

SHOOTING INDUSTRY®

THE INDUSTRY'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE — EST. 1955

\$5 | JULY 2024

SPECIAL REPORT!

U.S. FIREARMS INDUSTRY TODAY

- Current State Of The Market
- A Look Back At 2022 Firearms Trends

MUST-HAVE Gun-Care & Cleaning Supplies

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

AI As A Tool For Unleashing Big Ideas — p. 20



THREADED BARREL

OPTIC READY

AMBI CONTROLS

MADE IN U.S.A.

21 REASONS TO LOVE P322

21 ROUND CAPACITY

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NEVER SETTLE

SIGSAUER.COM/P322

The advertisement features a central image of a black SIGSAUER P322 handgun. The background is a light grey surface scattered with several brass-colored 9mm Luger caliber rounds. Handwritten-style yellow text is overlaid on the image, highlighting key features: 'THREADED BARREL' at the top left, 'OPTIC READY' at the top right, 'AMBI CONTROLS' on the left side, 'MADE IN U.S.A.' on the right side, '21 REASONS TO LOVE P322' at the bottom left, and '21 ROUND CAPACITY' at the bottom right. The SIGSAUER logo and slogan 'NEVER SETTLE' are positioned at the bottom right, and the website 'SIGSAUER.COM/P322' is at the bottom center.

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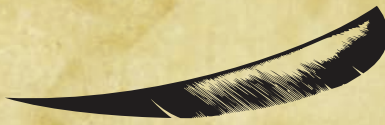
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CONTENTS

COLUMNS

6 *Inside This Issue*
ITI Evaluating 2022 Firearms Production

Industry News
10 **IN** ■ NRA Foundation Is A Leading Supporter Of Youth Shooting Programs
■ Streamlight Renews C.O.P.S. Support
■ Brownells Celebrates 85 Years With Special Offers

Newsmakers
14 **NM** SIG SAUER's Marketing Organization Shift, Wiley X Expands Sales Team + More ...

Personal Defense Market
16 **PDM** Selling *More Of The Hottest-Selling Guns*
By Massad Ayoob

Arms & The Woman
18 **AW** Doe Camp Nation Offers Outdoor Skills, Training To Women
By Nancy Keaton

Best Practices
20 **BP** Unleash Your Next Big Idea: A Look At AI Tools
By B.A. Stear

Industry Link
46 **IL** Riding The 9mm Wave
By Jade Moldae

Departments

8 Letters To The Editor 44 Advertiser Index
42 New Products



38

Polish & Protect
Must-Have Supplies For Gun Care & Cleaning
By Bryan Hendricks



42

FEATURES

22 **U.S. Firearms Industry Today**
Where's The Election Year Chaos?
By Jade Moldae

32 **Are We In A De-Evolution?**
A Frank Discussion On Fixing The Firearms Industry
By Hank Yacek

34 **Bowhunting & Beyond: Navigating The Evolving Archery Market**
By Ashley McGee



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Evaluating 2022 Firearms Production

The yearly “U.S. Firearms Industry Today” report is the centerpiece of this issue. Taking a deep dive with ATF’s 2022 Annual Firearms Manufacturing and Export Report (AFMER), *Shooting Industry* Editor Jade Moldae evaluates the trends from the 2022 calendar year (the most up-to-date data available).

After smashing several firearms production records in 2021, things cooled in 2022. However, some segments of the U.S. firearms industry experienced year-over-year growth. And, in raw numbers, 2022 represents the fourth-most prolific year on record.

To view the top-performing brands, as well as import and export data, see the full report beginning on p. 22.

A “DE-EVOLUTION” IN THE MARKET?

This is a story you won’t want to miss: In part one of what will be a two-part series, Hank Yacek questions whether or not the industry’s pricing practices are putting retailers out of business. With dwindling margins impacting a dealer’s bottom line, it’s hard to argue — especially with firearms and ammunition segments representing as much as 70% of a dealer’s gross revenue.

“To think 70% of the cash that changes hands in our industry is done at little to no *net* profitability should be repulsive to anyone reading this. A large part of this situation is squarely the fault of an exploitative manufacturer ecosystem,” he says.

To read part one, see pp. 32–33. (And yes, part two will be in the August issue.)

GUN-CLEANING PROFITS

Bryan Hendricks argues gun-cleaning products represent a “necessary evil” for retailers. No, they’re not high-volume sellers, but when a customer needs a cleaning rod, lubricant, patch or all-in-one kit, they’ll appreciate the stores that maintain



JULY 2024

them in stock — resulting in extra add-on profits.

To see what must-have accessories he recommends, see pp. 38–40.

BOWHUNTING MARKET

In “Bowhunting & Beyond,” FMG Digital Content Editor Ashley McGee examines how the archery industry is experiencing a significant transformation — fueled by technological advancements and changing consumer preferences.

For brick-and-mortar retailers and archery ranges, staying ahead of these trends is crucial to attract and retain customers. To learn where your store can profit, see pp. 34–37.

COMING NEXT MONTH: RANGE PROFITS

Inside the August issue, two features will delve into strategies to help range operators be more profitable. Doug VanderWoude examines some of the best practices displayed by ranges around the country, while Tim Barker looks at how ranges can profit through hosting shooting leagues and other events.

Other points of interest in the issue include a look at the used gun market, flashlight sales and lessons the FMG Publications team has learned from growing its online presence through videos.

Have a question or comment on anything you see in this issue or content ideas you’d like to see explored? Drop us a line anytime: comments@shootingindustry.com. **SI**

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In 1949, Bill Ruger introduced the Standard Pistol to the American shooter. Representing an outstanding value, this iconic pistol gave up nothing in performance and features. Since then, the design has been continuously improved with the Mark I, II, III and IV. Now, all models of the Mark IV feature a simple, one-button takedown for quick and easy field-stripping and proper chamber-to-muzzle cleaning. Simply pressing a button in the back of the frame allows the barrel-receiver assembly to tilt up and off the grip frame without the use of tools.



Caliber



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The acquisition, ownership, possession and use of firearms are heavily regulated. Some models may not be legally available in your state or locale. Whatever your purpose for lawfully acquiring a firearm – know the law, get trained and shoot safely.





Image: Keltec (SUB2000 GEN3)

[PCCs] are shorter and lighter, they take the same magazines as your handgun, they shoot cheaper ammo – which makes practicing more accessible – and they are much quieter than rifles.

ANOTHER “TOOL” IN THE DEFENSIVE BATTERY

I know Mr. Ayoob’s article (“Selling The Defensive Battery,” *Personal Defense Market*, May 2024) focused on the parallels between police guns and home-defense guns, but there’s one tool he left out of the defensive battery: a pistol-caliber carbine (PCC).

At our shops, we often recommend PCCs like the KelTec SUB2000 or the Beretta CX4 Storm for home defense because they have a few advantages over rifles. They are shorter and lighter, they take the same magazines as your handgun, they shoot cheaper ammo — which makes practicing more accessible — and they are much quieter than rifles.

This last point is something a lot of people don’t think about in a defensive encounter: We’re careful to warn people a PCC will still ring their ears, but it will be much less disorienting to shoot indoors

than an AR.

And, while we’re on the topic, we like to recommend a set of electronic muffs to keep near the home-defense carbine. **SI**

— Kyle Barrett, Owner
America Fidelis Guns & Ammo, Buckeye, Ariz.
Rim Country Guns, Payson, Ariz.

Kyle, thank you for weighing in here. We’re going to revisit this “content hole” in a future issue — a follow-up from Massad Ayoob is on its way!

Readers, let us know if you want to see other topics reexamined from a different perspective. After all, *Shooting Industry* wouldn’t be around if it wasn’t for you.

Contact me anytime with suggestions:
editor@shootingindustry.com.

— Jade Moldae, Editor



HAVE A THOUGHT WHILE READING THE ISSUE?

Let us know at comments@shootingindustry.com, facebook.com/shootingindustry or linkedin.com/company/fmg-publications

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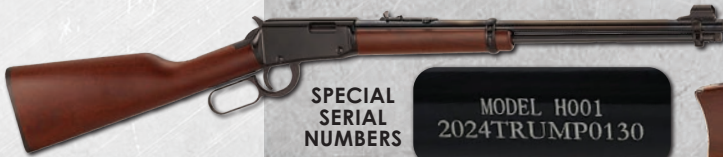
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NRA FOUNDATION IS A LEADING SUPPORTER OF YOUTH SHOOTING PROGRAMS

Friends of NRA is the blockbuster fundraising program under The NRA Foundation. Established in 1992, Friends of NRA is a 100% grassroots effort dedicated to securing the Second Amendment and raising money for the shooting sports. Each year, volunteers across the country raise charitable dollars (and generous donors make gifts) that are then awarded as grants in support of educational and public service programs relating to the shooting sports in our communities.

Since The NRA Foundation is invested in the next generation of America's leaders, a significant majority of grants support youth shooting sports

programs. In 2023 alone, The NRA Foundation funded over 2,100 grants for youth programs across the nation, totaling almost \$8 million. These programs included 4-H, JROTC, Scouts, school/college clubs and teams and a wide variety of other youth shooting programs. From air rifle, to small-bore rifle and trap/skeet/clay programs, these grants help youth learn safe, responsible firearm handling.

2023 grants for youth programs funded over 7 million shotgun shells, 5.7 million rounds of rimfire ammo, more than 400 shotguns, more than 500 rimfire firearms, \$700k+ in archery supplies, 187 trauma kits, 120,000+ pairs

of foam earplugs, over 1,000 pairs of earmuffs, over 12,000 pairs of safety glasses, 90 gun safes, 180+ assorted reactive targets and 500+ shooting mats and kneeling rolls.

The grants helped major organizations, including 4-H, Boy Scouts of America, JROTC and ROTC, Scholastic Clay Target Program, Future Farmers of America, NASP and S3DA archery groups and hundreds of competitive youth shooting teams.

The Piedmont Council Boy Scouts of America, based in Gastonia, N.C., had much to say about the grant they received in 2023: "Without the NRA Foundation grant, our program this year would have been significantly scaled back. The impact of the grant goes beyond numbers. It positively affected the lives of our youth because we were able to run a successful shooting sports program! These young men and women learn responsibility as they worked to improve good sportsmanship, self-discipline, logic and concentration. They gained confidence and were trained in safe habits and attitudes that will last a lifetime."

[/ friendsofnra.org](https://www.friendsofnra.org)

GUNBROKER, GEARFIRE CAPITAL OFFER FINANCING SOLUTIONS

Online firearms marketplace GunBroker announced a partnership with Gearfire Capital, a leading provider of Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) consumer financing solutions.

The collaboration aims to empower both retailers and their customers via flexible financing options tailored to the industry. The move will enhance purchasing power for consumers and

drive sales growth — a win-win.

"Understanding the unique needs of firearms sellers and their customers is at the core of what we do. Our partnership with Gearfire Capital enhances our platform's capabilities, giving sellers the tools to thrive in a competitive market and buyers a flexible way to finance their purchases. It's about creating opportunities and driving the industry forward," said Jared Smith, CEO of AMMO Inc., GunBroker's parent company.

"We are excited to partner with GunBroker and support the growth of firearms retailers across the country.



Our tailored financing options are designed to help businesses expand their customer base and boost sales by making their products more accessible," said JW Shultz, CEO of Gearfire Capital.

GunBroker expects to have the new financing programs available to its sellers later this year.

[/ gunbroker.com](https://www.gunbroker.com)

[/ gogearfire.com](https://www.gogearfire.com)



BROWNELLS CELEBRATES 85 YEARS WITH SPECIAL OFFERS

Brownells, a cornerstone of the firearms community since 1939, is commemorating a significant milestone as it celebrates its 85th anniversary this year. During this special occasion, exclusive sales and promotions will offer customers unparalleled deals and opportunities to join in the celebration.

Founded by Bob Brownell in 1939, Brownells has grown from a small family business into a leading global supplier for gunsmiths, enthusiasts and tactical shooters. Over the decades, it has maintained its commitment to quality and customer satisfaction, always staying true to the values instilled by its founder.

To mark this historic milestone, Brownells is offering month-long anniversary deals including 15% off Brownells-branded products, free shipping on orders of \$85 or more and thousands of items on sale.

“As we celebrate our 85th anniversary, we reflect on the remarkable journey that began with my grandfather, Bob Brownell,” shared President Pete Brownell. “He was a visionary gunsmith and writer who understood the importance of sharing knowledge and providing quality tools to the firearms community. His mission to professionalize the gunsmithing trade laid the foundation for what Brownells has become today. Our commitment to innovation, education, and customer satisfaction continues to drive us forward. We are proud to honor his legacy and look forward to serving the next generation of firearms enthusiasts and professionals.”

For a journey through Brownells’ rich history and significant milestones, visit the History of Brownells timeline on the company website.

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

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INDUSTRY NEWS

VETERANS, ACTIVE-DUTY MILITARY ENJOY THIRD ANNUAL RUCK-UP

Veterans Equine Therapeutic Services (V.E.T.S.) and Honored American Veterans Afield (HAVA) recently held the third annual Ruck-Up adventure event for a group of grateful veterans and active-duty service members.

V.E.T.S. provides therapeutic healing for veterans through equine-related activities. HAVA, formed by companies in the shooting and outdoor industry, assists veterans in their healing process through guided hunts, shooting events and other outdoor sports activities. Both V.E.T.S. and HAVA are 501(c)(3) organizations.

The Ruck-Up Veterans Adventure School in southern Connecticut hosted the transformative, two-day event. Ruck-Up offers participants an opportunity



An instructor gets Ruck-Up attendees set for a session on the archery range.

to engage in equine therapy, outdoor bushcrafting skills, traditional archery and firearms training within a supportive, empowering environment. The event helps veterans and active-duty service members address the loss of purpose and community often experienced when transitioning to civilian life.

“The Ruck-Up is so unique and challenges these veterans and active-duty service members to stretch their limits by participating in several skill-building

activities. Our participants love that this event drives camaraderie while also encouraging them to reach outside their comfort zone,” said Tom Taylor, HAVA chairman and executive director.

Ruck-Up is made possible through the generous support of partners such as Lighthouse Homestead and Stables, the Niantic Sportsman’s Club and numerous local businesses and volunteers.

[/ honoredveterans.org](http://honoredveterans.org)
[/ vetsct.org](http://vetsct.org)

STREAMLIGHT RENEWS C.O.P.S. SUPPORT

Streamlight Inc. announced it has renewed its sponsorship of Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.) for the 25th year in a row. The company has supported C.O.P.S. for 40 years, helping to underwrite ongoing programs and activities for survivors of fallen officers.

The company’s 2024 contribution as a C.O.P.S. Guardian Sponsor totaled \$146,000, including proceeds from recent sales of its blue-light products bearing the C.O.P.S. logo.

Streamlight supports C.O.P.S. by sponsoring multiple programs and events throughout the year, culminating in this year’s National Police Weekend activities in Washington, D.C. The company was the presenting sponsor at the 40th anniversary Formal Celebration Gala on May 14.

The company also is a sponsor of Law Enforcement United (LEU), which helps to raise money for C.O.P.S. through Streamlight programs like The Road to Hope memorial bicycle ride. This year, LEU is celebrating its 15th year of honoring the fallen and survivors.



From left: Streamlight Sales Director Pat Lucas; Streamlight Inside Sales Manager Angel DelliGatti; C.O.P.S. Executive Director Dianne Bernhard; Streamlight Board of Directors Member Clayton French; C.O.P.S. National President Connie Moyer; and Streamlight Sales Manager Brett Marquardt.

“As a leading provider of lighting equipment for first responders, we remain steadfast in our commitment to not only provide tools to keep police safe, but also to assist C.O.P.S. in the important work it does for law enforcement. It is our honor to have served this fine organization for all these years,” said Streamlight President and CEO Ray Sharrah.

Streamlight earmarks \$1 from the sale of each Blue Nano Light for C.O.P.S. The keychain flashlight boasts a super-bright, white LED and a double-sided fob

that features the C.O.P.S. logo on one side and Streamlight’s logo on the other side. Streamlight also donates \$2 from the sale of each Blue Siege AA lantern that features one white and two blue LEDs along with the C.O.P.S. logo on its globe.

Today, more than 50 C.O.P.S. chapters nationwide provide resources to some 50,000 survivors, including immediate and extended families and co-workers of officers who have died in the line of duty.

[/ streamlight.com](http://streamlight.com)
[/ concernsofpolicesurvivors.org](http://concernsofpolicesurvivors.org)

SHOOT UNITED PROFILE INTRODUCES NATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN GUN ASSOCIATION

Shoot United announced the launch of its latest “Straight Shooter” profile introducing Phillip Smith, founder and president of the National African American Gun Association (NAAGA).

Smith started NAAGA in 2015 to create a community and provide a network for all African-American firearm owners, gun clubs and outdoor enthusiasts. The goal of the National African American Gun Association is to educate and train their community on the rich legacy of gun ownership of African Americans, offering education, training, support, safety standards and cultural inspiration. In less than a decade, NAAGA has grown to 45,000 national members and more than 100 chapters across the U.S.

“The community that Phillip Smith



Phillip Smith, right, founded NAAGA in 2015 to offer education, training, support, safety standards and cultural inspiration to African Americans. Boasting 45,000 members, NAAGA is hosting its 2024 National Summit July 25–28 in Dallas.

and the National African American Gun Association have created promotes education and excitement in responsible firearm ownership and training,” said Jason Gilbertson, director of marketing for Shoot United. “Through the power of community, NAAGA is sharing the positivity of shooting with people of all walks of life throughout the country. Shoot United is excited to share this story.”

The “Straight Shooter” video series,

presented by Shoot United, explores the human element of the shooting sports. Shoot United serves as a resource to share stories that represent the millions of firearm owners who have been positively impacted by the shooting sports.

Phillip Smith’s story can be accessed on Shoot United’s website and YouTube channel. [SI](#)

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R. JOHNSON

SIG SAUER Shifts Marketing Org.

SIG SAUER announced Robby Johnson, SVP, Commercial & Defense Product Management, is now also serving as chief marketing officer as well as SVP, SIG SAUER Academy, where he manages the SIG SAUER Academy and SIG Experience Center.



T. TAYLOR

“Robby brings a tremendous breadth of

experience to the ever-evolving and growing SIG brand,” said Ron Cohen, SIG SAUER president and CEO. “His 21 years of military service and experience in the industry at Remington, as well as various roles at SIG SAUER, puts him in a great position to make a smooth transition into his role leading SIG SAUER marketing.”

Tom Taylor, formerly the chief marketing officer and EVP, Commercial Sales, is now serving as EVP, Global Brand Development. He has over two decades of industry-related sales and marketing experience from roles at SIG, Smith & Wesson and Mossberg.

Additionally, Jack Barnes, SVP, Commercial Sales will now report directly to Cohen.



N. MARJI

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers Names Mar/Comm VP

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers (BHA) announced the recent addition

of Nadia Marji as the VP of marketing and communications. Marji will be responsible for the development of a comprehensive communications strategy and complementary focus on compelling messaging and

branding.

BHA President and CEO Patrick Berry stated, “Nadia brings the knowledge, skills and personal experience to effectively share our compelling stories and showcase BHA’s distinctive mission and effective advocacy.”

Marji brings more than 10 years of experience in the natural resources field to the position. She recently served as chief of public affairs and engagement officer at the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, and the executive editor of *Kansas Wildlife and Parks Magazine*.

She earned a B.S. in communications from Pittsburg State University.



A. QUIGLEY

Wiley X Expands Sales Team

In unison with its recent brand refresh, Wiley X welcomed Aaron Quigley as its SVP of sales. Quigley is leading the company’s efforts to enhance support for its retail partners and develop a more impactful brand presentation across sales channels.



C. STOUT



A. CLARKE

As part of this initiative, Wiley X has expanded the teams of both its Outdoor and Optical Divisions with the addition of over 100 industry professionals and agency representatives across the U.S.

Quigley joins the company with over 20 years of experience as a sales executive for companies such as Oakley, Stüssy and VonZipper.

Carl Stout, now the director of outdoor sales for Wiley X, joined the Outdoor Division in 2023 after holding senior sales positions with Sellmark and Meprolight. Stout and his team

have strategically expanded the brand’s dealer network while boosting alignment with new and existing retail partners.

The Optical Division welcomed Alana Clarke as the regional sales manager where she is spearheading efforts to supercharge business with independent and large-scale eyecare professionals. Clarke joined the brand after serving in roles at Luxottica and Safilo.



C. WOODROW

ZeroTech Grows Team

ZeroTech announced the additions of Chris “Woody”



J. HEAD

Woodrow as the digital marketing manager, and James Head as head of international sales.

Woodrow is responsible for developing and executing digital marketing strategies that promote the company’s mission to deliver exceptional quality and innovative optical solutions. He will also oversee the digital promotion of new product launches and enhance customer interaction through various digital platforms.

“When someone as achieved as Woody joins your team, it really showcases the growth and commitment that ZeroTech has had within the market,” said Nathan Dudney, president of ZeroTech USA.

Head is responsible for overseeing the global sales strategy, fostering key relationships and leading international sales initiatives.

Chris Watkins, CEO of ZeroTech, commented, “[Head’s] extensive expertise and proven ability to enhance sales and development are crucial as we continue to innovate and extend our reach on a global scale.”

Both Woodrow and Head join ZeroTech following key roles at Lightforce Group.



K. BUTLER

SLG2 Inc. President Joins Advisory Board

SLG2 Inc. President Karen Butler was chosen to join the advisory board for CB&S Bank in Huntsville, Ala. She will play a vital part in promoting the CB&S Bank brand within the community and providing valuable business insights.

CB&S Bank Regional President and EVP, Taron Thorpe, has been a supporter of SLG2 Inc. since 2010, and CB&S Bank has consistently demonstrated its commitment to small businesses in the communities in which they serve.

Butler shared, "CB&S Bank has always been extremely friendly

to our industry. CB&S Bank truly understands and supports the needs of small businesses such as SLG2 Inc., and they are a perfect financial partner for us."



A. LILJESTRAND

Pnuma Outdoors/Heated Core Name Brand Manager

Pnuma Outdoors and Heated Core welcomed Amber Liljestrand to serve as the brand manager to drive the brand strategy and growth.

Liljestrand's experience stems from her tenure at Bass Pro Shops, where she served as assistant merchant for hunting and tactical apparel, overseeing design, development and promotion of proprietary brands while collaborating with major national brands.



M. VENTURINO

FMG Publications Mourns Longtime Writer

Longtime *GUNS Magazine* and *American Handgunner* contributing editor Mike "Duke"

Venturino passed away on June 9, 2024, at his Montana home after a short illness.

Venturino wrote for *Handgunner* and *GUNS* for many years, along with other publications. He also authored several books about shooting.

A native of West Virginia, he earned a journalism degree from Marshall University.

"There is no way to fill the void Mike leaves our magazines or the shooting world in general," shared *GUNS* Editor Brent Wheat. **SI**

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BY MASSAD AYOUB

SELLING *MORE* OF THE HOTTEST-SELLING GUNS

When something becomes a best seller, it's nature's way of telling us to sell even more.

Half a decade ago, Phil Strader and the design team at SIG SAUER brought forth the P365. It was the size of .380s of old like the 1934 Beretta, but it was lighter, it held way more rounds of full-power 9mm and it was eminently shootable. *Voila!* A new category of defensive handgun was born. And an astoundingly successful one. They became known as micro-compacts.

Across the country, dealers were reporting the P365 had instantly become their hottest-selling firearm overall, not just their top-selling handgun. For a while, there were waiting lists.

The rest of the industry followed with alacrity. The original P365 had been a 10+1 gun; Springfield Armory upped the ante with its very similar Hellcat holding more, and the race was on. Ruger, S&W, Taurus and GLOCK were soon aboard the bandwagon, the latter with the slimline series of 10+1 G48 and G43X pistols, with Shield Arms magazines soon available, upping capacity to 15+1.

SIG itself expanded the line to

stay in the capacity race, and now we practically need a decoder ring to tell apart the P365, the P365 XL and P365 Macro with 17+1 capacity, and so on. For traditionalists who like the concept but can't abide polymer, S&W introduced the hammer-fired CSX with an aluminum frame.

If they're selling so well, why not build on their attributes to sell even more?

EXPLAINING THE ADVANTAGES

Let the customer who hasn't bought one yet know these guns are easier to shoot than they might think, given their light weight and their potential 9mm+P power level. My primary occupation is teaching people how and when to use defensive firearms, and I've lost count of how many students — both male and female — have successfully gone through 500 rounds in my classes with this type of 9mm pistol with no discomfort and no fatigue.

When I got my first P365, I taught a class with it and in the demonstration run we call the Pace-Setter, it gave me a perfect 300 out of 300 score on the rather demanding 60-shot qualification course with which the class finishes.

Last year when I shot the state mandated LEOSA course, I found myself shooting next to the high sheriff of the county hosting the qualification. A great cop and a skilled shooter, the sheriff shot a perfect score with his full-size GLOCK service pistol and then followed it up with an identical perfect score with the little P365 he carries in an ankle holster for backup.

John Strayer, co-owner with his wife, Terri, of Pro-Arms Gun Shop in Live Oak, Fla., owns a vast collection of high-grade firearms and can carry whatever he wants. He is one of the few Five Gun Masters in the International Defensive Pistol Association and has lost count of how many state and regional shooting championships he has won.

““

I've lost count of how many students — both male and female — have successfully gone through 500 rounds in my classes with this type of 9mm pistol with no discomfort and no fatigue.

His daily carry? A Springfield Armory Hellcat Pro. Terri, a former Florida State and Florida-Georgia Regional Female Champion in IDPA, carries a P365. Shooters at this level don't carry guns they can't shoot their best with, and I can tell you from personal observation that John shoots perfect qualification scores on demand.

“BUT WHY SHOULD I CHANGE FROM MY ...”

You'll always have the customer who says, “I'm comfortable with what I carry

now, why change?" Well, there are lots of reasons. Let's look at some typical cases.

Customer 1: "My five- or six-shot revolver is all I need. If I need more than that, I'll run away."

Try to find a gentle way to explain the customer who has run out of ammo can't outrun his opponent's bullets. Richard Davis, the man who invented soft body armor, owned a pizza joint in Detroit and was set upon by three armed robbers. He emptied his six-shooter into them and hit all three, but they weren't all down for the count. When he turned to run for cover, Richard was shot twice with a .25 Auto. It's what inspired him to create something better than one's own body to stop bullets. (Today, he carries guns with more rounds than that.)

You might also remind your revolver shooter that because time and motion studies are based on the concept motion takes time, the longer pull and longer reset of the revolver's trigger make for a rate of fire of about four shots per second. A self-cocking Auto gives more like five shots per second, according to the long-validated research of master instructor John Farnam.

Customer 2: "Well, my current gun holds 10+1. Why should I carry something with more when this one is so easy to carry?"

Consider Ersie Joyner, the Berkeley, Calif. hero cop who survived multiple gunfights on the job and in retirement carried what was reported to be a GLOCK 43X with 10+1 rounds. Set upon at a convenience store gas station by a gang of thugs who said they were going to kill him, he opened fire in self-defense, killing one of his four attackers. ... When he ran out of ammo, apparently with no spare magazine, the rest of the punks opened up on him and he miraculously survived a reported 22 gunshot wounds. Do you doubt that he would have appreciated a Shield magazine in his G43X, or a pistol of similar size that held up to 18 rounds?

Customer 3: "But I want something I can carry in my pocket!"

Guess what? The smallest of the P365/Hellcat genre are, in fact, pocket size. Have some Sticky brand or similar

pocket holsters right there in the shop to show the customer.



You'll always have the customer who says, 'I'm comfortable with what I carry now, why change?' Well, there are lots of reasons.

Customer 4: "But us real men carry Government Model .45 Automatics, by God!"

Yeah, me too, since I was 12. I'm writing this at the time of year when I'm preparing for my favorite annual match, The Pin Shoot (pinshoot.com) and accordingly carry the gun I'll use there to get re-acclimated to it, the full-size all-steel 1911 .45 Auto.

However, as I write this I'm also suffering from sciatica, and the micro-compact cocked and locked S&W CSX on my hip weighs about half as much as my big 1911s and is much more tolerable. It's cocked and locked, the exact same format as the 1911 and holds 12+1 rounds of Winchester Ranger-T 127-grain +P+ 9mm, which will go about 1,200 feet per second from its short barrel. It's about the same as that famous "man stopper," the 125-grain .357 Magnum out of a 2" barrel five- or six-shooter. I'm not under-armed with it, I don't think.

And let's not forget a whole lot of these micro-compact 9mms come from the factory ready for mounting a carry optic. There are shooters of all ages who swear the red dot optic sight has significantly improved their ability to shoot fast and straight. (They can be enhanced even more with such accessories as Wilson Combat's P365 grip modules discussed at the following links: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iefIsTJ33p>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cur2oPzxiY8>.)

Yes, the micro-compact 9mm pistols with small size, lighter weight and more service-power ammo on board have become best sellers that seem to sell themselves.

But by making the above points with customers, you can make them even better sellers!



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BY NANCY KEATON

DOE CAMP NATION OFFERS OUTDOOR SKILLS, TRAINING TO WOMEN

When on the lookout for great outdoor opportunities for women, you may come across some events that are more than they seem at first glance. Doe Camp Nation is one of those offering much more than the name implies.

We spoke with Doe Camp Nation's Meridy Capella and Amanda Mavourneen, who serve as VP and treasurer, respectively, to find out more and why women should attend.

REVIVING THE BRAND

Doe Camp Nation began over 20 years ago. Capella and Mavourneen attended several of the events and loved them. However, as with many things, it ultimately ended up going defunct during the pandemic. But knowing how successful it had been, Capella, Mavourneen and some of their friends decided they wanted to revitalize it.

"We decided to pull together a group of us who had been participants and had fallen in love with the camp, and we received some guidance from the original program team to help pull things back together," Capella explained.

Mavourneen shared, "As alums of the program, we couldn't let it die. We all have busy personal lives and day

jobs, but we're volunteering to make this thing happen again because it was so impactful on our lives and we can't let it go."

The value of the program and desire for it to continue is also evident through the financial support coming in. Varying organizations, such as VOGA (Vermont Outdoor Guide Association) and local telecom provider Waitsfield Telecom have provided seed money, and the majority of the funding is coming from a grant from the Davis Foundation.

WHAT IS DOE CAMP NATION?

The program is structured around women's outdoor education and encompasses almost every facet of anything to do in the outdoors. A lot of people associate it with hunting because of the name, but it's just a portion of the whole event.

Training is offered in a wide range of disciplines: rifle, pistol, shotgun, archery, foraging, land navigation, kayaking, canoeing, log rolling, chainsaw, orienteering, how to cook in the woods, how to start a fire, sheltering in the woods, dog sledding, Nordic skating, ice fishing and regular fishing. ("Basically, anything 'outdoors' you can think of," Capella added.)

At this point, the goal of the Doe

◀ Through hands-on education, Doe Camp Nation endeavors to encourage women of all ages and abilities to experience shooting sports and outdoor activities.

Camp Nation team is to bring back all of the above offerings. Capella noted it's all contingent on partnering with the best instructors.

"The focus is always on having the most qualified instructors and making sure we offer a safe, well-rounded program," she emphasized.

Women have an opportunity to take whatever class they like, so the format generally is Friday through Sunday. Participants choose one class in the afternoon on Friday, two classes on Saturday and one Sunday morning class. The participation fee includes four classes along with meals and housing.

WHY DO WOMEN ATTEND?

"I think people come to Doe Camp for many different reasons," observed Mavourneen. "For me, I grew up in the city and my family didn't do this kind of thing. As an adult in my 40s, I moved to Vermont. I felt like there were things I was not taking advantage of. Now, I own a compound bow, a couple of handguns and a rifle."

At Doe Camp Nation classes, attendees will learn a variety of skills.

"We offer things tangential to hunting — like how to set up a treestand, how to dress a deer, wilderness medicine and building a shelter if they're out somewhere and get lost," Mavourneen shared. "These things are all important to the experience of hunting, but it's not specifically for hunting. It's just about getting comfortable outside and learning some skills that will help attendees. And maybe they'll find a passion they really want to learn more about."

"I came into it a little bit differently than Amanda did," noted Capella. "I came into it in my 30s with young kids, and for me, it was a bucket-list item. It gave me an opportunity to go be with other women. After I did it the first time, I knew I would continue to do it forever."

"I did not think I would end up on the board though," she said with a laugh.

Each class is about three hours long, so participants have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the experience and they might just discover they love it.

"I've never heard anybody say they hate it," said Capella.

Capella explained another benefit

of attending is the “trying without buying” aspect.

“You don’t have to commit to purchasing the gun or purchasing the kayak or purchasing the compound bow. You can try it and see if it’s something you’re interested in. And you can do it in a safe situation with a skilled instructor who has all the equipment,” she said.

GREATEST CHALLENGE(S)

Mavourneen lent insight into the most difficult part of reviving Doe Camp Nation.

“I think it was having to start with no money,” she said. “Luckily, we have a friend and former instructor, Cheryl Sullivan, who wrote grants for us, and we got some seed money.”

She continued, “However, I had a nice surprise when I opened the mail last month and there was a \$500 check in there from Franklin County Whitetails Unlimited. So yeah, it’s great the people are really supporting what we’re doing.”

Getting boots on the ground to run events has also been a challenge.

“A close second is not having

enough hands on deck to help us,” Mavourneen said.

They have recently attended a couple of gun/hunting shows and were excited to reconnect with outdoor instructors who had previously taught at the camp.

“They were so glad to hear we were starting up again and were asking how they could get involved once more,” Mavourneen said.

GETTING INVOLVED

Doe Camp Nation is ready to hit the ground running on September 13–15, 2024 at Jackson’s Lodge in Canaan, Vt.

Women can go online to pre-register now at doecamp.org. The fee to reserve a space is \$100. Spots are expected to fill quickly.

Mavourneen and Capella are also working on finalizing their instructor cadre so participants can start seeing what will be offered. If a participant had a favorite instructor at previous camps they can look forward to learning with that instructor again.

Capella advised, “Women can visit our website and even if they’re



I think people come to Doe Camp for many different reasons. For me, I grew up in the city and my family didn’t do this kind of thing. As an adult in my 40s, I moved to Vermont. I felt like there were things I was not taking advantage of. Now, I own a compound bow, a couple of handguns and a rifle.”

Amanda Mavourneen, Treasurer
Doe Camp Nation



Doe Camp attendees learn a wide variety of outdoor skills — from firearms handling and dog sledding to starting a fire and fishing.

not interested or able to come to this particular event, they can get on our contact list so they’re looped in for the future. We also have a Facebook page where we try to stay active and current so it gives them an opportunity to check out what we’re up to and where we’re headed. We also have a good community on Facebook where people are sharing other activities, so if you’re just interested in local events, it’s a great way for people to share.”

FUTURE GOALS

Capella and Mavourneen agree on their goal for the event: “We just want to have an awesome fall program. We want it well attended, well instructed and safe. We especially want everyone to feel like they’ll walk away with everything they signed up for and building a stronger community.”

For more info, visit doecamp.org.



BY B.A. STEAR

UNLEASH YOUR NEXT BIG IDEA: A LOOK AT AI TOOLS

SHOT Show 2023 was momentous. Yes, it was a great show, but it also marked the first time artificial intelligence became widely used by the general public. ChatGPT was released by OpenAI Nov. 2022, and by SHOT Show 2023 it had over 100 million active users, which was when I heard about it. Since then, it has absolutely blown up. According to the latest available data, ChatGPT has around 180.5 million users.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), as it's called, is now widely used to create marketing emails, provide customer support, summarize news stories and even write magazine articles such as this (Disclaimer: This article was tediously typed by hand on my laptop).

Many of the major companies now provide free AI tools to use in addition to ChatGPT — including Google Gemini and Microsoft Bing Chat. What we're going to focus on today is how to use these tools for your own business planning. Business planning can include expanding your existing business, adding some product or service lines or just testing a crazy idea.

DEVELOPING BUSINESS IDEAS

In the spring, I teach a business planning class at a prominent business school in downtown Denver. This year marked the first year we introduced a new AI tool into the classroom to help students hash out their business ideas. The tool, called GoZigZag, was actually created by a former MBA student who was using it to triage business ideas he deemed worthy of investment.

When your job is to sift through 50 business plans a day to identify winners, it helps to have a few tricks up your sleeve. In this case, the founder of GoZigZag created the trick to help himself. Luckily for us, it's now available publicly on Gozigzag.com, and you don't need to be tech-savvy to use it.

Here's how it works: Head to Gozigzag.com (QR code attached). Once you log in, you will see a section at the top named "Your Startup Idea." In this box, enter a business idea. Pro tip: The more detailed the idea, the better the output. For example, don't just type "I want to open a gun range." Instead, type "We currently operate a small gun shop and want to expand the business

to add an indoor shooting range for our customers."

Here are some actual inputs you can tweak if you want to try it:

- (same as above) We currently operate a small gun shop and want to expand the business to add an indoor shooting range for our customers.



AI is an amazing tool to help you with considerations, but it should never be completely trusted to come up with an accurate plan.

- Our business currently manufactures and sells gun barrels, but would like to expand our product line to include fully assembled bolt-action rifles that will be sold at high-end retail stores.

- I'm an independent gunsmith operating out of my garage and would like to move to a larger commercial location and add firearms sales in addition to custom-built rifles.

Once you enter your business idea, click the "Unleash Your Startup Idea" button and wait a few minutes. The AI is now processing the idea and generating a huge amount of content, so be patient (this can take some time). Once processing is complete, you'll see some checkmarks next to the various sections.

LEAN CANVAS & CRITICAL HYPOTHESES SECTIONS

In our business class, we focus on two specific outputs from GoZigZag, the Lean Canvas section and the Critical Hypotheses section.

The Lean Canvas section is a streamlined one-page business plan template that succinctly captures your business idea. This one-page document typically consists of these key elements:

- ✓ Problem
- ✓ Solution
- ✓ Key Metrics
- ✓ Unique Value Proposition
- ✓ Existing Alternatives
- ✓ Channels
- ✓ Customer Segments
- ✓ Cost Structure
- ✓ Revenue Streams
- ✓ Unfair Advantage

The Critical Hypotheses section helps identify and prioritize the fundamental assumptions underpinning your business, as well as recommend methods to help validate the idea.

In our example input about adding a range to an existing gun shop, the software identified three areas that are highly critical to success including Desirability, Viability and Feasibility, as well as named some methods to validate the assumptions.

How do you determine if customers who visit your gun shop are interested in using an indoor shooting range on-site? Well, you conduct customer interviews. How do you determine if the cost of building and maintaining an indoor shooting range will generate enough revenue to cover expenses and be profitable? You perform a financial projection analysis. How do you know if your local regulations and zoning laws even allow for the construction and operation of an indoor shooting range at your location? Ask some experts or local officials.

INTO THE RABBIT HOLE

The GoZigZag tool is so advanced it goes deep into the rabbit hole, providing expanded details for every business planning consideration. For example, when you click on Customer Segments on the Lean Canvas page, it will break down your customers into easily understood profiles.

Continuing with our example, the top profile it identified was Recreational Shooters and included a persona overview for this notional customer:

Mike, aged 25–45, works in IT in a suburban area and enjoys outdoor and adventure activities on the weekends. He views shooting as a hobby and a way to relieve stress.

The second persona it generated



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How do you determine if customers who visit your gun shop are interested in using an indoor shooting range on-site? Well, you conduct customer interviews.

was this Self-Defense Advocate:

Sarah, aged 30–50, lives in a metropolitan area and is a small business owner concerned about personal safety and security. She is interested in learning more about firearms for self-defense purposes.

The tool continues, listing five personas in total. Each one of these personas represents your potential customers, but more than that they represent specific groups you should be marketing toward.

The GoZigZag page offers a ton of other tools and features, but my class has found those two specifically to be

the most beneficial. If you want to have some fun, check out the Startup naming page and the Landing Page. The AI tool actually generates a list of compelling business names and even creates an example website with some AI-generated images ... just look for the Landing Page button about halfway down the main results page.

DON'T FORGET THE "HUMAN" SIDE OF THE EQUATION

Coming back out of the rabbit hole, I tell my students GoZigZag (or any generative AI tool) should never be used to write your full business plan. A full business plan requires creativity, human thought and actual assumptions checking. AI is an amazing tool to help you with considerations, but it should never be completely trusted to come up with an accurate plan.

If you have been kicking around a business or product idea (industry-related or not), hop on Gozigzag.com and see what the tool generates. I think you'll be pleasantly surprised, and it might even help you launch your idea faster. **SI**

Other resources:

Gozigzag.com

Walk-through video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v931yDNan4Q>

BY JADE MOLDAE

U.S. FIREARMS INDUSTRY TODAY

2024

Where's The Election Year Demand?

Revisiting previous iterations of this story — notably in 2016 and 2020 — “fear” was a driving force in the marketplace.

In 2016, I wrote: “Sales are being driven by the intensified anti-gun/anti-industry rhetoric from leftwing politicians, with November’s general election near.” Four years later, in the first months of the pandemic and social unrest, I noted, “Amidst the uncertainty, the U.S. firearms industry is booming. Consumers have responded to events around them by visiting local dealers in unprecedented numbers.”

Here in 2024, there is still uncertainty in the marketplace — but a different kind. After so many once-in-a-generation events, “crisis fatigue” seems to be impacting sales across the firearms industry. Yes, the threat of federal action against firearms owners and the industry exists — but anti-gun efforts haven’t been as successful federally as they have at the state level.

The “Election Year Boon” of the previous election cycles appears absent — so far.

“If the election cycle is impacting our sales, it’s been slight,” shared Jacquelyn Clark, co-owner of Bristlecone Shooting, Training & Retail Center in Lakewood, Colo. “I do think things will eventually ramp up, like they always do in an election year, we’re just not seeing big effects yet.”

Kara Brown-Boesenberg, co-owner and

executive VP of MKS Supply (marketer of Hi-Point firearms and Inland Mfg.), shared a telling observation of today’s market.

“For the current market, it’s promotionally driven. It seems everyone is cutting deals and lowering prices or adding value-added packages to help move products,” she stated.

In the past two election cycles, the phrase “promotionally driven sales” was not used in our industry. It begs the question: As we get closer to November, will there be another impetus to kickstart sales for consumers? Time will tell.

LEGAL VICTORIES

The month of June brought two legal victories — one in the U.S. Supreme Court, and the other in a U.S. District Court. Both decisions addressed the limits of the ATF’s authority on rule-making.

While these advancements on a national level are welcoming, there are numerous threats at the state level — including California’s “sin tax” taking effect this month, the Colorado state legislature’s pursuit of anti-gun bills, New York’s impending implementation of a law forcing dealers to add warning signs in their establishment and more.

Garland v. Cargill

June 14, in a 6–3 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled a semi-auto rifle equipped with a bump stock is not a

machinegun. The case, known as *Garland v. Cargill*, challenged ATF’s sudden decision to include bump stocks under the definition of “machinegun” in response to the tragic mass shooting on the Las Vegas Strip in October 2017.

Writing for the majority, Associate Justice Clarence Thomas noted, “We hold that a semiautomatic rifle equipped with a bump stock is not a ‘machinegun’ because it cannot fire more than one shot ‘by a single function of the trigger.’ And, even if it could, it would not do so ‘automatically.’ ATF therefore exceeded its statutory authority by issuing a Rule that classifies bump stocks as machineguns.”

“This is a significant victory for gun owners because it reminds the ATF it simply cannot rewrite federal law,” said SAF Founder and Executive Vice President Alan Gottlieb. “The agency has just been reminded that it can only enforce the law, not usurp the authority of Congress.”

In response to this decision, President Joe Biden reiterated a familiar appeal to Congress: “I call on Congress to ban bump stocks, pass an assault weapon ban and take additional action to save lives — send me a bill and I will sign it immediately.”

Mock v. Garland

A day earlier, June 13, the Firearms Policy Coalition (FPC) announced a significant legal victory in its *Mock v. Garland* lawsuit challenging the Biden

NICS BACKGROUND CHECKS: NSSF-ADJUSTED

Jan. 2020–May 2024

YEAR	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	TOTAL
2020	1,171,478	1,294,123	2,375,525	1,678,223	1,595,790	2,177,586	1,848,307	1,684,083	1,632,918	1,769,553	1,949,141	1,906,916	21,083,643
2021	2,052,130	1,387,076	2,044,136	1,694,118	1,324,419	1,279,300	1,291,298	1,328,518	1,350,754	1,427,264	1,543,378	1,792,797	18,515,188
2022	1,190,856	1,352,105	1,669,578	1,359,908	1,174,791	1,382,287	1,233,115	1,286,816	1,243,687	1,265,311	1,519,524	1,747,506	16,425,484
2023	1,268,236	1,343,593	1,556,492	1,369,296	1,174,142	1,110,696	1,023,903	1,117,821	1,141,847	1,370,719	1,595,476	1,775,834	15,848,055
2024	1,197,294	1,343,478	1,442,061	1,216,116	1,089,117	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6,288,066

NSSF removes NICS purpose codes used by several states for CCW application checks and other purposes. The removal of this data provides a more accurate report of background checks conducted for the purchase of firearms. Visit nssf.org/research.

#	MANUFACTURER	PISTOLS	REVOLVERS	RIFLES	SHOTGUNS	TOTAL
1	Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc.	692,655	174,947	694,397	15	1,562,014
2	SIG SAUER Inc.	1,048,769		72,197		1,120,966
3	Smith & Wesson	626,461	208,737	130,681	7,389	973,268
4	Savage Arms Inc.	8,774		608,579	102,288	719,641
5	Springfield Armory Inc.	258,101		304,365		562,466
6	GLOCK Inc.	465,117				465,117
7	Henry USA	5,347	8	334,805	20,039	360,199
8	O.F. Mossberg/Maverick Arms	5,547		74,309	266,382	346,238
9	Heritage Mfg. Inc.		287,283	20,757		308,040
10	Taurus USA	287,650				287,650
11	Palmetto State Armory	137,105		101,358		238,463
12	Kimber Mfg. Inc.	210,418	15,853	4,054		230,325
13	KelTec	85,151		69,874	41,093	196,118
14	Beretta USA Corp.	125,588			54,859	180,447
15	Colt's Mfg.	34,727	98,839	20,832		154,398
16	FN America	103,451		35,144		138,595
17	RemArms	43		48,697	83,781	132,521
18	Diamondback Firearms	31,866	12,458	78,036		122,360
19	Radical Firearms	16,146		102,537		118,683
20	SCCY Firearms	113,159				113,159
21	Strassell's Machine Inc. (Hi-Point)	41,900		45,900		87,800
22	Daniel Defense	19,512		61,923		81,435
23	Shadow Systems	76,685				76,685
24	Legacy Sports Int'l. Inc.	2,120		41,564	31,626	75,310
25	Christensen Arms	2,741		60,270		63,011
26	Keystone Sporting Arms	1,678		54,200	4,391	60,269
27	American Tactical Inc.	22,142		32,077	238	54,457
28	Century Arms Inc.	10,081		43,146		53,227
29	Bond Arms Inc.	52,104				52,104
30	Outdoor Colors	10,811		19,553	21,163	51,527
31	IWI US Inc.	22,387		21,140	5,595	49,122
32	Browning Arms Co.	47,974		17	5	47,996
33	Staccato	30,390				30,390
34	Walther Arms	29,861				29,861
35	Bear Creek Arsenal	1,627		27,914		29,541
36	CMMG Inc.	23,020		5,101		28,121
37	Del-Ton Inc.	3,382		24,448		27,830
38	EPP Team	22,457				22,457
39	RWC Group	5,186		14,062	2,643	21,891
40	CZ-USA Inc.	20,868	62	356		21,286
Top 40 Total		4,703,001	798,187	3,153,647	641,507	9,296,342
% Of All Manufacturers		93.9%	96.0%	90.0%	96.9%	92.9%

“We’re seeing some discounting to be sure, particularly if the manufacturer is only one product line deep or wide.”

Chris Killoy, CEO
Sturm, Ruger & Co.

administration’s “pistol brace” ban rule issued by ATF. In the decision, U.S. District Court Judge Reed O’Connor ruled the ATF’s pistol brace rule violated the Administrative Procedure Act’s procedural requirements — granting summary judgment in favor of the plaintiffs and vacated the rule nationwide.

“Today’s order shows our community can take on an immoral government and

win. We look forward to defending this victory on appeal and up to the Supreme Court, just as we have in other cases,” said FPC President Brandon Combs.

FPC expects the *Mock* decision and remedy to be appealed by the U.S. Department of Justice.

NICS BACKGROUND CHECKS: 1 MILLION STREAK CONTINUES

July 2019 was the last time NSSF-adjusted monthly NICS background checks totaled less than 1 million. From Aug. 2019 to May 2024, the closest NICS checks have come to 1 million was in Sept. 2019 — which totaled 1,011,636 checks. This current run of nearly five years of monthly checks exceeding 1 million is a record.

The most recent month available at press time, May 2024, totaled 1,089,117 NSSF-adjusted background checks — a

drop of 7.2% from May 2023 (1,174,142). Each of the first five months of 2024 has trailed the corresponding month in 2023. NSSF-adjusted NICS checks so far in 2024 are 6.3% down from the first five months of 2023 (6,711,759 to 6,288,066).

Put in context, however, Jan–May 2024 NICS trends rank seventh in the all-time history of the NICS system — ahead of the 2016 election cycle (which had 6,179,528 checks through May 2016) and 2019 (5,317,913), the last “normal” year before the pandemic.

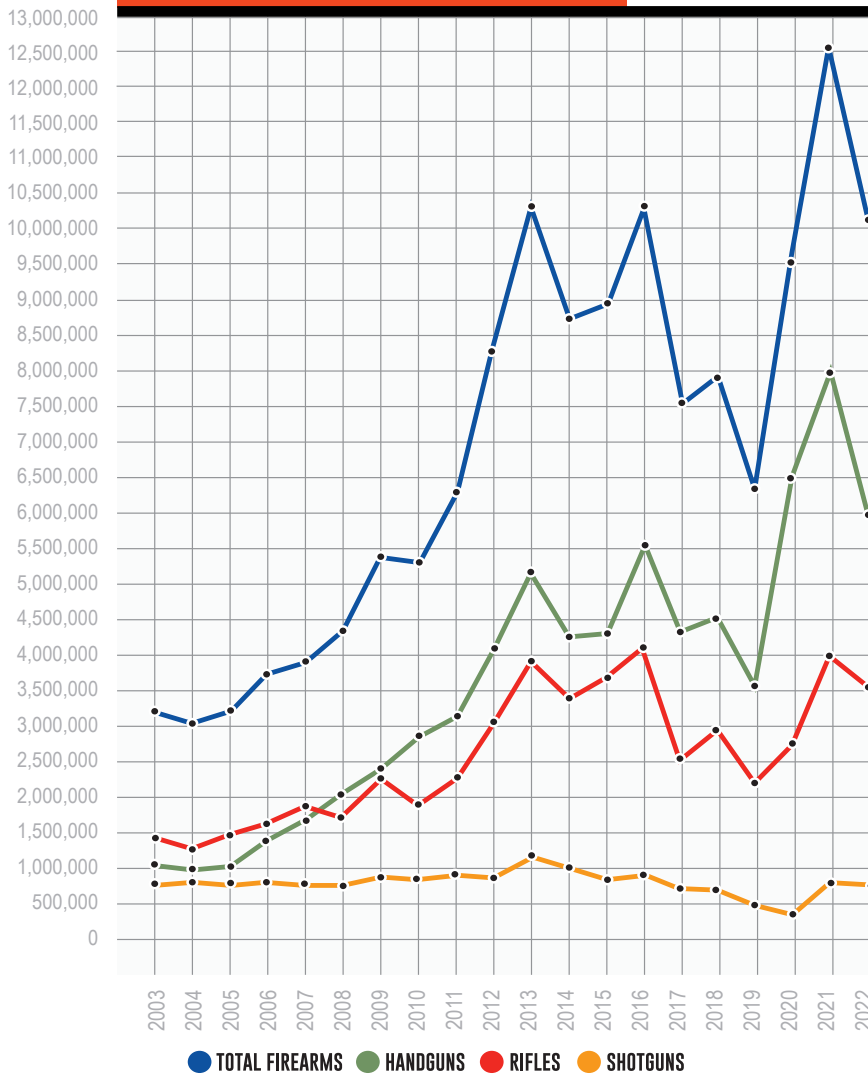
INSIGHTS FROM PUBLIC COMPANIES

Two of the industry’s most prolific firearms companies — although not in 2022, as we’ll soon evaluate — provide unique insights on the current market.

May 7, Ruger announced net sales for Q1 2024 were \$136.8 million. For the

U.S. FIREARMS PRODUCTION

2003–2022



corresponding quarter in 2023, net sales were \$149.5 million. Q1 2024 net sales experienced an 8.5% drop from Q1 2023.

“Although the overall firearms market declined in the first quarter, demand for several of our product families remained strong,” observed Ruger CEO Chris Killoy.

According to Killoy, demand for Ruger’s 75th-anniversary models — Mark IV Target pistol, 10/22 rifles and LCP MAX pistol — remained robust, along with the American Rifle Generation II family of rifles, Mini-14 Tactical with slide-folding stock and LC Carbine chambered in .45 Auto. Sales of new products represented \$42 million (or 32% of firearms sales) in Q1 2024 — rising from \$30 million (or 21% of sales) in Q1 2023.

The estimated sell-through of Ruger’s products from independent distributors and retailers increased by 1% in Q1 compared to the prior year period. During the same period, NSSF-adjusted NICS background checks decreased by 4%.

During the quarter, Ruger made some strategic moves to ensure its long-term success in an ever-evolving firearms market. As part of this measure, Ruger undertook a reduction in force that impacted 80 employees, about half of which were reassigned to manufacturing positions.

In a May 8 webcast discussing Q1 2024 operating results, Killoy noted the prevalence of discounting in the market.

“We’re seeing some discounting to be sure, particularly if the manufacturer is only one product line deep or wide — for example, for folks who only make, say, the AR-15 platform. It’s tough for them in this market,” he said.

During the webcast, Killoy also shared modest annual price increases to products weren’t as widespread this year compared to previous years.

“Just based on the competitive nature of this market, we were not able to implement [the same] level of price increases this year,” he said.

June 20, Smith & Wesson announced its financial results for Q4 2024 and full fiscal year 2024, which ended April 30, 2024. Q4 2024 net sales were \$159.1 million, an increase of \$14.4 million (9.9%) over Q4 2023. For the full fiscal year, net sales were \$535.8 million, an upswing of \$56.6 million (11.8%) over the prior fiscal year.

President and CEO Mark Smith predicted demand will increase.

“While the summer months will be highly competitive as we navigate the traditionally slower season for firearms, we continue to expect healthy demand overall for firearms

TOTAL U.S. FIREARMS PRODUCTION

2003–2022

YEAR	HANDGUNS	RIFLES	SHOTGUNS	TOTAL
2003	1,121,024	1,430,324	726,078	3,277,426
2004	1,022,610	1,325,138	731,769	3,079,517
2005	1,077,630	1,431,372	709,313	3,218,315
2006	1,406,329	1,496,505	714,618	3,617,452
2007	1,610,998	1,610,923	645,231	3,867,152
2008	2,041,134	1,734,536	630,710	4,406,380
2009	2,415,453	2,248,851	752,699	5,417,003
2010	2,817,377	1,830,556	743,378	5,391,311
2011	3,170,990	2,318,088	862,401	6,351,479
2012	4,155,240	3,168,206	949,010	8,272,456
2013	5,167,008	3,979,570	1,203,072	10,349,650
2014	4,377,501	3,379,549	935,411	8,692,461
2015	4,442,458	3,691,799	777,273	8,911,530
2016	5,576,366	4,239,335	848,617	10,664,318
2017	4,411,927	2,504,092	653,139	7,569,158
2018	4,545,993	2,880,536	536,126	7,962,655
2019	3,626,614	2,226,625	499,885	6,353,124
2020	6,502,261	2,760,392	476,682	9,739,335
2021	7,911,837	3,934,374	675,426	12,521,637
2022	5,841,953	3,505,819	662,350	11,221,754
Total	73,242,703	51,696,590	14,733,188	10,010,122

in fiscal 2025,” he said.

During a June 20 conference call with investors, Smith previewed a robust summer of promotional activity.

“We will be aggressively pursuing market share through promotions and marketing campaigns — in addition to building inventory in preparation for the busy fall season and continuing our cadence of new product introductions,” he said. “Specifically, with consumers increasingly price sensitive as inflation impacts discretionary spending, we will be focused on addressing this with new entry-level price launches this summer.”

OBSERVATIONS FROM 2022 AFMER DATA

In March 2024, ATF released its 2022 Annual Firearms Manufacturing and Export Report (AFMER) — the most recent data available on firearms production in the U.S. (There’s a one-year delay in reporting to comply with the Trade Secrets Act — so 2023’s final figures will be made public next year.)

It’s important to note at the onset: these figures constitute the number of firearms sold or distributed into U.S. commerce by U.S. manufacturers during the 2022 calendar year (not total market share).

This data does not record firearms imported into the U.S. A second data set used in this special *SI* report comes from the U.S. Census Bureau, which delves into firearms imports — sorted by country of origin, rather than the importing company.

1. A DOWN YEAR, IN CONTEXT

For the firearms industry, 2022 represented a “cooling” period relative to the unquenchable demand surge from first-time buyers and established users during the first years of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. In 2021, U.S. firearms manufacturers produced a record-smashing 12,511,637 firearms. A year later, firearms manufacturing fell to 10,010,122 — a 20.1% drop.

As a result, 2022 ranks as the fourth most prolific year on record — behind 2016 (10,664,318) and 2013 (10,349,650), the only other years when the industry crossed the 10 million firearms threshold.

The industry’s cyclical nature is once again on full display. As noted in previous years, a YOY percentage change greater than 20 points has become fairly common in recent history. In the past 20 years, YOY swings greater than 20% has occurred eight times. This only occurred four times 1975–2011.

2. A SHAKEUP IN THE TOP 3

For the first time since 2015, the top two U.S. firearms manufacturers didn’t consist of

Continued on p. 27

U.S. HANDGUN PRODUCTION

2022

#	MANUFACTURER	PISTOLS	REVOLVERS	TOTAL
1	SIG SAUER Inc.	1,048,769		1,048,769
2	Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc.	692,655	174,947	867,602
3	Smith & Wesson	626,461	208,737	835,198
4	GLOCK Inc.	465,117		465,117
5	Taurus USA	287,650		287,650
6	Heritage Mfg.		287,283	287,283
7	Springfield Armory Inc.	258,101		258,101
8	Kimber Mfg. Inc.	210,418	15,853	226,271
9	Palmetto State Armory	137,105		137,105
10	Colt’s Mfg.	34,727	98,839	133,566
11	Beretta USA Corp.	125,588		125,588
12	SCCY Firearms	113,159		113,159
13	FN America	103,451		103,451
14	KelTec	85,151		85,151
15	Shadow Systems	76,685		76,685
16	Bond Arms Inc.	52,104		52,104
17	Browning Arms Co.	47,974		47,974
18	Diamondback Firearms	31,866	12,458	44,324
19	Strassell’s Machine Inc. (Hi-Point)	41,900		41,900
20	Staccato	30,390		30,390
21	Walther Mfg. Inc.	29,861		29,861
22	CMMG Inc.	23,020		23,020
23	EPP Team	22,457		22,457
24	IWI US Inc.	22,387		22,387
25	American Tactical Inc.	22,142		22,142
26	CZ-USA Inc.	20,868	62	20,930
27	Daniel Defense		19,512	19,512
28	Phoenix Arms	17,300		17,300
29	Saeilo Inc.	16,679		16,679
30	Polymer80 Inc.	16,620		16,620
31	Magnum Research Inc.	13,919	2,304	16,223
32	Radical Firearms	16,146		16,146
33	Bearman Industries	7,809	3,866	11,675
34	Haskell Mfg. Inc.	10,900		10,900
35	Outdoor Colors	10,811		10,811
36	North American Arms	3	10765	10,768
37	Heckler & Koch Inc.	10,537		10,537
38	Masterpiece Arms	10,403		10,403
39	Century Arms Inc.	10,081		10,081
40	Standard Mfg. Co.	995	8,203	9,198
41	FMK Firearms Inc.	8,836		8,836
42	Wilson Combat	8,820		8,820
43	Savage Arms Inc.	8,774		8,774
44	KRISS USA Inc.	8,692		8,692
45	Trailblazer Firearms	8,135		8,135
46	ZEV Technologies Inc.	6,663		6,663
47	O.F. Mossberg/Maverick Arms	5,547		5,547
48	Henry USA	5,347	8	5,355
49	Automated Finishing Co. Inc.	2,746	2,487	5,233
50	RWC Group	5,186		5,186
51	Q	5,167		5,167
52	Devil Dog Armaments	5,164		5,164
53	LWRC Int’l.	5,124		5,124
54	Freedom Ordnance Mfg. Inc.	4,978		4,978
55	Volquartsen Firearms Inc.	4,897		4,897
56	Rainier Arms	4,780	73	4,853
57	Nighthawk Custom	3,847	965	4,812
58	Iberia Firearms Inc.	4,800		4,800
59	Pantel Tactical	4,402	318	4,720
60	Extar USA	4,158		4,158
61	Great Lakes F&A	4,051		4,051
62	PTR Industries Inc.	4,002		4,002
63	Anderson Mfg.	3,407		3,407
64	Del-Ton Inc.	3,382		3,382
Total		5,011,167	830,786	5,841,953

Total includes all U.S. handgun manufacturers.

U.S. PISTOL PRODUCTION

2022

MANUFACTURER	TO .22	TO .25	TO .32	TO .380	TO 9MM	TO .50	TOTAL
1 SIG SAUER Inc.	77,938	5,566	7,373	57,720	852,520	47,652	1,048,769
2 Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc.	187,994	25,806		231,420	229,177	18,258	692,655
3 Smith & Wesson	51,120	9,680	25,636	79,923	347,388	112,714	626,461
4 GLOCK Inc.	74,158			44,092	300,506	46,361	465,117
5 Taurus USA	114,325			5,454	167,871		287,650
6 Springfield Armory Inc.					88,137	169,964	258,101
7 Kimber Mfg. Inc.				7,097	97,753	105,568	210,418
8 Palmetto State Armory		42,413	19,412		75,265	15	137,105
9 Beretta USA Corp.	13,260		19,884		92,444		125,588
10 SCCY Firearms				7,088	106,071		113,159
11 FN America					76,407	27,044	103,451
12 KelTec	83,367		1,318	42	424		85,151
13 Shadow Systems					76,685		76,685
14 Bond Arms Inc.	2,630			11,695	10,930	26,849	52,104
15 Browning Arms Co.	39,131			8,843			47,974
16 Strassell's Machine Inc. (Hi-Point)				15,800	26,100		41,900
17 Colt's Mfg.				13	3,534	31,180	34,727
18 Diamondback Firearms	6,318		2,293	3,707	19,548		31,866
19 Staccato				1	30,284	105	30,390
20 Walther Arms				12,911	16,950		29,861
21 CMMG Inc.	367	5,431	3,276		7,647	6,299	23,020
22 Epp Team				2,115	20,342		22,457
23 IWI US Inc.	4,369		982		17,036		22,387
24 American Tactical Inc.					2	22,140	22,142
25 CZ-USA Inc.					15,827	5,041	20,868
26 Daniel Defense		9,233	10,279				19,512
27 Phoenix Arms	16,214	1,086					17,300
28 Saeilo Inc.				2,872	4,467	9,340	16,679
29 Polymer80 Inc.					16,620		16,620
30 Radical Firearms	11,359		4,787				16,146
31 Magnum Research Inc.				1,027		12,892	13,919
32 Haskell Manufacturing Inc.						10,900	10,900
33 Outdoor Colors	10,811						10,811
34 Heckler & Koch Inc.						10,537	10,537
35 Masterpiece Arms	282				10,079	42	10,403
36 Century Arms Inc.						10,081	10,081
37 FMK Firearms Inc.					8,836		8,836
38 Wilson Combat		87	142	28	6,525	2,038	8,820
39 Savage Arms Inc.					8,774		8,774
40 KRISS USA Inc.	431				3,080	5,181	8,692
Total	732,028	122,679	109,673	500,499	2,832,422	713,866	5,011,167

Total includes all U.S. manufacturers.

U.S. REVOLVER PRODUCTION

2022

MANUFACTURER	TO .22	TO .32	TO .38	TO .357	TO .44	TO .50	TOTAL
1 Heritage Mfg. Inc.	286,870			272		141	287,283
2 Smith & Wesson	16,660		99,257	52,254	18,545	22,021	208,737
3 Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc.	101,534	4	14,707	45,116	6,848	6,738	174,947
4 Colt's Mfg.	532		1,912	79,010	16,911	474	98,839
5 Kimber Mfg. Inc.	1		284	15,568			15,853
6 Diamondback Firearms	12,458						12,458
7 North American Arms Inc.	10,765						10,765
8 Standard Manufacturing Co.	7,782					421	8,203
9 Bearman Industries			3,866				3,866
10 Automated Finishing Co. Inc.	1		5	2,144	278	59	2,487
11 Magnum Research Inc.		369		261	294	1,380	2,304
12 Nighthawk Custom				624	341		965
Total	437,653	459	120,698	196,205	44,105	31,666	830,786

Total includes all U.S. revolver manufacturers.

Continued from p. 25

Ruger and Smith & Wesson. In that span, Ruger has been ranked as the most prolific firearms manufacturer five times (three for Smith & Wesson).

In 2022, Ruger reclaimed the top spot from Smith & Wesson — producing 1,562,014 firearms. This represents a drop of 24.6% from 2,071,897 in 2021.

But there was a newcomer ranked as the second-largest U.S. firearms manufacturer: SIG SAUER. Buoyed by its position as the top-ranked U.S. pistol producer (a position it last held in 2019), SIG SAUER was the only other manufacturer to produce more than 1 million firearms in 2022. Since 2018, SIG has consolidated its position as the third-largest U.S. firearms manufacturer — holding that mark from 2018–2021.

As noted above, this is the first time Smith & Wesson has been ranked outside of the top two since 2015. It produced a record amount of firearms in 2021 (2,312,313), and its total fell sharply in 2022 (973,268).

3. EVALUATING THE TOP 40

There is a significant amount of consolidation from the 40 largest U.S.

firearms manufacturers: Together, they produced 9,296,342 (92.9% of all firearms made in the U.S.) in 2022.

Among the top 40, a number of manufacturers bucked the trend and posted YOY production increases in 2022: Savage Arms, Henry USA, Beretta USA, Colt's Mfg., RemArms, Daniel Defense, Shadow Systems, American Tactical, Outdoor Colors, Browning, Staccato, Walther Arms, Bear Creek Arsenal, CMMG and RWC Group.



For the first time since 2015, the top two U.S. firearms manufacturers didn't consist of Ruger and Smith & Wesson.

Savage Arms achieved a notable YOY increase in all three product categories it competes in: pistols jumped from 635 to 8,774, rifles grew from 392,880 to 608,579 and shotguns increased nearly eightfold from 13,352 to 102,288. Savage was the fourth-largest manufacturer in 2022, up

three spots from seventh in 2021.

RemArms experienced significant improvement from 2021 to 2022, rising from the 26th-largest manufacturer to the 17th.

Outdoor Colors was another significant mover — it didn't even make the top 50 in 2021 (54), but catapulted up to the 30th-largest U.S. firearm manufacturer in 2022.

Bear Creek Arsenal produced 9,486 firearms in 2021 and was the 72nd-largest manufacturer. A year later, its production more than tripled to 29,541, placing it as the 35th-largest U.S. firearms maker.

On the other side of the coin, some firearms manufacturers experienced considerable YOY decreases. Of greatest significance, Smith & Wesson's production fell from a record 2,312,313 in 2021 to under 1 million in 2022 (973,268) — a 57.9% YOY reduction. Its YOY pistol production shrunk 62% (from 1,649,540 to 626,461). Combining its pistol and revolver production, Smith & Wesson was the third-largest handgun producer in 2022.

Heritage Mfg., the sixth-largest producer of firearms in 2021, dropped 39.1% (from 505,601 to 308,040). It was,

Continued on p. 44

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U.S. LONG-GUN PRODUCTION

2022

#	MANUFACTURER	RIFLES	SHOTGUNS	TOTAL
1	Savage Arms Inc.	608,579	102,288	710,867
2	Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc.	694,397	15	694,412
3	Henry Repeating Arms	334,805	20,039	354,844
4	O.F. Mossberg/Maverick Arms	74,309	266,382	340,691
5	Springfield Armory Inc.	304,365		304,365
6	Smith & Wesson	130,681	7,389	138,070
7	RemArms	48,697	83,781	132,478
8	KelTec	69,874	41,093	110,967
9	Radical Firearms	102,537		102,537
10	Palmetto State Armory	101,358		101,358
11	Diamondback Firearms	78,036		78,036
12	Legacy Sports Int'l. Inc.	41,564	31,626	73,190
13	SIG SAUER Inc.	72,197		72,197
14	Daniel Defense	61,923		61,923
15	Christensen Arms	60,270		60,270
16	Keystone Sporting Arms	54,200	4,391	58,591
17	Beretta USA Corp.		54,859	54,859
18	Strassell's Machine Inc. (Hi-Point)	45,900		45,900
19	Century Arms Inc.	43,146		43,146
20	Outdoor Colors	19,553	21,163	40,716
21	FN America	35,144		35,144
22	American Tactical Inc.	32,077	238	32,315
23	Bear Creek Arsenal	27,914		27,914
24	IWI US Inc.	21,140	5,595	26,735
25	Del-Ton Inc.	24,448		24,448
26	Colt's Mfg.	20,832		20,832
27	Heritage Manufacturing Inc.	20,757		20,757
28	Black Rain Ordnance Inc.	18,049		18,049
29	Great Lakes Firearms & Ammunition	17,147		17,147
30	RWC Group	14,062	2,643	16,705
31	Riley Defense Inc.	15,408		15,408
32	LWRC Int'l.	13,251		13,251
33	Stag Arms	10,779		10,779
34	Pioneer Arms Corp.	10,274		10,274
35	Alex Pro Firearms	9,387		9,387
36	Weatherby Inc.	9,274		9,274
37	KRISS USA Inc.	8,521		8,521
38	Wilson Combat	7,859	253	8,112
39	Anderson Manufacturing	7,559		7,559
40	Steyr Arms Inc.	7,422		7,422
41	Accord Manufacturing Inc.	280	7,078	7,358
42	Patriot Ordnance Factory Inc.	7,232		7,232
43	Barrett Firearms Mfg. Inc.	7,052		7,052
44	Seekins Precision	6,973		6,973
45	Rock River Arms Inc.	5,940		5,940
46	Windham Weaponry Inc.	5,741		5,741
47	Unbranded AR	5,372		5,372
48	Bravo Company Mfg. Inc.	5,356		5,356
49	PTR Industries Inc.	5,137		5,137
50	CMMG Inc.	5,101		5,101
51	Saeilo Inc.	4,329		4,329
52	BP Firearms Company	4,239		4,239
53	Loyal 9 Manufacturing	4,102		4,102
54	Kimber Mfg. Inc.	4,054		4,054
55	Standard Manufacturing Co.	54	3,925	3,979
56	Bushmaster Firearms	3,928		3,928
57	Heckler & Koch Inc.	3,901		3,901
58	Arsenal Inc.	3,734		3,734
59	Devil Dog Armaments	1,800	1,251	3,051
60	Fierce Products	2,713		2,713
61	Rainier Arms	2,294	414	2,708
62	FMK Firearms Inc.	2,658		2,658
Total		3,505,819	662,350	4,168,169

Total includes all U.S. manufacturers.

U.S. MISC. FIREARMS PRODUCTION

2022

#	MANUFACTURER	TOTAL
1	O.F. Mossberg/Maverick Arms	1,058,459
2	Palmetto State Armory	312,985
3	Aero Precision	199,974
4	Anderson Manufacturing	146,298
5	Century Arms Inc.	53,743
6	Black Rain Ordnance Inc.	31,608
7	Outervild Mfg.	31,137
8	M & M Firearms	30,200
9	RemArms	23,478
10	SIG SAUER Inc.	14,154
11	American Tactical Inc.	10,105
12	Corolla Capital Management	9,717
13	3rd Gen Machine Inc.	9,572
14	Advanced Powder Products Inc.	9,217
15	Lewis Machine & Tool Co.	8,152
16	New Frontier Armory	7,317
17	Stag Arms	7,041
18	Accurate Energetic Systems	6,540
19	Senga Engineering Inc.	6,369
20	Defiance Machine Inc.	6,093
21	Zermatt Arms Inc.	6,034
22	Radian Weapons	5,958
23	SCT Mfg.	5,734
24	FM Products Inc.	5,732
25	Henry Repeating Arms	5,668
26	ZEV Technologies Inc.	5,516
27	Unbranded AR	5,275
28	Franklin Armory Inc.	5,209
29	Brownells Inc.	4,715
30	Bravo Company Mfg. Inc.	4,478
31	Colt's Mfg.	4,399
32	Tegra Arms Inc.	4,137
33	Combat Armory	4,133
34	Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc.	3,729
35	Grey Ghost Precision	3,676
36	Childers Guns	3,512
37	Tennessee Arms Company	3,422
38	Sota Arms Inc.	3,272
39	Radical Firearms	2,917
40	KE Arms	2,753
41	LWRC Int'l.	2,691
42	Tape Matics Inc.	2,511
43	CMMG Inc.	2,482
44	Konza Guns Inc.	2,470
45	Battle Arms Development Inc.	2,434
46	Warwick Tactical	2,316
47	ET Arms Inc.	2,301
48	Drake Associates Inc.	2,195
49	Arrowhead Machining Inc.	2,193
50	Tactical Machining	2,023
51	Bushmaster Firearms Industries Inc.	1,994
52	Chiappa Firearms USA	1,992
53	Rattlesnake Tactical	1,964
54	RWC Group	1,946
55	Pantel Tactical	1,936
56	Centurion Arms	1,860
Total		2,171,255

Total includes all U.S. misc. firearm manufacturers.

*Per ATF, miscellaneous firearms are defined as: "Any firearms not included in the other categories, such as frames or receivers, etc. that are not identified as particular firearms."

(Editor's Note: Misc. firearm product total not factored in the "Top 40 U.S. Firearm Manufacturers" and "Top Exporter" charts on pages 23 and 29, respectively.)

TOP U.S. EXPORTERS

2022

#	MANUFACTURER	PISTOLS	REVOLVERS	RIFLES	SHOTGUNS	TOTAL
1	GLOCK Inc.	123,907				123,907
2	Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc.	9,807	7,051	68,808		85,666
3	SIG SAUER Inc.	71,047		4,693		75,740
4	Savage Arms Inc.	190		53,887	14,453	68,530
5	Smith & Wesson	19,646	11,802	10,524	838	42,810
6	O.F. Mossberg/Maverick Arms	1,426		4,438	22,811	28,675
7	Springfield Armory Inc.	8,494		5,957		14,451
8	Henry Repeating Arms	167		13,547	520	14,234
9	Beretta USA Corp.	9,495			2,735	12,230
10	Colt's Mfg.	5,366	5,511	1,150		12,027
11	Diamondback Firearms	921	65	9,784		10,770
12	KelTec	1,535		6,377	1,710	9,622
13	Taurus USA	4,755				4,755
14	Adams Arms Holdings	10		3,280		3,290
15	Daniel Defense	6		2,774		2,780
16	Legacy Sports Int'l. Inc.	4		2,605	65	2,674
17	Freedom Ordnance Mfg. Inc.	256		2,287		2,543
18	IWI US Inc.	532		1,720	60	2,312
19	Christensen Arms	3		1,997		2,000
20	Just Right Carbines	140		1,838		1,978
21	TNW Firearms Inc.			1,757		1,757
22	Rainier Arms	1,348	5	255	35	1,643
23	AmChar Wholesale Inc.	920		720		1,640
Total		266,902	24,691	213,291	43,312	548,196

Totals include all U.S. firearms exports. Editor's Note: Misc. firearm exports not included in totals. There were 5,504 misc. firearms exported in 2022. The top three misc. firearm exporters in 2022 were O.F. Mossberg/Maverick Arms (3,148), Aero Precision (1,072) and Rainier Arms (228).

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U.S. IMPORTS 2022 & 2023

HANDGUNS

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	2022	2023	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	2022	2023
Argentina	47,586	19,852	Norway		55
Austria	1,471,936	1,214,984	Pakistan	2,950	30
Belgium	22,490	58,094	Philippines	160,782	105,199
Brazil	753,408	766,110	Poland	10,678	5,464
Bulgaria	4,923	2,818	Portugal		1,502
Canada	1,151	17	Romania	42,650	24,560
Croatia	476,957	328,864	Serbia	12,600	5,057
Czech Republic	205,961	91,728	Slovakia	3,555	1,607
Denmark	4		Slovenia	11,134	6,545
Finland	95	84	South Africa	15	19
France	3,607	3,646	South Korea		21
Germany	488,916	482,066	Spain	256	697
Hungary	208	120	Sweden	14	32
India	477	441	Switzerland	8,471	9,175
Israel	45,834	32,900	Turkey	457,419	433,621
Italy	142,089	139,774	World Total	4,380,653	3,744,958

Import data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, Economic Indicators Division

RIFLES

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	SEMI-AUTO Centerfire, W/O Tel. Sights HTS Code: 9303308010		BOLT Centerfire, W/O Tel. Sights HTS Code: 9303308017		NESOI* Centerfire, W/O Tel. Sights HTS Code: 9303308025		RIMFIRE Rimfire, W/O Tel. Sights HTS Code: 9303308030		TOTAL	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
Australia		256		5		3				264
Austria	3,740	1,345	21	3,790	14	174	72	159	3,847	5,468
Belgium	12,003	12,679	27	16	42	226		8	12,072	12,929
Brazil	600			8,430	66,751	151,920	84,285	31,212	151,636	191,562
Bulgaria		9,616								9,616
Canada			1,001	151	6	3	270,211	156,815	271,218	156,969
Croatia	6,100	17,570							6,100	17,570
Czech Republic		1,312	3,428	22,669	26	30	29,215	39,005	32,669	63,016
Egypt		265			4				4	265
Finland			70,479	76,102	9	7		12	70,488	76,121
France	56		29	48	48	1,127			133	1,175
Germany	8,024	5,051	8,796	2,812	2,732	1,467	81,856	50,660	101,408	59,990
Hungary	481	1,226		88					481	1,314
India					30	71			30	71
Israel	11,346	9,574				400			11,346	9,974
Italy	4,093	1,027	16,386	15,751	12,900	11,452	4,181	4,947	37,560	33,177
Japan		1	70,674	65,460	12,355	12,082	8,480	7,590	91,509	85,133
Mexico					700	600			700	600
New Zealand						4				4
Norway			3							3
Philippines							4,800	980	4,800	980
Poland	15,826	10,456	51		1,200	1,225		700	17,077	12,381
Portugal	12,021	11,233	30,924	48,251		5			42,945	59,489
Romania	6,917	8,001					80		6,997	8,001
Serbia	45,524	22,098	31						45,555	22,098
Slovakia				4						4
Slovenia				1			10		10	1
South Africa			14	2					14	2
Spain			8		112,689	139,492	400	500	113,097	139,992
Sweden			18	1,187				72	18	1,259
Switzerland	110		1,583	1,482	258	45	174	129	2,125	1,656
Turkey	505	907	235	11,060	815	80	75,336	125,874	76,891	137,921
U.A.E.				6						6
United Kingdom	1	3	7,968	7,255	2,809	2,202	1,775	455	12,553	9,915
World Total	127,347	112,620	211,676	264,570	213,388	322,615	560,875	419,118	1,113,286	1,118,923

*NESOI: "Not Elsewhere Specified Or Included" — Economic Indicators Division, U.S. Bureau of Census

SHOTGUNS

*NESOI: "Not Elsewhere Specified Or Included" — U.S. Census Bureau, Economic Indicators Division

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	SEMI-AUTO HTS Code: 9303200020		PUMP-ACTION HTS Code: 9303200030		OVER/UNDER HTS Code: 9303200040		NESOI* HTS Code: 9303200065		TOTAL	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
	Australia							15		15
Austria					8	1	82	13	90	14
Belgium	26	80			32	528	51	46	109	654
Brazil	330				9,315	13,536	35,117	45,262	44,762	58,798
Canada	1	4	2				6		9	4
China	1,458		8,555	3,600			83,588	21,161	93,601	24,761
Croatia							56		56	
Czech Republic							2		2	
France						12	138	124	138	136
Germany	8				1,124	1,037	371	398	1,503	1,435
India	1,146				50				1,196	
Ireland								2		2
Italy	194,785	154,324	51,561	17,991	42,261	45,389	4,300	3,116	293,050	220,820
Japan	60	6			1,124	1,255	89	78	1,300	1,339
Mexico						32				32
New Zealand	4								4	
Pakistan							650		650	
PNG							50		50	
Poland								1		1
Portugal	93	43	2		5				100	43
Singapore							1		1	
Spain		123			10	516	2,392	1,499	2,402	2,138
Sweden							4	3	4	3
Switzerland						9		29		38
Turkey	342,553	237,997	332,542	159,262	92,489	89,704	185,012	175,798	952,648	662,761
United Kingdom					5,115	2,547	2,392	2,266	7,513	4,813
Uruguay	1								1	
World Total	540,465	392,577	392,662	180,853	151,533	154,566	314,245	249,867	1,399,133	977,863

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BY HANK YACEK

Are We In A DE-EVOLUTION?

A FRANK DISCUSSION ON FIXING THE FIREARMS INDUSTRY

First things first: This article is not about the upcoming election, impending legislation, ATF weaponization or anything of the sort.

It has to do with the current state of the industry, and its ability to produce real profits from the hard goods we sell. (Not add-ons like a range, classes, membership revenue or the attached restaurant you built to diversify revenue.) This is solely a hard look at the items we buy at cost and sell at retail.

So, let's rip off the bandage and open an honest conversation about the much-needed change this industry requires to be a healthier one — and thwart what could be a potential bankrupting of the industry if things don't change, and soon!

\$7/\$10 FROM TWO CATEGORIES

Based on data from thousands of retailers across

the country, firearms alone consistently make north of 50% of the total retail hard goods dollars that change hands in our industry. This number can even swell to 60% when there are surges in interest. Ammunition is the next largest contributor to revenue in our industry, which typically ranges between 20%–30% of industry dollar volume at retail.

Combine the two, and they represent at least 70% of the annual industry revenue dollars. Let this soak in for a moment: \$7 out of every \$10 that crosses your counter is in two product categories. If we dig a little deeper, we find they're amongst the lowest profit margin categories in our industry.

Firearms, as of early June, are averaging around 16.5% gross profit margin, and profit margins for ammunition fall somewhere around 25% for bulk-type range ammo and slightly higher for specialty ammo. What's interesting is the cost of operating a business has increased during recent times, yet the profit metrics of these goods have stayed stable at best.

Based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average hourly rate for a retail salesperson in the sporting goods industry was \$12.55/hour in May 2019. Flash forward to May 2022 (the most current government data available) and costs climbed to \$15.12/hour. Looking elsewhere, many other employment data sites show current estimates hovering around \$16/hour (ZipRecruiter data February 2023). This is an increase since the pre-COVID era by 27.5%!

If this is what it takes to find (and retain) quality employees, then something must compensate elsewhere. In an already lean industry, when product margins stay the same yet the cost of operation dramatically increases, it creates a situation (particularly if sales volume is flat or in decline) where there is no way to dig out a profit at the end of the day.

So, who is to blame here? Let's look at one side of the industry, the manufacturers.

BEING PRICED OUT OF BUSINESS

The pricing of products is a complex topic spanning

Images: Buch&Bee / Adobe Stock

many factors, such as the state of the economy, cost of manufacturing and costs to promote and even implement strategic pricing to steal market share from the competition. You could spend years exploring and taking graduate-level courses to fully understand and master these complex dynamics.

When the rubber meets the road, however, one factor solidifying all these factors is “shelf price.” How is this determined? People far more intelligent than I sit at desks, hired by manufacturers to determine the sweet spot that will maximize *their* ability to produce healthy profits be it for their owners, or more significantly, shareholders.

Due to manufacturer marketing efforts, they hold, by far, the greatest sway on what the market price will ultimately be for the items they manufacture. But based on my 35 years in this industry, many do it with little to no regard for the profit needs of the retailers who sell their products.

Retailers turn those products back into the truly most valuable commodity — cash!

WHEN MAP BECOMES “MARKET PRICE”

Surveying many of the major brands in the firearm marketplace we experience a situation called Minimum Advertised Price (MAP), the lowest price at which a retailer and manufacturer agree to market their goods. I trust this concept started from a well-meaning idea to help stabilize the market space and establish a profitable price for all tiers of the industry. However, this has not turned out to be the case. Often, MAP price — regardless of MSRP — becomes the “Market Price.”

Many MAP price points seem to settle into the range of 8–14% gross profit margin on firearms. The big question: How is MAP pricing determined? In all my years of exploration, conversations and interrogation of professionals in the manufacturing space it boils down to two factors: 1) “We price our goods to be perceived as a great value compared to our competitors of similar products;” 2) “We want to position our products to be priced in the sweet spot of high-volume sales in the product’s target market space.”

In my 30+ years working in this

industry, only one manufacturer has ever been able to describe their pricing structure from the viewpoint of the retailer to me. A manufacturer’s self-serving means of establishing MAP is an extremely myopic way of seeing the market space. This strategy forces the retailer community to create a profitable sale of a firearm (or other low-margin good) through add-on sales of other, higher-profit-margin goods or services.



\$7 out of every \$10 that crosses your counter is in two product categories. If we dig a little deeper, we find these two categories are amongst the lowest profit margin categories in our industry.

FIREARMS-ONLY NOT ENOUGH

There is direct evidence of this industry-wide de-evolution. Some 20+ years ago, you’d find retail-only firearm establishments dotting the American landscape. At the time, the idea of an indoor range was a rare sight and often seen as a mecca worth driving multiple hours to experience. I recall living in Connecticut in the 1980s when a new indoor range opened in Bristol, and it sent the local firearm community all abuzz about this amazing new facility — the likes of which none of us had ever seen.

Flash-forward two decades, and suddenly the narrowing retail margins — largely determined by the manufacturers — started to make adding an indoor range a necessity and not just a curiosity to run a profitable operation.

In today’s market — considering

the increased costs of operation due to staffing expenses, utilities and other post-COVID inflationary increases — we’re now seeing range/retail operations looking for new ways to diversify beyond the traditional sources of revenue to produce predictable and rewarding levels of profit.

BECOMING LOSS LEADERS?

At the end of the day, we’re seeing sales of firearms, followed closely by ammunition, are about to (or already have) become loss leaders in our industry. It’s absurd to think these two goods alone aren’t enough to put retailers on the path to true, standalone profitability.

As noted above, as much as 70% of the cash changing hands in our industry is done at little to no *net* profitability and should be repulsive to anyone reading this. A large part of this is squarely the fault of an exploitative manufacturer-independent dealer ecosystem. For our industry to move forward in a healthy way, it shouldn’t be dependent on facilities operating expensive ranges or adding a restaurant just to post profits. Manufacturers need to work more closely with every rung of the industry ladder and keep every step profitable on its own — rather than retailer partners needing to be subsidized by other revenue streams.

Yes, the manufacturers shoulder a lot of blame for the negative impacts on the revenue health of our industry and for pushing it closer to the precipice of non-viability. After reading this I’m sure many of you are ready to run out of your businesses with a torch and pitchfork in hand, but I ask you to temper your frustration a bit until you read the next part of this article (publishing in the August 2024 issue).

As you’ll see, retailers have a lot of blame here as well. Yes, *you*, the retailer core, also bear a large part of the de-evolution of this industry — which is what we’ll focus on next month. We’ll see you there! **SI**

Editor’s Note: Dealers, we invite you to join the conversation. What can be done to improve profit margins for you and how can the industry better support your businesses? We want to hear from you: editor@shootingindustry.com. (Manufacturers, we’d love to hear your perspective on this, too.)



BOWHUNTING & BEYOND

BY ASHLEY MCGEE

Navigating The Evolving Archery Market

The archery industry is experiencing a significant transformation, fueled by technological advancements and changing consumer preferences. For brick-and-mortar retailers and archery ranges, staying ahead of these trends is crucial to attract and retain customers.

Let's delve into the current trends shaping the market and how you can leverage these insights to boost business.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

Technology is revolutionizing the archery world. Compound bows and crossbows have seen remarkable improvements in recent years, making them more efficient and user-friendly.

Today's compound bows are lighter, faster and more accurate, thanks to innovations in limb design,

riser construction and cam systems. The integration of carbon and other lightweight materials has dramatically reduced the weight of these bows without compromising strength and durability. This makes them more accessible, especially for younger and female archers.

"Aluminum bows are also getting lighter in weight with the ability to keep the price tag easier on some consumers," said Cody Griffin, promotions manager for Easton Archery.

Compound bow manufacturers are also making moves to make their bows more accessible to the shooter with tuning capabilities the archer can do on his/her own without the need for pro-shop assistance.

Crossbows are seeing even more technological advancements. Modern crossbows are more powerful yet compact and easier to cock. Innovations like advanced cocking mechanisms, such as crank systems and sled designs have made crossbows accessible to a broader range of users, including those with physical limitations. The introduction of reverse-draw technology has enhanced power and accuracy, making crossbows

◀ **The bowhunting category isn't limited to just bows and arrows. Apparel and camouflage represent key profit centers. Pnuma Outdoors' CAZA OV pattern was designed for a focus on treestand and elevated hunting. (Image: Mitchell Pantzke, Pnuma Outdoors)**

a popular choice for both hunting and target shooting.

Additional innovations such as high-performance broadheads, improved arrow designs and sophisticated sight systems have made bowhunting more accessible and effective, contributing to more successful hunts. Modern equipment has elevated the bowhunting experience, combining tradition with cutting-edge technology.

BOWHUNTING: A RESURGENT PASSION

Bowhunting remains a cornerstone of the archery industry, with a dedicated and passionate following. As overall hunting participation has continued to decline, bowhunter participation numbers are on the rise.

From 2011–2021, overall hunting participation declined 1% while bowhunting participation increased by 6%.¹

Last year, the Archery Trade Association (ATA) released its 2021 State-by-State Hunting Data — marking the first time the ATA or any other entity has gathered a complete set of state bowhunter estimates.

The ATA worked with state wildlife agencies and

partners to determine bowhunter participation numbers in each state during the 2021–22 season. After combining the state totals, the ATA reported America has over 3.7 million licensed bowhunters.

The growth in bowhunting participation can be attributed to several factors, including a desire for a more traditional hunting experience and the challenge it presents compared to firearm hunting. The crossbow market has experienced steady growth from aging



We've seen a growing number of customers who are passionate about ethical hunting. They appreciate the challenge of bowhunting and the skills it requires, and they want the best equipment to support their goals."

Dustin Miedema, Co-Owner
Long Range Archery
Holland, Mich.

bow hunters as well as gun hunters who want to extend their season.

A renewed focus on ethical hunting practices has also contributed to the rise in bowhunting's popularity. Hunters are increasingly aware of the importance of quick,

humane kills and are investing in equipment that ensures precision and reliability.

Dustin Miedema, co-owner of Long Range Archery in Holland, Mich., confirmed: "We've seen a growing number of customers who are passionate about ethical hunting. They appreciate the challenge of bowhunting and the skills it requires, and they want the best equipment to support their goals."

Changes in hunting regulations and the expansion of bowhunting seasons in various states have also opened new opportunities for hunters. Retailers can capitalize on this trend by staying informed about local regulations and stocking the appropriate gear. Offering workshops and seminars on bowhunting techniques and regulations can attract hunters looking to refine their skills and knowledge.

Providing educational opportunities is vital to the industry's future.

In an article on the organization's website, ATA Senior Manager of Outreach, Nicole Nash, noted, "COVID had a significant impact on bowhunter education. This fact is reflected by a sharp drop in program participation in 2020, going from over 160,000 students in 2019 to 121,295 students in 2020. Educational offerings and participation are still recovering from that impact, but the trend remains in a positive direction of continuing to increase in participation."

Participation in bowhunter education classes is not only on the rise, but the number of bowhunter education classes being offered is as well.

This information is important for the industry because if there is an increase in educational offerings and student participation, there will be a higher demand for archery equipment. This not only helps state agencies but manufacturers, retailers and the archery industry as a whole.

ARCHERY'S GROWING APPEAL

Beyond hunting, archery is gaining traction as both a recreational activity and a competitive sport. Participation rates are climbing, and the number of archery clubs and organizations is on the rise.

Modern compound bows and crossbows have made archery more approachable for families and individuals seeking an engaging outdoor activity. Offering introductory classes and hands-on experiences can convert casual interest into long-term customers.

"We've seen a significant uptick in families coming in to try archery together. Offering beginner lessons and family-friendly events has been a great way to introduce more people to the sport and build a loyal customer base," Miedema shared.

The competitive scene is also thriving, with more

participants in local and national tournaments. Organizations like USA Archery and the National Field Archery Association (NFAA) are experiencing membership growth.

“We’ve seen a steady increase in the number of participants in local and national tournaments,” noted Cody Griffin of Easton Archery. “The competitive aspect of archery is a significant draw for many enthusiasts.”

UNDERSTANDING (AND CATERING TO) CONSUMER PREFERENCES

Meeting the evolving preferences of today’s archery consumers is essential for success. Consumers are seeking convenience, performance and value in their purchases.

Customization is a significant trend, with archers wanting equipment tailored to their specific needs and preferences. Offering a range of customizable accessories and personalized fitting services can meet this

demand.

“At Long Range Archery, we’ve expanded our selection of customizable gear and offer personalized fitting sessions,” said Miedema. “This not only meets the needs of our customers but also enhances their overall experience and satisfaction.”

Besides the increased popularity in crossbows, Miedema mentioned one of the biggest changes in the archery industry is the knowledge of the consumer.

“In the last few years, YouTube and podcasts have helped increase the customer’s technical knowledge. This has them looking for more technical products that usually have a higher retail price,” he said. “The other trend we’ve been seeing has been mobile hunting setups and an increase in hunters who are traveling between states.”

For Easton Archery, front-end components for arrows are hugely popular. Hunters are going to premium half-outs with a lot of weight up front while

at the back end, high-performance vanes are in high demand.

“The compound bow market has for sure changed with consumers wanting more ‘high-end equipment.’ Archery has become more than just shooting your bow right before archery season, I think Total Archery Challenge (TAC) and other shoots have driven consumers to pick up their equipment more year-round,” said Griffin.



A renewed focus on ethical hunting practices has also contributed to the rise in bowhunting’s popularity.

“The popularity of TAC events has also changed the type of arrows and sights our customers are buying. Instead of a cheap 3-pin sight, they are buying more advanced multi-pin sliders,” added Miedema.

For value-minded consumers, “ready-to-hunt” package deals are appealing. Regardless of the price range, these packages tend to save the consumer a good percentage over buying equipment piece by piece. Bundling cellular trail cam technology and other products that allow individuals to maximize

their time afield can help increase archery sales.

It’s also important for retailers to not only understand but embrace the demographic shifts within the archery community.

Engaging younger generations is vital for the future of archery. Programs like the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) have successfully introduced thousands of students to the sport. Retailers can support these initiatives by offering youth-specific equipment and hosting youth tournaments and events.

The number of female archers is also increasing, driving demand for equipment designed specifically for women. Bows with adjustable draw lengths and weights, along with accessories catering to female archers, are essential.

“The growth in female participation has been tremendous. Manufacturers and retailers need to recognize this and provide products that meet the needs of women in the sport,” Griffin suggested.

Miedema added, “We’ve seen a noticeable increase in female customers at our store. By stocking bows and accessories that cater to women, we’ve been able to attract and retain this growing segment of the market.”

MARKETING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Effective marketing and community engagement are key to thriving in today’s market.



Dustin Miedema with a tahr taken in New Zealand, May 2024, with a Prime RVX 4 bow, Victory VAP TKO arrow and G5 T2 broadhead.

Leveraging social media and maintaining a robust online presence can enhance visibility and reach. Sharing success stories, showcasing new products, and engaging with customers online builds a loyal community.

“We’ve found social media is a powerful tool for connecting with our customers. By posting regularly and engaging with our followers, we’ve been able to build a strong online community that translates into in-store visits and sales,” Miedema explained.

Hosting events and workshops can attract new customers and retain existing ones. These events provide opportunities for customers to try new

“
Engaging younger generations is vital for the future of archery.

equipment, learn from experts and connect with other archery enthusiasts.

The team at Easton Archery believes events and workshops are not only a great way to showcase products but also to foster a sense of community among archers.

Miedema echoed this sentiment.

“Our workshops and

events have been incredibly popular. They provide a platform for archers to learn, share experiences and build a sense of camaraderie. It’s also a great way to introduce new products and get immediate feedback from our customers.”

Forming partnerships with local schools, sports clubs and outdoor organizations can also help retailers reach a broader audience. Sponsoring local tournaments and leagues can enhance a retailer’s reputation and visibility within the archery community.

TAKEAWAYS

The archery industry is in a dynamic phase of

growth and innovation. By staying informed about the latest trends and consumer preferences, brick-and-mortar retailers and archery ranges can position themselves for success. Embracing technological advancements, catering to evolving consumer demands and actively engaging with the community are key.

As Griffin from Easton Archery aptly put it, “The future of archery is bright. With the right strategies and a commitment to meeting the needs of today’s archers, retailers can look forward to a prosperous future in this exciting industry.” **BI**

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POLISH & PROTECT

By Bryan Hendricks

MUST-HAVE SUPPLIES FOR GUN CARE & CLEANING

Whether you love or loathe gun cleaning and maintenance, you need the proper tools to do the job the right way.

For retailers, gun cleaning products are also a necessary evil. They're not high-volume sellers, generally speaking, but when customers need them, they

appreciate a retailer who has them.

Modern shooters are more educated about the relationship between cleaning and maintenance to accuracy and reliability. Cleaning is no longer a necessary evil. It's part of the lifestyle.

In response, the shooting industry offers an ever-expanding selection of high-performance cleaners, lubricants and specialty cleaning tools. Obvious items are solvents to remove carbon and copper from bores, of course, but myriad other items we might take for granted occupy the high-performance niche, too. Mundane

options like cleaning rods, bore brushes, lubricants and even cradles and vises have evolved to the modern age.

CLEANERS

Forget all the mythology about scrubbing fouling from the bore, said Jesse Rambo, co-owner of Bore Tech. A quality cleaner is necessary to chemically separate and remove carbon, lead and copper fouling from the bore. He contends Bore Tech's Eliminator is the ultimate solution.

"We figured out a way to effectively remove both fouling types with our Eliminator bore cleaner," Rambo said. "It's our

best-selling product.”

“The old-school way is using a separate copper and carbon remover,” he elaborated. “Effectively removing metallic fouling and carbon fouling are chemically different processes. Copper fouling is ‘welded’ to the barrel. You’re not mechanically removing it without potentially damaging your barrel. Then there’s carbon fouling. Some of it is literally one step away from the hardness of a diamond. You’re not mechanically removing it safely, either. Let your cleaners do the work, not your elbow.”

According to Rambo, Bore Tech Eliminator is safe to handle and bio-friendly. It is also odorless, which initially created skepticism from influencers who believed a gun solvent had to have a strong odor. Unlike traditional ammonia-based solvents, Eliminator can safely be left in the bore to soak for extended periods, Rambo noted.

Bill Pool, owner of Arkansas Gun Traders in Benton, Ark., and a highly regarded gunsmith, still prefers traditional standards like Sweet’s and Shooter’s Choice, but he speaks highly of Eliminator.

CLEANING HARDWARE

Eliminator and other copper solvents react with the copper in cleaning tools like jags, brushes, mops and even cleaning rod tips. Rambo said this prompted required Bore Tech to re-engineer common accessories because those products are traditionally made of bronze or brass, alloys that contain copper and create false copper residue on cleaning patches.

“Eliminator solved a problem, but it created another,” Rambo stated. “You can’t use brass tips on jags, bronze brushes or brass tips on cleaning rods. This is how our Proof-Positive products were born.”

Bore Tech’s Proof-Positive Bore Stix cleaning rods and terminal hardware are made of non-copper alloys, so they do not impart false copper deposits on patches.

Proof-Positive Bore Stix also have

an industry-exclusive barrel twist-rate identification system. The simple index dot system allows shooters to easily determine a firearm’s barrel twist rate.

Proof-Positive Bore Stix are available in diameters from .17-cal. to .416–.50 cal. Yes, it is also available in 6mm–.270 cal.



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RETAILER WHO HAS
THEM.**

One area many gun owners ignore during cleaning is the bolt seating recess and the throat, the site of the dreaded carbon ring. Bore Tech makes tools to clean those areas, as well.

“The carbon ring; it’s always been there. That’s what got us into our action-cleaning tools,” Rambo said. “People forget about the throat and the chamber areas. They get dirty too, especially in ARs. Our action-cleaning toolkits are absolutely one of a kind. We molded a piece of rubber with a jag through the center to mimic the bolt face, be it two lug or three lug. Let me tell you, these are the best things since cold canned beer. It’s so simple,

but it works so well! If you start with our products, you’ll never develop a carbon ring. If you come to us later, you’ll never have another one.”

Bore Tech offers complete action kits for AR platforms to clean the upper and lower units.

“When I grab this kit, everything I need to effectively take care of my AR upper and lower is there,” he concluded.

LUBRICANTS

A popular development in gun cleaning over the past few decades is the CLP class of liquids. The acronym stands for Clean Lubricate Protect.

Jerry Milam, president of 80 Below Oil, said his 80 Below CLP is one of the few pure synthetic CLP products on the market, and it’s a true Class 4 product. (Break Free, a CLP pioneer, also offers a Class 4 product.)

Milam said a hunting trip to Canada revealed there was a need for such a product.

“What started 80 Below Oil was when I was a distributor for a lot of high-speed manufacturing products for the food industry,” Milam recalled. “I’d go to Canada every year to hunt with clients, and we would always have problems with guns functioning, especially autoloaders. I took my chemist to Canada, and we started developing this lube in 2015.”

“When we came out, we tested it against several products,” he added. “If we could not measure up or beat them, I didn’t see any reason to come on the market. For lubricity, longevity and rust prevention, I think we nailed it. It’s a pretty phenomenal product.”

Pure synthetic composition is the key to its consistency and effectiveness, Milam noted.

“This is Class 4 lubricant. You rarely see this in the gun industry,” he said. “Being Class 4 and being a really cold-tolerant lubricant is unique. The high end is pretty amazing, too. It goes well over 500 degrees.”

80 Below comes in a 2-oz. bottle, 2-oz. jar and a 12-mL syringe.

“Trapshooters like to use the syringe on their choke tubes and



▲ Casey Cormier, an associate at Fort Thompson Sporting Goods in Sherwood, Ark., demonstrates how an MTM gun maintenance cradle is able to hold a firearm securely. This assists in cleaning with the muzzle angled down, which keeps liquids and other gunk out of the working parts.

Universal Bore Guide and the Rapid Bore Guide Kit. The Universal Bore Kit is a basic kit containing an anodized aluminum tube and bore inserts, including one for AR-15 actions, as well as a stop extension to keep it stationary.

The Rapid Bore Guide has additional features. These tools enable you to insert a dry patch into a collar, apply solvent to the patch and then push the patch into the bore without having to touch solvents.

Bore Tech's Centerfire Bolt-Action Patch Guide includes a bolt collar that fits many popular centerfire actions with a 0.695–0.700" bolt diameter. This complies with most Remington, Winchester, Ruger, Browning and Savage rifle-bolt diameters. Bore Tech's Patch Guides are available for AR and rimfire platforms, as well.

Place a patch over the opening on the angled patch plate, wet the patch with cleaner and push the rod down the bore. A self-centering, tapered rubber nose cone in the front and an extended barrel design in the rear of the guide ensures proper alignment. Replaceable solvent-resistant molded rubber nose cones prevent cleaners from leaking into the chamber and action areas.

CLEANING STATIONS

A stable, secure platform improves the cleaning process immensely.

Several fine options from Tipton and MTM Case-Gard provide compact, steady cleaning stations. Tipton's Best Gun Vise and Tipton's Gun Vise with Quick Release Cam are excellent middle price-point options. MTM's Gun Cleaning Vise for Rifles and Shotguns and MTM's Maintenance and Cleaning Centers are good economy price-point options.

I have used MTM's Maintenance and Cleaning Center for nearly 30 years. It holds a rifle or shotgun securely and angles the muzzle down to prevent contaminants from flowing toward the action and trigger.

With proper maintenance, your customers' guns will shoot accurately and flawlessly for generations. Having these tools on hand will help them accomplish those missions. **SI**



MODERN SHOOTERS ARE MORE EDUCATED ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE TO ACCURACY AND RELIABILITY. CLEANING IS NO LONGER A NECESSARY EVIL. IT'S PART OF THE LIFESTYLE.

all kinds of coil springs," Milam informed. "It's the same as what's in the 2-oz. jar. Some people like to dip their fingers in it and smooth it onto their gun parts because it doesn't have a greasy finish. It adheres and stops rust."

Mack's Prairie Wings in Stuttgart, Ark., the world's largest waterfowl hunting retailer, uses 80 Below in its gunsmith department, as does Retay USA for its shotguns.

BORE GUIDES

The best way to clean a firearm is from the breech, and this requires precise rod alignment to prevent damaging the throat.

It's important to use a bore guide specific to the brand of rifle. Bore Tech, Tipton and Dewey make retail-accessible bore guides. All emphasize a hands-free operation for stabbing and inserting a solvent-soaked patch into the bore.

Tipton offers two products: the

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NEW PRODUCTS

By Jenna Buckley

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Work Sharp Sharpeners introduces the **KEN ONION EDITION KNIFE & TOOL SHARPENER MK.2** sharpening system. It is offered as a standalone sharpener or as an Elite package that includes the base sharpener along with a fully featured blade grinding attachment. Features include seven preset speed settings, amber LED indicator lights, scope click adjustment knob, leather-lined angle guides, sharpening cassette, adjustable three-position convex pulley system for custom grind profile and angle adjustment knob.



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The **FLEX-M** cellular trail camera from SPYPOINT boasts true dual SIM technology, mobile activation and on-camera buttons that facilitate the formatting of the required microSD card. Four capture modes include Time-Lapse and Time-Lapse+, a responsive trigger that automatically optimizes settings for each photo and Constant Capture technology, allowing the camera to send and capture photos simultaneously. Integration with the SPYPOINT app offers easy camera activation, customizable maps, weather information and BUCK TRACKER technology that utilizes AI image recognition to scan images with species filters. The app allows users to manage settings and update firmware remotely.



FMG PUBLICATIONS

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fmgpubs.com

The influence and intrigue of the American Old West lives on in the 2024 Special Edition issue of **GUNS MAGAZINE OLD WEST HISTORY, GUNS & GEAR**. Features highlight iconic guns of the storied era such as the Springfield 1863 and Winchester 1885. Gripping tales recount lost soldiers' gold, drinking with a dead man and the murderous trail of "Bloody" Bill Longley. Classic *GUNS* articles from the '60s and '70s detail the guns of Pancho Villa and how Chuck Connors, star of "The Rifleman" TV series, ran a Model 92 Winchester at machine-gun speed. *Old West* also examines Taylor's & Co.'s 1860, Henry's Big Boy, the Ruger Super Wrangler, British Bulldogs, substitute cartridges for the .45 and more.



NEXTORCH

nextorch.com

With an output of 10,000 lumens, the **TA31 ULTRA-BRIGHT TACTICAL SEARCHLIGHT** from NEXTORCH casts its beam over four football fields end-to-end, allowing for full area coverage or targeted searching. Using One-Step-Strobe technology, a two-stage button on the tail allows for an override of the constant functions with a half-press for high and a full-press for an immediate strobe. A smart temperature control system maintains optimal performance and safety while in use. The smart sensor technology prevents accidental blinding when detecting objects at close range. The stainless steel strike bezel is impact-resistant up to 6.5', and the TA31 can easily break tempered glass in emergency/rescue or tactical self-defense scenarios. It is also IPX-8 rated as waterproof up to 6.5'.



HODGDON POWDER COMPANY

(913) 362-9455
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RAMSHOT GRAND from Hodgdon Powder Co. is a double-base, spherical propellant powder designed for loading Magnum rifle calibers. It is temperature stable and, as a spherical propellant, meters extremely well. Ramshot Grand also offers optimal load densities, which deliver low extreme spreads and standard deviations. Ramshot rifle powder is available in 1-lb. and 8-lb. canisters.

MUZLSTIK

(513) 939-8891
muzlstik.com

The Muzlstik **COMPACT BARREL FLAG** works with most rifle and pistol calibers from .22 LR to .357 Mag. Simply fitting into the end of the barrel, Muzlstik barrel flags offer an immediate, clear communication of a firearm's status as **LOADED**.



TISAS USA

(865) 604-6894
tisasusa.com

The **1911 A1 STAKEOUT** from Tisas USA is a custom-produced electroless nickel-plated 1911 that comes with both a 9mm barrel (installed) and a .38 Super barrel. The back sight titanium firing pin and serrated front sight aid accuracy. It boasts an A1 service thumb safety and an extended beavertail grip safety. The single-action Stakeout includes one stainless steel 9mm nine-round magazine, one Ed Brown .38 Super nine-round magazine, a cleaning kit, bushing wrench and trigger lock.



UMAREX AIRGUNS

(479) 646-4210
nitroair.com

The **KOMLETE NCR** from Umarex Airguns is powered by a pre-filled high-pressure nitrogen cartridge, offering the high-powered performance of a pre-charged pneumatic airgun without the traditional hassles of filling with high-pressure air. The airgun eliminates the need for a high-pressure air compressor, airgun hand pump or external tanks, thanks to its NitroAir cartridge system utilizing a 3,600 psi nitrogen system for easy use and consistent performance. Pre-filled with nitrogen, these cartridges provide shooters with more than 900 fps velocities and more than 45 consistent high-velocity shots. The Komplete NCR achieves 1,025 fps with .177-caliber and 975 fps with .22-caliber using standard lead pellets, making it ideal for a variety of shooting activities.



STURM, RUGER & CO. INC.

(336) 949-5200
ruger.com

Ruger introduces the **MARLIN TRAPPER SERIES MODEL 1895 EQUIPPED WITH MAGPUL ELG** stock and forend. ELG furniture is durable and impervious to even the worst weather. The stock and forend are M-LOK and QD attachment capable. Chambered in .45-70 Govt., the rifle has a threaded 16.17" cold hammer-forged barrel with a 1:20" twist. An integrated storage compartment in the stock holds six additional rounds, a cheek riser kit is provided for better sight alignment when using an optic. The upgraded Skinner Sights sight system features a 6.25" Picatinny-style rail with an adjustable rear peep sight and a Bear Buster front sight.

GLOCK INC.

(770) 432-1202
us.glock.com

GLOCK's **G17L GEN5 MOS** chambered in 9mm features a 6" barrel, a well-balanced slide, long sight radius and a slightly lighter trigger pull made for competition. The model G17L Gen5 features MOS technology, enabling effortless mounting of optical sights for faster target acquisition. Additional specs include the GLOCK Marksman Barrel and the elimination of finger grooves for individualized grips. The pistol is also designed with an added ambidextrous slide stop lever and the reversible magazine catch to enable optimal handling for both right- and left-handed operators. Magazine capacity is 17 rounds (10-round and 24-round mags are optional).



MTM CASE-GARD

(937) 890-7461
mtmcase-gard.com

The **TRAVELER BOW CASE** from MTM Case-Gard accepts bows up to 44" long. Made of rugged polypropylene with fortified wall construction, the case will protect a bow and arrows in various modes of transportation. The case is engineered to accept most bows with the quiver attached. There are also three different mounting points incorporated on the inside lid of the case for a quiver to be mounted during transport as well as additional straps for securing should the quiver need to be stowed separately. Offered in black with a red center handle and red latches, the Traveler Bow Case has an exterior dimension of 47.08"x19.33"x 8.44".



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U.S. FIREARMS INDUSTRY TODAY

2024

Continued from p. 27

however, the top revolver maker for the fourth year in a row.

Other manufacturers in the top 40 with sizable YOY drops include: Legacy Sports (-64.9%), IWI US (-49.2%) and SCCY Firearms (-47.8%).

4. PISTOL PRODUCTION

U.S. pistol production fell just over a quarter (25.8%) in 2022, from a record 6,751,919 in 2021 to 5,011,167.

Of little surprise, 9mm production dominated the pistol landscape once again — accounting for 56.5% of all pistols produced in 2022. SIG SAUER produced more than double its next nearest challenger in the 9mm category (Smith & Wesson). GLOCK, Ruger and Taurus rounded out the top five 9mm pistol producers.

9mm production fell from 4,301,814 in 2021 to 2,832,422 in 2022 (-34.2%). Out of



Of little surprise, 9mm production dominated the pistol landscape once again — accounting for 56.5% of all pistols produced in 2022.

the 40 top pistol producers from 2022 (see chart on p. 26), only Springfield Armory, Shadow Systems, Diamondback Firearms, Staccato and Walther expanded production in this caliber.

Despite the YOY decrease in overall pistol production, 2022 was able to compete with 2021 in a couple of pistol categories.

Rimfire production experienced only a slight YOY decrease (-0.7%), with pistols

in the .22 category totaling 732,028 in 2022 (737,374 in 2021). No doubt, SIG SAUER's entrance into the rimfire category elevated this category. In 2021, SIG produced a single pistol in this category. This figure jumped to 77,938 in 2022 (the year the P322 launched). Bond Arms was another new entrant in this market, with the Rawhide .22 LR and Stinger RS .22 introduced in 2022. Taurus, GLOCK, Browning and Outdoor Colors attained notable YOY success in .22 pistol production, as well.

The .50-caliber category (which includes 10mm and .45 ACP pistols) achieved modest YOY growth, rising from 682,779 to 713,866 (4.5%). Springfield Armory was the top producer in this pistol caliber category, expanding its production from 113,911 to 169,964 (49.2%). At the end of 2021, Springfield Armory unveiled Emissary 1911 pistol variants, the Garrison 1911, Ronin EMP and other models, which

Continued on p. 45

likely buoyed its presence in this category in 2022.

The top pistol producers — broken down by caliber — can be found on p. 26.

5. REVOLVER PRODUCTION

In 2021, U.S. revolver production topped 1 million. In 2022, production in this category contracted by nearly a third (-28.4%) to 830,786. As noted above, Heritage Mfg. was the top-producing revolver maker for the fourth year running, but it experienced a sizable decrease (-41.7%). Coinciding with its YOY decrease, Heritage Mfg.'s proportion of revolver production also dropped. In 2021, it accounted for 42.5% of revolvers produced in the U.S. This number fell to 34.6% in 2022.

While 2022 rimfire pistol production eclipsed 2021 figures, rimfire revolver production declined from 781,246 to 437,653 (-44%). Revolver production in larger calibers, however, outperformed 2021 totals — with .357, .44 and .50 categories growing in 2022.

Colt's Mfg. was the fourth-largest revolver maker in 2021 and 2022, but its revolver count increased significantly YOY, from 65,062 in 2021 to 98,839 (51.9%). Diamondback Firearms' production in the .22 category (the Diamondback Sidekick) soared in 2022 — rising from 432 in 2021 to 12,458.

The top 12 U.S. revolver producers can be found on p. 26.

6. LONG-GUN & MISC. PRODUCTION

After a substantial rebound in 2021, long-gun production in 2022 was down — but still represented the sixth-highest total in the past 20 years. Rifle production equaled 3,505,819, down from 3,934,374 (-10.9%) in 2021 and shotgun production decreased slightly (-1.9%) from 675,526 to 662,350.

Totaling 710,867 rifles and shotguns, Savage Arms was the top long-gun producer in 2022 (it was fourth in 2021). Ruger had been the top long-gun producer for each of the previous four years. Savage achieved incredible YOY growth, its rifle production jumped from 392,880 to 608,579 (54.9%) and its shotgun production expanded from 13,352 to 102,288 (more than 600%). In total, its YOY growth in long guns amounted to 75% (from 406,232 to 710,867).

Ruger has ranked as the first or second most prolific long-gun producer every year since 2013. Ranked second in 2022, its YOY production dipped 5.7% (from 736,693 to 694,412).

Miscellaneous firearms production, not factored into a manufacturer's total firearms production in this report, was the only category that featured an increase in 2022. YOY production in this category rose dramatically — from 1,283,282 in 2021 to 2,171,255 (69.2%). This is the highest total observed since *SI* began tracking this data in 2017.

O.F. Mossberg/Maverick Arms was the leader in this category, accounting for nearly half of the misc. firearms produced in 2022 (1,058,459).

Charts detailing both categories are on p. 28.



After a substantial rebound in 2021, long-gun production in 2022 was down — but still represented the sixth-highest total in the past 20 years.

7. EXPORTS

Despite the dip in domestic firearms production in 2022, U.S. exports increased YOY — from 450,342 in 2021 to 548,196 (21.7%). Every category, other than revolvers, improved YOY.

For the first time since 2013, GLOCK was the largest U.S. exporter. It achieved admirable 84.6% YOY growth in pistol exports (67,106 to 123,907).

Ruger held as the second-largest U.S. exporter in 2022, a position it has maintained since 2019. Its export totals increased YOY, from 78,215 to 85,666 — a 9.5% jump.

After holding the title as the largest U.S. exporter for each of the previous two years, SIG SAUER dropped to third in AFMER rankings. Its YOY exports fell 26.1% (from 102,514 to 75,740).

The top U.S. exporters from 2022 are displayed on p. 29.

8. IMPORTS

Using the latest data from the U.S. Census Bureau, import data from 2022 and 2023 is available.

In 2023, handgun imports recorded a 14.5% drop-off from 2022 (from 4,380,653 to 3,744,958). The top three handgun importers in 2022 — Austria, Brazil and Germany — were also the top three in 2023. Austria and Germany recorded YOY dips (-17.5% and -1.4%, respectively), while Brazil's climbed slightly (1.7%) in 2023.

Unlike handgun and shotgun imports, rifle imports posted a YOY increase — albeit a very slight one, at 0.5% — from 2022 to 2023 (1,113,286 to 1,118,923). Brazil, Canada and Spain rounded out the top three importing countries in 2023 (in 2022, Canada and Brazil were flipped). Brazil and Spain posted YOY increases (26.3% and 23.8%, respectively), while Canada dropped considerably (-42.1%).

Shotgun imports fell from 1,399,133 in 2022 to 977,863 in 2023 (-30.1%). The top three importers in 2023 were Turkey, Italy and Brazil. (China was the third-largest importing country in 2022, falling one spot to fourth in 2023.) Two of the three top countries in 2023 registered YOY declines — Turkey (-30.4%), Italy (-24.6%) — while Brazil's 2023 total increased (31.4%).

The full import charts are available on pp. 30-31.

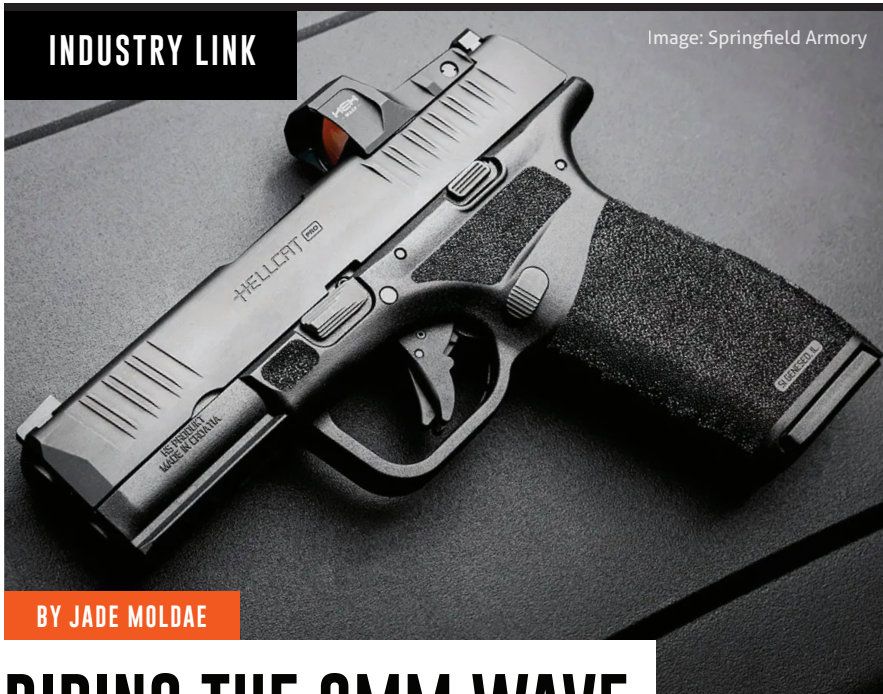
UP NEXT: 2023 FIREARMS PRODUCTION

The ATF will be releasing its interim 2023 AFMER data later this year — typically during summer — which will feature fresh totals for consideration. The full 2023 AFMER data, featuring breakdowns by FFL licensee, will be available in early 2025.

It's likely the broad softening of the market observed in the 2023 business year will result in lower figures in the interim report.

Until then, we'll wait — and look forward to presenting the 2025 "U.S. Firearms Industry Today" report next July. [SI](#)

Have a comment after reading this story? Reach out anytime: editor@shootingindustry.com.



BY JADE MOLDAE

RIDING THE 9MM WAVE

There's no debate: We're firmly in the 9mm era.

Using the past 10 years of ATF's AFMER data (2013–2022) as our source, there were 44,242,904 pistols produced by U.S. firearms manufacturers. Of those, 22,712,215 were chambered in 9mm — making up more than half of all pistols produced in the U.S.

Take a closer look at each year in the chart below — the proportion of 9mm pistols gradually increases. From 2013 to 2017, 9mm pistol production swayed from 34.9% of all U.S. pistols on the low end up to 48.3% on the high end. In 2018, 9mm pistols made up more than half of pistols produced — and it hasn't looked back since, peaking at 63.7% in 2021 and maintaining its hold on the market in 2022 (56.5%).

Competition in this market is only increasing. This year alone, Daniel Defense, Black Rain Ordnance and Rost Martin entered the 9mm pistol market — representing fresh brands for your handgun customers to evaluate. (And this doesn't even include the number of imported pistols in 9mm that perform capably on retail shelves.)

It all begs the question: What will challenge 9mm's impressive dominance, especially in the pistol market?

POTENTIAL RIVALS?

In the pistol segment, it's difficult to see what caliber will challenge 9mm. Of the six calibers listed in the AFMER data, three experienced an increase in 2022: .22, .32 and .50.

Interestingly, the .32 caliber experienced a sizable increase year-

to-year from 2021 to 2022 — more than doubling, from 56,226 to 114,508 (103.7%).

In his April 2024 column, written before the AFMER data was available, Massad Ayoob earmarked the .32 as a caliber to look out for: "In case you didn't notice, .32 Autos are coming back. These pistols are super tiny and super light ... and in America, convenience sells. In this case, so will .32 ACP."

Now, pistols in .32-caliber aren't going to exert the dominance currently enjoyed by 9mm. However, having them in stock will give you additional opportunities to make a sale.

The "To .50" category experienced a 4.5% year-over-year increase (from 682,779 to 713,866). In conversations with my esteemed colleagues at *American Handgunner* and *GUNS Magazine*, I've gleaned there's a small subset of those first-time customers from 2020 and 2021 who became active participants in the shooting sports and have expressed interest in learning about platforms they've heard about — such as the 1911.



In 2018, 9mm pistols made up more than half of pistols produced — and it hasn't looked back since.

While 9mm 1911s are certainly on the rise, the classic .45 ACP 1911 would likely appeal to "purists" eager to get their hands on an iconic platform. Something to look out for ...

Another "hot" market these days is lever-action rifles. Henry USA and Ruger-made Marlin lever guns have ignited the segment — with several new manufacturers joining in this year, including Smith & Wesson, Taylor's & Company and Bond Arms (coming Q3 2024).

At the end of the day, having the right product assortment — from top-selling SKUs to stable, slow-and-steady movers — and the ability to add value to customers will result in sales for you and your team.

With the of uncertainty and challenges facing our industry today, any edge is worth sharpening. **SI**

THE "9MM ERA"

Year	9mm Production	Total Pistol Production	% Pistols In 9mm
2013	1,697,509	4,441,726	38.2%
2014	1,270,419	3,633,454	34.9%
2015	1,531,055	3,557,199	43.0%
2016	2,281,450	4,720,075	48.3%
2017	1,756,618	3,691,010	47.5%
2018	2,099,319	3,881,158	54.1%
2019	1,729,834	3,046,013	56.8%
2020	3,211,775	5,509,183	58.3%
2021	4,301,814	6,751,919	63.7%
2022	2,832,422	5,011,167	56.5%
Total	22,712,215	44,242,904	51.3%

Source: ATF AFMER (2013–2022)

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SCAN CODE FOR MORE INFO ▶

#52150
590[®] Retrograde
12GA, 9-Shot

SAFETY TIP ⚠️

Store firearms securely, inaccessible to children and unauthorized users.

Consult and comply with any and all applicable federal, state, and local: laws, regulations, requirements, and/or restrictions, including but not limited to those regarding the purchase, ownership, use, transport, and carrying of a firearm. Not all products are available in all states and jurisdictions.

TIMELESS, TIME-TESTED SHOTGUNS.

With a nod to Mossberg's first security pumps, Retrograde shotguns combine the timeless look of walnut furniture with Mossberg's time-tested pump-action features. Available in multiple finishes, in 6, 7, and 9-Shot capacities, and in Security and Field/Hunting configurations.

Mossberg – Makers of dependable, hardworking firearms for more than a century.

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SINCE 1919