

RETAIL BUYERS GUIDES:

BOARDSHORTS, THE GREAT OUTDOORS, SKATE
HELMETS, MEN'S STREETWEAR, FOILING,
WINGS, WOMEN'S SWIMWEAR, LIFESTYLE
BACKPACKS, MEN'S SURF APPAREL, SKATE
FOOTWEAR, WETSUITS

BIG WIG: JOOST GROOTSWAGERS
ONE TURN EUROPE

BRAND UPDATES OCEAN & EARTH, BOSINY, LIP
SUNGLASSES, WAVE HAWAII, BLACKRIVER

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SUPER FLY COMPACT MID LENGTH



Super Fly CML 119 L Carbon
6'0 x 24½ x 6 | 119 L | 6.8 kg
Art. 3214SR

Super Fly CML 104 L Carbon
5'11 x 23½ x 5¾ | 104 L | 6.5 kg
Art. 3217SR

Super Fly CML 89 L Carbon
5'10 x 22½ x 5¾ | 89 L | 6.2 kg
Art. 3218SR

Super Fly CML 74 L Carbon
5'8 x 21½ x 4¾ | 74 L | 5.6 kg
Art. 3219SR

Super Fly CML 59 L Carbon
5'6 x 20½ x 4 | 59 L | 5 kg
Art. 3220SR

**Super Fly CML
Le Doigt 5'4 Carbon**
5'4 x 19½ x 3¾ | 44 L | 4 kg
Art. 3267SR

EARLY BIRD LIGHT WIND MID LENGTH



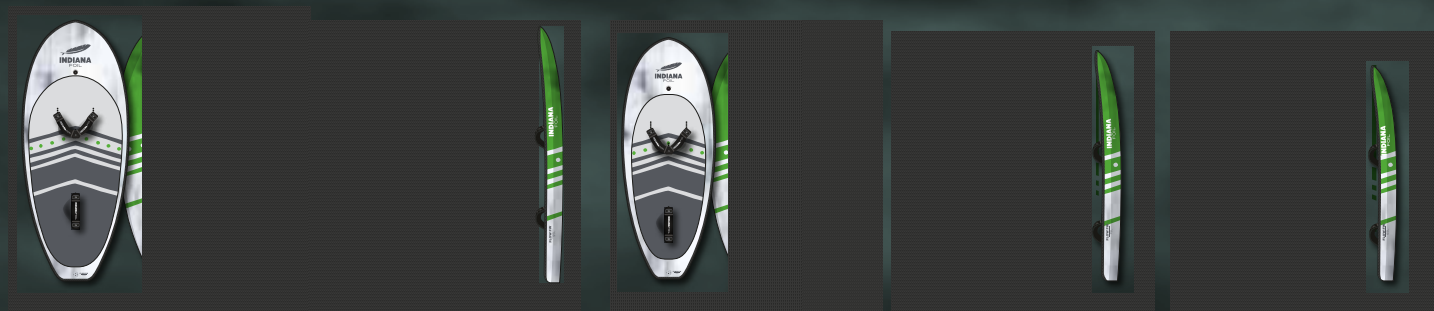
Early Bird LW 123 L Carbon
6'10 x 21½ x 6¾ | 123 L | 7.4 kg
Art. 3221SR

Early Bird LW 104 L Carbon
6'6 x 20½ x 5¾ | 104 L | 6.7 kg
Art. 3222SR

Early Bird LW Le Doigt 6'4 Carbon
6'4 x 18½ x 6¾ | 96 L | 6.3 kg
Art. 3268SR

Early Bird LW 87 L Carbon
6'2 x 19½ x 5½ | 87 L | 6.1 kg
Art. 3223SR

FLOW FREEWAVE



Flow Freewave 105 L Carbon
5'8 x 28 x 4¾ | 105 L | 6.9 kg
Art. 3274SR

Flow Freewave 95 L Carbon
5'6¾ x 26¾ x 4½ | 95 L | 6.6 kg
Art. 3275SR

Flow Freewave 85 L Carbon
5'2 x 24½ x 4¾ | 85 L | 6 kg
Art. 3270SR

Flow Freewave 75 L Carbon
5'0 x 23 x 4¾ | 75 L | 5.5 kg
Art. 3271SR

Flow Freewave 65 L Carbon
4'8½ x 22¾ x 4¾ | 65 L | 5.2 kg
Art. 3272SR

MONOBLOC COMPLETE FOILS

Marlin
XL | L | M | S | XS | XXS
Barracuda
XL | L+ | L | M | S
Condor
M | S



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HELLO SOURCE#125

Times they are a changing. faster and faster

Listening to the radio this week, i heard all about the coming Quantum computer revolution.

This new computational technology will solve complex problems in minutes rather than years, with this new step change from current super computers to quantum computers being far greater than the change from the abacus to the super computer. So just as we beginning to feel at home with AI an equally as disruptional technology will affect our businesses as well as all aspects of our daily lives.

The boardsport market is having to deal with change in a way it has never faced

before, combined with the instability of the daily tariff decisions and the war in Ukraine.

Good news is in short supply with consumers struggling as much as businesses to deal with this new reality. Tried and tested methods are no longer the sure bet they used to be as we all need learn on the run. But there will be winners out of this maelstrom, there always is. Opportunities will be there they will just be more difficult to identify and as the business cycle speeds up, they will not last as long as they used to.

Talking of opportunities seized, then our big wig personality fits the bill. Joost Grootswagers found himself in the position to take over the business he was running following the demise of Liberated brands. Joost is now one of the proud owners of the Volcom and Spyder brands in Europe, his destiny is now in his own hands. Our retail buyers guides are full of information on trends in the market and on what products brands are designing to take

advantage of opportunities. Likewise our brand updates in this issue; Ocean & Earth, Bosiny, Lip Sunglasses, Wave Hawaii and Blackriver are a combination of newer and older brands looking to take advantage of the opportunities they have found in the market. Last but not least our National Market intelligence reports give a closeup account of what is and what is not working in the market, what is a good opportunity in one country may not be as good in another.

Knowledge is king, the more you know, the better your ability to spot those opportunities and as the business world speeds up Source is there to give you the information to make the right decisions and grab those opportunities.

Always sideways but now at Quantum speeds

**Clive
Publisher**

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TEAM

Editor Harry Mitchell Thompson
harry@boardsportsource.com

Skate Editor Dave Morgan
davemorgan@boardsportsource.com

Surf Editor David Bianic
david@boardsportsource.com

**Snowboard Contributor
Matthieu Perez**
Matthieu@boardsportsource.com

German Editor Natalia Maruniak
tala@boardsportsource.com

French Editor Marie-Laure Ducos
ducos@boardsportsource.com

Graphic Design Louis White
hello@louiswhite.co.uk

Proof-readers Natalia Maruniak,
Marie-Laure Ducos, Sam Grant

Contributors Rocio Enriquez, Benoît Brecq, Gordon Way, Franz Holler, David Bianic, Nuno Principe, Sydney Bohannan, Alfred Sutton Juliana Schneider

**Advertising & Marketing
Clive Ripley**
clive@boardsportsource.com

Accounts Manager
accounts@boardsportsource.com

To Subscribe
boardsportsource.com
subs@boardsportsource.com

Publisher
publisher@boardsportsource.com

Published by ESB
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Suffolk, C010 2AA. UK

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On the cover Léonard BLONDEEL DC Skatepark 162 Coordinator. Photo: David Manaud

TRADE EVENTS

PREVIEWS

SPORT ACHAT ETÉ, ALP EXPO GRENOBLE, FRANCE SEP 8-9, 2025

location with its mountain ambience in the heart of the Alps it offers quick and easy access for mountain sports retailers. Last year, over 210 brands exhibited, a 10% increase in participation compared with the previous year. Correspondingly there was a 40% surge in the number of visitors, which is a positive indication of the popularity of the new location and timing. Retailer visitors came primarily from France, Switzerland, Italy, and Benelux, but there was a broad representation of other countries. Since the cancellation of Outdoor by ISPO for this year, Sport Achat Été is currently the largest summer outdoor show in Europe, and the organisers expect the show to become more international. All major outdoor categories are represented: technical gear, e-bikes, trail, climbing, footwear, textiles, bivouac, and lifestyle, so retailers will find all they need to be able to make the best selection of brands for their specialist markets. The 2025 brand list, which is regularly updated on the Sport Achat Été website reflects a high level level of repeat brand business plus new brand bookings.

For the first time, Sport Achat Été will run alongside the Hexagone Gift & Souvenir trade show which is also held at the Alpexpo on the same dates. With its 70+ exhibitors in gifts, regional products, décor, and souvenirs, this show should be especially attractive to resort-based retailers attending Sport Achat Été, with its cross-pollination opportunities between outdoor buyers and lifestyle/gift retailers from both mountain and coastal locations.

Another additional major new feature will be the launch of the Chamrousse B2B e-bike & MTB test day, which will be held on Wednesday, 10th September, the day after Sport Achat Été. So retailers can stay overnight

SURF & SKATE EXPO NEWQUAY, UK SEP 12-14, 2025

Surf & Skate Expo is the UK's first Summer boardsports trade/consumer event for many years. At long last the UK industry will have the opportunity to meet and network, while consumers will be able to visit booths of over sixty brands, as well as visit the skate park and attend the Wavelength UK Surfer Awards. Held in Newquay, Cornwall, the home of British surfing, the event will bring together the whole surf and skate community. The schedule is packed: a chat with one iconic skate legend, a keynote presentation about handling yourself in the face of fear, a Surf Girl panel, a photography workshop with an ex-WSL heroine, grom talk, surfpreneur round-table, shaper workshop, plus a UK junior surf competition, just to name a few of the activities. This dynamic hybrid B2B and B2C event features an eclectic mix of zones and locations catering to every facet of the surfing, skateboarding, and lifestyle industries, all within easy walk of each other.

The UK Surf & Skate Expo Village will cover an impressive 7,000 square meters and will contain over 65 brands including Arcade, Circle One, Duer, Deus, FCS, Finisterre, Firewire, Florence, Instinct, Indobard, O'Neill, Pura Vida, Saax, Sunbum, Stance, Slowtide Sissrevolution, Vissla, Yeti and Xtratuf. Additionally, the all-day Saturday the Surf & Skate Vintage Meet & Swap will be held in the village.

The Expo Hall is where all the keynote presentations, panel discussions and The Wavelength UK Surfer Awards will take place. You will also find the official UK Surf & Skate bar, beer garden and UK Surf Show Recording studio. A full access pass to access this part of the UK Surf & Skate Expo is required. Highlights of the program include on Friday from 18.30 the Wavelength UK Surfer Awards hosted by Sam Bleakley and on Saturday skate legend and Dogtown icon Tony Alva will be on hand for an Evening with Alva from 19.00.

and the following day visit Chamrousse ski resort, just 40 minutes drive from Grenoble, to test new models on the trails and in the bike park. This will mean retailers can save a lot of time and money by visiting both the trade show and bike test on consecutive days. For attending brands and visitors there is transport and various on-site logistics available. This is a first for Sport Achat Été and is expected to become a key component of future shows.

The Fresh Zone near the entrance is dedicated to start-ups and will feature new companies that are less than five years old, giving them the opportunity to present their products cheaply and get themselves known, as well as enabling retailers to see newcomers to the market. Near the entrance, The Shoe Expo, a wall of shoes, will help retailers discover innovative models, new products or bestsellers from a large number of brands. The Tent Expo will show brands exhibiting the latest bivouac tents. The Industry talks and panels will run throughout the show and will be hosted by Fred Tain and Le Paret Sport. A full program of speakers is available on the Sport Achat Été website.

To keep show attendees fed and watered, the show features a food truck village with a wide choice to satisfy all tastes and avoid long waiting times. The annual Summer Party with a DJ set will be held on Monday evening from 18:30 in the food-truck area. In a relaxed networking atmosphere a cocktail and buffet will, of course, be on the agenda!

Partner hotels and accommodation deals are available. Airports in the region include Grenoble, Geneva, and Lyon Saint-Exupéry. Grenoble is also well connected by motorway and TGV from both Paris and Marseille. The Summit is open from 09:00 to 19:00 on Monday and from 09:00 to 18:00 on Tuesday. So, jump on a plane or get in the car and come hang with the industry community, see next summer season's products all in one location.

SPORT-ACHAT-ETE.COM

Other highlights over the 3 days are on Friday at 17.00 The Surferpreneur a panel discussion on business, purpose and passion with Nick Hounsfield, Tom Kay, Rachel Murphy, Sam Bleakley and Ellen Caldwell, on Saturday at 14.00 Surfing 100 ft Waves and How to Build Surf Confidence with Andrew Cotton and on Sunday at 13.00 Riding Waves, Rising Strong presented by Surf Girl.

The Concrete Waves Skatepark will hold skate jams from 10.00 onwards on Saturday and on Sunday from 11.00 there's an 80's Pool Party Skate Demo. The Expo ramp has a busy program with the highlight being the Tony Alva Demo on Saturday at 14.00 and the Skateboard & BMX Demos with Alex Halford, Owen Champion (Sox) and Jack Clark (BM each day). The School of Surf & Skate, hosted by Newquay University will be the home to a full range of workshops and presentations on the Saturday starting at 13.00. On Saturday morning on the Great Western beach, the Surfing England Junior Series will begin and last throughout the weekend.

"To put on an event that celebrates these special communities, to bring everyone together, for all of us tired of the doom-scroll, this is an opportunity to get together and be around like-minded people," said organiser Chris Thomson. "It's free to attend the Expo Village, where you get to see and interact with your favourite brands. For talks and keynotes, it's best to pick up the Three-Day Explorer Pass, which will grant you access to every talk, presentation, sit-down and chat in the Expo. Basically, it's your all access pass." A short 15 minute's drive away is Newquay Airport with connecting flights to London, Portugal, Spain, Ireland, Scotland and Manchester. Or catch a bus or train from the town to destinations throughout the UK. Alternatively jump in the car and come and join 3 days of fun, learning and networking.

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EUROSIMA SURF SUMMIT SEIGNOSSE, FRANCE SEP 25-26, 2025

The 22nd edition of the annual action sports business conference will take place on September 25th and 26th, with Eurosima welcoming the action sports industry to its two-day conference, which this year will be at the Belambra Club in Estagnots Seignosse, the same venue as last year.

The summit will start at 09:30 with an opening speech from Jean-Louis Rodrigues, President of Eurosima, and over the next two days four key topics will be presented and discussed.

First up is Business Models & Brand Identity: creating meaning to exist. In an uncertain environment, brands must reinvent their business models while asserting a strong identity. Creating value is no longer enough: they must also create meaning. This is where creativity, storytelling, and differentiation become strategic. How can we create unique brands that can adapt without diluting themselves, and tell stories that engage as much as they inspire?

Second up is Communities & Culture: building connections in a fragmented world. Connecting with customers, partnerships based on trust, authenticity, and shared values in a volatile world. Within corporate culture the ability to unite is becoming as strategic as product quality. How can you build a brand that inspires and an organisation that attracts talented people over the long term?

Third up is Eco-Thinking: making eco commitment a driver of performance. Far from being a hindrance, ecological and social requirements are becoming an opportunity to innovate and stand out. Between regulations, transparency, responsible design, the circular economy and market behaviour, impact is becoming an essential strategic vector for brands. How can we transform

PADDLE SPORTS SHOW STRASBOURG, FRANCE SEPT 30 - OCT 2, 2025

This will be the third edition of The Paddle Sports Show in the Parc des Expositions de Strasbourg. The show attracts buyers from specialist shops, rental centres, holiday centres and central purchasing agencies from across Europe and the world.

The Paddle Sports Show hosts over 150 exhibitors from kayaks, canoes, stand up paddles, foil & wing foils, inflatable beach structures and all associated equipment markets. Expect the usual big players alongside smaller and super innovative companies as the whole industry gathers under one roof for three days to share in shaping the future of the industry and to demonstrate the collective strength of the Paddle Sports industry.

The night before the show opens, starting at 19.00, the Paddle Sport Film Festival will take place at the Palais des Congrès, opposite the Hilton hotel and the Parc des Expositions. In its second year, the film festival is an evening packed full of outstanding films and presentations from the paddle community. There is also a competition, with a 1,500 euros cash prize for the winning film, decided on by an industry jury. The Film Festival is a public event and open to everyone.

The event has a full program of round table discussions and presentations, starting on Tuesday, the first topic 'increasing female participation in paddle sports' is lead by Nouria Newman. This is followed by 'paddle sports and disability', where adaptations and innovations to make the sport more

these challenges into credible and stimulating opportunities for growth and performance?

Lastly, Innovation Tech & Experience to get you ahead: AI, immersive technologies, and data are redefining customer relationships, value creation, and internal processes. Innovation is key, but it's also important to do so with relevance. How can we leverage these tools to improve the experience, stimulate creativity, strengthen decision-making, and foster connections with our communities without losing touch with reason?

At the time of going to press, speakers included Yorgo Tloupas, Grégory Pouy, Fred Tain, and Christophe Lepetite. For an up-to-date list of speakers go to the Eurosima website.

The annual Surf Summit cocktail party will be held on Thursday from 19:00 at the 70 Hectares and Ocean hotel in Seignosse, to celebrate the winners of the Eurosima 2025 Call for Innovation projects.

On Friday morning at 09:00 there's a Surf Session with the Hossegor Surf Club and at 13:30 a presentation of the winner of the Eurosima Call For Innovation project.

During the Surf Summit, Eurosima will be presenting the 8th edition of the Surfing Lounge exhibition, which showcases the most innovative products and services in action sports. Summit guests get to examine the products firsthand and have a chance to talk to many of their creators.

So, if you need to visit South West France for business or pleasure, add the Surf Summit to your calendar and participate in Europe's number one networking event for the surf industry. See you there.

EUROSIMA.COM

accessible will be discussed. The day ends with a round table looking at how tourism contributes to the development of paddle sports. First up on Wednesday, 'is AI serving paddle sports, how can AI develop your business', presented by Frédéric Wickert consultant and trainer in AI. Next up is the 'paddle sports equipment and techniques supporting civil security' round table. This will also serve as an initial meeting with the aim of launching the first European symposium on river rescue techniques derived from paddle sports in 2026. On Thursday, the RISE Commission (Reduce the Impact of the Outdoor Sector on Environment) will host a discussion titled 'where do we stand', during which the commission will give an update on its work and actions with Bob Timms presenting the first results.

On the first evening of the Paddle Sports Show exhibitors will host informal drinks parties and invite their customers to visit their stands from 19.00 to 22.00. On the second evening, starting at 19.00 the industry party and awards ceremony takes place, featuring the Paddle Sports Product of the Year awards and the annual Hall of Fame ceremony as well as food and drinks till midnight. The 14 categories in the Paddle Sports Product of the Year Awards, presented by Kayak Session Publishing, are chosen by a panel of independent judges. The awards highlight products that are making a difference through innovation, performance, design, and utility. The lucky winners will be announced during the industry dinner.

THEPADDLESPORTSHOW.COM



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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

SKATE FOOTWEAR SS26

The ever-fluctuating market is currently in a challenging position, according to various sources. Smaller brands are struggling, whilst more established ones are trying all they can to remain afloat. With physical, independent skate shops sadly closing their doors across Europe, we ask what brands are doing to stay in demand among skateboarders and consumers. **By David St Clair Morgan.**



MARKET

Bas Jansen - Head of Sales EMEA & APAC at Etnies, éS & Emerica said, "We're aware that apparel and hard goods are picking up — but in speciality, footwear is somewhat behind." Albeit the case, skateboarding continues to grow in Europe and the world as a whole, as Mirko Magnum, co-founder at Opus, explained: "As hard-goods brands continue to grow in numbers and expand DTC business, they continue to compete with shops' monthly sales."

Customers who have access to online stores continue to look for footwear on sale, driving down prices and margins for traditional skate shops. Kenny Reed - Marketing, and Team Manager at the recently reborn lpath said, "There are lots of giant sporting goods brands making and selling shoes to skateboarders", which of course adds challenges to the market for smaller, core brands.

With Trump's potential new tariffs on China, some brands are having to reevaluate their production methods. Mirko from OPUS said, "The Trump tariffs halted all shipments to the USA for OPUS, which allowed us to get more shoes into Europe ahead of our original European expansion timeline." R.P. Bess, Brand Director at the renewed World Industries, noticed that "More shoes are coming from outside of China." Fallen Footwear's International Sales Manager Matt Sandler said similarly, "We're already exploring sourcing strategies that help us remain competitive without compromising quality." Bas from Etnies, éS & Emerica mentioned that their brands were not directly affected; however, "indirectly, it could affect brands on a global level, which can impact things from a budget perspective."

"actually reducing their price points to make a more accessible shoe." Michi Makrodt, Fishing Lines

Price Points- Most brands seem to be striving to maintain their price points, with some only increasing within the US. Fishing Lines Worldwide's Founder/Owner, Michi Makrodt, said that they are "actually reducing their price points to make a more accessible shoe." Bas from Etnies, éS & Emerica said that "Price remains a sensitive topic in the market. We have reduced certain lines to better align with current competition." Matt from Fallen said, "While global inflation affects production costs, we prioritise accessibility for skaters and aim to remain fair and competitive in all markets."

Smaller Brands - Small brands have never had it easy in skateboarding. Dennis Martin, CEO at Hours Is Yours, said, "I believe shops should be supporting smaller skater-owned and operated footwear brands to help the industry as a whole." It's up to skate shops to support smaller brands. Mirko from Opus noted that "The market is always looking for something fresh and compelling, the challenge for a small or new brand is setting up infrastructure with a slow to moderate growth plan." R.P. Bess from World Industries added that "I think there is some room for smaller brands. They just have to make their mark and get noticed." Matt from Fallen said perfectly that "Core skaters continue to value authenticity and purpose. Fallen has always been rooted in skateboarding, and that credibility resonates deeply with a loyal community."



Collection themes and stories -The main stories for next season seem to be cupsoles and bulky styles. Dennis from Hours Is Yours spoke of the release of a “Cup sole penny loafer”, whereas Andres Araya, EMEA Sales manager, said “their focus was on the 933 launch & Jamie Foy cupssole models. Bas from Etnies, éS & Emerica said, “On the lifestyle side, we are leaning heavily into the Y2K trend with bulkier styles. On the skate side, we’re pushing for innovation and newness.” R.P. Bess from World Industries announced that “graphics are doing well for us, although we are discussing throttling it back in the coming seasons.” Kenny from Ipath said their main stories are “pushing casual, skate-able and comfort. Classic silhouettes with modern tones, like the new ‘Cat lows’ in buttery soft suede - Good to walk to the beach with no socks or hit up the local DIY and lay into some tranny.” DC’s Skateboarding Marketing Coordinator,

“Core skaters continue to value authenticity and purpose. Fallen has always been rooted in skateboarding, and that credibility resonates deeply with a loyal community.” Matt Sandler, Fallen

Cedric Borderie said similar - “ Post-session, transition effortlessly into the running-inspired ROAMMAX, or relax in the Super Suede skateable mule, the LIEGE.”

DESIGN

With people searching for more ‘all-rounder’ footwear, brands are having to sometimes adapt their designs to suit not just skateboarders’ tastes. Practical silhouettes with technical performance. ‘Functional footwear as fashion’, as Michael Morey, footwear designer at Etnies, said simply. “I’ve noticed a surge in lifestyle-inspired sneakers that look good both on and off the board. For SS26, we’re introducing a new silhouette called the Emerson, which blends lifestyle aesthetics with skate performance attributes.” Michael also spoke of éS’s new silhouette - “the Imprint - a new style we’re debuting for SS26. We’re offering a special version using Kevlar for the toe and heel caps.” Emerica will be focusing on “ a few core silhouettes and updating their colour palettes to remain interesting whilst still wearable,” as Michael said. Fishing Lines owner Michi said, however, “The trends are going towards ‘more is more,’ but, as I say, we’re not trying to go that way.” Hoursisyours’ Dennis said similarly, “We are always looking to offer skate and semi-casual silhouettes as part of our brand DNA.” Big puff OG’s, Osiris, however are sticking to their roots as Brian Barber said proudly “For us, we’re leaning into our legacy — focusing

“On the lifestyle side, we are leaning heavily into the Y2K trend with bulkier styles. On the skate side, we’re pushing for innovation and newness.”

Bas Jansen, Etnies/ éS/ Emerica

on heritage models and elevating them with upgraded materials and modern detailing” Fallen will be doing similar at Matt explained: “we’re leaning into the legacy of Fallen, highlighting key rider stories and reviving underground classics from our early 2000s archive.” R.P. Bess from World explained their current design tactics: “We tend to follow skate groms and apparel fashion to see into the future with product designs, graphics and marketing tools.”

PRO MODELS/COLOUR-WAYS

Fewer pro models next season, however, colour-ways are a different ballgame. éS will be releasing 2 new colour ways of TJ Roger’s pro shoe as Michael from éS explained: “a Black/Red colourway launching in Spring references the iconic launch colour of the Two Nine 8 — reflective silver mesh included, and a Summer colourway in clean white leather with baby blue accents.” Similarly, Emerica will be releasing 3 new colour-ways of Spankey’s KSL III. Mirko from OPUS spoke of “releasing an updated version of our Standard mid and Low, with longer lasting rubber compound and upgraded Suede.” DC will be releasing a Will Marshall colourway of the ONYX Vulc, which ‘provides lightweight control’ as Cedric explained. Hours Is Yours “will have some very good colour ups for the Herman 3 and Dilo Pro for SS26” as Denis said. Fallen’s Matt Saddler did announce that they’re “launching new pro models for Dalton Dern and Tommy Sandoval, each designed in close collaboration with the skaters themselves” so it’s not completely void of new pro models next season!

COLLABORATIONS

New Balance Numeric continue to fire on all pistons, now collaborating with Italian Neo Luxe Menswear brand Stone Island. This will see several redesigned silhouettes and apparel pieces that will make an impact next season. Osiris will also be bringing a strong collaboration to the table as Brian from Osiris said: “One of our most exciting collaborations is with YDB — Young Dirty Bastard — the son of the legendary Ol’ Dirty Bastard of the Wu-Tang Clan. This partnership is special on many levels.” Kenny from Ipath mentioned they’re “getting something going with Bronze 56k,” which only further catapults their somewhat cult appreciation within skateboarding.

SUSTAINABILITY

In this day & age, it’s (hopefully!) accepted that most footwear brands will offer a vegan alternative for their best sellers. Brian from Osiris said, “We’ve been early adopters of synthetic materials and vegan footwear — dating back to Y2K, not only for animal-conscious reasons but also because many synthetics offer increased durability and longevity.” R.P. from World Industries said, “All of our footwear is 49% vegan leather. Safe for the environment and good to recycle. Etnies will be offering synthetic suede in the Marana model, whereas Emerica will be launching the Moca for SS26- the White/Gum colourway using entirely animal-friendly materials, and éS will have an animal-friendly version of the Accel for the first time since reintroducing the 1995 spec. Ipath, finally, “source and use sustainable materials whenever possible. We have at least 3 hemp styles available every season,” as Kenny said proudly.

MUST-HAVE STYLES FOR SS26 AND WRAP UP

Whilst new pro models are lacking this year, brands are making up for it with new colourways of successful silhouettes. Kenny from Ipath said their must-have would be the Bronze56K Grasshopper, and Brian from Osiris spoke of “The D3 2001 25th Anniversary Edition.” Some things never go out of fashion, it seems. DC will be launching the HYBRID OG- “offering technical precision with distinct DC heritage design language,” as Cedric explained. Emerica keep it plain and simple with ‘the Moca’, whilst éS’s Michael Morey says “the must-have style is the Imprint.” New Balance Numeric’s Andres said for them “ The NM306 cupssole is a standout must-have.” Hours Is Yours says their must-haves are “Cohiba SL90, Herman 3 & B1 Slip-on,” whereas Fallen will focus on “The Patriot, The Valor, and The Daytona- Dalton Dern’s pro shoe.” ©

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

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Cupsoles are dominant this season
- 2 Some are staying simplistic with their silhouettes
- 3 Much more vegan footwear is available
- 4 Nostalgic shoes grow in popularity
- 5 Functional footwear as fashion



KSL III



Emerica.

933



New Balance technology, combined with Andrew Reynolds' attention to detail, wear tests, and trick lists, suggest that the all-new 933 will meet and exceed expectations.

We can't sell you Reynolds' flick, but we can offer a shoe that can withstand his. Proudly introducing the 933, Andrew Reynolds' signature model.

ABZORB FANTOMFIT  DURANCE

new balance
numeric
skate
shoes 

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RETAILER PROFILE MINIRAMP, POLAND

Mini Ramp is a pioneering Polish skate retailer that's been on the scene since 2004. What began with a mini ramp has grown into a trusted name in skateboarding and streetwear, known for supporting local culture while staying ahead of global trends.

Please give us a brief history about your store.

In 2004, after many years of effort and collecting materials, we managed to create an indoor spot, with the main element being a Miniramp - probably the best one in Poland at the time. At the same time, I came up with the idea to open a skate shop. The name came naturally - Miniramp.

Miniramp has been running for over 20 years now. What do you think has been the key to such long-term success in Poland's skateboarding market?

Keeping up with trends, listening to young people - what they want, what excites them - and continuously supporting the local skateboarding scene.

How has your customer base evolved since you opened in 2004? Are you seeing different demographics or behavior now compared to earlier years?

Customers have changed a lot. In 2004, mostly skaters came into the shop. Today, skateboarding is heavily mixed with streetwear and big footwear brands have transformed the entire industry. Nowadays, our customers are everyone - regardless of age, gender, or lifestyle.

We now sell way more shoes than gear, but that's not a bad thing - sneakers have always been a key part of skate culture and have always excited us. What makes us especially happy is the number of girls coming in, even with their moms - and often they're not even skateboarders. Skateboarding has become more inclusive.

You operate both a brick-and-mortar store and an online shop. How do sales currently split between the two, and how important is e-commerce to your overall business strategy?

The internet has completely changed this industry. Today, running a store without online sales is practically impossible. Online sales account for the vast majority of our revenue.

You were the first skate shop in Poland to offer your own boards. What role does your own brand play in your product offering today?

Yes, we were the first shop in Poland to produce our own decks. Our goal was to make them affordable and good quality - back then it was all about

the skating, the gear, and supporting the local scene. Today the situation has changed - young people prefer foreign brands, and we now sell many more complete skateboards, which was rare back in the day.

The Miniramp brand is still going strong, although in times when every skateshop has its own decks, we mostly sell ours locally. We're about to release a new deck collection in collaboration with renowned artists: @pawel_swanski and @eskaer.

Which brands do you see trending among younger skaters?

It's constantly changing. New brands keep popping up and shaking up the scene. For example: Violet, Limousine, Parra, Cash Only, Homeboy, but also classics like Carhartt WIP, GX1000, Hockey, Fucking Awesome, Palace.

You launched an eco-initiative where you plant a tree for every skateboard sold. Do you find that sustainability efforts actually influence customer decisions?

It's hard to say whether customers choose us because of the ecologism, but the initiative has been well received and appreciated by many people. We know that skateboarding contributes to deforestation, so we wanted to do something good for the planet - every Miniramp deck bought online equals one tree planted.

Do you have a skate team? Is managing a team an important part of running a skateshop?

Yes, our team is constantly evolving. Over the years, we've had many awesome skaters who we've supported and built Miniramp with together. Currently, the team includes: Dima Tishenko, Janek Jaroszewicz aka Pacyna, Patryk Sadzki, Weronika Choromańska, Emil Wolan, Agata Halikowska, Grzegorz Cygań, Adam Winowiecki, Jakob Laube.

Looking ahead, what's next for Miniramp? Are you planning to expand, develop more in-house products, grow your digital presence, or explore new formats?

We can't reveal all our plans, but we do have some cool ideas for the future. One thing we can say it's that we're actively working toward the creation of an indoor skatepark in Poznań. 📍

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

BOARDSHORTS SS26

The boardshort is a statement for surf brands. The surf trunks convey a message which indicates whether you are a genuine surf label or not, while being relevant to the contemporary trends in style, planet-minded constructions and functionality. That's a lot for a mere 20' long piece of fabric and Spring-Summer 2026 will remain story-loaded. **By David Bianic**



Unless you live somewhere in the Southern Hemisphere, preferably close enough to the equator, the boardshort is probably the one piece in your surfer's kit you spent the least amount of time wearing. Let's say a couple months if you are lucky in Europe. Theoretically, a quality boardshort should last a few seasons. Yet, the urge to renew your trunks quiver every year is pretty much compulsive. It has become an affirmation of some sorts, indicating the current vibe, telling so much about you, more than you can even imagine.

Looking back at the Spring-Summer 2025 level orders, once again the boardshort segment signs decent figures in the worst case scenario, and really positive sales for most. As seen in the past, the sophisticated models really shine among the dedicated surfers: "The order levels for SS25 were positive, particularly in core lines, with retro-style aesthetics combined with modern performance features performing best", says Brianna Moore, Brand Manager for Lightning Bolt, highlighting the demand for sustainable fabrics and technical finishes as the "key drivers".

A pattern stands out in many feedbacks from the brands. The more abundant the range, the more success they meet. "Level orders for SS25 boardshorts were good, at least in progression as we increased our range, more styles and more colours", notes Thomas Chastol, Product Manager at Oxbow. Protest Sports-wear is on the same page, attesting that different lengths and a wide range of colors "further boosted consumer interest".

The past 3 years however were mainly characterised by a carry-over policy and probably helped establish some staple pieces through time. It is no surprise the retro-inspired pieces will stand the test of time by definition, and find their places among those staple SKUs. Rhythm named those the "classics" and "heritage" collections and they proved to be the cornerstones of their collection, says Pablo Garay, European Marketing Coordinator, as they "keep being good sellers year after year".

"The order levels for SS25 were positive, particularly in core lines, with retro-style aesthetics combined with modern performance features performing best"

Brianna Moore, Lightning Bolt

From a distance, boardshorts may all look alike, until you read the price tag. From roughly €30 to €140 and even above, the spectrum is spectacularly wide. Not all brands aim for the same consumer target. Protest aims for the €40 to €70 euro range, as "it's all about giving people something that looks great, lasts, and feels worth it, without being too expensive". In an upper price range, Lightning Bolt is "positioned firmly between €70 and €110", whereas Florence x Marine tops the list with €75 to €140. Yet, the recurring figure – where the strongest sales are made – seems to be €70 for boardshorts.

2026 BOARDSHORTS SILHOUETTE TRENDS

The inseam length is a good sign of the air du temps: the shorter it is and you can tell brands are playing on the vintage vibe; the longer it is, you know designers are quoting the 90s & early 2000s golden era of surfing. Rip Curl noticed a clear trend towards longer boardshorts, between 21 and 23 inches, though the bulk of sales still is around 19–20 inches: "The 2000's trend remains strong and continues to lead the opinion leader segment. This is why we're seeing more and more boardshorts featuring cut-and-sew details, contrasting piping, and bolder, more retro prints and branding. All of this is of course offered with new materials that are 100% recycled and stretch", tells Pierre-Alexandre Merlet, Men Division Product Manager. Rusty even goes the extra length. We are talking above the knee silhouettes, with 21" and 24" inseams: "90's inspired long length board shorts are back! The style is baggy but stretchy materials keep them functional", reassures Craig Butcher, European Head of Marketing

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and Sales. Obviously, for brands whose roots and brand image gravitate around the 70's, the inseams are conversely shorter, like Lightning Bolt cuts: mid-waist, 16–18 inch outseams with slightly more relaxed fits rather than slim cuts.

2026 WALKSHORTS/BEACHSHORTS DESIGN TRENDS

In the past, the core surfers used to wear their technical boardshorts anytime: waves, beach, streets, even in clubs. The boardshort was a testament to the tribe they belonged to, in opposition to the non-surfer and its puffy elastic waist beachshort. But that ship has sailed for a few years. The undisputed comfort and functionality of them walkshorts/beachshorts won over completely, now a staple piece of the OG surfers, as in Lost's range, with "relaxed fits, elastic waistbands, utility pockets, and soft vintage washes define our SS26 walkshorts. These are built for all-day wear—beach to bar". Some walkshorts are distancing themselves from the beach lifestyle, as told by Alex Berthonneau, Head of Merchandising for Billabong: "After many years led by elasticated waists, the rigid waist is taking more space in our line with longer and baggier fits, workwear silhouettes."

The hybrid shorts (boardshort meets beachshort) are still a thing at Protest. They named those "the surfables", it's to say shorts you can surf in, but also wear casually. "We have four surfables in our collection: PRTJEREMY, PRTRAD-COT, PRTFILBY, and PRTADONIA. They're made with quick-dry, stretch fabrics and have a clean, modern look—perfect for both in and out of the water."

Lately, Florence x Marine ventured in the outdoor market, offering hiking, climbing, fishing and hunting-ready apparel. Their walkshorts mirror the trend, "built for versatile use, from trail to surf with breathability, durability, and storage in mind", says Hector Caldwell, Brand Manager. This translates in design features such as airflow perforations, tactical pockets, liner options, integrated waistband belts or Cordloc® drawcords, key cord loops, reflective branding and locker loops for drying.

2026 PRINTS & COLORS

While the boardshorts lengths are a throwback to the 90's for most, the graphics clearly rule out the flashy and bold from that era. "The market has shifted away from 80's/90's nostalgia and loud prints to more minimal, tonal chic designs", says Nick Crook, founder and CEO of Boardies.

In 2026, muted is the key word as seen on Lightning Bolt's collection, where washed brights (vibrant but softened colors), mineral tones (refined earth tones), and soft tech (subtle, tech-inspired hues like lilac and aqua green) set the vibe. Rather than man-made colors, a nature inspired palette stands out in Picture's collection, through 3 outdoor key destinations: Tofino, Les Écrins and Niseko. From deep greens to earthy browns and muted purples in the Tofino range, to a combination of bright yellows and oranges with soft pastels and earthy hues in Les Écrins, their color choices are a peaceful invitation.

The Lost range goes for the sun-faded, using "washed black, clay, aged olive, salt blue, and dirty pastel hits" which distances itself from the previous seasons.

Even more understated, the solid colors in Florence's range keep it classy and simple, with classic neutrals (black, charcoal, navy, steel blue, mountain green, sage green and red) and a signature camo. Camo it is as well at Rusty's, but not your typical army camo: "Look out for the Flip Rambo Boardshort in hunting camo print to mix things up a bit!", suggests Craig Butcher.

Similarly, prints are low-key with minimal tropicals and geometric graphics (Lightning Bolt), prints inspired by local myths and traditional stories (Protest), landscapes and folklore (Picture).

On the other hand, Oxbow dug into their style library and introduced "an heritage segmentation with iconic styles we used to offer back in the days". They have used a few strong all over prints which definitely lean towards the rich and bold graphics. The throwback vibe is also patent in Billabong's collection, notably the Longbongs, "our range of performance trunks with an early 00's flavor" whilst the reintroduction of their the most iconic shorts of all time, like

"The shorts are built for versatile use, from trail to surf with breathability, durability, and storage in mind." Hector Caldwell, Florence x Marine

the Andy Irons Rising Sun, are doing great, "which is correlated with the Y2K trend", adds Alex Bethonneau.

2026 MATERIALS & CONSTRUCTIONS

Boardshort wise, we don't see recycled polyester going anywhere as the synthetic fabric remains the most efficient for intense water activities. Yet, some fine details stand out from one brand to the other. See the high-stretch recycled polyester used at Lightning Bolt, sourced with the Seaqual Initiative, which transforms marine litter into textile solutions (their seaqual yarn). For added durability, Ripstop is more and more implemented within the nylon/spandex blend. In addition, eco-friendly treatments for chlorine and salt resistance come handy (Lightning Bolt).

"We are proud to introduce the Stoked boardshort! Upcycled fabrics, 46% less fabric offcuts during production, entirely made in France: the result is -93% CO2 emissions compared to a conventional boardshort."

Aurélien Silvestre, Oxbow



Walkshorts and beachshorts use a wider array of fabrics, as seen in Rhythm's range, from denim to cord, linen, and good old cotton. As per Rip Curl they are proud to celebrate their 10-year partnership with Cordura : "For the upcoming season we will launch our Re-Cord (recycled Cordura) swimwear — allowing us to offer a fully 100% recycled boardshort/volley range", announces Pierre-Alexandre. Florence x Marine also banks on Cordura for its abrasion resistance properties, as well as the Airtex technology "for maximum airflow and to release water".

Matching the "washed" color palette of their SS26 collection, Lost implemented some vintage-feel cotton for a worn feeling.

Closure systems and waistband options are also two crucial features and keep on evolving from season to season. Lightning Bolt introduces a mix of traditional lace-up/velcro and hybrid minimalist zip-fly systems for enhanced comfort and longevity. Any rubbing can ruin your sessions and Lost knows that, offering flat fit closures with rubber-tipped drawcords.

THE TARIFFS SPECTRE

It has been the elephant in the room for this first half of the year. How will the new tariffs policy from the US administration affect our industry? The backwards and forwards movements from President Trump has led the European brands to take action so they don't lie under the sword of Damocles.

Many already relocated their production in Europe, and particularly in Portugal, as did Lightning Bolt: "We foresee no direct impact from tariffs. Instead, we expect to strengthen our competitive edge through ethical, sustainable, and resilient production." Discrepancies are to be expected according to the production/materials sourcing, giving opportunities to the least impacted by tariffs. ☹

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Full on 90s & early 00' styles
- 2 Longer inseams (see above)
- 3 Workwear and outdoor inspired walkshorts
- 4 Toned down colors for non-heritage styles
- 5 Bulletproof materials (Cordura)

BILLABONG

SPEC 73

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

WINGS SS26

Wing brands are not only refining performance but also ensuring accessibility and longevity, making the sport more attractive to a wider audience every season. By Rocio Enriquez.



Wing foiling continues to energise the water sports industry. It attracts both newcomers, drawn by its accessibility, and seasoned riders, looking for performance and progression. 2024 was a healthy year across the board, with each brand carving its own niche. NSP enjoyed strong growth with its Fireball wing. This model compromised value and quality, proving that affordability still sells in a market increasingly filled with premium builds. Performance-focused riders embraced the wing's balance, making it the brand's best-seller. SIC Maui reported growth from two fronts: progressing riders advancing into intermediate and expert stages, and a wave of crossover athletes from sports like surfing, kiteboarding, and snowboarding. This mix created demand for versatile gear that works from first sessions to advanced riding without the need for frequent upgrades. Armstrong highlighted similar dynamics, underlining their philosophy of building wings for the long run. They stress durability and adaptability, qualities that attract both committed riders and ambitious newcomers. While elite riders fuel innovation, long-term growth of the sport depends on newcomers. It is important to lower entry barriers and build an inclusive community, while still catering to high-performance users. There is also a surge in intermediate riders hungry for progression. "We see strong demand from intermediate riders who have moved past the basics and now want to jump, carve, and go further while keeping the same base set-up", says Noora Ruskola, Marketing Manager at Armstrong. A modular approach to design is well rewarded. 2025 bestsellers show how brands balance accessibility, performance, and innovation. NSP's Fireball wing stays at the top of their charts. "The Fireball combines quality and price in a way few others offer. It hits the sweet spot for riders progressing quickly and needing gear that can keep up", says Jarra Bitton, NSP's Design and Communications Manager.

"We see strong demand from intermediate riders who have moved past the basics and now want to jump, carve, and go further while keeping the same base set-up" Noora Ruskola, Armstrong

Their Meteor model also performs strongly, entering the competitive space against top foiling names but at a sharper price point. SIC Maui continues to thrive with the Raptor V3, an all-rounder known for its lift and smooth stability. It's friendly enough for learners yet powerful for advanced disciplines like racing and surf foiling. The real buzz, however, surrounds their new Dragon wing. With its medium-to-high aspect ratio, V-ahedral profile, and segmented strut, it delivers impressive upwind efficiency, reduced drag, and freestyle handling. Its ergonomic boom gives riders precision and freedom, while advanced materials like ALUULA AERIS X FX86 and EXOTEX 2 ultra-rigid Dacron balance high performance with still affordable costs. The Dragon is sold in a complete set-up, with an installed boom, bag, leash, and pump. Armstrong keeps things simple. Their A-Wing XPS Mk II dominates sales worldwide. Years of refinement and rider feedback have built a wing that works in waves, racing, and freestyle alike. With one wing model covering nearly all conditions, Armstrong reinforces its minimalist philosophy. Ensis top seller was the Score 3. It is highly accessible, easier to control with its rigid handles, and very light, all this while delivering excellent performance.



ARMSTRONG

2026 WINGS

Material and structural innovation remains a key battleground. The conversation in wing design is no longer about whether to use premium fabrics. It's about how to combine them smartly, how to tweak layouts, and how to balance weight, stiffness, and cost. NSP sticks to Dacron but plays with innovative canopy panelling and strut support. The goal of this hybrid layout of multi-weight Dacron is to maintain light weight and responsive handling while reinforcing critical stress areas. "We reinforce areas of high stress or pressure and use lighter Dacron on areas where a little bit of flex would be beneficial to overall performance", says Jarra Bitton. Their approach is evolutionary: improving aerodynamics, boosting control, and making their wings sharper every season. SIC Maui sees a bigger shift. They're integrating multiple fabrics to maximize durability and performance without inflating costs. They double down on premium fabrics, including ALUULA for the leading edge, EXOTEX 2 for struts, and

"The Fireball combines quality and price in a way few others offer. It hits the sweet spot for riders progressing quickly and needing gear that can keep up" Jarrason Bitton, NSP

3DF canopy reinforcements. The strategy is premium performance without premium-only prices. "The Dragon is constructed with multiple advanced materials strategically placed to maximise performance and durability, without breaking the bank", says SIC Maui's Global Brand Manager, Casi Rynkowski. The ergonomic boom delivers excellent rigidity, precise power control, and unrestricted freedom of movement - all of which contribute to its responsive performance. Their design ethos is about versatility — freeride, wave, or freestyle with one wing. Ensis uses Dacron for their Score and Topspin models. The Score Limited Edition and the light wind wing Drive use a hybrid Aluula and Aluula Aeris layup. The Topspin Ace introduces Dyneema, which offers rigidity and performance in a very light weight. Armstrong doesn't follow trends; they maintain their tried-and-tested approach to set their own path. Their A-Wing XPS Mk II features the Cross Panel Sail Design for canopy longevity, and the Dyna-Link handle system, letting riders choose between carbon handles or a full boom. For materials, they choose Teijin Technoforce D3 for the canopy and carbon for the trailing edge battens, evidencing a focus on construction longevity. "The A-Wing XPS MkII covers almost any condition, the rider only needs to choose the wing size", says Noora Ruskola. Freewing takes a broad view. They want to push wing foiling from entry-level to Olympic-level competition, making

"We are rolling out a new educational video series designed to empower both retailers and consumers with the knowledge they need to make informed purchasing decisions" Casi Rynkowski, SIC Maui

sure their equipment supports every style — freeride, racing, waves, and freestyle. They experiment with structural and material innovation. "Today, the Starboard crew is submerged in wing material development, build methods, shape technology, and even patented structural advantages to solve the oversized leading-edge challenge", says Freewing's Marketing Manager, Matt Maxwell. They also develop ergonomic carbon booms with multiple diameters to suit different hand sizes. Gaastra equips all models with a 100% carbon pistol grip boom, except the Jet which presents a straight boom. They use premium ForceTec Dacron on the Cross, Cross LW, and Poison. The Pure model incorporates Dyneema in the leading edge and strut frame. They also use Teijin's VoltNova and VoltNova+. Brands' line-ups for 2026 reflect confidence in existing designs but with selective innovation. NSP will offer two models in multiple sizes, plus a new range mid-2026 to expand reach. SIC Maui will continue with the versatile Raptor V3 alongside the performance-driven Dragon. Armstrong plans to carry over the XPS Mk II and the XPS Lightwind Mk II into 2026. Ensis will offer the Topspin and Topspin Ace, which they expect to do well given the increasing interest in boom wings. Alongside these, in their line-up, we'll find the Score 3, in its regular and limited edition, and the Drive. Gaastra will add the Jet racing wing to their line-up in 2026.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is thought of less as an add-on and more as a necessity, but it remains challenging in a technical product with high durability and performance demands. Efforts are therefore focused on product longevity and waste management. NSP shows a practical approach, repurposing factory offcuts into packaging, ties, and hangtags. This cuts down on single-use plastics and turns waste into useful materials. Armstrong strongly advocates longevity, encouraging a strong second-hand market by avoiding seasonal graphic refreshes and ensuring durability. This also allows retailers to carry over stock without pressure to clear inventory. Freewing underscores its commitment to both product performance and planet care.

RETAILER SUPPORT

Each brand seems to be finding its niche market, tailoring their communication to them. NSP plays in the value-performance space, delivering innovation without pricing out fast-progressing riders. SIC Maui emphasizes versatility and inclusivity, balancing accessibility with cutting-edge design. Armstrong champions longevity and minimalism, betting on one wing to do it all. Freewing takes the broadest view, pushing for all-level growth while experimenting heavily with materials and constructions. "We want to see wing foiling become the world's most popular sailing sport", says Matt Maxwell. Retail partnerships are critical as wings become more technical and diverse. NSP supports retailers with spec sheets, videos, training tools, and increased investment in demo programs and events. SIC Maui launches SIC Talk Stories. "We are rolling out a new educational video series designed to empower both retailers and consumers with the knowledge they need to make informed purchasing decisions", says Casi Rynkowski. They're also introducing SIC Foil Pro Centers worldwide, strengthening dealer expertise and creating on-water engagement hubs. Armstrong continues to back retailers with display systems, product education, access to rider insights, video-rich content kits, and simplified sizing charts.

Wing design has taken big steps forward in recent seasons, driven by new materials and smarter constructions. The next phase is about combining fabrics and refining builds to achieve more performance without losing accessibility. Brands are working to balance weight, rigidity, and affordability — a delicate game with high stakes for riders, retailers, and the wider foiling community. Wing foiling is no longer just a fast-growing water sport — it's becoming a mature global market. Moving forward, we can expect more versatile wings, lighter builds, and smarter use of premium materials. Hybrid constructions will blend affordability with performance. This, combined with retailer initiatives that focus on education and community, will lay a fertile ground for wing sales. 5

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

- 1 Hybrid materials redefine wing performance
- 2 Accessibility drives steady market growth
- 3 Durability key to sustainability goals
- 4 Retailer support boosts sport adoption

ALL-WATER TURBOCHARGED PERFORMANCE

RST SERIES

The new All-Water Rocket Ship Turbo race board is the fusion of the exceptional glide and maneuverability of the RS series with the unmatched rough water stability of the Atlantis with a venturi drain. The final results deliver unbeatable all-water dugout performance with speed, agility, and stability, even in challenging conditions. The RST won multiple world titles in 2024. Turn on the Turbo mode!

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

FOILING SS26

Precision engineering and clever designs are setting the pace of foil sports development, promising a future full of lift and no drag. By Rocio Enriquez.



The foil market has been showing signs of maturity for the past year, with growth spread across multiple disciplines. Windsurfers and wing foilers are sharing the waters with increasing numbers of downwind SUP, prone, and pump foiling practitioners. Brands are echoing this diversification with a wider product mix. Shops are keen on stocking a full foil range. The demand is leaning towards high-end, technically advanced products. Brands aim for quality and performance as key differentiators. While industry sales are down from past peaks, especially the post-pandemic one, there is overall stability and growth in the foil category. New disciplines have contributed to this. There is ongoing enthusiasm in the foiling community, which brands are factoring in their production forecasts. Stock levels have stabilised. There is still some leftover inventory that keeps prices down which could have contributed to a rethinking of the production planning. There is an observable trend of phased product launches and on-demand manufacturing aimed at avoiding excess stock and maintaining innovation cycles. In-house manufacturing helps balance availability for retailers with avoiding overproduction. Stock management is becoming a key competitive advantage. Wing foiling continues to dominate the demand. Its accessibility, versatility and the ability to ride in varied conditions make it very attractive to users of all riding levels. It is also becoming competitive with racing, freestyling, and big air modalities increasing in popularity. Media coverage of events and athletes is helping. There is a strong momentum in downwind foiling, especially amongst advanced riders seeking the thrill of a long glide. Mid length boards and crossover equipment that can be

"We use the stiffest and lightest materials where we can, while maintaining durability"

Philipa Murphy, Flite Lab

used for both downwind and wing foiling are enabling its growth. Pump foiling is attracting younger users for the affordability and low entry barriers - all it needs is a dock or pier and the water.

FOILS

Entry-level set-ups remain strong sellers. Not only they offer a low barrier to entry, but they help riders progress quickly. Liquid Force's Launch and Horizon's Alloy kits are two examples. SIC Maui pushes their Flite Complete kits for beginners and lighter riders. Racing models help the competitive segment, catering to advanced riders that seek stiffness, control, and speed. In this category Starboard's SLX and MF, Levitaz's R6 Race Series, and SIC Maui's Slash front wing 600 have topped sales. Levitaz builds up on the success of the Race series to launch the brand new Freeride series platform focused on performance. Versatility has been a good selling point. Set-ups that adapt to different riding styles and conditions, and even multiple disciplines, have been popular. Here we find NSP's Riblet, or Slingshot's Glide and Flow. "The Riblet's carbon construction and hydrodynamic design make it a favourite

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among both performance-focused and progressing foilers”, says Jarra Bitton from NSP. The modularity of customisable set-ups helps tool-free quick adjustments and easy travel. SIC Maui’s Flip Fuselage offers two options in one. The user can install the Pump Arrow forward for more lift, stability and pumping power. Flip it around with the Steering Wheel forward, and you get lighter turns and a more responsive ride. Slingshot’s One-Lock platform also performed very well in sales. This is a screw-free system that enables riders to build their ideal set up without the hassle of bolts or tools, simplifying progression. Lastly, the cost-conscious consumer has leant towards a compromise between fair pricing and high performance. Indiana’s HP foil collection sold the best for its fair price level for a high-end product. These bestsellers evidence the main trends in design and technology. There is a focus on stability, stiffness, and control. “We use the stiffest and lightest materials where we can, while maintaining durability”, says Philipa Murphy from Flite Lab. Liquid Force focuses efforts on their Fuse Lock system. Its new shelf design between the wing and the mast reduces wing wobble allowing the foil to perform fully as it was designed to. Adjustable stabilisers and unique fuselage designs enhance fine-tuning without shims. “We are expanding our Monobloc foils offer by adding new front wings like the Barracuda L+, new stabiliser tails, and faster masts like the Hyperdrive UHM in 76, 86, and 96”, says Niki Dietrich from Indiana. High-modulus carbon is becoming the norm, especially in masts and front wings. It improves the stiffness and responsiveness without added weight. Gastra is combining their existing ultra-high modulus carbon mast with a newly developed front wing, fuselage, and rear wing set-up. The front wing is integrated in the front segment of the fuselage for a streamlined

“We are expanding our Monobloc foils offer by adding new front wings like the Barracuda L+, new stabiliser tails, and faster masts like the Hyperdrive UHM in 76, 86, and 96” Niki Dietrich, Indiana

tip with minimum drag and turbulences. UHM carbon is not the only premium material on offer. There is growing use of titanium hardware, corrosion resistant finishes, and advanced lamination techniques that secure longevity. “We feel a strong demand for

“The trend is increased wingspans, the goal is to be able to glide all the time, even in very light wind conditions” Bruno Sroka, Sroka

ever higher spec carbon parts and the use of titanium and steel parts to chase the ultimate”, says Tiesda You from Starboard. Shapes and features are quite performance driven. High aspect front wings enable glide and speed. “The trend is increased wingspans, the goal is to be able to glide all the time, even in very light wind conditions”, says Bruno Sroka from Sroka. Gastra’s new Move front wing has a higher aspect ratio for all-round performance. Optimised foil wings reduce drag. Modular systems allow precision fit, faster set up, and swapping wings, stabilisers, and fuselages to match conditions. Tool-free connection systems are highly valued, for their ease and accessibility.

BOARDS

Mid length and all-round boards dominate sales, as they allow wave riding, parawing, prone foiling and light-wind wing foiling equally. They are valued for their versatility, a key selling point. Many riders look for one board that will cover multiple disciplines. Appletree reports their best results with their all-rounder Apple Slice V3. Slingshot’s versatile Flow Craft v1 has been a strong performer too. Niki from Indiana says: “We see the biggest growth in our compact mid-length Super Fly CML boards”. He also announced a new “All-round / Flat water” range for 2026. Norden’s best sales have come from mid length boards with all-round characteristics, followed by entry level boards. This is a category that continues to sell well, reflecting the steady growth that new participants entering the sport provide. Sales of compact, high-performance boards for advanced riders are increasing. Levitaz has done well with the Boom RS 58 for wing racing and the Boom 75 for freeride winging. Slingshot’s Hope Craft V2 is also popular amongst those looking for stiffness, responsiveness, and optimised control. Pump foiling is growing. Indiana is investing in this segment, based on the strong and growing sales they are experiencing in pump foil boards. Most brands’ line-ups cater to both new entrants and expert riders. This results in two main board subcategories: the progression-friendly and the elite performance. The first ones, short or mid length and wider, provide easy lift and stability. In this category we find Liquid

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SELECT
foils division

Force's Launch for beginners, and the Horizon which bridges the entry-level to intermediate. NSP's Spitfire 2.0 is a mid-length SUP and downwind board. Slingshot's Glide Craft V1 is an accessible mid length with extra stability, ideal for learning transitions. SIC Maui offers the Ka'a, a narrower mid length board. Its pulled-in tail adds control for smooth carving, and longer foil tracks ensure the same nimble feel of a shorter board. The second sub-category comprises longer and narrower boards. They are lightweight, compact, stiff, and responsive designs. Here we find Liquid Force's X high-end surf style, NSP's Bluefin EVO elite downwind board, Levitaz's Raze series, Sroka's LW boards, and Slingshot's Flow Craft V2, a performance mid length. "The new Bluefin EVO is the next evolution in our downwind foil range, engineered for elite riders chasing ocean glides and open-water speed", says Jarra. There are some design refinements for control and feel. Narrow widths enable a harder and more aggressive carving without rail catch. Reduced thickness allows direct foil feedback. Tail shape optimisation offers better turning and lift management. Chine rails and pin tails result in smoother touchdowns and reduced drag. In construction, carbon and hybrid carbon layups are now the standard. They provide the stiffness, strength, and low weight that consumers are after. We see hybrid sandwich builds of carbon and wood or PVC that balance performance, durability, cost, and sustainability.

SUSTAINABILITY

The growing awareness that carbon production is not eco-friendly has sparked interest in alternative materials for board construction. However, there is only so much that can currently be done regarding materials for such performance-oriented products. Sustainable efforts are concentrated mainly in production processes, logistics, product longevity, and environmental advocacy. Appletree and Liquid Force use solar-powered manufacturing. Appletree, NSP, Norden, and Slingshot optimise production to minimise excess materials. Designing boards and foil set-ups to last longer reduces the need for replacements. "We have an industry that pollutes, so the only thing we can do is produce solid, high-performance products that are built to last", says Bruno Sroka. NSP uses closed-cell foam cores and advanced shaping methods to extend product life. Modular systems like Slingshot's One-LockTM allow upgrades without full replacements. Levitaz and Norden also prioritise durability in their designs. Packing and shipping offer plenty of opportunities to offset carbon emissions. "We optimise the processes with pre-orders and promote boat transport", says Benjamin Tillier from protection gear brand WIP. Appletree and Levitaz manufacture in Europe, not only cutting emissions but also supporting local economies. Along with Slingshot, they also use recyclable packaging. Support for environmental organisations like Surfrider Foundation or Sea Shepherd is commonplace. Appletree also commits to safe and fair working conditions.

"We feel a strong demand for ever higher spec carbon parts and the use of titanium and steel parts to chase the ultimate performance"

Tiesda You, Starboard

RETAILER SUPPORT

Education and access to try the product are possibly the most efficient support systems in a product category that is highly technical and new at the same time. Education is delivered in many forms, like product videos, usage guides, and online staff training that do not only explain product choices but also the terminology used. These tools can also make foiling more approachable. First-hand experience is enabled through demo units, test centres, and flagship stores, where customers can try the gear before buying. Traditional marketing support is activated too. Brands have team rider programmes that generate content and visibility. There are also coordinated product launches that efficiently time seeding

"We optimise the processes with pre-orders and promote boat transport" Benjamin Tillier, WIP



to athletes and dissemination of content. This is accompanied by visual assets ready for retailers to deploy at their convenience. Collaboration with retailers at all stages of the product life makes a difference. WIP factors retailers' input in their development and strategy. Levitaz has created the Performance Centres concept that provides exclusive product access, priority support, and co-marketing. Finally, there are some logistics and stock solutions to support retailers. Norden offers pre-order incentives and margin benefits. Indiana reduces the stock risk of their retailers by offering drop shipping. Starboard uses local warehousing for a faster delivery. "We also have an online ticket system to deal with issues that may arise", says Tiesda.

Foiling has settled into a confident rhythm - stable, diverse, and still buzzing with innovation. Wing foiling leads the charge, but new disciplines like downwind, prone, and pump foiling are luring more riders into the water. Lighter and stiffer gear, and smart modular systems keep the market fresh. The focus ahead will be on refining technology, strengthening sustainability where possible, and making foiling sports even more accessible. The right kind of support will help retailers keep a healthy stock to supply the demands of newcomers enthusiasts. The synergy between brands and retailers, combined with the widening appeal that new disciplines offer, is a winning combination for the future of this promising sport.📍

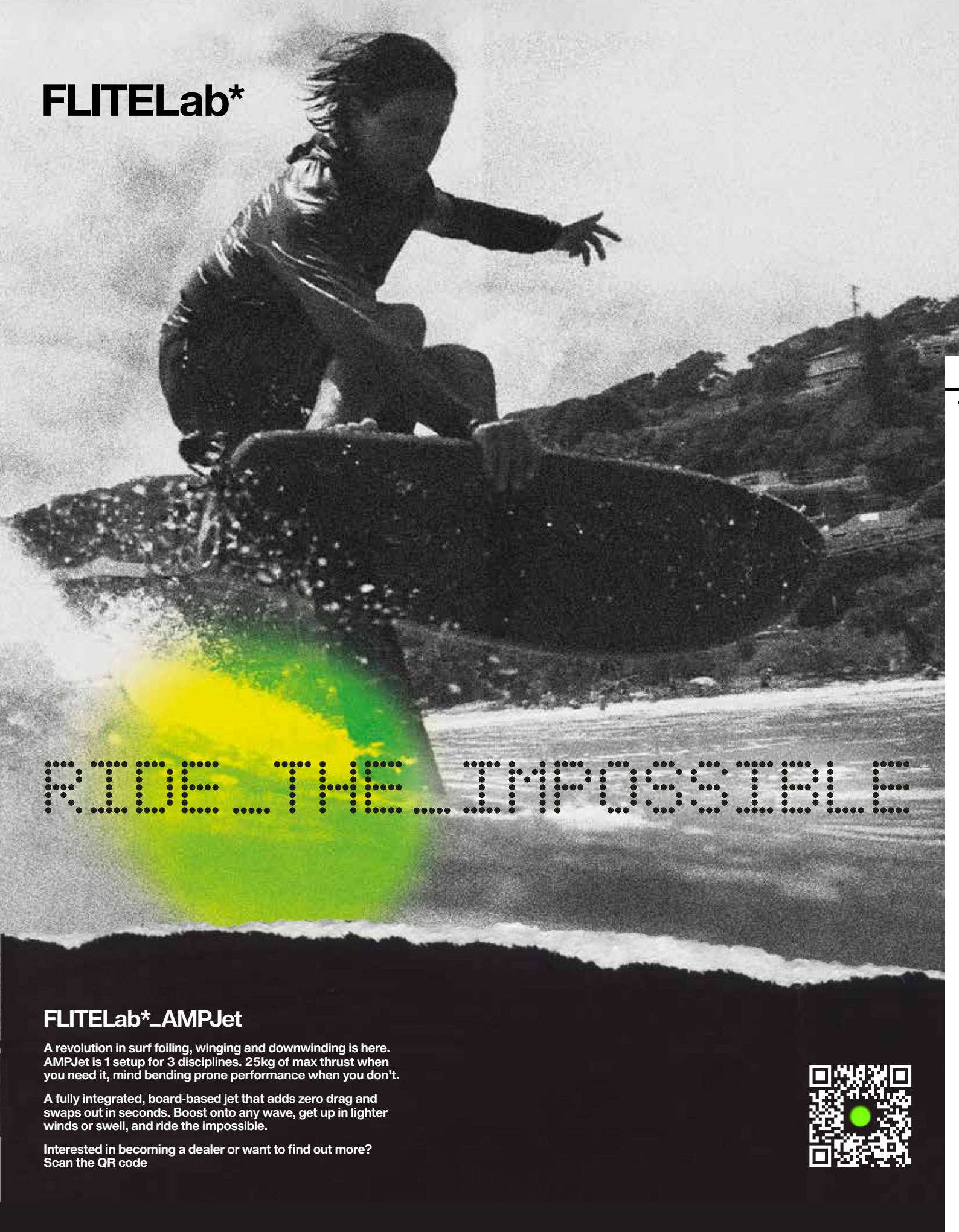
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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Wing foiling drives market demand
- 2 Diversification fuels steady category growth
- 3 Innovation prioritises stiffness and control
- 4 Retailer support strengthens customer access

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BIG WIG INTERVIEW

JOOST GROOTSWAGERS, HEAD OF ONE TURN EUROPE

Joost has been in the European Boardsports business for 21 years, having worked at both O'Neill and SoleTechnology before moving onto Volcom where he became CEO. Following the recent demise of Liberated brands he grasped the opportunity to purchase the Volcom and Spyder brands and is now master of his own destiny. Source caught up with Joost to hear all about the deal and the transition to the new independent business model.

Recently you obtained the European license for Volcom and Spyder, what was the thinking behind this move?

When the opportunity arose to become the operating company for Europe, we had a serious look at it and realised we have created something very sustainable over the past decades. Volcom is a stronghold brand in action sports, and we have carefully curated the brand over the past decades in Europe. With Spyder we have embarked on a similar journey and feel very positive about the future

We have a solid team in place and likewise a solid track record. Therefore, we decided to make a play with the goals of keeping both brands going in Europe and continuing our success, keeping our great organisation and partners in place and having fun while doing it

Please tell us about the acquisition process and how you became the preferred buyer.

The transition has been a process, but we were thankful that Authentic was supportive through it all. We had to transfer all the websites, suddenly fully design our lines, move our ERP system, and more. So in essence we went from being like a little sister to being a fully operational company. We had to make sure we kept the trust of all our partners and suppliers. And we are proud to say that we managed the transition well and as a result we are again delivering our Fall collections 100% on time.

We have been working very close with Authentic for quite some time now and our relationship has been built on mutual trust over the past years. In multiple ways it was the most logical step to take, with this deal we ensure turnover and equally important also our organization whilst at the same time keep the brands independent.

Volcom is a stronghold brand in action sports, and we have carefully curated the brand over the past decades in Europe

Who is on the management team now?

The teams at Volcom and Spyder have not changed at all during the past year and so our management and operational teams remain fully intact. On our management team we have: Antoine Lanusse COO and co-owner, Julie Sonier Head of HR and legal, Marie Aurelie Cazaux Head of Product and Merchandising, Matthieu Galtie Head of Digital, Guillaume Dartenuc Head of Marketing, Emmanuel Lorenzato Head of Spyder, Frabrice Delas **Head of Logistics and myself as CEO and Head of Volcom.**

With Volcom Europe now operating independently from the U.S, how has that shift changed the way you build the brand here? We are now fully responsible for all design on the streetwear side of things. For our snow collections for both Spyder and Volcom we work closely with our US counterparts, The Outdoor Collective for Spyder and the Levy Group for Volcom Snow.

As for the brand building, we are now closely working together with Authentic, Australia and the US to keep our brand heat going. Results are looking pretty epic at the moment with our athletes in Surf, Snow and Skate on fire.

Yago Dora and Jack Robinson will compete at the WSL Finals in just a couple of weeks, with both having a huge chance to claim the world title! Even in the worst-case scenario, we'll still have a Vice World Champion.

Action sports have always been about creativity, freedom, and pushing limits. If we stay true to those values while embracing sustainability, inclusivity, and digital innovation, the European action sports scene can continue to thrive.

In October, we'll also release a brand-new Volcom surf production, a true adventure filmed in South Australia, featuring our EU surf leader William Aliotti, one of the most stylish twin-fin surfers out there.

Arthur Longo keeps building his legend. With many personal projects on the horizon, we'll continue to highlight and push his artistic side even further.

This winter, Marcus Kleveland will release his very first signature line, while also positioning himself as a serious contender for Olympic medals this February.

And in November, we'll proudly launch our first-ever European skate movie: a two-year project led by our iconic Team Manager, Roberto Aleman. Without a doubt, it's one of the most exciting projects Volcom Europe has developed in recent years.

How do you personally stay inspired and connected to the creative and cultural side of the business?

As I mentioned before we are also in the business to have fun, meaning staying connected with the sports and lifestyle we offer. Snowboarding is my primary passion, which is something I will always choose to do. This gives me the opportunity to stay connected to our riders, the industry and our end users.

Furthermore, we employ a lot of creative and connected people. We continuously keep hiring young people who are close to our target audiences. On top of that, our teams and I keep meeting with customers, partners, riders and ambassadors in order to keep a deep understanding of our markets and related scenes.

What are the biggest lessons you have learned during your career in the boardsports industry?

Keep a clear head and stay positive!!! There are so many passionate people in our industry and among our customers. Regardless of

We had to make sure we kept the trust of all our partners and suppliers. And we are proud to say that we managed the transition well and as a result we are again delivering our Fall collections 100% on time

what the industry goes through we always must remember that we empower people to enjoy themselves through our products

How do you see the market for streetwear and winter apparel in Europe?

When you look at participation in our sports they are mostly up. So, in that sense the market is very alive and will continue to be. That said, there are still many uncertainties like inflation, tariffs, other brands entering the market and more. But realistically we sell mostly to cross over consumers, who are inspired by the lifestyle but are not necessarily pure participants. and that is why we need to continue to invest in marketing, activations, team riders and cool new initiatives. At Volcom we have always been at the forefront of activating our brand and we will continue to do so.

As for winter apparel, we have experienced some difficult seasons in terms of snow in Europe, and this has certainly had an effect on business. However, with Spyder we are catering to a more high-end real participant consumer through the outstanding technicality, history and image of the brand. With Volcom Snow we cater to the cool snowboarder. So in essence with both brands, we have clear positioning and target consumers who are more resilient.

What are the products you're personally excited about right now at Volcom Europe?

I am really looking forward to our upcoming snow season, with Spyder and Volcom we have amazing collections and some rider driven capsules coming out. Also very excited every season to see our new featured artist collections coming to the market.

How is the balance of your business between D2C and B2B. How do you work with retailers to push the brand and product?

All brands combined are roughly at 35% D2C and 65% B2B. We push our brand and product through our retailers a lot with using online marketing, local shop events, newsletters, team riders and special events where we invite our core shops.



What do you think are the biggest challenges and threats for the European action sports industry?

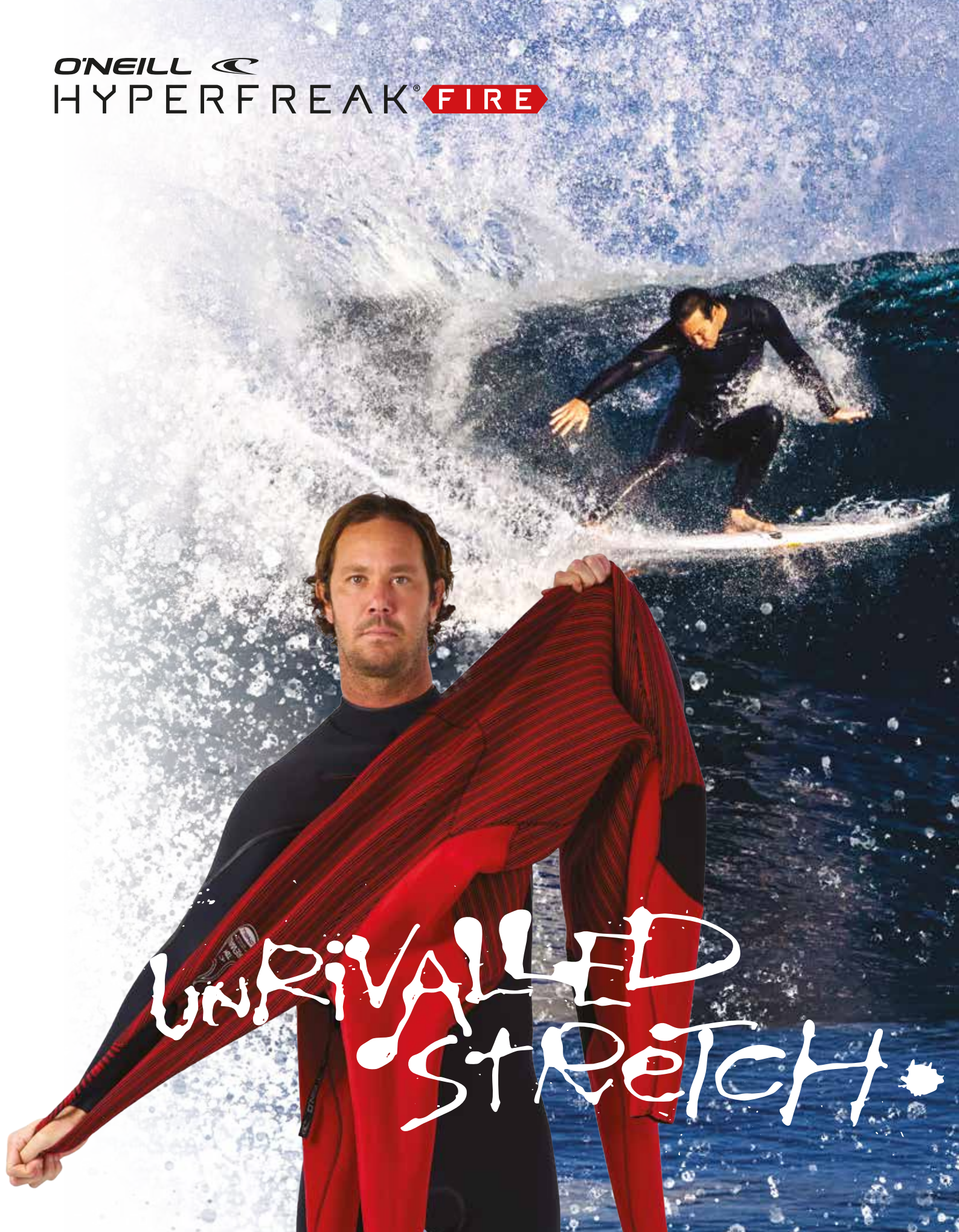
I believe the European action sports industry faces several important challenges. First, there is economic pressure from the rising costs of production, inflation, and shifts in consumer spending habits making it harder for both brands and retailers. Second, we see the impact of climate change, warmer winters affect snow sports, while environmental concerns are pushing the entire industry to become more sustainable and responsible. Third, digital transformation is both an opportunity and a threat, younger generations consume content differently and brands need to constantly adapt to remain relevant and authentic.

At the same time, I believe these challenges are also opportunities. Action sports have always been about creativity, freedom, and pushing limits. If we stay true to those values while embracing sustainability, inclusivity, and digital innovation, the European action sports scene can continue to thrive.

What excites you most about the next few years for Volcom in Europe and what should we be keeping an eye on?

Keep an eye out on how we will continue to be different through product, marketing and more. Keep up with us on www.volcom.eu or @volcom on social and www.spyder.eu. or @sypder on social.

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE WETSUITS SS26

After a couple years hitting the brake pedal, the wetsuit industry can eventually spread its wings again and soar, helped by a wind of change, fueled by more sustainable rubber options. Spring-Summer 2026 preview by **David Bianic**.



If it wasn't for that bad cold that plagued the world in 2020, we cannot but imagine the success the wetsuit industry would have met in normal times. The early pandemic stasis, the resulting frenzy for freedom and the premature hangover caused by a 2 figure inflation... That context slowed down the business, precisely at a time of great innovation, the kind you don't get to see every decade. We are talking of the alt-rubbers which spurred the market, inspired by a will to take distance from the oil-based neoprenes.

After almost a 3 year hiatus, brands are starting to see some "green shoots", says Jimmy Pinfield, Marketing Manager for C-Skins: "We've seen a strong response and growth in our NuWave natural rubber line. Dealers were keen to get behind more sustainable options and something fresh, especially with the market feeling stagnant post-Covid." Same feedback from Rip Curl as their new natural rubber foam introduced in the springsuit range this Spring 2025 met a highly positive response, "with excellent sell-in results confirming the growing demand for more responsible, high-quality products in the category", confirms Bastien Grandy, Wetsuit Product Manager Associate.

And the figures back up the trend. O'Neill reveals their SS25 and FW25/26 Presell campaigns have been great, after they committed to running the same line for multiple years until the inventory problems were solved. "Once we ran new styles and colourways for 2025, the investment paid off and we saw solid growth in our Preorders; +20% for SS25 and +40% for FW25/26", shares Joe Turnbull, European Sales Director for O'Neill Wetsuits.

"We've seen a strong response and growth in our NuWave natural rubber line. Dealers were keen to get behind more sustainable options and something fresh." Jimmy Pinfield, C-Skins

According to Nicolas Guerard, Social Media & PR Manager at Picture Organic Clothing, they saw "a notable growth in wetsuit rentals, especially among surf schools".

SS26 LINE-UPS & PRICEPOINTS

As recalled by Joe at O'Neill, brands tend to update their wetsuit line each winter season, "and the following spring/summer takes those updates into thinner models". So SS26 is basically a trickle-down of the offering we monitored in issue 123 (FW25 Wetsuits). Still from O'Neill, we will thus see redesigned Hyperfreak Fire series and Psycho Tech series, featuring increased graphene for heat retention, and an update of the O'Original RG8 natural rubber series "featuring the latest Yulex 2.0 foam which we laminate with our own hydrophobic microline fabric jersey".

But the spring-summer pieces don't always mirror the latest winter offering, and some introductions help refresh the customer interest. For example, Alder is launching a completely new style called Freeride FX for SS26: "It's an entry level GBS with specific FX stretch on shoulders and arms, we are also making eco updates to current styles", adds John Westlake, self-proclaimed "all things neoprene"

While neoprene historically refers to polychloroprene foam (petroleum-

Yet, a few options with classic neoprenes can still be found, as some of them know quite a cult-following. Starting with the Yamamoto limestone foam, featured in the Zambezi range of Hurricane Surf, a newcomer on



©CielGlue





SOORUZ

the wetsuit segment, while their lower tier Mamba (mid-range) and Buffalo (entry-level) use CR neoprene (chloroprene). O'Neill partially sticks to limestone neoprene as their TechnoButter compound offers a unique stretch-to-lightweight ratio which has been a crowd favorite among surfing connoisseurs. "The rest are either made from Ultraflex neoprene or Yulex natural rubber", adds Joe Turnbull.

Rip Curl took a pragmatic approach, choosing the best from both worlds. They still use chloroprene (neoprene) foam on the high-end Flashbombs and the entry-level New Classic segment. Whereas the E-Bomb and Dawn Patrol, "our high-volume drivers", are based on Sheico's Ocena rubber: a 100% neoprene-free, bio-based foam containing 74% certified bio-based natural rubber.

"Once we ran new styles and colourways for 2025, the investment paid off and we saw solid growth in our Preorders; +20% for SS25 and +40% for FW25/26."

Joe Turnbull, O'Neill Wetsuits

SS26 LOOKS: SILHOUETTES & COLORS

Short legs, long arms, no arms, long legs, short arms... The combinations are endless within the Spring-Summer wetsuit segment depending on your liking. Still, every now and then, a few silhouettes seem to trend better than others. And the short-leg long-arm springsuit stands out this year, as confirmed by Billabong on their Revolution spring, C-Skins with the women's Solace Lite, Rip Curl and the E-Bomb Shorty Long Sleeve, or O'Neill, which cites them as one of their quickest growing categories. And there are plenty to choose from, as mentioned by Antoine Dalibot at Soörüz, as their long-sleeved Shorty exists in a range of colors, zips, pro models, and more.

In the women's category, the swimsuit inspired pieces remain popular, as confirmed by Picture Organic Clothing, whose "long-sleeve top with briefs bottom is highly appreciated by women", says Nicolas Guerard. Even closing systems differ from men to women, suggests Thomas at Owbow, as they noticed a rising interest for "half front zip rather than classic chest zip springsuit".

Summer does not equal small waves for everybody (at least, outside Europe) and WIP offers a unique Big Wave Short John silhouette: "Developed with the best big waves surfers, it can be used alone or under a wetsuit for real armor", explains Benjamin Tillier. The 1.5mm

"To further enhance the customer experience, we've recently digitalized the repair request process. Everything is now managed online for a more seamless journey, with improved tracking, full visibility, and free shipping both ways, regardless of warranty status or wetsuit brand." Bastien Grandy, Rip Curl

thick short john integrates a 3 layer padding for effective impact absorption, removable pads for customized protection and a 50N buoyancy (not a lifejacket though).

For fancy colors and graphics, you will have to look on the women's side, such as Rip Curl's springsuits, which "are aligned with the women apparel strong capsules artworks". C-Skins also "introduced a bit more personality", through sublimated tropical prints and brighter details in the thinner women's suits.

O'Neill is quite relieved to introduce new styles: "Having looked at the exact same inventory for such a long time, new colours were right at the top of our to-do list." Their women's Bahia and Epic series will feature multiple print options "that carry over to the new Hyperfreak Skins rashguard series too" adds Joe Turnbull.

The kids wetsuits also get the fun treatment on Alder Impact junior styles, which "offer fun colours and popping inks", as well as flashy contrast colour pop in the branding for Hurricane Surf, because in the kid's wetsuit, "it is all about the colour however and black just doesn't work here", assures Craig Butcher.

And for the forever kids out there, we suggest you have a look at the AI Forever models in Billabong's range, which backs up the huge success of the Andy Irons' tribute apparel line.

RUBBER CARE

Now a mandatory feature for many clients, the after-sale service happens to be a key factor to boost sales while improving the sustainability (yes, you can have both). Let's start with the repair programs as quite a few brands chose to outsource this task, like O'Neill, which supports multiple Area 52 approved repair centres across Europe, "to help reduce the distance a wetsuit would need to travel and the time it would take to be repaired". These facilities are kept stocked with their most common materials and fixtures. Oxbow partnered with the Tearing Waves repair workshop, allowing a 24 months warranty to its customers, while C-Skins operates with "one of the UK's most highly regarded wetsuit repair services (Bodyline), and our European distributors have their own centres".

For a seamless experience (no pun intended), Rip Curl recently digitalized the repair request process, "with improved tracking, full visibility, and free shipping both ways, regardless of warranty status or wetsuit brand", announces Bastien Grandy. Rip Curl relies on its main repair center in their Hossegor HQ, supported by two additional partner workshops in the UK and Portugal.

Oh, by the way, we shall not insist enough on cleaning your wetty for better durability, using for example the Nikwax Wetsuit Refresh cleaner, as it removes contaminants (salt, chlorine and organic residue), odours and keeps the material soft and supple.

And when the time has come to say goodbye to your trusty but wrecked wetsuit, recycling programs are on offer from almost all brands. O'Neill's wetsuit recycling is handled by Circular flow who turn wetsuits into changing mats. Likewise at Rip Curl, which turns reclaimed wetsuits into change mats made from Renoprene, a 100% recycled neoprene, produced in Europe. To encourage their customers, Rip Curl hands them with a 15% voucher toward the purchase of a new one.

There is no arguing the brands did a tremendous job to help retailers get through the overstock period, postponing their innovations until better days. And that day my man has come. Cheers. ☺

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

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 More proprietary technologies
- 2 Natural rubbers taking over
- 3 Thinner fullsuits
- 4 Long sleeve springsuit coming hot

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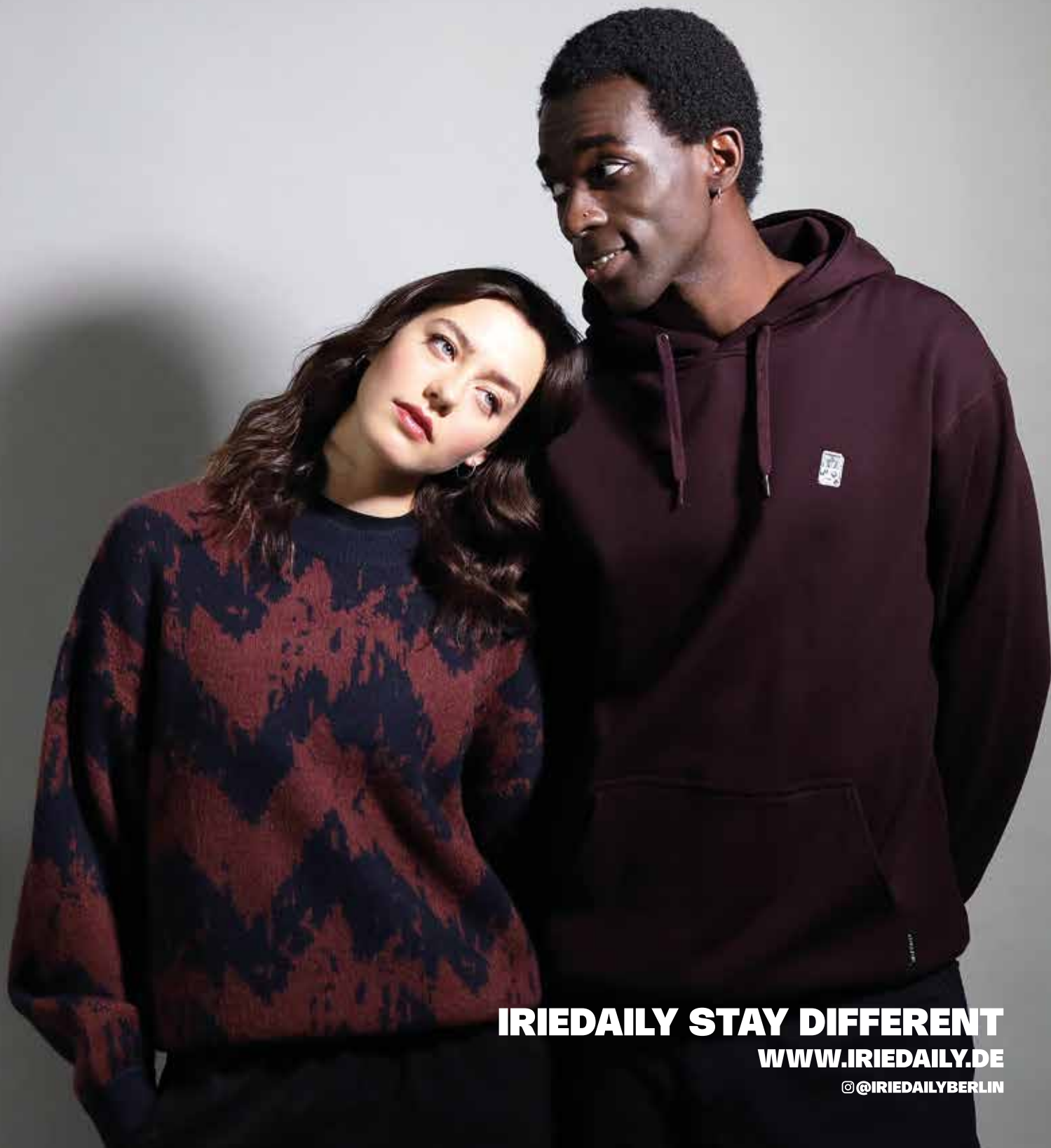
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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

MENS STREETWEAR SS26

Challenged by the fast fashion behemoths, the streetwear segment is engaged in an endless race to keep that edge on the mainstream labels. To achieve so, they can rely on their solid collabs portfolio, but also on their sustainability credits. Overview of the Spring-Summer 2026 Men's Streetwear trends by David Bianic.



"prices will remain stable", it won't be without any effort or concession from the brands. "Purchasing will also become more expensive for us, but consumers have less money to spend. We have therefore put a lot of energy into sourcing in order to become even more affordable", explains Homeboy.

To be more specific, Revolution says "t-shirts are still 40 euros, shirts are between 70-100 euros, knits 70-100 euros and outerwear between 180-250 euros".

SS26 THEMES & STORIES

How do the asphalt-born brands embrace the summer feeling? It is all about expressing the joy of long hot days without losing that bad boy vibe which makes streetwear labels unique.

Homeboy sums this up perfectly : "We blend two worlds together. On the one hand, our collection is tougher than ever, with dirty washes and bold designs. On the other hand, we mix cheerful colours, linen trousers and men's shirts with elegant embroidery in between. Our motto: Well dressed and still core." Same vibe with Iriedaily's SS26 collection, as their "popular colour-block designs now come in the new seasonal color theme "Dusty Pastels", says Denise Graff, Brand Marketing Manager. "These shades are soft and minimal but still pack a punch and bring authentic streetwear vibes." Colorful and dirty.

SS26 COLLABS

The skateboard culture has always infused streetwear with an (over) abundant use of collabs. And SS26 still is a name-dropping list. Homeboy teases a Sk8mafia collab, "then we want to release a capsule collection with our team rider Aimu Yamazuki, and the last one is still a secret". Hydroponic brings back the Peanut, the legendary Charles Schultz cartoon, with a collection of T-shirts, tank tops, summer shirts, caps, backpacks and socks, plus a few skate decks, skate completes and wheels. "The Collaboration will go on through FW26 with the addition of more clothing, especially the popular Hydroponic hoodies & crewnecks, plus winter apparel such as beanies and neckwarmers", adds Jordi Quinto. As per Iriedaily, they stay close to the art community and invited artists like Stohead, Look the Weird, and Moritz Adam to contribute to this collection. "Their visions come alive not only through exclusive t-shirt artworks but also in bold patterns that transform pieces like lightweight ripstop jackets, leggings, dresses, and shirts into real eye-catchers," details Denise.

FABRICS & SUSTAINABILITY

Those two go side by side nowadays, as material sourcing embodies most of the sustainable policy presented by streetwear brands. And greenwashing is not an option: brands are not throwing a few green gimmicks, accounting for a margin of their actual volumes. No. See how RVLTL reached its highest level of sustainability with their SS26 collection, i.e. almost 85% of the collection. "We consider a style to be sustainable when we use more than 50% of organic or recycled materials", explains Palle Bruun Rasmussen.

In addition to organic cotton, we also find techy fabrics like viscose (Lenzing Ecovero), lyocell (Tencel), and recycled materials in Iriedaily's range. While high grammage cotton gives t-shirts some structure, viscose has a flowy, lightweight feel which fits perfectly for summer shirts, as seen on Hydroponic x PEANUTS™ "Surf's Not Species" shirt, featuring all-over surfing and skating prints of Snoopy and friends. ☺

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

BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

You know you are doing good things when everyone is jumping aboard your train. And Streetwear is in a way a victim of its success these days says the Homeboy staff, as "in recent seasons the young target group could only find the 90's trend with baggy silhouettes at selected brands from the scene", whereas today the fast fashion retailers flood the market with their little money copycats. On the other hand, Hydroponic says they are forced to look for new customer targets, "with many action sports retailers closing down it's been a tough year for most skate and surf related brands, that may need to focus on a more general approach to the public". But in the meanwhile, the early millennium trend is still full of rage, and offers some déjà-vu feeling for some brands: "Fashion runs in cycles, and if you've been watching the streets over the past few years, you can feel we're right back in DC's early days. Our latest collection taps into that Y2K spirit, reimagined for the future of the brand." How does this translate in outfits? DC says we need to imagine "a bold denim lineup—both pants, jorts and shorts—alongside fresh outerwear like a standout bomber jacket".

The European brands may also benefit from an unexpected helping hand, says Jordi Quinto at Hydroponics as "U.S. brands become more expensive due to tariffs so European brands should gain market share". He hopes that consumer loyalty would shift toward European players "offering similar aesthetics without the price hikes". And the effects of Trump's Tariffs on business are very patent, noticed Palle Bruun Rasmussen, Partner and Design Director at Revolution (RVLTL). "We have seen a lot of suppliers who out of the blue have reached out to do business with us, I guess it's because they have lost business within the US so they try to look for more stable markets in the EU."

The tariffs topic leads us to pricepoints for Spring-Summer 2026: what should you expect on your order sheets? While the short answer is

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Y2K vibe still hot
- 2 Stable pricing
- 3 Vibrant yet "dirty" colors
- 4 Cotton/denim paired with synthetic fabrics

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE SKATE HELMETS 2025

The Skateboard protection market is experiencing a "strong recovery after the COVID hangover," according to Protec's Marketing Manager, Noah Todaro. We take a deeper look into all things helmet and skateboard protection for the 2025 Retail Buyers Guide. By David St Clair Morgan.



STORIES

Stories vary, but a consistency is that the focus remains on getting the younger generation to wear protection, as Dennis from BERN said: "Kids, kids, kids are the trend setters and elevation in technology that provides an awesome balance of Protection, comfort and Style." S1 will continue their focus on supporting their team as Dan said, "Our riders were represented on the biggest stage of skateboarding by some other skaters at the Olympics on both the men's and women's side, including Gavin Bottger, Naia Laso, Tate Carew and Minna Stess." Protec/Triple8 are putting a lot of focus on how their helmets fit, as Noah announced, "We launched two new market-leading models in 2024 with the Deep Cover from Triple 8 and the Low Pro from Protec. They both focus heavily on fit." For TSG, Marcel said, "A key highlight in 2025 is our focus on downhill skateboarding."

Helmets rarely change their shapes, as the classics remain the most practical and effective. That being said, the technology can evolve, and the protection capabilities can adapt. Protec, for example, sticks by "The same design that's been trending since 1973, the Protec Classic", as Noah from Protec said. Andy King, CEO at REKD Helmets, said, "There is a growing preference for protection that is slimline and discreet, allowing it to be worn comfortably under regular clothing, without compromising safety."

COLOURWAYS/GRAPHICS

Some things stay the same, but colourways and collabs are exciting and new. Triple8 will be "using some new pearlescent style paint on their new lids, whereas family brand Protec will have their big collab with Santa Cruz, as Noah said, "They're two iconic brands that have stood the test of time." Bern will be introducing "Graphics for kids like The 'Nino Shark Bite' or 'Nina Sea Shell' and bright colours like pink & orange for older kids", as Dennis said. S1 will be pushing their Christian Hosoi, Lance Mountain & Mina Stess collab helmets.

TECH

S1are using 'Fusion Foam' in all of their Lifers and RAD Sizing Liners, whereas REKD will continue with their "Energy Foam, which reduces up to 75% more impact energy compared to standard HD foam," as Andy explained. Triple8 said their main tech story is the "Hidden hinge system on the Deep Cover- a way to incorporate the ability for the shell to separate and retract to create the snug-fit feeling that it provides", as Noah said. Bern will use Rib Tech EPS liners, and their helmets "come in 3 different size moulds to provide skaters the ultimate balance of profile, weight and fit for every head size," as Dennis said.

It's an exciting year for skateboard helmets and protection, albeit a nervous one regarding Trump's tariffs and rising costs. The demand, however, continues to grow, so we look optimistically to the future. ☺

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Heavy-hitting Pro Helmets
- 2 Different-sized helmet moulds
- 3 Playful graphics for kids
- 4 Slim Fit, subtle padding
- 5 China-EU imports are not affected by Tariffs

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

GREAT OUTDOORS SS26

The outdoor industry enters 2026 with strong momentum and clear signals from consumers: they want versatile, sustainable, and beautifully designed products that support both serious adventures and everyday life. Retailers face both opportunities and challenges - global supply chain volatility, shifting tariffs, and evolving consumer expectations - but also a wealth of innovation from brands redefining what "outdoor" means. Ladies and gentlemen, let's dive into the S/S26 Great Outdoor Retail Buyer's Guide by Matthieu Perez.



WHAT'S HOT?

A clear shift in consumer behaviour is toward lightweight, modular equipment that maximises freedom and efficiency without sacrificing comfort. "Cooking and community," as Linnea Bronner, Primus' PR manager, explains, "are becoming central to the outdoor experience." Their solution - a compact, eco-conscious cooking ecosystem - underscores how social connection now plays as important a role as technical performance, blending practicality with shared experiences.

The very definition of "outdoor" has also expanded, stretching beyond forests and peaks into everyday environments. As Chi-Wang Cheung, Chief Marketing Officer at Helinox, points out, "The outdoors is no longer confined to trails—it now lives in the city as well." Rooftops, art studios, and patios have become as relevant as alpine campsites, and gear designed for these hybrid spaces allows retailers to tell stories that merge technical heritage with contemporary design culture, creating a seamless bridge between adventure and everyday life.

Safety, meanwhile, is taking a new place in the spotlight. Originally designed for mountaineers and forestry workers, Airmarker's visibility systems are now crossing into paddleboarding and kayaking. Their mission is simple: "Our focus is on making search and rescue faster and more effective," emphasizes Thomas Schmidt, Head of Sales International. With participation in water-based sports growing, equipment once considered niche is now essential, highlighting how innovation in safety technology is becoming mainstream.

Performance-driven lifestyles are also shaping the conversation. The playful energy of KAVU's Spring 2026 collection highlights how design can bridge utility and personality, while Duer reflects the needs of a customer who, as Emma Lloyd, European brand manager, puts it, "refuses to compromise between style and functionality." From bold retro fits to trousers that slip easily between urban streets and mountain trails, the trendline is clear: consumers demand gear that adapts to multiple contexts without losing its identity, blending performance, comfort, and aesthetic appeal in every detail.

"More people are investing in high-quality, multi-functional products that serve a range of outdoor activities." Charlotte Green, Red Equipment

Another defining theme is longevity. Consumers are investing in fewer, higher-quality items, a trend Red Equipment has captured across paddleboarding, recovery, and camping. Charlotte Green, head of marketing, hammered: "More people are investing in high-quality, multi-functional products that serve a range of outdoor activities." Similarly, Heimplanet's SS26 approach highlights how sustainable materials can enhance - not limit - performance. As Jonas Gritzmann, head of online marketing & E-commerce, explains, "Integrating recycled fabrics and low-impact materials lets us improve performance without compromise." In both cases, the drive is toward gear that lasts, evolves, and holds meaning over time, reflecting a deeper shift in consumer values toward sustainability and durability.

TARIFFS AIN'T STOP US!

The unpredictable trade environment continues to shape how brands and retailers operate. Some have turned challenges into opportunities by maintaining tighter control over production. Duer, for example, acknowledges tariff pressures but emphasises that owning their own factory provides unusual agility: "Having direct control over production means we can adapt costs without sacrificing quality," reinforces Lloyd, demonstrating how flexibility in manufacturing can transform potential obstacles into strategic advantages.

Others adopt a more global lens. Rab highlights the reality that volatility and uncertainty are the only constants. "We continuously monitor the global situation and adapt our processes accordingly to ensure we maintain



“Our challenge is to create product that lives up to consumer expectations, both functionally and sustainably” Milly Pestell, Xtratuf

a healthy business while supporting our retail partners in the best possible way,” says Jessica Burton, UK Marketing Manager. For retailers, the message is clear - brands that communicate openly and respond quickly to change are becoming invaluable allies in navigating ongoing market fluctuations, emphasising collaboration as the key to long-term resilience.

NAVIGATING CHALLENGES

The hurdles facing the outdoor industry are as varied as the opportunities. “Global disruptions, the implications of climate change, and changing consumer patterns are significantly impacting our retail partners,” observes Burton at Rab, and she argues that “success requires very close cooperation between all parties in the industry, and following our wholesale-led approach, we aim to work closely with our partners to best serve their needs.” Their stance reflects a broader truth: resilience will increasingly be built not in isolation, but through partnerships that share risk and responsibility, reinforcing the importance of trust and transparency.

Visibility is another challenge that cannot be ignored. Green at Red Equipment makes the case that “standing out in a competitive market requires storytelling, product excellence, and authenticity.” Their investment in in-store activations, retailer training, and merchandising reinforces how experience - rather than sheer volume - now drives differentiation, ensuring that brands can connect meaningfully with consumers.

Balancing consumer expectations adds yet another layer of complexity. As Milly Pestell, international marketing manager at Xtratuf, explains, “Our challenge is to create a product that lives up to consumer expectations, both functionally and sustainably.” Shoppers today demand high-performing products that are both durable and responsibly made, but also remain accessible in price. The brands capable of threading this needle will prove the most valuable partners for retailers, as they navigate the fine line between aspiration, practicality, and ethics.

PRODUCT IS KEY

If trends and challenges provide the framework, it is the products themselves that bring the industry’s evolution to life. What unites the new season’s highlights is a focus on clear purpose and authentic storytelling. In the ritual-driven world of daily adventure, No Normal CEO and Co-Founder Philippe Greinacher adds character by anchoring gear around

“It depends on the adventure, but must-haves are always a good knife, matches, toilet paper, snacks and coffee” Philippe Greinacher, No Normal

coffee: “It depends on the adventure, but must-haves are always a good knife, matches, toilet paper, snacks, and coffee.” Blending utility with humour in a way that resonates emotionally as much as it does practically, this approach highlights how everyday rituals can define the adventure experience.

Helinox continues refining its icons, particularly the Chair One, complemented by lightweight tables and cots that transform campsites, rooftops, and studios into comfortable living spaces. As Cheung notes, “Our customer today is curious, design-aware, and open-minded. They’re not defined solely by outdoor expertise, but by a desire for objects that support movement, creativity, and a life in motion,” illustrating how versatility and aesthetics drive consumer choice.

The vibrant personality of KAVU shines through in fits updated for Spring 2026. Shirts, shorts, sun-layers, and colour-blocked pieces carry their retro-inspired aesthetic, reflecting their mantra that “every day can be a KAVU day,” and celebrating the joy and playfulness of the outdoors in everyday life.

Duer strengthens its foothold in the lifestyle performance category, positioning trousers in slim, tapered, and relaxed silhouettes across outdoor, action sports, and urban wardrobes. The emphasis on “everyday adventure wear” has become a cornerstone for consumers seeking one pair of pants that does it all, reflecting the merging of fashion, comfort, and functionality.

Durability and adaptability remain central in Red Equipment’s portfolio, where paddleboards and recovery tools are designed with an investment mindset. Green states: “Consumers want gear that works hard and lasts, rather than buying multiple products for single-use occasions,” reinforcing the notion that consumers increasingly value quality over quantity.

Shelters take on a new dimension in Heimplanet’s SS26 lineup, where refinement meets responsibility. “For this season we’re upgrading and refining our existing lineup while introducing fresh details,” explains Co-Founder Stefan Clauss, with recycled fabrics, C0 DWR finishes, and other low-impact materials driving a holistic sustainability strategy. This combination of aesthetics, performance, and eco-conscious materials highlights how thoughtful design can align with environmental responsibility.

Functionality is the defining trait of Xtratuf’s footwear and gear. Built for people facing harsh environments daily, their commitment remains unchanged. Pestell claims, “We will never compromise on product functionality, quality, or our brand’s authenticity and heritage.” This clarity of purpose underlines why durability remains one of the sector’s most powerful value propositions, ensuring that consumers can trust their gear in any environment.

Nikwax closes the loop with innovation in aftercare. Their PFAS-free Direct.Dry technology offers a new generation of sustainable repellents, reinforcing the idea that stewardship matters as much as newness. As Zoe Hewitt, Head of Marketing, puts it, “All Nikwax aftercare products are easy to use, safe for you and the environment, and will ensure you stay dry and comfortable whatever the weather.” By extending the life of existing gear, they give consumers both performance and responsibility in one package, completing the cycle of sustainable outdoor innovation.

The Great Outdoors 2026 is defined by versatility, longevity, and lifestyle crossover. Consumers expect products that combine functionality with authentic storytelling, sustainability, and style. For retailers, this means curating collections that deliver multi-functional gear, eco-conscious practices, and narratives that resonate both practically and emotionally.

As we move into 2026, the outdoor industry sits at the intersection of tradition and innovation. Retail success will come from balancing technical performance with lifestyle appeal, offering products that perform in the wild but fit seamlessly into everyday life. The outdoors is no longer just a destination- it is a lifestyle, a community, and a movement. Have a good end of the summer, and let’s go outside, people!🌲

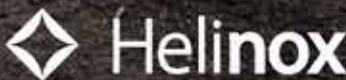
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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Versatility
- 2 Lifestyle
- 3 Performance
- 4 Storytelling



At home, anywhere



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

WOMENS SWIMWEAR SS26

Women’s swimwear continues to be a standout growth category within the board sports market. With more women in the water, and brands meeting their values with their designs, the sell-through potential is high. By Rocio Enriquez.



The overall women’s swimwear market is strong and consistently expanding. In the board sports industry, this category leads the growth charts within the larger apparel ecosystem. With strong margins and broad marketing potential, women’s swimwear plays a crucial role in keeping brands relevant. This is a product that meets all the important consumer demands at once. The post-pandemic mentality has driven more women to the ocean seeking fitness, freedom and a deeper connection to nature. There is also growing awareness around the environment, body inclusivity, and functionality. New highly technical and sustainable fabrics with mindful designs are ticking these boxes. Social media influencers spread the news of these innovations quickly and authentically. Current trends reflect these values. It is hard to find a piece that is not made with some kind of recycled or eco-friendly fabric. Functionality and versatility lead design purpose. Some pieces can equally be used in the gym or in the water. Some bathing suits become a bodysuit when the sun sets. Constructions account for body inclusivity with flattering designs, internal support, and extended size ranges. On top of these “must-have” features, ladies are leaning towards statement looks. Bold prints, textured fabrics, and a retro surf culture inspiration dominate the aesthetics. The one-piece is the most popular shape, offering flattering sculpting capabilities and a fusion of fashion and comfort. Triangle tops remain key, particularly adjustable ones. There is a preference for cheeky bottoms and high leg cuts. Mix-and-match offerings are well rewarded due to their personalisation options.

“We embrace the retro waves with an 80’s inspired surf collection with strong graphics and a bold colour palette” Charlotte Lefrançois, Rip Curl

LOOKS
SS26 collections are driven by emotional storytelling. Three main colour and print trends stand out: a celebration of nature and coastal living, nostalgia for past decades, and a youthful energy boost. Earthy, organic colours dominate the colour palettes. They reflect the natural elements of the beach, imbuing the collections with a sense of calm and connection to nature. Oxbow uses brown and earthy red. Rhythm’s rich browns are the foundational element in every collection. Lightning Bolt works with mineral greens, warm sand beiges, and terracotta hues. Barts evokes the natural elements with prints like foliage, earthy geometrics, minimalist florals, soft animal prints, swirls, and stripes. Protest also uses prints like flowing waves, and coastal natural motifs. The glowing summer sunset light is reflected with colours like gold, warm orange, or peachy pink. There is a strong presence of retro colour and print stories that celebrate the beach life heritage. Faded stripes, vintage-inspired graphics, and washed tones nod to the surf culture of the 90s and early 00s. “We embrace the

retro waves with an 80s inspired surf collection with strong graphics and a bold colour palette”, says Charlotte Lefrançois from Rip Curl. Youthful energy is injected through the strategic use of bright tones. They are often combined with neutrals or dark tones, an aesthetic that appeals particularly to younger women. Barts features the Camelia, an eye-catching colour inspired by digital brights. “Our timeless and sophisticated dark tones are paired with vibrant blue-lilac and a spark of peachy pink”, says Marketing Manager Kenny Janmaat. Oxbow goes bright with a strong flower overall print with a cool gradient effect. Billabong offers hand-drawn tropical florals, Mediterranean prints, and bold placement prints with vibrant hues of pink and aqua green. Across all aesthetics, one feature remains key: mix-and-match coordination. It increases value for money and personalisation, especially if the tonal consistency is kept across swimwear, beachwear, and accessories. Barts, Protest, and Rip Curl embrace this strategy.

SHAPES
Swimwear design is mainly focused on sculpting and shaping pieces. They enhance the feminine figure while offering support, contributing to body confidence. This could explain the ongoing increasing popularity of the one piece, the silhouette that best meets this purpose. Swimsuits blend function and fashion in a versatile range from sexy to sporty, catering to different customer needs. Billabong, Lightning Bolt, Barts, and Protest position the one-piece as a hero item. Barts has added a sexier version of their popular Plunge shaping one piece, with high legs and cheeky bum. Oxbow expands the concept. “We introduce a new onesie style with a full long sleeve for sun protection, but with a trendy shape”, announces Product Manager Thomas Chastol. Retro influences remain strong. Many designs aimed for nostalgic appeal offer sculpting benefits too. Billabong, Barts, and Protest channel this vintage charm. “Sharp curves and high-leg silhouettes elongate the body and add a daring, sexy edge”, says Billabong’s Design Manager, Isabelle Weppe. “We added a sexy, cheeky high-waist piece that covers the belly area but emphasises on bum and leg”, explains Kenny Janmaat. Practical silhouettes remain prominent in collections thought for active use and all-day wear. Women who surf, swim, or train outdoors demand designs that move with them. High support, freedom of movement and comfort are essential. Lightning Bolt, Protest, Oxbow, and Barts offer many options in this space. “Our designs ensure secure support, combining true freedom of movement with elegant confidence”, says Lightning Bolt’s Brand Manager, Brianna Moore. Mix-and-match modularity helps customise the fit as well as the look, ensuring the right support and coverage for each part of the body. Protest and Lightning Bolt highlight this feature. “Whether you prioritise comfort, elegant details, or supportive halter styles, we have options for everyone”, says Cassandra Panayotopoulos from Protest.

MATERIALS
Regenerated polyamides and polyesters are now the industry standard. Durability bridges the demand for sustainability and

“Whether you prioritise comfort, elegant details, or supportive halter styles, we have options for everyone” Cassandra Panayotopoulos, Protest

performance. Consumers expect swimwear that lasts, performs under pressure, and resists wear from salt, sun, and chlorine. Technical resilience cannot compromise comfort, though. Pieces that do not dig, dry quickly, and stay where they belong allow for carefree, all-day activity. Soft and natural feeling fabrics make the experience far more pleasurable. Fabric looks are then elevated through texture. “From wavy effect and crochet-inspired details to striped sun faded hues and mini waves checks, every piece is crafted to bring depth and dimension to your beach look”, says Isabelle Weppe.

SUSTAINABILITY
Sustainability now extends well beyond recycled fabrics. Brands are embracing end-to-end strategies that address product design, production methods, supply chain ethics, and packaging. Lightning Bolt integrates sustainability into every stage. “Local production in Portugal, European-sourced recycled and organic materials, small-batch collections to avoid over production, and designs built for timeless wear”, says Brianna Moore. Reducing transport emissions



while improving oversight of labour conditions is important for Oxbow too. They produce in Tunisia and focus on localised sourcing. “Being a BCorp company, we are heavily involved in increasing the sustainability of our products”, says Thomas Chastol. Barts emphasises supplier accountability and ethical standards. They prioritise partners who align with their values of fair working conditions and environmental impact reduction.

RETAILER SUPPORT
Next summer’s marketing stories will be themed around nature, beach life, nostalgia for good old days, and youthful energy. The synergy of diverse support platforms carries the message to the consumer in a consistent and timely manner. POS materials play a big role. All participating brands offer some sort of display and visual assets. Lightning Bolt curates their visual assets for their placement and provides merchandising guides for their POS kits. The packaging contributes to reinforcing the message, particularly the sustainability one. Oxbow delivers their swimwear in an innovative, reusable pouch made with recycled fabrics. Brick and mortar efforts are backed by awareness in the digital world. Social media activation amplifies the marketing stories. In addition to these proven retail support methods, each brand sprinkles in their own ideas of support. Rhythm activates gift-for-purchase programmes and invests in pop-ups to push the brand’s awareness. Barts coordinates their swimwear and accessories lines thoughtfully, so they complement each other, boosting sales of both. They also offer flexible re-ordering options throughout the season, with quick delivery from their in-house warehouse. Protest offers their retailers customised marketing activities.

SS26 collections reflect a powerful convergence of functionality, sustainability, and style. The category continues to grow, driven by an increasingly active and values-conscious consumer. Women’s swimwear is a product that inspires as much as it performs, a winning combination for healthy sales. ☺

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

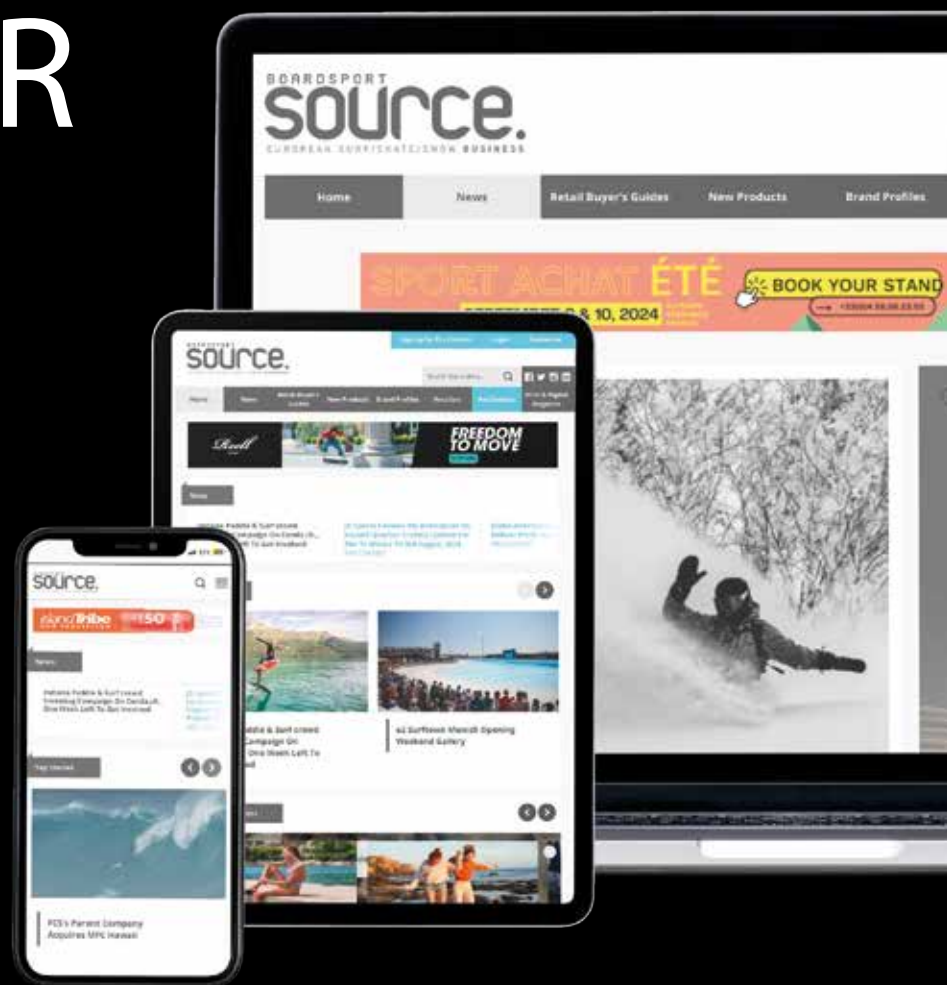
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- HIGHLIGHTS**
- 1 Beach nature inspired colour palettes
 - 2 One piece continues to dominate
 - 3 Regenerated fabrics elevated with textures
 - 4 Comprehensive retail activation

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RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE BACKPACKS SS26

The lifestyle backpack category is more dynamic than ever, shaped by hybrid lifestyles, urban exploration, and the desire for versatile, functional gear. From technical performance to emotional storytelling, backpacks today must do more than carry - they must inspire. In a market where consumers seek both style and substance, brands must respond with thoughtful design, technical reliability, and stories that resonate. Ladies and gentlemen, let's dive into SS26 Lifestyle Backpack Retail Buyer's Guide by **Matthieu Perez**.



WHAT NEXT

The strongest direction shaping backpacks today is versatility. As Topo Designs' Alizée Berg, European Brand Manager, explains, "The influence of outdoor gear is increasingly present, particularly through the use of technical materials, weather-resistant fabrics, and performance-driven details, making these bags not only stylish but also highly functional." Clean, minimalist aesthetics, multifunctional compartments, and opportunities for customisation are increasingly in demand, reflecting consumers' desire for products that move seamlessly between work, school, and leisure contexts.

This push for adaptability is echoed by Nitro, where Philip Haendeler, head of sales & product management, observes that consumers expect a single product to keep up with ever-shifting schedules, "Lifestyle backpacks have become essential gear for navigating the new hybrid reality. People expect one backpack to do it all: commute, work, school, and whatever comes after - from gym sessions to weekend travel." Nitro's designs embody this philosophy, blending durability, performance, and everyday style to create truly multi-functional backpacks.

At the same time, the emotional pull of the outdoors continues to influence consumer behavior. Charlie Green, Head of Marketing at Red Equipment, highlights the growing desire to unplug and reconnect with nature: "There's a growing desire from consumers to slow down, disconnect from the digital world and connect with nature. The shoreline is becoming a key destination for restoration, adventure, and connection." Backpacks in SS26 increasingly need to bridge the urban and outdoor worlds, encouraging exploration without compromising comfort or functionality.

"The brand is colourful, joyful, purpose-driven, and welcoming to all. For this reason, we're seeing customers seek out Cotopaxi products to stand out from the crowd and showcase backpacks that are as unique as they are" **Caroline Nieuwenhuis, Cotopaxi**

Alongside versatility and adventure, sustainability has become non-negotiable. Jessica Burton, Rab's UK marketing manager, emphasises, "We're pleased to see an increasing emphasis on sustainability topics. The demand for versatile technical outdoor gear continues to grow, and we can respond with a strong technical range of performance products." Across the market, technical performance, durability, and sustainability are now baseline expectations rather than optional extras.

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

Brand identity plays a critical role in consumer decision-making, with storytelling often as influential as product features. Cotopaxi exemplifies this approach, Caroline Nieuwenhuis, Marketing Executive, explains, "From day one, Cotopaxi set out to build a brand for people who didn't see themselves in the traditional outdoor narrative. The brand is colourful, joyful, purpose-driven, and welcoming to all. For this reason, we're seeing customers seek out Cotopaxi products to stand out from the crowd and showcase backpacks that are as unique as they are."



For design-conscious consumers, Herschel offers a combination of fashion and function. Adam Mansell, VP International, illustrates, “Our vision is to be the most loved brand in a world that never stands still. For our core range, we updated features and benefits to make it more relevant – things like adding water bottle pockets or fleece-lined laptop sleeves. With the rise of hybrid working, this has become increasingly more important.” Herschel’s approach ensures that products remain culturally relevant while practical for everyday use, offering hybrid-ready solutions for commuting, working, and leisure.

Trust and security are central to Pacsafe, where Maria Schmieder, Marketing Coordinator, highlights the brand’s unique positioning, “Pacsafe’s vision is to empower people to explore the world safely. Our lifestyle backpacks embody that by offering cutting-edge anti-theft features, smart organisation, and sustainable innovation – all wrapped in a design that fits both urban and travel contexts.” For urban commuters, digital nomads, and adventure-seeking travelers, Pacsafe backpacks provide peace of mind without compromising style or versatility.

“We offer a diverse range of lifestyle products where fashion meets function. Every design serves a clear purpose, tailored to the needs of today’s modern consumer.” Adam Mansell, Herschel

TARIFFS AND MARKET CHALLENGES

Despite innovation and strong consumer demand, external challenges such as tariffs and logistics continue to affect how brands bring products to market. Smaller independents, like Heimplanet, feel these pressures acutely, Stefan Clauss points out, “Tariffs and changing customs policies create uncertainty in planning, especially for smaller, independent brands like ours. We’ve had to rethink parts of our sourcing and logistics strategy. Despite the challenges, Heimplanet is doubling down on the US customer base, offering domestic shipping for the first time and an improved customer experience with faster delivery and clear pricing.”

For retailers, this underscores the importance of working with brands capable of navigating such challenges while delivering reliable supply and consistent consumer appeal. Community-driven labels like Cotopaxi leverage loyal followings to weather external pressures, while larger players like Herschel, Nitro, and Pacsafe provide the reassurance of scale, innovation, and category leadership. In times of uncertainty, having a mix of reliable, high-performing brands alongside niche innovators ensures a robust retail offering.

CHANGE IS THE ONLY CONSTANT

The backpack’s role has expanded dramatically over the last decade, reflecting shifts in work, travel, and leisure. Haendeler from Nitro observes,

“Pacsafe’s vision is to empower people to explore the world safely. Our lifestyle backpacks embody that by offering cutting-edge anti-theft features, smart organisation, and sustainable innovation” Maria Schmieder, Pacsafe

“We’re seeing that the lines between school, leisure, and travel are continuing to blur – especially for Gen Z and younger Millennials. Backpacks today have to perform across different situations: carrying a laptop to school or university, packing gym gear, heading out for the weekend, or traveling. That means durability, organization, and comfort are non-negotiable, but design and style are just as important.”

For Pacsafe, this evolution aligns perfectly with its DNA. Schmieder notes, “We see lifestyle backpacks becoming versatile companions that support commuting, remote work, and spontaneous travel. People are looking for bags that are sleek enough for the office, functional enough for day trips, and safe enough for city streets or international airports. The backpack has evolved into a multi-purpose tool that bridges personal and professional life – and that’s exactly where Pacsafe’s DNA lies.”

The same hybrid demand drives established lifestyle names like Herschel. Mansell explains, “We offer a diverse range of lifestyle products where fashion meets function. Every design serves a clear purpose, tailored to the needs of today’s modern consumer. This commitment extends to our outdoor line, where every detail is carefully considered to ensure peak performance without compromising on style.”

Across the industry, creativity and practicality must go hand in hand. Berg from Topo Designs observes, “Backpacks need to be increasingly durable and functional, our everyday ally, not just in terms of style, but above all in terms of practicality.” This evolution highlights the shift from a single-use item to a product indispensable across multiple aspects of daily life.

NEW MEANS NEW

Looking toward SS26 launches, innovation is being driven by both material breakthroughs and cultural shifts. For Herschel, new audiences are at the forefront. Mansell reveals, “SS26 sees us introduce our Cloudform collection – our softest carry yet. It’s a lightweight, puffy, everyday bag. The duffle is a real highlight, with a laptop sleeve, luggage trolley sleeve, and multiple storage options. We introduced the Cloudform range after seeing a gap in our line for a truly women’s focused collection, inspired by lightweight silhouettes trending among Gen Z.”

Nitro continues to reflect a commitment to both performance and responsibility. Haendeler explains, “In our SS26 lifestyle line, all products are bluesign® approved, meet the OEKO-TEX® Standard 100, and are equipped with YKK® zippers. Around 80% of the line is made from certified recycled fabrics. With the introduction of our new 1000D fabric, we’ve taken a big step forward in durability and long-term performance – because we believe that real sustainability starts with products that are built to last.”

Pacsafe differentiates itself through security-driven design, ensuring urban and outdoor versatility. Schmieder highlights, “Our key differentiator is security – Pacsafe backpacks are engineered with patented anti-theft technologies like lockable zippers, cut-resistant materials, and RFID-blocking pockets. We design for everyday urban use while ensuring robustness and comfort for outdoor functionality. Lightweight, sustainable materials, ergonomic support, and flexible storage systems ensure our bags perform wherever life takes you.”

Other players are also shaping the innovation landscape. Heimplanet integrates recycled materials and eco-friendly finishes, Cotopaxi continues to celebrate bold, outsider storytelling, and Red Equipment broadens its outdoor-ready range into wild swimming, hiking, and beach camping. Together, these launches illustrate that the backpack category is rich with creativity, meeting the needs of both performance-driven adventurers and style-conscious urbanites.

In SS26, backpacks go beyond simple utility - they’re gateways to exploration, discovery, and everyday adventure. With the right combination of performance, style, and reliability, they meet the needs of every type of modern consumer. Retailers have the opportunity to offer products that inspire people to move, roam, and experience the world beyond the screen. Gear up, get out, and breeze! ☺

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

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Versatility
- 2 Sustainability
- 3 Performance
- 4 Storytelling



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

MENS SURF APPAREL SS26

In a clothing industry plagued with fast-fashion juggernauts, the surf apparel category can hold its head high, thanks to a fine combination of heritage, durability and vista. The appeal remains strong in SS26 for both the core and mainstream customer bases. By **David Bianic**



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Unlike many other product segments featured, surf apparel does not comprehend a single product category. Unlike wetsuits, surfboards or swimwear, surf apparel covers a wide range of clothing: the plain tee-shirt, pants, sweaters, jackets, walkshorts, etc.

So, arguing that surf apparel is doing good or bad, is just reading the bottom-line, all things included. We took a slightly different approach this year, asking the brands which pieces/styles did well in Spring-Summer 25. And the results are very telling.

"Contemporary beach lifestyle apparel performed well, particularly heritage-inspired and premium casualwear pieces", reveals Brianna Moore, Brand Manager for Lightning Bolt, while "overly technical surf-specific apparel experienced a decline in interest". At Oxbow, t-shirts remain a flagship category, signing excellent results, but in the meanwhile, fleeces and jackets experienced significant growth, says Manon Jouanine, Men's Lifestyle Head of Product, while "we saw slightly weaker sales in shorts and short-sleeved shirts". A weather-induced pattern, due to poor conditions, according to Manon.

Rusty confirms the trend for baggy jeans and tees is still well alive, as well as Billabong, which "gained additional sales from the longer/baggier trend on our apparel that fits more in urban environments", reports Alex Berthonneau, Head of Merchandising.

For the brands, those insights on 2025 obviously come way too late to feed the 2026 collection guidelines. So they rely on market analysis, trend reports and... a fair bit of intuition. While weather is unpredictable, Oxbow tried to tackle that issue for SS26 with an increased number of new mid-season products. "These are designed to bridge the gap

"Contemporary beach lifestyle apparel performed well, particularly heritage-inspired and premium casualwear pieces." Brianna Moore, Lightning Bolt

between winter and summer seasons, allowing retailers to introduce the summer collection earlier in the season", explains Manon.

On the other hand, the carry-over policy which has been implemented since that Covid thing morphed from a defense strategy to establishing staple collections. Rhythm aptly named it the Classics collection, "composed of pieces that never go out of style", says Pablo Garay, European Marketing Coordinator, as "these pieces are in our collection from year to year and they always perform".

Interesting move from Rusty as they opted for few carry overs in favor of a majority of fresh SKUs, yet reducing the SS26 collection "to Best Sellers only as retailers have the opportunity of getting fresh 'injection orders' at least 4 times a year outside of the pre-order seasons", explains Craig Butcher, European Sales and Marketing.

It is also worth noting that globalisation does not equal uniformity. In a powerhouse like Billabong, Alex Berthonneau insists on mentioning "the line is now almost exclusively designed in France to suit the needs of the European market".

SS26 STYLES: A HEFTY HERITAGE

While the surf industry cannot rest on its laurels forever, banking on its glorious past still proves to be a crowd favorite among consumers. Interestingly, the heritage style isn’t appealing to male surfers only, quite the opposite actually, says Pierre-Alexandre Merlet, Men Division Product Manager for Rip Curl: “This trend remains important, especially for reaching a younger audience. It is expected to continue next season, with increasingly looser fits, reminiscent of what we saw in the 2000’s.” Oxbow made it quite explicit, naming one of their key marketing stories ‘Future Memories’ which specifically highlights the design trends of the 90’s and 2000’s. Again, while this is “a journey back in time where we revisit historical pieces”, it is embodied by younger, progressive surfers like Maud LeCar and Miguel Blanco, tying both generations.

As Alex at Billabong aptly reminds us, “depending on the consumer profiles, different eras apply”. Curating their 50yrs legacy, they have many heritage eras to offer and for SS26, Alex highlights Billabong’s 80’s re-issue inspired collection, named “Since 73”, with a strong Australian heritage, which “has been collecting a lot of prebookings this season”.

For a brand like Lost, heritage isn’t found in the soul surfing of the 70’s but rather in a noisier era: “We’re using elements from Lost’s past with a modern, surf-punk feel, raw, not nostalgic”, says Jonathan Gilbert, CEO Europe. On a different note, TCSS digs into an era they never actually experienced (founded in 2009) after they “dipped their toe” into the early 00’s: “In all honesty, it sits a little outside of our wheelhouse. We look towards the 50’s through to 80’s as our key surf reference period”, says Sam Coombes, Founder & Head of Creative at The Critical Slide Society.

SS26 FABRICS: COMFY WITH ETHICS

If heritage styles tell where you come from, the materials shed a light on which future you want for your brand. And yes, fabrics have a lot to tell us. Maybe the more accurate way to describe the trend is found at Lightning Bolt, where the focus is on “conscious comfort”: European-sourced organic cotton, refined hemp blends, and recycled fibers for technical support. In addition to organic cotton, recycled cotton or Repreve (recycled polyester), Oxbow can’t praise enough their use of linen, as seen on their Dart shirt: “[It] is a highly sustainable fiber; it’s derived from the flax plant, which requires significantly less water and fewer pesticides than cotton. It’s also a strong and durable fiber, and biodegradable”, details Manon Jouanine.

Even the common tee-shirt isn’t what it used to be, as the grammage has beefed up for a few years now. The message being: the higher the grammage, the more quality, even though some tees might be “too warm” for the heatwaves we experienced during summertime. “The lowest 100% cotton tee shirt grammage will be 160gsm with the majority being at 220gsm”, tells Craig from Rusty, which also separates “the brand from many competitors by keeping the product on the consumers body for longer, and away from waste dumps”, may he add. Their Dead ringer short sleeve tee, featuring bold black sleeve and neck cuffs with matching chest print sits right there in this trend. Smart move from TCSS as they brought in a raw 150gsm ‘tropical weight’ jersey into their tee Spring offering, whilst the heavier 230gsm options remain available.

“We gained additional sales from the longer/ baggier trend on our apparel that fits more in urban environments” Alex Berthonneau, Billabong

SS26 COLORS & PRINTS : THE ART OF UNDERSTATEMENT

Heritage with a contemporary twist is the vibe again for Spring-Summer 2026. Silhouettes and cuts take direct inspiration from the 90’s and early 2000’s styles, yet they did not “paint it bold” as was apparel back in those days. Quite the contrary actually.

Let’s start with the color palette. “Sun-washed and mineral: faded brights, coastal greens, warm terracottas, and classic neutrals”, it is at Lightning Bolt, or “lots of pastels, various shades of blues, greens, and dusty roses, combined with earthy browns to reinforce the theme”, in Oxbow’s ‘Lost Places’ story. At Protest, the colorway designations are ‘velvet for the ear’: Dark Teal, Tourmaline Blue, Golden Yellow, Plum Mauve, Bali Blue, Thyme Green, Fern Green, Clorofix Lime, Cali Blue, Night Sky Navy, Burnt Peach, Hazelnut Brown, Amber Brown, Bamboo Beige... All these shades are exploring the Midsommar Myth: “Imagine coastal vibes mixed with old-school folklore”.

Prints are even more low-key with vintage stripes, subtle tropicals, and beach-inspired textures (Lightning Bolt), vintage wallpaper and geometric patterns (Oxbow), patterns that mimic waves, sand, and leaves (Protest)

“We brought in a raw 150gsm ‘tropical weight’ jersey into our Spring offering.”
Sam Coombes, The Critical Slide Society



or “xerox style sketchy patterns and subtle non camo looking camos that we are bullish on”, teases Cory Higgins, Co-Founder of Jetty.

If all of this is too subtle for your liking, look over Lost’s collection, where “graphics are raw, surf-art inspired”. Sure enough, the classic Mayhem logo will find some unexpected traction among Lady Gaga’s fans, since the singer “forged” the graphics for her latest album cover!

RETAILERS CARE

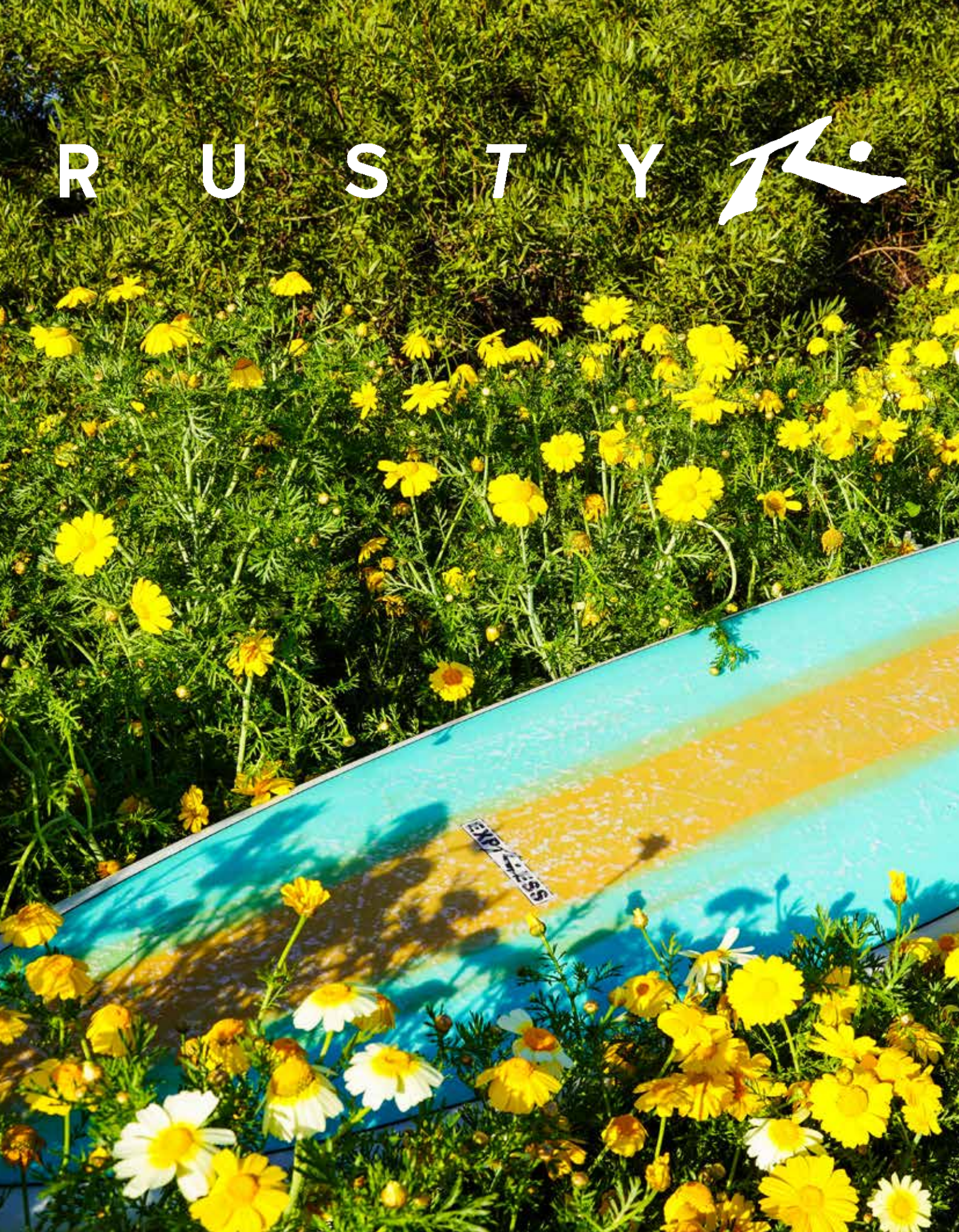
“OK, those fine garments of yours are great, dear surf brands. But what makes my brick & mortar shop more attractive than your e-shop?” As always brands keep a few tricks up their sleeve to enhance the in-store customer experience. It starts with the usual: “Storytelling-rich POS materials, curated seasonal lookbooks, versatile digital assets for in-store and online use, and flexible merchandising strategies”, details Brianna at Lightning Bolt. Oxbow also provides education tools for the retail staff like their Tradebook, “that outlines the season’s marketing stories and product stories”, through “in-depth product descriptions, imagery, and fit guides, enabling sales staff to confidently present our products to customers”, says Manon. To make the retailers feel even more special, Jetty reserves retailer exclusive colors and styles, in store events, “and finally a few custom fixture displays hitting the market”. Let’s not forget the incentives for customer loyalty, like Rhythm gifts for purchases.

As per the Trump Tariffs threat hanging over our heads, most (non US-based) brands minimise the direct impact on our industry, “however we recognise that changes in trade policies can have ripple effects across the global market, potentially influencing consumer confidence and overall economic conditions in Europe”, adds Manon from Oxbow.©

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 More ‘casual’, less ‘surf’ specific
- 2 Baggier tees & pants
- 3 Toned down palettes
- 4 Kids dig the throwback styles



Trust The Bum[®]

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OCEAN & EARTH

Ocean & Earth, the iconic surf brand born in 1979 on Australia's east coast, is known for its reliable, high-quality gear. From leashes to softboards, they've grown into a global name while staying true to their surfing roots

What inspired the founding of Ocean & Earth, and how has the brand evolved?

Ocean & Earth was born in 1979 on Australia's east coast from a pure love of surfing and the ocean lifestyle. Founded by friends deeply connected to the waves, the mission was simple: create high-quality, functional gear surfers could trust in any condition. In the early days, it was gear by surfers, for surfers — focused on durability, performance, and innovation. Over the decades, we've grown from a small local operation into a globally recognised brand. While our range now includes apparel, accessories, and technical gear, our core values remain: performance driven design, premium materials, and deep respect for the ocean. We continue to innovate from the world's strongest leash to eco-conscious lines, while staying true to our roots.

How do you stay connected with core surfers while also appealing to beginners and the broader surf lifestyle market?

We stay connected to core surfers by keeping performance and authenticity at the heart of what we do. Our products are tested and refined with help from experienced surfers and team riders to ensure top-level performance. At the same time, we create gear that's accessible to beginners and surf lifestyle fans, focusing on easy-to-use products, education, and styles that carry the surf spirit beyond the beach. By blending technical credibility with inclusive design, we ensure pros trust our equipment and newcomers feel welcome.

What are Ocean & Earth's key brand values?
Performance & Innovation — built for the toughest conditions with cutting-edge materials;



Authenticity — gear by surfers, for surfers;
Quality & Durability — products that last session after session;

Respect for the Ocean — reducing our footprint and supporting sustainability;
Community & Connection — supporting the surf community worldwide, from grassroots to pro level.

How has Ocean & Earth contributed to the surfing community?

We've always believed the surf community is the heart of the sport. From day one, we've supported grassroots events, local clubs, and junior competitions. We sponsor surf championships at all levels, work closely with team riders, and support surf shops and schools with reliable gear. Beyond competition, we back initiatives for ocean safety, environmental awareness, and coastal conservation. Our role goes beyond making gear — it's about nurturing talent, protecting our playground, and keeping the stoke alive.

Can you explain the materials and construction process in your soft top surfboards?

Our soft tops are designed for safety, durability, and performance. They feature a water-resistant EPS foam core for buoyancy, laminated wooden or composite stringers for strength, a soft EVA foam deck for grip and comfort, a slick HDPE bottom for speed, and heat-laminated rails for water resistance and durability. This makes them tough enough for daily school use, yet responsive for fun in varied conditions.

Who do you see as the target audience for your soft top surfboards?

They're made for a wide spectrum of surfers:

- Beginners & Surf Schools — safe, forgiving, and confidence-building.
- Families & Casual Surfers — perfect for shared, worry-free sessions.
- Intermediate Surfers — ideal for catching waves on smaller days.
- Experienced Surfers — increasingly enjoying performance softboards, especially



shortboards in summer; we've created models with refined shapes and fin setups for real performance with softboard forgiveness.

- Rentals — durable and low-maintenance.

Are there any upcoming innovations or changes to your softboard products that you're excited about?

Absolutely — we're constantly refining our range to balance fun, safety, and performance. Our development team always works on performance shapes, enhanced construction, eco-conscious materials, upgraded fin systems, and fresh designs. The future of softboards is bridging entry-level safety with high-performance surfing. Some innovations will be revealed over coming seasons — but for now, a few surprises remain.

What's new in your softboard range for next season?

Some exciting updates are already in the works with innovations pushing our softboards further than ever, from rail design to overall feel. Every detail is being refined to deliver boards that are both fun and capable. For now, it's too early to reveal more, but our partners will be the first to see, touch, and test what's coming. The future of softboard surfing will be even more exciting than you imagine. ☺

BOSINY

BOSINY

Bosiny Surf is a surfboard company focused on sustainable design and material innovation. By combining engineering expertise with environmentally conscious practices, the brand aims to offer performance-driven boards that meet the demands of modern surfers.

Can you give us a brief history of Bosiny Surf?

Bosiny was actually founded on a trip to the bins! My business partner John had snapped yet another brand-new shortboard at our favourite beach break. That's when the idea really took hold: there must be a construction that's durable, lightweight, flexible — and doesn't cost the Earth. (Pun intended.)

Drawing on a background of material science, engineering, and craftsmanship, we set out to find a better way. Our first construction had real success, earning praise for its strength, beauty, and originality — turning heads both in and out of the water. One of the biggest milestones came when Brazilian surfer Caiña Souza took one of our hollow wooden boards into a WSL event — becoming the first athlete in history to ride a wooden board in professional competition. He advanced to the second round, proving that our design was viable at a very high level of surfing. But we knew there was room to improve.

That's where FiberFlex comes in — our soon-to-launch next-generation tech. Our shortboards match premium PUs in price (€800), weight (2.7kg), and deliver amazing flex dynamics for which we're seeking patent protection. Furthermore, these boards align with our ethos being 98% biodegradable!

How do your boards compare to a more traditional surfboard?

A big bonus: You can't snap them! At least, we haven't yet. But honestly, there is a unique magic to surfing on air, wrapped in wood — these materials suit the ocean and offer a deeper connection to the environment. And



Chris Thomson & Bella Bunce

when you feel good, you surf better! That's the difference...

What steps do you take to ensure your production methods are eco-friendly?

We start with materials: nearly every component in the board is biodegradable and, where possible, locally sourced — including Paulownia, Cork, Bamboo, and Iroko. The only synthetic element is a thin layer of Carbon Kevlar, used to reinforce the skins. While this does slightly compromise total biodegradability, it dramatically extends the board's lifespan, reducing the need for replacements — a trade-off we consider justified.

Our commitment to sustainability runs deeper than the materials themselves. Our previous workshop was fully solar-powered, and we're working to replicate that setup in our new space. We're also refining our production methods to minimise offcuts and make better use of surplus timber. From materials to energy use to manufacturing efficiency, we're building boards with a genuinely low-impact footprint — and constantly looking for ways to do even better.

What advice would you give to someone trying one of your boards for the first time?

Come to a demo day, surf one, tell us how much you loved it — then buy one! You won't regret it.

How do you see wooden surfboards fitting into the broader surf industry?

Wooden boards have always appealed to surfers looking for something beautiful and unique, usually attracting a niche customer who's happy to pay a bit more.

Historically, performance has been the limiting factor. But that's changing. There's a growing movement to rethink wooden board construction, and some exciting designs are entering the market — boards that are not only stylish but increasingly surfable.

We realised that if we wanted to appeal to



the wider industry, then the price, weight, flex — everything — had to match the other boards in the rack. That's what we've done with FiberFlex, building something that looks and feels familiar underfoot, but comes with far less environmental baggage. We can't wait to launch it this autumn.

Have you noticed an increase in people looking to buy eco-friendly products?

Absolutely — the shift is definitely happening. It's becoming much more prominent in people's decision-making, and you can feel that momentum building in the surf community.

But when it comes to performance, I believe the product has to come without compromise.

Sustainability and performance need to come hand in hand. If we want eco-friendly gear to truly take hold in the mainstream, it has to feel just as good — or better — than what it's replacing. It can't just look good on paper; it has to deliver in the water, session after session.

How do you distribute the brand across Europe?

Outside of our own platform, we are about to go live with Boardshop UK, and we're always looking for new partners and distributors across Europe. Expanding the network is a big part of our focus.📍

LiP
SUNGLASSES

LiP

LiP Sunglasses is a performance-driven eyewear brand specializing in technical sunglasses for water sports. Founded in 2012, the company combines expert design with premium materials to deliver products built for extreme conditions and lasting comfort.

What's the background story of LiP Sunglasses?

LiP Sunglasses was conceived on the beaches of Boracay Island in the Philippines. Born out of frustration from losing too many sunglasses while windsurfing and kiteboarding in the searing tropical sun, our founders Dirk Michielson and Li Chen joined forces in 2012 to pioneer fit-for-purpose watersports eyewear that could survive the elements, stay comfortably locked in place, and deliver crystal clear vision.

At the time, Li was a passionate entrepreneur living in Taiwan who had just sold her business and was looking for a new challenge, while Dirk was a seasoned eyewear designer with over 25 years of industry experience. From their home base in Taiwan, at the crossroads of tropical waters and high-end manufacturing, the concept of our flagship Typhoon model began to take shape and their holiday home and the waters of Boracay offered the perfect real-world testing ground for the first prototypes.

What are your key brand values?

At the product level, our values have remained the same since day one: function, quality and style. Our sunglasses are engineered to perform in especially demanding environments, with premium materials, robust retention systems, and optics you can count on. But there's more to LiP than our eyewear: as individuals and as a brand, we're grounded in balance - in how we work, how we play, and how we live. At the heart of LiP is the belief that we become what we choose to pursue - that nothing is out of reach so long as we remain true to our core values. That's the energy we bring into every product we design,



every partnership we build, and every day we spend on the water.

LiP is known for producing sunglasses tailored for water sports, what sets your eyewear apart from typical sunglasses?

Typical sunglasses offer style and tint but not much in the way of bespoke functionality. Our sunglasses are engineered for water, with failsafe retention systems, high tech coatings, fog resistance, and glare-cutting optics. Every LiP Sunglasses model is purpose-built to ensure it is fit for the purpose it is intended to be used for.

How does LiP approach sustainability in product design, materials, or packaging? We don't claim to have it all figured out, but we make conscious decisions where they matter - starting with the core components: lenses and frames.

For our lenses, we co-brand with ZEISS, a global leader in optics that shares our commitment to quality and environmental responsibility. Our nylon lenses are manufactured using 39% renewable material sourced from municipal and industrial bio-based waste, and are produced using 100% renewable electricity.

Our frames are made from TR90, a petroleum-based material that is recyclable. While we continue to evaluate bio-based alternatives, we've found that most still fall short when it comes to durability - a critical factor in saltwater and high UV environments. Instead of building eyewear that needs replacing every season, we've focused on longevity. We've built sustainability into our product lifespan through a modular design, offering replacement parts for frames and lenses to keep our sunglasses in use for as long as possible.

How important is community feedback and athlete collaboration in shaping your products?

Community feedback is foundational. It guides how we refine and update our frames, our lenses, and the approach we take to new designs. Our athletes push our products



to the limit, and our customers often know exactly what's working and what could be better. We listen to both and we take pride in honest, human customer service that reflects our belief that this is a shared journey. Every session, every conversation, and every bit of feedback helps us evolve.

What challenges do you face as a smaller brand in an industry dominated by larger, global eyewear manufacturers?

Being a smaller, independent sunglasses brand in a market dominated by multinational giants definitely comes with challenges, especially when it comes to visibility, buying power, and shelf space. What we offer is genuine product expertise in a niche that we've helped to define. We make one thing - technical watersports eyewear - and we make it well. That means our time and resources are channelled into product refinement, customer service, and rider-led innovation.

Any upcoming projects or products you can share?

This autumn, we're launching the 'Tide'. The Tide delivers the same high-level performance we demand from all our watersports eyewear. It's purpose-built for women, youth, and riders with smaller faces. It's the result of an extended period of development, testing, and rider feedback, and we're incredibly proud of what it represents - both in terms of product performance and brand legacy.🌊



WAVE HAWAII

WAVE HAWAII is a lifestyle brand known for its laid-back style, sustainable products, and strong connection to board sports culture. With steady growth and a clear identity, the company continues to make waves in the market through innovation, authenticity, and a dedicated team.

What have been the major challenges for WAVE HAWAII over the last 12 months?

In terms of products, we are very well positioned and, fortunately, are continuing to grow. We are moving to new premises because we handle all our fulfilment ourselves and need more space due to our expanding product range. We also had to hire more staff and now have a great, dedicated team that is highly motivated and forms the backbone of our company. The Pakistan-India conflict has actually hurt us this year, causing us to receive approximately 20,000 ponchos two months late. However, we have resolved this issue and are now fully focused on developing our brand.

Which of your products have sold particularly well this year and why?

Our hero products are still our ponchos. Following our record year in 2024, we are currently up 63% on last year. It seems we haven't done too badly! As always, our focus is on our styles, sustainability, durability, top service and dealer terms. We are also delighted with the great response to our wooden sunglasses and quick-drying AirLite Multifunc Wear (e.g. under the wetsuit and as everyday wear) and socks. It's not just board sports enthusiasts who feel at home with us.

What are your key brand values?

This is pretty simple: Authenticity, sustainability, durability, fairness, style.



These points make up our DNA and shape our brand. We stand for a cosmopolitan and colourful world view – in line with our new project 'Necking not Wrecking!' Better to kiss than to bash each other's heads in.

How have you made your brand more sustainable?

We now manufacture more in Europe and Turkey and avoid long transport routes as far as possible. Our products are made from natural or recycled materials and are designed to last. Our parcel shipping is green, as is our electricity. We generate a lot of clean energy with a large photovoltaic system. And we take back old or worn WAVE HAWAII products so that they can be properly recycled or upcycled.

What makes the brand so attractive to retailers?

Reliability in terms of top-quality products, trade margins and fast, personal customer service. Our products perform very well in retail, which means that turnover is high and the number of complaints is very low. We make it easy for new retailers to get started with us without any risk by offering special agreements.

How do you market your brand to consumers?

Our marketing activities are wide-ranging and bring us lasting brand awareness, which naturally also benefits retailers. On the one hand, we are very active on social media. In this context, we have an increasing number of great influencers and ambassadors who present WAVE HAWAII from a different perspective. You will also find us regularly featured in relevant magazines. Another area is events where we or one of our partners are actively involved and have direct contact with end consumers. Last but not least, our website is our calling card, where end consumers can find out more about our brand.



Any special plans for 2026?

We will have some great new products on the market and are also expanding our existing range. This means we will be making a statement with fresh new designs. We are also working on a number of collaborations in the form of licensed ponchos, which we will be launching at the end of the year. It's going to be really exciting and we can't wait! We will also continue to expand our collaboration with EXITSURF. The connection between board sports and art is a hugely exciting topic that reflects our attitude of seeking out unusual paths.

What else is exciting at WAVE HAWAII?

We are extremely happy to be working with the impressive people at Wellenbezwingen. We are able to support them. This is about surfing as a school of life. The aim is to have a positive influence on young people from socially disadvantaged areas and to give them tools for life. Sport and nature promote young people's well-being and help them discover their potential and develop their social skills. In year-round surf clubs, important core values and skills are taught, reflected upon and transferred to everyday life through experiences in and around the water. ☺



BLACKRIVER

Blackriver started in 1999 with one goal: to turn fingerboarding into something real. From a small German town to a global scene, they've built a brand rooted in skate culture, creativity, and community. Here's how they did it – and where they're headed next.

Please tell us the story behind Blackriver

Blackriver was founded in 1999 by Martin Ehrenberger, driven by the vision to transform fingerboarding from a simple pastime into a recognized boardsport. From the beginning, the focus was on passion, creativity, and a strong link to skate culture. In 2002, Martin joined forces with Denise Hermann. Together, they worked to professionalize the scene and build a brand that would shape fingerboarding for decades. What began in a small German town is now a global leader in premium fingerboard products and community culture.

How has the fingerboard market changed over the last 3 years?

The pandemic gave the fingerboard scene a major push, as people embraced creative hobbies at home. Since then, the market has continued to grow and mature. There's been more innovation, increased international interest, and deeper ties to skateboarding culture. Today, fingerboarders range from young creators on social media to lifelong skaters who see fingerboarding as a natural extension of their lifestyle.

How important have collabs been to your success?

Collaborations are key to keeping Blackriver authentic and relevant. By partnering with legendary skateboard brands like Girl and Alva, we connect fingerboarding with skateboarding on a cultural level. These collabs allow us to release exclusive designs that resonate with collectors and riders, while also raising the visibility of fingerboarding within the wider boardsport scene.

What are Blackriver's core values as a brand?

Authenticity, community, craftsmanship, and



creativity. Most of our products are handcrafted in Germany with a focus on quality and detail. We're skater-owned and driven by real skate culture. Instead of chasing trends, we focus on creating meaningful, lasting experiences. Supporting the community and inspiring the next generation is at the heart of everything we do.

How has Blackriver contributed to the growth of the fingerboarding community?

We've gone far beyond just making products — we've helped shape a culture. Blackriver sponsors riders, hosts events, and runs the world's most comprehensive fingerboard webshop. Our flagship store and community hub in Chicago serves as a model for how retail can help grow the scene. Our goal is to create spaces where people can connect, learn, and build lasting communities around fingerboarding.

Please tell us about the 'Fast Fingers' event?

Fast Fingers is the fingerboard world championship and represents the top level of the sport. Launched in 2000, it quickly became the most important event in the scene. Held in Germany, it gathers the global fingerboarding community for a day of high-level competition and cultural exchange. It's all about pure fingerboarding — a place for riders and fans from around the world to come together.

What are your key models for 2025?

In 2025, we're focusing on new graphic collabs, upgraded *Pro Completes*, and refining our core product line. We're also expanding our range of ramps and fingerboard parks — from compact setups for home use to large-scale layouts for retail and events. This allows every end customer and every board shop to find the perfect solution for their needs.

Why should retailers stock Blackriver fingerboards?

We've helped retailers succeed for 25 years by offering top-quality, authentic products that resonate with real communities. Stocking Blackriver means being part of a global movement rooted in skate culture. Our fingerboard parks are especially powerful



tools: they draw people into the store, foster interaction, and build long-term customer loyalty. With strong margins and worldwide brand recognition, Blackriver is a smart, sustainable choice for retailers who want more than just products — they want community.

What makes Blackriver different from other fingerboard brands?

Blackriver isn't just another brand — we helped define fingerboard culture. We're skater-owned, community-focused, and committed to premium craftsmanship. Our products are developed with real riders and often handmade in Germany, offering a level of quality and durability that mass-market alternatives can't match. While others fill the market with cheap imitations, we've stayed true to our roots. Customers and shops alike value Blackriver for its authenticity and cultural credibility.

How do you see the future of fingerboarding?

Fingerboarding is only just beginning to show its full potential. Like skateboarding decades ago, it's growing from a niche hobby into a cultural force — especially among young people who see it as both sport and creative expression. With more access, better infrastructure, and strong community support, we believe fingerboarding will become a long-term fixture in board culture, youth spaces, and beyond. We're proud to be shaping that future. ☺

NEW PRODUCTS

01 / NIKWAX WETSUIT REFRESH

Nikwax Wetsuit Refresh is a powerful non-biological cleaner for wetsuits, and neoprene items. Deodorises and extends the life of your wetsuit by cleaning away salt, chlorine and organic residue and leaving it soft and supple. Wetsuit Refresh cleans effectively, removes contaminants, and eliminates odours, keeping the material soft and supple and extends the life of your wetsuit. The product is not harmful to aquatic life and recommended for neoprene and Yulex®.

NIKWAX.COM

02 / PACSAFE EXP 12" ANTI-THEFT SLING CROSSBODY

Stay hands-free and stress-free with the Pacsafe EXP12 Sling – the compact, anti-theft crossbody built for life on the move. With recycled materials and smart security features, it's your go-to everyday companion from city streets to travel adventures.

PACSAFE.COM

03 / PACSAFE® V TECH ANTI-THEFT SLING PACK

Recycled, compact, and anti-theft – the Pacsafe V Tech anti-theft sling pack keeps your essentials safe with anti-theft tech and recycled materials. Ideal for city life, travel, and everything in between.

PACSAFE.COM

04 / SUNBUM SIGNATURE SPF 30 MINERAL FACE STICK

Sunbum's 100% zinc oxide / non-nano zinc oxide stick blends into skin while providing long-lasting SPF 50 Broad Spectrum protection. Comfortable on skin, pocket sized, and ready for every outdoor adventure.

SUNBUM.COM

05 / SUNBUM SIGNATURE SPF 30 MINERAL LIP BALM

Don't forget your lips. The sun won't. Sunbum's 100% zinc oxide / non-nano zinc oxide lip balm blends into skin while providing long-lasting SPF 30 Broad Spectrum protection. Glides on comfortably, and won't bleed into mouth. Keep one in every pocket for all outdoor adventures.

SUNBUM.COM

01



02



03



04



05





fahlo

Each purchase tracks an animal and helps us save wildlife










Contact for more information: Wholesale@myfahlo.com



MARKET INSIGHT

UK

FRANCE
GERMANY
ITALY
PORTUGAL

Fickle – adjective: changing frequently, especially as regards one's loyalties or affections. Is it always fickle? Are there degrees of fickleness? So here we are at the height of the holiday season (mid-August). If there is one thing that should be guaranteed, it's that tills at all the holiday locations should be ringing loud and clear... and long. That's always been the way — hasn't it? Sporadic – adjective: occurring at irregular intervals or only in a few places; scattered or isolated. Alas, the two words that can best describe the current state of play in our business.

Or what about ..

Haphazard – adjective: lacking any obvious principle of organization. As an example: our business works in a haphazard fashion. It's not like it's our fault. It's not! And it's not like we can continue to blame the Covid boom — but we can, and we do.

One thing's for sure: we are a long way from the dependable, reliable, predictable business that we all crave so much... that we all need.

One of our Brand Managers, Scott, was describing to me a typical few days on the road. "I was in Torquay and it was rammed. Good, good I thought — the stores are going to be busy and I should have some happy customers. The reality was that on that particular day there was some event on which drew in the crowds, but they were not spending money. They're coming in, looking, touching and even trying on, but finally — getting that sale across the till — was elusive." Scott went on to Woolacombe. "It was dead. Empty. The campsites were half full." And then on to Teignmouth: "Heaving, but all buckets and spades and ice creams."

This seemed to be a pretty good summary — fickle, sporadic and haphazard.

I called Ben at The Bay Surf Shop in Woolacombe and asked him how business was. There was a long pause followed by the word: "Quiet." It actually made me laugh — I thought the line had gone dead... then just that one word: "Quiet."

'The Bay' was founded more than 40 years ago. Ben has been a customer since he was about 10 and the owner for the past 5 years. Having previously been a car salesman, he made the jump to a sensible business! Or did he?

So, after the pause Ben continued: "It is what it is. It's difficult and much quieter than it should be. The campsites have plenty of spaces, as do the hotels. Customers are being much more considered in their purchases and almost always looking for a deal." Is there any particular area that is harder? "Wetsuits are really slow. Clothing is just saturated and only seems to move if it is a sale item."

"Nothing we sell is a necessity — no matter what we may think — and people need to feel good in order to part with their money for luxury and non-essentials. The economy is not helping, the government are not helping. People need to feel confident, they need good news, and there's precious little of that about at this time."

I checked back with Mark from Piran Surf... it was quite uncanny how the call started. I asked Mark how it was... and there was a long pause (been here before). "Ummmm... Ummmm..." Sometimes people just don't want to deliver bad news. "... tricky... yes... tricky."

Mark said he did not want to crow on again about too many boards, too few customers, but it was still a fact. And business was not great. "We're in the middle of the summer season and we're a tourist beach so it should be busy — but it's... tricky. Online it is only the cheapest price that wins the day, so that's no good. We need footfall — and whilst we have had two busy weeks it's now tailed off. Sunny days — more than ever — make the difference."

Anything in particular not working? (Wait for it.) "Neoprene is really tough and I think it is going to continue to be that way for some time. There's still loads of stock in the chain and it has to go somewhere. I'm really not looking forward to the 5mm season as I don't think it is going to go well."

Anything to do about all this? "Yes — you have to find your skills as a retailer! We have to try and counter the failure of our government to do anything positive. In fact, I'm particularly scared of our current Chancellor and what she may be doing to our economy."

Mark did finish by saying that despite everything he is "guarded to optimistic", which perhaps we should put on a T-shirt for everyone in our industry. We are almost always that!

Next call was to Paul at Zuma Jays — always positive (almost). "He's busy with a customer" — always happy to hear that. I was put 'on hold' and it's amazing what a bit of music can do for you. It's worth calling Zuma Jays and asking to be put on hold — for a surf shop to have Jacques Offenbach's Galop Infernal as their 'on hold' music is interesting, to say the least. (Probably better known as the can-can dance music.) It made me smile.

So where to next? There must be some good news out there somewhere?

"It's like pulling teeth." This is Jason from Midland Nautique. Primarily a boat retailer, they also sell wakeboards, wakesurf and accessories, but my endeavours to find good news fell on deaf ears. "Well — it's up and down, but it's hard. Everything is so much harder than it used to be."

Tell me some good news, Jason. "OK — well interestingly we have sold three 2026 boats, so there is light at the end of the tunnel." Now these boats are selling for upwards of £200k, so I take that as a good sign — there is hope for us yet.

Checking in with another wakesurf/wakeboard retailer — Raymond from Scotland Nautique. "Diabolical. Wakesurf selling OK. Wakeboarding dead — I cannot remember the last wakeboard set-up we sold. Wetsuits selling OK [WOW] but remember it's cold up here [Loch Lomond]."

"Some of the events we're attending are getting the people there, and where there is enthusiasm there are potential sales, but generally it is diabolical."

Where does that leave us? Up one day, down the next. It's fickle. It's sporadic and haphazard. It's boardsports.

I want to end on a positive. Winter is coming. Order books are solid. Retailers are super optimistic and calling in stock early. Sales over summer for winter product have been better than anticipated. By the time we come round to the next Boardsports Source it could be a whole new board game. (See what I did there?)

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Summer 2025 in France: Between Slowdown and Economic Adaptation

The summer season of 2025 began under economic strain. Despite controlled inflation, now below 3.5%, the French remain cautious in their spending. Purchasing power continues to be a major concern: according to the latest INSEE data, household consumption stagnated in the second quarter, particularly in the leisure, textile, and equipment sectors. Summer vacations did take place, and coastal resorts saw significant tourist traffic, but vacationers’ budget constraints were evident, with average spending down and lower footfall in shops outside of food and accommodation.

On the employment front, the unemployment rate remains stable at around 6.8%, but the job market continues to face pressure, especially in seasonal sectors and tourist regions. Recruitment difficulties, particularly in hospitality, retail, and services, sometimes hamper the smooth running of the season. The French economy, still searching for momentum, is hindered by geopolitical uncertainty and sluggish European growth. Although the European Central Bank slightly lowered interest rates, this has yet to noticeably boost domestic consumption or investment from households and small businesses. Meanwhile, energy costs remain high for professionals, despite some stabilization in gas and electricity prices. The energy transition, while politically prioritized, presents an added cost for many businesses—especially in coastal areas—which must balance tourist appeal with energy efficiency. Calls to decarbonize tourism are increasing, but public support remains largely inaccessible to small independent enterprises.

For businesses—particularly local shops and specialty boutiques—this summer has been one of adaptation. Faced with leftover stock from previous years, strategies now focus on limited restocking, short supply chains, and high-value products. A shift towards more responsible, local, and thoughtful consumption is evident, as is the growing importance of service and the personal connection in purchasing decisions. In this context, professionals in the boardsports industry have not been spared, but some have managed to stand out thanks to strong identity, local communities, or a differentiated offering. Boardsports, Summer 2025: Between Resilience, Reinvention, and Resistance

In a summer when many French people still went on holiday, many surf shops didn’t see the expected foot traffic. The results are mixed, while some stores benefited from solid local activity or a unique product offering, others were hit hard by reduced consumer spending, seeing drops in visits, more deliberate purchases, and a need to refresh their stock.

In Saint-Pierre d’Oléron, Frédéric Groot, head of Cocoa Gliss and Co, doesn’t hide his frustration: “Revenue is down 10% since the beginning of the year. There’s less in-store traffic, and the aver-

age basket has dropped.” Low foot fall gives shops lower visibility on demand trends, meaning their desire to restock are very limited. “Even suppliers no longer have the right products in stock. We can’t pre-order in large quantities anymore, the risk is too high.” Sales held few surprises: smaller items like surf hats sold better than boards, and some surf hardgoods brands are clearly losing ground. “Customers constantly compare prices online; they’re looking for bargains as well as advice,” he adds. The shop is therefore banking on person to person relationships to build loyalty.

In the southwest, in Bayonne, the outlook is more positive. Thibaud Berger, manager of Hoff Factory, calls it a surprisingly good season: “July was quiet, but revenue is up 20%, thanks to our electric bikes.” Two Voltaway models (Twinee and Bulkee) sold extremely well. The shop, historically boardsport focused, has successfully adapted: “We still see comprehensive demand for surf, bodyboard and skate products, but bikes really saved the start of our season.” For boardsports, beginner and intermediate boards (Torq, Venon) and Sniper bodyboards performed well. “SUP and skate are still slow, though showing slight signs of recovery,” Thibaud notes. A loyal and demanding local clientele remains the backbone: “People come to us for our expertise, our stock, and our vibe.”

In Provence, La Ciotat marches to its own beat. At Manipura Surf Shop, the approach is unique, handcrafted goods, short supply chains, and a family vibe. Marianne Nolo, employee and purchasing manager, is pleased with a very strong season: “Our Manipura products are selling very well, especially viscose pants and locally printed t-shirts. We’d almost sold out before July!” More of a concept store than a traditional surf shop, it draws customers through its distinct identity: “People come for the exotic feel, for our ambiance. It’s a meeting place, not just a store.” This alternative model emphasizing handmade goods and customization has found a loyal audience that values these ideals.

While strategies differ, observations converge. Customers increasingly compare with online shopping sites, hunting for deals, and making more rational decisions. “It’s a disaster. People hesitate, compare, and leave without buying,” laments Frédéric Groot. In response, everyone is betting on advice, proximity, and customer experience. Staff expertise, product knowledge, and service quality have become the main tools to win over a more demanding clientele.

Despite uncertainty, passion remains strong. The surf shops doing well are the ones that dare to diversifying, they use short supply chains, local manufacturing, or offer a technical specialization. Some are also boosting their online presence or strengthening their social media efforts to maintain off-season engagement. Summer 2025, while not stellar everywhere, has at least confirmed one thing: boardsports remains a world for the passionate people who know how to ride waves, even when they are slow to come.

BENOIT BRECQ

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Well, where shall we start this time? Perhaps with world events. Things remain interesting, exciting, and unpredictable. Mr. Trump meets Ms. von der Leyen, and suddenly everything changes. Tariffs, customs duties, and the like are unsettling the markets, and many brands are currently finding it difficult to set prices for the long term or plan strategies for extended periods.

But that’s the way it is – we live in the here and now, and tomorrow everything could be different again.

Inflation in Germany in July 2025 is +2.0% compared to the same month last year and +0.3% compared to June, according to the Federal Statistical Office. At the same time, this summer has been extremely inconsistent. While the end of May, June, and the beginning of July were marked by heat, the south experienced three weeks of rain with temperatures below 10 degrees Celsius. This had a direct impact on sales: hoodies, long pants, and rain ponchos suddenly went through the roof—much to the delight of some and the disappointment of others. Bikinis, of course, did not sell so well.

Another topic covered in the magazine is men’s streetwear. Here, the focus is clearly on oversized and relaxed cuts. Chunky hoodies, baggy jeans, and loose-fitting jackets set the tone, inspired by surf and skate culture. Workwear designs that are functional, durable, and versatile reflect this trend particularly well in board sports. Philipp Lange from Home Boy reports a very good summer pre-booking round and new customers who didn’t want to know anything about Home Boy two years ago but are now placing orders. Thomas Gebka from Reell also draws a positive mid-term conclusion. Non-denim pants such as corduroy and lightweight poly-cotton models are selling particularly well, along with vintage styles in loose and regular fits. His approach: stability over hype.

Armin from the A-Man Boardingstore in Memmingen expresses a similar view. Denim and baggy styles are selling extremely well there, and Home Boy and Reell are also successful in the store. It is striking that many surf brands now offer almost exclusively baggy or heavy shorts. The trend is hot and is worn by young people as well as adults, who say nostalgically, “I wore that when I was 16 – it’s super comfortable.” Stefan from Switch in Straubing confirms this.

I also spoke to Stefan, who is heavily involved with young skaters, about skate helmets. They are still not the most popular accessory, but they are essential – especially for lessons and competitions. Feedback from shops is almost universal: helmet sales are steady, not outstanding, but stable. TSG remains the market leader with its adjustable Meta helmet, while Protec plays an important role through Shiner Distribution. Basti from Edge to Edge in Garmisch emphasizes that safety comes first, then style. Helmets that are pulled down a little further are considered safer, and kids now wear them almost as a matter of course – similar to bike or snowboard helmets. Nico Ritzelt from the Skateacademy in Mannheim and Allgäu also confirms that there is hardly any

MARKET INSIGHT

discussion about it during the courses: helmets are accepted as mandatory, and pads are also worn without complaint.

The skate sneaker market, on the other hand, is difficult to assess. The boundaries between performance, core, and lifestyle are blurring, and major players such as Nike and Adidas are getting involved. Demand for shoes that are suitable for both skating and everyday wear is growing. Etnies and New Balance Numeric are responding to this with multifunctional models. Etnies remains closely linked to core skateboarding, focusing on team, style, and credibility. The online market is extremely strong here, while brick-and-mortar sales are solid but not outstanding. Nevertheless, Christian from Skatedeluxe emphasizes that sneakers are indispensable in the product range and generate stable sales.

Many brands are also focusing on retro and heritage designs in the men’s board shorts and women’s swimwear segments. Vintage prints, Aloha shirts, and washed-out colors such as pink, salmon, and off-white are all the rage. At the same time, streetwear and outdoor elements are finding their way into the mix, such as corduroy shorts with elastic waistbands. Heritage brands such as Oxbow are bringing iconic designs back into fashion. In addition to big players such as O’Neill, which are focusing on retro logos, many small surf brands are also making a comeback, such as Duvin from the USA. The vintage look sells – and what sells stays trendy.

There is exciting momentum in the wetsuit segment. Patagonia remains a pioneer with Yulex Natural Rubber and is the clear leader in sustainability. O’Neill is launching a new, sustainable performance line with the Blueprint Series, while Rip Curl is further developing the E-Bomb series with more stretch and high-end zippers. Billabong is focusing on Yulex and eco-surfers with its Furnace Natural range. French brand Soörüz remains particularly innovative, working with Biöprene and Oysterprene. Its recycling bin concept is particularly exciting and is being used more and more in surf shops and wakeboarding facilities. The bins are almost always full, reports Robin from Choppy Water. Customers are on board with the sustainability concept, and old wetsuits are recycled and turned into yoga mats or floor panels. For the summer, Soörüz is focusing on a new material developed in collaboration with producers: “Democratisation Organic Oysterprene” – super stretchy and environmentally friendly at the same time.

While we’re still in the middle of summer, the first brands are already looking ahead to winter. Rome is delivering an innovation with its new F.A.S.E. system: a fast-entry binding with its own shoe that rides like a classic binding – even pros are impressed.

All that remains for me to say is: let’s hope that the global situation calms down and we can all regain a bit of normality. With this in mind, I wish you all a good and peaceful end to the summer.

Ride on,

TOBI HAMMER

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Surf, by contrast, is still struggling with apparel sales down across most regions and many retailers are sitting on too much surfboard inventory. Brands that overproduced during the pandemic are still trying to correct course, and the result is price pressure and cautious buying. SUP is the one stable area, with consistent interest from newcomers and families, especially in warmer regions. But even here, the explosion of competing brands is making it harder to stand out. Price wars are more common, and margins are tighter. In men's surf apparel and boardshorts, retailers are playing it safe avoiding risk, avoiding fashion-forward bets, and focusing on basics that sell.

Streetwear, especially in men's categories, is also a source of concern. There's a lack of clear direction in the market, and many stores are

UK
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Overall, the Portuguese boardsports market faced significant challenges in the Spring, mainly due to unusually constant rainfall, something that wasn't seen in many years. Some retailers had hoped that the Easter season would help turn things around, but despite a few positive signs, unfortunately, that didn't happen, and the situation dragged on until the end of May. It was only at the beginning of summer that sales finally grew considerably, thanks to the arrival of good weather and a tourism boost. The shoe segment remains particularly difficult. Skateboard market activity is almost at a standstill, with low demand in the bigger stores, some of which are struggling to clear out stock. However, some more core-focused stores have achieved better results. As for the surf market, hardgoods saw a slight increase in sales over June and July, with a similar trend for high-performance shortboards. Wetsuit sales remained stable compared to 2024.

For ManelSport, a core skate/surf shop in Santa Cruz, the struggle with Climate Change has been hard. "March, April, and May were very poor, possibly some of the worst in recent years, with constant cold and rain," said the store owner, Carlos Dias. "From June onwards, as the weather improved, so did business, much like last year. It feels like Winter happens during Spring and Summer during Fall." Despite this situation, "surfwear has performed well. On apparel, the

seeing slower sell-through. "Reaching the younger generation is becoming harder," says Alex Berger of Fakieshop. "The shift in consumer behaviour, combined with fast-moving B2C trends, is taking customers away from core stores. The rapid turnover of brands makes it extremely hard to plan and commit to pre-books." That concern is echoed by sales reps, who say retailers are increasingly reluctant to pre-order. More stores are choosing to buy closer to season and from available stock. It helps them manage risk and cash flow but creates headaches for brand supply chains and planning.

In snow, although it's the off-season, the uncertainty is just as real. Retailers are cautious about winter preorders and many are waiting longer than ever to commit. The balance between forecasting and flexibility has shifted heavily in favour of the latter. Outside the core categories, some bright spots remain. Lifestyle backpacks continue to sell in tourist areas, and safety gear like skate helmets is growing steadily, particularly among parents buying for kids. Hybrid outdoor gear crossing over between urban and alpine use still has momentum. Wings and foils remain niche, but interest from water sports schools and coastal specialists continues to grow.

The common thread across all markets is caution. Retailers want flexibility, smaller commitments, and dependable sellers. Brand loyalty isn't what it used to be. In this environment, fast-moving D2C brands have a major advantage, one that established players are still struggling to counter. Retailers feel exposed, especially the smaller independents, and many have already shut down in quieter towns. Those who remain are choosing their stock more carefully than ever.

If the sun holds, the tills will too. But it's clear that long-term planning is out, adaptability is in, and listening to the retail frontline has never been more important.

FRANZ JOSEF HOLLER

top-performing brands are Carhartt, Billabong, and Volcom. The best-selling skate shoes are from Cariuma, Vans, and New Balance Numeric, while most other brands are seeing very low sales. Surf hardgoods and skate gear continue to sell steadily, just like last year."

To keep the ball rolling, retailers have to keep moving. “We’re continuing to organize and sponsor events, investing heavily in social media, and supporting our team of 18 athletes. Summer is going much like last year and looks set to continue, but it’s no longer possible to recover the losses from Spring. Our own brand, STA, has been growing year after year. This summer, in addition to working with organic products, we also upgraded to a more core-focused line, which has been very well received,” he finishes.

Despite the ever-changing market, Wavegliders, a core surfboard brand and surf shop in Ericeria, has positive results. "In terms of sales performance, this year has been one of the best so far," highlights Nico, the brand owner. Apparel is the strongest-performing segment in the store, with brands such as Rhythm, Roark, our own brand Wavegliders, Carhartt, Deus Ex Machina, and Brixton.

Tourism is the main driver behind these results. “Visitors usually stay around two weeks, and after exploring the main spots in Ericeira, they visit different shops and make their purchases. These are what we’d call ‘holiday purchases’ — driven by factors like the weather — rather than everyday shopping. Besides product quality, one of the key ingredients for success is excellent customer service, provided by a team that’s available, well-informed, and attentive. In such a competitive environment, that makes all the difference. When it comes to surfboards, our goal is to stay at the forefront with the best raw materials, showcasing new arrivals first on social media and knowing how to present the products effectively. The large number of stores sometimes creates challenges, but it also pushes us to consistently deliver at our highest level,” he emphasizes.

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EVENTS #125

surf/kite	optics	snow	street/outdoor	SUP/foil
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surf	BOARDMASTERS LONGBOARD PRO	Fistral Beach, UK 6 - 10 Aug	worldsurfleague.com
surf	TAHITI PRO	Teahupo, Tahiti 17 - 16 Aug	worldsurfleague.com
surf	LEXUS WSL FINALS	Cloudbreak, Fiji 27 Aug- 4 Sept	worldsurfleague.com
surf	SURF EXPO	Orlando, USA 4 - 6 Sept	surfexpo.com
street	WHO'S NEXT	Paris, France 6 - 8 Sept	whosnext.com
snow	SPORT ACHAT ETE	Grenoble, France 8 - 9 Sept	sportair.fr
surf/sk8	UK SURF AND SKATE EXPO	Newquay, UK 12 - 14 Sept	uksurfskate.com
surf	RIP CURL PRO	Anglet, France 16 - 21 Sept	worldsurfleague.com
snow	WSF PRE-SEASON MEETING	Zurich, Switzerland 19 -22 Sept	worldsnowboardfederation.org
surf	EUROSIMA SURF SUMMIT	Hossegor, France 25 - 26 Sept	eurosima.com
surf	QUIKSILVER FESTIVAL	Hossegor, France 20 - 28 Sept	quiksilver.com
optics	SILMO	Paris, France 26 - 29 Sept	silmoparis.com
surf	ERICEIRA PRO	Ericeira, Portugal 29 Sept - 5 Oct	worldsurfleague.com
sup	THE PADDLE SPORTS SHOW	Strasbourg, France 30 Sept- 2 Oct	thepaddlesportshow.com
snow	HINTERTUX OPENING	Hintertux Austria 3 - 5 Oct	hintertuxparkopening.com
foil	EFWE	Lagos, Portugal 8 - 11 Oct	efwexpo.org
snow	STUBAI OPENING	Stubai, Austria 10 - 11 Oct	stubaier-gletscher.com
snow	KAPRUN OPENING	Kaprun, Austria 11 - 12 Oct	kitzsteinhorn.at
surf	BOARDROOM	Del Mar, USA 11- 12 Oct	boardroomshow.com
textiles	PERFORMANCE DAYS	Munich, Germany 26 - 30 Oct	performancedays.com
surf	TUDOR NAZARE PRO	Nazare, Portugal 1 Nov - 31 Mar	worldsurfleague.com
surf	SURF PARK SUMMIT	Virginia Beach , USA 5- 7 Nov	thesurfparksummit.com
outdoor	KENDAL MOUTAIN FESTIVAL	Kendal, UK 20 - 23 Nov	kendalmountainfestival.com
outdoor	THE PILL BASE CAMP EXPO	Milan, Italy 24 - 25 Nov	thepilloutdoor.com
snow	ISPO	Munich, Germany 30 Nov - 2 Dec	ispo.com
kite	QATAR GKA FREESTYLE KITE WORLD CUP	Qatar 10 - 14 Dec	gkakiteworldtour.com
surf	SURF EXPO AFRICA	Cape Town, South Africa 28 - 30 Dec	surfexpoafrica.com
snow	SLIDE AND OTS	Telford, UK 6 - 8 Jan	slideotswinter.co.uk
surf	SURF EXPO	Orlando, USA 7 - 9 Jan	surfexpo.com
snow	PROWINTER	Bolzano, Italy 11-13 Jan	fierabolzano.it
snow	WINTERPRO	Tignes, France 12 -14 Jan	actsnowboarding.com
snow	LAAX OPEN	Laax, Switzerland 15 - 18 Jan	open.laax.com
snow	SHOPS 1ST TRY	Hochfügen , Austria 18 - 20 Jan	shops-1st-try.com
snow	THE PILL BASE CAMP TEST	Pila, Italy 20 - 21 Jan	thepilloutdoor.com
snow	SNOWBOARD EUROPEAN CUP	Madonna di Campigliio, Italy 23 - 24 Jan	worldsnowboardfederation.org
snow	X GAMES	Aspen, USA 23 - 25 Jan	xgames.com
snow	THE PILL BASE CAMP TEST	Folgaria, Italy 27 - 28 Jan	thepilloutdoor.com
snow	SPORT ACHAT HIVER	Grenoble, France 26 - 28 Jan	sportair.fr
snow	SNOWBOARD EUROPEAN CUP	Davos, Switzerland 13 - 14 Feb	worldsnowboardfederation.org



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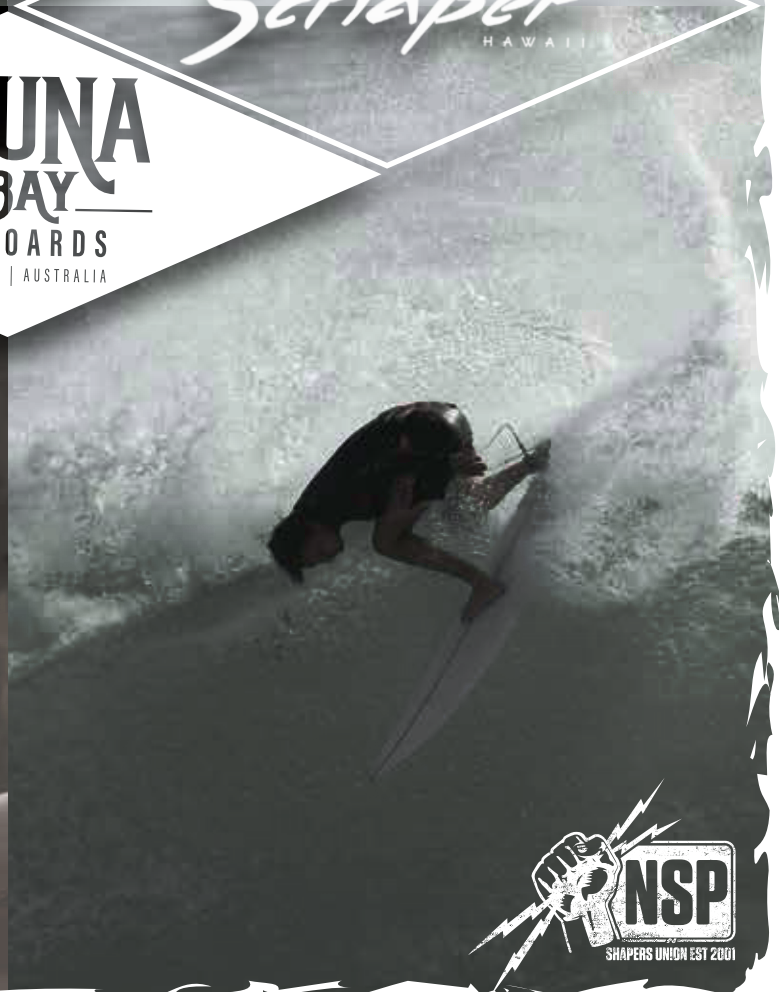
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VOLUME



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