

# HUNTING



R T A I L E R

January/February 2021 | Camo & Apparel

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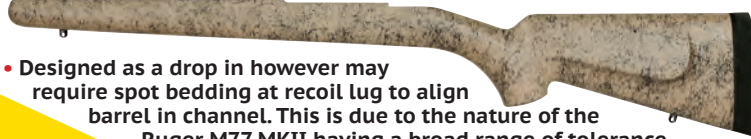
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- Designed as a drop in however may require spot bedding at recoil lug to align barrel in channel. This is due to the nature of the Ruger M77 MKII having a broad range of tolerance at the recoil lug area.
- Free Float Magnum Barrel Channel

**NEW PRODUCT!**

SKU7011

### Winchester Model 70 M40 Style



- Drop in fit for Winchester Model 70, one-piece floorplate, heavy contour barrel, short action/WSM
- 1-Inch Pachmayr Decelerator Pad
- Full length aluminum bedding block

**NEW PRODUCT!**

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### Tikka T1x Rimfire Sporter Style



- Drop in fit for Tikka T1x Rimfire .22LR
- 1-Inch Pachmayr Decelerator Pad
- Full aluminum bedding block extends from the grip to the front swivel stud, free floated barrel

**NEW PRODUCT!**

SKU1010, 1011

### Remington 700 BDL Long Range Hunter



- Drop in fit for Remington 700 BDL Long and Short Action, heavy barrel
- 1-Inch Pachmayr Decelerator Pad
- Full length 6061-T6 aluminum bedding system extends through the forearm, with aluminum "tail piece"

**NEW PRODUCT!**

SKU1052, 1053

### Ruger American® Sporter Style



- Drop in fit for Ruger American®, LONG & SHORT ACTION, rotary magazine, standard and predator contour barrels
- Pachmayr Decelerator Pad
- Full length 6061-T6 aluminum bedding system

**NEW PRODUCT!**

SKU1007, 1009

### Savage 10 & 12 "Detachable Mag" Sporter Style



- Drop in fit for Savage Model 10 and 12 Short Action with detachable mag and sporter weight barrel
- Pachmayr Decelerator Pad
- Full length 6061-T6 aluminum bedding system

**NEW PRODUCT!**

SKU6510

### Howa 1500/Weatherby Vanguard Sporter Style



- Drop in fit for Howa 1500, Weatherby Vanguard, Smith & Wesson 1500 and Mossberg 1500, standard contour barrel, short action
- 1-Inch Pachmayr Decelerator Pad
- Full length aluminum bedding block

**NEW YOUTH MODEL!**

SKU1003

### Howa Mini Action, M40 Style



- Drop in fit for Howa Mini Action with factory detachable mag, heavy or sporter barrel contour
- Pachmayr Decelerator Pad
- Full length 6061-T6 aluminum bedding system

**NEW PRODUCT!**

SKU2460

### Remington 700 BDL Sporter Style



- Drop in fit for Rem 700 Short Action, standard and magnum contour barrels, BDL hinged floor plate design
- Pachmayr Decelerator Pad
- Full length 6061-T6 aluminum bedding system

**NEW YOUTH MODEL!**

SKU1002

### Howa Mini Action Sporter Style



- Drop in fit for Howa Mini Action with factory detachable mag and sporter barrel contour
- 1-Inch Pachmayr Decelerator Pad
- Full length 6061-T6 aluminum bedding system extends through the forearm, with aluminum "tail piece"

**NEW PRODUCT!**

# CONTENTS

## FEATURES

### 16 Is a Prostaff Right for Your Shop?

Promotional staffs aren't just for big, national brands. Could a local prostaff help your shop grow?

By Trent Marsh

### 20 Is It Time to Renovate?

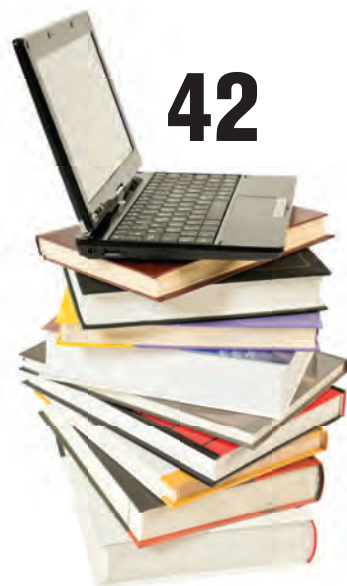
If you haven't changed the signs on the wall since the first Bush administration, it might be time to spruce up the store a little.

By Michael D. Faw

### 26 Navigating the Wader Gauntlet

Which pair of waders does your customer need? Letting a shopper walk out with a pair that's ill-suited to their needs is a mistake.

By David Rearick



# 42



# 44



# 26

### 30 Small Niche, Potential Big Payoffs

Small-game hunters are a tiny piece of the puzzle, but they can boost profits.

By Matt Crawford

### 34 How to Overcome the Challenges of a Bad Boss

If a difficult supervisor is making your work life miserable, it's time to learn how to 'manage up.'

By Ken Wysocky

### 36 SHOT Show Special

We won't be meeting in Vegas this year, but here's a peek at some of the new products debuting in 2021.

### 38 Gear Roundup

Cold-Weather Gear  
By Gordy Krahn



# 20

### 42 Virtual Learning

SHOT University Online has seen significant growth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

By Jodi Stemler

### 44 New Products

Here are a few new products to keep your eye on this year.

## DEPARTMENTS

### 4 In the News

A roundup of relevant and noteworthy industry updates

### 8 Informed Associate: 10 Ways to Build a Better Workplace

Making time on the job more pleasant for employees will reduce turnover and generally improve your life and theirs.

By Judy Kneiszel

### 10 Up Close: Hunting Handguns

Hunting with handguns is no longer a fringe activity. It's more popular than ever, and a number of handguns are well-suited to the task.

By Mark Chesnut

### 12 Gear Guru: 7 Highly Effective Cold-Weather Boots to Warm Up Retail Sales

Boots are a great product for brick-and-mortar retailers – they wear out, so customers periodically need to buy new ones, and most shoppers want to try them on in person.

By Kevin Reese

### 52 Counter Culture: Is Hunting as We Know It in America About to End?

Is hunting and conservation, as we have known it all our lives in America, about to end?

By Bob Robb





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## Sauer Partners With Big Rock Sports

Blaser Group is pleased to announce its J.P. Sauer brand partnership with Big Rock Sports, one of North America's largest wholesale distributors for the outdoor industry. Big Rock is now carrying the entire line of Sauer 100 bolt-action rifles that are designed and built by J.P. Sauer and Sohn, Germany's oldest gunmaker.

The S100 rifles promise five-shot sub-MOA performance and feature a crisp, user-adjustable single-stage trigger, detachable magazine, three-position safety, and German steel cold hammer-forged Sauer barrel.

"Big Rock is a vital and valued partner for us as we continue to build market share for the Sauer brand," said Jason Evans, CEO, Blaser Group. "We

look forward to working with their team to reach a much broader group of retailers with these world-class rifles."

The Sauer 100 line is available in a wide array of calibers, including 6.5 Creedmoor and 6.5 PRC, and comes in variety of models. MSRP starts at \$799.99 For further information, visit: [www.jpsauer-usa.com](http://www.jpsauer-usa.com).

The Blaser Group is the official U.S. importer for iconic German firearms brands Blaser, Mauser and J.P. Sauer; English gunmaker John Rigby & Co.; and Minox optics. Established in 2006, the company, which is based in San Antonio, Texas, works with more than 200 authorized Blaser Group dealers across all North American states.

## Orion Wholesale Partners With AmmoReady

Orion Wholesale, a national distributor of firearms, ammunition, and accessories, has chosen AmmoReady.com to help facilitate its ongoing digital transformation and to provide its customers with solutions for ecommerce, point-of-sale integration, inventory auto-replenishment, FFL transfers, and consumer dropshipping.

"Orion Wholesale is an innovative and rapidly growing distributor serving firearms retailers of all sizes, and we're very excited to be assisting them with the adoption of new digital commerce capabilities," said Paul Angell, CEO of AmmoReady.com. "The addition of a new supplier like Orion gives merchants using the AmmoReady platform access to additional

inventory and new products at a time when consumer demand is at an all-time high."

As of today, Orion Wholesale's catalog is available for instant-on streaming via the AmmoReady platform. In the coming weeks, ship-to-store order fulfillment will be available, followed by consumer and FFL dropshipping in the future. AmmoReady merchants with Orion accounts can connect their catalog now.

Orion Wholesale dealers that are not yet using AmmoReady to power their ecommerce operations can sign up with promo code ORION to save \$250 at startup.

## Vista Outdoor Launches Virtual Sales Shows

In August, Vista Outdoor launched a series of virtual sales shows to support its Buy Group customers, with weekly shows dedicated to specific groups for content review through an online portal. At the end of each week, attendees could get questions answered through live chats.

"Our distributors and retailers are hungry for information and product news. They need to hear from us and since we cannot be there in person we created our own virtual experience," Federal SVP Hunting & Shooting Sales Jim Bruno said at the time in a press release. "As a result, our efforts will benefit the end consumer because we will provide the latest and greatest products and information to be made

available from our distribution customers who attend these virtual shows."

With this already in place, look for more virtual releases in 2021 for other Vista Outdoor brands.

New product videos with information on features and benefits were the focus of the shows. Other digital content included messages from Bruno and Federal Ammunition President Jason Vanderbrink; examples of upcoming product advertising; trade marketing tools and displays; plus, pricing, terms and hot show specials for Buy Group members.

Business customers and Buy Group members interested in more information should contact their Federal sales representative.

## Vortex Introduces New Tripods

Vortex is debuting several new tripods for 2021.

First, the High Country II aluminum tripod offers a good balance of durability and packability. A two-way pan head provides simple, intuitive controls and a full range of mo-

tion. Max height is 62.5 inches, minimum height is 11.25 inches, folded length is 24.25 inches, and weight is 3.9 pounds. Load capacity is 22 pounds.

The Summit Carbon II carbon fiber tripod is designed for strength with a lightweight build. It also features a two-way pan head and has a compact, lightweight design for ultimate packability. Max height is 53.25 inches, minimum height is 6.25 inches, folded length is 18.125 inches, and weight is 2.3 pounds. Load capacity is 22 pounds.

The Ridgeview Carbon has carbon fiber construction and an expended height (max height of 73.75 inches), making it perfect for stand-up glassing. Minimum height is 8.25 inches, folded length is 29 inches, and weight is 3 pounds. Load capacity is 22 pounds.

Two Radian tripods are also available, both made of carbon fiber, but with different heads. The leveling head version (pictured) offers smooth, intuitive controls with a rubberized, twist-to-lock/unlock handle. It has +/- 15 degrees of leveling capability to guarantee precise positioning. Max height is 64.25 inches, minimum height is 7.75 inches, folded length is 25.5 inches and the weight is 6.1 pounds. Load capacity is 44 pounds in the first position, making it ideal for large binoculars, spotting scopes and rifles.

The ball head version of the Radian is also made of carbon fiber, but the ball head allows independent pan movement and tension control with an integrated level. It offers 45 degrees of tilt and notches for up to 90 degrees for all the travel you need. Max height is 67.25 inches, minimum height is 8.25 inches, folded length is 28 inches, and weight is 7.25 pounds. It's also perfect for large binos, spotting scopes and rifles, as the load capacity is 55 pounds.

Find more information at [www.vortexoptics.com](http://www.vortexoptics.com).



This month's cover brought to you by:



## Do-All Outdoors

Founded in 1997, Do-All Outdoors is a company with a true love for the great outdoors. Since developing our first patented clay pigeon thrower, we have been dedicated to bringing the highest quality, most innovative, and affordable items to the hunting and shooting industries. (In addition to the Do All Outdoors brand, Jurassic Rock and Dead Deer hunting accessories have both been very important additions to our family of products.

Create and maintain mineral sites with the best all-natural wildlife supplement, Jurassic Rock. Being a year-round mineral supplement produced in nature it is packed with prehistoric minerals to support size, strength, and health. Deep beneath the ground in Redmond Utah lies a salt deposit that remained untouched for millions of years. During the Jurassic period, an ancient inland sea known as the Sundance Sea covered much of the western United States. Over the course of millions of years, the sea eventually dried up and formed a large mineral deposit. This deposit is where we proudly mine Jurassic Rock, right here in the U.S.A. Our all-natural mineral rock is packed with all the minerals that deer love and need. Jurassic Rock consists of 3 Sku's, a 12lb rock, and

2 bags of crushed rock, one weighing 6lbs (ideal for packing in) and the other weighing 30lbs. For 2021, we are excited to announce our MAMMOTH sized rock weighing in at 15+ lbs. It is an incredible value at no extra cost to the retailer.

Dead Deer Hunting Accessories offers you cost effective ways to show off your trophies in an innovative and flashy way that always looks great. From the classic Iron Buck and its eye-catching variations, to the Iron Turkey, you will not be disappointed.

Do-All Outdoors has become a one-stop shop for your hunting and shooting needs. Offering Jurassic Rock, Dead Deer, a full line of clay pigeon throwers and various types of shooting targets. We have set the bar high by backing up all our products with one of the best customer service departments in the industry. With your continued support we look forward to continuing to strengthen our partnerships and increase the success of these categories together. Be sure to check out our products at your favorite local retailer, dealer, or distributor. For more info visit [doalldoors.com](http://doalldoors.com) or follow us on Facebook and Instagram.



## NSSF Releases 2020 Firearm Production Figures

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) recently released the 2020 edition of its Firearm Production Report to members. The report compiles the most up to date information based on data sourced from the ATF's Annual Firearms Manufacturing and

Export Reports (AFMER) as well as the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC). Key findings:

- In 2018, 11.4 million total firearms were produced or imported in the United States (less exported firearms).

- Approximately one-half (48%) of all rifles produced and imported (less exports) in 2018 were modern sporting rifles (MSRs).

- Since 1990, there are an estimated 19.8 million MSRs in circulation today.

- An interim 2019 estimate showed a total of 6 million total firearms were produced in the United States. Of those, 3.6 million were pistols and revolvers, 2 million were rifles and 480,000 were shotguns. Those are interim figures that will be updated when complete reports become available from the ATF.

- In 2019, there were approximately 3.3 million firearms imported into the United States which included 2.3 million pistols and revolvers, 301,000 rifles and 678,000 shotguns.

- From 1991 to 2019, nearly 214 million firearms have been made available to the U.S. market.

- According to reports such as: ATF Firearms Commerce in the United States, ATF AFMER and Congressional Research Service data, there are an estimated 434 million firearms in civilian possession in the United States.

- There are approximately 71.2 million pistol magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds, and 79.2 million rifle magazines capable of holding 30 or more rounds in circulation.

- Firearm and ammunition manufacturing accounted for nearly 12,000 employees producing over \$3.9 billion in goods shipped in 2018.

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## Walther Partners With Gravel Agency

Walther has a new partnership with the Gravel Agency to represent Walther products' complete line in commercial and Law Enforcement markets in Canada.

The Gravel Agency will manage distribution, warranty, translation services, parts inventory and compliance for all Canadian customers. Gravel Agency will continue to work with service partner Elwood Epps Sporting Goods as an authorized service center.

Walther's continued growth in the United States has increased Canada's demand for the high-performance pistols, including the Q5 Match, Q4 Tac, and Meister Manufaktur series. The Gravel Agency's help will increase market share in Canadian Law Enforcement, IPSC competitive shooters, and firearms enthusiasts. Walther will continue to rely on Outdoor Escape Sales' expertise for supporting specific military and law enforcement customers. **HR**





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# 10 Ways to Build a Better Workplace

Making time on the job more pleasant for employees will reduce turnover and generally improve your life and theirs.

BY JUDY KNEISZEL

**E**mployee turnover is expensive, costing you both time and money, and decreasing overall efficiency. The less turnover, the better, but that's certainly easier said than done. Keeping good employees can be a challenge — the best and brightest are apt to look elsewhere as they climb the ladder, and younger workers are not afraid to job-hop if it means better working conditions or greater rewards. As an employer, that means you have to up your game if you're going to keep good workers around.

Certainly, more pay and better benefits are a big part of the reason employees stick around — but they're not the only things that

keep people from leaving, and you don't necessarily have to increase your payroll beyond what's reasonable in order to lower turnover. Your workplace culture has a huge influence on how happy your employees are and how likely they are to stay put.

Here are 10 ways to improve your company's culture. Any one of these suggestions could be the difference between keeping a good employee and having to post that help-wanted sign again.

## 1. Show Some Appreciation

Paying fair wages is a must if you're going to attract and keep good employees. Beyond that, show appreciation for a job well

done with a sincere thank you, a pat on the back, a box of doughnuts or a free lunch. Consider bigger rewards when deserved, like monetary bonuses or extra time off. Employees who feel valued are more likely to work hard and be committed to the company.

## 2. Provide Feedback

Showing appreciation is important when things go right, but employees also want to hear from you when things go wrong or when things are going just OK. Providing thoughtful, constructive feedback will help an employee grow and do better in the future, and it will be appreciated if you go about it the right way. If you have to be



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## “Show appreciation, offer feedback and then back off. Let people do their jobs.”

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critical, be tactful and have the conversation in private to help the employee save face. Look at it as a teaching opportunity, not a critique. Be generous with both positive feedback and positive reinforcement on a daily basis and also in a more formal annual performance review.

### 3. Don't Micromanage

Show appreciation, offer feedback and then back off. Let people do their jobs. Sometimes this means letting people make, and learn from, mistakes. Micromanaging can hurt morale and decrease the productivity of the manager and the employee being managed. Learn to delegate tasks, and trust employees to complete them. You'll be surprised at what people can accomplish if you give them a little room.

### 4. Get to Know Your Employees

If you refer to one of your associates as “the tall one with the tattoo” and another as “the bald guy,” you've got your work cut out for you. Know every employee's name. Talk to them, and get to know something about their interests, whether it's the team they cheer for, a hobby they pursue after hours, or where their kids go to school. It's a lot easier for an employee to quit if they think of the boss as a mean, faceless stranger. On the other hand, if you recently bonded over the pain of your team's heartbreaking overtime loss, they might not want to kick you while you're down.

### 5. Give Clear Direction

No one likes feeling uncertain or directionless, especially on the job. If an employee doesn't understand what they are supposed to be doing, they can't do a good job, and this leads to frustration, which may lead to them walking off the job. Good communication is the key to a successful workforce. Explain expectations to employees. Have clear job descriptions, safety procedures, a chain of command and company policies. Provide more than adequate training.

### 6. Provide Inspiration; Set Goals

Whether you offer a group reward for a certain number of accident-free days, award an employee-of-the-month plaque, sponsor sales contests with prizes, or organize some other incentive program, these types of tactics can be fun and effective. If you want to see results, set goals for people and reward them when those goals are met.

### 7. Be Flexible

Work-life balance is crucial to a happy workforce. Be generous with time off and understanding about scheduling whenever possible. A mom or dad might be happy to stay late one day if it means they are able to cut out early and catch their daughter's softball game the next day. Actively

encourage employees to take vacations, too. Well-rested employees are happy employees.

### 8. Don't Play Favorites

Maybe your crew includes family members or friends. Maybe there are just some employees who you get along with better because you have similar outside interests. That's fine, but when it comes time for raises, promotions and job assignments, you've got to treat everyone fairly. Any hint of favoritism can lead to long-lasting resentment or defection.

### 9. Don't Hog the Credit

Recognize employees for their achievements. If a particular employee went above and beyond for a customer, give credit where credit is due. It could make better customer service contagious rather than spreading the “why bother?” attitude that comes with the frustration of seeing the boss take credit for an employee's hard work.

### 10. Handle All Disputes Immediately and Fairly

Nothing hurts morale like a disagreement between co-workers, especially in a small company where employees can't easily be reassigned to a different team. An employee who has a beef with management can also spread negativity through a company like the plague. Nip it in the bud. Listen to all sides, try to get the facts, and settle things fairly. If necessary, bring in a neutral party for mediation to resolve the issue.

If your company could improve in any or all of these areas, take steps to implement changes. Concentrate on making your company a great place to work, and it will help you sail through the busiest seasons with a full crew. Preventing workers from leaving for greener pastures will reduce the time, effort and money needed to find last-minute replacements. **HR**



# Hunting Handguns

Hunting with handguns is no longer a fringe activity. It's more popular than ever, and a number of handguns are well-suited to the task.



BY MARK CHESNUT

**B**ig-game hunting has long been the stronghold of those using conventional rifles, shotguns with slugs, muzzleloading rifles and archery equipment. Occasionally, hunters took handguns — usually large-caliber revolvers — along with them on their outings, but seldom as the primary hunting firearm.

All that changed in the late 1960s when Thompson/Center introduced its forward-thinking Contender pistol. The break-action, single-shot pistol was eventually chambered in a large number of excellent deer cartridges and had the flexibility of being able to change out the barrel for a different caliber depending on the hunter's needs. A growing number of handgun hunters soon took to the fields and woods in pursuit of deer, bear and other medium-sized game species.

Now, handgun hunting is growing by leaps and bounds, and even has somewhat of a cult following of participants who thrive on harvesting their game with a short-barreled firearm. Be aware, however, that some of these “handguns” resemble a conventional centerfire rifle far more than they do your typical pistol.

Let's take a look at three popular options — a bolt gun, a revolver and a semi-auto — that handgun hunters might look for in your retail establishment.

## REMINGTON 700 CP

Just introduced by Big Green last year, this is one of those “handguns” I mentioned that don't look like a handgun. In fact, it doesn't shoot like a handgun, either, but more like a rifle, and it is available in several popular short-action calibers. Initially offered in 300 Blackout, .223 Remington and .308 Winchester, the gun is now available in 6.5mm Creedmoor and will eventually include about 10 other chamberings, many of which will be good for big-game hunting.

Built off a standard Remington 700 short action, one of the most popular bolt-action rifle designs in history, the 700 CP (for chassis pistol) exhibits many rifle-like characteristics in a much more compact package. Remington adding the SB Tactical arm brace to the gun made it even more rifle-like, while still compliant with ATF regulations concerning handguns versus rifles.

The 700 CP features a Remington chassis and M-LOK handguards, a muzzle threaded for a suppressor and an included thread protector, and a full-length Picatinny rail for mounting scopes or red-dot sights. The gun also comes with a 10-round magazine and Magpul MIAD pistol grip, with some models offering the aforementioned SB Tactical brace.

As for triggers, the 700 CP's X Mark Pro trigger is said to be a very fine one, and it's easily adjustable at that. For those wanting to get into handgun hunting without giving up the extended range their rifle usually brings, the 700 CP is one of the best options on the market right now.

While the 700 CP's 12-inch barrel won't yield as much velocity from a typical rifle cartridge as would a longer-barreled rifle, it is still plenty long to get the necessary velocities to produce the downrange energy needed to kill big game at 200 to 250 yards. That makes it a great option for those handgun hunters not satisfied with being able to make shots out to only 75 to 100 yards.

This isn't a budget gun, by the way. With the Magpul MIAD pistol grip, the MSRP is \$1,040. Models with the SB Tactical brace carry an MSRP of \$1,169.

**“Be aware, however, that some of these ‘handguns’ resemble a conventional centerfire rifle far more than they do your typical pistol.”**



### SMITH & WESSON MODEL 62 CLASSIC



### SMITH & WESSON 629 MAGNUM HUNTER



### SMITH & WESSON MODEL 629 STEALTH HUNTER

### SMITH & WESSON MODEL 629 .44 MAGNUM

I consider this heavy, sturdy handgun one of the finest hunting revolvers ever made. The Model 629 is based on the company's earlier Model 29 revolver and was the first production revolver chambered for .44 Magnum – at the time, in the early 1970s, the most powerful handgun cartridge in the world.

Built on the company's large N-frame, the gun is now offered with a 5-inch, stainless steel barrel with satin stainless frame finish. The cylinder holds six rounds of powerful .44 Magnum ammo, and the revolver can be shot single or double action.

As for its deer-killing ability, I've personally killed a handful of deer and a couple of wild hogs with the 629 and found it to do its job quite well. When I got to the downed animals, they were just as dead as deer or hogs I've shot with high-powered rifles. Prospective handgun hunters should be aware that the gun weighs in at about 2.75 pounds, so a good holster is needed – providing retailers another opportunity for a sale.

More recently, Smith & Wesson has introduced The Model 629 Magnum Hunter, a .44 Magnum revolver built specifically for hunting. The six-shot Magnum Hunter, made by S&W's Performance Center, has a built-in muzzle brake and comes with an adjustable rear sight as well as a red-dot or green-dot optical sight. With its 7.5-inch barrel and Performance Center-tuned action and

trigger, the 629 Magnum Hunter is a top-of-the-line offering for revolver big-game hunters. But with an MSRP of \$1,378, it's not going to appeal to every hunter looking to get into the handgun side of the sport.

Fortunately for those who want to hunt with a revolver, many ammunition companies make fine .44 Magnum hunting ammunition designed for the deep penetration and excellent expansion required to kill big-game species quickly and efficiently. Some good loads to consider carrying in your inventory include Black Hills 240-grain, Buffalo Bore 240-grain deer Grenade +P, Hornady 200-grain and 240-grain XTP, Remington's 225-grain Hog Hammer and Winchester's 250-grain Platinum Tip JHP.

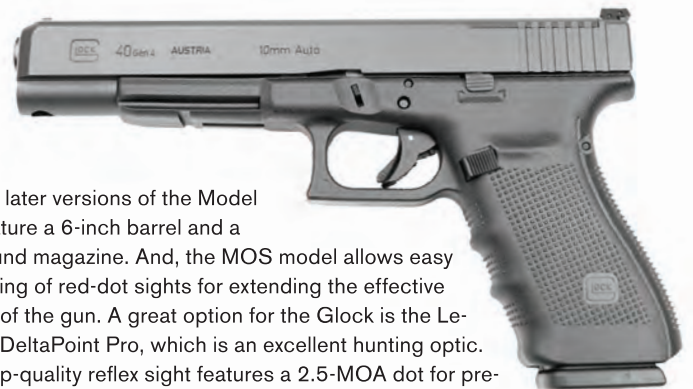
### GLOCK MODEL 40 10MM

"Hunt with a Glock? You must be crazy!"

For those unfamiliar with the 10mm Auto cartridge and Glock's complete line of handguns, that statement might make sense. But for customers looking for a big-bore semi-auto capable of taking deer-sized game quickly and cleanly, the Glock Model 40, known as the G40, fills the bill.

The 10mm cartridge was invented by Col. Jeff Cooper in 1983 and was first chambered in the Bren Ten pistol. Cooper designed the cartridge to have a flatter trajectory and more extended range than the .45 ACP, with more killing power than the popular 9mm. In recent years with a better selection of high-quality bullets on the market, many have begun using the cartridge for deer-sized game, and the G40 is one of the most popular pistols in the caliber.

As most know, Glock is an Austrian company that put polymer-frame, striker-fired pistols on the shooting map decades ago when Gaston Glock invented the P80, now known as the G17, at the behest of the Austrian Armed Forces. Better known for police, military, home-defense and self-defense applications, the G40's 10mm chambering pushes it into the realm of viable hunting cartridges.



The later versions of the Model 40 feature a 6-inch barrel and a 10-round magazine. And, the MOS model allows easy mounting of red-dot sights for extending the effective range of the gun. A great option for the Glock is the Leupold DeltaPoint Pro, which is an excellent hunting optic. The top-quality reflex sight features a 2.5-MOA dot for precise sighting out to about 100 yards.

For deer-sized game, several companies offer 10mm ammo that will get the job done. These loads include Hornady 175-grain Critical Duty and 180-grain XTP, Speer 200-grain Gold Dot, Federal 180-grain Trophy Bonded JSP and 180-grain Hydra Shok, and Buffalo Bore 220-grain Heavy Outdoorsman. **HR**



# 7 Highly Effective Cold-Weather Boots to Warm Up Retail Sales

Boots are a great product for brick-and-mortar retailers — they wear out, so customers periodically need to buy new ones, and most shoppers want to try them on in person.



BY KEVIN REESE

“Let me know when you’ve walked a mile in my boots.”

I can still clearly hear my pop uttering those words. Most often, the words were used to emphasize my lack of experience, as well as my lack of capacity at the time to understand what it took, as a sheet metal worker, to provide for our family. However, I learned quickly when, at 18 years old, I stepped onto yellow footprints and soon after, traded sneakers for combat boots. Lord knows how many miles I trekked over eight years of Marine Corps service. While the miles took their toll on my feet and hiking up hills was quite taxing, heading back down them was where most of the damage occurred — hot spots, blisters, shin splints and bad knees. Unfortunately, Marine Corps regulations regarding boots were strict. I

could wear slick black Cadillacs... or slick black Cadillacs.

Growing up in a blue-collar, factory-working home, I also understood early on how important it was to take care of your feet. As much as he reminded me that I hadn’t taken a step in his boots, he also emphasized the importance of good boots — “You’ve got to take care of the moneymakers. They’re your most important tool.” While I clearly did not have a choice in footwear during my military service, I headed into the factory after my discharge and I did exactly as he suggested. I took care of my moneymakers. Fortunately, the lessons of my blue-collar stepfather carried over from factory work into my outdoor lifestyle. From my first hunts, clear through to today, I have been ever mindful of the important

role boots play on and off the grid.

This is a make-or-break lesson your customers also desperately need to know, and it is in your best retail interest to guide them. Sure, footwear is a vital factor in comfort and reliability, but more importantly, hunting boots, especially in cold weather, can mean the difference between great memories and traumatic or downright deadly circumstances. Your customers need to know before they go, and you need to outfit them with the right gear. Fortunately, doing so often leads to more sales and fosters the kind of relationships that bring your customers back. In the spirit of giving good advice for customers and making great inventory decisions, here are seven highly effective boots to warm up your retail sales.



## ROCKY ARCTIC BEARCLAW 1400G

Seemingly the epitome of starting with nothing, William (Bill) and F.M. (Mike) Brooks founded Rocky Boots, quite literally, on a shoestring budget. In 1932, Nelsonville, Ohio, like the rest of the country, languished in the Great Depression that had started just three years earlier. The Brooks brothers weren't fairsing any better but were dead set on entrepreneurship while America's economy lay in shambles around them. They scored the keys to a rent-free building and borrowed some machinery, and William Brooks Shoe Company was born. Now, 88 years later, Rocky remains in family hands. Even better, the company has amassed quite a following and has

become a top producer of hunting boots. One model well worth space on your cold-weather retail shelf is the Arctic BearClaw, the warmest offering in the BearClaw lineup.

Rocky 10-inch Arctic BearClaw Boots are designed from the ground up to provide your hunting customers with warm yet dry feet even in brutally cold, wet environments. Arctic BearClaw boots boast 1400 grams of 3M Thinsulate Ultra Insulation, breathable yet waterproof Gore-Tex liner, 3-D welt construction and a full-grain leather/nylon upper. An Air-Port cushion footbed keeps your feet dry and comfortable during all-day activities, while a BearClaw 3-D outsole provides slip-resistant confidence on icy, uneven terrain. [www.rockyboots.com](http://www.rockyboots.com)



## KENETREK MOUNTAIN EXTREME 1000

Sheep hunters are a different breed of adventure-seeking animal. From steep fields of shale to perilous summits shrouded in jagged rock outcroppings with gut-wrenching drops on either side, the only tools at their disposal to close the distance with confidence are brains and boots. While Kenetrek can't do anything about decision-making, they have boots covered; in fact, it was a 2002 sheep hunt, and brutalized feet, that led to Kenetrek's founding in 2005. Sheep hunting and the toll such adventures take on the minds and feet of hardcore, high-altitude hunters are what motivated Kenetrek to develop what many consider to be near-perfect hunting and hiking boots, one of the most popular being the Italian-made Mountain Extreme 1000.

Truth be told, if you're serving discriminating hard-core hunters with an affinity for extreme cold and ridiculously high altitudes, Kenetrek Mountain Extreme 1000 Boots need some of your shelf space, and your customers need some of your retailer guidance to pick them out of your inventory crowd. Mountain Extreme 1000 boots feature 10-inch-tall uppers constructed of full-grain, 2.8mm-thick leather; swiveling boot hardware; seamless tongues for improved waterproof reliability; double and triple stitching; 7mm nylon insoles; reinforced rubber sole guards and slip-resistant K-Talon outsoles. For ultra-reliable, breathable waterproofing and warmth, Kenetrek Mountain Extreme 1000 boots also include 1000-gram Thinsulate insulation and Windtex membranes. [www.kenetrek.com](http://www.kenetrek.com)



## LACROSSE AEROHEAD SPORT 7MM

Depending on the weather, I may spend weeks at a time in neoprene boots I affectionately refer to as "mud boots." Honestly, hog hunting in expansive Texas crop fields after heavy rain has led me past wandering ducks on many occasions and, as it happens, my go-to mud boots are LaCrosse. Of course, freezing cold weather is generally fleeting down South, so my uninsulated Alphaburly Pro boots may not be a great fit for an ice storm, but Lacrosse 18-inch Aerohead Sport 7mm boots just might be the perfect fit. These boots are rated for cold weather temperatures ranging from -60 to 30 degrees.

LaCrosse Aerohead Sport 7mm boots offer the comfort, waterproof protection and warmth your hunting patrons want without being cumbersome. As the name implies, these Aerohead Sport boots boast ultra-thick 7mm neoprene insulation, spandex and Lycra composite shells, jersey knit comfort liners, ridiculously comfortable yet removable EVA footbeds, adjustable over-the-calf-buckles, integrated polypropylene board shanks and bonded, taped and double-stitched welds. One other huge benefit of LaCrosse Aerohead Sport 7mm boots is the flexible neoprene gusset for added comfort and enhanced fit for your customers blessed with larger calves.

[www.lacrossefootwear.com](http://www.lacrossefootwear.com)



## DANNER PRONGHORN REALTREE EDGE 1200G

Over the course of 88 years, Danner boots has built a reputation here in America of uncompromising craftsmanship, comfort and durability. In their own words, Danner is committed to continuing "to craft high quality boots, using the best possible materials we can find, to create a product built to last." Relying on Danner's Ballistic boots for all of my gritty range work, I can attest to the brand's quality and durability. As a Jarhead, factory worker and outdoor writer, I have always made my money on my feet, and Danner's Ballistic boots have been my best choice yet. One excellent Danner cold-weather hunting boot is the Pronghorn 8-inch Realtree Edge 1200G.

For more than 20 years, the Pronghorn has been a hinge-pin in Danner's success story. Now, five Pronghorn generations later, Danner might have reached the pinnacle. At least for now, the current generation of Danner Pronghorn boots has stepped up to stake its claims in quality, comfort and reliability.

In terms of cold weather, Danner Pronghorn 1200G boots are tough to beat, and I might even argue that for value, they rank among the best the market has to offer. Pronghorn 1200G boots are built upon Danner's Force Next platform with an internal and external shank system, and they feature full-grain leather hand selected after comprehensive testing, 1200-gram PrimaLoft insulation, 100% waterproof and breathable Gore-Tex lining, Vibram SPE midsole and a Vibram Pronghorn outsole. [www.danner.com](http://www.danner.com)





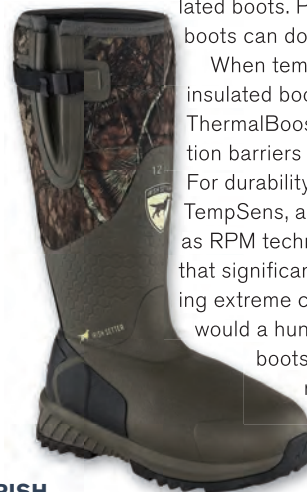
**“This is a make-or-break lesson your customers also desperately need to know, and it is in your best retail interest to guide them.”**

### IRISH SETTER MUDTREK INSULATED

The Irish Setter story begins long before the first branded boots hit shelves in the early 1950s. Decades earlier, Red Wing Boots took footwear by storm in 1905 and migrated into hunting by 1929. A couple of decades later, Irish Setter was forged from Red Wing's legacy, and the brand continues as an industry-leading hunting boot brand today. My personal story with Red Wing and Irish Setter boots began at a young age. My grandfather's hunting boots were Irish Setters, and for as long as I knew my stepfather, a sheet metal worker, Red Wings were on his moneymakers. For my many years on a factory floor, I wore the same. The quality, comfort and reliability of Red Wing and Irish Setter boots have never been lost on my family, and I still own a couple pairs of Irish Setter hunting boots. That said, looking at the brand's latest offerings, the 11 inches of rain that fell recently and the cold fronts routinely accompanying late fall, I would do well to jump into a pair of Irish Setter's new MudTrek insulated boots. Perhaps you should be looking at what these boots can do for your customers, too!



**IRISH  
SETTER  
ICETREK**



**IRISH  
SETTER  
MUDTREK**

When temperatures plummet, Irish Setter MudTrek insulated boots keep your hunters' toes toasty with ThermalBoost — strategically placed, multi-zone insulation barriers — and 1200 grams of PrimaLoft insulation. For durability and comfort, MudTrek boots incorporate TempSens, a temperature-reactive control system, as well as RPM technology, a “breakthrough composite material that significantly reduces the weight of the boot, providing extreme comfort and added endurance.” Finally, what would a hunting boot be without scent control? MudTrek boots include ScentBan, a scent control treatment designed to kill bacteria responsible for odors, embedded throughout boot materials including the footbed.

[www.irishsetterboots.com](http://www.irishsetterboots.com)





## CHIPPEWA WEDDELL BAY APACHE ARCTIC

Founded in 1910, Chippewa Boots have been staple footwear here in my home state of Texas since Justin Boots, headquartered in Fort Worth acquired the shoe company in 1984. Today, you would be hard-pressed to find a group of us Texas hunters absent of at least one pair of Chippewa Descaro-style snake boots. For 36 years, Chippewa boots have been nearly as Texan as, well, Texas, so naturally the brand is one of my top choices, including for cold-weather footwear. Of course, while Chippewa may be owned by Justin, the boots are still made in the USA with "global parts" in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, and those folks know cold so well that Weddell Bay Apache Arctic boots have to be highlighted here for those customers of yours who demand high-tech cold-weather innovation in classic leather boot styling.



Beyond the throw-back look of Chippewa's iconic Descaro snake boots, the brand's greatest cold-weather boot offering just might be the Weddell Bay Apache Arctic. These boots are constructed of a lace-up design, brown Bay Apache leather exterior and rugged, slip-resistant Vibram outsoles. Inside, Weddell Bay Apache Arctic boots feature Chippewa's popular Chip-A-Tex waterproof membrane (breathable but prevents water infiltration), Texon 460 waterproof insoles and a warm, insulating lamb shearing wool polypropylene felt lining. For maximum durability, Weddell Bay Apache Arctic boots also include a leather welt, 4-iron rubber midsole and triple-ribbed steel shank. [www.chippewaboos.com](http://www.chippewaboos.com)

## LOWA TIBET SUPERWARM GTX

Cold weather? How does Mount Everest cold strike you? Jim Whittaker was the first American to summit Mount Everest in 1963, and he did so in a pair of Lowa mountaineering boots. In 1923, Lowa was founded by Bavarian cobbler Lorenz Wagner in Jetzendorf, Germany, just about 90 miles south of Nuremberg. While Lowa was forced to make military boots through WWII, the company stepped back into civilian footwear soon after the war's end and never looked back. Today, the Lowa is a premier boot brand throughout Europe and is also exceptionally popular among elite adventurers throughout the U.S. — and for good reason. The company continues to innovate and produce top-shelf boots for high-elevation exploits. Case in point, Lowa Tibet Superwarm GTX Boots.



Designed specifically for cold-weather, high-altitude hiking and hunting, the Tibet Superwarm GTX follows the same popular design as Lowa's Tibet GTX and adds Gore-Tex PrimaLoft 400 insulation as well as an Insulated Pro insole. Tibet Superwarm GTX Boots also boast a Vibram Mottarone Arctic Grip sole, DuraPU midsole, waterproof yet breathable construction and a Flexfit system. Additional features include dual-zone X-Lacing, C4-Tongue, I-Lock technology, minimal seams and roller eyelets. If you're serving discriminating hunters who demand the best in warmth and comfort for mountain-top hunting adventures, Lowa Tibet Superwarm GTX boots should fit them quite nicely. [www.lowaboos.com](http://www.lowaboos.com) **HR**

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**THE OUTLAW**

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PROGRAMMABLE

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**GEN2 GC320**

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**GEN2 GC300**

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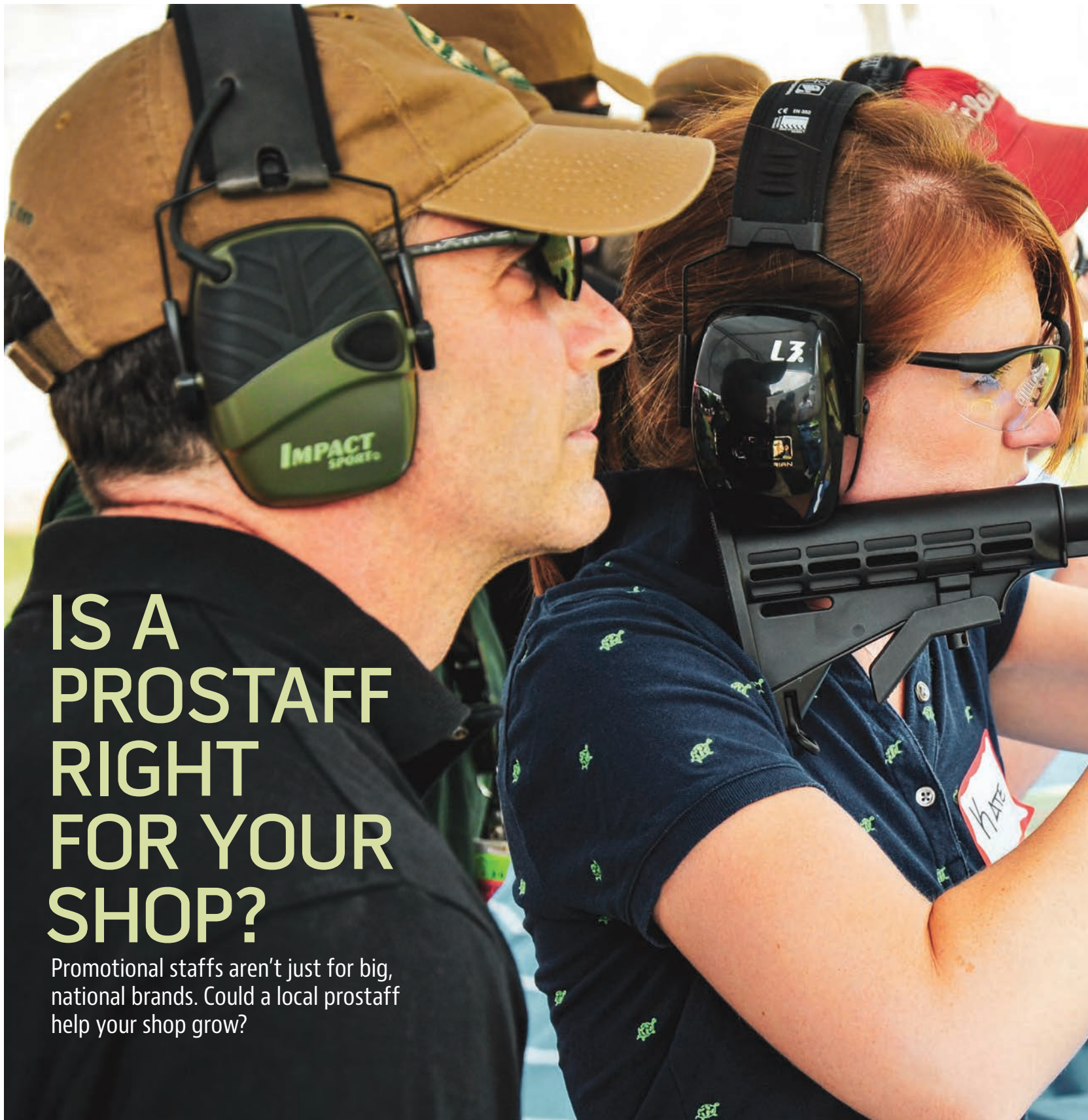
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# IS A PROSTAFF RIGHT FOR YOUR SHOP?

Promotional staffs aren't just for big, national brands. Could a local prostaff help your shop grow?





BY TRENT MARSH

Choosing the right advertising plan for your shop can be a daunting task, full of trial and error and agonizing decisions. It's likely at some point you've considered the idea of adding a prostaff to your shop's arsenal of advertising channels, but if you haven't, let's discuss some of the things to consider, advantages, pitfalls, and how to manage a staff to ensure a return.

A prostaff is nothing more than influencer marketing. While the outdoor industry catches a lot of guff for being behind the times, and often deservedly so, influencer marketing is one place where the industry has been decades ahead of the curve. The mediums may have changed, but the premise is the same: Get people who use your product or service to talk about and promote you.

At its core, that's really all influencer marketing is, and that is exactly what we ask of a prostaff at either a local store level, or as a national brand.

So how do you decide if a prostaff is right for you?

The first thing you need to decide is if you have time for a prostaff. Staff size can vary greatly. At the store level, it's likely to be smaller than most brand prostaffs, but even from a brand perspective, I've managed prostaffs ranging from as few as 15 members to as many as 150. What may be a surprise is how little difference there was in managing teams of such varying sizes.

Managing people is time-intensive work. Establishing protocols and procedures can help, but the mantra "people buy from people" applies here, too. Generally speaking, the more involved you are, the more direction you provide, the more engaged your staff sees you, the more they will do, the harder they will work, and the more benefit you will receive.

But your staff isn't made up of employees. They have jobs of their own. The flexibility that it takes to manage a prostaff is different than managing employees. You may need to be available at different times or make accommodations for staff members to get the training or information they need.

Time is a major factor. If you or someone on your team doesn't have at least five to 10 hours a week to dedicate toward getting a staff established, you're likely headed to disappointment.

The next thing to consider is exactly what you want from your prostaff. If you don't have a clear vision of what you need from a prostaff, then your staff won't have a clear vision of their expectations, either.

There is no one reason to start or have a pros-



staff. Every shop or brand has a different reason or expectation of their staff, but you still need to know what yours is and communicate that to the members or prospective members.

A poorly defined or communicated vision for the expectations and duties for your prostaff will have huge implications. From the shop's standpoint, it is tougher to measure the effectiveness of the staff without a clear task list to which to hold them. That also makes the management of the staff more difficult because you're constantly making it up as you go.

engaging. You might need a staff of competition shooters for local archery or three-gun competitions.

Whatever your needs are for promoting or enriching the customer experience, a prostaff can help. But it is paramount that you understand exactly what that list is before you get a staff up and going.

If you've made it to this part of the decision-making process, you probably already have a few people in mind that you would like to add to any staff that you start. Let a few of these people be part of the early planning stages for the staff. Candid conversations with the people you want to be the keystones in your staff are going to make sure that both sides have a clear understanding of the goals as well as a stake in making the program the best that it can be for both sides. If you can't have these conversations and come to a place where you are both happy, do you think it's going to be any better when the staff actually gets up and running?

So, you've decided you have the time, the vision, and the buy-in from some of your priority members, and you pulled the trigger and started a prostaff for your shop. Great.

Now what?

Starting a prostaff is quick and easy. Managing that prostaff is where the real work begins. So how do you make sure that the staff is running smoothly and getting the returns you're after?

First, it is much easier to expand a staff that is working than to reduce an ineffective staff. It doesn't matter if it is a brand or a shop prostaff — it is made up of customers. Where the difference is, at the shop level your customer base is smaller than that of a national brand, and as such, the relationship with those customers is far more personal.

The harsh reality is that at some point you may need to fire members of your prostaff. Especially initially, you can temper this reality by keeping the staff small and being transparent with the staff that this is an experiment. You don't want this prostaff experiment to result in hurt feelings or lost customers, and if you come out of the gates with a big staff, you just raise the chances that some of them are going to have to go. Keep the staff small at the start and build on successes.

Next, make a plan for regular communication. At the local level, this can include in-person communication as well as digital. For the prostaff to be effective, they need to know what is going on. Keeping them in the loop is key to keeping



↑ Trade shows are a great place to utilize your prostaffers, in your booth and walking the floor on your behalf.

You also make it more difficult on your staff members. If they don't know or understand how they are being evaluated, they can't do their best job promoting what is important to you. If they're on their own in terms of guidance and what to focus on trying to help your shop, that may run counter to the other initiatives you have in place and actually create issues for your shop, rather than solving them.

Once you've decided that you have time for a staff, and you have a clear idea of what you would like from them, take a serious look at your expectations and make sure that the prostaff is the best avenue to accomplish what you've identified as their main tasks.

This list is what will vary the most from one location to the next. Maybe you just need some additional "expert" voices to be in the shop a few times a year for major sales. You might want a team of people who are influential in local social media to help with brand awareness. It's possible you run a content program on your website, and you need contributors to help keep that content relevant, timely and



them engaged with their audience or following about what's going on at your shop.

This doesn't mean you need to share confidential information that you wouldn't give to any customer that comes in off the street, but you do need a level of transparency with them that allows them to carry your message to their following.

When you have upcoming sales or hunter's safety or concealed carry classes, your prostaff members need to know so they can be talking those events up to help with recruitment and attendance. Don't expect to be able to wait until the night before an event and have your staff pull off miracles.

Social media has made it easier than ever to stay in touch with your staff. The use of Facebook and Facebook Live within a private group that is set up just for your staff members can be a great tool for conveying information, and it allows for interaction beyond an email or text message.

For staff communication, I have always tried to focus on what's important over the next week, the next month and the next quarter. Breaking it down in that way allows you to plan ahead as well and keeps them aware of what's on the horizon.

Another thing to consider is how you will compensate your staff for their investment of time, effort and access to their audience. While some people may do this out of the kindness of their heart and because they value your shop on a personal level, their undertaking deserves some compensation from you.

That doesn't mean you need to start cutting checks, but letting your staff know that what they are doing has value and that you recognize that goes a long way to getting the best out of them. More often than not, this manifests in the form of some combination of free or discounted products and/or services, use of a prostaff title, and swag.

The last critical factor to the success of a prostaff is the ability to track performance of your staff members.

This is impossible, of course, if you weren't clear about setting expectations and benchmarks up front. For me, I have found that maintaining a spreadsheet with staff members' information and the critical tasks or objectives to be the easiest way to keep track of this. You can lay it out well ahead of time and let the staff know how you are tracking and keeping notes on performance, so if difficult conversations need to be had, they know where the information is coming from and you aren't guessing or going with your gut on performance.

It might be as simple as checking that they shared a

post on social media about an upcoming sale at your shop. Maybe you want them to be doing stories or live clips from your shop once a month. Whatever it may be, you can set those events in the spreadsheet and just check them off as they are completed.

If you want to take it to the next level, there are software options that let you evaluate the reach and influence of your staff across multiple platforms. But these services aren't free, and at the local level, you should be able to see the impact of your staff a little easier than with a national staff of dozens if not hundreds of members.

While my initial statement of five to 10 hours a week to commit to your prostaff management may have seemed like a lot, look at what we need to do to maintain prostaff performance. By the time you carve out time to determine what it is you need from your staff, communicate those needs, and evaluate not only if they got it done, but how well it worked, five to 10 hours can easily be on the lower end of what is needed.

**“Starting a prostaff is quick and easy. Managing that prostaff is where the real work begins.”**



→ Be sure to have your prostaff present at range days and other shop events you put on. They can interact with customers and promote your shop.

Prostaff and influencer best practices vary more than most other types of marketing. There are more ways they can be used, and the use ultimately depends on your shop's needs. What works for one shop or brand may not be at all what someone else needs.

At the end of the day, if you are clear about how you need a prostaff to perform, communicate that to your prostaff, and do your part to ensure that what you need done is getting done, a prostaff can be a cost-effective, organic way to spread the word about your shop. **HR**





# IS IT TIME TO RENOVATE?

If you haven't changed the signs on the wall since the first Bush administration, it might be time to spruce up the store a little.

BY MICHAEL D. FAW

**T**he hunting retail store was more like a dusty antique museum. When I entered in search of a box of .30-06 ammunition, I discovered lots of vintage hunting gear in dusty boxes that had been there since the '60s and early '70s. Many items had outdated camouflage patterns. Some hunting firearms I noted on the gun racks were now more for collectors than hunters. The older gentleman behind the counter peered across his glasses and directed me to a nearby row of shelves with ammunition. There I found more dust and disorganization. Time had passed this retailer by.

Ask yourself, is your retail business due for a makeover? Could a reorganization or substantial renovation increase sales and customer visit numbers?

Take a quick inventory around you. When were the walls last painted, new racks or display cabinets installed, or the floor plan reorganized? Find any dust? If you have settled into routine ways, with the same old surroundings as they were five or 10 years ago, your customers may have noticed and are now spending more time in updated surroundings — with your competitors. The average home gets remodeled approximately every seven to 10





## “One final guide on renovations is to avoid the ‘I can do this myself’ mistake.”

years. Are you behind in remodeling and sprucing up? Your customers notice when you make changes and upgrades. Some of those customers may wonder what took you so long.

### Making the Decision

The decision to reorganize or remodel can be based on many factors. First, look around you, across the street, around the neighborhood, and at your competitors. Have any added fresh paint, new signs or parking upgrades, new racks and shelves inside, and other things that deliver a fresh look? Next, step back inside and give your business, building and surroundings a close and honest look. If things look just like they did five or 10 years ago, it's probably time to make changes.

Updates can attract more and new customers — and give them notice that you are prepared to better serve them. Timing is also critical when updating. You should not be doing major remodels the months prior to opening days for dove season, big-game rifle seasons, and spring turkey season. Those are times when you should focus more on serving customers, selling hunting-related merchandise, and collecting dollars. So, when is it time to renovate?

“We have always aimed for the middle of summer, which is historically a slow time for our industry,” says Patrick Hayden, owner of Kentucky Gun Company. His business has been through four major renovations in the past two decades. Each has meant more floor space, more product lines, or more reasons for customers to visit.

### Set Your Sights on Costs and Timelines

The first thing in successful remodels or renovations is determining what you want to do and how much it will cost. It's important to get a plan of what you will do, when you want to start and stop, and the hard numbers of what items cost so you

can set an accurate budget. It's very important to get your plans on paper. As a rule, most projects tend to run 10 to 20% over the initial estimate, so calculate accurately when getting estimates and allocating dollars to projects. Base your budget on a percentage of income the past three years — but forgo the 2020 info, because this year has been everything but normal. Stay focused on the deadline, also, because renovation projects can take on a life of their own if you do not keep them in check.

Another often overlooked item in renovations are necessary local and possibly state permits. You probably do not need a permit to paint, but some neighborhoods do have restrictions and zoning ordinances on exterior colors. If a hammer and nail are involved, you probably do need a building permit.

Next, it's best to get at least three

construction estimates or costs if you will make interior changes or additions. Moving walls, adding doors, upgrading plumbing or lights, building a new section, and other major changes can become expensive — quickly. Ask for a written contract and bid, get a thorough list of materials and ask for references of past customers. If possible, visit a recent remodel job with the contractor to learn how that contractor completes a project and thinks about retail spaces. Call and check references and visit their locations to better judge results. Renovations are a huge decision, so spend your time and dollars wisely before the hammer swings.

Be honest in determining if the dollars spent will increase customer flow and aid you with selling wares. An easy-but-quick upgrade can be installing energy-saving LED lighting to replace standard incandescent lights. You may have monetary incentives from local governments or utility companies to make these upgrades, so ask and do your research. Your customers will instantly notice this upgrade.



There are businesses that specialize in store redesigns. Ask around or do your research thoroughly before committing. Some of these redesign experts can save you money by offering discounts on lighting, new shelves and up-to-date fixtures. When dealing with any redesign team, be certain they understand your customers are hunters. Note that your employees can also be a good source for input and feedback from customers, so let them know your renovation plans and ask their input.

One final guide on renovations is to avoid the “I can do this myself” mistake. You are a businessperson and retailer first, not a carpenter, electrician or plumber. Even mundane tasks like painting the interior walls can give the wrong impression to customers if not completed with crisp edges and proper color selection. Leave renovation work to the pros.

**Staying Open**

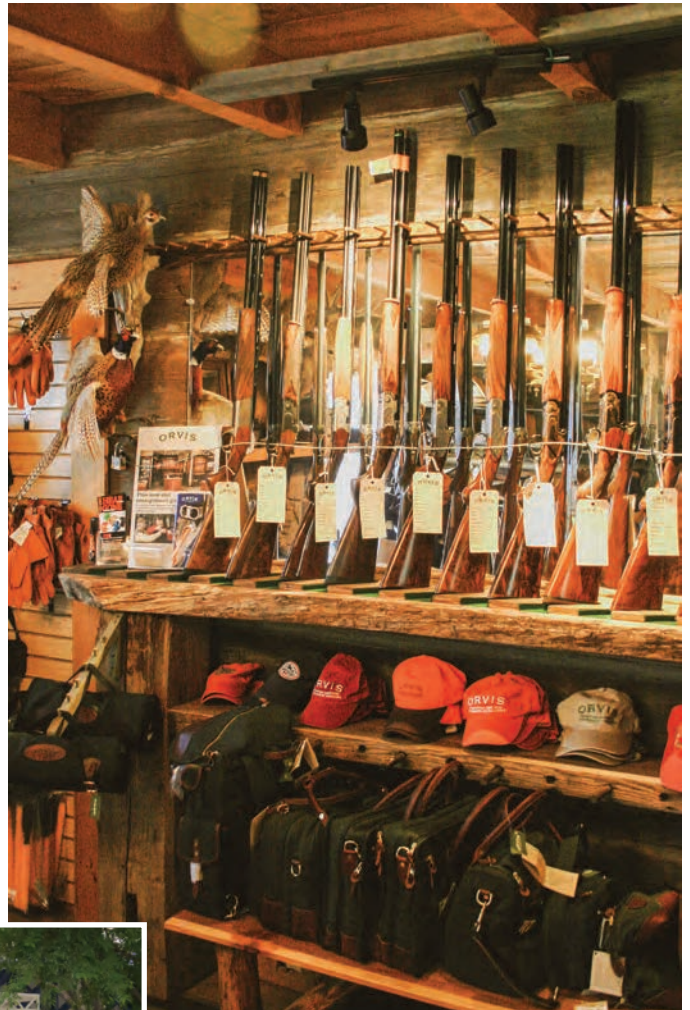
If renovations occur during normal business hours, plan on signs in the parking lot and on the front door and windows indicating that you are OPEN during renovations. Let current customers know a month before renovations begin about what will be happening — and what this will mean for them when the project is finished. Oddly enough, sometimes when renovations and upgrades are underway, some customers driving by incorrectly believe there’s a new business going in at your location.

“Letting customers know that you are expanding is critical,” said Hayden. “They need to know what is happening! By keeping them in the loop, this creates excitement and anticipation.” Remember to leave open parking spaces for customers near the entrance and have service trucks and contractors use rear or side entrances when possible.

**The Space You Have**

Sometimes expansions are out of the question in the location and building you occupy. A floor plan redesign could be beneficial within your current walls. The great news is that there are several sources for software that can guide you through rearranging shelves, moving counters and better utilizing retail spaces. Along with a new floor plan for shelves and counters, consider new paint, upgraded lights, and new floor coverings.

↓ Construction projects should be left for the pros – you have a retail business to run and customers to serve.



↑ Invite local media to cover your construction project and your open house when the renovation is complete.

↑ Renovated doesn't have to mean ultra-modern. Some renovations can be used to add that clubhouse effect and old-time gun-room feel. Use your imagination.

Thorough upgrades can wow customers and have them talking — and word-of-mouth advertising is powerful.

Better use of your current space can be costly but rewarding. The U.S. standard upgrade costs of retail space ranges from \$100 to \$200 per square foot. If you have a limited budget, consider spending dollars on the entrance and check-out counter areas — where you can wow customers and make them excited about shopping with you. Customer bathrooms are also a place where dollars invested are well spent. With all upgrades and remodels, remember to meet guidelines for disabled shoppers. A minimum distance is that aisles be at least 4 feet wide so customers can pass one another easily while shopping. If you have wheeled metal carts for customer use, 5





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feet should be the minimum. Remember that as a rule, when customers enter a business, they tend to turn right. This is the prime location in most stores and displays here can ring the register.

As a rule, cosmetic upgrades are best undertaken every year or couple of years. Major redesigns with a new floor plan and additions, however, should be undertaken every five to seven years. The more you keep things fresh; the more

customers like to visit — and spend.

There are things to consider if a floor plan upgrade will be underway. Most stores have grids where there are rows and rows of shelves, and customers can move up and down aisles — like most grocery stores. Loop floor plans permit customers to come in, circle about, and return to the entrance. This is a great pattern for smaller spaces. You can also do a free flow pattern where

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### HUNT



↑ When renovations are complete, invite customers to an open house and have a wide range of manufacturers reps on site to make the project's completion a huge occasion.

rows of shelves are opposing. This is a great way to separate hunting gear into areas away from the firearms counter, tactical gear, camping and fishing items if you offer those.

Brick-and-mortar stores have an advantage over online retail because customers can see, feel and experience hunting gear, operate the actions of hunting firearms, and try turkey calls. Plan all



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renovation projects to increase this customer-and-hunting-gear interaction and you are well on the way to increasing sales.

### Build Your Brand

It's important to keep your brand and company identity in mind as you renovate. Strive to prominently project merchandise and services that set you apart from your competitors. If you are known for selling hunting rifle packages complete with a riflescope and a carrying case, incorporate this product line and all top-selling items or categories into your layout. Making shopping easier for the customer is a win for them — and you.

Remember to work with vendors such as firearms, footwear and treestand manufacturers, and others, to incorporate their displays and hands-on customer-centered aids as you renovate. Get the details and necessary dimensions as you make plans to move shelves and add new displays. Be careful not to crowd customers.

Remodeling and new layouts in the store are a great time to also rework your business plan. This presents a chance to expand deer-hunting gear areas in the fall or turkey decoy and gear displays in the spring. Think about your top 20 hunting gear items and arrange the new floor plan so these items stand out in locations to catch customers' attention.

### The End

Completion of a renovation project is a great time to bring customers inside. Work with the local chamber of commerce and news outlets — especially the ones you advertise with — to cover renovations if they are major, like an addition of indoor shooting lanes or archery ranges for hunters, newly renovated classrooms for hunter educa-

tion courses, and any addition of square footage. Spread the news on all of your social media channels, too. Becoming the exclusive dealer for a line of hunting footwear, optics, firearms and such may also qualify you for coverage. Check with manufacturers for co-op dollars to help cut costs.

“Do an open house when you are ready to reveal your expansion,” says Hayden. “Make an event out of it. You can buy cheap costume hard

hats for your employees for under \$1 (for party purposes only, of course), or you can do a cookout in the parking lot. The possibilities are endless, but make it stick in their minds that you are expanding for them — the customer.”

Renovations done correctly can put more dollars in your cash register. Are you ready to hear hammering or see brushes and cans of paint? Your customers could be waiting. **HR**

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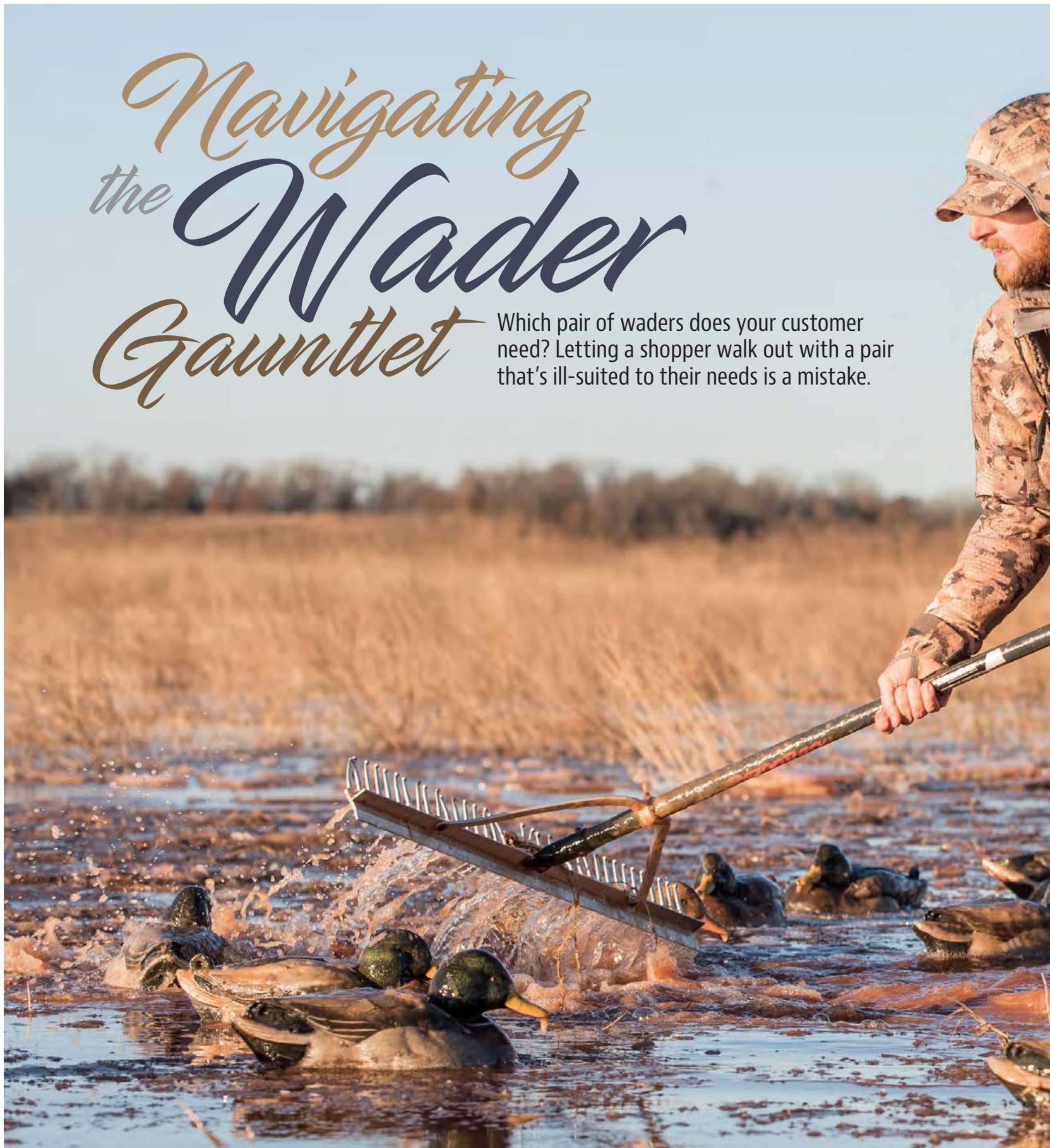
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# *Navigating the Wader Gauntlet*

Which pair of waders does your customer need? Letting a shopper walk out with a pair that's ill-suited to their needs is a mistake.





BY DAVID REARICK

While waders have improved greatly over the years from the canvas and rubber variants that were prone to dry rot to the advanced materials of today, that doesn't make selecting the most appropriate choice any easier. Waders, both for hunting and fishing, come in many different styles, materials and insulation factors, requiring careful consideration of the end user's application prior to purchase. Equipped with the necessary knowledge, making the sale and putting your customer in the right set is as easy as selling them the right caliber of ammunition for their firearm.

While wader styles vary per brand, the materials/types of most modern waders are the same. As you already know, waders are generally available in two material choices — breathable and neoprene. Within these material choices lies different thicknesses, different boot styles, and a plethora of other features consisting of belt loops, knee pads, handwarmer pockets, etc. The first two choices above should be used to help define the appropriate wader for a user's specific use case, while the gingerbread features should be considered a buyer's preference and used as a selling point to a specific buyer. In all cases, having in-depth knowledge of the pros and cons of each type and manufacturer is what will place a buyer in the best possible pair of waders for their situation.





↑ Neoprene is a classic for a reason – it's warm and more durable than materials usually used for breathable waders.

### Materials

The two most popular material choices, as stated above, are breathable, sometimes referred to as all-season, and neoprene. Both of these choices, when cared for appropriately, will provide the user many seasons of worry-free use provided they don't use them to bust through a thorn thicket on the way to the water. If a user does require something that will handle brush thickets and is more puncture resistant, there are a few manufacturers that make briar-proof or canvas waders that they should be directed towards, as the other two choices will not withstand this type of abuse, leading to an unhappy customer and attempted warranty claims.

Breaking down the differences between breathable and neoprene starts with understanding the temperature range they will be worn in. If a hunter or fisherman predominately needs waders for warmer climates or seasons, the best choice is a breathable, all-season wader that will keep the user cooler in hot temperatures while minimizing dampness due to sweating. This type of wader has gained greater popularity in recent years, as they can also be used in cooler temperatures with the appropriate layering system underneath and are generally more comfortable to wear. Companies including Lacrosse, Banded, Frogg Toggs and Sitka Gear make versions of this style of wader, and they are quickly becoming the go-to for users who want one wader for every situation. For users who like what all-season waders offer but need a little added warmth, some versions of these waders are available with a thin layer of insulation underneath the outer material.

On the flip side, neoprene waders are generally bulkier and heavier, but they offer supreme warmth in cold temperatures and greater durability when compared to all-season waders in rocky streams or mild brush. Their main pitfall is that they can make a user unbearably hot in warm temperatures, especially when a user is active, causing a lot of dampness inside the wader. This is also problematic when a user is active setting decoys or walking to their fishing spot, then standing rather motionless for hours while the dampness from their own sweat causes them to get cold. A great use case for neoprene waders is for users who frequently stand in cold water for extended periods or hunt in sub-zero temperatures. While all-season waders and layering

can keep users warm when standing outside the water, when standing in water, there is a greater cold transfer to the body with all-season compared to neoprene waders that some users find undesirable. This is where neoprene waders excel and are the appropriate recommendation.

Neoprene waders are also available in two thicknesses — 3 and 5mm. As expected, 3mm neoprene waders are lighter in weight than their 5mm counterpart, but they don't offer as much warmth or ruggedness. For extreme cold, 5mm is best, but for mild conditions, 3mm will be a much more comfortable choice. Aside from the thickness, there are no other appreciable differences between these wader styles.

### Boot Types and insulation

Both wader material types mentioned above are available in a stocking-foot or boot-foot variation from different manufacturers. For hunters, except in special cases, boot-foot is the most appropriate choice. For fisherman, it can go either way, and that decision should be made based on the use-case. Stocking-foot waders equipped with a felt sole boot/shoe excel in streams, providing added traction on slippery, moss-covered rocks. They can also be less clumsy to walk in and are generally more comfortable for walking long distances, as the boot is more secure than a standard slip-on wader. Hunters may benefit from these advantages, so don't overlook pitching stocking-foot waders to hunters who would otherwise overlook them.

While most users gravitate toward the slip-on boot-foot style of waders for an all-purpose use, a common question





## Wader Repair

Even the best-maintained waders are susceptible to a leak. In a pinch, duct tape will work to temporarily fix a leaking wader, but ultimately, something more permanent will be required.

While there are many types of wader patch kits available, Aquaseal is a favorite of many frequent wader users, especially for boot repair. Make sure that the kit being sold will repair the material type of the waders being repaired. Some patch kits will cover both materials, while others may be designed for only all-season wader styles.

To complete the repair, a user must first clean the damaged area to provide a good bond between the material and the patch cement or glue. Next, they should clean up the area so the cut closes cleanly. Then it's a matter of applying the glue and patch and allowing the patch to dry before stressing the area or immersing it in water. Some patches may last longer than the waders themselves, but in more high-stress areas, the patch may need refreshing every year until you can convince the user to buy a new pair of waders.

is how much Thinsulate to get in the boot. While options vary by manufacturer, with some waders having no insulation and others having 1600 or more grams, the user must ultimately decide. Good socks can make up the difference for an under-insulated boot, but an over-insulated boot will lead to sweating and ultimately getting cold feet if too much moisture builds up in the boots. This is a good time for retailers to bring up the need for good synthetic or wool socks instead of cotton, as a wool liner sock underneath a heavy wool sock can outperform even the best Thinsulate in some situations.

## Other Considerations

An often-overlooked attribute of waders is their transportability and comfort for day-after-day use. For hunters or fisherman who travel or hunt/fish day after day, neoprene waders take longer to dry out, especially the inside, and they retain water, making them heavy. All-season waders, on the other hand, dry out quickly and are much lighter when they are dry and significantly lighter when wet. This means less weight and less bulk in a suitcase — an especially important attribute for traveling hunters and anglers who are flying out in the afternoon after a morning's outing on the water.

Features, features, features! Outdoorsmen love neat features and gadgets, so make sure to thoroughly understand what specific brands or wader types offer the user. Not all wader types/brands are the same, and just like trucks, sometimes the features are what differentiates them to a prospective buyer. Sometimes a simple feature like a reinforced knee or a shell loop matters to the buyer, so being able to point them out goes a long way to making them comfortable that you're the expert on what they are looking to purchase.

Did you know certain brands make waders specifically for women? With increasing numbers of outdoorswomen, be prepared when women come in looking at wader choices. Generally speaking, most wader types are cut for the leg and torso length of a male, making them uncomfortable and downright awful to wear for those not cut from that mold.

**“This is a good time for retailers to bring up the need for good synthetic or wool socks instead of cotton...”**



Lacrosse, for example, makes a full line of waders cut specifically for women that are designed to fit them comfortably. Additionally, while some manufacturers make youth waders, don't overlook waders made for women to try out on a youth. Just like men and women, not all young people fit into the same fit-mold, and a women's cut might be the most appropriate choice for a comfortable fit on a youngster.

## Making the Sale

When a prospective buyer asks about which wader type to buy, the response should start with a question about the buyer's use case. Are they looking for something to wear for summer fishing, late-season duck hunting, or for every season? Follow up that question with some scenario-specific questions like the amount of activity during each outing, the environment they will be using them in (rocky river or brushy shorelines), and how often they travel to hunt or fish. With those characteristics in mind and the information above, sellers can easily provide a few appropriate choices that

are specific to the user's application.

Additionally, all waders will have different features, so make sure to point out the items that will make the waders more user-friendly for a prospective buyer's particular use case. For instance, one style of wader might have a built-in handwarmer pocket that a waterfowl hunter might enjoy or a one-sided shoulder strap that won't interfere with shouldering a shotgun. If you can provide the buyer choices based on their actual needs, they will quickly become more comfortable with their selection and their future purchase, likely seeing you as the expert they have been looking for. **HR**



# Small Niche, Potential Big Payoffs

Small-game hunters are a tiny piece of the puzzle, but they can boost profits.

BY MATT CRAWFORD

**T**hrough the rise of specialized hunting gear, exotic destination hunts and slick multi-platform marketing campaigns designed to part hunters with their paychecks, we often forget how most hunters got their start: chasing rabbits, squirrels or upland gamebirds.

Small-game hunting is the best way to introduce a new hunter to the sport. It teaches wood skills, prioritizes gun safety and provides easy field-to-table meals. But in the brick-and-mortar retail landscape, the gear and equipment needed for small-game hunting is often no more than an afterthought. There are viable reasons for that. While overall participation in hunting has ticked downward, small-game hunters have practically fallen off the cliff. A 2018 study in Minnesota illustrates that perfectly. That study found the fewest numbers of hunters going afield for species like grouse, waterfowl and squirrels since the DNR began tracking those figures in 1969.

Make no mistake, hard-core small game hunters have noticed they are being ignored by retailers.

“I don’t think negatively of my local shop because they don’t carry much for small-game hunters,” said Henry Rackliff, a New England bird hunter. “It’s not that they don’t care, it’s just that there doesn’t seem to be enough demand for them to focus their efforts on it. I get it, the profit







margin on ARs and handguns is a heck of a lot of better than on a box of 20-gauge shells.”

But small-game hunters (most of whom also pursue other species like deer and elk) can provide a decent revenue stream for gun and outdoor shops that decide to make a couple of tweaks in their product offerings. Remember, the hunter who started chasing squirrels with a hand-me-down .22 can grow up to be the hard-core upland bird hunter who spends thousands of dollars on dogs, clothing and shotguns. Retailers who decide to cater to the small-game niche can tap into customers more than willing to spend cash.

Thinking of specializing a bit more in the small-game crowd? Consider these retail approaches.

### Guns and Ammo

Youngsters getting into small-game hunting don't need much. Entry-level pump shotguns and a blaze orange vest are staples in every gun and outdoor shop that's ever opened its doors, and the

**“I've never seen decent brush pants or decent upland hunting boots at any outdoor store, which is too bad, since both of those items require proper fitting.” — Pat Berry**

big-box stores are full of inexpensive options for these newcomers.

But discerning bird hunters? They are a different breed of consumers who aren't afraid of spending decent amounts of money to get what they want. What they don't want are the cheap, plastic shotguns that are churned out by the thousands by the chain retailers.

“I wish my local gun shop put some effort into carrying good, high-quality upland guns,” said Rackliff. “I look at those online all the time, but it's a pain to try to buy guns online.”

Beretta, Benelli and Browning are three of the most popular brands making double guns for uplanders, but older, American-made guns from manufacturers like Parker, LC Smith and A.H. Fox are highly sought after and command premium prices.

Those older guns need special care and attention, too. “Given that many bird hunters enjoy hunting with ‘classic’ shotguns, I wish more outdoor supply companies carried low-pressure, low-recoil shotgun shells intended for use in these older guns,” said Tony Valentino, a New Jersey-based upland bird hunter.

Given the hassles of ordering specialized shotgun shells online, shops should investigate brands like Fiocchi or RST that make shells safe to use with the older, collectible doubles.





### Footwear and Clothing

Sure, every type of hunting clothing ever known to humankind is only a few clicks away, but buying clothing and footwear often requires a tactile investment by the consumer: They want to try it on for size. They want to feel it. Is a jacket too heavy? Do the boots fit a wide foot or a narrow foot better?

Online shopping can leave hunters dissatisfied.

"I've never seen decent brush pants or decent upland hunting boots at any outdoor store, which is too bad, since both of those items require proper fitting," said Pat Berry, who spends much of his autumn following his English springer spaniels through ruffed grouse habitat in the Northeast.

Berry's observation is backed up by Brian Dietz, a grouse and woodcock hunter in Wisconsin, who says while he'll gladly buy electronics, dog collars and shells online, he puts a priority on trying on clothes and footwear at his local retailer before he decides to put down his credit card.

"For my local store, I want them to stock high-quality footwear, that is top-of-the-line hiking boots and not cheap deer-hunting boots or rubber boots," said Dietz. "I'll add gloves and pants to that, too, as online ordering is a crap shoot for determining comfort and fit."

Brands like Filson and Columbia make higher-end small-game clothing. Danner and Irish Setter make some downright spectacular upland hunting boots. High-quality, hunting-specific socks, like those made by Darn Tough or Farm to Feet, appeal to small-game, waterfowl and big-game hunters alike.

Paul Edward of Massachusetts is a big proponent of high-performance footwear and is the kind of customer willing to pay for it.

"As I get older, I find the need for quality footwear — and that includes socks and insoles — more important," Edward said. "I find myself ordering Darn Tough and Smartwool socks online, and it feels like Christmas when the packages arrive. I can make do with subpar gear in other areas these days, but with my feet not so much."

### Educational Programs

One of the biggest laments for newcomers trying to get into hunting is how to acquire the knowledge base on their own. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of first-time hunters has increased, with fish and wildlife agencies around the country reporting marked increases in license sales.

Retailers who cater specifically to hunters would do well to model the seminar method perfected by stores like REI, who bring in new hikers, climbers and campers with introductory classes. Small-game hunting represents one of the best ways to pique newcomers' interest, but very few shops take the time to teach new hunters how to successfully go after rabbits or squirrels.

"Yeah, I'd like my local shop to sell good clothing and boots, but mostly I'd like to see the hunting community, and that includes retailers, promote small-game hunting to kids and newbies," said Brad Hanson, who hunts just about anything that has a season in Vermont. "I'd like to see squirrel-hunting clinics. I'd like beagle clubs to have youth days for the kids who don't have access to dogs. Retriever clubs could take new hunters out duck hunting. I think we all need to promote small-game hunting better." **HR**



# How to Overcome the Challenges of a Bad Boss

If a difficult supervisor is making your work life miserable, it's time to learn how to 'manage up.'

BY KEN WYSOCKY

If you dread going to work every day because your boss is — in a word — bad, maybe this will provide a little solace: You're not alone, not by a long shot.

For anecdotal proof, Google the phrase “my boss is killing me,” then make yourself some coffee and start perusing the millions of results. Or consider a recent survey conducted by *Monster.com*, a global employment website, which found that 32% of employees rated their bosses as “horrible.” Moreover, 50% of the 2,555 respondents gave their immediate supervisor a ranking of one or two on a scale from one to five, with one being “horrible” and five being “excellent.” In stark contrast, only 15% described their manager as “excellent.”

Jim Clifton, CEO of noted analytics firm Gallup, conservatively estimates that there are millions of bad managers wreaking havoc on the American workplace. He bases that determination on Gallup's periodic State of the American Workplace polls that consistently find a majority of American workers aren't engaged at work, which Clifton views as a direct indictment of managers' collective deficiencies.

But while misery may love company, it doesn't do much to make your day-to-day work life any better. Dana Brownlee, a corporate training consultant and founder of Professionalism Matters, suggests taking another more proactive route: Manage up.

“From what I hear anecdotally (at training sessions and seminars), you're lucky to have one or two amazing, phenomenal bosses in your career,” Brownlee says. “They're like unicorns. In my training sessions, I get a lot more questions about dealing with bad managers.

“Typically, employees think about doing their jobs. But unless you're at the top of the food chain, you need to manage: Find a way to achieve the best results in spite of a difficult manager. Making life easier for a manager — taking things off their plate and anticipating their needs — all falls under the umbrella of managing up. People who fly up the promotional ladder tend to be good at this.”



To provide more specific solutions for boss-challenged employees, Brownlee has some strategies for managing up with three common kinds of bad managers.

## Tornadoes

The first one earns the moniker the Tornado — a force of nature who likes to think he or she empowers staffers but instead runs roughshod over people, stifling new and innovative thinking.

Brownlee's solution centers on talking with the manager before a big meeting. The purpose is to solicit the manager's advice about how to obtain more candid feedback from a team. Like so many things in life, it's all about context. If you go in

and try to tell your boss what he or she needs to do, the reception may be lukewarm at best. Instead, be more strategic about your approach.

“You can point out how hierarchy makes a difference and that people tend to defer to what the boss thinks,” Brownlee says. “Tell your boss that you're struggling with how to challenge the team to come up with new and interesting ideas.”

This softer, more preventive approach makes the boss still feel a sense of control over the matter. Equally important, it preserves your relationship, too.

“It also gives the manager the opportunity to be the coach — the expert or problem-solver,” Brownlee says.

Photos: Bill Konway



## Wishful Thinkers

Then there's the Wishful Thinker who wants you to boil the ocean — by end of day tomorrow, please.

Dealing with this brand of manager requires doing some due diligence about the mission impossible with which you've been tasked. That means collecting data showing that the project the boss unrealistically believes is a slam dunk will actually take a lot more time, resources and money than imagined, Brownlee says.

"The Wishful Thinker might not suffer from a personality defect," Brownlee says. "It may be more of a case where the further up the food chain you go, the more removed you get from the day-to-day work, which distorts assumptions about things."

**"There's the Wishful Thinker who wants you to boil the ocean — by end of day tomorrow, please."**

the Daytona 500. This requires you to proactively probe with specific questions that help ferret out details omitted during the initial assignment.

"The danger here is that just because managers aren't clear about what they want doesn't mean they won't hold your feet to the fire in the end when their expectations aren't met," Brownlee says. "If you're not getting clarity, you have to pull it out of them."

Perhaps that requires making a mock-up of a

manager's vision of one."

In other instances, this kind of manager may even be unsure of exactly what he or she wants, due to lack of experience or skills. If that's the case, working the manager through a process of elimination to find out exactly what they're looking for can be helpful.

## Be Authentic

In the end, it's how you express things that counts. Managing up requires employees to walk a thin line between brown-nosing and flattery, and overtly telling someone stationed at a higher pay grade how to do their job. Yes, it may feel awkward at first as you step out of a certain comfort zone and try to be more proactive about the process.

"It's not about sticking your nose into things you shouldn't be," Brownlee says. "I'm not talking about going in and trying to do your manager's job. But when you're put in a situation where you know there's a problem and you're not getting a lot of support; you still want to be successful. In fact, the more successful you are, the better it is for your manager."

"So, you have to find the right approach, and there's no one-size-fits-all solution. You have to do what feels the most authentic — customize your approach to fit the person with whom you're dealing and do some relationship-building along the way."

During the process, you'll learn new skills that will serve you well throughout your career. As Brownlee observes, it doesn't take any extraordinary amount of skill to be successful when you have an amazing manager.

"But it requires another level of sophistication to be successful when you're saddled with one of these types of bosses," she says. "And the skill sets you develop will serve you wherever you go. I call it organizational savvy. It's an element that's hard to define, but it makes a huge difference in how successful you can be in an organization." **HR**



It helps if you can gather objective data from a representative cross section of employees.

"Getting together with all the subject matter experts helps to quantify the risks of the project and makes your information more credible," she says.

## Clueless Chameleons

Then there's the Clueless Chameleon — the supervisor whose best skill seems to be giving vague or confusing directions, or whose priorities shift more often than a NASCAR driver at

report or spreadsheet or an outline of a project and asking for feedback, just to be sure you're headed in the right direction.

"I also tell people to ask the three magic questions: What is your manager's understanding of the task (be sure to repeat it back to them for verification), what will the final deliverable look like, and what are the first three steps you're going to take?" Brownlee says. "These steps are helpful because your vision of what constitutes a business plan, for example, might be different from your



# Trade Show Gear Preview

A look at the best stuff you didn't get to see at ATA and SHOT this year

BY GORDY KRAHN

Seeing new product launches in person is one of the highlights of the annual trade shows. This year, with the cancellation of the 2021 SHOT Show and ATA Show, retailers missed out on the chance to handle some of the year's top product introductions and old standbys.

You didn't get to feel the sure grip and sharp steel of the Woox Rock62 knife. You missed the

chance to range far-off booths with Vortex's new Fury HD or crank up the volume on ICOTec's Sabre programmable game call — but they are still products that your customers will want to know about, and you can read about them in this special section of *Hunting Retailer*.

By the time this print magazine is in your hands, ATA 2021 Online (Jan. 11-15, 2021) will

have concluded. We hope you took advantage of the ATA-only show specials and online media summit. The SHOT Show On Demand campaign runs Jan. 18-22 so you can stay up to date with the latest news in the firearms world.

We hope to see you in person at ATA 2022 (Jan. 7-9 2022 in Louisville, Kentucky) or SHOT 2022 (Jan. 18-22 2022 in Las Vegas)!



## WOOX ROCK62 KNIFE WITH X-GRIP TECHNOLOGY

Woox has added another great outdoor gear item to its growing line of products with the new Rock62 hunting knife.

Gaining inspiration from legendary Pirelli tires, the Woox Rock62 hunting knife's X-Grip technology is designed with grooves and threads that help fluids such as water and blood naturally and quickly flow away from the handle, displaced 10 times faster than with conventional handle designs and providing superior grip and handling in any environment or weather. Like all Woox Rock62 knives, this new model features superior Sleipner steel (Rockwell HRC 60-62), custom fitted screws and German micarta handles. The Rock62 knife is made in Italy but is assembled and finished at the Woox North American headquarters in Hickory, North Carolina. It's available in two different colors.

MSRP: \$199

CONTACT: [www.wooxstore.com](http://www.wooxstore.com)



## VORTEX FURY HD 5000 AB RANGEFINDER BINO

This two-in-one bino/rangefinder takes the guesswork out of identifying and ranging that trophy buck or bull.

Take the guesswork out of long-range shooting with Vortex's Fury HD 5000 AB rangefinder binocular paired with on-board technology and connectivity that give the shooter in-display wind/drop solutions at the push of a button. The Fury bino pairs with the Fury HD app and the onboard Applied Ballistics Elite Solver for the ability to create custom ballistic profiles for popular cartridges and provides access to the full Applied Ballistics bullet library. It can even link a Kestrel or Applied Ballistics Garmin device for real-time precision. Optically, the Fury HD 5000 AB combines HD clarity with XR lens coatings and a rangefinder that has the capability to reach out to 5,000 yards on reflective targets with three ranging modes.

MSRP: \$1,999.99

CONTACT: [www.vortexoptics.com](http://www.vortexoptics.com)

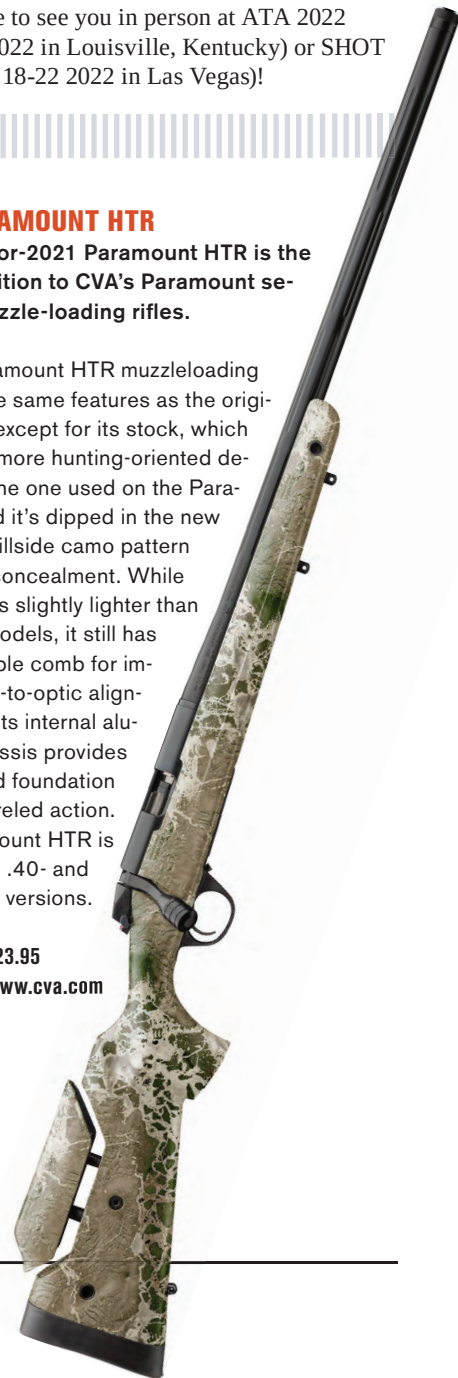
## CVA PARAMOUNT HTR

The new-for-2021 Paramount HTR is the latest addition to CVA's Paramount series of muzzle-loading rifles.

CVA's Paramount HTR muzzleloading rifle has the same features as the original model except for its stock, which features a more hunting-oriented design than the one used on the Paramount. And it's dipped in the new Realtree Hillside camo pattern for better concealment. While this stock is slightly lighter than previous models, it still has an adjustable comb for improved eye-to-optic alignment, and its internal aluminum chassis provides a rock-solid foundation for the barreled action. The Paramount HTR is available in .40- and .45-caliber versions.

MSRP: \$1,223.95

CONTACT: [www.cva.com](http://www.cva.com)





### AIRFORCE .50-CALIBER AIR RIFLES

AirForce Airguns has expanded its Texan lineup with the addition of new versions of its .50-caliber big bore air rifle.

Previously available only with 34-inch barrels, the AirForce Airguns Texan .50 is now available in two versions featuring 24.5-inch barrels. The Texan .50 Carbine is AirForce's most compact .50-caliber rifle and the Texan SS .50, features a shorter barrel combined with the AirForce Sound-Loc sound reduction system. All Texan .50-caliber rifles feature a .510-caliber Lothar-Walther barrel, the recently released TX2 valve system and are available with either a 200bar (3,000 psi) aluminum tank or a D.O.T.-certified 250bar (3,625 psi) carbon fiber air tank. The new Texan .50-caliber rifles are capable of producing over 700 foot-pounds of energy.

**MSRP: Without scope: \$1,085/Texan Carbine; \$1,235/Texan SS**

**CONTACT: [www.airforceairguns.com](http://www.airforceairguns.com)**

### ICOTEC SABRE PROGRAMMABLE GAME CALL

Professional sound quality, volume level and long-range remote activation with the touch of a finger.

ICOTec's new-for-2020 Sabre programmable game call delivers professional grade sound quality, durability, high volume, long-range remote activation and other key features that make it a hunter's best friend. Developed to deliver performance at a practical price, the Sabre – with 280 sounds in its library – is a great tool for hunters who are targeting predators, deer, elk, turkeys and wild hogs. And with the touch of a button, the user can easily recall up to 20 favorites sounds and one coax call. The Sabre also features separate play and pause buttons, an easy-to-read remote display, day or night remote screen display options and has a remote range of 300 yards. It also has the capacity of save up to 500 sound files internally.



**MSRP: \$279.99**

**CONTACT: [www.icotec.com](http://www.icotec.com)**



### DO ALL OUTDOORS FLYWAY30 CLAY TARGET LAUNCHER

The FlyWay30 is a lightweight and affordable clay target launcher with unmatched adaptability for backyard wing-shooting enthusiasts.

The FlyWay30 automatic clay pigeon thrower from Do All Outdoors holds 30 clays, has three adjustable launch angles and a removable foot pedal cord to allow the shooter more accessory options than ever before – which include the newly improved wireless remote and voice control/smart phone Bluetooth adapter called SmartShot (downloadable app). Other models in the FlyWay series include the FlyWay60, FlyWay80 and FlyWay90 – the series number representing the number of clays it can hold. The FlyWay60 and FlyWay80 include a wireless remote and the FlyWay80 also comes with a two-wheel "off-road" style cart. The FlyWay90 is the only clay pigeon thrower in its class that allows the user to throw "true-pair" doubles.

**MSRP: \$299.99/FlyWay30**

**CONTACT: [www.doalldoors.com](http://www.doalldoors.com)**

### SEAL 1 MUZZLELOADER CLP PLUS PASTE

Non-toxic Seal 1 muzzleloader products represent the next generation of biobased nontoxic products for muzzleloading firearms.

Seal 1's Muzzleloader CLP Plus paste is a bore cleaner, patch and bullet lube and protectant all in one product – developed and manufactured by the inventor and original manufacturer of Bore Butter and many other well-known blackpowder products. And like all Seal 1 products, Muzzleloader CLP Plus paste is not petroleum based, but rather vegetable oil or vegetable ester based, allowing the user to shoot hundreds of rounds without cleaning. Made in the USA.



**MSRP: \$10.49/4-ounce jar**

**CONTACT: [www.sseal1.net](http://www.sseal1.net)**



# HUNTING RETAILER

# GEAR ROUNDUP

## COLD-WEATHER GEAR

BY GORDY KRAHN



### GLACIER GLOVE ALASKA PRO

Nasty weather? No problem with cold-weather hand gear from Glacier Glove (\$39.99) – its Alaska Pro series a favorite with many hunters and other outdoors enthusiasts. Constructed with a genuine leather palm for an enhanced grip, they feature poly insulation to keep hands warm and a waterproof, breathable membrane to keep them dry and comfortable. Designed for dexterity, glued seams create a soft finish and blind stitching provides excellent strength and durability. Alaska Pro gloves come dressed in Realtree Edge camo – a great choice for hunters who want to blend in when braving cold late-season conditions.

[www.glacierglove.com](http://www.glacierglove.com)



### HUNTER SAFETY SYSTEM HEATED MUFF PAK

Hunter Safety System's new USB battery-powered Heated Muff Pak (\$59.95) keeps hands toasty warm while its ultra-soft polar fleece lining keeps them cozy. It has been designed with four pockets to keep important items handy: two zipper pockets and an accessory pocket in the front and a large mesh bellow pocket on the back. Its web belt makes it portable, so it can be taken anywhere, and it adjusts from 34 to 49 inches to accommodate multiple layers of clothing. An included 11-inch expansion strap brings the maximum adjustment length up to 60 inches. The Heated Muff Pak comes with ElimShield scent control technology and is available in Realtree Edge and Mossy Oak Bottomland camo and black. [www.hssvest.com](http://www.hssvest.com)



### MOJO HANDWARMER

Waterfowl hunters know the importance of keeping their hands warm and dry and ready for action. The Mojo handwarmer (\$24.99) will do just that – it's crafted from durable, water-resistant material with a fleece-lined, moisture-wicking interior that maximizes comfort and convenience, and it's dressed in Mossy Oak Blades camo for top-shelf concealment. Hunters can use the built-in clips to attach the Mojo handwarmer securely to their waders or use the adjustable waist strap to hold it secure and handy. A front zippered pocket holds shells, chokes and other gear and valuables. [www.mojooutdoors.com](http://www.mojooutdoors.com)



### HEYBO BLUFFS FLEECE PANTS

Combining the super quiet and comfortable qualities of a mid-weight fleece with wind-blocker technology, HeyBo Bluffs fleece pants (\$99.99) provide hunters with the late-season warmth and comfort that will keep them in the field longer. They feature a quiet outer shell, reinforced poly fleece, YKK zippers and a stretchable waistband. From hunting ducks in cold Arkansas flooded timber to sitting in an up-north December deer stand, HeyBo Bluffs fleece pants are warm, quiet and versatile. Available in sizes small to XXXL.

[www.heybooutdoors.com](http://www.heybooutdoors.com)







### **BROWNING HELL'S CANYON BTU-WD PARKA**

The Hell's Canyon BTU-WD parka from Browning (\$299.99) packs a one-two-three punch – with a fully taped waterproof/windproof hooded outer shell, detachable insulated liner jacket with PrimaLoft Hi-Loft Silver 80-gram insulation, and comfortable inner liner insulated with PrimaLoft military-grade hollow-fiber fill that provides warmth even when it's wet. The outer shell features fabric hook-and-loop cuff closures, two oversized handwarmer pockets and Napoleon chest pocket, water-resistant front zipper, SilentSnap front storm flap closure and an internal pocket for smaller gear. The insulated liner has handwarmer pockets, a left chest zipper pocket, internal zipper chest pocket, internal zippered security pocket for valuables and a full-length zipper with chin guard.

[www.browning.com](http://www.browning.com)



### **CARHARTT SHERPA-LINED JACKET**

Carhartt's Washed Duck Sherpa-lined hooded jacket (\$119.99 to \$129.99) is built to brave the cold, windy conditions outdoorsmen often find themselves in. Made from heavy-weight 12-ounce, 100 percent ring-spun cotton washed duck, sanded and brushed for softness, this garment is designed to provide warmth and comfort. Its many features include a quilted nylon sleeve lining for easy on-and-off, attached Sherpa-lined hood with hidden drawcord, pleated elbows for ease of movement, internal rib-knit storm cuffs to help keep out the cold, pleated bi-swing back for extra stretch across the shoulders, left-chest pocket with zipper closure, two inside pockets and two Sherpa-lined lower-front pockets. [www.carhartt.com](http://www.carhartt.com)



### **FORLOH MEN'S THERMONEUTRAL DOWN JACKET**

Forloh's ThermoNeutral men's down jacket (\$469) features a combination of its Perf-Weld and Activ-Dri technologies to ensure that increased weather protection doesn't come with a compromise in breathability – providing a great mid-layer option for backcountry cold-weather hunts. Perf-Weld advanced sonic weld construction lets excess heat out when physical demands cause body temperature to rise, keeping the wearer comfortable and drier all day long. Activ-dri keeps the 650 fill RDS duck down drier, retaining its superior warmth-to-weight ratio and reducing water or sweat absorption by more than 60% over untreated materials. The jacket's ergonomic seamless design increases performance, breathability and durability. Other features include 100% nylon construction, YKK reverse coil zippers and secure chest, handwarmer and internal gear pockets. [www.forloh.com](http://www.forloh.com)



### **MILWAUKEE TOOL M12 HEATED AXIS JACKET**

Milwaukee Tool's M12 hybrid heated jacket (\$169/Jacket; \$199/Jacket w/battery) features Axis Ripstop polyester to provide a lightweight, compressible garment that can be used as an outer shell or a mid-layer to protect the wearer from wind and moisture. And to keep hunters toasty warm in the coldest conditions, it is powered by M12 Redlithium battery technology, which provides quick heat to the chest, back and shoulders. The jacket's heated shoulders are particularly beneficial in extreme cold conditions or during layering for additional heat dispersion. The M12 is available in men's and women's sizes and comes with a compact charger and portable power source. [www.milwaukeetool.com](http://www.milwaukeetool.com)





### NATURAL GEAR WINTER-CEPTOR FLEECE PARKA

Natural Gear's classic windproof fleece parka, the Winter-Ceptor, is a must-have for frigid winter hunts (\$199.99). With a combination of 400 grams of windproof microfleece and 150 grams of quilted insulation, it locks in the body's natural heat, and a microfleece finish keeps the wearer stealthy and silent. The Winter-Ceptor is designed with fully articulated elbows and shoulders and added stretch panels to enhance mobility, and waterproof poly tricort on the back and shoulders keeps hunters dry when hunkered down waiting for that perfect shot. Additional features include an adjustable and removable fleece-lined hood with drawcord, hook-and-loop cuffs, and a large array of pockets to keep essential items close for easy access.

[www.naturalgear.com](http://www.naturalgear.com)

### NOMAD ELEVATED WHITETAIL SCRAPE SERIES JACKET AND BIBS

Nomad's Elevated Whitetail Scrape jacket and bibs (\$280/each) are made with super soft, windproof fabrics combined with innovative construction that limits the amount of wind that reaches the body to keep the wearer quiet and warm when the wind kicks up and the mercury plummets. Both garments feature super-soft, high-pile interior fabric made of long-fiber fleece to trap air for added warmth and comfort, Sound Kill noise-limiting technology, and a three-layer windproof grid fleece exterior. The jacket is safety-strap compatible and has Sherpa-lined hand-warmer pockets and a secure left chest pocket with zipper. The bibs have a complete zip-off side zipper.

[www.nomadoutdoor.com](http://www.nomadoutdoor.com)

### PREDATOR AIRSTREAM JACKET

The AirStream from Predator Camo (\$239.95) has the fit, feel and functionality hunters look for in a cold-weather jacket. It's incredibly lightweight and ultra-warm, making it a great mid-to-outer layer garment. It features PrimaLoft Gold Active insulation with four-way stretch capability for uncompromised freedom of movement. It absorbs less moisture to keep the wearer dryer and warmer, utilizes 45% recycled content and is super compressible for easy packing. The AirStream's super-soft outer shell and inner lining are both composed of four-way stretch nylon ripstop fabrics that ensure full range of motion and simplistic layering underneath or when worn as an outer layer.

[www.predatorcamo.com](http://www.predatorcamo.com)

### SCENTLOK REVENANT JACKET AND PANTS

The all new ScentLok Revenant clothing system (\$399.99/jacket; \$349.99/pants) is the culmination of almost three decades of engineering, research and in-field testing – a combination of a premium dead-quiet fleece fabric with odor control, insulation and water repellent technologies. Both jacket and pants are designed to keep the wearer warm, dry and odor-free with Carbon Alloy for maximum odor adsorption, Precip-X coating to repel water, mud, ice and other liquids, and zoned Primaloft Gold insulation for effective warmth-to-weight performance. The jacket has a removable, adjustable hood with a built-in gaiter and concealed safety harness port. The pants feature removeable adjustable suspenders, nine covered pockets for dry storage and articulated knees for greater range of motion. [www.scentlok.com](http://www.scentlok.com)





### UNDER ARMOUR ESSENTIAL HYBRID JACKET

Under Armour's Essential hybrid jacket (\$250) is extremely light but still 100% waterproof, featuring a hard-faced Paclite fabric on all outward facing surfaces to shed water and a soft, brushed Paclite fabric in the side gussets and under the arms to eliminate contact noise without sacrificing breathability. It all adds up to whisper-quiet hunting comfort no matter what the conditions. A shaped hood with one-handed adjuster provides maximum coverage and a secure, custom fit. The jacket also features an internal, adjustable bungee hem, secure, zip hand pockets and internal chest pocket and bonded sleeve cuffs.

[www.underarmour.com](http://www.underarmour.com)

### VOORMI ACCESS NXT PULLOVER

For versatility and comfort, nothing beats a lightweight water-shedding pullover. The Access NXT from Voormi (\$199) is optimized to absorb light rather than reflect it, and it is odor resistant, so hunters are not hampered by game-spooking, ever-changing thermals. Built from lightweight, breathable, surface-hardened wool, it adapts to varying weather conditions to minimize the need to constantly add or remove layers. The Access NXT pullover is available in Voormi's proprietary Phase-Sc concealment patterns and features integrated hidden thumb-holes, external chest pocket and features integrated hidden thumb-holes, external chest pocket with an internal headphone port, four-way stretch woven water-repellent side panels, and a durable water-repellent finish.

[www.voormi.com](http://www.voormi.com)



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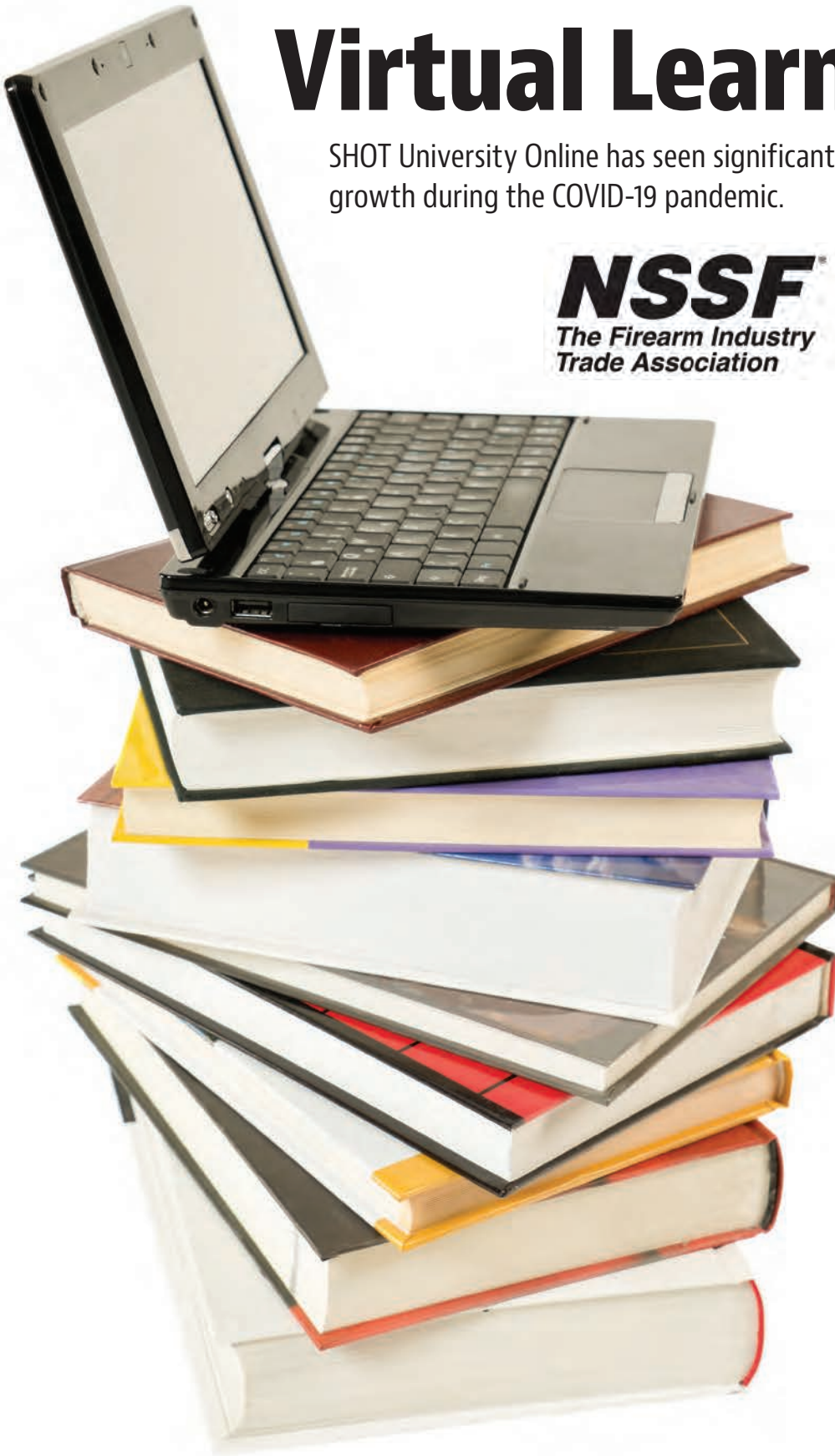
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# Virtual Learning

SHOT University Online has seen significant growth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**NSSF**  
The Firearm Industry  
Trade Association



BY JODI STEMLER

**T**he National Shooting Sports Foundation knew that they were creating a valuable member service when they launched the on-line SHOT University courses in the fall of 2019. However, it wasn't until the spring of 2020 that the true value of the platform would be evident. When most face-to-face interactions were limited due to the COVID-19 shutdown, NSSF was able to offer new content to help ranges and retailers train staff on their new reality. With new content coming online regularly and timely webinars being transferred to recorded learning modules, SHOT University Online has become a tremendous resource for NSSF members.

“What we have compiled within SHOT University Online is the most comprehensive education that is specifically geared to the firearm industry,” said Mike Vrooman, NSSF’s Managing Director for Member Services. “I am so excited about this benefit because it allows us to offer our members an incredible collection of content by people who know these issues and are true experts within our industry.”

The platform, which is free to access by all NSSF members and already has more than 1,100 individual registered users, currently offers 33 courses with 55 individual training modules. The modules allow the courses to be broken out into shorter durations so the content can be viewed within a busy schedule. For instance, one course might have over an hour of total content divided into several separate 20-minute modules; others are housed as hour-long courses that can be stopped and started as time permits. Classes ranging from marketing and business training to compliance and inventory management are designed for business owners as well as their employees. While SHOT University Online already had a growing user base after it launched, no one could have predicted how valuable the platform would be until the March 2020 shutdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Ranges and retailers have been extremely busy this year, so having courses that allow them to navigate the changing world forced by COVID-19, and helping these businesses train their employees, has been valuable.

“The SHOT University Online classes are not just for the owners of companies but are



also valuable to compliance, sales, and marketing teams — particularly if just one person in the business wears all those hats,” said John McNamara, NSSF’s Senior Director of Retail and Range Services. “People who use these resources can become more well-rounded and take away nuggets of information that will help them improve their businesses.”

For example, NSSF hosted five free live webinars that provided information about operating a range/retail business in the COVID-19 era. Topics included liability and new operating tactics as well as how to use social media in times of crisis. These webinars were recorded and are now available within the SHOT University Online platform. Other courses tailored to the current uncertain times provide store security concepts for retailers.

“Digital learning as a whole has taken off around the globe, and we were happy we had our platform in place and ready to help during this difficult time,” McNamara said. “The webinars we hosted have also helped drive new membership because of the value of the content we are offering.”

The platform continues to provide timely education modules for ranges and retailers not found in any other location. Through NSSF’s partnership with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, a course was devel-

oped to help range staff spot the signs of a suicidal person and also provide support to the community about safe firearm storage and educational materials to help prevent suicides.

For retailers, “Completing Form 4473 (2020 Version)” is a new course that gives detailed information about completing the new 4473 form that became mandatory in November. Presented by former ATF inspector Jean Zabel, the course contains three modules that describe step-by-step and line-by-line the nuances of completing each section of the revised form. Another new course helps firearm retailers to identify key performance indicators to measure performance of the shop. The course was popular in a live SHOT Show University class, and instructor Hank Yacek, a former owner of a retail operation who has more than 30 years in the firearm industry, outlines how retailers can use data and statistics to understand where they are making and losing money.

“Looking forward, our plan is to add content geared to manufacturers. We started with ranges and retailers and that has gone extremely well, so in 2021 we will be expanding to reach all of our industry members,” said Vrooman.

To access the online courses, log in as a member on the *NSSF.org* website and click on the SHOT University link under the Resources tab. **HR**



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# HUNTING RETAILER NEW PRODUCTS

BY GORDY KRAHN



## AVIAN-X FULL-BODY DUCK DECOYS

Avian-X's AXF Black Duck and AXP Mallard full-bodied decoys trick ducks into taking a second look with intricate details, exact coloration and a wind-activated motion system – a deadly combination that melds authentic-looking decoys with the natural rocking waddling motion of feeding ducks. Both models feature a true-to-life, natural finish, with contrasting colors that enhance visibility at long distances, and an advanced rubberized molding material for long life – the AXP Mallards finished with vibrant non-chip paint and the AXF Black Duck decoys topped with a non-glare flocked finish. Avian-X engineered its full-body decoy's wind-activation motion system around a heavy-duty 17-inch field stake that'll hold firm when the going gets tough. **MSRP: \$159.99/AXP Mallards Fusion pack (six); \$209.99/AXF Black Duck Fusion pack (six).** [www.avian-x.com](http://www.avian-x.com)

## SAR USA MAGIC 12-GAUGE SHOTGUN

The Magic semi-automatic 12-gauge from SAR USA features 26- and 28-inch vent-ribbed chromemoly barrels and is loaded with features hunters expect from a high-performance shotgun – featuring laser checkered genuine Turkish walnut oiled finished stocks. The SAR USA Magic is also available in a 24-inch slug gun configuration with a synthetic stock. The Magic comes with five Beretta/Benelli thread patterned compatible choke tubes, and other features include dual smooth action bars, cross trigger block safety, machined solid steel locking block and bolt and machined aircraft-grade aluminum receiver. Combine that with a lengthened forcing cone with a Truglo sight for a slug gun optimized for precision shot grouping or a field gun that is optimized for game birds or clay targets. **MSRP: \$888.88.** [www.sarusa.com](http://www.sarusa.com)



## HEYBO OUTDOORS SPORTSMAN BAG

The Sportsman bag from Heybo Outdoors is built tough to take on the challenges of the great outdoors – made from high-quality waxed cotton canvas for a classic look and long-term durability. Two-hand heavy-duty carry straps are designed to haul heavy gear, and the bag's adjustable, detachable shoulder strap allows for shoulder or crossbody messenger-style carry. The Sportsman bag has two front zipper pockets as well as an internal zipper pocket to provide extra space to secure smaller gear and valuables. **MSRP: \$99.99.** [www.heybooutdoors.com](http://www.heybooutdoors.com)



## BENJAMIN CAYDEN HUNTING AIR RIFLE

From Benjamin's Craftsman Collection, the Cayden PCP-powered hunting air rifle features a handsome crafted Turkish walnut stock with a height adjustable cheek piece, rifled steel barrel, two-stage trigger with adjustable shoe and 12-shot rotary magazine. It comes with a side cocking lever, external power adjuster knob, integrated air gauge and Picatinny rail for mounting a variety of accessories. With up to 60 shots per fill at 3,000 psi, the Cayden shoots .22-caliber pellets at up to 1,000 fps, delivering 32 foot-pounds of energy – providing the power needed to take down small game and varmints. The Cayden is 40.76 inches in length and weighs 7.95 pounds. Its barrel is threaded to accept after-market sound suppressors. **MSRP: \$599.99.** [www.crosman.com](http://www.crosman.com)

## FLEXTONE BUCK COLLECTOR PLUS

Versatility is the key to Flexitone's Buck Collector Plus call's effectiveness – giving the user the ability to switch tones, volume and inflection with ease and designed so both experts and beginners can produce realistic sounds. Its Tru-Touch buttons allow the user to transition through buck, doe and fawn vocalizations seamlessly, and its soft, flexible exterior makes it easy to manipulate subtle changes in tone and inflection. The Buck Collector Plus can mimic the grunts, growls and snort-wheezes of rutting bucks, doe bleats, and fawn bleats and bawls, making it a must-have for whitetail hunters looking for an all-in-one call. **MSRP: \$18.99.** [www.flexitonegamecalls.com](http://www.flexitonegamecalls.com)



## EVOLVED HARVEST 5 CARD DRAW SEED BLEND

High in protein and minerals, Evolved Harvest's 5 Card Draw seed blend creates a food plot that's as diverse as it is palatable. The forage variety annual/perennial mixture is designed to be eaten, grow back and then be eaten again – building regular hoof traffic and a stronger, healthier deer herd. Five Card Draw is made up of forage oats, forage wheat, perennial white clover, Barkant turnip and chicory. Each 10-pound bag will cover approximately one-quarter acre, or 11,000 square feet, and is best planted in tilled soils with a pH range of 6.0 to 8.0. It should be planted during summer through fall for the best results. **MSRP: \$19.99/10-pound bag.** [www.evolved.com](http://www.evolved.com)





### FEDERAL FUSION 10MM AUTO AMMUNITION

Fusion Handgun 10mm Auto hunting ammunition features the same molecularly fused bullet construction as its rifle counterparts for the toughness, accuracy and terminal performance short-barrel hunters need. The bullet's weight (200 grains) and velocity (1,200 fps) have been optimized to be lethal on deer without punishing the shooter. Fusion Handgun's soft-point bullet features a copper jacket that's electro-chemically applied to the core with a skived, pre-programmed nose that ensures deep penetration, consistent expansion and maximum weight retention. MSRP: \$29.99/Box of 20. [www.federalpremium.com](http://www.federalpremium.com)

### THERMASEAT TWO MAN TREESTAND SEAT

The Two Man Treestand seat from ThermaSeat provides ultra-plush comfort for super-size ladder or lock-on stands – available in .75-, 1.5- and 3-inch thickness options. The .75- and 1.5-inch versions are made from ThermaSeat Softek foam, while the 3-inch model is made from Triple Layer ThermaSeat Infusion foam. This includes a thermal barrier of a 3/8-inch layer of Softek closed-cell foam for maximum heat retention, a comfort barrier of 1 5/8-inch premium, furniture-grade urethane Comfotek foam and a 1-inch layer of rigid, closed-cell foam. Each seat has 2x48-inch quick-release straps and is covered with waterproof, polyurethane-coated SilentTouch Realtree or Mossy Oak fabric, which adds another layer of freeze-proof protection that won't get hard in sub-zero temperatures. MSRP: \$17.99-\$63.99. [www.thermaseat.com](http://www.thermaseat.com)



### BLACKHEART MAX SLING

The BlackHeart Max sling offers hunters and shooting enthusiasts an effective way to easily and comfortably transport their favorite firearms. It features a 16x3.5-inch moisture-wicking neoprene pad with non-slip backing and is fully adjustable with 1.25-inch nylon slider hardware and metal swivels. But what makes it unique is that it also includes a 12-inch neoprene scope cover that conveniently stores in the Max Sling's built-in neoprene storage pocket. The pocket is also a perfect on-the-go storage option for a rangefinder, ammo, camo face paint or firearm tools and accessories. The Max Sling is available in black and Mossy Oak Bottomland camo. MSRP: \$32.99. [www.blackheartgear.com](http://www.blackheartgear.com)



### SPRINGFIELD ARMORY MODEL 2020 WAYPOINT RIFLE

Springfield Armory has introduced the first model in its new Model 2020 family of premium American-made bolt-action hunting rifles. The Model 2020 Waypoint strikes a balance between light weight and rugged durability – achieved through the use of a premium 100 percent AG Composite carbon-fiber stock that is hand laid and pillar bedded for precision and repeatability. Available in adjustable and standard configurations, the stock features five QD mounts for versatile carry, M-Lok slots for mounting bipods and accessories and is hand painted in Ridgeline or Evergreen camo. Its TriggerTech "Field" trigger is adjustable from 2.5 to 5 pounds and the action is fed by AICS-pattern magazines. The Waypoint is available in 6mm Creedmoor, 6.5 Creedmoor, .308 Win. and 6.5 PRC. MSRP: \$1,699-\$2,399. [www.springfield-armory.com](http://www.springfield-armory.com)



### PULSAR ACCOLADE 2 LRF XP50 BINOCULAR

The Accolade 2 LRF XP50 binocular features a <40mK sensor, providing enhanced detail recognition in rain, fog, ice or other adverse conditions. It also has a full-color 640x480 AMOLED display for vivid, flawless imaging and power conservation. Additionally, the Accolade 2's laser rangefinder detects adult-sized objects at up to 1,000 yards in zero light. The Accolade 2 also features a built-in camera and video recorder, three-second startup, Wi-Fi connectivity, direct image streaming, picture-in-picture and 8X variable digital zoom to keep hunters connected and informed while in the field. Further, the Accolade 2 has an IPX7 waterproof rating and rechargeable batteries for durability and convenience. MSRP: \$6,485.99. [www.pulsarnv.com](http://www.pulsarnv.com)



### EAA CORP. 512 COWBOY SHOTGUN

European American Armory Corporation has added the 512 Cowboy side-by-side to its shotgun lineup – produced by Turkish gunmaker Akkar and styled after the shotguns used by stagecoach drivers in the American Old West. The 512 Cowboy is lightweight and easy to maneuver and pays tribute to the self-defense scatterguns of old with a stagecoach engraved on its case-colored steel receiver. The 12-gauge 3-inch shotgun features a set of 18.5-inch barrels, manual safety and extractor, bead sight and Mobile choke tubes. The forend and stock are made from select walnut and oil-rubbed to a fine finish, enhancing the natural figuring of the wood. The gun's fine fit and finish make it an excellent choice for hunting or target shooting. MSRP: \$969. [www.eaacorp.com](http://www.eaacorp.com)





**SCENTLOK OZCHAMBER 5K COMBO KIT**

ScentLok has introduced a baby brother version of its 8K OZChamber combo in the more compact OZChamber 5K. This new bag utilizes the all-new Radial IQ ozone generator to destroy odors in a more packable design specifically engineered for ScentLok Chamber bags to emit the perfect amount of ozone. The Radial IQ features a one-button design that runs a 30-minute cycle, while the colored ring indicates battery life in 25% increments. The Chamber 5K is made from durable 600D PVC-backed polyester fabric with reinforced 2-inch-wide grab straps for hauling heavy loads, and a removable, adjustable shoulder strap for comfortable, convenient carrying. The bag includes a dedicated pocket to suspend the Radial IQ, allowing ozone to fill the entire bag. **MSRP: \$199.99** [www.scentlok.com](http://www.scentlok.com)

**REALTREE EDGE DEER CAMP COFFEE**

Hunters can start their day off right with a delicious cup of coffee designed specifically with early mornings in the deer stand in mind. All Deer Camp Coffee blends are known for their freshness, consistency, quality and taste. This propriety blend of coffee beans is medium roasted to perfection to produce delicious and consistent taste and flavor with each cup. The Opening Day blend embodies the excitement of opening day and the rituals and camaraderie of the hunt, such as setting up camp, preparing delicious meals, storytelling by the campfire and the fresh scent of dawn. It can also be enjoyed as ice coffee, cold brew, nitro brew and ice cream pour-over flavoring. **MSRP: \$10.95/12 ounces** [www.realtree.com](http://www.realtree.com)



**ZEISS VICTORY SF 8X32MM BINOCULAR**

The Zeiss Victory SF 8x32mm, the latest addition to its SF line of binoculars, features a wide field of view – up to 20% more observable area – and improved ergonomics in an ultra-lightweight design. Its SmartFocus feature provides extreme precision, taking only 1.6 revolutions of the focus wheel to adjust from infinity to its minimum focusing distance of 6.4 feet. Zeiss' unique ErgoBalance feature shifts the center of gravity toward the eyepiece, making long-term observation extremely light, ergonomic and fatigue-free. The Victory SF offers excellent clarity and rapid visual recognition, even in poor lighting conditions. **MSRP: \$2,249.99** [www.zeiss.com](http://www.zeiss.com)



**SMART WOOL MEN'S PHD HUNTING MEDIUM CREW SOCKS**

Hunters know that one key to staying in the field longer is keeping feet dry and comfortable. Cushioned Phd Hunt medium crew-height hunting socks are designed to do just that. With a Virtually Seamless toe, soft and breathable merino blend and snug fit, hunters can wear them for days. Smart Wool's Indestructawool technology and itch- and stink-free benefits of merino help the cause, too. These socks feature body-mapped mesh zones for added breathability and an Achilles strap that provides extra protection and warmth and extra stretch in the leg to accommodate a wide range of boot heights. Made in the USA of imported yarn: 66% merino wool; 32% nylon; 2% elastane. **MSRP: \$26.95.** [www.smartwool.com](http://www.smartwool.com)



**THERMACELL MR450 MOSQUITO REPELLER**

The portable, lightweight Thermacell MR450 effectively repels mosquitoes by creating a 15-foot zone of protection around the user. This small scent-free, DEET-free device can be used almost anywhere to keep pesky mosquitoes at bay and includes some unique features to make it Thermacell's most advanced portable repellent device yet. One notable improvement is ZoneCheck, which provides a visual indication when a zone of protection is created. Other features include a rubber-armored outer shell, belt clip, quiet ignition, reengineered grill and switch, improved ergonomics and an accessory mounting system. The package contains one MR450 portable unit, one CR2032 battery, three repellent mats and one fuel cartridge. **MSRP: \$34.99** [www.thermacell.com](http://www.thermacell.com)







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# Is Hunting as We Know It in America About to End?

Is hunting and conservation, as we have known it all our lives in America, about to end?

BY BOB ROBB

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, which is foundational to our industry, states that wildlife is a public resource, and as such, access to wildlife for hunting is through legal mechanisms such as set hunting seasons, bag limits, license requirements, etc. And that, in keeping with democratic principles, government allocates access to wildlife without regard to wealth, prestige or land ownership.

This model is based on the fact that, following indiscriminate slaughter of wildlife and wanton habitat destruction in our nation's early years, in the 1800s, citizens began to ask whether wildlife populations could continue at healthy levels without checks on hunting. As the tides turned for conservation, important laws were passed, including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act of 1934, the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 (Pittman-Robertson Act), and the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950 (Dingell-Johnson Act). Collectively, these acts laid the foundation for what inspired the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. As of April 2019, the P-R and D-J acts have collectively distributed more than \$21 billion in apportionments for state conservation and recreation projects. The recipient state wildlife agencies have matched these funds with approximately \$7.3 billion throughout the years, primarily through hunting and fishing license revenues.

The love of money may be the root of all kinds of evil, as the saying goes, but money does make the world go 'round, and conservation depends on it. And like all things in America and the rest of the world, everything has been changed by COVID-19. Economies are in disarray, businesses have been shuttered for good, and the way we live and work has, in no small measure, been altered forever. The May 18, 2020 issue of [www.smithsonianmag.com](http://www.smithsonianmag.com) has an article entitled, "How Covid-19 Is Disrupting Crucial Conservation Efforts." It details many of these problems,

not just those that directly affect both the national and international hunting communities, but also recreational groups like birders. A June 11, 2020 article in [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com) entitled "Halt In Ecotourism Threatens Conservation Efforts Worldwide" discusses the same issues. Simply stated, the funding is drying up.

Near-term, Pittman-Robertson funds appear to be in great shape, thanks to booming firearm and ammunition sales. But travel restrictions or outright bans like the closing of the U.S.-Canadian and Mexican borders, as well as quarantine requirements for those who do travel to some states or international destinations, have reduced hunting license sales, which means less money for matching funds, which means fewer P-R funds being actually allocated to specific states. In many states, non-resident hunting license sales provide a very large chunk of state game and fish department budgets. Thus, as spending drops due to reduced revenues, there is less money to pay the salaries of game wardens, whose ranks are already depleted both here and abroad. This, taken together with the economic downturn, can lead to increased poaching.

Our private conservation-based businesses are also suffering greatly. Conservation and advocacy organizations are hurting badly after a season of no fundraisers, banquets and raffles, and individual donations are reduced to a trickle of their former levels. This past summer, one group, the National Wild Turkey Federation, held a "Turkey Telethon" fundraiser on Facebook Live that raised over \$200,000 for an organization that laid off more than 50 staffers in spring due to a pandemic-related halt in their fundraising efforts. Others have conducted online auctions, but the money raised there is never as much as money raised at live banquets and conventions. These groups' collective spending on conservation efforts, as well as efforts in hunter recruitment and retention and helping ensure land access for the general public, is significant and benefits all wildlife and hunters.

Guide and outfitter businesses have also been hammered, especially in states where travel bans and quarantines cost those states entire nonresi-

dent hunting seasons. Outfitters that had to cancel seasons still have to pay leases, insurance and other fixed costs without revenue, and cancelled hunts have to be rolled over to future seasons in some sort of staggered schedule so that those who had booked a year or more out aren't bumped from their spots. Some outfitters will go out of business altogether. The bottom line for hunters that use these services will be a tightening of available hunts, which means the cost will inevitably go up.

With travel bans, quarantines and economic downturns, many folks naturally look to close-to-home sources of recreation. Landowners wary of people they don't know well will be less inclined to open their property to the unattached hunter. Add to this the trend with millennials, Gen-Xers, and Gen-Zers embracing the locavore movement and an increasing interest in hunting for meat, not trophies per se, and local hunting resources and public lands are sure to see more hunting pressure. One bright spot in this trend was the announcement on August 18, 2020, by Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt of the opening and expansion of more than 850 hunting and fishing opportunities across more than 2.3 million acres at 147 national wildlife refuges and national fish hatcheries. This rule increases the number of units in the Service's National Wildlife Refuge System open to public hunting to 430 and those open to fishing to 360. The rule also formally brings the total number of National Fish Hatchery System units open to hunting or sport fishing to 21. This is in addition to the 2019 expansion of 1.4 million acres for new or expanded hunting and fishing opportunities. You can find a list by doing an online search for "FWS Station Specific Hunting and Fishing Final Rule Narratives."

What's all this mean for you, and your business? How do you see the future? Drop me a note at [editor@grandviewoutdoors.com](mailto:editor@grandviewoutdoors.com) — I'd love to hear

## 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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