

HUNTING

RETAILER

January/February 2018 | Gear & Gear

**THERMAL OPTICS
ARE WITHIN REACH** 

See page 4 for more info

**PUT THE RIGHT PRODUCT IN YOUR
CUSTOMER'S HAND**

**HELPFUL TIPS
FOR SELLING CAMO**

**BROWNING'S
HELL'S CANYON
SPEED CAMO LINE**



**THE INS & OUTS OF
PACK FITTING
& PACKING**

**« ATN THOR LT
IS A GAME CHANGER!**

See page 4 for more info

RETAILER PROFILE
OUTDOORSMANS, OPTICS & ACCESSORIES

+ GEAR:
MYSTERY RANCH MULE
NEMO BACKCOUNTRY GEAR
MOUNTAINSMITH TREKKING POLES

 **GRAND VIEW
OUTDOORS**

www.huntingretailer.com

HUNTER IS READY ARE YOU?



KIMBER HUNTER

STARTING AT 5 POUNDS 7 OUNCES | 22-24 INCH BARREL | MSRP \$891
AVAILABLE IN .243 WIN, .257 ROBERTS, 6.5 CREEDMOOR, .270 WIN, 7MM-08 REM,
.280 ACK IMP, .308 WIN, .30-06 SPRG

Kimber[®]

WHAT ALL GUNS SHOULD BE[™]



MADE IN AMERICA

**SUB
MOA**
ACCURACY
STANDARD

(888) 243-4522
KIMBERAMERICA.COM



S BEAM SHOTGUN



PUMP ACTION SHOTGUN
MODIFIED CHOKE TUBE INCLUDED
4+1 CAPACITY
12 GAUGE
3" CHAMBER
28" BARREL
BEAD FRONT SIGHT

**COMPATIBLE WITH
870 ACCESSORIES &
PARTS.**

MSRP: **\$214.95**

SKU #: ATIGBARMB328



AMERICAN TACTICAL
www.AmericanTactical.us
800.290-0065

Quantities limited. Not responsible for printing errors. Sale subject to stock on hand. Prices subject to change without notice.



CONTENTS

DEPARTMENTS

6 In the News

A roundup of relevant and noteworthy industry updates.

8 Up Close

Mystery Ranch's Mule is more than just a simple load-hauling pack.

By Darren Choate

12 Informed Associate

Here's what you need to ensure you put the right product in the customer's hand.

By Patrick Meitin

16 Gear Guru

Browning's Hell's Canyon clothing line covers it all.

By Kevin Reese

24 The Top Rung

This Arizona retailer is excelling in their niche market.

By Matt Crawford

64 Taking Aim

Hunters need to build community by taking a united front.

By Bob Robb

FEATURES

28 Proper Pack Fit

Knowing the ins and outs of pack-fitting will create happy and return customers.

By Zach Bowhay

36 Selling Camo

Learn how your store can promote its camo sales with the help of a few select brands.

By Chuck Smock

44 Nemo Backcountry Gear

Nemo Equipment has a diverse backcountry lineup, perfect for your backcountry hunting clientele.

By Josh Kirchner

52 Jetboil MiniMo

Here's a versatile stove to stock in your store.

By Darren Choate

54 Gear RoundUp

There may be something for your store in this diverse collection of gear.

By Mike Schoblaska

58 Trekking Poles

Keep on trekking with these lightweight poles from Mountainsmith.

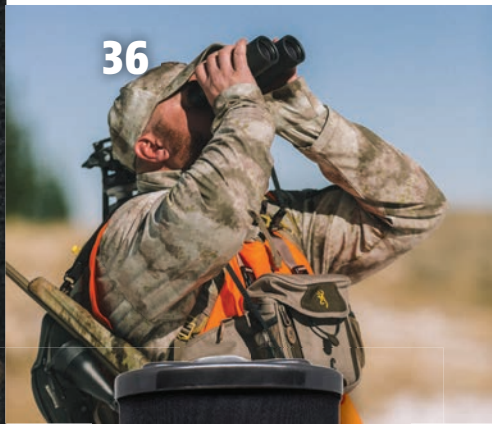
By Mia Anstine

62 New Products

Here are a few new products to keep your eye on in 2019.

By Staff







THIS ISSUE'S COVER BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



THE FUTURE OF OPTICS

ATN Corp has established itself as a market leader with the release of their SMART HD thermal optics. Their quality and affordable thermal and night vision optic lines

have become a must have in the predator hunting community. ATN has done it again, and in 2019 they are releasing a powerful, compact thermal unit that is everything that you would want. Giving you a get it done, thermal optic at the price you want and the thermal capabilities that you need to elevate your hunt, the ATN ThOR LT!

Designed for close range target acquisition. This thermal scope is perfect for hog and small varmint eradication needs with your crossbow, Bolt action, AR platform or for hunting smaller game with your rimfire rifle or air gun. An optic choice that is light enough to easily maneuver with your crossbow, and sturdy enough to withstand the recoil of higher caliber weapons. The ATN ThOR LT gives you the ultimate adaptability to switch between platforms.

The new streamlined scope design looks more like a traditional glass optic and allows for standard 30mm rings to be used. Giving you flexibility with ring height and brand selection for your choice of weapon platform. The advancement in power consumption is revolutionary for the thermal optics market. The internal battery provides the user with 10+ hours of power! This improvement in power consumption will stretch every single minute of your hunt out into the early pre-dawn hours. There will be no worries about not having enough juice in the battery to make it through the whole night without having to recharge.

Also, no need to burn through boxes of ammo just to get your thermal scope to zero. With the one shot zero feature, all you have to do is move the zero reticle to your first point of impact. That's it. Saving you a ton of time, money, and unneeded frustration!

The ATN Thor LT series is an effective thermal optic that provides you outstanding performance and gives you a quality thermal rifle scope for close range engagement, at a price point that doesn't hog-tie your budget. MSRP Starting at \$1,199. ATN is The Future of Optics!

Follow them on Facebook and Instagram. For more info on the ATN ThOR LT visit www.atncorp.com.

www.atncorp.com



EDITORIAL

Editor / Darren Choate
Group Managing Editor / Hilary Dyer
Copy Editor / Alex Headley
Product Editor / Mike Schoblaska
Digital Editor / Dave Maas

CREATIVE

Art Director / Justin Lancaster

ADMINISTRATION

Circulation / Nicole LaBeau
nicole.labeau@colepublishing.com

ADVERTISING

President/Publisher GVO / Derrick Nawrocki
derrick.nawrocki@grandviewoutdoors.com
Regional Sales Manager / Don Harris
don.harris@grandviewoutdoors.com
Regional Sales Manager / Mike Kizzire
mike.kizzire@grandviewoutdoors.com
Regional Sales Manager / Patrick Boyle
patrick.boyle@grandviewoutdoors.com

NATIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVES

Byers Media / Ken Byers & Toby Shaw
toby@byersmediaonline.com

HUNTING R E T A I L E R

HUNTING RETAILER®

is published six times a year in January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, and November/December by COLE Publishing, Inc. Published and owned by COLE Publishing, Inc., 1720 Maple Lake Dam Rd., Three Lakes, WI 54562.

All rights reserved. Contents may not be printed or otherwise reproduced without written permission of COLE Publishing. Periodicals postage paid at Three Lakes, WI 54562 and at additional mailing offices.

COLE Publishing is not responsible for researching or investigating the accuracy of the contents of stories published in this magazine. Readers are advised that the use of the information contained within this magazine is with the understanding that it is at their own risk. COLE Publishing assumes no liability for this information or its use. COLE Publishing assumes no responsibility for unsolicited editorial, photography and art submissions. In addition, no Terms and Conditions agreements are recognized by COLE Publishing unless signed and returned by the Editor.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Free to qualifying retailers, wholesalers, manufacturers, and salespeople of shooting sports products

within the U.S. and Canada; \$60 annually for all other U.S., Canada or Mexico subscribers; and \$150 for two years to all other foreign countries. To subscribe, visit www.shootingsportsretailer.com/subscribe or call 800-257-7222.

Postmaster:
Send address changes to:
Hunting Retailer
P.O. Box 220
Three Lakes, WI 54562

CALL 800-257-7222 | 715-546-3346
FAX 715-546-3786

EMAIL nicole.labeau@colepublishing.com.
Please include both old and new addresses.

ADVERTISING:
Advertising inquiries should be emailed to: info@grandviewoutdoors.com.

Hunting Retailer® is a member of the National Shooting Sports Foundation

© Registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Copyright 2019 COLE Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission from the General Manager.



THE FUTURE OF OUR SPORT WON'T GROW ITSELF.

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO GROW THE SHOOTING SPORTS.

If just 1 in 3 hunters and target shooters introduce one new person to the shooting sports, we'll secure a strong future for generations to come. The +ONESM Movement is a mission to do exactly that. We need your help to spread the word about the single most unifying force in the shooting sports today. Together we'll ignite the passion of millions of new hunters and recreational shooters. And build the future of the way of life we love. Be the one. Join the +ONE Movement. Visit LetsGoHunting.orgTM or LetsGoShooting.orgTM



THE FIREARMS INDUSTRY TRADE ASSOCIATION | NSSF.ORG |





Hunting Retailer, the Inaugural Issue

Grand View Outdoors proudly presents *Hunting Retailer*.

With this publication, we hope to revolutionize the B2B hunting market. Our goal is to become the leading source of critical information with a primary focus of providing hunting-industry-retailers an authentic, competitive edge. Notably gear-centric, *Hunting Retailer* covers every gear niche within the hunting market both comprehensively and without boundaries. In every issue, our stable of well-respected contributors will deliver

meaningful columns and feature articles that cover a breadth of topics from hard-core gear reviews to successful business practices designed to exceed every retailer's goals.

To accomplish our goals, we need to ensure we meet our readers' needs. I'd love to hear from you – a hunting retailer representative in the trenches. If you have a topic suggestion or a general comment, please do not hesitate to contact me. Send me a note with your thoughts to: darren.choate@grandviewoutdoors.com.

Federal Judge Halts Grizzly Bear Hunts

IN LATE SEPTEMBER, a federal judge restored protection for grizzly bears under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), ending the first scheduled hunts for the animals in the Lower 48 after almost a month of delays.

U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen ruled that the bears' recovery in the Yellowstone National Park area was insufficient based on their prior native range. He said possibly more than 50,000 roamed in the United States at one time. Christensen said because of that greater number, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's removal of ESA protections in

2017 based solely on the Yellowstone area population was "simplistic at best and disingenuous at worst."

The judge's ruling restored federal management for the bears instead of the state wildlife agencies. Pro-bear supporters decried the piecemeal approach to delisting and applauded the judge's decision.

Scheduled hunts in Wyoming and Idaho were halted with the decision. The USFWS said it believes its decision to delist the bears was correct. The Wyoming hunt, originally slated to start Sept. 1, had been delayed twice by the judge.

Oklahoma Refuge Hunting Opportunities Expanded

Hunters have more opportunities to hunt on federally managed lands in Oklahoma for deer, elk and small game, including 70 more cow elk tags in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge near Lawton.

The expansion comes following discussions between the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. They were prompted by a 2017 order from U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke seeking to improve wildlife management and conservation; to increase access to public lands for hunting, shooting and fishing; and to put new and greater emphasis on recruiting and retaining new sportsmen conservationists.

Along with Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), the Deep Fork National Wildlife Refuge and Sequoyah National Wildlife Refuge have expanded opportunities.

Changes include:

- Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge near Lawton, an additional elk hunt and 70 cow harvest tags.
- Sequoyah NWR near Vian, additional acres to the refuge's deer hunting area in addition to opening various refuge hunt units to the harvest of small game animals including gray and fox squirrels, cottontail and swamp rabbits and opossums.
- Deep Fork NWR near Okmulgee, an expanded deer archery season; the 2018 season was Oct. 29 to Nov. 30.

Further expansion of hunting opportunities at other federally managed areas in Oklahoma are expected to be implemented for the 2019-20 hunting seasons.

RMEF Honored For Work To Protect Public Lands

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION (RMEF) received the Public Lands Foundation (PLF) 2018 Landscape Stewardship Award for efforts to conserve wildlife habitat and improve access on public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

"The RMEF has been a long-time leader in working with the BLM, state and federal agencies, private landowners and other partners to conserve wildlife and enhance access to public lands for hunters, anglers and other outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy," said Ed Shepard,

PLF president. "RMEF's unique niche as a grassroots, member-driven organization has made a measureable impact as a passionate and effective advocate, working from the ground up to champion access and habitat improvement projects across the country."

The Montana/Dakotas BLM nominated RMEF for the prestigious award and highlighted RMEF's successful Cow Island Trail acquisition in north-central Montana immediately prior to the 2015 hunting season. The 93-acre project improved access to approxi-

mately 6,000 acres of public land in the scenic Upper Missouri Breaks.

In the last 20 years in the Montana/Dakotas region, RMEF spearheaded five lands projects conveying 14,015 acres to BLM, opening or improving access to more than 56,000 acres of public lands. The most recent effort is the Little Sheep Creek access project in southwest Montana that, when completed, will permanently protect nearly 1,000 acres of wildlife habitat and improve access to 2,600 acres of adjacent public lands.

Groove Life Rings Are Safer Option for Hunters



IF YOUR WIFE SEES YOU TAKING OFF YOUR WEDDING RING as you leave home to “go bowhunting,” you might have some explaining to do. Here is one way we can help with that potentially sticky situation.

For far less than you paid for your gold wedding band, purchase a silicone ring from Groove Life Rings. Before you walk out the door to leave on a hunt, carefully place your metal wedding band in a safe spot – your wife’s hand is a safe spot – then slide on the silicone ring in its place.

The Groove Life ring features an inverse “comfort fit” arch that lessens skin contact, is safer and has zero chafing. Silicone rings are resistant to most common chemicals including bug spray, gasoline, oil, diesel and household cleaning products. Blood from big or small game, waterfowl, turkeys or other critters should be no problem.

Are you interested in adding Groove Life Rings to your store? Visit www.groovelifelife.com to find out more.

Realtree, Frogg Toggs Make Stronger Partnerships

REALTREE AND FROGG TOGGS HAVE STRENGTHENED THEIR PARTNERSHIP to include cooperation with product design, fabric development, marketing support and sales.

“Frogg Toggs has completely changed the way people think about staying dry and comfortable in the field,” said Brian Doughman, Realtree Director of Licensing Brian Doughman. “Any outdoorsman or woman who has ever used Frogg Toggs product knows just how effective, versatile and comfortable their products are. This partnership combines the best of both of our businesses into a true benefit for our

customers and consumers.”

In fall 2018, Frogg Toggs launched products in the new Realtree Timber, Realtree EDGE and Realtree Fishing. Numerous categories including clothing, rainwear, waders, boots and bags will be included in this expanded partnership.

“Realtree is the world leader in concealment and camouflage and Frogg Toggs is the worldwide leader in keeping folks dry and comfortable,” said Frogg Toggs founder Will Fowler. “Neither of these pursuits are static. They require constant development and understanding of the customers’ wants, and more importantly, needs. Realtree and Frogg Toggs share a common goal of being the world’s best brand and company in their respective industries, which makes working together an appealing proposition because you know your partner is working as hard as you are to create the products that the customers want and need for their outdoor pursuits.”

Your Trusted Shotgun Made Even Better

TacStar Accessories take a nice, reliable gun and kick it up a notch

Sure, it's a nice shotgun, but add on a SideSaddle to keep spare rounds handy, and a Carbon Fiber Mag Extension for extra round capacity without extra weight and now you've got a serious machine. TacStar offers these and many more accessories to help your customers customize their favorite trusted friend. Visit www.lymanproducts.com

TACSTAR
TACTICAL PERFORMANCE, PRACTICAL DESIGN
A Division of Lyman Products





Mystery Ranch

MULE

The MULE is a versatile daypack with a lightweight, load-hauling frame.

BY DARREN CHOATE

Steeped in backpacking heritage, Mystery Ranch was officially formed in 2000 by Dana Gleason and Renee Sippel-Baker. The two partners have worked together since 1978; first at Kletterworks, later at Dana Designs, and now at Mystery Ranch.

Mystery Ranch was lifted to prominence quickly by their patented lumbar wrap design. A contract with the Navy SEALs ensured their prominence in the pack-making market and at the same time put them on a new business path. Over time, Mystery Ranch has expanded into several markets, including outdoor retail.

Today, Mystery Ranch produces high-quality backpacks and load carriage systems for a wide array of industries, including hunting. Their focus is hand-built quality along with matching user-specific specifications. Based in Bozeman, Montana, Mystery Ranch is now a global leader, producing and distributing backpacks worldwide.

A top-selling hunting pack, the MULE is one of Mystery Ranch's newest innovations; a user-specific design built on a superior load carriage system. Regarding the MULE's innovative features, Tim Hoffer, Mystery Ranch North American Sales Manager (Hunting), offered the following. "We set out to design a pack that was lightweight, simple in design and form, but allowed for a flexible style of hunting — from day hunts to multiday outings, the MULE offers the capacity to carry just the bare essentials, or it can be paired with a large dry bag to carry more gear for longer hunts. Also, it is available as a "bag only" option, so with one frame, a hunter can have a large multi-day pack for big hunts, and easily switch it out for day hunts."



The Mule

Mystery Ranch developed the MULE as a "blended" backpack, coupling a 23-liter packsack with their Guide Light Frame, constructed from lightweight carbon and featuring Load Carriage ingenuity. The pack's OVERLOAD feature adds load expandability via a load sling between the pack and frame. The result, "a versatile, workhorse hybrid for multiple hunting applications," according to their marketing.

The daypack is capable of carrying all of the essential gear items to and from on any hunting adventure. The versatile load sling that fastens the daypack to the frame is expandable, adapting to fit overnight camping gear or quarters from a downed big game harvest easily. The pack is crafted from a combination of 500D and 610 HP CORDURA. "Mystery Ranch, and prior to that Dana Design, has had a very strong relationship with CORDURA for nearly four decades. It is really the gold standard for a fabric choice. As Dana Gleason states, 'Cordura gives us the best mix of durability, waterproofness and just plain toughness.' We use 500D for solid colors like Coyote and Foliage, which is a nylon fabric, and the 610 HP CORDURA is a polyester base, which allows the Desolve Bare and Op-

↑ The MULE pack is available in solid colors (Coyote and Foliage), and camo options (Desolve Bare and Optifade Sub Alpine).

SPECS

WEIGHT: 4.4 lbs.

VOLUME: 1404 cu-in

DIMENSIONS: 19x11x11

FRAME SYSTEM:
The Guide Light Frame

MSRP: \$375

CONTACT:
www.mysteryranch.com



PRO STAFF

Darren Choate is an outdoor writer and photographer who lives and breathes hunting. As a professional hunting guide in Arizona and New Mexico, he pursued big game with clients for three decades. Choate is now the editor of *Hunting Retailer*, as well as two other Grand View Outdoors publications, *Predator Xtreme* and *Whitetail Journal*.

“The lightweight carbon Guide Light Frame is both dynamic and rigid, designed to give and flex as the body moves.”



tificate Sub Alpine patterns to be applied cleanly and crisply. Both are what we require in terms of durability and abrasion resistance,” Hoffer added. It’s obvious that Mystery Ranch created the MULE for the hardcore Western or mountain hunter, but they also note that it adapts to fit the Midwestern white-tail hunters’ every need as well.

The lightweight carbon Guide Light Frame is both dynamic and rigid, designed to give and flex as the body moves. The frame features heavy-duty compression straps and load lifters to stabilize loads. The waist belt features a forward pull, which tightens easily and effortlessly and includes built-in features to distribute weight evenly, lessening slippage down and over the hips. The goal is comfort under heavy loads. “The Guide Light Frame is the foundational piece for our backcountry hunting packs. It is a modified form of the renowned NICE frame, which countless military groups around the world rely on. For the hunting application, a few things were modified, namely removing some fabric that was overkill and therefore saved a bit of weight, and the addition of load lifters, which is key when packing out sizable loads such as elk quarters or bags of boned out meat,” Hoffer noted.

“The OVERLOAD feature again originated from our Military side of the business. Special Forces teams have used it and variations of it for a number of years to haul everything from communications gear to ammunition and medical kits to hard-sided cases for optics, battery packs, mortar rounds — the list goes on. For the hunter, the OVERLOAD allows you to carry the heavi-





What is Cordura®?

In 1929, E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company (DuPont) developed and trademarked Cordura. Initially, DuPont unveiled the fabric as a rayon. In 1966, as nylon was developed into a superior fabric, Cordura became a nylon product. Eventually, researchers developed new uses for the fabric, helped in large part when dyeing Cordura became possible. Today, Invista owns the Cordura trademark and continues to develop new fabrics.

Cordura fabric, a nylon material often blended with cotton or other fibers, is well known for its durability and resistance to rips and tears. Cordura is a common fabric used to construct luggage, jeans, belts, performance apparel and military gear to name a few. Cordura is also used in hunting-specific products such as boots, holsters, sheaths, tarps, ammo pouches and other accessory items. Moreover, Cordura fabric is the most common material used to construct backpacks.

Cordura backpacks are easy to care for. When possible, read the products label for specific care instructions. The following are general care instructions for Cordura backpacks.

- Remove soil with spray cleaner or detergent and water.
- Remove oil or grease spots.
 - First, treat with a dry cleaning solvent.
 - Second, follow with spray cleaner or detergent and water.
- Avoid chlorine or bleach based cleansers.

est load closest to your back, where it is most secure as well as being the safest location to keep you balanced for the hike out, all while keeping your other gear dry and clean in the main pack bag. Over the years, that feature has been used to carry elk quarters, bear hides, shed antlers, camera gear and treestands. Basically, anything you can fit in it, cinch down and physically carry out has been done!"

Selling Points

Mystery Ranch designs for and caters to a wide variety of pack users. "While not necessarily tangible features, Mystery Ranch is known for innovative designs that really solve problems for our users: from wildland firefighters to Navy SEALs, ski mountaineers and backcountry hunters, the "secret sauce" is the level of passion and expertise the people at Mystery Ranch bring to the table every day. We are committed to making the best load-bearing backpacks in the world, period," Hoffer says.

"The MULE was our answer to the individual headed out for a long day hunt, who just needed the volume to carry the essentials, but when an animal is on the ground, easy access to the OVERLOAD feature for the pack out. We kept hear-

ing from hunters who, either had one of our larger packs like the Metcalf, or who didn't need quite that much volume for day hunts. The MULE was a good solution for the day hunter who will likely be hauling quarters and game bags," Hoffer added in regard to the user-specific design of the MULE.

Below are a few points from Mystery Ranch regarding the MULE to share with interested customers.

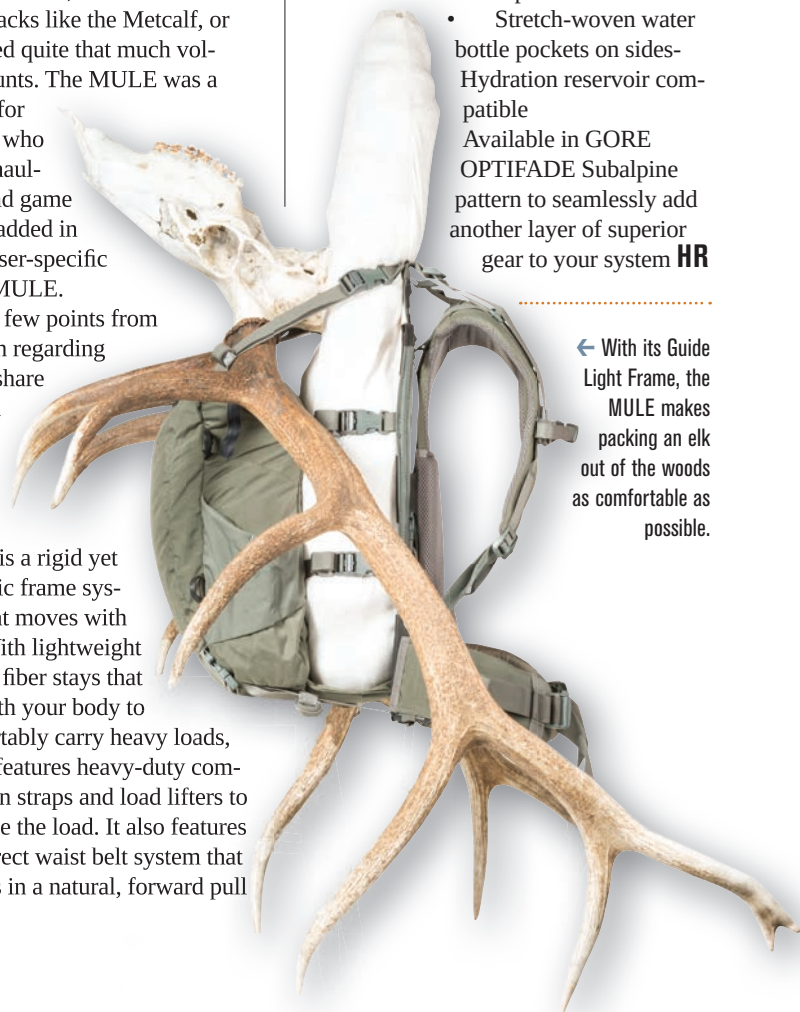
- The Guide Light Frame is a rigid yet dynamic frame system that moves with you. With lightweight carbon fiber stays that flex with your body to comfortably carry heavy loads, it also features heavy-duty compression straps and load lifters to stabilize the load. It also features a Redirect waist belt system that secures in a natural, forward pull

direction that requires less effort to tighten and with patented features and construction methods, the waist belt cants and conforms over the hips to effectively transfer and distribute the weight eliminating slippage down over the hips.

- OVERLOAD feature provides functional expandability via a load sling between the pack and the frame, allowing you to put the bulk of the weight closest to your back for optimal comfort.
- The patented Futura Yoke easily macro adjusts to the torso length allowing the proper amount of stand-off between the back and frame.

Features

- Top-zip access to main compartment
- Zippered pocket on face of bag
- Bow and rifle carry via Quick Attach Accessory Straps clipped to web loops on edge of bag for secure compression
 - Stretch-woven water bottle pockets on sides- Hydration reservoir compatible
- Available in GORE OPTIFADE Subalpine pattern to seamlessly add another layer of superior gear to your system **HR**



← With its Guide Light Frame, the MULE makes packing an elk out of the woods as comfortable as possible.



FIELD DRESSING TOOLS

To ensure your customers are prepared, suggest these critical tools as upsells to any pack sale.

Hunting Made Easy 2 Piece Skinning Gut/Cape Knife Kit

A two-piece kit with a 3.5" gut hook knife and a 3.5" fixed blade knife. The black oxide finish resists rust and hold a razor sharp edge.

FEATURES

- 3.5" gut hook
- 3.5" fixed blade
- Strong, durable 420HC steel
- Black oxide blade
- Non Slip TPR rubber handled
- Heavy-duty sheath

MORE INFO: www.hmeproducts.com



Smith's Pak Pal Pocket Multi-Function Knife Sharpener

A pocket-sized, versatile tool that combines a knife sharpener, fire starter and an emergency whistle.

FEATURES

- Multi-functional pocket tool • Versatile carabiner clip
- Carbide knife sharpener • Pull-out fire starter
- Built-in whistle • Durable plastic construction

MORE INFO: www.smithsproducts.com



UP CLOSE



Gerber Myth Fixed Blade Saw

A T-handled, fixed blade saw that meets the demands of cutting wood and bone.

FEATURES

- Blade Length: 6.65" (16.6 cm) • Overall Length: 10" (25.4 cm) • Steel Type: SK5 high-carbon steel
- Weight: 3.9 oz. (110.5 g) • Material: Rubber overmold

MORE INFO: www.gerbergear.com

Hunter's Specialties Field Dressing Gloves Combo Pack

Disposable gloves to keep the field-dressing process as clean and dry as possible..

FEATURES

- 6 pairs of short latex gloves
- 6 pairs of shoulder-length poly gloves
- Poly bag



MORE INFO: www.hunterspec.com

Caribou Gear Single Quarter Game Bag

Game bags that allow optimal air circulation to preserve your hard earned meat and trophy.

FEATURES

- Synthetic nylon fabric blend
- Breathable, stain resistant, washable
- Lightweight and durable

MORE INFO:

www.biggamebags.com





Put the Right Product In the Customer's Hand

Taking the time to pitch the right product is far more beneficial than simply making the sale.

BY PATRICK MEITIN

Today's outdoor consumer has more options than ever, including the bane of brick-and-mortar outlets. To keep customers coming through your doors reliably, top-notch personal service is imperative — especially for the small and/or independent dealer competing in an atmosphere ripe with big-box stores. Treat your customers poorly and they will go somewhere else, simple as that. Paramount to this impeccable service and the invaluable word-of-mouth advertisement that it generates, is properly meshing customers' actual wants and needs with expectations during every purchase.

During a recent stint as a low-level manager in retail sporting goods, we dealt with the added burden of salesmen commissions. Sales people received a two percent bonus for every sale they were directly involved in, and furthermore received monthly and annual performance evaluations based on these sales numbers. Due to its competitive nature, I witnessed too many impatient sales pitches — particularly from inexperienced sales people — and even more troubling, pushing product on customers that obviously wasn't a good fit in the pursuit of paycheck bonuses or top-salesman status.

Even with sales commission set well aside (a topic for another time) there are some glaring problems with the hasty approach. Firstly, such an approach leads to more frequent returns, something no retailer wants or needs. The



PRO STAFF

Patrick Meitin worked in various bow shops off and on while in high school and college. More recently he worked as a low-level manager in a regional sporting-goods chain, as a salesman, employee scheduler and mechanize specialist. He has been heavily immersed in the archery and firearms trade for more than 30 years.

↑ Highlighting the useful features of a product adds a positive tone to interactions with customers.

customer, perhaps a reluctant buyer to begin with, takes that product into the field and soon discovers it is not living up to expectations or just isn't what they had in mind. They bring it back, looking for a refund.

More importantly in my mind, you have also shaken that customer's trust, and trust is some-

for my personal income, but for the store as a whole.

The first thing to remember when developing a rapport with potential buyers is humans are inherently averse to being swindled — no doubt something dating back to when one Neanderthal offered to trade some gathered berries for a chunk of woolly mammoth. The natural inclination is to believe salesmen are working in their own best interests. An impatient sales pitch or canned "Can I help you?" only serves to inflate this notion. When that happens you'll generally hear the universal, "I'm just looking." Translated into plain English this means,

← Break the ice with customers with a bright greeting and engaging follow-up question.

↓ When possible, invite the customer to "try out" the features of a product to illustrate your selling points.



thing you just can't place a value on. Loyal customers look to you for guidance, for your expertise and knowledge of the merchandise that makes the great outdoors more enjoyable or their particular pursuits more productive. You push something on them just to make a sale, and they then find it lacking or ill suited to their needs, and that trust is eroded. This issue becomes particularly pronounced in firearms sales, as guns can't be easily returned due to required FFL paperwork in conjunction with federal background checks. When a customer is involuntarily stuck with something they don't want, that failing of trust can turn into outright resentment. Fair or not, I've certainly witnessed disgruntled customers loudly proclaim, "I'll never shop in this store again!" You can also bet they will relate this experience (the injustice growing with each telling) to anyone who will listen. This just isn't worth the risk, even on a slow day or desperate month of slow sales — or to make a few extra commission dollars.

While working on the sales floor of that independent sporting goods store already mentioned, I earned plenty of much-needed commission. But I also developed fiercely loyal customers who would wave off two other sales people to find me when contemplating a major purchase. They trusted me to offer sound advice, and most of all to be brutally honest. It was not only good





“Leave me alone.” You’ll need to invest more effort to break through those natural barriers, but especially to pair a customer with the best product possible for their particular wants and needs.

"It's also important to avoid labeling one product as "better" or "worse" than another."

↓ When working with a customer, discuss budget and provide as many options as possible in close proximity to the number presented.

Unless the customer is for some reason in a hurry (or has already made a buying decision based on past visits) take the time to slowly dissolve those barriers, allow them to relax and trust you. Greeting every customer brightly,



“How are you doing today?” is a great start. Shoot the breeze, asking “How’s the hunting/fishing been?” for instance. Talk about the weather, local sports or current events. Talking allows customers to relax and decide if you’re worth interacting with. Only then should you ask if they are looking for something in particular. Should they offer that, yes, they are, resist the urge to do all the talking, opening your ears instead.

Let the customer tell you what they want, interjecting only to ask pertinent questions or move the conversation along, while always focusing on gaining a solid hold on exactly what that customer intends to use a product for, what they expect out of it, how hard or often it will be used and the kind of performance they demand, just as random examples. What you need to know to make an informed suggestion obviously depends on the product under discussion, whether that be bullets/ammo, clothing/boots, optics or camping gear. This is also where thorough product knowledge helps you not only move more merchandise, but best match customers with suitable product.

This is generally the biggest failing of low-performing salesmen. Let’s say a customer walks in looking for a GPS unit prior to big-game season. The salesman plunks a handful of options on the counter and the customer understandably begins to ask questions:

“Is this unit compatible with maps-overlay systems showing land status? I hunt where there is a lot of private property and don’t want to get into trouble.”

“How do I input GPS coordinates from my buddy’s unit, so he can show me his secret spots?”

“Can you show me how to mark a spot and then come back to it later?”

If a salesman answers, “I’m not sure,” “Good question!” or simply shrugs to any of these questions, doubt begins to fester and the sale is already lost. Put yourself in their shoes. Say you’re looking for a new cell phone or service provider. You tell the sales representative where you live and what features you need to get your work done but the sales person has no clue what to suggest. You’d walk out the door and find a business with someone who can offer definitive answers. Moral of story: do your homework.

So moving forward, you have listened carefully to a customer’s input — have asked enough questions and invested in enough follow-up prodding to eliminate obvious nonstarters. You can now slip into salesman mode. If you have not listened carefully and hand them some-

thing obviously not fitting their desires — let's say pushing varmint ammo when the customer clearly stated they are going elk hunting, as an exaggerated example — you're likely to be viewed as an idiot, or at least someone who just doesn't care. No one likes to think their time is being wasted.

My basic approach, based on the intel I had gathered, was to choose an item I believed best matched their needs, and one each with lower and higher price points. The lower price point is made an option in case the "ideal" is out of the customer's budget; the higher price point in case I could "up-sale" slightly. As a quick note, I think it's important to avoid the subject of price early in the sales pitch — unless the customer says quite specifically they have X number of dollars in their pocket to spend — as it automatically limits possibilities. It's also important to avoid labeling one product as "better" or "worse" than another. Saying one product is inferior to another, first, subconsciously tells a customer you sell product that isn't good, and second, takes that option completely off the table. No one wants an "inferior" product! Instead, talk in terms of features, as in "This product has these useful features, whereas this product has different useful features.

One pet peeve is a salesman handing me a product and saying, "This is what I use." I don't care what you use — I'm not you! You might mention that a certain product was used on a successful outing and it worked well because of a certain set of circumstances, but indicating your tastes are universal is generally off-putting.

To illustrate such a scenario let's say a customer is seeking a scope for their deer rifle, and let's say, just for the sake of argument, they have their heart set on Vortex Optics because the customer mentions a friend recommended the brand. You have determined the rifle/cartridge choice, the typical ranges presented, lighting conditions most commonly encountered and the customer's personal preferences, such as magnification parameters and front or side parallax adjustments. So you offer a budget-priced Crossfire II, a mid-priced Diamondback and a top-end Viper. You point out that all include lifetime, transferrable warranties against any mishaps known to man. You point to the Diamondback as your top choice for their particular needs, but suggest the Viper might offer a few more minutes of viable shooting light, that the coatings are a tad tougher if they are in the habit of, say, wiping away dust with a shirttail, or even that it would make his friend jealous.

You invite that customer to take the three

scopes outside and peer into the landscaping with each. They might balk at the price of the Viper, but then notice how much brighter and crisper the images are through its glass. Perhaps they outright reject the Diamondback, saying it will get them in hot water with their spouse. The Crossfire II is still on the table.

The patient approach to sales definitely requires more effort, and is generally more time consuming, but rest assured that customer will remember that extra effort and time the next time they contemplate a major purchase, or a friend asks them for a sporting goods recommendation. This is but one part of the customer overall sales equation but a vital one. No business wants to deal with returns, for worse yet, an unhappy customer. **HR**

↓ During the sales process, avoid a recommendation based solely on personal opinion. Instead, recommend products based on useful features that meet your customers' desires.





Browning Hell's Canyon Speed Clothing

Dressing up your one-stop-shop with a name you trust.

BY KEVIN REESE

"IT'S HARD TO BEAT A BROWNING." I can still hear my father-in-law, Pop to me, giving his 2¢ about good rifles and I took everything he said as if it were weighted in gold. An iconic hunter in his own right, he lived life on his terms, hunting hard and often for 75 years — the only seasons he missed were while he served on a diesel submarine during the Korean War. To be honest, "Eugenius" as his friends knew him, had a "few" rifles to his name and had killed more deer in his 75-year run than he could recall. "I don't know how many deer I've killed in my life but it's a lot."

While Pop killed deer, antelope and scores of other huntable wildlife before I wandered along and throughout the 20 years we hunted together, his favorite was elk in his home state of Montana. He hunted hard all his life and even in his last season, at 84, took a great elk at high elevation with his Browning X-Bolt Medallion .325 WSM — in his later years, his favorite elk rifle. It'll be a bittersweet trip about a week after I write this feature to go home to Montana and bring that rifle back for my son. In the short list of heritage driven, truly legendary outdoor companies and brands like W.R. Case Knives, Colt, Winchester, Woolrich and select others, Browning most certainly ranks among the "Best there is."

The good news, as you can imagine, is that while Browning's legacy and an empire through the manufacture of reliable firearms, the iconic brand diversified many moons ago to include an array of products designed to enhance outdoor experiences for consumers, from rifles, handguns,

bows and crossbows to sleeping bags, tents, flashlights, knives and yes, apparel. While Browning's firearm design, development and manufacture shows no sign of slowing down, even after 138 years, the company's role and indeed reputation for quality has definitely bled over into expanded

"Billed as light and fast, with superior protection, Hell's Canyon Speed clothing is designed for both efficiency and adaptability."

apparel offerings — one great example is Browning's Hell's Canyon Speed lineup.

Unveiled at the 2016 SHOT Show, Browning Hell's Canyon Speed apparel turned the heads of retailers throughout the 650,000 square-foot showroom floor. And for good reason — when it comes to the finicky tastes of your diverse customer base, Browning's Speed line seems to have a little something for everyone — especially in proprietary A-TACS camo, designed by veterans, that appeals to hunters, law enforcement and tactical fans alike — yes, it's true. Browning maintains exclusive rights to A-TACS camo patterns Arid Urban and Foliage Green patterns. A-TACS camo as a whole has achieved enormous popularity in hunting, law enforcement and even competitive shooting circles and Browning's two A-TACS camo patterns handily break up your customers' outlines in most environments, in every season. Of course, it's worth mentioning that beyond Browning's proprietary patterns, A-TACS also outfits professional and recreational consumers who take life by the horns in urban or snowy environments.

Anytime, Anywhere

True to Browning's M.O., Speed clothing was not

→ Browning's Speed camo blends well into any environment.

↓ The Hell's Canyon Speed lineup is designed for both efficiency and adaptability.



PRO STAFF

Kevin is an award-winning outdoor writer, Marine Corps veteran and avid hunter. His favorite pursuits include feral hogs with a bow or with a thermal scope and AR-style rifle in his home state of Texas. Of course, he also loves deer, elk, turkey, duck and dove hunting — and the list continues to grow.



only well received by retailers and consumers in 2016; the line has grown considerably to include all manner of clothing your customers need for outdoor pursuits.

Billed as light and fast, with superior protection, Hell's Canyon Speed clothing is designed for both efficiency and adaptability. In fact, Browning's forward-thinking, purposeful approach to layering, without compromising comfort and protection, makes Speed a perfect solution for most conditions in which your customers find themselves, including warm, cool, wet and downright cold environments, from desert floors to snow-capped mountaintops. Even better, one of Hell's Canyon's most buzzworthy features is sizing. Garments are specifically sized for wear over lower layers.

More than layering and temperatures, protection and comfort for your customers' active lifestyles Hell's Canyon Speed clothing was intentionally designed to fit your customers, and their active outdoor lifestyles, exceedingly well.





↑ A-TACS camo is available in both Arid Urban (AU) and Foliage/Green (GF) patterns.

Something for Everybody

Apparel companies learned early the importance of complete lineups quickly and Browning is no exception. When it comes to themes and colors, camouflage included, customers want to look good in the woods in clothing they can expect to last more than just a season or two — even better for retailers, in a world of you-get-what-you-pay-for, they are willing to pay for it, especially when they trust the brand, and Browning certainly has reputation nailed down.

From the beginning, Browning set out to build a better mousetrap, so to speak, in the Speed line. The company wanted to offer clothing where every layer can effectively be the outer, depending on weather conditions, changing temperatures and diverse natural surroundings. Designers performed exceedingly well in all areas, including the latter by acquiring proprietary use of A-TACS Arid Urban (AU) and Foliage/Green (GF) patterns.

Developed by veterans, A-TACS camo has been incredibly popular with other military veterans, special operators, law enforcement, competitive shooters, and now, hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts. Proprietary use of both patterns not only provides effective break-up of your customers body shapes, the colors help them blend in with their surroundings to remain undetected by wildlife capable of seeing colors. From dry, muted landscapes to rich, green woods and marshlands, A-TACS conceals exceptionally well.

Perhaps equally as important as effective concealment, Browning's exclusive use of the two A-TACS camouflage patterns further differentiates Speed apparel from anything else on the market. It's worth noting now that while A-TACS F/G is incredibly popular, for 2018, Browning changed its camouflaging up a bit by transitioning from F/G to A-TACS' new Tree/Dirt Extreme (TDE). The move makes the latest Speed apparel even more adaptable to natural environments. The 2018 Speed products also introduce flat colors like charcoal and khaki.

With Browning's Speed lineup, from base layers to outer shells and charcoal/khaki to A-TACS AU and TDE, your customers should be ready for just about anything their hunting lifestyle throws at them. With all bases seemingly covered, it makes sense for retailers to carry as much of a product line like Speed as makes geographic sense considering today's customers are looking for one-stop-shopping experiences. Carrying a full array of hunting apparel designed to work together makes good sense and the brand certainly isn't plagued by lack of or a poor reputation. Circling back here, when customers see the Brown-



→ HeroFit tailoring in Speed garments maximizes freedom of movement.



↑ Browning is using innovative technology and independent testing to ensure their fabrics hold up to the rigors of hunting.

ing logo, they already know quality, durability and reliability are there.

Past and Present

Although the Hell's Canyon Speed Line is still relatively young, not yet three years old, Browning has made some significant changes, including the camo pattern change previously mentioned, due largely to improved fabric design and technology. If you're already a Browning Speed clothing dealer, it's worth noting products you carry that may no longer be available — restocked, replaced or otherwise supported.

The following Speed products are no longer available. If you currently carry these items, be prepared to make some inventory changes. Discontinued products include Trailhead Hoodies, Javelin Pants, MHS Bottoms, Plexus Short Sleeve Mesh Shirts, Shrike-FM Jackets, Shrike-FM Vests, Hellfire Jackets, Hellfire Gloves, Phase ¼-Zip Tops, Phase Beanies, Phase Neck Gaiters, Phase Liner Gloves and Backcountry Gloves.

Current Hell's Canyon Speed clothing series like Backcountry, Hellfire, Rain Slayer, Shrike,

→ The Hell's Canyon Speed lineup is designed to be an efficient layering system, providing comfort in the harshest environments.





↑ Browning's use of the A-TACS camo in the Speed line has proven popular with customers.

MHS and Phase are still supported and even boast some great upgrades. The only remaining product for Trailhead is a beanie; the Speed Cap A-TACS (AU) also remains. The remaining products, both still available in A-TACS AU and FG, have been popular with customers and still get traffic through your retail door. Those items include Hellfire Pants, Rain Slayer Pants and Jackets, Shrike Vests and Jackets, Phase Pants, MHS ¼-Zip Tops and Backcountry Pants, Vests and Jackets.

Recent Additions

Recently, Browning introduced Speed's ETA, Javelin, Riser and Youth series apparel while sprinkling in improvements to popular Rain Slayer, Hellfire, Backcountry, MHS and Plexus clothing.

Rain Slayer, a lightweight and packable outer shell of protection, gets an upgrade with bonded, 3-layer Gore-Tex technology. The new technology bonds Gore-Tex to the inner and outer linings to eliminate movement between layers. Rain Slayer fans also get a new designation, Fast and Mobile (FM). FM-designated apparel is specially designed to complement today's active hunting lifestyle with unrestricted range of motion and overall on-the-go mobility. As a side note here,

Rain Slayer gloves feature 2-layer Gore-Tex protection.

The ETA series of lightweight packable rain gear also joined the Speed lineup in 2018 with two-layer Gore-Tex FM pants and jackets. Like Rain Slayer, ETA's Gore-Tex layer is bonded to the outer shell; however, the inner layer is detached for even greater range of motion.

Hellfire's jackets and pants also turned up the heat with insulated 3-Layer Gore Windstopper Gore-Tex windproof, water-resistant, breathable fabric. Hellfire Windstopper Jackets and Pants are perfect for customers who like to spend time in places where the mercury is known to plummet.

Like Hellfire, new Hell's Canyon Speed Backcountry-FM 3-Layer Gore Windstopper Jackets and Pants feature 3-layer Gore Windstopper technology and are well suited for biting wind. The protective quality and lightweight, ultra-breathable features of the Backcountry make it the right choice for hunting in moderately cold environments.

New Hell's Canyon Speed Javelin-FM series pants, jackets, vests and gloves are the perfect for customers hunting in cool temperatures. Exceptionally rugged, Javelin apparel is breathable yet tear and water-resistant. Browning states Javelin

series Speed clothing protects hunters from thick brush and, if soiled, can be rinsed in a stream, shaken off and then immediately worn again. The gloves also include double-weave soft-shell fabric and perforated synthetic-leather palms.

For the MHS series of Hell's Canyon Speed apparel, Browning added MHS-FM base layers. The new shirt and bottom boast rapid moisture wicking technology, A-TACS camouflage trim and itch-free merino wool. For the top, merino wool is used around the trunk, under-sleeves and on the cuffs for added warmth where your clients need it most. The bottoms feature merino wool and A-TACS camo fleece trim.

Plexus also received a comfort improvement for 2018 for mesh short-sleeve and long-sleeve shirts. The new shirts feature a lightweight, breathable polyester-mesh hybrid fabric, FM designation for greater comfort and mobility and integrated mesh underarms. Both are available in A-TACS AU and TDE.

Speed's Riser-FM Long Sleeve Shirt

and gloves also were unveiled this year. Both are constructed of a lightweight, breathable, moisture-wicking polyester-spandex blend for comfort and durability in your hunting customer's outdoor world. The shirt features a charcoal trunk with A-TACS camo sleeves, scent control technology, thumbhole sleeves and anti-chafing nylon stitching.

In an effort to underscore the something for everybody approach to Hell's Canyon Speed clothing, Browning also introduced the line's Youth series. The series comprises of a ¼-zip top, long-sleeve shirt and pants. The three offerings include Browning's Pre-Vent waterproof, windproof and breathable technology; all are constructed of 100-percent polyester. The lightweight shirt is perfect as an outer layer in mild temperatures, as a base layer when temperatures drop and includes an integrated facemask and hood for full-concealment. The mid-weight ¼-zip pullover jacket features brushed polyester and a chest pocket. The pants also are lightweight

and breathable with open hand pockets, a back pocket, thigh pocket, tapered leg cuffs and an elastic waistband complete with a drawcord for a tighter fit.

The Bottom Line

Browning's Hell's Canyon Speed apparel sits well within the ranks of other premium products that have served to bolster the company's brand equity, perceived value, and to that end, real value in a you-get-what-you-pay-for world. While consumers are always on the prowl for good deals, they also understand this simple truth. Consumers also look for convenience. The greater the variety of goods, the more prone customers are to visiting, staying and purchasing. Those retailers unwilling to cater to the one-stop-shop demands of today's consumers are losing prospective buyers, sometimes before they ever show up. As a hunting retailer, offering a well-rounded line of apparel like Browning's Hell's Canyon Speed lineup is definitely worth considering. **HR**

LOW COST INVENTORY **ICOTec** **HIGH VOLUME SALES**

Enjoy **The BEST** free sound-library ON THE PLANET!

2019 SHOT SHOW BOOTH 4042

GEN2: EVOLUTIONARY

ICOTec offers a completely NEW line of electronic game calls for 2019. Our products are perfect for attracting small varmints, predators, birds and big game. We offer customers an ever-expanding professional sound library for FREE. Other companies charge hundreds for additional sounds.

Known for our incredible remote control range, clear sounds, ease of use, extended battery life and overall value - ICOTec is your ideal electronic call & decoy partner.

Find out what many of your customers already know. ICOTec is the clear leader in the design and manufacturing of high quality affordable products that get **Dead Serious** results.

Quality, Performance & Value.

6415 Angola Rd. | Holland, OH 43528 | icotec.com

PD200 Decoy

BUILT ROCK SOLID

240 SOUNDS INCLUDED THE OUTLAW

©2018 ICOTec. All rights reserved.





STOCK A VARIETY OF CAMO

Today's hunters are finicky and loyal to their camp brands.

1 NOMAD | Cottonwood Series 1/2 Zip

Designed to be the ultimate fleece hunting system. Nothing on earth is quieter than Berber fleece, which makes up the exterior of the Cottonwood. Nomad backs it with a windproof membrane to create the ultimate outer shell for a killer combination of comfort and silence. The windproof Cottonwood jacket and pant can be worn alone in the early season, or over the heat-trapping Cottonwood base layers when temperatures plummet. Articulated sleeves and a Sherpa fleece articulated three-piece hood provide additional shielding from the elements. A safety-harness port lets you wear your harness underneath to eliminate encumbrance.

COST: \$179.99

CONTACT:

www.nomadoutdoor.com



3 BADLANDS | Ascent Jacket and Pant

This combo is designed to keep you comfortable throughout your hunt, thanks to leading features like wind-resistant Badlands Approach FX Fleece, Water Repellent Technology and Nano C6 DWR coating. When treestand hunting, conveniently wear your tree harness underneath the jacket and feed the tether through the exit port. Badlands Legendary Lifetime warranty instills peace of mind that when you buy the Ascent system, you get quality you can trust.

COST: \$159.99 (jacket) \$149.99 (pant)

CONTACT: www.badlandspacks.com



2 SCENTLOK | Revenant Jacket and Pant

The Revenant jacket and pant defy the elements. Brave the frozen landscape with this killer suit, which features time-tested Thinsulate insulation. A windproof membrane shields the user from blustery conditions, and the wicking-treated lining minimizes moisture to keep you dry. The outer DWR finish sheds moisture. The jacket's telescoping cuffs enhance scent containment and feature thumbholes for additional hand warmth. Carbon Alloy Technology provides odor adsorption. The ultra-quiet and smooth tricort and fleece outer fabrics improve stealth. The Revenant Jacket and Pant are available in Realtree Edge, True Timber Kanati and Mossy Oak Break-Up Country. The jacket features safety-harness access, and its articulated elbows provide a full range of motion. Dress with your boots on, thanks to the 21-inch leg zippers on the pant. Removeable suspenders and an adjustable, integrated webbing belt ensure a positive fit.

COST: \$249.99 each • **CONTACT:** www.scentlok.com



4 SITKA GEAR | ESW

The Early-Season Whitetail System is designed for a specific application, warm temperature whitetail hunting. It consists of a shirt and pant, which can be worn as outer garments in warm temperatures or as undergarments when chillier temperatures arrive. Permanent Polygiene Odor Control Technology controls bacteria growth, and quiet, body-mapped fabrics make the ESW System tailored for the dedicated early-season bowhunter. Mesh armpits provide ventilation. The shirt and pant both feature silent snaps to ensure stealth, and four-way-stretch polyester maximizes mobility. Cargo pockets provide instant storage for small items and accessories.

COST: \$129 (shirt) \$149 (pant) • **CONTACT:** www.sitkagear.com



5 SIXSITE | Gunnison Soft-Shell Jacket

Athletic mobility is an apparel trait that western hunters welcome. The Gunnison Soft-Shell delivers unrestricted movement with its athletic cut – no bulk or unnecessary fabric here. Lightweight and breathable, the Gunnison offers multi-season function and comfort so you can focus on the hunt. It's treated with DWR for superior water-resistance, and armpit zips provide ventilation when temperatures climb. The Gunnison makes a solid choice as an outer garment during early season, or you can wear it as a layer underneath a heavier parka when temperatures plummet.

COST: \$224.99
CONTACT:
www.sixsitegear.com



Please visit Booth #3246 at SHOT Show 2019 to see our latest new products.

FIRST SHOT CONFIDENCE

www.KestrelBallistics.com





Outdoorsmans

An niche Arizona retailer knows what they do, and they do it well.

BY MATT CRAWFORD

Way up in some mountain range this past hunting season, a big ram or a bull elk was carefully glassed by a hunter. The camo-clad hunter steadied his rifle on a bipod, gently squeezed the gun's trigger and the bullet spiraled toward the magnificent animal before it hit the vitals — right where the shooter intended. Whoops and high-fives from the hunting party echoed over the mountains, and then the process of field-dressing the animal and packing it out began.

There is a better-than-decent chance that way up in those mountains where a trophy animal was tagged the hunters were using a piece of equipment that originated from a small, specialized shop located in central Arizona. That shop: Outdoorsmans, has made a name for itself in recent years, providing big-game hunters with high quality optics, bipods and tripods. Outdoorsmans doesn't sell guns or bullets, apparel or radios or assorted camp necessities — Outdoorsmans is unique. It's a hyper-specialized hunting optics store that's gained a world-wide following among those hunters who need specific, specialized, high-end equipment.

"We are the nichiest, niche shop in the entire hunting industry," said Outdoorsmans manager, Jake Rush.

Customer, Brian Taylor, from Chandler, AZ, sums up Outdoorsmans this way: "More than any-



thing, they are an optics store; however they do carry a lot more than just optics. They carry lots of high end stuff that a lot of places don't."

Like a lot of companies in the outdoor industry, Outdoorsmans was the brainchild of an active participant who was looking for better gear options. Outdoorsmans opened its doors in 1982 after founder and owner, Floyd Green went on a sheep hunt and was less than satisfied with the tripods being used. Green was young when he started the business (he's 58 now), and he was motivated to design better tripods and pack frames that could stand up to the demands of a big-country, big-game hunt. His first shop was a 1,000 square-foot location in Phoenix, but Out-

↑ Outdoorsmans specializes in high-end optics, binos, spotting scopes and tripods.

Outdoorsmans

WHERE: Fountain Hills, AZ

FOUNDED: 1982

SPECIALTIES: Optics, bipods, tripod and hunting backpacks

PHONE: (480) 570-7679

WEBSITE: www.outdoorsmans.com



PRO STAFF

Matt Crawford lives, writes, fishes and hunts from his home base in northern Vermont. He is the former editor of *The Burlington Free Press* and *Upland Almanac*. Currently, he works in a communications firm where he represents a number of brands in the outdoor industry.

↓ Manager Jake Rush offers a customer his expert advice on a bino purchase.

doorsmans eventually moved to Fountain Hills, about 30 miles northeast of Phoenix.

Rush said the shop really defined its direction about five years ago, when the staff realized that being “uber-specialized” would allow Outdoorsmans to set itself apart from other hunting stores that cater specifically to big-game hunters. The shift has worked: While the hunting industry has

seen flat or declining sales in the last half decade, Outdoorsmans has seen sales on an upward trajectory.

The current store is 1,700 square feet, with retail space in the front and customer service, offices and a meeting room in the back. The Outdoorsmans staff (eight full-timers) is the brain-child and inspiration behind a number of the prod-



Outdoorsmans Innovation

The Atlas Trainer Frame System is a machined aluminum bracket designed specifically to fit on the Outdoorsmans pack frame. The system is the most secure and efficient way to train with a simulated loaded pack. Simply slide any Olympic-sized weight onto the collar and begin your training. The Atlas Trainer is great for both the gym and the trails. The adjustability and comfort of the Outdoorsmans backpack frame ensures the system is up to any task. The Atlas Trainer Frame System comes assembled and includes the Atlas Trainer with Oso barbell collar, frame, belt and harness.

→ Outdoorsmans is more than a retailer, offering specialized packs for hunting and training.





Social Media: Can and Cannot

Jake Rush, manager of Outdoorsmans in Fountain Springs, AZ, came to the specialized hunting store from a social media background. He runs the store's social media accounts – Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, mostly. The Twitter account doesn't see much action. He calls social media a “double-edged-sword” and admits it's easy to go down the on-line rabbit hole and forget about real-world activities. Social media has other challenges, too. Retailers in hunting and shooting shops can find social media a bit tricky to navigate, particularly as an advertising tool. Since 2014, Facebook has forbidden ads for guns or ammunition. Earlier this year, Facebook added additional restrictions. Now, accessories including holsters, hunting apparel and gun cases can be advertised on Facebook legally, but only if marketed to audiences over the age of 18. Instagram, owned by Facebook, also restricts the advertising of firearms sales. Many outdoor shops have taken advantage of Instagram as the perfect platform for both customers and retailers to share hunting photos or well-composed photos of new gear. On Instagram there tends to be a bit more leeway with non-sponsored posts. Some shops run contests through Instagram and include a link to their store's web site in the profile. Twitter, as an advertising medium, has significant challenges, and few shops bother to spend advertising money there to promote their business. Twitter is a good place to catch up on the news, not really designed as a medium to promote local businesses. YouTube is a great avenue for in-depth product reviews, but also prohibits certain firearms content.

ucts the store sells. The tripods are designed and machined by a shop that also produces aftermarket accessories for a gun manufacturer. The backpacks are sewn by a small company in Oregon and the external pack frames are designed and built in Wisconsin. The inventory is warehoused and shipped from a facility about nine miles down the road.

“Tripods are about 25 percent of our overall business,” said Rush. “Optics are 40-50 percent and then backpacks make up pretty much the rest of our sales.”

Outdoorsmans carries some of the most distinguished optics brands in the business including Swarovski, Vortex, Leica, Kowa and Zeiss.



“I've bought a lot of things from them,” said long-time customer, Taylor. “I can be hard on my equipment and I have had to bring things in to have them repaired. They always fix them up brand new — no questions asked.”

It's not just such a well-defined product line that sets Outdoorsmans apart. It's service, too. Hunters who can afford a big-game hunt in some of the most rugged and remote parts of the world aren't the type who complete their gear selection by shopping online or at some big box retailer where price determines most of the inventory.

“I'd say about 10 percent of our business is actual walk-in customers,” said Rush. “Maybe 40 percent is online from our website and the remaining half is over the phone.”

It's the phone sales component that sets Outdoorsmans apart. Rush said the staff is accus-

“It's the phone sales component that sets Outdoorsmans apart.”

tomized to adjusting because of the differences in time zones, talking with customers from all over the globe at 6 a.m. or at 7 p.m. Arizona time. Outdoorsmans recently found a group of customers in Australia, which requires some staff members to adjust their schedules to be available for phone calls from Down Under.

↑ Swarovski binos are an Outdoorsmans top seller.



↑ Outdoorsmans stocks a small inventory of just the niche-market products that they know and sell well.

↓ Although a small shop, Outdoorsmans stocks the products that their clientele demand.

“Tripod stuff isn’t always intuitive,” Rush said. “We have designed our products to work with other products very precisely, and we spend a lot of time on the phone making sure our customers can get their scopes or binos to perform the way they were designed to under demanding hunting conditions.”

Outdoorsmans customers, said Rush, also tends to represent a specific demographic — one that’s not used to making high-end purchases from some soulless website.

“Our internet sales tend to be dominated by bowhunters,” Rush said. “That’s a little bit of a younger demographic who grew up buying things online. But when you have a clientele that’s going on a Marco Polo sheep hunt or a snow leopard hunt, they want to be able to discuss all of the details of the product they’re buying and will be using. They want to talk to somebody about it.”

Rush realizes there’s value in reaching the future generation of well-heeled hunters as well and has made Outdoorsmans social media presence more robust. Rush said social media is a double-edge sword. While it is the fastest, cheapest and easiest way to get information to customers, it’s easy to get lost in the minutia and forget to stay attuned to the things that makes the business work.

“Social media is a marketing tool, and we use it. You have to.” Rush said. “But we also realize that our best marketing is really providing the best products and service we can.” **HR**





PROPER BACKPACK FITTING AND PACKING

Providing proper backpack fitting techniques for your customers will increase customer satisfaction, taking a load off your shoulders.

BY ZACH BOWHAY

← The hunting pack market is diverse and pack features are complex. Still, proper fitting relies on just a few simple tools.





← Proper torso measurement is key to finding the correct pack for your customers.

Sending a customer out of your store with a poorly fitted pack is a risky endeavor. To ensure your customers leave as, and remain happy campers (pun intended), follow these guidelines to increase customer satisfaction and appreciation.

Today's packs are much more comfortable and adjustable than those of yesterday. Finding the "perfect" pack that "fits" is attainable, if the customer doesn't simply buy the first pack that catches their eye. There are packs for everyone, regardless of size and shape. With the correct measurements and a little time spent, everyone can be in a pack that fits them, comfortably even with heavy loads. The following is a primer to proper pack fitting and happier customers.

Torso Length

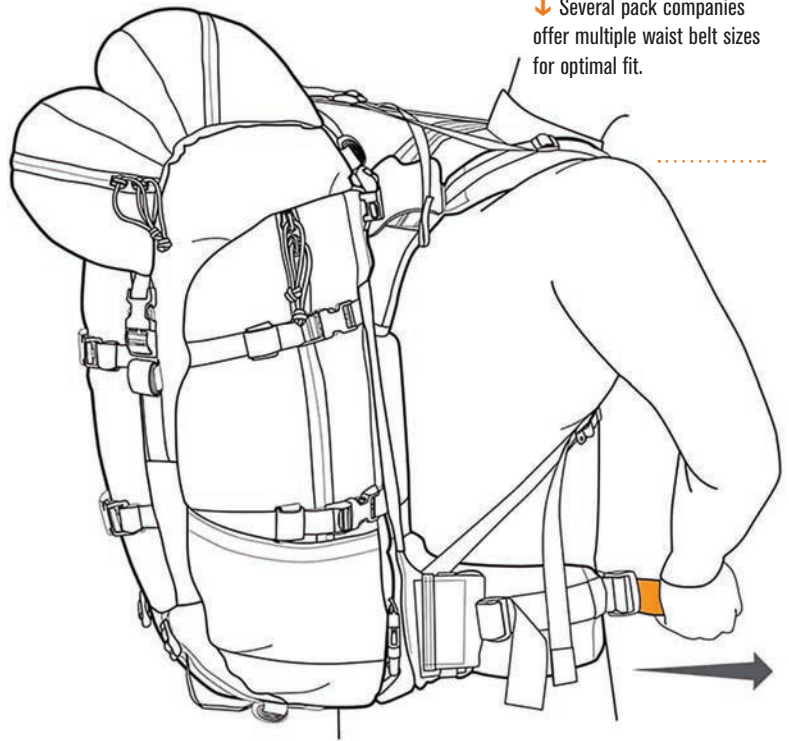
To begin, find the correct torso length. To measure, use a soft tape. First, have the customer slide their hands down their sides — with bended elbow, palms down — until they hit the top of their hipbones, the iliac crest. Imagine a line across the back connecting the two points. This line becomes the lower measurement point for the torso. Next, have them bend their neck forward, touching their chin on their chest. Then find the C7 vertebra, which in layman's terms, is the bony bump on the back of the neck. Following the spine, measure the distance between the C7 vertebra and the imaginary lower line. This distance provides the torso length. Today's top-quality backpacks are designed for a specific torso length or are adjustable, fitting a range of torso lengths.

Waist Belt

Generally, when the torso length fits someone, the waist belt for that pack will fit as well. However, most companies also offer different waist belt sizes as an option. So, it's always a good idea to measure to make sure. To do this, measure with a soft tape along the iliac crest around the body. Since this line is higher than the belt line, you cannot simply go off someone's pant size. The hip belt needs to be able to adjust both longer and shorter. The reason, to have the flexibility to adjust to varying clothing layers during use.

Minor Adjustments

Once you have appropriately identified the torso length and hip belt size, the next step is to adjust the pack. It's best to do so with added weight in the pack. Before you begin, loosen all of the straps and put in a moderate amount of weight. From there, follow these steps. First, tighten the hip belt so that it's sitting on top of the hips, snugly. Second, tighten the shoulder straps until they



↓ Several pack companies offer multiple waist belt sizes for optimal fit.

wrap over the shoulder without a big gap along the back. If there is a gap, tweak the torso length to remove it. Third, adjust the load lifters — straps from the top of the pack, above the shoulder straps. Properly fitted, these straps should be at about a 45-degree angle. To fit, either tighten or loosen. Lastly, adjust the sternum strap. This strap should be about an inch below your col-

↓ The first step to pack fitting is ensuring a correct torso fit.





↑ Velcro is commonly used for torso adjustments on backpacks.

larbones. If you cannot adjust the sternum strap, vertically to ride here, you need to find a different pack. You especially do NOT want the sternum strap riding too high. This strap is meant to keep the shoulder straps in place, relieving some stress from the shoulders. Furthermore, if it's not situated correctly, it will be more uncomfortable when fully packed for use.

Once you have all of these adjustments made, the bulk of the weight should be felt on the hips, not on the shoulders. When properly fitted, even a heavy pack will feel comfortable and much lighter than it actually is. Conversely, a poorly fitted pack will make its weight feel much more substantial than it is.

“Conversely, a poorly fitted pack will make its weight feel much more substantial than it is.”

Pack Size

In today's market there are packs for everyone out there. Whether someone is planning a day hunt

or a two-week backpacking sheep hunt, there is likely a pack out there to fit. Ultimately, a lot depends on personal preference, as well as individual needs to be “comfortable.” It also depends heavily on each person's gear — weight and bulk. However, below is a guideline to start from when it comes to picking a pack size.

Day Hunts

If all that is on the docket is a day hunt, a person will not need a huge pack. A pack in the 1800-2200 cubic inch range should be plenty to carry all of the gear needed for a day's hunt. Gear may include, but not be limited to extra clothing, food, water, camera, ammo and field-dressing tools. However, it may have to be large enough to pack a quartered animal as well.

Overnighter

If someone is planning an overnight trip, a pack in the 2800-3200 cubic inch range should suffice. These days backpacking gear is lighter and more importantly, less bulky. With modern gear, a hunter should be able to go overnight with a tent, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, water filter, small stove and all of your other hunting gear in a pack this size.

Multi-Day

The gear needed for a multi day trip is not that different from that for an overnigher other than more food and water, and possibly extra clothing. Still, a bigger pack is often a better option for an extended stay on the mountain. For these types of trips, a pack in the 4000-5500 cubic inch range are suggested. Packs this size allow for plenty of room for hunting gear, camping gear, extra clothing, as well as plenty of room for the food required to stay multiple days.

Week Long+

Most hunters don't spend more than a week on a hunt without making it back to the truck to restock. But there are a dedicated few, who do it on a regular basis. For trips this extensive, there are many great packs out there in the 6000-7200 cubic inch range. These packs provide all the room needed for all the gear of shorter hunts, as well as extra space for more food, extra clothing and other necessities a person may need to survive these long trips in relative comfort.

Loading the Pack

When hitting the trail, knowing how to pack gear

in a pack is vital. On a longer hunt, a pack needs to be packed so that the pack "rides" best, but also, so gear items are easily accessible. It's a good idea to separate gear into daily-use, camp-only and one-time use, like a kill kit for when an animal is harvested. Stress the following guidelines to your customers.

The bottom of the pack can be packed with items like that kill kit, rain gear (if rain is unlikely at the onset), extra clothing and the like. On top of that is a good place for sleeping bags and sleeping pads.

The middle of the pack is the best place to put heavier items. Examples are a cook kit, food, water, tent and spotting scopes. Having the heavier items in the middle of the pack is the best, most stable location to ensure that the pack rides well on the back.

The top of the pack provides storage for items needed on a regular basis such as a jacket, food, water filter and a camera. For packs with a lid and/or outer pockets, frequently used gear should reside there. Such items may include headlamp, flashlight, gloves and a beanie. Many packs have places on the outside as well where a tripod and spotting scope can be stowed eas-

PRECISION REFLEX
GEAR UP

RIFLES + UPPERS
SCOPE RINGS + BASES
AR15 + M16
.308 + 6.8
TOOLS + ASSEMBLY
ACCESSORIES

See us at
Booth
20335 at
SHOT
Show

MANUFACTURER OF TACTICAL SHOOTING PRODUCTS
precisionreflex.com

RAMRODZ
PRECISION BORE CLEANERS
For Most Common Calibers and Gauges

Call for **FREE**
Dealer Sample
Pack

- No drip, mess or splatter
- Low-lint cotton on strong, flexible bamboo handles
- Expands deep into rifling grooves, pushing out dirt, debris and fouling

Average MSRP \$12.95/bag - Dealer Pricing Available
WWW.RAMRODZ.COM | 855-GUNSWAB (855-486-7922)





ily without tearing everything out of the pack to glass quickly.

Final Thoughts

There has never been a better time to be a hunter as far as gear goes. Many companies are going to great lengths to provide the best gear possible for people, regardless of their hunting

goals. Knowing how to provide your customers with the right gear to match their specific application(s), is the key to keeping happy, satisfied customers. Follow the guidelines above to ensure that the next time a customer walks out of your shop following a backpack purchase, they walk back in to purchase their next gear item too. **HR**



PRO STAFF - Hunt DIY entrepreneur Zach Bowhay is highly regarded in the Western hunting community. His expertise is equipping hunters with the perfect gear for hunting big game in the mountains of the West. A well-published outdoor writer, Bowhay disseminates his expertise and shares his experiences through a variety of mediums including articles, social media and video.

↓ The sternum strap is designed to keep the shoulder straps properly aligned and should not be overtightened.



FIT IT, SELL IT

5 all-around packs to consider stocking in your store.

1 MYSTERY RANCH |

Treehouse

This pack epitomizes what treestand hunters need in a backpack. Whitetailers will love its many compartments designed to organize all the necessary gear for an all-day hunt, from a hydration pack to a treestand. The pack is designed to hang on a tree in a 45-degree open position via two fiberglass rods for fast main-compartment access – grab your bow hanger, camera arm or grunt call in seconds and without shuffling. A telescoping yoke ensures proper torso fit for virtually all users. A quiet 640D COTNA liner inside a 500D CORDURA exterior paired with YKK zippers delivers rigidity to withstand wear and tear. The Treehouse is available in two solid colors, Coyote or Birch Bark. At just 4.6 pounds (empty), encumberment is history. Despite its light weight, the Treehouse provides a generous 1,892 cubic inches of storage.

COST: \$250

CONTACT: www.mysteryranch.com



2 ALPS OUTDOORZ'S |

Hybrid X

Think of it as the bridge between whitetail packs and elk packs. The 2,750-cubic-inch pack is designed to carry and organize all of your hunting gear, but it detaches from the frame via compression straps so that you can pack out quarters following a successful hunt. The frame features a shelf and compressed wing pockets, accommodating loads both large and small. Unrivalled strength and durability are the products of 1860D Nylon Ballistic and Robic Nylon fabrics with Hyaplon reinforced construction. A molded-foam suspension system and Lycra shoulder straps provide outstanding comfort and bold stability. A drop-down stock pocket easily accommodates a rifle or shotgun, and the waist belt accommodates a clip-style holster and features additional pockets for smaller accessories. A rain cover completes the ensemble.

COST: \$249.99

CONTACT: www.alpsoutdoorz.com



3 TENZING |

TZ 2220 Daypack

A premium air-mesh suspension system improves comfort and breathability in the TZ 2220 daypack. Tipping the scale at merely five pounds, the TZ 2220 provides 2,400 cubic inches of storage. With eight organizational pockets and 11 compartments, you likely won't find a more functional hunting daypack. A fold-out rain cover provides shelter from the elements, and a fold-out boot easily secures your bow or gun. Robic rip-stop fabric maximizes durability in critical high-stress areas of the pack. Attach additional gear to the pack's two webbing straps. The hydration-pack-compatible TZ 2220 Daypack is the answer for demanding days afield.

COST: \$149.99

CONTACT: www.tenzingoutdoors.com



4 EBERLESTOCK |

X1A3

Compatible with archery and firearm hunting alike, it features a patent-pending Ripcord Tether and Quick-draw Backscabbard – fits all long guns and AR-15s – as well as large tubular pockets that cradle a bow. A vertically-adjustable shoulder harness provides the perfect fit for a variety of users. Full-depth spotting-scope pockets provide secure transportation for your expensive glass. The Gosamer polycarbonate frame delivers superior support that is well-suited for heavy loads.

The X1A3's frame can be interchanged with Eberlestock's tubular aluminum Intex II frame for versatility that fits every preference. The pack weighs 5 pounds, 13 ounces, and it provides 1,500 cubic inches of storage (not including the scabbard).

COST: \$199

CONTACT:

www.eberlestock.com



5 BADLANDS |

Timber Pack

The Timber Pack attaches to a tree and features a drop-down workstation, providing quick and convenient access to your calls, water, snacks and treestand accessories. Compatible with a 3-liter hydration reservoir, the Timber Pack weighs just 2 pounds, 10 ounces (empty). It offers a roomy 1,500 cubic inches of storage broken down into organizational pockets. Designed to last, the Timber Pack boasts an abrasion-resistant back suspension and quiet, yet durable Badlands KXO-32 fabric. A provided strap also makes attaching a bow simple.

COST: \$149.99

CONTACT: www.badlandspacks.com





SELLING CAMOUFLAGE Clothing in Your Store

Insight: Three companies work with retailers to promote and sell camo.

BY CHUCK SMOCK





Outdoor retailers face a variety of challenges when it comes to selling camouflage hunting products. For some independent outdoor retailers, these challenges can present barriers to participating in the category as much as their customers would like.

It might start with competition from other retailers, including big-box retailers and their e-commerce websites, or online mega retailers and their third-party vendors, or popular outdoor companies operating direct-to-consumer models. There's also the challenge of finding adequate sales-floor space to display enough product to drive and satisfy customer demand, as well as the back-room storage space needed for the required inventory.

However, for hunters who don't live near a big-box outdoors store and who wouldn't think of buying a hunting jacket or a pair of boots without trying them on, the independent outdoor retailer often is the best option. Regardless of other factors, some hunters just prefer the idea of buying products at a locally owned store. They like seeing familiar faces and talking to the same people they've trusted over the years for recommendations on gear purchases.

↓ Camo sales are competitive but can be overcome with the right partner(s) and promotion strategies.

Brian Mildenstein, second-generation owner of Fin & Feather, The Great Outdoors Store, in Iowa City, Iowa, said customer service has been a focus since his parents, Roger and Linda, opened Fin & Feather in 1967. According to the Fin & Feather website: "(Brian) shares his parents' passion of introducing customers to outdoor activities and loves swapping stories of outdoor adventures."

Brian said camouflage clothing isn't a huge part of his store's 25,000-square-foot offering, but spikes in demand, often driven by innovation such as a new camo pattern or a new scent-free technology, can cause him to expand that offering from year to year, and season to season. He said he travels to several trade shows a year looking for new brands and new ideas. He's typically not interested in mass-produced items readily available in big-box stores or online.

"As a small, single store, I think we're more nimble than big-box stores operating at the macro level," said Mildenstein. "We're in white-tail country, and we're buying just for this store, for hunters in this area, so it's easier to make those decisions. "We can react quicker (when adding new products) if we have an account with a company, but some companies are easier to



work with than others,” he adds.

Read on to learn how three companies work with outdoor retailers to provide, or promote, camouflage hunting products for their customers.

Browning Helps Retailers, Large, Medium and Small

The iconic Browning Buck Mark is recognized by hunters from coast to coast.

Browning licenses its name and logo for use on a variety of gear, everything from camping gear to key chains, but its team of in-house experts designs and has built to its specification the extensive line of quality Browning camouflage hunting clothing.

When finished samples of new products are ready, Browning turns to outside sales representatives to spread the news to retailers across the country. Pat Heinrich, with More & Molloy, Inc., in Sandy, Utah, said his company’s territory for Browning clothing includes everything west of Kansas, including Canada and Mexico. “We’ve represented Browning for 35 years, and there is no logo in the hunt/shoot category that carries like the Buck Mark logo,” Heinrich said. “(Retailers) know their customers will recognize that logo.”

Heinrich said he typically sees the new apparel line the last week of September each year, and receives his dealer workbook and samples by early October. He has until December 1 to place retail orders for delivery the following summer, ahead of fall hunting seasons. The buyers at larger chain stores, who plan their sales floor space down to the square foot; by brand, category, individual products and seasons, require these extended timelines. Smaller, independent retailers have more flexibility, Heinrich said, but they also need to be more specialized.

Heinrich guessed the average independent outdoor retailer offers less than 20,000 square feet of sales-floor space, and some get by with as little as 1,000 or 2,000 square feet. Compare that to more than 200,000 square feet for some of the biggest outdoor retail chain stores. That doesn’t mean independent retailers are out of luck if they want to offer brands that resonate with their customers. They just have to think smaller and smarter.

Heinrich said Browning ball caps with the Buck Mark logo, Browning knives, and, perhaps a small selection of lightweight, price-point camo in a few patterns, or a few shooting vests, are enough for some retailers to satisfy their customers’ demand for the Browning brand.

“A lot of guns stores don’t sell apparel,” Heinrich said. “Selling Browning caps, as an impulse



buy, might be as far out as they go on apparel sales.” If that’s not enough, Browning has some great tools to make sure retailers can deliver any Browning product their customers’ want: the annual Browning Master Catalog, and a convenient dealer-access portal.

The 2018 Browning Master Catalog totaled 315 pages. Retailers often keep these catalogs near the sales registers, and invite customers to look through them when wanting something specific that isn’t available in the store. Their dealer-access portal allows retailers to place orders on the spot, even for a single item.

.....
“The iconic Browning Buck Mark is recognized by hunters from coast to coast.”

Browning doesn’t sit on huge inventory positions, especially with big-ticket items, but the company tries to have a good selection of products, especially the price-point stuff, in stock and ready to ship.

Heinrich said having the Browning catalog, and access to the dealer-access portal, gives the independent retailer more flexibility. This is par-

↑ Logos like the iconic Browning Buckmark are easily recognized by the majority of hunters.

.....





→ A well-balanced camo offering can lead to happy (and successful) customers.

↓ Technical camo clothing is popular among hunters.

ticularly true in gun stores where the customer base might be skewed to older, more experienced shooters who don't want to use a smart phone to look at a company's product offering. "In some cases, these are customers who still have a newspaper dropped in their driveway every morning," he said. "These customers like

to pick up a catalog and flip through the pages, something they've been doing for many years."

Then there's the selection proposition. "A big box might be able to offer five Browning shotguns, where an independent retailer can offer access to 105 Browning shotguns," Heinrich said. "The independent-reps model works well for Browning. We do well with the big-box stores, but our meat and potatoes are the independent guys."

Browning doesn't require a minimum annual spend for its dealers to have access to the order portal, and does not sell directly to consumers from its website.

Website: www.browning.com • Phone: 801-876-2711

Realtree Focuses on Independent Retailers

In 2017, Realtree introduced its newest camouflage pattern Realtree EDGE, which it describes as: "... the first camo pattern that allows you to blend into your hunting environment at close range, with natural elements arranged in a way



to disrupt the human form at a distance.” The company unveiled a new waterfowl pattern, Realtree Timber, in late 2018.

Other than a handful promotional items, including hats, T-shirts and logo wear, Realtree doesn't actually produce any of the hunting gear, clothing or lifestyle products featuring the company's camo patterns. Rather, Realtree licenses its camo patterns to companies that manufacture clothing, boots and waders, firearms, archery equipment and truly every hunting and outdoor category consumers need to enjoy the great outdoors.

Realtree supports many of these companies, and the retailers who sell their products, on many different levels. Recently, Realtree saw an opportunity to help hunters shop for camo at the most traditional, and often most trusted level: the independent retailer. The company created its Independent Retailer Initiative and hired David Langston as director of independent retail. Langston has more than 20 years of experience in the outdoors industry.

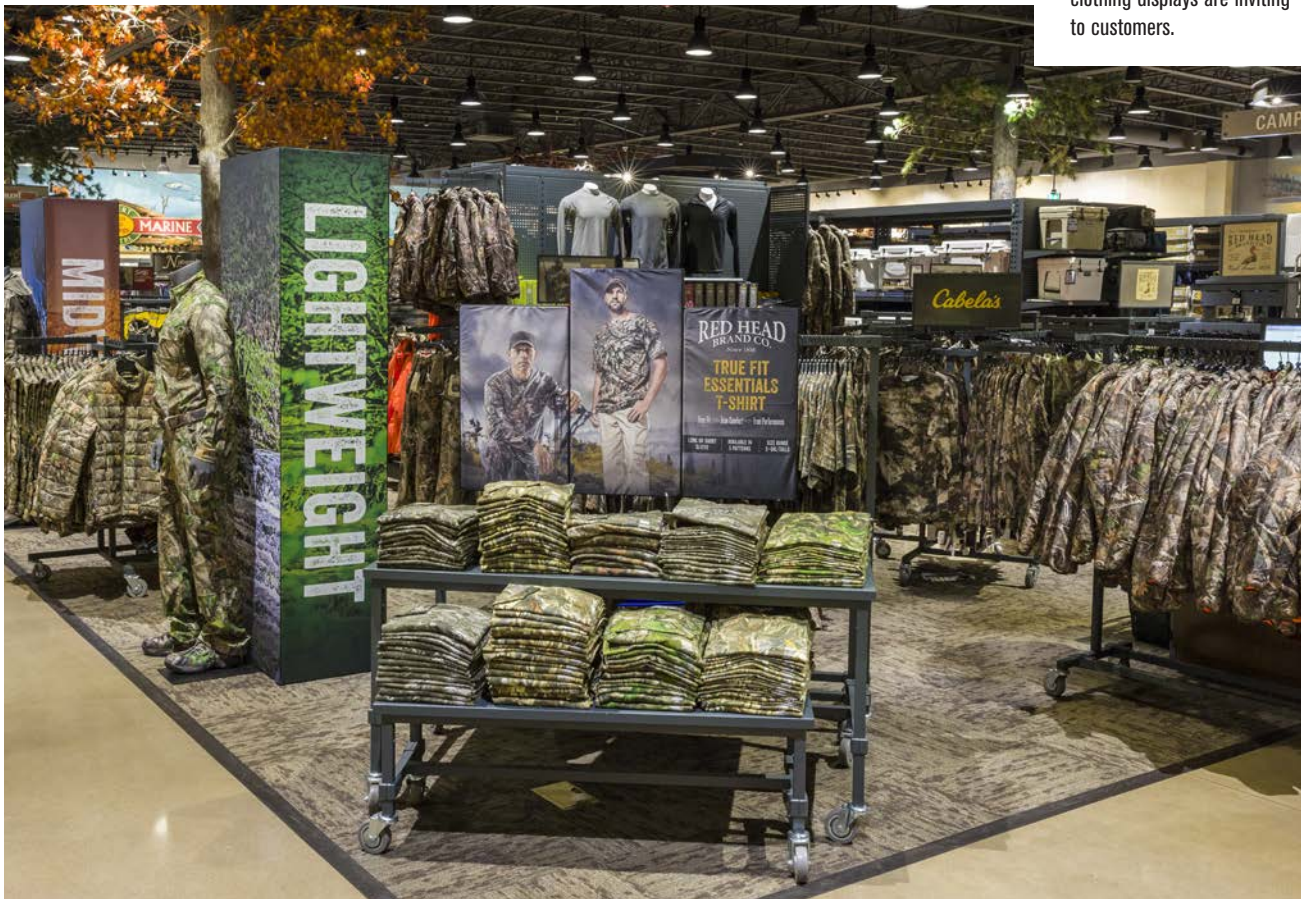
Langston, Shane Grimsley (a 15-year Realtree employee) and Cragg Fitz (an experienced outdoor-industry representative), run the Realtree



Independent Retailer Initiative. “It’s all about partnerships and resources, and operating with honesty and integrity, all ideals we learned from our founder Bill Jordan,” said Langston, who estimates nearly 2,000 companies’ license and use Realtree camouflage patterns. “We’re not com-

↑ The Realtree camo patterns have always been an industry leader.

↓ Well-organized camo clothing displays are inviting to customers.





ing to your store to sell anything, we're coming to help. We want to let you know how we plan to promote new products. "It doesn't matter how big you are, we want to come in and help you," Langston added.

For independent retailers who are operating their own websites, participating in social-media campaigns, and/or creating digital or print sales fliers or other advertising materials, Realtree offers several helpful services. "For premium independent retailers who are using social media, including Facebook and Instagram, the number-one challenge is content," Langston said. "When we're working with these retailers, we can share a link that gives them free access to Realtree's entire collection of images from premier photographers, covering everything from hunting to lifestyle to family, and all species."

Realtree also can use its social-media platforms to geo-target customers within a 100- or 150-mile radius of a given retailer to promote its licensees' products and let customers know where to purchase them. The company acts as a liaison between its licensees' and retailers who need help with displays, signage, logos and other promotional items for everyday use, or for

special events. Langston and his team will arrange for Realtree pro staffers to attend in-store events to promote products, give seminars and demonstrations, or sign autographs and take pictures with customers. "No matter what you are looking for, Realtree has the resources to help," Langston said.

Website: www.realtree.com • Phone: 800-992-9968

Eberlestock Enters Camouflage Clothing Market

Long known as a producer of durable, functional high-quality hunting and tactical backpacks, as well as a variety of other products for active outdoor enthusiasts, Eberlestock entered the camouflage hunting clothing world in 2018. The company plans to roll out to retailers at least seven new outerwear garments in 2019.

The company is also offering two new proprietary camo patterns: Mountain and Sky, as well as solid earth-tone colors, in the new line. Both patterns are digital designs created to be effective at different distances throughout a variety of Western terrains and seasons.

For starters, Eberlestock's hunting clothing line will include mostly lightweight vests, jack-

↓ Adding environmental components to a display can make it even more appealing to customers.



THREE CAMO CLOTHING LINES TO CONSIDER



SITKA GEAR

Now owned by W.L. Gore & Associates, Sitka Gear was founded in 2009 by serious big-game hunters who demanded quality and expected performance from their hunting gear.

The company focuses on using quality materials and construction methods to produce exceptional clothing and gear designed to protect and conceal dedicated hunters in a wide variety of habitats and weather conditions.

Sitka currently offers five camouflage patterns, all under the proprietary GORE OPTIFADE brand: Elevated II, Open Country, Subalpine, Waterfowl Marsh and Waterfowl Timber,

to cover everything from hunting from a treestand, to spot-and-stalk adventures on the plains and in the mountains, to pursuing ducks and geese in fields and flooded timber.

NOMAD

From the Nomad Outdoor website, the company's mission is "To build the most innovative, authentic hunting apparel to inspire a community to experience and protect the traditions of hunting and to empower everyone on their next expedition."

Nomad designs and creates high-end, high-quality garments that appeal to hunters who know performance has a price, and are willing to pay for it. Nomad categorizes its offerings into four groups, Whitetail, Big Game, Turkey and Lifestyle, with gear for men, women and children, and uses camouflage patterns from Kryptek, Mossy Oak and Realtree. Nomad also uses its proprietary Veil Cervidae camo pattern in its Big Game clothing line.



WALLS

Perhaps known by some more for its coveralls and other workwear, Walls Outdoor Goods has been producing durable, dependable hunting camouflage outerwear for years. The company reports it "is the brand of work wear, western wear and hunting gear for men and women who work hard and play hard outdoors."

Walls introduced its proprietary HID3 Camo pattern in early 2018. HID3 Camo is exclusive to Walls Pro Series of hunting clothing. "The decision to develop the HID3 camo pattern and to incorporate the design into our full concealment system stems from a growing performance hunt market," said Brad Bromstead, vice president of marketing and merchandising at Walls Outdoor

Goods. "The technology behind our HID3 concealment system establishes Walls Pro Series as a performance brand, equipping our hunters with the essential tools for success."

Walls also offers men's, women's and kids' camouflage in Realtree and Mossy Oak patterns.

ets and shells, including insulated and waterproof versions, all constructed from performance fabrics, offering flexibility and breathability for active hunters. Tanner Leaton, Eberlestock's operations manager at its Boise, Idaho, headquarters, said the new camouflage clothing should ship to retailers in time for the 2019 turkey-hunting season. Additionally, he said the company is working on clothing offerings specifically for hunters who pursue white-tailed deer, as well as beefier options with more insulation and added late-season weather protection.

"Eberlestock wants its independent dealers to be successful and wants to ensure they are set up and stocked up sufficiently, so they represent the brand well."

Eberlestock knows many smaller, independent retailers struggle with finding enough space, both on the sales floor for engaging displays, and in the back room for storage — especially with big items, such as large, external-frame backpacks. That's why its dealer program, which has an annual minimum buy of \$5,000, at dealer pricing, allows retailers to stagger their shipments throughout the year, rather than accepting the entire order at once. Leaton said Eberlestock wants its independent dealers to be successful,

and wants to ensure they are set up and stocked up sufficiently, so they represent the brand well.

Eberlestock sells direct to consumers through its website, but its independent-dealer program allows participating retailers to order individual items for their customers. **HR Website:**

www.eberlestock.com •

Phone: 208-424-5081



PRO STAFF - Chuck Smock spent over 15 years working in media relations in the outdoors industry. He also served as the editor of a national hunting and fishing magazine for more than 10 years. In 2018, he decided to pursue a career in freelance writing.



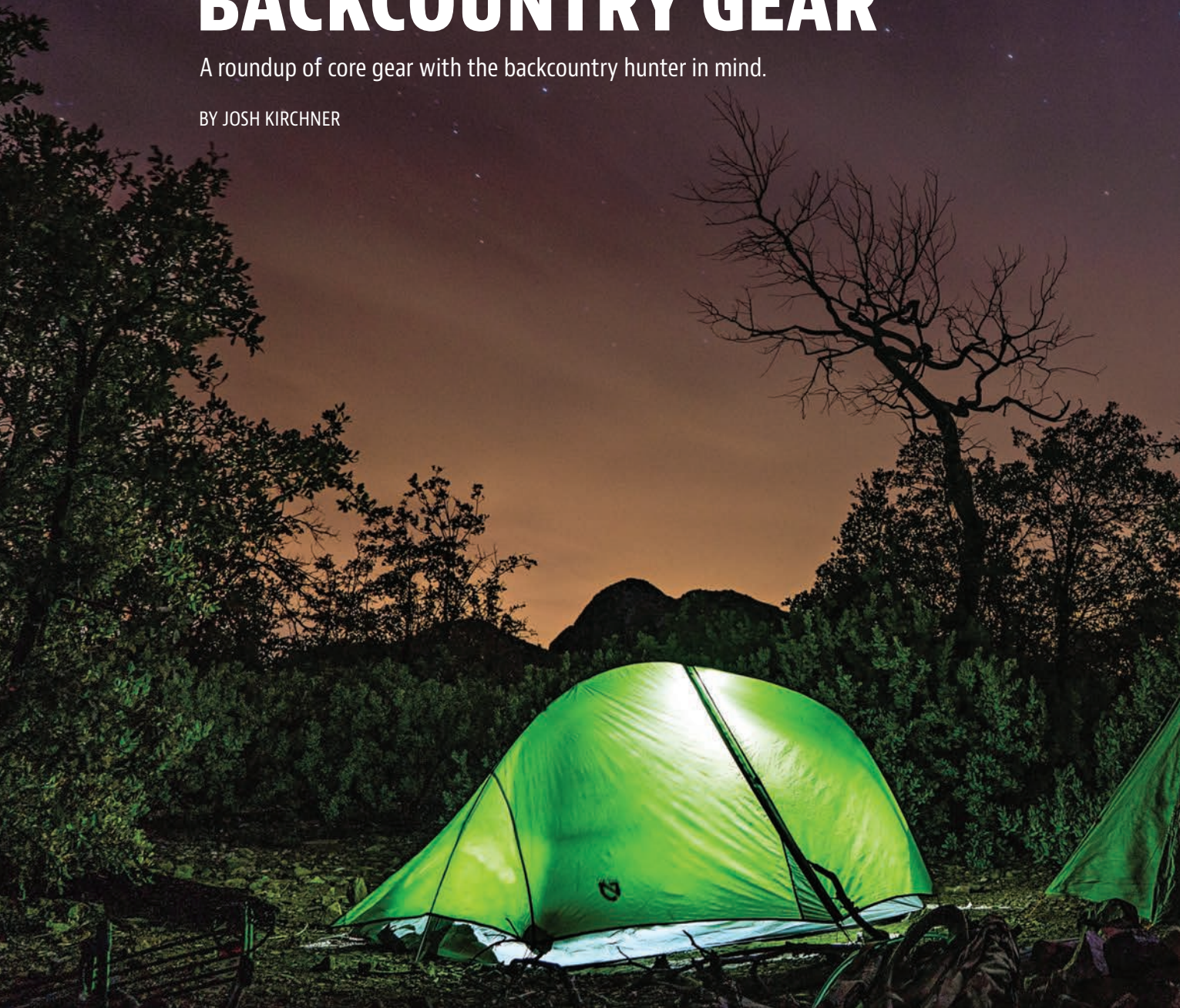


NEMO

BACKCOUNTRY GEAR

A roundup of core gear with the backcountry hunter in mind.

BY JOSH KIRCHNER



It seems our daily lives in suburbia are all too predictable, monotonous. We wake up, go to work, come home, eat dinner, go to bed, repeat. While doing so, scrolling through endless feeds of social media. Stuck in a rut, however routine, is still stuck in a rut.

A trip into a remote wilderness — far from the comforts of home — is exactly what many of us need to reset. I know I do. Decompression from the nine-to-five grind is just plain healthy, if you ask me. It's healthy to slow down and synchronize our rhythms with the mountains. Things move at a different pace out there. Where is there?

The word backcountry is one that keeps popping up more and more in the hunting world. The promise of a hunting adventure coupled with the uncertainty of it all, intrigues us as hunters. At the same time, it moves our endeavors farther from trailheads and roads. Hunters are willing to hike miles through unforgiving terrain and inclement weather with nothing more than an ambition to fill a tag and a need for resetting.

As peaceful as it sounds, the backcountry does

not exist without challenge. Like life in suburbia, life in the backcountry comes with its own set of adversities. The backcountry is rugged, physically demanding. The weather is unpredictable, changing on a whim. Above all else, it's mentally challenging. To prepare for a backcountry excursion, quality gear is a necessity. A good shelter, sleeping bag and sleeping pad are a core requirement of the backcountry hunter.

I remember my first backcountry hunt like it was yesterday. It was a turning point in my life. My hopes, as well as my anxieties, were high. I camped on a mesa overlooking a vast high desert. After opening the door of my tent and seeing what lay before me as the sun crept over the mountains, I knew that I would be doing this for many years to come. Backcountry hunting isn't for everyone, but it is for me.

Years of backpacking into the wilderness and hunting for extended periods have made me realize the importance of high-quality gear. Nemo Equipment offers the core necessities for hunting and camping in the backcountry. Here's a roundup of several items in their lineup that I feel are worth looking at.

↓ Backcountry hunting in the remote wilderness has become increasingly popular, especially in the West.

“Years of backpacking into the wilderness and hunting for extended periods have made me realize the importance of high-quality gear.”





Tents

A tent provides shelter from environmental conditions, a must on most hunts. However, it's also a hunters' home away from home for the duration of the hunt. Here, a hunter will dream about the coming days and reminisce about the ones that have already passed. It will be more than a sleeping quarters; it will double as a storage facility at a minimum. The right tent will be a reflection of the hunters' individual personality. Here are a few to consider.

Spike Storm →

An ultra-lightweight tent, the Spike Storm is a bomber shelter that weighs in at just a tick over one pound. It packs down to the size of a large Nalgene bottle, fitting easily in any pack. The listed weight includes the stakes. The Spike Storm does use one trekking pole for support. Efficiency is everything in the backcountry and the Spike Storm lends itself to that.



SPECS

CAPACITY: 1	PACKED SIZE: 9.0 x 5.0 in/23 x 13 cm	FLOOR DIMENSIONS: 87.1 x 39.0/29.9 in/221 x 99/76 cm
SEASONS: 3	PEAK HEIGHT: 42.2 in/107 cm	VESTIBULE AREA: 5.1 sq ft/0.5 sq m
MINIMUM WEIGHT: 1 lb, 3 oz/530 g	FLOOR AREA: 19.9 sq ft/1.9 sq m	MSRP: \$229.95
PACKED WEIGHT: 1 lb, 7 oz/640 g		

Hornet Elite Ultralight ↓

This is the lightest freestanding tent in Nemo's lineup. The two-person version of the Hornet Elite Ultralight weighs in at a mere 1 pound 12 ounces. It offers enough room on the inside to store clothing, boots and other gear. The vestibule is roomy enough to store a bow or rifle and a backpack. Both lightweight and durable, the Hornet Elite Ultralight is a great choice for the backcountry hunter with a minimalist mentality.



SPECS

CAPACITY: 2	PACKED SIZE: 19.0 x 4.5 in/48 x 12 cm	FLOOR DIMENSIONS: 85.1 x 50.4/42.6 in/16 x 128/108 cm
SEASONS: 3	PEAK HEIGHT: 36.6 in/93 cm	VESTIBULE AREA: 6.2 sq ft + 6.2 sq ft/0.6 sq m + 0.6 sq m
MINIMUM WEIGHT: 1 lb, 12 oz/805 g	FLOOR AREA: 27.4 sq ft/2.5 sq m	MSRP: \$499.95
PACKED WEIGHT: 2 lb, 1 oz/933 g		

Losi →

Whether heading deep into the backcountry with a friend or just setting up a nice truck camp, the Losi is a great option. The Losi offers a ton of room on the inside, which is perfect for weathering out a storm or just having room to store one's hunting gear. The unique pole design ensures the most headspace possible. The tradeoff, more weight. If living space is on the top of the list, the Losi is definitely worth a look.

SPECS

CAPACITY: 2	PACKED SIZE: 22.0 x 6.5 in/56 x 16 cm	FLOOR DIMENSIONS: 83.9 x 54.0 in/213 x 137 cm
SEASONS: 3	PEAK HEIGHT: 46.1 in/117 cm	VESTIBULE AREA: 10.0 sq ft + 10.0 sq ft/0.9 sq m + 0.9 sq m
MINIMUM WEIGHT: 4 lb, 15 oz/2.24 kg	FLOOR AREA: 31.4 sq ft/2.9 sq m	MSRP: \$399.95
PACKED WEIGHT: 5 lb, 9 oz/2.54 kg		



Kunai Mountaineering ↓

The Kunai is one of the most versatile tents on the market and is a true year-round, 4-season shelter solution. Its double-wall construction provides a condensation-free environment in harsh and humid conditions. T tapered profile, aggressive brow pole, and wind-blocking inner tent keep you protected from snow dust and strong winds. The Kunai is the perfect solution for late season, backcountry hunts.

SPECS

CAPACITY: 2	PACKED SIZE: 11.0 x 7.0 in/28 x 18 cm	FLOOR DIMENSIONS: 85 x 51/42in/216 x 130/107cm
SEASONS: 4	PEAK HEIGHT: 42 in/107 cm	VESTIBULE AREA: 6.8 sq ft/0.6 sq m
MINIMUM WEIGHT: 3 lb, 15 oz/1.8 kg	FLOOR AREA: 27.6 sq ft/2.6 sq m	MSRP: \$499.95
PACKED WEIGHT: 4 lb, 14 oz/2.2 kg		





Sleeping Bags

A good, versatile sleeping bag goes a long way in the backcountry. The most important factor in selecting a sleeping bag is temperature rating. However, it's not the only factor to consider. Nemo offers a wide variety of sleeping bag designs, shapes, weights and temperature ratings. Here are a few in the Nemo lineup.

Men's Riff | Women's Jam →

The Riff and Jam sleeping bags lend themselves to the side sleepers of the world. Their unique Spoon shape ensures sleepers have enough room to roll around without restriction, but not too much, to where they are compromising warmth. Another innovative feature of these sleeping bags are their Thermo Gills, which allows the user to vent body heat. Additionally, the Riff and Jam incorporate a waterproof footbox designed the feet warm and dry. The Riff and Jam include both a compression sack, as well as a cotton storage sack.

RIFF SPECS

CAPACITY: 1
SHAPE: Spoon
MINIMUM WEIGHT: 2 lb, 9 oz/1.17 kg
PACKED SIZE: 17.5 x 9.0 in/45 x 23 cm
TEMP RATING: 15F/-9C
FILL TYPE: Down
FILL WEIGHT: 1 lb, 5 oz/585 g
FITS UP TO: 6'/183 cm
SHOULDER GIRTH: 64 in/163 cm
HIP GIRTH: 60 in/152 cm
KNEE GIRTH: 64 in/163 cm
COMPRESSED VOLUME: 6.2
MSRP: \$399.95

The Riff is also available as a 30-degree bag; both bags are available in regular and long lengths.

JAM SPECS

CAPACITY: 1
SHAPE: Spoon
MINIMUM WEIGHT: 2 lb, 15 oz/1.35 kg
PACKED SIZE: 18.0 x 9.0 in/46 x 23 cm
TEMP RATING: 15F/-9C
FILL TYPE: Down
FILL WEIGHT: 1 lb, 11 oz/775 g
FITS UP TO: 5'6"/168 cm
SHOULDER GIRTH: 62 in/157 cm
HIP GIRTH: 58 in/147 cm
KNEE GIRTH: 62 in/157 cm
COMPRESSED VOLUME: 8.8
MSRP: \$399.95

The Jam is also available as a 30-degree bag; both bags are available in regular and long lengths.



Men's Ramsey | Women's Cleo →

For the hunter that wants to spend more money on hunting tags than sleeping bags, these are a solid choice. The Ramsey and Cleo are a traditional style mummy bag, designed for efficiency, warmth and packability. These two bags also incorporate Nemo's Thermo Gills and waterproof footbox. The Ramsey and Cleo include both a compression sack, as well as a cotton storage sack.

RAMSEY SPECS

CAPACITY: 1
SHAPE: Mummy
MINIMUM WEIGHT: 2 lb, 7 oz/1.12 kg
PACKED SIZE: 13.0 x 8.5 in/33 x 22 cm
TEMP RATING: 15F/-9C
FILL TYPE: Down
FILL WEIGHT: 1 lb, 4 oz/555 g
FITS UP TO: 6'/183 cm
SHOULDER GIRTH: 61 in/155 cm
HIP GIRTH: 57 in/145 cm
KNEE GIRTH: 53 in/135 cm
COMPRESSED VOLUME: 5.13
MSRP: \$279.95

The Ramsey is also available as a 30-degree bag; both bags are available in regular and long lengths.

CLEO SPECS

CAPACITY: 1
SHAPE: Mummy
MINIMUM WEIGHT: 2 lb, 12 oz/1.26 kg
PACKED SIZE: 12.0 x 7.5 in/30 x 19 cm
TEMP RATING: 15F/-9C
FILL TYPE: Down
FILL WEIGHT: 1 lb, 10 oz/750 g
FITS UP TO: 5'6"/168 cm
SHOULDER GIRTH: 56 in/142 cm
HIP GIRTH: 53 in/135 cm
KNEE GIRTH: 51 in/130 cm
COMPRESSED VOLUME: 6.53
MSRP: \$399.95

The Cleo is also available as a 30-degree bag; both bags are available in regular and long lengths.



Sleeping Pads

It's difficult to understand the full functionality of a sleeping pad, if you haven't spent the night in a remote wilderness on a cold evening. Cushioning is a nice comfort, but the insulation qualities of a good pad go a long way for overall warmth. An inflatable pad with the correct insulation for the conditions are critical for real rest and sleep. And, a good night's sleep is crucial for recovery on a backcountry hunt. Here are a few sleeping pads to consider:

Tensor Field Insulated Ultralight ↓

This pad was designed with backcountry hunters in mind. It's lightweight, yet handles the rigors of the hunt. Its coated underside is puncture resistant and repairs easily in the field. The Tensor Field includes both a suspended Thermal Mirror as well as a layer of Primaloft to provide additional warmth. The Thermal Mirror is a metalized film that provides quiet insulation, while similar pads can be noisy. Finally, the Tensor Field includes a micro-adjust valve for user-controlled inflation.

TENSOR FIELD SPECS

- MINIMUM WEIGHT:** 1 lb, 2 oz/510 g
- PACKED SIZE:** 8.0 x 3.5 in/20 x 9 cm
- TEMP RATING:** 10 to 20F/-7 to -12C
- THICKNESS:** 3.0 in
- DIMENSIONS:** 72 x 20 x 3 in/183 x 51 x 8 cm
- SHAPE:** Rectangular
- MSRP:** \$179.95

The Tensor Field Insulated Ultralight is also available in long length.



Tensor Ultralight →

This pad was designed with backcountry hunters in mind. It's lightweight, yet handles the rigors of the hunt. Its coated underside is puncture resistant and repairs easily in the field. The Tensor Field includes both a suspended Thermal Mirror as well as a layer of Primaloft to provide additional warmth. The Thermal Mirror is a metalized film that provides quiet insulation, while similar pads can be noisy. Finally, the Tensor Field includes a micro-adjust valve for user-controlled inflation.

Vector Field ↓

A newcomer to the Nemo lineup, the Vector Field is similar to the Tensor Field. The Vector Field includes the Thermal Mirror metalized film, as well as a layer of Primaloft to provide additional warmth. A micro-adjust valve allows user-controlled inflation. Additionally, the Vector Field pad includes a foot pump, which is handy, if the added weight is not a deal breaker.

VECTOR FIELD SPECS

- MINIMUM WEIGHT:** 1 lb, 7 oz/650 g
- PACKED SIZE:** 8.0 x 5.0 in/20 x 12.7 cm
- TEMP RATING:** 10 to 20F/-7 to -12C
- THICKNESS:** 3.0 in
- DIMENSIONS:** 72 x 20 x 3 in / 183 x 51 x 8 cm
- SHAPE:** Rectangular
- MSRP:** \$179.95

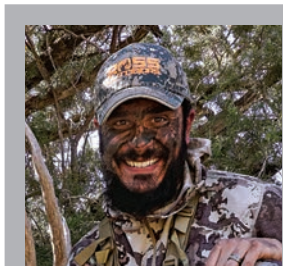
The Vector Field is also available in a long/wide size.



TENSOR ULTRALIGHT SPECS

- MINIMUM WEIGHT:** 0 lb, 14 oz/385 g
- PACKED SIZE:** 8.0 x 3.0 in/20 x 7.5 cm
- TEMP RATING:** 30 to 40F/4 to -1C
- THICKNESS:** 3.0 in
- DIMENSIONS:** 72 x 20 x 3 in/183 x 51 x 8 cm
- SHAPE:** Rectangular
- MSRP:** \$119.95

The Tensor Ultralight is available in mummy and rectangular shapes in a variety of width and lengths.



PRO STAFF

Josh Kirchner is the voice behind *Dialed in Hunter* where he documents his hunting adventures, gear reviews and strategies for Western hunting. A lifelong hunter, his true passion is backcountry bowhunting for big game. He and his wife reside in Arizona.





LEADING BACKCOUNTRY GEAR

Quality sleeping and shelter gear for hardcore backcountry hunters.



1 KLYMIT | Sky Bivy
A full featured hammock tent designed for all weather conditions.

SPECS

WEIGHT: 4.7 lb/2.1 kg
DIMENSIONS:
Shade Mode - 157" x 95"/4 m x 2.4 m
Storm Mode - 157" x 84"/4 m x 2.1 m
PACK SIZE: 14.5" x 15.75"/37 cm x 40 cm
CAPACITY: 300 lb/136 kg
WARRANTY: 2 Years
MORE INFO: www.klymit.com

2 KLYMIT | KSB 20°
An award-winning three-season sleeping bag with stretch baffles for free movement.

SPECS

WEIGHT: 2.75 lbs/1.3 kg
TEMP RATING: 20°F/-7°C
DIMENSIONS:
82" x 30"/208.3 cm x 76.2 cm
PACK SIZE: 13" x 8.5"/33 cm x 21.6 cm
FILL POWER: 650 with fill weight of 800 g
INSULATION TYPE: White Duck Down
SHOULDER GIRTH: 60"/152 cm
HIP GIRTH: 60"/52 cm
FABRIC: Sil-Nylon
WARRANTY: 2 Years
MORE INFO: www.klymit.com

3 KLYMIT | Insulated V Ultralite SL
A roomy V-Chambered surface that provides head-to-toe comfort.

SPECS

WEIGHT: 15.2 oz/431 g
DIMENSIONS:
72" x 20" x 2.5"/182.9 cm x 50.8 cm x 6.4 cm
R-VALUE: 4.4
INFLATION: 7-10 Breaths
PACK SIZE: 4.5" x 7"/11.4 cm x 17.8 cm
FABRIC: 20D Polyester
WARRANTY: Klymit Lifetime Warranty
MORE INFO: www.klymit.com

4 BIG AGNES | Fly Creek HV UL2
The Fly Creek is ultralight, easy to set up, weatherproof and comes with many features of a three-season tent.

SPECS

TRAIL WEIGHT: 1lb 15oz/879g
PACKED WEIGHT: 2lb 5oz/1.05kg
FAST FLY WEIGHT: 1lb 7oz/652g
PACKED SIZE: 4" x 19"/10 x 48cm
FLOOR AREA: 28sq ft/2.6m²
HEAD HEIGHT: 40"/102cm
VESTIBULE AREA: 8sq ft/0.7m²
FOOTPRINT WEIGHT: 4oz/113g
NUMBER OF SEASONS: 3
NUMBER OF DOORS: 1
INTENDED USE: Backpacking
MORE INFO: www.bigagnes.com

4



3



2



1



5 BIG AGNES | Deer Park 30

Versatile Park Series down bag, perfect for serious hunters in a backcountry bed.

SPECS

BAG WEIGHT: 3lb 14oz/1.76kg

FILL WEIGHT: 18oz/510g

COMPRESSED BAG SIZE:
9in x 10in/23 x 25cm

STUFF SACK SIZE:
L 9in x 20in/L 23 x 51cm

SHOULDER GIRTH: 80.5in/204cm

HIP GIRTH: 75in/190cm

FOOT GIRTH: 66in/168cm

MORE INFO: www.bigagnes.com

6 BIG AGNES | Two Track

A lightweight, foam insulated, self-inflating pads ideal for backcountry travel.

SPECS

AVAILABLE SIZES:

20" x 66" 24oz/680g

20" x 72" 28oz/794g

25" x 78" 37oz/1.05kg

MORE INFO: www.bigagnes.com

7 SLUMBERJACK | Contour Bivy

This lightweight, waterproof bivy shelter is perfect for the solo backcountry hunter.

SPECS

SEASONS: 4

CAPACITY: 1

PACKAGED WEIGHT: 1 lb 6 oz

MINIMUM WEIGHT: 1 lb 5 oz

DIMENSIONS: 88" x 34"

PACKED SIZE: 11" x 11" x 4"

FLOOR MATERIAL: 70D PU Coated Polyester

UPPER FABRIC: 40D WPB

MESH MATERIAL: No-See-Um Mesh

MORE INFO: www.slumberjack.com

8 SLUMBERJACK | Downwind 20

Technical, lightweight down-fill Mountain bag with a generous cut for added comfort in extreme environments.

SPECS

REGULAR

FILL WEIGHT: 1.31 lbs/20.96 oz

CARRY WEIGHT: 2.7 lbs/43.2 oz

DIMENSIONS: 78 x 33 x 29 in

FITS TO: 6 ft

LONG

FILL WEIGHT: 1.63 lbs/26.08 oz

CARRY WEIGHT: 3.1 lbs/49.6 oz

FITS TO: 6 ft 6 in

DIMENSIONS: 84 x 35 x 31 in

MORE INFO: www.slumberjack.com



7



6



5



8





Jetboil MiniMo Cooking System

This small stove from Jetboil is versatile, perfect for car camping or for use deep in the backcountry.

BY DARREN CHOATE

Jetboil's MiniMo Cooking System features a regulated burner that provides a consistent flame for superior simmer control and that is also capable of boiling half a liter (16 oz.) of water in a mere 2 minutes and 15 seconds. The included 1 Liter Short FluxRing insulated cooking cup is designed to minimize packing space and ergonomically designed for eating right from the cup. Additionally, the bottom cover doubles as a measuring device, and the system includes a stabilizer that fits onto the fuel canister (not included). Jetboil Jetpower canisters fuel the stove and come in a variety of sizes. Jetboil offers several accessories too, everything from skillets and utensils to a coffee press. The versatility and color variety of the MiniMo will appeal to a wide variety of customers.



SPECS

COLOR: Adventure, JetCam, Sunset and Carbon
WEIGHT: 14.6 oz. / 415 g (excludes fuel stabilizer)
VOLUME: 1 Liter Short
COOKING TYPE: Precision Cook
FUEL REGULATOR: Yes
GROUP SIZE: 1-2 People
BOIL TIME: 2m 15sec per .5 liter (avg. over life of Jetpower can)
WATER BOILED: 12 liters per 100 g Jetpower can
IGNITION TYPE: Push Button
PRODUCT TYPE: System
DIMENSIONS (PACKED): 5 in x 6 in (127 mm x 152 mm)
FUEL TYPE: Jetpower
BURNERS: 1
ACTIVITY: Backpacking, Paddling, Cycling
STABILIZER WEIGHT: 0.9 oz. | 27 g
POT SUPPORT WEIGHT: 1.2 oz. / 35 g
MSRP: \$134.95
CONTACT: www.jetboil.com

Features →

- 1 Liter Short FluxRing cooking cup with insulating cozy
- Metal handles for an easier cooking and eating experience
- Optimized spoon angle for easier eating right from the cup
- Unbeatable simmer control
- Regulated for consistent performance down to 20F (-6C)
- Clever sideways burner storage minimizes pack space
- Convenient, reliable push-button igniter
- Bottom cover doubles as a measuring cup and bowl
- Fuel Canister Stabilizer included
- Compatible accessories include a Grande Coffee Press, Hanging Kit, Utensils, Skillet and FluxRing Cooking Pot
- Pot Support and Jetpower fuel sold separately

“Built with just you in mind, the MiniMo combines our tried-and-true efficiency and versatility with a convenient form factor. The metal handles and redesigned cooking cup — optimized for a low spoon angle — make it the perfect vessel for personal cooking and eating.”

ACCESSORIES

8-inch FluxRing Fry Pan →

A long-time standard for outdoor cooking, now updated and improved through the use of Jetboil's FluxRing® technology, which provides incredibly even heating. Plastic base cover doubles as a food preparation or eating dish.



Features

- Compatible with the following burners: Zip, Flash Lite, Flash, Flash Java, MightyMo, MicroMo, MiniMo, SUMO
- Pot Support (sold separately) must be used when cooking with the FluxRing® Fry Pan on all compatible systems except the MightyMo

← Coffee Press

Brew the best cup of back-country coffee or flip it over to steam your favorite fish and vegetables! The stem and basket detach to stow easily in your cup. Available in two sizes: regular and grande.



Features

- Compatible with MiniMo, Sumo, Sumo TI. Also compatible with the 1-Liter Short and 1.8-Liter Spare Cups
- Stem detaches from the basket and easily stow in your cup
- Two stem pieces included. One piece is used for the stem of the MiniMo and both pieces screwed together are used for the Sumo.
- Grande Coffee Press assembly options: 4.6" (117 mm) dia. x 4.6" (117 mm) for MiniMo 4.6" (117 mm) dia. x 7.2" (183 mm) for Sumo



Jetpower Fuel ↑

Formulated for maximum efficiency and minimum consumption, our high-performance propane/isobutane four-season fuel delivers higher vapor pressure for improved performance in cold weather.

FEATURES

SIZE	BOIL CAPACITY	WEIGHT	DIMENSIONS	COST
100 g	~12 liters of boiled water	7 oz./199 g	3.5 in x 2.8 in (9 cm x 7 cm)	\$4.99
230 g	~24 liters of boiled water	13.4 oz./380 g	4.3 in x 3.9 in (11 cm x 10 cm)	\$5.99
450g	~48 liters of boiled water	23.5 oz./666 g	4.3 in x 5.9 in (11 cm x 15 cm)	\$9.99





HUNTING RETAILER GEAR ROUNDUP

1 ALPS OUTDOORZ |

Contender X Whitetail Pack

Whitetail hunters now have an ALPS OutdoorZ Xtreme pack designed just for them, the Contender X Whitetail Pack. With a 30-liter capacity, the Contender X features a U-shaped zippered top panel that offers easy access to the main compartment. The waist belt includes zippered pockets for smaller items, while an additional pocket in the main compartment can be opened from the inside or the outside along with multiple mesh interior pockets for organization. The Contender X features a molded foam suspension system including load lifters for custom weight adjustment and a built-in bow/gun pocket for hands-free weapon carry. Additional features include a hydration pocket with ambidextrous hydration ports, a rain cover and a waist belt that accommodates clip-style holsters for carrying a sidearm.



2 TENZING |

TZ 2220 Day Pack

The Tenzing TZ 2220 Day Pack offers 2,400 cubic inches of usable space with 19 total compartments and multiple access points to the main compartment. The upgraded TZ 2220 features a padded air mesh on the suspension, back panel and waist belt for enhanced breathability, while the addition of Robic rip-stop fabric in high-stress and high-abrasion areas offers increased durability. An internal fluted aluminum frame stay and five horizontal compression straps ensure a secure and balanced fit with any load. Two additional lower webbing straps allow for attaching bulky items like bedrolls or heavy coats. The TZ 2220 features a foldout rain cover, drop-down bow/gun carrier and is fully H2O compatible with Tenzing's reversible 2-liter hydration bladders.



3 HME |

Scent Slammer Ozone Duffel

The Scent Slammer Ozone Duffel from HME eliminates odors on clothing and gear by killing bacteria using ozone, a process that's chemical-free and leaves no scent or residue. Featuring an ozone output of 250mg/h with 1 to 40-minute active ozone cycle and 40 to 360-minute resting cycle, the Scent Slammer duffel bag keeps your gear scent free and organized. With a wide full top opening for easy access and a zippered side pouch for smaller items, the Scent Slammer duffel also features an AC and car adaptor, Velcro webbing for ID or morale patches and reinforced corners and bottom for lasting durability.



4 MYSTERY RANCH |

Sawtooth 45 Pack

Built on their new Guide Light MT Frame, the Sawtooth 45 from Mystery Ranch offers 45-liter capacity with a unique 270-degree zipper access and a quick attach frame capture for easier access to the shelf for packing out the harvest. Constructed of 330D Lite plus Cordura fabric with YKK zippers and lightweight SJ Autolock buckles, the Sawtooth 45 features four internal pockets for organization, a zippered top accessory pocket and compression loops for tripod or trekking poles. Available in sizes from small to extra-large, the Sawtooth 45 has a telescoping yoke for a custom torso fit and is hydration reservoir compatible. Compression straps keep your bow or gun tucked away and side stretch-woven pockets add room for tripod feet or water bottles.



5 BLACKHAWK |

Stingray Pack

The Stingray Pack from Blackhawk opens at the top, left or right side of the main compartment, with EVA-molded side wings to protect gear from bumps and drops. The Stingray Pack is constructed of 500D nylon with a fleece-lined valuables pocket large enough to fit even the biggest smartphones and a padded compartment for a hydration reservoir or laptop. Available in three sizes from EDC (Every Day Carry), 2-day and 3-day, as well as three colors (black, coyote tan and black/gray), the Stingray Pack features YKK zippers and a loop-lined MOLLE in the main compartment for attaching additional pouches and accessories.

5



6 FOXPRO |

Large Carrying Case

The 12-pocket FOXPRO Large Carrying Case is specifically designed to carry the Shockwave electronic caller but is compatible with all FOXPRO models except the Prairie Blaster and Krakatoa models. The case features a remote pocket, caller pocket, ammo pockets, battery and charger pocket and carry strap. The Large Carrying Case is offered in tan with black trim with rubber zipper pulls. The case is capable of holding a game call with a Foxjack decoy attached while keeping the rest of your gear secure and organized.

7 SENTRY |

Tumalo Extreme Pack

Featuring 1080 technology utilizing an octagonal pattern to mount equipment or pouches vertically, diagonally or horizontally, the Tumalo Extreme pack from SENTRY has a 27-liter capacity. Constructed from 420 Denier rip-stop fabric that's coated with a moisture-proof TPU laminate on the inside and a water repellent finish on the outside, the Tumalo Extreme is built to withstand the toughest conditions with YKK Aquaguard water-resistant zippers and Seam Seal technology offering water-resistant seals throughout the pack. The Lightweight Airframe creates a channel between the pack and your back for enhanced comfort and breathability.

8 LACROSSE |

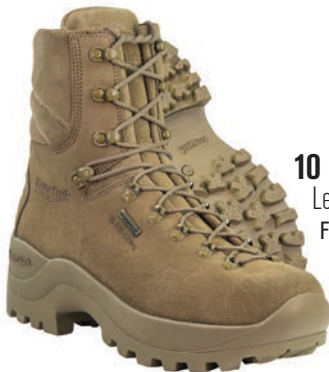
Navigator Atlas Boots

The new LaCrosse Navigator Atlas boots are constructed with a combination of rubber, leather and textile for a secure fit and durability. With a sturdy molded rubber toe cap and a heel outfitted with a DuraFit molded rubber heel cup, the Atlas boots deliver lasting durability and stability on uneven ground. The grip comes from the LaCrosse LXG rubber with optimal traction on wet and dry ground while the InfiniTrac outsole lug design ensures solid footing with increased surface contact. The Atlas boots feature Dry-Core waterproof linings and are available uninsulated or with PrimaLoft Insulation.

9 DANNER |

Pronghorn Boots

The new fifth generation of Pronghorn boots from Danner feature an upper built from soft, full-grain leather on the traditional 851 last, a return to the same fit and feel of the original Pronghorn. The Terra-Force Next platform of the Pronghorn boots combines an internal and external shank system to provide arch support and torsion control with a Bi-Fit stability board for underfoot comfort, reduced weight and added forefoot flex. With a GORE-TEX waterproof breathable lining and PrimaLoft insulation up to 1,200 grams, the Pronghorn is available in solid brown, Realtree Edge and Mossy Oak Break-Up Country.



10 KENETREK |

Leather Personnel Carrier Boots

For truly rugged terrain, the Kenetrek Leather Personnel Carrier (LPC) boots in Coyote Brown feature full-length, tapered 7-mm nylon midsoles and deep-lugged, oil-resistant K73 outsoles with increased toe and

heel taper. These 8-inch tall boots with 2.8-mm thick full grain rough-out leather uppers are available in non-insulated, with 400 and 1,000 grams of Thinsulate insulation to fit any environment. Also available with steel toes in all three models, the Kenetrek LPC boots meet ASTM F2412-11 and ASTM F2413-11 impact, compression and electrical hazard safety standards.



11 FIELD & STREAM |

Swamptracker Boots

With 1,000 grams of Thinsulate water-resistant insulation, the Swamptracker Boots from Field & Stream provide lightweight, waterproof performance. The scent-free rugged rubber outsoles allow for steady traction while the photorealistic Realtree Edge camouflage print features browns and grays present in the woods year-round. With a full neoprene lining, the Swamptracker boots also feature a breathable Hydro-

Proof waterproof membrane that blocks water penetration and protects feet from the wind.





12 LACROSSE |

Alpha Agility Boots

The LaCrosse Alpha Agility is constructed of hand-laid rubber over 5mm of insulating neoprene with a quick-drying polyester jersey liner. The Active Fit locks the heel in place, while the adjustable back gusset accommodates a variety of calf sizes. Multilayer rubber construction provides added durability and support where it's needed most and the specially formulated LXA compound gives athletic shoe-like agility and cushion for all-day use. With a kick-off heel plate for easy, hands-free removal, the Alpha Agility is available in non-insulated, 800 grams and 1,200 grams Thinsulate Ultra insulation.



13 SCENTLOK |

BaseSlayers AMP Base Layers

Available in lightweight, midweight and heavyweight styles, ScentLok BaseSlayers AMP tops and pants feature 360-degree jersey knit stretch panels for full range of motion. Using Active Mapping Performance technology, the BaseSlayers AMP focus carbon technology odor elimination precisely where it's needed to combat odor while ensuring mobility and flexibility. The midweight and heavyweight tops feature a 1/4-length zipper for easy on and off, as well as concealed thumbhole



openings to help sleeves stay put when adding additional layers. Midweight tops and pants feature a micro-fleece inner lining for warmth, while the heavyweight models feature a zoned long-nap and micro-fleece lining for maximum heat retention.

14 BADLANDS |

Venture Jacket

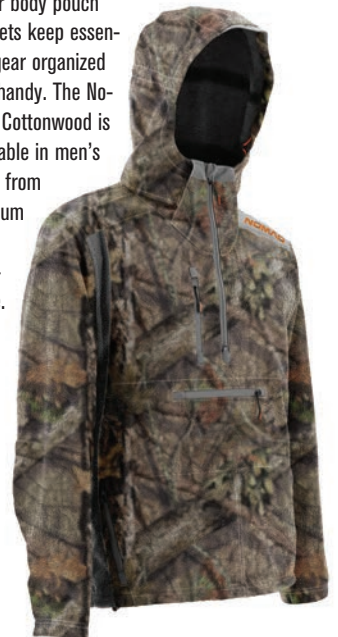
Part of the new Badlands Approach FX apparel line, the Venture Jacket is warm, quiet and waterproof. Featuring a rangefinder pocket with built-in tether cord along with an adjustable hood, the Venture Jacket also has a tree stand tether exit port. Constructed with PrimaLoft Gold insulation and a microsuede outer shell for increased stealth, the Venture is windproof and waterproof, available in men's sizes from medium to XX-large. The Venture Jacket also features the Badlands no questions asked lifetime warranty.



15 Nomad |

Cottonwood 1/2 Zip Jacket

The Nomad Cottonwood 1/2 Zip jacket provides warmth and stealth with a heavyweight Berber fleece exterior backed by a windproof lining for complete protection. The Cottonwood features a Sherpa fleece-lined articulated three-piece hood and kangaroo pocket, articulated sleeves, and a center back neck zip opening for a safety harness strap. A draw cord cinch at the bottom hem and internal sleeve gaskets on the cuffs help seal out the elements. Napoleon, mid and lower body pouch pockets keep essential gear organized and handy. The Nomad Cottonwood is available in men's sizes from medium to XXX-large.



16 SCENTLOK |

Full Season Taktix Jacket

The Carbon Alloy odor-absorbing technology in the ScentLok Full Season Taktix jacket combines activated carbon, treated carbon and zeolite concealed between fabrics to control human odor while hunting. NeverWet Superhydrophobic Treatment repels water, mud, blood and other liquids without sacrificing breathability to keep you dry no matter the conditions. Utilizing hydrophilic and hydrophobic fibers to construct pathways within the fabric to help the moisture move, the Full Season Taktix jacket in Realtree Edge camo draws sweat away from the body toward the outer surface of the fabric for quick evaporation.





17 HEYBO OUTDOORS |
Renegade Jacket

Made from 100-percent polyester fleece for comfort and to hold body heat, the new Heybo Outdoors Renegade Jacket features waterproof fabric, waterproof zippers and adjustable watertight cuffs to ensure hunters stay dry. This full-zip jacket also features chest, waist and wader chest pockets and hood. The Renegade is available in sizes from small to XXX-large in Mossy Oak Bottomland camo, which was created based on the natural blended appearance of a handful of leaves, sticks and bark. This pattern helps break up hunters' outlines and facilitates blending into a variety of backdrops.



19 BROWNING | Hell's Canyon Speed ETA-FM Gore-Tex Jacket

Like other pieces of the Browning Hell's Canyon Speed clothing lineup, the ETA-FM Gore-Tex jacket is lightweight, packable and won't slow you down. This fully articulated jacket with two-layer Gore-Tex shell and fully taped seams is waterproof, windproof and breathable. Featuring the exclusive A-TACS camo pattern, two lower and two upper front chest pockets and one chest pocket, a fully adjustable attached hood and safety harness access. The Hero Fit of the jacket has a narrow shoulder line and downward taper from the shoulders to the hips with tripper sleeves that eliminate excess bulk.

18 ARCTICSHIELD |
Body Insulator Suit

The ArcticShield Body Insulator Suit in Realtree Edge delivers warmth, comfort and functionality in cold weather hunting conditions. This one-piece body suit contains RETAIN heat-retention technology that captures and returns up to 90 percent of body heat while deflecting cold outside air away from the body. The quiet outer fabric is waterproof and windproof with a waterproof laminate and taped seams to keep rain out. Other features include a detachable hood, long pull main zipper with EZ pull zipper tabs, elastic inner shoulder straps that wear like a backpack to keep the suit on when it's unzipped, and a boot shaped foot area with plenty of room for hunting boots. The ArcticShield Body Insulator Suit also features a safety harness strap pass through slot and a removable blaze orange cape.



WE'RE
EASY TO
SCOPE OUT



THE VOICE OF THE INDEPENDENT RETAILER

**SHOOTING
SPORTS RETAILER**

SOCIAL
twitter.com/ssretailer

WEBSITE
shootingsportsretailer.com

DIGITAL ISSUES
shootingsportsretailer-digital.com

E-NEWSLETTER
shootingsportsretailer.com/newsletter

**TACTICAL
RETAILER**

WEBSITE
tactretailer.com

DIGITAL ISSUES
tactretailer-digital.com

E-NEWSLETTER
tactretailer.com/newsletter

GRAND VIEW
OUTDOORS

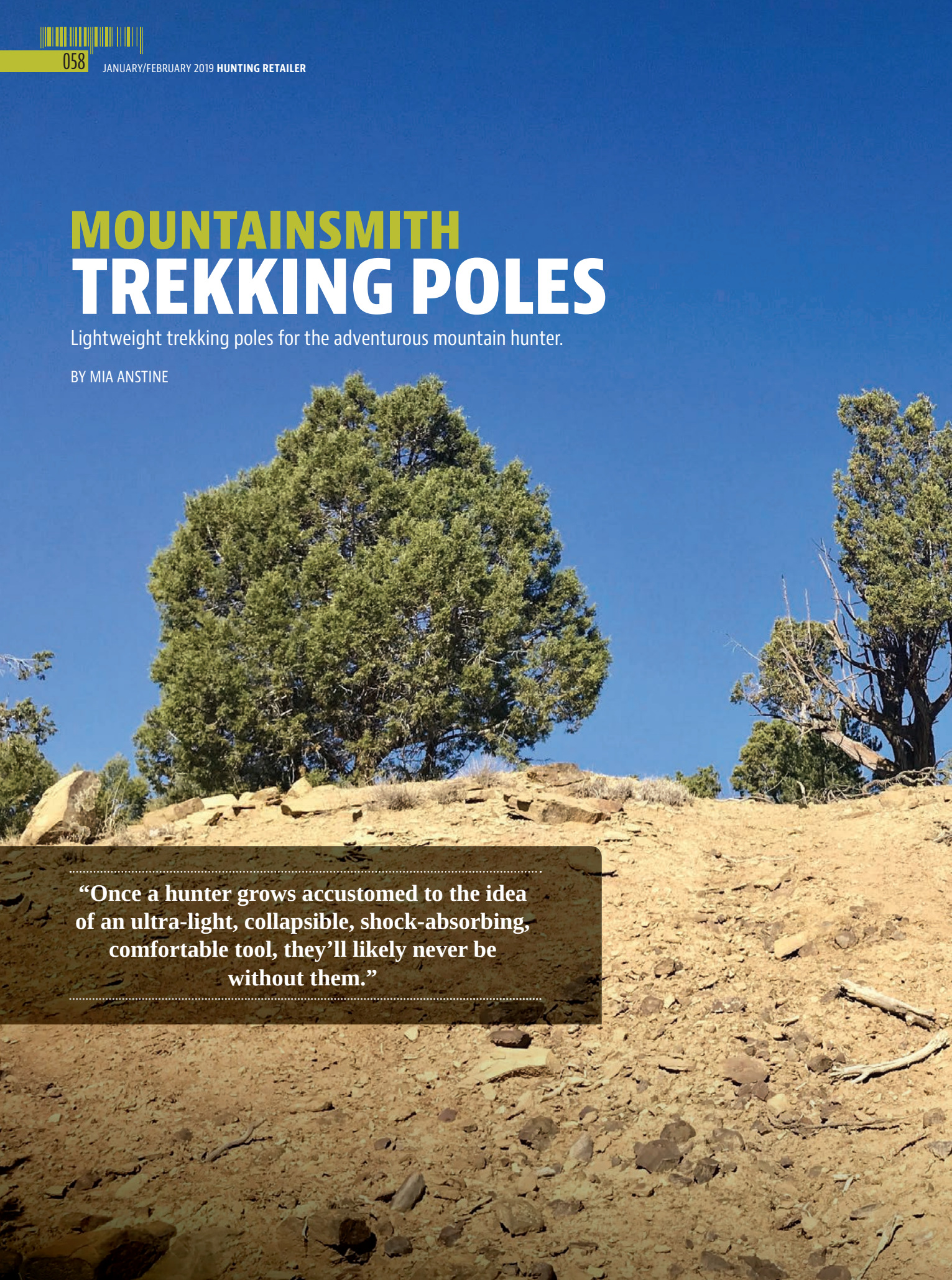




MOUNTAINSMITH TREKKING POLES

Lightweight trekking poles for the adventurous mountain hunter.

BY MIA ANSTINE



“Once a hunter grows accustomed to the idea of an ultra-light, collapsible, shock-absorbing, comfortable tool, they’ll likely never be without them.”

LEKI | Micro Vario Carbon Series

These trekking poles deliver sensational styling and makes long days in the mountains more enjoyable than ever. The Micro Vario Carbon Lady DSS poles are engineered for women, featuring smaller dimensions and grips. Adjust pole length over a 20-cm range in seconds with the Speed Lock 2. DSS (Dynamic Suspension System) technology reduces impacts by up to 40 percent, which protects joints, muscles and ligaments as you negotiate varied terrain. Don't be weighed down, and don't compromise stiffness – carbon pole construction blends the best of both worlds. Finally, the Flex Tip Short provides solid gripping in virtually all terrain types. Make these folding poles your partner for even the most grueling trail hikes.



COST: \$219.95 (pair)

CONTACT: www.us.leki.com

BLACK DIAMOND | Trail Ergo Cork Trekking Pole

Cork grips provide comfort and manage sweat, while Double Flick Locks speed adjustability. Interchangeable carbide Tech Tips make these trekkers a versatile four-season pole designed to tackle Mother Nature's worst. Other standout features include 15-degree corrective angle for optimal grip positioning, non-slip foam grip extension and 360-degree padded webbing strap. The pair weighs merely 1 pound, 2 ounces. Length adjusts from 29-55 inches.



COST: \$124.95 (pair)

CONTACT: www.blackdiamondequipment.com





Benefits of Trekking Poles

Trekking poles aid in supporting the body weight of a person as they hike. The added points of contact on the ground reduce the weight transferred to the feet as while walking. The weight of the body shifts during walking or hiking. This is especially true of hunters who are likely carrying a backpack and magnified while under heavy load, such as packing out a large big game animal. This extra stability helps to protect the knees and ankles, as well as other joints and large muscle groups. After all, no one wants to end up in the doctor's office, nor on the IR during hunting season.

→ Trekking poles aid in weight transfer, making hiking more energy efficient.

Recently, I enjoyed an elk hunt in the remote wilderness of southwest Colorado. My goal for the hunt was to fill my freezer with natural, steroid-free meat, which I did. It wasn't a walk in the park, however.

The San Juan Mountains are rugged! Elevations extend over 14,000 feet above sea level. Slopes are steep; it's not uncommon to gain 2,000 feet in elevation over a mere quarter-mile run. Above timberline, even the most well used trails are shaped from talus, shale rock. Here — even in my best boots — traction is limited.

I remember a day when most people thought of trekking poles as tools for the old or the indigent. In fact, I still rarely hear them mentioned as a hunting tool. Trust me when I say not only can they make any jaunt more enjoyable and safe, they're a requirement in the terrain I hunt.

On this hunt, I put Mountainsmith's Carbonlite Pro trekking poles to the test. Crafted from lightweight blended carbon and aircraft grade 7075 aluminum, these rugged poles are well equipped for the mountain hunter.

Hunting Use

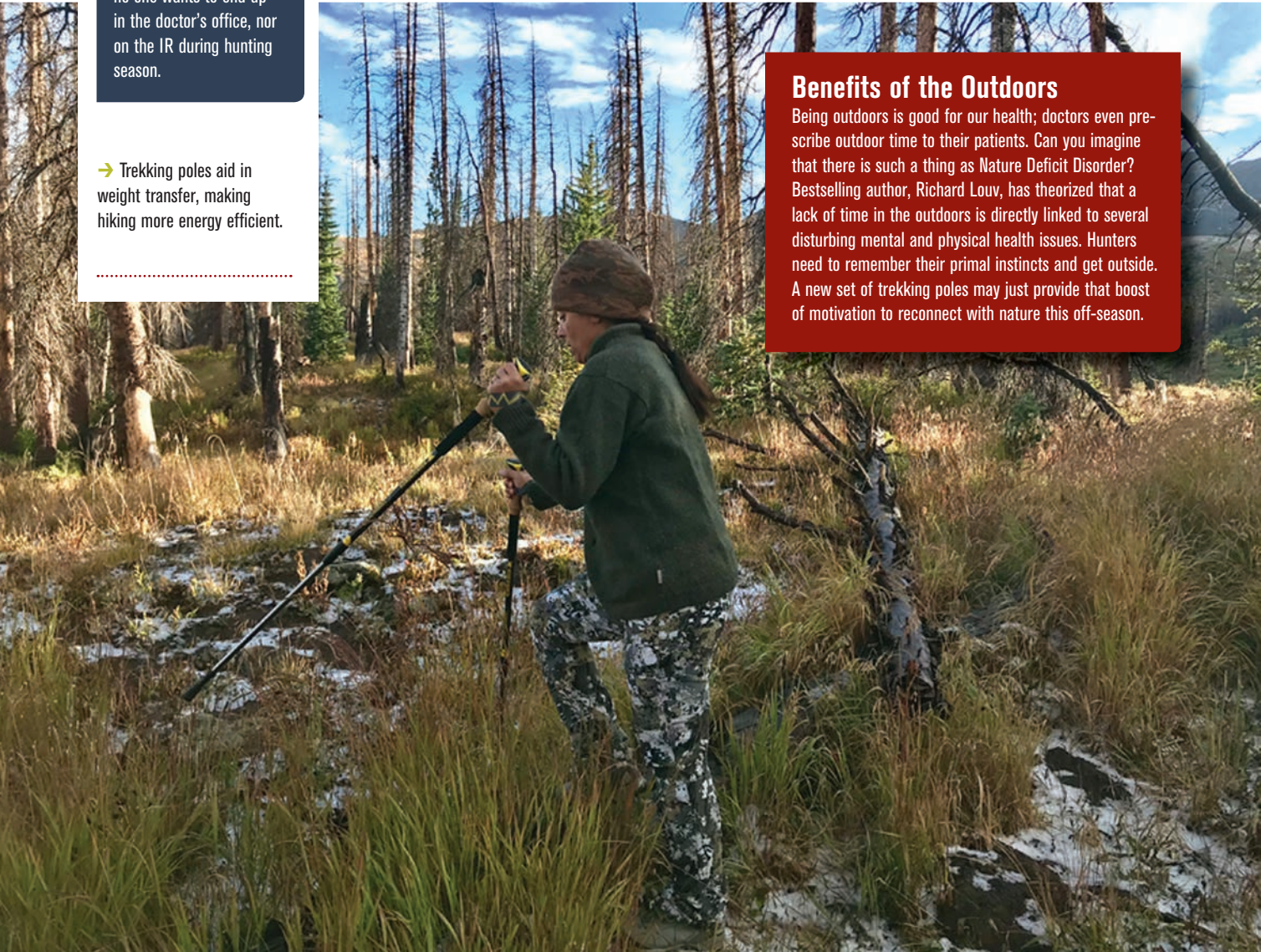
As I mentioned, trekking poles are a relative newcomer to the hunting market. Therefore, it's quite possible that a customer is not aware they exist or if they know, may not know the full gamut of their provisions. Below are a few basic ones.

An additional point (or two) of contact with the ground, reduces strain on body and joints. Under a heavy load — packing out a massive bull elk in Colorado — the added points of contact provide added stability and balance, possibly preventing injury. Trekking poles also come in handy when the ground is wet or slippery. Crossing streams or traversing wet rocks is much safer with a solid pole set in hand.

Trekking poles provide balance, stability and energy conservation on adventurous treks. Once a hunter grows accustomed to the idea of an ultra-light, collapsible, shock-absorbing, comfortable tool, they'll likely never be without them. In fact, they may just provide that needed edge to get to try a backcountry hunt, get to that next vista or to fill a coveted tag.

Benefits of the Outdoors

Being outdoors is good for our health; doctors even prescribe outdoor time to their patients. Can you imagine that there is such a thing as Nature Deficit Disorder? Bestselling author, Richard Louv, has theorized that a lack of time in the outdoors is directly linked to several disturbing mental and physical health issues. Hunters need to remember their primal instincts and get outside. A new set of trekking poles may just provide that boost of motivation to reconnect with nature this off-season.



MOUNTAINSMITH'S CARBONLITE PRO TREKKING POLES

"Top of the line composite carbon/aluminum poles delivers exceptional performance and features at half the cost you'd expect from the competition."

SELLING POINTS

Here are a few core features of the Carbonlite Pro trekking poles that you'll want to highlight for your customers.

1 Adjustment: Poles need to fit the user comfortably. A proper fit is determined by gripping the handle with the elbow bent at 90-degrees (forearm parallel to the floor or ground). The tip of the pole should rest on the ground.

Mountain Smith trekking poles have three telescoping sections. They have double-cam twist-lock adjustments, which are quiet and simple to adjust. The collapsed length is 27-inches and fully extended length is 55-inches. Measurement increments are marked in inches and centimeters on each pole, making it a breeze to set equal lengths.

The range adjustment makes sharing easy. This can come in handy on a heavy pack out. Additionally, they stow easily during transport. A clamp-on double U-bracket connects the poles together in a snap for easy storage and carrying.

2 Grips: There is not much variation in grip material of trekking poles. In most cases, it's cork, plastic or foam rubber. The Carbonlite Pro poles utilize extended cork/EVA/TRP handles. Many hunters prefer cork grips because after moderate use they will form to the users' hands. Other plastic and rubberized grips come pre-formed and may not provide a custom fit.

3 Weight: To prevent bicep and shoulder fatigue, a lightweight pole is best. True to their name, the Carbonlite Pro poles have carbon fiber upper sections, reducing the weight of a pole significantly. Added aluminum inserts in the lower sections give the poles strength and rigidity.

4 Wrist Straps: Allow for hand use without releasing the pole to the ground. Quality straps are handy for adding a location mark to a GPS or looking through binos to view game along the way.

The Carbonlite Pros have adjustable soft-touch webbing wrist straps that will not chaff or cut into the skin. They're made of a lightweight, durable, moisture-wicking fabric that are quick drying.

5 Anti-vibration: An anti-vibration system absorbs impact as the pole hits the ground, preventing repetitive jarring of the wrist and elbows. The Carbonlite Pro poles are designed with a spring loaded anti-shock system with a lockout feature to reduce felt joint vibration.

6 Boots: Part of the anti-vibration system is the rubber tip, or boot, at the tip of the pole. Having a boot is important for traction and impact dampening.

Mountainsmith went even further. The shock-absorbing boot is removable and you'll find a metal tip for winter quests or when a more aggressive bite is needed.

7 Askets: Askets provide trekking poles that crossover from simple hiking use to winter snow-shoe use. Askets are more common on ski poles. The Carbonlite Pro poles come with removable hiking askets, a pin locks them in place during use. Askets help keep the pole on the upper crust or surface of the snow. Being removable is important for non-snow use, keeping the tip from becoming tangled in brush or weeds, causing strain to the user. **HR**



FEATURES

- Molded cork/EVA handle
- Three telescoping sections
- Spring loaded anti-shock system
- Twist lockout double-cam adjustment
- Removable hiking askets with locking pin
- Removable rubber boot tips
- Adjustable neoprene wrist strap
- Snow basket compatible
- Max Load: Up to 160 lbs

MATERIALS

Carbide Tips
Carbon wrapped 7075 aluminum

WEIGHT

1 lb, 4 oz/0.57 kgs
MSRP: \$79.95
CONTACT: mountainsmith.com



PRO STAFF - Mia Anstine grew up in the mountains along the San Juan River in southwest Colorado. She is a hunting guide, freelance writer, podcast host, commentator, public speaker, hunter education instructor, as well as an archery and firearms instructor. She shares her experiences to inspire others to embrace the outdoors.





HUNTING RETAILER

NEW PRODUCTS



KIMBER EVO SP (CDP)

New for 2019 from Kimber, the EVO SP CDP (Custom Defense Package) features a beveled magazine well, deep crown barrel and TRUGLO Tritium PRO night sight along with Kimber's streamlined carry melt treatment for a reduced chance of snagging during the draw. The aluminum frame EVO SP (CDP) is striker fired, weighs 19 ounces with an empty magazine and is offered in 9mm. It also features a set of heavy duty G10 grip panels and backstrap with diamond checkering for a more positive grip. The factory trigger pull is set at between 6 and 7 pounds. MSRP: \$949.00. (888) 243-4522

www.kimberamerica.com

BUCK KNIVES 110 SLIM AND 112 SLIM

Buck Knives has added slim profile options to their 110 Folding Hunter and 112 Ranger lines with the 110 Slim and 112 Slim. The new slim line features a thumbstud for one-hand opening and lockback design for safe use with a stainless steel deep pocket carry clip. The Slim Selects are constructed with 420HC steel and lightweight nylon handles. The Slim Pro models feature S30V steel with Micarta and G10 handle options. All blades are finished with Buck's Edge2x technology that makes them sharper out of the box, hold an edge longer and easier to re-sharpen. MSRP: \$38.00 - \$110.00 depending on model. (800) 326-2825

www.buckknives.com

HAWKE OPTICS VANTAGE WA RIFLESCOPES

The new Hawke Optics Vantage Wide Angle (WA) riflescopes are built on a 30mm mono-tube mainframe with 11-layer fully-multicoated optics and fixed parallax at 100 yards. Available in three sizes to fit most mid- to long-range hunting scenario, the Vantage WA scopes' powers include 1-4x24, 2.5-10x50 and 3-12x56. Vantage WA riflescopes feature a glass-etched L4A Dot reticle with selectable red/green illumination and a five-position adjustable rheostat on the saddle. The 1/4-MOA fingertip, low-profile turrets provide quick adjustment to get on target quickly and stay there. MSRP: \$249.99 - \$289.99. (877) 429-5347

us.hawkeoptics.com

PRECISION REFLEX CARBON FIBER FOREARM

Precision Reflex Inc. will be offering a new Carbon Fiber Octagonal Forearm in multiple rail configurations. The M-LOK rail allows for the addition of Picatinny rails or other M-LOK compatible accessories. One configuration that will be available will have rails mounted at 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions. The Carbon Fiber Octagonal Forearm will also be offered as a complete upper setup in either black or flat dark earth. The forearm alone will be offered in black, flat dark earth and natural carbon fiber. (419) 629-2603

www.precisionreflex.com



HERON OUTDOORS
SCENTBLASTER

The ScentBlaster from Heron Outdoors is a scent dispersal unit that utilizes natural fiber wicks, interchangeable scent reservoirs and a silent fan. The proprietary ScentBlasterWick absorbs scent from the two-ounce reservoir and stays wet for up to three days or more depending on weather conditions. The small fan runs more than 60 hours on four AA batteries and works to produce constant airflow over the wick for improved scent distribution on windless days. The ScentBlaster Starter kit comes with the ScentBlaster scent dispenser, reservoir and six-pack of wicks. MSRP: \$39.98. (903) 440-2358

www.scentblaster.net

MCMILLAN
MC3 TRADITION STOCK

Modeled after the popular Game Scout stock, the new Mc3 Tradition Stock from McMillan is constructed from a proprietary polymer blend called Zenolite. The Mc3 is compatible with most Remington 700 models and offers a completely solid stock that weighs 2.8 to 3 pounds, available in both short and long action models. With a fixed LOP of 13.5 inches, the Mc3 is available in a Standard BDL or Deluxe BDL, featuring a McMillan recoil pad by Pachmayr, two front sling studs, one rear sling stud and three finish options including tan, olive or carbon fiber black. MSRP: \$269.00 - \$319.00. (877) 365-6148

www.mc3stocks.com

PRIMOS
TRIGGER STICK GEN 3
ACCESSORIES

To complement the Trigger Stick Gen 3 shooting aid, Primos has developed three new accessories, a Camera Mount Plate, Crossbow Yoke and Scabbard. The Camera Mount Plate features a 1/4-20 UNC threaded post that fits most cameras and optics. The Crossbow Yoke is designed to work with the Trigger Stick Gen 3 Quick Detach system and engineered to support a variety of crossbow models. The Scabbard is available in Tall or Short models and can be attached to bags or gear vests with the built-in MOLLE and buckles or carried with the supplied shoulder strap. MSRP: \$10.95 - \$21.95. (800) 523-2395

www.primos.com

**ONTARIO KNIFE
COMPANY**
HUNT PLUS CAPER KNIFE

Ontario Knife Company has added the Caper to its HUNT PLUS lineup. The Caper features a 4-inch long, 55-57HRC-rated uncoated stainless-steel blade that's precision ground to hold a razor-sharp edge. Measuring 9.3 inches overall, the Caper's handle matches others in the HUNT PLUS series, constructed with an ergonomically-formed, durable, synthetic-rubber compound for a solid, no-slip grip. The base of the blade has no edge, allowing the Caper to be gripped like a pencil or scalpel for the precision work needed to cape out a trophy. MSRP: \$41.50. (716) 676-5527

www.ontarioknife.com





A Sense of Community

BY BOB ROBB

I've been something of a pro shop junkie since I was a kid, when dad would take me with him for a Saturday breakfast at The Chili Hut, then we'd go spend a lot of time browsing and BS'ing at the local Western Auto. Back in the 1960's that's where you shopped for guns, ammo, accessories and fishing tackle. If it wasn't hunting season you could always find a handful of locals sitting around a little table covered with sporting publications and catalogues drinking coffee and sharing their views on every topic imaginable — many of which weren't really appropriate for a small town boy who rarely traveled out of the county.

As the saying goes, I guess some things never change, because today, the hunting shops I visit most frequently are those that are still trying to create a sense of camaraderie within the local hunting and shooting communities.

They do this in different ways, depending on their individual circumstances. It's a different ballgame for a big box store like Bass Pro Shops, Cabela's or Sportsman's Warehouse than it is for a smaller mom-and-pop store. Bottom line, relationship building is essential. Relationships build trust, and without trust retailers are pushing the wheelbarrow uphill when it comes to making sales. Brick-

and-mortar retailers have the opportunity to create physical communities of loyal customers. These communities provide tangible value that keep customers in stores longer, bring them back, and spread your brand story through word-of-mouth referrals. And word-of-mouth is powerful! A 2016 Nielsen Survey showed that 82 percent of Americans says they seek the opinion of friends and family before making a purchase: <https://bit.ly/2OtB3iz>

There's been a lot of talk lately about how online shopping is turning brick-and-mortar stores into dinosaurs heading for extinction. Last year I attended a seminar that essentially said that was true only if you allowed it to happen. Rather than dwell on the past, the focus was creating the successful store of the future. The three key points made were:

1. Build a sense of community: To do this you must realize that your shop needs to fill a larger purpose than simply selling stuff. New or revitalized store formats

will have more space that allows for social interaction as well displaying merchandise and providing services like setting up bows, scoping rifles and so on. Studies have shown that the consumer of tomorrow will spend more time in a store that offers them a chance for human contact and social interaction with both staff and other customers. It's just like

that little table in Western Auto decades ago, with a modern twist. A cool blog on community

“There’s been a lot of talk lately about how online shopping is turning brick-and-mortar stores into dinosaurs heading for extinction. Last year I attended a seminar that essentially said that was true only if you allowed it to happen.”

management can be found here: <https://www.shopify.com/blog/community-management>.

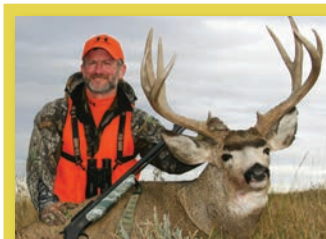
2. Going social: Not social media per se, but instead a store that creates a concept of community that connects customers with experiences and people that can enhance their own enjoyment. Several hunting, archery shops and gun stores I visit have staff members that are certified hunter safety instructors, for example, and they can always be found giving classes. They actively promote banquets for conservation organizations and use these banquets as a place to network with potential customers. They have picture boards where hunters post hero shots, sponsor youth sports teams and scout troops, hold range days, host instructional seminars and even community events like litter clean-ups on nearby roadways.
3. Use the internet: Like it or not, social media is a powerful force with today's consumer that is not going to go away. For hunting communities, using it can be tricky given the restrictions many popular SM sites place on hunters and gun owners. So while you have to be smart about it, you have to be actively engaged. You also must have a modern, easy-to-navigate, and informative website; if it doesn't allow customers to buy products online, how about a discount coupon good on an in-store purchase only? Or how about an online newsletter that soft-sells your shop but also offers general information hunters need like tag draw deadlines, news stories taken from DNR press releases, new product information, highlights a success story from one of your customers and so on. Send it to everyone on your email list every month.

Parting Thoughts

Whenever possible, hire people that are hunters and shooters. Nothing is more frustrating than going into a store and dealing with help that doesn't have a clue. Just this past summer I went into a local Walmart and Dick's looking to buy an over-the-counter archery deer tag. It should have been a simple thing, but in both places not only did the hired help not know what I was talking about, they gave me the “look” that said they thought I was kind of disgusting.

Needless to say, there wasn't a place for hunters to hang around and shoot the breeze.

What do you do to create a sense of community? Drop me a note at editor@grandviewoutdoors.com, I'd love to hear about it. **HR**



PRO STAFF - Bob Robb has been a full-time outdoor writer since 1978. He's a former staff editor for *Peterson's Hunting* magazine, as well as the former editor of *Western Outdoor News*, *Peterson's Bowhunting*, *Inside Archery*, *Whitetail Journal*, *Predator Xtreme*, and *Waterfowl & Retriever* magazines. He's hunted on five continents with both rifles and archery equipment, and lived in Alaska for 15 years, where for a time he held an assistant hunting guide's license.

WEATHERTIGHT™



COMPOUND BOW CASE »

Patent Pending

**THE SOFT CASE THAT
THINKS IT'S A HARD CASE.**

RUGIDGEAR.COM



RIFLE/SHOTGUN CASES



HANDGUN CASES



TACTICAL CASES



DURABLE GEAR FOR EXTREME CONDITIONS

DESIGNED IN THE U.S.A.

DEALERS WANTED - 833-777-8443 | SERVICE@RUGIDGEAR.COM

SPEED™

KILLER CLOTHING



BROWNING

BROWNING.COM