

HUNTING

RETAILER



January/February 2020 | Camo & Apparel

The Fine Line Between
**SOCIALIZING AND
CUSTOMER RELATIONS**

What to See at
**SHOT SHOW
2020**

Capitalize on the
**HUNTER-ATHLETE
TREND**



WEATHERBY®
NEW LOOK!

See page 4 for more info

- Titanium Actions • Carbon-Wrapped Barrels
- TriggerTech Triggers • Carbon Fiber Stocks
- Cerakote Coatings **+ MUCH MORE!**

INTERVIEW:
Mossy Oak's Chris Paradise

Selling to
DIY GUNSMITHS

Should You Stock
**TRAPPING
GEAR?**

Staying Connected
OFF THE GRID

NEW LOOK MARK V RIFLES
**◀ FROM WEATHERBY BOAST NEW
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

See page 4 for more info

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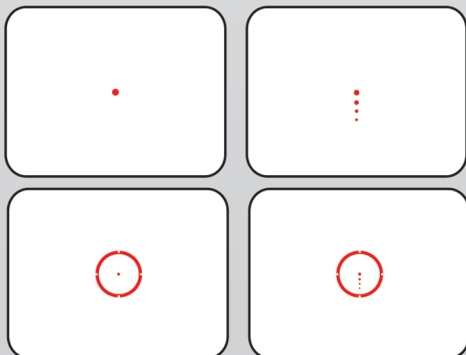
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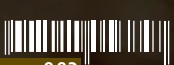


2 MOA Red Dot Ballistic Circle Dot



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THE NEW WEATHERBY MARK V product line features titanium actions, carbon-wrapped barrels, TriggerTech® triggers, carbon fiber stocks, Cerakote® Coatings, and much more. In combination with recent ammunition and rifle price adjustments, the Weatherby brand is showing an example of the innovation people should expect since moving the 75-year-old family-owned business to Sheridan, Wyoming in 2019.

Additionally, the flagship Backcountry Ti and newly released 6.5 WBY RPM cartridge combine to create the lightest and fastest production rifle at an unmatched price. Utilizing the first-ever Weatherby® cartridge featuring a straight wall shoulder and rebated rim, it ushers a new member to the Weatherby® Magnum Cartridge Family. Delivering 1500 foot-pounds of energy at 500 yards, all harnessed in a sub-5-pound rifle with a 6.5mm bullet.

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- *Vented recoil pad
- *Turkish walnut oil finish
- *Red fiber optic front sight
- *Patterned machined top rib
- *Aluminum frame
- *Brass mid bead

MSRP:
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ATIG20CRS28 (20GA)
ATIG28CRS26 (28GA)
ATIG410CRS26 (410GA)

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- *Schnabel forend
- *Manual trigger
- *Recoil pad
- *Turkish walnut oil finish
- *Red fiber optic front sight
- *Patterned machined top rib
- *Aluminum frame

MSRP:
\$499⁹⁵

ITEM#
ATIG12CRF28 (12GA)
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Mossberg Will Sell Factory-Direct to Distributors Worldwide

Mossberg began selling its products factory-direct to international distributors on November 1, 2019. The company previously utilized Essex International Trading, Inc., as an exclusive distributor for Mossberg product shipping into most of the global marketplace. Mossberg and Essex mutually agreed to terminate their business relationship.

"The international sales landscape has evolved over the past five years and we've identified the need to create a factory-direct distribution network that will increase product availability worldwide," said John MacLellan, Vice President of Sales and

Marketing for Mossberg. "We are excited about this change and believe that it will allow us to better reach our global customer-base through a new competitive, direct-to-international distributor sales model."

Mossberg will be actively working to set up international market-specific distribution agreements in the coming months. All international sales inquiries should be directed to Erica Basile, International Sales Manager for Mossberg; ebasile@mossberg.com.

2020 Pope and Young Club Annual Convention

Pope and Young Club is gearing up for the annual convention in Chantilly, Virginia, March 26 to 28. The 2020 convention will feature the Bass Pro/Cabela's "Trophy Tower," the largest display of archery world record North American big game animals ever assembled. Attendees will also have the chance to visit with outfitters from around the world, in addition to checking out bows, gear, art and historic bowhunting items. Other activities include a live auction for hunts, historical tours, 3-D shoot, adventure race, seminars, live entertainment and speakers.

The event will take place at the Westfields Marriott, Washington Dulles in Chantilly, Virginia. For convention information, go to www.pope-young.org.

There will be a limited number of booths available to archery manufacturers and outfitters. If you would like to reserve a booth, contact Rick Mowery at rick@pope-young.org.

2019 Team USA Best of the Year Awards

The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee recently announced winners for the 2019 Team USA Best of the Year Awards, recognizing outstanding achievements of Team USA athletes, teams and coaches in eight categories. These prestigious awards recognize the highest achievements of athletes across all Olympic sports, and with nominees in half of the available categories, USA Archery was proud to commend its athletes and coaches on their outstanding accomplishments during 2019.

Ben Thompson, recognized as the best Male Paralympic Athlete of the Year, upset the world No.1 archer to win gold in the individual men's compound open event at the 2019 World Archery Para Championships in the Netherlands. He also led Team USA to a world record in the compound men's open team ranking round, and ended the season with a No. 1 world ranking.

National Head Coach KiSik Lee led Team USA archers to a historic year, highlighted by Brady Ellison becoming the first U.S. Olympic style archer to win the world title since 1985. Under Lee's tutelage, the world No. 1 ranked Ellison became the first man to win five world cup final titles, placing at three world cup stages with two golds and one bronze medal. Coach Lee was named the Best Olympic Coach of the Year, and Ellison was honored as a finalist for Best Male Olympic Athlete of the Year.

The Recurve Open Men's Team from the World Archery Para Championships, Eric Bennett, Timothy Palumbo and Michael Lukow were also honored as finalists in the Best Paralympic Team of the Year category.

For more information on the Team USA Awards, including the full list of 2019 finalists, visit TeamUSA.org.

Make Plans to Attend the Hunting Retailer Show

Targeted specifically to retailers in the hunting and outdoors industry, the Hunting Retailer Show aims to bring the entire industry together under one roof. The exclusively business-to-business event will be held March 9-10, 2020, in Nashville, Tennessee, at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center. The exposition will feature manufacturers from the outdoor marketplace focusing primarily on the hunting industry.

"I've been to multiple shows over the past few years and they were either not targeting the hunting market at all, or were specifically targeting one type of hunter. The hunting industry is much more than just guns and archery equipment, and we hope to showcase it all," said Jeff Bruss, president of COLE Expos.

Exhibit space for the Hunting Retailer Show includes carpeted booths, opt-in attendee lists, free passes for exhibitors to gift to customers, free app-based lead retrieval and other value-added benefits. For questions regarding exhibit space, please contact Brad Bisnette at (866) 933-2653 or email show@huntingretailer.com. You can see a preview of some of the event's exhibitors on page 36 of this issue.

Sig Sauer Academy 2020 Full Course Schedule Now Open

Sig Sauer Academy's full 2020 course schedule is now available for registration online at sigsaueracademy.com.

The Sig Sauer Academy curriculum is a unique firearms training program designed to achieve results at every level. The schedule features more than 100 courses across a wide variety of platforms including pistol, rifle, shotgun and precision scoped rifle.

The 2020 Sig Sauer Academy course offerings also include advanced training, armorer's certification, law enforcement and military training, and exclusive guest instructor courses.

To register and review the full 2020 comprehensive course schedule or course dates for Sig Sauer Academy, visit sigsaueracademy.com. Classes can also be registered for by calling the Sig Sauer Academy ProShop at (603) 610-3456.

The proshop is located at 233 Exeter Road in Epping, New Hampshire.

Convergent Hunting Solutions Signs With Source Outdoor Group

Convergent Hunting Solutions is pleased to announce Source Outdoor Group as its communications agency for its innovative line of electronic and mouth predator calls.

"We're excited about our new partnership with Source Outdoor Group, which will help expand our presence as a leader in the game call and hunting industry," Byron South, owner of Convergent, said. "As Convergent Hunting Solutions marketing partner, Source Outdoor Group will be charged with translating our company's unique business strategies into a communications program that drives results and introduces hunters to our groundbreaking line of game calls."

This strategic partnership will allow Source Out-

door Group to help communicate the marketing initiatives to both consumer and trade partners for this industry-leading brand by leveraging media planning and outreach, as well as digital publicity tactics and content placement.

"We are extremely excited to be working with Convergent Hunting Solutions and its outstanding lineup of hunting game calls," Aaron McCaleb, of Source Outdoor Group, said. "In our new role, we look forward to contributing to this outstanding brand with meaningful marketing, content, and communications strategies as it continues to be one of the most innovative brands within the game call industry."

1791 Gunleather Adds Crow Shooting Supply

1791 Gunleather has increased dealer assistance with the addition of Crow Shooting Supply as a new wholesale partner.

Crow Shooting Supply is a nationally recognized distributor that provides small gun shops and retailers with firearms, ammunition, reloading equipment and shooting accessories. By joining Crow's Shooting Supply's members-only website, shops and retailers can access Crow's wide variety of products at wholesale pricing.

"Crow Shooting Supply will stock our products and provide

convenient user-friendly ordering with efficient delivery in order to help retailers achieve success," said 1791 Gunleather CEO Ramiro M. Romani.

Retailers interested in obtaining 1791 Gunleather products through Crow Shooting Supply may call (800) 264-2493 or visit crowshootingsupply.com. For information about stocking 1791 Gunleather, contact 1791 Gunleather National Sales Director Janette Palmer at janette@1791gunleather.com.

Chris Hodgdon Retires From Hodgdon

After he serves for one year on the Hodgdon Board of Directors to complete a transition from daily responsibilities, Chris Hodgdon is retiring from full-time service to the company. Hodgdon served in many roles over the last 26 years, from media and public relations to sales.

"I want to express my deep appreciation for the opportunity to work with and benefit from the talented team at Hodgdon," he said. "It has been an honor to represent the third generation of Hodgdon's at the company my grandad founded. I have been blessed by the opportunities to work with writers, gunshop owners and other shooting industry professionals."

"One of the first things I noticed about Chris

was his passion for reloading and the shooting sports — it was just immediately apparent," said Steve Kehrwald, President and CEO of Hodgdon. "His presence in our office since 1993, and his knowledge of reloading and the Hodgdon culture, will serve him well in his new role on the Board of Directors."

Hodgdon Powder Company was established in 1947 by Bruce and Amy Hodgdon. Today, sons J.B. and Bob have grown Hodgdon Powder Company into the largest US supplier of smokeless, blackpowder and blackpowder substitute propellants. The company distributes gunpowder under the Hodgdon, IMR, Winchester, Pyrode, Triple Seven and Goex brands.



New Bait & Tackle Business Website and Magazine

Grand View Outdoors, publishers of *Hunting Retailer* magazine, announce the introduce of a new print title and website: *Bait & Tackle Business*.

If you operate a bait shop, a huge tackle retail outlet or something in between, you're sure to find something to help create a more successful business at www.baitandtacklebiz.com. The website is now live, offering the latest in fishing industry news, the hottest new products and hands-on reviews, as well as business management articles written by our stable of well-respected contributors.

In addition to the online exclusive content, *Bait & Tackle Business* magazine will publish nine issues annually, starting in January 2020. Subscribing is free and easy if you qualify. Visit www.baitandtacklebiz.com/order/subscription to make sure you receive the information you need to help your business grow, delivered right to your home or business. You can also subscribe to the Bait & Tackle Business newsletter with hand-picked stories from our editors, sent right to your inbox. **HR**





Staying Connected **OFF THE GRID**

Looking to stay in touch in the backcountry? Here are a few options.

BY MARK CHESTNUT

↑ Part of the appeal of backcountry hunting is the solitude. But for hunters looking for an emergency communication system that'll work anywhere, satellite technology is often the answer.



One of the best things about hunting is getting away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life and out into the fields and woods for some much-needed solitude. While it's refreshing, really getting off the grid can be a dangerous proposition.

Fortunately, satellite technology can allow hunters and other outdoors enthusiasts to get away from it all and still be able to call for help in case of an emergency in the woods, plus allow family to contact them in case of a problem back home.

One quick cautionary note: The luxury of being able to stay in touch with the outside world doesn't come without some hidden costs, as a service agreement with a satellite provider is required for this type of communication.

That said, here are three cool products to stay connected while off the grid — all with interesting features and capabilities. All could be a good addition to your product line for hunters, backpackers, campers and others who enjoy the great outdoors.

Satellite Beacons

Satellite beacons, the most primitive of the satellite devices we'll look at, are great for allowing hunters to get help in the case of emergency while still allowing them to be largely out of touch with the world.

The Spot Gen3 satellite GPS Messenger fills the bill quite well in that respect. For starters, to say the unit will fit in the palm of your hand is an understatement. At 3.42 inches long, 2.56 inches wide and only 1 inch thick, it's tiny compared to most satellite gear. While that's great, it also makes it easy to lose in a pack full of equipment, so find a specific place to store it so you don't spend more time looking for it than you do using it.

For peace of mind to those back home, the Spot Gen3 continuously tracks users while they are out on an excursion.

“The luxury of being able to stay in touch with the outside world doesn't come without some hidden costs...”

← Spot Gen3

sion. Tracking rates can be customized to be sent every 2.5, 5, 10, 30 or 60 minutes, depending on what the user prefers. A vibration sensor in the Spot Gen3 tells the unit when movement has stopped. So, when a user stops, it knows to stop sending locations until he begins moving again, which conserves batteries and helps avoid repeatedly sending the same location.

Along with tracking, the Spot Gen3 lets hunters and other users “check in” to let family and friends back home know all is well. The unit makes it simple to send a pre-programmed text message with GPS coordinates or an email with a link to Google Maps with your location to pre-selected contacts with your location. With a push of a button, a message is sent via email or SMS to up to 10 contacts, and your waypoint is stored in your Spot account for later reference.

The Spot runs on 4 AAA batteries and can send 1,250 check-in and custom messages on a single set of lithium batteries. With an MSRP of \$149.99 (plus satellite service), the Spot Gen3 is about as budget-minded as you can get for carrying satellite peace of mind along with you.

www.findmespot.com.

Satellite Communicators

Satellite communicators are a step up from satellite beacons and offer many of the same features plus more advanced ones. Satellite communicators generally allow users to pair them

with an app on their cell phone to send and receive text messages when they are in areas where they have no service. Many also offer GPS and web-linked live tracking and an SOS button in case of emergency.

The Garmin inReach Mini has all that and more — and it's tiny, to boot. At only 3.9x2x1 inches and weighing just 4.3 ounces, it's the smallest satellite communicator



→ Garmin's inReach Mini has two-way messaging capability and location sharing.

Garmin makes. The Mini gives users the ability to send location to friends, and it has two-way messaging capabilities for





↑ Garmin inReach Mini

sending and receiving SMS messages. Paired with a mobile device and the Earthmate app, the Garmin inReach Mini doubles as a quality, easy-to-use mapping GPS with a much faster interface for managing and composing messages.

For safety's sake, Garmin has added a neat SOS messaging feature. In case of emergency, the user simply triggers an interactive SOS message to GEOS, a professional 24/7 global monitoring and response center. The trained staff there is available to respond to the user's messages, track the device and notify emergency responders in the area. The response center even stays in touch with users and emergency responders until the situation is resolved.

Other cool features include inReach-to-inReach communication allowing users to communicate directly with others using the device via SMS, including location sharing, and the ability to request weather forecasts for current and planned destinations. It also has integration capabilities that allow it to send and receive messages via other Garmin-enabled devices.

The Mini runs off an internal, chargeable lithium ion battery that the manufacturer says will last up to 50 hours when set at its default setting of 10-minute tracking with 1-second logging. The unit carries an MSRP of \$350. That's quite a bit higher than the aforementioned Spot Gen3, but the Garmin packs many more features into its tiny case.

www.garmin.com.

Satellite Hotspot

Satellite hotspots take remote communication to another level entirely. Who would have ever thought that you could crank up your laptop or tablet in the middle of the wilderness and order more hunting gear that will be waiting on the porch when you get home! No, you can't order a pizza for delivery in the boondocks, so don't try.

That's right, these ultracool devices enable you to create

a Wi-Fi hotspot anywhere you have satellite access — like smack dab in the middle of Quetico Provincial Park, dozens of miles away from the nearest Wi-Fi. The Iridium GO! 9560 Satellite Terminal with Wi-Fi Hotspot is a great example.

The Iridium unit isn't as small as the other devices mentioned. But with measurements of 8x6x4 inches and weighing just 2.2 pounds, it's still a pretty compact bundle for all of the features it offers.

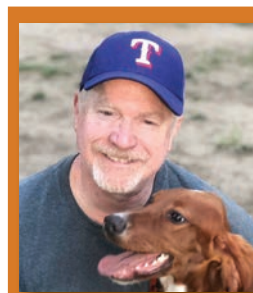
Of course, the unit's signature capability is instantly creating a Wi-Fi hotspot from anywhere satellites can be accessed, which can be used to connect within a 100-foot radius of where the GO! is located. Adventurous hunters can easily connect and operate multiple devices within that area using the Iridium GO! app, available in the iTunes Store or via Google Play.

But that's not all this little marvel has to offer. Compatible with Apple and Android, Iridium GO! extends the use of your smartphone and other devices no matter where you are. Apps are available for you to use it and your smartphone for voice calling, SMS, email, weather monitoring and other functions.

One such app is the Iridium Mail and Web app, a free application for both Apple and Android that accelerates email messaging and web browsing, allowing users to keep in touch by posting updates to social networks, compressing and sending photos to share experience online and accessing up-to-the-minute weather forecasts.

With an MSRP of \$799 plus satellite service, the Iridium GO! is certainly not a cheap option for staying connected when off the grid. But for those whose job requires them to be in communication at a backwoods hunting camp, it can certainly make that an attainable reality. www.iridium.com. **HR**

↓ Iridium GO!



PRO STAFF

Mark Chesnut is a freelance writer and editor who has been a professional journalist for more than 35 years. An avid hunter and bird dog lover, he is also owner and editorial director at Red Setter Communications.





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The Fine Line Between Socializing and Customer Relations

Every store has a few so-called customers who stop by to chat and handle the guns, but never buy.

BY PATRICK MEITIN

Much of what made standing behind a gun counter enjoyable during the time I worked in outdoor retail were the relationships I developed with a handful of loyal customers. These were usually retired gentlemen with time and disposable income to burn (though not necessarily a universal trait), with a keen sense of and profound insight into the shooting sports borne of extensive trial-and-error experience. I began handloading centerfire cartridges, tinkering with rifles and obsessively sniping burrowing rodents before puberty took a firm hold. Yet I'm not fool enough to believe I have all the answers, nor do I buy into the notion that anything worthwhile

in cartridge and rifle development has occurred in my lifetime. The insufferable blowhards and know-it-alls that gun counters naturally attract set well aside, I was intensely interested in new (or old-but-proven) perspectives from like-minded shooting enthusiasts.

That said; I quickly differentiated between those using a sporting-goods venue as cheap entertainment and actual customers. An easy example: I recall a customer who arrived every Sunday as if on cue, requesting to handle this firearm and that, running their actions thoroughly and shouldering or sighting them repeatedly before requesting another to examine. This



← There's a difference between the looky-loos who come in and handle all the guns every week, and the customer who stops by regularly to chat but spends some money on occasion.

↑ Part of sales is talking to customers. The trick is knowing when this turns into a time-wasting proposition.



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.



“Since your job description includes chatting up customers, it becomes all too easy to turn organic business interaction into time-burning socializing.”

typically went on for about an hour. He would then politely thank me for my time and disappear. In nearly two and a half years he never purchased so much as a box of .22LR that I'm aware of. This was apparently his weekend entertainment. When things were slow, as they often were on Sundays, I played along happily. When presented with other customers, I learned to ignore him. I never caught his name; I doubt it was ever offered.

I also remember Melvin. A seemingly lonely widower, Melvin dropped in frequently, mostly just to chat, offering some of that handloading/firearms history and angles I found so interesting. The big difference is Melvin occasionally made a purchase. We might be chatting about spring ground squirrel shooting when I would ask if he'd seen the new .17 Winchester Super Mag, just as an easy example. An inquisitive fellow, Melvin would ask to see a rifle so chambered while I extolled the virtues of the zippiest and farther-reaching rimfire incarnation. When something sparked his fancy, he'd invariably say, “Well, I need another rifle like I need a hole in the head, but I think I need to try this one out.” The rifle purchase then necessitated a new scope and rings and, of course, ammo. Melvin was a valuable customer. As such, I indulged him on those days when he only needed someone to stave off loneliness or pure-and-simple boredom — though I genuinely enjoyed our conversations. I had a dozen “Melvins” who arrived regularly to chew the fat — but again, periodically making a purchase.

Despite the perception that working in a sporting goods atmosphere is all fun and games, surrounded by all those sexy toys most incessantly dream about, it is, after all, a job just like any other. The gear excitement wears thin, and salesman go through periods of burnout or simply have days when they're just not feeling it. But the time clock must be punched to keep that paycheck coming. Since your job description includes chatting up customers, it becomes all too easy



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- Industry Leading Sales
- Amazing Reviews
- Tremendous Tech Support
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“I quickly differentiated between those using a sporting-goods venue as cheap entertainment and actual customers.”

to turn organic business interaction into time-burning socializing.

As an eventual manager, I was flabbergasted that employees had to be reminded that employment isn't a social service and they're present to help a business turn a profit. To that end, there is a fine line between wasting an employer's time and promoting sales via customer relations. Making friends with customers can certainly lead to repeat business, but using customer interactions as a way to avoid work means other customers — those genuinely looking to transfer cash into a store's coffers — are being neglected.

Put another way, as much as I enjoyed talking to Melvin, had he not been making the occasional purchase, I would've been forced to cut conversations short. As a sporting goods employee, I certainly got visits from close friends and social associates during work hours. Most did understand I was working. If they arrived just to chat, I would have to excuse myself should a real customer arrive. More commonly, they arrived with a specific item in mind, knowing I would provide the straight dope due to our established relationship, allowing



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← Got a range where customers can try out gear before they buy? Then you're probably familiar with the "here every week to see what's new" guy.

me to shortcut the salesmanship routine and get right down to business. None of the friends who'd only arrived to say howdy were offended if I put them off or scooted off to wait on another customer. I was on the clock. I was making commissions and was there to earn money to keep the wolves off the porch.

One of my problem children, after being promoted to a low-level manager, spent conspicuously more time chatting than selling — a reality not lost on fellow employees. He had to be persistently harassed into restocking empty pegs and shelves and tidying up his assigned department. Yet he seemed to have plenty of time to chitchat with a steady stream of friends and casual acquaintances. I always imagined him encouraging work-hour visits from these folks to stave off boredom. His sales numbers (tracked closely due to employee sales incentives) reflected this lack of conviction. He was dead wood in every sense of the term, but he was a family friend of the manager and immune to firing or ordinary disciplinary action.

Talking to customers, and doing so effectively, is an important portion of any retail position. But a big part of your employee contract, the ability to sell effectively and earn a potential promotion or commission, is applying chit-chat efficiently and selectively. Ask yourself this question: Is the time you spend yakking it up with customers or friends promoting the good of the business you work for, or simply being abused because you just don't feel like doing your job? There's a fine line involved, but given a modicum of thought, the answer should be quite obvious. **HR**

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← Camo patterns vary by season, geographic region, species targeted and more. Many customers can't or won't buy different camo for every type of hunting they do, so stocking some multi-purpose patterns that can do double or triple duty is a smart idea.

Concealment Exposed:

8 Great Camo Patterns to Outfit Your Hunting Customers

There's a dizzying array of patterns available these days — some made for very specific purposes. Which is right for your customer?

BY KEVIN REESE

My father-in-law, Gene, was my hunting buddy for more than 20 years. At 80 years young, he was still trekking throughout the Bitterroot Mountains in search of his trophy bull elk of a lifetime. By then, he had hunted for nearly 70 years, and if you asked how many deer he had taken in his lifetime, he most certainly wouldn't have an answer — accomplished hunter is an understatement.

Oddly enough, his camo pattern of choice was red-and-black-checked flannel or wool, Woolrich being his favorite. Even in his early 80s, his choice of hunting garb was a toss-up — checked or an honest-to-goodness camo pattern. While

his getup was often as old-school as one could imagine — his checked outfit dating back over 60 years and still going — it was still as purpose-driven as today's camo. To him, it was about breaking up his outline, period, even if he did it with scores of squares. Yes, even 60 years ago, hunters knew they stuck out like sore thumbs and sought to do something about it.

Fortunately, we're decades away from Pop's checked Woolrich getup. Technology has improved so dramatically that hunters flat-out disappear when they wear the right camo and stop moving. That said and movement aside, the right camo pattern for the hunt does matter, especially when you're chas-



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.

“Even 60 years ago, hunters knew they stuck out like sore thumbs and sought to do something about it.”

ing prey that are acutely aware of their environment, that are sensitive to objects and shapes foreign to them, and, in some cases, that see color exceptionally well.

Wildlife biologists have already established that deer do see color on the lower wavelength — predominately blues, including UV. This is also why hunters are learning to stay away from laundry detergents with UV/optical brighteners. Conversely, deer don't see other colors well at all. Colors like green, brown, yellow and even orange are seen as shades of gray; of course, it makes sense to break up large gray shapes, too, and camo does exactly that. On the polar opposite side of color sight, you have the all-seeing eyes of a turkey. There's a reason hunters don't wear blaze orange, or perhaps more importantly, blue, red or white (colors found on turkeys).

Considering camouflage patterns and their purposes, environment is at least equally as important as a chosen prey's vision. While a number of your customers may know what works best to leverage hunting success in their favor, many more may be camo-challenged. Whether they're hunting a species or in an environment for the first time, they look to you for answers — and the more (helpful) answers you have, the more likely you are to generate repeat business. Yes, advising folks on correct camo choices definitely can increase business. To that end, let's dive into a handful of camo patterns worth understanding — and worth a bit of retail space.

Mossy Oak Break-Up Country

Unveiled in 2015, Mossy Oak Break-Up Country has become the brand's most popular pattern and a staple choice for hunters from coast to coast and beyond. Break-Up Country's diverse array of right-sized natural elements makes it an easy choice for most environments. The balance of colors and shadowing also make Break-Up Country an excellent choice for any season, with exceptions.

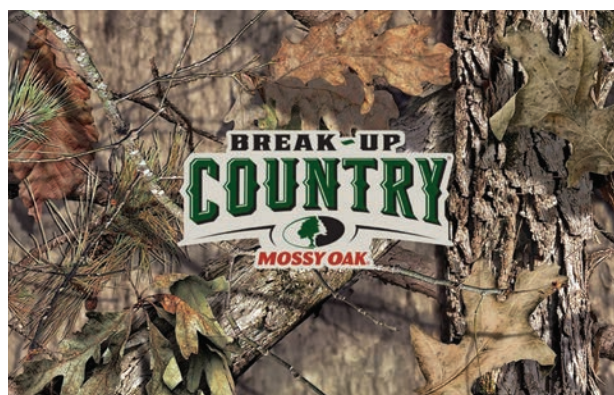
If you're heading to an arid desert landscape, perhaps composed of dramatically muted colors like dirt, dried grasses and sage, Break-Up Country isn't the best choice. Likewise, this pattern obviously isn't ideal for a snowy environment. That said, from spring turkey hunting to chasing elk or deer in high timber or dense woods, Mossy Oak's Break-Up Country is more than capable of breaking up your customer's pattern and hiding everything except movement.

Mossy Oak Shadow Grass Blades

Shadow Grass delighted waterfowler eyes early in 2016. If your customers are planning to hunt areas rich with grasses, reeds, cattails, etc., this pattern is a top choice. The pattern of larger, naturally colored and laying blades and shadowing back-dropped by a thatch of pressed grasses makes the pattern a more diverse concealment option, and it layers with impressively realistic 3-D detailing.

Realtree Max-1 XT

2015 was a popular year for Realtree, with the introduction of



← Break-Up Country is Mossy Oak's most popular pattern; it works in most locations and most seasons.



← Mossy Oak Shadow Grass Blades is specifically designed for waterfowlers.



← Realtree Max-1 XT is ideal for dry, desert-type terrain.

Max-1 XT, an updated version of the incredibly popular Max-1 pattern. As Bill Jordan put it, “Printing technology just keeps getting better and better, allowing us to add more detail, increased depth, subtle coloration and realistic shadows.”

Like the original, Realtree Max-1 XT is purposed for hunting in drier, desert-type environments teeming with dry grasses, sage, shrubs and other muted colors. Regionally, at least as it relates to the continental U.S., Max-1 XT is well suited for central and Western hunting, although the original Max-1 has been a nationwide favorite among predator hunters chasing prey in open areas — Max-1 XT continues where Max-1 left off. Max-1 XT is also popular throughout Texas and other Western states for spring turkey hunting.

Realtree Edge

Realtree struck hunting gold again in 2018 with Realtree Edge, capitalizing on advanced design and HD printing technology. Edge's appropriately-sized natural details, well-balanced col-



“Considering camouflage patterns and their purposes, environment is at least equally as important as a chosen prey’s vision.”

ors, shadowing and layering combine to deliver exceptional concealment in multiple environments, including spring thickets, lush high-altitude timber and even the dry, brown, late-season woodlands found in most areas of the U.S. Realtree Edge’s diversity makes it a solid option for hunting turkey, deer, elk, bears and year-round predators.

TrueTimber MC2 Snow

Nothing stands out like dark camo against a snowy backdrop. Even in a world of gray hues, a dark figure could certainly be easy to spot. Plain white may be better but definitely also not ideal in any setting with other non-white elements. This is where TrueTimber MC2 Snow is perfectly suited — snowy environments with a foliage backdrop, from lush shrubs, grasses and cedar stands, to high-country forests and brown, leafless, late-season woods.

TrueTimber MC2 Snow is composed of a snow base, layered in vibrant, contrasting natural elemental colors like brown gray and green. More than contrast and colors, MC2 Snow delivers big on realistic, natural imagery, inclusive of branches, twigs and brush. Of course, these high-definition camo pattern attributes combine to break up your customer’s outline, resulting in truly impressive concealment.

Kryptek Typhon

While there’s some truth to the idea that sitting further back in a blind with black interior makes you disappear, wearing the wrong camo pattern, especially with brighter colors, can ruin your hunt, especially when hunting turkeys and hogs at close range. Seasoned ground blind hunters understand this and focus heavily on darker colors, even black — that’s where Kryptek Typhon really shines. Kryptek Typhon is a muted-gray, web-like pattern on a black background. The combination works wonders for making hunters disappear within the black walls of their ground blinds. Even better, where light may reveal some semblance of a silhouette, Kryptek Typhon’s gray element does a superb job of breaking it up.

More than blind hunting, for some of us, Kryptek Typhon is a perfect choice for night hunting. Whether your customers prefer still-hunting at night from a blind or treestand, or closing the distance on a spot-and-stalk pursuit, Kryptek’s ultra-dark Typhon pattern is sure to make them virtually invisible.

Prym1 Woodlands

While Prym1 begins with the same purpose as any other camo company, the company accomplishes that task in a unique way. Where most patterns focus heavily on natural elements like rocks, leaves, twigs, limbs and grass, to quote founder and creator Stacie Walker, Prym1’s single pattern is composed of “textures of nature, combined with the organic



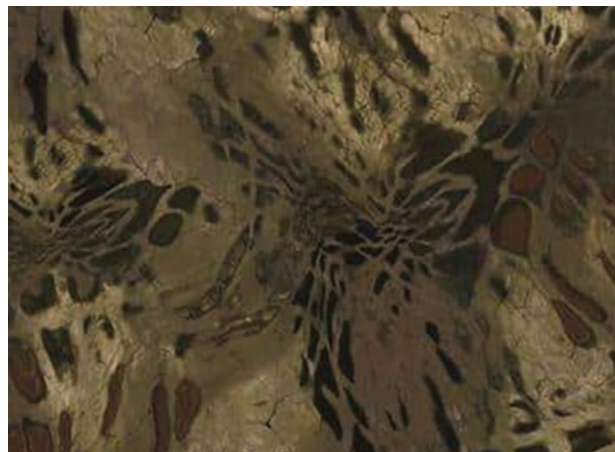
← Realtree Edge is a solid year-round option for most areas of the country.



← TrueTimber MC2 Snow is built around the idea that dark camo won't work against a snowy background, but solid white without any natural elements to break it up can be too blocky.



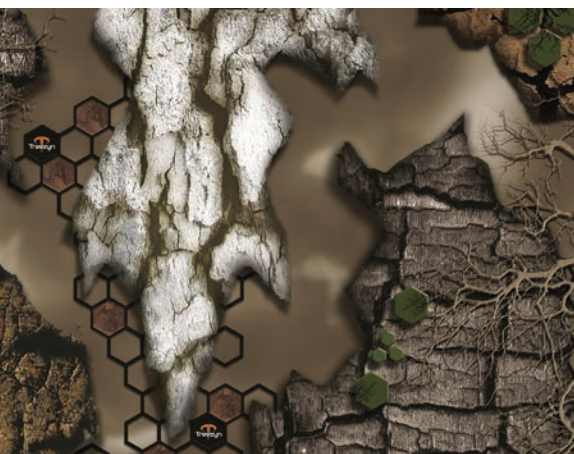
← Kryptek Typhon is purpose-built for ground blind hunters who don't need traditional camouflage.



← Prym1 Woodlands uses "textures of nature" rather than specific natural elements to break up the hunter's outline.

patterns of wildlife.” As an example, looking closely, one might find inspiration from leopard hide. The dramatic pattern differences seem to be limited to color changes and shadowing, and Prym1 does exceedingly well in maximizing that — there’s a color and shadowing pattern suited for every manner of hunting one might imagine. That said, Woodlands has been popular.

Prym1 Woodland’s darker, shadowy blend of natural yellow, green, brown and black boast a remarkable balance of highlights and shadowing for impressive concealment in many densely wooded areas. From turkey hunting in the heavy thickets of east Texas to chasing bull elk in high-mountain forestry, Prym1 is an excellent choice. To further emphasize Prym1 Woodland’s usefulness, it might be better to state where the pattern wouldn’t be a good idea — muted colors in arid and effectively barren landscapes. Prym1 also wouldn’t be the right camo pattern to wear for duck hunting in muted grasses or in any environment where a pattern like Realtree’s Max-1 XT might be a better fit.



↑ Treezyn Late Season G2 is made to work in most environments, with muted colors and some high-def elements.

Treezyn Late Season G2

While Treezyn isn’t the most established camouflage company in the industry, by a long stretch, it’s not without the authenticity you find in the most well-known brands. Treezyn’s pattern is founded upon decades of hunting experiences in virtually every hunting environment imaginable. Moreover, as a relative newcomer, they work aggressively to produce insanely rich-contrasting, high-definition, multipurpose camo patterns for all types of landscapes. I’ve been especially interested in their growth, their expanding patterns and worthwhile upgrades to solid offerings like Late Season that, frankly, already accomplish buzzworthy concealment.

Treezyn’s Late Season G2 camouflage pattern is definitely a great choice for customers plugged into everything from spring turkey hunts nestled in lush green foliage to late-season big-game hunts with the brown-dominant scheme of the trunks, limbs, branches and twigs and green-thicket splashes. And, when I say everything, I mean Treezyn Late Season G2 camo is definitely a multi-tasking pattern. Aside from the muted palette of those desert-type arid environments often

found throughout the western and southwestern U.S., Treezyn Late Season G2 can make you disappear in most environments, from sea-level shrubbery to those heavenly, nose-bleed-worthy high-timber sweet spots. **HR**

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A Pattern of Success

In a rapidly changing marketplace, Mossy Oak continues to innovate.

BY MATT CRAWFORD

It's been a busy string of months for Mossy Oak, the Mississippi-based camouflage company. In January 2019, the news came down through a respected industry report that the company's Break-Up Country pattern was the top-selling camo pattern for deer hunters in the United States for the third consecutive year. Also in January, Mossy Oak inked a multi-year partnership with Plano Synergy, a multi-brand company that's one of the behemoths in both the hunting and fishing industries. Late in 2018, Mossy Oak became the official camouflage pattern of the National Rifle Association. That announcement came on the heels of Mossy Oak signing a partnership

deal with Carhartt clothing.

There's little to suggest Mossy Oak will be slowing down in 2020. The licensing arm of Mossy Oak, which already oversees some 1,500 licensees, is closing new deals almost daily, and the company continues to push the technological limits of printing — something that's been at the core of Mossy Oak since it was started by Toxey Haas in 1986.

Hunting Retailer had the chance to talk with Chris Paradise, Senior Vice President & Chief Sales Officer of Mossy Oak, about what's on the packed agenda for Mossy Oak in the new year. Paradise, who's been in the hunting industry for nearly a

↑ Licensed to more than 1,500 brands, Mossy Oak camo is seemingly everywhere these days.



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.

quarter of a century, said it's full-speed ahead at Mossy Oak.

HR: What can we expect out of Mossy Oak in 2020?

Paradise: We will have a number of new innovations in fishing and hunting and some new surprises you'll see in more life-style-type products. We have a unique technology that allows us to separate ourselves from the pack, and that technology gives us the ability to consistently and repeatedly transfer our patterns on to products. We will have new patterns that we've designed internally, but we'll be showcasing those patterns in unique ways.

"We know the camo market is beyond the saturation point."

HR: Are there new biological discoveries in the animal/wildlife world that could change the way camo looks or is used?

Paradise: There's a better general understanding of the physiology of how animals' eyes work, yes, but it hasn't fundamentally changed the way we do things. Research continues to support the premise that camo has to break up the human outline.





The key is causing enough confusion for an eye to not see what is there. We've always hung our hat on the number one reason people wear camo is to break up the outline. We've talked about that for years in all of our patterns, and it remains central to everything we still do.

HR: What do you expect to see across your segment of the hunting industry in 2020?

Paradise: We know the camo market is beyond the saturation point. The dedicated brands that invest in the market, that have a track record of innovation, will be able to operate in that market from a leadership position. For a while there, anybody with an Apple computer and a design program could invent a new camo pattern — but we're seeing a number of those camo companies sort of fall off the map. These companies who just have a cool pattern will go away within months, but the companies that diversify and keep pushing for new technologies will stick around.

HR: Mossy Oak has partnerships with a wide array of conservation organizations. Was setting up those relationships a planned strategy?

"The diversity in our customer base is what's helped us."

Paradise: Yes, for sure. We're very proud of the commitment we've made to conservation organizations in the shooting, hunting and fishing space. We made a concentrated effort to be the leading conservation camo company in this space. That was a way to attach ourselves to issues we feel strongly about. We're the exclusive, official pattern of the NRA, Ducks Unlimited, the NWTF, QDMA, the Tarpon Trust, B.A.S.S. — the list goes on and on. We want to work with those groups that are the stewards of what's important to us. That positions us strategically against other companies that haven't nurtured the relationships we have.

HR: How has the decades-long slide in the number of Americans hunting affected business?

Paradise: Participation and access are critical points for determining what the future looks like. Yes, the bullseye target consumer, the hunter, is on a downward trend — you can't argue that, but we've worked hard to develop more consumers than just that hunter. Mossy Oak is in fishing, we're in native living, we're in home decor, we have Gamekeeper Kennels, we have a property division that operates in the real estate world. And our fishing business is exploding. I think as an outdoor pursuit, fishing offers easier access and a lower barrier to begin, and we haven't seen the drop-off there. The companies that are just making a hunting product, there's no doubt they're feeling the pinch. Our diversity in our customer base is what's helped us.

↑ With the camo market saturated with competitors, Mossy Oak stays tuned to the core idea that effective camo must break up the human outline.



↓ Mossy Oak sees its partnerships with various conservation organizations as a strategic advantage in the consumer market.

HR: How has the consolidation of mammoth retailer brands like Bass Pro and Cabela's and the changing landscape of specialty retail affected Mossy Oak's business?

Paradise: Those changes can be hard for the consumer or the store owner, but we embrace those changes. If you don't have a strong brand, you feel the pinch of that consolidation, but while the retailer may change, the customer is still there with the intent to purchase. We've watched consolidation take place for more than 30 years now, and we've been able to adapt by making sure our brand is strong in as many retail channels as we could be in across the spectrum.

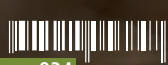
HR: How has the rise in boutique brands, particularly in hunting apparel, changed your business?

Paradise: We love the smaller brands that start as endemic hunting brands and often break out into multiple market segments. Even the ones we don't work with, we love to see the innovation. We also love the brands that are in another market segment and then come into the outdoor space. Because of the way we operate with partnerships, we touch consumers if they're spending \$5 or \$5,000. We have more than 1,500 licensees, and that's growing every day. There are so many unique items in the marketplace with Mossy Oak patterns. We have large partnerships with companies like Carhartt, Sketchers, Browning, Columbia and Crocs. We also have our patterns on smaller brands, on everything from lingerie to caskets. It's a good feeling to work with brands that are carving out their niche and bringing Mossy Oak along for the ride.

HR: Lingerie, caskets and boat wraps. What would you like to see in Mossy Oak that we haven't seen yet?

Paradise: We're working on a few of those now. Let's just say there's more to come, and people will get to see them at SHOT show. One is an endemic product, but one is a lifestyle product. That all goes back to the ability to print our patterns efficiently and to get it to market, something's that's been a staple of Mossy Oak. The easy part is coming up with a pattern — the difficult part is getting that pattern to work on clothing, on a gun, on plastics or whatever you want to be camouflaged. **HR**





← Trapping is tough, dirty work that won't appeal to everyone. But those who do participate are passionate and hard working, and they need a certain amount of specific gear.

Should Your Store Stock Trapping Gear?

Fur prices are at rock bottom, but trappers keep buying gear and setting traps. Find out how you can get in on the action and start catering to a new customer.

BY MARK OLIS

If you've paid attention to any of the fur reports over the past several years, you already know the story — fur prices are down. In past decades, if a trapper worked hard and was successful, he could expect to collect a nice pay check at the end of the season. With modern fur prices where they are, many trappers don't want to spend the time or money for such little gain. However, that doesn't necessarily mean you shouldn't set aside some aisle space for trapping gear.

Back in the day, every hardware store carried trapping equipment and supplies, because there were a lot more trappers. Today, this specialized gear is much harder to find. There are a number of websites that sell trapping gear, but a customer has to figure in shipping cost as well, because steel traps weigh a lot and skyrocket shipping expenses.

"If a business sells hunting gear, then it's also good to carry trapping supplies," suggests John Chagnon, Division Manager for PCS Outdoors (trapping-supply company). "Nine out of 10 times, trapping gear sells better than predator-hunting products. However, if a place only sells canoes and caters to the yuppies, then it's not going to do good."

You have to put in a little effort, though. Just because you

have traffic doesn't mean you're going to sell traps. If no one on staff knows how to talk about trapping, then sales are likely to go down the toilet.

"I highly recommend that they have someone on staff that can talk trapping," says Chagnon. "It's like selling archery equipment and not having a bow guy. People don't want to just buy a bow; they want someone who can set it up and work on it."

Who Is the Modern Trapper?

In 2015, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) paid for an in-depth survey on the modern trapper and trapping trends for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). The Characteristics of U.S. Trappers survey was conducted by Responsive Management — a survey research firm specializing in attitudes toward natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. The study divided the nation into five areas: Alaska, West, Midwest, South and Northeast.

Through a combination of data provided by states and the survey, it was estimated that there were 176,573 licensed trappers in the U.S. during the 2014-2015 season. The Midwest region dominated with an estimated 95,318 trappers. The South



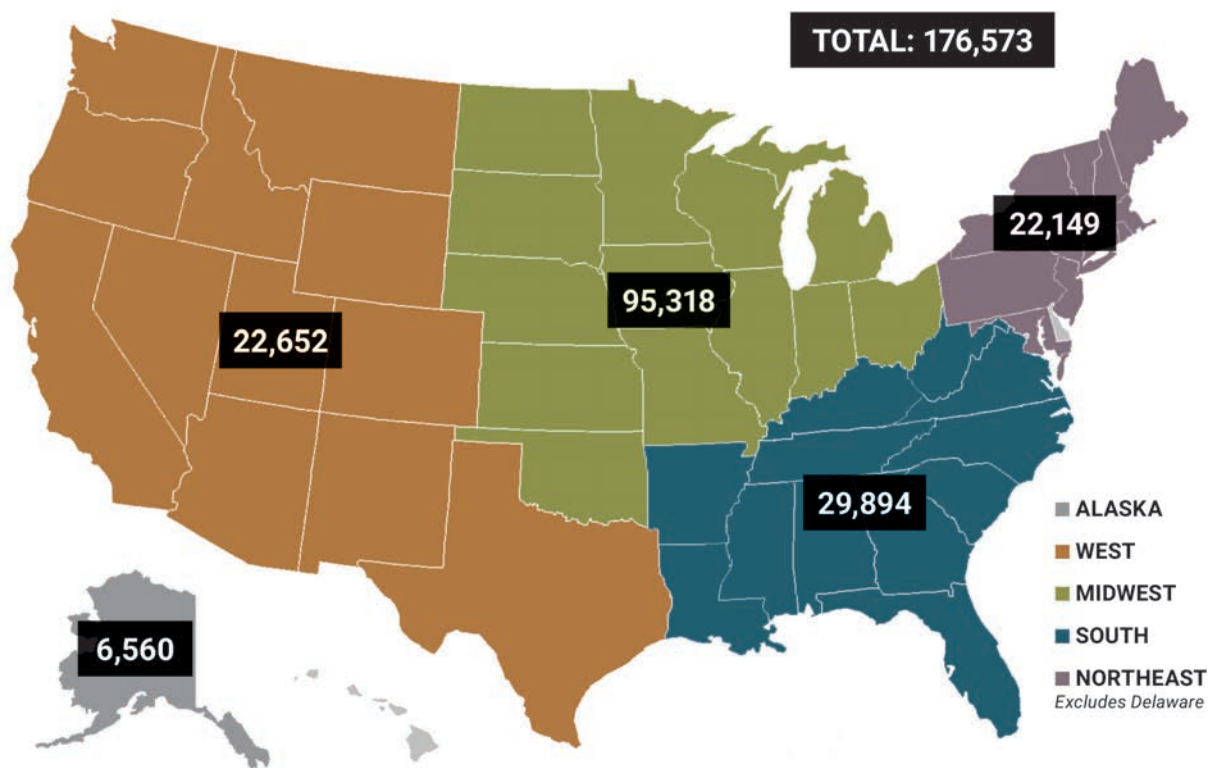
PRO STAFF

Mark Olis is an Auburn University Journalism graduate and life-long outdoorsman. He's been writing in outdoor publications for the past 15 years. His passion is working the land to create better habitat for whitetail deer and wild turkey, and he enjoys all aspects of hunting and shooting.



ESTIMATED NUMBER OF LICENSED TRAPPERS (2014-2015)

Through a combination of data provided by the states and data provided by the survey, Responsive Management estimates that there were **176,573 LICENSED TRAPPERS** in the United States in the 2014-2015 seasons. The tabulation shows the estimates in the regions; the Midwest leads the nation in number of licensed trappers.



Characteristics of U.S. Trappers; Survey conducted by Responsive Management in 2015 for the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies.

“If no one on staff knows how to talk about trapping, then sales are likely to go down the toilet.”

had nearly 30,000 trappers, the Northeast with a little more than 22,000, the vast West with 22,652 and Alaska with 6,560.

Today's trapper population is 98 percent male with a median age of 47.7, with less than 10 percent under the age of 24. The average household income is \$40,000 to \$60,000. However, on average, these trappers annually spend \$246.36 on traps and lures and another \$150 on trapping tools and skinning knives, etc.

What to Stock?

There's no need to start off carrying hundreds of items. Start off with a few traps and the items that go with them. You don't need a large display area, but make it look good and stock items in a logical way so customers can see how it all works together.

“If you're selling traps, then sell accessory items, too,” explains Chagnon. “You'll need to carry stakes for the traps. You'll want to carry a trapper's trowel — they are more heavy duty than a garden trowel, and people will buy them.”

It's easy to get distracted when looking at a trapping-

PRO TIP

Begin your trapping-supply hunt by reaching out to a reputable trapping-supply dealer. There are a number of good ones throughout the country. If you have a good local or in-state supplier, they can often set up booths at outdoor sales and store events and talk trapping with your customers and show off products you carry. Here are a few top trapping-supply dealers to get you started:

Kaats Bros. Lures www.kaatzbros.com

Fur Harvester's Trading Post www.FNTpost.com

PCS Outdoors Trapping Supplies www.PCSoutdoors.com

Minnesota Trap Line Products www.minntrapprod.com

Hoosier Trapper Supply www.HoosierTrapperSupply.com

Schmitt Enterprises Trapping Supplies www.SchmittENT.com

→ Dog-proof raccoon traps are cylindrical or square steel tubes and feature a trigger on the bottom of the inside that must be pushed or pulled, depending on model, to trip the trap. These traps are the best at targeting only raccoons and opossums, since these animals can reach in and pull the trigger up. Not only are these highly effective traps, but they don't catch the neighbor's dog.

↓ Feather-Lite Dog Proof Raccoon Trap. More info on this trap in sidebar on page 28.





→ A raccoon reaches into this trap, tripping the trigger as it grasps the bait.



supply catalog or an online store because there are literally thousands of lures and baits and other gear. Don't get anxious — talk to the supplier to find out what are some of the better-selling products, and just carry a couple of different brands of traps, lures and scents.

Traps typically have a low return rate because they are made of steel and are heavy-duty items. Remember, you want to have what a trapper needs, not everything under the sun. Plus, you can always add more later.

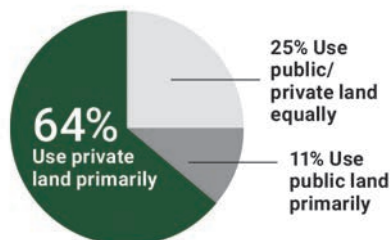
Other items to consider would be pack baskets. They look good on a display and trappers use them for all their gear, but non-trappers purchase them as well, to use for apple-picking and gardening. Because many of your customers will be new to trapping, make sure to carry informational materials such as books and DVDs on trapping. Carry a

“There's no need to start off carrying hundreds of items. Start off with a few traps and the items that go with them.”



PRIVATE LAND PREDOMINATES IN TRAPPING OVERALL.

Conversely, in the Alaska region, public land predominates, with 61% using public land mostly and 94% using public land at least half the time.



Characteristics of U.S. Trappers; Survey conducted by Responsive Management in 2015 for the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

Dog-Proof Coon Traps

Data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife survey, "The Characteristics of U.S. Trappers," revealed that raccoons were the most commonly targeted furbearer nationally, with 62 percent of respondents saying it was a top-four targets species for them. Of those who trapped raccoons, 54 percent said they use dog-proof traps. The next closest trap selection was a 1.5 coil-spring leg-hold trap. Dog-proof traps appeal to the nuisance trapper who has raccoons getting into the garden and trappers trying to make a buck. Here's a list of solid brands often purchased by trappers. Traps and retail pricing from *PCSOuthdoors.com*.

- Coon Dagger:** The Coon Dagger is made by Sudden Valley Supply and features a diamond-shaped opening, which is said to allow for better grip pressure around the paw once the trap is tripped. This trap features a push/pull trigger and can be set to pull-only to eliminate dryfires when loading the trap with bait. Once loaded, the trigger can be switched back to push/pull. This trap features large drain holes for moisture and bait residue to flow out of. It comes with a welded machine chain attached to two multi-purpose swivels. **\$15 per trap.**
- Duke DP:** The Duke DP is a metal-tube style trap. It features a sensitive pull-only trigger, powerful coil springs and a spade head for easy insertion into the ground. The entire trap is powder coated in a dark brown paint that protects the metal and features a chain and swivel for anchoring. **\$11.50 per trap.**
- Feather-Lite:** This is a lightweight cast-aluminum tube-style trap with two inline-swivels and #2 straight-link chain. The pull-only trigger, springs and dog are all stainless steel. This is an American-made trap from AuSable Brand. **\$12 per trap.**
- Z-Trap:** This metal tube trap has double coil springs for fast catches and strong holds. The Z-Trap is powder coated and comes in a dark brown or a dipped camo version. The spring and push-pull trigger are protected with a zinc coating. A unique feature built into the Z-Trap is a stabilizing washer welded onto the metal stake. This helps stabilize the trap when sunk into wet ground and other soil types. **Brown sells for \$15 and a camo-dipped version for \$16.**

→ A set raccoon or possum trap.



book or DVD on trapping coyotes, another one that covers water trapping and maybe something on fur handling.

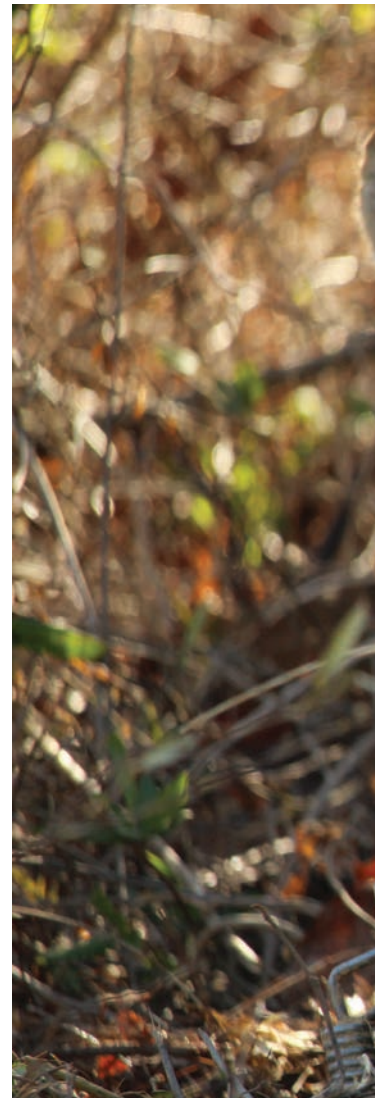
Speaking of fur handling, that's another segment of products you can branch into, such as skinning knives, tail strippers and small-game gambrels. Chagnon also recommends stocking snares if legal. He said a small pack of snares can make 100 percent margins, unlike small traps. Snaring is highly effective, too.

Don't Forget About the Nuisance Trapper

"If the trend continues and fur prices keep going down, trappers aren't going to be wasting time trapping," says Chagnon. "But then, you're going to have the raccoons getting in the farmer's corn. That's where the dog-proof traps will do well."

Anytime you can carry an item for a trapper that will also work for nuisance control, do it. Dog-proof raccoon traps are not only highly effective, but they are also inexpensive and easy to set and bait, and they typically don't catch the neighbor's dog. It's good to stock cage or live traps for the gardener and homeowner, too. Dog-proof traps often work better than a live trap, but the customer has to be willing to dispatch the raccoon. With a live trap, they can move the animal somewhere if they don't want to kill it. Body grip traps sell well for problem woodchucks and beavers, too. People like to buy those because the trap instantly dispatches the animal.

Nuisance traps sell best when you have a display showing that a customer can catch a raccoon or a coyote. Be sure that the display illustrates how the trap can help solve their problem and how easy it is to use. This goes a long way in helping a customer feel more confident when trying to make



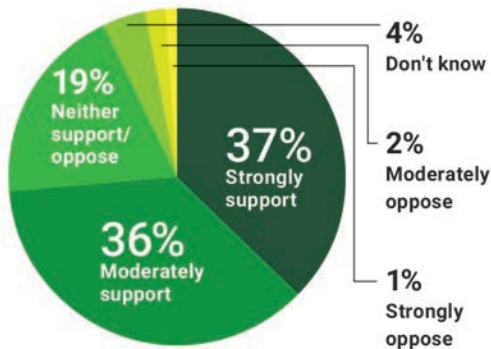
Characteristics of U.S. Trappers; Survey conducted by Responsive Management in 2015 for the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs)

42% of trappers have heard of BMPs for trapping

Of those who have heard of BMPs, **64%** know a *great deal* or a *moderate amount*

OVERALL, DO YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES?

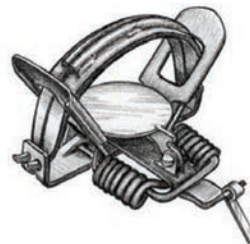


Among trappers who support BMPs, the most common reasons given for this support are for **HUMANE / ETHICAL/ANIMAL WELFARE REASONS** (34%), that it is **GOOD FOR ANIMAL POPULATIONS** (24%), that it is **GOOD FOR THE FUTURE OF TRAPPING** (20%), that it is **GOOD TO HAVE GUIDELINES** (20%), and that it is **GOOD TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC/IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF TRAPPING** (17%).

Among trappers who oppose BMPs, the most common reason given for this opposition is that there is **TOO MUCH REGULATION OR THE REGULATION IS TOO UNIVERSAL** (51%) — by far the top response. Both of these questions were open-ended and allowed multiple responses to be given.

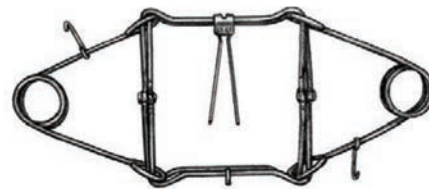
Among trappers who have heard of BMPs, **66%** currently use them and plan to continue

MOST COMMONLY USED TRAP TYPES (NATIONALLY)



86%

of trappers use
FOOTHOLD traps



60%

of trappers use
BODYGRIP traps

TRAP ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOE GOODMAN

← Studies show that a trapper spends an average of nearly \$400 annually on traps, lures and trapping gear.





PRIMARY TARGET SPECIES

Nationally, when asked to name the top four species most important to their trapping, trappers most often selected:



62%
RACCOON



55%
COYOTE



37%
MUSKRAT



33%
BEAVER



30%
RED FOX



27%
BOBCAT

Regionally, the four most important species were:



Characteristics of U.S. Trappers; Survey conducted by Responsive Management in 2015 for the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies.

a decision to purchase a trap.

Don't leave out mole traps and gopher traps, either. Those are hard to find and will sell to gardeners if these species are in your area. If there are skunks in your area, stock tube traps. These traps are designed to keep a skunk from spraying the trapper/homeowner.

Seasonality is a big aspect of trapping. Your fur trappers are going to be trapping from October through January, while your nuisance trappers will be needing supplies in the spring and summer. If you're going to have an endcap,

design it for fur-trapping supplies in the fall, then change it over to nuisance control in the spring and summer for the gardeners. Check with your local game warden if you don't know what kind of furbearers or varmints live in your area and ask them what species the locals trap most. You want to provide products for locally targeted species.

"Once you get a local trapper as a customer and you have the gear available, he'll come back," says Chagnon. "He's going to have to stock up on gear at the start of every season and he'll probably be back to get stuff during season." **HR**





← This Bridger #2 4-coil spring leghold trap is a common item for a trapper that focuses on larger animals, such as coyotes. Various sized leghold traps are commonly used for raccoons, otters, beavers, fox and more. When selecting traps, check with your local game and fish division to find out the common species trapped in your area and carry traps based on that information.

→ Trapping trowels are excellent items to keep in inventory. They sell well because they are more heavy-duty than gardening trowels, so you end up selling them to trappers and non-trappers. Plus, they are typically under \$30.

↓ When selling traps, also make sure to carry the needed accessories, such as this chain and drag setup on this Feather-Lite dog-proof raccoon trap. Other items used to secure this style trap would be an earth-anchor, re-bar stake or cable restraint connected to a tree or pole.





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2020 HUNTING RETAILER SHOW EDUCATION LINEUP

MONDAY, MARCH 9TH

8:00AM - 9:00AM

TOPIC: MEETING THE NEEDS OF YOUR
FEMALE CUSTOMERS

SPEAKER: WHITNEY JOHNSON

9:30AM - 10:30AM

TOPIC: TRADEMARK LAW AND ISSUES FOR
HUNTING RETAILERS

SPEAKER: GARY LAMBERT

11:00AM - 12:00PM

TOPIC: BUILD, MANAGE AND ENGAGE YOUR
CUSTOMERS DATABASE TO DRIVE
MEASURABLE SALES

SPEAKER: TIM GLOMB

1:30PM - 2:30PM

TOPIC: MIGRATING TO AN INTEGRATED POINT
OF SALE (POS), EBOUND, ENICS
AND E4473 SYSTEM

SPEAKER: JON RYDBERG

TUESDAY, MARCH 10TH

8:00AM - 9:00AM

TOPIC: BEAT SOCIAL MEDIA ALGORITHMS
BY BUILDING A TRIBE

SPEAKER: COLLIN COTTRELL

9:30AM - 10:30AM

TOPIC: OPERATION SECURE STORE
SPEAKER: WILLIAM NAPIER

11:00AM - 12:00PM

TOPIC: MARKETING AND SALES STRATEGIES
TO MAXIMIZE EXHIBITING AT
CONSUMER SHOWS

SPEAKER: CHRIS O'HARA

1:30PM - 2:30PM

TOPIC: THE RISE OF WORLD CLASS
MANUFACTURING IN THE FIREARMS
AND MUNITIONS INDUSTRY

SPEAKER: NATHAN DUDNEY

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FEATURED EXHIBITORS

(AS OF DECEMBER 4, 2019)

AIR VENTURI
ALASKA GUIDE CREATIONS
ALPINE INNOVATIONS, LLC
AMERICAN TECHNOLOGIES NETWORK (ATN)
BUCKNBEAR KNIVES
CAMO FACE PAINT
CAPCO SPORTSWEAR
CELERANT TECHNOLOGY CORP
COOPER HUNTING
EO TECH INC
JTS GROUP / XISICO USA INC
KENETREK BOOTS
KLYMIT
L&Q TACTICAL
MCMILLAN GROUP INTERNATIONAL
MOUNTAIN LAKES, INC.
MTR CUSTOM LEATHER

OSPREY GLOBAL LLC
OUTDOOR SPORTS MARKETING (OSM-USA)
PHALANX DEFENSE SYSTEMS LLC
POCKET SHOT LLC
RUGID
SEAL I, LLC
SELLMARK CORPORATION
SHEFFIELD KNIVES
SPORTEAR BY AXIL
SPORTS SOUTH LLC
SPOT HOGG ARCHERY PRODUCTS
SPYPOINT
T-BIRD ARCHERY
TIMBER CREEK OUTDOORS
VICTORY ARCHERY

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TARGETING THE HUNTING MARKET

BY HUNTING RETAILER STAFF

The Hunting Retailer Show will put the whole hunting industry in front of you so you can put the best products in front of your customers.

The Hunting Retailer Show is set for its inaugural run March 9-10, 2020, at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

Targeted specifically to retailers in the hunting and outdoors industry, this all-new show aims to bring the entire hunting industry together under one roof. The exposition will feature manufacturers from the outdoor marketplace focusing primarily on the hunting industry.

The show will offer a comprehensive educational program consisting of eight seminars presented by both retailers and manufacturers. Presentations cover a range of important topics pertaining to your business, including marketing, trademark and law, point-of-sale software, event participation, security, manufacturing and meeting the needs of your female customers. There will also be networking opportunities available including Retailer Roundtable Discussions both mornings and an Industry Appreciation Party in the evening on Monday, March 9.

Jeff Bruss, president of COLE Expos, brings more than two decades of trade show management experience to the event. He leads a staff of professionals who owned, managed, grew and eventually sold one of the largest trade shows in the United States. Bruss identified the need for such an event through ties to the outdoor industry on both the advertising/sales and retail sides.

"I've been to multiple shows over the past few years, and they were either not targeting the hunting market at all or were specifically targeting one type of hunter," Bruss says. "Even more disappointing are outdoor shows that don't include the hunting market at all, concentrating solely on the camping, climbing, hiking and biking side of things. Hunting is a strong market and we intend to proudly represent that through this show."

COLE Expos is owned by the same company as Grand View Outdoors.



The synergies between the trade show organization and the business-to-business brands owned by GVO make a strong bond for advertising, promoting and launching this new event.

"We've never had an opportunity like this in the long history of GVO. With our strong ties to the industry, we see this as a win-win for all involved," says GVO President Derrick Nawrocki.

Grand View Outdoors operates six titles in the business-to-business space including *Hunting Retailer*, *Archery Business*, *Shooting Sports Retailer*, *Tactical Retailer*, *Bait & Tackle Business* and *Recreational Retailer*, as well as the consumer titles *Bowhunting World*, *Predator Xtreme* and *Whitetail Journal*.

The following are some of the products that will be highlighted at the 2020 Hunting Retailer Show.

1 SEAL 1 | Signature Series Copper and Lead Remover

SEAL 1 Signature Series Copper and Lead Remover is specifically designed for high-performance shooters. It's all natural, non-toxic and environmentally friendly, and research shows that it is more effective and safer for the user than traditional copper and lead removal products. SEAL 1 uses state of the art technology to remove copper and lead fouling from the bore without the strong odors or dangerous chemicals used in traditional copper removers. It can also be used to help improve performance in bores that have slight imperfections. SEAL 1 specializes in eco-based archery, hunting and shooting sports products. MSRP: \$10.49.

www.seal1.com



2 BUCKNBEAR | EDC Diesel Knife

The EDC Diesel flipper knife from BucknBear Knives is built with a lightweight skeletonized carbon fiber/titanium handle for top-notch durability and function. Its compact clip point 14C28N Swedish steel blade with a titanium stonewash finish provides excellent wear resistance and edge retention. The blade opens effortlessly on a smooth ball bearing pivot and locks up solid for swift, responsive blade deployment. The EDC Diesel is a remarkable combination of tactical functionality and a refined, stylish appearance. MSRP: \$139.

www.bucknbearknives.com



4 KLYMIT | Insulated Static V Luxe

The Klymit Insulated Static V Luxe is a big, warm, comfortable, inflatable sleeping pad that weighs in at only 2 pounds — testament that it's possible to have a luxury pad without going overboard on weight. All insulated Klymit sleeping pads feature Klymalite insulation, which creates additional warmth that lasts through the night. And its V-chambered sleeping surface is wide enough to move around on without feeling restricted. Take on cold conditions without sacrificing comfort or pack size. Klymalite lofted synthetic insulation offers exceptional warmth without the dreaded crinkle noise of other insulated pads. It even rolls up small enough to easily slide into a backpack. MSRP: \$119.95. www.klymit.com



6 SPYPOINT | Link-Micro Trail Camera

The LINK-MICRO-S-LTE from Spypoint combines the company's innovative patent-pending integrated solar panel technology with the LINK-MICRO platform to deliver a compact and affordable trail camera. The solar panel charges the included 10,200 mAh lithium battery pack directly, without the need for a bulky secondary battery system. Being able to keep the camera powered while images are sent via cellular network means big savings from fewer trips to the hunting property. The LINK-MICRO-S-LTE uses the LTE network in place of the 4G network to keep ahead of cellular network evolution, ensuring years of service. MSRP: NA.

www.spypoint.com



3 T-BIRD ARCHERY | Modular Arrow Saw

T-Bird Archery's Modular Arrow Saw is a versatile and quiet arrow cut-off saw powered by a powerful 8,000 rpm motor, ensuring quick cuts through any type of arrow shaft. Spin testers check for arrow shaft straightness and broadhead runout and a deburring tool chamfers the inside of the arrow shaft to allow easy insert installation. A vacuum adapter accommodates a vacuum cleaner to remove carbon dust and a built-in squaring device quickly and accurately sands the ends of the arrow shaft to make certain the nock and insert are perfectly aligned with the arrow shaft. Built for pro shop and home use. MSRP: \$135.

www.modulararrowsaw.com



5 SIGHTMARK | Wraith HD 4-32x50mm Digital Riflescope

Take back the night in high definition with the Sightmark Wraith 4-32x50mm digital riflescope. Hunt with an advanced 1920x1080 HD sensor that provides full-color clarity in daytime or simply hit the left arrow to switch to night mode — with classic emerald or black and white viewing options. The Wraith comes with a removable 850nm IR illuminator to provide an enhanced nighttime image and accurate target acquisition up to 200 yards. The Wraith features a built-in camera that allows users to record and share videos, 4.5 hours of battery life with four common AA batteries and an external MicroUSB port for expanding power options. Customize the Wraith with 10 reticle options and nine color choices. MSRP: \$599.99. www.sightmark.com



7 KENETREK | Mountain Extreme Boots

Serious boots for rugged terrain, Kenetrek 10-inch Mountain Extreme boots are made with 2.8mm full-grain leather and one-piece vamp boot uppers, which means there's no stitching at the tongue to come loose or allow moisture to penetrate. The uppers sit on top of stiff yet lightweight 7mm nylon midsoles with high-traction K-talon outsoles. Waterproof, breathable Windtex membrane ensures dry feet, and 400- or 1,000-gram Thinsulate insulation keeps them warm. Other features include reinforced triple stitching in high wear areas, anticorrosion swiveling hardware and reinforced rubber sole guard for extra leather abrasion resistance. Retail: Starts at \$465.

www.kenetrek.com



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8 EOTECH | Vudu 1-8x24mm SFP Riflescope

EOTech, a division of L3Harris Technologies, has added the versatile 1-8x24mm Second Focal Plane configuration to its Vudu riflescope lineup. Like other Vudu scopes, the 1-8x24mm SFP is made from aircraft-grade aluminum — including a one-piece 30mm tube — for strength and durability. It features clear and bright XC High-Density glass with extraordinary resolution, color fidelity and low-light performance characteristics. It also has surgically precise turrets and intuitive push-button reticle illumination controls. The HC3 quad-level BDC reticle features a precise 0.5-MOA illuminated center dot and 2-, 5-, 8.5- and 12.5-MOA subtensions on the vertical axis (at 8X power). It measures just 10.5 inches in length and weighs a mere 21.1 ounces, making it shorter and lighter than most other scopes in this configuration. MSRP: \$1,399.

www.eotechgear.com



10 SHEFFIELD | 12626 Field Box

The Sheffield 12626 Field Box has been redesigned and is now even better for protecting, storing and safely transporting ammo and other valuables in the outdoors. With a compression-fit lid that resists water and dust, plus a molded lip for added strength and protection against contaminants, this sturdy field box has many uses. It's ideal for hunting and fishing gear, equipment, electronics, tools and many other items. It features three locking options to guard against prying and tampering, providing peace of mind that belongings are safe and secure. A base-to-lid interlocking system reduces tipping and allows easy stacking to save space and enhance organization. It has a hefty handle for easy carrying and is available in a variety of colors. MSRP: \$10.98. www.sheffield-tools.com



12 JTS GROUP | M12AK Semi-auto Shotgun

The JTS M12AK semi-automatic magazine-fed shotgun has been designed and built based on the traditional AK platform, utilizing a long stroke piston system and dual locking lug bolt. It is chambered for 2¾- and 3-inch shotshells and its adjustable gas system can be easily configured to run most loads. It has a chrome-lined barrel that is threaded to accept Rem.-style choke tubes and is manufactured utilizing the highest-grade polymers available. As with all JTS shotguns, the M12AK is shipped with a cylinder choke and two five-round magazines. MSRP: \$449.

www.jtsgroup.us



9 MTR LEATHER | Slimline Deluxe Pancake Holster

MTR Leather's Slimline Deluxe Pancake Holster features a slim profile with a light butt-forward cant allowing effective OWB concealment and easy access for drawing a weapon. It comes with custom combat accessibility, allowing for an instant shooting grip, and covers the full-length barrel and trigger of each weapon. The open-top design offers a swift and easy draw with a great cosmetic appearance and detailed molding. Customized holsters are available for lasers/lights/optic attachments on specific weapons and is offered in exotic leathers such as full dark brown alligator. The Slimline Deluxe Pancake Holsters with custom sweat shields are hand-molded to fit specific firearms. MSRP: NA. www.mtrcustomleather.com



11 ATN | BinoX 4K 4-16X Day & Night Smart HD Binocular

Integrating a laser rangefinder into its BinoX 4K Day & Night binocular series now allows American Technologies Network product lines to talk to each other. Simply build a ballistics profile in your SMART HD scope and range the target with the BinoX 4K Day & Night binocular. The SMART HD processor handles the rest and will provide an instantaneous POI adjustment. This day/night binocular will allow users to have the convenience, speed, efficiency and valuable dual-purpose functionality of a high-definition binocular, perfectly paired with an angle-compensated rangefinder. The control keypad is simple to use and easily manipulated with a single hand. The BinoX 4K is ergonomically designed and includes a neck strap. MSRP: Starts at \$899. www.atncorp.com



13 OSPREY | Elite Series 1-12/26mm IR Riflescope

Osprey Global's Elite Series 1-12x26mm IR riflescope offers a wide magnification range for close- to mid-range shooting, combining impressive in-the-field performance with a stealthy appearance. Designed with serious shooters in mind, it features a second focal plane elite reticle calibrated for 55-grain 5.56/.223 projectiles. Built with a sturdy 34mm tube, the Elite Series 1-12x26mm scope has an overall length of 10.6 inches and an eye relief of 4.72 to 3.5 inches. Other features include red, green and blue illumination, 94-7.9-foot field of view at 100 yards, 100 MOA elevation, windage adjustment and more. Uses one CR2032 battery. MSRP: \$649.

www.ospreyscopes.com



15 PHALANX DEFENSE | Systems Stealth Operator Holster

Engineered using a temperature-resistant, high-strength polymer, Stealth Operator now offers gun owners a lightweight, durable and flexible holster for concealed carry or use at the range. Stealth Operator holsters are a multi-fit containment system for the multi-gun owner, available in compact, full-size and left-handed models. Contoured to fit the curves of the body, each holster is formed using proprietary Frame-Lock technology to provide positive and reliable retention for 150-plus handgun models without any adjustment. Stealth Operator is a brand of Phalanx Defense Systems, which produces body armor and tactical equipment. All Phalanx Defense Systems products are made from high-quality materials in the USA. MSRP: \$39.95.

www.phalanxsystems.com



14 MCMILLAN | Mc3 Tradition Hunting Stock

Modeled after McMillan's popular Game Scout Hunting stock, the Tradition features a vertical pistol grip with built-in texture panels that match the panels in the forend — built to fit Remington BDL long- or short-action rifles. The Tradition is 31 inches long and weighs 2 pounds, 10 ounces. Installation is as simple as removing the old stock and swapping in the Mc3 and BDL floorplate reusing the factory screws. Every Mc3 stock comes equipped with aluminum pillars bedded in during molding. The Tradition is a great economical option for anyone who wants to ditch their factory stock for a long-lasting and accurate upgrade. Available in tan, olive green and carbon fiber black. MSRP: \$269.

www.mcmillanusa.com



16 ALASKA GUIDE CREATIONS | Kodiak Cub Binocular Pack

There are times when it's better to have more than not enough. Integrating simplicity and utility, the Kodiak Cub binocular pack from Alaska Guide Creations delivers optimal protection and storage. The Cub protects valuable optics while keeping them easily accessible. It also provides storage of other essential gear with two elastic sleeves on the lid to hold a phone, a front rangefinder pocket and two side pockets for a wind checker and headlamp or other like-size items. The Kodiak Cub is available in a variety of camo patterns. Alaska Guide Creations also offers packs in multiple sizes and pocket configurations, and accessories to fit most binoculars and all styles of hunting. MSRP: \$99.99.

www.alaskaguidecreations.com



17 AIR VENTURI | SenX ONYX Crossbow

Air Venturi, a leading manufacturer and importer of airguns and airsoft guns is pleased to showcase the SenX ONYX Crossbow, the industry's first and only one-push cocking (OPC) crossbow. The ONYX features collapsible limbs for easier transport and an arrow speed of up to 330 fps. But the biggest differentiator is the one-push cocking system powered by a refillable high-pressure air tank. A simple touch of a button cocks and de-cocks the unit, erasing the safety concerns associated with traditional crossbows, which hunters often carry fully cocked and ready to fire. With the ONYX, hunters can automatically cock the crossbow when needed, immediately before shooting. MSRP: \$1,749.99/Basic Combo; \$2,059.99/Premium Combo; \$3,199.99/Ultimate Combo. www.airventuri.com





PREVIEW

18 CELERANT | Gun Shop Software

Celerant is a premier provider of gun shop software, including shooting range software, gun store POS systems and firearms dealer software in the United States, serving the firearms industry for close to two decades. Sportsman retailers can leverage its solutions-integrated electronic A&D book, e4473 and digital waivers, easily import products from vendor catalogs such as Sports South, Zanders and RSR, and upload products to third-party marketplaces such as GunBroker, Guns.com and Amazon. As a preferred software provider of the NSSF and the NRA, Celerant supports the hunting, archery and outdoor industries and will continue to do so long-term with its gun store eCommerce and other retail management solutions.

www.celerant.com

**20 ALPINE PRODUCTS** | Ammo Slicker

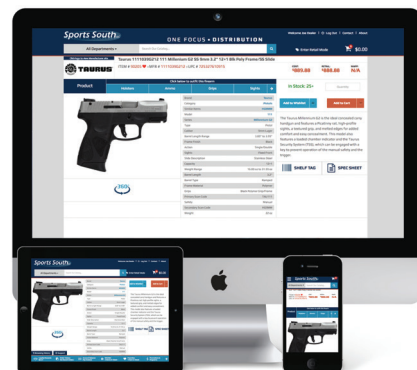
The Ammo Slicker from Alpine Products is an innovative ammo holder built with special non-slip neoprene and a catch pocket to keep ammo secure. It completely covers the ammo and fits most rifle buttstocks on the market. The Ammo Slicker is available in shotgun, small and large caliber versions, and single pocket designs, and includes a left- or right-hand dope sheet window. The large caliber model holds seven rounds and the small caliber model holds 10 rounds. Never drop ammo again. MSRP: \$21.99. www.alpineproducts.com

**22 SPOT HOGG** | Wiseguy Wrist-Style Release

The Spot Hogg Wiseguy was built for hardcore hunters who want a wrist-strap-style release with the same quality and accuracy as target releases. The Wiseguy incorporates an uber-light adjustable failsafe trigger with zero travel, rigid body for comfort and speed, a quick-loading jaw that creates a torque-free release when using a D-loop and a forward trigger design for maximum draw length and speed. It also has a magnetic breathable Velcro wrist strap for consistent adjustments. MSRP: NA www.spot-hogg.com

**19 SPORTS SOUTH** | Shooting Warehouse

Sports South maintains an industry leadership position through the relentless pursuit of innovation to drive long-term success and growth. With the nation's largest single source of shooting sports products from leading manufacturers under one roof, Sports South can deliver unmatched distribution services to its customers. Its virtually-live online inventory is available 24/7 at www.theshootingwarehouse.com — access to 37,000-plus products and many other retailer account features that will make day-in and day-out transactions effortless. Sports South also offers many web service APIs so customers can take advantage of the same data as its own website. www.theshootingwarehouse.com

**21 CAMO** | Face Paint

Camo Face Paint is an international company started 23 years ago by Bobbie Weiner, an F/X professional makeup artist for the film and TV industry and the No. 1 supplier of camouflage face paint to all branches of the U.S. Government. The company now supplies the hunting industry with the same high-quality face paint. Weiner will custom make any color combinations and all compacts come with an unbreakable mirror and a four-year shelf life. Camo Face Paints are odorless, hypoallergenic, nontoxic and can be washed off with soap and water. www.camofacepaint.com

**23 VICTORY ARCHERY** | RIP TKO Small Diameter Hunting Arrow

Hunters looking for a combination of speed, power and durability need look no further than the RIP TKO hunting arrow from Victory Archery. Its .204 diameter shaft is smaller than standard hunting arrows, which reduces wind drift and increases penetration while maintaining extreme durability. Now offered with Victory's SHOK TL204 broadhead adaptor, this arrow has an even higher FOC for tighter broadhead and field point groups. MaxxKe technology increases momentum/kinetic energy during impact, helps the arrow recover quicker in flight and ensures the arrow hits hard on every shot. MSRP: \$164.99 per dozen shafts/V3 straightness $\pm .003$ -inch; \$189.99 per dozen shafts/V1 straightness $\pm .001$ -inch. www.victoryarchery.com



24 RUGID | Compound Bow Case 2.0

The new and improved RUGID Compound Bow Case fits most modern parallel-limbed bows. The durable waterproof, rugged, floating case is made of 500D PVC. The new model features an improved zipper location on the arrow pocket that allows full access to the 33-inch-long by 8-inch-wide by 2-inch-deep arrow pocket. Both the arrow pocket and accessory pocket also feature upgraded highly durable zipper mechanicals. Additional features include an elastic call/clip holder, rear tie-down straps and a removable closed-cell foam interior for protection and easy cleaning. MSRP \$239.99. www.rugidgear.com



26 POCKET SHOT PRO | Arrow Kit

The Pocket Shot is the evolution of the slingshot. Its patented circular design allows users to load and shoot different projectiles at two to three times the rate of a regular slingshot. Perfect for hunters and recreational use, the Pocket Shot also features a sling-bow variation. The PRO Arrow Kit has a 40-pound draw weight and allows users to shoot full-size arrows up to 180 fps. The kit includes a PRO arrow pouch, pocket hammer, black arrow cap, pocket shot inner ring and cap, four nock caps and an arrow release trigger (glove). The Pocket Shot weighs only 14 ounces and measures 7.5x4 inches. MSRP: \$99-\$105. www.thepocketshot.com



25 MOUNTAIN LAKES | Custom Embroidered Caps

You design it and they will make it. Mountain Lakes high-quality custom hats are a popular and cost effective way to advertise any company or product. And it now has a special offer on custom embroidered caps in numerous fabric types in a rainbow of color choices. The price includes free setup and up to 10,000 stitches, choice of fabric and embroidery locations, pre-curved bill and proof sample by photo — or just pay shipping for a physical proof product. For an extra charge, puff embroidery and a sandwich bill are also available. MSRP: \$3.25 plus shipping/minimum quantity of 288; \$1.98 plus shipping/large quantity of 10,000 and up. www.mloutdoors.com



27 L&Q TACTICAL | Laptop Backpack

The Laptop Backpack from L&Q Tactical comes equipped with padded air mesh shoulder straps and back panel and has a robust grab and go handle. It will safely transport up to a 17-inch laptop computer via its spacious main padded compartment with a rigid board for enhanced support and stability. It also features a zippered tablet pocket, a zippered pocket with an organizer/office panel and a kidney pad with a hidden, padded zippered pocket for a concealed weapon. An integrated rain fly keeps the backpack dry and stows away in the bottom. MSRP: \$150. www.lqtactical.com





Stocking Up for Food Plot Sales

Food plots are big business these days in most parts of the country. Are you cashing in?

BY MARK CHESNUTT



PRO STAFF

Mark Chesnut is a freelance writer and editor who has been a professional journalist for more than 35 years. An avid hunter and bird dog lover, he is also owner and editorial director at Red Setter Communications.

I was on my fourth hour of planting food plots for a second day in a row when two migrant workers from the farm where we hunt came to bring me some more diesel fuel. As I approached on the tractor, I noticed them grinning and looking at each other quizzically.

“What’s the matter?” I asked, worried that one of my tires was flat, my face was smeared with dirt or my jeans might be unzipped.

“Oh, nothing,” one answered. “We just can’t believe anyone would do that much work just to feed deer.”

I started to explain that I wasn’t working that hard just to feed deer, but to kill them. But his point had already been made. I realized that even though it seems crazy to many nonhunters, some hunters (like me) are willing to put in a lot of time, effort and money to plant food plots in preparation for the fall hunting seasons.

Since that’s the case, retailers who are prepared to supply those hardcore hunters with the food plot products they need can bolster their bottom line in the process.

Creating a good food plot is a multi-step process. First, hunters must locate a spot on their hunting property that is the appropriate size and in a desirable location to provide deer with a food attractant. To prepare the area, hunters must first mow, spray, or mow and spray the area to clear it of

“Some hunters (like me) are willing to put in a lot of time, effort and money to plant food plots in preparation for the fall hunting seasons.”

its current vegetation. Next, the ground must be broken up to allow for good seed-to-soil contact. At this time, a soil sample should be taken so any necessary fertilizers can be added. Next, seed must be selected from a large variety of plants and blends, then spread in the correct manner and amount. Finally, with all that done, it's time to pray for rain.

To cater to hunters wanting to gear up to plant their first food plot, there are several product categories retailers should consider.

Sprayers

Killing off existing vegetation can help alleviate a lot of future problems with a new food plot. Sprayers are available in all shapes, sizes and configurations, and that's a good thing. Some hunters making very small plots can use a handheld or backpack sprayer. These are handy and can get the job done if the food plot area isn't too large.

Those with bigger plots need sprayers that pull behind or mount to ATVs, allowing them to spray the plot faster and more easily. Hunters who plant plots that cover several acres will need a sprayer made for pulling behind a farm tractor.

5 Great Food Plot Implements

No idea where to start? These five food plot implements will help you reach customers in the segment immediately.

1. The **NorthStar ATV Boomless Broadcast and Spot Sprayer** is narrow enough to go anywhere an ATV will go but still sprays a wide swath.
2. **Plotmaster's Plotmower Rough Cut Mowers** pull easily behind an ATV to cut down current vegetation in proposed food plot areas.
3. The **King Kutter 48-inch Flip-Over Disc** is designed for breaking ground with minimal effort.
4. The **Field Tuff Heavy Duty Drag Harrow** is pulled behind an ATV to smooth the soil after turning.
5. **Moultrie's ATV Spreader** hooks to an ATV and can be used for spreading both seed and fertilizer.

Sprayer buyers also need some kind of herbicide to use with their sprayer, so stocking a few kinds could lead to an additional sale. Glyphosate (Roundup) is the most common herbicide used, but other popular ones include Sethoxydim (Poast Plus, Vantage and G-Pro) and Clethodim (Arrest Max, Arrow and Select).

Mowers

The main job of a good, heavy-duty mower is to clear a food plot area when preparing to establish a new plot. But they

↑ Food plots can be anything from simple hand-planted spots to multi-acre affairs planted with heavy equipment.

→ You're not likely to sell tractors or huge implements in your store, but food plotters need plenty of smaller, more accessible gear that you can supply.



A Tree Deer Will Love

If your food plot customers are looking to branch out into longer-term projects like establishing an orchard, they'll be searching for the right tree. While it's probably not practical to stock trees yourself, you can help steer them in the right direction — good advice is always appreciated.

Historically, the American chestnut tree was a favorite of deer and other wildlife, until a blight virtually eliminated them from the landscape. But a preference for chestnuts is still encoded into the deer DNA. They recognize the nutritional superiority of chestnuts, which contain four times the carbohydrates of a white oak acorn, 2.5 times the protein and only a fraction of the fat. Chestnut trees offer additional advantages to land managers as well. They grow faster and bigger, sometimes bearing in two to five years, where a white oak might not bear for 20 years.

Through some fortunate discoveries and serious grafting and cross-pollination work with a blight-resistant American chestnut and a Chinese chestnut, Dr. Robert Dunstan created the Dunstan chestnut, a breed with the optimal combination of blight resistance and production of large, high quality nuts. Today, Dunstan Chestnuts and a variety of other mast producing trees and shrubs are grown at Chestnut Hill Orchards in Alachua, Florida. The family business, which began as a commercial chestnut orchard, now produces stock specifically designed and cultured for wildlife mast orchards.

For more on Chestnut Hill Outdoors products and how to care for them, visit ChestnutHillOutdoors.com, or call (855) 386-7826.



are also useful for cutting paths and helping control weeds in perennial food plots.

Some hunters load up their zero-turn mower or lawn tractor from home and use them for this purpose. However, most food plots are much rougher than lawns, so it's easy to tear up a lawnmower using it in this manner. Other hunters use one of the mowing implements made for pulling behind ATVs. A good example is one of the pull-behind mowers made by Kruz Engineering. Those with very large plots typically use a power takeoff-driven brush hog pulled behind a farm tractor. These can mow a lot of area very quickly, but purchasing and maintaining a tractor solely for food plot purposes is a very expensive proposition.

“While implements are typically a one-time sale, seed and seed blends are needed every year to replant food plots.”

Discs

Discs and other implements (plows, cultivators) made for breaking up the ground are necessary, even for those who choose to make a food plot without first spraying and/or mowing. That's why these implements should be at the top of the list for retailers choosing to carry food plot products.

Except for those made to pull behind tractors for farming, most discs are designed for pulling behind ATVs to break up the ground before planting. In this case, there's a trade-off between weight and how deep discs are able to break the ground, since most ATVs won't pull an overly heavy implement. Models that have pin adjustments for the angle of the disk blades and electric motors to raise and lower the disk gangs within the implement's frame are more expensive, but many find them worth the extra money.

Disc/harrows, which combine two functions in one implement, are also available and are versatile.

Harrows

This implement is made to smooth food plots once they've been broken up with a disc or plow. Most are made for pulling behind ATVs, and some are adjustable for multiple levels of aggressiveness in smoothing the ground. For example, in some models the harrow's teeth can be aimed down and forward for an aggressive cut, down and to the rear (less aggressive) or up for simple smoothing.

Many hunters trying to make a food plot on a budget try to make a DIY harrow from an old piece of chain link fence or even skip this part of the process altogether. But most eventually end up purchasing a harrow made for the purpose, since results are better.

In recent years, many hunters have begun using cultipackers instead of harrows for smoothing broken ground. A cultipacker is a heavy, iron roller, usually with iron cleats, that is rolled over soil after it has been turned to firm and smooth the seedbed. Cultipackers are generally much more expensive than harrows, though.



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→ Cultipackers are rolled over the soil after seed has been planted, to smooth out and firm up the seedbed.

↓ One of the more practical food plot items to carry in a local store are seed blends. Every food plot needs them.



Seeders/Fertilizer Spreaders

Seeders and fertilizer spreaders also come in a wide range of sizes, and choosing the right one depends mostly on the size of the food plot.

For seeders, handheld and over-the-shoulder units are perfect for small jobs that can be done on foot. Of course, those planting bigger plots and large fields are going to need a seeder/spreader that pulls behind an ATV or tractor. ATV-mounted spreaders also come in a wide range of sizes and price ranges.

Most spreaders are easy to adjust and can do double duty for both seeding and fertilizing.

Seed/Seed Blends

Don't forget the seed to be planted in food plots. While implements are typically a one-time sale, seed and seed blends are needed every year to replant food plots.

The type of seed hunters choose for their plots varies by many factors, including region of the country, soil type and what other hunters have convinced them they need to try.

According to the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA), food plot plantings fall into two categories: warm-season and cool-season. Warm-season plantings are typically planted in spring and grow throughout the summer and into fall. They include forages like soybeans, corn, sorghum and cowpeas.





← Simple hand-held spreaders are inexpensive, and many hunters will go this route rather than investing in big equipment. Be sure to stock some spreaders that can get customers into the food plot game for a low cost.

4 Seed Blends to Consider Stocking

For retailers just entering the food plot business, consider these four blends for starters.

Cool-Season Blends

Whitetail Institute Imperial Whitetail Clover Seed provides antler-building protein and is tolerant to cold weather.

Antler King Honey Hole Food Plot Mix is a blend of brassicas, rape seed and turnips.

Warm-Season Blends

Pennington Fall Forage Food Plot Seed combines winter legumes, brassica and fall grains.

Evolved Harvest Mean Bean Crush is a mix of bean and pea seeds.

Cool-season forages are planted in the fall or early spring, and some grow throughout the year. They include forage plants like wheat, rye, oats, clovers and brassicas. Warm-season forages are typically annuals, while cool-season forages can be annuals or perennials.

Carrying a good selection of seed and seed blends will give customers lots of options, depending on what kind of food plot they have in mind.

Wrapping Up

As deer hunting popularity remains high, the interest in food plots will likely continue to grow. Likewise, so will the need for accessories, implements and seed blends for creating, planting and maintaining food plots.

Overlooking the potential food plot customer is a poor decision for retailers who target hunters. With the right knowledge of what is needed to successfully grow quality food plots, jumping into the market isn't that big of leap. **HR**

↓ A successful food plot is a thing of beauty. Help your customers develop the plot of their dreams, and they'll keep coming back.





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R E T A I L E R



Catering to Hunter-Athletes

Boost your bottom line and appeal to the hunting/fitness craze with these tips.

BY JACE BAUSERMAN

Here's some interesting stats to consider. The average American, according to a survey completed by MyProtein (us.myprotein.com), will spend \$112,000 dollars on their health and fitness over a lifetime. That's an average of \$155 per month, and it was discovered that over 60 percent of the population spends more than \$40 each month on supplements like protein, vitamins and the like.

In 2017, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducted a survey that showed 101.6 million Americans participated in hunting, fishing and wildlife activities. I'm no Einstein when it comes to crunching the numbers, but it's fair to say that a solid percentage of these outdoorsmen and women, based on the stats from MyProtein, shell out hard-earned coin when it comes to their overall health and fitness.

↑ More and more backcountry wanderers are learning the benefits of Altitude Advantage.



PRO STAFF

Jace Bauserman is a former magazine editor and well-known freelance writer in the outdoor space. Bauserman lives in Colorado with his wife, Amy, and their three children, Hunter, Abbey and Brody. While Bauserman's passion is bowhunting, he doesn't mind picking up any legal weapon and chasing game. To date, Bauserman has hunted 16 different states along with a pair of Canadian provinces.

It's a trend we've seen growing. Pioneered by Western hunters looking to get in better physical shape in order to boost their backcountry efficiency, the trend correlating hunting and fitness has exploded. From treestand sitters waiting on a thick-necked whitetail to Western wanderers chasing muleys in unsullied alpine basins, the fit-to-hunt craze is booming. Jump on board.

One of the fastest ways to boost profits in your store is to stock products this crowd craves. Here are a few to consider.

MTN OPS *(mtnops.com)*

Offering an array of products covering everything from help-you-sleep Slumber to Ammo Whey Protein meal replacements, MTN OPS has it going on. Backed by research and focused on constant development, this nutrition/health company is engrossed in helping hunters train, recover and stay focused and energetic during their time in the woods. While their list of to-carry products is long, some of their craved-by-hunters must-haves include Ignite and Enduro drink mixes. These products are offered in powder tubs as well as trail packs. Ignite contains a scientifically formulated blend of amino acids, L-citrulline and L-arginine, as well as MTN OPS' proprietary Brain Blend of nootropics to better improve cognitive func-

↓ For many, training to hunt has become a lifestyle, and this crowd depends heavily on supplements to help them fight fatigue, recover and gain energy.

→ Mtn Ops' Enduro works in concert with the body's cardiovascular system to boost hydration and endurance.





tion. I've used Ignite for years and can attest to the 20-plus hours of long-lasting, jitter-free energy it provides. Enduro was designed to work with the body's cardiovascular system to increase hydration and performance during intense physical activity. Both of these drink mixes are offered in an array of palate-pleasing flavors. A quick breeze through MTN OPS' website will reveal throngs of other products you may want to consider stocking on your shelves.

Wilderness Athlete (wildernessathlete.com)

I love the name. I also love their products. While Wilderness Athlete has drink mixes that help with recovery, energy and the like, countless hunters are experiencing the true advantages that stem from using the manufacturer's Altitude Advantage. Designed to help hunters adapt to and perform at high altitudes, this supplement helps reduce fatigue, inflammation and frustrating lactic acid buildup. A potent blend of natural antioxidants, Altitude Advantage is ideal for both the seasoned Western hunter and those making their first trip into the high country. Another possible to-stock Wilderness Athlete

“The hunt/fitness crowd is a loyal group. For them, hunting and fitness is about a lifestyle, not about taking part in a seasonal activity.”

item is Green Infusion. A blend of greens, fruits, vegetable extracts, adaptogenic herbs and probiotics, this powder reinforces proper digestion while supplying the body with a dose of six servings of fruits and vegetables. According to longtime Wilderness Athlete user and fitness/hunt fanatic Tim Kent, Green Infusion helps promote gut health. “It really, really helps with stomach health and digestion. The product has really worked wonders for me, and I’m a big believer in it. I hate getting bloated on and before hunts. This product really helps with uncomfortable bloating.”

Offer Them Something More

In addition to carrying the nutrition products today's hunter-athletes demand, you can also put more greenbacks in your account by stepping outside established norms. I currently know of a couple of retail outfits that have partnered with local gyms, running clubs and the like. It's nothing more than local businesses help-

← Drink mixes specifically marketed to hunters provide a boost of energy and hydration during a workout or a hunt.

→ Altitude sickness is nothing to sneeze at. Wilderness Athlete's Altitude Advantage is designed to help hunters perform at high altitude.

↓ Wilderness Athlete says its Green Infusion product offers six servings of fruits and vegetables to promote digestive health.





ing one another grow. It works like this: Your retail shop partners with a local gym. While at your shop, hunters can sign up to get a discounted gym membership as well as pen the dotted line for an array of fitness classes offered by the gym. What's the gym get? More bodies. Running clubs work in much the same way. You offer your customers a special discounted sign-up rate, and the running club gets more members, members they can expose to different races, tailored training programs and the like.

Another option, and one that really appeals to the public-land DIY hunt/fitness crowd, is to pay an expert dietitian, nutritionist or physical trainer to develop a number of diet/fit-

ness programs that customers can purchase from you at your store or download for a fee off your website.

I've always said that one of the best ways to move bows in and out of your shop is to have your souped-up rig hanging in a very visible area. The same holds true for moving nutrition-type products. If you have a water cooler set up and a tub of MTN OPS or WA available next to the cooler with some small cups, customers can try it out. In addition, you should be using the products and supporting the hunting/fitness lifestyle. Offer morning running groups, evening lifting groups, and the list goes on.

“Pioneered by Western hunters looking to get in better physical shape in order to boost their backcountry efficiency, the trend correlating hunting and fitness has exploded.”

↓ Hunter-athletes train hard. If it fits with your store's image, it wouldn't be a bad idea to stock some basic fitness gear, like trail-running shoes.





Yes, You Want to Carry the AccuBow

A true training partner, the AccuBow is gaining traction in the retail world. Why? Simple. The AccuBow has zero letoff, which means it will condition and develop the necessary muscles required for archery. I've seen guys with monster chests and backs struggle to pull back the bow when set at its max weight of 70 pounds.

The good news is the bow is adjustable from 10 to 70 pounds, meaning you can drop or increase weight based on your desired goals and training. This bow features the durable AccuBand, specifically created to withstand stretch and snap. That's right, you can dry-fire the heck out of this thing – so not only are you training your muscles, but you're also perfecting your form. Testing by AccuBow has shown that shooters are able to simulate shooting 90 arrows in just 20 minutes. Try doing that out on the range – it's not going to happen.

Designed to look and feel like an actual bow, the AccuBow comes with a laser sight and allows for the addition of a stabilizer. Strategically located shock absorption on the bow reduces the kinetic energy wallop and allows for virtually unlimited dry-firing.



They're Specific

The hunting/fitness crowd is a specific group. They invest oodles of time getting their bodies ready for a physically demanding season, and they demand gear, especially clothing, that offers an athletic fit and feel. If you're not currently carrying this type of hunting apparel, you should be.

Sitka (sitkagear.com)

They have it all, and they've perfected the art of building quiet, comfortable, durable gear that promises an athletic fit. Their arsenal is rich — loaded with multiple layering systems designed for Western hunters as well as for those who prefer to hang 20 feet up a hardwood. Gear for early-, mid- and late-season pursuits is offered, and each piece features specific, purposeful design features that make it ideal for the particular season in which it's being used.

Three distinct camo patterns are offered for big-game enthusiasts inside the Sitka line. Western hunters often lean toward the Subalpine and Optifade Open Country patterns, while whitetail enthusiasts prefer the Elevated II pattern. Sitka gives hunters options, and when it comes to moving gear off your racks and out the door, options help — a lot.

Badlands (badlandspacks.com)

Not just a pack company anymore, Badlands has expanded into the clothing arena, and their gear is quickly being accepted by hunter-athletes around the globe. Staple camo patterns include Approach, which is favored by the Western crowd as well as those hunting early in the season when the vegetation has yet to be sucked of its color. Whitetail hunters, and those chasing other late-season big-game species, will

↑ Serious hunters know the value of training before the season starts. Is your shop a place where they can find nutrition products, seek workout council and possibly purchase workout programs?



→ Packs, poles and other gear get near-year-round use by hunters who train all spring and summer. Stock quality items that appeal to high-end shoppers, who don't mind spending more on heavy-duty gear.



lean toward the FX Approach pattern. This pattern features a fall-schemed color arrangement; like the original Approach, it features Adaptive Coloration, a technology that allows the pattern to adapt to the surroundings as well as the current lighting conditions.

Like Sitka, Badlands offers multiple systems to ensure proper layering is achieved. In addition, like Sitka, Badlands offers lifestyle clothing. This is important. The hunt/fitness crowd is a loyal group. For them, hunting and fitness is about a lifestyle, not about taking part in a seasonal activ-

ity. They love to show their loyalty, and if they can pick up some branded lifestyle gear at your shop, they typically won't hesitate.

There you have it. Something new and something fresh — some tips that could truly help boost shop sales. This is a growing segment, and with the reach social media is capable of and the number of hunter/fitness fanatics posting daily pictures and updates to their daily stories, it won't be a passing fad. Take advantage. Jump on the bandwagon and offer your customers more while putting a little more in your pocket. **HR**





12 Must-See Booths at SHOT Show 2020

If you're headed to the SHOT Show, stop by and see the new items at these industry-leading booths.

BY MARK CHESNUT

Held every January in Las Vegas, the SHOT Show brings together about 60,000 gun fanciers from around the world to celebrate firearms and firearm-related equipment of all kinds. New products are the star attractions, with an almost Christmas-morning-like atmosphere on display as people browse booth after booth to see the latest offerings from companies large and small.

SHOT 2020, set for Jan. 21-24, will be no exception, with some 18,000 booths full of new guns and gear galore

— much of it related to hunting. Of course, visiting every booth at SHOT is nearly impossible. A little quick math reveals that to do so, you'd have to visit about 50 booths an hour, every hour. That, of course, is a daunting task for even the heartiest SHOT goer.

Regardless of how many booths you choose to visit during SHOT Show 2020, here are 12 we think you'd be wise to check out.



PRO STAFF

Mark Chesnut is a freelance writer and editor who has been a professional journalist for more than 35 years. An avid hunter and bird dog lover, he is also owner and editorial director at Red Setter Communications.

1 ALPS

Known for its high-quality gear, Alps will be introducing a new hunting pack that offers all the conveniences of a day pack while providing the functionality of a meat hauler. The Hybrid X combines an internal frame meat hauler with a detachable 2,750-cubic-inch top-load pack that lets hunters carry essentials and haul meat out after a successful hunt. The pack detaches from the dual-aluminum frame by a series of compression straps. Made from 1860D Nylon Ballistic and Robic Nylon fabrics with hypalon-reinforced construction, the pack features a molded-foam suspension system and Lycra shoulder straps for comfort and stability when undertaking tough hunting chores. www.alpsoutdoorz.com



2 BEAR & SON

Over at the Bear & Son booth, the company's new fixed-blade knife designed specifically for big-game hunters will be the star attraction. The new 563 Small Stag Bone Hunter features a 2½-inch blade of 440 stainless steel with a clip-point blade to allow users to cleanly cut hard-to-reach places. Other features of the 563 include an India Stag Bone handle, nickel-silver finger guard for additional control and a handmade leather sheath. Overall length is 6¼ inches, and the knife weighs only 1.7 ounces. The American-made knife comes with Bear & Son's limited lifetime warranty.

www.bearandsoncutlery.com

3 BENELLI

At the time of this writing, the folks at Benelli, makers of high-quality shotguns prized by many hunters, were being tight-lipped about what they were going to introduce at SHOT. But they would say they are going to be introducing three new game changers to the Benelli lineup. The popular 828U line of over-and-under shotguns is overdue for sub gauges, so it wouldn't surprise me if they finally released a 20-gauge of that model. And since Benelli's Super Black Eagle is an apex predator of the skies, maybe it's time to expect another type of apex predator from Benelli? Remember, you heard it here first! www.benelliusa.com





4 CZ USA

At the CZ USA booth, representatives will be displaying the company's new All-Terrain shotgun line. Clad in OD green and walnut, these shotguns will stand out without being ostentatious. The muted green Cerakote finish should make them ideal for field work and impervious to the elements often faced by hunters while afield. Equipped with sling swivels and extended chokes, the All-Terrain lineup will include a semi-automatic, a side-by-side and three over-and-unders. Interestingly, the double-barrels will be equipped with magnets in the extractors or ejectors so shells are retained in the gun when it is turned upside down, yielding easy loading even in a pit blind or boat. www.czusa.com



5 FRANCHI

Though Franchi is better known for its shotguns, the additions to its Momentum line of bolt-action rifles should draw a crowd at SHOT 2020. The rifle's advanced ergonomic stock is now available in a variety of colors for hunters, each featuring a complimentary Cerakote finish on the barrel and receiver for protection against the elements. For hunters preferring a camo rifle, the Momentum now features the versatile Strata pattern from True Timber, also paired with a Cerakote-finished barrel and receiver. Additional features include a factory-installed muzzle brake and one-piece Picatinny top rail. All of the rifles have triggers that are adjustable from 2 to 4 pounds. www.franchiusa.com



6 GAMO

GAMO Adult Precision Airguns quietly revolutionized high-velocity air rifles a few years back with the introduction of the first rotary magazine for break-barrels, allowing 10 shots as fast as the shooter can break the barrel. Now into its second generation, GAMO's Swarm technology becomes more accurate and dependable, with a lower profile that allows for open sights in addition to the scope. With velocities reaching up to 1,300 feet per second, GAMO Swarm break barrels are legitimate small-game rifles for hunters of all ages. New models at SHOT 2020 will include Swarm Gen2 Maxim, Swarm Gen2 Magnum and Swarm Bone Collector. www.gamoussa.com



7 FEDERAL

Federal will be showing off its new Upland Steel loads at SHOT 2020. Made for hunting doves, quail and other upland birds, these shells will give hunters what they need for success in areas that require the use of non-lead shot. Federal says the loads are consistent and reliable, with high velocities that make the most of the steel payload while being offered in the shot sizes preferred by upland hunters. The 2 3/4-inch loads will include 12 gauge #6, 1 1/8-ounce; 12 gauge #7.5, 1 1/8-ounce; 20 gauge #6, 3/4-ounce; and 20 gauge #7.5, 3/4-ounce. MSRP will range from \$8.95 to \$9.95. www.federalpremium.com



8 GERMAN PRECISION OPTICS

German Precision Optics (GPO) will be showing off its new RangeGuide range-finding binocular. With a size and weight that rivals its competitors in the 42mm-binocular class, the 10x50 binocular boasts precise ranging on reflective targets out to nearly 1.75 miles. Only 6.3 inches tall, the RangeGuide's magnesium housing enables it to weigh in at just 35 ounces. Special features include true-range angle technology that calculates the proper distance to the target after measuring the angle to the target and a scan mode, which provides three readings per second via an orange OLED display with nine adjustable brightness levels. The bino's armor coating makes it tough enough to use in any outdoor environment. www.gpo-usa.com



9 MARLIN

Folks visiting the Marlin booth should be buzzing over two new lever-action rifles in that company's lineup. Marlin's Dark Series 1895 chambered in .444 Marlin should pack a wallop on any big-game animal that gets in its way. The rifle is made of carbon steel with Parkerized finish and features a 16.25-inch threaded barrel, black painted stock, black lever rail, big loop lever and a black paracord sling. Marlin will also show off its 150 Year Anniversary Rifle. Limited to year 2020 and chambered in .444 Marlin, the rifle has a 24-inch half octagon, half-round barrel, C-grade walnut stock, satin finish and engraved receiver, lever, TGP and bolt. www.marlinfirearms.com.



10 MOSSBERG

The Mossberg booth is a perennial favorite for many because of the wide variety of firearm types the company has to offer. For SHOT 2020, Mossberg will be showing off its Patriot Synthetic and Patriot Synthetic Super Bantam bolt-action rifles chambered in 350 Legend. Built with hunters in mind, the 350 Legend is the fastest straight-walled hunting cartridge available while offering more energy, less recoil and better penetration than many of its competitors. Mossberg also has a new 6.5 PRC chambering of its suppressor-ready Patriot Predator bolt-action rifle. The 6.5 PRC is designed for short-action, bolt-action rifles and combines velocity, manageable recoil and a flat trajectory. www.mossberg.com.

11 TRUGLO

Makers of high-quality pistol and shotgun sights, arrow rests and a variety of other hunting-related products, Truglo is making some introductions for 2020 that include the new Veros five-pin bow sight. The Veros is an ultra-bright hunting sight packed with special features like ProBrite pins, a TruLite rotary LED sight light and a threaded aperture that accepts a sunshade. Adjustable for right- and left-handed bows, the Veros 5-Pin Bow Sight is a second- and third-axis-adjustable level sight with mid-bracket elevation adjustment for quick tuning without crowding the aperture. Other features include extra-long fibers for maximum brightness, micro-adjustable windage and elevation, decreasing-diameter pins and TruTouch soft-feel technical coating in black or Realtree EDGE Camo.

www.truglo.com



12 WILDLIFE RESEARCH CENTER

Known for its innovative products in scents and scent elimination, Wildlife Research Center will have on display its Gold Estrus Gel with Scent Reflex Technology in a 2-ounce flip-cap squeeze bottle. Golden Estrus is proven to attract whitetail bucks, and the sticky, long-lasting gel should be even more effective than the liquid variety. Wildlife Research Center says the gel will stay stronger for longer compared to standard urine attractants. The company will also have on display its new Scent Killer No Zone Air & Space Deodorizer. Touted as a safe and easy alternative to ozone generating machines, the new Air & Space Deodorizer works for a wide range of applications including closets, backpacks, sports bags, lockers, cabins and vehicles. www.wildlife.com



HUNTING RETAILER 2020 SHOW

2020 HUNTING RETAILER SHOW EDUCATION LINEUP

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WILLIAM NAPIER / NSSF
OPERATION SECURE STORE



JON RYDBERG / RETAIL TECHNOLOGY GROUP
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Tapping DIY Gunsmiths

Millions of garage-bench gunmakers and amateur gunsmiths can help you offset market swings in firearms sales.

BY WAYNE VAN ZWOLL

It seemed terminal. Cases emerged from the old battle rifle with a blackened gash forward of the rim. Some separated there, the head alone extracting, leaving me to burrow for the rest.

"Swollen chamber," mumbled the old man. Whatever that meant. What did I expect for \$15?

It had seemed a bargain, this relic peddled by Sears, Roe-

buck. I knew the No. 1 Mark III was an early SMLE but couldn't say why a No. 4 Mark 1 cost more, or why No. 5 Mark I Jungle Carbines listed for a heart-stopping \$29.95. Headspace was still a foreign term. I ponied up a premium for another No. 1 Mark III from the father of a fetching blonde in my high-school class.

After a winter's whittling on a \$7.50 stick of walnut from

↑ Real Avid markets innovative, useful tools and cleaning accessories – the kind that boost shop traffic.



PRO STAFF

Wayne Van Zwoll has published 16 books and nearly 3,000 magazine articles on hunting and shooting. A competitive rifleman, he has hunted on five continents and earned a Ph.D. in wildlife policy. He resides in northern Washington State.

Herter's, I shelled out double that for Williams open sights. Ready to hunt, the .303 had sucked as much cash out of me as a pal had sunk into his spanking-new Winchester 94. But I'd learned a bit about rifles. When that cobbled SMLE tumbled a running whitetail, Ron's factory-crisp .30-30 suddenly looked ordinary.

Another winter tending a Claro blank and commercial Mauser metal yielded a better-looking rifle — but I hadn't fitted the recoil lug closely. My first shot split the stock's wrist. I charged back to my basement bench, keen to redeem myself as an amateur gunsmith. I've yet to do that but yet to stop trying.

Enthusiasts like me vastly outnumber real gunsmiths with lathes, mills and drill presses and the skills to use them. Surprisingly few gun shops offer the bench-top tools and aftermarket parts these DIYers are looking for — despite a roller-coaster market in factory firearms. The shops of my youth, staffed to help customers fix or upgrade guns, have been replaced with counter clerks with little, if any, experience as mechanics.

Your customer base will surely grow if you carry more than new firearms. In fact, DIY hardware has prospered, leading firms in the shooting industry.

“Enthusiasts buy at brick-and-mortar shops that not only carry parts, bench tools and DIY kits, but also give helpful tips and feedback.”

“We cater to shooters and gunsmiths and hobbyists who want to refurbish, repair, improve, even build guns,” says Roy Hill at Brownells, the Iowa supply house claiming “satisfaction guaranteed since 1939.” Eighty years in business has yielded a thick catalog with products from masking tape to bluing tanks. The dog-eared Brownells volume on my desk packs 150 of its 700 oversize pages with gun parts, AMT to Winchester. Brownells peddles its own products — Acra-Glas is the industry standard in bedding compounds — as well as branded items like Galco leather, NECG sights, Pachmayer recoil pads, Redding and RCBS dies.

Midway USA is as familiar as Brownells to shooters and gun shops. Larry and Brenda Potterfield have added to their prodigious list of brand-name products some of their own design and offer “just about everything” having to do with guns.

↓ Cleaning supplies are consumables. They cost little to stock but offer something every shooter needs.





↑ Brownells and Midway ship inexpensive gunsmithing tools that serve hobbyists – and profit shops!

“Components for AR-style rifles, Glock handguns and Ruger 10/22s account for a big share of our business,” Larry says, but the Midway catalog is comprehensive, with over 47,000 items that qualify for free shipping. The Columbia, Missouri, firm offers discounts to consumers as well as dealer programs. Battenfeld Technologies, once part of Midway, is one of its many suppliers.

Big Ticket or Bust?

Customers can order online from these sources without visiting local gun shops. But many who might tinker don’t know how, or they want to see the punches, taps, screws, grips, holsters, sights, brakes, chokes, bottom metal, or more in person. Enthusiasts buy at brick-and-mortar shops that not only carry parts, bench tools and DIY kits, but also give helpful tips and feedback. “What to put on the shelf depends on the skills behind the counter,” says Larry Potterfield. “Selling items for DIY projects requires knowledge and passion.”

The same thinking applies to handloading tools and components. You won’t stock anywhere near a complete selection of either, but by offering popular brass, powder, bullets and dies, your shop will earn a reputation as a handloading hub. If you dispense useful advice, customers will come calling. When a customer asks, “Is H414 or W760 better behind 150-grain bullets in the 7mm-08?” will someone at your store know the answer? Powder is expensive, and no loading manual lists all propellants for every cartridge. Wildcats make local expertise more valuable still. I’m loading for the .25 Krag Short, and early on, I would have patronized a store whose staff could

suggest light bullet charges.

Not long ago, a friend handed me a couple of sandwich bags bulging with cartridge cases. “Unprimed .303 Savage,” he said. “New, I think.” Thoughtful of him. Brass for my old 1899 carbine is as scarce as humble politicians. I ferreted out his source, a rural gun-and-pawn shop not far away. The hand-packaged brass in old nail cubbies along a crowded aisle had escaped my eye. Now I check at each visit, as the inventory changes and always includes hard-to-find hulls. This out-of-the-way shop is always busy and sometimes thick with customers. Shelves hold ammunition, dies, components and scopes. Aged holsters and scabbards dangle from pegs above massive Stihl saws and other hardware befitting a pawn shop. Its second-hand racks are dominated by well-used “truck guns,” but since my pal donated that brass, a couple of unmolested mid-20th-century bolt rifles have followed me home. I spend time there because this shop has what I won’t find elsewhere, and some prices have a bit of give.

When adding gunsmithing and handloading supplies, you’re bound to order something that won’t sell before we plant a flag on Mars. Ask up front about return options. Brownells honors its no-questions-asked refund/exchange policy, no time limit. Midway USA also goes out of its way for gun shops (the Potterfields once ran one). Return any new-condition product inside 90 days for a full refund or exchange. Custom rifle items, such as new bottom metal and the superb sights from New England Custom Gun, are worth showing, but you need just a few on display. Emphasize your service of ordering made-to-fit units.



↑ Brownells has screwdriver sets with bits for most gun screws; a torque wrench ensures proper tension.

→ You can't stock all handloading supplies. Showcase the most popular and cover shipping on orders.



You profit when visitors see a part or accessory, tool or consumable they can buy impulsively. Stocking these items distinguishes your shop as a source for what big-box stores and casual gun counters don't carry. Instead of just selling firearms, you're helping customers upgrade, refurbish and fix them. If you peddle second-hand guns, DIY products give shoppers more reason to buy them.

Gun Stocks: Perks and Perils

Among the most popular projects for hobbyists is stock refinishing. In another life, I earned a few shekels restoring original beauty to walnut for a gun shop. It's with trepidation that anyone who's labored to "get it right" would entrust this task to the great unwashed masses, because many collectible firearms have lost significant value to reckless dolts refinishing walnut they shouldn't have touched. Other stocks have been ruined by vigorous sanding when the surface could have been stripped chemically and had the dings steamed out. Any sanding rounds edges, cuts tracks and can leave metal suddenly "proud" of the wood.

Depending on a stock's detailing, stain, wear marks and the type and condition of original finish, refurbishing can be quite easy or devilishly hard. A good result always requires more

"You profit when visitors see a part or accessory, a tool or consumable they can buy impulsively."





work and time than you predict. Matching original color and glow is difficult; fresh finish applied in patches almost always shows its borders.

Finishing new wood is much easier now than when I applied a pocket knife and flint paper to the semi-inletted Hertzer's blank for my SMLE. Boyds Gunstocks of Mitchell, South Dakota, lists many styles of walnut and laminated stocks machined for drop-in fit on myriad rifles and shotguns. A Boyds laminate for an LAW rifle I just stocked required no inletting and little outside sanding.

I'm puzzled by gun shops that carry small bottles of finish but nothing else for stock projects. To tackle an old stock, a customer will need varnish remover (stripper) and medium, then fine (0000) grades of steel wool to apply it and remove softened finish. Sanding to reshape or bring a recoil pad flush with the wood requires medium-grit garnet or equivalent. But I'm loath to sand more than needed. If the goal is simply to replace the finish, I stay with 320- and 400-grit wet-and-dry, finishing with 600-grit. An artgum eraser backs sandpaper to keep the surface ripple-free and edges crisp. Brownells and Midway sell excellent stock finishing kits, including sealer.

↑ "Sporterizing" military rifles, like this SMLE with Williams sights, requires tools and components.

→ Tip for customers: Between coats of finish, hand-rub in a slurry of rottenstone and boiled linseed oil.

Porous wood can require a prep coat of spar varnish. Rottenstone in a slurry of boiled linseed oil rubbed in (and wiped off!) between coats of "oil" finish coaxes a warm glow from the wood. If you lack these inexpensive supplies, a customer

"Despite laments that gunsmithing is a dying profession, lost on youth enslaved by smart phones, it is still very much alive."



→ Wayne's Krieger-barreled LAW in .340 Wby wears a Boyds stock he finished. No inletting needed.



← Minor gunsmithing tasks, like installing sling swivel studs, are easy given the tools and components.





will spend less with you and more time at local hardware stores — or they'll abandon the project and leave that bottle of finish on the shelf!

For more ambitious stock projects, you'd be smart to carry task-specific wood chisels and gunsmith rasps for contouring tight places. Of course you'll have Acra-Glas or similar bedding compound on hand, and a fine-toothed checkering tool to freshen worn or scarred panels. At no charge, you'll dispense advice that puts the customer firmly and forever in your debt:

1. Slather on finish remover. Let it curdle a few minutes; scrub with steel wool with the grain.
2. Raise stock dings by pressing them with a hot iron over a triple-folded wet washcloth.
3. Mask the checkering. (After finishing, brush it with boiled linseed oil on a toothbrush.)
4. Sand wood at metal junctures last and lightly, if at all, to ensure crisp edges and a snug fit.
5. Examine surfaces in bright sunlight to attack sanding scratches. Use a sanding block!
6. Let each coat of sealer, then finish, dry thoroughly. Adding too soon yields a gummy mess.

When They Need a Pro

The shift of gun sales from small shops with resident gun-

smiths to sales counters equipped only with credit card readers leaves customers with no obvious recourse when a job requires special skills and tooling. Rebarreling, for instance, or hot-bluing — even installing a shotgun rib or new bolt handle. You'll help customers (and boost your income) by pointing them to professionals. Brownells, which declares it does no gun work, has taken surveys of commercial gunsmiths and listed prices for common jobs such as sandblasting, Parkerizing, sight and safety installation, chamfering revolver cylinders, raising dents, back-boring shotgun barrels, glass bedding and fitting recoil pads.

Despite laments that gunsmithing is a dying profession, lost on youth enslaved by smart phones, it is still very much alive! I found a wealth of new talent at Trinidad State Junior College, perched above a bright, butte-hemmed valley threaded by Colorado's Interstate 25. Its two-year program serves about 60 students at a time. "They dive deep into the workings of many firearms," said Communications Director Greg Boyce, "flintlock rifles to AR-15s, Colt Frontiers to Sigs, boxlock to autoloading shotguns. Every student learns to bed, checker and finish stocks, Cerakote and case-color steel. Each must rebarrel and re-stock a Mauser 98 action to produce a custom sporter. And learn to fix broken guns."

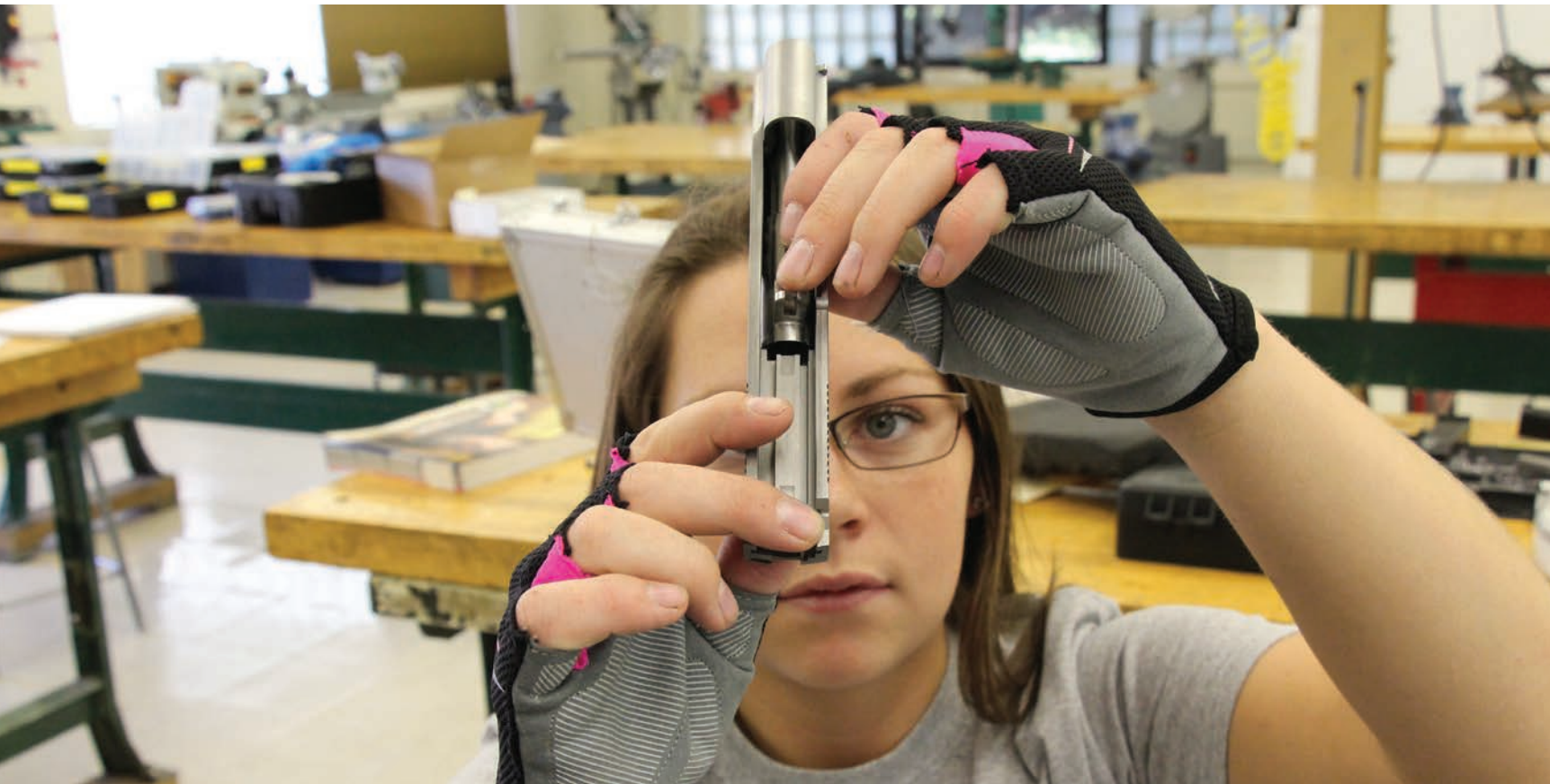
Many enroll because they like firearms. But to make a living as a gunsmith or a gunmaker, you must satisfy a demand. One

← Tip for customers: soap swivel stud threads; use a snug-fitting Torx wrench to spin the stud in easily.

→ Gunsmiths extinct? Hardly. Ainsley Ridgeway, here at Trinidad State Junior College's gunsmithing shop, built a custom Mauser hunting rifle and a classy 1911 before she opened her own gun shop.

↓ For some work, see a pro! NECG wizards built this 20-gauge slug gun on a Ruger No. 1 rifle action.





recent graduate specialized in 1911s. His rationale, “If I can fix or upgrade a 1911, my children will never go hungry.” An AR-15 focus is also popular, said Boyce, and profitable.

For a student perspective, I phoned 29-year-old Jayson Tuntland, finishing his Associate’s Degree in gunsmithing. The Illinois native met his future wife at TSJC, so common interests were assured! Four years in the Army repairing small arms grounded him in gunsmithing. “I like to work with my hands,” he said. Keen to combine his armorer skills and TSJC training, he plans work “in design and manufacture as well as repair.” First: his own shop in Illinois. “Art in steel and walnut excites me as fine paintings appeal to others. I’m sure there’s still profit in well-crafted custom guns.”

Ainsley Ridgeway was closing in on graduation when I spoke with her. She was about to get two diplomas, the second for business administration study at the University of Wyoming. “I figured I’d need business savvy as well as gunsmithing skills,” she said. Ainsley grew up hunting in Nebraska. Her father became her business partner in a gun shop now getting its legs. Her passion: long-range rifles. “Action blueprinting and accurizing were my favorite classes at TSJC,” she said. A 1911 pistol she built on a Nighthawk frame appeared in a cover story about her in *Women & Guns* magazine.

Gruff, bent men in grimy aprons, peering over bifocals and grunting “swelled chamber,” can still benefit your shop. But so can fresh talent more familiar with CNC programs than paper-patched bullets. When you provide a clearing house for knowledge and industry contacts, as well as a retail store, you’ll get more traffic. Customers will visit more often, tarry longer — and buy more. **HR**





HUNTING RETAILER

GEAR ROUNDUP:

COLD WEATHER CAMO

BY GORDY KRAHN

1 BROWNING | Hellfire Windstopper Jacket

Browning's Hellfire Insulated Windstopper jacket (299.99) is designed to keep hunters fast and mobile, even when the mercury drops and the wind starts to howl. Fully articulated, lightweight and packable, and engineered with three-layer Gore Windstopper technology, the Hellfire Jacket blocks the wind while allowing moisture vapor from perspiration to escape. This combination of protection and breathability minimizes the wind's chilling effect while reducing the risk of overheating during heavy activity. A durable outer fabric treatment provides the additional protection of water repellency. Other features include internal pockets for smaller gear, anatomical body pit zips for venting, molded hook and loop cuff closures, lower handwarmer pockets with check and shoulder pockets, fully adjustable attached hood and much more.

www.browning.com



2 SCENTLOK | Bowhunter Elite: 1 Apparel

Bowhunter Elite:1 Apparel from ScentLok (\$169 to \$299) is the clothing system serious bowhunters have been waiting for. This suite of premium hunting clothes is purpose-engineered for hunters who are committed to solving problems, creating their own opportunities and increasing their chances for success. Uncompromising in design, form and function, Bowhunter Elite:1 Apparel includes the versatile mid-season Voyage series, mid-weight, single-layer garments tailored for comfort, ease-of-movement and mobility throughout the hunt; the 100-percent waterproof, insulated late-season Fortress series with body-mapped Thinsulate insulation; and the Reactor series for warm, versatile and silent on-demand layering. All garments employ advanced, bowhunter-friendly designs, ultra-silent fabrics and unsurpassed ScentLok Carbon Alloy technology.

www.scentlok.com



3 HARD CORE APPAREL |

Finisher Xtreme Parka and Bib

Inclement weather is an inevitable ingredient of waterfowl hunting, and it's impossible to hunt effectively when cold and wet. Hard Core Apparel's new Protective Series Finisher Xtreme parka and bib (\$299.99 per garment) feature Primaloft insulation for warmth without bulk and are 100-percent waterproof with woven poly/spandex flex-stretch shells for maximum mobility and breathability. These extremely durable outerwear garments also feature highly abrasion-resistant fabric overlays. The parka has four chest pockets and four waist pockets and an articulated hood with built-in adjusters. The bibs have adjustable elastic shoulder straps with buckle closures, adjustable buckle closure waist with high-rise back and six pockets.

www.hardcore-brands.com



4 BADLANDS |**Pyre Jacket/Bibs Combo**

Being cold sucks. Being cold while trying to remain still in a treestand or ground blind sucks even more. Badlands' new Pyre bibs (\$279.99) are all about maximum warmth and mobility. PrimaLoft Silver insulation locks in the heat, while articulated knees and easy-on side zippers keep the wearer moving around with ease. Fleece-lined pockets keep contents quiet and also keep those digits warm, flexible and ready to make that textbook trigger press. The Pyre jacket (\$289.99) features the same PrimaLoft Silver insulation, but the compressible sleeves don't deter range of motion and are extremely quiet. Both garments are available in Badlands' high-tech Approach and Approach FX camouflage patterns and are covered by the company's unconditional lifetime warranty.

www.badlandspacks.com

**5 SCENT BLOCKER |****Whitetail Pursuit Insulated Parka and Bib**

The new ScentBlocker Whitetail Pursuit parka and bib combo (\$269.99 per garment) is the late-season apparel serious rut hunters throughout the country will be glad they're wearing when the Witch of November makes her icy entrance. Engineered for maximum performance in the coldest conditions, the Whitetail Pursuit Insulated parka and bib are DWR treated to repel the elements, with body-mapped Thinsulate positioned for maximum warmth and mobility. Featuring all-new Cold Fusion Catalyst technology, these garments combine powerful activated-carbon technology with natural wool fibers to deliver comfort, warmth and durability while adsorbing odors. The parka has a three-piece adjustable hood and articulated elbows for better mobility. The bib features adjustable suspenders for a custom fit, four pockets for carrying essentials and leg zippers.

www.blockeroutdoors.com

**6 KRYPTEK |****Njord Jacket**

Designed to be whisper quiet and warm, the Njord Jacket from Kryptek (\$169.99), makers of high-performance technical and tactical outdoor adventure apparel, is 100 percent windproof and highly water resistant – an excellent blend of mobility, comfort and performance. The Njord Jacket is tailor made for hunting in cooler temperatures – super quiet brushed tricot bonded to an extremely warm high pile backer for extra warmth, using a 10/10 lamination between the two layers to keep hunters warm and dry. A large selection of pockets helps keep gear safe and handy. Other features include pit zips, DWR treatment and articulated (athletic) fit.

www.kryptek.com





7 ARCTICSHIELD | Body Insulator Suit

The ArcticShield Body Insulator Suit in Realtree EDGE camo (\$349.99) delivers exceptional warmth, comfort and functionality in cold-weather hunting conditions. This one-piece "full body suit" contains RETAIN heat-retention technology that captures and returns up to 90 percent of the user's body heat and deflects cold outside air away from skin to keep hunters warm from head to toe, allowing them to spend extra hours afield. The soft, quiet outer fabric is windproof and has a waterproof laminate with taped seams to keep rain and sleet out. The elastic inner shoulder straps wear like a backpack, and safety features include a harness trap pass-through slot to allow for a safety harness underneath and a removable blaze orange cape to meet state requirements.

www.arcticshieldoutdoor.com



8 NATURAL GEAR | Dura Fleece

Layering Series

Natural Gear has released an entirely new mid-weight layering line, available in a hoodie, 1/4-zip pullover and built-in stirrup wader pant. The new Dura Fleece assortment (\$59.99 each) features a 300g polyester stretch performance fabric that allows increased mobility in the field. The softshell outer surface ensures a completely silent operation and no hang-ups when layering over them, while the brushed fleece interior adds warmth and comfort. This mid-weight line works well as outer garments when it is mild outside but can easily be incorporated as a layering system under heavier garments for late-season, cold-weather hunting.

www.naturalgear.com



9 KINGS CAMO |

XKG Transition Thermolite Jacket

The XKG Transition Thermolite Jacket (\$149.99) is a versatile mid to outer layer insulated garment that provides added warmth when hunters need it most. A packable jacket that stuffs into its own zip pocket, the XKG Transition Jacket is made of 100 percent micro ripstop polyester with 100 grams of Thermolite synthetic loft insulation in the body and 80 grams in the sleeves to reduce bulk. Quilt stitched ripstop polyester secures the down in place and water resistant treatment blocks moisture. Add the XKG Transition Jacket to any layering system without taking up a lot of space or weight. Available in Desert Shadow, Mountain Shadow and Realtree Edge camo patterns.

www.kingscamo.com



10 PREDATOR CAMO |

Ambush Insulated Vest

Warm, quiet and windproof was Predator Camo's goal when it designed the new Ambush Insulated Outerwear Series. All three garments – jacket, bib and vest – work together as a late-season clothing system that keeps hunters warm and comfortable when the weather turns nasty and helps keep them in the field longer. The Ambush Insulated Vest (\$149.95) features a 165-gram micro-fleece outer fabric bonded to an ultralight four-way stretch windproof membrane and a safety harness pass-through. Other features include PrimaLoft Silver Active 100-gram insulation, insulated kangaroo pouch lined with Sherpa fleece and a cross check zipper that allows pouch access with both hands. Estimated temp range: 10 to 30 degrees, lower with layers.

www.predatorcamo.com



11 SITKA |

Fanatic Jacket

The newly redesigned Fanatic Jacket from Sitka (\$449) takes the quest for warmth and silence to the next level. An enhanced high-loft Berber fleece face silences the new and ultra-quiet Gore-Tex Infinium with Windstopper technology, which is packaged with PrimaLoft Silver Hi-Loft Ultra insulation for the coldest days in the stand. A new body-mapped construction is designed to optimize the archery draw cycle for bow string clearance on the left arm along with reduced bulk in the draw arm to keep hunters quiet and their arrow flight true. The Constant-Connect Sitka Safety Harness Port eliminates the need to disconnect from the harness when adding or subtracting layers.

www.sitkagear.com



12 UNDER ARMOUR |

Revenant

The Revenant Windstopper Parka from Under Armour (\$320) features a four-layer construction with a wool blend fabric that makes it UA's warmest jacket currently offered. A Gore-Tex Windstopper membrane is sandwiched between two layers of 100-gram PrimaLoft High Loft insulation for warmth and protection against the harshest elements. The Revenant features forearm compression zips that reduce bulk and avoid bowstring slap. A Scent Control fleece liner and anti-odor technology wick sweat and prevent the growth of odor-causing microbes. Additional features include a two-way center front zipper, harness-compatible design and a removeable hood.

www.underarmour.com



**13 HEYBO OUTDOORS | Renegade**

Made from 100 percent polyester fleece for comfort and to hold body heat, the new Heybo Outdoors Renegade Jacket (\$149.99) features waterproof fabric, waterproof zippers and adjustable watertight cuffs to ensure hunters stay dry. This full-zip jacket also has chest, waist and water check 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.



www.heybooutdoors.com

15 HUNTWORTH |**Heavy Weight Tricot Hunting Parka**

Designed especially for late-season hunting, Huntworth's Heavy Weight Tricot hunting parka (\$149.99) is as warm as it gets when temperatures plummet. The quiet Hidd'n camo tricot shell is equipped with a windproof breathable film, taped seams to seal out moisture and a soft Sherpa lining for ultimate comfort and flexibility. An adjustable hood, zipper storm flap, heavy-duty cuffs, drawcord adjusters and a longer design help seal in the warmth. The parka is also treated with microban antimicrobial protection on the Sherpa fleece lining to help control human scent. Equipped with multiple pockets and harness access, this warm, durable coat is designed to keep hunters in the field longer when the mercury drops. MSRP: \$149.99.

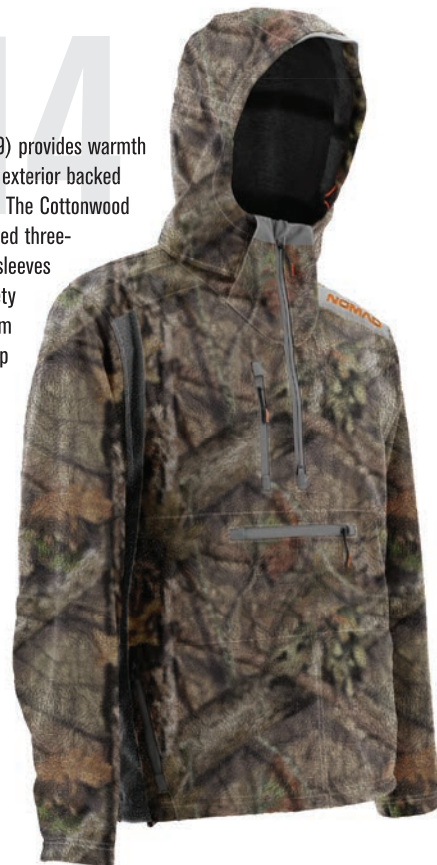


www.huntworthgear.com

14 NOMAD | Cottonwood ½ Zip

The Nomad Cottonwood ½ Zip jacket (\$179.99) provides warmth and stealth with a heavyweight Berber fleece exterior backed by a windproof lining for complete protection. The Cottonwood jacket 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 inter sleeve gaskets on the cuffs help seal out the elements. Napoleon, mid- and lower-body pouch pockets keep essential gear organized and handy.

www.nomadoutdoor.com

**16 FIELD & STREAM |****Base Defense Arctic Chill Half Zip**

Made with heavyweight polyester/spandex, the Field & Stream Base Defense Arctic Chill Half Zip (\$34.99) is designed as a next-to-skin layer when hunting in extremely cold weather conditions. The one-sided brushed fleece design with SmartHeat technology provides maximum warmth by reflecting and trapping body heat. No Scent C3 conceals and contains odors, and then self-charges to help keep hunters scent free. Flatlock seams won't irritate skin when the garment is worn all day and SmartWick absorbs and wicks away sweat to manage moisture. An extended back hem provides more coverage and thumbholes prevent the sleeves from creeping up and exposing skin. Stretch panels provide unrestricted mobility, while the mock neck with half zip makes it easy to get in and out of the garment.

www.fieldandstreamshop.com



HUNTING RETAILER NEW PRODUCTS

BY GORDY KRAHN



SAVAGE .450 BUSHMASTER RIFLE PACKAGES

Savage is now chambering .450 Bushmaster in its popular 110 Apex Hunter XP and 110 Engage Hunter XP rifle/scope combos. This straight-walled cartridge is legal in many previously shotgun slug-only areas and offers improved range, accuracy and power over other straight-walled rifle cartridges. Both rifles feature a tough, synthetic stock with enhanced ergonomics and adjustable length-of-pull, as well as Savage's user-adjustable AccuTrigger and a 22-inch carbon steel barrel with a ported muzzle brake. The Apex Hunter XP comes with a Vortex Crossfire II 3-9x40mm riflescope mounted on a one-piece rail, while the Engage Hunter XP features a Bushnell Engage 3-9x40mm scope. Both are mounted, bore-sighted and ready to shoot. MSRP: \$519/110 Engage Hunter XP; \$773/110 Apex Hunter XP; www.savagearms.com.

HALO XL600 RANGEFINDER

The HALO XL600 laser rangefinder provides fast ranging out to 600 yards and operates in dual modes. Standard mode provides a single precise distance reading with one push of the button, while scan mode enables users to quickly range multiple targets without having to reactivate the laser for each target. Angle Intelligence Technology automatically detects and compensates for slope in both mode settings, providing users with an accurate, "shoots like" reading regardless of topography. Versatile 6X magnification provides bright, clear viewing and fast target acquisition, while an easy-to-read internal LCD displays the reticle, battery status, mode setting, numerical display and unit of measure. The XL600's durable and water-resistant housing is built to hold up to tough hunting conditions. MSRP: \$119.99; www.halooptics.com.



WILDCAM INNOVATIONS MICRO CAMS

Some of the best things come in small packages, and Wildgame Innovations' new Shadow Micro Cam and Shadow Micro Cam Lightsout fit the bill. Both units are just 3x3x2 inches, making them easy to hide from curious critters and camera thieves. They feature Wildgame Innovations' Adaptive Illumination technology, which determines how far away game is from the unit and automatically adjusts the camera's image exposure setting. The Shadow Micro Cam is outfitted with high-intensity infrared LEDs, while the Shadow Micro Cam Lightsout uses both invisible black infrared LEDs and invisible infrared LED flash. As a result, hunters capture crisp and vivid high-definition photos and videos to help prepare for hunting season. MSRP: \$99.99/Shadow; \$109.99/Lights Out; www.wildgameinnovations.com.



ALPS OUTDOORZ ALLURE SHOOT LIKE A GIRL PACK

The Alps OutdoorZ Allure Shoot Like a Girl pack in Mossy Oak Break-Up Country camo was designed with women in mind and features shoulder straps, a waist belt and frame to accommodate a woman's figure. Its innovative self-standing L-shape frame allows the pack to sit on any flat surface. The Allure also features a padded back panel with vented channels, and a drop-down weapon pocket that will securely carry most compound bows or rifles. With 34 liters of space, the Allure will accommodate a lot of essential gear needed, but it also includes lashing straps so even more gear can be strapped on if needed. A mesh pocket on the side of the pack is great for keeping water bottles handy. MSRP: \$112. www.shootlikeagirl.com



**CZ-USA 1012 SHOTGUN**

CZ-USA's newest semi-auto shotgun, the 1012, utilizes a gas-less operating system that uses a spring within the bolt to store energy during the shotgun's recoil, spending this energy a split second later to rotate and unlock the twin lugs from the barrel extension and withdraw the spent shell. The major advantage of this gas-less system is a less stringent maintenance schedule. According to CZ-USA, occasional cleaning and oiling should be more than enough to keep the gun running smoothly during normal use. Additionally, the gas-less system is tuned to cycle a wider variety of shotshells – from light-recoiling target loads up to smoking hot 3-inch hunting loads. MSRP: \$659-\$749; www.cz-usa.com.

STYRKA S3 RIFLESCOPES

Styrka Optics has added two new affordable, cutting-edge riflescopes to its S3 line, upgraded with Kenton custom ballistic turrets: the new 3-9x40mm Plex with a .350 Legend ballistic turret and 3-9x40mm Plex with a .450 Bushmaster turret. The new .350 Legend cartridge from Winchester and .450 Bushmaster are both approved in those states that require straight-walled cartridges for deer hunting with a centerfire rifle. The factory turret is used to zero-in the scope and then the user switches it out for the custom Kenton ballistic turret. With the Kenton turret installed, hunters can dial to the yardage distance that corresponds to their target and shoot. MSRP: \$309.95; www.styrkastrong.com.

**WALKER'S GAME EAR XCEL 500BT MUFFS**

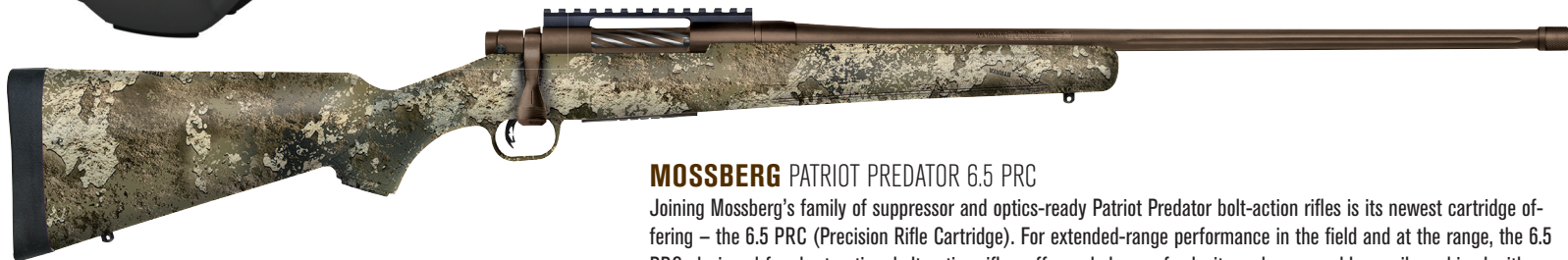
Walker's Game Ear combines sophisticated sound processing, intuitive menu navigation and rich electronic control features with an intelligent, forward-thinking approach to design and ergonomics in its new XCEL 500BT shooting muffs. The XCEL 500BT's next-generation Sound-Activated Compression and variable Dynamic Sound Suppression automatically adjusts compression time according to noise level intensity and duration instead of using conventional "fixed-time" compression. The result is improved hearing protection regardless of the sound environment. The user can select between four different listening modes for a custom experience via a soft touch button control panel located on the headband. By Bluetooth pairing the unit to a mobile device, calls and notifications connect through the muffs. MSRP: \$149.99; www.walkersgameear.com.

**VIPER ARCHERY PRODUCTS VENOM XL BOW SIGHT**

The Venom XL bow sight from Viper Archery Products is a simple-to-use five-pin bow sight with a lightweight fixed-plate design. It is equipped with second- and third-axis adjustments that are located before the windage and elevation adjustments to allow for correct true-level positioning of the sight's XL housing. The housing is threaded for a shade or lens attachment and features five aluminum Razor Pins – available in 0.010-, 0.015- and 0.019-inch sizes. The Venom XL is machined from 6061 T6 aluminum, features all stainless steel hardware and weighs in at just 5.5 ounces. MSRP: \$119.99; www.viperarcheryproducts.com.

**KOPFJÄGER AMBUSH SHOOTING REST KIT**

Kopfjäger's Ambush Shooting Rest Kit provides a rock-solid solution for fighting fatigue and ensures a precise shot while inside a deer blind. Using the included 7- to 10-inch bipod, the Ambush's arm securely grips the blind's wall and secures the firearm, locking it in the perfect shooting position above the blind's window ledge. Included in the kit is the premium Reaper Grip shooting rest. Its curved grip anchors rifles to the bottom of the rest while the specially designed grip pivots to stabilize both tapered, straight stocks and chassis. Remain hands-free at the ready and free up valuable space in the blind with the Ambush Shooting Rest Kit. MSRP: \$499.97; www.kopfjagerindustries.com.

**MOSSBERG PATRIOT PREDATOR 6.5 PRC**

Joining Mossberg's family of suppressor and optics-ready Patriot Predator bolt-action rifles is its newest cartridge offering – the 6.5 PRC (Precision Rifle Cartridge). For extended-range performance in the field and at the range, the 6.5 PRC, designed for short-action, bolt-action rifles, offers a balance of velocity and manageable recoil combined with a flat trajectory. Inherently accurate to beyond 1,000 yards, the 6.5 PRC delivers long-range performance in the compact Patriot Predator rifle. This purpose-built rifle comes in a choice of two finishes: a durable Flat Dark Earth synthetic stock with matte blue metalwork and a TrueTimber Strata camouflaged synthetic stock with Patriot Brown Cerakote metal finish. MSRP: \$441/Matte Blue; \$524/Brown Cerakote; www.mossberg.com

**STOCKY'S VG2 STOCK**

Designed for long-range shooting, Stocky's VG2 is an outstanding hunting, target or tactical stock. The fiberglass VG2 features hand-layup construction and a carbon fibercore with a durable and attractive gelcoat finish. VG2 stocks are laminated under strict, climate-controlled cleanroom conditions and tempered in custom ovens to precisely control the curing process for a shell that is pound-for-pound far stronger than steel. They are machined on Stocky's new state-of-the-art CNC mill employed exclusively to transform the special bedding composites utilized into its super-accurate Accublock "V" bedding configuration. VG2 stocks come in a variety of popular action inlet/barrel taper configurations including Remington, Defiance, Big Horn, Weatherby and Howa footprints. MSRP: \$529.99; www.stockysstocks.com.

**SAVAGE 110 CLASSIC WITH WALNUT STOCK**

Savage Arms' new 110 Classic bolt-action rifle combines the timeless good looks of a walnut stock with user-friendly adjustability, modern ergonomics and tack-driving accuracy for a superior shooting experience. A push-button mechanism allows the shooter to adjust length-of-pull and comb height for a custom fit. The 110 Classic features a carbon steel barreled action with matte black finish, user-adjustable AccuTrigger and a three-position safety. It is available in eight popular hunting calibers – .243 Win., .308 Win., 6.5 Creedmoor, 7mm08 Rem., .270 Win., .30-06 Sprg., 7mm Rem. Mag. And .300 Win Mag. All feature 22-inch barrels except for the magnums which have 24-inch barrels. The rifle comes with two sling swivel studs and is drilled and tapped to accommodate scope mounts. MSRP: \$999; www.savagearms.com.

**BELL AND CARLSON HOWA MINI M40-STYLE RIFLE STOCK**

Bell and Carlson's Howa Mini Action M40-style rifle stock is designed as a "drop-in" to fit Howa mini-action, heavy-barrel, detachable magazine rifles. It incorporates two front sling studs, one rear sling stud and a Pachmayr Decelerator recoil pad. Standard length of pull is set at 13½ inches. This stock, like all in the Medalist line, has a full-length aluminum bedding system that is computer designed and CNC machined out of aircraft grade 6061-T6 aluminum. The aluminum block extends through the forearm to add strength and stiffness and also has an aluminum "tail piece" from the bedding block through the grip area to add rigidity to strengthen the stock. It is designed to be free-floated. MSRP: \$285; www.bellandcarlson.com

**RCBS MATCHMASTER COMPETITION DIE SETS**

RCBS recently announced the launch of the new MatchMaster Competition Die Series – available in Full Length, Neck Sizing and Seating configurations. The Full Length Sizing Dies use RCBS's precision-machined neck bushings to put the perfect amount of neck tension on each round. The titanium-nitride coated expander offers silky-smooth case extraction and reduced brass buildup. The Neck Sizing Die Set also puts the perfect amount of neck tension on each round while not changing the body dimensions of fired cases. The set also includes a MatchMaster Competition Seating Die, with its unique bullet seating window and micrometer-adjustable, free-floating, self-centering bullet-seating stem. Reloaders can fine-tune any load with repeatable precision with the micrometer-adjustable, free-floating, self-centering bullet seating stem. MSRP \$185.79 (800) 533-5000; www.RCBS.com.



What Do Americans Think of Hunting?

How many of our fellow Americans are really on our side?

BY BOB ROBB

Like all people, hunters sometimes take things for granted that they shouldn't. For example, just because we hunt, believe strongly in the North American Conservation Model and think that hunting is a good thing, that doesn't necessarily mean that other Americans feel the same way. Or do they?

A 2019 telephone survey conducted by Responsive Management and the National Shooting Sports Foundation sought to assess trends in Americans' attitudes toward hunting, fishing, sport shooting and trapping. Responsive Management has tracked public attitudes on the four activities since 1995. Overall, the study concluded that 80 percent of Americans approve of legal hunting. Approval of hunting is highest in the Midwest (86 percent approval) and lowest in the Northeast (72 percent approval). Interestingly, Americans' level of approval of hunting has remained generally consistent over the past 25 years, with a gradual increase since 1995, when approval stood at 73 percent.

However, depending on the stated reason for hunting, approval of hunting varies considerably. When the reasons are for meat (84 percent), to protect humans (85 percent), to obtain locally-sourced food (83 percent), for wildlife management (82 percent), and to obtain organic meat (77 percent), approval is very high. When the reason is for sport (50 percent) or the challenge (41 percent), or trophy hunting (20 percent), support drops. The species being hunted also affects approval of hunting. Hunting of ungulates and waterfowl is more accepted than hunting of predator species, while the hunting of African lions and elephants has even less approval among Americans.

The approval of hunting also depends on the technique being used, especially the extent to which the technique in question allows for fair chase. For example, more Americans approve of bowhunting (80 percent) than approve of hunting with high-tech gear

like lasers or hearing devices (26 percent) or hunting inside a high fence (21 percent.) Hunting with dogs was approved by 55 percent of respondents, but using attractant scents (43 percent) and bait (32 percent) was not popular. Neither is spring bear hunting, which received just 20 percent approval.

The high level of approval of hunting for the meat mirrors other research that shows that millennials and Gen Xers are drawn to hunting if the primary purpose is to help support a locavore lifestyle. The survey also asked respondents if they had eaten wild game meat, such as venison or deer, wild turkey, boar, buffalo or duck in the 12 months prior to the survey. Less than half of Americans (43 percent) said they had, with the Midwest (55 percent) the only region where more than half the residents had done so.

The survey also found that 81 percent of Americans approve of legal recreational shooting, a level consistent with previous years' survey results. Groups most commonly associated with approval of sport shooting are hunters and anglers, those who grew up with a family that owned firearms, those who live in rural areas, white residents, and male residents. At the opposite end, the groups most commonly associated with disapproval of shooting are black residents, those who did not grow up with a family that owned firearms, Northeast region residents, Hispanic residents, and female residents. When asked to select a statement that best reflects their opinion of recreational shooting sports, the three statements and percentages who selected each were: Shooting sports are perfectly acceptable

(65 percent); Shooting sports are OK, but maybe a little inappropriate now (23 percent); Shooting sports are inappropriate nowadays (9 percent.)

Not surprisingly, trapping is more controversial than hunting, fishing, or shooting, with just 52 percent of Americans approving while 31 percent disapprove. However, as with hunting, the stated motivation for trapping affects the approval rating. There is relatively high approval of trapping for wildlife restoration, population control, food, and property protection, but less approval of trapping for money, fur clothing and recreation.

The survey asked about legal hunting so that poaching or other illegal activities would not be considered. Sport shooters and anglers are also more likely to approve of hunting than the average American. Other groups associated with higher levels of approval of hunting are those who live in rural areas, those who grew up in a family that owned firearms, white residents, and male residents. On the other hand, groups associated with lower levels of approval of hunting include Hispanic residents, those who did not grow up in a family that owned firearms, black residents, Northeast region residents, and female residents.

The survey also asked respondents, regardless of their personal opinion of hunting, if they agree or disagree that it is acceptable for other people to hunt, provided they do so legally and in accordance with hunting laws and regulations. Most Americans (92 percent) agree that it is acceptable, compared to only 6 percent who disagree. Given that the initial question showed that 13 percent of Americans disapprove of

hunting, this followup question suggests that just over half of those who disapprove nonetheless feel that others should have the right to hunt.

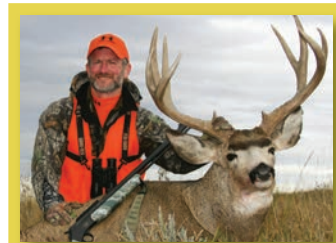
These numbers are, generally speaking, encouraging, though they don't reflect the trend that overall hunter numbers are declining as a percentage of the overall

population, or why that decline

is taking place — which is a topic for discussion another time. What it does tell us is that, when done ethically, in a fair chase manner, with the primary goal of obtaining meat, a very high percentage of our fellow countrymen approve of hunting, even if they don't participate themselves.

What's your take on these survey numbers? Does your business reflect the survey results? Drop me a note at editor@grandviewoutdoors.com and let me know. **HR**

“Not surprisingly, trapping is more controversial than hunting, fishing, or shooting, with just 52 percent of Americans approving while 31 percent disapprove.”



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.



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