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WHEN YOUR RANGE IS  
MORE THAN A RANGE

# SHOOTING INDUSTRY<sup>®</sup>

THE INDUSTRY'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE — EST. 1955

\$5 | AUGUST 2022

## FIRST-EVER RANGE ISSUE!

### 500 Range Visits And Counting:

What Sets The Best Ones Apart

### Are We Nearing The END OF LARGE RANGES?

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

New Range Technologies  
Bring In Younger Guests

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2022

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 Editorial Review **CONSOL TORRES**  
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## NATIONAL ADVERTISING SALES

advertising@fmghq.com

West **DELANO AMAGUIN**

■ delano.amaguin@fmghq.com

North East **AMY TANGUAY**

■ amy.tanguay@fmghq.com

South East **TOM VOREL**

■ tom.vorel@fmghq.com

Online Traffic Manager **LORI ROBBINS**

■ lori.robbins@fmghq.com

Classified Advertising **AMY TANGUAY**

■ classads@fmgpublishings.com

■ FAX: (866) 645-9137

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**EDITORIAL** editor@shootingindustry.com

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## Range Time In Focus

**M**illions of first-time gun buyers decided to purchase a firearm for peace of mind over the past two years. If we can get them plugged in as range members, recreational shooters and enthusiasts, it's more likely they'll become repeat guests and introduce their friends and loved ones to the shooting sports. It's what it's all about.

Here in *Shooting Industry's* first-ever Range Issue, there are several features providing range operators with a look at some innovative technologies, the merits of pursuing NSSF's range-rating program, how to make facilities more welcoming to women and more.

And for retail-only stores — there are numerous takeaways throughout this issue that will benefit your approach to serving customers, as well.

### FRIENDLY COMPETITION: RANGE EVENTS

Keeping the “bigger picture” in mind, Nashville Armory hosts “Shoot N Scoot” events twice a month at its facility. General Manager Jason Edgley shared while these events aren't about making money, they do encourage repeat traffic — and relationship building.

“It's a give-back to our customers,” he elaborated. “We want them to have a great time and come back. We're providing them with a safe venue to practice certain skills they usually only

do at an outdoor range.”

For more see pp. 24–25.

### LESSONS FROM 500 RANGE VISITS

Doug VanderWoude recently passed a unique milestone: 500 onsite visits to individual ranges across the country. In this issue, he shares what has made these ranges so successful. In short, they're creative, take advantage of industry programs and excel at putting themselves in their customers' shoes.

To see other insights, see pp. 26–28.

### THE END OF AN ERA?

Historically, shooting ranges have enjoyed the successes of a growing shooting sports industry marked by the change from rural hunting to urban living and modern recreation. However, rising real estate prices and market saturation have made large-scale ranges close to urban centers an uncertain enterprise.

B.A. Stear argues ranges will benefit from adapting to changing times by getting smaller and closer to population centers. He contends: “The only way to get more people shooting is to make the experience more convenient, period. This usually translates into minimal drive-time from their houses.”

For more, see pp. 34–36.

### NO RANGE? NO PROBLEM.

Retail-only dealers have gotten creative to expand “the shooting experience” to their customers. Consider adding training, educational seminars,



AUGUST 2022

shooting simulators or partnering with a local range to add value to customers. See pp. 42–43.

### COMING NEXT MONTH: EXPANDED E-COMMERCE

In the September issue, *SI* contributing editor Tim Barker gleans helpful tips from Gearfire and Celerant and the advice they give to dealers looking to expand their e-commerce presence. Dealers, as well as providers, share insights.

The September issue will also cover the outlook on the used-gun market, airguns for training/hunting and tips for getting more out of paid digital marketing campaigns.

Let's hear from you! For feedback on anything you see (or want to see) in *Shooting Industry*, drop us a line: [comments@shootingindustry.com](mailto:comments@shootingindustry.com). **\$1**



### FEATURE HIGHLIGHT

#### “The 5-Star Treatment”

By Ken Perrotte

PAGE 30





## “FOUR SURE SHOTS BETTER THAN NONE”

I enjoyed Massad Ayoob's article on revolvers (“Relics Or Rescue Tools?” *Personal Defense Market*, June 2022). I spent 27 years as a sworn officer and the past 11 working in a local sporting goods store behind the gun counter.

In addition to what was presented in Ayoob's article, I'd like to add the importance of the press-contact in conversations with new female shooters. Many arrive at the store with recommendations of small semi-autos. I always take the time to fully explain the controls and watch as the customer demonstrates the operation of the handgun.

Almost without fail, slide lock backs are confusing, and magazine changes and the use of any safety levers remain problematic. Slide operation might take two or three attempts to chamber a snap cap.

Next, I introduce the press-contact possibility with purse or winter coat pocket carry and the realistic chance the beginning of the incident will occur when she's grabbed by the assailant. Then I show her a five-shot revolver, and its ability to be fired within a purse or pocket, needing no other operation than the trigger pull.

Though  
unnecessary  
for safe carry,  
an empty  
chamber on a  
revolver —  
if it gives  
peace of  
mind — still  
gives four  
sure shots in  
defense. An  
auto, zero.

Sometimes she'll share her fear of carrying with a round in the chamber, and I'll remind her the use of two hands (to rack a pistol slide) will not be given by the assailant. Though unnecessary for safe carry, an empty chamber on a revolver — if it gives peace of mind — still gives four sure shots in defense. An auto, zero.

My wife and I both enjoy Ayoob's writings and hold *In The*

*Gravest Extreme* as an outstanding recommendation to new shooters. If another article by him could be written addressing sales to new female shooters, their concerns, the concerns of handgun-to-method-of-carry and that operation simplicity of a revolver will not deteriorate as rapidly over time, I think customer support — both for the woman and male family members — would strongly benefit.

— **Steven Hamilton**

Rocky Mountain Discount Sports  
Gillette, Wyo.

*Steven, don't be surprised if you see this very topic explored in a future Personal Defense Market column. Thank you for reading Shooting Industry.*

— **Jade Moldae, Editor**

## FROM “BASEMENT BANDIT” TO STOREFRONT

**Editor's Note:** Letters continue to pour in on the home-based vs. storefront dealer debate. We invite you to join in the discussion: [editor@shootingindustry.com](mailto:editor@shootingindustry.com).

I started out as a home-based business. I now have a small store in a small town (4,500 people). I wouldn't be where I am today without the experience gained as a “Basement Bandit.”

At the same time, I'd like to see the current basement bandits follow some basic rules: Follow the law, make a profit on every sale and price your stuff at a competitive price with everyone else.

There are a lot of manufacturers who now have MAP requirements because of the people who sell for \$10 over cost. If you want more wholesalers to work with you, prove you're more than just a Basement Bandit.

P.S. I've been at this for 25 years after retiring from the U.S. Air Force. Anyone looking for a small business in a small town? Time to retire again! <sup>SI</sup>

— **Ernie Huether**

Guns N Things LLC  
Glendive, Mont.

**HAVE A THOUGHT WHILE READING THE ISSUE?**

Let us know at [comments@shootingindustry.com](mailto:comments@shootingindustry.com) or  
[facebook.com/shootingindustry](https://facebook.com/shootingindustry).





Photo: CrossBreed Holsters

◀ The concealed carry market should receive a boost following the Supreme Court's ruling in the *NYSRPA v. Bruen* case.

Supreme Court's faithful application of Constitutional rights."

This ruling is also impacting lower courts in a significant way, as it sweeps the "interest-weighting" tests on firearms. (This was a practice adopted by lower courts to justify keeping gun control laws in place that ranged from subjective laws to bans on entire classes of firearms and magazines.)

**"[*NYSRPA v. Bruen*] establishes 'may issue' permitting schemes that relegate the Second Amendment to a second-class right that can be meted out by government bureaucrats are unconstitutional."**

Larry Keane, SVP & General Counsel  
NSSF

It's too early to tell how much this decision will impact the concealed carry segment — with states like New York and California again leading the charge to defy this ruling — but it certainly will provide even more growth to a flourishing segment.

Continued on p. 10

## BATTLE FOR GUN RIGHTS RAGES ON

By Jade Moldae

June was a busy month for the future of Second Amendment advocacy. It was a classic "two steps forward, one step back" development — with some major wins, along with setbacks. No question: recent decisions at the federal and state levels will have lasting reverberations on the future of the U.S. firearms industry for years to come.

### THE GOOD

In one of the most (if not *the* most) significant gun rights victory over the past decade, the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in the *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association (NYSRPA) v. Bruen* case struck down New York's restrictive

"may issue" concealed carry permitting scheme. This landmark decision affirms the Second Amendment is an individual right that may be exercised in the home or in public.

"This is a tremendous victory for the rights of all law-abiding Americans to exercise the pre-existing and God-given right to keep and bear arms for self-defense," said Larry Keane, NSSF SVP and general counsel. "This establishes that 'may issue' permitting schemes that relegate the Second Amendment to a second-class right that can be meted out by government bureaucrats are unconstitutional. The firearm industry is tremendously grateful to the U.S.

## CHATTANOOGA SHOOTING SUPPLIES EXPANDS

Chattanooga Shooting Supplies Inc. continues to expand its sales force across the nation, along with its distribution center. The current facility is expected to grow by an additional 40,000 sq. ft. of space.

"We are investing in the future with our increased product mix, exclusives, continued expansion of our sales team and, now, expanding our facility. We are using the latest technology to improve the

employee experience, as well as becoming more efficient for our dealers and vendor partners," said Ron Staffieri, CSSI president and CEO.

CSSI was founded in 1977 by two families with a passion for hunting and shooting. That same passion holds true today with the second generation of family members who have seen the business grow to now stock over 35,000 shooting and hunting-related products to service independent dealers.

CSSI's mission is to provide dealers with same-day shipping, competitive



pricing and the brands they know and trust. The company's knowledgeable, courteous sales staff also are users of the products they sell.

[/ chattanoogashooting.com](http://chattanoogashooting.com)



## RIA-USA OPENS FACILITY

Armstrong's Rock Island Armory opened its first RIA-USA facility in Cedar City, Utah, on June 8. The company expects to add 88 new high-paying jobs at this inaugural U.S. location in the next six years, with more expansion planned for the future.

"We're looking forward to expanding our American-based production in Cedar City. The skilled workforce and welcoming community (are) a perfect fit. Our entry in Cedar City will provide unprecedented growth that could only happen in the great state of Utah," said Lisa Tuason, president of RIA-USA and senior VP of marketing and public relations at Rock Island Armory.

"We're very proud to have begun manufacturing quality firearms on U.S. soil," added Martin Tuason, president and CEO of parent company Armcor. "This has been a longtime dream for our family. We're excited about what the future holds,



On hand to celebrate the opening of RIA-USA's Cedar City, Utah, location was (from left) Lisa Tuason, RIA-USA president and Rock Island Armory SVP of marketing and PR; Carlos Tuason, Rock Island Armory SVP of global sales; Garth Green, Cedar City mayor; Joe Mantenga, actor, Second Amendment advocate and host of Outdoor Channel's "Gun Stories;" and Martin Tuason, Armcor president and CEO.

and I think our customers will be, too."

Armcor/Rock Island Armory is a leading global manufacturer of ammunition and firearms, as well as one of the largest producers of 1911 pistols in the world. Armcor exports to over 50 countries on six continents.

Through RIA Imports, consumers can own quality firearms from around the world, at attractive price points, covered by the same limited lifetime warranty as company-made products. / [armcor.com](https://armcor.com)

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Continued from p. 8

## THE BAD

The “Bipartisan Safer Communities Act” was signed into law June 25 by President Joe Biden days after it was formally introduced in the Senate.

Upon signing the bill into law, President Biden hailed its passage but was quick to express “there’s much more work to do, and I’m never going to give up.”

“While this bill doesn’t do everything I want, it does include actions I’ve long called for that are going to save lives,” he added.

The bill includes several provisions, including enhanced background checks for gun buyers under age 21, setting aside \$750 million in federal grant funding to help states implement red flag laws (as opposed to a federal red flag law) and closing the so-called “boyfriend loophole,” which would bar dating partners from owning firearms if convicted of domestic abuse. In addition, the bill would strengthen the penalty of straw purchases and trafficking guns.

The text of the “Bipartisan Safer Communities Act” was unveiled late June

21, swiftly passing through the upper house of Congress with 15 Republicans joining all 50 Democrats in support of the bill, which circumvented the filibuster.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) moved quickly in bringing this bill to a vote in the House, which passed in 234-193 vote June 24. Fourteen Republicans joined with Democrats in supporting the measure.

Reacting to the bill’s passage, NSSF stated: “While providing more resources for school security and mental health, NSSF was unable to support due to several gun control provisions.”

## THE UGLY

As has been the case in recent years, the battle for gun rights is being fiercely contested at the state level. One state, in particular, has once again passed mind-numbing legislation that may encourage others to follow suit.

California reacted swiftly to the *NYSRPA v. Bruen* case, with Gov. Gavin Newsom signing AB 2571 June 30. This bill bans advertising or marketing firearms or ammunition in a way that is “attractive to minors” — which replaced the language in a previous law that specifically banned

“advertis[ing] to minors.” It was passed with an urgency clause, meaning it went into effect immediately.

NSSF provided the following commentary to email subscribers: “Specifically, it is now a crime for a ‘firearm industry member’ to use ‘advertising, marketing or arranging for placement’ of communication concerning any ‘firearm-related product’ in a manner that is designed, intended, or reasonably appears to be ‘attractive’ to minors punishable up to \$25,000.”

According to the NRA-ILA, “this legislation is so broadly worded that it will be devastating to conservation, safety and education efforts throughout the state.”

## NOT TOO EARLY FOR #GUNVOTE SUPPORT

With the industry fighting anti-gun efforts on a variety of fronts, it’s not too early for every dealer, range operator, distributor, importer, manufacturer and related businesses to encourage employees to get out and vote in elections this November.

The #GUNVOTE campaign will be more active the closer we get to Election Day.

[/ nssf.org/government-relations](https://nssf.org/government-relations)

## FREEDOM MUNITIONS EXPANDS MANUFACTURING CAPACITY

KASH CA Inc., parent company to Freedom Munitions, broke ground on a new facility intended to expand Freedom’s line of rifle ammunition. The 10,000 sq. ft. building will give the company more capacity to manufacture cases and projectiles for a wide array of calibers ranging from .223 to .30-06 Sprg.

The new plant, located on KASH CA property in downtown Lewiston, Idaho, will be equipped with state-of-the-art machinery and highly trained operators to ensure superior quality, tolerances and consistency. Each cartridge from Freedom Munitions is U.S.-made and manufactured to SAAMI specifications.

All Freedom ammunition is developed, produced, loaded and tested in-house in Lewiston. Manufacturing facilities include an underground ballistics lab with testing range and propriety processes to ensure premium quality and consistency.

Current rifle ammunition offered



Pictured: The site of Freedom Munitions’ future 10,000 sq. ft. plant — which will give the company additional capacity to manufacture cases and projectiles for calibers ranging from .223 to .30-06 Sprg. — is located in downtown Lewiston, Idaho.

by Freedom Munitions is loaded using premium components from well-respected brands. Freedom also remanufactures ammunition utilizing strict quality protocols and high-tech equipment.

“KASH CA is utilizing our already vast technical expertise to expand into a new line of rifle cartridge cases and projectiles to be able to produce a broader range of top-quality ammunition,” said Daniel Kash, KASH CA president. “As

manufacturers continue to struggle with shortages on raw goods — particularly for U.S. brass cases — we decided to better control the situation by making Freedom Munitions fully capable of manufacturing these items.”

The new facility is expected to create 20–30 new positions, and be fully operational by spring of 2023.

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



## FEDERAL AMMUNITION RAISES FUNDS FOR LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

In honor of its 100th anniversary, Anoka, Minn.-based Federal Ammunition is donating more than \$218,000 to three local organizations in support of their critical missions. The Anoka Police Department, Feed My Starving Children and the Anoka County Brotherhood Council all will receive equal portions of the donation.

The gifts come from funds raised at silent and live auctions during a company event on June 18 that celebrated the centenary milestone with current and retired employees and their families, industry friends and local dignitaries. Medal of Honor recipient Sammy Davis Jr. also held an auction, and 10K Brewing donated a portion of its sales.

Accepting the donations were Anoka's



Chief of Police Eric Peterson; Ann Hill, development officer at Feed My Starving Children; and Stephanie Lehman, executive director at the Anoka County Brotherhood Council.

The Anoka Police Department was established in 1878. Federal's donation will help build a new gun range for critical training.

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) is a Christian nonprofit dedicated to seeing every child whole in body and spirit. Donations fund the ingredients for

volunteer-packed meals. Meals are then provided to FMSC partners around the world that feed children and literally save lives. The Federal donation will provide food to more than 400,000 kids in need.

Anoka County Brotherhood Council maintains a local food pantry that also helps those in need with clothing and other resources. Founded in 1971, the organization has provided more than 500,000 pounds of food so far in 2022.

[/ federalpremium.com](http://federalpremium.com)

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## SAGE BECOMES NSSF'S ENDORSED INSURANCE PROVIDER

SAGE Program Underwriters announced its partnership with NSSF as an endorsed insurance provider for its membership.

SAGE is the leading workers' compensation insurance provider for the shooting sports industry. SAGE has been insuring hundreds of shooting ranges, firearm retailers and industry manufacturers since 2006, providing

businesses and their employees with workers' compensation coverage and protection.

"SAGE is thrilled to partner with NSSF and its continued efforts to provide real solutions to its members. Our industry knowledge and underwriting expertise allow SAGE to dramatically lower costs and greatly improve the support NSSF members deserve," said Chuck Holdren, SAGE president and CEO.

Any NSSF member can access SAGE's exclusive workers compensation program by either connecting with a current insurance broker or working directly with a SAGE agent.



"Our members are steadily contacting us requesting referrals for insurance companies (that) are not only friendly to our industry but (also) competitive in cost and service," added Samantha Hill, NSSF director of member services. "We're pleased to add SAGE to our list of trusted insurance providers." / [nssf.org](https://nssf.org) / [sageuw.com](https://sageuw.com)

## STREAMLIGHT SUPPORTS FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION

Streamlight Inc., provider of high-performance lighting for first responders, announced its donation of \$17,500 to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF). The gift includes \$7,500 in proceeds from sales of the company's specially marked NFFF Red Nano light, Red Vantage helmet light and Red Siege AA lantern.

Streamlight earmarked \$1, \$3 and \$2, respectively, from sales of each of those lights for the NFFF. The donation also included a \$10,000 contribution to renew the company's "Bronze Helmet" NFFF sponsorship.

Streamlight has been supporting the NFFF through donations and sponsorships for more than 15 years. Contributions have continually assisted the foundation

in commemorating the lives of firefighters who have died in the line of duty, and supporting their families and colleagues.

"Firefighters put their lives on the line every time they respond to a fire emergency for the sake of saving others and their property. We hope that over the years our donations to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation have helped to support the families and surviving colleagues of the brave fallen firefighters, and recognize their sacrifices," said Streamlight President and CEO Ray Sharrah.

Streamlight's sponsorship helps fund various NSSF initiatives, including the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend tribute to fallen heroes, to be held Oct. 8–9 at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Md. The donations provide lodging and meals for immediate families of firefighters being honored, and assist them with travel expenses.

A plaque with the names of the



STREAMLIGHT RED VANTAGE HELMET LIGHT

firefighters who died in the line of duty in 2021 will be added to the National Firefighters Memorial during the tribute.

Streamlight's sponsorship also helps fund scholarships awarded to spouses and children of fallen firefighters, and counseling programs for agencies that have lost colleagues in the line of duty.

/ [streamlight.com](https://streamlight.com) / [firehero.org](https://firehero.org)

## COLT CONTINUES SUPPORT OF FOLDS OF HONOR

Colt's Mfg. Co. is proud to continue its support of its Veteran Charity Partner, Folds of Honor. Since June 2015, Colt has been donating a portion of its proceeds from commercial and rifle sales to this organization.

Folds of Honor provides annual educational scholarships to military families of those service members killed

or disabled while in active duty. Since its founding in 2007, Folds of Honor has awarded 35,000 scholarships, including over 6,500 in 2021–2022 alone. An impressive 91% of all funds donated to this 501(c)(3) non-profit organization go directly to these scholarships.

"We owe such a great deal to all of our nation's veterans and their families," said Paul Spitale, Colt's Mfg. EVP commercial business. "The sacrifices our veterans have made, and continue to make, defend and protect our nation and our freedoms.



We at Colt's Manufacturing can think of no better way to honor our fallen and disabled heroes than through our support of this noble organization." / [colt.com](https://colt.com) / [foldsofhonor.org](https://foldsofhonor.org)



## AIMPOINT AWARDED NEW CONTRACT FOR FIRE CONTROL SYSTEMS BY U.S. ARMED FORCES

Aimpoint was awarded a new contract for supply of the Aimpoint FCS13RE Fire Control Systems to the U.S. military. The system is currently being deployed as the primary Fire Control on the M3E1 MAAWS lightweight 84mm Carl-Gustaf produced by SAAB Dynamics for use by the U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Special Operations Command.

The FCS13RE is a direct view, Dynamic Universal Reflex Sight, which utilizes an integrated laser range finder and ballistic computer to give the gunner an aiming point corrected for range, type of munition, terrain angle and environmental conditions. In addition to the 84mm Carl-Gustaf, the system can also be utilized on other weapons including



the AT4, 40mm high-velocity grenade launchers (Mk19, Mk47, and GMG), .50-caliber heavy machine guns (M2) and the M134D Minigun. The FCS13RE provides an extremely high probability of first-round hits on both stationary and moving targets during day and night. The system can be enhanced with a magnifier, a thermal imager and is compatible with all generations of military night vision.

“The FCS13RE has a proven hit probability of over 90% for the max effective range of the Carl Gustaf weapon system and is also capable of mounting to various crew-served weapons,” said Thane Smith, Aimpoint Inc. professional sales director. “Aimpoint will continue to produce the highest quality weapon optics that increase lethality and survivability of our service members.” / [aimpoint.us](http://aimpoint.us)

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# INDUSTRY NEWS

## HENRY KICKS OFF MILLION DOLLAR PLEDGE INITIATIVE

In celebration of Henry Repeating Arms' 25th anniversary, CEO and founder Anthony Imperato recently presented a \$50,000 check to Tunnel to Towers Foundation Chairman and CEO Frank Siller. It's the first donation of a \$1,000,000 Silver Anniversary pledge to various charities through the company's Guns For Great Causes program.

The Tunnel to Towers Foundation was founded in December 2001 by the surviving siblings of Stephen Siller, a member of the New York City Fire Department whose heroic actions on September 11, 2001, resonate throughout the city and the country to this day. In honor of Stephen's sacrifice, Tunnel to Towers pursues a mission of supporting the country's first responders, military veterans and their families with mortgage-



Henry CEO & Founder Anthony Imperato (left) presenting Tunnel to Towers Foundation CEO & Chairman Frank Siller with the first donation of Henry Repeating Arms' \$1,000,000 Silver Anniversary pledge.

free homes, having supplied over 450 to date.

Henry Repeating Arms will offer 1,000 unique Henry Golden Boy Silver Anniversary edition rifles for sale in the coming weeks. Sold exclusively online, 100% of the proceeds will benefit charities supported by the company's Guns For

Great Causes program — including children's hospitals, military veterans, law enforcement and first responder organizations, wildlife conservation, hunting and shooting sports education and pro-Second Amendment endeavors.

[/ henryusa.com](http://henryusa.com)

## WILSON COMBAT CELEBRATES 45TH ANNIVERSARY

In 1977, champion pistol shooter Bill Wilson started Wilson Combat in the back of the family jewelry store to support his passion for firearms. Forty-five years later, Wilson Combat is a fully integrated specialty gun and accessory manufacturer that employs hundreds of people in northwest Arkansas, and at sister companies across the United States.

Beginning with basic 1911 gunsmithing, parts and accessories, the company quickly became the leading one-stop shop for competition and defensive handgunners looking for high-

quality pistolsmithing and gear at a fair price. Wilson Combat later branched out into defensive carry guns and gear, tactical shotguns and AR rifles, and now manufactures almost every gun part needed for production in their state-of-the-art precision manufacturing facility.

Tremendous internal growth, as well as the acquisition of other innovative brands has established Wilson Combat as an industry leader in the specialty firearms and accessory market.

"It's hard to believe that the one-man gunsmithing shop I started in a 10' x 20' area in the back of my dad's jewelry store 45 years ago has grown to a multi-brand enterprise with over 200 employees in three states. It's been quite a ride and it



couldn't have been accomplished without our awesome team members," said Bill Wilson, president and CEO.

[/ wilsoncombat.com](http://wilsoncombat.com)

## DAKOTA ARMS BECOMES PARKWEST ARMS

Dakota Arms, a leading provider of custom-built bolt-action rifles and hunting and tactical rifles known for accuracy, has changed its name to Parkwest Arms.

Dedicated employees in Sturgis, S.D., still remain committed to their craft, from careful attention to flawless detail on the outside of the rifle to precision-crafted

internal components from premium materials. Rifle models that have proved popular with consumers include the SD-76 Dark Continent, PW-XTi and PW-P9.

Parkwest Arms uses modern CNC equipment and highest-grade, certified steel (no plastic or castings) to manufacture quality parts that are made to precise tolerances. Parkwest craftsmanship reflects decades of talent and a passion for the final product. The company offers handcrafted,



custom rifles with a wide range of options.

Established over 35 years ago in Sturgis, S.D., as Dakota Arms, Parkwest Arms has built an elite reputation among shooting and hunting enthusiasts.

[/ parkwestarms.com](http://parkwestarms.com)



# NEW PARTNERSHIPS

## DISTRIBUTION

**Chattanooga Shooting Supplies** expanded its offerings with the addition of **Rugged Rare's** line of concealed carry bags, wallets and EDC belts.

**Kinsey's** added **Rock Island Armory** firearms and **SIG SAUER** Electro-Optics and ammunition to its distribution assortment.

**Wolf Premium Oils** announced a new distribution relationship with **Blue Ridge Knives**. Blue Ridge Knives will assist in getting Wolf Premium Oils products into the hands of dealers across the country.

## INTERNATIONAL

**Blaser Group** hired **Gravel Agency** as its manufacturer's representative group for Canada. The Gravel team will serve as Blaser Group's sole sales representatives for the Blaser, Mauser and Sauer brands.

## SALES REPRESENTATION

**Blaser Group** announced **Dunkin-Lewis Inc.** is now its sole manufacturers' representative for all the company's brands throughout the U.S. The brands include Blaser, Mauser, Sauer and Rigby rifles; Minox optics; and Liemke Thermal Optics.

**Liberty Ammunition** is teaming up with **Maschmedt & Associates** for sales representation in the Western U.S.

**AMERIGLO** entered a new partnership with **Outtech Inc.** for exclusive sales representation of the AMERIGLO product line in the U.S. market.

## PR/MARKETING

**Wild Society Coffee** engaged **Hunter Outdoor Communications** as its public relations agency of record. The company will manage Wild Society Coffee's public relations and communications strategy worldwide.

**Fast and Friendly Brass** partnered with hunting and shooting sports firm **Full-Throttle Communications** for press relations, advertising and marketing.

**GAT Marketing** welcomed **AMMO Inc.** as a new customer. Ammo Inc. is the owner of GunBroker.com and producer of ammunition and components.

**Blue August LLC** was selected by **ET Arms Inc.** to assist in public and media relations through brand awareness, event promotion and industry presence. Blue August will guide marketing efforts to ensure all promotional platforms work together seamlessly.

**Fisher Space Pen** and **Barnett** have named **Source Outdoor Group** as agency of record. Source Outdoor Group is tasked with a wide range of responsibilities for the brands, including public relations and influencer management. Additionally, Medal of Honor recipient from the Naval Special Warfare Development Group, **Edward Byers** Master Chief Ret. selected Source Outdoor Group as his agency of record. In this role, Source Outdoor Group will provide brand development, social media marketing and public relations services.

**GPO USA** announced its partnership with **QuickFire** to handle its social media and organic managed services.

**Duck Commander** named **Murray Road Agency** as its marketing agency of record, which includes day-to-day public relations efforts and media buying for all Commander brands: Duck Commander, Strut Commander, Fin Commander and Buck Commander.

**Riton Optics** selected **Chevalier Advertising** as its strategic public relations agency of record.

**3Rivers Archery** and **Veil Camo** have renewed commitments with **UrgeMedia**.

**Liberty Ammunition** teamed up with **Frontier Media Labs** for marketing and media services.

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## WHITE BIRCH ARMORY SHOOTING RANGE AWARDED NSSF 5-STAR RATING

The NSSF announced it has awarded White Birch Armory its 5-Star rating for range excellence.

Located in Dover, N.H., White Birch Armory is a service-disabled, veteran-owned small business offering a full-service experience to customers. It boasts a new, state-of-the-art range, training and sales of firearms, ammunition and accessories.

“White Birch Armory demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of its customers, and providing them with a rewarding experience. For these and many other standout features, White Birch Armory is clearly deserving of the NSSF 5-Star Range Rating,” said Zach Snow, NSSF director of member development.

“We are humbled to be recognized as a 5-Star Range by the NSSF. The team at White Birch Armory works tirelessly to maintain a high standard while creating a positive environment in the firearms industry through training, education and meaningful interaction with our local



White Birch Armory team members celebrate being named an NSSF 5-Star Range. Pictured (from left): David Guard, director of operations; Sean Manning, owner; Zach Snow, NSSF director of member development; Brenna McCoubrey, marketing manager; Tyler Hecker, rangemaster; Renee Grim, retail sales manager.

community here on the seacoast of New Hampshire,” said Sean Manning, owner of White Birch Armory.

White Birch Armory features a state-of-the-art, 16-lane, 25-yard indoor shooting range that can accommodate shooters of varying abilities, and provides an excellent environment for firearm training classes. The 16 lanes are divided into two training bays, including a tactical bay that allows for training up and down the entire length of the range.

White Birch Armory also includes a walk-up eatery known as Caliber Café, a VIP member lounge, firearm simulator and a 3,000 sq. ft. showroom.

In the coming months, White Birch Armory plans on nearly doubling its retail showroom and increasing its warehouse space to accommodate the growth of its internet and wholesale businesses, along with its law enforcement and government contract capabilities. / [wbarmory.com](http://wbarmory.com) / [nssf.org](http://nssf.org)

## 5.11 AWARDED 2022 INNOVATION AWARD FOR FOOTWEAR

5.11 Tactical was named winner of the 2022 Innovation Award in the footwear category for its A/T 8" HD Boot from The Network American Association of Uniform Manufacturers & Distributors (NAUMD).

The NAUMD is a non-profit global network of companies that outfit hundreds of millions of workers around the world. Its annual Innovation Awards recognize unique designs, advanced technology and excellence within the public safety uniform, image apparel and footwear industry.

5.11 won the footwear category for its A/T 8" HD Boot for its ability to distribute weight, improve stability and return energy to provide all-day performance while also offering protection from heat and the sun.



“Our product team puts a strong emphasis on leading with innovation and advanced technology to create the best products possible for our end users,” said Brendan Rynne, senior category manager, footwear for 5.11. “We’re honored to

receive this award as a testament to our many hours of work and dedication to creating the A/T 8" HD Boot.”

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





## FERADYNE OUTDOORS ACQUIRES SCENT CRUSHER

FeraDyne Outdoors, a multi-brand family of archery, hunting and outdoor industry products, announced its acquisition of Scent Crusher.

Developed from NASA-based research, Scent Crusher is a leading ozone-activated technology used to effectively eliminate odors on clothing and gear. Scent Crusher products, which eliminate odor by killing the organisms that cause it, complement FeraDyne's suite of innovative archery brands in the hunting and outdoor markets.

"Dan Drake and the team at Scent Crusher have done an excellent job growing Scent Crusher through an unwavering commitment to the expansion of ozone-based scent elimination technology. We welcome the opportunity to integrate Scent Crusher into FeraDyne's growing portfolio of industry-leading brands, and we are excited to partner and build upon the remarkable momentum that Scent Crusher has created," said FeraDyne CEO Todd Seyfert.

Since 2015, Scent Crusher has provided hunters with a full line of field-effective products that leverage science-based research to effectively eliminate odors that come from sweat, soaps, food, perfume and more. Scent Crusher products contain no chemical residues or harmful byproducts.

Scent Crusher products include an extensive line of ozone generators, storage lockers, bags and totes, in addition to copper ion technology-based, scent-control soaps, shampoos and sprays.

In addition to Scent Crusher, FeraDyne Outdoors hunting and

outdoor brands include Axe Crossbows, Rage broadheads, Muzzy broadheads, Carbon Express arrows and accessories, Nockturnal lighted nocks, TruFire releases, Block targets, GlenDel targets, Shooter

3D targets, Black Hole targets, Hurricane bag targets, Sure-Loc archery products, Covert Scouting Cameras, Covert Optics and several other brands. / [feradyne.com](http://feradyne.com)  
/ [scentcrusher.com](http://scentcrusher.com)

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C. STEPHENS

### AGM GLOBAL VISION ADDS STAFF

AGM Global Vision announced two new hires: Chase Stephens as director of brand development and Randy Carothers as director of marketing.



R. CAROTHERS

Stephens has more than 15 years' experience in the optics industry, having spent most of his time in thermal products.

Carothers will work closely with the sales team and other executives on everything from creative direction, marketing communications and customer insights for product development.

"We are excited to have Randy on board and are confident he will help elevate the AGM brand to new heights," said Mark Tarakanov, AGM VP of sales.

Carothers' marketing background stems from roles at companies such as OSS Suppressors (now HUXWRX Safety Co.) and LMT Defense.



A. DEL RIO

### AOB NAMES VP/CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER

American Outdoor Brands Inc. (AOB) welcomed Arturo Del Rio to the newly created

position of VP of HR and chief people officer. He will oversee global HR for the company and is responsible for developing and implementing human capital strategies for the organization.

Brian D. Murphy, AOB president and CEO, said, "[Del Rio's] track record of developing and implementing intellectual capital strategies for world class, global companies, will make him a tremendous addition to our team."

Del Rio has over 24 years of HR leadership experience in the U.S. and Mexico. He most recently

served as global human resources director at Ferro Corp.

He earned a bachelor of labor degree in psychology from Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon in Monterrey, Mexico; a master of organizational development at the Universidad de Monterrey in Monterrey, Mexico; and an MBA from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.



B. GALLASSO

### PRIMARY ARMS RECRUITS SALES MANAGER

Primary Arms Government welcomed Brice Gallasso as the new

U.S. law enforcement territory sales manager for the western region where he will work with and represent teams across the western U.S.

"Brice has over 12 years of L.E. experience, which will surely be an advantage with his current customer base," said Özge Cumberland, Primary Arms' SVP of sales, marketing and business development.

Over the course of his L.E. career, Gallasso earned numerous instructor-level certifications, including TCOLE Firearms Instructor, TCOLE Basic Instructor and TCOLE Field Training Officer as well as TASER Instructor titles.

### STAG ARMS APPOINTS GM



R. DONAHUE

Stag Arms announced the appointment of Ryan Donahue as GM.

Elie Azar, White Wolf Capital founder, CEO and managing

director said, "Ryan's extensive marketing and brand management experience, combined with his persona and enthusiasm to drive results, is a winning formula."

Donahue most recently served as the director of brand management at American Outdoor Brands. Prior to joining the

firearms industry, he worked in the film industry as a director of production and marketing.

He earned a bachelor's in English Language and Literature/Letters from University of Miami, and a master's in mass communication/media studies from Lynn University.



J. BURCKHALTER



K. DYROFF

### NWTF ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) CEO Becky Humphries is retiring Feb. 2023.

Jason Burckhalter and Kurt Dyroff were appointed as co-CEOs, and

Humphries will serve with them until she steps down.

"Building on Becky's accomplishments and to prepare the NWTF for the future, the board decided ... to tap the unique experiences and energy of not just one but two of the organization's top executives," said Bryan Perry, NWTF board of directors president.

As co-CEOs, Dyroff will lead the organization's mission-related activities, including conservation, finance and accounting and general business support. Burckhalter will oversee membership and fundraising-related duties, including field operations and development, marketing and communications, membership, information technology and facility management.

Dyroff served as NWTF's chief business and finance officer for the past three years. Before joining the NWTF, he held various conservation-focused executive capacities at Ducks Unlimited. Dyroff is a graduate of The Pennsylvania State University where he earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering.



Burckhalter was the NWTF's CIO for the past three years following his time as VP of finance and controller. Prior to the NWTF, he held various executive roles with for-profit entities. Burckhalter is a graduate of Lander University where he earned a bachelor's degree in finance/economics. He received an MBA from Augusta University and an accounting degree from Auburn University.



J. WHITTEN

#### **HECKLER & KOCH PROMOTES MANAGER**

Jason Whitten was promoted to law enforcement sales manager at Heckler & Koch (HK). Whitten is the primary point of contact for law enforcement across local and state agencies. He is also charged with growing HK's L.E. dealer base across the U.S.

Nathan Schueth, HK director of sales and program management, said, "[Whitten's] extensive leadership experience in law enforcement, particularly in grants and procurement, will make him quite an asset now that he sits on the other side of the desk — so to speak."

Whitten joined HK in 2019 as a customer service representative after retiring from a 25-year law enforcement career.



S. FALDON

#### **UMAREX USA RETAINS MARKETING MANAGER**

Scott Faldon was appointed marketing manager for Umarex USA. In this position, he will lead, manage and execute holistic marketing strategies for the company's product categories in North America.

Justin "JB" Biddle, Umarex VP of marketing, said, "We're excited Scott brings with him both a passion for the outdoors and a solid marketing background that will assist us and our retail partners in connecting our brand and products with the end user."

Faldon's industry career spans more than 25 years. He joins Umarex after several years with PRADCO. Prior to that, Faldon covered sports news as a writer and editor at the *Times Record of Fort Smith*. He earned a bachelor's in English from the University of Central Arkansas.



W. SMITH

#### **ETS GROUP TAPS SALES MANAGER**

ETS Group welcomed Wylie Smith as national sales manager where he oversees national accounts and sales reps.

"Wylie brings with him a skill set essential in the hook-and-bullet market," said ETS Group VP of Sales Jim Hansen. "We believe Wylie will help us to position ourselves as a premier business in the tactical and outdoor industries."

Smith has over three decades of experience in sales, purchasing and distribution from serving as director of purchasing at RSR Group.



K. JONES

#### **APEX AMMUNITION WELCOMES MARKETING DIRECTOR**

Kile Jones has joined APEX Ammunition as the director of marketing where he will spearhead the development and management of marketing initiatives for the company and work with the current advertising, communications and social media teams.

Jason Lonsberry, APEX CEO stated, "[Jones] will be a key part of our team as we continue to navigate the explosive growth we've experienced these past few years and find new ways to engage with our customers."

Jones was an APEX Ambassador before joining the company. He previously served as marketing specialist for Dive Bomb Industries and worked for Higdon Outdoors/Power Calls as national sales manager. **SI**

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BY MASSAD AYOUB

## LEADING YOUR CUSTOMERS TO THE LIGHT(S)

**P**ersonal illumination devices have probably advanced faster than firearms in terms of “lighter, handier and less bulk with more power.” Have your customers kept up?

Just the casual question, “What are you carrying for a flashlight these days?” can be the starting point of a sale. An amazing number of people, including a lot who carry a concealed handgun daily, would have to go to their car, desk or, heck, back home to find a flashlight.

Daily carry of a flashlight is at the least a huge convenience and at worst — a life-saver. In the latter vein, I still remember one of my students from about 20 years ago. He had just about become the SureFire poster child, and with good reason. He was a survivor of the Twin Towers on 9/11, and the horror was still fresh in his mind from the living hell he and others had endured going down what seemed like endless pitch-black stairwells by feel after the power went out. He had been lucky, one of the last ones out before his tower collapsed. He swore to never again be without one or more powerful flashlights on his physical person.

For the average man or woman, even if they never experience a disaster, the everyday carry (EDC) flashlight is one of the handiest accoutrements. Most of us who carry them find use for them

almost daily. A pen rolls under the desk. Individuals find themselves in darkened public restrooms and have to search for the light switch. We need to find something in the very back of the safe. The list of uses is almost endless.

And if the above isn't enough ...

### GENTLY NEUTRALIZING POOR EXCUSES

The customer might say, “I don't need one, I have a light on my phone.” Yes, I understand. So do I. In fact, my iPhone has become my second flashlight. It's strictly backup, though, for finding a keyhole for the key in poor light or some other situation where I only need a little bit of light, and only at short range. It's not going to temporarily blind an attacker in the dark, nor identify what's in the hand of the man at the other end of the dark alley by the parking lot, nor help me make an accurate shot swiftly under poor lighting conditions.

Or you might get “I don't need one; I have one on my pistol!” It's true enough: Today's weapon-mounted lights (WMLs) have reached a stage of compactness — and our holster-makers have created concealable rigs for them — all of which makes daily carry of a light-mounted pistol possible and even practical. However, this means one has to draw a gun to utilize the light.

Encourage the customer to think

◀ Weapon-mounted lights, like the Streamlight TLR-1 HL pictured here, have reached a level of compactness to be carried in compatible holsters. Remind customers with this setup having a backup light is essential! (Photo: Streamlight Inc.)

about that. I know of a friendship lost when a man showed the new dog in his pickup truck to a friendly sheriff's deputy one night. Not really able to see the pupper, the deputy reflexively reached for the only light he had on his person: the department-issue Streamlight TLR-1 on his department-issue GLOCK, which was fully loaded. The two nearly came to blows when the gun/light was pointed at the dog. I don't think a formal complaint was lodged with the sheriff's office, but it apparently ended a friendship.

The use of the WML for a non-deadly force situation can have horrible consequences. Remind any of your customers doing a search with a WML means *pointing a lethal weapon at everything we look at!* I remind my students it's directly analogous to the slob hunter who scans for game through the telescopic sight of his deer rifle ... and finds he has pointed a loaded gun at everyone in the woods by the time he sees them and identifies them as a “no-shoot.”



**Just the casual question, ‘What are you carrying for a flashlight these days?’ can be the starting point of a sale.**

Most people who carry guns concealed *don't* put lights on them; ditto most people who have guns at home for family protection. In either case, separate illumination is critical for searching, and in poor light — where even a customer with 20/20 vision might be the equivalent of legally blind — it's vitally important to have illumination to distinguish a deadly foe from a “no-shoot target.”

And of course, there's the ever popular “I already have a very cool tactical light, thank you very much.” I get it. So do you. But it's a perfect moment



for you to segue into what you might have to offer that's smaller, lighter and/or more powerful — and thus better suited to your customer's needs. Which leads us to ...

### THE LATEST & GREATEST

The old guy writing this column hung out with a lot of New York City cops back in the 1970s, and noticed even on day shift uniformed officers there were *required* to carry flashlights on duty. Why? Because the next minute could take them into

a darkened building, and a daytime emergency could run long into dangerous night work.

The same can be true for the armed citizen. When the Maglite company brought out the pocket size Mini-Mag, it was a godsend, and when SureFire brought out the 6P I designed a horizontal carrier for it on the front of my belt; after all, it was only a flashlight, and there was no need to waste concealment space on it. The Mini-Mag was relegated to backup, and sat very comfortably and accessibly vertical next to a wallet in my hip pocket.

Time went on. Lights got smaller. For years my primary was a SureFire L1 Digital LumaMax clipped in a side pocket, backed up by a Mini-Mag. The iPhone's light replaced the Mini-Mag for non-serious light work, and of late, the L1 has been supplanted with a Streamlight Wedge. It's flatter, and being rechargeable instead of battery-powered, a bit lighter ... and brighter.

It sits very comfortably in the cell phone pocket of my trousers next to a spare pistol magazine.

Another trendy development is the green beam. Here's what the Maglite folks have to say about their new MiniMag LED Pro: "Green is great for outdoors as animals, insects and fish typically do not react to seeing a green LED light source. Visually, your eye responds better to green and blue color lighting. [It] protects your night vision and avoids eye strain typically associated with using white LEDs for an extended period of time. [A] great rescue light for both the professional rescuer, as well as the average consumer, green LED flashlights can be seen up to a mile away."

He who controls the light need not fear the darkness. If Miss Manners didn't say, "You can't be too thin, too rich or have too many flashlights" ... well, maybe she should have. Practicality and logic can convince your customers to agree. **SI**

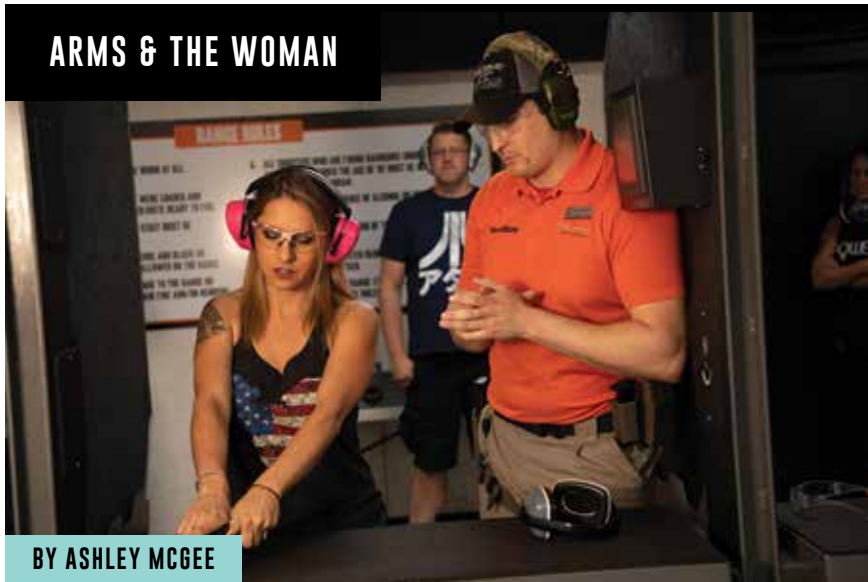


Maglite XL50 LED Spectrum Series

An advertisement for Impala Plus Shotguns. The background shows a man in a grey shirt aiming a shotgun. Overlaid on the image are four different shotgun models: Mikeno (orange and black camouflage), Elite Aqua (blue and silver), Urban (colorful abstract pattern), and Emerald (solid brown). To the right, the text reads "IMPALA PLUS SHOTGUNS" in large, bold letters, with "WHERE QUALITY MEETS EVERYDAY PERFORMANCE" underneath. Below this, a red banner says "2022 STOCKING DEALER PROGRAM". Underneath that, in white text on a dark background, it says "MINIMUM PURCHASE: 10 IMPALA PLUS SHOTGUNS", "NO MORE THAN TWO OF THE SAME ITEM", and "MAXIMUM OF 30 TOTAL". Below that, in large white letters, it says "10% OFF DEALER PRICING WITH MINIMUM QUALIFYING ORDER". At the bottom, there is a detailed diagram of a shotgun with various features labeled: Removable Comb Riser, Adjustable Shims, Ventilated Rib, Coated Barrels, TrueGlo Fiber Optic Sight, Soft Recoil Pad, Overmold, Oversize Bolt Release, and Improved Trigger. The website "IMPALAPLUSSHOTGUNS.COM" is at the bottom left. The bottom right features the "EXCLUSIVE OFFERING FROM ZANDERS" logo, with "AMERICA'S DISTRIBUTION COMPANY SINCE 1962" written below it.



## ARMS & THE WOMAN



BY ASHLEY MCGEE

# 7 KEYS TO MAKE YOUR RANGE MORE WELCOMING TO WOMEN

**T**he past two years saw a significant surge in first-time gun owners. Coupled with the debate over gun control legislation back at the forefront, a renewed focus on education and training is more important than ever.

NSSF revealed at least 5.4 million people purchased a firearm for the first time in 2021, many of whom were women. Of those, nearly 47% of first-time gun buyers in 2021 inquired about training and 43% signed up for training.

While on the surface these figures help paint the picture of a promising future for the firearms industry, what ranges and retailers should see is the opportunity to do better.

From the statistic, this means nearly 3.1 million first-time buyers *didn't* sign up for training last year alone. Let that number sink in. Then, ask yourself why.

The short answer? Shooting ranges can be intimidating.

So, what can you do to make your range more welcoming and appealing to women? Here are some ideas.

### 1. EVALUATE YOUR FACILITY

The longer you've been in the firearms industry, the harder it can be to relate to the experience of someone coming to your range to shoot for the first time. And, unless you're a woman,

there are some things you likely wouldn't give a second thought.

In an article for the USCCA, "Why Women Won't Go To The Shooting Range," Beth Alcazar shared the restroom facilities (or the lack thereof) are one of the many reasons women have used to explain their absence or their avoidance of gun ranges.

"It's something many females inquire about, and it's something that may keep them from fully enjoying the firearm training, competition or just the camaraderie of shooting with family, friends or even strangers at the gun range," she said.

Put yourself in a woman's shoes, or better yet, ask a woman to visit your range and share her experience. Things that may seem trivial to you, like curb appeal or whether your parking lot is well lit, may be deterrents to a woman ever setting foot inside.

### 2. DIVERSIFICATION

More Americans from all walks of life are buying guns. Today's gun owner is increasingly diverse, with significant growth of women and minorities purchasing firearms. You may roll your eyes and think "diversity, equity and inclusion" are just buzzwords, but representation matters.

"Based on my personal experiences

◀ If you really want to gauge how welcoming your store is to women, try asking them to share their experiences — it will help you to key in on potential deterrents that would keep other women from visiting. (Photo: Magnum Range)

and also things I've seen working and teaching at gun ranges, the main two things that keep women away from the range are 1) the perceived lack of diversity/inclusion; 2) the attitudes of the staff," said Desstoni Johnson, owner of FAB Firearms Academy in Little Rock, Ark.

"I got started working at a local range part-time and I was the only Black female employee. Women were always so surprised to see me behind the counter and you could literally see their shoulders drop and the tension leave their bodies when they spotted me," she recalled. "The ratio of men to women in a gun range is off-putting for some. They feel as if they'll be demeaned or just made uncomfortable trying to explain their needs to a guy who may understand, but simply can't fully empathize with the unique set of issues women face."

Having female instructors, not just women in sales or administrative roles, helps.

"When a woman sees another woman just like her doing something she initially thought she could never be good at, it suddenly doesn't feel so out of reach," Johnson added.

Valerie Bernhardt, training coordinator and instructor at H&H Shooting Sports in Oklahoma City agrees. She's the first point of contact when someone inquires about training.

"I'm the only female who works in the retail part of the building. All the other women work in the café or in the administration offices," she said. "Having an instructor or range safety officer who's a woman makes a big difference."

Bernhardt also teaches private lessons and a small, women-only gun safety and fundamentals class.

Sauna Mahoney, owner of Moms Who Carry, echoed the sentiments expressed by both Johnson and Bernhardt.

"I'd love to see more female staffing in our local ranges, from counter sales to RSOs and instructors," she said.

Product diversification is another subtle way to tell women they're welcome.



"Stocking more apparel and holster options for women would not only be great for our inner shopaholics, but would also make things look more inviting to female shoppers at first glance," Mahoney noted.

### 3. FOSTER COMMUNITY & CAMARADERIE

Diversification doesn't only apply to who you employ, but every area of your business — including the imagery you use in marketing materials and class offerings.

"Class offerings matter. If a range does not currently offer 'women-only' courses or have a designated ladies' night like my local range does, it's definitely something to consider implementing," said Johnson. "Women-only courses aren't meant to be any easier — nothing about firing in self-defense or preparing for an attack is easy — but classes catered to women allow the instructor to focus solely on topics more relatable to women, which means they better retain the information."

Mahoney shared ladies' night events are also helpful for fostering a

sense of community at the range.

"Ladies' nights on the range are always fun for shooting and getting to know other women who you can continue to enjoy the range with!" she said.

You might also consider hosting a women's shooting group, like The Well Armed Woman or A Girl & A Gun, to further help promote the camaraderie and community aspects of shooting.



**Put yourself in a woman's shoes, or better yet, ask a woman to visit your range and share her experience. Things that may seem trivial to you, like curb appeal or whether your parking lot is well lit, may be deterrents to a woman ever setting foot inside.**

### 4. ANSWER QUESTIONS BEFORE THEY'RE ASKED

From discomfort or fear to lack of knowledge or even gear, there's a host of reasons why a woman won't come to the shooting range. A simple way to help alleviate any anxiety is to answer questions before they're asked, and a great way to do this is through your website.

Your website has the ability to work for you 24/7 — even when your range is closed. And often, it's a person's first experience with your business.

Take a page from The Well Armed Woman's book. Their website includes valuable information like the do's and don'ts of gun-range attire and gun-range etiquette. The NRA Women website features articles on topics like what a first-time guest would need and how to introduce significant others to firearms. If you don't have

the resources to create original content yourself, include links to trusted third parties.

You can also add frequently asked questions to your range's Google My Business page like standard rental fees and what it includes, what gear/apparel is required on the range, etc.

Getting in front of your most frequently asked questions and making your answers readily available is a great way to turn more searchers into customers — and also another way to stay one step ahead of your competitors.

### 5. CONSIDER VIRTUAL OFFERINGS

You've probably heard the saying, "Why buy the cow when you can get milk for free?" But when it comes to shooting ranges, offering little free nuggets of information can serve as a gateway to attract more people to visit in-person.

Adding a video library to your website is a great way to position yourself as an expert in your field, build credibility and, more importantly, humanize your brand. The videos can be hosted on YouTube, then embedded on your website and also uploaded directly to social media platforms for maximum reach.

You might even consider going "live" on social media to show some simple range drills or supplementing your in-person training courses with paid virtual experiences like a webinar on gun cleaning and maintenance. The possibilities are endless.

"I personally have found being at the range and teaching and posting my lessons on Facebook has been a huge draw for the range I'm associated with," said Debbie Rose, firearms instructor and owner of Girls Shoot Guns Too.

A report by global marketing communications agency Wunderman Thompson, presented at the 2022 National Retail Federation Conference, found 93% of consumers say technology is our future, 76% say their everyday lives depend on it and 81% believe a brand's digital presence is as important as its in-store presence.

**Continued on p. 48**



Desstoni Johnson, owner of FAB Firearms Academy, recommends facilities seeking greater participation from women need women-only events and female instructors.



## BEST PRACTICES



BY TIM BARKER

# FRIENDLY COMPETITION: HOSTING RANGE EVENTS

**T**wice a month, dozens of customers gather on the range at Nashville Armory for a bit of friendly competition. These are the nights when the Tennessee store puts on its popular Shoot N Scoot events — a Tuesday night affair for pistols and a newer Thursday night program for rifles.

Each of the events is designed to stress and test a range of shooting skills — most of which are applicable to self-defense and concealed-carry situations. But they also represent a chance for the store to build long-term relationships with these customers.

For General Manager Jason Edgley, these Shoot N Scoots aren't about making money. (At least not on a per-event basis.)

"It's a give-back to our customers," he elaborated. "We want them to have a great time and come back."

For Nashville Armory and other shops around the country, using a range for regular competitions and special events can provide significant benefits. They have the potential to boost revenue streams. Even more, they create bonds with customers, who are given yet another reason to keep coming back. They may even be one of the keys to turning some first-time buyers into firearms enthusiasts.

## MORE THAN PUNCHING HOLES IN TARGETS

Nashville Armory offers a glimpse

into what's possible for any range entertaining the idea of offering some sort of range competition. Shortly after opening in 2012, the shop started with an official IDPA match. Over time, they decided to go a different direction and invent a game of their own.

"We really wanted to be our own governing body," Edgley stated. "This is the driving force for Shoot N Scoot."

In this sense, any shop is limited only by the imagination of its management and employees. There are numerous "official" games to choose from, including International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA), United States Practical Shooting Association (USPSA), GLOCK Sport Shooting Foundation (GSSF) and Steel Challenge Shooting Association (SCSA).

Another approach: Come up with a game that best fits your own range, business goals and customer base. Shoot N Scoot has certainly been a hit with Nashville customers. In the early days, they were shutting down half the range for a dozen or so participants. These days, the crowd regularly tops 50 (at \$25 a person) and consumes the entire range.

At the end of each year, Nashville Armory offers prizes for the top three finishers in two divisions (irons and optics), with a couple of guns handed out last year. More than anything, Edgley sees it as a chance to reinforce basic gun skills for customers, who are faced with scenarios (or stages) emphasizing

◀ Shoot N Scoot participants receive a briefing from an RO at Nashville Armory. This weekly event has created quite a following in the community.

various aspects of self-defense shooting.

"It's hard to talk about Shoot N Scoot without using the word 'competition,' but it's not what it's all about," he said.

Centennial Gun Club, southeast of Denver, uses its range for a variety of events, including a monthly bowling-pin night, steel challenge (with .22 LR) and a new USPSA match. They also offer GSSF matches a few times a year, along with special events, including a night bowling-pin match using blacklights and glow-in-the-dark pins.

Much of it is geared toward the idea of adding extra value to range memberships (discounts are offered for most of the events.) But these competitions can also serve to help newbies connect with the gun community, said Joey Mizufuka, Centennial sales manager and instructor.

Instead of just seeing a new gun as something to stick in the bedside table, they start to see other possibilities.

"It opens up their eyes to the idea guns are for sporting purposes," Mizufuka argued.

“

**Come up with a game that best fits your own range, business goals and customer base.**

At Ultimate Defense Firing Range & Training Center in St. Peters, Mo., regular events include a bowling-pin night and silhouette league (using small metal targets, including a ram and turkey.)

"When you shoot them, they really fly off the table," said Paul Bastean, managing director, noting dynamic action is key to all of their competitions.

"It's not just punching holes in targets. When you shoot, something happens. And the customers love it," he added.

To encourage repeat competitors,



Ultimate Defense has a monthly contest where scores on a particular target (in December it's a Christmas tree, for example) earn entries for a gun giveaway. One key for success, Bastean said, is not skimping on the rewards. Consider when the shop got its first two GLOCK 44s, one of them went into the gun-of-the-month contest.

"The prizes we give away are all good prizes. It's not just garbage we can't sell," he explained.

### "A LESSON LEARNED"

When you start thinking outside the box, you'll quickly realize not everything is going to work. The more creative you get, the more chances you give yourself to say something along the lines of: "We're never going to do that again."

Ultimate Defense has a couple of those stories, both with an autumn theme. The first was the time they decided to have a contest where participants would be judged based on the quality of faces they could shoot onto a jack-o'-lantern target. Turns out it takes several hundred rounds to get a decent face.

And then there was the time they bought a bunch of pumpkins and offered them up to shooters. Two days of power washing to clean up the mess left Bastean with a simple conclusion: "It was an astronomical mistake."

Mizufuka at Centennial Gun Club remembers when they first tried their .22-caliber steel challenge event. They underestimated the potential for damage from deflected fragments. This fact was brought home squarely when a ricochet took out one of the range sprinkler heads, drenching the place.

"A lesson learned," he laughed. "So, I built a wooden barrier that's easy to set up to catch the splatter."

Both ranges have adjusted their bowling-pin contests. Mizufuka changed the format — moving from heads-up matches to simple time-based scoring. Some competitors weren't all that fond of going against the top shooters in direct contests.

Ultimate Defense switched to plastic pins. "You don't get splinters off plastic pins," Bastean explained.

"There's just not as much mess."

In Nashville, the biggest adjustment they've made is in how Shoot N Scoot runs. In a typical IDPA or USPSA match, everyone shows up at the same time and waits for their turn to shoot each of the stages. A match can easily take three or more hours to complete.

Now, Nashville offer signups for three different one-hour blocks, allowing participants more control over how much time they are dedicating to the match.



**Using a range for regular competitions and special events can provide significant benefits. They have the potential to boost revenue streams. Even more, they create bonds with customers, who are given yet another reason to keep coming back.**

"They can stick around as long as they want. But now, it's not a forced function," Edgley said. "You're here maybe an hour and a half."

### WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

There are different ways to approach these sorts of events. Making money directly from them may be a challenge (particularly in the early days) once you factor in employee time, potential lost range revenue, supplies and prizes.

For some ranges, the idea of turning competitions into a solid revenue stream never even enters the equation. Edgley is in it for relationship building — and doing his part to educate and train his customers.

"We're providing them with a safe venue to practice certain skills you

usually only do at an outdoor range," he said, while noting most of his urban customers don't have easy access to an outdoor facility.

Each month he sees evidence the plan is working. At least half the people at each match are regulars. But he sees five to 10 new faces in each group. Invariably, some of those return for future matches.

"From the beginning, we accepted we weren't going to make much money off this, but we wanted to generate repeat customers," he said.

These are the same people who end up buying guns, ammo and other accessories. And in recent years, the matches have turned profitable, allowing the shop to upgrade the range and targets.

It's a similar story at Centennial in Colorado.

"Does it make money? I think we're lucky to break even," Mizufuka said. "But it's for our members. We want to give them something to do."

They also help generate traffic, he said: "Since I brought back USPSA matches, I'm getting more people in the store who are interested in the competition gear we carry."

Still, this doesn't mean there isn't money to be made.

At Ultimate Defense in St. Peters, Bastean estimates they bring in an extra \$2,000 to \$2,500 a month from the various contests.

"The first benefit of these events is they drive traffic. The second benefit is they make money," he said.

The boost is seen elsewhere as well. They sell more ammo, range bags, optics, magazines and loading devices. They watch shooters come in off the range asking for electronic hearing protection, so they can take part in the social aspect of the events. Then there are the guns.

"People want to buy whatever the winner was shooting," he said.

For shops that aren't seeing robust range use, these competitions can also help to jumpstart activity. Bastean suggests moving away from the *Field of Dreams* model, thinking if you build a range, "they will come."

"It doesn't work that way," Bastean noted. "People need to be engaged and entertained." **SI**



Photo: NSSF

BY DOUG VANDERWOUDE

# 500 RANGE VISITS & COUNTING ...

WHAT MAKES  
SOME RANGES  
MORE SUCCESSFUL  
THAN OTHERS?

**F**or this special Range Issue, I thought a rundown of some “best practices” I’ve picked up in 500+ onsite visits to individual ranges around the country would be helpful for range operators — and even retail-only facilities. Here are some lasting takeaways on what makes some ranges more successful than others.

## FIRST SHOTS: IT WORKS

If you’re looking to get more shooters in the stalls, there’s no better way than to offer a First Shots event. Those of you who have been around a while, may scoff and say “Ah, we tried that once” — but you need to know NSSF Retail & Range Business Development Coordinator Ann Gamauf and her team have now super-charged the program.

A fee can now be applied to the class, plus ranges are able to offer participants a \$25 gift certificate good at your store/range. Yes, you read that right: They take the class and receive a \$25 gift card to your facility, courtesy of NSSF.

Jessica Keffer, marketing manager at The Sportsman’s Shop in East Earl, Pa., is one reaping the benefits of the new program (and they charge \$50 per student). She reports over half of the students returned to the range after taking

the First Shots class, plus more than 25% took a private lesson. Keffer offers a discount coupon on select items that would outfit a beginner shooter — such as eye/ear protection and locking storage. In the first 30 days after an event, over a quarter of the students come back to the store to make a purchase.

*More than half* of the shooters came back, and *a quarter* of them took another class, plus 25% purchased more equipment. I don’t know what more you could ask for to fill your range during the slow months!

## DON’T FORGET ABOUT “FUN”

First Shots does a great job of promoting the fun of shooting — does your range? Do you go after Tactical Tammy or Mall Ninja Mike, but aren’t marketing to those who shoot for recreation?

Take a look at your target



selection. Are they all silhouettes and dark colors? Gun Fun Targets (and others) offer fun, colorful targets — like balloons and carnival games — and sell them in a fun pack of three to five targets for more sales.

### PUT YOURSELF IN FIRST-TIME CUSTOMERS' SHOES

Package rental guns into shooting experiences. Envision yourself as a new shooter: How do you figure what it costs to go shooting at your range? The lane fee doesn't tell you much, as you still need to add in a rental gun if

you don't own one. A first-time guest may not have eye/ear protection yet, so that needs to be added. And, of course, you'll need ammunition (a range experience isn't much fun without it) and something to shoot at.

Being new to the sport, first-time guests have no clue how much any of those items cost by themselves. It's more straightforward for new shooters to know how much these items are — and even simpler when you bundle the whole experience together in one easy-to-understand package.

Golf offers a similar example. A first-time golfer could go buy a putter, wedge, driver and some balls, but it's much simpler when the retailer offers a package with the needed clubs, balls and a bag as one package. The same thing applies to shooting.

### MAKE IT EXCITING

Strap on your marketing hat to make the experience exciting. Have a local celebrity? Make a package with his/her three favorite firearms. Try a U.S. military package, where a new shooter can experience a magazine through each of the 1911, AR-15 and either SIG M17 or Beretta M9 platforms. Besides the firearm and ammunition (already preloaded in the magazines), include eye/ear protection (preferably with your range logo on them) and a range-logoed hat or T-shirt. Offer to super-size the package with extra

ammunition for an additional fee.

Having rental-gun magazines pre-loaded with ammo will sell more ammo. Ever watched a new shooter struggle trying to get 17 rounds into a GLOCK 17 magazine? It's the definition of anti-fun. Make it easy for them and they'll buy more — even most experienced shooters don't enjoy loading magazines.

Need more incentive to offer packages? Consider some younger generations lean more toward experiences than owning — your range rental packages fit the bill. In the future, some shooters may enjoy the sport by coming in often to rent firearms (maybe even the same one over and over), so you're essentially storing and maintaining it for them.

A final point on rental gun packages: Think of the time savings for your staff not having to explain options and pricing as the customer suffers "paralysis by analysis," figuring out what they want. Like anything in your business, use data to keep track of what packages were a hit or not — and keep tweaking to your market. Change it up at least quarterly.

### MAXIMIZE RENTAL-GUN EXPOSURE

Another good trick on rental firearms is to advertise the total retail dollar value of the rentals you have on hand. Telling the public "*We have 100 rental firearms to choose from*" does not sound nearly as impressive as saying "*Select from over \$50,000 worth of rental firearms for only \$20!*" If you have full-autos available, all the better for your dollar figure.

More on rental firearms: Do you have rental-gun signage on your *retail* guns? For firearms in the display case that are also available for rent, put "Try Me" signage on them. Daniel Defense, FN and some other manufacturers offer this signage. For those who don't, make your own. Many buyers have no clue they can test-fire guns on your range; let these tags tell them.

Sarah Parkhurst, director of operations at Ann Arbor Arms in Ann Arbor, Mich., reports rentals of Daniel Defense guns have increased by 70% since she started using the tags to



**WE ALL TALK ABOUT MAKING RANGES MORE INVITING FOR THOSE NEW TO OUR SPORT, SO UPGRADING A SMALL AREA OF YOUR RANGE CAN GO A LONG WAY TOWARD THE GOAL.**



Holding a First Shots class can be a boon to your operation — especially when you can suggest product bundles to outfit first-time shooters.





**Left:** Stamping a logo on the range is a great opportunity to promote your brand, such as what Sprague's Sports in Yuma, Ariz., has implemented to great success. **Right:** In a similar vein, having fun signage for guests to hold after a day of shooting will lead to increased promotion of your range through social media posts. Here, Doug (right) has some fun claiming bragging rights over Rob Davidson of Blaze Sales Group.

promote them — which has likewise led to more retail sales of Daniel Defense firearms.

The “try before you buy” approach is a huge advantage for stores with ranges. We need to let the shoppers know we offer this; the tags help by not needing to rely solely on salespeople to perform this function.

## EFFECTIVE BRANDING

When it comes to branding/promoting your range, here are a couple easy ones. Have an “I shot better than” sign available for shooters to tease the friend they came in with. Of course, the sign will have your range logo and information on it.

The Powder Room in Panama City Beach, Fla., uses the one pictured above — with yours truly and Rob Davidson, president of Blaze Sales Group, demonstrating. In a similar vein, a selfie spot is great for shooters to document their experience on social media. Your selfie spot can be a simple backdrop, although something more unique will get more use and your range more exposure.

Is your logo on your range? I'm seeing more ranges putting their logo on the floor of the range near the stalls. This not only promotes your business (especially when shooters take pictures), but it can also look good. Vista Outdoor is working on a program where ranges are able to apply co-op

funds for in-range signage (as shown above) from Sprague Sports in Yuma, Ariz.

Speaking of making your range look classy, adding commercial-grade flooring to the area from the firing line to the wall behind shooters can really upgrade your range look. Many ranges are only 12' from the fire line to the front wall, so the cost is minimal to soften the look of your range. We all talk about making ranges more inviting for those new to our sport, so upgrading a small area of your range can go a long way toward the goal.

## START A TAB

Want to sell more ammunition to range guests? If your POS allows running a tab, make it easy for guests (and better for your bottom line) by allowing them to take three boxes into the range with them.

It works like this: A guest asks for a box of 9mm range ammo with their lane time, your staff gives them three boxes, telling the guest, “Hey, to save time, take these three boxes. You won't have to come out of the range, stand in line and use up some of your range time. We'll only charge for what you open.” When the guest checks out and has only opened two, your clerk can offer to take the third box off the tab or point out three boxes earn a price discount of a X% off each box.

Something else that works well is

when a consumer asks for a box of ammunition anywhere in the store, have your staff hand them two boxes. Over 20% of the time, they'll take the second box. With no expiration date and prices increasing, it's good for both of you. If they don't want it, put it back on shelf — no harm, no foul.

Think of your ammunition sales in the course of a year, and add 20% to that number. It should put a smile on your face. It didn't cost you anything and should have you dancing on the cash register.

## MAKE YOUR “WELCOME” OBVIOUS

We'll close with another small, but oh-so-important one: Do you have “Public Welcome” signage on your building and all marketing material? If not, you're missing folks every single day.

It seems as soon as you have a range, folks tend to think your operation is a member-only facility. How many folks have never walked through your door because they still believe this? Tell them loud and proud — they are welcome. **SI**

Range operators — what other sales tips would you add to this list? Retail-only dealers, do you see any of this impacting the way you promote your business? Let the SI team know: [editor@shootingindustry.com](mailto:editor@shootingindustry.com).



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# THE ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 5 STAR TREATMENT

By Ken Perrotte

## *Special Range Designation Gives Retail Managers Marketing Leverage*

**S**ustained high-level business performance requires paying attention to details — large and small. Everything must come together to create the desired outcomes. Satisfied customers result in profitability, enabling retailers to reinvest and thrive, ideally continually improving their game.

In the area of

managed, private sector indoor shooting ranges, the NSSF outlines the criteria that managers can use to drive excellence. The capstone payoff is designation as an NSSF 5-Star Range.

To earn NSSF's 5-Star facility rating, a range must demonstrate quality across four categories: Appearance, Management, Shooting Sports Development and Amenities. Within each

main category are sub-categories. For example, Appearance has Signage and Facility Exterior and Interior as sub-categories. Management sub-categories include Corporate Technology, Financial Awareness & Compliance, Marketing & Advertising, Staff Training, Uniforms, Security & Safety and Leadership. Sub-categories in the Shooting Sports Development Category include one of the same name as the main category, Community Engagement, Range Equipment & Practices and Environmental. The final main category,

Amenities, assesses Retail Store/Pro Shop, Restrooms and Other Amenities.

Scoring criteria are grouped within the sub-categories. Using this as a detailed checklist, managers make an honest self-assessment across some 120 mostly qualitative criteria spanning the gamut of the operational and customer experience.

Each response requires supporting documentation, which can include photos or written explanations or both. A top score of 5 is warranted when a retailer demonstrably exceeds the criteria. A



score of 3 is awarded for meeting the criteria. Failure to meet the criteria results in a goose egg — a 0.

The NSSF provides a form to use used in completing the assessment (which can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3A49pPJ>). A review panel comprised of members of the NSSF Range Advisory Council assesses and validates each submission packet.

### THREE MAKING IT WORK!

Those who've gained that 5-Star distinction say it comes with benefits. Here's a look at three top-performing ranges.

Will Doss is the general manager a Green Top Sporting Goods' range in Ashland, Va. Green Top Shooting's range began operations in 2019. Last year, the facility hosted more than 36,000 shooters. The 5-Star rating came in January 2022.

"We cater to all of types of shooters with various skill levels," Doss said. "It isn't uncommon to see some of our members 3-5 times a

week. They vary in age and diversity from the young adult just discovering their passion for shooting to the retired individual who now has more time to do what they love."

Handgun shooters comprise most of Green Top's guests followed by modern sporting rifle fans. Rimfire and defensive shotgun shooters are at the other end of the spectrum, but steadily gaining numbers, Doss adds.

Nishan Campbell, co-founder and CEO of Gunfighter Canyon, with locations in Page and Williams, Ariz., says both of his facilities received the 5-Star rating in July 2021. The Williams range is located on Historic Route 66, in the heart of downtown.

Each location serves 200-600 shooters per month per location in the winter months and 1,200-2,000 shooters during the summer, according to Campbell.

Interestingly, most of Campbell's clientele are foreign-born visitors.

"Most of our users are

***"We frequently have guests tell us they drive past other ranges to come visit us. That is powerful motivation, and we are so very proud and grateful to be able to experience that feeling."***

#### Will Doss

General Manager  
Green Top

looking for a first-time experience," Campbell shared. "They're typically visiting the United States for the first time. Our submachine guns and belt fed machineguns are by far the most requested."

Rob Euerle, president of Parma Armory Shooting Center in Parma, Ohio, a suburb south of Cleveland, says his operation received 5-Star designation in December 2020.

"After all the work we did to meet the high standards set for 5-Star recognition, it was like winning an Oscar," Euerle stated. "Congratulations and backslapping all around. It validated we had achieved so many of our goals."

Parma Armory's five-lane range opened in March 2017. The double-deck 21 Guns Salute Range opened in October 2019.

Euerle was reluctant to specify precise throughput for the facility but said thousands of customers visit monthly. He credits proximity to Cleveland for his diverse customer mix, with shooters of all ages and genders from both urban and suburban environments. Most come to shoot handguns, but many shoot rifles and some shotguns.

### ACCESS & PARTNERSHIPS

Successful, clean, reliable ranges tend to attract business and generate demand. Green Top offers memberships that offer perks and monthly specials. Doss says most nonmember guests soon realize buying a membership is a worthwhile investment, especially if they're regular shooters.

Green Top also recognizes women are a key target audience.

"Women are our fastest-growing segment of shooters and we have several ladies groups that frequent the facility weekly," Doss informed. "Women students also make up approximately 50-60% of all entry-level classes with many registering for additional training afterward."

In the area of community partnerships, Green Top enjoys working



At Gunfighter Canyon's Williams, Ariz., facility, Assistant Manager Shawna Gonzales walks a customer through a handgun purchase. Gunfighter Canyon's two locations (the other is in Page) are 5-Star ranges.



relationships with several law enforcement and first responder agencies, including the Virginia Capitol Police, the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources, City of Richmond Fire Marshalls and the Ashland Police Department, to name a few.

They also partner with several regional shooting clubs that stage weekly and monthly events at the range. These partner clubs get access to meeting rooms and discounted range time. Included here are The Well Armed Woman, A Girl & A Gun, Friends of the NRA, plus several corporate members who utilize the range facility for team building events and celebrations.

Gunfighter Canyon works with three city police departments, two state agencies and six different federal agencies in training and procurement, according to Campbell.

Parma Armory

also serves several law enforcement agencies.

“They find our five classes and 30-yard, five-lane range perfect for private classes, and shooting proficiency practice and qualifying,” Euerle said. A Girl & A Gun combined its Akron and Cleveland clubs into a single group with its home base now the Parma Armory Shooting Center.

Juggling throughput is essential. People don’t like to wait long for access to a shooting lane.

“Wait times can vary depending on the day of the week,” shared Green Top’s Doss. “Weekends are our busiest time and we usually have all three bays (24 lanes) filled. Wait times are normally 30 minutes or less on the weekends and very minimal, if any, on the weekdays.”

The sheer size of Parma Armory Shooting Center lends itself to ready customer access. Euerle notes it is home to the

**“Our submachine guns and belt fed machine guns are by far the most requested.”**

**Nishan Campbell**

Co-Founder & CEO  
Gunfighter Canyon

world’s largest indoor double-deck gun range. The 21 lanes and a separate five-lane gun range open lanes are readily available even on peak weekend days and times, he noted.

#### **BEST FOOT FORWARD — SELLING IT**

Doss spotlights Green Top’s modern, computerized targets and range ventilation systems, plus the spacious,

clean, well-merchandised and maintained customer facing areas as powerful selling attributes.

“You can tell a lot of preparation and hard work happens before the doors open each day,” Doss stated.

Gunfighter’s Page location, which opened in 2017, features a floor-to-ceiling ballistic glass that looks into the main range, something Campbell calls “a centerpiece for our modern design.”

Besides ample access and resources, Euerle says Parma’s best attribute is a “totally customer-centric approach to everything we do. Superb customer service is our standard.”

Campbell says social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook and YouTube, plus tourism sites like Trip Advisor, Yelp or Google are the main vehicles for marketing their 5-Star rating. Also important are monthly email campaigns as well as paid online advertisements.

Green Top’s robust marketing and public relations efforts cover the waterfront, from employing the Richmond-based PR firm Madison + Maine for company-wide press releases to using the inhouse marketing team for myriad heavy lifting, whether that be packaging messages and producing videos for social media, doing radio voiceovers, and vendor and community relations.

“The team utilizes all of these different avenues to drive home the 5-Star story as well as the constantly evolving journey of our company,” Doss says.

All prominently display their 5-Star plaques to remind customers they’re getting top-flight service.



Green Top maintains a robust retail footprint as part of its business. Its “Member Services” area is clearly marked next to merchandising.





Outside Parma Armory's 21 Gun Salute Range, Rob Euerle shares the benefits of targets on hand for customers to buy.

### NO TIME FOR COMPLACENCY

Getting to the top is a journey. Staying on top takes commitment. A 5-Star rating is something that merits continuous polishing.

Doss believes the rating offers additional leverage compared to other facilities that have not achieved this distinction.

***“Most of our users are looking for a first-time experience.”***

**Nishan Campbell**

Co-Founder & CEO  
Gunfighter Canyon

“We understand people have a choice where to spend their hard-earned money,” Doss says. “The 5-Star rating represents a passion to provide guests with an experience they will remember and can share with their friends and family. There are other local ranges that compete for the same business, but we feel that having that stamp of approval by the NSSF is invaluable. There is a sense of pride, customer trust and true appreciation that comes with that distinguished logo. We frequently have guests tell us they drive past other ranges to come visit us. That is powerful motivation, and

we are so very proud and grateful to be able to experience that feeling.”

Campbell says having the first 5-Star rated ranges in Arizona gives employees confidence when educating new customers.

“Our range members are always proud to visit other shooting ranges and report back the 5-Star difference they receive at Gunfighter,” Campbell said.

“To be recognized by our industry trade association leader is a wonderful accomplishment and a testament to our employee's success. Now it's our duty to uphold the 5 stars and earn that rating every day,” he added.

Euerle believes the NSSF top rating demonstrates to customers the facility has “gone the extra mile to make Parma Armory Shooting Center the best in every possible way and has helped us become the leading facility of its kind in the Greater Cleveland area. It is a reaffirmation that we feel makes our customer messaging — though totally honest — more believable.”

While getting the rating took total team commitment, Doss believes going through the process was invaluable.

“This process took well over a year to complete and to be honest it pushed us out of our comfort zones,” Doss says. “In the end we were all so grateful to go through the process as it made us better teammates, better leaders and allowed us to deliver an experience our guests deserve.” **SI**

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BY B.A. STEAR

# NEARING THE END OF LARGE RANGES?

**T**here comes an end to every era, whether you're an empire, business or both.

At some point, a collective decision (or inaction) will lead to success or demise. The decision point comes on so gradually you might not even notice, but when it's past the tipping point it's hard or impossible to reverse. Kodak lasted 120 years before filing for bankruptcy, the Roman Republic pulled off about 500.

Historically, shooting ranges have enjoyed the successes of a growing shooting sports industry marked by the change from rural hunting to urban living and modern recreation. Over the past 30 years the popularity

of shooting has been extremely stable, meaning the number of people who go to a range each year to shoot has been very consistent (unlike gun sales trends). 2022 spoiler alert: increased gun sales don't mean people are actually taking them out of the boxes.

## RANGE OPENINGS HAVE SLOWED, WHY?

NSSF does an amazing job of collecting participation data each year and publishes it annually in its Industry Reference Guide, in addition to a tabulation of U.S. ranges from its wheretoshoot.org website.

Taken individually, the industry data looks very promising for an entrepreneurial new range owner — as it shows a stable participation base and growing industry. However, hidden in the data is a longer, more ominous trend indicating the number of indoor shooting ranges opening each year is slowing down as many cities are becoming saturated with ranges.

In other words, the number of shooters who live in a given area

only need a certain number of shooting lanes to satisfy demand, just like your neighborhood only needs a certain number of gas stations or Starbucks. For a sprawling city like Atlanta, you could make a claim it would be impossible to saturate — but the numbers are telling.

## A DAY ON A LANE

To better explain this concept, let's take a step back and study the daily operation of a single shooting lane (yes, one lane, not a whole range). When the range opens, one member might be waiting to get in early and shoot for an hour. Next, a couple comes in to rent some compact pistols to “try before they buy” and another hour passes. Just before lunchtime, two work buddies stop in to shoot for an hour, followed by a retiree trying out his new handloaded ammo.

Using data from NSSF, when you factor in the average shooting session (close to 45 minutes), the average lane occupancy (around 1.6 people per lane) and a 12-hour business day, one lane can serve





Photo: Adobe Stock

**We need to adapt to hotter areas (i.e., closer to population centers). Yes, the real estate is expensive and smaller — but it provides access to more people.**

over 25 shooters per day. For a 10-lane range, this equates to 250 people per day. Here's where shooting participation becomes important.

The national average participation rate across all age groups is around 5% for target shooting with a handgun. (We selected handguns mainly because it's most representative of indoor range users.) This percentage is reached by taking the total target shooting (handgun) participants and dividing it by the whole U.S. population.

In 2018, the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) reported 14.3 million Americans went target shooting with a handgun out of a U.S. population of 326.8 million (technically 4.4%, but let's just say 5% for the sake of argument). So, this means one out of 20 people in the U.S. will visit an indoor range in any given year. If your 10-lane range can support upward of 250 visits per day and you're open 360 days per year, your total range capacity is 90,000 visits per year.

Let's now move up to a bird's-eye view. At a participation rate of 5%, one 10-lane range can satisfy the demands of a city with 1.8 million people (90,000 is 5% of 1.8 million). The Indianapolis Metro Area (population 2.1 million), for example, has over 12 ranges, while the San Antonio Metro area (population 2.5 million) has around 20 ranges.

Anyone who hates traffic and values convenience understands more than one range needs to exist in these towns, but the specific placement of these ranges along the urban/

suburban divide is getting saturated with the current industry model of building large (greater than 12-lane) ranges.

These large ranges obviously have a sizable footprint, so there's only a small band around most cities with a reasonable trade-off between real estate expenses and customer convenience. We're at (or nearing) capacity for most major metropolitan areas in the traditional range placement along this band.

### THE "HABITABLE ZONE" FOR RANGES

This trend doesn't necessarily spell doom for the industry, it just indicates we're a bit past the tipping point for the traditional large-format range that likes to exist in very specific locations around any given city — let's call this the "habitable zone," to take a cue from astronomy. For life to exist on a planet, it has to

be far enough away from the sun that it doesn't burn up, but not too far away it freezes to death; hence a small zone exists where life has the possibility of existing (such as Earth with its abundant sunlight and temperate climate).

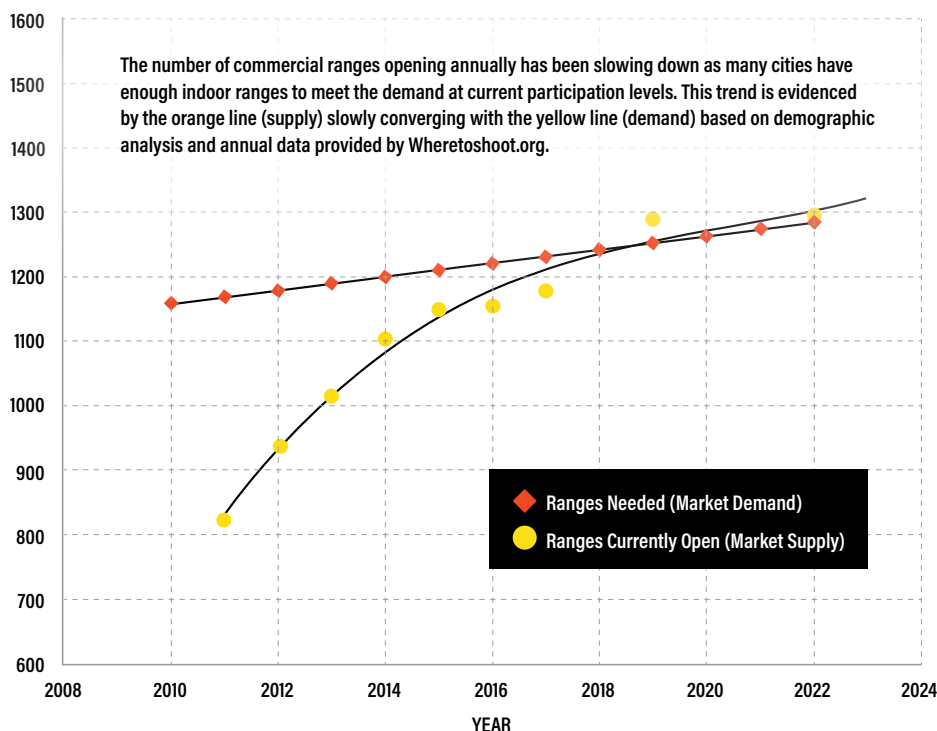
The range "habitable zone" is very similar. A large range has to be far enough away from the city center to make the real estate affordable, but not too far away that it's inconvenient for its customers. This zone typically exists near the outer suburban band of a city if the range was built anytime in the past 10 years.

What we're seeing in most metropolitan areas is the range "habitable zone" is fully saturated, which is making most potential range owners either waste time scouring for affordable real estate or waste time trying to raise additional money (typically through investors) to afford a more expensive



Is the era of expansive indoor ranges over? What are your thoughts on this? We want to hear from you: [comments@shootingindustry.com](mailto:comments@shootingindustry.com).





property. It's a very vicious cycle most potential owners don't make it through, and the number-one reason we have less ranges opening annually each year.

### THE CASE FOR SMALLER FOOTPRINTS

So how can the industry buck this trend? We need to adapt to hotter areas (i.e., closer to population centers). Yes, the real estate is expensive and smaller—but it provides access to more people.

Reading this, you've probably guessed the solution already exists—it's just not as grandiose as the Home Depot-sized guntry club you've been planning for the past five years. Enter the small-format range (8–12 lanes) catering mainly to handgun shooters (20 yards or less). These ranges are achieving footprints between around 7,000–9,000 sq. ft. with ease.

With a bit of ingenuity and a focus on recreational handgun shooters, it should be possible to introduce more people to the shooting sports through a handful of smaller ranges placed in convenient locations closer to the population centers.

With a smaller footprint, the real estate becomes more affordable and abundant. It's a lot easier to find 9,000 sq. ft. than 20,000 sq. ft., since most retail centers embrace smaller boxes (try testing my theory in a LoopNet search of your area). Anything around 20,000 sq. ft. is either industrial zoned or big-box retail, both of which violate the range "habitable zone" rule (either too expensive or too inconvenient).

With a smaller footprint, you can spend the same amount on real estate as initially planned, but open closer to the population center.

**A large range has to be far enough away from the city center to make the real estate affordable, but not too far away that's inconvenient for its customers.**

Remember, 9,000 sq. ft. at \$20/sq. ft. rent is the same as 20,000 sq. ft. at \$9/sq. ft. rent.

Overall, the range would benefit from more shooters (higher revenue) and the real estate expenses should be a wash (same operating expense). Anytime you can increase sales revenue without increasing operating expenses, it's a win at the bottom line.

### CONVENIENCE IS THE REASON

So, what are we getting at here? If you're a range manufacturer, it's time to focus on smaller ranges if you want to sell commercial equipment. Sure, your average contract price will be lower, but you'll make the money up in higher volume and subsequent maintenance deals.

For potential range owners, this is a call to get creative, compact and closer to population centers. In general, you'll find the small model much more launchable/achievable/graspable/fundable/what-everable.

And for the industry as a whole: the only way to get more people shooting is to make the experience more convenient, period. This usually translates into minimal drive-time from their houses. **ST**

**B.A. STEAR** is the founder of Shoot Indoors Franchising LLC, a Colorado-based company that supports a growing number of shooting-range franchises under the Shoot Indoors brand, and the designer of the patented Taper-Range.



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# COOL NEW RANGE TECH

BY CAROLEE ANITA BOYLES

**T**HE GENERATION GAP BETWEEN TRADITIONAL SHOOTERS AND TODAY'S MILLENNIALS/GEN Z IS REAL. OLDER SHOOTERS MAY BE CONTENT TO PLINK AT PAPER TARGETS AND MARK THEIR SHOTS WITH SPOTTING SCOPES, BUT THE UP-AND-COMERS WANT FLASH AND HIGH TECH.

They've grown up on video games and graphics that pop, and they want their shooting experience to provide the same kind of entertainment.

The good news? Cool new technologies able to generate this level of excitement are within reach of almost every range.

## PROJECTED LIVE-FIRE TARGETS

Doug Hague is one of the owners of Evolve Range Solutions. Evolve is a family-based, veteran-owned

company that began as a shooting range — Vandalia Range and Armory. The company has been operating an indoor range in Vandalia, Ohio, for 17 years and has a range in New Castle, Ind., as well.

"They are both NSSF 5-Star ranges, and both carry 15-plus lanes," Hague shared. "At the range in Ohio, we have 100-yard lanes for rifles underground, along with 20 lanes for handguns above grade."

One of the goals Hague and the other owners have is to reach out to younger shooters who gravitate toward technology.

"They've been playing games on some sort of a console their whole lives," Hague noted. "This fact is where we drew the concept from, and we went from there. It's a live-fire projected system that marks the target and scores the hits."

When a guest goes into a range equipped with one of Evolve's Advanced Hybrid Shooting Range Solutions systems, she'll find a tablet on the wall beside her. She'll enter her range code on the tablet, select the target she wants projected on the screen and start shooting. She can choose a replica of a paper target, an array of bowling pins that "fall" when they're hit or any one of a number



◀ The Longshot R.A.I.S.E. Camera System provides a clear view of a target up to 50 yards away. Customers can confirm groups in real-time from their lane, which reduces wear and tear on target carriers.

of other traditional and nontraditional targets.

"We have knockdown targets, exploding targets and games," Hague stated.

The target face — the paper "screen" that targets are projected onto — rolls up after each shooter, so every shooter has a fresh target face for his or her targets. Because many shooters like to take their target with them, the system will email targets to the guest at the end of his or her session.

As they're shooting, guests can see their hits on the tablet beside them.

"When they shoot the target, there's a momentary red marker that covers the shot, so they'll have an easier time locating where they're shooting," Hague described. "Then it disappears until the next shot."

Many of the targets are similar to video games kids — and even some older adults — play. Others mimic metal resetting targets they would find on an outdoor range. In training mode, the

system tells them not only why they missed the center of the target, but also how to correct the problem.

"Another thing we've been able to do with this system is reduce the footprint of a range," Hague added. "If you have a 25-yard range, you have to put up about 120' of building. Now we can put the equivalent of a 25-yard range in 60 lineal feet of building. It saves our customers quite a lot of money on new builds."

The system also is designed to allow advertising so ranges can promote other local businesses, upcoming events or in-store specials.

Most recently, Evolve Range Solutions released the EV-R Target System for ranges, entertainment businesses and even residences — it's the same concept as the live-fire system, but for airsoft pellets. This system has an intrinsic cost advantage, as it doesn't require air filtration, armor or trap.

"The EV-R benefits are too good to ignore! It works amazing, and we have a little more versatility on where/how we can set them up," said Alex Hague, Evolve Range Solutions co-owner. "In mid-June, we had a set up at the Northwoods Mall

in Peoria, Ill. They've been slammed, and since it's non-lethal they can rent it to kids, etc."

## TAKING IT LONG RANGE

Though completely different from the Evolve system described above, the ROMTES Short Circuit Target System is equally cool.

ROMTES Technologies is an Israeli-based research, design and manufacturing firm that has been developing and producing interactive live-fire targets and tactical training target systems for the military and law enforcement for 25 years. The system is being sold in this country by American Tactical.

American Tactical's Sales Manager Jaime Ramos said the ROMTES system was set to debut in the U.S. in late May this year.

"The ROMTES Short Circuit Target system is

**"[YOUNGER SHOOTERS] HAVE BEEN PLAYING GAMES ON SOME SORT OF A CONSOLE THEIR WHOLE LIVES. THIS FACT IS WHERE WE DREW THE CONCEPT FROM, AND WE WENT FROM THERE. [THE EV-R] IS A LIVE-FIRE PROJECTED SYSTEM THAT MARKS THE TARGET AND SCORES THE HITS."**

**DOUG HAGUE**

Owner, Evolve Range Solutions



The ROMTES Short Circuit Target system can be used at both indoor and outdoor ranges. An Israeli system, it's being sold in the U.S. by American Tactical.



easy to use and inexpensive to maintain,” Ramos noted. “The target consists of several layers of material, two of which are conductive. Once a round penetrates the target, it creates a short circuit between the two layers. This is detected by an electronic system and then recorded.”

The signal created by the target is transmitted to a receiver in the shooting stall so the shooter can see the location of the shot on the target.

“You can use the system indoors or outdoors,” Ramos shared. “We can put the receiver up to 1,400 yards away and it will tell you which target you hit, wirelessly, with no problem. You can shoot from a mile away. Regardless of the caliber you’re shooting, the system provides instant feedback of the hit location in up to eight different scoring zones, and the time between shots.”

#### **LESS WEAR-AND-TEAR ON TARGET RETRIEVAL SYSTEMS**

Longshot Cameras, founded in 2013 by Clay Rhoden, Richard Rhoden and James Hoffman, brought closed-circuit TV technology



Evolve Range Solutions’ EV-R Target System combines the latest in hit detection technology and gaming to bring an interactive and entertaining experience for guests.

## **THIS GENERATION MAY HAVE BEEN RAISED ON VIDEO GAMES AND VIRTUAL TARGETS, BUT BY BRINGING THE SAME LOOK AND FEEL ONTO THE RANGE, WE’RE SHOWING A LOT OF THEM JUST HOW MUCH FUN SHOOTING CAN BE.**

to shooting. After Clay Rhoden took a trip to the range and forgot his spotting scope, the three of them pieced together a system with existing components that let them use an app to see the target downrange. For the past several years, the company has offered a range of camera systems allowing shooters to see their targets up to two miles away on a phone or a tablet.

The most recent addition to their line of products is the R.A.I.S.E. Camera System, which allows indoor ranges to have the functionality of the Longshot app platform in a shooting stall.

“The R.A.I.S.E. camera system allows any user to come into a shooting stall, and at the touch of a button, the system automatically adjusts to provide the shooter with a clear view of the target from up to 50 yards away,” noted Cameron Kaufhold, VP of sales and marketing. “The system allows users to interact with their targets in real time with shot-marking capability.”

In the shooting stall, a wall-mounted tablet has the app installed, so shooters need only tap the tablet to see the target close up. The camera portion of the system has 36X zoom capability and is mounted above the shooter.

This means no camera damage from stray shots.

Since the camera in each stall is a separate unit, there’s no limitation on the number of lanes the system can be used.

“When the user walks into the stall, the tablet is mounted right next to the carrier system” Kaufhold said. “You can pre-set focus points; so if the carrier stops at 5, 10, 15 or 20 yards, you can pre-program the camera to focus on those distances.”

A number of ranges already have Longshot Camera systems up and running.

“We have about 100 lanes with units in use across the U.S.,” Kaufhold informed. “Some are just one lane, and some are 16 lanes at a range.”

One benefit some of those range owners have noted is a reduction in wear on target-retrieval systems, as shooters aren’t bringing the target retriever back every time they want to see their targets.

As shooters are changing, ranges are adapting to meet their desires. This generation may have been raised on video games and virtual targets, but by bringing the same look and feel onto the range, we’re showing a lot of them just how much fun shooting can be. **SI**

**For more info:**  
[evolverangesolutions.com](http://evolverangesolutions.com),  
[americantactical.us](http://americantactical.us),  
[longshotcameras.com](http://longshotcameras.com)





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# NO RANGE? NO PROBLEM.

## 4 Considerations For Retail-Only Locations

**N**ews flash: You don't need a range to be successful in this industry. Yes, having a range to host the "live-fire experience" gives range operators a leg up to create opportunities for welcoming enthusiasts. Liability concerns, zoning issues, the presence of other established ranges and the significant capital needed to build a range means this opportunity just isn't available to most retail-only locations.

But there's a reason why storefront dealers have been the bedrock of this industry for decades — they've found ways to be successful by having the right mix of inventory on hand and a knowledgeable sales team to meet the needs of customers in their self-defense or recreational shooting journeys. It's all about creating value for customers.

Here are four ways retail-only locations have found success adding value to customers, while also coming close to replicating the range experience — without a range.

### 1. DRY-FIRE TRAINING

If your store doesn't offer training — it's a missed opportunity. Whether it's introducing first-time gun owners to basic firearms handling or an experienced user looking to take training up a notch, your store's classes provide another touch point with customers. Done right, training will create goodwill in the community and make your store the "go to" place for customers.

One type of training that has gained momentum over the past two years is dry-fire training. Fueled by concerns in ammunition availability and price, dry-fire training has been added as a regular course offering by instructors. A benefit for retail-only facilities: it doesn't require a range.

Debbie Rose, founder of Girls Shoot Guns Too, recently added dry-fire laser training guns — such as those from Smart Firearms Training Devices — as instruction tools.



"By not expending any ammunition, you don't need a range and can train anywhere," she noted.

Dry-fire training is also appealing to "gun-shy" first-time shooters, Rose added.

"If someone is really nervous, we'll start with Smart Firearms Training Devices training guns or use them as a warm up. They help get you into the mindset of shooting," she said.

A number of dry-fire companies have cornered this market in recent years, including: Mantis, Strikeman, LASR, CoolFire Trainer and DryFireMag. If you're not able to incorporate these products into training, try adding them to your inventory.

### 2. EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS

There are a number of worthy topics to present in a seminar format for customers. Hosting an on-site seminar would serve two purposes: to drive revenue (either through a fee to attend the seminars, providing related products for sale or both) and to enhance your store's visibility in the community. Here are some ideas:

- **Gun Care:** With millions of first-time gun owners joining our ranks over the past two years, chances are a

good many of them don't know how to clean their guns properly. Consider adding a "Gun Care 101" class to teach customers how to properly maintain their firearms. Sales tip: have pre-packaged or all-in-one kits ready to sell to customers after the seminar.

- **Reloading:** With market volatility over the past decade, interest in reloading has jumped. A basic reloading class could jumpstart a customer's intrigue in this segment, leading to a number of follow-up purchases.

- **Being Your Own First Responder:** Classes like "Stop The Bleed" not only appeal to CCW customers and home defenders, but also to anyone concerned with community safety. A number of dealers have added this topic to their curriculum.

- **Legislative Updates:** At the federal level, the industry is facing multiple attacks. The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act was signed into law in late June. In mid-July, Congress is again on the move with the Assault Weapons Ban of 2021 (H.R.1808) likely headed toward a vote. Depending on your state, you already know whether elected officials are supportive of gun



◀ Lots of guns have been sold over the past two years — chances are good both new and even some experienced users will need a refresher on how to clean guns properly. Consider hosting a “Gun Care 101” seminar to boost brand awareness and add sales.

rights or not. Educating customers on both federal and state developments, especially during a midterm election year, could influence their (and friends and family) decisions at the ballot box.

This isn’t an exhaustive list; hunter education, draw stroke basics, mental preparedness, or seminars designed to counter criminal activity in your area (such as Ultimate Defense’s “How To Survive A Carjacking”) represent other potential options.

If your store doesn’t have a classroom, consider hosting a seminar after hours — and encourage customers to purchase products used or presented in the class.

### 3. SHOOTING SIMULATORS

It’s no secret: the capital needed to add a shooting simulator is *significantly* less than adding a live-fire range component to a store’s footprint. If you can afford to devote space to a simulator, it presents a ready-made opportunity to offer real-time training or experiences to customers.

One company that installs shooting simulators is Sports Entertainment Specialists. Company President Todd Mallon, in an interview with *SI* Contributing Editor Tim Barker last year, argued an effective simulator will give customers another reason to visit your establishment.

“The name of the game is just to get people coming back in the door,” he said. “It’s a very easy process to introduce new shooters when you use a simulator.”

To get the most out of a simulator, Mallon recommends stores promote training.

“If people are looking to make money from a simulator, training is far and away the best option,” he added.

Ava Flannell, *SI* contributing editor and owner of Elite Firearms & Training in Colorado Springs, Colo., has also found success adding a virtual reality trainer from Point Blank Simulator.

“With a computer, camera and HD projector, you can turn a laser trainer



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into a much more immersive training experience for students,” she stated. “The system can even make use of the Microsoft Xbox Kinect to track the user’s movement for a more dynamic experience. This allows a number of training scenarios with safe dry-fire that include shooting from behind cover, and it continually adjusts the view based on the position of the user.”

**“The name of the game is just to get people coming back in the door. It’s a very easy process to introduce new shooters when you use a simulator.”**

**Todd Mallon, President**  
Sports Entertainment Specialists

Flannell points out immersive training provides students with real-time experiences.

“This kind of technology enables teaching a lot of defensive scenarios you usually can’t on most ranges,” she added. “Force-on-force simulators are a great training opportunity a lot of people don’t get to experience and it’s incredibly valuable for beginners and experienced shooters alike.”

### 4. PARTNERING WITH A RANGE

Lastly, if you can’t offer customers a range, bring the range to them. Retail-only locations can seek out symbiotic relationships — such as partnering with a local range — to the benefit of both parties.

Shad Biltz, co-owner and COO of Mad Dog Armory (with a location in Largo and Tampa, Fla.), has found success partnering with a private range.

“We help drive membership to them. Our kickback is being able to use the facility. We kind of scratch each other’s backs,” he said.

A note of caution: if you partner with a store with a range, you run the risk of losing business there. Biltz learned this the hard way before partnering with the private range, bringing his customers to a store with an indoor range.

“I’d take customers in to use the range, and then they’d become their customers,” he shared.

If your store can find the right range partner, it’s a win-win for both businesses. And, it extends the shooting sports to a broader customer base. **SI**

Dealers, what other strategies have you employed to boost revenue without adding the “range experience”? Let us know: [comments@shootingindustry.com](mailto:comments@shootingindustry.com).



# NEW PRODUCTS

TO VIEW HUNDREDS OF PRODUCTS  
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[SHOOTINGINDUSTRY.COM/CATEGORY/FIRST-LOOK](http://SHOOTINGINDUSTRY.COM/CATEGORY/FIRST-LOOK)

By Jenna Buckley



## SAFARILAND GROUP

(800) 347-1200  
[safariland.com](http://safariland.com)

Due to high demand and continued requests, Safariland relaunched **BLACK MULTICAM** for the 6304RDS and 6354RDS holsters in the Cordura wrap print options. These holsters feature the patented Automatic Locking System (ALS) that provides retention and security. The 6304RDS and 6354RDS are versatile in fit and function. With the QLS 19 Locking Fork, the holsters can be used with any mounting platform (leg shroud, belt loop, etc.) that has the QLS 22 Receiver Plate installed. These two products also allow users to securely and discreetly carry their firearms with or without optics. The Black Multicam options fit top handgun brands such as GLOCK, Smith & Wesson, Staccato, SIG SAUER and others.

## WILSON COMBAT

(800) 955-4856  
[wilsoncombat.com](http://wilsoncombat.com)

The Wilson Combat **EDC X9** 9mm defensive handgun sports a 3.25" subcompact barrel and slide assembly. The 15-round, high-capacity 9mm 1911 X-frame is similar in size to a traditional compact, single-stack 1911, and accepts a high-capacity magazine with a grip smaller in circumference than a standard 1911 while retaining traditional 1911 controls. The screwless X-frame design uses hammer spring tension to keep the aggressive traction Wilson/VZ G-10 starburst pattern grips securely in place. Other features include a Tri-Top slide profile with user-replaceable front sight, single lug tapered cone match-grade 1911 barrel, rear Tactical Concealment Battlesight and a rugged, user-replaceable extractor. The EDC X9 comes with two 15-round magazines, weighs 27.6 oz. (unloaded) and has a 1.5" at 25 yards guarantee.



## THE ALLEN COMPANY

(800) 876-8600  
[byallen.com](http://byallen.com)

The **COMPETITOR RANGE BAG** from The Allen Co. is designed with a large zip-around opening on the main compartment and external zipper pockets allowing for the maximum amount of storage. Five elastic loops hold extra shells or choke tubes, and an internal removable tote provides organization and/or acts as shell caddy. The included rollout gun mat allows users to clean and assemble or disassemble firearms on a protective mat. The adjustable shoulder strap and webbed carry handles make for easy transport even when the range bag is fully loaded.

**HAVE A NEW PRODUCT?  
LET US KNOW.**

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[advertising@fmghq.com](mailto:advertising@fmghq.com)



## SPORT RIDGE

(910) 637-0315  
sportridge.com

**10"X10" SQUARE PREMIUM PRECISION SIGHT-IN TARGETS** from Sport Ridge remove the frustration of dialing in a firearm's optic by aiding in direction and the proper amount of click adjust from shot group to shot group. With sight-in distances of 10, 25 or 50 yards, there's no need for guesswork to match an optic's adjustment value, saving ammunition and time spent sighting-in firearms. The graphic rings are sized to aid users in a high-quality sight picture for precise placement of each shot taken.



## COVERT OPTICS

(800) 282-4868  
feradyne.com

Covert Optics' **8X42MM AND 10X42MM BINOCULARS** flaunt dependable aluminum housings underneath ergonomic rubber moldings to deliver an entire setup that's waterproof, fog-proof and shock-resistant. The binoculars are compact and lightweight at just 24 oz. (10x42mm) and 23.5 oz. (8x42mm). Feature highlights include: High-quality ED Glass and BAK-4 phase-corrected dielectric-coated roof prisms to minimize diffraction; diamond bright multi-coating for maximum light transmission; and glare reduction and scratch-resistance. The binoculars include a semi-hard case with strap, neck strap, eyecups, lens cloth and instructions.



## BIRCHWOOD CASEY

(877) 269-8490  
birchwoodcasey.com

From Birchwood Casey, the **SHOOTING REST COMBO BAG** is specifically designed for tactical rifles and filled to the ideal shooting height with clearance for 30-round magazines. The combo works with tactical-style bolt-action rifles and the rear bag can be positioned two different ways to hold a variety of firearms. The extremely heavy-duty ballistic nylon fabric holds up well to rough-edged Picatinny rail handguards.

## FMG PUBLICATIONS

(866) 820-4045  
fmgpubs.com

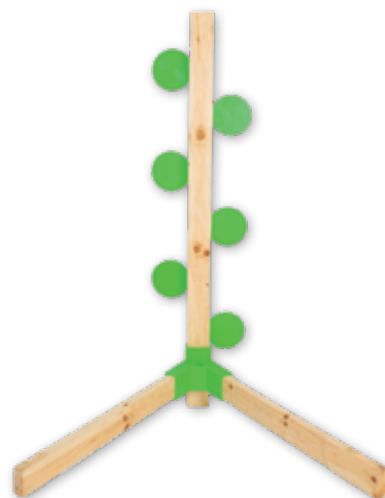
Inside FMG Publications' Special Edition issue of **DIY GUNS**, at-home gunsmiths and armorers will discover articles with step-by-step instructions and ideas for a host of projects. **DIY GUNS** outlines legally converting an M1 Carbine into a fully automatic M2 version, salvaging a special gun from high-mileage wear and tear, how to custom-mold a holster for today's hottest handguns, fitting a bushing to a 1911 barrel, customizing a Ruger Wrangler, transforming a Remington 870 into a home-defense gun, personalizing a GLOCK, converting .22 LR cases to .223 bullets, how to lower a hammer spur and more.



## THROOM TARGETS

(732) 469-5654  
throomtargets.com

Throom's Self-Healing Plates now come in a **DUELING TREE KIT**, a shoot-through alternative for competitive shooters. The kit uses six 6" Dueling Tree plates, along with a single Alpha Bracket. Each self-healing plate is made of a denser, advanced polymer that is more reactive, allowing the plate to flip completely to the other side when hit. The plates can take over 1,000 rounds of both rimfire and centerfire rounds without worry of ricochets. Components weigh 10 lbs., and the kit can be left outdoors.



## DAVIDSON'S INC.

(800) 367-4867  
davidsonsinc.com

Davidson's has teamed up with Girsan, imported by European American Armory, to develop an exclusive 1911 offering. Chambered in .45 Auto, the **XLV** features a Commander-style 4.25" barrel. It has an enlarged, extended slide release; ambidextrous extended thumb safety; extended beavertail; serrated combat-style skeletonized hammer and checkering on the mainspring housing and front strap of the grip. The grip panels are diamond-checked black plastic with the Girsan logo and the front and rear sights are dovetail cut. The fixed steel frame is dressed with a durable Davidson's Dark Earth Cerakote finish. An eight-round magazine is included.





## TAURUS

(800) 327-3776  
taurususa.com

The Taurus **G3 TACTICAL** is a full-size polymer striker-fired 9mm pistol with a receiver in Magpul FDE and slide with an element-resistant Patriot Brown Cerakote finish. Features of the G3 Tactical include: Taurus Optic Ready Option (T.O.R.O.) with interchangeable optic mounting plates to allow easy installation of the most common red dot optics on the market; a 4.5" factory-threaded 1/2x28 DLC-coated barrel; tall co-witness open sights; a Mil-Std 1913 Picatinny rail; and two-stage G-Series trigger. The G3 Tactical is available in 10- or 17-round magazine configurations.

## SENTRY PRODUCTS GROUP

(877) 726-7328  
sentrytactical.com

SENTRY's **BARRAGE BACKPACK** has an integral foam back panel with 3D mesh for superior comfort and breathability. Users can customize the fit with the padded shoulder straps, the adjustable sternum strap and the padded, adjustable waist strap. The Barrage incorporates SENTRY's patented 1082 MOLLE system on the shoulder straps and front panel stuff pocket. The Barrage has a hydration pocket with a hydration port for easy access to essential liquids. Stretch side pockets on the Barrage also allow the carry of and easy access to additional water bottles. The front stuff pocket is made to fit securely a full-size OPS Core helmet. Compression straps with side-release buckles keep gear compact and secure. It's available in blue and Wolf Gray.



## TARGET FACTORY

pete@target-factory.com

From Target Factory, **SHOT FORCE PRO RIMFIRE** and **HANDGUN/RIFLE AR STEEL TARGET A-FRAMES** (pictured) are easy to set up and transport, and can be set to any height. Targets simply slip onto the steel "C" hook hangers. The patented A-frame steel brackets and the slide-on target hooks are specifically designed for 1x3's on the Rimfire A-frames and 2x4's on the Handgun/Rifle A-frames. Rimfire A-frames come with three 0.1875" AR 400 targets and Handgun/Rifle A-frames come with three 0.375" AR 500 gongs in 4, 6, and 8" diameters or a single 12" diameter long-range gong. The mobility and height versatility provide numerous shooting setup options, including small or large game, hostage, personal threat or multiple sets competition scenarios. Accessories and additional target options are available separately.

## FEDERAL AMMUNITION

(800) 831-8100  
federalpremium.com

Expanding on its line of personal-defense ammo for rimfire platforms, Federal's **PUNCH 22 WMR** is propelled at extreme velocities and engineered to minimize expansion to hit critical penetration depths even through short-barrel handguns. The round features a 45-grain nickel-plated lead-core bullet designed for maximum penetration needed in personal-defense scenarios.



## ESCORT SHOTGUNS

(877) 278-4448  
escortshotgunsusa.com

Escort's **PS YOUTH** shotgun is chambered for 3" Magnum 20 GA shells and features Escort's Fast-Loading and Smart-Valve Piston Systems. It can handle a variety of shots, including steel (with specific chokes) and the multi-choke system includes five chokes. Spacers can be added or removed to adjust the length of pull and stock shims provide adjustment of drop and cast for a better fit. A manual cross-button safety is built in and mounted sling studs make for easy carry and firing support. The finish is available in full black, and three camo options: Realtree Timber (pictured), Mossy Oak Bottomland and Realtree Max-5. It weighs 6 lbs. is and OAL is 41".







## CHAMPION TRAPS & TARGETS

(800) 533-5000  
championtarget.com

The Champion **FREEDOMBIRD AUTO-FEED TRAP THROWER** is perfect for the shotgunner looking for more challenging target practice. With its ultra-fast, less than one-second cycle time, shooters can create a flurry style of targets with either standard or midi clays (using the included midi clay adapter). The FreedomBird boasts a 50-clay stack magazine capacity, and throwing angles (10–50 degrees) as well as distance (70–90 yards) can be adjusted with the main spring tension adjustment. Shooters can practice solo or with companions thanks to the included wireless remote and foot pedal. A newly designed custom cart makes it easier to tote the battery.

## MTM CASE-GARD

(937) 890-7461  
mtmcase-gard.com

The **DOUBLE RIFLE CASE – RC51D** from MTM Case-Gard is designed to hold two scoped hunting rifles up to 50.5" long. Quality convoluted foam padding provides impact protection and helps keep rifles in place during transport. It is molded from specially formulated, high-impact plastic, providing excellent transportable protection for long guns. Secure storage is ensured with four strong snap latches and four padlock points. Tie-down grooves help secure the case for transportation on a vehicle. The Double Rifle Case measures 51.5"L x 14.4"W x 4.3"D.



## CRKT

(503) 685-5015  
crkt.com

From CRKT and designer Jeff Park, the **STICKLER** is a sleek folding knife with Assisted Opening technology that conceals the 3.38" blade in a cobalt blue handle when closed and pays homage to vintage melon testers and coffin jack pocketknives. The Stickler deploys fast and smooth thanks to its Assisted Opening technology and IKBS ball bearing pivot system. It measures 8" long when open (4.6" closed) and weighs 2.4 oz.



## OTIS TECHNOLOGY

(800) 684-7486  
otistec.com

Otis Tec's **EARSHIELD RANGER ELECTRONIC PRO EARMUFF** boasts a slim, low profile design with 23 dB NRR and sound-activated compression and omnidirectional microphone technology for maximum environmental sounds at a safe volume level. The adjustable headband ensures a proper fit and the soft band makes for a comfortable wear. Its 0.5 millisecond attack time is ultra-fast and offers uninterrupted hearing; it eliminates sound clipping of ambient noise after gunfire so users don't miss important range commands. Powered by two AAA batteries (not included), the 4-hour auto shut-off feature prolongs battery life. The on/off switch controls volume and an LED light indicates the unit is powered on. An auxiliary input jack and included cord for connecting to phone/devices.





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## ARMS & THE WOMAN

Continued from p. 23

The goal is to leverage your digital presence to demonstrate to customers your business is not just a place to buy guns and ammunition or to pick up transfers bought online, but a place they can go for quality gun knowledge, instruction and to access a part of the community of gun owners.

### 6. OFFER UNIQUE PROMOTIONS

On Tuesdays, H&H Shooting Sports offers a rental special. For \$20 plus the cost of ammunition, guests can rent as many guns as they want. Nearly all of the models available for rent are also available to purchase, and if they buy a gun that day, the rental cost is refunded.

"This offer is a such a great deal, especially for women, because coupled with the fact our lane rental fees are for the entire day, they can really take their time finding the gun that fits them best," said Bernhardt. "Women come in all the

time who have never shot before saying, 'My husband bought me this gun or my boyfriend bought me this gun' and nine times out of ten it's not the right gun for them."

The rental special is a great way to learn about and try a variety of guns in a low-pressure environment without breaking the bank. It's also an affordable way to get in regular training.

### 7. UNDERSTAND, ACKNOWLEDGE & VALUE FEMALE BUYING POWER

Understanding why women buy is the first step to gaining their business. And when it comes to firearms, the number-one reason they're buying is for personal safety.

*Forbes* contributor Bridget Brennan writes, "Having a gender-balanced marketing team will help you better identify the communication nuances that will make women think, 'These people understand my life.'"

Brennan is the founder and CEO of

Female Factor, a strategic advisory firm, and author of several books.

"It's critical to stay grounded in the real reasons women buy, or you risk being viewed as tone-deaf in your marketing," she added. "Because no matter how fast technology advances or how frequently people change the way they shop, one thing remains the same: Women are the shoppers of this world, and understanding why she buys is the best insurance policy there is."

Brennan also says you have to address a woman's "invisible others."

"Every time you deliver great service to a woman, she has a multiplier effect on your business because she represents a broad range of other potential customers, and will likely tell people about the great service you offer," she said. **SI**

**Editor's Note:** In the online version of this story, there's an eighth tip — giving specific insights to trainers. For more, visit [shootingindustry.com](http://shootingindustry.com).



## SOUTHWICK ASSOCIATES RELEASES UPDATED CONSUMER PERSONA DATA

To help businesses understand the distinct consumer segments, or personas, that make up the U.S. firearms and accessories market, Southwick Associates has released a new report defining them. This report builds on recent persona research by explaining the process, (or journey) consumers go through when first becoming aware of their need for a firearm all the way through their post-purchase experience.

“Selling to all firearms and accessories consumers using one-size-fits-all messaging and product design will minimize marketing success,” said Nancy Bacon, Southwick Associates VP. “Consumers’ motivations and therefore their shopping and product preferences vary widely, from recreational to self-defense, to hunting and competitive shooting. Our new report defines each distinct firearm consumer segment and explains how to best connect with and serve each of these unique personas.”

The new 120-page report, presented in an easy-to-read graphics-based format, is available for



**“Selling to all firearms and accessories consumers using one-size-fits-all messaging and product design will minimize marketing success.”**

**Nancy Bacon, Southwick Associates VP**

purchase. The study covers all U.S. firearm buyers from 2015 through 2020, with a special survey conducted in 2021 to ensure the “COVID bump” consumer is represented. Consumers are segmented based on their motivations to own a firearm.

For each of the five personas (Skills Builder, Hunter, Family Guardian, Urban Defender and Prepared for the Worst), the report describes their demographics, how they describe themselves, motivations for purchasing, details of each phase along their purchase journey (Awareness, Research, Purchase, Post-Purchase), products purchased and much more.

To purchase a report, contact Lee Davis-Clark at [lee@southwickassociates.com](mailto:lee@southwickassociates.com), or Nancy Bacon at [nancy@southwickassociates.com](mailto:nancy@southwickassociates.com). Custom research into specific market niches is also available, as are reports identifying top brands, sales by retail channel, market size and more.

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

## WINCHESTER LAUNCHES “SHOOTING SPORTS” INSTAGRAM PAGE

Winchester Ammunition has launched its “Shooting Sports” Instagram page, a destination on social media that will appeal to the more than 60-plus million recreational shooters in the U.S.

“The shooting sports have a positive impact on so many people’s lives throughout the world, and as a 156-year-old brand and industry leader, Winchester remains committed to delivering meaningful and engaging content,” said Matt Campbell, VP of

sales and marketing at Winchester Ammunition. “This is an opportunity to provide content to a very targeted audience that is diverse and growing.”

The new Instagram page will be fully dedicated to providing content for all things related to the shooting sports — from backyard plinking to long-range shooting to organized competitive sports.

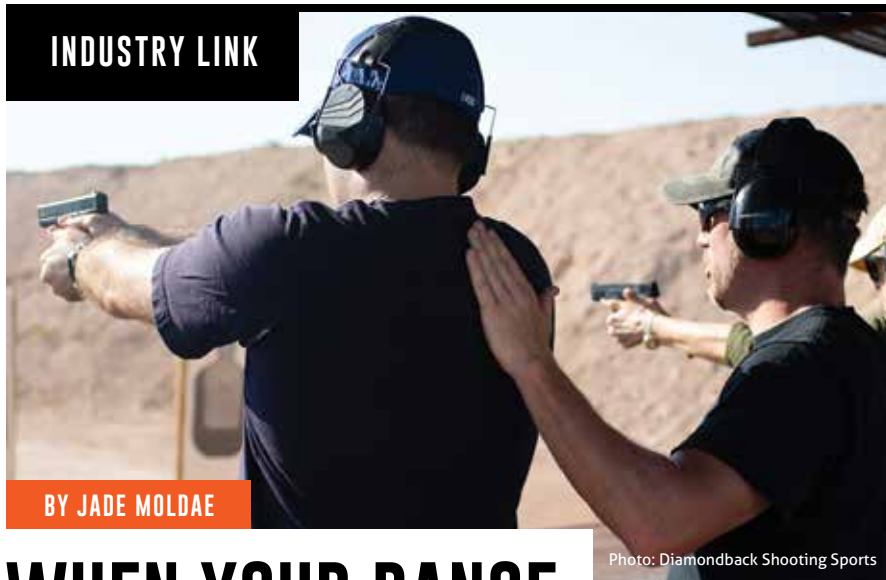
In addition, content from Team Winchester will also be featured on the page. From competitive pistol events to shotgun sports, including trap, skeet and sporting clays, Instagram users will find the latest updates and results on tournaments and state, regional and national championships as well as information on upcoming events.



The new Instagram page can be found here: [@WinchesterShootingSports](https://www.instagram.com/WinchesterShootingSports). [SI](https://www.instagram.com/WinchesterShootingSports)

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





BY JADE MOLDAE

Photo: Diamondback Shooting Sports

# WHEN YOUR RANGE IS MORE THAN A RANGE

**W**hat do clubhouses, coffee shops, health and fitness clubs and shooting ranges have in common? They're places built by community.

When your range becomes "more than a range" it provides a sense of belonging to customers — something that has been disrupted by the pandemic over the past two-plus years. Those ranges able to foster a sense of community will be better equipped to ride the ebbs and flows of seasonal demand.

## PROVIDING FUN

Target shooting is intrinsically "fun" — so use your range to create fun events, which will help encourage customers to come in often, and bring their friends. Ranges have keyed in on popular movies ("John Wick"), online games (Fortnite) or fun themes (Old West or Roaring 20s) to capture interest from customers. (Don't be surprised if events inspired by "The Terminal List" gain traction.)

To take some of the pressure off throwing a top-dollar showpiece, themed events don't have to be an exact replication of a scene from a popular film.

"It doesn't have to be too authentic. It just has to be fun," advised Paul Bastean, managing director of Ultimate Defense.

Shooting leagues offer another avenue of camaraderie among range users — whether it's IDPA, GSSF or one

unique to your range (see this month's *Best Practices* column for more). These events can create friendly competition and entice customers to come back to the next match to see if their scores can improve.



**Ranges able to foster a sense of community will be better equipped to ride the ebbs and flows of seasonal demand.**

## GIVING BACK

For the past four years, Frontier Justice — with locations in Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska — has hosted its Veteran's Freedom Shoot, an annual shooting tournament specifically for veterans. The two-day event is held at the beginning of July and is free to veterans who bring their own firearm (\$5 to rent a firearm). For the 2022 event, Hornady provided ammunition at no charge.

"We take seriously our freedom was *not* free," stated Bren Brown, president of Frontier Justice. "We have these

brave men and women to thank for everything we have as Americans and creating a fun event to recognize them is a privilege."

Promoting the event, Frontier Justice invited civilian customers to come in and thank a veteran.

Earlier this year, Frontier Justice hosted a donor match drive through Be The Match (a national marrow donor program) during its biannual sale. Those who registered as a donor were gifted a free Frontier Justice range pass.

## FUNDRAISING BUILDS GOODWILL

A point covered in this column earlier this year (June 2022), Jacquelyn Clark, co-owner of Bristlecone Shooting, Training & Retail Center in Lakewood, Colo., has fostered better connections with the local community thanks to charitable events.

"People want to do business with and be loyal to organizations they 'like' and feel are good community citizens," she said.

To that end, Bristlecone has hosted several fundraising events over the past year for L.E. and veteran organizations — with the proceeds coming from competitions on the range. In another fundraiser, Bristlecone raised money benefiting those who were impacted by the devastating Marshall Fire by advertising a store-wide sale.

These types of events may not pad the bottom line, but build a sense of goodwill — which creates a deeper bond with community members.

## SHOWING INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Don't forget — this month is NSSF's National Shooting Sports Month (NSSM). First launched in 2017, this nationwide campaign provides a fun and unique opportunity to grow your business and the shooting sports.

To get involved, NSSF encourages ranges and retailers to sign on as a participating business and download the free "How To Create Participation And Sales" e-book. NSSF has provided additional promotional materials here: [shootingsportsmoonh.org/promotional-toolkit](https://shootingsportsmoonh.org/promotional-toolkit).

Supporting initiatives like NSSM will showcase your range's involvement with the rest of the industry. There's still time to participate. In the spirit of NSSM, #LetsGoShooting.

**Continued on p. 49**



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