



BIG WIG INTERVIEW: NICHOLAS LARTIZIEN
SURF HARDWARE EUROPE

EURO BOARDSPORT BUSINESS ANALYSIS

RETAIL BUYERS GUIDES:
SURF ROBES AND PONCHOS,
SUNGLASSES, SURFBOARDS, SUP,
HANGING SHOES, IMPACT VESTS,
MENS UNDERWEAR, SUNSCREEN

SINCE
2010
ON
WATER



INDIANA
PADDLE & SURF Co.

Check out our 2024 Collection

indiana-paddlesurf.com | info@whitewave.ch | A Brand of White Wave AG





#indianapaddlesurf



Become a SUP or Foil Competence Center and profite from great offers!

ÖRGANIC OYSTERPRENE[©]

More sustainable, Highest performance



SOÖRUZ

**HIGH PERFORMANCE
& SUSTAINABLE WETSUITS**



ÖRGANIC OYSTERPRENE®

The game-changing neoprene foam for high-performance wetsuits. Made from natural rubber from FSC certified forests and oyster shells, it delivers unmatched performance while being USDA certified biobased product.

This new technology will be available on our GURU range for spring summer 2024 and FIGHTER/ DIVINE range in winter.



RIPCURL 
SEARCHGPS³

**JOIN THE WORLD'S
LARGEST SURFING
COMMUNITY**



MICK FANNING - 3X WORLD SURFING CHAMPION

HELLO SOURCE#120

The Weather is the key!

I know us English are famous for talking about the weather, but climate change is now beginning to really impact on our sports, and businesses will need to learn new tricks of the trade, to deal with the irregularity weather is bringing with increased regularity.

Both winter and summer products have been impacted, and not just to the confines of Europe, with both North America and Japan experiencing bad winter seasons as well. So, the geographic tripod business model that has underpinned the winter business for years was no longer able to properly function as no region was able

to offset the other regions. This is the first time this has happened.

So, what of spring? In Europe as I write this editorial, the North is drowning under record breaking amounts of spring rain and the South is getting close to a water shortage crisis. For shops and brands alike, everyone is praying for spring to properly start and consumers to get out outdoors and start buying summer goods.

With inflation dropping the industry is hopeful this spring will be better than last, as consumers feel less squeezed and with stocks slowly falling to manageable levels, reducing the need for serial discounting. But the weather needs to start working for us quickly so that shops can sell product thereby improving their cashflow and most importantly kickstart the prebook for s/s 2025.

In this issue we will cover ten product categories in our s/s 2025 retail buyers' guides, helping make the case for retailers to place their prebook orders with the last

impacts of Covid hopefully behind us and ordering patterns returning to some kind of new normal.

Our bigwig Nicholas Lartzien has been in the industry since 1985 so has seen it all, and as he says at the end of his interview "Respect and protect Nature, Mother Earth offers us such an incredible playground during our small living time, so make sure we pass it on to our kids in the best condition," and he finishes with a quote from French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupery "We do not inherit the Earth from our parents, we borrow it from our children."

Wow I am back full circle talking about mother nature's weather again, time to sharpen the pencil and figure out that new business model!

Always sideways weather permitting.

Clive Ripley
Publisher

CONTENTS

P.07 Contents	P 31 SUP Retail Buyer's Guide	P 53 Brand Profile Pineapple Island
P.09 News	P 36 Big Wig Interview: Nicholas Lartzien Surf Hardware Europe	P 54 Brand Profile Barts
P.11 Outdoor by ISPO preview	P 39 Hanging Shoes Retail Buyer's Guide	P 55 Brand Profile Sun Tribe
P.12 Surf Robes and Ponchos Retail Buyer's Guide	P 43 Impact Vests Retail Buyer's Guide	P 56 Brand Update Foam Life
P.16 Retailer Profile Troggs, Northern Ireland	P 45 Men's Underwear Retail Buyer's Guide	P 57 Brand Profile Prolong
P 19 Sunglasses Retail Buyer's Guide	P 47 Sunscreen Retail Buyer's Guide	P 59 Market Insight
P.22 Sunglasses Pictorial	P 50 New Products	P 63 Opportunities
P 27 Surfboards Retail Buyer's Guide	P 52 Brand Profile Milo	P 68 Events

TEAM

Editor Harry Mitchell Thompson
harry@boardsportsource.com

Skate Editor Dave Morgan
davemorgan@boardsportsource.com

Senior Surf Contributor David Bianic
david@boardsportsource.com

Snowboard Contributor Matthieu Perez
Matthieu@boardsportsource.com

German Editor Natalia Maruniak
tala@boardsportsource.com

French Editor Marie-Laure Ducos
ducos@boardsportsource.com

Graphic Design Louis White
hello@louiswhite.co.uk

Proof-readers Natalia Maruniak,
Marie-Laure Ducos

Contributors Rocio Enriquez, Benoît Brecq, Gordon Way,, Franz Holler, Nuno Principe, Toby Hammer, Sydney Bohannon, Joanna Swiderska, Alfred Sutton

Advertising & Marketing Clive Ripley
clive@boardsportsource.com

Accounts Manager
accounts@boardsportsource.com
To Subscribe
boardsportsource.com

subs@boardsportsource.com

Publisher
publisher@boardsportsource.com

Published by ESB
22 Friars Street, Sudbury
Suffolk, CO10 2AA. UK

Boardsport SOURCE
is published bi-monthly
© ESB. All Rights Reserved

boardsportsource.com

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without prior written permission, except for permitted fair dealing under the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988. Application for permission for use of copyright material including permission to reproduce extracts

in other public works shall be made to the publishers. Full acknowledgement of author, publisher and source must be given. The views expressed in this publication are not those necessarily held by the Publisher. ISSN # 1478-4777

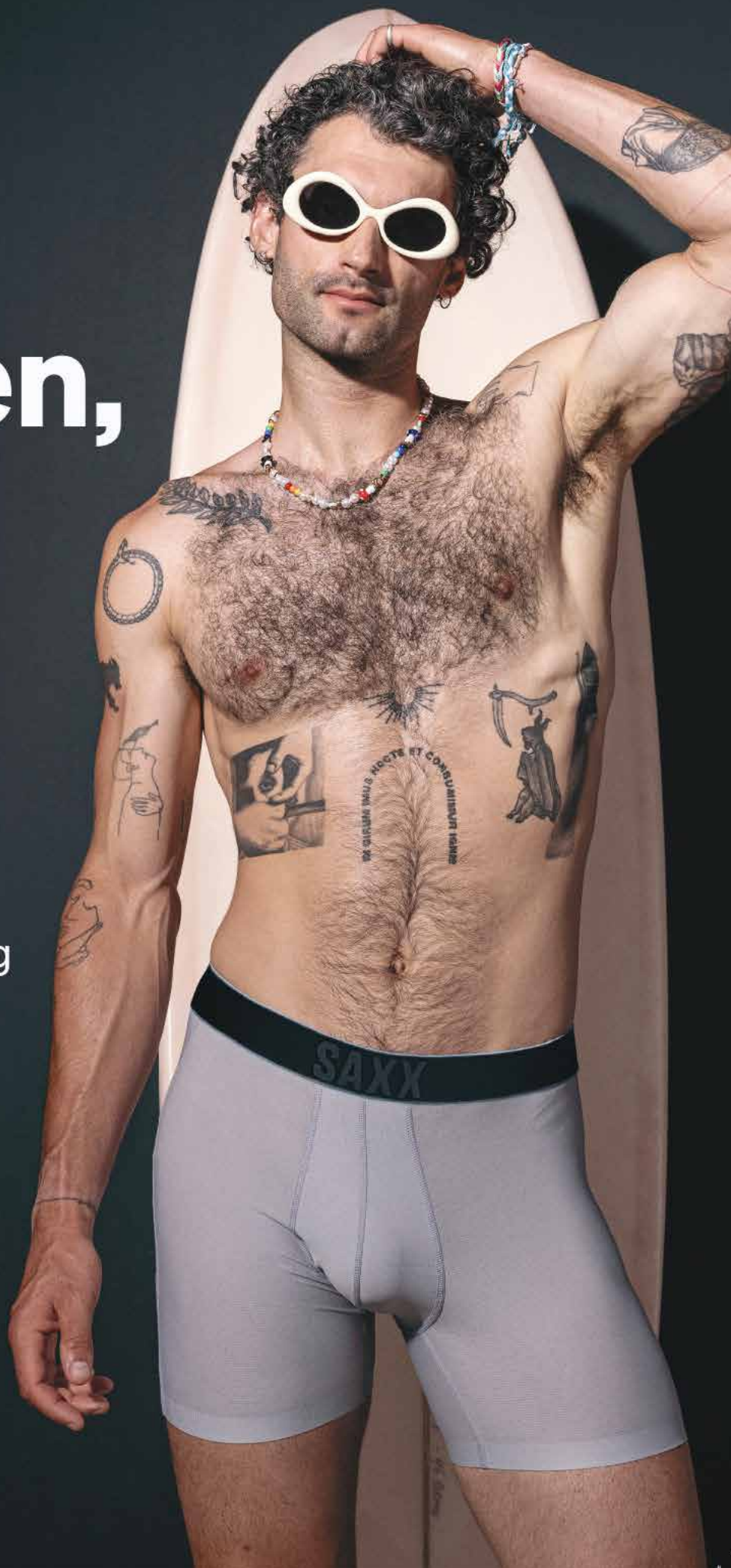
SOURCE only puts industry employees on our front covers. No pro athletes for us. This is our way of recognising all the hard work and effort put in, which normally goes unnoticed. Please email submissions to harry@boardsportsource.com

On the cover Source Graphic Designer, Louis White - Photo: Bronson Wyke

SAXX

Hang ten, never eleven.

Experience life-changing
underwear with the
BallPark Pouch.™



NEWS

#120

BEAUMANOIR IN EXCLUSIVE NEGOTIATIONS FOR BOARDRIDERS

At time of going to press French group Beaumanoir is in exclusive negotiations with the American Authentic Brands Group for the Western European activities of the Boardriders Group. Details of the countries covered by the agreement have not yet been released, but it is understood that Beaumanoir would take over the management and distribution of the Boardriders brands, boosting their wholesale sales, a distribution channel little used until now by the Breton group. The future of Boardriders brand shop networks and the Boardriders multi-brand stores in major towns and summer and winter resorts had not been decided. Nicolas Foulet, Chairman of Boardriders EMEA, said he was "fully committed to this great opportunity, which will enable us to adapt more quickly to a rapidly changing world and to extend the influence of our brands over the long term."

TRIPLE EIGHT DISTRIBUTION ACQUIRES PRO-TEC TRADEMARK & PARTIAL INVENTORY FROM BRAVO HIGHLINE

The combination of Pro-Tec with the Triple Eight's brand portfolio (Triple Eight, 187 Killer Pads, Eightball, Wipeout, and 80six) will enable the company "to deliver a broader breadth and depth of protective gear to the global action sports market," said the company. Triple Eight reported it intends to integrate the Pro-Tec brand into its existing platforms by the second quarter of 2024, in time for the Paris 2024 Olympics. "By combining the deep authenticity of Pro-Tec with the back-office operations, logistics and financing of Triple Eight, we believe that we can better advance our capabilities and serve the needs of our customers and athletes," said Yana Farrally-Plourde, head of marketing at Triple Eight. "And with the portfolio of brands now under our direction, we can help our retail partners through product and brand segmentation, exclusivity, and pricing structure worldwide," added Justin Rimbart, head of sales for Triple Eight.

VF CORPORATION RECOGNISED AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST ETHICAL COMPANIES FOR 8TH YEAR RUNNING

VF Corporation has received the 2024 World's Most Ethical Companies® recognition by Ethisphere, a global leader in defining and advancing the standards of ethical business practices. "At VF, living with integrity is foundational to our business success, guided by our Principles, and embedded in everything we do," said Jenn Sim, VF's Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary. This is the 8th consecutive year VF has been recognized and is the only honouree in the apparel industry to be named this year.

FOAMLIFE HAS ANNOUNCED THEIR NEW AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND PARTNER AS STOKEHOUSE AUSTRALIA

Global wholesaler Stokehouse Australia (Vissla/Sisstrevolution/Amuse Society) has been chosen as FoamLife's distribution partner for Australia and New Zealand. Timo Mullen FoamLife Co-Founder explained, "Given the significant potential in this region for flip flops/thongs we have waited patiently for the right opportunity and partner that fits with our future growth plans. Stokehouse are like us, rider and founder owned with a similar brand ethos, a perfect match. We know the team at Stokehouse well, our product has been stocked in all the Vissla stores in the USA and Hawaii and has sold exceptionally well, so the logical next step was to continue our relationship into Australia and New Zealand for 2024 with the Stokehouse Australia team."

2024 INTERNATIONAL REPORT ON SNOW AND MOUNTAIN TOURISM PUBLISHED

Swiss expert Laurent Vanat launched his "2022/23 International Report on Snow and Mountain Tourism" during Mountain Planet, which was held at Grenoble-Alpexpo in April. This annual report lists and analyses data from nearly 2,000 ski resorts in 68 countries around the world. For 16 years, the Swiss consultant Laurent Vanat

has been monitoring and analysing the world ski and mountain market by publishing his International Report on Snow and Mountain Tourism every April.

LONGBOARD CLASSIC: A QUARTER CENTURY!

The legendary Longboard Classic celebrated 25 years this year by releasing the Longboard Classic 25th Anniversary book. The "Woodstock of Snowboarding" has been attracting over 500 soul surfers, longboarders, off-piste enthusiasts, and snowboard legends from around the world to Stuben am Arlberg for 25 years to celebrate the passion for snowboarding. "It's a declaration of love for snowboarding," said founder Paul Gruber. The book documents 25 years of festival history and the origins of the sport, with Gruber's team researching for 10 months to complete the book.

TOM BERRY NAMED CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT SAXX

SAXX has announced the appointment of Tom Berry as Chief Executive Officer. Berry comes to SAXX having most recently served as president and CEO America's of the Danish brand ECCO. Prior to that, Berry held leadership roles at Levi Strauss & Co, Tecnica, Salomon and The North Face. "With Tom at the helm and the continued dedication of our team and retail partners, we are heading into an exciting future as we reach more men with innovative, technical and life-changing products," said Dan Galpern, chairman of the SAXX board and Partner at SAXX investor TZP Group.

WAVEGARDEN COMING TO BIRMINGHAM UK

Stoneweg InfraSport has committed to invest £50 million to deliver the UK's largest Wavegarden Cove. The development will have as its central feature the 5.4-acre Wavegarden Cove surfing lagoon, along with a sandy beach and a vast array of amenities such as a surf academy, equipment rental, and surf store. Additionally, restaurant areas featuring co-working spaces and further recreational activities including hot tubs, a playground, and a pump track will be available for the more than 200,000 visitors expected annually.

MELON OPTICS OPEN FLAGSHIP EU SHOP IN INNSBRUCK

Melon Optics have announced the opening of their first ever EU flagship store right in the heart of Innsbruck, Austria. For the first time in Europe, action sports enthusiasts can step into a Melon store to design their own custom goggles and sunglasses, with the help of their expert in-store team. The store also features a separate 50 sq. metre space for brands to partner with Melon.

BURTON SNOWBOARDS ACHIEVES B CORP RE-CERTIFICATION

Burton has announced its recertification as a Certified B Corporation. "I feel strongly that the way our business impacts the planet, and our global snowboard community is equally as important as the design and quality of Burton products," said Donna Carpenter, owner of Burton. "All of us at Burton are very proud to be a part of the growing B Corp movement because it means our family-owned company is contributing to making business practices more equitable, socially responsible and transparent."

PASSENGER APPOINTS MATT LIDDLE AS GENERAL MANAGER FOR USA

Passenger, the responsible outdoor clothing company, has appointed Matt Liddle as General Manager for the USA. Liddle, who will be based in Portland Oregon, joins from Snow Peak USA, where he served on the executive team for five years as Chief Operating Officer, leading a period of transformative growth for the brand in the US.

PADDLE SPORTS SHOW INTRODUCES FILM FESTIVAL FOR 2024

The Paddle Sport Film Festival will take place on September 23rd, the evening prior to the show, and is open to Kayak, Foil, Sup and Canoe films. The event will be held at the Palais des Congrès Strasbourg Pl. de Bordeaux, 67000 Strasbourg starting at 19h00 and films must feature or be related to a Paddle Sports. The film program will include presentations from directors and athletes, with time for Q&A, and is also a competition, with a 2000 euros cash prize for the winner, decided by a jury.



www.pacsafe.com



TRADE EVENTS

PREVIEWS

OUTDOOR BY ISPO
MUNICH, GERMANY
JUN 3-5, 2024

Think Outdoor - OutDoor by ISPO the global platform for the outdoor community.

From June 3-5, 2024, the most exciting brands and retailers of the outdoor community will congregate in 3 halls, A1, A2 and A3 at the Trade Fair Center Messe München. This, the original home of the exhibition which moved to the smaller MOC for a couple of years after covid. Then last year the EOG voted to move the show back to its birthplace which has enabled the show to further expand.

Under the motto «Think Outdoor», numerous renowned exhibitors such as Vaude, Rab / Lowe Alpine, Mountain Equipment, Lowa, Meindl, Nordisk, Icebug, Marmot, Montura, Scott and Skechers have already confirmed their participation. The global trade fair brings together leading companies, manufacturers, retailers, industry experts and outdoor enthusiasts. The event offers a unique platform for networking, business opportunities and knowledge exchange in an inspiring atmosphere.

Especially in the current situation with high inventory levels and consumer restraint, it is of great importance to know and understand the latest market trends in order to set the course for successful business development. In recent years, OutDoor by ISPO has successfully proven that it is the leading platform for the outdoor industry to showcase brands and innovations, make valuable business contacts and promote collaboration within the community.

With 50% more exhibition space in three halls and a spacious outdoor area of over 5,000 square meters, OutDoor by ISPO offers an ideal environment for experiencing and discovering new products and trends.

Within each hall the areas are divided into specialist hubs which are central focus points with exhibiting brands and chill out areas. In hall A1 is the trail running test track and the climbing hub, in A2 is the watersports hub and in A3 is the sustainability hub,

The Sustainability Hub is a central point of contact for anyone interested in sustainability in the outdoor industry. Innovative and sustainable solutions are presented and discussed here in order to shape a more environmentally friendly future together. Exhibitors have the opportunity to present the entire life cycle of their products and show how they actively contribute to conserving resources.

As one of these main highlight areas, the Watersports Hub features a 100 m2 pool for brands to test and showcase their products. The pre-built options around the 350 m2 designed hang-out area give brands the option to bring new designs, innovations, and ideas to a by topic curated audience. Surfing, SUP, kayaking, canyoning, life vests – the focus is watersports adventure and life by the ocean vibes.

From partnering with Blue Earth Summit, giving the stage to Sail GP, and inviting former athlete Bjørn Dunkerbeck, to surf movies at the outdoor cinema – OutDoor by ISPO approaches watersports holistically introducing a home and meeting point for brands and all industry players alike.

Various countries have collected their brands into national hubs with the Italian village in A1, the Scandinavian village run by the SOG in A3 and the French Village run by the OSV in A3.

There will also be the opportunity to visit brands authentically presented in the great outdoors without any restrictions. Under the open sky, the Atrium area not only offers a huge lounge and exhibition area surrounded by greenery, but will also be the place-to-be to connect and celebrate.

As always at ISPO much is made of the best new products out there. The ISPO Award winners represent the finest in innovation and design within the sports industry, showcasing remarkable products. Check out the winners' products to stay up to date with the latest developments and trends in sports. These are all on display at the ISPO awards in A2.

ISPO Textrends platform in A3 is now in its 10th year. With ISPO Textrends you can discover the most cutting-edge garments, accessories, fabrics, fibers, and components for the sports and outdoor industries, all in one place. The Textrends awards is handed out twice a year and honors trends in the textile and apparel sectors which are set by experts two years in advance. The winners are presented at ISPO Munich and the OutDoor by ISPO Textrends exhibition.

The OutDoor by ISPO experience is rounded off by community events such as outdoor parties. The large green area in front of the halls serves not only as an exhibition space, but also as a meeting point for the industry and a place where the community comes together in the evening to celebrate together and be inspired by the latest OutDoor movies at the outdoor cinema.

From June 2nd to the 6th you can also experience the event in the open air and camp on a guarded site. You can have an authentic camping experience and be close to the outdoor community as a part of the trade show.

OutDoor by ISPO is more than just a trade fair - it is the central platform that brings together enthusiasts from the outdoor industry to discuss not only products, but also a responsible approach to the environment. Be part of this community and think outdoor.

The show is easily visited by visitors from abroad with Munich Airport close to the Messe halls and the city is also the center for the motorway and rail systems in Bavaria. The messe site is connected to the city by s and u bahns so no need to rent a car. So pack your bags and join the outdoor community. With the global outdoor market currently facing many challenges Outdoor by ISPO is the place to network and meet industry people to find solutions as what is the largest global platform for the outdoor community. Outdoor by ISPO is the ultimate hub for outdoor professionals and brands.

[ISPO.COM/EN/OUTDOOR](https://www.ispo.com/en/outdoor)



Certified



Corporation

dryrobe®

get changed. stay warm.

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

SURF ROBES & PONCHOS 2024

Originally designed to help surfers change on the parking lot without disclosing their privates, nor chilling them, the surf poncho slash changing robe has come a long way. A game changer (pun intended) for retailers which has a lot to offer in 2024. By David Bianic



VOITED

Today, fashion magazines praise the functionality of Surf Ponchos & Changing Robes, and you are more likely to see those “surfers’ capes” on the back of dog walkers at the park or Instagram’s cool kids, around a bonfire in the wild. The demand rose exponentially, and the brands multiplied like hot cakes, till the business hit the brakes “due to an over saturated market”, notes Brad Rochfort, UK Territory Manager for FCS, one of the brands which pioneered the “towel poncho” 10 years ago. If the ascending curve slowed down, “in 2023, the market for Changing Robes and Surf Ponchos still experienced growth”, reports Marin Mauriac, Product Engineer for Soöruz.

For the brands who managed to address a larger consumer target than just water sports enthusiasts, there is still a lot of room for success. “We were able to increase our sales by over 37%”, reveals Carsten Raphael, CEO of Wave Hawaii, as “ponchos have established themselves from a practical item for surfers to a lifestyle product for a very broad target group”. Another example is After Essentials, which managed to remain relevant through new product categories such as “the rain ponchos for a more urban use, different sizes and shapes for tiny babies, babies, toddler and kids, some warm and comfy ponchos for more of a domestic use, etc.”, explained marketing wizard Rémi Chaussemiche.

MARKET EVOLUTION

The “changing garments” intended use, slowly drifted, “to encompass a broader use as an additional shell for changing weather climates”, explains Hannah Craig, Marketing and Project Manager at Voited. Many brands acknowledge the term “changing robe” isn’t relevant anymore as it is largely used as “a versatile layer suitable for various weather conditions and especially rainy or windy days”, comments Mauriac at Soöruz. Accordingly, the branding has moved with the times: Shelter Poncho (FCS), Dry Stop Poncho (Mellow Sea), Storm Ponchos (Wave Hawaii), The Shelter (After Essentials), Storm Robes (Surf Logic),

“A larger population see the changing robe as a versatile layer suitable for various weather conditions and especially rainy or windy days.”

Marin Mauriac, Soöruz

Revolution 3-in-1 Parka (RED) and obviously the dryrobe®. Similarly, the Surf Poncho has turned more into a Beach Poncho, nowadays adopted by any and all beachgoers - hence the numerous opportunities for surf shops located on the beachfront adds Soöruz’s Mauriac as “you will also find some tourists that will buy trendy products to go on the beach”.

2024 SURF PONCHO TRENDS

The very first surf ponchos consisted of a mere terry towel with a hood, whereas they are now packed with features such as quick-drying fabrics and absorbing materials, like the AirLite ponchos of Wave Hawaii, which “are climate-regulating, so they keep you warm when it’s cold and let out steam when it’s hot. They are also lightweight and dry quickly - combined with sustainable materials made in Portugal”.

dryrobe® also sees “a growing demand from travelling athletes and adventurers (like pro surfers and triathletes) for our ultra-portable, high-performance dryrobe® Lite”. Packable, compact designs are favoured by the use of those technical synthetic fabrics.

Another category of users which proved consistent are kids, and the selling point here is different as “fun patterns, bright colours” are the most sought-after criteria, says Victor Jarrige, E-commerce and Web Marketing Manager for Mellow Sea. On that note, the young ones can



also benefit from serious changing robes, since RED introduced last year their range of Kids Waterproof Robes, “designed with active kids in mind”, highlights Catherine Morris, Commercial Director. These kids’ robes are available in two different styles and sizes, with different colour options, and long sleeves that grow with them. Smart.

2024 PRICE RANGE

Starting at €30 for the entry-level surf ponchos at Mellow Sea, to a hefty £280 for the new dryrobe® Lite, there is quite a gap between the simple towel poncho and the element-resistant changing robe. To help you navigate the market, let’s highlight some brands key price points. Soörz points out a range between €59.95 and €79.95, knowing that “from our experience if the price of the poncho goes above €80 it will be hard to sell unless there is a real technical feature”. Wave Hawaii shares similar figures for surf ponchos, whereas for the changing robe / storm poncho, “the consumer is willing to pay €120”. At Voited, “the best-selling price points fall within the mid-range, offering a balance between affordability and premium features”. Same at dryrobe®, whose bestsellers (the short

“We were able to increase our sales by over 37%”

Carsten Raphael, Wave Hawaii

and long sleeve Advance robe) retail at £145 and £165. Overall, €60-70 for the surf ponchos, and €120-160 for the changing robes seem the most sought out items.

2024 KEY MATERIALS

Let’s keep it simple, starting with the surf ponchos. Some brands are still using a 100% natural terry fabric, as it remains “a highly absorbent fabric made from 100% cotton with looped pile fibres”, says the staff at Lightning Bolt, before adding, “it’s soft, comfortable, and ideal for absorbing water. Cotton terry cloth provides excellent moisture-wicking properties”. Made from 100% organic cotton, the dryrobe® towel robes tick the eco box, as well as Wave Hawaii and Surf Logic, with the use of Oeko-Tex® cotton, “an eco-label which guarantees that any textile bearing the label has been tested and found free from over 300 harmful substances”, details Javier Gonzalez Vega, Founder & CEO of Surf Logic.

There’s the same spirit at Mellow Sea, as their ponchos are upcycled: “We collect unused or abandoned beach towels and give them a second life.”

The implementation of polyester helped the fast-drying properties, while the “user only comes into contact with the cotton”, ensures Raphael at Wave Hawaii.

“The Shelter Poncho is basically designed with the same external features as a snowboard jacket.”

Brad Rochfort, FCS

Concerning the changing robes, the specifications are closer to an outerwear shell, says Brad Rochfort at FCS, speaking of the Shelter Poncho; “It’s basically designed with the same external features as a snowboard jacket.” That’s to say, a 5000mm water resistant polyester shell with 3000mm breathability, fully taped seams and water-resistant zippers. Add some sustainability and you’ve got yourself a winner with the dryrobe® Advance; “The unique, super-warm, fast-drying inner is made from recycled polyester, a large part of which comes from plastic bottles. The durable weatherproof outer is made from pre-consumer recycled nylon that would otherwise be destined for landfill – such as old fishing nets, tights and nylon carpets. This is finished with a PFC-free Durable Water-Repellent (DWR).” There’s the same tech-load of features at Voited, with 100% recycled 50D Ripstop Repreve® for the outer shell fabric, coated with 18.000mm waterproofness on the inside and a Bionic Finish®Eco coating (fluorine free), plus a quilted mid-layer made of 3D Synthetic Featherlight recycled fibre for insulation, and an absorbent microfiber fleece lining.

Good practice is also at the heart of RED’s business, as the brand has joined the B-Corp gang in 2023; “It is important to us to use responsibly sourced and recycled materials wherever possible without making any compromise when it comes to the end product”, comments Catherine Morris.

If the devil is in the details, so is the quality. The ponchos/robes have gradually boosted their offer with extra features that can make the difference for customers. For example, the changing robes at Mellow Sea, come with a removable, easily zipped, waterproof lining, in case you want to keep your wetsuit under the robe; “When you get out of the water, it’s very practical, as you avoid getting the fleece wet. And once you’re dry, you can easily zip on the lining for direct contact with the softness of the fleece.” Voited offers adjustable hoods and a “additional CloudTouch® insulation panel in the lumbar area for comfort in various climates in our changing robe”.

2024 COLORS & PRINTS

Again, ponchos and changing robes don’t get the same treatment as they serve different purposes. Robes are often more muted than ponchos for technical rationale; “We chose black as our colour due to its obvious heat absorbing properties to keep you warmer and it dries faster”, says Rochfort at FCS. The sober approach is also a way to focus on the technicality of the product, adds Jarrige at Mellow Sea, as seen on their robes which only features “two embroideries with a logo on the heart and one on the back”. The most popular colourway of the past year at dryrobe® has been the Black Camo on the Advance model, with a pink lining for a pinch of fun.

Surf Ponchos display a much wider palette of colours and prints, some of them you might be familiar with; “We usually use the colours/prints/pattern used in our entire collection”, explains Mauriac at Soörz. Lightning Bolt is on the same page with “a colour range deeply connected to Lightning Bolt’s brand identity”, from vibrant ocean blues to fiery sunset oranges.

Whereas some brands go for the bold and flashy, Wave Hawaii is inspired in 2024 by the natural elements, through a combination of “blue, green, brown, beige - with matching designs such as leaves, waves, jellyfish”. After Essentials ticks almost all the colour boxes, in between artist collabs (Quentin Caillat, Juliette Béchu and Nathalie Fercoq), “a series of prints inspired from the rebirth of the nature during the spring season”, as well as series of prints inspired from the hippie movement from the 60’s -70’s and Native ethnic prints.

It is very refreshing to see a category of accessories like the ponchos/robe blooming in every direction, driven as much by the core water sports users as by the outdoor aficionados, who seized the product and repurposed it as a versatile shell and opened new frontiers for the industry. ☺

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Compact designs
- 2 Urban & indoor robes
- 3 Kids & toddlers ponchos/robes
- 4 Outwear fabrics on robes
- 5 Matching looks with the apparel ranges

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM



PONCHOS



SOCKS

SOON →



UNDERWEAR

AIRLITE[®]

PERFORMANCE WEAR





RETAILER PROFILE

TROGGS SURF SHOP, PORTRUSH

Having started trading all the way back in 1984, Troggs in Portrush, Northern Ireland has established itself as one of the UK and Ireland's leading surf shops. Set to celebrate their 40th anniversary this year, we grabbed owner Andrew Hill to talk all things surf!

Please give us a brief history about your stores.

We will be celebrating 40 years in surf retail this year, starting from humble beginnings in a garage at our Guest House in Portrush in 1984, to present day, where we now have 2 stores in the town; our Main St store, which is now fully fashion lifestyle focused, and our new store which is Ireland's largest hardware store for surfboards and wetsuits. We have also been selling online since 1999. In our trading history we also had stores in Portstewart and Ballymena.

How has business been this spring vs last year? Do you have more local customers or tourists this season?

We have had a slower start to the season this year, weather was cold this Easter break and we haven't experienced too many tourists, a few Americans and Germans so far and our domestic market has been much quieter than last year. We are seeing a trend of more visitors from Scotland, Mainland UK and Southern Ireland coming to visit the area famous for its outstanding coastline, surfing conditions and of course Golf! Portrush hosts the 153rd The Open at Royal Portrush July 2025, so I'm sure we will see Stephen Bell here and possibly Kelly Slater!

Which brands are super-hot right now and which products are selling well so far this season?

Rip Curl, Saltrock, Vans, Yeti, Alder, O'Neill and Pyzel.

Any new brands catching your eye?

We have re-introduced Oxbow, and Picture and Florence Marine are new brands for us. With the new hardware store, we have expanded our offering of Surfboards including Pyzel, Christiaan Bradley, Sharpeye, Mark Phipps, Firewire, Lost and more, we now have over 300 surfboards in stock.

What are you hoping/expecting to see in product lines from brands for next season?

I would like to see product lines containing more recycled or sustainable fabrics and materials. I also hope brands work on their manufacturing principals and ethics, hopefully seeing more brands gain a B Certified Corporation Certificate or similar.

How much of your business is done online? What are the benefits of having a physical shop over simply having an online store?

Almost 15% of our business is online currently. We are seeing a return to the physical stores especially in hardware from our investment in the new store, there seems to be a trend where surfers physically wish to try on wetsuits and get the feeling of a board below their arm.

A physical store acts as a hub for the surfing community offering expert local advice creating a sense of belonging and loyalty and supporting the local surfing scene. Our new flagship destination store has attracted surfers from all over the country where now they can see and get a more deep level exposure to some of the best surfing equipment available on the market, we have expanded our range of FCS and Futures fins, board bags leashes and traction.

What marketing tools are you using to keep your shop name out there?

We have an active Instagram and Facebook page with daily video surf reports and are hoping to initiate product reviews on our YouTube channel shortly. We have recently sponsored some of Ireland's up and coming hot surfing talent.

Are you doing anything innovative to give your consumers unique products/experiences?

More of our own brand development in fashion own logo clothing, and we are following up on some ideas we gained from Surf Expo in Florida this year. We are hoping to throw a big party for the Northern Ireland Surfing Community this summer to celebrate 60 years since my father Ian Hill first surfed here in April 1964, and to celebrate Surf Retail here for 40 years and the Surf School which has operated for 30 years since 1994.

What do you predict for the future of surf retail?

Physical surf shops will have to foster a community driven space allowing for unique experience events, workshops and surf related activities as well as providing personal expert and customer service which is unequalled online. Who knows far in the future with advancements in technology, will allow for more customisation options in both wetsuits and surf boards both in dimension and design. ☺

TROGGS.COM



BLANKETS | CHANGEWEAR | RAINWEAR | FOOTWEAR
MADE WITH REPREVE FROM 100% RECYCLED PLASTIC BOTTLES



**COVER MORE ADVENTURES
WITH VOITED**



ENERGIZE
YOUR EYES

DAFT-04



specteyewear.com
OFFICIAL RED BULL EYEWEAR LICENSEE

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

SUNGLASSES 2024

The sunglasses business keeps growing amidst market challenges. Sustainable materials and lens technology drive sales to customers conscious of both their eyes' and the planet's health. By **Rocio Enriquez**.



Despite bad weather adding to the existing challenges of the sports retail environment, sunglasses sales kept growing in 2023, albeit at a modest pace. The main drivers for this growth were sustainability and performance, with recycled plastics and other sustainable materials persuading customers to buy. The demand for technical frames and lenses has expanded from sports styles to everyday lifestyle designs. Large shields and speed shapes in full, half, or no rim presentations are a strong trend. Frames are getting chunkier, paired with bold colours, for an added fashion statement. Retro inspiration stays strong. Wrapped rectangles, panoramic, geometric, oversized, and side cups throw us back to the sports scene of the turn of the century. These looks need to be paired with high performance features in both frames and lenses. Good ventilation, lens polarisation and photochromy are a minimum requirement. Any added innovation in performance seals the deal.

2024 FRAMES

This year we find many new shields and wraparounds with Oakley and Zeal introducing a few. Dragon presents the new shield Momentum H2O and a new semi-wrapped shape called Calypso.

Quiksilver's Fishy is a new wrapped rectangular shape in their retro Mercury Collection. Other retro additions are square and round styles, Zeal has launched a couple of these. Otis is doing well with their Divide square style and their two cat eye variations, Audrey and Selena. Wave Hawaii redesigns classic square, panto, and Wayfarer shapes, "A little retro with modern parts makes for a good mix", says CEO Carsten Raphael. Eyeking has launched the new square lifestyle frame Blockhead.

Some new performance styles are launching this Spring. Glacier's Pierredar is a sleek high-performance mountain style featuring a recycled stainless-steel frame. Red Bull Spect has developed two new sporty models, Chop and Chase. Loubsol's Onyx is a smaller version of their classic Daccan, a

"The Conquer have been hugely popular, which is why we are releasing a similar retro style in the Spring" Carsten Raphael, Wave Hawaii

versatile sport/lifestyle frame, they also introduce two new kids' speed shapes. Amongst Hilx' new launches, we find the sports performance Gladiator™. Izipizi announces a new frame for water sports activities for the end of the year. Melon has a new performance shape dropping in May. Panda sticks to their sports models Multi Sport and Fixed Sports.

More new frame shapes drop in 2024. Sunski releases the Vallarta and the Estero. Spektrum adds three new styles. "Rista, Gausta, and Kesu are all produced of bio-based material but offered at a lower price", says Anders. Neuman. CHPO adds eight new models. Hilx includes in their launches the Savage 2.0 and the Nomad Green Series, with a bio-based frame. Aphex's new four styles for this year, the IX, Dune, Leo and Lyra, are bio-based. "The Dune is a classic design with side caps for extra protection", describes the brand's distributor, Bert den Boer. Von Zipper presents 2 new acetate frames and four new injected styles. Eyeking launches a new sleek fashion piece called Cortez. Roxy adds five new fashion styles in bio-acetate: one cat-eye, one oversized geometric, and three rectangular shapes. Knockaround will add four frames later this year, to join the three new frames already launched. Adidas' collection covers from bi-ocular sunglasses to rimless, full-rim, and half-rim masks.

Some existing shapes are refreshed with new colours. Volcom introduces four new colours: the patterned Asphalt Beach and Purple Paradise, and



two translucent ones. Translucent colours have done well for Otis, like their Eco Crystal Foliage and the Eco Crystal Velvet. Electric introduces nine new tones. Zeal has a new tortoise frame with fun pops of colour. Dragon has introduced some crystal colourations and is expanding the Athlete Signature Series. CHPO has added seven new colours to the line. Loubsol brings in more paint splatters and soft colours such as lilac and sage. Smith proposes muted greens, chalk rose, mustard yellows and teals, “Our new colours are reminiscent of desert/nature scapes”, says Allie Flake. They also introduce a marble texture and some fun retro bright colours. Knockaround, Moken and Sunski announce new colours too.

2024 LENSES

Premium lenses with innovative technology are popular, evidencing a heightened sensitivity to eye health. Polarisation ranks high in lens choice. Photochromy, contrast enhancing, and performance coatings sell very well.

“Rista, Gausta, and Kesu are all produced of bio-based material but offered at a lower price”

Anders Neuman, Spektrum

Aphex offers polarised lenses on all their models, adding a Q-View high contrast extra lens in their IQ 2.0 shield style. Dragon offers their exclusive Lumalens technology that increases depth perception, “We offer Performance Polarised lenses within the new SS24 H2O collection”, says EMEA Brand Manager Sam Nelson. Eyeking’s sunglasses come equipped with injected polycarbonate or nylon HydroClean™ 360° polarised lenses which enhance optical clarity. Their dual coated layers repel water, prevent sweat and sunscreen from building up, and are easy to clean. Moken’s Line Tracker technology consists of a polarised pink lens with a unique chromic colour balance. Zeal works with their plant based Ellume polarised lenses. Their Auto Sun lens that combines photochromy and polarisation for mountain bikers or kites is popular. Otis’ L.I.T. Polar lens is growing close in popularity to their top selling polarised lenses. Hilx offers the photochromic XVIZ™ lens and spherical lenses with H2OFF antiglare and triple scratch resistant coating. Knockaround launched their Knockterra™ sport lens. It is water and oil resistant, as well as FDA approved for impact resistance. Oakley relies on their Prizm Tens Technology engineered to enhance colour and contrast. Other proprietary photochromic technologies are Loubsol’s Apex, Red Bull Spect’s ChromX, and Smith’s ChromaPop. The latter is introducing the ChromaPop Glass Polarised Polarchromic lens in their popular Guide’s Choice and new Hookset frames. Wave Hawaii and Adidas use performance coatings to reduce stress from dust, water, oils, or scratches. Sunski introduces the new lens Helio for their Alpine frames. CHPO also offers contrast enhancing capabilities on their sports segment. For the fashion styles, they use see-through and tinted lenses. Glacier and Spektrum rely on the savoir-faire of

“Our new colours are reminiscent of desert/nature scapes” Allie Flake, Smith

Zeiss to produce sharp lenses that improve contrast, comfort, and visibility. Spektrum’s Lom shield style with Zeiss photochromic lens is the brand’s best seller.

Mirrors seem to be quite in vogue. New renditions are Hilx’s photochromic red mirror, Loubsol’s light blue mirrors and Smith’s polarchromic yellow/blue and green/brown mirrors. Wave Hawaii has also launched a yellow mirror lens. Glacier equips their new model Pierredar with a new category three lens called the Alp mirror. Zeal’s Ellume polarised has a new interpretation called Phoenix Mirror, a rose base with a bright red mirror. There are new non-reflective colours and tints too. Dragon introduces the Lumalens Purple Ion Polar and the Lumalens Plasma Ion Polar. Moken imports the Linetracker glass from their winter collection. This is a retro Inui gradient lens with an innovative horizontal gradient flash treatment. Spektrum also introduces two new gradient colours, Amber Contrast and Amethyst Gradient. Loubsol presents the new Roll with a nice green tint. Smith focuses on low-light tint options. Sunski introduces some low light lens options for the first time. Knockaround announces new colours and tints on their lenses too. Panda keeps their tints fairly neutral, with blues, reds and yellows mostly used.

SUSTAINABILITY

Recycled plastics and plant-based materials have replaced most oil-based acetate. Many metals are also recycled, and there is a lot of FSC certified wood. But brands know that sustainability does not stop at materials. Reducing carbon emissions is driving many brands to avoid air shipments, this means more planning to ship a good amount of stock by sea. Some move their production closer to their markets. Quiksilver manufactures in Italy. Glacier’s pieces are handmade in the Alps. Rethinking packaging significantly increases sustainability. All of Smith’s retail boxes are produced from post-consumer recycled cardboard that folds flat for reuse or disposal. The packaging of Otis, Sunski, and Aphex is also entirely plastic free. CHPO makes the pouch of the sunglasses with recycled PET, and their plastic bags are made of corn. Knockaround and Quiksilver use recycled paper.

Supporting existing initiatives is a common practice. Zeal’s annual Shades for Seas campaign cleans 93 square meters of coastline for every pair of sunglasses sold during Earth month in April. Knockaround has partnered with 4Ocean to offset every pound of plastic they use by taking a pound out of the ocean. CHPO collaborates with CleanHub, who builds waste management infrastructures. Product longevity remains the top sustainable practice. Sunski and Glacier prioritise this over everything else. Glacier’s fractioned designs allow users to replace elements that break down and repair their frames.

RETAILER SUPPORT

In-store branding is important. Wave Hawaii offers bamboo counter displays. Melon has desktop displays and Iron Maiden POS on hand. Red Bull Spect has developed their ready-to-use Universal Tower. Hilx, Moken, Quiksilver, Roxy, Smith and Sunski all invest in the production of in-store displays. Graphic assets are readily available both for in-store and digital activation. Hilx creates videos that can easily be shared on social media. Knockaround creates product videos for each SKU. Otis has developed an education clip that can be cut into snippets. Adidas offers visual assets for windows and seasonal advertising material and provide digital assets for a 360 activation of their Hero project. Sunski, CHPO, and Oakley, are very active in creating assets for their stores’ promotional efforts.

Training and B2B experiences are welcome by stores. CHPO has expanded their customer service and marketing teams to offer a better customer experience. Adidas constantly trains their reps, so they can relay the technicalities of their products to retailers. Making the sale experience easier helps. Wave Hawaii does not have MOQs, their sunglasses are available all year round to be ordered at short notice. Glacier commits to never sell below the price indicated on their website. Aphex takes pride in offering one of the healthiest shop margins. Melon takes back any colours that don’t work for retailers and replaces them with the ones that do. Knockaround applies trans-seasonality to give their sunglasses a longer shelf life. Otis certifies the quality of their products with a lifetime warranty on frames. Such support strategies can make a difference.

The sports market environment may be timid now, and the weather does not always help, but eye health has a premium position in the list of consumers concerns, and they will be looking for the right protection. ☺

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Shields and wraparounds high on demand.
- 2 Muted colours and translucent tones popular.
- 3 User preference for premium lenses.
- 4 Widespread use of natural and recycled materials.

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

BOARDSOURCE.COM

Pursue your thrill.™



Dylan Graves in the Monroe Peak in
Matte Moss Crystal + ChromaPop™
Polarized Gray Green

Monroe Peak
Throw it back to 1993.

SMITH

SUNGLASSES 2024[®] PICTORIAL



Adidas - SP0090_94Q



Adidas - SP0091_94Q



Adidas - SP0093_21U



Aphex - Leo



Aphex - Dune



Aphex - IX



CHPO - Anna



CHPO - Henrik



CHPO - Marina



Dragon - Momentum



Dragon - The Box 2



Dragon - Thorn



Electric - Crasher



Electric - Mahi



Electric - Stanton



Glacier - Moiry 1



Glacier - Moiry 2



Glacier - Pierredar



Izipizi - Nautic



Izipizi - Speed



Izipizi - Zenith



Knockaround - Piano Songbirds



Knockaround - Rainbow Campeone



Knockaround - Rider Pacific Palisides



Loubsol - Onyx Lilas



Loubsol - Revolt S Icefall



Loubsol - Scalpel Air Party Starter



Melon - Arcade Iron Maiden



Melon - IM Kingpin



Melon - Layback Iron Maiden



Moken - Hawkins Vintage



Moken - Kurtiss



Moken - Santo



Oakley - Heliostat

APHEX

LOVE THE LIGHT



BIO-BASED PLASTIC FRAMES



POLARIZED LENSES

FEATURES (DEPENDING ON MODEL):

-  LARGE FRAME EXPANDED FIELD OF VIEW
-  MICROFIBRE PROTECTION & CLEANING POUCH
-  CARRY CASE
-  REMOVABLE GLARE PROTECTION
-  ARTICULATED NOSE ADJUSTMENT
-  ANTI SLIP TEMPLES
-  STRAP EYELET

CONTACT@APHEXGEAR.COM - WWW.APHEXGEAR.COM



Oakley - Latch Panel



Oakley - Stylas



OTIS - Audrey



OTIS - Rambler Sport



OTIS - Divide



Quiksilver - eqey03204



Quiksilver - eqey03218



Quiksilver - eqey03222



Red Bull Spect - Chase



Red Bull Spect - Daft



Red Bull Spect - Earle



Roxy - Albahia



Roxy - Nikah



Roxy - Vadella



Smith - Guides Choice



Smith - Lowdown



Smith - Wildact



Spektrum - Kesu



Spektrum - LOM 2



Spektrum - Rista



Sunki - SUN BE CAF 2



Sunki - SUN ES HSL 02



Sunki - TL TFO 2



Volcom - Eyeeye Stone



Volcom - Macho



Volcom - True



Von Zipper - Crusoe



Von Zipper - Episode



Von Zipper - Super Rad



Wave Hawaii - Aruba



Wave Hawaii - Lookback



Wave Hawaii - Sao Paulo



Zeal - Decker



Zeal - Open Hearts Crowley



Zeal - Whittier

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

BOARDSOURCE.COM

SURF EXPO

SEPTEMBER 5-7, 2024
ORANGE COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER
WEST CONCOURSE
ORLANDO, FL

The Premier
Watersports &
Coastal Lifestyle
Marketplace

WATERSPORTS

SURF
PADDLE
SHORELINE
SKATE



EXPLORE THE LATEST TRENDS AND EMERGING BRANDS TO SET YOUR INVENTORY APART.



COASTAL LIFE
SWIM
BOUTIQUE
RESORT
FOOTWEAR
COASTAL GIFT

Surf Expo is a trade only event, open to qualified retail buyers.

REGISTER HERE
OR AT SURFEXPO.COM





Here & Now

Stoke & Aloha since 1971

▶ AUSTRALIA

▶ NEW ZEALAND

▶ JAPAN

▶ BRAZIL

▶ EUROPE

▶ INDONESIA

▶ HAWAII

▶ TC

PIPELINE, OAHU, OUR HOMEGROUND @TCSURE.COM

▶ /1

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

SURFBOARDS 2024

The very nature of the surfboard market means it has been relatively spared from the overstock issues reported in other boardsport categories. Add an ongoing “easy to ride” approach in 2024 and it is more likely we see even more participants joining the party. By David Bianic



RUSTY

The surfboard isn't an industry per se. It's a galaxy of master craftsmen who, together, form a market big enough to be considered an industry. Very few surfboard labels operate on an industrial scale, producing standardized goods. The surfboard business relies largely on custom-made products and on demand manufacturing.

Yet, surfboards aren't essential products either, and the figures took a hit, the post-Covid frenzy ended with a hangover. But for Johnny Cabianca, owner of Cabianca Surfboards, the market is only going back to normal, “the way it was before the pandemic”. According to Benoit Jean, Wholesale and B2C Manager for UWL & Cardinal Surfboards in France, the customers are taking additional time to finalize their orders, but the average purchase value has increased, estimated at €1,050 for a custom board plus accessories.

Not all boards are treated equal reports Andy Wirtz from Norden Surfboard, as “there is still a lot of overstock on softboards and composite boards made in Asia”. There comes reputation, as the long-established names are doing better than the rest of the bunch. No surprise, people want “surfboard models they can trust because they have proven feedback and a reputable brand behind them”, insists Jaime Azpiroz, Product and Sales Manager for Olatu, Europe's manufacturer for Pukas, Lost, Channel Islands, McTavish and so on. “Customers want to put money in trustworthy assets.”

2024 TRENDING DESIGNS

1 - Mids

Unsurprisingly, the mid-length/twin-fin combo should account for a large part of your inventory in 2024, much like the 3 previous seasons. Maybe the most striking piece of news here, showing the widespread adoption of the design is “Kelly Slater releasing his first ever performance mid-length, the Boss Up by Dan Mann, sized from 6'6 to 7'6”, reveals Chris Grow, Director of Brand & Marketing for Firewire Surfboards and Slater Designs.

And indeed the offer ever widens: brands started with a single “mid”, now they implement a full-on mid-length range. After its Mid Strength, Chill releases a Full Strength, a more performance-oriented mid, “inspired by

“The market is going back to ‘normal’, the way it was before the pandemic.”

Johnny Cabianca, Cabianca Surfboards

James' [Cheal, founder] journey to the Mentawai Islands, Indonesia, with his son”. The result is a pulled nose to decrease the drag up front, together with a narrower tail area, “giving it more of a shortboard feel”. It's the same program with the Channel Islands M23, a tested and trusted model that Al Merrick designed by for himself decades ago, which got a second wind thanks to the mid-length hype. Available in Torq's X-Lite Construction, a technology used only on CI's models. Also in the Torq range, the V+ (for “Volume Plus”) stands somewhat in that family, an updated mini-mal' of sorts: “The high volume makes it super easy to catch waves while the rocker and bottom contours make this lively and agile underfoot with more performance than you would expect from a larger board”, says Sebastian Wenzel, General Manager.

Stewart Surfboards always had a strong midlength game, way before we actually labeled those “hype funboards” (haters gonna hate!) as “mids”. Models such as the 949 Comp and the Funline 11 are joined by the new Wild Bill, “the ultimate high-performance mid-length surfboard”. The Wild Bill is more in tune with the latest mid designs and sports a striking simple to double concave, as well as Stewart's iconic bevelled rails, which “allow for more foam where you need it while having a nice thin rail to carve into those turns”. Though they don't belong to the modern mid-length design, the couple of Pipeliners from Lightning Bolt will definitely appeal to the same grey-haired surfers. The Gerry Lopez and Rory Russell Pipeliners are true replicas of their iconic boards from the 70's, “handcrafted using the original templates, rockers and the same glassing techniques” for the Lopez model, and with a more contemporary Eco-Tech construction for Russell's.



Finally, Town & Country's Missing Link is – as the name suggests – an hybridization of the shortboard step-up design and of a mid-length, meant to be ridden as a twin-fin. The Mid trend still holds a lot of potential and will carry on, says Andy at Norden, fiddling with “different fin set ups, different bottoms, channels not channels, different constructions, there is endless options”.

2 - Twinnies

As per twin-fins, the choice is even larger, from the classic retro-fish to the more progressive perf' twins with a trailer fin. NSP covers all the spectrum of twins, spread into 3 constructions. Their Double Vision (PU) is a timeless option, a twin-keel fish with a retro vibe but a thinned-out design for more drive and speed. Town & Country Surf Designs really gained momentum with their modern spin-off of the Sinner and Saint shaped by Glenn Pang. The new Nomad shares some DNA with those models, now with a round-pin “thumb tail” and soft wings. The board is clearly meant for steeper faces and control in the pocket.

We also see a trend consisting in variations of a thruster model turned into a twin-fin, like the Candy model at Cabianca Surfboards, also available as a Candy Twin. On that note, Johnny Cabianca reports the have “sold less twins in the past couple of months than the years before, but more easily

“As far as the sales of high-performance surfboards go it continues steady and has not slumped.”

Nick Urrichio, Semente Surfboards

shortboards”.

But feel sure, high performance twinnies are not going anywhere according to Chill, as they display serious assets: good hold, drive, and fast directional changes, putting into light their Peppa Twin, “a go-to board for all types of waves when you're after the speed and flow of a twin, yet the hold and performance of a thruster. Combining two perfect worlds”. Same vibe with Rusty's Deuce (a collaboration between Rusty Preisendorfer and Noel Salas of Surf 'n Show), as Craig Butcher (distributor via SARL Hurricane Surf) noted a shift in the twin trend: “Whereas the best-selling twin fins in the past have been with fish or hybrid style boards, the trend here seems to be getting the twin fin feel on a high performance shortboard shape.”

3 - High-Performance Shortboards

On an international level, some big names pulled out of the CT, distancing themselves from the WSL. On a regional scale, “the big brands that used to organize the competitions no longer have the means to do so. That's why the tour in Europe has become much smaller...” regrets Johnny Cabianca. Did this affect the sales of high-performance boards? “As far as the sales of high-performance surfboards go it continues steady and has not slumped”, comments Nick Urrichio, owner and shaper of Semente Surfboards in Portugal, who made its bread and butter with these sharp blades. If we were

“Our longboards sales grew 20% last year and makes up close to 40% of our total surf sales.”

Sander Blauw, NSP

to name the latest trend in HPSB (high-performance shortboards), it would then be the slightly longer designs, as pointed out by Benoit at UWL, “ranging from 6'1” to 6'4”, inspired by surfers like Harry Bryant who favour the 90's style Australian shortboards”. And “high-perf” doesn't necessarily translates by “exclusive”, as Rusty's new Keg is said to be “the most approachable pro model for everyday surfers in general”, claims Surfline. Designed by Rusty Preisendorfer and Wade Carmichael, it features a high nose and tail rocker with a fairly deep concave through the bottom deck. Likely to be a staple in Rusty's lineup for the years to come.

4 - Longboards

For many years, the classic longboard market has had a life of its own, with dedicated shapers, mostly under the radar of the big brands. Of course, companies such as Surftech & NSP built their reputation and turnover combining proprietary techs and signature shapers: “Our longboards sales grew 20% last year and makes up close to 40% of our total surf sales”, reports Sander at NSP. But we are seeing a widespread adoption of logging across the industry, not only as a side offer, but as a key model. The grand release of the CI Log at Channel Islands in 2023 epitomized the phenomenon. “I have reinvented myself somewhat in this area, thanks to our customers in Korea”, admits Johnny Cabianca, a shaper more famous for its partnership with 3 time world champ Gabe Medina. The addition of an old-school noserider, the Dreamer, has increased the demand for Cabianca longboards, since he branched into what he calls a “parallel market”: “Longboarders have a different mindset than regular surfers.”

Though Stewart Surfboards boasts a few classic logs in the range, such as the new Bird model, most of their offer leans towards the more performance-oriented art of longboarding: “The classic longboards designs are more fashioned at the moment but they are not as easy to ride. So, we try to adapt classic design with tiny performance in put that will make the board more fun to ride”, claims Rémi Chaussemiche, Marketing Manager Europe at Sample N'Co. A good example of that are the Bird and the Ripster, as Bill Stewart “made sure that the Bird checks all the classic log boxes for those pesky contest rules while adding some key features to make it ride way better than your average single fin”.

5 - “Funformance”

Pyzel really nailed it, coining the “hybrid shortboard” under a fresh phrase: Funformance. Adding more fun in the performance category gather a heck load of designs: grovelers, big guy shortboard, step-down shortboards... Pyzel's Precious is the latest addition to the Funformance collection. Based on the Gremlin, the board is sleeker, with less width and less chunky rails: “In order to do that, and still keep a fair bit of volume in the board, we decided to make it a step-deck.” Semente's Catcher also fits in the genre, a user-friendly shortboard, “probably one of the most refreshing designs around to motivate a lot of us to surf those gutless days”, says Nick Urrichio. Same with the latest addition of Firewire's line-up, the Machadocado, “a hybrid groveler by Rob Machado that was inspired by an avocado seed”, says Chris Grow. The stubby squash tail shape is meant to be ridden with a new 2 +1 template from Firewire. The ultimate avocado toast!

Sustainable constructions

While the polyurethane boards haven't changed much in decades, EPS constructions lead to many innovations, one the latest being biomass-based blanks, like EON Foam®. “This alternative to petro-sourced EPS reduces CO2 emissions by at least 30% for equivalent performance and technical characteristics”, says Johnny Cabianca, who also offer its whole range in a Polyola blank option, as well as a 3D-printed construction on 3 models, via a collab with Wyve. There as so many new constructions and materials popping up that a label can help the consumers. A choice made by Firewire, which was the first brand to build “100% of its production for global retail under Sustainable Surf's ECOBAORD Standard”, thus emulating fellow competitors such as Lightning Bolt, through a Gold Level certification by the ECOBOARD project (a program run by Sustainable Surf, a non-profit organization). “The ECO-TECH construction, compared to a standard construction in PU and Polyester, has a 70% lower environmental impact in every board produced”, ensures Lightning Bolt. Yet, “due to the nature of the business, it will be really difficult to have sustainable surfboards” admits the people at Euroglass. This said, their efforts are focused on the second-hand market, making sure “the boards are passed on instead of landing in a dump”.

On the same note, Nuno Viegas, founder of eNvy Surfboards, emphasizes that “more and more new suppliers and alternative materials for board manufacture appear, giving a lot of

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Increased purchased value
- 2 Performance Midlengths
- 3 High-Perf twin-fins
- 4 Classic Logs from mainstream labels

R U S T Y 



SURFER: WADE CARMICHAEL
BOARD MODEL: KEG





UPGRADE YOUR ADVENTURE



VOYAGER RANGE

Tour, explore and carry more with Red's Voyager expedition boards. Speed meets stability with innovative V-Hull technology, Twin-Fin design, market-leading MSL® and RSS battens for unrivalled stiffness.

www.red.equipment

*5 year warranty applies to boards only. All boards must be registered within 3 months of purchase. Please visit red.equipment/register for full terms and conditions.



RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

SUP 2024

The SUP industry developed surprising adaptability skills when the market was spurred with the COVID boosting demand, and similarly, in 2024 the brands quickly reacted to the saturated landscape walking a fine line between carryovers, yet innovation sprouts here and there. By **David Bianic**.



SIC Maui

Believe it or don't, 2023 isn't over yet. While we are already mid-point in the 2024 season, many products from the previous year are still weighing on the retailers' cash flow, and, as a domino effect, on the brands/distributors, failing to meet the orders level for the year running. Yet the whole industry chose the safe path, carrying over the same ranges, at least partially, from one year to the other, smoothing out the deep rebate issue. "While carry overs did provide some relief, the impact wasn't as significant as anticipated", regrets Chap Zhang, Senior Brand Manager for Aqua Marina. And for those who did manage to clear much of their inventory, like Airboard, there was a quid pro quo, as the brand had to limit new production to prevent the overstocks repeating. Thomas Schillig, Product Manager at Airboard adds that pre-orders have dropped significantly, meaning "it is up to us predict demand and inventory supply". Quite the conundrum.

That said, keeping the market fresh remains crucial and one brand cannot but introduce new designs. Here is an example of drawing that fine line at NSP: "We listened closely to the shops to help them on their sell through while staggering the launch and introduction of new models and shapes that complemented the remaining stock on hand, but most importantly did not cannibalize or destroy value of their older stock on hand" explains Sander Blauw, Global Sales Manager. This is where experienced brands make a difference. As Monty Python once sang — "Always look on the bright side of life" — and Blauw even ponders on the positive effects of the oversupply, as the subsequent price offers helped bring new paddlers in the sports, "and we are seeing some of these customers upgrading to newer models". Confidence is key, right? NRS sure can boast about showing confidence as they bet on innovation in these troubled times: "When the market is flooded with minimally differentiated boards being sold at discount, the only way to compete is by offering something different and better", says NRS Chief Marketing Officer Mark Deming. Their whole range consists of redesigned

"We listened closely to the shops to help them on their sell through while staggering the launch and introduction of new models and shapes that complemented the remaining stock on hand, but most importantly did not cannibalize or destroy value of their older stock on hand." Sander Blauw, NSP

iSUPs, implementing a woven Z-Blend drop-stitch material ("lighter, stiffer, and rolls up more compactly") as well as an Integrated Shaping Technology (IST) with multiple air chambers, "to shape the boards for improved efficiency and stability".

Some brands have also been putting this time to good use. Innovation doesn't only translate into new models, and for Red Paddle Co., that meant working on their B Corporation certification. "It was a three-year process in which every area of the company was assessed, audited and scrutinized. We are continually taking steps to improve the way we design our products, reduce our impact on the planet and build a strong community of paddlers around the world", said George Shillito, Commercial Director.

2024: THE END OF THE TUNNEL?

Moving forward, we sounded out the brands to see if confidence can be brought back this year. In other words, will supply and demand balance out in 2024?



Paolo Cesari, Product Manager for Duo Boards (whose part rigid part inflatable concept will be developed later), puts the spotlight on suppliers' practices, which doom the industry to over supply: "The search for the lowest price in production to obtain a greater sales margin has determined very high Minimum Order Quantities on the part of suppliers (almost always Asian)."

Still on the manufacturing side, Shillito at Red Paddle Co. raises a terrifying question: "Potentially a bigger consideration here is will there still be supply when existing inventories have been reduced?" Indeed, after a recent review with their suppliers, it was estimated that between 85-90% of inflatable SUP factories have closed... and we mean "permanently". "These closures mean a huge amount of skill and knowledge is being lost meaning quality is likely to drop. Something we will not allow to happen."

That quality level isn't met by all brands and an inflatable SUP only has a limited lifetime says Sven Josten, Sales Manager for France at Spinera. According to Josten, the renewal of the boards will help clear the existing overstock: "I reckon after 2024 brands can start over again with fresh inventory." Schillig at Airboard doesn't foresee a balanced market until 2025 or latest 2026, considering the established brands are able to sustain the next two years. Kill me!

Let's wrap up on a positive note as Andy Wirtz, owner of Norden SUP, strongly believes SUP is in transition from a trend sport to becoming a core sport, "which also means that the masses will fade, and the core remains, and that takes time. We have seen this in windsurfing, kitesurfing and we will also see this in foiling at a later stage". He is convinced things will balance out eventually.

2024 ISUP PRODUCT STRATEGY

In a confused market, retailers need a straightforward strategy from their partners. Let's hear from the SUP brands about what they have up their sleeve for 2024 regarding the inflatable category. Mistral sends a confident message with "inflatable family-focused SUP boards resulting from in-depth market research on what designs and USPs are popular and at what price point". Their key models cover those bases with the Cozumel 11'6", an ideal first-time recreational SUP cruising paddleboard with kayak options, and the Aruba 10'6" x 33", a super stable family model.

Different vibe, SIC Maui appeals to more performance-oriented paddlers. Leaning on the success of its racey RS and RST hardboards, the RST Air screams speed with its new narrower shape and nose. These examples display a pattern in the iSUP market, as confirmed by Sander at NSP: "Interesting to see demand remains strong at opposite ends of the spectrum. On the one side for our entry price point boards, bringing new customers into the NSP ecosystem at a very affordable price, while on the opposite side demand remains high for our high-end inflatable race boards."

"I reckon after 2024 brands can start over again with fresh inventory." Sven Josten, Spinera

"With mass paddling events selling out in a matter of hours across the world the Sport+ range is designed to improve efficiency, acceleration and overall speed whilst reducing drag and fatigue on longer paddles."

George Shillito, Red Paddle Co

Located in between those two categories, the inflatable touring board is a fast-growing segment as well and has even given birth to an intermediate design: all-rounders with "pointy" noses which mimic the touring outline, whilst remaining stable enough for any paddler. Add a bit of sparkle and you've got a great package such as the Ultimate Reef from Sandbanks Style, a 10'6" x 32" x 6" iSUP available in various graphics that really stands out from the bunch. Another trend proving the growing interest for touring iSUPs is Indiana splitting its offer between classic 30"+ widths and sportier versions of the same design. Their 14'0 Touring inflatable is available in a 31" width and in new faster 14'0 S (with 28" width). Same thing with their top-seller, the 12'6 Touring Inflatable which will come in a 12'0 S iteration (29" width) and a 12'6 Ocean model "with a pronounced nose scoop and tail rocker for easy and smooth rides in wind and waves on the lakes or outside in the open ocean", explains Nikolaus Dietrich, Head of Sales at Indiana.

Same spirit at Red Paddle Co, which has revamped its offer with the new Sport+ range, designed as an upgrade from an all-round shape, to cater the endurance/touring demand: "With mass paddling events selling out in a matter of hours across the world the Sport+ range is designed to improve efficiency, acceleration and overall speed whilst reducing drag and fatigue on longer paddles", sums up George Shillito. Their 12'6" Sport+ has strong selling points: 2 kg lighter thanks to the new MSL®800 double drop-stitch material, and yet stiffer than ever, allowing a reduced thickness (4'7", 120 mm) for stability and a more connected experience to the water. The new Deluxe Lite drop stitch construction is also making headlines at Starboard as it's the first "premium entry level woven drop stitch", a technology more commonly seen on higher end models. Ollie O'Reilly, Brand Manager Starboard SUP & Foilboard, can already announce that this tech will be carried over from '24 into '25, and "has received a massive interest due to the added performance".

Allowing us a seamless transition to the hardboard category, Duo Boards stands as quite the... uncategorisable: half rigid (in the planing part), half inflatable. The mid-to-tail section is made from moulded EPS Core and Epoxy Laminate and is connected to an inflatable mid-to-nose section. Not as slim as a regular iSUP once deflated, the board can still fit in the trunk of a car or fly in a plane without the oversize luggage fee. Paolo Cesari ensures their Duo boards have "excellent performance in the water thanks to the rigid tail. You can surf a wave in Sup or Windsurf exactly like with a composite board". The system opened new developments in 2024 with the release of two wingfoil boards, the aptly named Foiler and Plate. The stiffness of the rear section is particularly suited to house the hydrofoil baseplate, where fully inflatable foil boards lack some rigidity under the feet.



ALL-WATER TURBOCHARGED PERFORMANCE

RST SERIES



The new All-Water Rocket Ship Turbo race board is the fusion of the exceptional glide and maneuverability of the RS series with the unmatched rough water stability of the Atlantis with a venturi drain. The final results deliver unbeatable all-water dugout performance with speed, agility, and stability, even in challenging conditions. Turn on the turbo mode!

RST

- 14'0" x 21.0" LV - 240L
- 14'0" x 21.0" - 260L
- 14'0" x 23.0" - 290L
- 14'0" x 24.5" - 305L
- 14'0" x 26.0" - 320L



Photo: Brian Stamm | SIC Maui



#BOUNDBYWATER
WWW.SICMAUI.COM    @sicmaui  @sic_maui



2024 HARDBOARD TRENDS

Interestingly, the composite SUP market reveals a similar pattern as the iSUP one, with a strong demand for the entry prices and premium models. But not exactly for the same reasons. The entry-level hardboard conveys a message of durability which is quite comforting for new participants. Hitting the blade of the paddle on the rails, bumping into rocks and fellow SUPers (!) or even dragging the board on the sand are common practice and the construction of the hard SUPs have integrated this use-and-abuse. It is no surprise here that NSP's HIT Cruiser is still the most successful model of their range. "Our HIT Cruisers remain our top sellers for B2B accounts due to their super durability and don't require repairs each time the rails are hit (or smashed) by first time paddlers, or party goers at a resort", says Sander Blauw.

"The new RS Dragon Fly is a great entry-level race board and the perfect performance touring option for those looking to go the distance in ocean conditions." Casi Rynkowski, SIC Maui

Similarly, the soft-top models appeal to the newbies for their smooth deck and Mistral adds a fresh design in the mix for 2024 with the Go Free: "Whether riding a small wave or cruising the shoreline, the super comfortable soft deck, tri-fin setup, and cargo net allow for optimum rider usability, available in 11'6 x 32.5 and 10'6 x 32", explains Steve West, Communications and Content Manager.

The premium race segment seems relatively immune to overstock and poor sell-out issues, as every season sees the release of new speedsters. The new SIC Maui RST (for Rocket Ship Turbo!) sits in the category, an impressive all-water race board with a dugout cockpit, made in a lightweight Super Fly moulded carbon sandwich construction. SIC Maui has also launched a more affordable version of their RS, the RS DF (Dragon Fly, moulded wood sandwich construction) which stands as "a great entry-level race board and the perfect performance touring option for those looking to go the distance in ocean conditions", says Casi Rynkowski, Brand Manager.

Hardboards also remain the go-to platform for foiling, wingfoiling and "windsupping", and Imagine Surf offers an interesting proposition with

their bestseller, the Bula, designed by legend Dave Kalama: "The Bula was also made to be the ideal platform for anyone wanting to learn to wing or windsurf without a foil", explains Brian Green, President. The Bula is available in bamboo composite construction and in a super durable thermo-moulded construction.

RETAILER SUPPORT

The most important support a retailer can expect from a partnering brand nowadays is the carryover strategy we mentioned earlier. In addition, a palette of tools is used by the brands to ease the business. As shop owners are obviously quite shy when it comes to pre-booking these days, Spinera offers "some really nice incentives [on pre-orders] to have a good margin for 2024". More flexibility is also proposed from Red Paddle Co. to save some budget: as an alternative from the package formula (board, paddle, bag, pump), a board-only option is a win-win solution for George Shillito: "It's not only kind on customers wallets allowing them to upgrade without compromising on quality but also means they are able to buy the kit they actually need which is better for the planet." Indiana also makes the retailers feel special as they can be identified as Indiana Competence Centres (Gold, Silver and Bronze): "These retailers can purchase demo material for special conditions", says Nikolaus Dietrich, and get marketing support "in form of Beach-Flags, T-Shirts, Caps, Coffee Cups and much more".

Dropshipping has gained a bit more ground in 2024, a method adopted by Duo Boards: "What we are proposing is the possibility of purchasing a board from the online shop and also sending it directly to the trusted shop, guaranteeing a profit margin without particular effort", explains Paolo Cesari.

When the business is good, it's a "every man for himself" situation: everyone trying to grab a bigger slice of the cake without thinking twice. Whereas in difficult times such as the one we are living in now, in the SUP industry we can clearly see some teamwork, a give-and-take approach between brands, distributors and retailers. This is solid groundwork for the days ahead and for that we shall rejoice. ☺

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Market bounce back anticipated in 2025
- 2 Premium SUPs doing good
- 3 Touring and racier iSUPs
- 4 Bulletproof hard SUPs for beginners
- 5 Retailer loyalty rewarded

COMMUNITY OF THE SEA SINCE 1976



Escape the madness

When investing precious time in pursuit of your passion, you need to invest in equipment solutions, not problems. Mistral, have provided solutions in connecting people with the world's oceans since 1976. If you knew us back then, it may be time to see us again today.



People of the Oceans

MISTRAL.COM





BIG WIG INTERVIEW

NICHOLAS LARTIZIEN; SURF HARDWARE EUROPE

From the Mediterranean to Hossegor, Nicholas Lartzien has experienced first-hand the birth and rise of the European surf industry. From the humble beginnings of Rip Curl Europe in 1985 to the growth of Billabong Europe at the dawn of the millennium, he carved his way forward, before moving on to become the head of Surf Hardware Europe in 2005. We spoke to Nicholas to discuss the growth of Surf Hardware, the difference between pre and post Covid markets and just what he's learnt after an incredible 40 years in the surf industry.

You've been working in the industry since 1985, in the early days of Rip Curl Europe and then Billabong GSM (as the very first staff member): Please tell us about your background and what led you to your current position at Surf Hardware International Europe.

To be honest, it's all been a question of good timing. I was a young windsurfer from the Mediterranean, so was my brother Vincent who was sponsored by Rip Curl. As I came back from a winter in Hawaii (Maui), windsurfing and discovering surfing, Rip Curl were planning to open a wetsuit manufacturing site in Hossegor and, for that, they needed to send two people to Australia for six months at the Rip Curl Headquarters in Torquay to learn how to make wetsuits. That started my career in the EU surf industry.. Then I arrived in Hossegor in the summer of 1986, fell in love with the place and never left. I worked 5 years at Rip Curl Europe: the company was very small; we were maybe 10 people at the beginning. Then Francois Payot, Rip Curl's CEO, got the crazy idea to import Billabong for the French market under the Rip Curl company. He proposed that I handle the distribution in France. This was in 1991, I was the local rep and managing the agents in France. Derek O'Neill, based in UK, was supervising the Billabong distribution in Europe. In 1992, Derek convinced Billabong Australia to open a branch in Europe and took me. I was the first employee for GSM Europe and stayed there 13 years, as a Southwest Rep then Export Manager.

Then I got approached by FCS (Surf Hardware Europe) as their manager was leaving. I got interviewed by the Australian CEO and he hired me. It was the best move as FCS was a core company and I settled back into the roots and the pure surfing.

"With Softech we are doing very good with surf schools whereas the retail market is slowing down."

When you took the helm at Surf Hardware in 2005, the company was a 5 people staff, with a €1.5 million annual turnover What has been the growth curve since then and what successes are you most proud of?

I applied what I learned at Billabong and things went quite quickly. We grew rapidly, developed our distribution all over Europe, hired new staff, opened a shop and extended our brand portfolio to include FCS, Gorilla, Softech, Hydro and Kanulock. We reached over €10M in turnover with the post-Covid craziness. We now have 17 people working at Surf Hardware Europe.

Should I be proud? That's not what I'm aiming for. I don't have an ego. I'm proud personally to have been able to live that journey and enjoy it. I've been on the board of Eurosima for a long time and I work for a company that innovates a lot: FCS II, Freedom Leash, etc. We won 3 Eurosima Awards. I love that brand FCS!

How does today's surf market compare with the market before Covid?

In one word: headache! I'm not blaming anyone, but before Covid, things were pretty seamless. Reps and distributors were going on the road twice a year, presenting a new range, collecting orders for the following season. Shops and surf schools were backing us up and it was kind of a secure business for everyone. Then came the 'Covid' tsunami and everything got washed out.

“Wholesale (retailers, manufacturers, surf schools) is still 90% of our business and believe me, we are doing all we can do to support them.”

From a secure and well-known way of trading, there came craziness, high demand from everyone, suppliers struggled to produce enough, late deliveries, overstocking and fear. Today there's no more certainty, no one is sure, most of the distribution companies have a lot of stock and cashflow sitting in the warehouse. Shops don't want to commit to prebook anymore, the pressure is on the supplier, and we are all using a crystal ball to purchase for the following season.

Last year we did lose money when compared to 2022 and the €10M high, we are now back at 2018/19 figures.

Which have been the best-selling product categories to date and what trends do you foresee for this summer?

Fins is by far our key category. That's where we innovate the most, we collab the most with our key manufacturers. We are now challenged by sound competitors like Futures Fins. Within FCS, board bags, leashes and pads are the other key categories.

Then we have Softech which is a bit of a benchmark in the softboard business. We are doing very well with surf schools whereas the retail market is slowing down. The softboard trend is over.

Surf Hardware Int. was historically a (hard)core company associated with elite surfers. Did the advent of softboards with Softech leading the global market make you rethink the target positioning?

True, we started very core: CT riders, performance driven focus. It is still the case that it's on the top of our pyramid. But what happened with Softech actually happened to the whole surf business. From an elite sport and way of living, it became a recognized 'Sport'; wave pool to the Olympics even... Our ranges

“We do innovate in all segments with the same idea: lead with a purpose, evolve with consciousness.”

today are now broader: core, lifestyle, talking to women, kids, sustainability. We do innovate in all segments with the same idea: lead with a purpose, evolve with consciousness.

Softech has even helped us bring more surfers towards our FCS products, especially adding FCS II on softboards. Covering manufacturing (plugs), retail (all products) and surfs schools (softboards, leashes, wax) is making everything credible for us. The circle is complete.

What are you doing regarding eco-design in the surf accessories segment?

Most of the eco conception came from insistent requests at Surf Hardware Europe. Today it is common in our brands, there are a lot of products made from natural materials, recycled and sustainable. Fins and leashes made with natural bio resin; pads made with sugar cane bio foam. We also pay for the Agec law (anti-waste decree) and recyclability of our products. And on top of that we are owned by Gowings Pacific Trader, who set up a whale trust, whilst FCS also donates 1% of total sales worldwide to support Ocean conservation charities, Sea Shepherd being one of them. I'm a huge fan of Paul Watson!

How key is the wholesale channel for Surf Hardware and how do you support your retailers?

While online is growing, and to be honest, this is a trend we can't do much about, we do believe that our retailers are key and are our best partners. Wholesale (retailers, manufacturers, surf schools) is still 90% of our business, and believe me, we are doing all we can to support them. In France and the UK, we have our own sales force on the ground to maintain our partnerships. From sales policies, corner concepts and products, we try to offer the best to our retailers.



I think they appreciate this, and they know they can count on us in difficult times. Same thing for the rest of Europe, we are trying to hire distributors that offer that quality of service and responsibility.

Which are the biggest lessons you have learned after 40 years in the surf industry?

I wonder if I learned more from the surf industry or from the ocean! In both cases, humility would be the key word. You cannot play with the Ocean: Mother Nature brings you back to where you belong. Same in the work field, you need to remain straight, honest, and not consider any ego. I have been at the start of 3 major brands and have always considered this as an opportunity and a matter of good timing, not a given. Authenticity would be the other word. Staying close to the roots, the culture, the passion.

Finally, respect and protect Nature, Mother Earth offers us such an Ocean playground during our short life span, and we need to make sure we pass it on to our kids in the best way. As Antoine de Saint-Exupery wrote . “We do not inherit the Earth from our parents, we borrow it from our children.”



 @Reef.uk
Reefsandals.co.uk

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

HANGING SHOES 2024

Flip-Flop and Sandal Market Thrives Amidst Challenges, Embracing Innovation and Sustainability.
By Rocio Enriquez.



Despite the challenging weather conditions of the summer of 2023, the flip-flop and sandal market has experienced growth. New designs were well-received by consumers keen on playing with colours and silhouettes on their feet. Amongst men, the preference seems to be casual, easy to wear shoes for all-day use, seamlessly transitioning from the beach to the city. Women also favoured footbed technology that enables versatile wearing, but while the men lean towards neutral tones, women gravitate towards brighter hues.

CONSTRUCTIONS

In men's lines, the footbed is getting a lot of technological attention in order to enhance all-day comfort. Reef are using nitrogen-infused EVA in their updated Phantom 2.0 and the new Cushion Norte, the latter being water-friendly. "The Cushion Norte offers cushioning like no other and is incredibly supportive while remaining unbelievably lightweight", says Marketing Manager Jenny Cooper. Flojos has created their own Hammock Comfort certification badge for styles featuring their latest technologies. They have a special moulded blown EVA memory foam that is water resistant, and have developed Flo-Jel technology, which consists of a capsule of gel inserted into the heel of the footbed to absorb shock. They also use Memex memory foam and yoga mat footbeds. Foam Life's new Fresco style is crafted from a brushed sugarcane EVA paired with a natural rubber outsole, with a recycled rubber fleck, rPET toe-post and faux suede padded upper strap. "The new Fresco style is the perfect fusion of a tennis sneaker and beach style", says Co-Founder Karl Read. Cool's Goku style has

"The Kush footbed is a squishy mixture of neoprene and EVA foam" Cole Harmening, Flojos

a moulded footbed with a textured sole for active usage. Xtratuf focuses on their Aprés Fish slide made entirely of Bio Lite. This is a low compression, high-performance EVA that delivers superior impact absorption and support. The outsole is slip-resistant. Quiksilver has developed an ultralight injected range with single or double strap slides and a three-point style. They have new all-terrain gum soles on their multi-activity sandals. They also will keep offering their Hydrobound sole on their Rivi slides and slaps.

Women's constructions benefit from material innovations adapted to feminine looks. Cool offers the Sponge and Sofia styles with fabric straps. Foam Life introduces the Yogi, with sugarcane EVA, yoga mat memory foam, and a woven upper strap. Reef introduces this year the Water Vista Higher, a water-friendly style with an elevated platform. They have also presented their new Bondi collection for women that features three youthful silhouettes, a single bar, a two-bar, and a three point. Flojos is expanding their offering of wide-width sandals with their signature Kush footbed. "The Kush footbed is a squishy mixture of neoprene and EVA foam", explains Marketing Coordinator Cole Harmening. They also introduce new platform thongs and sandals,



REEF

while they keep pushing wedges like their popular Olivia, that provide an extra 2 1/2" heel height without sacrificing comfort.

Premium materials do well amongst those looking for an elevated look while delivering superior comfort. Reef's Ojai collection falls into this category. With a suede upper and glove leather lining, this style is modern and easy to wear. The Ojai is available in a three point, a two bar and a slide version. Flojos offers sandal straps and uppers made of tooled, faux leather with burnished effect, alongside raffia, weaves and metallics.

Sustainable materials are making their way into collections. Foam Life has introduced bio-leather into their men's line-up, following the success it had amongst women last year. Their Seales Earth style features a brushed sugarcane EVA foam, a vegan bio-leather upper, and a natural gum rubber outsole with a fleck made of grain husk. Also, their new Sharrp & Sharrp slide features the same sugarcane EVA with a

"The Cushion Norte offers cushioning like no other and is incredibly supportive while remaining unbelievably lightweight" Jenny Cooper, Reef

textured, polyester fabric strap made from rPET. Cool offers the Byron, a more sustainable sandal with cotton sole and straps. Xtratuf's Bio Lite EVA has been granted the Green Leaf certificate by Intertek, verifying that it will properly biodegrade in bioreactor landfills.

LOOKS

Men's collections offer a tonal palette of classic colours and earth tones. Cool are focussing on these. Reef introduces the new Orion Black across their collection. "You'll also find a larger range of styles offering sand, tan, fossil and grey colourways", says Jenny Cooper. Flojos works with ivory, tan, brown, black, and burnt orange. Foam Life keeps their best-selling classic colours in their core men's styles; black, navy, tan, olive, stone grey and slate grey. They have introduced the more earthy Putty and Earth Brown and there are a few pops of brightness, such as their Clay Red and the neon pink, green and blue highlights found in their 80s themed Traac style.

Women's collections are brighter. Flojos offers soft pink, matcha green, and sparkly metallics. Reef introduces lime, hot pink, a shade of lilac called Taffy, and sand lime to their Water Vista range. Foam Life

"We are plastic free in our packaging from the factory all the way to the end consumer. All the materials we use are vegan and PVC free" Karl Read, Foam Life

combines their neutral sand and latte brown with a sophisticated palette of pastel colours like sage green, powder blue, dusty pink and lilac. Their most vibrant colour is the Neon Orange offered in their Lixi style and as an accent throughout the rest of the collection.

Some prints spice up the offering. Cool chooses floral prints. Xtratuf brings in a range of new swirls. Foam Life carries over the successful animal prints and have updated their palm print. A key print in 2024 is the custom camo design of their Artist Series, seen in the Pampa style. The design is based on an image created by the brand's co-founder Karl Read, originally painted in 2018 at the Upfest in Bristol.

SUSTAINABILITY

Not only recycled or biodegradable materials make a product sustainable. How it is manufactured and shipped matters, and brands are well aware. Longevity is key. Flojos focus is on building well-crafted, durable products that serve season after season. They are also developing new kraft hang-tags and hangers. Xtratuf's packing is FSC certified. Cool is working on a new protective bag made of paper fibre that will replace plastic in 2025. Foam Life has been committed to sustainability from inception. "We are plastic free in our packaging from the factory all the way to the end consumer. All the materials we use are vegan and PVC free", says Karl Read. Reef is also plastic free, adding to that a close monitoring of their suppliers. They make sure the factories they work with do not use restricted chemicals. Their leather and suede come from tanneries with gold and silver ratings.

RETAILER SUPPORT

Creatives have come up with entertaining stories to activate marketing support. Reef presents three stories. In "Bold Behaviour" they encompass women's and men's day to night styles, where we find their Water Vista Higher and their Bondi Collection. "In the Flow" showcases water styles and "Performance Comfort" focuses on technical and innovative styles. Flojos intends to spread a relaxed beach state of mind through their "Just Hangin' Out" motto. Cool equates sandal wearing with freedom in their "Ride your Way" campaign. Quiksilver focuses their marketing efforts on their new injected program. Xtratuf has teamed up with RNLI to share messages of water safety. Not only will they be providing lifeguards across 240 UK beaches with bespoke Après Fish sliders, but they will also donate one pound for every pair sold on their website to the charity.

These stories are activated in-store and online. Flojos offers an in-store POP package to all retailers that includes brand displays with a new natural wood logo and reed backdrop. They have updated their slat wall pegs with vibrant sunset-coloured, larger square faceplates. Their display rack has a reed sidewall topped off with the Flojos hammock logo. Foam Life provides a free-standing unit with clear branding and key product and sustainability icons. The design allows two standard stands to be joined together with a wider branded header. This offers flexibility for when the retailers want to increase their assortment. Xtratuf has wall-mounted, free-standing, and countertop displays, as well as recyclable shelf and window displays. They also offer bespoke solutions for retailers that need it. Additionally, each pair of their Après Fish sliders comes with a recyclable hanger in the box. Quiksilver and Reef also offer displays and branded fixtures. All brands make sure to provide enough lifestyle and product imagery to support their retailers' online activations through social media or websites. Xtratuf throws in a stockist's section on their website to drive customers to their retailer network.

The hanging shoes market has displayed great resilience amidst challenging conditions in 2023. With a steady delivery of innovative designs and strategic marketing support, brands can be rest assured that retailers will sell every pair they make. ☺

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

[BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM](https://boardsportsource.com)

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Innovative technology in constructions.
- 2 All-day, beach to city wear.
- 3 Focus on sustainability.
- 4 Vibrant looks for women.

FOAMLIFE®

THE FRESCO FLIP FLOP



LIVE LESS ORDINARY

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

WAKE VESTS 2024

What is new for Impact Vests in 2024 and what does the market look like? Our Retail Buyer's Guide by Anna Langer is full of insights.



O'NEILL

MARKET DEVELOPMENT

While Follow and O'Neill talk about a "covid hangover", feeling the "entire market is in a bit of recovery mode" with "high levels of inventory saturating the market", there definitely is promise for more growth. Jetpilot has found that despite fluctuation, the "sentiment in the marketplace seems a lot more positive compared to this time last year and continues to improve," commented Kolyn Howard, Jetpilot Brand Manager. Liquid Force reported a great 2023, Ride Engine are seeing steady demand in both their wind-based impact protection and in their wake offering, whilst WIP talk about "steady growth, with increased demand in various water sports disciplines. More and more hydrofoil sailors are recognizing the dangers of falling onto foils and are equipping themselves accordingly."

Which is no big surprise, as following on from previous years, the foil market is still where numbers are rising constantly. "Foiling is the name of the game for 2024. We're talking boat, hand wings, ocean surf – you name it. Our vests aren't just for riding at the cable. They're the go-to for foiling fiends craving protection, flexibility, and that unmistakable Liquid Force style," states Rich Jonas, Global Marketing Manager. Jetpilot has also noticed a growing number of consumers expressing interest: "This increase has only amplified the demand for multipurpose vests to cater to diverse water sport needs." WIP argue that "people who also practice Wind are getting older and want now to protect themselves" and Ride Engine's Marketing Director / Product Line Manager Gary Siskar adds that they are seeing continuing growth in wing foiling and big air kiteboarding but also note "a keen interest among wake dealers for innovative and

fresh brands as alternatives to established heritage brands."

Last but not least, Follow mention really strong sales in their women's range. "Follow puts a lot of effort into the fits and colours options for the female range. We don't treat it as a girl's version with black and pink. We put as much effort into the female range as any Follow product."

TRENDS

When it comes to trends, it's not so easy to single out special themes for 2024, as many factors seem to intertwine. "There is still a trend with consumers chasing a vest that has sleek style lines with thin construction that is comfortable and does not compromise on safety all whilst being sustainably sourced," says Jetpilot who have catered for this with the introduction of Ecoprene and continuous work on their 360-stretch neoprene. O'Neill agree that they see "it's all about the perfect combination of fit and protection whilst using the lightest materials available. When it comes to protection low profiles and 360-degree protection are in high demand."

For WIP, the main trends in the impact vest market revolve around product versatility and durability. "It's worth noting that even the slower-moving riders want to protect themselves to avoid the silly injury that could easily have been avoided with an impact vest" says Mathis Bourgnon, Sport Marketing Manager, while in their opinion the criterion of vest weight takes a back seat to the decision. He adds that "there is also a more complicated trend that riders want to protect themselves with highly visible helmets but with an impact vest that is more sober in colour, darker and more discreet. Head protection is cool, body protection is in progress."

TECHNOLOGY

Durability is also mentioned as an emerging key factor, with consumers showing a preference for environmentally friendly materials and manufacturing processes, according to Bourgnon from WIP. Follow have developed a Recycled Nylon Chevron material, using close to 80 plastic bottles in every vest for not much of a price update. Jetpilot continue their recycled Ecoprene, which is also 30% lighter than traditional neoprene: "with a triple-layer construction, this process ensures that Jetpilot maintains its renowned durability and quality." Liquid Force have increased their use of eco conscious PE foams with no glue that are heat welded together; O'Brien incorporate BioLite into almost all their life jackets for a soft, smooth textural feel and outstanding breathability and O'Neill highlight their unique Nytrolite Foam that is lighter and provides more protection for its size compared to regular foams. There is no point in taking extra weight on the water with you! ☺

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

[BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM](https://boardsportsource.com)

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Foil specific products
- 2 Slim but functional
- 3 Eco friendly

WIP

WATER PROTECTION



Lauriane Nolot
Kitefoil World Champion
with her **Impact Vest 50N**

#GOFASTONWATER

WIP IS A PROUD
MEMBER OF THE
1% FOR THE PLANET
ASSOCIATION



FOR THE
PLANET

— MEMBER —

STANCE UNDERWEAR

MOVE WITH COMFORT



STITCHED
DIFFERENT

DESIGNED IN
CALIFORNIA

ESTABLISHED
IN 2009

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

MENS UNDERWEAR 2024

Fabric innovation pushes growth in men's underwear. Customers seek pieces that are functional and eco-responsible and will reward brands that deliver. By Rocio Enriquez.



2023 was a dynamic year for the men's underwear market, with many brands reporting growth. Innovative fabrics have met the demands of consumers for functionality and sustainability. Aligning designs with fashion trends has sealed the deal. These demands will remain steady in 2024. Consumers will be scanning tags for eco-friendly materials. They will also prioritise functional designs that remain comfortable during sports. Features such as moisture-wicking, cooling, or the possibility to wear it under your wetsuit as well as underneath your trousers are welcome. It is in their most functional products that brands expect their biggest growth.

2024 COLLECTIONS

Most brands offer a choice of boxer shorts, boxer briefs, trunks or briefs. There are added length extensions such as Saxx's Long Leg, Wave Hawaii's mid-length boxers, and Moskova's long version of their boxer brief. It is the technology used that sets them apart, along with their choice of material. Bn3th relies on their patented Original 3D Pouch Technology™ for comfort. Saxx couples their BallPark Pouch™ with new Stop Drop Technology that keeps the skin dry after an impromptu wee. They also have kept their DropTemp™ active evaporate cooling technology, applied to different fabrics, such as mesh or cotton jersey. Stance offers maximum support in their briefs with their patented Wholester™ technology. They enhance functionality with Feather-Seam™ construction and performance mesh. Wave Hawaii offers AirLite products that enable multi-functioning, thoughtful construction securing comfort in any conditions. Moskova's M2 style is built for performance, with multi-panel construction and a non-weaving elastic band. American Socks features a premium Soft-Touch band and flatlock stitching. Saxx uses a 4-way knit construction. Supernatural introduces the BASE+ constructions for very cold days.

Brands are striving to find the most sustainable fabric options that will still enable these technologies and constructions. Supernatural

uses a blend of Merino wool and synthetic fibres. Moskova presents their M2 style in cotton for a natural feel, and polyamide for users who need more support. American Socks crafts their underwear from a comfortable blend of cotton and elastane. Bn3th focuses on sustainable materials, such as Tencel, recycled polyester and US grown cotton. Wave Hawaii uses a special perforated recycled polyester for their AirLite range. They also offer other styles in bamboo. "Viscose made from bamboo is ideal for people with very sensitive skin", says CEO Carsten Raphael. Saxx offers different fabrics for different purposes, mainly combining cotton or polyester with Spandex. Some fabrics include Modal, and some polyester content is recycled. They also offer some products made with Vibe XTra EcoVero viscose jersey. Stance offers a combined cotton option, a nylon one for performance, and their patented ButterBlend™ for superior softness. They also apply their proprietary anti-microbial treatment, "FreshTek™ that helps wick away moisture while eliminating odour-causing bacteria to keep you feeling fresh, dry and comfortable, says Stance's Nathan Hill.

Graphics dominate the looks, some developed in-house and others in collaboration with artists. American Socks draws inspiration from street art and urban culture. Wave Hawaii's theme is centred around surf, beach, and van life. Bn3th offers a rendition of each of these themes, the Pineapple Fade print, and a classic Bandana print. Supernatural has developed the Flear Bear which features a ski jumping bear. There are many collaborations across the board. PSD offers many brand collaborations and influencer signature models. "We are particularly excited about our Playboy x PSD collection and our A-level athlete collabs," says Senior Director of International Sales, Tom Helleberg. American Socks partners with Joel Abad and Stinky Surfer. Bn3th offers a limited capsule collection developed with Madsteez, featuring the artist's unique handwritten type. Saxx has collaborated with Erik Abel, whose art is inspired by his love of the ocean, surfing, and travel. "Erik's work articulates the spirit of the water and awe of nature", says Sales Agent & Brand Consultant Darren Wilcox. Moskova is running three collaborations, with Japanese fashion magazine Leon, Keep a Breast Europe, and Bugarski surfboards.

SUSTAINABILITY

Efforts towards sustainability extend beyond fabrics. Longevity is a key factor. American Socks, Bn3th, and Saxx conduct wear and tear tests for quality. Supernatural adds the versatile and timeless characteristics of their underwear, that encourage consumers to keep it for longer. Brands also consider the carbon footprint and labour conditions of their production.

RETAILER SUPPORT

POS furniture is an important element of in-store marketing for this product category. Wave Hawaii has a compact, rotating counter display and a cool surfboard as a floor stand. American Socks includes boxer hangers in their shipments, so customers can feel the product before purchase. Supernatural has special POS furniture that makes it easy to present and replace the underwear. Saxx and Bn3th also offer displays to highlight their products. PSD has partnered with Footasylum to launch their retail presence in the UK. In-store marketing is supported by digital assets and online promotional campaigns to increase brand visibility. 📍

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Functional fabrics and constructions.
- 2 High demand for eco-friendly materials.
- 3 Storytelling graphics and artist collaborations.

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

[BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM](https://boardsportsource.com)

Worry-Free Zinc

Reef Safe • High Performance • Organic



Suntribe®

RETAIL BUYER'S GUIDE

SUN CREAM 2024

In case you're wondering about colourful faces in the oceans and on the mountains this year, our latest Retail Buyer's Guide on Sunscreen might offer some insights! Diversity is all the rage these days in this product segment, as Anna Langer reports.



SWOX

INNOVATIONS

As you may have guessed from the intro of this article, colouring is the big news in Sunscreen for 2024. Greenbush have introduced blue and pink SPF 50+ sticks that are certified "Bio Cosmos" by the Ecocert standard: "These colour sticks are a breakthrough in sun protection, as they not only offer superior SPF 50+ protection but are also formulated with 100% natural pigments, allowing us to achieve vibrant colours without compromising on organic integrity," explains Margaux Menon, Communications Officer. Newcomer brand TIZA offer cream sticks in white, blue and violet; "colours that make it more attractive to use, especially by the youngest of the family. Our creams are suitable for sensitive skin, as well as paediatric use from 3 months of age (although dermatologists do not recommend sun exposure for babies under 6 months of age). Suntribe have also added a new colour to their portfolio, now supplying 5 different natural zinc colours in 3 different packaging's. But, if you'd rather not have any colour on your face, you're covered in 2024 with Himaya's Nature SPF 50 stick, which doesn't leave a white residue and isn't nano.

With their ethos of making it as easy as possible to use sunscreen, Sun Bum showcase a SPF 50 face mist as the "pentacle of our new innovation. It's meant to be used every day as part of your morning routine and it's super sheer and lightweight." SeventyOne Percent have introduced a technical innovation in Europe: the ROKA SMART UV® molecule that is activated by natural light and adapts to your UVA protection needs for 8 hours.

Other areas of innovation include after sun products. SWOX have expanded their product range to include skin care and regenerative after sun products using hemp seed oil and organic aloe vera to offer deep nourishment and antioxidant protection that perfectly complements sun protection. And SeventyOne Percent offer a new protective hair oil that has been asked for by their customers for years and which they are now delivering in a technical and sensorial solution, including a major innovation with their UV protective oil that adapts to all hair types, including coloured hair.

"These colour sticks are a breakthrough in sun protection, as they not only offer superior SPF 50+ protection but are also formulated with 100% natural pigments, allowing us to achieve vibrant colours without compromising on organic integrity"

Margaux Menon, Greenbush

PACKAGING

There is also quite a bit of movement when it comes to packaging. Purposely designed small enough to fit in your board shorts or jacket, Sun Bums products come without any sharp corners to land on. It's On zinc offer a new 10g can of their natural zinc sun protection and skin care (in addition to the already existing 30g and 50g can). "This mini size comes with a small price and is for that reason very interesting for beginners and water sport tourists that don't use it on a daily base for the entire season," says Michael 'Mitch' Lippstreu, Marketing & Sales. "I want to highlight the consequent avoidance of plastic. It's On comes in an aluminium screw can with paper labels. The can, can be cleaned and used to e.g. store jewellery in it once it's empty," he adds. TIZA also use 100% paper and 0% plastic, while Greenbush strive to use recyclable or biodegradable packaging materials whenever possible to reduce waste and minimize our environmental footprint and Nuura implement cardboard, aluminium and "I'm green-bioplasic" which is made of renewable organic sugarcane.

Himaya emphasize the lack of tubes in their offering. "Approximately 98% of all tubes worldwide end up in landfills or are incinerated. Contaminated tubes are too expensive to recycle, even if they are made of so-called bioplasic, which is derived from ethanol produced by the biofuel industry using maize.

However, this is not truly sustainable in the long term or when scaled up. That is why Himaya is also exploring alternative raw materials for packaging", next to refillable options they have offered for the past 10 years, explains Founder Stuart Knowles.

SUSTAINABILITY

The issue of eco-friendliness in the product, its manufacturing as well as consumption, has been a highly relevant topic for sunscreen for many years now and has not shed an ounce of importance, if anything it gains in momentum in discussions.

Himaya has always prioritized high SPF protection with mineral filters since 2002, says Knowles. "We carefully consider not only what to include, but also what to exclude. We do not use nano ingredients, palm oils, nut oils, perfums, beeswax, lanolin, and other similar substances. These are commonly found in many natural lotions as they are easier and cheaper to formulate with. However, most of these ingredients can have negative effects on the environment, cause skin reactions, or are not sustainable." It's On argue that "the question what we're not using seems at least equally important. We're not using titanium dioxide as additional UV-filter and that is important to us since there are studies that classify titanium dioxide as hazardous to the health. It's not just about the application for the end user, but also about the manufacturing. In particular, inhalation is considered carcinogenic and is therefore highly problematic," says Mitch. They do use Lanolin and Kaolin as they are "making a real difference when it comes to the skin caring properties of It's On zinc."

Island Tribe state that all their products are vegan, free of animal testing and contain no perfume, parabens or oxybenzone and Suntribe formulate their zinc range with 4 natural ingredients (Coconut oil, bee's wax, zinc oxide, and the natural colouring).

Greenbush incorporate a variety of natural oils and plant extracts, including coconut oil, jojoba oil, shea butter, aloe vera, macadamia oil and almond oil while Nuura highlight that all their natural ingredients come from organic farming: Shea butter, Carnauba wax and Sunflower oil, Aloe vera, strawberry seed oil and Ginkgo biloba Leaf Extract. Both brands are certified by ECOCERT (COSMOS ORGANIC) and TIZA uses 100% natural ingredients, manufactured in the demanding laboratories of Natural Cosmetics and certified in BIO and NAT by ACENE.

Swox add, that on top of their focus on sustainability in regard to packaging and ingredients, they also source their products locally here in Europe, in order to avoid long supply chains. And Island Tribe ship their products with net zero CO₂ emissions, door to door,

BENEFITS

With brands thankfully now all caring about the environment as well as consumer health, the latter has become more interested in what additional benefits a certain product has to offer.

Hydration and Anti-Aging can be a helpful selling point, which Greenbush address with moisturizing ingredients such as botanical extracts, and natural oils that help prevent signs of premature aging such as wrinkles and age spots. Nuura's formulas are enriched with a good amount of active ingredients that provide a good dose of skin care, such as vitamin F and vitamin E, that offer additional sun protection while also having an antioxidant effect and helps to regenerate the skin, like Shea butter, Carnauba wax, Sunflower oil, and Aloe vera, which all come from organic farming, offering an anti-inflammatory, hydrating and protective effect. It's On zinc highlight skin caring and wound healing properties, and also Sun Bum add aloe vera, witch hazel, and Vitamin E help to reduce inflammation and heal your skin.

"Many of the products we make can only be bought in this channel, and we're constantly coming up with ways to drive traffic to these stores. If it wasn't for these shops taking a chance on us in the beginning, I know for certain we wouldn't be here today" Dustin Smith, Sunbum

TIZA work with Karité Natural butter and olive oil to provide the skin with protection, softness, antioxidants, conditioning, nutrition, hydration and repair damage and irritation. Suntribe Founder Karl Roos states that "all our products have hydrating capabilities, and our more cosmetically focused products are focused on more advanced skin care such as anti-aging. Another great benefit of Suntribe zinc products is the value, our sticks & tins in general have about twice the size of the competitors for the same price point."

RETAILERS

While every brand is naturally and obviously convinced of their product, their answers to our question of "why should retailers stock your products" can be very valuable if you're looking to switch or enhance your portfolio, as it indirectly or directly shows their ethos and what best aligns with your own shop's values.

Swox advertise their international community of action sports athletes and skin care experts, such as model and surfer Charlotte van Berkum, pro-surfer Jordy Smith or Marlon Lipke amongst many others.

"Approximately 98% of all tubes worldwide end up in landfills or are incinerated. Contaminated tubes are too expensive to recycle, even if they are made of so-called bioplastic, which is derived from ethanol produced by the biofuel industry using maize." Himaya



Suntribe claim "the most comprehensive range of sport focused sunscreen and zinc products: with our range of zinc sun sticks, larger zinc tins, mini-tins, and high-performance SPF 50 liquid formulas, we supply both the PoS and the variety to attract anything from hardcore surf teachers to 1 week holiday makers." Arguing that "when push comes to shove, the price is one of the major selling factors", It's On introduced their new smaller 10g can, allowing retailers to offer high quality sun protection in a plastic free packaging on a small budget. For Island Tribe it's important to mention the attractive margins, next to their broad spectrum of products.

Nuura argue that their brand connects perfectly with surfers, snowboarders and outdoor sports lovers, for its origin, values and philosophy, "ONE BODY, ONE PLANET, ONE WAY" while also offering the highest sun protection.

Greenbush highlight brand recognition and high-quality products: Our brand and products have earned a solid reputation for quality, efficiency, and reliability. With over 15 years of research, SeventyOne Percent have established an expertise that continues without compromising their values: efficacy, sustainability and sensoriality. Veterans Himaya find that by acquainting customers with Himaya, retailers are not only expressing their concern for providing the finest product, but also for the environment in which the product will be utilized. On the other end of the spectrum, you find a start-up with values as well as cutting edge techniques in TIZA, that is committed to providing modern and natural cosmetics.

And last but not least, Sun Bum say they "spend a lot of time and effort trying to help keep specialty retail unique. Many of the products we make can only be bought in this channel, and we're constantly coming up with ways to drive traffic to these stores. If it wasn't for these shops taking a chance on us in the beginning, I know for certain we wouldn't be here today," says Dustin Smith, International Market Development & Training Manager.

From our personal point of view, all of these brands and their products are legit so in this day and age it will come down to who you align with most, what complements your current stock, and which will fit your customers best, for which of the above listed key factors (which are by no means extensive) might give you some hints. ☺

Visit our website to see in depth brand previews of this category.

BOARDSPORTSOURCE.COM

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Coloured sticks
- 2 After sun products
- 3 Skin care benefits
- 4 Plastic free packaging

SONNY'S IN THE HOUSE

ISPO Munich, Hall A2, Stand 222
November 28-30



**SUN
BUM**®

NEW PRODUCTS

01 / REEF WATER SCOUT

Be one with your sandal, as in the one-piece construction of Reef's Water Court. The sandal is water-friendly and totally comfortable, thanks to its lightweight construction, arch support, and heel cup. Note the pretty espadrille details, too. This is one you'll love!

REEFSANDALS.CO.UK



02 / DRYROBE LONG SLEEVE ADVANCE

Recharge pre, and post-board sessions, with the original outdoor changing robe - made for any weather with no limitations to its uses. Its iconic oversize design combines a durable waterproof outer with a super-warm inner to protect you from the elements, whilst giving you enough space to change in and out of a wetsuit or sports gear. The long sleeve length provides extra shielding from harsh weather. However often you hit the sea or slopes, the dryrobe® Advance can be used multiple times throughout the day over wet kit, without the need for drying between uses. Made with 100% recycled fabrics and a PFC-free water-repellent technology.

DRYROBE.COM



03 / CAPTAIN FIN YONDER SHORT SLEEVE TEE

A must have in any Captain's wardrobe, the Yonder Tee features an epic hand drawn illustration printed on a 100% Organic Cotton, 200 GSM weight tee.

EU.CAPTAINFIN.COM



04 / RIP CURL SEARCH GPS 3 WATCH

Introducing the SearchGPS 3 watch! Precision and performance unite in this 100m Water Resistant marvel, featuring GPS, a vivid display, and seamless Bluetooth. Boasting 11 hours of GPS battery life and an incredible 30+ days of overall endurance, it's your go-to for every adventure. Step & Paddle Counter, Moon Phase, Sunrise/Sunset Times keep you in sync with nature. Plus, it's your built-in Logbook, all packed in a sleek 43mm case. Join the world's largest surfing community!

RIPCURL.COM



05 / REEF MENS PHANTOM 2.0

Reef have updated their fan-favourite style, Cushion Phantom. The updated version has even more support and a silhouette that wears easily. It has been designed with a superior footbed, that moulds like memory foam, but rebounds after every step.

REEFSANDALS.CO.UK



06 / CAPTAIN FIN YAGO DORA THRUSTER

The Yago Dora flying goat thruster just landed! Designed to make you fly high and dig deep. Yago's first signature fin with Captain Fin Co was designed to work in the wide range of waves Yago surfs on tour. From powerful reef passes to wonky beach breaks, this fin does it all. A relatively neutral template that features a thinned-out tip with slight rake throughout, this fin goes great in performance shortboards and everyday grovelers.

EU.CAPTAINFIN.COM



SAILING ^{L7} ENERGY

island
Tribe

SUN PROTECTION



Rider: Joost Vink

Contains no perfume, parabens, oxybenzone and is microplastic free.

No stinging eyes.
UVA, UVB protection.

www.islandtribe.eu



MILO

Named one of TIME magazine's Best Inventions of 2022 and recipient of The Red Dot – the most prestigious international design award out there, Milo is revolutionising communication in the outdoor sports industry. The brands CCO Jan McNair dropped by to give us the lowdown on the brands history and what makes it so special.

What was the thinking behind the development of Milo?

INSPIRED BY ADVENTURE

Standing at the top of one of Whistler's iconic powder-covered black diamond runs one morning in early 2017, our founder Peter Celinski saw his two kids drop and disappear into the trees. He tried to call after them to stop, but it was no use. He had no choice but to follow. Reaching them at the bottom of the run after multiple falls, he realized that it was essential to be able to communicate in the midst of the action.

After extensively testing other products – from analogue walkie-talkies to expensive digital portable radios – it became clear that nothing enabled a simple, hands-free way of communicating on the go. With a background in wireless networking and audio, Peter assembled a small team and got to work.

Peter's vision? The 'GoPro of walkie-talkies' – a simple device that didn't require the user to push a button to talk and provided clear audio in even the most extreme conditions.

After more than 5 years of product design and engineering by our world-class team, Milo was ready to hit the slopes, surf and trails.

Milo makes shared adventures better by connecting people in the moments that matter.

What is Milo's USP?

Milo™ – The Action Communicator™ is the walkie-talkie reimaged.

It enables hands-free (no buttons to push), multi-way, group voice conversation, allowing



adventurers to speak while on the trails, slopes or water. No phones or Wi-Fi needed, so everybody in the group can share the moment, in the moment. Waterproof and rugged with clear voice in all conditions. Optional connection to BT headphones for enhanced privacy. Finally – the Milo Action Communicator is software upgradeable via the App. It means that consumers will receive upgrades with extended performance and new features on a regular basis.

Please tell us about the awards Milo has won and how this propelled the brand forward?

Our relentless focus on delivering an exceptional user interface led to Milo being selected as one of TIME's 2022 Best Inventions.

Milo won the IDEA Gold Award for 2022 in the Sports category, ahead of Beats and Tempo. Recent winners of the Gold Award include the iPhone, Tesla Model S and Xbox. As a Gold Award winner, Milo was entered into the permanent collection of The Henry Ford museum.

The Red Dot is the most prestigious international design award. Milo was awarded the highest honour, receiving the Best of the Best award in 2022.

How do you see the action communicator market developing over the next few years?

The market will increase significantly as the awareness of Milo goes up and people get to know about the concept. This is not about replacing the walkie talkie market. Milo is a new concept that will create a new market on its own for everybody enjoying group sports and outdoor activities. Milo creates huge value for people training others – "Real Time Training". Lastly, Milo also adds significant value for teams working in construction and other businesses.

What is currently your top performing European market and why?

The Milo adventure started with focus on skiing and in our first year, we have seen great sales to countries with ski-destinations like France, Austria & Switzerland. However, with Milo being adopted by people biking, hiking, fishing and doing water sports, we now see the UK becoming the best performing market.



We believe this to be impacted by early tech adoption.

How is Milo distributed across Europe?

We have a strong distributor, Aqipa, and they make sure to provide top service to smaller and larger resellers across Europe. We work with larger outdoor resellers as well as Specialty Retailers. We are keen to expand our distribution network with engaged channel partners within the various vertical markets like Skiing, Biking, Hiking, Climbing, Maritime Sports, Fishing, Hunting etc.

Please explain how Milo's unique mesh network works.

Milos™ create a private secure mesh radio network. No Wi-Fi or phone signal needed. The range between two grouped Milos™ in clear terrain is around 1000 meters. When you extend the group size, Milo will use any of the grouped Milo's as a repeater to provide the best signal and thus also increase the range.

Why should retailers carry your product?

Milo provides a significant business opportunity for pro-active retailers. The Milo customer is using Milo for multiple activities and sports across the year. The Milo consumer buy 3 Milo's on average representing a strong revenue driver with a good profit per customer – and people come back for more when their friends are invited to join the experience. The market is increasing rapidly – not only for consumers but also for business applications. ☺



Pineapple
Island

PINEAPPLE ISLAND

Pineapple Island, the UK-based jewellery and accessories brand have been making waves recently in Europe with their surf-inspired Balinese artisan-made products. We grabbed the companies Creative Director, Alice Parmenter, to talk sustainability, jewellery trends and what makes the brand stand out from its competitors.

Please tell us the story behind the launch of Pineapple Island?

Back in 2008, Pineapple Island got its start thanks to Nathan's travels. He stumbled upon some amazing handmade jewellery and thought, "Why not share this with everyone?" And so, Pineapple Island was born, to bring handmade surf jewellery to retailers everywhere. Today, we've got 1500 stockists worldwide and we're known as the go-to for retailers looking for unique handmade pieces to enhance their inventory.

What are the brands USP?

What makes Pineapple Island stand out is our direct-to-maker model. We're all about cutting out the middlemen and working directly with Balinese artisans. That way, they get fair pay for their skills. We've been committed to doing it this way since 2008 and we're all about providing retailers with one-of-a-kind handmade pieces that customers love.

Our partnership doesn't just benefit us and the artisans—it's a win-win for everyone. Retailers love stocking our surf-inspired jewellery because it flies off the shelves and brings in high profit returns. Plus, it's the perfect add-on purchase or upsell at the checkout.

Please take us through your current line.

Our handmade jewellery and accessories are all about that laid-back surf vibe straight from the beaches of Bali. From woven bracelets to hoop earrings, anklets, necklaces, and everything in between, each piece captures surf-inspired style. And the best part? We've got something for everyone, no matter their style.



We've really stepped up in 2024, especially when it comes to getting our brand out there. We're all about making it easy for retailers to showcase our products. That's why we offer everything from counter displays to full-on shop fits. Whether it's a surf shop or a boutique, we've got the perfect display for you to make our handmade jewellery stand out.

Which is the most popular product in the whole line and why?

Our top selling Leme Surf bracelets are a hit with our retailers! Made with delicate macramé in a mix of colours, they bring summery vibes wherever you go. Plus, we offer them as a counter display set for retailers, making it easy for customers to fall in love with them in their favourite stores. And speaking of must-haves, have you seen our wave ring?

How has the brand fared in Europe, any new distribution, where has been your most popular market?

Over the past year, we've been making waves in Europe, especially through the online marketplace Faire.com. It's been great seeing our brand popping up in coastal regions where surfers hang out. The feedback has been amazing! With hundreds of positive reviews and high ratings, we have boosted our visibility out there.

We've also been getting a lot of love from retailers in coastal spots like Portugal, Spain, France, and the Netherlands. They found us through our socials and website and couldn't resist wanting to stock our surf jewellery. So, if you're a retailer interested in offering your customers Pineapple Island, you can apply via our website.

Have you noticed any new trends in the handmade jewellery and accessories market in the last few years?

We've been noticing this shift towards sustainability and conscious craftsmanship, especially among our retailers. Customers want products that match up with their values and lifestyle choices, and they are actively seeking out products made from quality materials and produced using ethical methods. From recycled materials to eco-friendly packaging, sustainability is taking centre stage.



How does the brand reduce its impact on the planet?

We've teamed up with a carbon accountant to help us track and offset our emissions and we're proud to donate part of our revenue to charities like Surfers Against Sewage and Project Seagrass. They're all about protecting our oceans and wildlife, which is really important to us.

We've also switched from plastic packaging to cassava-fruit packaging. It's a small change, but it shows our commitment to sustainability. We know we're not perfect, but we're trying our best to keep things green.

What makes Pineapple Island such an attractive sell to consumers?

For Pineapple Island, it's all about quality, style, and having a green mindset. Each piece has its own story, which is great for those who want something unique. Also, because we work directly with makers, we can make sure everyone gets a fair deal and customers know exactly where their products come from.

What really makes Pineapple Island stand out is how we treat our retailers. We're all about giving them great value and service, like with our three times profit margin. We've been working with some of our retail customers for over 10 years, and it just goes to show how much people love what we do. ☺



BARTS[®]
AMSTERDAM

BARTS

Having been around the winter headwear market for well over 30 years now, Dutch-based BARTS recently branched into summer product lines for the first time. So, we took Sales Manager Mariët Wieske aside for a quick chat about the decision behind the move and how it's been going.

Can you give us a brief history of the brand?

In the summer of 1986, our founder/CEO Bart Koene started selling handmade, colourful swim shorts to the beachgoers of Southern France. One of the girls helping him out decided to wear some of the fabric around her head to protect her from the sun. Soon, customers were asking where they could buy this cool bandana. That was the kickstart of BARTS, and three decades full of unique headwear and other high-quality fashion accessories, designed and distributed from our warehouse in Amsterdam to retailers throughout Europe.

What are currently your best-selling product lines? Any new categories for 2024?

The best-selling product line is still the beanie. We have also seen an increase in the sales of other types of headwear. Bucket hats, flat caps etc. Headwear that can be worn when it's less cold outside and the winter is milder. For the summer collection we see a more even spread of sales numbers, which is quite interesting. Retailers are focussing more on offering a complete summer collection. Our collections match this by offering headwear, swimwear, and beachwear like kaftan's, parel's and beach dresses. Also, the Raffia hats, which are in a little bit of a higher price range and unique to BARTS, are very popular.

Sustainability is high on our agenda. For new collections, we try to focus on increasing the overall percentage



of sustainable materials. Our summer 24 collection is at 40% and we work closely with our suppliers to increase this percentage with each collection.

You're predominantly known for your range of winter accessories but have recently expanded into swimwear to complement your summer accessories, what made you go down that avenue?

It started with some of our clients' making inquiries about a possible summer collection. They had space in their store(s) that was used for our winter collection and wanted to keep using this space for BARTS during the summer. This resulted in the start of a summer headwear collection. After five years of summer headwear, the collection broadened with swimwear and beachwear. There was always an ambition at BARTS to design a swimwear collection. At first, our agents were a little bit surprised because swimwear is a league of its own. Luckily, they are now introduced to our summer collection with great enthusiasm every year.

What is currently your top performing European market and why?

Next to the Dutch market, we consider Germany to be our biggest. It has a good mix of Sports and Fashion clients. Which are two branches our collections focus on. This makes our range of products a good match with the German market and its consumers.

What is your distribution set up in Europe, where do you sell more - through your online shop or with distributors/retailers?

We value both our online customers and our distributors/retailers. Therefore, we want BARTS to be available through different channels. Both online and offline. The presence and existence of physical retailers is something that is very important to us. BARTS started and grew by selling to retailers and that's why we value them a lot. We like to be a brand that is accessible through physical stores, and we would like to stimulate the shopping experience in physical stores.



How is the brand working on becoming more sustainable?

We work and communicate closely with our suppliers to find sustainable solutions. This goes for the use of materials but also the daily operations. This means good working conditions, fair wages, animal welfare and much more. Our upcoming W25 collection consists of 49% sustainable materials overall. We're actively working on increasing this percentage with every collection we put out. Besides the products themselves, we are also making steps in the responsible production of our branding, trimmings, and packaging.

Why should retailers' stock Barts products?

BARTS is a unique brand with quality products in an attractive price range. Our collections suit the market and are attractive to a wide audience. All this results in high numbers of resales at our retailers. We are also a company with more than three decades of experience. Because of this, we know the market we operate in, and we deeply value the relationship with our customers. We have an in-house warehouse which allows us to offer quick deliveries and options for restocking throughout the season. Suited to the client's needs. ☺



SUNTRIBE

Suntribe is an award-winning cosmetics company producing sunscreens 100% free from synthetic chemicals whilst retaining high functionality and safety, a must have product for any conscious outdoor sports enthusiast. We grabbed co-founder Karl Roos to find out more about the history of the brand, market performance and where they see the future of sunscreens is heading.

Please can you give us a brief history of the brand, who's the team behind Suntribe?

The brand was founded in Sweden in 2016, by a group of friends who discovered that there was a severe problem with sunscreens - and that someone needed to solve that. I had lived in Australia for several years and was shocked coming back to Europe to find that I couldn't buy mineral sunscreen anywhere. Then things went very fast - we met some lovely people who taught us how to manufacture the original recipe that we still use for our Zinc sunscreens today (Zinc Sticks & Tins), and then we formed the company around that. Using and preaching mineral sun protection daily.

Our mission has always been to reduce the number of chemical sunscreens being used, by providing a worry-free alternative. We started full-on focusing on the surfing scene, basically making the best natural zinc that we'd want to use ourselves, and since we're still surfing, we're still completely committed to making the most kick-ass natural performance sunscreens out there. But we realise not everyone surfs, so over the last 5 years we have grown our portfolio to also include products for a more general use, and therefore attract more people into making the switch to mineral based and all natural sunscreens.

What is Suntribe's USP?

You can be sure that all Suntribe ingredients are safe for your health and nature and that our packaging is sustainable.



What is currently your best-selling product line, and have you noticed any trends over the last couple of seasons?

Our best-selling product lines are our Zinc Sticks combined with our Natural Mineral SPF 30 Sunscreen tubes. These two products deliver what most people need, a serious face / zinc protection for sports, together with a non-whitening liquid mineral sunscreen. I think why the Zinc Sticks have gotten really popular is because they present a simple choice, compared to most alternatives in the store they are 100% natural, and they offer 30 grams of Zinc sunscreen compared to the usual 10 or 15 grams which we see in most of the market. The trend we have noticed is for sure to develop high-tech mineral-only formulations and really push the boundaries of what you can do. Our best-selling tube Natural Mineral SPF 30 is after 5 years development, miles ahead of the original formulation in terms of spreadability, non-whitening and even shelf-life. While still retaining a strictly natural formula. This development trend is setting the stage for the natural sunscreens' entry into the mainstream space.

What is currently your top performing European market?

It's Germany, closely followed by France and Portugal.

What is your distribution set up in Europe, where do you sell more - through your online shop or with distributors/retailers?

We currently have a setup mainly committed to distribution partnerships in the EU. More than two thirds of our business come from distributors and retailers.

Where are Suntribe's products manufactured and where are the ingredients sourced?

We manufacture our products in Portugal and many of our ingredients come from certified organic agriculture. We keep the supply chain as local as possible, sourcing most of our raw materials from the EU.



Do you have any new products set for release this year?

For sure! This year we are releasing our SPF 50 Zinc Stick line with the new addition Mint Green. This expands our Zinc Stick offering to 5 colours, and we offer a unique wooden display to present the Sticks in store!

Where do you see the opportunities in the sun protection market over the next few years?

I see a lot of opportunities in the mineral-only space. Soon we will have SPF 50 mineral body sunscreens with identical usability as chemical ones. We will see mineral-only spray products becoming stronger and more versatile. We will see a lot of established conventional cosmetic companies releasing their own mineral-only product lines. I definitely predict that mineral formulations will dominate the new releases in the market for the foreseeable future.

How do you support your retail base?

At Suntribe we really believe in strong partnerships with our retailers, since that is the core of our business. We provide unique wooden Point of Displays for all our products. We provide a general shelf display for the entire range, a Zinc Stick display, and a display for the Zinc sunscreens in 15g tins. With this we also provide thick self-standing posters and a range of thin quirky posters. ☺



FOAMLIFE

Despite challenging and turbulent times in the industry, FoamLife is an outlier, bucking the trend and actually expanding its business at an incredible rate, so we grabbed Co-Founders Karl Read and Timo Mullen to find out the key behind their current success.

It's been 12 months since we last caught up with you guys, how has business been?

TIMO: Extremely busy! It's been a good year and we've seen phenomenal growth in the business despite the challenges in the global market. FoamLife has continued to grow, solidifying its position as a leading player in the industry. Overall, we are pleased with the trajectory of the business and the opportunities that lie ahead.

How has the brand fared Internationally, any new distribution?

TIMO: The feedback is that product sell-through has been strong, and our brand & products have resonated well with consumers.

From the outset, our goal for FoamLife was to be the number one sustainably focused flip-flop brand in the world, we have always been focused on international growth but not at any cost. It's easy to say yes to any distributor or store for the sake of revenue but we have always believed in the brand first, protect that and the rest will follow.

All of our partners are as passionate about creating something different, as we are. Not only are they great in business but they also care about our industry and the planet. Most live a beach lifestyle and are active in the sports we all love, ultimately that was how we connected with most of them! However, we have also seen that FoamLife not only sells well in core surf stores but also just as well in lifestyle boutique stores stocking premium brands such as Ralph Lauren and Vilebrequin.

FoamLife has versatility, universal appeal, and higher impulse purchase potential, making it easier for stores to accommodate.

For 2024, we have several new distribution partners and have established partnerships with new retailers, allowing us to reach a broader audience internationally. FoamLife will be available in the UK, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Germany, Malta, Canary Islands, Belgium, South Africa, Philippines, Mauritius and the USA.

For the USA, we are currently stocked in the Vissla / Stokehouse stores and several other strong independents. We plan to focus more on this territory next year and look forward to further growth and success in this key market. We plan on attending some key trade shows in the US to further bolster our position in the US market.

New for this year is our partnership with Vissla (Stokehouse) Australia. FoamLife is stocked in their own Vissla branded stores, it's exceeded expectations and Vissla's targets in the first season. Due to this success, Vissla (Stokehouse) Australia is now distributing (and currently pre-selling) FoamLife in Australia & New Zealand to Vissla's wholesale customers. We look forward to seeing FoamLife stocked in over 50 stores across Australia & New Zealand from September 2024.

How have you structured this year's range and are there any plans to expand your product categories?

KARL: Our new 2024 Collection is approx. 60 options, including flip flops and sliders, with a fairly even split between Men's and Women's styles.

Comfort has remained a priority and we have increased the number of colourways in our best-selling core styles, additionally there are styles with some great new features and marketing stories.

There has been a really positive response to styles where we've enhanced and increased the sustainability features. Consumers are gravitating more towards eco-friendly materials and practices; they're seeking brands that are in-line with their values. Additionally, we're in the process of our B-Corp journey and hope to be certified by next year.

Responding to consumer demand, we've introduced branded beach towels and caps to our product line-up. Furthermore, we're currently in the process of developing a closed-toe style for both men & women that's anticipated to launch this winter.

You've started shipping internationally direct from your website, what was the decision behind that strategy and how is it going?

KARL: We recognised there was an increasing demand for our products from international markets. We have seen a significant increase in online traffic and requests through our customer services and social media wanting to buy our products. It's been interesting to see the correlation between the countries where we have increased our wholesale business, to the surge in traffic and sales we are now receiving from those territories online. It relates back to our strategy of working with the right partners. It's important for us as a brand to have cohesive sales channels, such as E-Commerce & Wholesale, that complement each other.

Any other plans for further increasing your distribution globally?

TIMO: We're always exploring opportunities for distribution with the right partner. We're committed to expanding our global reach and bringing FoamLife products to new markets around the world. Anyone interested in stocking or distributing FoamLife can get in touch at: info@thefoamlife.com ©



PROLONG

PROLONG

Having spotted a gap in the market with the way brands manage their Care & Repair dept and after-sales interactions, the team at Prolong have developed a unique platform that can help manage and expand after-sales services whilst encouraging brands to adopt a circular economy model at the same time. We spoke to Co-Founder and CEO Tanguy Frécon to find out exactly how the system works and why brands should adopt the service.

What was the thinking behind the launch of the Prolong business?

Prolong was launched with the mission to revolutionise after-sales services in the outdoor industry. Our platform is centred on enhancing customer satisfaction and brand loyalty through efficient and profitable Care & Repair services. We observed a significant gap in how brands manage after-sales interactions; often, it's an overlooked aspect of customer experience. Prolong addresses this by enabling brands to offer seamless and environmentally sustainable services, turning after-sales from a cost centre into a revenue stream and brand builder.

Please explain in detail how the Prolong system works?

Prolong is an omnichannel platform that integrates directly into a brand's existing infrastructure, allowing them to manage all aspects of Care & Repair services effectively. Our system automates the service workflow, enabling brands to handle customer requests swiftly and scale their after-sales services without proportional increases in overhead costs. From the initial customer inquiry through the repair process to the return delivery, every step is streamlined and transparent.

Additionally, our analytics suite helps brands to forecast demand for after-sales services, optimise resource allocation, and manage inventory of spare parts efficiently. This not only ensures quicker turnaround times but also reduces waste and supports sustainability efforts.



Who are your current partners?

After extensive research and dialogue with the industry, we had the privilege to co-develop Prolong in collaboration with three leading brands in the sportswear and footwear sectors, including Fusalp, which has been instrumental in shaping our platform. This partnership was supported by a significant investment of 1.5 million euros, allowing us to tailor our offerings to the specific needs of the industry and ensuring our solutions are both innovative and effective. Alongside these brand partnerships, we have established a robust network of over 200 repair workshops globally. This network not only enhances our service reach but also ensures expertise in outdoor gear repair, providing an invaluable resource to our partners and their customers.

How do you see the market for this service developing over the next few years?

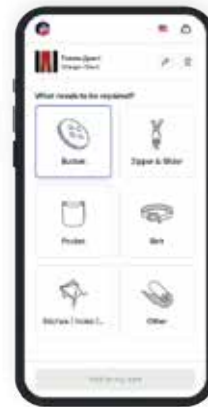
The demand for comprehensive after-sales services is on the rise, driven by consumers who expect more from their purchases and the brands they support. This is particularly true in the outdoor industry, where the durability and longevity of products are significant selling points. We anticipate that more brands will adopt after-sales service platforms like Prolong to enhance customer loyalty and operate sustainably. As the market evolves, the integration of such services will become a standard, especially for premium brands in the outdoor sector.

How do you plan to expand across Europe?

Our European expansion will focus on aligning with market-specific needs and scaling our service capabilities across different regions. We plan to establish local partnerships and adapt our platform to meet regional regulations and consumer expectations. By the end of 2024, we will operate our Platform across more than 10 countries.

Can you share a success story, or a case study where Prolong has significantly impacted a brand's after-sales service?

Absolutely. One of our partner brands, which specialises in high-end outdoor apparel, leveraged Prolong to revamp their warranty and repair services. Prior to using our platform, their



repair process was cumbersome and often left customers unsatisfied due to long wait times. After integrating Prolong, they not only reduced their turnaround time significantly but also increased customer retention. This success story underscores how effective management of after-sales services can enhance brand loyalty and customer satisfaction.

Why should brands get involved?

Brands should get involved with Prolong to capitalise on the growing trend of sustainability and exceptional customer service. Our platform not only helps brands manage and expand their after-sales services but also does so in an environmentally conscious way that reduces waste and promotes product longevity. By enhancing their after-sales offerings, brands can significantly improve customer retention and satisfaction, which are key drivers of competitive advantage in today's market.

How does Prolong contribute to the broader sustainability goals of the outdoor industry?

Prolong actively contributes to sustainability by extending the lifespan of products through efficient repair management. By doing so, we help reduce waste and the need for new resources. Our platform encourages brands to adopt a circular economy model, where products are kept in use for as long as possible. This not only conserves resources but also aligns with the values of consumers who are increasingly making purchasing decisions based on environmental impact. ☺

SPORT ACHAT ÉTÉ

JOIN THE 200 LEADING OUTDOOR BRANDS !

THE MEETING PLACE
FOR OUTDOOR
PROFESSIONALS

BOOK YOUR STAND

www.sport-achat-ete.com

→ **+33(0)4.58.58.23.05**

SEPTEMBER

9 & 10, 2024

**ALPEXPO
GRENOBLE
FRANCE**

FRANCE

ITALY
SWISS
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
GERMANY
UK

The French economy is experiencing a more sluggish start to 2024 than expected, penalized by the effects of rising interest rates and industry difficulties. Economic activity continues to stagnate in the first quarter but is expected to rebound by 0.3% in the second quarter, according to the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies. The French economy is taking time to emerge from its lethargy and the recovery has not arrived yet,

the INSS reveals in a scenario somewhat different from what they presented last December, when an increase in GDP of 0.2% was forecast for each of the two quarters at the end of last year.

The growth will therefore not be very different over the whole period, underline the experts of the statistics institute, who also revised upwards the growth in the fourth quarter of 2023, to +0.1%, instead of 0. The growth momentum at mid-2024 would thus still stand at 0.5%. However, this makes the government's target of a 1% GDP growth in 2024 uncertain. To reach its target, it will probably require positive trends to materialize during the first semester. Otherwise, a GDP increase of 0.7% in the third and fourth quarters will be necessary, an assumption that seems unlikely in the current context.

The spring of 2024 seems sluggish in France economically, whereas normally it is generally synonymous with the start of the season; what is its impact on the world of sliding?

The first quarter of 2024 seems to have been mixed for stores. As François Wuest, manager of the Vega Skateshop in Paris explains: "As usual the winter sales are more than mixed because there are now promotions all year round and everywhere." He adds: "Spring has been slow to arrive, and as specialists in skateboarding, we depend heavily on the weather. This means that equipment sales are still low." He continued: "Our situation is comparable to the same time last year with high stock (even though it is decreasing) and fairly low cash flow."

Further south on the Atlantic coast, the situation is not very different. Alban Causse from the Hawaii Surf store in Mimizan comments: "Winter has been quite tough with a decrease of nearly 40%...For coastal stores like us, we are starting to consider closing part of the winter. This year in particular, spring is struggling to start, it's very slow. At the beginning of April, the weather was not as expected and like every year, we are counting on the Easter holidays and the May long weekends to truly kick off the season."

It's the same feeling at Olo Surf Shop in Hossegor where Antoine Sechet, co-manager of the 2 stores, commented: "Spring is quite gloomy for the moment, the trend is rather downward in purchasing power and consumption and thus turnover." He added: "The recovery in early April is timid for the moment since it's not our area that is on vacation. We keep our fingers crossed for the weather to cooperate because it will once again be key this year."

At OGM Bodyboard Shop, one of the only ultra-specialized bodyboard stores in Europe, the assessment doesn't seem very different: "Winter has been really quiet, and we felt it from the end of October. The return of Easter holidays and especially the weekend of April 15th should allow us to see the return of customers to the store," said Founder Gontrand Marchal. He continued: "It remains quite typical since we are more or less on the same trends as last year in terms of floor traffic and turnover."

As for the stock, it seems that it is still high although for some it is decreasing. Wuest, from Vega commented: "The level of stock is very high, especially on skate decks and completes, but on usual consumables like wheels, bearings, screws, etc., we are doing some restocking."

At Olo, Sechet is more measured: "The stock is generally under control. We have been quite cautious on pre-orders; we have a residual but healthy stock that will gradually be sold. He comments: "Regarding neoprene, it's true that the stock remains relatively high compared to the current sales volume."

Marchal from OGM comments: "Our stock is rather healthy because we anticipated the decline in 2023 and particularly the slowdown in the technical field." In line with Sechet, Marchal adds: "The neoprene remains at fairly high stock levels, considering the massive clearance sales of all players and particularly the major surf brands."

For others like Alban Causse in Mimizan, the situation still seems quite complicated in terms of stock: "The stock level remains too high despite everything, we had asked to postpone the deliveries of our pre-order for May/June but a large part of the suppliers have already delivered." He adds: "the pressure on cash flow is felt by everyone, supplier and retailer, and it's the banks that are rejoicing with most notably factoring which is becoming more and more important and pushes brands to deliver early to recover cash flow."

As for the products, it seems that textiles are faring better compared to technical products. Indeed, Sechet tells us: "it's mainly ready-to-wear and accessories that are selling the best at the beginning of the season. While the technical department is struggling a bit with a clear slowdown in equipment renewal." A situation also observed at Vega in Paris, Wuest confirms: "At the beginning of the season, it's clothing that works best, such as pants, and also our own range of textiles."

At OGM, an ultra-specialized store that has been a pioneer for 22 years in its field, loyal "Core" customers seem to still be present with sales of high-end products with "purchases of premium and quality boards."

Causse from Hawaii Surf informs us of a change in consumer mentality: "Customers are primarily looking for discounts, purchasing power and consumption habits have changed. The society's emphasis on the ecological dimension of not over-consuming by promoting second choices has greatly developed the second-hand market, which is a good thing, but buying new at normal price has almost developed a feeling of guilt in the consumer." He adds: "the normal purchasing process has almost become isolated, foreign tourists and notably Germans and Swiss continue to buy as before and seem less affected than the French when they come through the store's door."

The season is about to start, but for now, the start seems complicated. The end of winter is struggling to arrive. As every year, Easter holidays and the May long weekends will set the trend for the upcoming summer. The weather and the waves are eagerly awaited and will once again play the role of barometer. Stay tuned...

BENOIT BRECQ

GERMANY

UK
FRANCE
ITALY
SWISS
SPAIN
PORTUGAL

Hello everyone, where do we start?

The German economy in the retail sector and especially in the board sports sector remains uncertain - just like the weather.

After a weak final quarter of the year, there are still no signs of a noticeable economic upturn in the German economy at the start of 2024. However, industrial

production and the construction industry also grew positively at the start of the year due to the weather. The inflation rate in Germany - measured as the change in the consumer price index (CPI) compared to the same month of the previous year - was +2.2% in March 2024. The inflation rate had been at +2.5% in February 2024 and +2.9% in January 2024 according to the Federal Statistical Office

In my view it is a constant up and down, the situation depends on many political decisions. There is still a great deal of uncertainty and a corresponding reluctance to buy. Insolvencies such as those from the SIGNA Group (Karstadt, Kaufhof, KADEWE etc.) are unfortunately becoming more frequent.

Let's move on to the weather. We already had summery temperatures of up to 26 degrees in March. And summer was actually already here. The wakeboard centres opened earlier than usual, the bikes were brought out, skate parks opened, etc. Sales of boardshorts, shorts and swimming costumes had begun. But suddenly winter came back, right down to the lowest altitudes in Germany. The snow that the ski resorts would have needed in January was or is now there, and from an altitude of 1100 metres upwards there is a great deal of it. This gave us a reasonably good end to the winter. But of course everything and everyone was already geared up for summer, which slowed down spring sales somewhat and winter jackets were in demand again. So everything is up and down.

After pre-orders for surfboard hardware dropped in Germany, things are picking up again at the moment. Factories such as Olatu (Pukas, Lost Channel Island etc.) and Poland (Pyzel, Stewart, Aipa) have increased production again. Christian Haro Sales, Manager at Olatu, explains: "We are working at full speed to fulfil all orders as quickly as possible. That's a really good feeling." Olatu is also pleased that a new milestone in German surfing is being created in Munich with the O2-Surftown which is nearing completion. The pool is now full and the construction work is coming to an end. Olatu, Europe's largest surfboard manufacturer, will be a partner here, as will Rip Curl in the wetsuit sector. I had the opportunity to take a look at everything on site and it's really impressive how far everything has come. Unbelievable, Germany is getting a SURFWELLE.

I also had a chat with Hannes Winter from HW-Shapes in Rostock Warnemünde. It was more about kitesurfing and his situation in the far north. Hannes had a good March, but even in April he noticed the impact of bad weather on his sales. "We still sell a lot of small items but unfortunately sales of hardware are still very slow." The reason for this? "On the one hand, it's certainly down to purchasing power, but on the other hand it's

also because prices on the kite market are very low. When even the retailers are only selling out by dumping prices, it becomes difficult for some." I asked him if he was worried about his stock. "Not really, because the people who come to shop or get advice online do so because they appreciate the expertise and therefore buy from me." For him, the quality of the goods also plays a major role and, as with Ricardo, the partnership with the agents and companies. "I work a lot with Eleveight Kite in the kite sector, they don't produce that much, so the prices are very stable and the quality is also good. It's just a great relationship with the brand." When I asked him how SUP sales are, he replied that he sells high-quality paddles and hardboards as the inflatable market is as good as dead for him.

The market for sun protection products is becoming increasingly important. The issue of skin cancer is of course the top priority here. The brand doesn't seem to really play a role in this, the motto seems to be: "We don't care if you use ours, just use sunscreen." SunBum is currently running a global marketing campaign that addresses precisely this issue and emphasises the importance of using sunscreen. As 90% of board sports are practised outdoors, sun cream is also playing an increasingly important role in sales. Petra Lang from Wakestiff reports: "Not only are wakeboarders looking for protection here, but every mum, grandma, simply everyone who lies on our lawn sunbathing appreciates good sun protection."

German owned Santoloco in Portugal is opening a new shop in Sagres on the main street with a café and associated shop/rental/test centre. Ricardo, one of the owners, has been working on this plan for some time and now it has become a reality. After the unofficial opening, the shop is already doing very well, Ricardo said to me: "We haven't done any advertising yet, but the sales in the OFF season are already really impressive". As in Munich, Ricardo works with selected smaller brands, but also with representatives that he personally appreciates, not always with those who offer the best deals. "The personal relationship is becoming increasingly important for me, even when something goes wrong, there is always someone there straight away and the solution is usually obvious." We wish him all the best in his venture and look forward to visiting him and surfing together.

Last but not least, we take up the topic of surf ponchos and changing robes. For a while, every surf brand produced ponchos in abundance, in all colours and variations, after there were initially only black ponchos with the brand logo on the chest. Things have changed, they are now colourful, wild and cosy, the SOFA poncho is now also a top seller in winter, according to Peter Frank, representative of All IN Ponchos in Germany. Guillaume Marage's French brand After Essential has also expanded its product range, producing a large children's collection in addition to the classic poncho models, sofa/chill variants and rain ponchos. Tani from Icehouse in Kulmbach is delighted: "We sell it to young and old! It's fun and everyone can use it".

Thank you for reading, good luck for the coming summer months, good sales.

TOBI HAMMER

MARKET INSIGHT

UK

FRANCE
ITALY
SWISS
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
GERMANY

WEIRD: of strange or extraordinary character.

Happy! Happy! Not to say a little surprising. For the second year in a row the winter season is ending positively (April 24). The Trade Show season is well behind us, the on-snow tests have (mostly) been completed, retailer shelves are looking sparse, discounting has been rare, pre-orders are in and positive and there's even a good showing of later winter

snow encouraging consumers to take later on-snow breaks.

Weird? That's certainly not a common intro to this column but it is very, very welcome. I feel like I should stop writing now so we can all go away happy.

But this article demands more words and with those words comes the risk of alternative news. For now, let's stop and dwell on the positive. And breathe...

But there's more - more positive. Weird!

The UK Economic indicators have improved, and our GDP is forecast to be about +1%. That's not great but it is an about-turn from the short dip into recession at the end of 2023. Inflation remains on a downward trend and should fall below the 2% target which leaves room for interest rate cuts and this, in turn, should boost consumer confidence. Of course, we are also into an election year so the politicians (of whatever colour) will be running around like headless chickens offering promises of riches galore on the horizon. I'm not quite sure if that makes anyone feel better because nobody believes them!

All in all, not a bad 'flying start' for the first Q of 2024. But is there a dose of reality coming down the line. What's happening on the shop floor right now? I'm almost frightened to ask.

"It's promising. I've not really got anything solid to pin that hope on, but I have a good feeling", commented Ian Gregorelli from Boardwise. "Winter has ended well enough and we're happy. Now getting in full gear for watersports. Winging has added a new dimension that some other watersports retailers have really focussed on. They've perhaps neglected their traditional windsurfing business and that's been to our benefit. Don't get me wrong we're also focussed on Winging but we're not ignoring our traditional base and that's paying off", he continued.

As an interesting aside here Gregorelli commented on a small Brexit bonus - "Prior to Brexit the windsurfing market was plagued with individual/personal imports, and this appears to have all but disappeared. A Brexit bonus - now there's a rarity!"

And what about SUP? "Interesting - the Covid boom compressed 3 years of sales into 12 months - I think we're just entering the end of that excessive sales impact. There's also some indication that people who have stuck with SUP and taken it up as a real sport are now looking for Performance, Race and Wave hard SUP's - so we're hopeful that this will follow through in solid sales numbers come the better weather".

And wetsuits? "Same thing really - one of the nice things about modern wetsuits (from a sales perspective) is that they simply don't last as long. They're comfy and soft and supple but the longevity is not there - the covid wetsuit boomers now

have stuff that is coming up to 3 and 4 years old - it's time for replacements".

Gregorelli pointed out that currently, he has no solid evidence of this growth in sales - the weather has not broken yet and looking out the window summer seems like a long way off "But it's coming - for sure - I have not felt this positive about watersports for a good while now".

Let's hope he is right.

One of the best Surf Shops in the UK is Secret Spot in Scarborough. Now in its' 35th year, I got hold of 'Icky' who has been there "off and on" for 20 years.

"Weird" there's that word "it's kinda OK in terms of sales volumes but margin is massively down. I suppose we could be called busy fools but we're managing to clear the old stock which then gives us space to bring in the new '24 kit. Got to be done. Really cannot complain because kit is still selling. We're even doing the odd lesson although I think overall lesson and hire will be down this year".

Secret Spot are the real deal when it comes to surf stores - open all year round serving both the local (Northern to you Southerners and South-ish to your Northerners) community but also with a healthy mail-order business "Of course the shop's quieter during the winter months and we look forward to the summer season but there's always hardcore enthusiasts who keep us sane". I asked Icky about wetsuits. "We've bought nothing in for the summer. No pre-orders. Just top up stuff. It was just getting silly, and we had to clear the decks. The wetsuit market has been ruined by Tom, Dick & Harry jumping on the covid bandwagon and, as a result there's a mass of average quality, under-priced neoprene. No idea how long it's going to take for the UK to clear the glut but no time soon. Greed got the better of everyone - us included".

And to skate. "Weird". Seriously? This was the first word that Paul from Black Sheep said when I caught him mid-renovation of a Flat. "Yeah - it's a weird one for sure". What was so weird? "Well, when will it be over for a start? Will it ever be over?" Paul is (like all of us) referring to the post-covid era that we all find ourselves in. Skate is still suffering with oversupply. "You do have to ask yourselves 'why?' but it seems that no matter how often you ask there is simply no answer. I'm not complaining. We're still selling boards and it is just the new norm. Nobody out there is evil and trying to do us or the sport any harm, but it does seem that some have done themselves a lot of harm in the process".

I think we get the drift here. But what about Black Sheep? "As I say we're selling boards, clothing is not so bad and so I cannot complain" (Paul never complains) "I'd like it to be better of course, I'd like the market to be a bit cleaner but can I predict when that will happen? No - no idea and to be honest I don't care. I care about our customers, about skating and about our business - as for the rest of it we'll just get on and make the best of it. We've got customers who will buy new decks for £120 come what may and for everyone else we've got some great offers from suppliers who appear to be on permanent sale. And if I don't take the deals this week there will be the same deals, maybe better, next week. It's weird"

So, there you have it.

Weird, eh?

GORDON WAY

SPAIN

PORTUGAL
FRANCE
UK
GERMANY
ITALY
SWISS

The Spanish economy grew five times more than the rest of the Eurozone last year. Forecast for 2024 is positive too, in contrast to the persistent downward forecast of Europe as a whole. However, the average spending of Spanish families is restrained. Recent analysis also reveals a staggering 38% increase in grocery shopping since 2021, in contrast with a bare 6% uptick in salaries. Inflation is predicted to be less than initially thought, but consumers mentality still needs to catch up. Ben Wesseling, from Duna Trading distribution,

thinks plummeting prices due to the overstock situation will reactivate customer spending. However, Sergio Mur from La General Surfera shop in Barcelona has observed a shift in consumer priorities towards travelling and dining out. Any leftover money they have after their grocery shopping will be likely spent on that.

Winter was not good in Spain. Lack of snow and warm temperatures have resulted in poor sales, especially of outerwear jackets and wetsuits. Stores looked forward to some Easter snowfall, but most of the country suffered terrible rainstorms, which hindered sales of new summer products. The demand for skateboards and surf skates has dropped significantly. "There is too much stock and people have already bought everything they need for now", says Mur. Bar the explosion in popularity of wing foiling, the board sports scene offers no observable growth trends. Cheaper products with more versatile use, such as backpacks or beanies, are selling better in a cautious financial climate. Expectations for Spring are not all bad, though. If the weather behaves, sales of summer apparel should follow suit. However, the trend of using surf apparel to lure customers into stores seen in the past years seems to have declined. "Surf stores have to go back to core, which is selling, renting, and showing hardware", says Ben Wesseling. Duna Trading

PORTUGAL

FRANCE
UK
GERMANY
ITALY
SWISS
SPAIN

Portugal has recently emerged from elections that gave victory to an alliance of several right-wing parties which has created a lot of political uncertainty within the country.

Even so, there are reasons to be confident, as according to the latest Bank of Portugal economic forecast set out in March, the Portuguese economy will grow more than expected with an estimated 2% jump in GDP for 2024, having grown 2.3% in 2023 after a very positive fourth quarter.

The bank is also predicting an average growth of 2.3% until 2026 due to "economic activity benefits from the effects of lower inflation, the expansionary impact of the measures adopted in the State Budget 2024 and the acceleration forecast for external demand," and there is also good news about inflation, which, currently at 2.6%, will decrease to 2.4% in 2024.

It's worth noting though, that the European Commission (EU) points to different numbers, estimating that the Portuguese economy will grow just 1.2% in 2024 and 1.8% in 2025.

The price of essential goods rose 10% at the beginning of the year due to the return of VAT tax and updated food prices which pushed the cost of consumers baskets to new records. This rise in food prices combined with increases in rent, electricity, telecommunications and transport, has taken away purchasing power from customers, leaving Portuguese families facing hard times.

In terms of board sports, the market faced difficulties over the winter, suffering a lower flow of tourism compared to the rest of the year, which affected the movement in stores and consequently sales. Furthermore, several storms affected the country also causing a lower circulation of customers who were still recovering from the Christmas hangover shopping.

But with Spring arriving, there's a feeling of hope between retailers that

works with a lot of schools. These have become competitors to stores by selling newcomers the hardware they have been taught with. Some stores are setting up schools just to have one more sales channel. Online sales are the biggest threat to retailers. To compete in this environment, stores need to offer something different. Mur only sells premium products in his online store. "The entry price products are the ones that flood the market, I offer products that are hard to find".

The difficult winter will leave retailers with more unsold stock than they had hoped for, but they had pre-ordered with caution, so it won't be too dramatic. In the current business climate, brands and distributors have stopped demanding MOQs. They are planning for an increase in the in-season ordering business model. With rising numbers of store closures and cancelled orders adding stock to existing inventory levels, there is always somewhere to order from. "It is not hard to know how much stock big manufacturers have in their warehouses, and it's scary", says Ben Wesseling. Nevertheless, he thinks that all this movement in the market offers good opportunities for small and flexible distributors, for example, buying overstock from big brands. However, even that cheap overstock needs a retailer to sell it to the final customer, and they are seeing less of those walk through their door by the day. Online competition is fierce, and many customers that visit the store use it as a showroom. Mur worries that, at this pace, the small retail store will disappear. Brands need to stop prioritising their D2C business and engage in a more ethical approach. Hopefully, the promise of a new European price regulation law expected for 2025 will help. It is brick and mortar retailers who offer the experience of talking to someone who knows and loves the sport. "The survival of the sport is not secured by making a lot of money", says Mur, "but by keeping the passion for the sport alive".

ROCIO ENRIQUEZ

they will recover business after those difficult months, since the sun is out, and people want to go outdoors and enjoy life.

For Waimea Surf & Culture in the north of Portugal "the negative aspects in this first quarter were the bad weather with several storms that made customers stay at home in Winter or preferred to buy online", said store owner, Joaquim Oliveira. "Furthermore, customers have less purchasing power due to high interest rates and rising costs of living. And clothing prices have also increased significantly. Stores have overstock and several websites are selling many products at a discount, mainly hardgoods. The brands' own websites had unbelievable prices to try to get rid of stock and this had a huge impact on street stores like ours and technical gear sales".

Even though this scenario wasn't easy to deal with there's always options to reinvent reality thinking positively. Oliveira continued "On the positive side, this forced us to pay more attention to the market, be more demanding with brands and find alternative brands to be able to offer different products to our customers. Our strategy is to have a strong presence on social media, to build customer loyalty with small treats, making them feel like a person and not just someone with a credit card. And convince them to come to the store and have an experience purchasing the product as if they were part of a club."

For Samadi Surf & Skate "The negative aspect from these times has been a long period of bad weather and the consequent drop in sales", commented store owner, Rico Moser. "On the positive side, we are balancing stocks in 2024, trying to control costs and arranging purchases of items with overstock...I think the best thing is to have a business that is as flexible and diversified as possible. We see the business recovery in the coming months with some optimism, as the good weather and good waves lead consumers to buy."

The sun is out, people are happier, the tourists are back and hopefully that will help retailers in the next months with the new Spring/Summer collections. Enjoy.

NUNO PRINCIPE

MARKET INSIGHT

ITALY

- SWISS
- SPAIN
- PORTUGAL
- FRANCE
- UK
- GERMANY

The economic update remains even as interest rates remain high, purchase power is still low and even if inflation rates are theoretically sinking, it is nothing the regular Citizen can really feel in his wallet, as the price increases are still real in most cases. Everyone really hopes for a better Q3 and Q4 in 2024 as the economy in total is struggling when talking to different business owners; from construction businesses to gardening.

On a positive note, for board sports, ski-resorts, especially in the northern part of

Italy, saw really good growth numbers, and snowboard / ski holidays are still high in demand, especially for tourists from outside of Italy which are bringing in some fresh cash.

There is also currently a similar trend relating to summer holidays, where the booking numbers are again better than expected. It's clear that people are willing to spend on holidays and rather save on other consumer goods. Being outside, having fun and spending on their personal lifestyle seems the most relevant to most teenagers nowadays.

The boardsports business started quite slow into Q1 - 2024 as skate hardgoods stocks are still very high, and brands, distributors and stores are struggling to get back to the good numbers from years ago. There's just too much product in the warehouses and on shelves overall, as is also being seen for surf boards and especially for wetsuits which are being heavily discounted.

Most products because of this are seeing discounts all over the place, which reduces the margin and profitability for the whole business sector. This is something streetwear sales will also experience a lot of in 2024. When talking to bigger Italian streetwear dealers they agree that there is too much discounted product on the market and that the customers have got really used to buying on sale items and are now not willing to pay full price if it is not a hype or limited-edition product, which are mostly sold D2C.

This puts pressure on the stores as sales, or so-called mid-season sales, are starting earlier every year which makes it tougher and tougher.

Having limited-edition products or brands that focus on certain retailers are now a must for many business owners as it keeps them making the margins they need to write down positive numbers.

Brands really have to focus on segmentation, price and distribution channels to not lose track. There are still many brands doing well out there, but many smaller ones, and also smaller stores, are struggling really hard during this 2024 as low margins and high stock levels are not easy to manage.

Also snowboard hardgoods experienced this sale pressure in 23/24. More and more stores are focussing on selling outerwear, clothing, outdoor gear and shoes rather than snow hardgoods as margins are too low and inventory levels are too high. The store landscape from pure core skate and snow stores has seen a big decrease over the last decade, in which we have lost many historical doors over the years.

On a positive note, it seems we have touched the bottom line, and things are starting to pick up again as the warmer temperatures have kicked in. Skate wheels and trucks are again more in demand and skate events are coming back on track after the corona pandemic, which saw many events and local contests taking a break.

Many local brands and stores have seen this decrease in business as a chance to try to re-organize themselves. Many have successfully cut unnecessary costs, added new brands, tried innovative marketing, collaborated with other businesses and so on. It is for sure a time of chance for many business owners, and as the market gets faster and keeping track is not always possible, so being creative and thinking outside the box is the new normality.

Most of the retailers see the end of 2024 as a changing point and are looking positively into the future which is very promising for our market.

peace,

FRANZ JOSEF HOLLER

BRUNOTTI

WANTED
DISTRIBUTORS & AGENTS
IN EUROPE

APPAREL - HARDWARE & SOFT GOODS - ACCESSORIES

INTERESTED? REACH OUT TO OUR EXPORT MANAGER:
INFO@BRUNOTTI.COM ATTN. PETER DIJKEMA

BOA DIALED IN. PRECISION FIT.

WORK WITH US.
Put your passion for shoes, braces and equipment to work for BOA.

ACCOUNT MANAGER
MOUNTAIN EMEA
m/f/d

OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE

WE OFFER

- Challenging tasks in a successful and innovative company based in the beautiful lake area of Salzkammergut.
- A welcoming working environment in a committed and international team of employees.
- Learning and Development Opportunities
- Amazing Company Activities and Events
- Company Bike Leasing
- Competitive Compensation Package

BOA Technology, the creator of the award-winning, patented BOA Fit System, is reinventing how shoes, medical braces, and equipment performs. As BOA looks ahead to the future, there is contagious excitement radiating across our offices in the United States, Europe and Asia. We are a collaborative, growing company where details matter and customer satisfaction with our product is paramount.



AIRBLASTER
DISTRIBUTORS WANTED!

HUNGARY - LATVIA - SLOVENIA
CROATIA - SERBIA - TURKEY

INTERESTED?
CONTACT [KYLE@MYAIRBLASTER.COM](mailto:kyle@myairblaster.com)



JOIN THE TEAM

APHEX
LOVE THE LIGHT

BIOPLASTIC
High Performance Sports Optics

CUSTOMIZE
Fully Integrated Personalization

We are looking for sales reps and distributors in:

We are looking for distributors in:

- Vanada
- Sweden
- Finland
- Norway
- Denmark
- Croatia
- Slovenia

Contact@Aphexgear.com



radiator
A Wetsuit Million Years in the Making

Join the Radiator Team!

We Are Seeking Distributors and Sales Agents in Europe

About Us

When it comes to keeping warm in the water nothing beats Radiator.

Using unique 4-layer technology radiator is lightweight, flexible and toasty warm.

Radiator is a great opportunity to develop extra sales and satisfied customers.

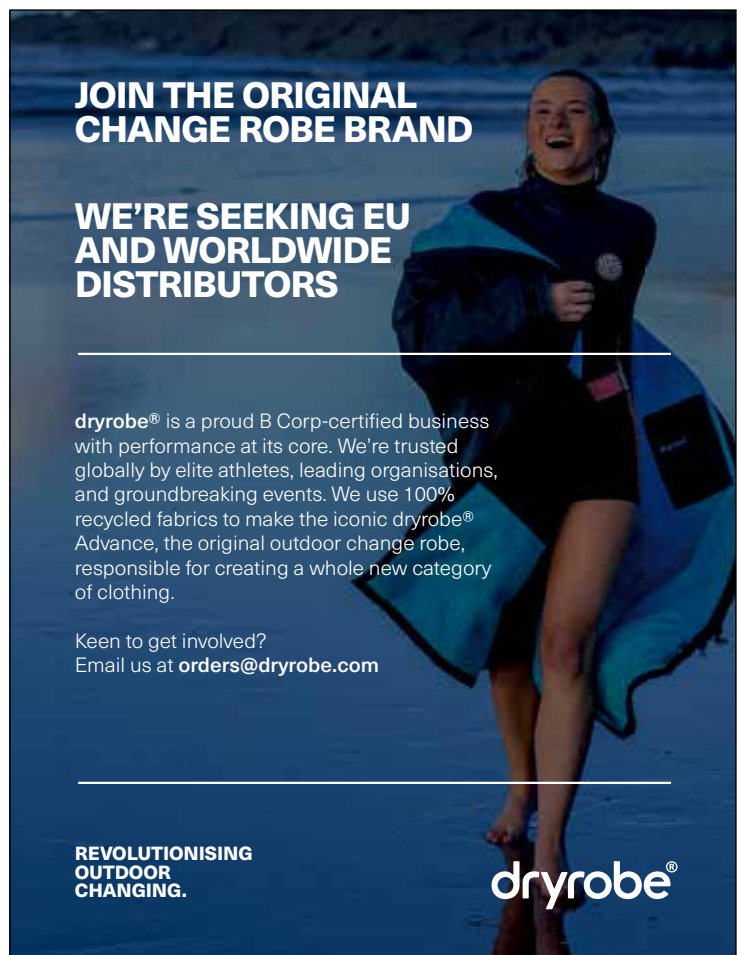
Whenever worn on it's own or under a conventional wetsuit, the Radiator Thermal Waterwear provides extra options for your customers in all types of water sports all year round.

Radiator can give your store the opportunity to develop new sales and add-on sales without taking away from your existing product range. It truly is in a class of it's own.

Radiator is proven in the market, and proven in the water -it works and it sells.

Interested?
visit radiator@net.com
or email bob.lushey@radiator.net

Thinner
Lighter
Warmer



JOIN THE ORIGINAL CHANGE ROBE BRAND

WE'RE SEEKING EU AND WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTORS

dryrobe® is a proud B Corp-certified business with performance at its core. We're trusted globally by elite athletes, leading organisations, and groundbreaking events. We use 100% recycled fabrics to make the iconic dryrobe® Advance, the original outdoor change robe, responsible for creating a whole new category of clothing.

Keen to get involved?
Email us at orders@dryrobe.com

REVOLUTIONISING OUTDOOR CHANGING.

dryrobe®



DISTRIBUTORS / AGENTS WANTED!



FOR WATER- & WINTERSPORT
 SWEDEN - SWITZERLAND
 NETHERLANDS / BENELUX - RUSSIA
 BALTICS - ITALY - FRANCE

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
 F2BOARDS.COM / BF@F2BOARDS.COM




FOAMLIFE

WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTORS WANTED

DUE TO OUR CONTINUED EXPANSION WE ARE LOOKING FOR DISTRIBUTORS WORLDWIDE.

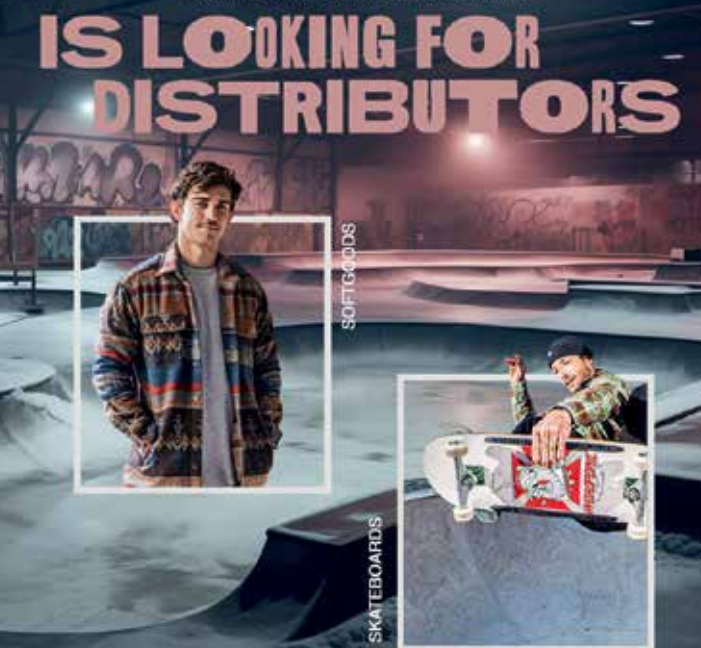
ENQUIRIES: INFO@THEFOAMLIFE.COM
WWW.THEFOAMLIFE.COM

LIVE LESS ORDINARY



HYDROPONIC
 THE SKATEBOARD BRAND FROM BARCELONA

IS LOOKING FOR DISTRIBUTORS



SOFTGOODS
 SKATEBOARDS

Already present in many countries around the world, we are seeking to expand our market. Your company could be our partner. Contact us at info@hyclothing.es and LET'S TALK!

hyclothing.es @hydroponic_official

WANTED

We are looking for **DISTRIBUTORS** in:

- Italy
- Austria
- Portugal
- Switzerland

JOIN THE TRIBE

#OurSkinOurProtection
info@islandtribe.nl
www.islandtribe.eu



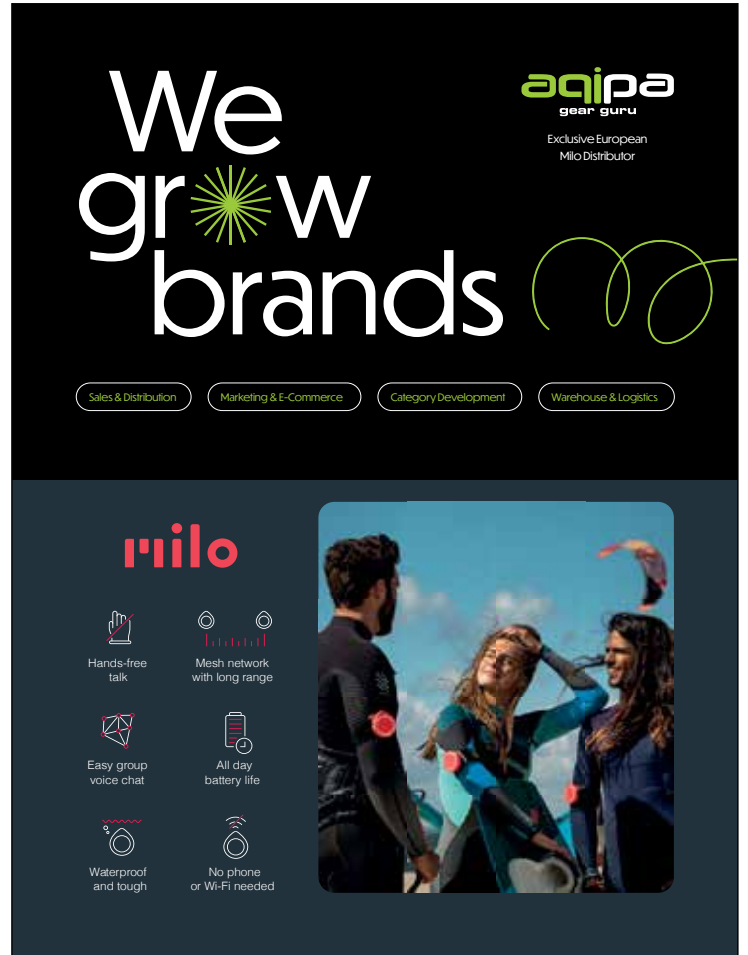




MAKŪ
WWW.MAKU-SURF.COM

REQUIRED
Distributors | Retailers
Ambassadors

SURFBOARDS - CLOTHING - ACCESSORIES
marco@maku-surf.com




aqipa
gear guru
Exclusive European
Milo Distributor

We grow brands

Sales & Distribution | Marketing & E-Commerce | Category Development | Warehouse & Logistics

milo

- Hands-free talk
- Mesh network with long range
- Easy group voice chat
- All day battery life
- Waterproof and tough
- No phone or Wi-Fi needed





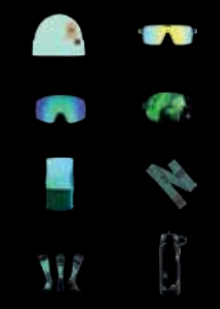
WANTED
DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS

MOWMOW IS EXTENDING ITS EUROPEAN DISTRIBUTION NETWORK. JOIN THE RIDE AND BECOME A DISTRIBUTOR OF MOWMOW IN YOUR COUNTRY.

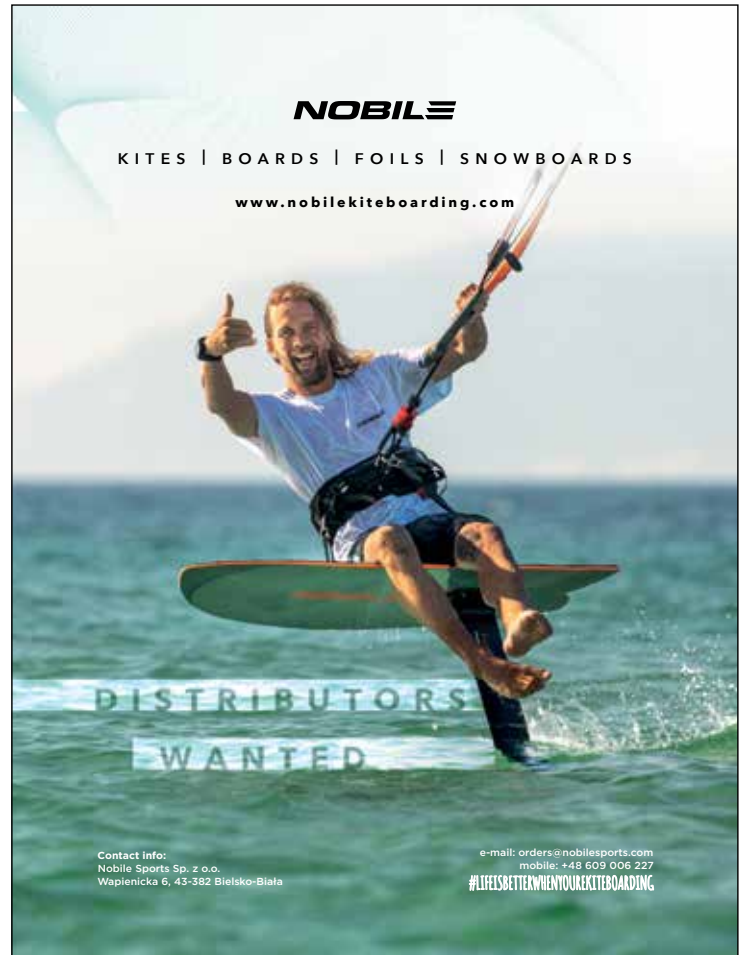
CONTACT MAURITS AT INFO@MOWMOW.EU

LOCATION: EU





ALL SEASON OUTDOOR ACCESSORIES



NOBILE
KITES | BOARDS | FOILS | SNOWBOARDS
www.nobilekiteboarding.com

DISTRIBUTORS WANTED

Contact info:
Nobile Sports Sp. z o.o.
Waplenicka 6, 43-382 Bielsko-Biala

e-mail: orders@nobilesports.com
mobile: +48 609 006 227
[#LIFEISBETTERWHENYOU'REKITEBOARDING](https://www.instagram.com/nobilesports)

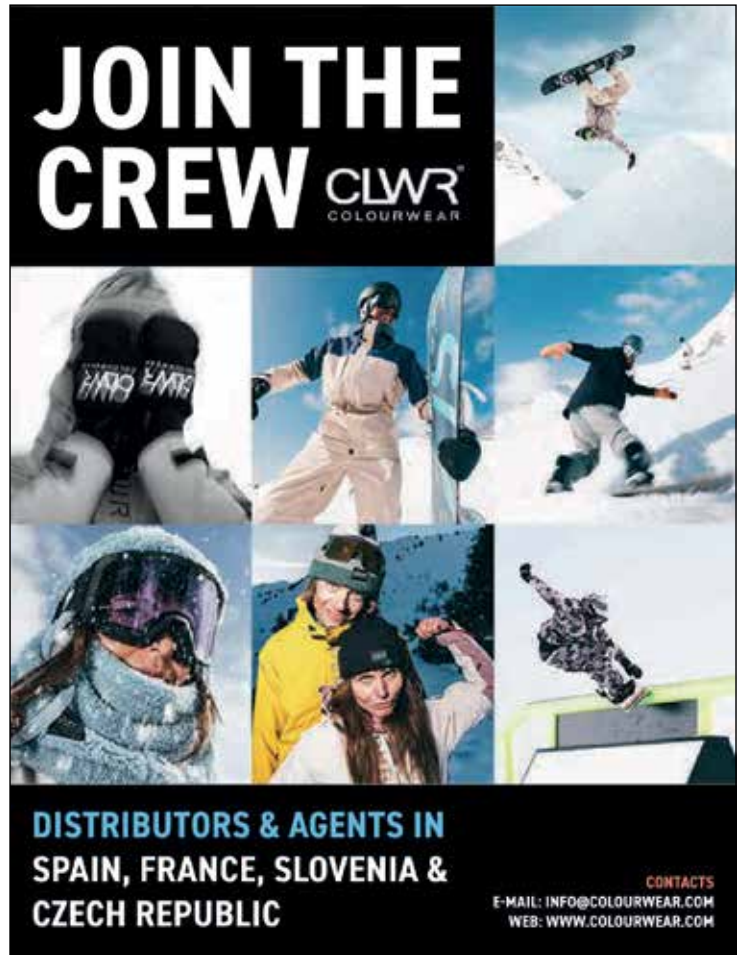


OTIS
MINERAL GLASS EYEWEAR

Sales Agents & Retail Partners wanted!

Join the OTIS family!
We're seeking sales agents and retailers across Europe.

otis@leisurecollective.com.au



JOIN THE CREW CLWR[®]
COLOURWEAR

DISTRIBUTORS & AGENTS IN SPAIN, FRANCE, SLOVENIA & CZECH REPUBLIC

CONTACTS
E-MAIL: INFO@COLOURWEAR.COM
WEB: WWW.COLOURWEAR.COM



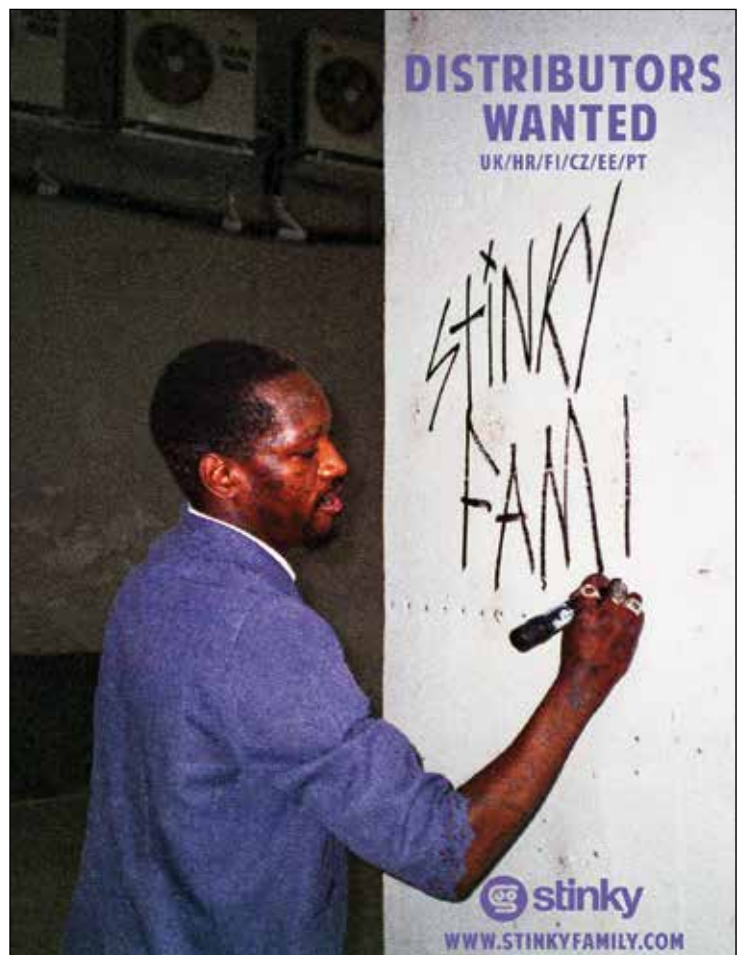
SRFACE

SURF SCHOOL SALES AGENT

As a Surf School Sales Agent, you will be responsible for our Surf School Program sales within your country. You will play a vital role in expanding our reach and promoting our student wetsuits and reseller program to potential customers.

Part-time
Commission based
FR (SW) / DE / UK / PT / NL

ENQUIRIES: JOBS@SRFACE.COM
SRFACE.COM



DISTRIBUTORS WANTED
UK/HR/FI/CZ/EE/PT

STINKY FAMILY

stinky
WWW.STINKYFAMILY.COM

EVENTS #120

surf/kite	skate/bike	snow	street/outdoor	SUP/wake
-----------	------------	------	----------------	----------

surf	WESTERN AUSTRALIA MARGARET RIVER PRO	Margaret River Australia 11 - 21 April	worldsurfleague.com
snow	LONGBOARD CLASSIC	Stuben am Arlberg, Austria 13 April	longboardclassic.com
textiles	FUNCTIONAL FABRIC FAIR	Portland, USA 17 - 18 April	performancedays.com
snow	SPRING BREAK	Kaunertal, Austria 27 Apr - 1 May	snowboardspringbreak.com
surf	SURFING FESTIVAL	Fehmarn, Germany 9 - 12 May	surffestival.de
snow	RIKSGRANSEN BANKED SLALOM	Riksgransen, Sweden 16 - 18 May	transition.se
surf	SHISEIDO TAHITI PRO	Tahiti 22 - 31 May	worldsurfleague.com
outdoor	OUTDOOR BY ISPO	MOC Munich, Germany 3 - 5 June	ispo.com/en/outdoor
surf	WAVES OF CHANGE FORUM	Biarritz, France 3 - 6 June	wavesofchange.earth/2023-forum
skate	CPH	Copenhagen, Denmark 6 - 9 June	cphopen.com
surf	SURF CITY EL SALVADOR PRO	Punta Roca El Salvador 6 - 15 June	worldsurfleague.com
street	PITTI IMMAGINE UOMO	Florence, Italy 11 - 14 June	uomo.pittimmagine
surf	FERROL LONGBOARD FESTIVAL	Ferrol, Spain 14 - 16 June	fesurf.es/competiciones/longboard
outdoor	BASE MILANO	Milan, Italy 16 - 17 June	thepilloutdoor.com/basecamp
outdoor	OUTDOOR RETAILER	Salt Lake City, USA 17 - 19 June	outdoorretailer.com
outdoor	OTS	Liverpool, UK 18 - 20 June	outdoortradeshows.com
surf	VIVO RIO PRO	Rio de Janeiro Brazil 22 - 30 June	worldsurfleague.com
skate	MYSTIC SK8 CUP	Prague, Czech Republic 28 - 30 June	mysticsk8cup.cz
outdoor	ISPO SHANGHAI	Shanghai, China 28 - 30 June	ispo.com/shanghai
surf	BALLITO PRO	Ballito, South Africa 1 - 8 July	worldsurfleague.com
bike	EUROBIKE 2024	Frankfurt, Germany 3 - 7 July	eurobike.com
skate	LONDON CALLING 2	London, UK 11 - 14 July	londoncallingskateboardinguk.com
textiles	FUNCTIONAL FABRIC FAIR	New York, USA 16 - 17 July	performancedays.com
kite	GKA BIG AIR	Grand Canary, Spain 26 - 30 July	gkakiteworldtour.com
surf	OLYMPIC GAMES SURFING	Teahupo'o, Tahiti 27 Jul - 5 Aug	olympics.com
skate	OLYMPIC GAMES SKATING	Paris, France 27 - 28 Jul / 6 - 7 Aug	olympics.com
surf	BOARDMASTERS LONGBOARD PRO	Fistral Beach, UK 7 - 11 Aug	worldsurfleague.com
kite	KITE SURF BIG AIR	Sylt in Westerland, Germany 20 - 25 Aug	gkakiteworldtour.com
surf	CORONA FIJI PRO	Cloudbreak, Fiji 20 - 29 Aug	worldsurfleague.com
kite	FREE STYLE WORLD CUP	Dunkerque, France 28 Aug - 1 Sept	gkakiteworldtour.com
surf	SURF EXPO	Orlando, USA 5 - 7 Sept	surfexpo.com
surf	WSL FINALS LOWER TRESTLES	San Clemente, California 6 - 14 Sept	worldsurfleague.com
outdoor	SPORT ACHAT	Grenoble, France 9 - 10 Sept	sportair.fr
outdoor	EOG OUTDOOR SUMMIT	Cambridge, UK 18 - 19 Sept	europeanoutdoorsummit.com
optics	SILMO	Paris, France 20 - 23 Sept	silmoparis.com/en
sup	PADDLE SPORTS SHOW	Strasbourg, France 24 - 26 Sept	thepaddlesportshow.com
surf	EUROSIMA SURF SUMMIT	Hossegor, France 26 - 27 Sept	eurosima.com
surf	SURF PARK SUMMIT	San Diego, USA 30 Sept - 2 Oct	surfparkcentral.com
textiles	PERFORMANCE DAYS	Munich, Germany 23 - 24 Oct	performancedays.com
outdoor	ISPO	Munich, Germany 3 - 5 Dec	ispo.com

OutDoor
by ISPO

June 03-05, 2024

Trade Fair Center
Messe München



**think
outdoor.**



Get your ticket.
ispo.com/outdoor



EXTREME HANGOUT
LOCAL

**INSPIRED BY OUR LOVE
OF ADVENTURE SPORTS,
THE NATURAL WORLD
AND OUR PASSION TO
PROTECT THE PLANET**

FIND OUT
MORE



GIVING CHANGEMAKERS **A VOICE.**

EXTREME HANGOUT LOCAL is a 1 - 2 day climate action event, anywhere in the world.

EXTREME HANGOUT BUSINESS

- **HOST AN EXTREME HANGOUT IN YOUR WORKPLACE**
- **Engage** your colleagues on the Sustainable Development Goals most important to you
- Engage the **workplace**, highlight local champions, and showcase the culture of your community!
- Draw in clients and suppliers to be part of your community and your **impact!**
- Be part of a much larger **global community**
- **Talk to us and help you brainstorm!**

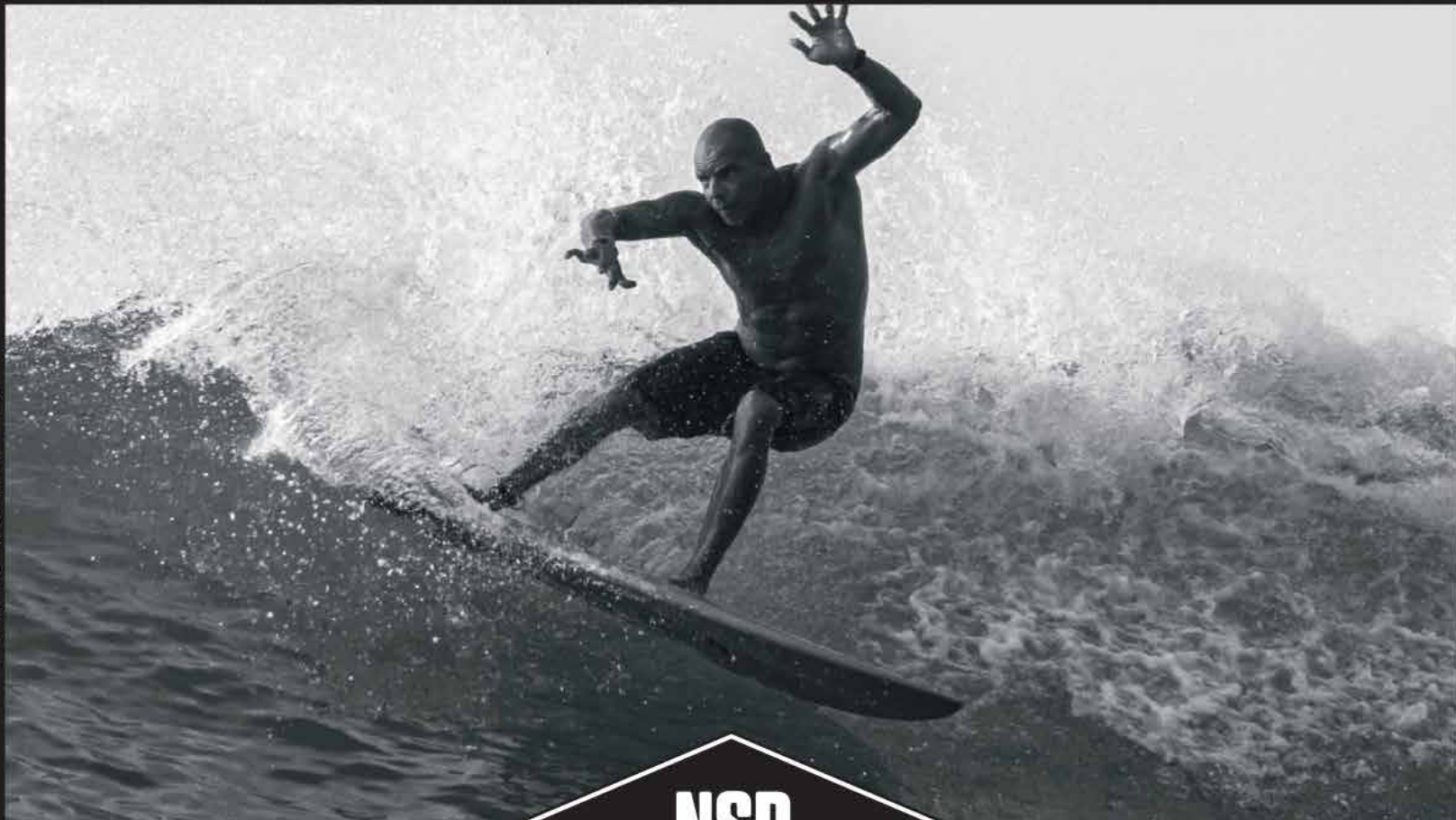
FIND
OUT
MORE



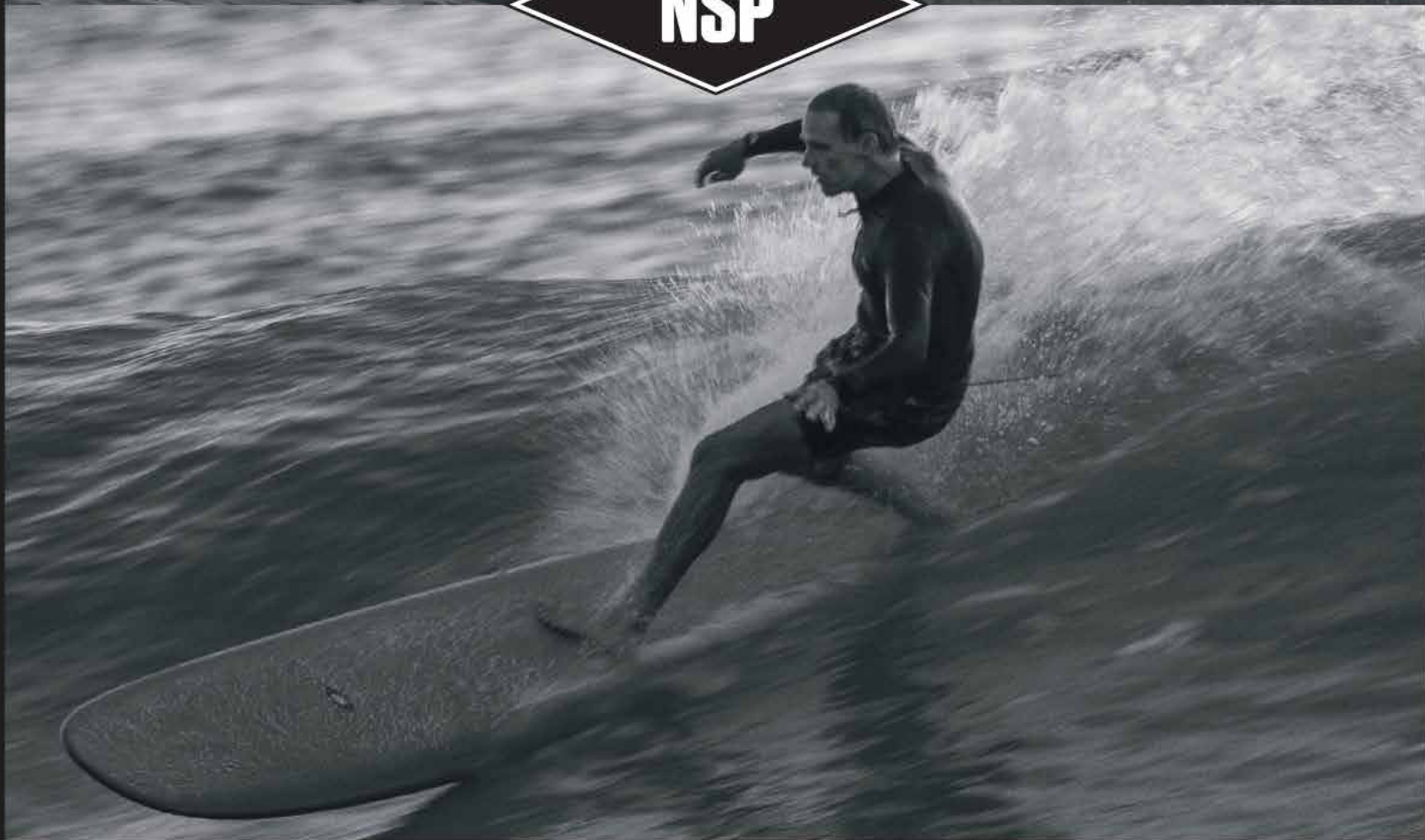
www.extremehangout.org/host-a-hangout



@extremehangout



NSP



NSP | NATURE SURFING PRODUCTS

npsurfboards.com