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SHOOTING INDUSTRY

THE INDUSTRY'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE — EST. 1955

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**PRECISION
LONG-RANGE
MARKET**
What's Next?

Insurance

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**STREAMLINE
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How To Spring Clean Your
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Offer A Better Customer Experience

Enhancing the “customer experience” is one way your store or range can stand out from the competition — things like an easier checkout process, an attentive staff, innovative technology or a responsive, mobile-friendly website can help tip the scales in your favor.

B.A. Stear, founder of the Shoot Indoors franchise, shares how the addition of range cameras have been one simple, yet impactful way the customer experience on the range has been elevated. It may sound counterintuitive at first, but Stear has noted since the addition of range cameras, customers are spending *less* time on the range.

“If I told you a shooter would spend 20% less time on the lane while shooting the same amount of ammo and had the same great time, that would mean you can either sell more ammo in that ‘bonus time’ or send more people through the range on a busy Saturday,” he noted. “What’s actually happening is customers are busy shooting, not busy retrieving targets.”

To learn additional benefits, see **pp. 34–35**.

SPRING CLEAN YOUR DIGITAL PRESENCE

Spring has sprung. Ashley McGee contends it’s a perfect time to “spring clean” your store’s digital presence. She provides six helpful tips in this month’s *Best Practices* column (**p. 24**).

“A marketing audit will reveal what is and isn’t working, and leave you more open to finding opportunities and trying new things that might work better,” she said. “While the word ‘audit’ — especially during tax season — may make you feel like running for the hills, a review and refresh of your digital presence isn’t as daunting as it seems.”

WHAT’S NEXT FOR THE PRECISION MARKET?

Prior to the supply chain chaos, the long-range precision market



APRIL 2023

represented a bright spot for dealers. Challenges in ammo availability have impacted sales, but with lower demand expected this year the segment is primed for a resurgence.

Stores with a foothold in this market will find Tim Barker’s article informative. See **pp. 26–29**.

EYE-CATCHING NEW PRODUCT LAUNCHES

At SHOT Show 2023, it was clear manufacturers are continuing to innovate and deliver dynamic new products to consumers. This issue’s new products section includes the *SI* team’s picks for standout product launches, as well as sales tips/insights from the brands represented. For more, see **pp. 40–44**.

NEXT MONTH: AMMO MARKET, ON-GUN ACCESSORIES

In the May issue, we’ll present our annual update on the ammunition market — with commentary from both manufacturers and dealers. What does availability look like moving forward? Are we at a “new normal” in pricing? Have the events over the past three years forever changed the market? These questions and more will be answered by panelists.

Sales of on-gun accessories — especially red dot optics — have exploded in recent years. Bryan Hendricks interviews dealers to share what accessories “practically sell themselves” to accompany firearm purchases, including magazines, triggers, suppressors and more.

With summer quickly approaching, the May issue will include tips for hosting a summer sales event and outfitting varmint hunters. **SI**

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GOTTA START SOMEWHERE

Editor's Note: Letters continue to pour in regarding the “home-based vs. storefront dealer” debate that started in early 2022. Here's a unique perspective from a storeowner with a foot in both camps. In his view, all businesses have to start somewhere, and customers are equally to blame for the rise of online-only discounting.

I'm a 20-year veteran FFL in the industry. I started from a home office space with the intent to provide better service than the local storefront gun dealers in my area. After only two years, I needed a storefront due to the volume of “strangers” coming into my home. I happen to own a piece of land around my residence, so I built a separate small storefront. Because I was part-time, with a small building/inventory — it shared the same address as my residence. I experienced a struggle for distributor reps to give me the attention I deserved with six-figure annual sales. A one-man, part-time show, working a separate full-time job and selling six figures of anything — no small accomplishment in my book.

Fast-forward 20 years, Class 07 FFL and SOT, machine shop and I have loyal customers who don't even price shop because they trust my fairness and

When big business exterminates the small business, it's often a sad state of affairs in pricing and service because it's all the buyer can choose from.

service. They're often willing to wait while I find an out-of-stock or hard-to-get item. They like the face time and attention I give them for their buying needs. Other than a handful of business cards, two small road signs and a two- to three-year website listing, I have never advertised any further. Customers find me off the beaten path through word of mouth.

Having stated this, I find more and more “loyals” feeding the online cutthroats. Can't blame the buyer wanting to save money, but I won't hand them a tissue when they cry that the local business option/service is gone.

So here's my opinion as a 20-year “residence-addressed FFL/storefront”

with \$1 million in sales to the wholesale distributors: Sell product to the “little guys/gals” however much and when they can buy. Especially during the heydays. Moments like these can cause dramatic growth in customer base, opportunity and ultimately leveling-up their status in purchasing power. Big outfits will stay big if managed well. Yes, they'll potentially have more competition, but that's how prices are kept in check.

Many bigger storefronts are afraid of small operations like mine because we offer service and experience beyond what their purchasing and walk-in traffic power can ever offer. So they hold on to their overhead expenses, limited experience opinions and allocation access in vain to naysay the “home-based FFLs.”

When big business exterminates the small business, it's often a sad state of affairs in pricing and service because it's all the buyer can choose from. They have the market cornered. Take it or leave it.


In reference to all the online cutthroat gun sales — all we small FFLs have to do is collaborate and refuse to receive and transfer for them. Tables will turn.

Thank you for addressing this issue. I've never spoken out in the industry before like I am now. Definitely got my attention and it stirred me up!

— Name withheld by request
Pennsylvania

WHAT READERS ARE SAYING ...

Editor's Note: The following letter is a reaction to Doug VanderWoude's Jan. 2023 feature, “Win The Customer Service Race” — courtesy of LinkedIn.

Customer service is everything! I tell my team constantly we're a sales and marketing company first. Without the customer you're an out-of-business company. Excellent read, Doug! 

— Kurt Lieberman, Owner
Youngsville Gun Club & Range
Youngsville, N.C.
Via LinkedIn

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Image: Ruger

INDUSTRY CELEBRATES \$1.6 BILLION APPORTIONED TO STATES FOR CONSERVATION

March 3, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced a record \$1.6 billion has been apportioned to state conservation and wildlife access programs. The distribution of funds is derived from the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson excise taxes paid by the firearms and ammunition industry, as well as the angling industry.

Of the \$1.19 billion generated by Pittman-Robertson, the firearms and ammunition industry provided nearly \$1.15 billion. According to NSSF, firearm and ammunition manufacturers have paid over \$25.38 billion into the fund since its inception in 1937 (adjusted for inflation). These funds directly contribute to wildlife conservation

through the Wildlife Restoration Act (also known as the Pittman-Robertson Act) and provides funding for conservation programs, increased access to public lands and hunter education.

“The firearm industry is tremendously proud of the contributions we make to conserving our wildlife and the habitats wildlife need to thrive for generations to come,” said NSSF President and CEO Joe Bartozzi. “Our industry is at the forefront of wildlife conservation. Each time a recreational shooter or hunter purchases firearms and ammunition, they’re supporting the manufacturers that pay these taxes to ensure America remains the gold standard for sustainable conservation

and wildlife management.”

The Wildlife Restoration Trust Fund is funded by excise taxes paid by firearm and ammunition manufacturers on their products, as well as archery equipment manufacturers. The excise tax is set at 11% of the wholesale price for long guns and ammunition and 10% of the wholesale price for handguns. The excise tax, paid by manufacturers and importers, applies to all firearms produced or imported for commercial or federal law enforcement sales, whether the purpose is for recreational shooting, hunting or personal defense. The tax is administered by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) of the Department of the Treasury, which turns the funds over to USFWS.

USFWS deposits the Pittman-Robertson revenues into a special account called the Wildlife Restoration Trust Fund administered by the USFWS. These funds are made available to states and territories the year following their collection based on a statutory formula. These 10 and 11% excise tax dollars collected since 1937 under the Pittman-Robertson Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act are specifically designated to be used by state wildlife agencies for conservation and related purposes.

Collectively, purchasers of firearms and ammunition, hunters and the firearm and ammunition industry are the greatest source of wildlife conservation funding.

[/ fws.gov/program/wildlife-restoration](https://fws.gov/program/wildlife-restoration)

SAVAGE ARMS MARKS 20 YEARS OF THE ACCUTRIGGER

In 2003 Savage Arms introduced the AccuTrigger. Two decades later, Savage is excited to celebrate its 20th anniversary.

“Introduced in 2003, the AccuTrigger was a game-changing innovation not only for Savage, but also for the entire firearms industry,” said Beth Shimanski, director of marketing at Savage Arms. “The AccuTrigger was developed to be the safest and most reliable trigger on the market with a focus on performance and

above all, accuracy. It’s impressive that 20 years later, the Savage AccuTrigger remains the best factory trigger there is, making it the ultimate tool for all hunters and shooters.”

Utilizing revolutionary and patented technology designed by leading firearms engineers, the AccuTrigger system was designed to eliminate trigger creep while being user-adjustable and completely safe. With a trigger pull between 1.5–6 lbs., the AccuTrigger continues to meet all the above requirements and more.

“The AccuTrigger spawned a wave of innovation in Savage that continues today and is stronger than ever,” said Al Kasper, president and CEO of Savage



Arms. “With new innovations such as AccuStock and AccuFit, a long line of new product offerings, and much more coming down the pike, the AccuTrigger was just the tip of the iceberg of what has come from Savage in the past 20 years and what will continue to come moving forward.”

[/ savagearms.com](https://savagearms.com)

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INDUSTRY NEWS

BLUE PAYMENT AGENCY REDESIGNS PAYMENT PROCESSING WEBSITE

In keeping with its shift from generic high-risk payment processing to providing its services mostly to federally licensed firearms (FFL) dealers, Blue Payment Agency Inc. has redesigned its website.

The company also focuses on ammunition dealers and tactical websites that sell knives, survival products and non-lethal weapons such as pepper spray and stun guns.

“Credit card payments can be complex. Adding another variable — in this case, providing both retail and e-commerce payments support — to a highly regulated group of businesses like FFL dealers only compounds that,” said Alex Roy, president of Blue Payment Agency.

Payment processing must be set up correctly in order to be stable, and the



combination of e-commerce FFL-to-FFL shipments, ammunition sales, face-to-face transactions and even auction sales on popular sites like GunBroker adds to the complexity. Integrations must work with POS systems, in addition to auction dashboards and a host of shopping carts, like WooCommerce, Shopify, BigCommerce and Wix.

FFL dealers can legally accept credit card payments for online gun sales, but must follow federal law. During the checkout process, the gun buyer must select a local FFL dealer from whom they

will pick up their firearm. That dealer performs the on-site background check via the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

Online firearms, tactical and survival businesses must work through a host of challenges, including prohibited activity lists that effectively bar them from using many common payment gateways, merchant accounts, shopping carts and even POS systems. Blue Payment Agency aims to alleviate this stress for business owners.

[/ bluepaymentagency.com](https://bluepaymentagency.com)

RUGER REPORTS 2022 NET SALES

Ruger has announced for 2022 it reported net sales of \$595.8 million, compared with net sales of \$730.7 million in 2021. For Q4 2022, net sales were \$149.2 million, compared to \$168 million to the corresponding period in 2021.

Ruger CEO Chris Killoy commented on the financial results: “Consumer demand in 2022 was below the level of demand in 2021, dampened in part by inflationary pressures, which often constrain discretionary spending. This led to an 18%

reduction in our sales from the prior year. Nevertheless, we’re encouraged by our increased quarterly sales and production in the fourth quarter. Our disciplined approach and long-term focus yielded strong cash flow, investment in our new product development and a robust, debt-free balance sheet.”

The estimated sell-through of Ruger products from independent distributors to retailers decreased 25% in 2022, compared to the prior-year period. Sales of new products — including the MAX-9, LCP MAX, Marlin 1895, LC Carbine, PC Charger and Small-Frame Autoloading Rifle — represented \$78.4 million (14%) of firearm



sales in 2022.

Ruger profitability declined in 2022 from 2021 as its gross margin decreased from 38% to 30%.

According to Killoy, “The lower margin was driven by unfavorable deleveraging of fixed costs resulting from decreased production and sales, as well as inflationary cost increases in materials, commodities, services, energy, fuel and transportation, which were partially offset by increased pricing.”

[/ ruger.com](https://ruger.com)

VORTEX ACQUIRES GEOBALLISTICS

Vortex announced its acquisition of GeoBallistics, a Dallas-based business providing ballistic mobile application software.

The GeoBallistics philosophy closely aligns with the Vortex mission of creating the best possible experience for their customers. GeoBallistics products added

to the Vortex portfolio will continue to enhance and simplify hunting and shooting by providing critical information quickly and accurately for customers familiar with both brands.

“We’re always looking for new ways to help Vortex Nation enjoy unforgettable experiences in the field. Acquiring GeoBallistics allows us to offer both consistency in our product line and make long-range ballistics simpler and more accessible for everyone,” said Joe



Hamilton, Vortex CEO.

For shooters already utilizing the GeoBallistics suite, nothing in the software and app experience will change. The biggest change is that Vortex will now be providing customer service and support.

[/ vortex.com](https://vortex.com)

5.11 TACTICAL CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

5.11 Tactical marked its 20th anniversary of doing business on Jan. 29.

“We’re celebrating two decades utilizing consumer feedback to produce innovative purpose-built gear. Since 2003, it has been a privilege empowering customers to ‘always be ready.’ Whether they depend on our gear in the line of duty or for everyday use, we’d like to say ‘thank you’ for counting on us as we pass this milestone and look forward to the future,” said Francisco J. Morales, CEO of 5.11 Tactical.

Founded in California in 2003, 5.11 Tactical’s initial product was a pair of rock-climbing pants inspired by the 5.11 difficulty rating for climbs. The brand



went on to expand its product offerings, and grew in popularity — especially with firefighters, EMTs, law enforcement and military personnel.

“Serving those who serve will always be at the forefront of what we do,” said Morales. “Whether it’s through brand partnerships, special events like our annual 5.11 Days celebration or simply developing dependable gear, we will

always strive to support public safety professionals and military personnel and show our gratitude for their service.”

Today, the company works directly with end users to design purpose-built gear for enhancing the safety, comfort and performance of public safety professionals, outdoor adventurers, training enthusiasts and others.

[/ 511tactical.com](http://511tactical.com)

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DEALER PRICE	\$469.00	\$469.00

GZANDERS.COM

RUGER AUCTIONS RAISE \$24,000 FOR SSSF

Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc. announced a donation of \$24,000 to the Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation (SSSF), an organization dedicated to educating youth about the shooting sports. Ruger's donation was raised through auctions on GunBroker.com from September through December 2022.

Since 2010, Ruger has worked with the popular firearms auction website to auction off rare, unusual, discontinued or one-of-a-kind Ruger firearms. Ruger



RUGER M77 MARK II INTERNATIONAL

donates all proceeds from these auctions to charities, with those gifts totaling just under \$900,000 to date.

"Supporting organizations like the SSSF is vital to our industry. We are excited to continue our support of the SSSF in its mission to provide educational and developmental opportunities to young people interested in the shooting sports, while giving loyal Ruger customers the chance to bid on one-of-a-kind Ruger firearms," said Chris Killoy, president and

CEO of Ruger.

Firearms sold to benefit the SSSF included a .308 Winchester-caliber Ruger Gunsite Scout Rifle and an M77 Mark II International in 6.5x55mm.

The SSSF is a 501(c)(3) educational-athletic organization dedicated to providing shooting-sports education and opportunities to school-age youths around the U.S. in order to encourage their personal growth and development.

ruger.com / sssfonline.org

SIG SAUER ANNOUNCES "SHOOT SIG" EXPERIENCE

SIG SAUER has launched SHOOT SIG, a membership-based shooting community and competition series open to firearm enthusiasts of all levels.

Founded through a collaboration between SIG SAUER and Team SIG professional shooter Daniel Horner, SHOOT SIG encourages participation in the shooting sports, and offers generous member-only benefits.

An annual membership to SHOOT SIG is \$50, while an individual match registration is \$45.

SHOOT SIG members may register for SHOOT SIG matches across the country,

with a generous prize opportunity for every participant. The matches consist of three, simple standardized courses of fire. SIG firearms are available for use at each match for those not owning one. Competing with other firearm brands is allowed, but members are not eligible for match prizes if they do so.

Members also participate in the SHOOT SIG Product Purchase Program, and have an opportunity to purchase a custom SHOOT SIG gun of the year, which is a custom P320-DH3 with a ROMEO1Pro Optic during this inaugural year.

"[Team SIG members] Max Michel, Daniel Horner and Lena Miculek are the top shooters in their respective disciplines. For 2023, the collective goal of Team SIG is to reach new firearms owners and expand



participation in shooting sports. While they each relish the competition and the thrill of the win, it's equally important to each of them to create an avenue to share the passion for their sport and have a vehicle to encourage others to get involved," said Tom Taylor, CMO and executive VP of commercial sales for SIG SAUER.

shootsig.com

SK CUSTOMS RAISES \$20,000+ FOR NWTF

SK Customs, a division of limited-edition production manufacturer SK Guns, has announced a gift of more than \$20,000 in support of the National Wild Turkey Federation's (NWTF) conservation research mission.

SK Customs donated two sets of custom-designed, engraved firearms in honor of NWTF's 50th anniversary, during the NWTF Annual Convention and Sport Show in Nashville in February. The firearms packages included a Henry Golden Boy Silver in .22 LR and a new model Smith & Wesson 1911 chambered in .45 ACP.

"Thanks to the convention's Grand National Live Auction, we were able to help raise more than \$20,000 to fund research and conservation efforts and enhance development opportunities in the overall firearm and outdoor industry through our SK Gives Back initiative," said Simon Khiabani, owner and founder of SK Guns.

Since 1973, wild turkey populations have risen from 1.3 million to more than 6 million, and the NWTF has conserved or enhanced more than 22 million acres of wildlife habitat.

Additionally, the organization has invested more than \$500 million in conservation and outreach efforts, and more than \$8 million in wild turkey research.



Customers can now show their support of NWTF's mission to continue driving wildlife conservation, forest resiliency and robust recreational opportunities throughout the U.S. by pre-ordering the 50th Anniversary Commemorative Set. The MSRP is \$3,100.

skguns.com
nwtf.org

ALPS OUTDOORZ EMPLOYEES "GET DIRTY"

ALPS OutdoorZ put its commitment to habitat conservation and building toward the future into action by having its entire organization participate in a recent project. The team devoted a day to wildlife sustainability and habitat improvement by planting trees near its headquarters in rural Missouri.

Working together with the local Quail Forever chapter, ALPS founder Dennis Brune organized the fun-filled day of tree planting on his boyhood farm. A mix of hardwood trees and shrubs were planted to benefit a wide variety of wildlife and to provide essential cover and brood habitat for upland species. The resulting wooded corridor will bring additional benefits to



Putting its commitment to habitat conservation into action, the entire Alps OutdoorZ team partnered with a local Quail Forever chapter to spend a day of tree planting on ALPS Founder Dennis Brune's childhood farm.

the area, such as decreasing soil erosion and improving water quality in the local streams.

"ALPS team members had a great time getting their hands dirty," said Brune.

"It makes me feel so good to know, as an

outdoor company, we have team members who truly enjoy being in the outdoors, and who are committed to making a difference now and for future generations of outdoors enthusiasts."

[/alpsoutdoorz.com](https://alpsoutdoorz.com)

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SMITH & WESSON RECOGNIZES 2022 AMBASSADOR DEALERS

Smith & Wesson Brands Inc. has named 10 of its top retailers across the nation as Ambassador Dealers for their outstanding performance in 2022.

The Smith & Wesson Ambassador Dealer program recognizes dealers that serve as strong advocates for the Smith & Wesson brand, and continually support the growth of its brand and products.

The Ambassador Dealers for 2022 are:

- Black Wing Shooting Center, Delaware, Ohio
- Bob's Gun Shop, Norfolk, Va.

- Carter's Country, Spring, Texas
- Cheyenne Mountain Outfitters, Bordentown, N.J.
- Dad's Super Pawn, Gulfport, Miss.
- Larry's Pistol and Pawn, Hunstville, Ala.
- Midwest Gun Exchange, Mishawaka, Ind.
- Midwestern Shooters Supply, Lomira, Wis.
- Scott's Outdoors, Jay, Fla.
- Tombstone Tactical, Phoenix

"These dealers continue to demonstrate the core values that are meaningful to Smith & Wesson. Their support of our products, promotions and our presence in their retail shops align

with our vision for the future. We look forward to many years of continued partnerships and success with our Ambassador Dealers," said Sue Cupero, VP of sales for Smith & Wesson.

Dealers selected as Smith & Wesson Ambassador Dealers must meet specific criteria of outstanding sales performance, retailer training, custom marketing strategies and more. The company presented each 2022 Ambassador Dealer with an awards package, and now recognizes them as Ambassador Dealers on its Dealer Locator.

[/ smith-wesson.com](https://smith-wesson.com)

NSSF RENEWS SUPPORT FOR IHEA-USA

The NSSF announced its renewed relationship with the International Hunter Education Association (IHEA-USA) that will provide funding for the organization's 2023 initiatives.

The partnership assists the IHEA-USA with its continued mission to promote safe hunting and shooting, as well as the development of its new mentoring platform, LearnHunting.org. The NSSF's support also will help fund educational tools for hunter education classrooms and the IHEA-USA Firearms Fundamentals course.

"We welcome like-minded organizations such as NSSF to help us

deliver state agency education teams and their volunteers the tools they need to ensure safe, responsible and ethical lessons are brought to the next generation of hunters and shooting sports participants. We look forward to promoting their programs to our audiences, and we are grateful for this relationship," said Alex Baer executive director of the IHEA-USA.

"The IHEA-USA and its tens of thousands of instructors play a vital role in educating new hunters and shooters across America. NSSF is proud to support this important organization, while also providing our resources in helping to educate hunters and shooters on the importance of firearm safety and secure firearm storage," said Joe Bartozzi, NSSF president and CEO.

NSSF®
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Trade Association



The IHEA-USA creates and delivers hunter education standards and content for state fish and wildlife agency programs that teach safe hunting and firearm handling. The IHEA-USA's programs employ 55,000 instructors, including many volunteers who teach hunting and shooting safety and responsibilities throughout the U.S.

[/ nssf.org](https://nssf.org)

[/ ihea-usa.org](https://ihea-usa.org)

BERETTA USA DELIVERS SAKO TRG M10 RIFLES TO NYPD

Beretta USA, a member of the Beretta Defense Technologies (BDT) alliance, announced the delivery of several Sako TRG M10 multi-caliber sniper systems to the NYPD in support of its Emergency Service Unit's mission. The company will also provide armorer training.

Beretta Defense Technologies is the strategic alliance of Beretta Holding companies, including Beretta, Benelli, Sako, Steiner and Norma that serves the defense and L.E. communities.

"It has been a privilege to work with

such an outstanding team of professionals to develop the best configuration for their needs. Beretta USA is honored to support the NYPD in its critical mission to guarantee the daily safety of the New York City community for the coming years," said Stefano Itri, VP of international sales at BDT USA.

"We're honored the NYPD, a world-renowned law enforcement agency, has selected our rifle to meet its exacting requirements. The U.S. market is extremely demanding, and we're proud our products continue to excel in the service of its professionals," said Raimo Karjalainen, CEO of Sako Ltd.

Born from the needs of U.S. special

operation forces, the M10 is Sako's latest addition to its legendary TRG family. The M10 features mission-specific configurability and multi-role capability in a single weapon system. Its modular design and ease of integration with after-market components allows the bolt-action, manually operated, magazine-fed sniper weapon to be set up in hundreds of configurations.

The M10's cold hammer-forged stainless steel barrel and two-stage trigger — adjustable in both pull weight and position — provide superior accuracy.

[/ berettadefensetechnologies.com](https://berettadefensetechnologies.com)

CRKT, HOGUE KNIVES FORM MANUFACTURING PARTNERSHIP

Columbia River Knife & Tool (CRKT) and Hogue Knives announced a partnership centered around the next generation of CRKT knives.

The alliance melds two top names in the knife and tool industry, aligning CRKT's acumen for design with Hogue's trade expertise in form, function and ergonomics. The partnership kicked off at SHOT Show 2023 with the launch of two new U.S.-made CRKT knives, the Definitive and the LCBK.

"We've known the team at Hogue Knives for quite some time, and their sterling reputation in the marketplace is well-deserved. As we looked toward partners in U.S. manufacturing, they were



The Definitive is one of CRKT's first knives to incorporate a Crossbar lock — which facilitates ambidextrous closing.

an obvious fit in helping us develop top-notch, American-made knives," said Doug Flagg, VP of marketing and innovation for CRKT.

"CRKT's penchant for design and willingness to take risks and stand out

fits right in with the ethos here at Hogue Knives, and we're excited for what the future holds for both brands," said Jim Bruhns, president of Hogue Knives. **SI**

[/ crkt.com](https://crkt.com)

[/ hogueinc.com](https://hogueinc.com)



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B. NIEMERG

SPYPOINT Trail Cameras Expands Marketing Team

Brittany Niemerg recently joined the SPYPOINT marketing

team with a primary focus on managing social media. She will also be a full collaborator on all consumer-facing marketing efforts, including influencer, media and communication strategies.

"Anyone who pays attention to marketing in the outdoor space knows who Brittany is, so when her availability and our need lined up, we were thrilled to add her expertise and talents to our team," said Maya Meyouhas, SPYPOINT VP of brand marketing.

Niemerg is the principal and owner of Britt Jill Marketing LLC and brings nearly a decade of social media management in the outdoor industry to her new role. She has worked brands such as Browning and DSG Outerwear.



J. ELLISON

IHEA-USA Names Education Director

IHEA-USA announced Jae Ellison has assumed the role of a new position within

the organization, director of education. Ellison will lead the LearnHunting.org platform program while working closely with subject matter experts to create courses specifically focused on the development of Hunter Education instructors.

Alex Baer, executive director of the IHEA-USA, stated, "Jae Ellison brings unparalleled expertise in delivering educational content to our team — we have struck gold with his addition."

Ellison's background is centered in outdoor education, primarily in higher education. He most recently served as the director of outdoor leadership and education at Lycoming College in Williamsport, Penn.

He earned a degree in outdoor

leadership from North Greenville University and a master of education in outdoor education administration from Georgia College & State University.



D. BRINKERHOFF

Streamlight Appoints Sales Manager

Streamlight announced the appointment of Daniel Brinkerhoff as southeast

regional sales manager for its fire and industrial markets. Brinkerhoff will be responsible for working with independent sales representatives and distributors with an emphasis on end-user activity to increase revenues and market penetration within their designated territory.

Streamlight Chief Revenue Officer Michael F. Dineen said, "[Brinkerhoff's] extensive experience and sales success over the years have proven him to be a great fit for this position."

Brinkerhoff comes to Streamlight from Fein GmbH where he was a senior sales representative.



J. LEACH

SASP Announces Development Director

The Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation (SSSF) announced Jonathan Leach joined its team

as the director of development for the Scholastic Action Shooting Program (SASP).

"Many working for and on behalf of SSSF got to see [Leach] grow up in our programs. With his experience ... we expect him to thrive in his position with SASP," stated Ed Fitzgerald, SSSF board chair.

Leach has a long history with the SSSF, first starting as an athlete in the Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) and then shooting pistol when the Scholastic Pistol Program (SPP) began in 2012. He was a member of an SPP National

Championship Centerfire Pistol squad shooting with Ozaukee Scholastic Shooting Sports in Wisconsin.

He started and coached the SCTP and SASP teams at Concordia University of Wisconsin, where he took the team to two SASP Rifle national championships.



M. OTTO

Steiner Optics Promotes Sales Manager/Product Specialist

Steiner Optics announced the promotion of Mic

Otto to national sales manager and product specialist. He will be responsible for managing, supporting and developing sales incentives and programs for customers across the U.S. He is also tasked with developing an e-commerce strategy, working with Beretta Defense Technologies Group, overseeing Steiner national L.E. sales and managing the Western U.S. sales team.

Otto most recently served as Steiner's law enforcement sales manager. Prior to joining Steiner, he was employed by the Greeley Police Department. He maintains an active role at a local Colorado sheriff's office.



B. BROWN

O.F. Mossberg & Sons Inc. Reorganizes Sales & Marketing Staff

O.F. Mossberg & Sons Inc. announced personnel changes within its sales

and marketing department: Bill Brown shifted to senior director of product management and Brian Krouse (not pictured) transitioned to director of sales.

John MacLellan, Mossberg VP of sales and marketing, stated, "These positive changes ... will be instrumental in aligning Mossberg for positive growth in the years to come. Both Bill and Brian's deep understanding of the Mossberg product line and the commercial

firearms user will continue to allow Mossberg to serve its customers with quality product and unparalleled service.”

Brown is responsible for developing and bringing new differentiated products to the market that address both market needs and represent viable business opportunities.

He spent 12 years at Smith & Wesson in various capacities before joining Mossberg in 2011.

Krouse is charged with supporting and supervising Mossberg’s team of regional sales managers to ensure annual sales targets are achieved.

He joined Mossberg as a national accounts manager in 2015, after spending seven years as a district sales manager for Smith & Wesson, and eight years with Andersen Windows in sales management positions.



N. SANDERS

SDS Imports Adds Accounts Manager

SDS Imports welcomed Neil Sanders as key accounts manager.

“We’re pleased to add Neil to our sales team where he will manage key accounts for our Tisas, Tokarev, Spandau and Military Armaments Corp. brands under the SDS umbrella,” said Tim Mulverhill, CEO of SDS Imports.

Sanders has over 20 years of industry experience and is a former VP of Traditions Performance Firearms.



B. ROPER

Camfour Inc. Announces President

Brandon Roper was named the new president of Camfour Inc. where he is responsible for leading the continued growth of

the brand and team.

Camfour CEO Malcolm Getz stated, “His experience and focus will allow us to provide customers with a sales and delivery experience unsurpassed in the industry.”

Roper first joined the company as VP of sales and marketing with 17 years of industry experience.




R. HOLM

MOULTRIE MOBILE Welcomes Marketing VP

As the new VP of marketing of MOULTRIE MOBILE, Ryan Holm will lead efforts to enhance the vision, identity and

awareness of the company and its products.

Holm has nearly two decades of experience in the outdoor industry. He spent the past 13 years at MYSTERY RANCH where he most recently served as the director of marketing. 



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PERSONAL DEFENSE MARKET

BY MASSAD AYOUB

FINDING A NICHE

In a world full of competitors, how does a business establish itself? Sometimes, the key is to offer the customer something different. To find a niche, have something the competition doesn't have, something that distinguishes your shop from the others. This niche can take many forms.

One important element to the success of a niche gun shop is a large customer base. By definition, the specialist firm somewhat limits its clientele to those with special interests or needs. This demands a larger population to draw from if the business is going to attract enough clientele to succeed.

Let's look at some examples.

BLACK FANG FIREARMS STUDIO

Larry Hills, Jr. and his lovely wife, Candis, opened their gun shop/art studio in a strip mall in Slidell, La., on September 17, 2022, and have been busy ever since. It has two unusual elements that draw customers. It's the first gun shop I've seen that labels itself a studio, and the appellation is correct. Among his many talents, Larry is a lifelong artist and his paintings are on display and for sale, just like the guns — and ammo and accessories.

Moreover, the shop is Black-owned and a living contradiction to the canard

"gun culture" is the exclusive province of aging white males.

Now 47, Larry told *Shooting Industry*, "I started shooting with a Crosman air rifle my grandfather gave me when I was 7 years old. We lived on a bayou, and we shot tin cans and such. When I was 10, the single-shot, .22 rifle my grandfather gave my dad as a boy was passed on to me, and I shot my first rabbit with it. By then I already knew I was going to be a 'gun guy.'"

His education and proclivity to art took Larry into a career in design and engineering. He still works as such in the aeronautics industry, with an evening shift job that allows him to be in Black Fang Studio from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. His wife and his dad manage the shop the rest of the time.

The main driver of sales is personal-defense guns for home defense and lawful concealed carry alike. The family business even encompasses training: Candis' cousin, a Louisiana State Certified firearms instructor, is available for training customers. Inventory goes heavily toward defensive firearms.

"Our fastest-moving firearms are the GLOCKs and the Smith & Wesson Shields. The new Shield Plus is selling particularly well. We sell a lot of 9mms, of course, but not everyone has bought into that trend. We still move quite a few larger-caliber pistols. The GLOCK 30

◀ Candis Hill welcomes customers at Black Fang. The Hills' store has sporting guns in stock, but focuses on self-defense armament.

is our fastest-selling .45," Hills informed.

Let's look at demographics.

Black Fang is located in Slidell, with a population of just under 29,000. However, it is part and parcel of the New Orleans metroplex, expanding the potential customer base to slightly over 1.25 million people.

Larry also points out, "Black-owned gun shops are uncommon, and we're the only one in the area."

Know thy demographics! Search engines tell us the city of New Orleans itself breaks down as 59% Black and 33% white, while the whole metroplex is 24% Black and 60% white, and Slidell itself is 75% white and 17% Black.

“

People are people, and here it's all about defending yourself and your family, first and foremost."

Larry Hills, Jr.

Black Fang Firearms Studio • Slidell, La.

Black pride is evident in the very name of the business.

"We certainly have a lot of Black customers who appreciate doing business with someone who looks like them," Hills stated. "I named the place 'Black Fang' because it represents the fact I'm a Black man, and we focus on personal and family defense armament. That said, though, the majority of our customers are white. I'm not pushing the Black-owned business element because we're not catering to just one demographic. People are people, and here it's all about defending yourself and your family, first and foremost."

For the owners, Black Fang crosses the color lines and emphasizes the family element. The shop is active on

social media and YouTube: You can find an example at [youtube.com/shorts/2k6tf8xGZtg](https://www.youtube.com/shorts/2k6tf8xGZtg). They also are having good luck with commercials on local TV, drawing customers even from Mississippi, a couple of hours away.

SMOKE N' GUN

When you ask gun shop owners how they got started in the business, the most common refrain is, "Well, I always loved guns and shooting, so ..."

Almost every successful writer will tell you, "Write what you know." Almost every successful entrepreneur will advise, "Sell something you know." We know our hobbies. Nature takes its course. And if you enjoy a fine stick of tobacco as much as you enjoy guns and shooting, well, you might just end up with a business called Smoke N' Gun.

Oakmont, Pa., is a quaint little town with the kind of architecture that would make you think a time machine had brought you back

to mid-20th century America. Its population is approximately 6,300, but it's a suburb of Pittsburgh — expanding the potential customer base significantly.

I was driving through Oakmont to teach a class in the Pittsburgh area when I saw this shop on a downtown corner and *had* to stop. The clever name and logo were the outer shell of an absolutely unique combination gun shop and cigar bar. The fragrance grabs you as you come through the front door, and you immediately find yourself in the smoking section amongst amiable customers partaking of the wares.

The rear of the establishment resembles a gun shop of old: fine firearms long and short are on display. You can certainly find top-quality hunting and target arms, but the main inventory is defensively oriented.

Customers can find the latest polymer pistol and high-end AR-15, or choose to defend themselves old-

school with a vintage, high-condition Colt Python or Diamondback.

The atmosphere is a curious blend of laid back — the crowd peacefully relaxing in the smoking section, the owner who insists "Just call me Gooch" — and a gun counter so busy they have time to answer customer questions on the phone, but they don't have time to chat.

Learning points? "Do something you love" is one takeaway, but you've probably already done that or you wouldn't be reading this magazine, so let's move on. "Find a niche" is important.

Both of the shops profiled here have something different to offer, and it has been a key to their success. As we've already discussed, if you have something important to what might be a limited demographic, have a large customer base to draw from to compensate for it.

And the big lesson? "Offer the customer something they can't find anywhere else around." **SI**



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ARMS & THE WOMAN



BY MICHELLE SCHEUERMANN

THE SECRET TO EMPOWERING (AND TEACHING) WOMEN TO HUNT & SHOOT

Everything you knew about teaching women to hunt and/or shoot for the first time might be wrong. How do I know? Because I thought, as a woman, I knew how to teach other women the same skills I took for granted.

It wasn't until I started attending She Hunts Skills Camp in Texas Hill Country with host Brittany Boddington I saw the magic needed to empower women to learn to shoot, and ultimately, learn to hunt.

MARKETING & LEARNING

It's one thing to know what is needed to market to women to attend these camps, such as a 5-star lodge, well-known instructors and a swag bag full of clothing from DSG Outerwear and binos from Leupold, to name a few. Those attributes draw women into a camp where they will be well-taken care of over a five-day period.

As Boddington, whose idea for these camps started five years ago said, "Women are often handicapped by chivalry in the early stages of learning to hunt. One of the main purposes of She Hunts is to equip all campers to shoot or hunt independently after attending our five-day camps."

Marketing a camp is one skill. Learning *why* a woman wants to attend a camp with *just* other women is another. And this is the secret sauce no one talks about. Even Boddington shared it took having a few camps under her belt to fully see the effect her open and honest teaching was having on women who came through the doors.

"I've had women attend who are too timid to even hold a gun in their hands, and by the end of the camp, they confidently hunt a pig or other animal on the property," she shared. "We never assume what any camper knows. We start with the basics and slowly work up from there. We spend a lot of time on the range. We sit with them and shoot as much as they like until they feel comfortable not only with pulling the trigger, but with gun handling and all the different shooting positions. With less than 15 campers each time, we have the luxury of being able to truly focus on each woman's needs — and then meet them where they are."

"I DIDN'T EVEN GET TO LOAD MY OWN GUN."

She Hunts alumni Joni Dryer had gone hunting several times before attending She Hunts camps, but everything was always done for her.

◀ Brittany Boddington provides instruction during a range session at a recent camp. (Image: She Hunts Skills Camp)

"I didn't even get to load my own gun," she explained. "At She Hunts, I learned how to mount a scope, load my gun and understand what I was doing and why — not just to point and shoot. I think any woman interested in hunting and shooting needs to give herself the gift of learning; it's very empowering."

Are there men in the camp? Yes, of course. They include guides at Record Buck Ranch, and Boddington's dad, Craig, is an instructor. Her husband, Brad, teaches on the range and is the archery instructor. But Boddington encourages the women to hang out with each other and build lasting friendships, which is another key to a successful camp.



Marketing a camp is one skill. Learning *why* a woman wants to attend a camp with just other women is another.

"Some women bring a friend, which is great, but it's better if they come alone. They'll mingle with other campers more and learn from everyone," she observes.

It isn't always work at the camps. Since each session is five days, Boddington can build in plenty of downtime — or hunting time.

"After each camper is successful on the range and I feel they can be successful in the field, we allow them to head out hunting with a guide," she noted. "I've seen women walk into the camp and state they hands-down refuse to hunt in the field. And then, magically, by day two, they're in the Jeep with their guide, glassing the field with their newly curated binos, proudly sporting their hunting gear and taking selfies to send to family back home."

What gives? Why do these women walk into camp with one idea in their head, but in less than 48 hours, have a complete turnaround?

IT'S ALL ABOUT SELF-CONFIDENCE

My theory is that, for the first time, these women finally believe in themselves. The camp teaches a skill, yes, but it builds confidence no one can take away. This is one of the reasons Boddington started the camp.

She shares her story with the campers every session — about how she grew up with a famous dad in the hunting world but didn't start hunting until she was in her late teens. And then, he or other men in the hunting camp would do everything for her. Her rifle would be set up, her scope mounted and dialed in; all the gear would be ready to go, much like Dryer's testimony. It would get so bad, she shares, when she was out in the field, guides would stand behind her and whisper in her ear, "Shoot now!"

Boddington didn't want that. She wanted to know how to mount a scope on a gun (a skill the campers learn first); she wanted to learn how to sight in a rifle; she demanded to be able to hunt on her own and shoot when she felt she was ready — not when someone else whispered in her ear.

She is adamant about teaching these skills in her camp.

"Many men do these basic set-up tasks for their wives or girlfriends to get them ready to hunt with them, but they don't realize they're truly holding them back," she conveyed. "Not allowing their partner to learn exactly what that rifle is, how to dial in the scope, how to pull the trigger and so on, sets them up for failure. It's unsafe. They could wound an animal because they weren't ready or wound themselves with scope bite or other typical field injuries."

As She Hunts alumni camper Abigail Hilderbrand shared, "One thing I learned about myself was that I wasn't afraid to try something new. Having never fired a gun or aimed a bow prior to attending She Hunts camp, I was quite nervous. Brittany and the instructors provided specific instructions for each task. We knew what we needed to do at that moment to be safe and successful. This gave me the confidence I needed as a new hunter, and I did go hunting with my husband shortly after the camp!"

Many campers are repeat

customers, such as Hilderbrand, who has attended camp three times. Some have told me they learned much more from the second camp than from the first — even though the content is identical. Campers even demanded Boddington have an "advanced camp," which she started this year and dubbed She Hunts 2.0.

“


We knew what we needed to do at that moment to be safe and successful. This gave me the confidence I needed as a new hunter.”

Abigail Hilderbrand
She Hunts Skills Camp Participant

ON EQUAL TERMS

Women are demanding to be heard in the hunting and shooting world. We want to be on equal terms in the field — and we certainly can be. We need to make our own mistakes, as frankly, it's how we learn.

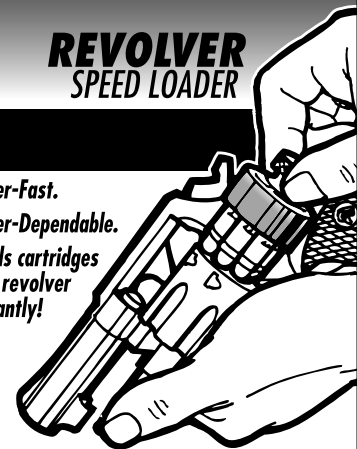
However, not every instructor can teach women. (I've seen that, too.) Not every person is equipped to see the layers of self-doubt, discouragement and fear hidden behind a smile. Some instructors glaze over it and plow through the seminar because they assume the women want to get out in the field. But the camp is where the finer details are presented, such as the shot placement seminar Craig Boddington gives campers. I've found the campers are just as attentive during this seminar as when they're at the range with Craig helping them hit bullseyes.

It's all about building skills that stack upon one another so when the camper is ready to go hunting, they can draw upon when Craig, Brittany or Brad showed them how to do it. And then, by gosh, they do it. 

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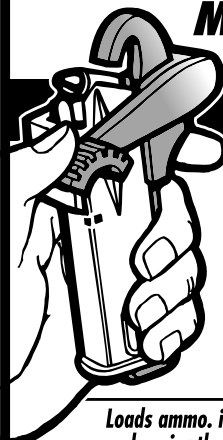
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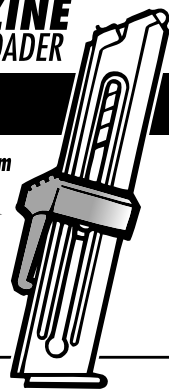
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BY ASHLEY MCGEE

6 WAYS TO SPRING CLEAN YOUR DIGITAL PRESENCE

When spring has sprung (or at any change in season), consider it the perfect time for a marketing audit.

Most small- and mid-sized business owners are busy running the day-to-day operations, so when it comes to their website or social media, there's a tendency to "set it and forget it." But a digital presence isn't like a crockpot you walk away from and forget about while it does all the work.

A marketing audit will reveal what is and isn't working, and leave you more open to finding opportunities and trying new things that might work better.

While the word "audit" — especially during tax season — may make you feel like running for the hills, a review and refresh of your digital presence isn't as daunting as it seems.

1. GETTING STARTED

A company's digital footprint extends far beyond its website and social media accounts. An often overlooked component, yet one critical for local SEO, are directory listings. These are online profiles such as Apple Maps, Yelp and Bing containing essential information about a business — such as name, address, phone number and website.

Many of these directory websites automatically pull information from elsewhere on the internet, so there's

a high probability there are outdated, or even unclaimed, company profiles you're unaware of.

Considering 76% of people who conduct a local search on their smartphone visit a physical place within 24 hours, and 28% of those searches result in a purchase,¹ it's imperative for businesses to ensure their local listings are accurate and up to date in as many directories as possible.

The simplest and most efficient way to do this is by using a listing management tool like Semrush, Moz Local or BrightLocal. Once you establish your location, these set-up-and-go tools search for and update your information across dozens of the most-viewed directories automatically. Many also include reputation-management capabilities, providing a single dashboard to manage and respond to customer reviews.

2. PERFORMING WEBSITE MAINTENANCE

Performed routinely and effectively, local SEO efforts such as online listing management can help increase a company's visibility and its website traffic, making it important to maintain a fast, error-free and optimized website.

Best practices suggest many website maintenance tasks be performed daily, weekly or even monthly, but when you're running a small business, it's easy for such tasks to be pushed to the

back burner.

Set aside a few hours this spring to verify your business's contact information and hours of operation are correct, search for and fix broken links, test the site speed, fillable forms and checkout process (if applicable) and delete any unnecessary plug-ins or themes.

We recommend using a free broken-link checker (brokenlinkcheck.com) and Google's PageSpeed Insights tool (pagespeed.web.dev) to simplify these processes.

Those with e-commerce websites should also spend time ensuring its security. According to WebARX, "98% of WordPress vulnerabilities are related to plug-ins."² When it seems like you see an alert for a new software or plug-in update every other day, it's easy to ignore them. Oftentimes, however, those updates specifically address security vulnerabilities. And sometimes, they provide additional improvements and features as well, so take the time to download the newest version of everything. These updates typically don't take too long, and can make a big difference to how secure your website is.

3. IMPROVING SECURITY

Staying on the topic of security, now is also an ideal time to review who has access to the backend of your website, as well as any social media accounts. Maybe you discontinued working with a marketing agency or forgot about a former employee who still has access. Additionally, most platforms offer varying levels of access. Verify that users don't have more access than what is needed to perform their job duties, such as the ability to edit payment information or delete the entire website.

While you're at it, update passwords. To thwart any unauthorized access to your website, it's vital to have a solid and complex password. Be sure it's a unique password that isn't used for other online accounts.

It's also recommended to change the default "admin" name in your content management system (like WordPress) to something more secure. By leaving it as is, you'll only be making hackers' jobs easier.

4. REVIEWING ANALYTICS

With the basics out of the way, it's time to dig a little deeper. Review your

digital analytics to pinpoint potential issues.

Do some pages have abnormally high bounce rates? Give those a look to potentially identify something about the design or copy that's keeping people from sticking around.

Do mobile users convert at much lower rates than desktop users? Maybe it's necessary to update buttons or forms to be more mobile-friendly.

Are you actively running any advertising campaigns? Make sure to setup conversion tracking to monitor phone calls, website purchases, newsletter signups, button clicks or other website actions. This is crucial to evaluating ROI.

Additionally, if you haven't done so already, make the switch to Google Analytics 4 (GA4). Google's Universal Analytics (UA) system will stop processing data on July 1. Users should make the move over to GA4 as soon as possible to build the necessary historical data before Universal Analytics stops processing new hits.



Consider deactivating accounts that are no longer serving you. Instead, focus only on the platforms that help move the needle.

According to Google, GA4 operates across platforms, does not rely exclusively on cookies and uses an event-based data model to deliver user-centric measurement. And if you recall from our January issue,³ one of the key trends highlighted was the growing focus on data privacy and how business should develop a plan for how to market in a cookie-less world. Migrating to GA4 now is a key step in developing that plan.

5. CLEANING LISTS

Another important facet of learning how to market in a cookie-

less world is collecting and protecting as much first-party data as you can. Given the ROI of email marketing, email addresses are without a doubt considered the holy grail of first-party data.

Businesses often spend more time and resources on growing their email lists than they do nurturing and maintaining the health of those lists. If your email bounce rate is up and/or the open and click-through rates are down, it's a good indication it's time to scrub the list. After all, a stagnant or bot-infested email list is worse than having no list.

Start by checking for contacts on multiple active lists. You'll also want to check the last-sent date on any lists and delete those that are too old.

Constant Contact, a popular email marketing platform, suggests going a step further by segmenting email subscribers into three main groups — those who love you and open your emails almost every time, those who sometimes open and those who hardly ever engage. Then, you can more easily implement and track the effectiveness of strategies to re-engage those in the latter two groups.

6. EVALUATING SOCIAL STRATEGY

Given it's 2023, I'd be remiss if I wrote an article about cleaning up your digital presence without addressing social media.

As with your website and local directory listings, make sure any social media accounts are updated with correct business hours and contact information, such as the phone number, physical address and website URL.

However, with firearms-related advertising and content policies growing more and more restrictive, it's likely a more effective use of time to evaluate your social media strategy as a whole.

Did you create a Twitter account five years ago and haven't posted a single tweet? Don't have the time to consistently create Instagram content? Consider deactivating accounts that are no longer serving you. Instead, focus only on the platforms that help move the needle. **BI**

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Footnotes:

- 1: thinkwithgoogle.com/consumer-insights/consumer-trends/local-search-conversion-statistics
- 2: patchstack.com/articles/website-hacking-statistics/
- 3: shootingindustry.com/discover/monthly-features/market-smarter-not-harder-2

Lastly, before stepping away for some much-needed trigger therapy, do yourself a favor and schedule time on the calendar for the next marketing audit. The first day of fall is Sept. 23.



What's Next For The Precision Long-Range Market?

BY TIM BARKER

Three years ago, when Allen Bennett bought his gun shop in St. Charles, Mo., he was on a mission of sorts. The former Marine wanted to give customers a better experience than the one he had when he decided to dip a toe into the world of precision rifles.

He recalls trips to numerous

stores, where he received no shortage of opinions and information. The problem was most of it was conflicting information. One salesman would promote a cartridge, scope or rifle, which would then be trashed by a salesman at the next store. By the time it was over, he'd spent a lot of money on a setup that was less than ideal.

"It wasn't like they did it with any kind of malice," Bennett explained. "It was just they didn't know. They just gave me the

information they had, which was either outdated or they were just massively misinformed."

So, when the opportunity came to buy his store — now called Full Circle Reloading and Firearms — he wanted to be different.

"I decided from day one, we were going to be an education-based company. I wanted to make sure the misinformation I got doesn't happen here," he said. "We're trying to get the best information we can to bring it here for the customer."

Bennett sees this expertise as a critical element for any store wanting to tap into the long-range precision rifle segment. Depending on where you do business, the product line could represent solid growth potential. Or it may be little more than a passing curiosity for customers who have difficulty finding a 100-yard range, let alone a 1,500-yard range.

Still, it's a lot easier to talk about doing something than it is to actually do it.

Bennett is overseeing a transformation, pushing his staff to embrace and understand the new products he's been pulling into the store.

"It's an active struggle to make sure the customers are getting the correct information on all fronts," he shared. "And we're trying to bring in new blood to make sure it's exactly what's happening."

"Today, it's more about helping our people and training them."

A.J. Hoffman • Co-Owner
SoDak Sports
Aberdeen & Mitchell, S.D.

In a perfect world, a gun store's staff would include specialists in a wide range of shooting disciplines. But that's not likely in this post-pandemic job market, contends A.J. Hoffman, co-owner of SoDak Sports in Aberdeen and Mitchell, S.D.

It's just not realistic to expect to find employees with extensive experience in long-range shooting.

"Unfortunately, I'm the only one here in this building who has ever

shot 1,500 yards," he said. "Today, it's more about helping our people and training them."

You also have to decide how important a particular segment is for your store. SoDak markets itself primarily as a hunting store, with an emphasis on things like deer, pheasant and waterfowl. The long-range market is a much smaller niche, making it difficult to focus too much staffing power in that direction.

OUTFITTING THE CUSTOMER

Equipping the long-range shooter can be a different experience when compared with the average handgun, shotgun or rifle customer. Even an entry-level setup can run \$2,000 and higher. And for those with the desire and the money to spend, the ceiling is considerably higher at \$5,000 and beyond.

As with higher-end 1911s, shotguns and revolvers, deciding what to carry can be a challenge. You can sink a lot of money into inventory and still not have exactly what your customer is looking for. Hoffman sees customers falling into two distinct groups.

"There's a handful of guys who walk in and buy the Cadillacs. Right away, they'll spend all the money on high-end, custom-built rifles," he maintained. "And there are guys who

"People respond to recoil. If you can get them on something softer, they'll shoot better because they're not flinching."

Allen Bennett • Owner
Full Circle Reloading
St. Charles, Mo.

buy a moderate-priced chassis rifle right off the shelf, put a decent scope on it, buy some factory ammo and get running."

His shop focuses on a small group of popular rifles, including Browning's X-Bolt, SIG SAUER's Cross-PRS and Bergara. At the higher end of the spectrum, they carry Christensen Arms and Fierce Firearms.



HORNADY 7MM PRC



BROWNING X-BOLT TARGET PRO MCMILLAN

Rifles are generally paired with optics by Vortex, Nightforce and Leupold.

For those customers who move further into customization, there's not a lot SoDak can do, given the relative size of the segment for his store.

"If somebody goes custom, I always joke we'll lose them as a rifle customer, because it's kind of hard to go back to a factory rifle," he said.

Bennett uses a somewhat different approach at Full Circle. For the lower end of the market, they carry the Ruger American and Savage Axis. Both rifles offer customers an option to walk out of the store with a decent setup (including optic) for less than \$1,000.

Most of those customers, he believes, have a hard time understanding the value of spending several thousand dollars more for a better kit. Often, this realization comes later, after they start pushing the limits of what a factory can rifle can do at ranges of 1,000 yards or more in a variety of weather conditions.

"Once you start running a custom rifle, you understand it's less about the accuracy. Modern rifles are unbelievably accurate," he reasoned. "You realize it's more about consistency over time. It's about the big picture and it's worth it."

When his customers are ready to go full-custom, he can meet the demand through a partnership with Sterling Precision, a gunmaker in nearby Farmington, Mo. The store works directly with Sterling to make sure



The Hawke Optics Frontier 34 FFP scopes were designed for extreme long-range shooters, available in either 3-18x50 or 5-30x56. These riflescopes give users up to 46 MRAD or 158 MOA, depending on the specific model, of elevation adjustment. (Image: Hawke Optics)

customers are able to get exactly what they want.

They also keep a couple of custom rifles — one set up for hunting, the other for competition — on display at the shop. This can help those customers get a better understanding of what they get for the extra money.

“With the regulars at the store, the more they come in and play with them, the more their brains get wrapped around the idea these things are really nice,” he said.

6.5 CREEDMOOR AND WHAT ELSE?

When talking about long-range shooting, it’s impossible to overstate the dominance of 6.5mm Creedmoor. The easy-handling, flat-shooting Creedmoor is the top-selling cartridge at both stores, often beating the combined sales of all other long-range cartridges.

Other calibers with potential include 6.5 PRC (particularly for hunters), 28 Nosler and Hornady’s recently introduced 7mm

PRC. Hoffman likes what he’s heard so far about the 7mm PRC and has guns and ammo on order.

“It’s going to be interesting to see what happens,” he noted.

“If somebody goes custom, I always joke we’ll lose them as a rifle customer, because it’s kind of hard to go back to a factory rifle.”

A.J. Hoffman • Co-Owner
SoDak Sports
Aberdeen & Mitchell, S.D.

Still, 6.5 Creedmoor is going to be tough to dethrone when you consider both its performance and relatively light recoil, Bennett suggested.

“Anybody who says recoil doesn’t affect them either doesn’t shoot a lot, or they’re lying to you,” he quipped. “People respond to recoil. If you can get them on something softer, they’ll shoot better because they’re not flinching.”

The popularity of the cartridge also has the potential to impact sales in other ways. With ammo makers still

struggling to catch up with demand, it’s more difficult to find ammo or reloading components for less-popular cartridges. Bennett shared it’s not uncommon to watch a customer come into the store and start assembling everything needed to reload for a particular gun, but as soon as they hit a roadblock (no primers, for example), they’ll just put everything back on the shelves and walk out.

“They won’t buy the guns and they won’t buy everything else they need,” Bennett informed. “It’s affecting sales. I mean, we’re definitely feeling the shortage.”

WHAT’S NEXT?

Both shop owners see the potential for this segment to grow, particularly in areas where long-range shooting opportunities are plentiful. They also see reasons to question whether this growth will occur in the short term.

Bennett, in particular, is optimistic about the impact of competitions and classes encouraging shooters to seek out ways to improve their skills and scores. The store offers precision-rifle classes geared toward newbies, through a partnership with a local range. His classes draw a wide range of students and gear.

“These guys have everything from your low-end factory rifles to full-blown custom rifles and we’re taking them out to 1,000 yards and teaching them the fundamentals,” said Bennett, noting many of his students later move on to competitions.



RUGER PRECISION RIFLE — 6.5 CREEDMOOR

Still, it's hard to look at the future of the sector without factoring in those ongoing supply issues. Primer, powder and bullet shortages are particularly hard on this group, with so many long-range shooters preferring to make their own ammo.

“We’re trying to get the best information we can to bring it here for the customer.”

Allen Bennett • Owner
Full Circle Reloading
St. Charles, Mo.

“You know, it's hard to do a load work-up with a bullet when you only see it once every five months,” Bennett asserted.

There's also the general impact of inflation, which is putting a dent in the leisure budgets of many customers.

“If you had asked me three years ago, I could have given a pretty definitive answer,” he stated. “But with COVID, and the shortages and the cost of living going through the roof, we’re seeing an overall decline across everything.”

The other major roadblock is the fact many customers don't even have the option of taking part in this segment, according to Hoffman, likely echoing the thoughts of store owners in areas without easy access to long-range shooting facilities. For his customers, it's a two- or three-hour drive to get to a 1,000-yard range.

“There are certain areas where guys can shoot that distance, and there are us guys who can't,” he said. “So, I think it's always going to always be a small market for us.” **BI**

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What A Streamlined E-Commerce Website Does For You

QUICK, REACTIVE & RELIABLE

Image: Legit Outdoors Photography

By Mia Anstine

This will sound familiar to many of you: spending hours researching, downloading, testing, repairing and trying to make your websites work. Add e-commerce sales into the mix, and you may already have a headache. It doesn't need to be that bad.

If you still need to embrace the cyber side of sales, it's high time to take action — and the process can be streamlined and simplified for your store and customers.

WHY YOU NEED AN E-COMMERCE SITE

E-commerce is a crucial component of a business strategy in today's digital age. It can help drive sales, improve customer satisfaction and increase brand awareness. A more significant

Considerations In Selecting A Platform

- What's your budget?
- How much can you spend to meet your needs and goals?
- Do you have someone on your staff who can free up their time to handle all of the e-commerce responsibilities?
- Can you afford to hire some of this out?
- What aspects are going to consume too much time?

Key Questions To Consider

- Does the e-comm provider offer support?
- Are they firearms-friendly?
- Will they assist with payment gateways?
- Do they offer shipping and fulfillment services?
- Do they have marketing resources?

Resources For Continual E-Commerce Learning

- Podcasts
- Webinars provided by your hosting provider or your hosting provider's approved partners
- E-commerce sales management companies
- Online courses
- Online forums
- Business consultants

Bottom Line: Compare the features, costs and user reviews to identify the best options for your business needs and budget and weigh it against what in-house resources you'll need to provide.

customer demographic with in-store and online sales will be reached. With a more extensive customer base, and if done correctly, the profit margin will also see a bump. Additionally, you'll have 24/7 access to potential customers.

We've all experienced a sleepless night: Remember flipping through channels only to see infomercials or the shopping channel offering some "must-have" object? Night owls have taken to the interweb, and now, you can appear in their browser, selling to them any hour of the day.

WHERE TO START

Hopefully, your e-commerce is already established. If not, these tips will streamline the process.

First off, define your business needs and goals. For example, do you plan to sell firearms, accessories, classes, etc.? The process will help identify the resources needed when considering hosting and site management, which includes such things as a web developer, payment gateway, shipping provider or marketing platform.

Magnum Shooting Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., has worked with online

sales for years. General Manager Dan Jaeger indicated the website makes the registration process for classes and memberships a breeze. Magnum streamlines the online registration and sign-up process, which has freed up staff from the phone back into the store. However, they also have numerous products listed online and need someone to manage them.

STORE RESOURCES

Creating a successful e-commerce platform will require dedication to the system.

"Find the person(s) on your internal team who will be responsible for getting information on the website," advised Glen Reich, VP of e-commerce for Kelly Brand Management, which specializes in retail, direct-to-consumer and e-commerce sales management.

"Most brands have somebody in logistics, in the warehouse, or maybe an administrative assistant or someone else," he continued. "They become your account coordinators and then your digital marketing specialists." (For our purposes, let's call them "e-comm specialists.")

For the e-comm specialist to be efficient

in their position, an overview and training of your e-commerce platform must be provided to help them understand the process of managing sales. If they're the one developing the site, they may learn as they go.



Night owls have taken to the interweb, and now, you can appear in their browser, selling to them any hour of the day.

To ensure an e-comm specialist has the best tools for the job, start by listing their responsibilities. For example:

- Marketing to attract customers
- Graphic design (to be used in listings and social media, email and online advertising)
- Retaining customers
- Managing inventory
- Maintaining payment gateways

and security

- Overseeing (or maybe handling) shipping and delivery processes
- Maintaining legal compliance in your state and beyond (including shipping laws and e-commerce laws)

Unless you find an easy-to-use platform, creating an e-commerce website may require specialized skills in web development. If you don't have someone capable on staff, hiring developers or web designers to at least get you set up and trained can be cost-effective.

FINDING THE BEST FIT

Matt Head, manager of Hi-Power Sports in Bloomfield, N.M., has a strong track record when it comes to delivering quality customer service, managing inventory and other responsibilities.

When asked about the store's e-commerce presence, Head shared the software used predates his involvement with the company and could be more user-friendly.

"I'm still trying to figure it out," he admitted. "I'm not the best with technology, but I'm trying."

Since Head has titles other than e-comm specialist, he has little time to design

the online sales site. He shared what works best for him in the interim.

“As of right now, I’ve been doing a lot of stuff through GunBroker.com,” he said. “Their site is much more user-friendly; it does what we want and GunBroker helps when it comes to interstate legalities.”

While Hi-Power has found an outlet where they can list firearms that are not hot-sellers in their market to make added sales, they’re not using it to list other accessories they carry in-store.

After having similar experiences to Hi-Power, Magnum outsourced its hosting to Gearfire, which provides point-of-sale and merchant services.

“They help us look very professional on e-commerce without much of our labor,” remarked Jaegar. “We would almost need a software programmer with our old service. Gearfire makes life easy and handles our website; it’s their point-of-sale, but it’s our bank account and authorization.”

Outsourcing certain functions, such as customer service or order fulfillment, can save time and allow you to focus on in-store business activities.

Using a third-party manager, Magnum has increased its online

sales and freed its staff. When a customer makes a purchase, the order goes through Gearfire straight to the distributor. Most of the time, the orders are fulfilled directly, but there are times when some items have to be managed by someone in-store.

USE THIRD-PARTY STRENGTHS

Like Gearfire, Kelly Brands can help ease the headaches of e-commerce by getting your site established and optimized for sales. When setting up products, the Kelly team pulls product reports of the top keywords.

“Then, they wordsmith the description to read so it will appeal to a human consumer,” explained Reich, “but it also speaks to the robot side, which is the algorithm that says, ‘this is an excellent product for you to show based on the number of keywords in this listing.’”

Next, Kelly’s determines the top graphics, imagery and trends, which can be added in to generate the highest conversion rate for a sale or provide an overall positive experience for the customer.

“Kelly has professionals who do this daily,” Reich shared. “They build those listings out

rather than taking up an in-store employee’s time.”

Ensuring product descriptions and images are clear, detailed and attractive will create a positive experience, help customers make informed buying decisions and reduce the risk of returns.

“
Outsourcing certain functions, such as customer service or order fulfillment, can save time and allow you to focus on in-store business activities.

Inclusive services, such as Kelly’s and Gearfire, will reduce your shop’s work in building a professional, cohesive, searchable online business.

Kelly Brands works with distributors to set up their products and will work with the retailer to connect the two. They can also help integrate items into the

point-of-sale system.

“Some hosting platforms, such as Shopify, are easier to work with than others,” Reich said. “When you have a retailer set up on Shopify, and vendors as well, that retailer can create an API credential and boom, pull all of your information over and they’re selling your stuff in no time; you’ve just expanded your demographic as a retailer.”

IDENTIFY WHAT WORKS

There are several ways to streamline the e-commerce side of your business.

“Find out what works for you,” advised both Reich and Jaegar.

For a large store like Magnum, they’ve utilized technology to automate routine tasks such as order processing, inventory management and shipping. This automation creates a positive customer experience by assisting with prompt responses to customer inquiries while providing clear and helpful information.

To keep online sales and memberships running smoothly, encourage your e-comm specialist to continue learning and to stay up-to-date with the latest industry trends and best practices. **S**



MENTAL HEALTH: IT'S OK TO TALK ABOUT IT.

Everyone struggles sometimes.
Sometimes we need help.
And that's okay!

As firearms owners, we often have a tough time admitting when we need help, and that is particularly true with our psychological struggles. One great way to check in on yourself and your mental state is to take a free and anonymous screening.

Walk the Talk America is made up of gun people who want to help other gun people while protecting our rights.

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By B.A. Stear

4 Hidden Benefits Of Target Cameras

About 10 years ago, there was a very large lawsuit between Apple and Samsung over the patent rights to use “finger gestures” to control the pinch-to-zoom feature of a smartphone screen. Since pretty much everyone in the world knew how to use the same finger gestures to control their phones, whoever owned the rights to them stood to make a lot of money on licensing deals.

Apple filed a case in the U.S. and won a \$1 billion settlement, then Samsung filed cases in Asia and Europe and won the money back in settlements of their own. This went on for years with billions of dollars in settlements claimed between them. Customers didn't care who won the money as long as they could still use the same intuitive finger gestures to control every smart device they owned.

Essentially, the world wanted the gestures democratized and standardized to make using the devices amazingly easy to the point where it becomes intuitive even on unfamiliar models.

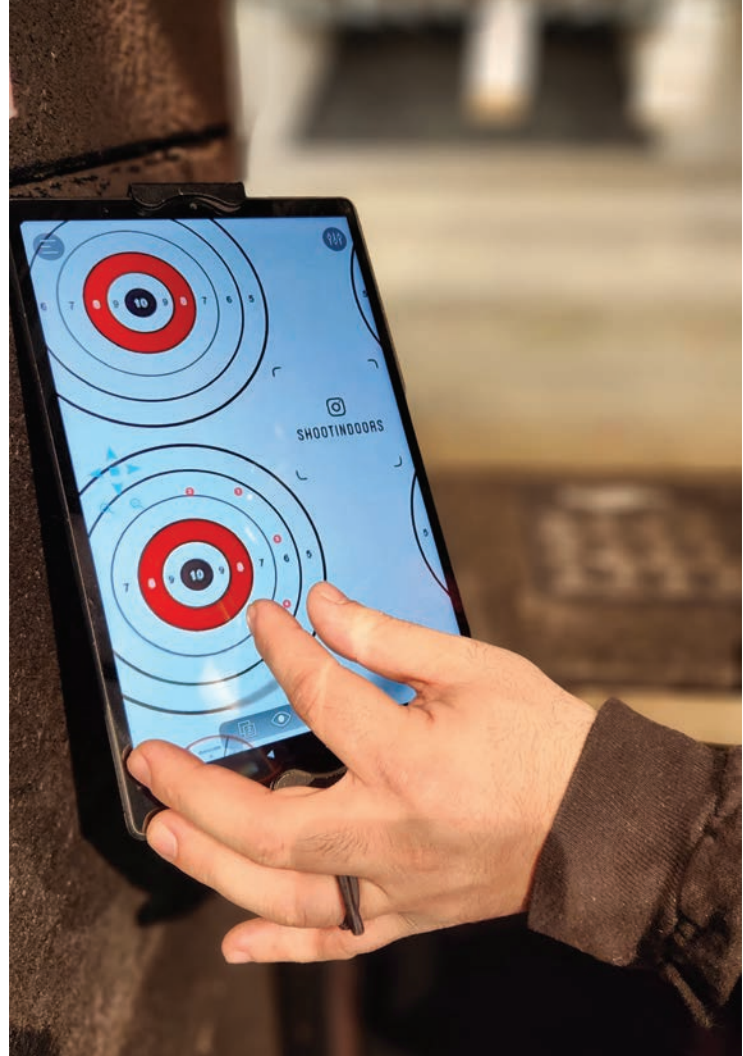
CONNECTION TO OUR INDUSTRY

So why does this history matter to the shooting sports industry? Because as a result of the lawsuits, the gestures have become standardized to the point you can now intuitively control a shooting range target camera by using those same finger gestures on a tablet display.

Can't see the .22-caliber holes in your target? Zoom in on the bull's-eye. Want to mark the holes for your first grouping? Zoom in and touch them. Want to indicate your hits so they don't get confused with your partner's? Zoom and mark them with a unique color.

The target cameras themselves have been on the market for a few years now and *SI* covered the technology in the August 2022 issue (“Cool New Range Tech” by Carolee Anita Boyles). What's interesting now is the early adopters are seeing hidden benefits they did not expect — or at least didn't realize how beneficial they would prove to be.

Our Shoot Indoors range franchises started



adding these target cameras to every lane about two years ago, and after tens of thousands of shooting sessions, we've learned about a few unique hidden benefits worth mentioning.

1. EASY TO INSTALL, EASY TO IMPRESS

First off, if a \$900 camera (or any device actually) can help generate multiple 5-star google reviews, buy it. Here are some actual reviews from one of our franchises:

"I really appreciate the camera and monitor aspect so I can easily see how I'm doing even downrange. This makes it much easier to correct my sighting on my rifles or my technique on my handguns."

"Awesome experience!"

The staff was great, the target camera was cool."

"... the best part was the cameras focused on the targets, no more bringing the targets up close to see where you're grouping."

Adding these cameras to shooting lanes is so easy now we've been able to fully outfit a 10-lane range in less than five hours with two employees and a drill. Some of the newer models are even powered over the ethernet cable so you're only running one line to each lane (no extra power cord). If you have an older facility, upgrading your lanes to these cameras will immediately make your range feel high-tech. If you're building a new facility, I would even prioritize these cameras

◀ **The intuitive “pinch to zoom” gesture is universal today — meaning any range guest can quickly and easily zoom in/out to evaluate their target down range.**

above any advanced retriever systems.

For the same costs, an economy-level target retriever plus these cameras will make you stand out more than just a touchscreen retriever with no lane cameras. Spend the money where it will make you money.

2. LESS TIME ON LANES

Secondly, shooters using these cameras don't spend as much time on the lanes themselves. At first glance this might seem like a negative outcome, but in actuality, it's quite the opposite.

If I told you a shooter would spend 20% less time on the lane while shooting the same amount of ammo and had the same great time, it would mean you

can either sell more ammo in that “bonus time” or send more people through the range on a busy Saturday. What's actually happening is the customers are busy shooting, not busy retrieving targets.

Remember the cameras can zoom, so the retriever isn't moving anymore. If you can magically increase your range throughput by 20%, you may have just run an additional 40 customers through the range that day. They enjoyed the reduced wait time and you enjoyed the extra profit. By the way, one day of success like this probably paid for one camera system. A one-day return on investment is pretty good any day.

3. 10 LANES MATCH 12

The third benefit worth mentioning is related to the second, but is a bit more nuanced. If a 10-lane range can now match the throughput of a 12-lane range (just by leveraging some simple target cameras), you don't need to



◀ **With two employees and a drill, it's possible to add cameras at a 10-lane range in less than five hours.**

“If I told you a shooter would spend 20% less time on the lane while shooting the same amount of ammo and had the same great time, it would mean you can either sell more ammo in that “bonus time” or send more people through the range on a busy Saturday.

build out those extra two lanes.

For the real estate buffs out there, a two-lane reduction probably shaved 700 sq. ft. off your building footprint. At today's inflated construction costs, 700 sq. ft. is equivalent to \$200,000 in most markets.

So what was the third benefit again? A \$10,000 investment in target cameras could save you \$200,000 in buildout. If you already have a facility and are thinking of expanding, try these cameras before you knock down a wall.

4. ADVERTISING POTENTIAL


The last benefit I want to mention is actually a future benefit. Since these cameras have been installed, multiple people and businesses have asked me about advertising. When the camera's tablet display is in sleep or screensaver mode, this is a perfect opportunity to display some weekly specials or advertise an upcoming range event.

Most of the tablets are Android-based, so loading marketing images and videos to display (or third-party apps) is extremely easy. If you can deliver thousands of captivated eyeballs to your screen, partner businesses are willing to pay for those spots. Why not have a partner business sponsor the content and cost share?

BOTTOM LINE

We've really enjoyed the benefits of these cameras. They're very easy to install, extremely intuitive to operate (across all age groups), increase range efficiency and garner great customer reviews. I fully expect these cameras to become the standard for modern shooting ranges, and for the naysayers out there, it's not an invasive or pushy technology.

If you don't want to use it, simply push the tablet flat against the lane divider and it stays asleep. Bottom line: You can't afford not to try these new target cameras. **■**



It can happen in a blink of an eye: The Shootist Gun Range was completely destroyed by an overnight fire in 2019. It reopened Aug. 2021 thanks, in part, to a robust insurance policy.

GET COVERED!

BY NANCY KEATON

6 Burning Questions To Answer Your Insurance Needs

IF you own (or plan to own) and operate any type of firearms-related business, do you know what insurance is needed? Do you know where to find it? Do you know all the details? Do you know what you

don't know? With the current climate, is it still possible to get firearms-related insurance? Many questions like this will arise as you plan this new business.

John Paulk with Outdoor Sports and Recreation Insurance and Joseph Chiarello with Joseph Chiarello & Company Insurance have both worked in the field for a long time and offer their expert insight and advice.

1. WHO NEEDS INSURANCE?

The business owner not only needs general liability for incidences you typically think of, such as someone falling in the store. Coverage is also needed for a variety of activities the business is involved in.

To begin with, Paulk explained insurance is for more than just firearms dealers.

"They're also manufacturers, distributors, retailers and range operations. It's a very diverse group of people," said Paulk. "There are so many pieces. Let's say you have an FFL retailer and he's got a gunsmith and the gunsmith is assembling guns and let's say he's got an engraver and he's engraving the name on the gun. Once he does that, he becomes a manufacturer. So it's important to understand it's not all that simple."

Paulk continued, "This is why when they do an application, they need to tell their agents every little thing they're going to be doing. If they leave something

You can be sued for anything, anytime, anywhere, anyplace, for any amount of money and it doesn't matter whether it's a valid claim. It's about what they're passionate about.

out and then they have a loss, they have no coverage.”

2. WHY DO YOU NEED SO MUCH COVERAGE?

“Remember something — and this is very simple — you can be sued for anything, anytime, anywhere, anyplace, for any amount of money and it doesn't matter whether it's a valid claim. It's about what they're passionate about,” advised Paulk.

Chiarello agreed: “I think it's important to go with a carrier and insurance company familiar with the firearms industry. A lot of insurance companies will tend to just settle a claim and you really don't want to do that because it's like every other insurance. Once you start having some claims and some big numbers on record, it becomes more and more difficult to buy. We work with a very select group of attorneys who handle all of our work for us. They've worked with the firearms industry for a very long time and are very familiar with this area. Without the right defense counsel,

you can end up settling a claim you shouldn't.”

3. WHERE DO YOU FIND INSURANCE?

Insurance considerations should be part of your business plan, and this is where Paulk believes the NSSF can be of great assistance. The NSSF can help owners develop a good business plan, provide information on demographics for a trade area, training on topics such as OSHA requirements, suicide prevention and more.

“NSSF does a tremendous service for their members,” praised Paulk. “So, let's start from the very beginning: They need to find an agent who understands this business; it's the first thing.”

A business owner can search online for companies, but both Paulk and Chiarello recommend the NSSF as an excellent starting place.

4. WHAT ARE YOU FORGETTING?

When asked what type of coverage most people don't think about, Paulk contends it's Workers' Compensation. He added Business Interruption is another important piece often not considered: It's extremely helpful if a business has a fire or some other damage and can't operate for an extended amount of time. You'll want this coverage until your business is fully restored.

To Chiarello, the most common type of coverage overlooked is on a building a dealer is renting.

“The landlord will want to see they're on there as an ‘Additional Insured’ to protect themselves,” said Chiarello.

He added that another important aspect of insurance his company offers is assisting an owner if they're involved in something like an ATF compliance audit.

“We have some coverage built into our policy to help clients get ready for that meeting,” he shared. “Say the ATF comes out and does an audit and the books don't add up to the inventory. We'll help you get



Ron Hagan, founder of Best Shot DE in Lewes, Del., heartily recommends attending industry events to get connected with the best providers. “Getting involved with the right organizations and making sure you do your research makes it a smooth transition to finding the right one that fits your needs,” he said.

ready and put together a response explaining what happened and why it's not going to happen again. This is basically what the ATF wants to hear. And if you need to have an accountant or a lawyer with you to help with the meeting, it is covered as well."

Helping clients prepare for a good response is key, Chiarello noted.

"We find it makes a lot more sense, in the long run, to help people prepare," he asserted. "This is usually enough for them to keep their FFL, which is good for us too because it means they stay in business."

5. WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR INSURANCE?

A lot has changed in recent years with boardroom virtue signaling limiting insurance options for firearms-related businesses.

"It's hard to say what the future holds because certain insurance companies have left the market altogether, while others have said they were going to leave and then changed their mind. But the insurance market overall is struggling right now for a number of different reasons," observed Chiarello. "Some enter thinking they're going to make a lot of money, but they don't. Costs are increasing everywhere. Insurance companies all over the board are struggling."

Paulk also confirmed a lot of providers have turned their back on the firearms industry, making it increasingly difficult to get the necessary coverage.

"I've been talking about the issue with insurance in this industry. Back about seven years ago, I started down the path of trying to put together a program for the insurance of the firearms industry. I had 189 insurance companies turn me down because of the word 'firearms.' When I

started writing insurance policies, there were 11 companies and now there are only three," Paulk laments.

Chiarello also admits it is in a large part due to the social climate.

"I just think it's so wrong," he said. "These are legal businesses; they aren't doing anything wrong."



It's important to make sure you're up to date and the numbers to rebuild and replace are current."

Ron Hagan • Founder
Best Shot DE
Lewes, Del.

6. WHAT DO BUSINESS OWNERS SAY ABOUT OBTAINING INSURANCE?

Ron Hagan, founder of the recently opened Best Shot DE in Lewes, Del., agrees with the advice to utilize the expertise of the NSSF, as well.

"The NSSF industry events were critical in helping me locate an insurance provider I could work with," he acknowledged. "I think getting involved with the right organizations and making

sure you do your research makes it a smooth transition to finding the right one that fits your needs. The consultant we used was also instrumental in connecting us with the right provider."

Hagan said there were really no surprises in the process of obtaining insurance due to the expertise of the consultant.

"I knew what I was getting into and what to expect," he added.

The Shootist Gun Range in Englewood, Colo., experienced the importance of insurance. After suffering a devastating fire in 2019, owner James Peterson has sage advice on the topic.

"Insurance saved our life and not having it would have been detrimental. We would have lost everything. As it was, we ended up paying for a lot of it out-of-pocket. We quadrupled our policy afterward. We had the policy for five years before the fire, but the cost of everything had risen so much, replacement costs were three times what they were back then. So, it's important to make sure you're up to date and the numbers to rebuild and replace are current," he advised.

THE BOTTOM LINE

While making your business plan, it's necessary to find a knowledgeable agent and start working with them right away to cover every aspect you can think of. Don't wait until the last minute, because quotes can take some time to get in place and you may need them to get a lease or equipment.

Work with professionals to get exactly what's needed to protect your business and every single aspect involved with it. Don't go cheap thinking it will save money, because it may ultimately cost much more in the long run. Then remember to periodically review it and keep it updated. **\$I**

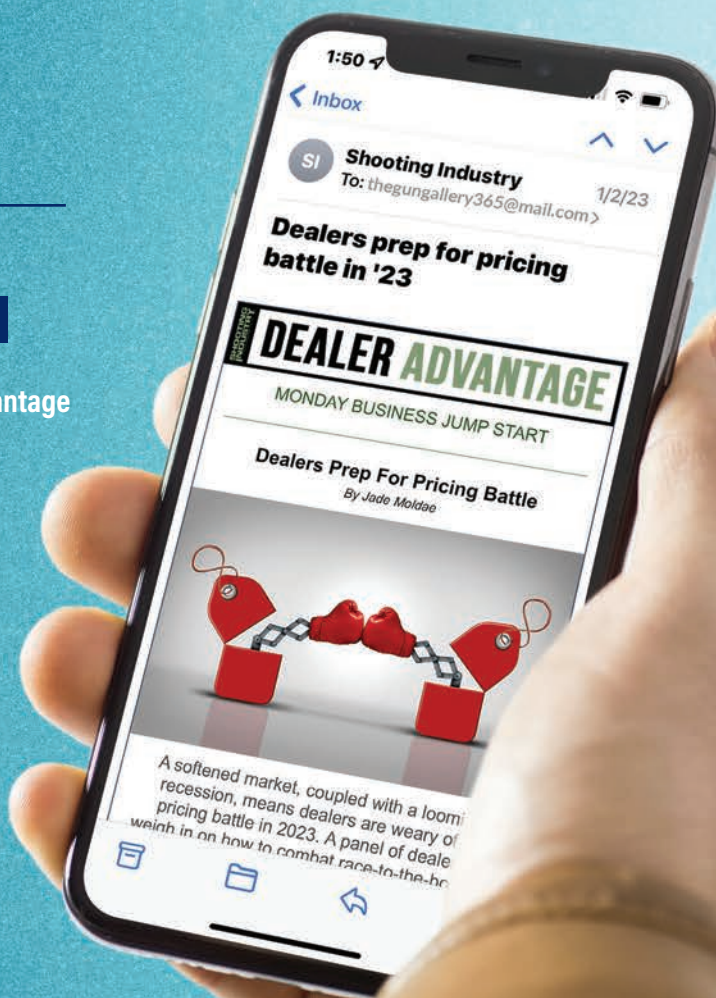
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**SHOOTING
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2023 TOP LAUNCHES

By Jenna Buckley & Jade Moldae



HENRY REPEATING ARMS

(866) 200-2354
henryusa.com

The semi-auto **HOMESTEADER 9MM** carbine from Henry Repeating Arms utilizes removable magazine well adapters to accept GLOCK-, SIG SAUER- or Smith & Wesson M&P-style magazines, in addition to the included five-round and 10-round Henry 9mm magazines. Features include a threaded barrel and centrally located controls. Its compact size and lightweight frame provide maneuverability and storage in close quarters. It has fully adjustable sights, a reciprocating mass inside the forearm to counteract recoil and non-slip leather-like texturing on the American walnut furniture.

SALES TIP "The Henry Homesteader 9mm is a feature-packed, pistol-caliber carbine ideal for home, property and livestock protection that maintains the classic appearance Henry Repeating Arms is known for. It's available in three different versions to suit the most common 9mm magazine patterns." — **Dan Clayton-Luce, Henry USA VP, Communications**



WILSON COMBAT

(800) 955-4856
wilsoncombat.com

Wilson Combat's **WCP365** takes the SIG SAUER 365 to new heights with a host of proprietary custom modifications to improve handling, shooting and optics capability in 16 available models. A choice of a standard or XL Wilson Combat polymer grip module is offered, and the stainless steel slide and 3.1" chromoly barrel wear the most advanced black DLC finish available. The slide's shape and texture were changed to make it more tactile under stress with exclusive X-Tac pattern cocking serrations, side-top serrations and heavy slide bevels all around. Each model is offered standard or action-tuned. The WCP365 can also be ordered with an optic mounting solution or a choice of direct-milled option (with cover plate and rear battlesight) for the Trijicon RMRcc, Holosun 407K or 507K, SIG SAUER Romeo Zero or Shield RMSc.

SALES TIP "The SIG SAUER P365 series is among the most reliable and safest ultra-compact 9mm pistols ever designed. Wilson Combat has made it even better with a host of our proprietary custom modifications to improve handling, shooting and optics capability." — **Wilson Combat**

FIOCCHI

(417) 725-4118
fiocchiusa.com

Fiocchi's **5.7X28MM** cartridge is offered in the company's Range Dynamics series. Sporting a 62-grain FMJ bullet, the Range Dynamics Subsonic is ideal for high-volume suppressed or unsuppressed fun on the range, personal-defense carbine training and semi-auto pistol use.

SALES TIP "Fiocchi Range Dynamics ammo is the right choice for regular practice sessions and high-volume training days. This subsonic cartridge offers reduced recoil impulse and sound signature, making it the go-to for suppressed or unsuppressed shooting and general plinking." — **Fiocchi USA**



IWI US

(717) 695-2081
iwi.us

The IWI US **CARMEL** rifle is a semi-automatic, short stroke, gas piston rifle made from superior steel, aviation-grade aluminum and high-strength impact modified polymer for reliable performance in all environmental conditions. The rifle has a locking, rotating bolt system ensuring maximum safety for the user and a cold hammer-forged, chrome-lined, free-floating barrel for enhanced accuracy and prolonged lifecycle. The Carmel is fully ambidextrous and can be easily customized with M-LOK rails at the 3, 6 and 9 position to allow compatibility with various accessories. It uses any NATO mil-std 5.56 steel, aluminum or polymer magazines and has three points of sling attachments (QD or cord).

SALES TIP "Assembled in the U.S. from imported and U.S.-made parts, the IWI US Carmel is designed for minimum operator- and armorer-level maintenance. All metal parts are corrosion resistant. The body is built with high-strength, impact-modified polymer." — **IWI US**



HORNADY

(800) 338-3220
hornady.com

Hornady's **7MM PRC** (Precision Rifle Cartridge) provides accuracy, consistency and long-range performance. It delivers long, heavy-for-caliber bullets in a standard long action and features temperature-stable, Magnum-speed propellants for consistent velocity and longer barrel life. Factory rifles are available, or users can swap the barrel on a 7mm Rem. Mag. or .300 Win. Mag. Available in the following ammunition lines: Outfitter 160-grain CX, Match 180-grain ELD Match and Precision Hunter 175-grain ELD-X.

SALES TIP "The 7mm PRC is the first truly modern 7mm Magnum cartridge perfect for hunting and long-range shooting. This new cartridge introduction has been an out-of-the-gate success." — **Neil Davies, Hornady Marketing Director**



CZ-USA

(800) 955-4486
cz-usa.com

The **CZ TS 2 ORANGE** sport pistol in .40 S&W and 9mm from CZ-USA is designed for competition in the IPSC. The 5.2" bull barrel delivers increased accuracy, better control and a significantly longer service life. The hand-fitted barrel-to-slide and slide-to-frame provide the tightest tolerances, and the CZ Shadow 2-style front attachment system allows quick and easy sight removal. Extra serrations on the top front edge of the slide ensure more comfortable cocking. It also boasts higher-positioned ambidextrous safeties, a reduced height magazine release button and modified recoil spring guide for simplified disassembly. OAL is 8.86" and it weighs 50.3 oz.

SALES TIP "The CZ TS 2 Orange is the premium version of the single-action TS 2. The Orange model gets special attention with a hand-fit barrel-to-slide and slide-to-frame for the tightest tolerances. Beyond the fitting, the TS 2 Orange utilizes a bull barrel for increased accuracy, better control and a longer service life." — **Danae Hale, CZ-USA Marketing Director**



SMITH & WESSON

(800) 331-0852
smith-wesson.com

Chambered in 9mm, the optics-ready **M&P FPC** (Folding Pistol Carbine) from Smith & Wesson features an integrated recoil buffer system, 1/2-28 threaded muzzle and in-stock magazine storage for making reloading fast and efficient. Additional features include a handguard with an upper Picatinny rail and M-LOK slots for accessories, a flat-face trigger design that offers a crisp single-action trigger break and four interchangeable palmswells. Three double-stack M&P pistol magazines are included: one 17-round and two 23-round. The FPC has a length of 30.375" and a compact folded length of 16.375".

SALES TIP "The team at Smith & Wesson aimed to design a pistol carbine that was compatible with various M&P series pistol magazines. We exceeded that initial desire by introducing side-folding mechanics that deliver a unique compact feature and allow the user to keep their sight system mounted on the gun both in the folded and extended positions." — **John Myles, Smith & Wesson Senior Manager of New Products**



SIG SAUER

(603) 610-3000
sigsauer.com

SIG SAUER introduces the **MCX-SPEAR**, the civilian version of the U.S. Army's XM7 rifle chosen for the Next Generation Squad Weapons (NGSW) program. The MCX-SPEAR is currently available in 7.62 NATO and 6.5 Creedmoor, and will soon be available in 277 SIG Fury. The rifle features rear and side non-reciprocating charging handles, a six-position folding Magpul SL-M stock, integrated stainless steel QD mounts, fully ambidextrous fire controls, two-stage Matchlite Duo trigger, two-position adjustable gas valve, free-float M-LOK handguard with Picatinny rail and a user-interchangeable barrel for caliber conversion. It ships with one 20-round magazine.

SALES TIP "The SIG SAUER-MCX family of rifles has become synonymous with innovative engineering and premium quality in a reliable and proven carbine. The next generation has arrived with the new MCX-SPEAR, offering enhanced AR-10 capabilities in the MCX platform for the first time on the commercial market." — **Tom Taylor, SIG SAUER CMO & EVP, Commercial Sales**



ROCK ISLAND ARMORY

(775) 537-1444
armscor.com

The **RIA 5.0** features a patented RVS recoil system engineered to maximize barrel mass and linear movement for super soft recoil. The barrel sits deeper into the bore axis so the muzzle stays flat under fire, allowing for faster target acquisition in rapid-fire situations. To enhance ergonomics and recoil control, the 5.0 has a two-piece modular grip frame that combines the flexibility of polymer in the grip with the control and durability of a full-length aluminum receiver. The 9mm RIA 5.0 has a 4.91" barrel, 4-lb. trigger pull, 18-round capacity, nylon grips and E100 Cerakote finish. OAL is 8.11", and it weighs 2.47 lbs.

SALES TIP "The RIA 5.0 is really an engineering marvel. It's an extremely shootable sporting pistol with a meticulously engineered trigger system." — **Martin Tuason, Armscor/Rock Island Armory President & CEO**



STURM, RUGER & CO.

(336) 949-5200
ruger.com

WRANGLER single-action revolvers are now available with longer barrels (6.5" and 7.5") and a Single-Six pattern grip frame, each offered in three attractive Cerakote colors. The revolvers are ideal for learning to shoot, introducing friends or family to the sport or just experiencing the fun of single-action shooting.

SALES TIP "Single-action revolvers in .22 LR offer a safe and fun way to introduce new shooters to the sport, and can serve as a reminder to even the most experienced shooters that range time can be just plain fun. Whether it's a customer's first gun or next, time at the range with the Wrangler promises to be well spent." — **Ruger**



SILENCERCO

(801) 417-5384
silencerco.com

SilencerCo is now offering a **CUSTOM PAINT SERVICE**. The Cerakote-certified team can refinish suppressors in Coyote Tan, O.D. Green, Flat Dark Earth, Cobra Black or Sniper Grey.

SALES TIP "Our intention with this project is to give shooters the ability to customize their suppressor. Whether it's Coyote Tan for long-range desert shooting or Sniper Grey for pairing with an AR-15, our paint team will do an impeccable job." — **Jessica Kallam, SilencerCo VP of Marketing, Customer Service & Warranty**



SHADOW SYSTEMS

(469) 458-6808
shadowsystemsco.com

Shadow Systems' **CR920P** 9mm subcompact pistol has an integrated compensator for compliance in areas with threaded-barrel bans. It is built on the aggressively textured CR920 frame and the slide features directional serrations in the front, rear and topside. Steel sights with a tritium front grace the topside of the slide, alongside the patented Shadow Systems multi-footprint optic cut. The match-grade, spiral-fluted barrel is attached to a machined carbon steel compensator, both finished in black nitride. Internals feature a stainless-steel guide rod and a drop-safe, flat-faced trigger. The trigger has a 4.5–5-lb. trigger pull and a crisp, tactile reset.

SALES TIP "Superior ergonomics combined with the recoil-taming compensator will actually make your customers love shooting a subcompact like the CR920P." — **Henry Burge, Shadow Systems Marketing Director**



O.F. MOSSBERG & SONS INC.

(203) 230-5300
mossberg.com

Mossberg's **PATRIOT LR TACTICAL** bolt-action rifle is designed to enhance long-range performance and accuracy. Its MDT Field Stock chassis system features V-Block aluminum bedding for stability on long-range shots. Features include: threaded barrel, 20 MOA Picatinny rail, adjustable trigger (2- to 7-lbs.), oversized easy-grip bolt handle, smooth cycling fluted bolt, Magpul M-LOK compatible forend with slots for customization and adjustable comb height and LOP. The Patriot LR Tactical is offered in 6.5mm Creedmoor and .308 Win. with a 22" barrel and 6.5 PRC with a 24" barrel. It is fed from a metal AICS-style detachable magazine with seven-round or 10-round capacity, and will accept aftermarket AICS-style mags (caliber-specific).

SALES TIP "These rifles are designed to achieve high levels of accuracy at extended distances in a user-adjustable, customizable package. They come with a spiral fluted bolt, oversized bolt handle, LPA user-adjustable trigger, medium bull threaded barrel, and 20 MOA Picatinny rail – married to a MDT/Oryx chassis system that has aluminum V-block bedding, M-LOK attachment points, LOP and comb adjustability and accepts AICS compatible magazines." — **Richard Kirk, O.F. Mossberg & Sons Inc. Senior Director of Marketing**



EAA CORP.

(321) 639-4842
eaacorp.com

Designed and engineered with a serious respect for the original John Browning pistol design, EAA's **MCP35 PI** by Girsan pays homage to one of the most widely used military handguns in the world. With its classic, black-matte styling and steel frame construction, the MCP35 PI boasts a 16-round capacity in a staggered column magazine. The MCP35 PI has a slim trigger, ring hammer, ambidextrous safety, windage-adjustable drift sight and a 3.88" barrel.

SALES TIP "The Girsan MC P35 PI is an homage to the highly desirable former Detective model. It is a brother to the classically styled MC P35, but in a carry size with a 3.88" barrel. It is a highly shootable, yet easily concealed offering in the MC P35 lineup. The best part about it is it retains the fantastic value for quality and represents a great market for retailers to capture." — **Chase Duffey, EAA Corp. National Sales & Imports Manager**



ORACLE ARMS

oraclearms.com

The **2311** from Oracle Arms is available in five 9mm models: Compact, Compact Elite, Combat, Combat Elite and Competition. Its SIG P320 magazine compatibility allows for the use of readily available, reliable and cost-effective magazines. Patented debris clearance channels ensure peak performance and the external extractor eliminates the need for fine-tuning, improving reliability and convenience. Its right-side slide stop makes it a completely ambidextrous double-stack 1911 platform. Each 2311 model includes four interchangeable slide plates (iron sight, RMR, DPP and RMsC pattern optics). Specifications vary by model, including magazine capacity, frame and grip material and the number of included magazines.

SALES TIP "The Oracle Arms 2311 opens up a new category in the handgun market, bridging the gap between traditional polymer striker pistols and high-end match pistols by pairing race gun features and performance with the versatility and reliability of a duty gun." — **Dave Wollman, Oracle Arms VP, Sales & Marketing**



REMINGTON AMMUNITION

(800) 243-9700
remington.com

The **REMINGTON RANGE** handgun load joins the Remington Range Clean family, a recently introduced product that minimizes the shooter's exposure to lead at the firing line. The full metal jacket projectiles feature clean-shooting Kleanbore priming and a temperature stable propellant for consistent velocity and performance. The loads are available in 50-, 500-, 600- and 1,000-round bulk pack in 9mm and .40 S&W.

SALES TIP "Remington Range was built with the frequent shooter in mind. Whether you're shooting paper or steel, no other handgun ammunition delivers this level of performance and accuracy more efficiently." — **Kris Carson, Remington Handgun Product Line Manager**



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HI-POINT FIREARMS

(419) 747-9444
hi-pointfirearms.com

Hi-Point Firearms' **MODEL JXP10** is chambered in 10mm and sports a 5.2" barrel, 10-round magazine and 1913 accessory rail. The front sights are compatible with GLOCK front sights and the rear sights are fully adjustable and red dot ready. Additional features include: +P rated, threaded 0.578x28 barrel, new textured grips, YC9 styled slide design and serrations, magazine compatibility with 1095 carbine, last round lock open, magazine disconnect safety and larger thumb safety. OAL is 8.5" and it weighs 49 oz.

SALES TIP "The JXP10 is a full-size, blowback-action pistol chambered in 10mm. Featuring a new slide design and frame loaded with features for today's modern shooter, the JXP10 uses the same magazines as the Hi-Point Model 1095 carbine." — **Kara Boesenberg, MKS Supply EVP**



BLACK HILLS AMMUNITION

(605) 348-5150
black-hills.com

Black Hills' **10MM HONEYBADGER HUNTING AMMUNITION** penetrates deeply, cutting through bone and muscle to get to vitals. The sharp frontal edges of the solid copper bullet enhance efficient penetration. The flutes then gather, redirect and accelerate the tissue radially from the bullet, creating damage comparable or superior to the best hollowpoint. The 10mm load provides a velocity of 1,600 fps from a 5" handgun. Penetration in 10% ballistic gelatin is over 50% greater than hollowpoints while generating larger wound cavities.

SALES TIP "In ballistic gelatin, the 10mm HoneyBadger presents a temporary cavity that's 23" long and a 4.5" diameter. You're getting better controllability, less flash and less muzzle blast — but you're getting the same effect on target as a .44 Magnum." — **Jeff Hoffman, Black Hills Ammunition Owner**

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NEW PRODUCTS



HOLOSUN

(909) 594-2888
holosun.com

The **DRS-TH** (Digital Reflex Sight-Thermal) from Holosun is a red dot and thermal fusion sight that combines the company's red dot sight technology with thermal imaging capability. The DRS-TH features an LED MRS (Multi-Reticle System) with two digital reticle options, 1024x768 resolution display at 50 fps, 8X digital zoom, digital image and video recording with on-board storage and is powered by an 18350 rechargeable battery. DRS-TH models feature five thermal image modes including White Hot, Black Hot, Highlight, Outline and Fusion. It is also available in a DRS-TH Pro version that increases the thermal sensor resolution by 33%.

SALES TIP "Where this thermal optic stands apart from competitors is the ability to augment real-world observations. A user can scan the environment through a normal viewing feature and augment it with an overlay of thermal imagery. A generous eye box window is 1.25x0.98" for the best clarity and observation." — **Josh Erickson, Holosun Marketing Director**

SOUTHWICK ASSOCIATES ID'S TOP BRANDS

Southwick Associates has identified top brands purchased in 2022, based on more than 9,000 surveys of hunters and shooters conducted through the year. Surveys were fielded through the Southwick Associates' online HunterSurvey and ShooterSurvey consumer panels and to the general public to help reach casual participants.

According to Southwick Associates, "Hunting and shooting equipment sales were steady in 2022, allowing retailers the opportunity to continue replenishing store shelves hit during the pandemic surge. With more products and brands to choose from, some brand shifts are occurring again."

Some of the most frequently purchased brands in 2022 include:

- Traditional Rifles: Savage Arms, Ruger
- Handguns: Smith & Wesson
- Shotgun Ammunition: Federal
- Reloading Dies: RCBS
- Reloading Components: Hornady
- Laser Rangefinders: SIG SAUER
- Red Dot Sights: HOLOSUN
- Non-powered Aftermarket Sights: Meprolight
- Scope/Accessory Mounts: Leupold
- Hunting Apparel Camo Brand: Mossy Oak
- Tree Stands/Ladders/Towers: Big Game Treestands
- Foot Plot Seed: Deer Creek
- Trail Cameras: Cabela's
- Game Calls: Primos
- Benches & Rests: Caldwell
- Shooting Sticks: BOG GEAR
- Gun Cleaning: Hoppe's
- Choke Tubes: Carlson
- Magazines: Magpul



- Trigger Assemblies: Timney

Results of the Southwick Associates consumer tracking study are available in the Hunting & Shooting Participation and Equipment Purchases Report. This in-depth resource tracks consumer reported hunting and shooting participation and equipment purchases for approximately 100 products.

Purchase information includes the percentage of sales across different types of stores, brand purchased, price paid and demographics for hunters and shooters buying specific products. Additional participation information tracked includes total days spent per activity, type of hunting/shooting activity, preferred species and where they hunt.

[/ southwickassociates.com](https://southwickassociates.com)

SHOOT UNITED LAUNCHES 2023 EVENT SCHEDULE

Shoot United is announcing 20+ events in 2023 that will be held at shooting ranges throughout the United States, with the focus of introducing participants to the shooting sports and responsible firearm education.

Each event provides individuals an opportunity to learn and ask questions of knowledgeable firearm instructors

in a welcoming environment, have fun with friends and family and receive a supportive hands-on experience.

"Shoot United range events are designed to attract people who would like to take the first step in learning about firearms at their own pace," said Jason Gilbertson, director of marketing for Shoot United. "We're partnering with some outstanding ranges and educated trainers to create turnkey experiences."

Shoot United events in the first half of 2023 include Intro to Pistol



courses at Shooters World (Orlando), Ben Avery Shooting Facility (Phoenix), Peacemakers (Howell, Mich.), GAT Guns (East Dundee, Ill.); Intro to Rifle at Centennial Gun Club (Centennial, Colo.) and Shooting Experience: Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun at Hyatt Farms Shooting Complex (Polkton, N.C.).

[/ shootunited.com](https://shootunited.com)

SLG2 DEBUTS SAFE LIVING PROGRAM

SLG2 Inc., an event marketing company that empowers women to participate in shooting sports and includes brands Shoot Like A Girl and Hunt Like A Girl, has officially announced the launch of its new Safe LivingG program.

Safe LivingG empowers men, women, families and communities with confidence to live securely through interactive informational experiences and web resources. During SHOT Show 2023, SLG2 debuted the new Safe LivingG

trailer — showcasing its offerings to media and industry professionals, and how it will promote the growing importance of safe living across the U.S.


"As the number of gun owners continues to grow, there's an important need to share more than just the confidence that comes from shooting sports," said Karen Butler, founder and president of SLG2 Inc.

Safe LivingG covers a wide range of topics including personal safety, family safety, community safety and much more. From situational awareness to first-aid tips and tricks, this expansion provides communities with authentic and factual knowledge to keep



themselves and those around them safe.

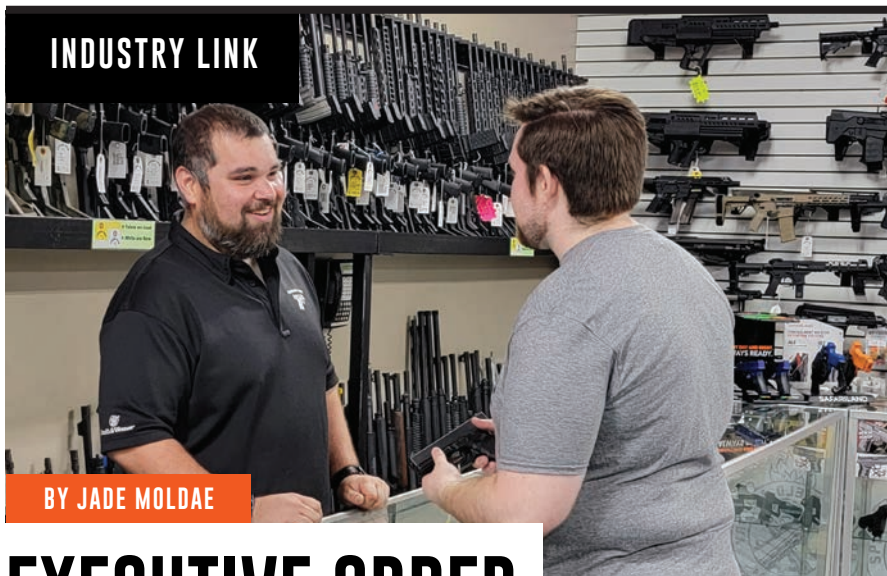
Safe LivingG consists of multiple safety council members, providing audiences with a variety of articles, videos, daily tips and more covering important topics people may face.

The 2023 Safe LivingG tour began Feb. 4 at the Bass Pro Shops in Prattville, Ala., and will conclude at a corporate event in Prescott, Ariz., Nov. 6. 

[/ shootlikeagirl.com](https://shootlikeagirl.com)

[/ safeliving2.com](https://safeliving2.com)

INDUSTRY LINK



BY JADE MOLDAE

EXECUTIVE ORDER PREVIEWS NEXT FOCAL POINT

A consequence of a divided government meant it was a matter of “when” — rather than “if” — President Joe Biden would use executive orders to carry out his anti-gun/industry platform.

“With the Republicans taking control of the House, Biden’s ability to use Congress as a means to implement his anti-gun agenda will no longer be an option once the new session is underway,” observed Adam Kraut, executive director of the Second Amendment Foundation, in the Dec. 2022 running of this column.

It didn’t take long: March 14, two-and-a-half months into the 118th Congress, President Biden signed an executive order that took aim at the firearm industry. In short, the order increases background checks, encourages additional “red flag” resources and will “hold the gun industry accountable” through a variety of measures, including directing the ATF to publicly release records of FFL dealers cited during an inspection.

The order also has directed Attorney General Merrick Garland to “clarify the definition of who is engaged in the business of dealing in firearms” — which, if anti-gun groups have their way, would expand the scope of “who” is an FFL.

The NRA-ILA summed up the executive order well: “Biden’s latest executive order is not so much a roadmap as a declaration: Gun

ownership and firearm-related businesses are bad and a ‘whole of government approach’ must be used to suppress them.”

WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID

The move doesn’t come as a complete surprise — especially since an executive order can advance a president’s agenda sans bipartisan support. When announcing the order, the president acknowledged as much.

“First, this executive order helps keep firearms out of dangerous hands, as I continue to call on Congress to require background checks for all firearm sales. And in the meantime ... my executive order directs my attorney general to take every lawful action possible to move us as close as we can to universal background checks without new legislation,” he said during an event at the Boys & Girls Club of West San Gabriel Valley in Monterey Park, Calif.

As he’s done in previous speeches, President Biden called on Congress to “do something big” and repeated a familiar refrain to abolish the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA).

“Let’s be clear: None of this absolves Congress from the responsibility of acting to pass universal background checks, eliminate gun manufacturers’ immunity from liability,” he said.

He continued, “I am determined once again to ban assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.”

◀ President Biden’s March 14 executive order represents another case of demonizing the firearms industry and its backbone, the storefront dealer.

THE INDUSTRY’S RESPONSE

Industry organizations took exception with these latest gun control measures.

“The Biden administration should demand soft-on-crime prosecutors and lawmakers use the laws already in existence to lock up criminals who misuse firearms to prey on innocent Americans,” said Larry Keane, NSSF SVP and general counsel. “Instead, this administration continues to scapegoat the firearm industry for its unwillingness to address crime.”

“

Biden’s latest executive order is not so much a roadmap as a declaration: Gun ownership and firearm-related businesses are bad and a ‘whole of government approach’ must be used to suppress them.”

NRA-ILA

In a similar vein, Alan Gottlieb of the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms (CCRKBA) labeled this order as “just another chapter in Joe Biden’s war on gun rights.”

“This is textbook Joe Biden,” Gottlieb concluded. “Talk tough, make it appear he’s doing something about crime when he really isn’t and ultimately just continue penalizing law-abiding gun owners for crimes they didn’t commit. The only people who will be any safer are the criminals who ignore gun control laws already.”

In some ways, the limited scope of this executive order is emblematic of the failure of the anti-gun groups to restrict gun rights. However, there are potential pitfalls with government agencies being emboldened to “get creative” in how they can make life difficult for a lawful industry. We’ll continue tracking any other developments in *Shooting Industry’s* weekly Dealer Advantage e-newsletter.

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