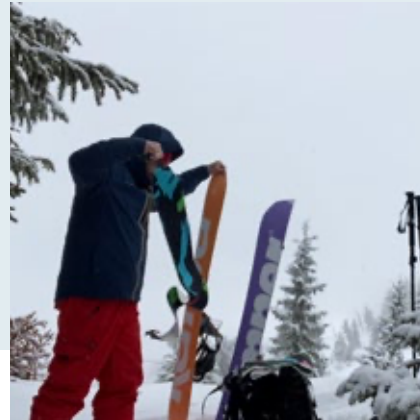
Retro is back and in the snowboarding world, it's all the rage. Someone who decided to ride the retro train is former pro snowboarder Jib Hunt, using it as a perfect opportunity to relaunch 80s/90s brand Kemper Snowboards. We got in touch with Jib to learn about how he's brought this brand out of the 90s and reintroduced it to the current snowboard community.

As one of the original old school brands, it's great to see you back. Please could we have brief history of the brand?

Kemper Snowboards was officially founded in 1987 by David Kemper who built the first boards in his garage in Ontario, Canada dating back to the winter of 1984/85. Once the brand started to gain momentum, Kemper moved its board production to a snowboard factory in Montreal, Canada for the 1988/89 snowboarding season. In 1989/90, the snowboard production moved to Austria.

Kemper Snowboards quickly became one of the biggest snowboarding brands in snowboard history and competed directly against Burton Snowboards, Sims Snowboards, and Barfoot Snowboards. The Kemper snowboarding brand was best remembered for fully embracing snowboarding's neon period, in both their snowboard graphics and their incredible range of funky outerwear.

In 1989 business was booming and Kemper had one of the best professional snowboard teams of the era. David Kemper eventually partnered with a windsurfing distribution company in Glendale, California called the Romney Group who added Kemper Snowboards to their portfolio of snowboarding brands. During that time, David relocated to California to help oversee the business, team management, and the growing product line. In 1992, David sold his remaining



shares of the company to focus on his college education.

By 1994 the company was sold to an in-line skate company on the East Coast. A couple of years shortly after, Kemper Snowboards officially went out of business.

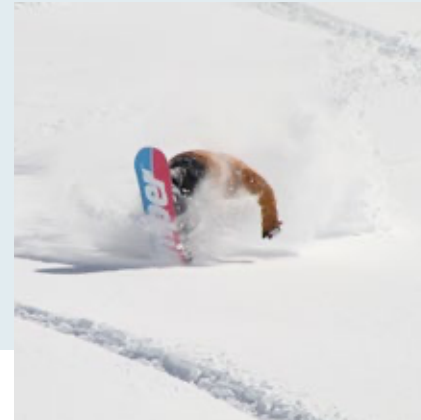
In the winter of 2018, Jib Hunt, a former professional snowboarder, relaunched the Kemper Snowboards brand. In the summer of 2019, Hunt moved Kemper's headquarters from the East Coast to Park City, Utah to better position the snowboarding brand for growth and exposure within the Utah snowboarding scene.

What was the thinking behind the relaunch of the brand?

There was recently a big surge of interest for the nostalgia brands from the older riders and the younger riders have been excited about brands who've revived their 1980s and 1990s designs. Also, snowboarding has become stagnant, and all of the brands look the same. Snowboarding needs some excitement.

Who are the people behind the brand today?

It's just me running the brand with one other employee, a handful of great sales reps, and some awesome international distributors. Many moons ago I was a sponsored professional snowboarder and rode for Scott USA, Pill Snowboards, Vans, 686, Fossil, and Mountain Dew. While I was pro riding, I was going to college to learn design and then coaching at the camps at Mount Hood in Oregon in the summers. When I finished college, I worked for Burton Snowboards for 5 years as their Softgoods Design Director. After Burton, I went on to design for brands such as Helly Hansen, 686, Rusty, Vans, and I helped Neff launch their first outerwear collection.



How is the brand to be distributed in Europe?

Our distributor for Europe is Centrano/SkatePro.com

Please tell us about the product range for this relaunch season.

We are sticking with our classic line which already includes some fun and unique shapes. For 22/23, we are bringing back the original shape of our freestyle board and even have a collab with Motley Crue. We have our own binding now and splitboard skins for our (4) models of splitboards. We are also working on developing a splitboard binding. Also, keep an eye out for a cool Europe-specific collab!!

Who's on the pro team?

Kurt Heine, J.D. Platt, Martin Gallant, Rich Varga, Joe Curtes, Ryan Flaska, Seth Hill, JF Fortin, Dylan Gray, Jonat Ste-Marie, Nat Sabourin, Derek Henderson, Scott McFarland, and Dustin Varga.

Why should retailers stock Kemper?

It's time to make snowboarding fun again. Our boards are made in one of the top factories in the world, we have a 4-year warranty on all our boards, our graphics are fun and bright, and we will provide your customers with something new and fresh, with a retro flavour.



SICOMIN

With growing demand for sustainable hardware within the boardsports industry and with more and more companies switching to bio components, SOURCE sat down with Sicomin's Export Manager Marc Denjean to get a better insight on how the advanced epoxy manufacturing company is involved in the shift towards bio.

Please tell us about the company's history and its product range.

Sicomin has been producing epoxy resins for over 40 years. Water sports are in our blood, and the products we manufacture in Southern France are used to create surf and wind surf boards, foils, skis, masts and other watersports equipment. As well as epoxy resins for all production methods, we supply composite materials such as core materials, fabric reinforcements, fillers and accessories such as inserts for surfboards.

We place a strong emphasis on innovation. We have a dedicated R&D facility where we create new formulations and can tailor a bespoke solution that satisfies our customer's most challenging specifications.

Can you explain your GreenPoxy bio resin product family.

Our GreenPoxy family is a complete range of epoxy materials that derive a high proportion of their carbon content from sustainable bio-based feedstock. In simple terms, we use industrial waste products (glycerol from oleochemical production) to replace molecules traditionally derived from the petroleum industry, lowering greenhouse gas emissions and reducing energy consumption with a greener, more sustainable chemistry.

We have worked hard to formulate the largest range of green resins on the market today, with a bio system created for each manufacturing process. The GreenPoxy range includes laminating and clear coating resins for traditional surfboard production techniques as well as specialist resins such as those for hot pressing skis and snowboards. We even



COBRA

make foaming bio-epoxy resins that form a lightweight foam core material inside a part.

Currently, hardeners for epoxy resin still tend to use petroleum based materials, however we plan to formulate a 100% bio-based epoxy resin for boards in the future.

Tell us about the surfboard brands you work with.

Our resins are used to manufacture boards for a huge number of surf, windsurf and SUP board brands including NOTOX, Fanatic, Starboard, Decathlon and NSP. We have a solution for every board maker, from the small custom shapers and artisanal producers to the mass production specialists who run production line processes outputting thousands of boards per month.

You have also launched the product in wintersports, how has this been received?

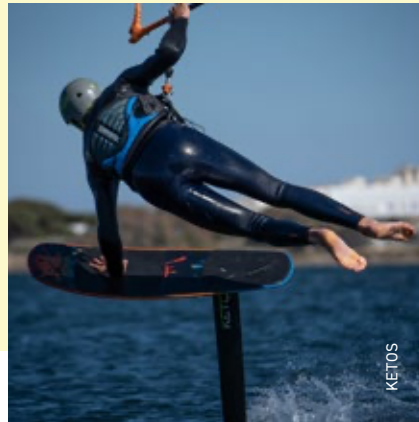
Yes, GreenPoxy resins are now as likely to be found on the mountains as in the oceans!

We have seen a massive increase in the demand for more sustainable materials from winter sports brands as our customers (ZAG, Nidecker, Movement...) become more aware about the materials used and search out products that have the lowest possible impact on the environment. With the GreenPoxy range we have products suitable for all production techniques from the small batch manufacturers to the offshore board and ski factories that build for several brands.

GreenPoxy resins have been formulated to replace existing resin systems, providing the same properties and uncompromising performance with no need to adjust the production machinery or processes.

Please take us through the ECOBOARD Project Gold Level qualification you received.

The ECOBOARD Project has done fantastic work to provide true third-party assessment and qualification of both board makers and raw materials in the surf industry. ECOBOARD focusses on reducing carbon footprints, increasing the use (and reuse) of renewable, recycled and up-cycled inputs, and reducing toxicity within the surfboard manufacturing



KETOS



BOREALIS

process. To be a Gold Level raw material, a resin must have at least 25% bio-carbon content, have received USDA Bio-Preferred certification, use a sustainably managed supply chain, and have been the subject of a peer reviewed life cycle assessment. GreenPoxy 56 is a clear, laminating epoxy specially created to combine excellent mechanical properties and a clear, high gloss finish that more than meets these targets. With 41% of its carbon content from plant origins, GreenPoxy 56 is the most sustainable Gold Level resin system available today. Our GreenPoxy 33, Surf Clear Evo and Bio Foaming formulations are also accredited.

How fast do you think demand for sustainable resins will grow and do you foresee any new applications for the technology?

Bio-based resins are a key part of our future. We expect demand to continue to increase as manufacturers try to do better, and customers demand products that are kinder to the environment. We were determined that availability shouldn't impact the uptake of more sustainable materials, so we have invested heavily in our production capacity, ensuring that all GreenPoxy products are available in industrial volumes. We also see GreenPoxy being used for larger applications, as the composites industry builds on the bio-based resin success story in board sports and starts to follow the same path in larger structures such as yachts, buildings and wind turbine components. ☺



TELOS

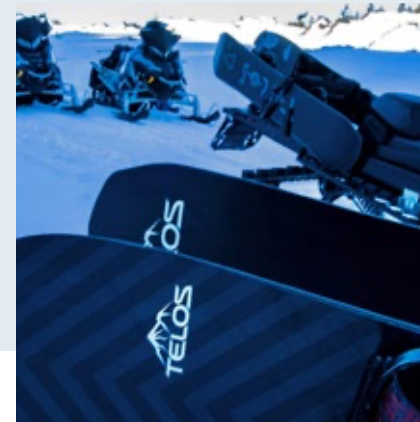
New to market four years ago is Telos, an American snowboard brand that has technical innovation at the forefront. Currently available at five retailers across Germany and Austria, the guys behind the brand are looking to continue growing their presence in France and Switzerland, alongside entering new European markets. Co-Founder and Telos President Ben Schwitz gave us the down low.

Who are the people behind the brand?

Telos was founded in 2017 by snowboarders Dan Agundes and Ben Schwitz, who also founded their GP87 factory along with Eric Luthardt, an award-winning board designer who'd previously worked with Ride and Flow. Dan began his career building and designing boards in Northern California near the base of Mt. Shasta which is also home to the City of Telos that, legend has it, is said to exist below the mountain. Telos is a magical ancient city but also very technically advanced and believed by some to be a connection to all that is natural in the world. This legendary city was the inspiration for building a technically advanced snowboard brand that also helps us connect with nature and the mountains that we love and protect. The name Telos also comes from the Greek word Telos meaning 'an ultimate goal or purpose', which for this group of core snowboarders who're striving to make the best riding boards and getting people back to the roots of the snowboarding lifestyle, is just that! Telos is a team of core snowboarders with the goal of creating new and innovative boards that people worldwide will be stoked to ride every day!

Recently there have been changes in how the brand is distributed, please tell us about the new set up.

Aside from our rapidly growing team in the US, we've also been distributing in Russia



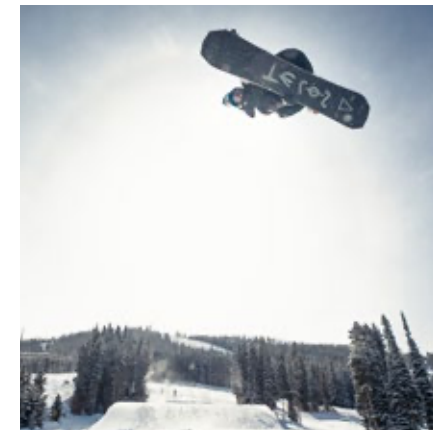
and Japan for the past few years. Alongside this, Telos is excited to now be available throughout the European markets thanks to our great partnership with Kolja and Nina Keetman over at [kar(:)isma], who are managing sales and distribution throughout the region. Aside from having well established business and great customer service experience, the team at [ka(:)risma] are core snowboarders themselves which fits our Telos brand profile perfectly.

How are you working with retailers to market the brand?

For the 21/22 season, Telos has introduced a new Retailer Marketing Program in the USA through the Quivers platform which allows us to capture sales online and then push them directly to the local retailers for fulfilment which will help build relationships between our customers and their local Telos dealers. For this season in Europe, we are closely cooperating with 5 strong local retailers in Germany and Austria. The Quivers retailer program will be rolled out and available to our EU retailers for the 22/23 season which we are very excited about. We're also currently working on a grassroots campaign, travel permitting, that would include touring throughout the EU with our Pro team for demos, shop tours and filming opportunities. Follow our social media for updates on that!

What are the key products in the new line and why?

For 22/23 we are expanding our line to cover a full range of entry-level, middle, and premium boards and accessories. The key new products this year are filling the mid-level range with the all-new Legend Twin, an all-mountain board that will feature graphics/artwork from pro-team rider, skater, surfer, and snowboard legend Mike Ranquet. To pair with this new board, Telos will offer our new Legend Bindings for the perfect all-mountain setup - ideal for entry-level to intermediate riders! On the higher end of the line there is the all-new Lemurian



freeride, in both solid and split, which will be a key new addition; especially in the Alps regions where big-mountain freeride boards are a must-have. With its sleek new design and high-performance technical construction, the Lemurian will get you through the steeps and deeps with a fast and stable ride.

Who's on the pro team?

Telos Athlete Team has an amazing range of riders from the US and all around the globe, as well as riders, we also have worldwide ambassadors and will continue to expand our team throughout the EU. Mike Ranquet, Skylar Holgate, Jordan Nield, Pat Abramson, with former Team USA Rider - turned coach, Nathan Jacobson, all bring decades of pro experience and a range of riding styles to our Telos Team.

Which is your best performing region in Europe, and which has the biggest potential for growth in the next few years?

Currently, our best performing regions in Europe are Germany and Austria with Switzerland and France starting to pick up as well. Since we are new to the game in Europe, there is great growth potential in all countries as we continue to grow our snowboarding lifestyle brand around the world. ☺



HYDROPONIC

Based in Mataró, just north of Barcelona's thriving skate scene, is HYDROPONIC, a household name for Spain's surf and skate community. A surf and skate brand created to reflect the trends and styles of Europe, uninfluenced by American culture. Now, nearly 20 years and 3 flagship stores later, the brand is looking to expand further into the European market as well as Asia. We spoke to HYDROPONIC's Skate Specialist, Jordi Quinto to find out more.

Please tell us about the brands history
HYDROPONIC was founded in the year 2002 by a couple of young friends from Barcelona after they spent one year studying in Australia. When they saw how Australian brands operated, they decided to create a surf & skateboarding brand in Spain at a moment where all the companies you could find stocked in shops were mostly American. These American companies didn't represent the spirit of the European brands trying to break through into the end of the century marketplace. They decided to start with a few T-shirts that was very well received by the best boardsports shops in the city. Year after year, HYDROPONIC widened their clothing collection and started a hardgoods line, to include anything you may want to find at your favourite boardstore. Today, 20 years later, HYDROPONIC is one of the main brand names in Spain and is starting to be known in European and Asian markets.

Where is your HQ and how is the brand now distributed across Europe?

HYDROPONIC's HQ is located in sunny Mataró, 30 kms north of Barcelona on the shoreline. The proximity to Barcelona gives us a pulse on the skate scene, which is very lively and strong. We have 3 flagship shops around the city, where you can find a full assortment of all of our collections. We've also got some big distributors in most European countries, starting this year with Centrano from Denmark, plus some other smaller



distributors in other European countries such as Portugal or Belgium, and our own distribution for Spain and Andorra.

What is the brand's USP?

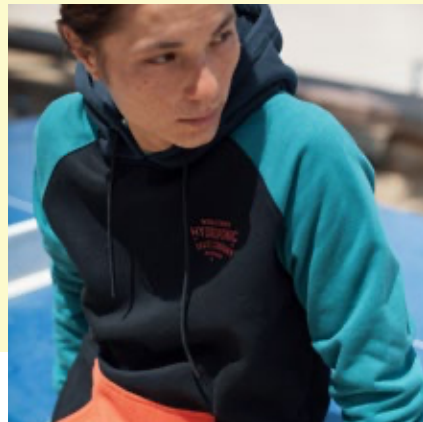
HYDROPONIC is an independent and inclusive brand representing Barcelona's influence around the world and offering a great range of products in street and skate culture.

Which is the brand's most successful product category and why?

HYDROPONIC is a fully consolidated brand in the clothing section, having started in 2002, and featuring many quality fabrics, our own designed clothing patterns and styles (specially the DH range of hoodies created for Downhill and wintertime skating), a Kids Collection and a huge 'Accessories' section. But for the last few years, the skateboarding hardware category has grown a lot, thanks to the top quality of our products, the competitive pricing we have, and the rise of popularity of skateboarding (and surfskating) in recent years. At the same time, we started doing special Collections with famous IP's, such as Spain's famous comic detectives Mortadelo & Filemón; the characters of the Japanese cartoon Dr. Slump and Aral; and in this season's winter collection we are featuring The Pink Panther, one of the most iconic cartoons worldwide for the last 60 years. These collections include most HYDROPONIC products, such as T-shirts, long sleeve T's, shirts, crewneck sweaters, hoodies and the HYDROPONIC DH Hoodies Collection (specially created to combat the coldness of winter skateboarding), and accessories too (from caps and socks to backpacks, fanny packs or wallets). This line will continue throughout 2022 with the South Park characters.

As a full range skate brand, what are the benefits of having both hardgoods and apparel?

Thanks to the wide range of products we offer, it is easier for our clients to stock the HYDROPONIC brand in their shops because it makes our brand more appealing to a wider audience (that may skate or not). Also, our team riders and ambassadors receive both hardgoods and apparel, which makes



becoming a HYDROPONIC rider a very sweet deal many are after.

How is the brand working to become more sustainable?

All cartons and most plastics are recycled, and HYDROPONIC's backpack, fanny pack & wallet collection is made of RPET (recycled PET (or Polyethylene terephthalate)) plastic. Energy supplied to our HQ and our Flagship shops comes from renewable energy sources, and we are planning many more small changes soon that will help make a difference.

How will you work with retailers to promote the brand?

The most important thing is having good communication to know each distributor's needs. We love organising events, shop displays or online promotions or as usual, window displays featuring the Pink Panther Collection, and supporting our skaters and ambassadors everywhere.

How's the market looking in 2022 for you?

It's hard and testing work, but we are confident things are looking good and we will be able to keep making HYDROPONIC one of the best European brands in our field with the same hard work and passion we've had for the last twenty years. We are starting to be present in Asian markets such as Japan, Thailand, South Korea and Hong Kong, which are growing very fast and showing a great appreciation for HYDROPONIC products. ☺

ENDORFINS

ENDORFINS

Introducing Kelly Slater's latest brand venture: Endorfin, a brand that is focussed on reducing the number of fins lost to the waves and destined to live the remainder of their life on the ocean floor. To discover the game plan behind this idea, we got in touch with the Endorfin team.

Tell us about the thinking behind the launch of the brand.

Kelly has always had a deep relationship with, and passion for, fins - being that they are a critical component of board design and performance. We wanted to bring this to life by launching a fin brand driven by Kelly's vision of performance and eco responsibility. We believe that, as surfers, we have a responsibility to make fins as eco-friendly as possible and to ensure we keep our ocean floor free from "lost and broken fins". Fins litter our oceans floors, so in response, Endorfin are designed to be screwed into the fin box to secure the flex point and work as intended. In addition, we have also designed the fins to float so they can be retrieved from the ocean if needed.

Who are the people behind the launch?

Endorfin is a Kelly Slater Brand, but for the brand to have control of the quality, eco standards and capacity requirements, we partnered with and bought the majority share of Scarfini Fins in South Africa. They are well respected and very experienced in fin manufacturing, and we believe that they have the best team to secure a bright future for the brand. Manufacturing in South Africa where the waves crank all day long is a great benefit to testing and allows us to have a diverse manufacturing portfolio.

How will you differentiate yourself in the market?

It's simple... and always is with Kelly. We promise to outperform all other fins and to always respect our ocean with best practices in eco product design and manufacturing.



Please tell us about Kelly's exact involvement

The founder of the brand is Kelly Slater.

Kelly has essentially been 'designing' these fins throughout his storied career through experience with so many templates and designs. That knowledge, coupled with the continued testing and refining over the past year and a half, have led to the launch of the ideal fins.

The design of these fins are the culmination of Kelly's many years and extensive experience with a variety of designs and templates. This unique flex pattern is created by a carbon twill, layered with an ultralight carbon veil over a P.E.T core. The P.E.T core is 90% air resulting in fins so light they float on water. Combining that knowledge, and several rounds of testing and adjusting over the past year and a half, we are excited to present Endorfin to the world.

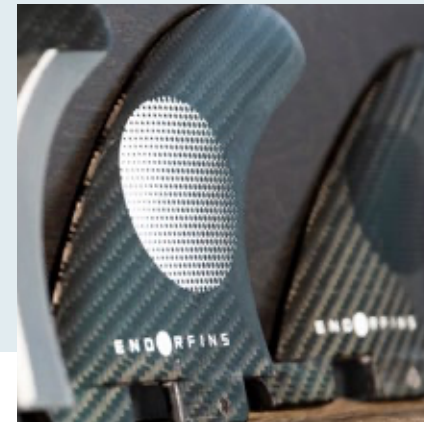
Tell us how you're helping retailers with the launch.

This launch is all about the consumer, and while we believe we have the best retailer partners supporting our Brands, we are laser focused on what the consumers' needs are first and foremost. If we succeed with the consumers, then everyone wins.

For brick-and-mortar retailers, we have created a dual purpose fin display and a robust marketing campaign. We pride ourselves on creating fun, educational, and consumer engaging platforms powered by rich content and gamification. We are introducing an online game exploring the story of the world's greatest surfer and his relationship with fins. We'll drive online traffic to a microsite containing a virtual scavenger hunt of questions that web visitors can answer for a shot at winning free fins.

Talk to us about fin box compatibility: FCS vs Futures.

Each set is built with a base that is compatible with either FCSII or Futures



boxes. The Futures compatible base on Endorfin will work just like a fin built by Futures with a Futures base. The FCSII compatible base will require two screws that will come with the fins. Endorfin with FCSII compatible bases will not click in and click out.

Any new product ambassadors in the pipeline?

Rob Machado has joined the team and will be working on fins in the coming months.

How will you be getting your sustainability message across?

We are a sustainably minded company, so it's in everything we do daily. "Screw your fins, not your ocean". Kelly has a hobby of collecting fins from the reef in front of his home in Hawaii. These fins are trash, abandoned on the ocean floor. By screwing our fins into our surfboards - and with the fact that these can float - we prevent this from happening. We are additionally continuing our commitment to Sea Trees - 'wiping' the yearly carbon footprint of our fin production through conserving kelp forest in California, protecting rain forest in Africa, and planting mangrove trees in Indonesia.

Last but not least - who thought up the Brand name?

Kelly Slater. "Endorfin - The Natural High" ☺

NEW PRODUCTS

01 / VANS CROCKETT HI

The Crockett Hi elevates Gilbert’s classic pro model shoe with a retro military-inspired silhouette. Featuring DURACAP reinforcement in high-wear areas to prolong the life of the shoe and a PopCush™ drop-in sockliner for impact protection and energy return. A Wafflecup™ outsole seals the deal with the best combination of vulcanized flick and boardfeel in the forefoot, support in the midfoot and heel, and rugged durability. Gilbert’s custom finishes can be seen on the sockliner, featuring his dragon artwork.

VANS.EU.SKATE

02 / STANCE BATMAN SNOW SOCK

Got Gotham flair? The Dark Knight finds a new home with the Stance x DC Comics collab. Made with their Feel360™ fibre treatment to keep your feet dry, Merino wool for extra warmth, and reinforced with Infiknit™ technology for durability you can count on.

STANCE.EU.COM

03 / REELL’S REGULAR FLEX CHINO

The Reell Regular Flex Chino, also available in straight flex, is a comfortable chino pant for the streets, whether it’s action sports, school, university or business. All in one! A stylish chino is never a ‘too much’ pant & this Flex Chino is the one for everybody who loves comfort & style.

REELLSHOP.COM

04 / HOMEBOY X-TRA MONSTER DENIM

“More room for radical movement!” was the response of a skater in Los Angeles in 1989, who was asked about his self-tailored, way too big pants. The receiver of this answer was Jürgen Wolf - founder of Homeboy. These words never left Wolf’s mind and inspired him to develop and retail the first baggy in Europe. Today, the result of constant product development is the X-tra Monster Denim.

HOMEBOY.EU

05 / IRIE DAILY BASE SWING JACKET

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02



03



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05



06



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MARKET INSIGHT	
<div>UK</div> <div>GERMANY</div> <div>ITALY</div> <div>SWISS</div> <div>PORTUGAL</div> <div>SPAIN</div> <div>FRANCE</div>	<p>Before writing these I always go back and look at the last article - just to remind myself what I was going on about 2 or 3 months ago. I was actually really surprised by how upbeat it was – it seemed as if everything in the garden was rosy and there were many positive, happy customers.</p> <p>Sadly this time round it is not so positive – but it’s also not so bad. The ‘covid bounce’ has not (yet) hit wintersports. The season has started late in the UK (although we are traditionally earlier than the rest of Europe) and this is causing some concern. That said at the end of October we (Ultra Sport) went from “static to panic” in a few days – suddenly everyone wanted stock ... the market had finally started. But was it just a flourish? From our perspective we had stock that had been gathering dust on the shelves for 12 months and it was a relief to see the wood (of the shelf) for the stock.</p> <p>Retailers were calling in their first drops and then, a week or so later, they were calling in 2nd and 3rd drops ahead of schedule. This was surely a time to be optimistic.</p> <p>Chris from Snowfit was hard to get hold of: “Been boot fitting all day long just like it was pre-Covid.” Sounds good to me! “And talking to the Tirol Tourist board they are really optimistic and anticipating seeing UK snowsports enthusiasts back in force.”</p> <p>So are we back to normal?</p> <p>Jeremy from TSA – “We are as close to getting back to normal as we can be apart from supplies – that’s the biggest issue. Bloody nightmare!” So is it really that good? On all fronts? “Boots are manic, boards are slow but I think that’s to be expected – people are going to hold off on that purchase until 2 weeks before their holiday – they want to KNOW that they REALLY are going on holiday.”</p> <p>And the shift to online continues? “Yeah – more than ever and it’s completely understandable but we’re also confident that instore will get back to normal eventually.”</p> <p>Overall Jeremy was: “As positive as I can be given the situation we’re in. Stock and staff are the biggest issues. And looking back at 2021 I am actually pretty pleased with how we’ve done considering people could not get to the snow. Certainly not as bad as I thought it was going to be.”</p> <p>Matt from Absolute was similarly positive: “I cannot really complain because our business has a broad base but if we were just a boardsports store then I would be complaining. On the board front we have had a terrible summer but then I’m comparing that to 2020 when we had a great summer ... and those guys who bought in 2020 still have their brand new kit – unused.”</p> <p>So how do you see this winter panning out? “It’s starting – the last 6 weeks have seen something shift and things are starting to move. There’s no doubt about it that the season is later and we can all understand why that is. I’m certain that the enthusiasts will get to the snow this year but the ‘holidaymakers’ – like my Mum and Dad, the casual wintersports enthusiasts, the family groups and the schools – they’ll be missing. They are not going to take the ‘risk’ and they’ll stay away. This does of course mean that the</p>
	<p>following season could be a bumper one but that presents me with other issues.”</p> <p>So what is your biggest concern for the future? “That’s it – the future – how on earth do I plan my buy-in for next year? How do I set my budgets? Who knows what the future will bring for our boardsports and how do we buy for that? If I can get to the end of this season with empty shelves then I’ll be happy enough – but then that makes me think that we will also be missing out on some turnover because our suppliers certainly don’t have the stock.”</p> <p>I feel for Matt as I do for all buyers and this issue goes right down the line from retailer to distributor to brand to factory – it’s always been a guessing game but it is usually based on some historical stability and covid has stripped that away. It’s going to be an interesting time over the coming buying season.</p> <p>Watersports has generally had a great year – for all the reasons we know about and Charlie from King of Watersports was happy enough: “2021 has been a good year but logistically very challenging. That aside the bottom line is that the figures tell their own story and it’s a positive result.”</p> <p>How about the start to winter? (Remember that KOW is primarily a watersports business). “Last year we had an exceptional start to winter with covid and staycation so 2021 looks slow when compared to that - but if we look back at 2019 it is on a par – so perhaps we are getting back to normality.”</p> <p>Charlie is looking forward to the return to normality but also anticipates a couple of issues. “Logistics issues are going to continue – Brexit has really not made it easy for us to service European customers – I also feel that the future will bring excess stock in SUP, Kite and Wingfoil and, whilst I hope I am wrong, I cannot see the growth we have experienced in the past couple of years continuing”. He’s right. We are all anticipating the end of the covid-bounce in watersports to come to a halt – but when?</p> <p>Boardwise are in to both water and snow: “We’ve had another busy year on the waterfront although supplies are all over the place.” This is Doug, “winter has, understandably, been a slow start but it’s steadily increasing and customers are hovering up deals. Full price kit is really slow. Winter wetsuits sales are great but being held back by supply issues”</p> <p>Looking forward Doug is optimistic. “All being well the new outdoor sports people are going to stay with us, continue to use their new toys and not revert back to watching football and wandering round shopping malls. I just hope that a tidal wave of nearly-new kit does not appear on eBay.”</p> <p>2021 will be remembered for many of the wrong reasons but as an industry we can look back and consider we did not do as badly as we perhaps first thought. Sure, snowboarding has stopped – but it was only the pause button and we’re starting to move forward albeit in slow motion. But skate, surf, SUP, kite, foil, wakeboard – they have all done really well and flourished under this covid cloud.</p> <p>So, it’s a mixed bag out there but generally I think we can say that our industry has come through covid (I know it’s not over) pretty well – we’re not unscathed by any stretch but we are here to fight another day.</p>
	<div>GORDON WAY</div>

MARKET INSIGHT

FRANCE

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Now that we've reached Autumn 2021, it's hard to believe that France has just had to deal with the greatest economic shock since the end of the Second World War. But good news from the economic frontline has been accumulating for some weeks now, leading us to believe that the worst of the Covid-19 crisis might be over. So, a year and a half after the crisis first hit, it's time to take stock of the reasons for us to be optimistic, or indeed to be wary.

With the distress caused by the first confinements behind us, the French economy has regained its strength in recent months with many traffic lights turning to go. This is especially the case for GDP; after a lethargic start to the year because of the confinement and subsequent curfew, growth is very much back on. According to the figures published by Insee, French GDP has increased by 3% in the third quarter after a rise of 1.3% in the second. Thanks to these two good quarters, French GDP has just about regained its pre-crisis levels.

Other good news: the unemployment rate is now at a very low level. Insee are saying they expect an unemployment rate of 7.6% at the end of the third quarter, the lowest level since 2008. Protected by partial unemployment during the crisis, and bolstered by the return to business, the French employment market is holding up well.

When it comes to the health of our businesses, the French economic tissue has weathered the storm and insolvencies are scarce for the time being. This good health is of course thanks to the aid allocated to businesses to get through the crisis, which was then extended into the crisis recovery plan. So, as a result there will not be the wave of bankruptcies as we might have expected at the start of the crisis.

Nevertheless, there are some shadows creeping into the picture. Some effects are already being felt while others may have more long-term consequences. The first, more short-term problem, resides in the fact that French businesses sometimes lack manpower which affects activity and therefore recovery. This is the case for certain sectors such as construction, civil engineering, and hospitality.

In addition to the workforce shortages, there are shortages of raw materials as well as all other kinds of materials (wood, steel, aluminium) and unfortunately the boardsports industry is no exception to this.

A lack of products combined with high demand has another consequence - price surges. Insee indicate here that inflation has reached 2.6% in one year. Such a rise hasn't been seen since 2012. This inflation weighs heavily on some businesses' margins, bumps up their quotes and puts a strain on household buying power. This was especially obvious in the price of energy, as well as transport, which was pretty spectacular this autumn because of such high global demand.

In the more long-term, the question of public debt - worsened by the aid schemes aimed at countering the crisis - may also prove tricky. According to the latest figures published by Insee, French debt will rise to 114.9% of GDP, 17.4 points more than in the 4th quarter of 2019. This stock of debt could be difficult to reabsorb in the medium-term without affecting growth, and it may prove tough to refinance if interest rates go up. Another debt to keep a

close eye on is business debt. Although the loans provided by the State meant they were able to survive the crisis, it also increased their debts. And whether they are repaid or not, this is bound to have consequences on the future, limiting investment capacity in the first case, causing closures in the other.

How has the boardsports market steered itself through all that during 2021? How has it been affected?

The winter season ended quite abruptly mid-way through March. An odd season with no ski lifts, an enduring the health crisis and with lots of snow falling on all the different mountain ranges of France. Mountain businesses drew pretty tepid results. It was a season that could have been excellent; the snow certainly held up its end of the bargain, unlike the year before. But in the midst of an ongoing health crisis, the government chose not to open the ski lifts. Holidaymakers, deprived of downhill winter sports fell back on other activities, which was just not enough to save the season.

But one man's loss in another man's gain. It seems as though the whole coastline benefitted from the ski lifts closing in 2020/21. If you look at the results, it was mostly technical equipment that was in high demand this winter: surfboards, neoprene, and skateboards - as symbols of fresh air and freedom - seem to have done the best out of this epidemic. Last winter went rather well for shops on the coast and in the lowlands but the challenge for the summer season ahead seems to already be in stocks and supply, even before winter has started.

Overall, the spring and summer seasons were really good: the populace, seeking open air activities, turned out in their droves. Naturally, in shops visitation numbers and average baskets increased this year. Shop turnover in general improved significantly with increases of +35 or even 50% depending on product category, and this is in spite of the shortages.

Broadly speaking, supply trouble, a lack of merchandise and delivery delays seem to have been the main problems of the 2021 season. This was particularly the case for neoprene, foam boards, skateboards, and accessories due to the lack of raw materials for producing them.

General buying behaviour also seems to have changed with this pandemic: just like in 2020, customers had a big appetite for buying, especially with the heightened interest in surfing and skating. People were moving from the thinking phase to the checkout phase much faster than before the pandemic, even for big ticket items.

So, all the lights seem to have turned green for the launch of the winter season 2021/22. All the frustrated riders from last winter are raring to go, hoping to make the most of the coming season and revisit the spots they might not have seen for a couple of years. The health situation, which has largely improved after the mass vaccination of the French population in the spring and summer (around 87%), is not entirely under control yet. The infection rate is bouncing around like a yoyo in many parts of France and the government are closely watching these fluctuations, continually adapting the restrictions in order to remain effective in the battle again this pandemic.

So unfortunately, not all the clouds have dissipated yet, but you have to admit that the sky is certainly clearer than it was in Spring 2020...

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Still no light at the end of the tunnel? Austria decided to introduce a mandatory vaccination from February 2022. A similar discussion is being held in Germany, but is yet to be determined. Certainly, the Corona pandemic keeps our society busy and provokes new political regulations across Germany, whilst the Omicron version starts to grip the globe. Certain states

have decided on a lockdown until the 13th of December with a potential to prolong.

Germany experienced an unprecedented increase in case numbers starting in early October. The documentation tools have changed from the R – Index to the hospitalisation rate, and a group of people is protesting in front of the health ministry of Saxony. The Christmas celebrations will probably be muted with restrictions only allowing a maximum of 50 persons in one place, but then only with the 2G (vaccinated or recovered) certificate. No surprise that the revenue generated from online retailers hit an all-time high with 23.1 billion euros compared to 19.7 billion euros in 2020. The 2G proof is necessary to enter retail shops, which is one explanation for the enormous increase in the online segment.

As Austria is labelled a high-risk destination, the German resorts will see a strong increase in visitors this winter, although the Zugspitze cable cars will run with only two-thirds of their normal capacity, and masks will be mandatory inside the cabins. Nevertheless, the authorities are positive because people have adjusted to the corona situation. People seem to follow the rules, and the winter season should happen, which is at least a little relief for the local retail shops that had to close last year and missed out on the 20/21 season. Many retailers decided to sell the previous season's boards with dramatic discounts to free up their storage for the new 21/22 snowboard hardware. "There wasn't much happening last winter, although I kept some of the models, and I didn't want to be part of the price war for last season's boards with crazy discounts. The problem was a stop in production and late deliveries this year, so many shops had no backup stock. I am now one of the lucky ones who has some boards that can be sold from the previous season," said Max Bechen, who runs the Stylefish shop in Winterberg.

The skate scene saw comparable impacts with late deliveries and increasing costs for skateboards. "Sales are still good, though prebooks for 2022 are slightly down," says Jörg Ludwig from Urban Supplies in Wiesbaden, Germany. Overall, logistics became a problematic issue this year with home office, staying at home, and improved computer skills meaning the overall demand and e-commerce business grew immensely. This put further pressure on the global freight system. The result was a shortage in containers, a rise in shipping costs and consequently a translation of higher costs onto the consumer. This fact is confirmed by Jörg Ludwig: "We had price-increases, moderate though, for some US products and airfreight exports from the US is only about 10% higher now than before the Corona-crisis." Nevertheless,

the skateboard sector has been gaining momentum since this crisis although there Jörg is expecting a slow-down "due to the super supply shortage until spring 2021, shops have prebooked completes like crazy. The fact that then the summer was rather rainy, and sales slowed down a bit, has resulted in massive stock of completes in shops and online-retailers." Streets, public places, and the urban landscape are the playground for the growing skate community with a slight decrease in demand expected for the upcoming year.

The summer went smoothly for the wakeboard industry, with appointment slots booked solid. The supply chains remained intact, and boards came in regularly. Anna Trinker of Wakeport in Raunheim mentioned that only a few small components for the wakeboards couldn't be ordered by the retailers, although the orders of boards worked normally. International holidays were still limited throughout the warm summer months, and due to the uncertainty implied by the corona pandemic, tourists stayed in Germany. The summer holiday in Greece was replaced by an excursion to the north of Germany, resulting in busy beaches full of surfers and kites. With the wakeboard season now coming to an end, and the sea becomes too fresh for many to kite, retailers can look back on a successful year with small supply chain issues and customers that adjusted to the current situation without cancelling their appointments in the round-cable park. Daniel Schöllhorn from Surf & Kite Hamburg recalls: "We were able to open the wakeboard facility only two weeks late, while the shop remained in click & collect mode. At the start, only 15 customers were allowed to use the cable at once but this figure grew, even the bad weather didn't stop people from booking out the slots at our cable park."

Germany has a strong surf community with roughly 2.5 million active surfers normally pursuing metre high waves worldwide. This year the endless possibilities for the surf community were limited to Europe. So, the standing wave at Eisbach in Munich and The North Sea coast were packed with enthusiastic surfers. Furthermore, Munich will soon become a major hotspot for surfing in Germany due to the construction permission given to the Surftown wave park in May. In 2023, the first waves are expected to pump in the 20,000 sqm artificial wave facility. The demand for all water sports is clearly strong and Stephan Güttinger from the wholesale division of Element Sports confirms this upward trend: "For us, the sales figures in water sports are very constant. There was a small slump due to the late start of the water-skiing season in the Covid year 2020, but since then we have seen a solid growth again. The demand for sports equipment and for the corresponding protection gear is on an upward trend."

In general, much of the boardsport industry for example surfing, wakeboarding and skating has experienced growth in 2021. Especially the skate boom where complete boards are being sold despite rising prices. The upcoming winter season will reveal how the snowboard industry keeps up with its stock, old models, and shortcomings in supply chains. The ongoing lockdown in Austria unsettles German tourists and will greatly impact the industry if the lockdown is extended and another season cancelled.

LAURIDS BELLE / ERIC BRUWELEIT



January 30 – February 01

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Economy update: It's looking promising for 2021, and 2022, as we are back to having GDP growth numbers around 5%. The tourism sector especially had a very good summer season...we had a lot of tourism. Our only fear at the moment is a potential fourth Coronavirus wave, otherwise, the economy should continue on this positive, upward trend. Also, our current prime minister Mr. Mario Draghi is giving us hope; he

has the ability to be a strong leader, with a very high reputation, which is something our citizens are looking for. His appointment has also been good for the boardsports sector as (so far) the industry has had a successful 2021. The winter season will now be dependant on the regulations that are due to be put in place shortly, such as a green pass duty for ski resorts.

For many retail businesses right now, growth is limited by the availability of goods and price increases, both of which are negative side effects to the pandemic. When talking to retailers, like Alex Berger from Fakieshop Merano, we can clearly see hardgoods are being delivered late and some companies are cancelling parts of their outerwear deliveries. Something that's worrying retailers is that if the selling season gets cut short again, many goods will have a very limited time frame to be sold at full price. Alex Ricci from Actionsport Agency states: "Something is sure, splitboarding will be the winner again for the 2021/22 season. Let's hope the supply chain gives us, and the consumer, enough product".

Skateboarding hardgoods sales have stayed stable, with the colder months experiencing a normal decrease. However, nearly all stores have reported that sales of skateboard completes are

SWISS

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What a strange year...2021 was full of twists just like 2020, there was kind of a return to normal, but one fraught with uncertainties. In Switzerland, the end results weren't as bad as they were in neighbouring countries, resorts were open, and the relative freedom permitted by our authorities meant that tourism and sporting activities could operate almost normally. Let's look at what happened in more detail.

It actually went relatively well for the snowboard market and the close of the winter season. Of course, the number of ski and snowboard rentals were down because of the limited traffic between countries but the Swiss customers, keen to spend some time in the mountains and escape the dreary vibe of the towns, helped to maintain decent figures. This relative success meant that the number of pre-orders was better than hoped for in spring. For snowboarding, it seems like the 21/22 pre-orders remained pretty much the same as levels before Covid, which seems quite crazy when you look at what has happened in the last two years. Shops were confident and so took a chance on ordering normal quantities, fully aware that the health situation might throw a spanner in the works.

The spring and summer season also proved troublesome with the first problems to supply becoming apparent, early signs of a turbulent future for the various chains. Almost all sectors are affected. At home in Switzerland, we've seen huge problems in delivering and restocking cycling, skateboarding and watersports equipment, especially wetsuits. So despite the weather, which

MARKET INSIGHT

decreasing heavily as the market is pretty much saturated right now. Mostly, stores are complaining about shoe companies delivering late or cancelling styles due to factory closures in Asia, which is something we'll have to deal with in 2022 as well. When checking out stores in Milan last week, I can definitely confirm that skateboarding and streetwear is big on trend with many different stores carrying all kinds of brands. When talking to the floor staff in Supreme [Milan], they said there was no noticeable slowing down at all, not even for high-end brands and products.

Like skateboarding, surfing is also on trend with hardgoods outperforming clothing. Frisco Skateshop, originally from Brescia is continuing its expansion and has opened stores in Milan and Turin. The owners have also confirmed there are more stores to come. Unfortunately, no new core snowboard stores are in sight and sadly even some of the bigger sports stores are cutting back on their snowboard offerings due to the decrease in demand. If you wanna sell snowboarding goods these days, you have to be active, organise events, spend time with the community in the mountains and be really passionate about the sport itself. The traditional snowboard industry in Italy has been going through some extremely difficult winters, as a retailer from the Milan area (who doesn't wish to be named) stated.

This winter season is a crucial one again as another lockdown would be devastating for some retailers and especially for our beloved snowboard industry – another lockdown would be catastrophic. At the time of writing, now no new restrictions have been put in place so we're all hoping for a happy winter season full of snow!

FRANZ JOSEF HOLLER

was worse than dull, the demand was there. You couldn't always please everyone but at least the desire hasn't dissipated, and the shops were well-visited. Biking continues on its really strong rise. Skateboarding hasn't been forgotten about either and is still really popular - as it has been for the last several years - building on this momentum, irrespective of seasons or weather. Watersports are expanding as well; wing foiling continues its impressive progress with landlocked surfers getting into it, quenching their thirst for gliding through water. Alaia Bay, the Wavegarden I mentioned in the last edition hasn't been any quieter despite the sharp drop in temperature, continuing to attract people from across the whole country and from our neighbours.

As for autumn, game hunting season has become a time for another kind of sport: merchandise hunting. We already knew about this, but it does seem particularly difficult to get supplies, most brands have had significant delays to deliveries if not straight-up cancellations. Delays to manufacturing were down to a lack of raw materials and because the various transportation channels, land, sea, and air, were hard to put in place, subject to long delays and also being very expensive. So the shops that placed their orders nice and early are super happy, requesting highly-anticipated deliveries from the few brands that managed to get their materials in before the summer rush. Generally everything is late, but thankfully for now, shops and their customers seem to be sympathetic and are waiting patiently, let's hope that this wait won't be too long and it transforms into some good sales. In any case, those who already received their goods in October were happy to start the season but talked about a drop in interest compared to the same time last year, to be continued...

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2021 was a rollercoaster in Portugal for the boardsports industry with ups and downs due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The country started the year in difficulties with a lockdown from mid-January until the end of March. Portugal led the ranking of the worst countries in the world in number of deaths and infections per million inhabitants. The National Health Service was out of control with hospitals facing a tough reality that has never happened before.

The economy closed its doors again and retailers' ability to adapt to the new tsunami was key to their survival putting again into practice the strategy they had used about a year ago: sales campaigns, sales through websites and social media, free shipping and door-to-door delivery. Although online sales registered a positive growth, they were lower than if stores were open. The government support came with Lay off for workers, financial support and tax payment delay for companies.

The economy reopening happened slowly and was divided into four stages. The beginning of April was important for the boardsports industry with surf/skate shops reopening their doors to start recovering from the loss. With Spring/Summer collection stocks ready and since boarders were able to practice again this was key for the movement of people inside shops and the increase in sales which allowed retailers to see sighs of relief.

Despite restrictions with a limited number of customers instore and stock issues, demand for hardgoods was high making brands and retailers try everything to find a way to have stock and boost sales.

Portugal's ups and downs managing the pandemic had a new positive sign concerning the vaccination process reaching 70% in August and 86% in the beginning of November. This success saw the country leading the world ranking and allowed for a faster reopening of the economy. This sense of "security" allowed Portuguese to live freely at the end of summer with a big increase in tourism as well. There was a lack of stock in hardgoods and some products were already more expensive due to raw material issues and transportation costs.

SPAIN

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Despite a disappointing third quarter report, boardsports businesses in Spain are still enjoying a sweet moment. Cooperation between brands and retailers to sort out stock challenges will continue to secure ongoing steady sales.

Spain's third quarter economic report has brought about some disappointment. There's recuperation in employment, but private spending does not appear to be keeping up the pace. The economy grew 2% in the period from July to September. This was supposed to be the quarter of the big

bounce-back. Tourism surpassed pre-pandemic levels, restrictions were lifted, and most of the population was vaccinated. Yet, private spending was far from the expected "Roaring Twenties" attitude. Inflation has a lot to do with this. Prices have gone up 5.5% from last year, marking a 30-year-high. Increasing energy prices are claiming a lot of families' budgets. Bottlenecks in the supply chain are keeping factories halted and product scarce.

Despite the unexpected grey cloud in the general economy, the boardsports industry keeps seeing some sunshine. Pandemic restrictions impacted the mentality of Spaniards, many of whom have reconsidered their priorities; pastimes and sports being at the forefront of them. Home budgets save a chunk for outdoor experiences. Sergi Sanchez, owner of Kite Experience, explains: "Board sports have an adventurous edge. They offer individual challenges and freedom, something today's society values a lot". Water boardsports spots tend to be touristic ones, so stores have benefited from the influx of foreign euros. Summer was quite good, prolonged by quite a warm early Autumn. Hardgoods remain the top-selling category, even in the face of scarcity. Stock problems have posed challenges for retailers, but they have also helped sell the inventory at full price. Delivery delays and lack of stock have held back growth, but the demand has stayed strong. Dani Garcia, sales agent and owner of

MARKET INSIGHT

Waimea Surf & Culture is a core shop located in Matosinhos founded in 1992 specializing in surfing, skateboarding and bodyboarding hardgoods. Since the store don't have a website, they had to adapt to the most difficult period of the lockdown driving sales through Facebook and Instagram. At the same time, they benefited from government support such as layoffs and postponement of tax payments. "We had to adapt again to a new reality", says the store owner, Joaquim Oliveira. "It was difficult times until April but there's positive things to take from it. There are customers who have returned to core shops instead of buying on the internet or shopping malls. We give priority to our customers and we know they are guaranteed sales for us. Despite the stock problems that affect the industry, our customers know they can find here the gear they are looking for and we do everything to make them happy. They aren't just numbers for us. We sell and share with them a social experience and an emotion linked to boardsports. This close relationship makes all the difference and can't be found anywhere else", he assures.

After reopening doors in April, they registered a boom in demand for hardgoods as well as a new trend. "We have strong connections with our suppliers for many years and this was key to having stock available. Since Spring/Summer craziness there has been a big demand for beginner surfboards, wetsuits and skateboards. There's a new trend which is female skateboarding with many girls wanting to learn. They buy product, clothes and want to take skateboarding lessons. They are much bigger consumers than men," he explained.

The lack of raw materials leading to a shortage of stock, the exponential increase of transport costs and fuel is inflating prices. As an example: "A surfboard from an international brand that cost 399 euros can now cost 539 euros, if the customer wants a delivery in the way they did back in 2019. Otherwise, he will have to wait several months to receive the board at the cheaper price."

There's a lot of uncertainty in the air with the rising numbers of infected in several European countries and also Portugal. Is there a fifth wave coming? To make things worse Portugal is facing a political crisis and will have elections on January 30th. Let's hope we don't have a new lockdown and that 2022 will be better for everyone.

NUNO PRINCIPE

Special Surf, sees the bright side. "The high demand and stock scarcity has stopped the market's suicidal tendency of overstocking, discounts and sales". The primal position that sports have gained in consumers' budgets promotes the sales of new high-end materials. They allow for all-condition riding, giving fans more time in the water, and even inland.

Skateboarding is riding the popularity wave boosted by the Olympics. Local authorities of many towns are investing in facilities that help the growth of the sport. It is yet to see if snowboarding will catch up with skateboarding and water boardsports. The last two seasons were heavily impacted by the travel restrictions imposed by Covid. Most professionals are optimistic about this season, though. "Once resorts are open, they are going to be packed. People really want to go and play in the snow", says Dani Garcia.

If brands and retailers can navigate the challenging stock situation, there's no reason to believe that the sweet moment they have been experiencing will stop. The time for discounts and delayed payments, so needed during lockdown periods, is over now. The best help brands can offer to retailers now is to fearlessly buy good quantities of essential products, so retailers don't run out of stock in-season. On the other hand, retailers need to cooperate by pre-ordering at the right time and doing well-thought forecasts. Dani sums it up: "Help measures are nothing but patches to keep afloat something that is not working well. If the market is clean and sustainable, there's no need for help measures". In this ideal situation, the money brands save by not having to offer discounts could be invested in Marketing and R&D. These initiatives truly progress the sports. Sergi Sanchez goes a step forward. "Looking at the bigger picture, manufacturing in Europe would be key to secure more quality control and carry-over collections". He proposes the creation of sports collectives. These could offer feedback to brands about which products need to be replenished, guiding their production decisions. While the demand is high, there's no better time to implement innovative changes that will ensure there's stock to cover it.

RICIO ENRIQUEZ



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Product Developer (m/w/d)

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ABS hat den Lavinensack erfunden und wird nicht müde, immer wieder neue Innovationen auf den Markt zu bringen. Agilität und vor allem zufriedene Kunden sind für unseren Erfolg verantwortlich. Der ABS Lavinensack ist das Original und steht für Innovation und höchste Qualität. „Made in Germany“ seit über 35 Jahren ist unter anderem ein wesentlicher Schlüsselfaktor unserer Philosophie, zu der auch Felix Neureuther als Markenbotschafter beiträgt.

Du hast Lust zusammen mit unserem Team in Göttingen unsere Marke zu gestalten und die Produkte dafür zu entwickeln? Dann suchen wir Dich zum nächstmöglichen Zeitpunkt unbefristet und in Vollzeit als Product Developer.

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- Erstellung von Tech-Packs (bestehend aus Zeichnungen, Bemaßung, BOM und Kommentaren)
- Erstellung von 3D-Daten in gängiger 3D CAD Software (Solid Works)
- Kommunikation mit unseren Produzenten und Dienstleistern
- Erstellung, Prüfung und Beurteilung der Prototypen auf Basis der entsprechenden Produkt-Briefings
- Projektleitung technischer Projekte im Bereich Hard Goods
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- Sie arbeiten im gesamten Design- und Entwicklungsprozess operativ
- Sie begleiten den Prozess beginnend bei der Ideation über den Entwurf und Begleitung der Entwicklung bis hin zum fertigen Produkt
- Sie designen unsere Neuentwicklungen z.B. Sportbrillen, mit dem Ziel, Schutzprodukte zu "eyecatchern" zu transformieren
- Sie betreiben den Formfindungsprozess in den Iterationen: 2D Sketching, 2D Photohop-Renderings, Claymodelling, 3D Modelling bis zum Rapid-Prototype, 3D Renderings
- Sie erstellen Design-Referenzgeometrie durch CAS Surface- und SubDiv-Modelling mit Alias, Polygon-Modelling mit Blender, Maya oder Cinema 4D

Ihr Profil

- Sie haben ein Studium im Bereich Produkt-, Industrie- oder Transportationsdesign, erste Berufserfahrung im Bereich Form-Gestaltung ist von Vorteil
- Sie haben gute Kenntnisse in der Anwendung von NURBS-, SubDiv- oder Polygon-Modelling um 2D Entwürfe, nahtlos in die 3D Geometrie zu übertragen
- Sie vereinen gestalterische Fähigkeiten mit Problemlösungskonzepten, um Form, Funktion und Markeninhalte an Produkten miteinander in Einklang zu bringen
- Sie bringen Grundkenntnisse in Bezug auf Ergonomie, Mechanik, Kunststoffverarbeitung und Standard Anforderungen mit
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Ihre Ansprechpartnerin
Nicole Gantkow



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FACTORY SUPPORT MANAGER EMEA m/f/d

BOA Technology, the creator of the award-winning, patented BOA Fit System, is reinventing how shoes, medical braces, and equipment performs. As BOA looks ahead to the future, there is contagious excitement radiating across our offices in the United States, Europe and Asia. We are a collaborative, growing company where details matter and customer satisfaction with our product is paramount.

OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE

In this position, you will hold a key role as a member of the Regional Development Support Team and be responsible for training and supporting the factories of our Brand Partners, most of them within the footwear industry.

Specific responsibilities include executing the production-ready implementation of Brand Partners' products, supporting factories on site with trainings and mass production start-up. Effectively plan and execute a detailed training schedule and the required travelling. Manage Q.C. issues, assist factories with immediate solutions and activities related to operations. You will act as communications liaison between the factories and the BOA Team for all production and development associated topics. Ultimately, your efforts will result in the flawless integration of BOA products into our Brand Partners' products before mass production.

SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Extensive professional experience in the footwear manufacturing environment and the production dynamic in the factory.
- Fluent in Italian and English (written and spoken).
- Excellent interpersonal, presentation, negotiation and problem-solving skills.
- Highly organised with great attention to detail and ability to adhere to timelines.
- A very solid technical understanding with the passion for products is essential.

- High School Graduation or University degree preferred.
- Team oriented, flexible and open minded.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Excel, Word, Outlook and PowerPoint.
- Knowledge of Adobe Illustrator or Photoshop is a plus.
- Willingness to travel on a regular basis within EMEA region and occasionally to Asia.
- Genuine interest in exploring BOA featured products in its various activities.

WE OFFER

- Challenging tasks in a successful and innovative company based in the beautiful lake area of Salzkammergut.
- A welcoming working environment in a committed and international team of employees.
- Learning and development opportunities
- Discounts on many outdoor gear brands

APPLY NOW

For legal reasons, we are obliged to point out the minimum salary for this position according to the collective agreement, which is 2191,- EUR gross per month. However, our attractive salary packages are based on current market salaries and are therefore significantly above the stated minimum

NOISE

Semi-Senior Digital Designer

Noise Studio is an international creative agency working at the intersection of digital and branding. We create unexpected design solutions for some of the most exciting names in sports, outdoors and sustainability. We are looking for an extremely talented Digital Designer with solid brand knowledge to join our team. You will be able to identify end user needs and leverage their findings to design beautiful, innovative, and easy-to-use experiences. You will collaborate closely with our brand designers and digital designers to create the best possible user experiences, interactions, and flows. You will have raw talent, curiosity and a strong creative instinct and help us deliver work for our clients which is bold, conceptual and different. You will be a team player who will be generous with ideas, and have strong beliefs — loosely held.

The Position

- Create wireframes, prototypes, and high-fidelity comps
- Design the interface and experience from concept to final hand-off to engineering
- Presenting designs and design systems to clients
- Work closely with UX/UI team to translate low fidelity wireframes, hand sketches, and/or rough requirements of an idea into well designed user interfaces and experiences
- Communicate with developers to ensure execution and consistency of the experience
- Participate in brainstorming sessions and bring fresh ideas to the table
- Develop digital storyboards and animation as needed
- Assist with pitches and brand developments, from designing the creative route to auditing a competitive landscape

What we're after

- 2+ years' experience as UX / UI designer
- Bachelor's Degree in design
- Thorough understanding of user-centred design/mobile first design, and web
- Articulate and assertive in presenting
- Strong problem-solving skills and knowledge of UX processes and methods
- Strong multi-tasking skills; able to prioritise own work (and ask questions)
- Strong creative instincts and willingness to push further through experimentation
- Advanced understanding of how to apply the methodologies of interaction design and research to business problems
- Proficient in Figma

What we offer

- The ability to work remotely with the sector's most interesting challenger brands, and to shape tomorrow's defining digital products and experiences
- Huge potential to grow, we are a fast-growing team, with big ambitions
- Be part of a dynamic team of international professionals
- 25 Days holiday (including Bank Holidays)
- Covering Space Stipend. We pay up to €150/month towards renting a co-working space in your city
- Coffee Stipend. We pay up to €50/month towards a daily coffee
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EVENTS #109

surf snow street outdoor

surf	SURF EXPO	Orlando, USA 5-7 Jan 22	surfexpo.com
snow	WINTER PRO	La Rosiere, France 9-11 Jan 22	actsnowboarding.com
street	PITTI IMAGINE	Florence, Italy 11-13 Jan 22	pittimmagine.com
snow	LAAX OPEN HALFPIPE & SLOPESTYLE	Laax, Switzerland 13-16 Jan 22	open.laax.com
snow	SLIDE & OTS	Telford, UK 18-20 Jan 22	slideotswinter.co.uk
street	SEEK	Frankfurt am Main, Germany 18-20 Jan 22	seek.fashion
snow	WINTER SPORTS MARKET SHOW	Salt Lake City, USA 20-22 Jan 22	wintersportsmarket.com
snow	FREERIDE WORLD TOUR	Baqueira Beret, Spain 22-28 Jan 22	freerideworldtour.com
snow	ISPO	Munich, Germany 23-26 Jan 22	ispo.com
snow	OUTDOOR RETAILER SIA SNOW	Denver, USA 26-28 Jan 22	outdoorretailer.com
surf	BILLABONG PIPELINE PRO	North Shore, Hawaii 29 Jan-10 Feb 22	worldsurfleague.com
snow	SHOPS 1ST TRY	Alpbach, Austria 20 Jan-1 Feb 22	shops-1st-try.com
snow	FREERIDE WORLD TOUR	Ordino Arcalis, Andorra 30 Jan-5 Feb 22	freerideworldtour.com
street	REVOLVER	Copenhagne, Denmark 2-4 Feb 22	revolver.dk
snow	FUTURE TRY LAAX	Laax, Switzerland 6-7 Feb 22	snowboardbox.ch
snow	WINTER OLYMPICS SLOPESTYLE	Beijing, China 6-7 Feb 22	olympics.com/en/sports/snowboard
snow	WINTER OLYMPICS HALF PIPE	Beijing, China 10-11 Feb 22	olympics.com/en/sports/snowboard
surf	SUNSET SUNSET BEACH	Oahu, Hawaii 11-23 Jan 22	worldsurfleague.com
snow	FREERIDE WORLD TOUR	Kicking Horse Golden BC, Canada 12-17 Feb 22	freerideworldtour.com
snow	WINTER OLYMPICS BIG AIR	Beijing, China 15 Feb 22	fis-ski.com/en/snowboard
street	AGENDA	Las Vegas, USA 15-17 Feb 22	agendashow.com
snow	INTERSTYLE	Yokohama, Japan 15-17 Feb 22	interstyle.jp
snow	FUTURE TRY LEW CROSETS	Les Crosets, Switzerland 24 Feb 22	snowboardbox.ch
snow	SLIDE ON SNOW	Kuhtai, Austria 7-11 Mar 22	slideotswinter.co.uk
surf	MEO PORTUGAL PRO	Peniche, Portugal 3-13 Mar 22	worldsurfleague.com
snow	SPORT-ACHAT	Lyon, France 7-9 Mar 22	sport-achat.com
snow	FREERIDE WORLD TOUR	Fieberbrunn, Austria 15-20 Mar 22	freerideworldtour.com
snow	SNOWBOARD WORLD CUP SLOPESTYLE	Bakuriani, Georgia 5 Mar 22	fis-ski.com/en/snowboard
snow	SNOWBOARD WORLD CUP SLOPESTYLE	Spindlermuhle, Czech Republic 19 Mar 22	fis-ski.com/en/snowboard
snow	SNOWBOARD WORLD CUP SLOPESTYLE	Silvaplane ,Switzerland 19 Mar 22	fis-ski.com/en/snowboard
snow	FREERIDE WORLD TOUR	Verbier, Switzerland 26 Mar-3 Apr 22	freerideworldtour.com
surf	RIPCURL PRO BELLS BEACH	Bells Beach, Australia 10-20 Apr 22	worldsurfleague.com
surf	MARGARET RIVER PRO	Margerat River, Australia 24 Apr-4 May 22	worldsurfleague.com
surf	CHALLENGER SERIES	Gold Coast, Australia 7-15 May 22	worldsurfleague.com
surf	CHALLENGER SERIES	Manly, Australia 17-24 Jan 22	worldsurfleague.com
surf	QUIKSILVER PRO G-LAND	Banyuwangi, Indonesia 28 May-6 Jun 22	worldsurfleague.com
outdoor	OTS	Liverpool, UK 7-9 Jun 22	outdoortradeshows.com
surf	OUTDOOR BY ISPO	Munich, Germany 12-14 Jun 22	ispo.com/en/outdoor
surf	TRESTLES	California, United States 15-22 Jun 22	worldsurfleague.com
surf	OI RIO PRO	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 27 Jun-4 Jul 22	worldsurfleague.com



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