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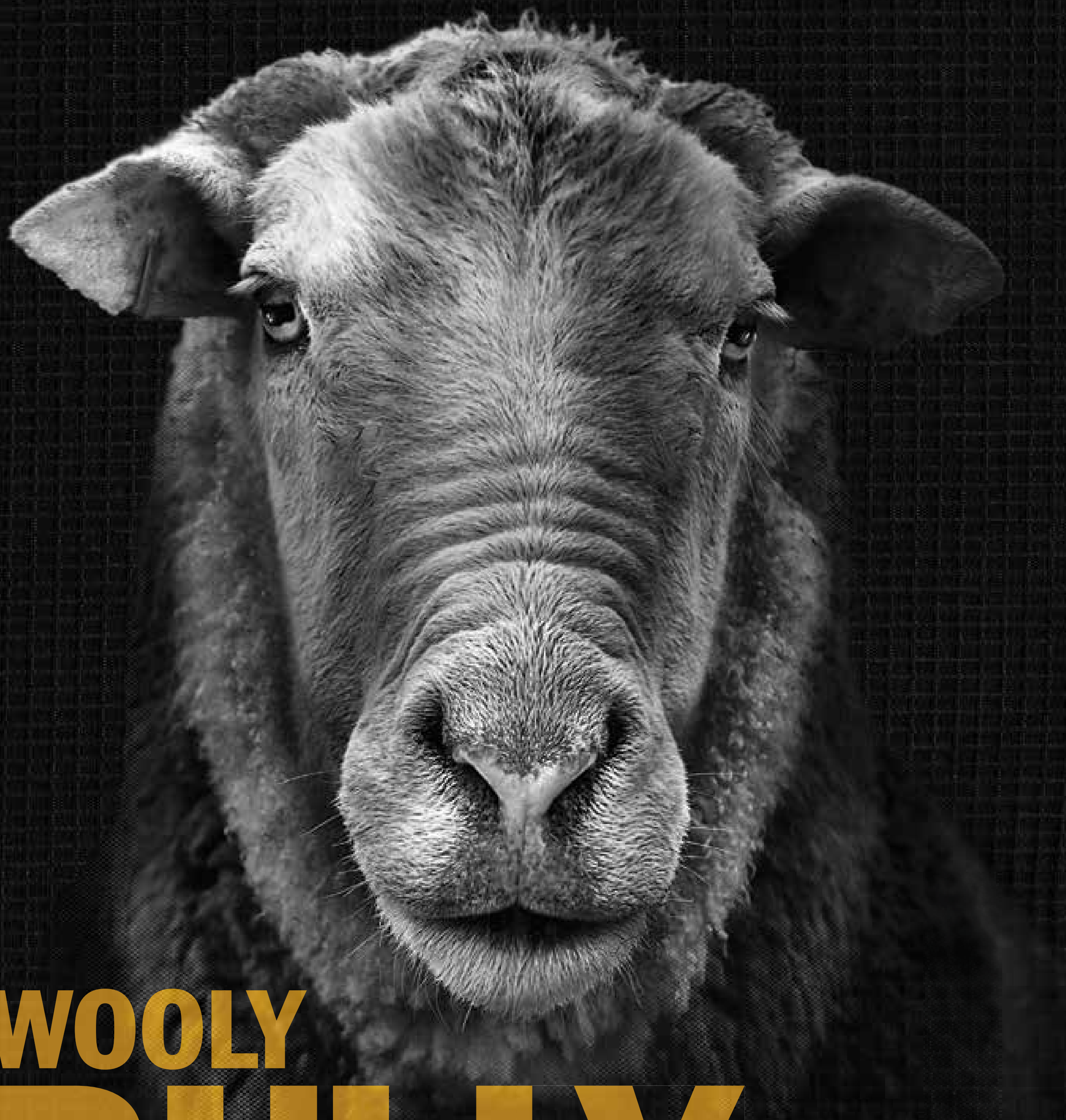

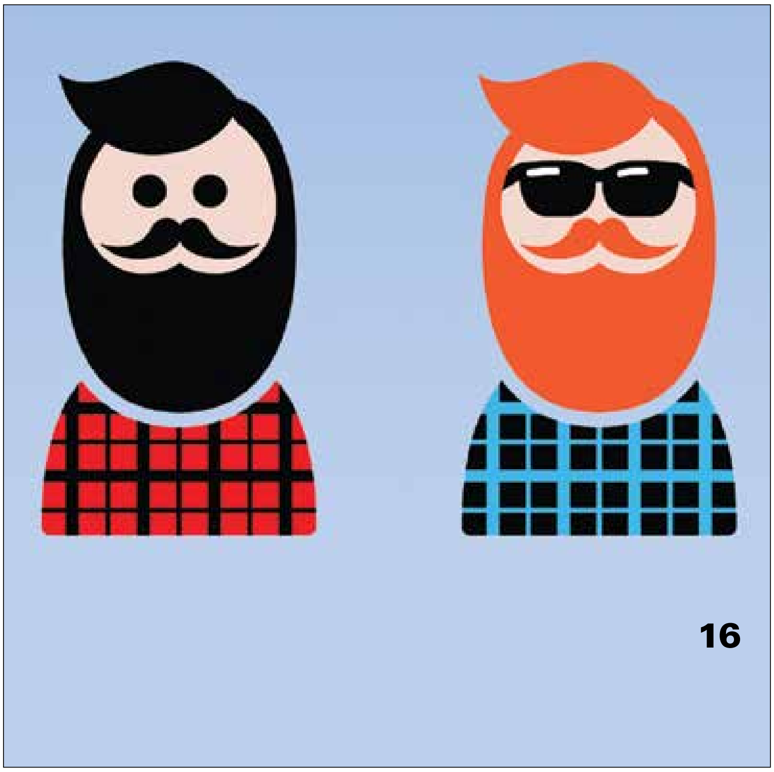

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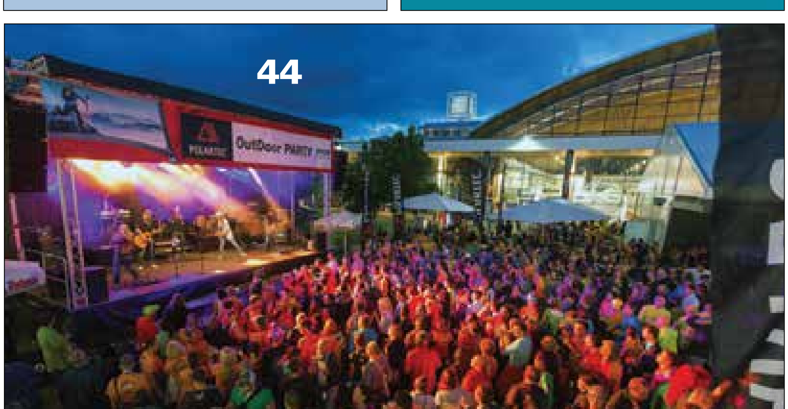

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Wave of Innovation

Historically, retailers have spent 70 to 85 percent of their technology budgets on the upkeep and maintenance of IT systems, according to retail technology research and advisory firm IHL Group. That means only about 15 to 30 percent of IT departments' time and money could be used for driving new sales and innovation, while the vast majorities have been spent just "keeping the lights on."

No so much anymore, say retail chief information officers.

As might be expected, surveys of retail CIOs show an intense concern over data security, "but retail CIOs also expressed a strong — and equally compelling — need to work closely with their line-of-business colleagues to create more business value and foster innovation," explains George Lawrie, vice president and principal analyst at Forrester Research. Indeed, 59 percent of CIOs surveyed by Forrester said the proportion of budget used for value-generating innovation was a top five concern, up from 40 percent who said the same in 2013.

This desire to transition emphasis from maintenance to innovation is partly due to the recent emergence of "shadow IT" or "rogue" technology investments, whereby line-of-business managers outside of the IT department, such as marketing and operations, invest in everything from location technologies and home-grown mobile apps to software-as-a-service business intelligence solutions without the guidance or even awareness of IT departments. In 2015, for example, effective IT governance was named a top five concern by 78 percent of retail CIOs, up from a mere 24 percent in 2014 and just 20 percent in 2013, according to Forrester Research.

Of course, behind the rise in rogue IT spending, and the ultimate reason for the focus on innovation, is the need to deliver a true omni-channel experience. In other words, CIOs, along with their C-level counterparts, understand they must move past purely product-centric and transaction-based technology strategies to ones that put customer shopping behaviors at the center of the planning process.

"CIOs will link arms with CMOs and other business peers to create a comprehensive business technology innovation agenda that focuses on solutions that help win, serve and retain customers," Lawrie predicts. "The agenda will support line-of-business, marketing and in-store innovation, as well as innovation in the data center."

The upshot is a rapid, and sometimes disruptive, evolution in retail technology and the capabilities retailers offer their customers. This is especially true when considering a 2014 study from the National Retail Federation and Arizona University, which found that 70 percent of retailers plan to refresh aging POS software during the next three years to satisfy the demands of increasingly connected consumers. You can be sure that when making those POS investments, as much consideration will be placed on facilitating omni-channel innovation as it will be on facilitating transactions.

Ultimately, however, this all can be seen as encouraging news for smaller and specialty retailers, as innovative IT will center on improving customer service and the customer experience, both of which typically are competitive advantages for smaller retailers when competing with larger, big-box competitors.

Those that fail to make the transition, meanwhile, simply will be left behind.

–MV

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Numbers Worth Noting

By **Martin** Vilaboy

5	Percentage of general outdoor consumers who participate in geocaching, according to Outdoor Industry Association. Geocaching.com indicates that one million active caches were logged in the U.S. in 2014.

Share and Share Alike

Whether it's called "collaborative consumption," the "peer-to-peer economy" or "access over ownership," the sharing economy already has been disruptive to a few industries and likely will be felt greater in general retail in the coming years, as 44% of U.S. consumers are familiar with the concept, while 72% say they can see themselves being a consumer in the sharing economy in the next two years, according to a PricewaterhouseCoopers survey.

Perceived Benefits Among U.S. Adults Familiar with Sharing Economy

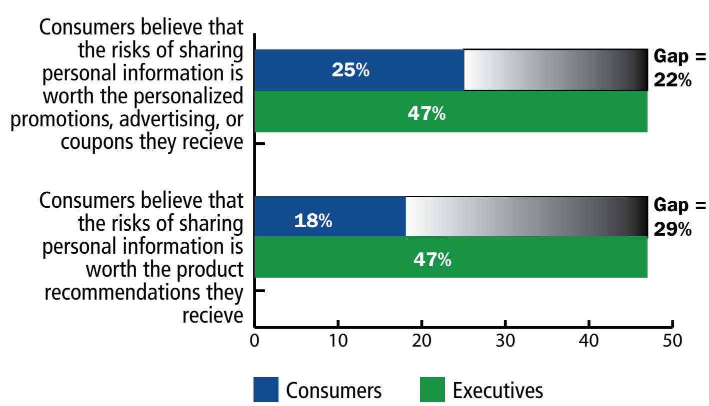
Agree it makes life more affordable	86%
Agree it makes life more convenient and efficient	83%
Agree it's better for the environment	76%
Agree it builds a stronger community	78%
Agree it is more fun than engaging with traditional companies	63%
Agree it is based on trust between provider and user	89%

Source: PwC

The Price of Personalization

There exists a significant gap between how consumers and retail executives feel about the perceived risks of sharing personal information for the sake of more personalized offers, according to surveys by Deloitte LLP. About twice as many executives as consumers currently believe the risks are worth the rewards.

Personalization Perception Gap

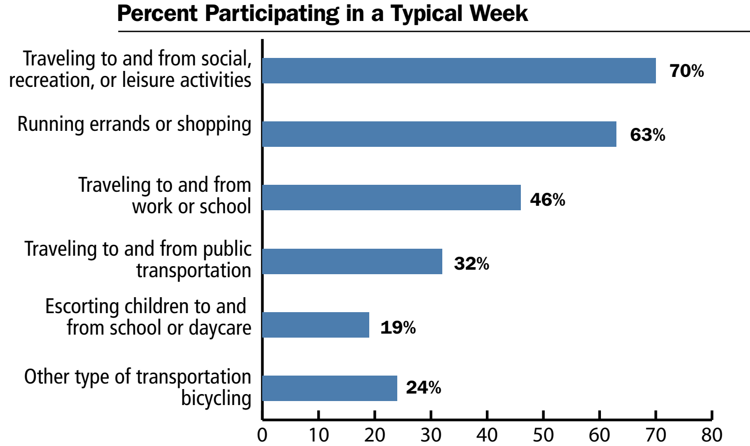


Source: Deloitte LLP

Where Bikers Ride

We've all seen plenty of gear and apparel targeting cyclists who commute to the office. But as it turns out, those who say they use their bikes for transportation are significantly more likely to ride their bikes to social events or for running personal errands, according to a U.S. bicycling benchmark survey from PeopleForBikes.

Percent Participating in a Typical Week

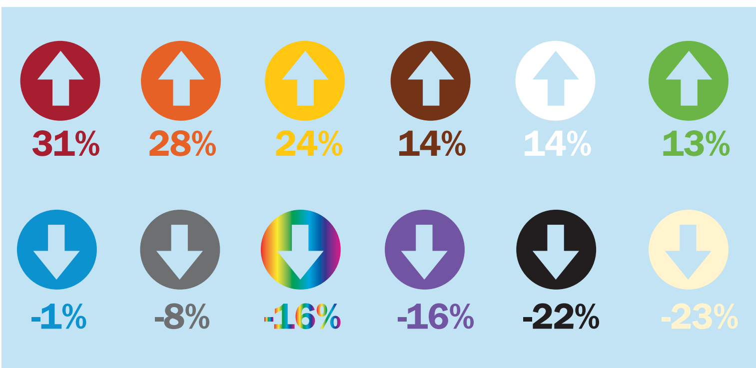


Source: Breakaway Research Group; PeopleForBikes

Color Story

Marketers have lots to consider when creating ad creative, but they best not overlook the importance of one seemingly simple thing: background color. According to a thorough analysis by Rocket Fuel, “Background color has a significant impact on ad performance across every vertical examined.” Overall, ads with red backgrounds had 31% higher conversion rates when compared to ads with other background colors, the highest lift among background colors. Other solid performers include orange and yellow.

Background Color Performance

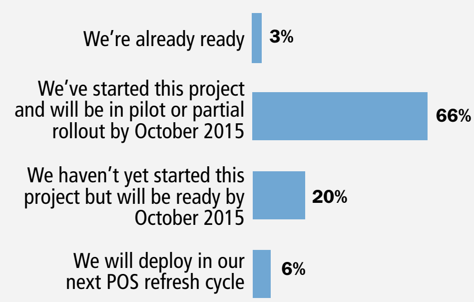


Source: Rocket Fuel

EMV Goal Posts

Despite the apparent complexities of compliance, U.S. retail CIOs surveyed by Forrester Research are generally confident about their rollouts of EMV (chip and PIN) capabilities, with 66% expressing confidence about meeting the October 2015 deadline. Just about 5 percent said EMV plans have not been established whatsoever.

Regarding the rollout of EMV (chip and PIN) capabilities, what are your plans to meet the October 2015 mandate for liability shift?



Source: Forrester Research

48

Percentage of retailers that said employee access to Wi-Fi has had a positive impact on customer loyalty and sales, with an average increase of sales at 3.4%, according to IHL Group surveys.

Set Up Camp

Despite lackluster growth in participation numbers and a general sentiment that camping is not cool among younger demographics, sales of camping gear have been rather robust the past few summers. In the months from May to September, sales of camping gear have grown year-over-year since 2012, often in the double digits, according to figures from OIA's VantagePoint. Among those months, the greatest growth since 2012 seems to be happening in August, which saw double-digit jumps in both 2013 (23.1%) and 2014 (10.6%).

Camping Gear Sales and Growth by Month ($Millions)

	2012	2013	YoY % Ch.	2014	YoY %Ch.
May	$127.9	$129.9	1.6%	$143.7	+10.97%
June	$166.2	$178.3	7.3%	$194.7	+9.2%
July	$122.5	$138.4	12.9%	$152.6	+10.3%
August	$111.9	$137.8	23.1%	$152.6	+10.6%
September	$109.1	$112.4	3.0%	$122.0	+8.6%

Source: OIA VantagePoint

Loyalty in the Cards

The number of loyalty cards is up this year, according to surveys by Brand Loyalty, but the number of active cards has dipped slightly. This seems to suggest that customers jump on a program to gain an immediate benefit (or because they don't want to say no to an associate) but only find programs compelling enough to continue using them about half the time.

Number of Loyalty Cards Held and Used

	2014	2015
Cards in wallet	10.9	13.3
Cards considered active	7.8	6.7

Source: Brand Loyalty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Seirus Innovations has named **Dean Carlson** as sales manager of its snow sports division. Carlson will be involved in both key account and regional territory management, handling Seirus' full line of cold-weather snow sports product. Carlson's experience in the sporting goods industry includes eight years at Smith Optics.

Chaco expands its sales team with the addition of **Hawk Associates** in New England. Covering Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, Hawk Associates is comprised of industry veterans **Doug Hawkins**, **Matt Ronca** and **Kyle Banfield**. In addition to Chaco, Hawk Associates also represents Smartwool and Kombi.

Chaco also has promoted **Todd Growth**, former director of sales, to the position of vice president of sales. In this role, Growth will further develop Chaco's U.S. wholesale strategy, enrich the brand's presence across retail partners and continue to lead the sales team.

Pelican International has hired **Larson Brothers LCC** as its sales agency in the Midwestern states. The Larson Brothers will be working alongside **Dave Sheehy**, Pelican's Midwest regional sales manager, to service an existing portfolio of accounts and drive the expansion of Pelican International's market share in the region. For the past 25 years the Larson Brothers have been selling outdoor gear mainly in the Midwest and for the last 15 years has been representing market leading brands in the paddlesports industry. **David Larson** can be reach at (541) 410-3840 or dave@larsonbrothers.net.

Bogs Footwear has hired **Waypoint Outdoor** to represent the brand in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. Based in Seattle, Wash., Waypoint Outdoor has been operating in the Pacific Northwest since 1998 with an extensive background in brand development and a focus on footwear. Led by **Jim Purdy** and **Bob Holding**, Waypoint's 13-person team is located throughout the Northwest with reps based in Bend, Ore., Bozeman, Mont., and Anchorage, Alaska.

Super.natural, a provider of "fusion performance apparel," announced the addition of four new sales agencies to its USA sales team. Sales representation for super.natural now extends into the Northwest, Southeast, Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions. **Linda Morton and Associates** takes over the Northwest region including Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Alaska and currently represent numerous outdoor brands including Carve Designs, Overland Equipment, Chums Outdoor Accessories and Beyond Coastal. **The Uber Group** has joined the super.natural team to cover the Southeast region with representation in West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida and Oklahoma. The group represents brands such as Arcteryx, Salomon, Suunto, Lole and Mountain Khakis. **Keith Whitmore** of **Allen Whitmore Sports Group** will be handling the Mid-Atlantic region, including Virginia, Delaware, New York and New Jersey, and currently represents Kuhl, Teva and Optic Never. And **Hampton Synnott** of **Evolution Outdoor Sales** will be covering Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont and Rhode Island. Synnott presently represents Lole, Mammut, Lilypond and Rossignol. The new representation is in addition to super.natural's existing rep forces in the Rocky Mountain and Midwest regions.

Footwear manufacturer **Evolv Sports** announced the hiring of **Will Mott** as an independent rep for Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas. Mott will be servicing retailers, climbing shops and gyms in this territory. He can be contacted at will.d.mott@gmail.com.

Austrian brand **Stegmann Clogs** has selected Virginia-based **AGS Footwear Group** as its U.S. distribution partner. With 83 years in the business, AGS owner **Andy Jacobs** says Stegmann complements the selling cycle of its Cudas water shoe and sandal brand, "enabling our company to establish year round presence in new and seasoned stores." AGS Footwear Group also includes Superior Boot Co. and a private label footwear division.

Sea to Summit announced the hiring of **James Howarth** to the newly created role of Northeast sales manager. With more than 15 years of industry experience, Howarth held a product manager role at Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS), where he became familiar with the Sea to Summit brand and products. Howarth will work closely with Sea to Summit's independent rep agency, **Sky Ambitions**, said the company. He can be reached at james@seatosummit.com.

CRAFT North America has enlisted **DS Specialty Sports** to represent the brand in New York, New Jersey, Delaware and Eastern Pennsylvania. DS Specialty Sports is led by **Dan Sims**, who began the agency in 1989, and represents brands across multiple channels, including run, cycle, outdoor and ski. Current clients include Camelbak, CEP, Clif Bar, Timex, Balega and Linus Bike. Sims is joined by **Dan Haselbauer**, who got his start in the industry in ski and bike hardgoods. Haselbauer was previously a sales and merchandise manager with Paragon Sports and Metro Bicycle Stores before moving into brand representation. Sims and Haselbauer work out of offices in Katonah and Brooklyn, N.Y.

KOR Water expands its U.S. sales team with the addition of the **Zulim Agency** in the South Central territory and **Robert Dennis**, an independent rep, in the Southwestern territory. Covering Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana, Zulim Agency is comprised of company president **Tony "Ty" Zulim** and **Jennifer Jones**. Zumlin recently moved to Texas from California, where he was a sales manager in the action sports industry for more than 10 years. He recently started his own rep group and hired Jones to assist with the brands they are representing. In addition to KOR Water, Zulim Agency also represents Stance Socks, Bounce SUP, Vere Sandals, Lalo Tactical and Metal Mulisha. Zulim can be reached by email at tyzulim@gmail.com. Cover-


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ing California, Nevada, Arizona and Hawaii, Dennis brings 15 years of outdoor sport sales experience. In addition to KOR Water, he also represents running/endurance footwear and apparel brands. Dennis can be reached at robertjdennis@gmail.com.

Patagonia announced multiple changes to its global sales force. **Bruce Old** has been promoted from senior director of global wholesale to vice president of global wholesale. To this role, Old brings more than 20 years of experience across multiple parts of the organization, having worked in retail, wholesale and managing the customer service teams. Additionally, **Walt Bailey** transitioned from eastern sales manager to director of North American wholesale. In this role, Bailey will oversee the rep teams and dealer relationships in the United States and Canada. During the course of the last 15 years, Bailey has successfully represented Patagonia as a sales rep and most recently as eastern sales manager. **Gregor Finke**, meanwhile, moved from dealer services manager to director of dealer services. In this new role, he will assist the wholesale management team in the planning and execution of Patagonia's specialty dealer focus. In addition, Finke will provide support for the global wholesale business by sharing resources and expertise globally and continuing to lead the dealer services team in Reno. Lastly, **Matt O'Connor** has accepted the role of western sales manager. Previously, O'Conner was a Patagonia Fish sales rep in 2008, where he quickly took on the wholesale business in the Rockies. He will continue to be based in Colorado.

Chums recently welcomed **Andrew D'Acquisto** as national sales manager. D'Acquisto brings 20 years of outdoor industry sales and retail experience to his new role, where he will manage the wholesale division for Chums and **Beyond Coastal Sun Care**. Most recently, D'Acquisto served as the North American sales manager for Gregory Mountain Products, where he oversaw the adventure brand's U.S. and Canadian sales force. D'Acquisto also spent five years as a senior guide and field manager with Open Sky Wilderness Therapy, providing instruction in primitive wilderness skills, backcountry camping, navigation and Leave No Trace. He's a certified ski technician and Master Boot Fitter and has received First Responder, Wilderness First Aid, Crevasse Rescue and Winter Survival training.

Angel Castellanos of **Travel Ambassador Sales & Marketing** has been retained by **Eagle Creek** for luggage specialty representation in Southern California, Arizona and Southern Nevada, effective immediately. Castellanos joins the Eagle Creek team with the unique distinction of having already won Agency of the Year for Eagle Creek with another firm. In 2012, Castellanos gained notoriety after launching a series of "Travel Smart" events at retailers across the West.


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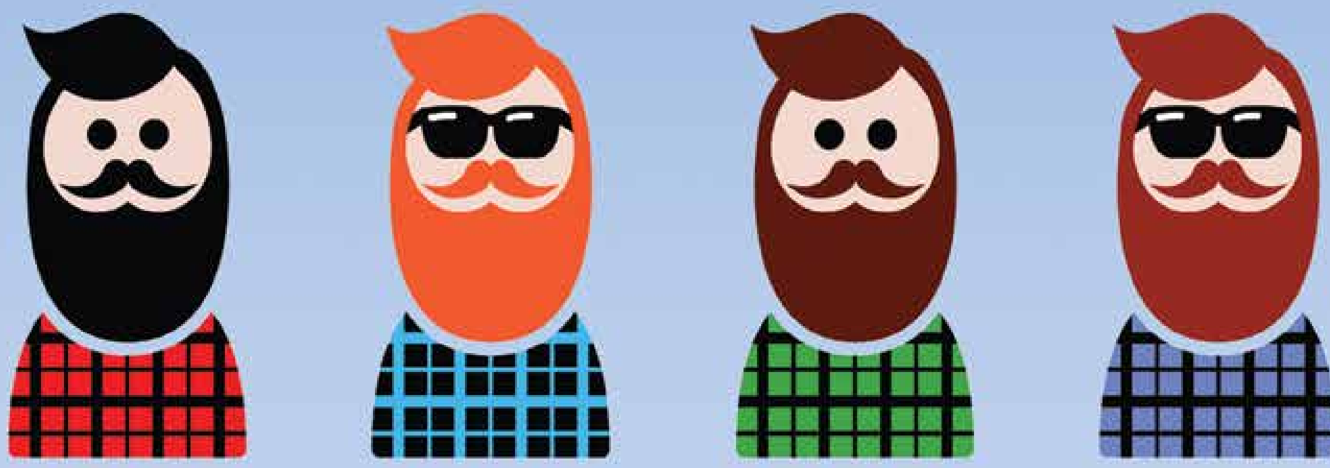
Leveraging 'Lumbersexual'



TURNING A FASHION TREND INTO CAMPING SALES

By **Martin** Vilaboy

There certainly are recent cases in which fashion trends, cultural crazes or mainstream movements and fads have impacted outdoor participation and product sales. The move toward "Made in USA" and the related rise of "heritage," for example, was a boon to many outdoor brands, as was the general yoga/fitness craze, which also undoubtedly encouraged some folks to take their workouts to the trail. Likewise, the American mindset during the most recent recession clearly pushed many folks toward camping as an affordable vacation, or staycation, option.

So as we head into the summer recreation season, the question we posed to several outdoor industry veterans, experts and friends is whether or not the emergence of an urban outdoorsy mentality and fashion consciousness, lumped under the moniker "lumbersexual," can be leveraged to sell camping. In other words, can retailers and brands – through the proper marketing, merchandising and assortment – entice lumbersexuals to try their manicured hands at camping this spring and summer, and hence buy camping product? How one answered these questions depends a lot on whether one views the ongoing trend as little more than a fashion statement and fad or as representing something much deeper underneath the beard and plaid.

If the urban woodsman sensibility is simply based solely or mostly on the right "look" and coinciding brand labels, then the prospects are pretty low that those Bespoke hatchets will actually be chopping any campfire wood.

"One is a fashion trend; the other a long-established form of recreation," says Jeff Basford, president of Paha Que. "It's kind of like a baseball bat manufacturer trying to capitalize on a spike in ball cap sales."

Indeed, it's silly to expect the hippest of hipsters, or those who view camping as "a hotel with no room service," to abandon their trendy urban lofts and studios for air-mattresses on a dirt floor.

"Just because these guys have let the beard go rugged, doesn't mean they aren't still obsessed with grooming. Camping and the outdoors might be too dirty for this

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crowd," says James Graven of Treehouse Communications, whose clients include technical brands Montane as well as heritage brands Helle of Norway (artisan knives) and Hults Bruks (axes). "Glamping may be an inroad for these types, where they can stand around looking good, drinking high-end bourbon from steel flasks

Official press photos from Target's leap into urban outdoorsy with its Target Collective

and cooking gourmet food on cast-iron pans while oiling their beards. But I won't expect to see a bunch of Brookly-nites heading to the Gunks to try their hand at climbing, backpacking or mountaineering,"

Of course, the urban woodsman trend has grown far beyond the trendiest neighborhoods at the center of the largest NFL cities, as evidenced by Target's recent unveiling of its Target Collective, a collection of U.S.-made leather goods, gifts and clothes for the manliest of men. Described as "decidedly lumbersexual," the collection combines pieces from brands such as Taylor & Stich, Owen & Fred, Locally Grown, Duluth Packs and Billykirk.

Regardless of Target's motivations, however, there are those who see the lumbersexual trend as something more culturally significant than the latest pet rock syndrome. When put in context, the lumbersexual or urban woodsman emerges as a type of reaction to what can be viewed as emasculating trends prevalent during the last several years, as well as a somewhat pampered urban existence.

"The beard and outdoor wear brings a certain manly ruggedness that overcomes the femininity of the metrosexual look," says Craven.

"It's the surfacing of inner desires, an inner manliness channeling Paul Bunyan as a foil for Venti lattes, diaper changing and the absence of any existential risk or soul-cleansing adventure in an increasingly sanitized and predictable life," says Cam Brensinger, founder and CEO of NEMO Equipment.

While fully admitting to the fad and vanity elements, Brensinger believes the beard, plaid and manly accoutrements reflect a desire to find more meaning in life.

"To me, the beard is the literal and figurative outgrowth of an inner masculine id, a latent but potent desire to face real challenges, to know and overcome hardship, to be a provider," he explains.

Modern civilized life, despite the advancements, has in some regards distanced itself from some simple, primitive truths, Brensinger argues. "Modern man has few socially acceptable outlets for his inner manliness. His desires are forced to wither and die, or surface, pathetically, in minor contests of grilling, first-person shooter video games or fantasy football."

In turn, the outdoorsy sensibility, continues Brensinger, sends a message that a man should wear clothes than enable, not inhibit him; a beard for concealment and protection; a pocket knife for utility and readiness; and boots for stature and capability. "If it's only fashion, maybe it stops there, but if it's really about connecting with some hardwired primitive inner-self, shouldn't he also desire to fend for himself and secure his own basic elements of survival: water, fire, food and shelter?" asks Brensinger. If lumbersexuality is indeed an authentic expression of manliness, "camping should be a natural fit. It's the perfect opportunity to put the clothing, the boots and the Gransfors axe to good use."

Put into a bit more simplistic terms, "Classy dudes are realizing that ladies like them with a little stubble and a big sense of adventure," quips Jack Knoll, marketing director and Forsake.

Although maybe a bit facetious, Knoll's observation is backed up by some anecdotal evidence. According to a recent "Social Buzz" from the Outdoor Industry Association, females discussing the topic online "want lumbersexual men to not only dress the part but be authentic and actually have some amount of outdoor expertise," writes OIA.

So ultimately, if the trend is simply "the latest costume for membership in a hipster subculture," as Brensinger puts it, the trend likely doesn't have legs to stand up within the camping market, and would be risky to build a merchandising and assortment story upon. But if it's also a manifestation of the desire to tap into every man's inner Ron Swanson, well then, Ron certainly enjoys everything about camping.

Number Worth Noting

130	Millions of acres of America's forests that are located right in cities and towns, according to the National Forest Service. Urban forests come in many different forms and sizes, including urban parks, street trees, landscaped boulevards, gardens, river and coastal promenades, greenways, river corridors, wetlands, nature preserves, shelter belts of trees, and working trees at former industrial sites. "Urban forests, through planned connections of green spaces, form the green infrastructure on which communities depend," says NFS.

‘Don’t Condescend Me Man’

Either way – a lasting cultural direction or temporary imagery – marketers looking to leverage the lumbersexual mystique should move forward with some caution. After all, the term “lumbersexual” itself can have negative connotations, used by some primarily as a derogatory term when poking fun at the trend and its adherents, suggests our informal survey of industry contestants.

This likely stems from the “poser” mentality, or a perception those who truly live the outdoor lifestyle can have toward folks who narcissistically adopt the “look” but not the ethos of that lifestyle. While possibly legitimate at times, such sentiments are certainly not conducive to growth or the inclusive spirit one would hope permeates the outdoor marketplace.

“The outdoor industry has a huge opportunity to gain from the current trend, but if we reinforce terms like [lumbersexual] we will alienate the very consumer we are looking to sell to: the millennial,” says Nate Borne, general manager at Snow Peak USA.

Borne prefers the term “urban woodsman,” which is currently used by marketers and designers in the fashion industry.

“However, whatever the term we want to use, we should make sure we are marketing our lifestyle as positive as possible no matter the consumer, no matter the trend,” he says.

“As a guy who loves the outdoor lifestyle, lumbersexual just seems like a costume for someone who wants to play outdoors,” adds Craven. “But if it brings awareness to the outdoors and maybe turns a few people onto the outdoor lifestyle, then I’m all for it.”

This Beckel Canvas Log Carrier can be merchandised so “a lumbersexual can instantly picture himself standing on the edge of the forest, this carrier swung nonchalantly over his plaid-clad shoulder, as he adjusts his man-bun,” says Nikwax’s Allen.

Snow Peak’s Stacking Shelf Center is not only a stylish way for the urban woodsman to store his accoutrements, but it’s also a nice campground merchandising piece for in-store.

So what are some ways to entice lumbersexuals to try camping? Heidi Allen, marketing director at Nikwax, suggests tapping into the desire to portray “manliness” combined with the group’s product-focused nature to create a scene she describes as “man glamping.”

“Highlight how the experience can be rugged, yet highly design-attuned,” she says. That means thinking along the lines of “urban-rugged,” says Allen, including concepts such as “campfire cocktails,” complete with high-end bourbon, or a local (possibly tattooed) chef discussing the best meats to cook over an open flame.

Highlighted camping products – or at least the accessories merchandised alongside of traditional campsite gear – should convey a sense of craftsmanship and authenticity, says Allen, in agreement with many other experts in our panel. Such merchandising examples could include a hand-sewn, canvas Beckel log carrier or a beautiful, craftsman-made knife from Helle of Norway or Snow Peak’s eloquent-yet-very-masculine Copper Head Peg Hammer, as just a few examples.

Of course, that’s not to suggest style or design trumps substance.

“Unfortunately, a lot of lumbersexually designed products push pastiche over function, and many lumbersexuals have consequently had a bad experience using their stuff outdoor,” says Robert Fry, director of product at Mountain Hardwear.

After all, a major part to being “authentic,” and inherent to craftsmanship, are the concepts of reliability and built-for-purpose. “This consumer is attracted to well-designed, classic products that both work and last,” says Borne. And that plays to the strengths of specialty brands and retailers.

“Outdoor, similar to workwear, has designs that are much more based on function, and those functions, those fabrics and those historic styles tell a story that is attractive,” says Borne.


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Handmade in Norway using darkened oak, curly birch and red leather inserts, the Algonquin from Helle Knives exemplifies the combination of design and utilitarianism that defines the urban woodsman.

Few things express more manliness than a tool roll, this one from Iron and Resin.

When it comes to conveying the message built into those fabrics and functions, however, outdoor marketers may need to employ a different strategy than they have commonly used in the past.

"These are not going to ever be gear junkies that care about the fabric specs, the weight and other selling points we tend to perseverate on," Borne continues. "They are much more interested in the emotion behind the design and story. How we sell is going to be based on the stories we tell and how we can inspire."

Not that it will be easy. Indeed, mustering up inspiration among urban woodsmen could require changing their entire perception of the campground experience.

"If we really want lumbersexuals to camp, which we should because we desperately need new audiences, we should recast the whole picture of camping into a Huckberry, Best Made, Iron and Resin look," says Brensinger. That means casting aside the notions of blue tarps, cooler-soaked hot dog buns, reeking armpits, leaky tents and dirt-stained jeans that likely come to mind when most urban dwellers think about camping.

"We should transform the image of camping to look more like it does day mountain biking or partying at a music festival. Rather, the experience is "thoughtfully chosen," says Brensinger, with beautiful, high-quality gear, hours spent barbequing delicious food, and friends having relaxed conversation in comfortable furniture.

Snow Peak's Copper Head Peg Hammer says heritage, sleek design, manliness and utilitarian all in one hand-held tool.

in Japan, for example," says Brensinger. "The Japanese take creating an experience while camping very seriously."

Indeed, the Japanese camping experience is seen as much more than cheap overnight accommodations or a place to conveniently crash after a

"A campsite is composed with the deliberateness of home," says Brensinger of the Japanese camper. "It has the primal ingredients of stars and fire and self-sufficiency, but it's attractive, romantic, groomed and on display – kind of like the beard of a lumbersexual."

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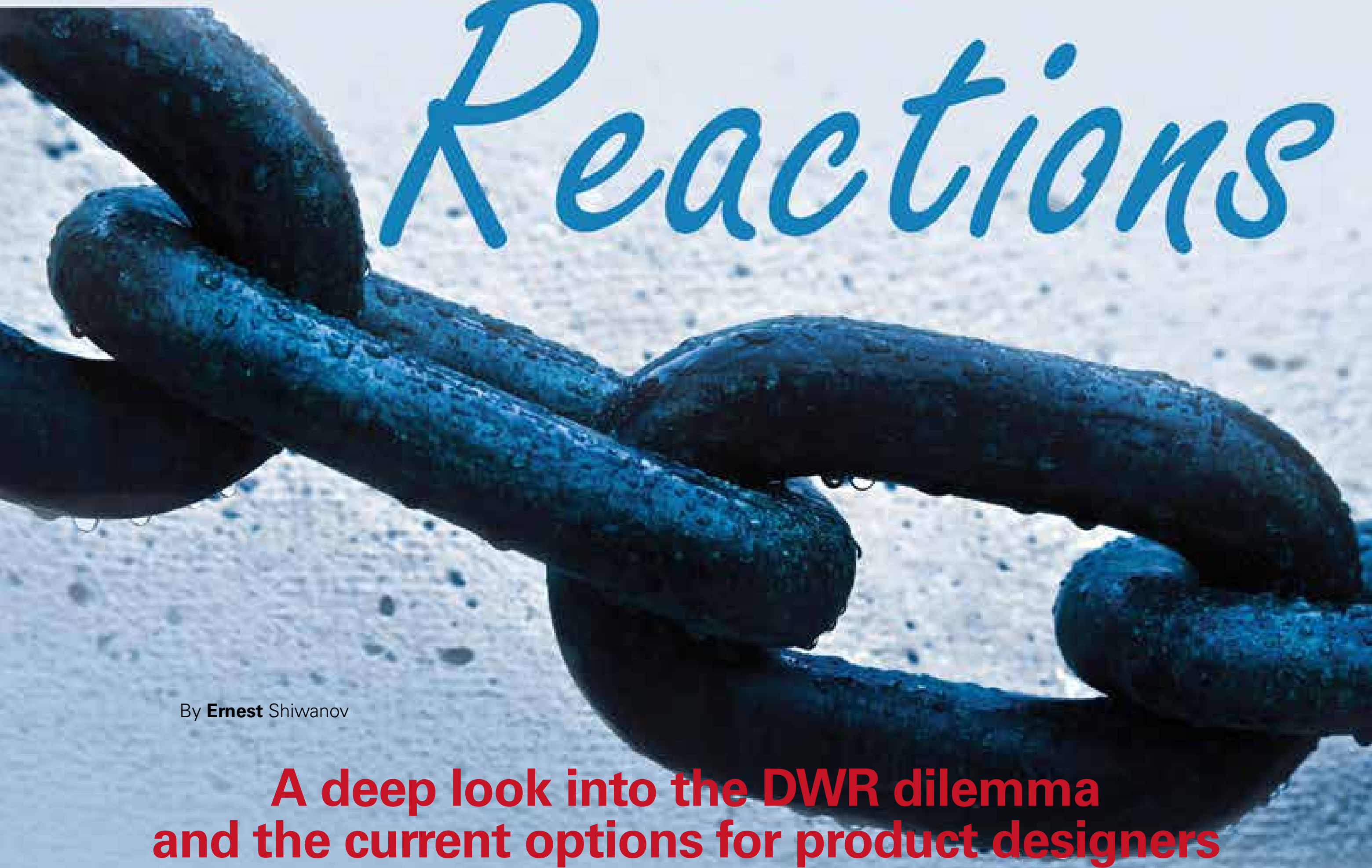

By **Ernest** Shiwanov

A deep look into the DWR dilemma and the current options for product designers

In 2006, Stephen L. Johnson, administrator at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, obtained commitments from eight major producers of perfluorooctanoatic acid (PFOA) to phase out its manufacture. The EPA's aim was to eliminate PFOA from "facility emissions and product content" and other precursors or similar chemicals that could break down or function similar to PFOA. Known as the 2010/15 Stewardship Program, the agency's goal targeted 2010 with a 95 percent worldwide reduction of PFOA and to eliminate it by 2015's end.

So what? Why is that of interest to the general public let alone the outdoor industry? Well, EPA animal studies have shown relationships between PFOA and "developmental and other adverse effects in laboratory animals." A 2005 EPA Science Advisory Board report found PFOA to be a likely human carcinogen. Additionally, The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) lists thyroid disease, poor birth outcomes, Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and heart disease/higher cholesterol to PFOA exposure. Low IQ, learning disabilities and a host of other problems also have been linked to infants exposed, post and prenatally, to PFOA.

Worse, it appears low levels of PFOA have been found throughout the environment and in 98 percent of the general human population. It is persistent over time in both humans and the environment. The operative word here is

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"persistent" – it resists safely going away. Its stick-to-itiveness and endemic cast makes the associated problems formidable. Yet its tenacious stability is the reason why PFOA and its family of like chemicals are so extremely useful.

The secret to the functionality of this class of fluorocarbon compounds lies in the strong chemical bond between the fluorine atom (the fluorine in fluoro), the carbon atom and fluorine's unique character. The resulting fluoro-carbon bond is persistently stable in many environments. Within this group, also referred to as perfluorocarbons (PFC), a class of industrial chemicals was created. One of these compounds, perfluorooctanoatic acid (PFOA), also known by its contraction C8, is used as a building block in the production of fluoropolymers. Another widely used PFC is perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), a powerful surfactant whose range of usefulness includes functioning like detergents, emulsifiers, dispersants and foaming agents. Collectively, this group of PFCs includes C5, C6, C6 sulfonate, C7 and homologs (longer chains of the same base unit common to these particular PFCs) C9 through 12.

As it turns out, the outdoor recreation industry has been using PFCs for almost as long as they have been around. PFOS is found within the many textiles used in making apparel, tents, sleeping bags and backpacks. PFOS helps keep outdoor fabrics water resistant as durable water repellents (DWR). 3M's Scotchgard was one of the best known PFOS-derived DWRs, bringing stain and water repellency to a wide range of consumer products including furniture, curtains, floor coverings and backpacking gear.

"Garments and equipment treated with fluoro-technology also have a longer useful life, therefore reducing energy and water used to manufacture replacements," says the FlouroCouncil, a gobal industry council for fluoro-technology. "They also require less frequent laundering, lower wash temperature and shorter drying time, further reducing use of water and energy."

PFOA derivatives were exploited for their low friction, non-stick, heat-resistant properties particularly with the invention of Teflon. Is there a household in the late 1960s not taken up by the space-aged miracle of non-stick frying pans? The space age also saw the use of Teflon in space suits and eventually in other technology spin-offs such as in the waterproof laminate membranes Gore-Tex and eVENT.

For the outdoor retail industry, it is pretty clear PFCs are pretty special, indeed, essential to the integrity of many outdoor recreation products.

Globally, fluoro-technology materials and products specific to the outdoor apparel and equipment industry generate a total of about $27 billion annually in economic output, says to the American Chemistry Council. Their ubiquity requires the replacement solutions or options to be carefully vetted. Given that it is 2015, will the pact made by the major producers of PFOA reach the EPA's goal of eliminating them as set out in the 2010/15 Stewardship Program? How will the new products balance performance with environmental compliance?

According to Jessica Bowman, executive director of the FluoroCouncil,

Atomic Backland Carbon Light

"New reporting data published by U.S. EPA in January 2015 show that all Stewardship Program companies are on track to meet the goal of globally phasing out these chemicals by the end of 2015."

Founded in 2011, the FluoroCouncil membership is composed of the world's leading companies that manufacture fluorotechnology products: fluoropolymer products, fluorotelomer-based products, fluorosurfactants and fluoro-surface property modification agents. Members of the FluoroCouncil include Archroma Management LLC, Arkema France, Asahi Glass Co., Daikin Industries, DuPont Company and Solvay Specialty Polymers.

For the outdoor industry, it is performance and environment stewardship that drive many of the brand identities, and the PFC industry has responded. As part of the voluntary 2010/15 Stewardship Program, the participating companies were to report on their production and emissions, both domestically and by "non-U.S. operations." The yearly reports were to start in 2007 and end in 2015.

Of the eight companies participating in the 2010/15 Stewardship Program, 3M was quiet vocal about getting rid of PFOA, PFOS (not covered under the Stewardship Program) and their precursors early on. Dan Hakes of 3M corporate said by late 2001 that a substitute had already been made for PFOS, the mainstay in ScotchGard. 3M reported no domestic production of FPOA and its associated precursors by the first report in 2007. By 2012, 3M's non-U.S. operations had ceased production per the EPA's Stewardship Program, as well. (To see progress reports of the participating companies for years 2007 through 2014, you can check out the EPA's Web site: www.epa.gov/oppt/pfoa/pubs/stewardship/)

Like all the perfluorocarbon manufacturing companies, DuPont shifted its research toward developing new PFCs with C8 performance minus the drawbacks. Many of these new products have six carbons (C6 or perfluorohexanoic

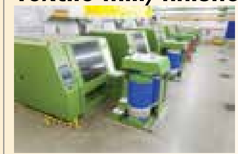
DU PONT®	HUNTSMAN Enriching lives through innovation	Textile mill/finisher 	DuPont™ Teflon®
Capstone repellent and stain release products made by DuPont	PHOBOL CP textile finishes are made by Huntsman from Capstone repellent and stain release products. Huntsman provides many finishes that deliver a wide range of textile effects (e.g repel, softness, wrinkle-free).	PHOBOL CP textile finishes are applied by mills and finishers to fabrics following Hunstman recipe and application guidance in order to deliver desired textile effects.	Fabric treated with PHOBOL CP products that meet DuPont performance specifications may be branded Teflon fabric protector.

Figure 1. DuPont Capstone's supply chain journey (after 1 July 2015); courtesy DuPont/Chemours

acid – PFHxA) or less, jointly known as short-chain technology. The short chain advantage lies in:

1) Not degrading into PFOA or PFOS,
2) Does not bio-accumulate,
3) Has greatly reduced toxicity in all environments and
4) Is rapidly eliminated from biological systems.

"The short-chain alternatives now used in Teflon fabric protector have … no compromise between performance and compliance," states Lisa P. Hardy, DuPont's North America manager for Teflon fabric protector.

DuPont has as many as 60 tailored solutions marketed under Capstone for various applications. For textiles, seven Capstone stain and rain products are converted by Huntsman, a manufacturer of textile finishes, into fabric-specific treatments (Figure 1). For instance, the textile mill would apply Huntman's PHOBOL CP-S on wool and wool blends. Other products are for cotton or synthetics, with or without stain release. All of the solutions are specific to the end use – not a one-size-fits-all application.

Swiss-based company Archroma Management LLC, meanwhile, has created the Nuva N series, "consisting of products based on the latest C6 chemistry," says the company. However, Archroma also has invested in a fluorine-free technology, Arkophob FFR, a product competitive with C6 fluorochemicals and alleged to be superior to other flurorine-free DWRs.

Asahi Glass Co., for its part, has moved its efforts into the C6 realm with its AsahiGuard E-SERIES, a PFOA-free fluorochemical. Asahi says it has chosen this technology path because it is "recognized as superior to wax or silicone agents," due to a "superior stability and durability in real-world conditions." (See Figure 2.)

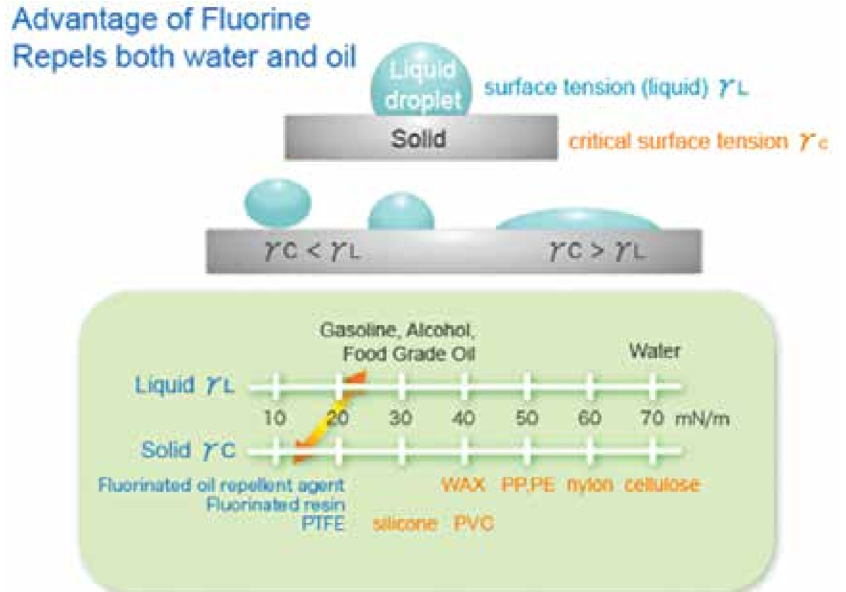


Figure 2. Nomograph showing the significantly lower surface energy of fluorinated chemistry applied on a solid in comparison to the surface energy of various liquids; courtesy of Asahi Glass Co.

Since 1968, Daikin Industries, Ltd. has been creating UNIDYNE DWRs. Now utilizing C6 backbones in their chemistry, the UNIDYNE product family is PFOA-free. Corporate-wide, Daikin "and its subsidiaries intend to stop manufacturing, using and selling Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and C8 telomer-based water and oil repellent products by the end of 2015," states the company. Additionally, Daikin has three (five total for textiles) unique product offerings for textiles. They are hybrids using fluorine and silicon, co-developed with Dow Corning Corporation. Marketed under UNIDYNE Multi-Series, the concept is to overcome texture hardening found with certain textile surfaces after being subjected to DWR treatments. The addition of silicon adds suppleness without losing the stain and rain properties of fluoro-technology. (See Figure 3.)

Solvay Specialty Polymers' Fluorolink PFPE is a product line engineered to solve water and stain repellency on various substrates. In apparel, Fluorolink 5032 and P56 offer a water-based option or direct application of this perfluoropolyether layer. Its unique structure enables it to attach to synthetic or protein-based textiles while preserving its fluorochemical performance.

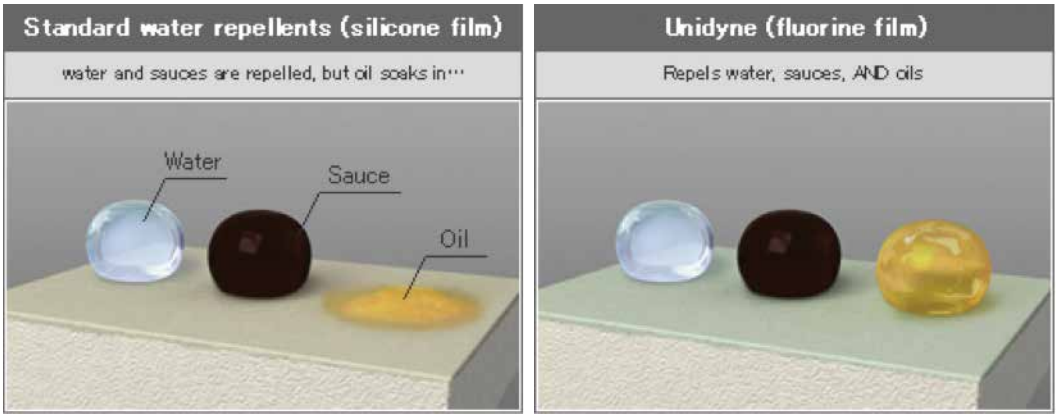


Figure 3. Daikin's UNIDYNE DWR PFC technology vs non-PFC technology; courtesy of Daikin Industries, Ltd.

Solvay emphatically states, that the product line is not manufactured with, do not contain and do not degrade to PFOA, PFOS or a C8 telomer-like structure.

No less involved, the EPA has worked closely with the companies in using peer-review science to ensure the new compounds do not repeat history with a trove of unforeseen consequences. In addition, the EPA is proposing to apply the Significant New Use Rule (SNUR) on the phased out 2010/15 Stewardship Program chemicals. Under the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976, SNUR would pre-screen any of the phased out PFCs for any possible new use and, after a 90-day review period, deliberate on the extent of its usage.

There is no shortage of non-C8 fluorochemical products for the outdoor industry to choose from post-EPA Stewardship Program. Remarkably, a salient aspect of the EPA's Program is how the elimination of PFOA, PFC precursors and homologs were carried out voluntarily. Eight major producers of these invasive, dangerous and very robust fluorochemicals were able to join the EPA in solving, if not addressing, one of the most dauntingly ubiquitous environmental problems ever faced: all done without the leverage of regulation.

There is no question some motivation lies within the "more than $1.2 trillion of global manufacturing output relying upon fluorotechnology," as reported by the FluoroCouncil's Bowman in her January 2014 OECD webinar. A quick and seamless transition to a predominately C6 economy would forego any fiscal disruption of this manufacturing sector. However, some have questioned the efficacy of C6 chemistry as sulfonates like PFOS, with less than eight carbons, may likely bio-accumulate.

Be it as it may, the process encourages conversations on mitigating global risk, non-fluoro-technologies or nature-inspired engineering, to all together avoid the overt cost to the planet and its inhabitants.

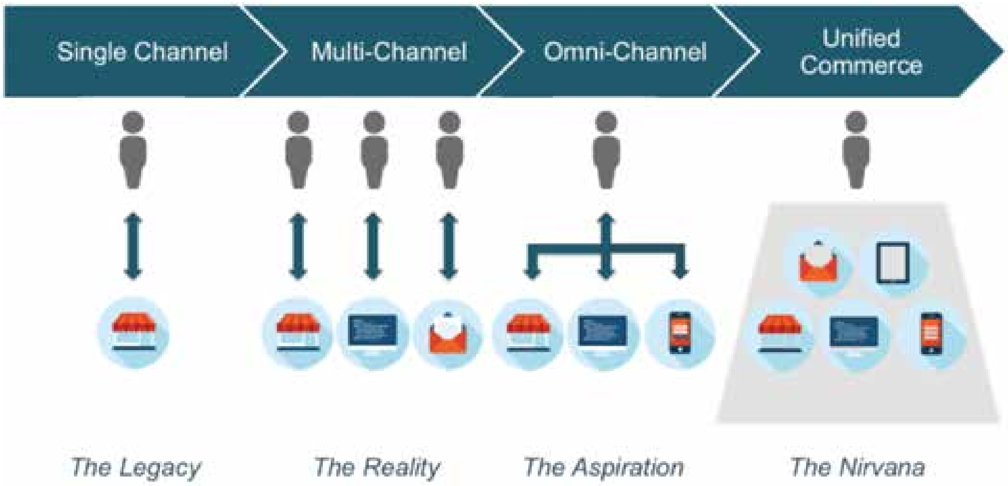
The Rise of U-Commerce

by **Martin** Vilaboy

The next step in customer-facing technology will unify the channels

First, there were physical stores, and it was just "commerce." Then came the Internet and with it "e-commerce." Next, the Internet moved to the palm of our hands, which brought about "m-commerce." And now, even before most retailers have fully wrapped their heads around the 'e' and 'm" versions, it's time to start thinking about "u-commerce."

Welcome to the pace of change within technology.



Source: Boston Retail Partners

As recently as last summer, retail technologists and consultant types introduced the concept of "unified commerce," and it's quickly become the latest buzzword among retail CIO types. According to Ken Morris, partner and co-founder of consultants Boston Retail Partners and an early advocate of the strategy, unified commerce seeks to break down the walls between internal channel silos by leveraging a single, unified platform.

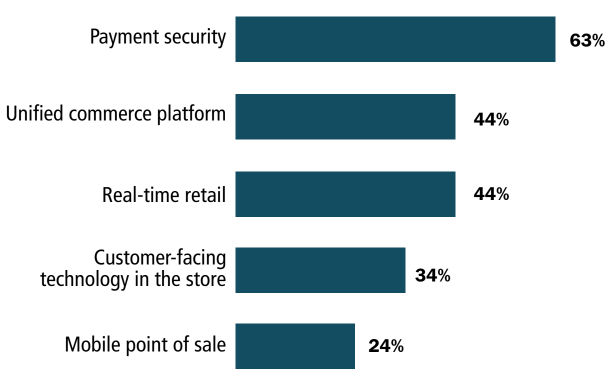
Of course, for most specialty retailers, this is not a "right now" technology transition. Currently, no single technology vendor even offers a truly comprehensive unified platform. But unified commerce certainly is not on the "bleeding edge" either. Indeed, the vast majority of retailers envision a single, unified commerce platform on the horizon, and nearly three-quarters of retail business and technology executives surveyed for the National Retail Federation are at least informally planning this business and technical transformation.

For most retail IT departments, however, the current reality is somewhere in the middle. But whether or not a clear roadmap to unified commerce is in place, the transition toward a unified sales platform should be weighed and considered into just about every customer-facing technology purchase decision moving forward.

The reasons are not hard to understand. Few people in the retail business, if anyone, still need to be convinced that shoppers are increasingly powerful and in control. Customers can quickly navigate multiple touch points and sources of information, compare and contrast, and find precisely what they want, often from multiple sources. They have come to expect concepts such as ship-to-store, endless aisles, real-time inventory feedback and customized pricing and promotions simply because they know it's possible. (Now Amazon even has them thinking about drones flying around, for goodness sake.) The challenges retailers face behind the scenes to deliver such capabilities, quite simply, are immaterial to consumers. If one retail brand doesn't have precisely what a shopper is looking for, it's likely they can find it somewhere else, often in a matter of clicks and sometimes for less money.

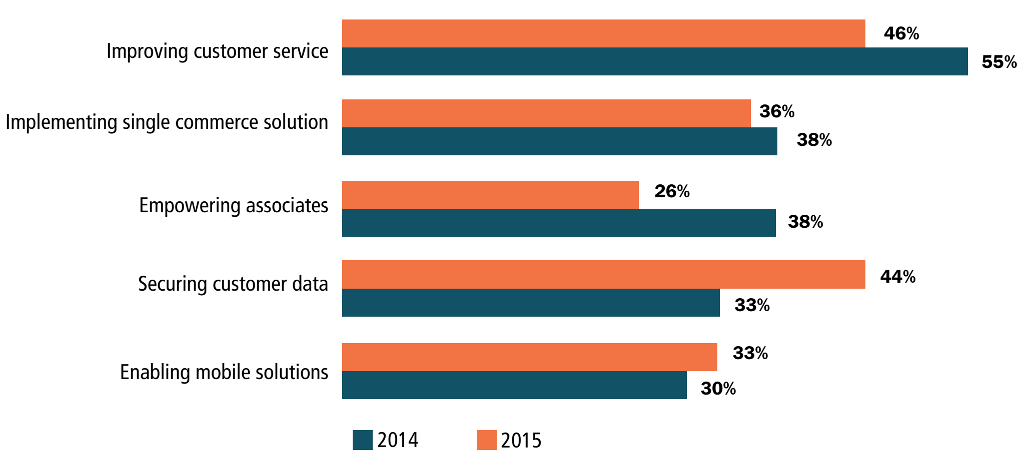
Meeting these omni-channel consumer expectations will require a transition from simply selling available inventory to holistically serving connected customers. It means gathering, analyzing and disseminating customer, product, pricing and inventory data in real-time. The problem is legacy retail technology hasn't been architected to handle these modern-day requirements and the harmonizing of business processes across all customer touch-points, says Boston Retail Partners. Rather, most retailers have deployed technology in separate silos by channel, such as disparate solutions for in-store POS versus e-commerce and, in many cases, mobile. In order to deliver omni-channel-type experiences, retailers have loosely coupled these legacy

Top IT Priorities for Retailers in 2015



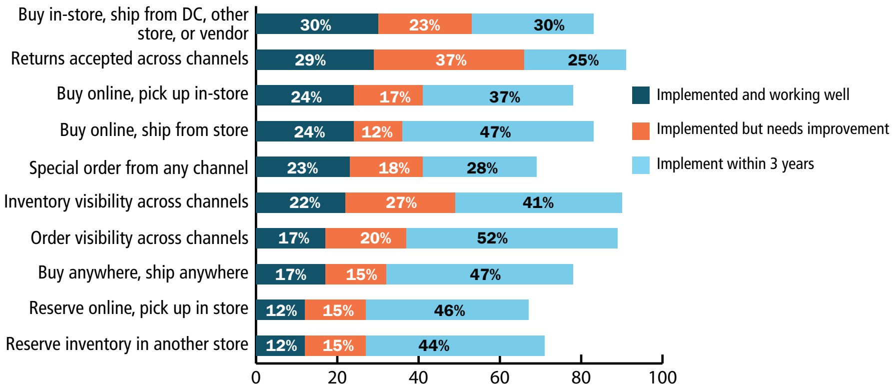
Source: Boston Retail Partners

Retailers Top Challenges for 2015



Source: Boston Retail Partners

The State of Omni-Channel Services



Source: Boston Retail Partners

systems originally implemented to solve specific problems for specific channels.

Many retailers, for instance, have relied on e-commerce engines to deliver their omni-channel experiences. Lower percentages have centralized on in-store POS, as well as customer relationship management (CRM) or enterprise resource planning (ERP) solutions. But the limitations of purpose-built and disparate technology environments, say analysts at Boston Retail Partners, strain to keep pace with rapid advancements in consumer technology and behavior.

"In omni-channel, you have multiple channels, but you don't have one piece of software, one version of the truth," Morris recently told eMarketer. "You have many versions of the truth. In the unified commerce world, it's all connected in real time. I don't just mean the Web side, but the mobile side, the Web side and the store side – all in real time."

The complexity is even greater considering the other platforms that enable commerce – such as inventory management, order management and merchandising – typically are disparate solutions as well.

"The inherent weaknesses of this model have become very apparent, as retailers chasing omni-channel capabilities have to overcome the almost impossible hurdle of integrating disparate legacy systems," says the research and consultancy firm.

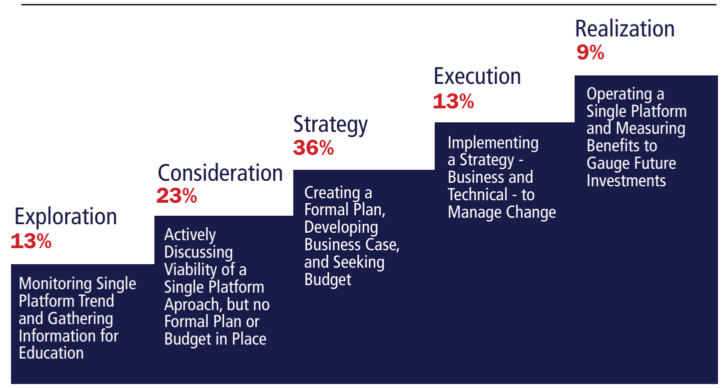
Not that retailers always had much of a choice. Decades ago, most retailers decided on decentralized POS, largely due to the immaturity of networking technology, Morris explains. Networks of the past, he reminds us, were slower, typically not redundant and costly. But with the emergence of nearly ubiquitous fat pipes, cloud computing and software-as-as-service (SaaS) delivery systems, solutions such as virtual private networks, back-up and disaster recovery, redundancy, on-demand computing, content delivery and advanced business and analytic applications are available and affordable for even specialty and smaller businesses.

In turn, retail IT executives are looking to leverage such capabilities to implement single, centralized commerce platforms that support instantaneous transactions, real-time and contextual marketing efforts, customer-based pricing, single channel shopping carts, product availability, etc. across all channels and customer touch points.

"Retailers understand that to deliver a next-generation customer experience they must have technology that supports the seamless convergence of in-store and digital experiences," says a Boston Retail Partners study.

While core merchandising, marketing, supply chain and business administration applications will likely continue to be the system of record in many cases, a unified commerce platform extracts value from back office applications and manages all consumer interactions and transactions throughout the consumer shopping journey, explains the consultant firm.

Phases of Journey Toward Unified Commerce Platform



Source: Boston Retail Partners, NRF

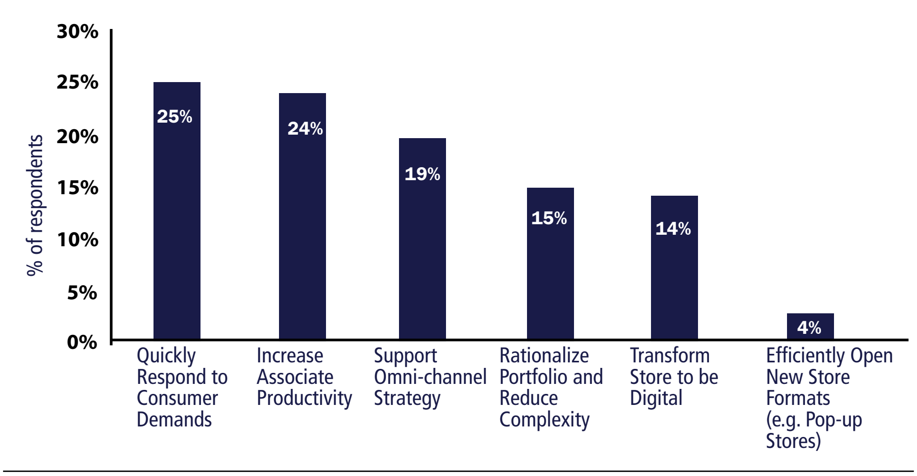
Deployment Plans

In the near-term, 53 percent of U.S. retailers say they plan to implement a single, unified commerce platform to consolidate key data elements, business rules and functionality historically housed in multiple systems, according to a survey performed on behalf of the National Retail Federation, Ecommerce Europe and the Ecommerce Foundation. This represents a nearly 50 percent increase in anticipated adoption year-over-year. During the next 10 years, a full 86 percent of surveyed retail executives plan to leverage a unified commerce platform, suggesting an emerging standard as the technology matures.

In the meantime, while a vast majority of survey respondents envision a unified commerce platform on the horizon, retailers are at various stages in their journeys toward realization. Currently, about one in 10 retailers surveyed by NRF are currently in the "realization stage" of operating a single platform and measuring the benefits to gauge future investments. An additional 13 percent say they are in the "execution stage," or implementing a business and technical strategy to manage the change. As for the rest, nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of retail organizations surveyed are informally planning this business and technical transformation by conducting initial research, engaging strategic vendors and beginning business case development, suggests NRF's figures. And this all despite the fact that no single vendor offers a mature and robust unified commerce platform to date, says Morris.

Not unexpectedly, intended investment is largely targeted at improving

Key Initiatives Addressed by a Unified Commerce Platform



Source: Boston Retail Group, NRF

the customer experience. When asked to prioritize the business imperatives addressed by unified commerce, retailers cited as number one the ability to quickly respond to consumer demand, thereby enabling organizational agility to effectively execute merchandising, marketing, promotional and loyalty initiatives. Next on the list was increasing store associate productivity by properly arming associates to enhance customer interaction and increase conversion. Right behind these two was a desire to support omni-channel strategy and execution. This is achieved by providing the backbone to manage data and functionality related to customers, product, price, inventory, orders and content across channels.

A centralized commerce platform not only is more conducive to support the customer experience, Morris points out. It also offers retailers the opportunity to leverage a leaner and more flexible store-level environment through the consolidation of servers, operating systems and applications at the data center or within the cloud, rather than at the store.

"Centralization allows for fewer devices and licenses to deploy and maintain, and helps application updates be deployed centrally to improve efficiency," he notes.

The Wares

As suggested above, cloud computing and SaaS, with their inherent speed, agility, anywhere/anytime access and pay-as-you-play models, represent the most logical delivery methods for most next-generation systems designed to keep up with dynamic demands. But the "glue" to a unified strategy is a robust middleware layer, or service oriented architecture (SOA).

As BRP consultants explain, most customer interactions and retail transactions require data from various retail systems to be gathered, analyzed and disseminated in real-time. At the same time, it's silly to expect retailers to suddenly abandon each individual legacy application before their natural end of lives. A middleware layer solves the dilemma by connecting the dots. Utilizing middleware or SOA, retail IT departments, or their third-party IT contractors, construct Web services that enable these instantaneous transactions by supporting the integration among several different retail systems. In turn, every customer or associate transaction traverses the middleware layer, "which brings the commerce platform to life," says Morris.

These Web services reduce application development time and costs, as they are reusable and can be leveraged across multiple applications throughout the enterprise.

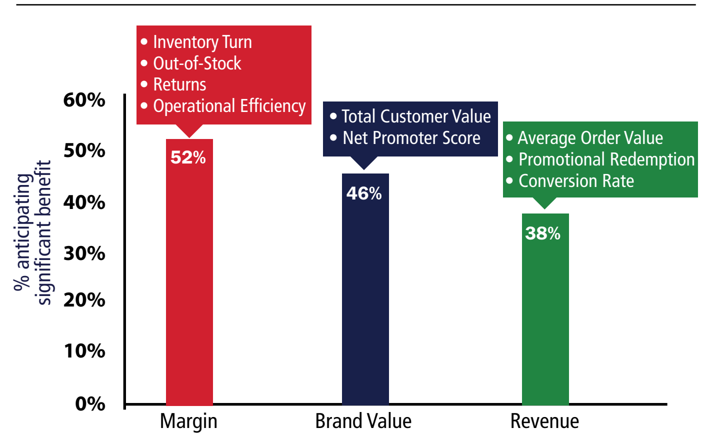
For example, a common transaction is a customer contact search by attributes such as name, phone number or loyalty ID, explain Boston Retail Partners analysts. "Developers leveraging middleware or SOA will build a common set of Web services that can be reused in any application that requires a customer search or lookup. Legacy integration approaches, such as point-to-point integration, on the other hand, often were not built to support robust real-time requirements nor do they offer the benefits of reusable Web services."

While middleware enables a centralized platform and other retail systems to effectively supply data across the enterprise, a master data management (MDM) solution ensures the data is consistent, accurate and up-to-date. By utilizing business rules and data governance to harmonize and merge the information from various retail systems, MDM provides a central repository for master files. Acting as a central repository, MDM maintains a single version of the truth for product, customer, vendor, location and asset information.

"Inaccurate or inconsistent data works against the goals of unified commerce and a holistic customer experience," BRP analysts warn. "MDM significantly decreases data errors within an organization, driving operational efficiencies and enhanced reporting and analysis."

Business process management (BPM) software, meanwhile, enables the definition, execution, monitoring and optimization of business processes across the retail enterprise. At the same time, a modern BPM system is able

Percent of Retailers that Anticipate Significant Business Benefits Derived from a Unified Commerce Platform



Source: Boston Partners Partners

to identify structured and unstructured processes that involve system interactions and human interactions, including both internal (within the four walls of the retailer) and external (suppliers of goods and services), an especially valuable asset for retail processes that involve multiple systems, channels and touch-points.

Once processes are identified, BPM enables process automation to reduce errors, maximize profits and ensure processes are unified, explains Boston Retail Partners. Additionally, a BPM solution can be leveraged for active business activity monitoring, such as real-time store operations monitoring, which could provide employees with real-time visibility to store conditions. A retailer starts the process by setting business rules and deviation thresholds in a closed-loop structure. If a threshold is met or an anomaly occurs, a manager can be alerted immediately, enabling real-time corrective action.

Ultimately, BPM improves processes by identifying inefficiencies and bottlenecks within processes so retailers can quickly make adjustments. And if evolving customer demands require a new process to be created, BPM enables business users to rapidly construct the new process.

"With BPM, retailers are able to make more informed decisions, improve performance and ultimately deliver a unified, continuous customer experience," claim Boston Retail Partners executives.

Needless to say, the transition will not be easy. New technology tends to require detailed training, and individual roles, responsibilities and accountabilities will alter within and across functions.

"Given the way processes and technologies have been hardwired to serve consumers by channel, organizational change requires a methodical approach that includes clarity, communication and training," advises BRP.

And as with most any technology deployment, ROI models will be requested, as will justification for the retirement of some legacy systems.

Even so, retail IT departments clearly are struggling with rapid change and the need to create omni-channel experiences for customers.

"Our survey responses show increased urgency around integrating selling channels," notes George Lawrie, vice president and principal analysts at Forrester Research.

Indeed, when Forrester asked retail CIOs to list their top three business priorities for IT for 2015, integrating the selling channels to enable an omni-channel face was second only to security concerns, listed by 76 percent of respondents. That was up from the 64 percent with omni-channel concerns in 2013. Meanwhile, within the same survey, respondent were ask to name their top internal considerations around deploying and managing IT, and 44 percent said "consumers are demanding access to proprietary corporate data such as product and inventory information." As recently as 2014, only 6 percent expressed this concern, and just 3 percent in 2013.

At the same time, 82 percent of U.S. consumers recently surveyed by Accenture said they expect a retailer's prices to be the same in store and online, a significant increase over the 69 percent who said this the previous year, according to the consulting firm. But in a benchmark analysis, Accenture also found that only one-third of U.S. retailers had consistent pricing for more than 80 percent of the items assessed. And while three-quarters of retailers told NRF they can fulfill inventory across multiple channels, 46 percent still use spreadsheets to manage their supply chain planning.

In other words, the transition to unified commerce is inevitable, but it's certainly going to take some time.

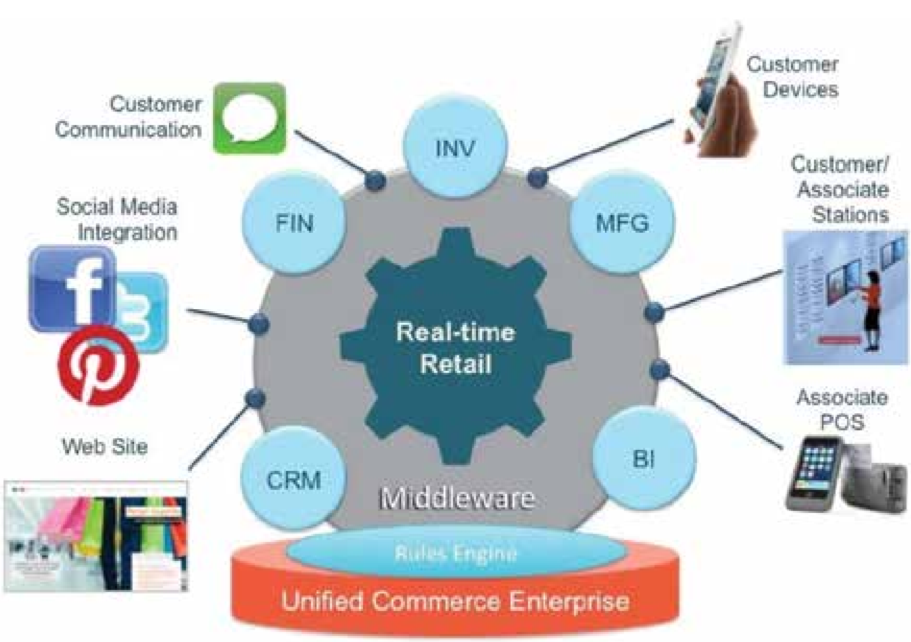
"Retailers should expect their plan to be executed over the course of several years as they decommission legacy systems, establish new integrations and consolidate disparate technologies into a unified commerce platform – all while the business continues to serve and delight consumers," concludes the Boston Retail Partners' study.

Along the way, IT departments can reduce the complexity of migrating to a single channel platform by ensuring that, moving forward, any infrastructure and technology investments that are related to commerce or customers are not hardwired to existing systems and applications.

Percent of Retailers that Anticipate More Than 10% Improvement from Unified Platform

Operational efficiency	71%
Total customer value	68%
Average order value	67%
Inventory turn	65%
Conversion rate	63%
Promotion redemption	61%
Out-of-stock	60%
Net promoter score	54%
Returns	53%

Source: Boston Retail Partners



Source: Boston Partners Partners

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Managing Millennials

Six things to know to lead the PlayStation generation

by **Martha** Maznevski

I didn't know what I was getting into before spending five years on the front lines finding out what makes millennials tick. The research I read before I became director of IMD's MBA class in 2009 didn't prepare me to lead members of the digital cowboy generation, those born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s.

We've all read plenty about millennials before: they are used to being told they are good all the time from a young age. They are not ready for real world setbacks. All they want is instant gratification. They lack loyalty. The list goes on.

While some of these characteristics have some truth to them, they can be said about previous generations as well. The stereotype of a millennial is a digital version of what 20-year-olds have been like since the industrial revolution.

Here are the six things I learned that today's leaders need to know to really harness the power of millennials.

1] They learn through experience. We don't call them the PlayStation generation for nothing. They grew up playing a lot of video games without using instructions. They learned to make it to the next levels of these games by dying over and over again. They can be like that in their professional careers too. They throw themselves into new experiences without a lot of planning and learn by failing.

They expect a leader to play the role that the walls and cliffs do in a game. Leaders should be aware of this and help point out the potential pitfalls of certain courses of action, both before and after.

2] Their lives are non-linear. The world has always been complex and volatile for this generation. They have witnessed the Asian financial crisis, climate change, 9-11 and the war on terror, the 2008 financial crisis, all before they were established professionals. This generation has never seen the world as a safe and coherent place.

They will have non-linear career trajectories and they know it. A lot of them will go back and forth between traditional employment and entrepreneurship.

For a large part of their lives they have been reading on the Internet, focusing on one subject one minute, and something completely different the next. Previous generations learned in a more linear way by reading books from start to finish.

For leaders this means that Gen Y is prepared for complexity. They don't know anything else. Older managers may have a hard time adapting to the new normal.

3] They ARE loyal. But to principles and not to people. This is where some of the accepted wisdom about millennials comes to play. They appreciate personal development. They love new opportunities. But they will not follow your lead just because you are the boss.

Instead of trying too hard on developing loyalty to your leadership or your organization among your team of millennials, you should focus more on developing and communicating the principles and purpose behind your organization's work, no matter whether it is a company, an NGO or a government agency. Millennials need to know that they are working to make the world a better place. They believe that there is no success without sustainability for individuals, organizations, society and the environment. If you can convince them in an authentic way that what you are doing is principled, they will get behind you.

4] Assumptions about privacy, boundaries and roles are fluid and permeable. This can be good and bad. We have all heard horror stories of young adults suffering consequences for what they post on social media, like that

"The stereotype of a millennial is a digital version of what 20-year-olds have been like since the industrial revolution."

Comparing Millennials' Attitudes at the Office

	Millennials	Gen X	Baby Boomers
Becoming a senior leader is among top career goals	18%	18%	18%
Starting own business is among top career goals	17%	12%	15%
If a team is successful everyone should be rewarded	55%	64%	43%
Employees should be rewarded for sharing information and collaborating	55%	66%	43%
I make better decisions when a variety of people provide input	56%	64%	49%
It is important to have group consensus	55%	61%	39%
My organization's leaders are the most qualified to make decisions	53%	57%	41%

Source: IBM Institute for Business Value friend of a friend who got fired for calling their boss a jerk on Facebook.

But it can work in a positive way. Not submitting to antiquated hierarchical structures allows millennials to think creatively and find business opportunities where others might not imagine there were any. While leaders should watch out for unintended consequences, they should also encourage younger employees' creativity to think beyond of the established way of doing things.

5] Power is distributed and control requires permission. In other words, millennials don't put up with bad bosses. They don't listen to authority if they don't agree. This might seem like a challenge, but in the long run the sooner people stop accepting poor leadership, leaders will have to improve. Everyone will benefit.

The lesson here is: don't be a lazy leader. Make sure your millennial employees understand why your organization and team are doing what they are doing. Don't just say, "do it because I said so".

Also, don't neglect leadership development. Keep investing in your leadership capabilities so you can motivate your millennial employees.

6] They are not good at boring but necessary work. Millennials don't like to concentrate on boring tasks that lead to mastery and build character if those tasks don't have clear benefit. In order to develop expertise and wisdom in any industry, people have to invest in non-glamorous grunt work to get to know their sector by heart. These types of experiences also help build patience to work through a problem until it's solved.

Today's senior managers should put in extra effort to show the digital cowboys why the hard work is important. Leaders need to make sure that entry-level talent know that having a deep understanding of the different aspects of an industry will help them in more senior roles later on.

Companies and organizations, by and large, have been good at getting millennials in the door for a while now, but they have been more challenged about getting them to transition to higher levels of responsibility.

If senior managers follow these six pieces of advice, they can tap into millennials' strengths and help them become the next generation of leaders.

Martha Maznevski is Professor of Organizational Behavior and International Management at IMD. She will be leading a daily interactive Insight Power Hour on millennials at Orchestrating Winning Performance (OWP), the unique global business program at IMD which takes place from June 21-26, 2015. She also teaches in Strategies for Leadership for female executives and the IMD-CK-GSB Dual Executive MBA, which builds knowledge and networks to do business with China and the world.

Exceeding Customer Expectations

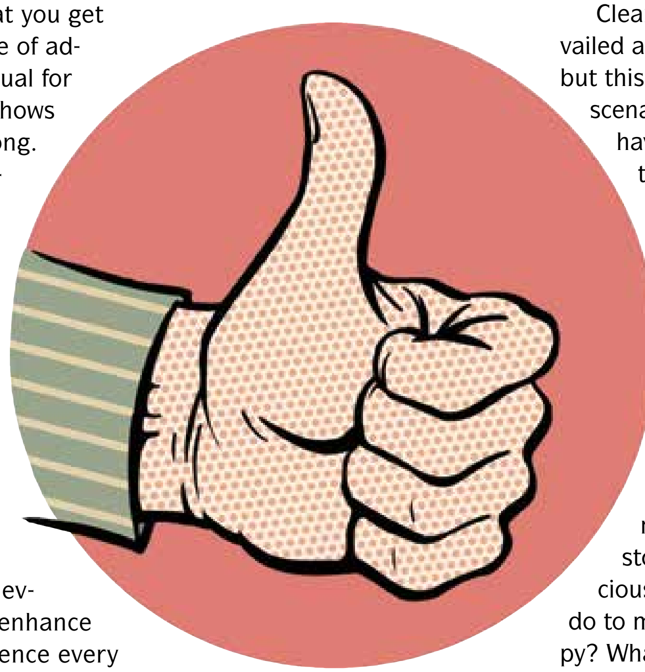
by **Ritchie** Sayner

Have you ever gone to a rock concert only to leave feeling the band was simply running through its repertoire of top hits in an effort to get off stage as quickly as possible, collect its fee and get to the next town? Anyone who has been to a Bruce Springsteen concert will concede that what you get is well worth the price of admission. It's not unusual for Springsteen to play shows that are four hours long. The E Street Band always seems to give 100 percent, and the set list is always different. Bruce Springsteen is an example of an entertainer who clearly exceeds customer expectations.

In today's rapidly changing retail landscape, it is crucial that retailers do everything possible to enhance the consumer experience every time they have a customer interaction, be it in a store or online. As we all know too well, the biggest assortment and the lowest price for anything your want to buy is only a mouse click away.

Sure, attracting new customers is critical to any retailer. However, given that it is "six to seven times more expensive to acquire a new customer than to keep a current one," according to the U.S Office of Consumer Affairs, it is important that we nurture our existing customer relationships. It is also true that news of bad customer service reaches more than twice as many ears as praise for good service. In fact, it can take as many as 12 positive experiences to make up for one unresolved negative one, says customer service consultant Ruby Newell-Legner.

"In fact, it can take as many as 12 positive experiences to make up for one unresolved negative one."



Here's some personal proof. Recently my wife and I were at dinner with friends. One of those friends had returned that very afternoon from shopping and couldn't wait to unload, in detail, her futile attempt to return an item with tags in place, receipt in hand and the item still in stock at full price. Since she was admittedly outside the store's return policy, our friend didn't expect a refund, but had hoped for a store credit. Instead, she was told by the "assistant manager" that she was "stuck with it" (exact words). Access to the store owner to appeal the decision was not possible; consequently our friend left the store mad and embarrassed, vowing not only to never return but to post the experience on every social media outlet she could find.

Clearer heads finally prevailed and disaster was averted, but this is the worst possible scenario. This store would have been much better off to grant the store credit, which is what the customer wanted in the first place. After all, this was all over $58 —certainly not worth losing a customer and all of the potential negative press. Just imagine how different our dinner conversation might have been if the store employee had graciously asked what she could do to make the customer happy? What if she even included an additional $5 on the store credit just for having to make the extra trip? It's all about exceeding the customer's expectations.

I recently asked a few of my clients if they had any stories they could share about good customer service. Here are just a few examples of the many responses I received:

A store owner received a call on Christmas Eve from a customer who was leaving on a ski trip the next morning but who had forgotten to pick up the skis he had purchased. The owner met him at the store, found the skis, and even went so far as to tell the customer that they could pay the existing balance when they returned from vacation.

Another store owner hand delivered presents to her customer on Christmas Eve because the customer's husband was out of town until Christmas Day.

An employee of another client called every husband in her social network, hand selected and photographed items on her iPhone, wrapped them and personally delivered them.

Another client in the Christmas tree business received 700 artificial trees after Thanksgiving (about a month too late). One of the owners personally delivered trees at 10:30 P.M. on a Saturday night in December because he had promised his customers they would get their trees as soon as they arrived.

There was also an interesting story involving a certified pedorthist who, while on vacation, delivered a special order to a diabetic customer who lived in a different state.

One store actually refunded the purchase price of a pair of shoes that never actually was purchased at the store simply because the customer was so insistent that they did. Now that really goes above and beyond. Think of the good will created by this gesture and the negative feelings averted had it been handled differently. The store had every right to decline this refund. He would have won the battle, yet still lost the war.

These are all great examples of what many retailers do to exceed customer expectations. Another simple step that pays huge dividends is to make sure the people we hire are truly representative of the message we want our customers to receive. The people on the selling floor are the direct face of your business. Always look for people to hire who are friendly, outgoing, gregarious, with warm personalities.

I walked into a nationally known home store the other day, walked up to a sales person who looked at me like I was interrupting, didn't smile and made the smallest effort possible to answer my question. I walked out empty handed. Do you think I will return anytime soon? No, they don't value my business or me as a customer.

The good news is that brick-and-mortar retailing still allows us to provide "high touch" service in a "high tech" world. Use your next staff meeting to share examples where your company has previously exceeded customer expectations and what more can be done in the future.

Ritchie Sayner is VP of Business Development at RMSA Retail Solutions. Follow him on Facebook at www.facebook.com/RitchieSayner or email to rsayner@rmsa.com.

OutDoor Abroad

New Days and New Gear at Friedrichshafen

Based on advance registrations, the 22nd edition of OutDoor is once again expected to bring more than 900 exhibitors and upward of 21,000 attendees to the Neue Messe Friedrichshafen exhibition center on the shores of Lake Constance in Germany. Set to take place July 15 to 18, 2015, the OutDoor international business expo has shifted its schedule one day (similar to what Outdoor Retailer has done), now taking place on Wednesday to Saturday, as opposed to ending on Sunday, both this year and moving forward.

"We're convinced that offering an additional week day is better for just about everybody. The OutDoor is an international event and, as such, conforms to international business practices," said Stefan Reisinger Head of OutDoor, explaining the decision, which was made together with partners from the European Outdoor Group.

The 2015 edition of OutDoor also will see an international panel of experts awarding the OutDoor Industry Award quality seal to products that represent outstanding innovation and design quality. In addition, the supporting program includes informative presentations at the OutDoor Conferences and the finals of the DAV German Bouldering Championships (Deutsche Bouldermeisterschaft), organized by the German Alpine Association (DAV).

Of course, there will also be plenty of gear and garb on display for international retailers. Following is a small taste from some of the companies planning a presence at OutDoor. *Genießen Sie!*

Alite Designs

The Shasta Stool is perfect for the outdoor person in need of seating but conscious of product weight. Four collapsible, aluminum legs join to create the seating base, which works as either a seat or an ottoman when paired with outdoor chairs. SRP is $45 USD.

Bergan's of Norway

The Moa Pirate Pant is a summer mountain capris for backpacking, hiking, climbing or in-town adventures. Constructed of lightweight four-way stretch softshell material, it is extremely lightweight, quick drying and highly breathable. Additional features include articulated knee sections, front pockets and a zippered thigh pocket. SRP is $79 USD.

Baffin

PACKables are a unique line of fashionable, folding, functional rain boots. Lightweight, waterproof and comfortable, each pair comes with its own waterproof travel bag, so you can roll up your boots and contain the elements you've just been protected from. From slick urban streets to splashy mud puddles, PACKables mean never worrying about getting caught in the rain again.

Burlington

Burlington's new CALIBRE collection of Merino wool blends are made with a mix of 52/48 wool and polyester to provide the illusion of pure wool but with the performance of a micro denier. These wrinkle-free fabrics are washable and offer comfort-stretch and advanced crease retention in trousers – all with the luxurious feel of wool. The Spring 2016 Collection features special yarn constructions that create an advanced luxury fabric with a contemporary look and feel, says Burlington.

CamelBak

The Forge travel mug features a self-sealing lid and lock-open button combination, which creates a one-handed, leak-proof drinking experience and the option to vent and cool hot beverages. The Forge's technology is housed externally on the cap making for easy cleaning. Forge can easily slip on a finger with its carry handle to make on-the-go transport easy even when your arms are full. It's available in two sizes: 16-ounces ($30 USD) and 12-ounces ($29 USD).

Clif Bar & Company

Clif Bar & Company introduced a new category in sports nutrition with Clif Organic Energy Food. Inspired by the home recipes of Team Clif Bar athletes, each recipe contains Certified USDA organic ingredients and is designed to capture the desire of athletes who want their sports nutrition to look and taste like the food they make at home. For example, the organic bananas in Banana Mango with Coconut provide both glucose and fructose for energy, while organic sunflower seed butter in Pizza Margherita delivers some fat and protein for longer-duration training and racing. Other flavors include Banana Beet with Ginger and Sweet Potato with Sea Salt. SRPs start at $2.29 USD.

Coghlan's

Headlamp or Flashlight? Can't decide? No problem with the Coghlan's Multi-Light. This bright headlamp features a comfortable head band with a pivoting chassis for light in any direction. Plus, the Multi-Light can be removed transforming it into a handheld flashlight. The Multi-Light features a simple ON/OFF button, 20 lumens of light and a 12-hour run time. It's powered by one AA battery, included.

FixnZip

The patented design of the FixnZip replacement zipper slider works on a variety of zipper types and materials, including plastic and metal teeth, as well as nylon coils. It can be used on open-ended (such as a jacket) or closed-ended zippers and can be started anywhere on the zipper. Easy to use, FixnZip is reusable and can be taken off one item and used for another. The slider parts are made of nickel plated zinc die cast, and the spring and thumbscrew of stainless steel. It comes in three sizes. SRPs start at $9.99 USD. 305.219.2242

Eagle Creek

As airline rules become less generous and more rigorously enforced, more and more people are looking for inflight storage flexibility that will allow them to breeze through the airport. Eagle Creek address this need with the Tarmac Weekend Bag. Comfortably worn as backpack, over the shoulder or hand carry, the new Tarmac Weekend Bag has all the organization a weekend or overnight business traveler could need, including two large compartments, butterfly opening for easy access, front zippered organizer compartment with multiple pockets, pen slots and key fob. It's built with Bi-Tech Armor weatherproof fabrics to withstand travel adventures.

Gerber

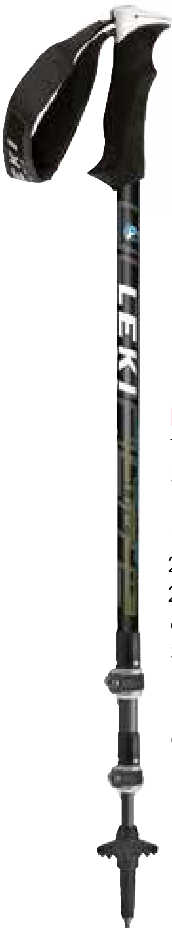
With an emphasis on ease of use and safety, the Bear Grylls Greenhorn Multi-Tool is sized for a pocket. Seven easy-access tools include a large fine-edge blade with a blunted tip and thumb stud, a full-size cross driver, a can-opener, flat driver paired with bottle opener, and a tweezers and pick that slide nicely into the sides of the tool.

GSI Outdoor

Classic but contemporary design with a wide mouth for easy filling, pouring and drinking, the Stainless Hip Flask features a tethered, screw-down top and a secure seal to assure that not a drop of a favorite beverage will go to waste. The curved design fits comfortably in back pockets for easy access on the trail, slopes, golf course or campground. Two sizes are offered in 6- and 8-ounce flasks. SRPs are $ 29.95 USD and $34.95 USD.

Klean Kanteen

Klean Kanteen expands its product line with the introduction of new Insulated offerings. The new Insulated styles include Growlers, Tumblers, Classics (pictured) and Kid Kanteens. The new Insulated bottles are built with durable, vacuum insulated double-wall construction, and keep iced drinks frosty for more than 24 hours and hot beverages warm for up to 12 hours. Launching alongside the new Insulated products is an all-new leakproof Café Cap 2.0.



LEKI

The Legacy features LEKI's new SpeedLock 2 system, a streamlined version of the original external locking system. SpeedLock 2 is now 33 percent smaller and 25 percent lighter, yet 20 percent stronger than the original SpeedLock system. Featuring high-tensile strength aluminum shafts and PAS Thermo Grip, the Legacy and Legacy Lady retail for a suggested $99 USD.

LiteGear Bags

The new Mobile Pro "go-bag" is designed with a solution in every pocket, says LiteGear, keeping users organized and operating at maximum efficiency. Created to accommodate the dimensions of the personal item size requirements of airlines, it features smart "in-bag apps" such as a cord manager, document holder, thermal food container and a mini-flashlight. 707.752.8933

Nikwax

Down Wash Direct is the first aftercare product designed to clean and maximize performance for both treated and untreated down, as well as both goose and duck down products. Down Wash Direct ensures optimal performance by cleaning effectively, revitalizing insulation, and restoring the water repellency of water-resistant down apparel and sleeping bags. Like all Nikwax products, the new Down Wash Direct is PFC-free and water-based for the lowest environmental impact. SRP is $10.95 USD.

Metolius

The Foundry full-featured board has an arcing shape and outward taper to put your hands and joints in a natural position for greater comfort and to help reduce injuries. The huge variety of holds on this compact board includes ergonomic pinches that taper upward to accommodate any size hand. SRP is $69

Nite Ize

The new NiteHowl LED Safety Necklace for dogs is durable, weather resistant and engineered from a flexible polymer tube that can be easily trimmed to create a custom fit. Illuminated by two bright red LEDs, the NiteHowl lights up a full 360 degrees, making dogs clearly visible from all angles. It includes two replaceable alkaline batteries and weights 59.5 grams. SRP is $12.19 USD.

Oboz

The Oboz Bridger Low BDry for men and women is trail-ready with Oboz's signature contoured footbed, deep lugs, underfoot chassis support for secure footing, and molded rubber toe and heel amps to up durability. Supple nubuck leather is BDry-lined to keep feet comfortable and dry when the going gets wet.

Polartec

Power Wool is a new fabric collection that optimizes the natural performance of wool with synthetic fibers in patented, plated bi-component knit constructions for superior comfort. The plated construction precisely places wool and synthetic yarns to achieve performance much greater than the sum of the parts, says the company, effectively creating a layering system within a single textile. Polartec Power Wool's launch was supported by brands including 66° North, Athleta, Beretta, Brooks-Range, Cabela's, Crazy Idea, Eider, Gornik, Ibex, Kitsbow, Mammut, Millet, Mountain Force, QOR, Roeckl, Ternua, Teton Bros, Trangoworld, Under Armour and Westcomb.

POLARTEC®
Power Wool

Princeton Tec

Part of the new Helix lantern collection, the Helix Basecamp Bluetooth allows for full control from your smartphone or tablet via Bluetooth, with no Wi-Fi or cell signal required. With one dimmable, white Maxbright LED boasting 250 lumens and one dimmable, red Maxbright LED, this lantern can operate via either a lithium-ion rechargeable battery or three AA batteries as backup for a max burn time of 50 hours. SRP is $109.99 USD.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Recco

RECCO Advanced Rescue Technology is integrated into winter sports products in order to enable professional rescuers to faster locate and rescue victims caught and buried by avalanches using a hand held RECCO detector. Currently integrated into more than 200 brands, the company recently announced nine additional brands will be integrated its reflectors, including Marmot (apparel), Head (helmets), Pret (helmets), Cebe (helmets), Arva (back protectors), Beal (climbing harnesses), Cairn (helmets), NuDown (apparel) and Isbjörn (apparel). +46 (0)70 655 95 99

Salewa

The next step in Gore Surround Technology, the Italian-made Alpine Trip GTX provides waterproof protection, a waxed Italian leather finish, anti-slip sole and an overlap tongue construction in a crossover model. SRP is $189 USD.

Sherpa Adventure Gear

The lightweight and compressible Tujan jacket with Sherpa's new 3D Dry fabric uses dimensional flocking to enhance air circulation inside. The three-dimensional technology creates a micro-layer of space between the lining of the jacket and the body, which helps movement of body heat, keeps moisture away from the base layer and helps the wearer stay drier and cooler, says Sherpa.

SnugPak

Available in Olive or Coyote, the new Stasha ultra-lightweight shelter can be packed down to stash away in a pocket, making it completely portable. It features looped webbing and grommets in each corner, so it can be staked out or attached with four provided guy ropes, allowing it to be configured in a different number of ways. Two plastic snaps allow the shelter to be folded to make an improvised bivvi. SRP is $49 USD. SnugPak also will be showing a set of hammock accessories, including the Hammock Under Blanket, to insulate from cold; The Hammock Quilt, which can combine with the Under Blanket for a cozy shell; and the Hammock Cocoon, which completely encases the hammock. Booth #B5-308, www.SnugpakUSA.com

Snow Peak

Snow Peak's Roccano Stove is a compact and powerful mountaineering stove with a unique integrated windscreen. Built around a remote-canister design that allows for both inverted and topside up fuel position, the Roccano's windscreen is designed to protect your flame while still allowing proper oxygen flow, and is built to accommodate larger pots and pans. A snow camping accessory that increases the stove's bottom surface area is also available.

Stanley

The classic canteen gets an upgrade in the Adventure Steel Canteen with stainless steel and a two-stage, leak-proof lid. Compatible with standard canteen insulating jackets, the new Adventure Steel Canteen has a shoulder strap and is fully packable. The two-stage lid means it's easy to fill up, drink from and clean out, says the company. SRP is $30.

Sterling Rope Company

The newest addition to Sterling's Fusion Series of dynamic ropes, The Nano IX comes as a lighter, skinnier and more versatile version of its predecessor, the Nano (9.2). The Nano IX is a performance rope ideal for sport, ice or mixed conditions. It's UIAA & CE EN 892 Triple Certified as a Single, Half and Twin Rope. It's available with DryCoat treatment and comes in 50-80M lengths, in a variety of colors, including bicolor. paul@sterlingrope.com

Yurbuds

Yurbuds sweat-proof, in-the-ear sport earphones are now available in Inspire Mossy Oak. Yurbuds feature TwistLock Technology and FlexSoft Comfort Fit to prevent the earphones from falling out of ears while letting ambient sound reach the ears. Available in three versions, SRPs range from $19.99 to $39.99 USD.

Suunto

The Ambit3 Run is a Bluetooth Smart-enabled GPS watch for runners for whom style, fit and functionality are of equal importance. It lets users create and follow detailed interval workouts with the Movescount App, even guiding them by voice. Set the desired duration and intensity, activate your workout and when used with the Movescount App, the voice coach will guide you through the workout. Additionally, the 2.0 software update brings the possibility to compare your running performance to your last 30 day average and analyze your recovery using a quick recovery or sleep recovery test.

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