

Summer 2016

# INSIDEOUTDOOR

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MAGAZINE

**S/S 2017  
NEW PRODUCT  
SHOWCASE**

**ROBOTS  
INVADE RETAIL**

**OPTICS ON  
NATURAL  
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**MARKDOWN  
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"Cooling technology," street-worthy footwear styles and spacious tents are among the prevalent product trends on display in our semi-annual new product showcase. Get your first looks here.



Cover photo courtesy @flylowgear.







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# Patagonia's Pandora's Box

You have to give it up to Patagonia. It took real guts to back research suggesting synthetic fibers in performance apparel may be contributing to a significant microfiber pollution problem. There are few instances in the history of corporate America when a large, well-known company so openly acknowledged a potentially major issue with a component that goes into a substantial amount of its product. And not just Patagonia product, the polyester, nylon, acrylic, and rayon fibers prominent in the findings are deeply intertwined into everything we have come to know about outdoor performance apparel.

Certainly, it's not unprecedented for outdoor companies to take a stand for the planet, far from it. Recent campaigns against long-chain DWR were very important, and the pressure to humanize down production certainly ruffled some feathers. Even so, market applications of both those components are but slices in a much broader outdoor apparel product category that regularly utilizes vast amounts of synthetic fibers. Of the 30 or so performance apparel items in our semi-annual product showcase (page 42) that are likely to see the inside of a washing machine, nearly all likely use some synthetic fiber. Make no mistake, Patagonia's move is causing quiet shockwaves through the supply chain.

Granted, Patagonia knows any admittance isn't going to suddenly crater apparel sales; consumer change simply doesn't happen that quickly. But it's not just Patagonia's sales and marketing strategies and sacrifices that are of note. Bigger to me is how Patagonia's decision illuminates some tough realities for all of us. After all, synthetic fibers are pervasive in outdoor apparel, everywhere from socks to skull caps, base layer to jackets, water sports to winter mountain activities. We love our synthetic fibers, and for some good reasons. But now we also must acknowledge, according to the study, that "Recent evidence supports microfiber pollution pervading terrestrial environments and the atmosphere as well," and that "microfibers are of particular concern regarding their potential to transport hazardous chemicals into the environment."

When assessing major global issues such as climate change and pollution, it's easy to point to the faceless villains: big oil, big energy, big politics, etc. But after reading about the ties between performance apparel and microplastic pollution, it's hard for me not to visualize all those individual consumer washing machines in all those individual homes and all those individual, single garments. These pollutants, in other words, are literally coming right off our backs.

If nothing else, it is a clear reminder how the decisions we all make are just as important as the changes we fight for in government regulations and corporate practices. Likewise, it's a stark reminder of how challenging it will be to continue to reconcile our responsibilities as stewards of the planet while at the same time relying on the continuous cycle of capitalistic consumption. After all, until our processes, components and delivery mechanism are all completely sustainable or neutral, logic says it's typically better ecologically not to buy than to drive to the store and buy. That's not always conducive to a successful and healthy "industry."

It may sound disheartening, but only if hope is left in the box. Patagonia could air its dirty laundry because it apparently believes, as I do, that its employees, providers and partners can and will find solutions. Patagonia also knows, as I do, that outdoor vendors, retailers and their consumers are routinely on the forefront of sustainability movements. That's why, time and time again, the outdoor market is routinely treated as proving grounds for earth-friendly and socially conscious start-ups.

Things aren't going to get easier. The microfiber pollution problem shows we have a lot of work to do and some gut checks to endure on the way to becoming a truly clean industry. Patagonia's leaders deserves credit for willingly facing those facts.

– MV

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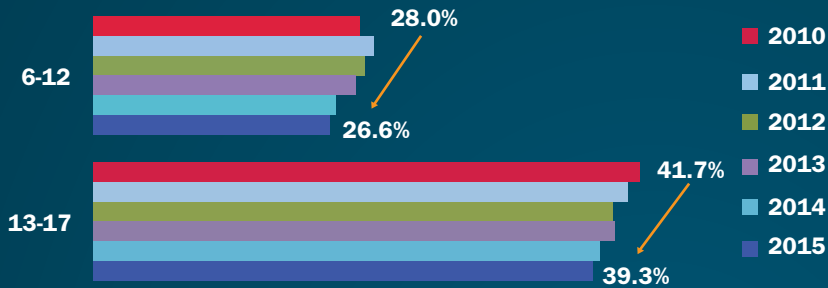
# DATA POINTS

## Numbers Worth Noting

By **Martin Vilaboy**

### The % of Kids "Active to Healthy Standards" Keeps Dropping

% of Kids Who are Active 3 Times a Week



Source: Physical Activity Council

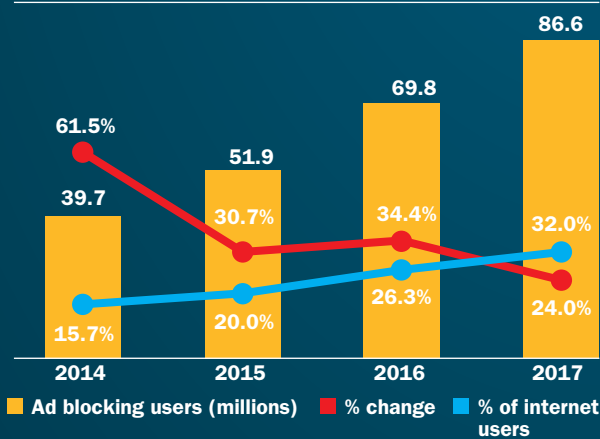
### Inactive Users

Nearly 35 million American children, or 68% of six- to 17-year-olds, admit to not being active three times a week. Nearly 10 million U.S. children say they were not physically active at least once in the past year in any one of 100+ sports or activities. In other words, two-thirds of U.S. kids are not active to healthy standards, and the trend is getting worse, according to recent figures from the Physical Activity Council.

### Online Ad Blocking and Tackling

At the same time online advertising spending overtakes spending on TV advertising, online ad blocking is causing headwinds for online advertisers. In 2016, 69.8 million Americans will use an ad blocker, a jump of 34.4% over last year, according to eMarketer figures. Next year, that figure will grow another 24% to 86.6 million people. By the way, no app as of yet can block a print magazine ad.

### US Ad Blocking Users and Penetration, 2014-2017

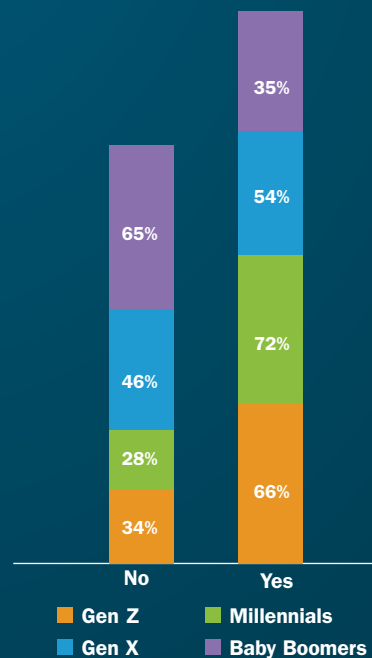


Source: eMarketer

### Shopping Appointment


Are pre-scheduled appointments with sales associates a part of the future of in-store shopping? A survey of consumers by TimeTrade found that 59% of respondents said they would take advantage of such a service. For retailers, one would think that if a customer schedules an appointment, the intent to purchase is pretty high.

**If you could schedule on in-store appointment (from any device) with a store associate at a time that is most convenient for you, would you?**



Source: TimeTrade



A man and a young girl are practicing archery in a grassy field. The man is kneeling and holding a pink Genesis bow for the girl. The girl is standing and aiming the bow. In the background, there is a tent and a forested hill.

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77%

Percent of women in the MercuryCSC “Adventurist panel” who say they prefer that outdoor brands not market to women and men differently.

### Climb Up

A possible sign the growth in climbing gyms are helping grow the overall market, key climbing categories experienced solid growth in the first quarter of 2016, according to The NPD Group figures, with climbing hardware increasing in dollar volume by 12 percent, fueled specifically by cams and quickdraws. Climbing shoe brands Scarpa, La Sportiva, Evolv, Five Ten and Tenaya all contributed to the overall category growth of 22 percent, says NPD.

#### First Quarter Climbing Dollar Sales

Q1 2015	Q1 2016	% Change
\$35.7M	\$40.4M	13%

Source: The NPD Group

### Run Down?

The number of U.S. marathon finishers declined for the first time in many years, with the exception of 2012\*, when the New York City Marathon was cancelled. The decline in 2015 follows several years of impressive growth, show Running USA figures, a pace admittedly hard to maintain. But the steep drop in 2015 is cause to keep an eye on future numbers.

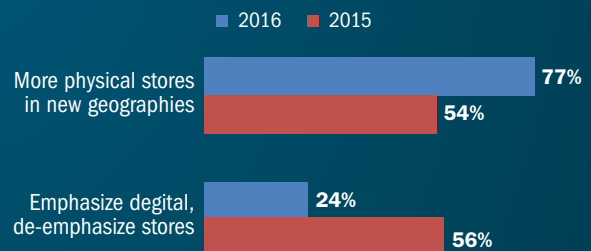
Year	Estimated U.S. Marathon Finishers
1976	25,000
1980	143,000
1990	224,000
2000	353,000
2005	395,000
2010	507,000
2011	518,000
2012	487,000*
2013	541,000
2014	550,600
2015	509,000

Source: Running USA

### More Mortar

Given the recent declines in foot traffic, and the steady increases in online sales, one would assume retailers would see more headroom for growth in the digital realm. Retailers surveyed by RSR Research, however, show that physical stores are actually gaining traction as a growth driver, particularly when it comes to opening stores in new geographic areas.

#### Growth Drivers: Stores vs. Digital Channels: % Agreeing



Source: RSR Research

75%

Percent of consumers who report their biggest challenge when shopping for outdoor gear is not being able to find an available store associate when needed, according to Sarah Wallace, principal market analyst for TimeTrade.





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**Club Ride Apparel announced the reformation of its sales force** structure from independent to factory reps in many areas of the country. The company says the new model will allow for more dedicated and individual service, greater mobility and increased awareness in both core and active-lifestyle markets. Club Ride has hired four new regional territory managers in the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest and Pacific who will be outfitted with CRA-branded sprinter vans to showcase the company's current and upcoming collections. "Rather than doing a handful of events in each territory, the new structure's flexibility lets us cover 50 different grassroots events and activations all over the country to create an even stronger presence," said Mike Herlinger, founder of Club Ride Apparel. The greater Rocky Mountain region will continue to be represented by the **Ptarmigan Group** (for bicycle specialty accounts), **Green River Sales** (for outdoor specialty accounts), **Velo Persona Sales** in Arizona and southern Nevada, and **Unique Cycle Sales** in Utah and Wyoming.

**The North Face recently announced the retirement of Ed LaJoy**, principal of **The Skylark Group**, brand sales agency partner for the Rockies territory. **Kari Larsen**, employed with The Skylark Group for more than 13 years, will assume responsibilities for LaJoy under the newly formed **Summit Sales Group**. LaJoy served as principal of The Skylark Group for 14 years, leading a team of 17 employees. He started with The North Face 23 years ago in sales and management roles, eventually taking over the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, then being promoted to director of sales (Western U.S.) before starting Skylark Group. He received numerous Vendor of the Year awards including Cabelas and The Sports Authority.

For its inaugural "Rep Agency of the Year" award, **NEMO Equipment** signaled out **Kurt Smith** and **Chaz Warren** of **Top Gun Sales** for 2016. "Covering a territory from the Midwest to the Southeast, these road warriors did it all in 2015," said the company in its award announcement. "From bringing on an incredible amount of new retailers, helping to grow the NEMO assortment in existing doors, and providing their retailers with the highest level of customer service, these two exceeded expectations. But it is their unending stoke for the brand and passion for the products they sell that really sets them apart."

NEMO also announced that **Peter Cahill** of **Exodus Reps** has transitioned from the Mid-Atlantic territory to New England effective July 1, 2016. The move will allow Cahill to focus on accounts that are closer to his home in Stowe, Vt. And with Cahill's move, NEMO has hired **Jamie Baker** of

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Coghlan's Log Carrier is a large sturdy tote for carrying firewood or other gear to your campsite. Made from durable cotton canvas, and reinforced with polyester webbing straps, it's great to use at the campsite, or home.

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**Arete Sales Group** to service the Mid-Atlantic.

**Vasque**, for its part, had some hardware to hand out, as well. New England-based **Pinnacle Outdoor Group** was named Vasque's "2016 Sales Agency of the Year." Pinnacle Outdoor Group earned the award due to significant growth and impeccable customer service in its northeastern territory, said the trail footwear brand. Vasque said its decision was extremely difficult this year due to the fact that nearly every agency posted double-digit increases in sales. Pinnacle Outdoor Group led the pack with 65 percent growth.

"Deciding on Agency of the Year is always a tough decision for Vasque," said Chris Miller, North American director of sales for Vasque. "Our criteria includes assessing if the agency met growth objectives, had positive management of their respective territories, and created initiatives to promote the Vasque brand."

In addition to Vasque, Pinnacle's team of outdoor industry veterans includes **Hal Ellms, Ben Winther, Sarah Miller, Rebecca Scholand** and **Adam Shapiro**. Their territories cover New England and parts of the Mid-Atlantic including New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

**Salewa North America**, which operates the Dynafit, Salewa, Wild Country and Pomoca brands in the United States and Canada, also announced its sales rep awards for the winter 15/16 season. Among the awards presented was the all-encompassing Oberalper Group Award, given to the group that embodies the Oberalp philosophy, approaching all four brands in a holistic way, while conveying each brand's distinct personality. This year's Oberalp Group Award was given to the **Wasatch Reps**, covering Utah and Colorado, and made up of **Sandy Brown, Pete Swenson** and **Ryan Ahern**. Salewa North American also

called out **Bryan Kuhn** of **Wild Onion Outdoors**, who "had a breakout year, opening several accounts."

**Toad&Co** recently announced the addition of two new agencies to its sales force – **Stoner-Andrews, Inc.** (New England) and **Blue Sky Group** (Western U.S.). Stoner-Andrews has been operating in New England for 25 years and is owned by **Scott Andrews** and **Rick Stoner**, both of whom got their start when they were hired as sub reps in 1978. They founded Stoner-Andrews in 1988, establishing a business model that straddles the ski, outdoor, bike and footwear industries. The Blue Sky Group, founded by **Fred Riley** and **Dominique Schwartz**, has been representing brands in the outdoor industry in California, Arizona, Nevada and Hawai'i for 20 years.

**GU Energy Labs** has bolstered its sales team with the appointments of **Amanda Basham** as Colorado field representative, **Danielle White** as

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New England sales representative and **John Palabrica** as Pacific Northwest sales representative. Before GU, Basham worked as a social media specialist in running and women's training expert at Nike, Inc., before joining the Nathan Sports team as Western regional tech rep. She will work closely with GU representatives in Colorado to drive engagement at retail. White's prior experience includes sales roles with Belmont

Wheelworks, as well as other bicycle retailers, and as account manager for Blue Marble Brands. Palabrica, meanwhile, joins GU to support retailers and sales growth in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. He formerly represented multiple brands, including GU, at **Far West Associates**. Palabrica also worked as a product line manager at Fit Right and chief purchasing officer at Fleet Feet.

**Purnell**, maker of versatile cross-over sportswear, announced the addition of two new sales representatives operating in the key territories of the Rockies and Canada. **Michael King**, a 30-year outdoor industry veteran, will be responsible for sales in the Rockies. King's experience includes helping to establish brands including Clif Bar, Pearl Izumi and Felt Bicycles. **Bob Kirkup**, based in Ontario, will be responsible for Purnell sales in Canada. Kirkup has more than 30 years of experience in the outdoor, ski, boat and bike industries. In addition to Purnell, Kirkup is currently working with Bergans of Norway, Newline Sport, Will Leather Goods, Everest Designs, Aksovaara and Rudy Project.

**Fond of Bags** of Cologne, Germany has chosen to work with **The Mountain Lab** to bring its portfolio of bag lines to the U.S market. The Mountain Lab will lead all sales, marketing, and distribution to retailers and consumers. This includes business operations such as warehousing, distribution, customer service, sales and marketing as well as managing sales representation, said the company. Sales representation has already been secured with independent agencies across key markets in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Great Lakes and Pacific Northwest, said Rick Saez, sales manager for The Mountain Lab, "However, we are still looking for representation in the other territories with agencies that share and embrace the Fond of Bags values."

**Ibex Outdoor Clothing** welcomed **Peter Skala** of **J.P. Skala Enterprises** as the newest member of its sales team. Skala will handle sales representation for Ibex in Ontario, Canada. A long time outdoor industry rep with more than two decades of experience, Skala also currently represents Trespass, SteriPen, Native Eyewear and ExOfficio.

**Boardslides** has been hired to cover the Mid-Atlantic territory, including the states of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, for **HippyTree**. Boardslides partners **Sean Pearsall** and **Jason Weber** have more than 20 years of combined experience in the territory.

  
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Photo courtesy of Sombrio



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# The March of Retail Robots



Smart machines will upgrade the in-store experience, as well as the business model

by **Martin** Vilaboy

**O**n initial walk up, SCOTTeVEST's new point of purchase display seems a fairly normal sportswear display rack. There's the large base with branding, a vertical bar for hanging garments and a colorful assortment of SCOTTeVEST's gadget-friendly activewear. When a customer approaches, however, the seemingly normal automatically activates. A locally targeted video is launched while a biometric scanner estimates the customer's size and begins guiding the purchase process. After the customer tries on a garment, a hangtag can be scanned to activate a rundown of the features, and if there are any questions, the PoP display will open a live video chat with a SCOTTeVEST customer service rep.

The eventual purchase can be rung through a standard payment app on the customer's smartphone, with the product delivered directly to their door. The retailer gets a commission for the sale, and any online promotions or discounts are automatically pushed to the PoP in each store.

"This is truly the best of both worlds," said Scott Jordan, SCOTTeVEST CEO and founder, "a hands-on truly awesome product experience plus online fulfillment – never lose a sale if an item is locally out of stock."



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You can make a checklist, but there's always a feeling that you left something behind. Comfortable and durable, the 12 Survivors Windom 65 Hiking Backpack is a piece of gear that can't be overlooked. Whether it's a short camping trip on the 4th of July or a week long trek in the backcountry, you'll need a reliable pack to haul your gear. Remember, some of life's best adventures aren't planned, they happen on a moment's notice. Don't leave your gear behind; stay organized, be prepared, and always GO READY



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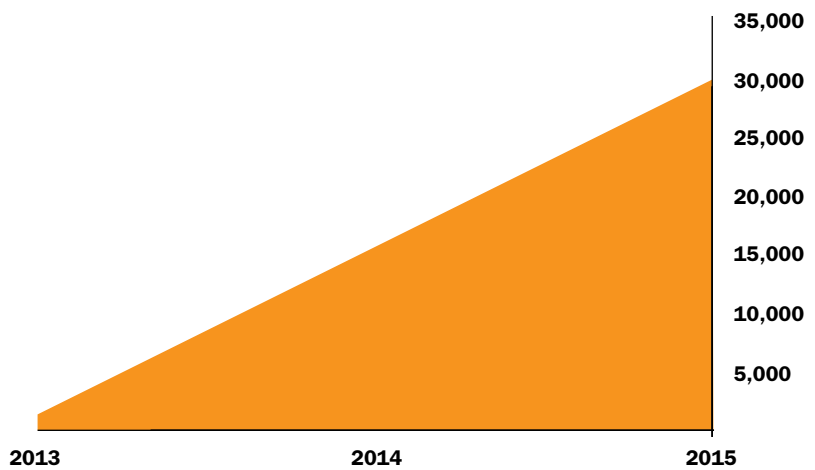
The “silent salesperson” has found its voice, plus a lot more.

Yet as intriguing and potentially disruptive as SCOTTteVEST’s innovative display truly is, it’s just a tease of the type of smart technologies that are beginning to appear on retail sales floors. At the ever-quickenning pace of technology adoption, advanced applications using artificial intelligence, machine learning and natural language processing (sometimes lumped together as AI-ML-NLP) are creeping into retail back rooms and sales floors. It’s the type of stuff that regulates current hot technologies in areas such as cloud, mobile, as-a-service and social as little more than utility services. And whereas those technology investments up to this point have largely been about chasing the customer across channels, the second wave of technology is more about attacking costs and streamlining operations. It’s a “future of retail” that is much closer than most people think, and, make no mistake, it will dramatically alter a brick-and-mortar business model that is in desperate need of an upgrade.

It’s easier to confine innovations such as robotics, automation and smart machines as primarily being deployed on assembly lines or in warehouses, largely replacing “low-skilled” laborers performing non-thinking, repetitive tasks. Still, more recently we’re also seeing really smart software and machines handle many “white collar” and “thinking-oriented” tasks, such as robo-advising within the financial services sector, reporting on live sporting events, answering and directing customer service calls or taking orders and processing payments at restaurant tables. There is even a free chatbot called DoNotPay that has successfully challenged 160,000 parking tickets – around \$4 million worth of fines – in London and New York.

Basically, if your job doesn’t require negotiating, you never have to be clever, and you are not required to personally help others (oh yeah, and you don’t have to fit in tight places), there’s a good chance you could be replaced by smart machines and/or software. At least that’s what researchers in a study led by Oxford University concluded. Out of nine possible traits, those four scored as the most important. Among

## Amazon Robots Installed in Warehouses



Source: Citi Research; Business Insider Intelligence

the many job roles with a high-90s percentage likelihood of being automated were claims adjusters and insurance underwriters; tax preparers, accountants and legal secretaries; real estate brokers and loan officers; payroll and account clerks; restaurant cooks and host/hostesses.

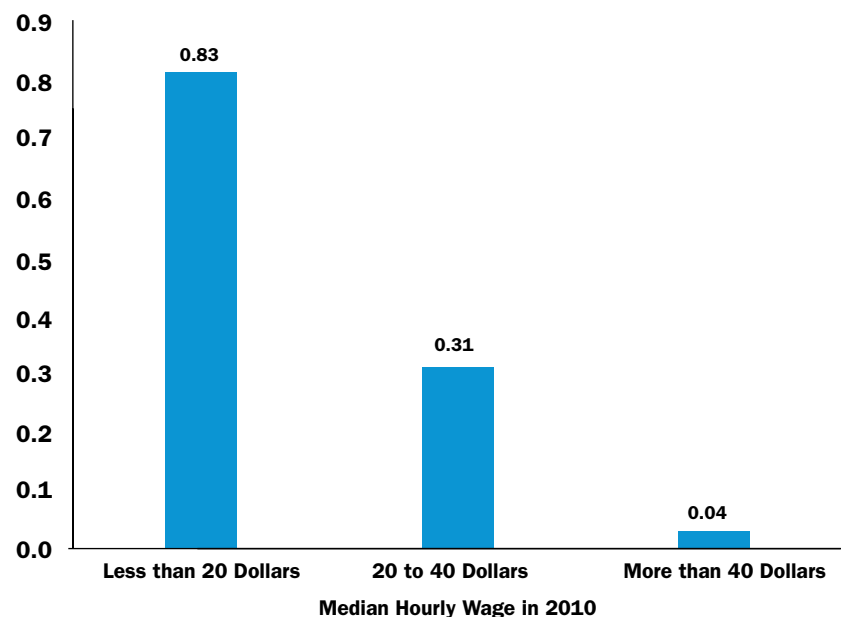
A few retail jobs also were among the most likely to be automated, according to the experts polled by Oxford researchers. A retail salesperson has a 92.3 percent chance of being replaced by machines and artificial

intelligence. Cashiers have a 97 percent chance of being automated. That compares to say an advertising sales agent or massage therapist (both 54 percent likelihood) and a choreographer or sales engineer, both at 4 percent likelihood. (Retail managers, meanwhile, had a 28 percent chance of being replaced by machines.)

All told, the Oxford University study found that 50 percent of jobs could get taken over within the next 10 to 20 years – a prediction backed up in a McKinsey report released last year, which sug-

## Probability of Automation by an Occupation’s Median Hourly Wage

Median Probability of Automation



Source: White House Council of Economic Advisers



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gested today's technology could feasibly replace 45 percent of jobs right now. Also earlier this year at an annual meeting for the American Association for the Advancement of Science, computer science professor Moshe Vardi proclaimed robots could wipe out half of all jobs currently performed by humans as early as 2030.

A separate study conducted by the White House Council of Economics and introduced to Congress in President Obama's February economic report examined the chances that automation could threaten jobs based on how much they paid: either less than \$20 an hour, between \$20 and \$40 an hour, or more than \$40. The results showed that those making less than \$20 per hour were far and away the most threatened. In other words, 62 percent of American jobs may be at risk, according to Bureau of Labor Statistic counts.

Seem farfetched or far away in the future? Well, if someone told you five years ago that driverless cars would soon be on the road, you'd likely say the same thing. And much of the technology that is being used to develop driverless cars is now being applied to the in-store experience.

Meet OSHbot, for example, a 5-foot-tall retail service robot developed by Lowe's Innovation Lab in partnership with Fellow Robots. OSHbot has been roaming the aisles of Lowe's-owned Orchard Supply Hardware in San Jose, Calif., for about a year now. Armed with facial-recognition and the same navigational technology found in driverless cars, OSHbot's primary functions are to help customers find items on the shelves and help store managers manage inventory. As for the former, the rolling robot will greet a customer in one of seven languages, and sports two informational screens that display upsell opportunities and promotions. Just tell OSHbot what you are looking for, and it will lead you to the location of that item in the store. Don't know the name of the piece or part you are looking for? Soon OSHbot will be able to take a visual scan of that part and tell the customer if and where it is in the store. All the while, OSHbot can track inventory in real-time, able to tell employees when an item is out of stock, misplaced or has possibly been stolen.



OSHbot was developed with Fellow Robots, which offers this Navii "autonomous retail robot assistance."

Several organizations, in fact, are marketing data-crunching, machine-learning roving robotic workers to the retail vertical. Bossa Nova Robots, which just scored \$14 million in series A funding, says it is ready to immediately deploy robots that collect terabytes of in-store data to help employees keep track of everything on the shelves and can even re-stock them.

"Bossa Nova addresses a multi-billion dollar opportunity within the retail

marketplace, and is a technology that can be immediately deployed by major retail chains," said Nic Brathwaite of WRV, which led the round of funding. "The product has already proven successful in stores and integrates seamlessly with existing inventory management systems."

4D Retail Technology Corp., for its part, recently unveiled its 4D Space Genius, a robotic imaging platform powered by Segway that can scan an entire



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store in less than an hour. As the robot travels down each aisle, it automatically compiles and processes huge amounts of big data, imaging every product and barcode in every aisle. Once completed, the Space Genius scan provides retailers and manufacturers with the precise location of everything in the store, as well as all instances of price tag discrepancy, missing price tags, empty shelving and more.

The Space Genius also provides retailers with an interactive 3D map of their store, precisely depicting each product exactly as it is displayed on the shelf. This realistic, virtual store can either be displayed on the company's Web site for consumer use and shopping, or toured remotely by retail executives at headquarters.

"With one click, customers can virtually navigate through any scanned store anywhere in the world and view products on the shelf exactly as they are," said the company. "As shoppers tour the aisles, they can pull products off the shelf, spin them around to read more product information and add them to a shopping cart to be shipped or delivered by local courier."

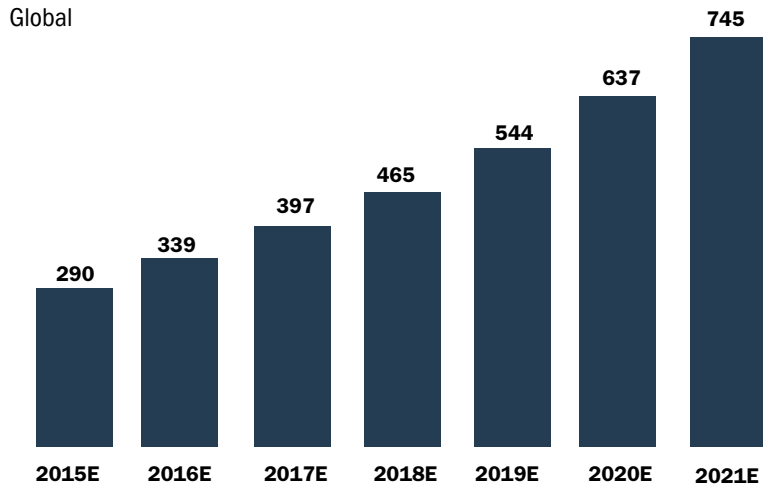
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Library Technicians

Source: Oxford University

Included with the Space Genius is a 3D planogram application. "Unlike traditional methods of creating planograms, which are based primarily on static, theoretical inputs, the 4D Space Genius intelligently generates dynamic

## Estimated Enterprise Robot Shipments (thousands)



Source: International Federation of Robotics; Business Insider Intelligence

'relograms' based on actual, scanned data," says 4D.

Then there's Pepper, a humanoid robot that Pizza Hut expects to have in its restaurants in Singapore by the end of this year. A joint effort with MasterCard and created by Softbank Robotics, Pepper not only will take orders, provide product information and facilitate payment, it will also be able to access customer and sales information in order to make personalized recommendations and offers. And at the Carnegie Mellon University store, visitors will find AndyVision, an autonomous robot that fuses image-processing, machine-learning algorithms, a database of images of the store's products, a basic map of the store's layout and navigation sensors to take thorough inventories and tell staff when an item is running low in stock or merchandise is out of place.

"The idea for AndyVision was born out of me being a shopper. I go to a lot of stores and I find it very difficult to find the items I want, and sometimes I leave when I don't find what I want," said Priya Narasimhan, head of the Intel Science and Technology Center for Embedded Computing at CMU.

Best Buy, meanwhile, has begun using Chloe, a robot that retrieves products that customers request from a kiosk, and Target recently began a trial of Tally, a robot that travels through aisles and takes inventory.

Some pretty smart machines are being deployed in the outdoor market,

as well. Although created largely to enhance e-commerce customer service, The North Face has been working with one of the most intelligent artificial machines, partnering in the development of the first mobile app experience to put Watson, the powerful artificial intelligence computer owned by IBM, to use in a retail environment. The application was designed to help online shoppers pick the perfect jacket for their respective wants and needs without having to bungle through product pages on the small mobile screen. Watson asks questions such as where, when and during which activities the jacket will be used, and then based on the feedback, crunches data and makes a recommendation. During initial trials, says The North Face, users who provided feedback rated the experience a 2.5 out of 3, and 75 percent said they'd use it again.

Osprey Packs likewise recently introduced its Packfinder digital tool which "allows customers to take a step-by-step journey through the decision-making process of finding the perfect pack for the intended activity," announced the company. Customers answer several simple questions such as the primary activity the pack will be used for, trip length, desired features and price range. Packfinder then determines the best Osprey product solution and creates a report card explaining the selection.

Again, both Packfinder and the TNF-Watson tool were created for online sales, but it's naive not to notice how





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the qualification questions and recommendation processes sound a lot like something most outdoor specialty sales staff hear on their first day of training.

It's also no secret how retailers need to reduce the cost of running physical locations in order to counter a declining percentage of overall sales. It's pretty safe to assume, after all, that dollars will continue to shift to online, mobile and social. It's even possible that online sales are just now hitting a critical mass, recently reaching 10 percent of total sales.

It's not something providers of such technologies are anxious to talk about – most smart technology initially is being marketed as “assisting employees” – but AI-ML-NLP technologies will be deployed to reduce the labor costs involved in keeping physical stores open, if they're not already having some impact on hiring. (Wal-Mart, for instance, recently said it was six to nine months from beginning to use drones to check warehouse inventories in the United States.)

While it's certainly true that in many cases AI-ML-NLP technologies em-



4D's inventory robot rolls through the aisles

power retail workers and enable stores to deliver an omni-channel experience, in other cases, they specifically handle tasks traditionally executed by retail sales staffs, cashiers and warehouse workers. When the machines are smart enough and the artificial intelligent enough, those tasks are done much more effectively.

That is no slight on the value of retail employees or the customer service they provide. Rather it is an acknowledgment of the rapid advancements taking place across the spectrum of AI-ML-NLP technologies, driven most recently by “deep-learning,” whereby large neural networks modelled after the human brain are fed enough data to be trained



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to do all kinds of things. Such “artificial brains” are the power behind Google’s search, Apple’s Siri, Amazon’s recommendations and Tesla’s self-driving cars. As those advancements increasingly make their way onto the retail sales floor, it becomes almost unfair to make comparisons between human and “artificial” or machine-based capabilities. After all, machines don’t need breaks or vacation days; they’re never late for work, never steal merchandise and can work 14 straight hours, seven days a week without overtime pay or Labor Department disputes.

Sure, even the smartest machines have their limits. There will be maintenance and upgrade costs and break-fix inconveniences, but non-human workforce solutions also have no need for health insurance, worker’s compensation and employment tax, and human employees simply can’t compete in terms of automatically gathering, storing and retrieving on-demand gobs of customer data the way machines increasingly can. Smart machines and robots also can speak multiple languages and

be updated constantly with real-time inventory and customer data.

On the other hand, there will always be lots of consumers who prefer the face-to-face of human interaction and real-person problem solving. But there is also most certainly a decent percentage of shoppers who are indifferent or even prefer interaction with non-humans. A recent study by Mintel suggest as much.

Within the relatively high-touch category of cosmetics and beauty products, Mintel found that 45 percent of beauty consumers prefer to search for product information in-store on their mobile devices rather than ask for assistance from a sales associate. What’s more, two in five (39 percent) of those consumers are interested in using, or have used, a store-provided tablet to research beauty products available.

When former McDonald’s USA CEO Ed Rensi recently stated how it would be cheaper to buy a \$35,000 robotic arm than hire a \$15 an hour employee to cook and bag French fries, it’s was largely said as a claim in the highly charged minimum wage debate. But placing politics aside and look-

ing at the matter purely mathematically, smart machines at those prices can be justified by eliminating the cost of just one full-time employee, especially when factoring in the dollars for training, insurance, sick days, employment tax and so on.

We’re also already seeing “robot-as-a-service” models being discussed, under which the cost to purchase, maintain and upgrade smart and learning machines is lumped into a recurring monthly cost – much like labor. And whereas current retail technology investments in online, mobile, local and social generally need to be justified by a boost in revenue or customer retention, capital for AI-ML-NLP investments may already exist in budgets, shifted over from the labor line item.

Some may say we sound like doom-sayers, or at least are inflating the type of hype this publication is usually careful to deflate. Even so, events and advancements that truly disrupt long-standing business models don’t appear very often. When they do, it’s always better to know about them too early rather than too late. 🤖



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# FIBER Optics

## Shedding light on three emerging natural fibers

by Ernest Shiwanov



Photo courtesy United By Blue

**T**oday's outdoor retailers know they face many challenges in making good buying decisions. The fast pace of technology alone has made taxing what had been traditionally simple decisions. Specifically, textile fiber technology has seen dramatic changes in both synthetic (e.g. polypropylene, polyesters, etc.) and protein-based (animal or plant sourced) fibers. Of late, protein-based fibers have seen an uptick of interest by manufacturers in non-traditional sources.

One of the reasons why could be the perception animal or plant-sourced fibers are more environmentally favorable over synthetics. Hand-in-hand with that notion,

advances in protein-based fiber technology are slowly incorporating or enhancing characteristics thought possible only through synthetics. Water-resistant down is a recent example of how a treatment can partially overcome one of down's negative attributes for outdoor recreationalists.

That said, it is worth taking a look at three trending fibers and contrast them with merino wool, a well-established if not de facto mainstay in protein-based fiber. The matrix below is a quick guide to the individual properties of these fibers. Although each column is fairly self-explanatory, the one labeled SuperWash requires some explanation (see sidebar).





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The SuperWash debate is centered on the chemical waste in the process, the water consumed and the long-term public health risk to low levels of carcinogens. Ironically, these same chemicals essentially catapulted the staid wool industry into the 20th Century. Unfortunately, as seen time and time again with technological advancements, a leap in technology sometimes brings unforeseen consequences. Although there have been successful efforts to address the chemical conundrum, the majority of SuperWash is still done in the same, not eco-friendly way, in third world countries.

Brand	Fiber Source	Fiber Diameter microns	Fiber monolithic or hollow	Super Wash	Hydrophobic	Anti-bacterial	Fire resistant	Other properties
Altera	Alpaca	16-30+ Altera socks: 23-24 µm	Hollow	No	Yes	Yes	Class I fiber by FTC/CPS	Hi loft, pills less than wool, ½ the moisture regain as wool 8 v 16%
Kora	Yak	18.3µm 18-20 17-25	Hollow	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Wicking, SPF 40, low lanolin, lower moisture retention than sheep, stronger than sheep wool
United By Blue	Bison	6-7 µm	Mono guard hair hollow	No	Yes	Yes	n/a	Stronger tensile strength than merino, wicking, high moisture retention

Source: Bison Wool Properties; International Textiles & Apparel Association; Company reports

### 'A' is for Alpaca

Shawn Malloy, co-founder of Altera, is not just a marketer. From farm to fiber, Malloy knows all things alpaca and then some. His company, Royalty Fiber Farm and sister company U.S. Natural

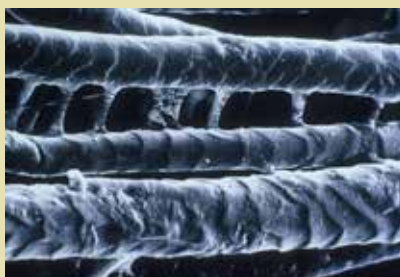
Fibers, specializes in handling boutique protein fibers such as alpaca, yak and bison. For Altera, Malloy only uses a small network of U.S. farmers considered to be in the premium alpaca fibers space. Using these exceptional

## The Dirt on SuperWash

SuperWash, as thought of by some consumers, is not just pre-washed wool. It is a process to make wool consumer machine washable by minimizing its propensity to shrink. A byproduct of this chemical process is to impart better resistance to pilling and abrasion, plus making the finished product softer and less scratchy.

The method commonly used to do this is the very effective Chlorine-Hercosett-Process. At its most basic, it is a two-step process: 1) it prepares the fiber surface for 2) a follow-up plastic resin coating. The procedure both reduces and covers the scales seen in Figure 1, which without treatment, cause the adjoining fibers to continuously interlock, ratcheting themselves ever closer (shrinking). ZQ Merino likens the SuperWash process to hair conditioner: it makes hair smooth and tangle-free.

As effective as it is, SuperWash does not come without serious environmental considerations. This process requires energy, water and has elements to it that are environmentally damaging. A 2009 European Commission study conducted by its Directorate-General for Environment's LIFE Programme disclosed that for 1,200 tons per annum of SuperWash wool produced, it required "150 tons of sodium hypochlorite (household bleach), 220 tons of polyaminoamide resin and 165 tons of other compounds such as sulfuric (car battery) acid, wetting agents and defoamers." These "environmentally hazardous substances," in combination with the large quantities of water, form wastewater laden with significant levels of Adsorbable Organic Halogen compounds or AOX. The investigators found, "The AOX-loading can be up to 40 milligrams per liter (40 ppm) and mainly due to the chlorination step, but also from the resin treatment."



(Left) SEM (scanning electron microscopy) view of polymer coated wool fiber. Note scales on the merino fiber's surface (Right). SuperWash effectively reduces the scale's profile and the resin smoothes them over adding softness and abrasion resistance. Source: CSIRO, Canberra, Australia

Consequently, short of adequate water purification at the end of the factory's effluent pipe, water contamination by chlorine by-products is guaranteed. In water treatment circles, many of these contaminants are known as disinfection by-products (DBP).

DBPs created by chlorine during the SuperWash cycle have been studied extensively but for another reason. A paper published in 1974 by Technical University (Delft, Netherlands) researcher J.J. Rook established a link between DBPs and sodium hypochlorite used as a disinfectant in municipal drinking water. Rook observed when a specific compound from sodium hypochlorite was combined with water and organic matter occurring naturally, it morphed into four primary THMs (trihalomethanes). As it turns out, the compound is hypochlorous acid, the same hypochlorous acid that revolutionized the wool industry via SuperWash.

The LIFE Programme's final report concluded SuperWash results could be practically achieved through other technologies without the chemicals that form DBPs and with virtually no water and a small increase in energy use offset by the cleaner technology. However, as this article will show, some of the fibers are so smooth, SuperWash is not necessary.





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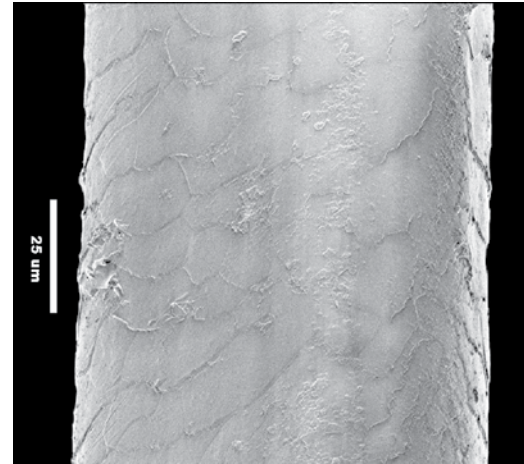


fibers as a foundation, he personally engineers his alpaca fibers to his specifications. "I design my own yarn specifically for my socks. I know specifically what is going into my socks. I don't buy my yarn off the shelf," Malloy emphatically states.

There are multiple parameters that constitute a good fiber and how it is properly utilized, Malloy relates. He favors his sock fibers to be in the 23 to 24 micron range, arguing superfine fibers at 16 through 21 microns are not strong enough for his socks (1 micron

{ $\mu\text{m}$ } = 1 thousandth of a millimeter/0.000039 inch).

Next, he designs the sock for a specific end use. For instance his Prevail is a triple-ply, all-season hiking sock, so he blends it with nylon for iron-like wear. Malloy enhances alpaca's natural anti-bacterial/anti-stink properties with Silver Infusion Technology. He also claims the hollow nature of the fibers increases the comfort range 30 percent over merino: warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer. Since his alpaca fi-



Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) image of the surface of an alpaca fiber. The cuticle scales on the surface of the fiber have a low profile, almost flat against the surface, yielding its soft handle and obviating the need to SuperWash. CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation - Australia)

bers are washed with a citrus-based cleaner and not SuperWashed, the natural water repellency provided by the oily lipids found on the fiber's surface is retained (Negri, A.P., H.J. Cornell and D.E. Rivett, 1993. A model for the surface of keratin fibers. *Text. Res. J.*, 63: 109-115). Alpaca, Malloy says, is also hypoallergenic since it does not have lanolin unlike sheep's wool; good news for those allergic to it.

Regarding SuperWash, a study conducted by PhDs Andy Tillman and Cheryl Tillman, published in *Alpaca Magazine* (Spring 2006), seems to confirm Malloy's assertion of not needing it for alpaca. The Tillman's compared fibers within the camelid family (alpacas, llamas, etc.) against Bombay silk, SRS merino (superfine), cashmere, angora and mohair. They used scanning electron microscopy (SEM) to make high resolution images of the surfaces of these fibers. They compared the number of cuticle scales per 100 microns and the height of the scales off the surface of the fibers. Their findings were clear: both types of alpaca had the lowest scale height and the least amount of scales per 100 microns. According to Tillman's report, "The scale height of suri alpaca fiber was almost impossible to measure, even with

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digital imaging tools. It is essentially a mono-filament, like silk.” They go on to say, “While half the scale height of other sheep breeds, SRS merino is still more than 10 times greater than huacaya or suri alpaca (“Surface Scanning Electron Microscopy of Suri Alpaca Fiber and Other Members of the Camel Family.” Alpaca Magazine Spring 2006) 158-71. Web.)

Although the Tillman’s study is a welcome addition to the database on fiber characteristics, additional peer-reviewed research needs to be conducted to verify all fiber properties such as loft, hypoallergenic status, fire resistance, moisture regain, tensile strength and pilling, just to name a few. Until that happens, these socks thrive on personal DIY field research in any outdoors proving ground. However, data collection is purely optional.

### YAK Attack

Kora is not the first manufacture to sell a line of yak wool apparel. Its business model, similar to Altera’s, is set on continuing to source, engineer and manufacture its own wool, but with a hitch: within a framework of sustainable development. As founder Michael Kleinwort’s puts it, “we are in fact, a fully integrated business that oversees our whole supply chain and production process.”



Kola base layers, including the Shola 230 Zip, are made from 100% yak wool.

Getting there has taken a lot of effort. Kleinwort spent the better part of three years scouring the Tibetan Plateau (Qinghai) for indigenous communities with his entrepreneurial vision and a potential supply of yak wool. With his herder cooperative established, he has been able to stimulate employment, establish an alternative income stream and, through it, bring additional economic constancy to the Qinghai region. To do this, during the last five years,

Kleinwort has been trading yak fiber above market rate in addition to incentivized benchmarks.

“We also pay a stipend at the end of the season of 10 percent in order to encourage the herders to return the next year to sell to us. These additional revenues help sustain these nomads’ livelihoods on the plateau,” Kleinwort submits.

When asked why all this effort, Kleinwort passionately responds, “positive change brings us closer to

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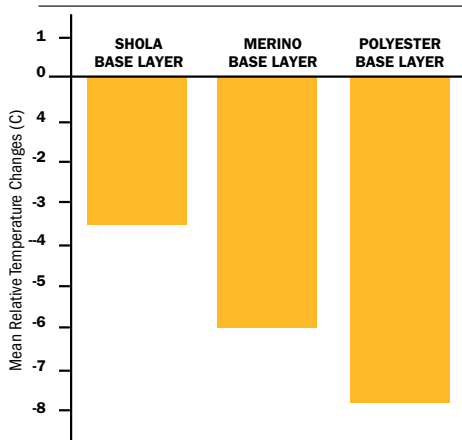
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## Thermal Loss During 1 Hour Running in -5C



Source: Sheffield Hallam University's Centre for Sport & Exercise Science; kora

the understanding that all societies, including traditional communities, exist in a state of constant flux. We are always changing; nothing is static. This runs counter to the (Western) view that traditional societies should be preserved as they always have been. Kora's view is that nomad culture and nomad societies are also changing and adapting to the new world around them – to survive, they must. We would like to help them adapt in a way that protects their cultural heritage and identity. For kora, this is about empowerment and education.”

Indeed, and within that scenario is the world's reliance upon ancient stewardship practices nomadic communities still provide to the grasslands of the Tibetan Plateau. Not just only for themselves but for the billions of inhabitants downstream and ultimately around the world.

Clearly, expending so much energy to bring logistically challenged yak to market implies it must be pretty special. It is.

First, it is a very fine fiber but strong even at 18.3  $\mu\text{m}$ , as used in kora's Hima-Layer Original 230 yarns. The fibers are claimed to be hollow, fire resistant, anti-microbial and hydrophobic. Kleinwort reports testing done by SGS shows yak is 40 percent warmer than merino, weight-for-weight. He also shows results from a Sheffield Hallam University's Centre for Sport & Exercise study concluding yak maintains

homeostasis better than polyester or merino wool base layers (see table). The kora website also maintains kora's yak “is 66 percent more breathable and is 17 percent better at transporting water vapour away from the skin.” Anecdotal feedback from athletes-testers confirms those assertions when comparing similar merino.

When all the testing is eventually finished, there is no doubt, yak will be among the elite natural fibers, and kora will take its place among the elite brands. And in no small way, kora's efforts to achieve the trifecta in sustainable development will unquestionably help them get there.

## United Under Bison

United by Blue's founder Brian Linton is obsessed by water. So much so, in 2010, he started UBB and with it a “pledge to remove 1 pound of trash from a river or ocean for every product UBB sells.” According to UBB's website, as of this writing, 312,402 pounds of trash have been picked up between 155 clean-up events. Additionally, UBB has committed to the B-Corp framework and has been certified since 2011 (its score is double the median grade). Then there is the product line, with each item curated to fit into UBB's ideal of doing right while doing good

*(Continued on page 82)*



(Top) Cross section of United By Blue's B100 bison insulation. The hollow bison fibers used in this 60% bison/40% recycled polyester non-woven insulation increase the overall thermal efficiency of the batting, giving it a third party tested 4.5 CLO value. (Bottom) The Ultimate American Jacket, insulated with B100 insulation. MRSP: \$598

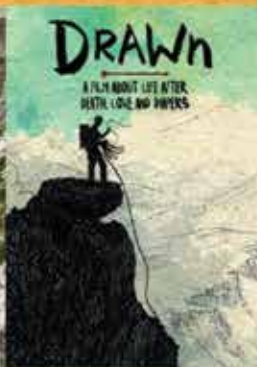




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# One Banana, Two Banana

## The Lifecycle of Merchandise

by **Ritchie** Sayner

A case could be made that the lifecycle of merchandise could be looked at in much the same way as visiting relatives; excitement for arrival, and shortly thereafter anticipation for departure. Merchants are excited to receive the next season's fresh new inventory, yet once it lands they try to figure out how fast it can sell to begin the process all over again.

Each style, size and color has its own life expectation. This cycle of life begins when merchandise is received and is complete when the goods have left the store. Several factors help determine a product's lifecycle. Gender, product classification, selling season, whether the item is a fashion or basic, all affect the length of time an item remains in the store. Circumstances that play havoc with lifecycle most certainly include weather (a warm fall can delay the start of boot selling, but at the same time extend the life of sandals, for example).

To best understand the concept of product lifecycle (and in particular, the exit strategy of same), a merchant need look no further than the local grocer. Bananas illustrate the point beautifully. Most grocery shoppers buy bananas with a hint of green (preseason delivery) knowing that they will ripen quickly on the home counter within a day or two and be perfect to eat (in season). If, however, you have purchased more bananas that you can eat

in a given time period (overbuying), the fruit will soon become overripe (out of season), be covered in little brown spots and be suitable only for making banana bread (markdowns). (Pardon the digression, but my banana nut bread recipe is pretty darn good, if I say so myself – see insert below). This timeframe represents post-peak season and is where clearance activity occurs.

Retailers should have a well-defined exit strategy for all merchandise. As in the banana example, each item has a shelf life, if you will. The exit strategy is a function of the store's sell-through and GM-ROI goals. The execution of the exit strategy process is subject

to a category-specific markdown cadence.

A cadence is a natural rhythm or flow of something. A markdown cadence ensures that all remaining inventory is sold through as profitably as possible while making room for the arrival of new merchandise. Many stores are helter-skelter on this concept and as such end up taking too many markdowns and usually the timing is wrong. As a result of no predetermined markdown schedule, retailers often end up waiting until too late in the season to take clearance markdowns and never maximize the true margin potential of the classification. Another symptom of a lack of markdown planning is the



**“Retailers should have a well-defined exit strategy for all merchandise.”**



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“panic” markdown. This type of markdown generally occurs when a retailer becomes worried about a lack of traffic or needs cash and typically overreacts by temporarily marking down the entire store, line or category. No real thought is given to margin outcome or resulting inventory balance. This is truly an example of a ready, fire, aim approach to markdowns.

Even worse than having no markdown strategy is the store that waits until the season is over on seasonal merchandise and simply decides it would be more cost effective to “carryover” the inventory in lieu of marking the merchandise down and moving it out. Although there are examples where this strategy may be acceptable, it is far from an ideal situation on a consistent basis, as it reduces turnover and ties up cash. There are too many variables to be overly specific, so I will only share one general cadence for purposes of example only.

- **In-season markdowns.** Taken after merchandise has been offered for sale for a predetermined time with limited activity. 20% off in-season might be sufficient to accelerate sales and prevent greater markdowns if not acted upon until late in the season.
- **First clearance reduction** might be one third off. Sales will spike after the markdown is first taken and then plateau or fall off until further reductions are made.
- **The next markdown** in the sequence might be 40 percent or 50 percent off depending on the merchandise and how aggressive the merchant is. The time to take this reduction is maybe 10 days



**Ritchie's "Markdown" Banana Nut Bread Recipe**  
**Ingredients**

1 ½ cups all-purpose flour	¼ cup chopped nuts
½ cup sugar	1 egg slightly beaten
2 ½ tsp baking powder <sup>11/3</sup>	¼ cup vegetable oil
½ tsp salt	2 tbs. water
½ tsp. baking soda	1 tsp. vanilla
1 ½ cups mashed banana (3 large)	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease an 8 ½ x 4 ½ x 2 ½ inch loaf pan. Stir together flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, baking soda. Combine egg, oil, water, mashed bananas and vanilla. Add all at once to dry ingredients. Stir until just moistened. Spread evenly into pan. Bake 50-55 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Let cool 15 minutes before removing from pan.

markdowns are now transferred to a markdown room or area within the store where even greater reductions will be taken until all the items are sold (red dot, blue dot, green dot, etc). Stores that manage this sequence effectively will actually buy off-price specifically for this area as they may have customers that frequent the

sale area.

The example above is generic and will vary from retailer to retailer and by type of merchandise. All retailers should develop a thorough understanding of the lifecycle of merchandise and consistently practice active markdown management. Those that choose not to may end up with ... banana bread. 🍌

*Ritchie Sayner is vice president of business development RMSA Retail Solutions, [www.rmsa.com](http://www.rmsa.com). To follow him on Facebook, go to [www.facebook.com/RitchieSayner](http://www.facebook.com/RitchieSayner).*

to two weeks after the initial clearance markdown is taken. Sales will again spike and then level off signally the time for round three, the final clearance.

- **The final clearance** can be easily identified when you see ads that say 75% off or “take 20% off the previous markdown” or “values to \$150, now \$49.90 saving up to \$100” or BOGO (buy one, get one). In some cases, the final





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# Alternate Advance

Purchase order funding helps build a bridge to growth

by **Chris** Kuroda

It's a classic "too much of a good thing" scenario: An emerging outdoor company makes killer products, grows a devoted fan base and starts gaining space on retailers' shelves. Then comes "The Order" — a commitment from a retailer willing to purchase a significant amount of new product. Suddenly, the emerging outdoor company has to figure out how to pay the short-term costs of producing and delivering "The Order".

Small-to-mid-sized manufacturers often struggle with finding money to keep the company growing in that period between closing a pre-season order and delivering the products to the retailer. Many companies in that position simply sell off their hard-earned equity — a quick fix that delivers an infusion of cash but often comes with long-term drawbacks and loss of entrepreneurial control. Other companies, such as Utah-based Saga Outerwear, have turned to more creative types of short-term financing — in particular, a program called "purchase order funding."

Popular in other markets and industries, purchase order funding is an emerging trend in the outdoor market. At its basic level, PO funding is an advance of money paid to a company's supplier so the company can fulfill a customer's order. It doesn't involve a bank loan or surrendering ownership, and the average loan period is about two months.

**"Yes, debt financing can be expensive, but it's a lot cheaper than selling your equity."**

"We were selling direct-to-consumer only, but there was a demand for our product at the wholesale and retail level," said Andy Mallett, CEO and co-founder of Saga Outerwear. "We were at a point that we simply couldn't finance our growth on our own. We could get a smaller line of credit from a bank, but that wasn't enough to produce our goods in Asia, ship them to our wholesalers and retailers and then wait for payment after delivery. We needed to find a way to generate revenue."

Saga teamed up with California-based Gateway Trade Funding, one of the leading purchase order financing companies operating in the outdoor industry.

"We were introduced to Gateway by a conventional bank that turned us down," said Mallett. "It worked out well. Gateway allowed my partner and I to maintain ownership in our company through a high-growth phase. Yes, debt financing can be expensive, but it's a lot cheaper than selling your equity."

Ned Post is Gateway's Business Development Manager for Outdoor Markets. He came to the financing company after more than 20 years as the president of Smith Optics and understands outdoor buyers, outdoor consumers and the pace of overseas production of goods.

"The outdoor market is the perfect place for purchase order funding," said Post, who






points out his company is an Outdoor Industry Association member. "Companies need to be focused on the parts of their businesses they do really well. That includes product innovation, brand building, marketing and sales. Purchase order funding allows a company to stay within their core businesses competencies while knowing their production and delivery costs will be paid for. It's a way to do what you're good at and not give up your ownership."

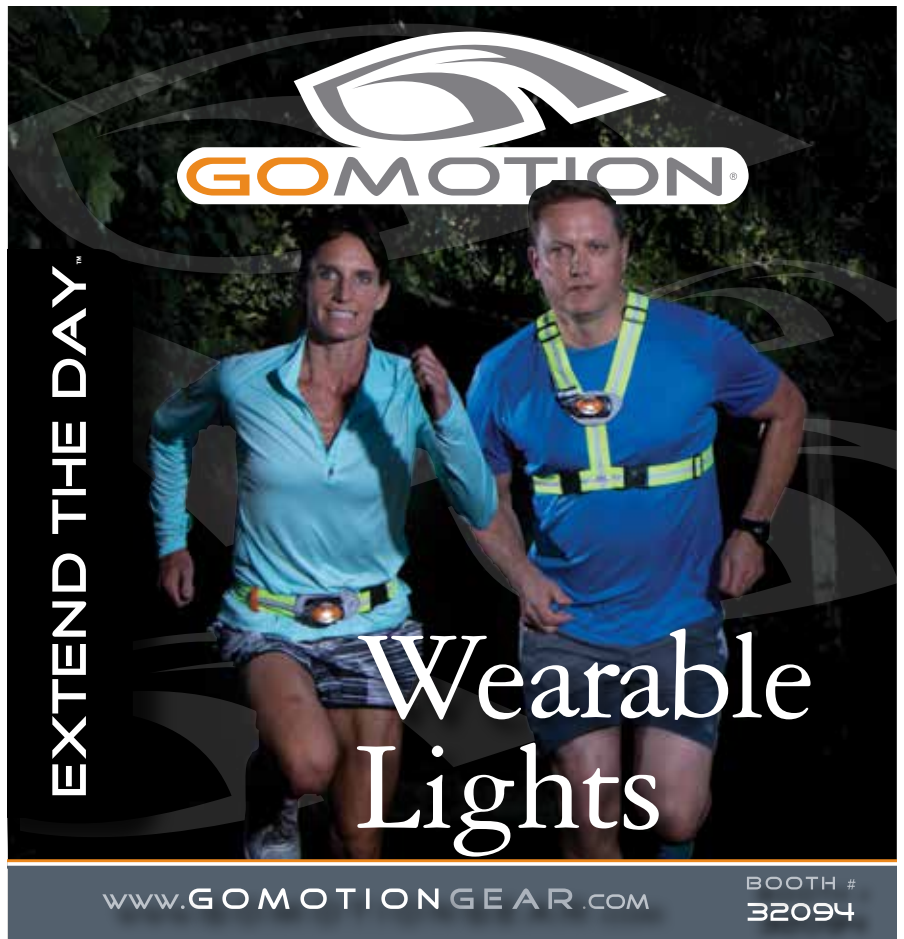
Purchase order funding isn't new, but according to a story in *Entrepreneur*, lenders say interest in PO loans began to increase after regulations on bank lending tightened during the Great Recession. Before 2010, there were only a few active purchase order lending companies operating nationwide, but as the economy rebounded and conventional banks got stingier, the option became a go-to for companies looking for help in financing through a growth stage.

Now, more companies in the outdoor industry are opting in.

"PO funding does not come from basing our decision to lend money on a manufacturer's credit score," said Post. "Purchase order funding looks very closely at the transaction being financed and who is paying the purchase order when those goods are delivered. Because of that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. It's really a unique, customizable lending program that works well with the size and kind of companies that make up the guts of the outdoor industry."

Mallett said he's heard of larger companies using purchase order financing, particularly those whose sales are seasonal, like so many mainstays of the outdoor industry.

"The sweet spot, I think, is those younger companies that are still growing," Mallett said. "The balance sheet may not be in the best shape, and the banks aren't real interested. In that case, PO funding really is a great alternative." 



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# Is Your Business Growing Too Fast?

## How to maintain market-share mojo

Extremely rapid growth for a business might sound good, but it can be a mixed blessing.

Certainly, high growth yields greater returns, offering shareholders five times more than medium-growth companies, says Debora McLaughlin, CEO of The Renegade Leader Coaching and Consulting Group.

Growth predicts long-term success, she says, and it matters more than margin or cost structure.

But sustaining growth is extremely difficult.

For example, a business may have tremendously high growth in the start-up phase, as did the daily-deals pioneer Groupon, which had a stellar valuation of \$6.4 billion in 2010.

“By 2012, Groupon had lost a mind-boggling 80 percent of its stock value since its initial public offering,” McLaughlin says. “What happened? The tech company never figured out customer retention.”

While Groupon is a prominent example, it’s certainly not the only one. Approximately 85 percent of super-growers, defined by McKinsey as companies whose growth is greater than 60 percent, are unable to maintain their growth rates, and once lost, less than a quarter were able to recapture them.

McLaughlin, author of “The Renegade Leader: 9 Success Strategies Driven Leaders Use to Ignite People, Performance & Profits,” offers tips for maintaining momentum for businesses that are experiencing high growth.

• **Define your Culture.** You can’t afford not to invest the time to define the culture

needed to support your strategic plan. What is the purpose of your company, its guiding values, and its top priorities? Defining the culture allows you to align senior leaders, stakeholders and investors, make faster decisions, attract top talent and engage employees.

- **Do your best to retain the right people.** Often, the problem faced by fast-growing companies is that they need to hire people fast so they fill positions based on talent versus fit and attitude. Hire people who align with your culture and its values. Have the right mix of visionaries with executors.
- **Maintain the quality of your product.** Whatever it may be – an online service or your town’s best muffins – exponential growth can have you running in 100 different directions. Don’t forget what got you to this point: quality. Continue to wow the customers who trusted in you at the beginning.
- **Make sure you have the money you think you have.**

It’s easy to confuse growth of accounts receivable for tangible, cash-based growth. If your company isn’t collecting the cash it’s due, there’s a risk of running into a cash crisis during growth. There’s nothing more valuable for an expanding business than cash.

“You want to manage your growth in a smart way,” McLaughlin says. “You want growth that easily translates to profit, which means collecting data, doing the research and challenging your business instincts. Don’t be so focused on your product or service that you fail to notice the shifting sands of your consumer demands.”

*Debora McLaughlin is a certified executive coach and CEO of The Renegade Leader Coaching and Consulting Group. She helps business leaders ignite their inner renegade leader to unleash their full potential, drive their visions and yield positive results, both in business and in life.*

“Approximately 85 percent of super-growers... are unable to maintain their growth rates...”



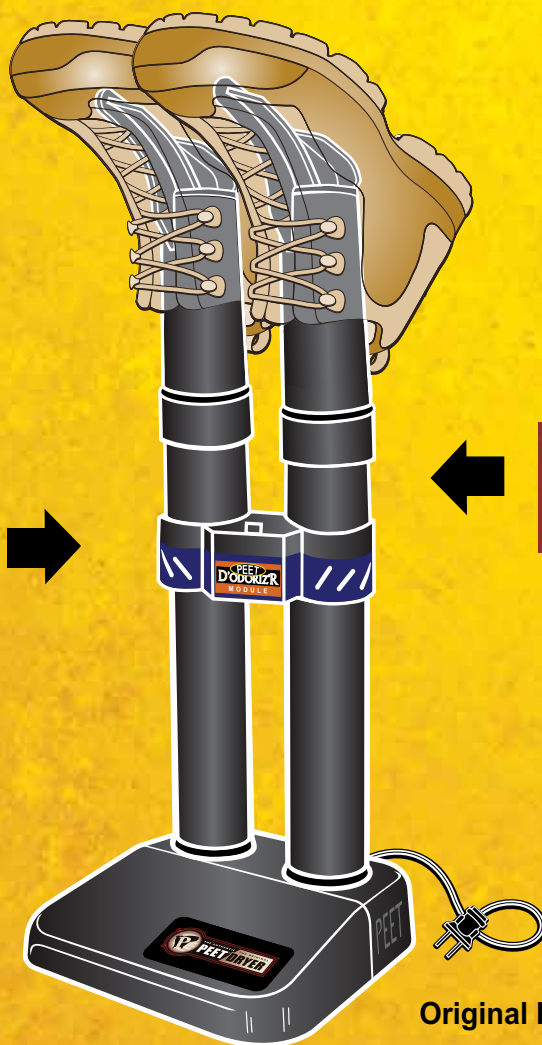


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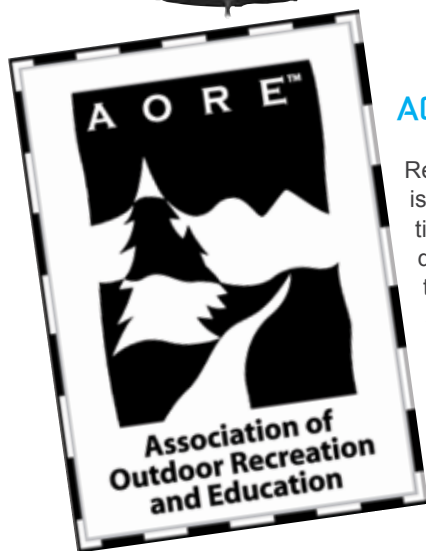
### AFTCO

The core foundation of Anhydrous outdoor system is a three-layer eVent DValpine waterproof/breathable fabric utilizing a proprietary ePTFE membrane. Other tech features include Bemis waterproof seam tape, water-repelling YKK AquaGuard zippers, watertight wrist cuffs and an articulated fit for natural range of motion. SRPs are \$395 for the jacket, \$345 for bib.



### Alpine Innovations

The BinoSlicker Bandit's patented design takes existing binoculars and gives them a functional facelift. The neoprene Bandit stretches easily over the eyecups of any binoculars, creating a comfortable barrier that reduces eye strain and shields from the previously ever-present glare, wind and weather that can leak in from the sides of an unshielded pair of binos.



### AORE

The Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education (AORE) is the premier member organization for current and emerging outdoor recreation professionals in the university, military, municipal and not-for-profit sectors.



### Airhead SUP

The Bonefish stand-up fishing board is loaded with four integrated mount pads strategically placed to accept four fishing rod racks, an Airhead SUP Fishing Rack and/or Bucket Rack, two smaller accessory mounts for small rod holders or other accessories and two stainless d-ring cooler tie downs. The classic teak-look EVA decking provides sure footing.

### AO Coolers

The first of its kind from AO, the Rigid Soft Sided Cooler is a hybrid of sewn and welded construction, with a molded EVA tub bottom, plus the same durable and eco-friendly TPU liner and YKK zipper as AO's other coolers.



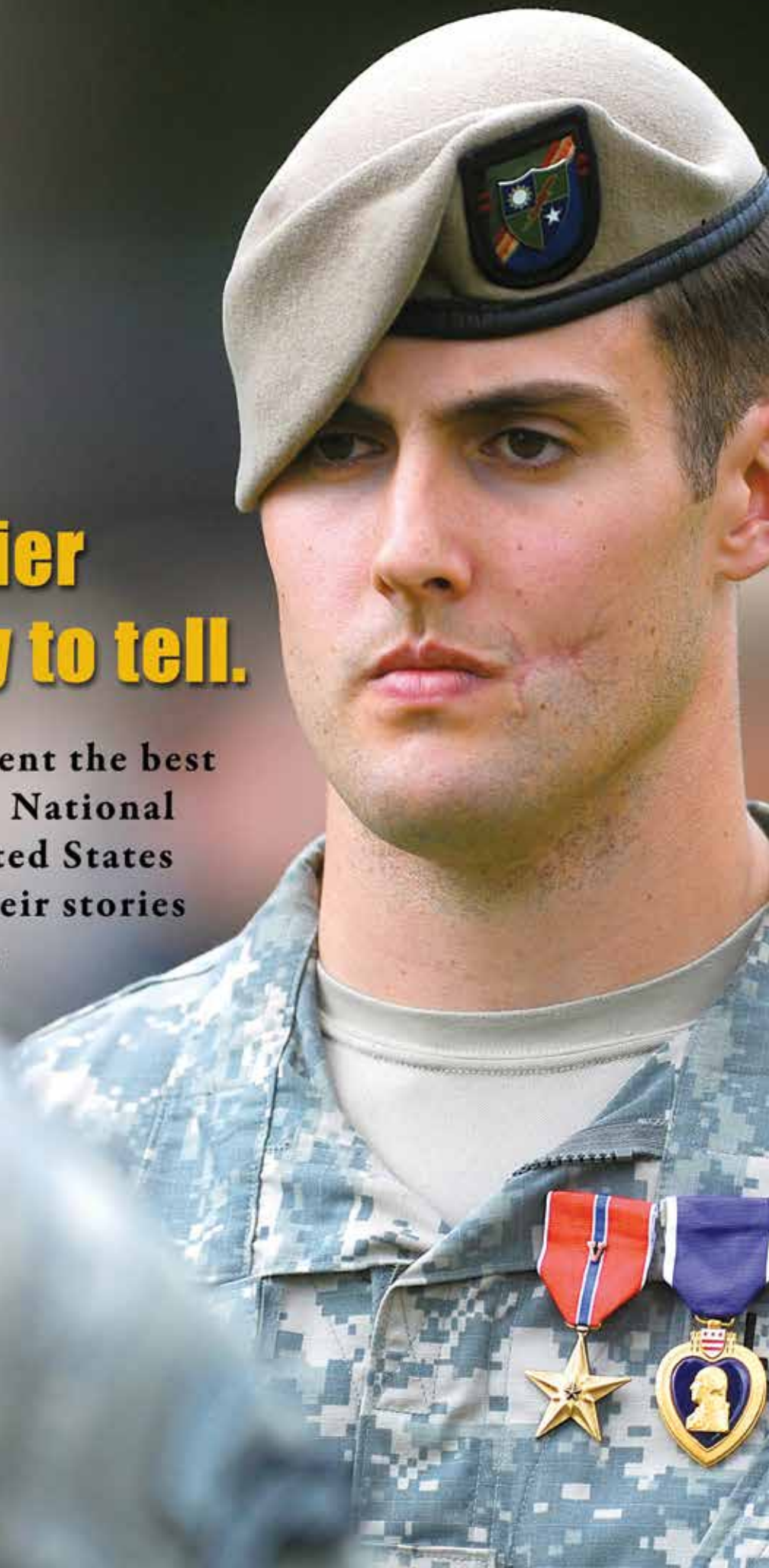




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Angle Oar is a paddle for recreational kayakers with limited endurance due to shoulder injuries, grip imitations, health conditions or general ability. Also great for anglers who want to paddle with one hand and fish with the other.



### Astral

Inspired by the unique elements found in Astral's water-ready footwear, the burly yet lightweight TR1 Junction is equipped with Astral's sticky G Rubber, Balanced Geometry and Top Shank for crushing miles of rugged terrain. The trail shoe is suitable for daily use, blending durability, ventilation and style. SRP is \$120.



### Avex

The Lounger is designed to keep can or bottle beverages colder for longer without breaking a sweat. Made with 18/8 Capacitor Stainless steel combined with a vacuum-insulated double-wall design, its patent-pending flexible gripper fins hold bottles and cans securely without rattling. Rubber non-marring base protects furniture and prevents slippage. SRP is \$24.99.



### Arc'teryx

For the Bora AR 50 overnight pack, Arc'teryx focused on designing a better load carry by implementing an adjusting hip belt that changes back length as you move. Also check out the new Norvan VT Trail Running shoe, designed to provide precision scrambling through adjustable laces.



### Aventura

The sublimated Hollis Dress has stretch that adds incredible comfort to this athletic-inspired, everyday dress. Side panels in a contrast stripe pattern are super slimming, and the delicate scoop neck is bra-friendly. SRP is \$87.



### Balega

The Enduro Vtech Quarter socks feature enhanced compression bands for an ideal support structure midfoot. Balega's own VTech Arch Support System provides a snug, supportive midfoot fit, while the protective cushioning, mesh panels and hand-linked seams ensure all-around comfort with non-restrictive movement. SRP is \$13.







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### Bergans of Norway

A versatile shoulder season jacket, the Slingsby Ultra features chest and sleeves made with Ecodear, a windproof, 30% plant-based fabric co-developed with Toray Industries. Ecodear is made partly from molasses, a waste product of sugar production, and helps to reduce the amount of petroleum-based materials used in jacket production. SRP is \$239.



### Bertucci

B-1T Titanium Field watches feature a rugged titanium, tonneau-shaped case (41mm diameter) in a cool, throw-back look. Highlights include super-luminous hands and dials, scratch-resistant mineral glass, all-metal quartz movement and an off-set crown ergonomically placed at the 4 o'clock position. SRPs range from \$150 to \$170.



### Big Agnes

At just more than 3 lbs, the double-door Happy Hooligan UL2 sets a standard for lightweight value in backpacking tents with 29 square feet of floor space, two vestibules, media pockets and optional fast fly setup. Available in two and three person sizes, SRPs start at \$379.95.



### BioLite

The credit-card-sized PowerLight Mini light features three lighting modes (edge-lit lantern, red night mode and strobe lighting), up to 135 lumens, an included bike mount and a rechargeable 1300 mAh battery that provides a boost to electronic gear. SRP is \$39.95.



### Bogs Footwear

Crafted with waterproof, unlined and raw edge leather, the Uma Lace's sleek silhouette offers casual style and everyday performance. The H2OGrip outsole holds steady on wet terrain while a removable Rebound footbed and Rebound cushioning in the midsole provide lasting comfort. SRP is \$95.



### Black Diamond

The Iota is the smallest, lightest weight, most powerful, rechargeable headlamp ever offered by Black Diamond. This little headlamp will shine at 150 lumens for up to three hours, says BD.





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### Bridgford

Bridgford Ready to Eat Wraps are now available in two flavors: Mexican Style Beef, and Pork with BBQ Sauce wrapped in a flour tortilla. Bridgford's Ready to Eat Wraps have a three-year extended shelf life. No refrigeration or heating required, simply tear open and enjoy.



### Brooks-Range

The Snooze 20 700-fill goose down bag features water-repellent DownTek, Flow Construction, 20D shell and lining fabrics with DWR, and a down-fill 3D collar. It weighs 2 lbs., 2.5 oz. and SRP is \$299.99.

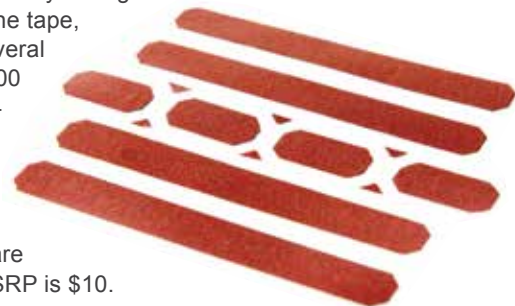
### Butler

Butler children's footwear is made in the USA and slips on over any child's shoe. The Rockhopper is made of a TPE compound, a consistent high performer in cold-temperature-crack tests and slip-and-wear tests. The shoe is also constructed from one mold, eliminating the wear and tear of thread or glue, and is lead and phthalate free.



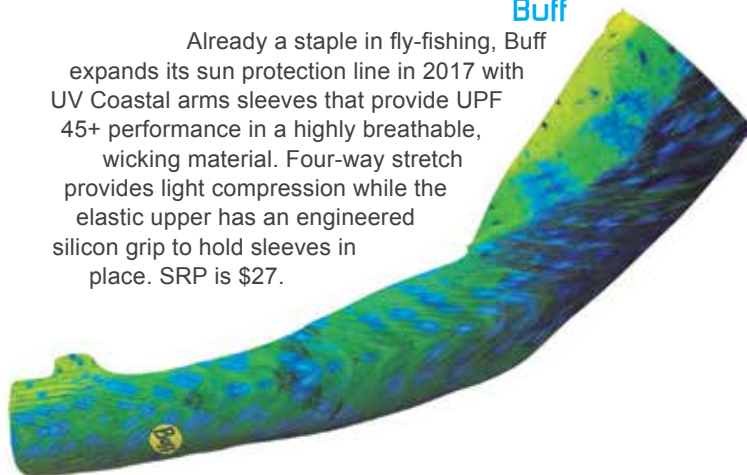
### Brilliant Reflective

Brilliant Reflective makes tape that easily adheres to a wide array of outdoor gear, providing a boost to visibility during low-light hours. The tape, available in several colors, adds 200 lumens of reflectivity to items such as bikes, helmets, shirts and shoes. Iron-on reflective options are also available. SRP is \$10.



### Buff

Already a staple in fly-fishing, Buff expands its sun protection line in 2017 with UV Coastal arms sleeves that provide UPF 45+ performance in a highly breathable, wicking material. Four-way stretch provides light compression while the elastic upper has an engineered silicon grip to hold sleeves in place. SRP is \$27.



### Bureo

A collaboration between Bureo and Carver Skateboards, the Ahi features a deck made from 100% recycled fishing nets that are gathered off the coast of Chile. The board is finished with a gripping scale pattern, stainless steel hardware, recycled Eco Cruiser wheels and Carver's CX truck, which allows the rider to pump and turn the board like a surfboard. SRP is \$195.





### CamelBak

The new Crux Reservoir delivers 20 percent more water per sip compared to the company's Antidote Reservoir. The Crux also features the patented Big Bite valve; a brand new cap and handle with wide opening to make cleaning and re-filling easy and effortless; and the Quick Link System, allowing the drink tube to be disconnected and remain routed in the pack while the reservoir exit port automatically shuts off for leak-proof removal and fast refills.



### Camp Chef

Available in two different models (one burns isobutane, the other propane) the Stryker Stove features Heat Ring technology that captures and transfers heat for a rapid boil while reducing overall fuel consumption. The stove comes with a tri-legged stand, burner with matchless ignition and an insulated 1.3 liter pot.

### Chamois Butt'r

The first non-cream product from Chamois Butt'r, the fragrance-free Go Stik is a solid stick lubricant designed to eliminate uncomfortable chafing and skin irritation for runners, cyclists, triathletes and swimmers. SRPs are \$14.99 (2.5 oz.) and \$2.99 (0.15 oz.).



### Casio

Casio introduces the latest addition to its Master of G, the GG-1000 Mudmaster. Shock- and mud-resistance ensure that nothing gets into the watch when work or play takes you deep into the dirt and sludge.



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### Chaos

One of eight new SKUs and a multitude of proactive fabrics, colors and prints for youths up to tween sizes, the lightweight Summit Boonie features UPF 50+ and wicking fabric, vented side panels and a moisture wicking sweatband.



### CleverCrate

CleverCrate's hinged frame designs allow them to collapse flat when not in use, saving space when stored or in the trunk. Plus, an interlocking, stackable design allows crates to stack when opened or collapsed. CleverCates are offered in several colors and sizes.



### Chums

With a removable padded divider, fleece lining and water-resistant exterior materials, the Guardian padded case is designed to stow and organize anything from sunglasses to tech while on the trail, water or traveling. SRP is \$14.99.

### Coghlan's

The Pop-up Recycle Bin makes it easy to recycle on-the-go. This durable recycle bin folds small for easy storage, making it great for the campsite, cabin or home. The bin is made of heavy-duty, tear-resistant polyethylene and features a steel spring that pops up and holds its shape.



### Counter Assault

Safety and comfort can be compatible. The Trail Runner Holster Belt keeps Counter Assault bear spray immediately accessible in the comfort of an integrated neoprene belt with breathable lining. It's available in two sizes: Sm/Med or Lg/XL.

### Craghoppers

The Nat Geo NosiLife Davenport lightweight travel vest incorporates 19 pockets while still offering UPF 50+ sun protection and Insect Shield repellent. Toss in a RFID protection pocket, sunglasses wipe, back hem vents, dry bag, and touch screen pocket for a hot-climate travel essential.







### Crazy Creek

Crazy Creek's all new accessories line helps organize gear and travel items. From the simple Do Wah Ditty Bag to the innovative Drop Sac (pictured), they all help keep "stuff" organized, so you have what you want, when you need it.



### Coyote Eyewear

A polarized sport sunglasses with the added benefit of bifocal lenses, the Polarized Sport Bifocal Readers are made with shatterproof polycarbonate Class 1 lenses, ANSI Z87.1 rated for impact resistance. Frames are TR-90 Grilamid with megol rubber for a secure, comfortable fit. Available in +1.50, +2.00, and +2.50 powers, SRP is \$89.99.



### Deuter

From trail to town the Walker 24 delivers all-day comfort with the ventilated Airstripes back system in an updated heritage design. The laptop sleeve features access from the interior and exterior of the pack. Inside a zippered valuables pocket, organization sleeves and a key loop keep items secure.



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### DryGuy

The new Force Dry provides a quick and efficient way to eliminate moisture from soaked gear. With the ability to dry a pair of shoes or gloves in about an hour, the Force Dry gently circulates warm air for quick, efficient drying, while foldable drying stacks make for a compact design that travels easy. SRP is \$50.



### Dynafit

The Elevation Polartec Alpha jacket is a highly breathable, wind-resistant insulated jacket designed for high output and aerobic activities. It features hybrid construction and four-way stretch, while repelling water and wind, making this jacket ideal for ascending and changing climates. SRP is \$199.



### Eagle Creek

The redesigned ORV Trunks boast increased durability and lighter weight carry – something only possible through the engineering of new materials. The bags also provide even more security and personal safety features, plus popular features such as the Equipment Keeper to secure gear to the top of bag. SRPs start at \$369.



### Ecöths

The Santiago SS is an organic cotton and CoolMax shirt with a soft, crepe-like feel. Color contrasting inside the yoke and placket set off the fresh colorways, while a microfiber Handy Cloth for cleaning phones and glasses adds convenience. Ecöths' donates three meals for each piece sold. SRP is \$72.

### ENERGYbits

Algae is recognized by NASA and the UN as the most nutritionally dense food in the world but is virtually unknown outside of Asia. ENERGYbits algae tablets are sustainably grown and improve energy, focus, strength, endurance and speed recovery all without chemicals, caffeine, gluten or sugar and are endorsed by 50 Olympic and pro athletes.



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**EnerPlex**

The Commadr 30 is designed for power hungry electronics and batteries with true 30-watt output. Its lightweight, solar-on-plastic technology makes the unit lightweight and flexible, weighing less than 2 lbs. It's water resistant and can withstand shocks, drops and minor punctures, says EnerPlex.

**ExOfficio**

The Men's Sol Cool Boxer Brief combines the soft comfort of mercerized cotton with the performance of a cooling, breathable and dynamic hydrophobic fiber blend to create a performance cotton underwear that keeps travelers cool, dry and comfortable. Available in six solid colors and six prints in sizes S-2XL stretch to fit, SRPs range from \$38 to \$42.



**Farm to Feet**

The Raleigh features Farm to Feet's 3D Active Knit Technology, creating multiple targeted venting and cushioning zones for superior performance and comfort. Designed for running, among other sport activities, the Raleigh is knit on a 200-needle machine with 19.5 micron U.S. wool for a lightweight, low-profile sock.



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The Extreme Balance Board Pro is one of the toughest on the market, providing the ability to train balance and coordination while building lower body strength and mobility. Featuring movement from front-to-back, side-to-side and full rotation, the balance board's SRP is \$199.95.



### Flylow

Dubbed a backcountry board short, the Waylon is a surf-inspired short made for travel, water-based adventures or to wash the car. These quick-dry, swim trunks with stretch feature a lace-up waist, zippered thigh pocket, 40+ UPF and multiple color options. SRP is \$65.



### Fjällräven

The lightweight Asisko Friluft 45 trekking backpack features the brand's Friluft Ventilation System that uses a mesh back panel and air columns to create ventilation and comfort. The body is constructed from a waxed organic cotton-recycled polyester blend and a 500D waterproof nylon base finished with a PFC-free weatherproofing treatment. SRP is \$180.



### FuelBelt

With a new feather-light handstrap, the 10 oz. Sprint Palm Holder bottle is the lightest from the company. It's made with BPA-free plastic, a durable hand-strap collar, a Velcro attachment that keeps the padded handstrap secure and a silicone push-pull bottle cap. Offered in several color options, SRP is \$14.95.



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### Gear Aid

The ARC Light & Power Station is built with 60 LEDs, USB charging and a 10,400mAh battery providing light and power for days. It'll weather a storm, transforms into a lantern and is compact. The ARC can be hung or mounted for 180° of lighting. SRP is \$99.95.



### Grand Trunk

This lightweight, puffy Tech Throw travel blanket fully unfurled offers more than 6' x 3' of soft, quilted synthetic insulation, but packs down to the size of a Nalgene bottle. The added cozy foot pocket keeps toes extra warm. SRP is \$80.

### Gerber

The US-Assist pocket clip folding knife is the latest addition to a long line of American-made blades. Built for everyday use, the knife incorporates a new ball bearing technology that ensures fast, consistent opening. It's built with premium materials including S30V steel and textured G10 scales. A scratch-resistant pocket clip and dual-ramped thumb studs complete the package.



### GoMacro

Thrive is a line of plant-based nutrition bars made with ancient super foods such as hemp hearts, sprouted flax and quinoa. They come in six flavors and contain a blend of plant-based protein, essential fatty acids and prebiotic fiber. GoMacro products all are non-GMO, certified organic, Kosher, vegan and free of gluten, soy and dairy.

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### GoMotion

XtendD is a fully reflective, minimal vest with 150 lumen Cree LED sternum light and red rear flashing lights for optimal visibility. It incorporates GoMotion's new lighter battery management system powered by

rechargeable lithium-ion batteries. It runs at 8h/18h/54h battery life with universal mini-USB port. SRP is \$69.



### GSI Outdoors

The Microlite 500 is a 500ml stainless vacuum bottle weighing just 7.9 oz. Its vacuum-insulated design with easy open one-hand operation provides heat and cold retention for up to eight hours, while 18/8 stainless steel ensures purity and durability. It is available in six colors. SRP is 25.95.



### Gregory

Starting at 3 lbs., the men's Paragon (pictured) and women's Maven offer a weight-conscious design and ventilated Aerolon Suspension System, while including all of the features traditionally needed in a backpack, including a hydration sleeve, daypack and rain cover.



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Current Registrant		Counter Assault	McNeil River Enterprises	UDAP	Security Equipment				
Date EPA Registered		May 12, 1998 (The First)	Dec 22, 1998	March 18, 1999	July 17, 2000				
Manufactured by		Counter Assault	Contract Filler	Contract Filler	Security Equipment				
Recommendations Suggested by bear biologists and wildlife specialists of the IGBC*		Counter Assault	Guard Alaska	Pepper Power	Frontiersman				
Minimum Net Weight	7.9 oz 225 gr	8.1 oz 230 gram	10.2oz 290 gram	9 oz 255 gr	7.9 oz 225 gr	9.2 oz 260 gr	7.9 oz 225 gr	9.2 oz 260 gr	
% Capsaicin & Related Capsaicinoids	1% - 2%	2%	2%	1.3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
		Produced with OC rated at 3.6 Million SHU's							
Shotgun-Cloud Spray Pattern		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Minimum Spray Distance	25 ft	30 ft	32 ft	15-20 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	35 ft	
Minimum Spray Time	6 sec	7.2 sec	9.2 sec	9 sec	4 sec	5.4 sec	5 sec	5 sec	
				Does NOT meet IGBC Recommendations		Does NOT meet IGBC Recommendations		Does NOT meet IGBC Recommendations	
Meets ALL IGBC* Recommendations?		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	

Net Weight, % Capsaicin and other Capsaicinoids, Spray Distance and Spray Time as provided above, are taken directly from each product's EPA approved label

\*IGBC: The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee consists of representatives from the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Geological Survey and representatives of the state wildlife agencies of Idaho, Montana, Washington and Wyoming. In the interest of international coordination and cooperation, the Canadian Wildlife Service is also represented.

### GU Energy Labs

GU Energy Labs returns to 18th century Netherlands with the irresistible Energy Stroopwafel. This syrup-filled, tasty creation is packed with nutrients such as essential amino acids, electrolytes and quality carbohydrates. SRP is \$1.50 individual/\$24 a box (GF option).



### Headsweats

Made of Headsweats' Eventure woven and technical stretch mesh fabrics, the Bigfoot Trucker is a lightweight and breathable hat that fits comfortably and dries quickly. The Eventure terry sweatband keeps sweat off the face and out of eyes, while bold embroidery adds to the fun. SRP is \$25.



### Hi-Tec Socks

Hi-Tec hiking socks are made with a premium merino wool/acrylic blend and feature a reinforced heel and toe, zone cushioning, mesh for breathability, deep heel cups and arch compression for support, as well as a hidden inspirational message on each pair.



### High Sierra

Named for the largest waterfall in Sequoia National Park, the Tokopah hydration pack is outfitted with a 2-liter reservoir, reflective details on front and back, internal organizer, sternum strap and tuck-away belt and a hidden helmet holder.



### Helle of Norway

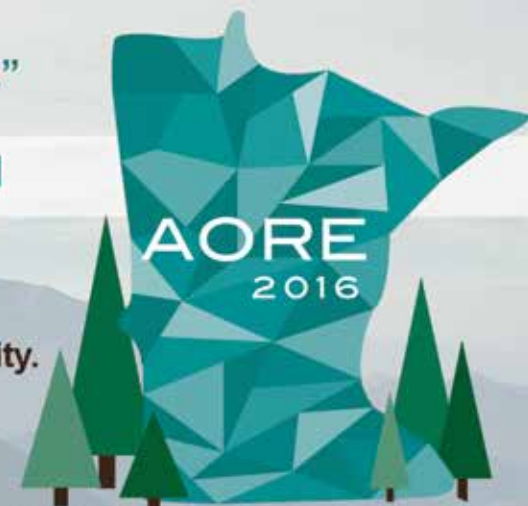
The Saga Siglar is a replica of a historical Viking utility knife design, crafted from triple-laminated steel and curly birch wood painstakingly shaped, polished and oiled. Simple, useful and unpretentious, its notable not only for its historical interest but also as an excellent all-around outdoor knife. SRP is \$114.

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### Hilleberg

The two- and three-person, all-season Kaitum and Kaitum GT have long been popular because of their roominess and light weight. With the new Kaitum 4 and Kaitum 4 GT, backpacking families, couples who camp with their dogs, or anyone looking for a roomy but lightweight four-person, all-season tent now have more options. SRPs are \$1,025 and \$1,195 (GT).

### Hults Bruk

A powerful, large-sized felling axe that makes light work of cutting down trees, the American Felling Axe was developed by the renowned American outdoor skills instructor, author and blacksmith, Dave Canterbury. Featuring a razor sharp 3.5-lb. axe head forged from high quality Swedish steel paired with a straight 32-inch solid hickory handle, SRP is \$239.



### Hydro Flask

The 10-ounce Hydro Flask Rocks is perfect for a three-finger pour or any slow sipping refreshment. The Rocks features a beveled bottom for a comfortable hold and Hydro Flask's TempShield insulation, ensuring drinks stay cool for hours. It's available with a Honeycomb Insulated press-in lid for beverages on the go. SRP is \$29.95.



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### Ibex Outdoor Clothing

The Balance Crop Bra is made from Ibex's new seamless Balance fabric that offers a blend of support and compression. With additional coverage and a wide rib-knit comfort band, the Balance Crop Bra layers well under a semi-sheer top. SRP is \$65.



### IceMule

The IceMule Pro Cooler sports a drybag design with roll-top closure, welded seams, a 600-denier exterior polyester fabric and a padded backpack strap system. The heavy-duty, inner layer is thicker than most soft coolers, says the company, while PolarLayer Insulation keeps contents cold for up to 24 hours. Available in two sizes, SRPs range from \$119.95 to \$139.95.



### Igloo

The Trailmate all-terrain cooler features oversized wheels for rugged terrain and a Cool Riser design to keep contents cooler longer. The Ultratherm insulated lid provides extended ice retention, while a Glide "slide-and-lock" handle technology reduces lifting load by 50%, says Igloo. There's also a built-in bottle opener and dry storage box. SRP is \$299.99.



### Icebug

The Eternal RB9X delivers a high level of comfort, stability and traction combining urban styling and a classic look. This all-leather shoe features a Nappa leather upper with a soft pigskin and polyester textile lining. Additional features include a PU comfort foam insole and a lightweight EVA midsole. SRP is \$164.95



### JetFlow

The new Raptor bladder replacement system is made in America and designed and fabricated with clear medical-grade plastics for ease of cleaning, ease of use and full transparency.





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**Kammok.**

The ultra-light, ultra-portable Wallaby hammock is a smaller, lighter cousin to Kammok's Roo camping hammock. Premiering Gravitas micro-light diamond ripstop fabric and Kammok's own suspension system, it holds up to 400 lbs. SRP is \$65.

**K3 Pro-Tech**

Shed water in style with the rugged and resilient Waterproof Dry Bag Backpack constructed of heavy-duty tarpaulin and RF welded water tight seams. Premium features entail a ventilated harness system, exterior pockets, expandable shock cord, attached O-rings and reflective trim.



**Kaenon**

The new women's style Cali in Amber Crystal combines easy-going California design with premium quality performance materials, outfitted with Kaenon's proprietary SR-91 polarized lenses, impact protection and glare reduction. SRP is \$249.



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### Katadyn

A collaboration with HydraPak, the BeFree is a collapsible 0.6 liter flask with a teeny but powerful hollow-fiber filter. The filter features

Katadyn's EZ Clean membrane that allows for swish and shake cleaning, instead of back-flushing.

The filter also has Free Flow Channels, allowing water on-demand and putting an end to the normal sucking fight filters put up. SRP is \$39.95.



### Kokatat

The Habanero is a paddling-specific one-piece dry suit insulator with a body mapping design. It has a multi-zipper system that features a long front entry zipper and a waist zipper that acts as a drop seat for compatibility with all Kokatat dry suits, including those with SwitchZip. SRPs are \$167 (men's) and \$179 (women's).

### Keen

Available in mid (SRP \$140) and low (SRP \$130) water-proof models, the Terradora collection features a narrower last through the heel for increased stability and glove-like fit for greater confidence on the trail.

And since a woman's foot tends to feature a slightly higher arch, the Terradora molds to the outline of a women's insteps providing out-of-box, all-day comfort.



### Kovea USA

Who says a two-burner stove needs to be bulky? The sleek designed Slim Twin Stove offers the ability to use any type of gas (Iso butane, butane or propane) with the use of the included adaptors.



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**Krimson Clover**

Like all dresses in the company's hand-painted collection, every Sweet Paradise dress is an actual one-of-a-kind piece of wearable art. With punchy bright colors and a flattering V-neckline, this dress can go from sunup long past sundown. SRP is \$130.

**La Sportiva**

Building on its summer apparel program, La Sportiva debuts its TX Collection, a capsule collection of spring alpine climbing apparel. Designed specifically for technical mountain travel, the collection includes base layers, wind jackets, shorts and pants. Pictured here is The TX Light soft-shell with Cordura reinforcements and a helmet-compatible hood. SRP is \$139.



**Leki**

Expanding the camp furniture category Leki recently entered, Leki introduces the Table XS, which uses the same SpeedFold construction as its folding chairs. The table top is a folding, hard surface that is perforated to save weight (880g) without sacrificing strength, and it's designed for easy clean-up. SRP is \$99.

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### Life Elements

Life Elements unveils a fresh look for Action Wipes, which were voted Best Body Wash of 2016 at Expo West and the first body wipe to receive the prestigious EWG Verified status. Action Wipes are the perfect companions for any outdoor adventure, road trip or festival.

### LifeStraw

The LifeStraw Go water bottle utilizes a two-stage filtration process that removes bacteria and protozoa to make microbiologically contaminated water safe to drink, while also reducing organic chemicals, chlorine and bad taste. It comes in five colors and features a flip-top bite valve and carabiner, is BPA free, and raw materials meet U.S. FDA regulations. SRP is \$49.95.



### Lorpen

The Spanish-based technical sock company is taking its innovative T3 Technology to the next level. Advanced T3 Technology (ATT) features a construction technology that improve fits, performance and comfort. This new design will also make the socks more durable and result in a soft feel against the skin.



### Lowa

To create a multifunctional shoe with 360° breathability, Lowa enhanced Gore's Surround concept, using a direct-injection system of midsole ventilation channels. The result is the Aerox GTX Lo. Combined with Lowa's MonoWrap frame and dual-density midsole, the result is a breathable/waterproof, lightweight, do-it-all athletic shoe. SRP is \$220

### Mad Water

The Waterproof USA Duffel is a fully submersible duffel bag with a zipper. A fully welded construction of double-coated polyurethane and YKK waterproof zippers combine to make this "Made in The USA" duffel submersible to 15 feet. It's available in three colors and three sizes.



### Metolius

The new Belay Glasses reduce neck strain and fatigue at the gym and the crag. They are made with low-profile frames for enhanced peripheral vision and optimized prism. SRP is \$59.95.





### Montane

The ultra-lightweight Minimus Stretch rain shell is packed with Pertex Shield+ 2.5-layer fabric, a special stretch PU laminate, a machine-stretched nylon face fabric, athletic tailoring, micro-taped seams, adjustable roll-away hood, shaped cuffs with adjustable hook-and-loop tabs, and multiple pockets. SRP is \$224.



### Mountainsmith

Building on the popularity of the Morrison tent, the Evo three-season, three-pole free-standing tent features an included footprint for fast-fly setup, two vestibules, a detachable ceiling loft pocket, fly ventilation windows, No-See-Um Mesh panels, clip-pole attachment for lighter weight and reflective guylines. SRP for the two-person Evo is \$199.95.



### Morakniv

A pocket-sized fixed blade knife, the Eldris has a 2 mm thick semi-matte stainless steel blade and a ground spine that's compatible with a fire starter. It features a scandi grind and a symmetrical polymer handle with a built-in click lock for safe handling. SRP is \$29.99, \$49.99 for the kit.

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### Native Shoes

Native introduces the Liteknit collection as a new category that showcases the brand's thinking toward soft-top technology. The Liteknit bound uppers are blended and formed to the foot resulting in a light-weight design. In addition to the bound upper, the marquee AP Rover Liteknit has a shock absorbent EVA mid-sole and outsole, a superfoam insole, and rubber heel and toe inserts. SRP is \$95.



### Nemo Equipment

Imagine a hammock where you could socialize with friends, see your surroundings and not be swallowed up by the fabric. With Cloudview's Layflat patterning, enjoy beach chair posture: head slightly raised, back and legs level. It also features a breathable coated polyester mesh and easy, secure set up with Nemo's Super Ladder Lock system.



### Nau

The Quintessenshell Jacket is a two-layer waterproof, breathable hardshell constructed with organic cotton, recycled polyester and spandex. The seam-sealed piece introduces the brand's PFC-free C0 DWR treatment. Additional features include an attached hood with drawcord adjustment, a covered two-way zipper, two dual-access front hand pockets with zippers and two front pockets with flaps. SRP is \$245.

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### Noso

Manufactured in the USA, Noso Puffy Patches are do-it-yourself fabric repair and embellishment patches for clothes and gear. The heat-activated technology creates a permanent bond without an iron. Just throw in the dryer or leave it in the sun to activate. SRP is \$14.95 for a pack of three.

### OMeals

The never-freeze-dried, fully cooked Lentils with Beef Homestyle Meal is high in fiber, low in cholesterol and features OMeals state-of-the-art flameless heating process that activates within 3 to 5 minutes with 3 to 5 oz. of liquid. SRP is \$9.99.



### Oboz

With its streamlined outsole and women's-specific design, the Equinox offers a nimble solution for done-in-a-day adventures. It features BFit Deluxe insole cushions, an ultra-breathable mesh upper with protective Nubuck leather overlays, heel pulls, toe and heel overlays and a comfortable padded color. SRP is \$110.

### One Source Apparel

The quilted center body and collar of OSA's quilted hybrid women's jacket are crafted with windproof, lightweight nylon fabric, while supple polyester insulation creates bulk-free warmth. The sleeves and side body panels consist of mélange sweater fleece for added comfort, mobility and texture. Two front hand warmer pockets with concealed zippers and thumbholed sleeves enhance the package.



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### OOFOS

The OOLaLa features the same impact-absorbing footbed as all OOFOS footwear but with a slim, more feminine silhouette. A new, multi-color upper kicks style up a notch, available in three fun color combinations – blue jay, sunset and violet – that move the shoes from trail to town.



### Orotovox

The Cortina Tunic “is where color meets crag.” The Tasmanian merino wool and Tencel fiber blend cools naturally on hot days and has a feather light feel. One chest and two side pockets, three-quarter buttons and the stand-up collar balance performance with a unique style.



### Osprey

The gender-specific, fully featured Aether AG 70 combines Osprey’s Anti-Gravity 3D-suspended mesh backpanel with an Iso-Form5 harness and CM hipbelt to deliver a customizable fit that is ideal for heavy loads and long miles. The removable top-lid converts to a functional DayLid daypack.

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### Outdoor Research

The Gauge Tee offers metabolic cooling by way of Polartec Delta fabric.

Delta fabric combines hydrophilic and hydrophobic yarns in a pattern that allows the hydrophilic parts to sit off the body, providing a cooling effect, while the hydrophobic yarns sit against the skin, providing glide and dry feel. SRP is \$59.

### Pacsafe

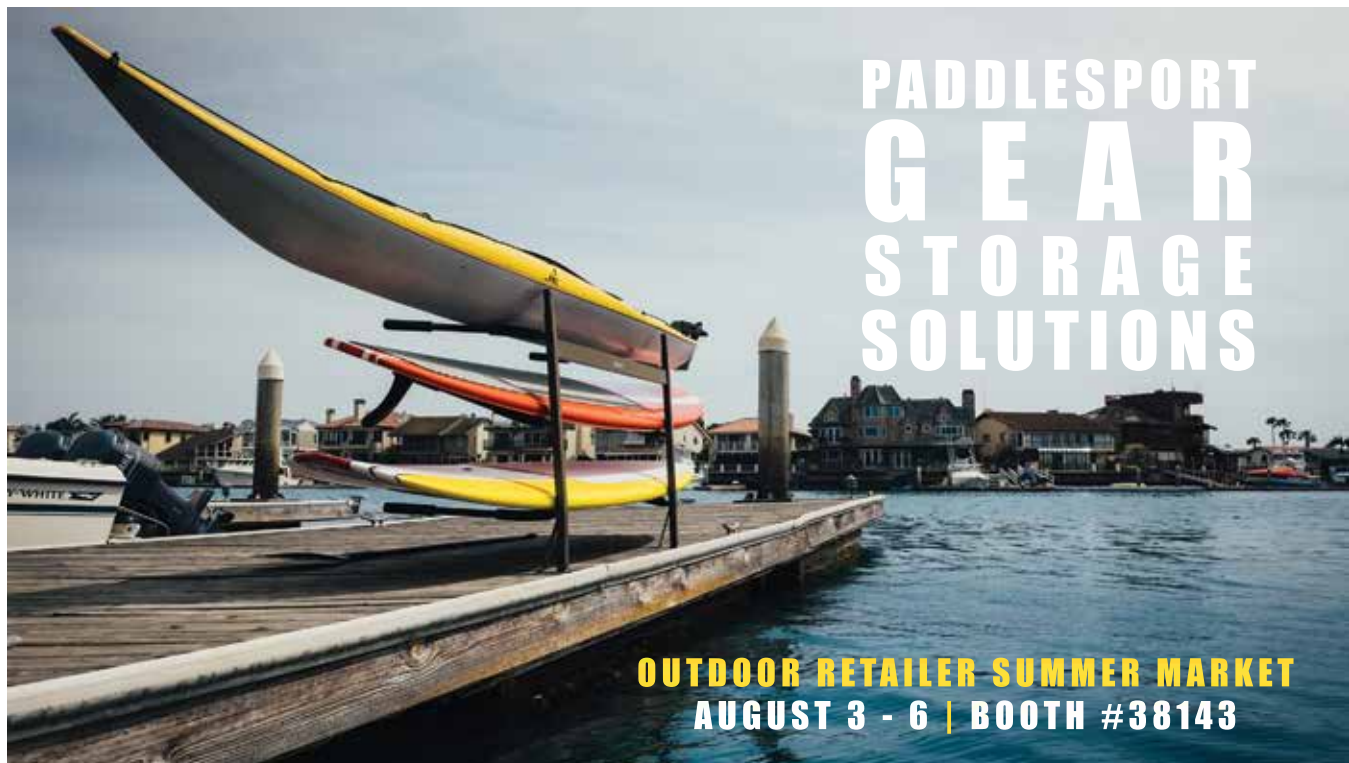
Fresh design meets subtle security details in the Vibe 20L anti-theft backpack. Security features include eXomesh slash-guards, RFIDsafe pockets to keep personal information safe, Roobar AT system to lock multiple compartments with a single padlock, and a PopNLock security clip to attach the backpack to a fixture. SRP is \$89.95.



### PahaQue

The largest of the Green Mountain series, designed to sleep up to eight people comfortably, the Green Mountain 6XD features two large doors, four windows and built-in room divider to make this PahaQue's most versatile tent. The bathtub style floor, rainfly and sidewall are factory seam-taped for total waterproof performance.

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**Primus**

The PrimeTech set starts with two nesting pots – one aluminum and one hard anodized with ceramic non-stick coating. There's also a wind-screen with integrated burner and piezo igniter, regulated burner and Eta technology for fuel efficiency. Add-ons include a new attachable pot gripper, transparent lid with integrated colander and an insulating storage bag. Sets are available in 1.3L (SRP \$130) and 2.3L (\$140) sizes.



**Re-fuel**

Re-fuel is keeping its customers pumped and hydrated with the new 2-in-1 Bluetooth speaker and BPA-free water bottle. SRP is \$29.99.

**Purnell**

As versatile as the statistical tool it's named for, the Weibull Distribution Short is constructed of 8 oz. mid-weight canvas with just a bit of stretch, enhancing comfort and freedom of movement. Fit is similar to a construction short but tailored for a cleaner profile. A gusseted crotch adds durability, comfort and additional range of motion. SRP is \$70.



**Red Paddle**

The new 14' Elite MSL inflatable board offers an entirely new design and is only 25" wide. Coupled with some new patented technology, it's designed to further stiffen the front of the board for fast performance.



**Royal Robbins**

The Wick-ed Cool S/S is a short sleeve, scoop neck T-shirt with Wick-ed Cool technology. Knit fiber panels wick sweat away from your skin while a built-in cooling agent helps bring the heat down. SRP is \$48.





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### Ruffwear

The new Core Cooler offers three-layer swamp cooler technology in an add-on chest and belly panel. It integrates with Ruffwear's Web Master and Web Master Pro Harnesses, Approach, Palisades and Singletrak packs. Soak, wring out and attach to harness or pack via hook and loop. SRP is \$24.95.



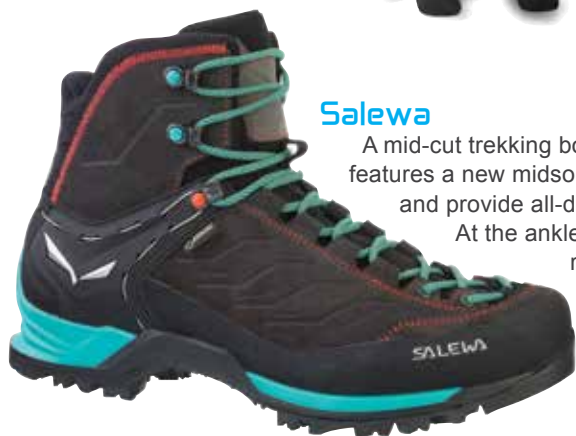
### Ruger/CRKT

The co-branded Ruger/CRKT Cordite Compact is a stalwart survival knife that fears nothing. Its can-do design by Ryan Johnson of RMJ Tactical features a black, stonewashed, drop point blade; a paracord-wrapped, full-tang handle with a unique "revolver cylinder-style" bead; and a multi-position, glass-reinforced nylon sheath. SRP is \$49.99.

### Salewa

A mid-cut trekking boot, the Mountain Trainer GTX features a new midsole designed to cradle the foot and provide all-day comfort on longer hikes.

At the ankle, the Flex Collar allows natural movement and adaptability during descents for extended comfort, while the lightweight, compact Vibram WTC Combi sole delivers solid yet forgiving walkability. SRP is \$249.



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**Sanuk**

Sanuk refreshes its Sidewalk Surfer franchise with a new version of its Donny silhouette, the Yew-Knit. Built with a wide slip-on construction and moccasin toe, it features Sanuk's soft Yew-Knit air mesh upper and forgoes a lining for maximum breathability and quick drying properties. A premium EVA footbed provides a soft step with antimicrobial properties, and a Happy U rubber outsole adds comfort and durability. SRP is \$70.

**SealSkinz**

The Halo Run Glove sports LED lights on the back of the hand to increase the wearer's visibility and improve safety. With a thermal rating of 1 (5 being the most thermally rated), it features close-fitting, single layer construction, an elasticated tapered double cuff, and a silicone pull-on tab.



**Setton Farms**

Available in 5-oz. resealable bags, three new snack blends include Pistachio Berry (pistachios, tart cherries and cranberries, fresh roasted almonds, cashews and white chips); Crème Brûlée, (freshly roasted cashews and toffee peanuts with butterscotch and white chips); and Sweet & Salty (roasted almonds, cashews and peanuts with sea salt and honey). SRP is \$4.99.



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## SJK

A versatile shelter from rain or sun, the Roadhouse Tarp easily pitches as a single pole A-frame with vehicle, dual pole awning with vehicle, or dual pole A-frame without vehicle to accommodate a variety of needs. Consisting of a 168-square-foot 68D polyester tarp, two 96" steel poles, stakes and guylines, the Roadhouse weighs 12 lbs. 6 oz. SRP is \$119.95.



## Sierra Designs

The Clip Flashlight is a redesigned version of a best-seller, now with more useable interior space, a taller peak height and more gear storage, all without an increase in weight. This two-person tent is single door, single vestibule with an all-mesh body to keep it lightweight and minimalist. SRP is \$199.95.

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## Sparehand Paddlesports

The Glacik G-200 is a three-tier rack for SUPs. With the footprint of 48" x 30.5" and height of 40", the rack is compact enough to be anywhere and large enough to hold just about any SUP. The padded cradle arm is 27.5" in length and spacing between each cradle is 10.75". A five-tier version is also available.





**Sports Suds**

Sport Suds Body Wash is an all-natural, perfume free, odor-eliminating wash free from parabens, petrolatum, dyes, phthalates, triclosan, SLS and more. What's more, it's biodegradable, hypoallergenic and not animal tested.

**Stansport**

The shock-corded fiberglass poles of the new Aspen Creek dome tent allow anyone to setup this tent with ease, says Stansport. It comes fully equipped with interior pockets for gear, a zippered door window, steel ring-and-pin pole connectors, door tie-backs and a rain fly. There's also a carry bag for easy storage and transportation.



**Stonewear**

The four-way stretch, lightweight woven nylon of the Dynamic Climbing Pant allows for freedom of movement, wicks sweat and resists abrasion with a UPF 50+ rating. Wide, comfortable waistband and hidden drawcord add support and ensure everything stays in place during dynamic movements. SRP is \$95.

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### Sunday Afternoons

The men's Lookout Hat was inspired by the strong and silent lookout towers that dot the north-west landscape. Antique brass and leather accents and waxed tech canvas fabric take it from trail to town. Performance details include Sunglass Lock, wicking sweatband, adjustable sizing, hidden internal stash pocket and packability. SRP is \$56.



### Sunski

Inspired by expedition-style mountaineering goggles, the new V7, with a double nose bridge design, adds modern curves and a fashionable twist to an iconic style. The V7 features oversized, polarized lenses, hand-polished polycarbonate frames and five-spoke durable hinges. SRP is \$58.



### Stormy Kromer

Stormy Kromer puts an outdoor spin on the classic cloche by making it with traditional waxed cotton. The Waxed Cotton Kromer Cloche combines solid exterior colors with contrasting yet complementary prints on the interior and a brim that can be worn down or up revealing the fun interior prints. SRP is \$44.99.

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**Tepui Tents**

Made in the USA, the Ultralight Rooftop Tent uses a recyclable thermoplastic base, includes a comfortable mattress, and has extra-large internal pockets, gear anchor points and bedding straps. Sleeping footprint is 56" x 96".



**Thermore**

Thermore has converted the entire Ecodown product line to fully recycled fiber content, derived exclusively from PET water bottles. Depending on the application, outerwear insulated with Ecodown can save up to 10 bottles per garment. Ecodown also does not require special quilting restrictions or fabrics and can be washed or dry cleaned with confidence. A wide variety of weights and thickness options are available.



**TravelChair**

The Kanpai Bamboo table adds a little environmentally friendly luxury to camping with two wine glass holders and a bottle opener built into its 28.5" x 40" top. Each foot of the Kanpai is individually adjustable, and its aluminum legs have three height options: normal table height, beach chair and kids' chair height. It comes with a carry bag and a \$200 SRP.

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### Treksta

The Libero Hike takes the fit and features of the original Libero approach shoe and incorporates them into an all-terrain performance hiker. NestFIT construction works with the durable leather and mesh upper, and the Hypergrip Supergum outsole with IceLock and aggressive lugs ensures superior traction on a range of surfaces and conditions. SRP is \$150.



### UCO

The SweetFire strikable fire starter is made from a sugarcane by-product called bagasse. This material produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions when burned than are absorbed by the plants while growing, making a completely emission-neutral cycle. UCO added a proprietary mix of vegetable-based wax to create a long-lasting fire starter that's also eco-friendly. SRP is \$5.99.



### Under Armour

The new Horizon FKT trail runner is designed for speed, says Under Armour. It features a translucent ripstop upper with internal bootie construction and Michelin outsole compound for traction in all conditions. SRP is \$129.99.



  
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**United By Blue**

The 30L Base pack is made from durable, water-repellent 600 denier, 100% recycled polyester with anti-rust aluminum hardware and vegetable tanned leather trims. Each bag features a full suite of pockets to offer high capacity storage. SRP is \$108.



**Vasque**

As the lightest Breeze model yet, the Breeze III features breathable high-abrasion upper mesh panels to manage moisture and air flow, while new heel and toe ventilation ports increase airflow along the footbed. An exclusive Vibram Contact Grip outsole increases control in all weather and trail conditions. SRP is \$179.99.



**Vapur**

Vapur flexible and packable “anti-bottles” now come in black. The 1-liter BlackOut Eclipse features a sturdy seal and easy open cap, is dishwasher safe and BPA free with an SRP of \$13.99.



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### Vibram FiveFingers

Made for inside the gym or out on the trail, the V-Train shoe was made to provide the flexibility and freedom of a barefoot run while providing more structure and support.

### Xtratuf

Ideal for boating, stand-up paddleboarding and kayak fishing, the Rip-tide's three-layer mesh upper allows water to move in and out freely, dries quickly and blocks out sand and debris. A perforated PU/EVA blend insole provides comfort and does not absorb water. It also features Xtratuf's non-marking, slip-resistant outsole. Available in both men's and women's sizes, SRP is \$80.



### Yeti Coolers

A leakproof, built-to-last provisions cooler, the Hopper Flip offers a 12-cans-plus-ice capacity. With its DryHide exterior, the Hopper Flip will withstand serious field abuse while keeping contents cold with its HydroLok zipper and ColdCell insulation. SRP is \$279.99.





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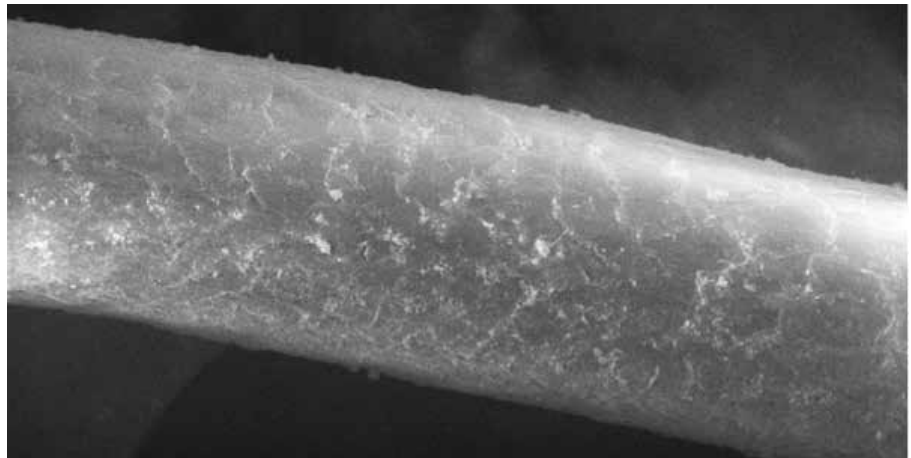
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(Continued from page 32)

yet tough enough to handle the adventure that waits.


Of special interest is UBB's bison collection. Bison fiber, similar to alpaca and yak, has some outstanding qualities differentiating it from merino. Like the aforementioned fibers, UBB sources from small ranchers, providing use for the hides previously discarded after the bison are converted into steaks. And similar to Altera and kora, all links in the supply chain are forged together by UBB in making its own bison apparel.

There are two types of bison fiber UBB uses in its garments. One is B100 insulation, a combination of 60 percent hollow bison guard hair fibers and 40 percent recycled polyester from PET bottles and post-industrial waste. Using coarse guard hairs as a component in B100 is not a problem since the bison/polyester batting is locked within the face and lining fabrics of the jacket.



Bison fiber SEM image showing low profile scales and high luster. The American Museum of Natural History.

However, for apparel, so called bison down is used for next-to-skin comfort. Despite being only six to seven microns in diameter, what they lack in microns, they make up in strength. They have "very strong tensile strength when compared to other natural fibers its same size," explains Chris Dickey of Purple Orange PR.

Finally, bison appears to be hypoallergenic, lighter than wool, wicks well and is naturally anti-bacterial. The only feature not added to the Ultimate American Jacket by the bison is a lifetime guarantee – United By Blue does that while making good on its promise to clean up bodies of water, one event at a time. 

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