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NEW PRODUCTS
PG. 58



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JUNE 2025

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REDDING PREMIUM DIE SETS

In response to customer feedback and request, Redding Reloading Equipment is significantly expanding the offerings of our Premium Full Length Die Sets and Premium Deluxe Die Sets which will now be available for over 100 popular bottleneck and handgun cartridges.

The two-die Premium Die Set is offered with a Full Length Sizing Die with a Carbide Expander Button and a Bullet Seating Micrometer equipped Seating Die. Redding also offers a three-die Premium Deluxe Die Set which adds a Neck Sizing Die to the two-die set. Redding continues to provide the needed capability to produce high quality loadings for all requirements in preparation for a competition or trip to the field.

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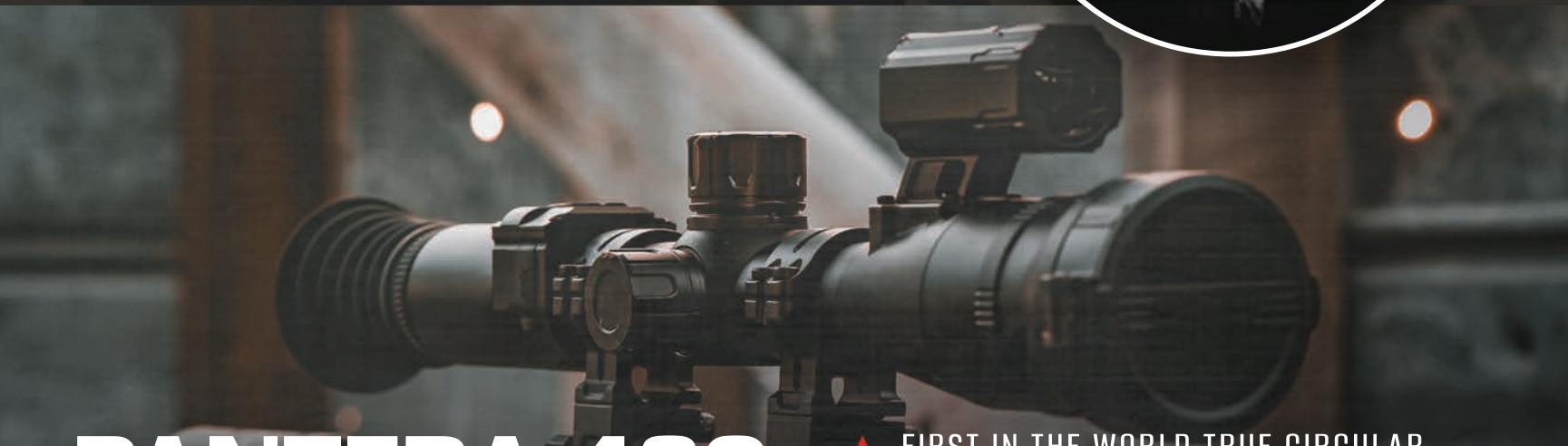
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Vacuum sealing isn't just for the kitchen any longer. It's gone mainstream as long-term protection for storing ammunition.

PROVIDING THE BEST PROTECTION

Long-term firearms storage requires more than a little oil and a locked safe.

By William Starnes

Keeping a firearm rust-free is a top priority for every one of your customers. It's easy for EDC guns. They handle them daily and can detect any signs of corrosion before it causes major damage. Rust doesn't have a chance.

It's different, however, for guns that are in storage. They sit in a gun safe without being seen. If they haven't been protected, moisture and oxygen can get to them, and it's only a matter of time before they start to rust. That's why annual inspection and cleaning is a must. I rotate through my stored guns on a regular basis, staggering the dates. My handguns are inspected and protected in October, rifles in February, and shotguns in June. When I am working with handguns, I'll do a quick inspection and wipe-down of my rifles and shotguns, ensuring that none of them are unseen for more than four months at a time.

That's adequate for my storage needs. But what if your customer needs to store a gun for an extended period that spans years rather than weeks or months? Can you guide them through the necessary steps and recommend the right products? Let's talk about long-term storage.

Anyone who has ever reclaimed a WWII military surplus rifle from storage has likely encountered Cosmoline – the military's then-preferred method of protecting tools, weapons, and even stored artillery. Cosmoline is a mixture of wax and a petroleum-based lubricant with the consistency of grease. It is easily applied and just as easily wiped clean when first used, and it effectively seals the equipment in a moisture-repellant barrier, preserving it in new condition. The problem, as many soldiers and collectors have discovered, is the volatile petroleum compounds evaporate

"My handguns are inspected and protected in October, rifles in February, and shotguns in June."

Nocpix

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over time, leaving behind a hardened, waxy coating that takes considerable effort to remove.

Fortunately, new methods of storage have emerged, providing the same or better protection without all the mess and frustration.

The Enemy

Whether short or long-term storage, the enemy is the same – rust. Oxygen molecules penetrate unprotected iron alloys, such as steel, and cause oxidation. Once started, the process continues for as long as oxygen is available. To make matters worse, sometimes moisture also exposes metals to other chemicals which accelerates the process by forming acids and other harmful compounds. Protecting guns from corrosion requires that we all take active measures to protect against contaminants. It requires familiarity with the methods as well as the dos and don'ts of storage.

Although the enemy hasn't changed, technology has. Firearms still need to be cleaned, lubricated, and protected with quality products. I've had great success with Birchwood Casey +P Stainless Steel Lube and their RIG Universal Gun Grease. Another is Break Free Collectors Long-Term Protectant. They have helped protect millions of firearms and should occupy space among your gun care offerings.



↑ VCI paper sheets are available in different sizes, as are the VCI storage bags. The bags are often blue or yellow depending on the supplier.

A Good Solution

Some products gradually improve over time. Others innovate. A great example of the latter is another of my favorites, VCI sheets and storage bags. VCI is the abbreviation for "Volatile Corrosion Inhibitor." They are chemical compounds that can



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↑ Birchwood Casey's RIG +P Stainless Steel Lube is a great protectant. So are their other RIG products.

be impregnated in paper sheets and storage bags designed for storing metal items over extended periods. When a metal item is wrapped in VCI paper or placed in a VCI bag and sealed, the volatile compounds evaporate and fill the enclosed space. The gas molecules float around and eventually condense on metal parts, providing a chemical layer that not only provides a protective barrier but also displaces any moisture that happens to be present. VCIs are not exclusive to guns. In fact, their first use was for protecting freshly machined metal surfaces for industry. If you've ever purchased an automotive bearing, U-Joint, or even brake rotors, then you've encountered VCI-coated paper as part of the packaging. It looks like thick brown paper that can be bought in craft or hardware stores. VCI sheets are wrapped around parts or simply thrown into the packaging with them. This ease of use is one of VCIs major benefits. Another is that the gasses can penetrate through the smallest of openings and provide as much protection for concealed or inaccessible places as they do the external surfaces. The sheets are perfect for wrapping guns before placing them into their case for storage.

As useful as the VCI sheets are, gun owners will likely be more excited over VCI plastic bags. These are like food storage bags but come in





LEARN MORE

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

various sizes small enough to fit handguns or long enough to hold rifles. Some of them seal like Ziploc bags. Others have an open end and can be folded then taped, stapled, or heat sealed. The VCI compounds evaporate, fill the enclosed space, and protect the metals within. VCI products are now the military's preferred method of protecting tools, guns and other metal components partly because they are so simple to use. The expected life of VCI products varies by manufacturer but they can last as long as 10 years.

One of the most significant advantages of VCI products isn't placing items in storage but rather restoring them to service afterward. The VCI particles remain volatile and simply evaporate from the metal surfaces and dissipate when exposed to the atmosphere. Tools can be instantly used, and firearms can be loaded and fired immediately after they are pulled from storage.

Placing guns in long-term storage doesn't have to be a hassle and doesn't take much more effort than should ordinarily apply to storing them. They should be cleaned and inspected as usual, then have a protective coating of quality oil applied to all metal surfaces. If a gun has wooden handles or stocks, it's recommended to apply a wax to keep it from drying out. Afterward, the gun can be wrapped in VCI paper and returned to its storage container or it can be placed in a VCI bag and sealed. That's how the military handles them, so we can be confident the process has been thoroughly tested and provides the best protection available.

VCI products are important components for long-term storage, though are likely not in as high demand as the other products mentioned. As such, it's not recommended that stores keep them on-hand. A wise move would be to secure a source and make them available as special order items for those who want them. If you do see a need, they are not very expensive. Just remember that they must be stored in airtight packaging to prevent the VCI from evaporating. They should also be stored in a dark location. SSR

SOMETIMES STORAGE SUCKS

If oxygen is the cause of the problem, it makes sense to get rid of it. That's what a lot of gun owners have started doing. They've adapted a technique popularly used in food preservation – vacuum sealing.

A quick internet search reveals videos of shooters sealing guns, parts, and ammunition in vacuum-formed plastic bags. Thanks to these out-of-the-box thinkers, the problems of long-term ammo storage appear to have been solved. There are, however, a few things to remember. It's important to properly label the bags. It can be done with a sharpie, or you can cut off the box top and seal it with the ammo. Ammo should still be stored in a dark, cool, and dry place until it's needed. And of course, all firearms and ammo should be kept out of the hands of unauthorized people.



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NOT ANOTHER CLONE

Ruger's RXM opens more possibilities than the average concealed carry pistol.

By Brian McCombie

When Ruger introduced its RXM 9mm pistol near the end of 2024, a number of social media critics quickly declared the handgun no more than a Glock clone. A Glock Gen 3 clone, to be exact. And since it was no more than a copycat gun, said the critics, the RXM was no good.

Well, a more fair-minded assessment of the pistol – compared to those extremely negative criticisms, based on essentially photographs — would involve actually looking at the pistol itself. As the famous firearms writer Bill Shakespeare once wrote, "The gun is the thing/ Wherein I'll catch the conscience of these scoffer kings."

Or something like that.

Anyway, the point is that while it is certainly a Glock-influenced firearm, the RXM is a pistol in its own right, and deserves to be judged as such.

And on that basis, and with approximately 250 rounds through my test pistol, I found the Ruger RXM a first-rate choice for concealed carry and home defense consumers. An accurate and fairly compact platform, the RXM fit my hand nicely, was optics ready, and offered 15+1 ammunition capability.

Plus, the pistol carries a suggested retail of just $499.

The Magpul Connection

First, though, the RXM is not a Ruger-only creation. Actually, Ruger collaborated closely with Magpul in the design and final Word of the RXM. Actually, the pistol's name RXM stands for Ruger x Magpul. The Magpul connection also provides FFLs with additional sales possibilities beyond the handgun itself.

Magpul's contributions include the RXM's interchangeable Magpul Enhanced Handgun Grip. As part of their ongoing collaboration, Ruger and Magpul offer a variety of grip frames so that your clientele can customize their pistols to meet shifting tastes and needs.



↑ The Ruger RXM is Glock-influenced but definitely stands on its own.

Features

The core of the RXM is a removable, serialized, and stainless steel Fire Control Insert set inside an interchangeable Magpul EHG finished in Stealth Gray. The FCI easily removes from the grip for insertion into different EHGs.

The Magpul EHG features a low-profile, flared magazine that allows quick insertion and removal of magazines. The trigger guard sported a generous undercut, and this feature plus the beaver tail gave me a higher grip for solid control of the pistol.

→ In testing, the RXM proved to be accurate, comfortable in hand and a fine choice for self defense.

The scalloped top of the magazine release made for an easy push to release. The universal-pattern accessory rail beneath the barrel allowed for quick attachment of a light or laser.

Striker-fired, the RXM's flat-faced trigger made for a smooth, consistent trigger pull and quick reset. The trigger on my test pistol had approximately .30 inches of uptake before encountering the wall, then broke at a relatively clean 2 pounds, 10 ounces of pull weight.

With its 4-inch, steel alloy barrel, the RXM measures out at just a shade over 7 inches and weighs in at 23 ounces unloaded.

Safety features include an integrated trigger safety, internal striker blocker and an inspection port that allows for visual confirmation of a loaded or empty chamber.

The RXM sells with two Magpul PMAG 15 GL9 15-round magazines or two Magpul PMAG 10 GL9 10-round magazines, depending on your location and possible ammunition restrictions.

An Optic

The RXM's slide features a black FNC nitride finish and allows for direct optic mounting of RMR, Delta Point Pro (DPP), and RMSc pattern optics.

I mounted a Meprolight MPO PRO-F closed-emitter sight onto my test pistol. At nearly an inch wide, the optic's rear lens provided a substantial sight picture. The unit features 10 daylight brightness settings, and two night vision settings. The optic's auto-brightness control automatically adjusts to lighting conditions, too.

I really liked the PRO-F's user-selectable reticle system, which let me choose from a 3-MOA dot, a 33-MOA bullseye surrounding the dot and a 33 MOA ring by itself. The optic runs on a single CR1632 battery loaded via a slot on the right side of the red-dot.

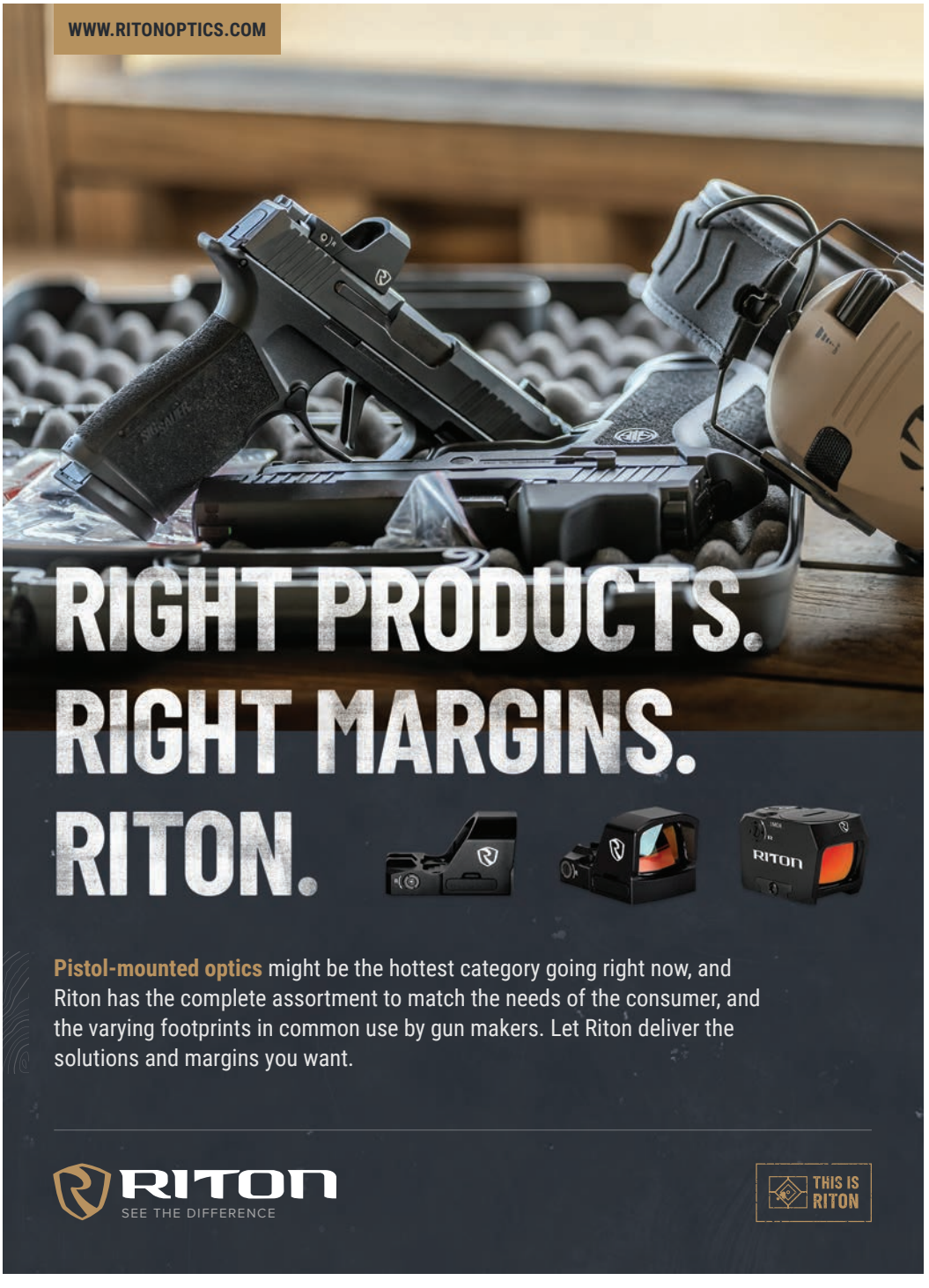
To mount the Meprolight, I simply removed the optic plate from the slide, placed the RMR adapter plate onto



↑ For accuracy testing, McCombie mounted a Meprolight PRO-F red-dot on the pistol.



"I carried the RXM for several days and found the pistol comfortable to wear and quick to deploy."



the slide cut, added two dowel pins (Ruger provided) at the front of the plate, and tightened down the optic.

The PRO-F was ready to go and zeroed quickly at my outdoor range.

Accuracy Test

I ran the RXM at 10 yards from a rest and 5 to 7 yards offhand. My 9mm ammunition was Nosler Assured Stopping Power, loaded with a 147-grain jacketed hollow point, Sierra THD loaded with 124-grain JHP, and Winchester USA Ready 115-grain flat-nosed full metal jacket.

For five-shot groups at all three of the above distances, the three ammo brands and the RXM averaged groups of between 1.2 and 1.5 inches.

Best groups included five shots of the Nosler ASP at 5 yards coming in at .80-inches, and 10 shots at 7 yards fired fairly quickly at 2.3 inches. Sierra THD made groups of 1.2 and 1.3 inches at 7 yards, while the Winchester did an impressive .90-inch group from my 10-yard rest shooting and two 1.0-inch groups at 7 yards.

The RXM provided good control throughout my shooting, thanks in part to the tactile texturing on the grip surfaces, including along the front and back straps.



↑ The accessory rail offers easy attachment of a laser or light.

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↑ Very tactical texturing on the Magpul Enhanced Handgun Grip provided a really solid hold.

CCW

I carried the RXM for several days and found the pistol comfortable to wear, and quick to deploy.

A good number of holster manufacturers offer RXM options, including Falco Holsters. For my carry, I used Falco's A911 Talon Guard IWB for Glock 19 Gen 4, a leather and Kydex hybrid. It held the pistol well, with room for the optic, and positioned the butt just right for a fast and smooth draw.

Selling RXM

Since they can't tell this by simply looking at the pistol, sales staff need to point out to customers that the RXM's stainless steel Fire Control Insert will enable an RXM owner to switch out frames. Legally speaking, since the serial number is on the FCI, the FCI can be removed from one frame and put into a different frame.

At which point, the smart salesperson will point out the Magpul frames also available.

Also note that the slide comes with a direct-mount optic cut that can accommodate optics with Delta Point Pro, RMSc and RMR footprints. The open sights co-witness to an optic, too.

Make sure customers actually hold the pistol, too. The grip angle is such that most shooters will find it very comfortable.



Nosler ASP 9mm ammo pegged this .80-inch group at 5 yards offhand.



↑ The Falco Holsters A911 Talon Guard IWB was a comfortable carry rig.

MAGPUL AND EXTRA SALES

Want to generate extra sales among your RXM customers? Most major components of this pistol are designed to operate in Gen 3-type Glock pistols and are therefore compatible with many off-the-shelf holsters and accessories.

Magpul, as noted, collaborated with the RXM. The company not only makes the pistol's Magpul Enhanced Handgun Grip but offers other grips, too. Currently, Magpul makes EHGs in 12-round, 15-round and 17-round configurations. They are available in Black, FDE, OD green and Stealth Gray.

The RXM sells with two Magpul magazines. Not a bad idea to have more Magpul magazines on hand, too. Plus, the pistol's magwell is a double-stack 9mm that's Glock compatible. Magpul offers a number of other magazines that will fit the RXM, all the way up to a 50-round drum mag.



↑ Magpul EHGs in various sizes and colors provide extra sales potential with the RXM.

And as sales staff go over all the features offered, they should definitely mention the pistol's sub-$500 cost.

In Store

Ruger Sales regularly offer marketing support to retailers holding events and promotions. Those retailers interested should contact their Ruger Sales rep or Ruger customer service.

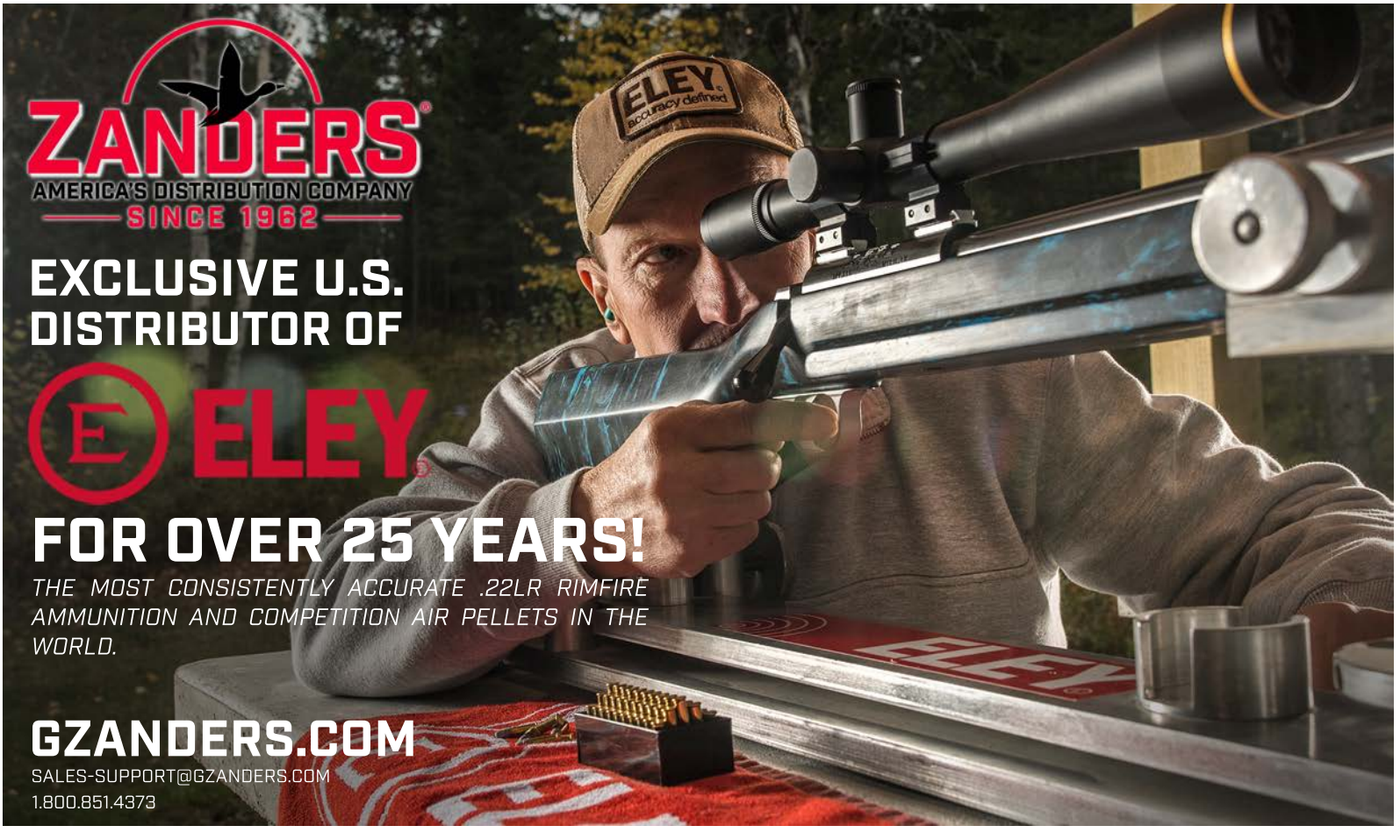
In-store or zoom training for sales staff may also be arranged, and Ruger also provides a large volume of training, sales and technical information at *www.youtube.com/@RugerFirearms*.

The company currently utilizes a two-step distribution method and sells only to distribution. Retailers interested in purchasing Ruger and Marlin products should order through their distributor partners. SSR

SPECS: RUGER RXM

Model Number: 19400
Caliber: 9mm Luger
Capacity: 15+1
Action: Semi-Auto, Striker Fired
Grip Frame: Magpul Enhanced Handgun Grip, Stealth Gray
Barrel: Alloy Steel, Black FNC Nitride Finish, 4 inches
Slide: Through-Hardened Alloy Steel, Black FNC Nitride Finish
Optic Ready: Yes
Front Sight: Tritium, Co-Witness Height
Rear Sight: Steel Blade, Drift Adjustable
Manual Safety: No
Safety: Bladed Trigger
Magazines Included: 2 PMAG 15 GL9
Length: 7.15 inches
Slide Width: 1 inch
Height: 5.31 inches
Weight: 23.2 ounces
MSRP: $499.00

For more information please visit:
www.ruger.com



SCOPING OUT A BIGGER MARKET

Burris is making its mark in the archery world with rangefinding crossbow scopes and bow sights.

By Alan Clemons

Like many innovators, Don Burris was working at a company and believed he could make a better product. Don left his job and in 1971 founded The Burris Company, which for 4 years made scope rings, bases and open sights for rifles.

It wasn't long before Don put his design engineering skills to use making riflescopes, which he had done for 12 years with Redfield, a well-known legacy brand with several popular products. But now it was time for Don to make his own mark. He did with the first Burris scope, the Fullfield, which entered the market in 1975. Fifty years later, it's still in production with the Fullfield IV and Fullfield E1.

Don Burris died in 1987, but his innovative spark and determination lives on. Today, Burris optics are well known in the firearms market, but the company is also producing optics for bowhunters. The Oracle and Oracle X sights for bows and crossbows made waves when introduced, leaning on the popular Burris Eliminator riflescope. More innovation is on the way, too.

We recently caught up with Jordan Egli, director of marketing for Burris Optics, to talk about the company and its array of products.

SSR: Burris was founded in 1971 when design engineer Don Burris left Redfield optics company to start his own. It's been a success ever since, and now includes optics for bowhunters. Can you give us a little overview of how Burris got into the archery market?

Egli: Burris has been reaching archers through its binocular and spotting scope lines for a while. It wasn't until we built the Oracle bowsight that we fully jumped into the category, though. The Burris Eliminator riflescope had been a wild success for years. The Eliminator uses a built-in rangefinder to provide, with a simple push of a button, an accurate aiming dot in the scope. With a team full of passionate bowhunters, it was only a matter of time before we had the wild idea to use that technology in a bowsight. This is how the Oracle was born. The Oracle X crossbow sight quickly followed.

SSR: Aside from the obvious differences between archery and firearms, what are some challenges Burris has overcome to be successful in both markets?

Egli: We focus primarily on our technology in the archery space. We don't have standard fiber-optic bowsights, so our footprint is very small. Our products aren't cheap, either, and require the customer to be educated on the advantages before committing to a purchase. Once they understand how the sights work, they are hooked for life. Technology also can be scary. But when you understand



Burris has been reaching archers with its binocular and spotting scope lines for a while, but the Oracle X crossbow sight will be of particular interest to shooting sports retailers.





↑ Burris is in the process of bringing much of its manufacturing and assembly back to the United States.

how simple these sights are, and that they have built-in redundancies, the hesitation goes away.

SSR: How have the Oracle and Oracle X been received by the industry, meaning retailers and distributors?

Egli: The Oracle X is one of our top-selling products and has been considered one of our biggest success stories. The Oracle has also been successful, but state legislation has certainly limited its success. We aren't sure why states want to make ethical, confident shooting illegal?

SSR: How have the Oracle and Oracle X been received by hunters? Technology changes so quickly, and now bowhunters have more possibilities to consider.

Egli: As mentioned above, once they understand how the sights work, they are hooked for life. We have customers who have bought multiples of each sight, and say they will never use anything else.

SSR: Have you seen any trends with hunters in regard to use of the Oracle and Oracle X? More use with vertical bows, or more with crossbows? Are sales, i.e. use, higher in one region more than others?

Egli: The Oracle X has followed the crossbow boom. It's hard to keep up with the demand! A lot of rifle guys who understand the Eliminator quickly adopted the Oracle X when they got into archery. The Oracle has been slightly slower in its success, although I can say we have sold more this year than ever before. (Author note: The original Oracle has now been replaced by the Oracle 2.)

SSR: Burris has a long history of innovation. The first American-made riflescopes with multi-coated lenses for optimal light transmission were offered in 1980. LaserScope was introduced in 2006, and the Eliminator in 2010 with its laser rangefinder and auto BDC capabilities. Without giving away any secrets, what might we see in the future from Burris with its bow and crossbow scopes? Smaller size? More capabilities?

Egli: I'll just say we are here to stay, and we have a track record in being innovative.

SSR: Some hunters will say the Oracle 2 and Oracle X are too big or bulky. How do you respond to that, and how can dealers respond to help customers?

Egli: Put one on a bow and try it out. They truly aren't as big as you think, and any tradeoff in weight is well worth it. The extra couple of ounces versus the distraction of pulling out a rangefinder or the risk of making a bad shot, absolutely is worth it.

SSR: Do a lot of your employees hunt and provide feedback? Burris has a strong ambassador program, as well, so is the input from the field varied and continuous?

Egli: Almost all of us hunt, and the ones who don't currently would like to, or have family members who do. Our product ideation team is the entire company. We have a lot of fun in those meetings! If you are curious about how well these sights work, check out Deer Meat for Dinner, Major League Bow Hunter, Halo Hunting, Gerald Swindle, Bow Hunter Planet, Growing Deer TV, and on and on. My only

↑ The Oracle X is a top-selling product for Burris and is considered one of its biggest success stories.

"We have customers who have bought multiples of each sight, and say they will never use anything else."

complaint is they keep asking for more of them for friends and family!

SSR: How is Burris positioned for the coming years, considering the public concern about the economy, inflation and various other factors?

Egli: I think our entire nation is at risk from the issues you mentioned. Burris is in the process of bringing much of its manufacturing and assembly back to the United States. We have a fully operational plant and build a lot of things in house, which is rare for an optics company nowadays.





↑ The Oracle X makes it easy to range targets without having to switch to a separate rangefinder.

SSR: I'm a shooting sports retailer, so give me the elevator pitch about why I should have Burris Oracle 2 and Oracle X rangefinding bowsight and crossbow scope in my store.

Egli: If you already carry the Oracle 2 or Oracle X, thank you! These products are an absolute game-changer. No longer guess the distance to the target or scare off your game by pulling out a rangefinder. No longer let the bow down to re-range if the animal moves off a bit. Simply push the rangefinder button and get your distance and an aiming point … ensuring a confident shot and an ethical kill. On the Oracle 2, there is a backup 20-yard pin and no glass to fog or get condensation on. Visit our website, burrisoptics.com, for all the details.

SSR: Thanks again for taking time to talk with us. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Egli: Thank you for your business! SSR

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BRINGING NEWCOMERS ABOARD

New mentorship coalition aims to increase opportunities in hunting and shooting sports.

BUSINESS INSIDER

NSSF® The Firearm Industry Trade Association

By Justin Morrissey

Let's face it, trying a new activity can be intimidating. Even a fun new board game can seem daunting, having to learn the ins and outs of the rules of play. Why even take the time when you're already familiar with other games you can play?

When looking at target shooting and hunting, confidence levels of potential participants vary greatly. Finding opportunities may be easier for some based on who they know, past experiences and the access they have to a sufficient range or hunting property. Participation takes dedication from the participant, but only gets easier for everyone when there is also commitment from some form of community or support system.

With 26.2 million people purchasing their first firearm since 2020, there is a tremendous opportunity to help those new gun owners improve their familiarity and proficiency with firearms. Recreational shooting activities and hunting are fun, effective ways for gun owners to train and meet new friends. So, how can we, as a community, help?

An Initiative for Leaders

Across the United States, firearm safety and hunter education instructors, shooting sports coaches, club leaders, hunting guides, neighbors, friends and family members welcome new target shooters and hunters into new and exciting activities that support safety, responsibility, proficiency and the sense of community. This collective community represents the best of the best in shooting sports and hunting. To help represent this group and recruit more strong leaders and volunteers, NSSF created the +ONE mentorship initiative.

The +ONE mentorship initiative works to facilitate community engagement in the shooting sports and hunting by improving discoverability, access and the user experience during entry. Created in 2017 with the mission of increasing participation through peer-to-peer mentorship, +ONE, led by NSSF, has been evolving to meet the needs for not only mentors, but the organizations and communities that create essential access points at the local level.

Besides spreading awareness around the opportunities for individuals to mentor from day to day, NSSF has promoted a pledge that has served as an indicator of the opportunities and intentions that exist among target shooters and hunters to drive newcomers into the respective activities. NSSF has also tested and observed models for mentorship events focusing on both industry and consumer participants.

We're going to look at the two pillars that support mentorship through +ONE. The first is peer-to-peer mentorship efforts by individuals and the second is community programs led by organizations.

Individual Mentor Data

Since 2018, +ONE pledge responses by individuals interested in mentorship racked up the total number of potential mentees to more than 2.5 million. It is safe to assume that this number signifies only a portion of

the opportunity that exists for outdoorsmen and women to help others in the communities get involved. That is especially true since the rise in gun ownership has exploded since the COVID-19 pandemic. There's a clear opportunity to increase interest and participation in shooting sports and hunting.

The pledge data shows that hunting mentors typically know at least three people on average that they could take hunting. Individuals who said they could mentor others in firearm fundamentals and target shooting indicated they knew more than six people on average that they could take to the range.

Survey responses for why individuals were interested in joining the +ONE community generated the following keyword results, illustrated in a word cloud.

Replicable Programs as Drivers

After gathering data from the +ONE pledge over several years to better understand the interest in peer-to-peer mentorship and what drives it, NSSF recognized the need for more meaningful outcomes and actionable results. Pledges help raise awareness, identify mentor prospects and increase participation, but the approach has limitations in understanding mentor needs better. Bridging the gap between interest and action is the key.

The only way to measure action is by identifying what constitutes action. In order of significance, action can be 1) in-the-field experiences, 2) classroom instruction and 3) storytelling. With those outcomes in mind, the primary focus for +ONE has shifted to connect volunteer mentors with programs that foster community and learning.

Initiated through +ONE, a mentorship coalition made up of organizations with replicable mentorship-related programs, started in 2022. Together, this coalition creates a nationwide, localized network of shooting sports and hunting communities.

Current +ONE partner organizations include NSSF, Pass It On – Outdoor Mentors, First Hunt Foundation, National 4-H Shooting Sports, Shoot Like a Girl, the International Hunter Education Association, Outdoors Tomorrow Foundation, National Deer Association, Outdoor Heritage Education Center, Ruffed Grouse Society, Ducks Unlimited and the North American Gamebird Association. NSSF is actively seeking new partner organizations that specialize in areas within shooting sports and hunting and that meet the qualifications of becoming a +ONE partner by operating a replicable mentorship-related program.

Partner Impacts

At the end of 2024, NSSF collected data from its +ONE partners to better understand the impacts programs have on driving participation in shooting sports and hunting. This data will be used to set mentor recruitment benchmarks for 2025 across all partnering organizations with the understanding that participation growth depends on volunteer mentors, coaches and instructors.

Between all existing +ONE programs, there are nearly 62,005 mentors supporting approximately 557,467 students through hands-on shooting sports, hunting and related activities. This means that, on average, each mentor affiliated with official +ONE programs supports nine students or mentees. Note how this ratio varies from NSSF's +ONE pledge data, which comes from individual survey data not directly affiliated with programs.

Another key outcome from the data is that some official +ONE partner programs offer online and classroom education that amounted to nearly 950,000 students (data average aggregated from partner data in 2023 and 2024). These offerings are significant because they provide efficient and thorough curriculums that help increase confidence, safety and awareness around opportunities, among other things.

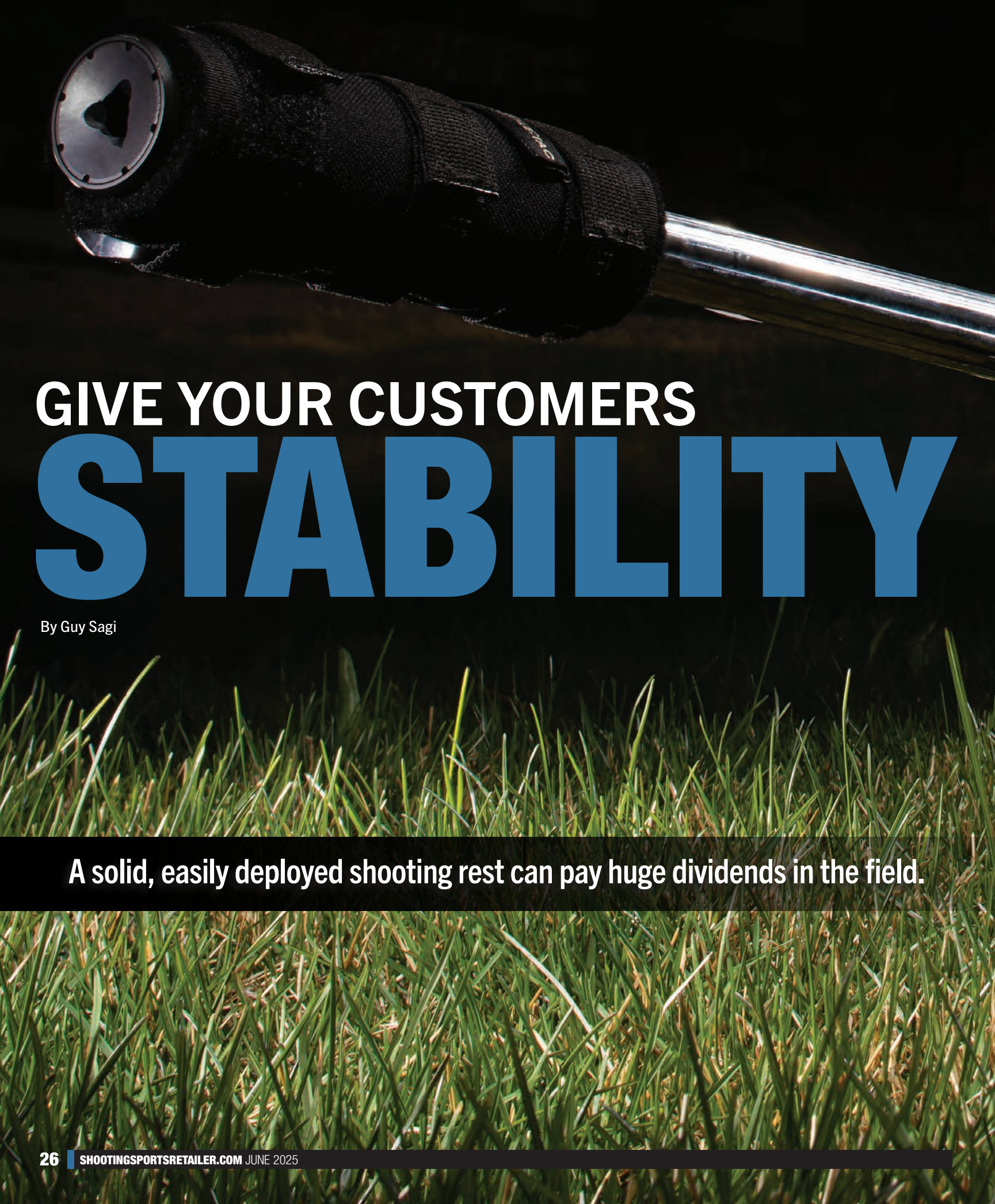
Programs use data to improve, expand and deliver opportunities. They consider all resources and work on a larger scale. They create mentorship best practices and standards that accelerate progress for both mentors and the coalition.

Your Responsibility

If just one out of three of America's recreational shooters helps one new person into shooting sports or hunting, we'll secure a strong future for generations to come. That is the +ONE motto. That future doesn't depend solely on any one person or singular organization, it depends on us working together and chipping in when there is a chance.

In the U.S., there are more than 63.5 million target shooters (as of 2022, per NSSF's Shooting Sports Participation Report) and more than 14.4 million hunters (as of 2022, per the USFWS 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation). If you consider yourself among this crowd, we invite you to join the +ONE Movement as a mentor and be inspired by the growing community of leaders who are paving a positive path for future generations. SSR





GIVE YOUR CUSTOMERS STABILITY

By Guy Sagi

A solid, easily deployed shooting rest can pay huge dividends in the field.


LEUPOLD

It's a familiar situation. You're on the move, spot your prey at long distance and there's no solid rifle rest nearby.

Take the gamble of making an undetected move to that lonely sapling, and it still might wilt under the rifle's weight. Add the fact that every second it takes to execute that belly crawl increases the odds the animal will be gone, and the advantages of a quickly deployed bipod become obvious.

Today's versions are lightweight, sturdy and combat tough. The experts agree there are fewer excuses than ever for not having one on your hunting rifle.

Skip the Dance

"If you get the chance to have a shot of a lifetime, you can't depend on a branch or tree that you can brace on," says a spokesperson from Harris Engineering, a company that's specialized in bipods for more than 60 years. "But if you have a bipod, you've got a solid rest."

"With the amount that hunters spend on clothing, firearms, ammo, footwear and a litany of other gear, the one product that improves their chances the most significantly is a steady shooting platform," says Jarrod Grove, senior marketing manager at American Outdoor Brands, the manufacturer of Caldwell bipods.

Swagger's Zach Clark agrees that hunters need a bipod, "Because you don't want to miss an animal of a lifetime because you were too nervous or out of breath. If this happens you will definitely regret not spending $150 on a tool designed for just about all situations."

Rob Gearing, managing director at Spartan Precision Equipment, concurs. "People spend shitloads of time planning their hunt," he says.



↑ The Magpul Bipod for M-LOK is lightweight and Mil-Spec with a low-profile design that conceals its internal mechanisms and hardware.



↑ Few things can improve a hunter's chances of success more than a solid shooting rest.

"An unstable shot is exactly that, and it matters not how good you are — you're going to be much better on a stable platform."

Aside from the widely accepted improvements in success and precision, there's also a practical advantage. Using a bipod during those adrenaline-filled minutes waiting for a textbook ethical shot reduces arm fatigue. Sight-picture-blurring reticle dance is minimized as well. It helps present a clear sight picture, an ideal supplement to your optic's performance.

Critical Features

Lightweight, durable, easy to operate, quiet, lifetime warranty and reasonably priced, are the first things to consider when first selecting a bipod, according to Harris Engineering. "Buy it from a company that has good customer service to get parts back to you quickly just in time for a hunt."



↑ The DeathGrip's patented clamp quickly secures any weapon for a solid hold.

"People can become obsessed about expensive rifles and optics yet completely forget the soft tissue holding it." – Rob Gearing

"Quick to deploy, adaptable for uneven surfaces and light in weight are my three key drivers when it comes to hunting bipods and tripods," adds Gearing.

Clark warns that not every bipod is ideal for hunting, though. "Most or all bipods are extremely rigidly designed to shoot off a bench or prone," he says. "More for punching paper or pinging steel. These bipods are useless in the field. Whatever it is you may be hunting, your target never walks in perfect, and your standard bipod is extremely limited on movement."

Tips and Techniques

Reaping the full benefits of a bipod takes more than deploying, adjusting legs for height and leveling the rifle's cant. The process begins with selecting a suitable spot. Things slide on smooth, flat surfaces — such as concrete. Areas of dirt, sand and grass, where the feet get solid traction are better alternatives. That minimal movement increases follow-up shot speed. Level, hardpack soil can even be slippery. In that case, dig a couple small holes to anchor the bipod's feet.

The real importance of solid anchoring comes clearly into focus with the next step. Apply firm forward pressure with your shoulder when behind a bipod-steadied rifle. Doing so takes up any play in the two-legged mechanism. How much pressure? There is no one-size-fits-all answer, but it takes only a few minutes to determine what's optimal for you and your rifle.



↑ Harris Engineering specializes in bipods and has been giving hunters a steady rest for more than 60 years.



THE RIGHT SETUP

The most traditional bipod anchoring system is directly to the sling-swivel stud up front.

Most bipods designed for that mount employ a rod that passes through the stud's hole. A padded section (V-, U- or flat-shaped, depending on forend profile) is adjusted to apply pressure against the stock and hold everything firmly in place, rattle-free. There are an infinite number of variations, but the setup is usually a little more complex than the other mounts mentioned below. They are, however, extremely effective.

Picatinny rails are common on today's firearms and the easy-on, easy-off versatility means the bipod can quickly be transferred to another rifle. It, of course, can also be removed to save space in the gun safe. Enthusiasts with sling swivel studs also have the option of replacing them with an aftermarket Picatinny. It adds a level of versatility, but installation requires care to avoid damaging the stock.



The M-Lok mounting surface is solid and a great alternative. On and off is also a breeze, although not quite as fast as the Picatinny. More recently the industry has begun the adoption of ARCA plates. It's fast and adds adaptability to a wide variety of photo equipment, including some tripods.

Get behind the gun when it's on the bipod and sight-in at a distant target. Start with little or no pressure at the shoulder, then slowly increase the load. At some point reticle dance will slow, likely stop. There's your sweet spot. Increasing pressure any further is a



↑ The Spartan Ascent Tripod is lightweight and multifunctional, with detachable trekking pole legs.





waste of energy that promotes fatigue, surrenders concentration on shooting form and, in most cases, re-starts crosshair wander.

Your shoulder, cheek and trigger finger should be the only body parts touching guns anchored on a bipod — with heavy calibers the most notable exceptions. Place your off hand under the rifle and behind the bipod. It's a simple and effective habit to minimize how much body movement, including breathing and heartbeat, reaches the gun.

"People can become obsessed about expensive rifles and optics yet completely forget the soft tissue holding it," Gearing emphasizes. "Bipods, tripods and quads provide the answer and as someone who likes my dead things to be exactly that, dead, I will always seek support of the rifle platform to ensure I execute the shot as well as I am able."

On a more practical note. Harris Engineering reminds owners to, "Never fold your bipod up when the legs are extended to where they cross the bore or you'll shoot the legs off your bipod." In addition, "Never get oil on the leather pads or they will come off."

Not Enough

Bipods might not be critical for close-up shots on deer-size or larger game, but it's a different matter when wary targets stretch the shot distance.

Bipods are an ideal solution, but simply buying and mounting one isn't enough, according to Clark. "Practice all situations you might think you will encounter. Don't just go shoot off a bench and call it good. Know your limitations in the field." SSR

BUILT FOR THE BLIND

Long shots are often required when hunting from a ground blind. Heaps of sandbags, coolers, chairs and other approaches have been cobbled together for decades as a solution. Four-legged, lightweight cradles are a more recent popular choice.

Tripods are increasingly popular, though. "For ground blind hunting, hunters really just need a tripod that will give them a steady rest and hold their gun while they wait for their target animal to walk in," says Jarrod Grove, senior marketing manager at American Outdoor Brands — manufacturer of Caldwell bipods. "We have three tripods, and one seated option, that are designed for more static-style hunting."

Caldwell's DeathGrip series is extremely popular. Instead of mounting directly to a gun's fore-end, it uses a padded vice that grips a gun tightly from both sides and bottom without marring. It's available in several versions, or a complete kit and can mount directly to nearly any sturdy camera tripod. The firm also has a rock solid version of its own, and several different kits ideal for hunters.

"The original DeathGrip series features large-diameter legs, a fixed clamping DeathGrip head and prone to standing shooting," Grove says. "It's the tripod that really ramped up the clamping tripod market and provided customers with a ton of value."

— Guy Sagi




PYTHON 357

THE EVOLUTION OF A LEGEND

By Max Archer

Colt has been making huge strides since its acquisition by CZ Group a few years ago.

We all know that the legendary Colt brand has had a rough journey, but this is not a surprising story. A similar story could be told for nearly all legacy U.S. firearms brands, and internationally, the list and story could grow very long.

At one time, Colt was the leader in revolver, 1911, hunting firearms and AR-platform innovation and quality. It was the brand that generations of military members took to the battlefield, sportsmen and hunters kept the family fed with, collectors sought after, and marksmen and competitors preferred. Since its start, Colt was challenged by aggressive competitors that were pushing innovation, machining and technology to the limits to overtake their lead.

Colt has faced financial and management challenges a few times throughout its history, centered primarily around its dependence on military contracts. In 1854, they closed due to lack of military contracts; from 1940-1950 they were in financial bankruptcy after WWII; and the brand went through a 2015 bankruptcy when the Pentagon's M4 contracts were changed to FN. The industry really didn't know whether Colt would survive after the last restructure, but it has. What is a bit unique is that a legendary U.S. firearms brand was sold to a European company in May 2021 when Colt holdings was acquired by CZ Group.

The fear for most Colt fans was that CZ would follow the same strip-and-gut investment banker strategy we have seen occur with predictable regularity in the firearms industry. Over three years later, all agree that the strategic support, deep pockets and bold innovation CZ brings to the relationship are what Colt needs for stability and the next phase of growth.

In talking with Colt and CZ leadership, the emphasis was not on making sweeping changes at Colt, but concentrating on thoughtful steps that would lead to predictable and solid growth for Colt and CZ. One of those decisions was to keep Colt operating with its own management team under CEO Dennis Veilleux instead of having CZ leadership run Colt as a sub-brand. The management team is pushing to fully restore the excitement around the brand, and it was clear that CZ wants the Colt brand to thrive.

Though CZ is well known for its high level of product innovation, they are making strategic moves jointly with Colt management on how to best leverage the two brands. Some of the strategies will be independent design, production and marketing, but there are areas where joint design and product collaboration will deliver something unique to the market. Both companies offer



← The new Colt CBX Precision delivers proven action, accuracy and reliability in MDT's precision chassis.

unique products and expertise the other does not have.

With investment and engineering support from CZ, Colt is again stable and making cautious, thoughtful steps. The first major step was creating a modern production environment for the Colt revolver line. Colt's snake-themed Anaconda, Python and Cobra revolver lines are back and upgraded, with cutting-edge machining delivering higher-quality tolerances, strength and finishes than legacy models.

Most also feel that the trigger has been significantly improved thanks to better machining and updated manufacturing methods. We are also seeing a large diversity within the revolver line emerge, including .22LR, .38 Special, .357 Magnum, and .44 Magnum in stainless polished, matte and now blued steel versions. Even more encouraging is seeing laser engravers using Colt stainless revolvers again as the canvas for exceptionally beautiful firearm art. It is exciting to see a resurgence of factory-new engraved Colt revolvers growing as collector items.

The long-term strength of Colt's 1911 sales have supported the company even through difficult times, but production volumes have always been relatively low. In a recent discussion with Colt, officials noted that goals include ramping up 1911 production to reduce backorders. The plan is to follow a similar strategy to improve manufacturing and production as done with the revolver line. Some of this strategy includes leveraging more advanced machining capabilities and increased tolerances to reduce the high percentage of hand-fitting of each of the 1911's roughly 58 parts.

Colt could have just started pumping out a stream of new models that ultimately would have led to even more backorders. Instead, it's another example of where Colt is focused on taking careful steps to streamline production with an eye on increasing volumes and quality.

Colt's rifle platforms are also getting updated beyond the legacy models. The new M5 model was added, which includes a more modern update to the M4 with some ambi controls and styling, along with a monolithic upper. The M5 represented Colt's first new AR platform in decades and a good first step in offering updates to the classic AR line.

In collaboration with CZ, the Colt CBX 6.5 Creedmoor and .308 bolt-action rifle line is an exciting addition to the Colt lineup, including MDT chassis on the CBX Precision models. This is a big step for Colt, as this is the first civilian .308 since the now-discontinued AR10. The CBX rifles offer Colt customers already-proven accurate and reliable rifles based on the CZ 600 actions. Additions like the CBX Precision models with MDT chassis are extremely accurate.

Customers I spoke with during several local gun shows were excited over what crossover collaborations might include, with speculations that ranged from high-capacity polymer 1911s that combined Dan Wesson, CZ and Colt designs, to AR-based Colt PCCs that accept Scorpion magazines. There were also some simpler hopes that the legendary Colt brand would deliver a series of affordable retro rifles that echoed back to their first models. There are many natural collaboration synergies between CZ and Colt we can hope materialize into unique products.

For CZ, there is a natural opportunity to leverage Colt's deep military relationships, and for Colt, there's the opportunity to take advantage of the forward-leaning engineering innovation of the CZ catalog. CZ has a lot of polymer and alloy pistol engineering that Colt could leverage as a





← Colt's Anaconda 6-inch revolver in stainless steel has become one of its best sellers.

↓ The 1911 series remains coveted by collectors and Colt is promising major advancements in this line.



new market. Though Colt has offered some 9mm AR platform PCCs, they have not embraced the exponential PCC market growth like CZ has with their Bren and Scorpion lines. We are all hoping that PCCs and AR pistols become a push within Colt's product development cycle.

Obviously, CZ has also developed the epically reliable short-stroke Bren platform, which has possibilities within Colt to potentially rejuvenate military contracts with something unique.

Although we like to believe that legacy brands could survive on their own and have the capital to adapt, the reality is that the competitive market in firearms has radically changed in just the last 20 years. The most important piece of CZ Group purchasing Colt is that they are not approaching Colt with an investment banker acquisition mindset, which would have certainly gutted Colt. Instead, CZ is bringing well-respected design and operations support to Colt and helping them rebuild to be competitive with new engineering, processes and manufacturing methods. The investment from CZ is allowing Colt to reset, retool, skill up, and update decades-old methods that are no longer competitive.

The CZ Group acquired Colt and has made noticeable moves forward in only three short years, with new models and innovations already in customer hands. We will all be following this legendary brand as they evolve during this exciting new chapter of Colt. SSR



← Colt's M5 series is a major first step for Colt in competing with the premier tier of feature-loaded AR platforms.





PLAYING THE LONG GAME

By Max Archer

The evolution of modern precision rifles is good for shooters and your business.

The pursuit of improved rifle accuracy is hardly a modern concept. From the early days of rifled barrels in the 1700s to today's sleek chassis-based long-range platforms, marksmen have continually sought to stretch the limits of precision.

American history alone is rich with examples, from Daniel Morgan's sharpshooters in the Revolutionary War to the sniper advancements of modern military conflicts. But in recent years, few developments have shaped the rifle market as significantly as the rise of the Precision Rifle Series competition.

Deep Roots

Even as far back as the 18th century, most rifles were essentially custom-built — hand-fitted barrels, wood stocks, and iron sights carefully tuned for accuracy. Legends like the Sharps rifles are still hand-fitted to this day. Over time, the standardization of actions and barrels allowed for greater interchangeability, setting the foundation for today's production assembly.

By the 20th century, accuracy-minded riflemen had largely coalesced around a few key platforms, with the Remington 700 action emerging as the dominant standard. Its simple yet robust design became the bedrock of both factory rifles and aftermarket innovation. In the decades that followed, companies like McMillan, Accuracy International, and Surgeon built on the 700 footprint with high-end custom receivers, triggers, and barrels — transforming the 700-style rifle into a true modular precision platform.

Rise of Precision

Among the pivotal rifles during this evolution was the $3,200 2011 FN SPR A3G. Built on the tried-and-true Model 70 action, the A3G combined a fluted chrome lined match-grade barrel, McMillan fiberglass stock with Sako TRG style ergonomics with ¼-MOA accuracy guarantee. This accuracy guarantee was a major selling point and verifiable performance benchmark that all other precision guns were measured against. The A3G was selected by the FBI sniper teams and became a legend among law enforcement and precision shooting communities, proving that precision didn't need to come solely from custom shops. Personally owning an A3G, it is an exceptional ⅛-MOA capable gun that was only matched by a $4,000+ custom Remington 700 footprint action build, a $2,800 Caracal CSR and a $2,800 Tikka T3x build with MDT Elite chassis and Timney Trigger.



Custom Goes Commercial

The birth of the PRS shooting discipline in the early 2010s added rocket fuel to the precision rifle market and long-range caliber development. PRS matches, often shot at distances of 300 to 1,200 yards, pushed competitors to demand better gear and chambering — and manufacturers responded. Suddenly, there was a new frontier: delivering "custom-level" performance at factory prices. Remington 700 and Savage 110 footprint actions dominated for the first five years with shooters upgrading barrels, triggers, and chassis for improved performance.



In July 2015, Ruger introduced the Precision Rifle — a chassis-based bolt-action that looked like it came off a custom builder's bench but carried a surprisingly modest MSRP. It also consistently delivered ½ -MOA groups or better in most hands and featured new PRS calibers like the 6.5mm and 6mm Creedmore chamberings. With its fully adjustable folding stock that offered nearly every adjustment possible, free-floated match barrel with muzzle brake, magazine fed action, modular compatibility, and match-grade trigger and performance, the RPR was a game-changer. It didn't just sell — it disrupted. The RPR delivered performance that would normally cost shooters over $2,500 to piece together from a Remington or Savage format. For the first time, everyday shooters could pick up a rifle with serious competitive potential right off the shelf, mount and zero an optic and start competing. No gunsmiths, torque wrenches, or trigger, barrel, chassis, upgrades needed.

Now, 10 years later, the RPR is seen as a turning point — a rifle that democratized precision shooting and helped define what a modern production precision rifle should be. Thankfully, spurred many other manufacturers to do the same. Notably, the RPR is still selling with Ruger continuing to upgrade the platform with a price point that remains competitive.



Market Matures

Today's market continues to evolve, with manufacturers in the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East all pushing the envelope. Major manufacturers like Remington, Savage, Howa, Mossberg, Tikka and Colt/CZ now offer rifles right from the factory equipped with upgraded barrels, suppressor-ready barrel threading, match-style triggers and even aftermarket chassis like those from MDT.

Other manufacturers are taking out-of-the-box performance to another level with custom actions, match-grade barrels, triggers and premier-tier chassis included like Bergara, Seekins and Caracal. All this is proving again that performance is no longer reserved for gunsmith-tuned customs.

Shooters now face a more exciting decision tree than ever:

1. **Custom Build:** Full-blown builds from premium actions, hand-lapped barrels, and match triggers. To achieve the same ⅛-MOA accuracy with a build just under a decade ago, it required special gunsmithing tools and knowledge, plus investing over $4,000 in the custom Ultimatum Deadline action, Northland Shooter Criterion barrel, Timney Calvin Elite trigger, and KRG Whiskey 3 Chassis plus tools and miscellaneous parts.

2. **Upgraded Factory Platforms:** Factory options are provided by Remington, Howa, Tikka, Mossberg, CZ, Colt and Savage offerings that deliver 1-MOA or better accuracy. Typically these options improve the accuracy of standard models with heavier barrels and upgraded chassis at the $1,000 to $1,500 MSRP range. In most cases, manufacturers are offering the same action in other models, but with upgraded chassis options like those manufactured by MDT to greatly improve accuracy along with shooter comfort and configurability. In many cases even these legacy barrel rifle actions can increase accuracy significantly by just moving the action to a stiff free-float chassis.



↑ This Tikka T3X CTR was reviewed and then upgraded — Tikka actions have become upgrades for pro shooters who praise their reliability.

3. **Out-of-the-Box PRS Ready:** $1,500-plus Rifles like the Ruger RPR, Tikka T3x TACT A1, Bergara B-14 HMR and Howa APC offer turnkey accuracy for those eager to compete immediately with ½-MOA capable rifles.

4. **Premium Out-of-the-Box:** $2,200-plus Seekins HIT Pro M3, Caracal CSR and Bergara Premier. These rifle rifles move beyond factory actions with custom actions, barrels, trigger and chassis options delivering accuracy and performance that matches the capabilities of hand-build custom rifle builds, plus carrying full manufacturer's warranties.

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Competition Worthy Precision Examples

TFN SPR A3G

- $3,200 original MSRP, ¼ -MOA guarantee, as tested delivered ⅛ - MOA.
- .308 Winchester
- Included Model 70 format action, custom 24-inch fluted FN match barrel with chrome lining, McMillian A3 stock
- Guaranteed to hold accuracy for 10,000 rounds.

Custom Remington 700 Footprint Build

- $4,200 - as tested delivered ⅛ -MOA
- Ultimatum Deadline action, Northland Shooter Criterion barrel, Timney Calvin Elite trigger, & KRG Whiskey 3 Chassis
- Swap Barrel Savage pre-fit configuration Criterion & Shilen .308 Winchester, .223 Remington, 6.5 CM.

Ruger RPR

- Original MSRP $1,400, Current MSRP $2,149-$3,349
- As tested delivered ¼ -MOA
- RPR Chassis, match trigger, AICS and M110/SR-25/DPMS/ Magpul-style magazine compatibility, brake included
- Various PRS focused and standard calibers available from .308-.338 Lapua

Howa 1500 - Upgraded

- Howa 1500 H7 Carbon Fiber Barrel $1,299 - Tested .308 Winchester
- Proven action with Howa sub-MOA guarantee, 24-inch carbon fiber barrel reduces weight
- Upgraded with MDT XRS chassis $550 and Timney trigger $250
- Upgraded total $2,100 - Pre-upgrade accuracy sub-MOA, post upgrade ¼-MOA.

Tikka T3x CTR

- $1,400 MSRP, as tested delivered ½ -MOA
- Proven sub-MOA accuracy, smooth high reliability feeding action
- Action now being used and re-barreled by some competitive shooters
- Proprietary Tikka magazines

Tikka T3x Upgraded MDT Elite, Timney

- Same T3x CTR with upgraded MDT AAC Elite chassis & Timney Calvin Elite trigger
- $3,300 MSRP, as tested delivered ⅛ -MOA
- Chassis upgrade is compatible with standard AICS magazines
- The chassis and trigger upgrade was transformative for the T3x that not only improved accuracy but exponentially improved comfort behind the rifle.

Caracal CSR

- $2,800 MSRP, as tested delivered ⅛ -MOA
- Premium chassis with 100% support hand adjustability, premium match trigger, match barrel, SR25/Magpul compatibility
- Built to exceed NATO test protocols; immersion, bore obstruction and "over the beach" testing.
- The single most accurate factory rifle I have ever tested printing consistent .12-MOA groups at 100 yards with 175-grain Federal SMK ammo.

"Today's market continues to evolve, with manufacturers in the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East all pushing the envelope."



↑ Full custom builds like this Ultimatum Action with KRG chassis support Criterion and Shilen barrel setups and can easily pass $4,000.



↑ The Howa 1500 was dressed out with a Primary Arms GLX 4-18 optic, Timney trigger, MDT rings, magazine, bipod and XRS chassis.

Easily Accessible

We now live in a golden age of rifle accuracy. Whether you're shooting steel at 1,000 yards, punching paper at 100, or simply trying to outshoot your last group, there's never been a better time to be a precision rifle enthusiast. What once required thousands of dollars, a waitlist, and a master gunsmith is now available at your local sporting goods store — boxed, bore-sighted, and ready for the range.

The evolution of PRS is more than just an equipment story — it's a testament to the passion of a shooting community always reaching for that next level of precision. SSR

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OPTIC-READY TORO SLIDE

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archery BUSINESS SHOT·SHOW HUNTING RETAILER

ARCHERY BUSINESS & HUNTING RETAILER PAVILION AT SHOT SHOW 2026

DON'T TAKE OUR WORD, TAKE THEIRS.

"The energy, engagement and exposure we get here made the decision to come back next year an easy one! — Arcus Hunting's Teri Quinn"

"The SHOT Show was the only trade show we attended in 2025. We'll definitely be back in 2026 at the Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion. — Moultrie's Mark Olis"

"Show organizers have not lost sight of the opportunity for outdoor, hunting and shooting sports brands. — Muck Boots' Chris Lorenzo"

NEW EXIBITORS ADDED

HÜKR · REVEAL Cellular Camera by TACTACAM · DEFEND by TACTACAM · LIMBSAVER by SIMS VIBRATION LABORATORY

EXHIBITORS TO SEE AT THE PAVILION

T.R.U. BALL Archery · AXCEL Archery · MOULTRIE · BOWTECH · SPOT-HOGG · DEAD DOWN WIND · MUZZY Broadheads · ROCKY · BARNETT · SCENT CRUSHER Scent Off. Game On. · COVERT Scouting Cameras · NOCKTURNAL Lighted Nocks · WICKED Tree Gear · IQ Bowsights Retina Lock · AXE Crossbows · ROGUE Ridge · CARBON EXPRESS · Rage · Tink's · TRUFIRE · The Original MUCK BOOT COMPANY · TightSpot · WAC'EM · NASP National Archery in the Schools Program · Ripcord Arrow Rest · OCTANE · GlenDel 3D Archery Targets · MAMMOTH · Specialty Archery LLC · Lancaster Archery Supply · BLACK GOLD Premium Bowsights · EXCALIBUR Crossbow Different For A Reason · ROCK RIDGE Outdoors · DEAD RINGER · BLOCK Targets · STEAMBOW · BAKCOU · AMERICAN BUFFALO Knife & Tool Co

SHOT·SHOW

archery BUSINESS + HUNTING RETAILER

SELECT YOUR BOOTH EARLY IN THE

ARCHERY BUSINESS & HUNTING RETAILER PAVILION AT SHOT SHOW 2026

PERFECT FIT AND BEST LOCATION FOR EXHIBITING:
ARCHERY, APPAREL, BOWHUNTING, FOOTWEAR, GAME CAMERAS, HUNTING, HUNT GEAR, HUNT TECH, OUTDOOR TACKLE, SCENT PROTECTION, WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT, AND MUCH MORE...

FACTS PULLED FROM A RECENT NSSF SURVEY

75% OF THE SHOT SHOW FEATURES SHOOTING/ HUNTING PRODUCTS

4,375 SHOT SHOW BUYERS ACTIVELY BUY ARCHERY/ HUNTING PRODUCTS

13,625 FIREARMS DEALERS AT SHOT SHOW = HUGE POTENTIAL FOR BUYING YOUR PRODUCTS

18,000+ BUYERS ATTEND SHOT SHOW

2,000 MEDIA MEMBERS ATTENDING THE SHOW

2026 APPLICATION IS NOW AVAILABLE:
LOCK A BOOTH DOWN NOW AT WWW.ARCHERYBUSINESS.COM/ABPSHOTSHOW

REACH OUT TO OUR TEAM TODAY

PATRICK BOYLE PATRICK.BOYLE@GRANDVIEWOUTDOORS.COM (920) 240-7280
BRAD BISNETTE BRAD.BISNETTE@COLEPUBLISHING.COM (715) 891-3235
DERRICK NAWROCKI DERRICK.NAWROCKI@GRANDVIEWOUTDOORS.COM (205) 807-5025

THE ARCHERY BUSINESS & HUNTING RETAILER PAVILION AT SHOT SHOW IN 2026

NSSF welcomes *Hunting Retailer* magazine as co-sponsor of SHOT Show's Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion, which will showcase everything from bows and treestands to deer scents and trail cameras.







BY ARCHERY BUSINESS STAFF

NSSF, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, recently announced that *Hunting Retailer* magazine is joining *Archery Business* magazine to co-sponsor the newly renamed Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion for the 2026 SHOT Show.

The Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion is a collaboration between the NSSF and Grand View Outdoors, a leading provider of outdoor content. The Grand View Outdoors family of brands include trade publications such as *Archery Business* and *Hunting Retailer* magazines, as well as consumer titles such as *Bowhunting World* and *Predator Xtreme*.

Regular visitors to SHOT Show have seen that it continues to grow annually, setting new benchmarks for industry innovation, collaboration and engagement. From an expanded show floor and a record-high number of exhibitors, attendees experience tremendous networking opportunities and can see firsthand the products to consider stocking in their stores.

"The 2026 Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion will feature apparel, scents, treestands, blinds, packs, calls, food plot products, trail cameras, camping gear, binos, rangefinders, knives — basically anything that supports a bowhunter. If it belongs in a treestand or blind, it belongs in the Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion," said Chris Dolnack, NSSF Senior Vice President & Chief Customer Officer. "By bringing these essential product categories into one pavilion, our 4,700 buyers that are interested in archery and bowhunting products can find them in one convenient location within the SHOT Show floor."

"We partnered with the NSSF in 2024 to build a unique and targeted area during the SHOT Show, designated for companies with a focus on the bowhunting segment," said Derrick Nawrocki, President/Publish-


V/RTUE
V/RTUE
BOWTECH






PUMA X22




EDGE2
EDGE2

er, Grand View Outdoors. "This naturally aligned with our *Archery Business* brand, and in the first two years we have seen year-over-year growth. Now, as we ramp up for the 2026 SHOT Show and aim to grow even more, we see another natural fit that helps broaden the appeal of this space and that is aligning with the *Hunting Retailer* brand, which will be on board as an official sponsor. Powered by two brands, this space will now be called the Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion. Coincidentally, 2025 also marks the 50th anniversary of the *Archery Business* brand (see sidebar), making this area even more attractive to exhibitors."

YEAR-OVER-YEAR GROWTH

"Momentum continues to build in year three of the Pavilion at SHOT Show, and we've seen the addition of significant exhibitors already including Martin Outdoors, Obsession Archery and Sims Vibration Labs," Nawrocki said. "This in addition to the return of T.R.U. Ball, Barnett, Pure Archery, ARCUS, Muck Boots, NASP, Lancaster, Rock Ridge Outdoors, and many others that are coming back.





"It is worth mentioning that many of the traditional and more modern firearms shop retailers, who are looking to expand their existing inventory with categories in the hunting, archery and general outdoor markets, are now able to see that segment in one area, which is one of the goals of this space — helping to make the SHOT Show as efficient and convenient as possible for buyers."

"We're pleased with the growth of the Pavilion and the opportunity that it presents for exhibitors and nearly 5,000 buyers who have intent to purchase archery, bowhunting and hunting products," Dolnack said. "Since the 2022 SHOT Show, our post show surveys revealed that 24 percent of the retail buyers had an interest in the archery and hunting categories as traditional firearm retailers look to expand their offerings."

FINDING THE PAVILION

If you've ever attended the SHOT Show, then you know it's massive. The 2025 version contained nearly 14 miles of aisles, and as in previous years, it was spread between The Venetian Expo (multiple floors) and Caesars Forum.

The 2026 Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion will be located in Caesars Forum and it will feature leading manufacturers in the archery and hunting industries. It's easy to find your way to Caesars Forum, and specifically the Pavilion; it's clearly marked on the SHOT Show overview map, and once you're on the Show floor, you can't miss all the signage pointing you in the right direction.

ARCHERY BUSINESS & HUNTING RETAILER PAVILION SPECIFICS

Dates & Location: January 20–23, 2026 at Caesars Forum in the Academy Ballroom, Las Vegas, Nevada.

ARCHERY BUSINESS CELEBRATES 50 YEARS!

50TH ANNIVERSARY

Launched in 1975, *Archery Business* magazine is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2025. This B2B brand has been serving archery dealers and retailers with the tagline "The Voice of the Archery Industry" for an amazing five decades. The former owners of our two longtime biggest competitors, *Arrow Trade* magazine and *Inside Archery*, at one point worked on the *Archery Business* staff before launching out on their own. Note: *Archery Business* and *Bowhunting World* magazines are part of the Grand View Outdoors family of brands.

"50 years seems like a lifetime!" said Grand View Outdoors President/Publisher Derrick Nawrocki. "Well, because for many companies it is, and certainly for a niche brand serving the archery and bowhunting markets. It's extremely rewarding to look back on how much the *Archery Business* brand has helped retailers and manufacturers alike grow, improve, spread the word, and stay dialed into the many product life cycles that drive our industry and lifestyles. It leaves me awestruck.

"Our team at *Archery Business* has been working in the archery/hunting space for over a combined 100 years, and we've focused over the long haul on hitting the mark and fulfilling our responsibility of being The Voice of the Archery Industry. We owe a big thank you to all of our partners for their continued support and trust, and our team will continue to lead the way into the future with this same mindset and focus."



Exhibit Focus: A dedicated exhibit area featuring manufacturers and suppliers of archery and bowhunting products, along with related accessories.

Media Coverage: Extensive coverage by the editorial teams of *Archery Business* and *Hunting Retailer*, as well as additional promotion in *SHOT Daily* and other Grand View Outdoors publications, including *Shooting Sports Retailer.*

Pavilion Size: The Pavilion features 16,000 net square feet of exhibit space and enclosed archery lanes to demonstrate new products for prospective buyers in Caesars Forum.



Limited Space: Exhibit space is limited; first come, first served. Those who exhibit in 2026 will have first choice for space for 2026.



SHOT Show Facts: SHOT Show attracts attendees from around the world, including buyers, media and other industry professionals. The 2026 show will cover more than 820,000 net square feet of exhibit space, featuring over 2,700 companies showcasing the latest in firearms, ammunition, hunting and shooting accessories, archery, outdoor apparel and much more.

BOOKING YOUR SPACE

Now's the time to begin planning for the 2026 SHOT Show. For info on exhibiting in the Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion, visit www.shotshow.org/archeryexhibit. Booth assignments will be confirmed upon receipt of a completed application and initial deposit. Space is limited.

For additional information about the 2026 SHOT Show, please visit www.shotshow.org.

SHOT SHOW
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LOOKING AHEAD TO SHOT SHOW 2026

Many companies have already booked their space in the 2026 Pavilion, including the three detailed below. Check out what company representatives have to say as they look forward to showcasing their products at SHOT Show.

Teri Quinn — Director of Marketing, Arcus Hunting

"The Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion at SHOT Show is an invaluable opportunity for us to connect with key retailers, buyers and industry professionals. It's not just about showcasing products — it's about meeting the right people, having meaningful conversations, and strengthening our presence in the market. The energy, the engagement, and the exposure we get here made the decision to come back next year an easy one!"

Chris Lorenzo — Vice President & Brand General Manager, Muck Boots and Rocky Brands

"As SHOT Show continues to grow in the firearms and ammo market, the show organizers have not lost sight of the opportunity for outdoor, hunting and shooting sports brands. The Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion is a dedicated space supporting the outdoorsman and has proven to be a fruitful location for Muck Boots, building both brand awareness and cultivating business through orders with current and new retail partners."

Mark Olis — Senior Brand Communications Manager, Moultrie Mobile

"Moultrie has exhibited at SHOT Show in the Pavilion for the past two years. Prior to that, we have been absent from the SHOT Show. The addition of the Pavilion catering more to hunting brands, made coming back to SHOT Show worth it. The past two years have been great shows with a lot of buzz. The SHOT Show was the only trade show we attended in 2025. We'll definitely be back in 2026 at the Archery Business & Hunting Retailer Pavilion."

NIGHT MOVES

iStock Photo/Ahorica

DUAL-FUNCTION AND DEPENDABLY ACCURATE

By Brian McCombie

New Nocpix thermal transitions from rifle-mounted to handheld and back with a 1-MOA return to zero guarantee.

Once I'd zeroed the Nocpix SLIM L35 thermal sight, I started my accuracy testing at 50 yards, the unit mounted on a SIG MCX-Spear LT rifle. I shot several sub-MOA three-shot groups, the last one of which appeared to be under .50 inches (later measured at .45 inches.)

Too easy. Well, heck, it was only 50 yards.

So, I moved my heat signature targets to 100 yards, loaded up the magazine of my SIG and took a couple shots. The rounds were slightly off the heat pack, as I had zeroed the thermal and rifle at half that distance. I made a quick manual adjustment and then shot two groups of three rounds.

They measured .95 and .65 inches.

This was my first time using a Nocpix thermal. I was damned impressed by the accuracy, of course. But I also really liked how easy it was to use the thermal, the quality of the images and the ability to quickly turn the thermal scope into a thermal handheld.

A New Player

Nocpix USA is a new thermal line distributed by iRayUSA. Nocpix offers consumers a thermal binocular, three lines each of thermal handhelds and thermal riflescopes, and the MT thermal Dome Camera, which mounts atop a vehicle.

The SLIM line is composed of the SLIM L35 I tested with a 384x288 thermal sensor, and the SLIM H35 with the more powerful 640x512 sensor. Both are built into the same-size magnesium-alloy housing, and both employ a 35mm objective lens.

The L35

In addition to the 35mm objective lens, the L35 features an 1024x768 OLED display. That display is covered by a rubberized eye piece.

A single replaceable, low-temperature resistant 18650 battery powers the unit. Nocpix rates the battery at up to 4 hours of run time. The battery loads into a compartment atop the scope, and the unit comes with two batteries, a charging station and charging cord.

Additionally, the L35 sports a magnetic charging port on the right side of the housing. The user places the magnetic charging cable (included) on the magnetic port, with the USB end of the cable connected to a. 5V–2A USB power adapter, any standard USB 3.0 port on a laptop or computer or an external power supply, such as a USB power bank.

Also, the user can easily remove the magnetic charging port to reveal the USB-C port beneath. Simply connect the charging station cable to the USB-C port and the USB end to any of the above-mentioned power sources.

Dual Uses

The L35 offers users a 2-in-1 designed QD mount.

My unit arrived with a mounting base already affixed to the bottom of the unit. This base slid into the top of the dual-throw mount, and I simply tightened the top throw lever to secure the L35.

Then, I mounted the bottom section of the dual-throw mount onto my rifle's Picatinny rail atop the receiver and tightened down that throw lever.

Need a handheld thermal for quick scanning? Open the mount's top throw lever and off comes the L35. Time to shoot? Re-secure the L35 onto the top of the mount. Nocpix even has a 1-MOA return to zero guarantee when the L35 goes from handheld back to the rifle mount.



The Nocpix SLIM L35 thermal scope was mounted on a Sig MCX-Spear AR for testing.

Controls



Both the L35's objective lens and diopter feature an adjustment wheel to fine tune the images seen in the display.

The unit's power button is located on the left rear of the housing. Press and hold down the button for a couple seconds to power on the unit. To shut off the L35, hold down on the power button. The three-second countdown to OFF pops up on the display screen. Keep pressure on the button until the display goes dark.

The three soft-touch buttons along the top control the L35's various functions. The center "M" button provides access to the unit's menus. A quick press of the M brings up a Quick Menu, a long press the more detailed Main Menu.

The Forward and Back Arrow buttons allow the user to navigate within the menus. When used by itself, the Forward Arrow adjusts the unit's digital zoom, which runs from 3.5x to 7x to 10.5x to 14x.

A short press of the Back Arrow takes a photo, while a long press starts and stops a video recording.

The L35 also features seven color palettes (White Hot, Black Hot, Red Hot, Color, Crimson, Viridian, Violet), picture-in-picture, and onboard video and photo recording with 32 GB of on-board media storage.

Zeroing

As every night hunter wants to know: Yes, that all sounds great, but how do you zero the thermal? With the L35, it's easy.

As with many thermal scopes on the market today, the L35 allows a shooter to zero both manually and through the Freeze application.

First, the user needs to access the Main Menu and select the Reticle icon, second from the top. Here, the Rifle Profile is selected (up to six profiles can be created), plus the reticle style and reticle color.

Next, go back to the Main Menu and select the Zeroing icon, third from the top. First, select the distance for the initial zero shooting. Then, the hunter takes his or her initial shots at the target and determines where the bullets have impacted.

At this point, the hunter can use the manual adjustments to the X and Y reticle axis to zero the scope or the Freeze application.

To use the Freeze for my initial 50 yard zero, I shot twice, and my rounds impacted well off to the left and down. I then held the rifle very steady with the SLIM reticle centered on my target, and pressed Freeze. Then, I used the X and Y adjustments to shift the Freeze reticle to when my first shots impacted. Last, I long pressed the M button and that information was saved.

I shot twice more and was on my heat target but high and right. So, I did the Freeze once more. My next two shots were on. As noted, once I moved to my 100 yard targets, I needed to re-zero the unit somewhat, and for that I used the Manual function.

Easy.



↑ The best three shots at 50 yards with the L35 grouped at .45 inches.

Shooting

Nocpix includes small circular heat packets for zeroing with the L35. I peeled off the back of one packet to expose the sticky side and affixed it to a large cardboard backing.The heat section of it measured 1.75 inches across.

For my 100-yard shooting I used a HotHands Super Warmer heat pack, which measured 3.5- x 4.75 inches. I also taped this to a larger piece of cardboard.

I ran the SIG MCX-Spear with Remington UMC .223 Rem. ammunition loaded with 55-grain full metal jacket bullets.

From past reviews, I knew the Sig was an MOA or better rifle, and it definitely lived up to past shooting in my testing of the L35.

At 100 yards, the HotHands showed up very clearly with sharp edges. While the L35 runs what's considered a lower level 384 thermal sensor, I have to note that the images, menu functions and zeroing abilities were easily equal to 640 sensors I ran five and six years ago.

Selling L35s

Given how well the L35 worked for me, I hesitate to term it a "bargain-priced" thermal, as the word "bargain" is frequently equated with sub-standard. But as Pliny Gale, director of marketing for iRayUSA, pointed out to me, "This is a great product for thermal beginners or to those shopping on a limited budget. The comparatively low price and the dual functionality offer an amazing value."

That price is $2,200 suggested retail. And, considering the L35 is indeed a quality thermal, I would also rate the price as representing an amazing value.

"It always looks great to have the thermal on a gun and even on a tripod," Gale added. "Be able to show users the quick detach feature, too. One of the most common questions we get is about the mount and its ability to return to zero. Let your customers know it has a 1-MOA return to zero guarantee."

As with any thermal, sales staff need to be able to run the potential customer through several of the menu functions to show them ease of use. Focus on the zeroing process as that is always a key concern of thermal users, especially new ones.

Because the SLIM line is distributed in the United States by iRayUSA, it has one of the very best warranties in the industry at 5 years.

Dealer Info

For its dealers, Nocpix/iRayUSA can provide in-store or zoom training for sales staff. Co-op ad funding and sales staff incentive programs are also possible.

"We have done all of these, but it varies store-by-store," Gale explained. "We always want to empower dealers to be successful so that we can win together.



↑ The SLIM L35 kit includes a recharging station, sticky heat pads, two batteries, power cable, lens cloth, thermal optic and carry case.



→ The L35 doubles as a handheld thermal.

Training is always available. For additional marketing support, reach out to your sales representative so we can tailor a plan to fit your product assortment and business needs."

Buying through distribution, he noted, is a great option for customer-requested special orders or for dealers who don't yet sell many thermal optics. Sports South, RSR, Chattanooga Shooting Supplies, & Bill Hicks, and Zanders are Nocpix's top distributors.

"For dealers looking to be a little more serious about thermals, it is always beneficial to be a direct dealer," Gale added. "Direct to dealer means better product availability, priority allocations, and typically better margins."

To explore dealer possibilities, go to: *https://irayusa.com/become-a-dealer/*

Media

Both SLIM models have received a good number of positive YouTube reviews, and a selection of print and web-based written reviews are on the calendar, too.

Nocpix has also created a larger marketing campaign to promote the SLIM line, including social media, digital and print advertising.

Additionally, all Nocpix dealers have access to a folder of Nocpix product images, text, specifications, and other product information to be able to create their own content as needed. SSR

SPECS: NOCPIX SLIM L35 THERMAL SCOPE

Thermal Sensor: 384 x 288
Pixel Size: 12µm
Objective Lens Diameter: 35 mm, F1.0
NETD: mK ≤ 18
Frame Refresh Rate: 50 Hz
Magnification: 3.5x Base, Ocular Zoom to 14x
Detection Range: 1,750 yards
Display Type: 1.03-inch Large-format AMOLED
AMOLED Resolution: 1024x768
Eye Relief: 1.9 inches
Power: 2 Replaceable18650 batteries (inc.)
Operating Time, Per Battery: 4 hours each, max.
On-Board Photo, Video Recording: Yes
Memory Capacity: 32 GB
Weight: 18.7 ounces
Dimensions: 8.50 × 2.99 × 1.81 inches
MISC: Wi-Fi and App. Connectivity to Download Photos, Video
MSRP: $2,200

For more information please visit:
nocpixusa.com

GEAR ROUNDUP

By Gordy Krahn

TACTICAL AND PRECISION RIFLES

Special-purpose tactical and precision rifles are designed and manufactured to tackle a wide range of duty-, competition- and hunt-specific tasks, and that's why they are available in so many configurations — in a mind-blowing variety of makes and models. Whether it's an AR-platform rifle, quick-handling pistol hybrid or tack-driving bolt-action precision rifle, these firearms are often the first and last line of defense for duty personnel and responsible civilians protecting life and liberty. While most of these special-purpose rifles are designed for tactical applications, some models — especially hybrid precision rifles and some AR-platform models — double as hunting rifles for those who want highly customizable and accurate firearms. The availability of models that fill every conceivable tactical and hunting niche is a testament to the growing interest in these firearms. That's good news for shooting sports retailers. Also good news is that they offer an opportunity to cash in on all of those aftermarket goodies available for these guns. It's up to you to make the most of each and every firearms sale by cross selling those products. Check out this assortment of specialized rifles that are sure to generate interest from your customers.

1: CENTURY ARMS MB47



Century Arms continues to push the boundaries of the AK platform by collaborating with John Sharps of Sharps Bros on a new milled receiver AK47 — the MB47. The MB47 is the latest in Century Arm's lineup of the U.S.-made AK47 platform. It features a case-hardened billet 4140 milled receiver with manganese phosphate finish and optic-ready side mount. Chambered in 7.62x39mm, it ships with a US Palm 30-round magazine. The MB47 is outfitted with premium components that include the US Palm free-float M-Lok handguard, Ultimak gas tube rail, RAK-1 Enhanced Flat Trigger, Magpul DT carbine stock w/AR-15 Mil-spec buffer tube and Century Arms US chevron compensator, installed on a 5/8x24 threaded fluted and chrome-lined 16.25-inch barrel. MSRP: $1,699.99 **www.centuryarms.com**

2: CHRISTENSEN ARMS EVOKE



The innovative all-new Evoke Rifle from Christensen Arms is offered in four distinct, feature-rich models, built to tackle any challenge thrown at them. Featuring a Remington 700 receiver, detachable magazine, hybrid grip angle, 416R stainless steel suppressor-ready barrel with a premium muzzle brake, integrated Picatinny rail, swivel sling studs and adjustable cheekriser and optics-ready base on select models, the Evoke has it all. Each model was carefully designed with the purpose to not just meet, but exceed, the needs of hunters and shooters of all kinds — and is backed by Christensen Arms' sub-MOA guarantee and limited lifetime warranty. Other key features include a TriggerTech adjustable trigger, 90-degree bolt throw, swivel sling stud and much more. MSRP: Starting at $898.99. **www.christensenarms.com**

3: DARK STORM INDUSTRIES MODERN FIGHTING RIFLE



The Dark Storm Industries MFR (Modern Fighting Rifle) is the true definition of a battle-ready firearm — sourced from the highest-grade American materials and finishes. It features the W.T.F. flash hider, developed to reduce muzzle flash by over 20% when compared to standard A2 flash hiders. The 15-inch free-float handguard has M-Lok slots where shooters need them. Under the handguard is the sub-MOA 16-inch SOCOM profile barrel, machined from Mil-Spec 4150CMV steel with black nitride heat treatment. The barrel is chambered in 5.56mm NATO to CIP headspace specifications, button-rifled with a 1:9 twist optimized for M193 ammunition. It also features a carbine-length, direct impingement gas system with a robust gas block pinned in place for long-term hassle-free operation. MSRP: $1,795. **www.dark-storm.com**

4: FIGHTLITE DUAL-FEED MCR



The FightLite Dual-Feed MCR (Mission Configurable Rifle) includes all the enhancements standard on its government products, including Dry Film technology, a Mil-Spec H3 buffer and ambidextrous, three-position pictogram safety selector markings, but configured in a civilian legal format that may be purchased through a local FFL in most states, or solely as an upper receiver. Standard features include gas-piston operation for extreme reliability in adverse conditions, a 16.25-inch Quick-Change (three seconds) Barrel System and a Mil-Std 1913 co-planar handguard with a rail-interface system for mounting optics and modern accessories. The MCR accepts standard box-type AR15 magazines or M27-linked ammunition at operator discretion, permitting unprecedented firepower and weapon flexibility. MSRP: $8,399.99. **www.fightlite.com**

5: FN AMERICA SCAR 17S NRCH



The legendary FN SCAR 17S Rifle from FN America, chambered in 7.62-51mm, has been upgraded with non-reciprocating dual-charging handles that enable any shooting position, grip style or optic choice — user swappable in the field. The FN SCAR 17S NRCH ensures any braced or barrier-contact position shoots flawlessly. The rugged, hard-anodized monolithic upper receiver, with a full-length Mil-Std 1913 rail, provides more space for rail-mounted accessories, and a folding buttstock fits any shooter with adjustable length of pull and cheek rest height. The FN SCAR 17S NRCH is the benchmark for accuracy and versatility from a light recoiling, piston-driven platform. This 8-pound rifle is equipped with a monolithic receiver and short-stroke gas piston. It has adjustable folding front and folding/removable rear iron sights. MSRP: $4,239. **www.fnamerica.com**

6: HORIZON FIREARMS VENATIC



The ultra-lightweight Venatic Carbon Rifle from Horizon Firearms is a great fit for the extreme backcountry hunter. The stock is an iota EKO in a different internal configuration than the standard EKO — specifically inletted and built just for this rifle. Featuring thumb detents, a long grip and the industry's most popular Arca-Swiss rail, the Venatic Carbon also includes other premium build components hand-picked by Horizon Firearms designers for long-range hunting enthusiasts, including the newly released Stiller Wombat action, premium Proof Research fluted carbon barrel and TriggerTech trigger. The rifle weighs just 6 pounds, 3 ounces and is available in only a right-hand offering at this time. It comes in a variety of popular hunting calibers. MSRP: $3,999.
www.horizonfirearms.com

7: HOWA .22 ARC MINI-ACTION



Legacy Sports International and Howa Precision Rifles continue to expand their popular Mini-Action Rifle Series with a variety of calibers and stock options that target varmint hunters and match and precision shooting enthusiasts. The latest offering is the .22 ARC chambering, now available in the compact and lightweight Howa Mini-Action platform. The .22 ARC outperforms other .22-caliber cartridges in its class, rivaling .22-250 Rem. performance in a mini-action format, and has dual purpose match and varmint applications — designed to take advantage of today's long-ogive, high-BC bullets with a variety of ammo offerings available from Hornady, such as its 62-grain ELD-VT in the V-Match, 75-grain ELD Match in Black and 88-grain ELD Match ammunition. MSRP: $559-$1,099. **www.legacysports.com**

8: IWI US ZION-15 SPR



Continuing to expand the Zion family of rifles at IWI US, the 5.56mm NATO Semi-Auto Zion-15 Special Purpose Rifle (SPR) pays tribute to the MK12 with modern-day updates that include a 17-inch free-float handguard with integrated ARCA rail, steel barrel nut, adjustable B5 Systems stock and grip, and custom Timney two-stage trigger. The Zion-15 SPR is equipped with a 1:8 twist 18-inch barrel that's nitride treated for durability and features a direct impingement operating system. It weighs 7.6 pounds and has an overall length of 31.5 inches (stock collapsed) and 34.75 inches (stock extended). Proudly manufactured and assembled at the IWI US facility in Middletown, Pennsylvania, the Zion 15 SPR comes with one 30-round Magpul PMAG magazine. MSRP: $1,299.99. **www.iwi.us**

GEAR ROUNDUP

9: KRISS VECTOR CRB GEN 3

Tailored for recreational use and competition in pistol caliber carbine divisions, the Kriss Vector Gen 3 CRB Rifle is equipped with a 16-inch, rifle-length barrel. It comes with a refreshed barrel shroud with M-Lok mounting points and is fed with full-size Glock magazines, ensuring seamless interchangeability for users familiar with Glock-style mags. It now comes equipped with the ergonomic Kriss Beavertail pistol grip designed for superior comfort and control, and a new folding stock features an integrated hinge that lets users choose to fold it to the right or left. Some of its other many features include a skeletonized trigger with 0.7mm pre-travel, ambidextrous short-throw safety lever and Gen 3 bolt release. MSRP: $1,749.99. **www.kriss-usa.com**



10: LIVE FREE ARMORY LF556 LEO

The LF556 LEO Tactical Carbine from Live Free Armory, the same rifle preferred by many law enforcement agencies and SWAT teams, is now available to civilians. This carbine is guaranteed to deliver sub-MOA accuracy with match-grade ammunition. It features a 16-inch Government profile 4150 chrome moly vanadium steel barrel with a 1:7 twist, billet LFA matched receiver set, LFA D-series free-floating M-Lok handguard, two-stage match-grade trigger with a 4.5- to 5-pound pull weight, ambidextrous charging handle, Magpul MOE RL six-position telescoping stock and mid-length gas system, and is available in 5.56mm NATO. The LF556 LEO comes with one 30-round magazine (where legal) and Live Free Armory's lifetime warranty. MSRP: Starting at $995. **www.livefreearmory.com**



11: MOSSBERG MVP PATROL PROFESSIONAL SERIES

The MVP Patrol Professional Series Bolt-Action Rifle from Mossberg features a 16.25-inch medium bull, button-rifled and threaded barrel with A2-style muzzle brake (protective thread cap included), pillar-bedded stock for superior accuracy, over-size bolt handle for firm grip, Mossberg's user-adjustable LBA Trigger System (3 to 7 pounds), optimal twist rates for bullet stabilization, factory-mounted Picatinny rail for ease of adding optics and adjustable fiber optic rifle sights (rear sight adjusts for windage and elevation). Completing the MVP Patrol package is a textured black synthetic stock, featuring stippling on the pistol grip, sling swivel studs and a 10-round magazine. Unique to the Professional Series is a Cerakote tungsten metal finish for enhanced durability. MSRP: $829. **www.mossberg.com**



12: NEMO ARMS BATTLE-LIGHT

The Battle-Light Combat Assault Rifle from Nemo Arms was designed in collaboration with former SOF operators. Everything about this gun was made with the operator, in the most austere, non-permissive environments, in mind. It features an 11-inch chromoly steel chrome-lined barrel chambered in 5.56mm NATO, matched billet upper and lower receiver set and a heat-treated nickel boron-coated BCG. The fully ambidextrous controls include the safety, charging handle, mag release and an easy-to-reach bolt catch and release. The 10.25-inch handguard features a Picatinny rail on the top and M-Lok slots along the other seven sides, two bolt attachments for minimal deviation and custom wire routing/stowage slots for clean mounting of multiple M-Lok compatible accessories. MSRP: $3,299. **www.nemoarms.com**



13: ROCK ISLAND ARMORY TM22 FEATHER



The Rock Island Armory .22-caliber LR TM22 Feather, a new-age lightweight rifle sporting polymer furniture, is built to the newest standards while retaining classical attributes. It features an adjustable stock, rear handle with front sight post and target barrel performance, and is compatible with AR-type grips, commercial buffer tube adapters and top rail. This rifle is appropriate for all ages and all types of shooting scenarios. It is equipped with an 18-inch barrel and has an overall length of 36.5 inches. The TM22 Feather weighs 4.9 pounds and comes with two 10-round polymer magazines. Aftermarket 15-round and 25-round magazines are available. It has a front bead sight and rear handle sight and comes with a black anodized finish. MSRP: $249. **www.armscor.com**

14: RUGER PRECISION RIFLE



The Ruger Precision Rifle (RPR), now offered in a new configuration, will be offered in three popular competition calibers — 6mm Creedmoor, 6.5 Creedmoor and .308 Win., as well as three magnum calibers — .300 Win. Mag., .300 PRC and .338 Lapua Mag. The rifle's new buttstock allows for easy, intuitive and secure adjustment to conform to any shooter or shooting style — adjustable for length-of-pull, cheek rest height and horizontal position and buttpad height. Other key features include a heavy contour, cold hammer-forged barrel, muzzle brake, Magpul MOE-K2 vertical pistol grip and a black DLC-coated bolt. The aluminum handguard is equipped with M-Lok slots and an ARCA rail. MSRP: Starting at $2,149. **www.ruger.com**

15: SHAW CUSTOM BARRELS EXCURSION



Excursion Complete Rifles from Shaw Custom Barrels are built as lightweight hunting rifles featuring carbon fiber Peak 44 stocks and stainless steel barrels (the addition/option for titanium-sleeved stainless steel barrels will be announced soon). With the Excursion's Remington 700 action footprint, the options for a tactical or PRS-style stock are plentiful. With seven barrel contours to choose from, customers can build an Excursion barreled action to suit their needs and put it into the stock or chassis of their choice, resulting in a tactical/precision rifle. Key features include a 416 stainless steel receiver, ultra-smooth bolt operation, TriggerTech trigger and two-position safety. The Excursion comes with one AICS-pattern magazine and sub-MOA guarantee, along with many other options to choose from. MSRP: Starting at $2,550. **www.shawcustombarrels.com**

16: SIG SAUER M400-SENTRY



The M400-Sentry from Sig Sauer offers a ready-to-go solution for discerning shooters, combining the proven capabilities of the M400-SDI X platform with the multi-purpose functionality of the Romeo5 Genll red-dot sight, Foxtrot-MSR full-size light and a vertical foregrip. With its 1X aiming solution and crisp 2 MOA dot, the Romeo5 Genll provides an estimated 40,000 hours of runtime, compliments of Sig Sauer's motion-activated Motac design. Standout features include fully ambi-dextrous control, free-floating M-Lok forend, Sig two-stage Matchlite Duo trigger, 16-inch chrome/moly steel barrel with a 1:7 twist rate, six-position Magpul MOE-SL stock and low-profile gas block with a mid-length operating system. This combination of features makes the M400-Sentry an out-of-the-box solution for home/personal defense, advanced training or recreational shooting. MAP: $1,749. **www.sigsauer.com**

GEAR ROUNDUP

17: TR IMPORTS TITAN 6 TAC



Long recognized as a high-quality line of hunting and target rifles, the Titan 6 from Austrian manufacturer Roessler is now available in a precision format. All Titan 6 models feature barrels made by Lothar Walther and a silky smooth rotary bolt that locks directly into the barrel — the strongest, most secure locking system available. The double cam cocking mechanism and floating firing pin yield an incredibly fast 1.6ms lock time, a key contributor to its guaranteed sub-MOA accuracy. The Titan 6 TAC is equipped with a 24-inch, 22mm-diameter threaded barrel chambered in 6.5mm Creedmoor, tactical bolt handle, MDT folding buttstock and MDT ESS forend and Picatinny rail. It ships with a four-round magazine in a hard case. MSRP: $2,962. **www.trimports.com**

18: TROY INDUSTRIES MK12



The beating heart of every precision gun is its barrel, and Troy Industries has chosen an 18-inch 1:8 twist medium-profile barrel for its MK12 rifles. Each is chambered in .223 Wylde, ensuring pinpoint accuracy with the dynamic range of 5.56mm and .223 Rem. cartridge loadings. Its 4.5-pound two-stage LaRue Tactical MBT-2S straight bow trigger provides a consistent, predictable break, and the Troy suppressor ready flash hider all but eliminates muzzle flash. The upper and lower receivers are Mil-Spec and CNC-machined from forged 7075 aluminum and Type III hard coat anodized, and the fire-selector is ambidextrous for ease of use and offers fluid engagement. The MK12 comes packaged in a Condition 1 45-inch waterproof and dustproof hard case. MSRP: $3,300. **www.worldoftroy.com**

19: WEATHERBY MODEL 307 RANGE XP 2.0



The Weatherby Model 307 Range XP 2.0 features a lightweight, vertical grip stock that includes an adjustable cheekpiece and adjustable length of pull for a custom fit. Meant to complement the historic Mark V and Vanguard lineups, the Model 307 sports a two-lug, fully cylindrical action compatible with many aftermarket accessories. Touch points are textured for a non-slip grip, and dual front swivel studs allow for attaching multiple accessories. It comes standard with an adjustable TriggerTech trigger and is equipped with a Magpul removable magazine. The skip-fluted barrel is threaded and comes with a recoil-reducing Accubrake. Made in Sheridan, Wyoming, the Range XP 2.0 has a durable Cerakote finish, and the stock features a hand-done sponge paint finish. MSRP: Starting at $1,279. **www.weatherby.com**

20: WILSON COMBAT TACTICAL ULTRALIGHT



The Tactical Ultralight series of rifles by Wilson Combat combines its slick side Mil-Spec forged receiver set, an adjustable Rogers Super-Stoc and the gunmaker's lightest Ultralight Hunter profile match-grade tapered and threaded barrel to create an extremely lightweight and fast-handling tactical carbine. Like all Wilson Combat custom rifles, the Tactical Ultralight is equipped with a strong and light M-Lok capable rail and time-tested light and crisp Tactical Trigger Unit. Finished in the exclusive Armor-Tuff thermally cured finish, the Tactical Ultralight is a great all-around carbine, available in 5.56mm NATO, .300 HAM'R and .300 Blackout chamberings. MSRP: $2,215/Base price. **www.wilsoncombat.com**

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OFFICIAL BALLOT

	BRAND	MODEL
FIREARMS		
Bolt-Action Rifle		
Modern Sporting Rifle		
Lever Action		
Shotgun		
Muzzleloader		
Handgun		
Revolvers		
AR Pistol		
Airgun		
Crossbow		
AMMUNITION		
Shotshells		
Centerfire		
Rimfire		
Hunting Pellet		
RELOADING		
Bullets		
Components		
Powder		
AFTERMARKET TRIGGER		
AFTERMARKET BARREL		
GUN SIGHT		
Riflescope		
Red Dot/Reflex Sight		
Night Vision/Thermal		
Laser Sight		
HUNTING LIGHTS		
Gun-Mounted Light		
Hand-Held Light		

	BRAND	MODEL
BINOCULAR		
RANGEFINDER		
SPOTTING SCOPE		
SUPPRESSOR		
SHOTGUN CHOKE TUBE		
HOLSTERS		
SHOOTING STICKS		
SHOOTING BENCH		
SHOOTING TARGET		
GUN CLEANING PRODUCTS		
GUN CASE		
GUN SAFE		
GUN-MOUNTED BIPODS		
BOOTS		
VEST/BACKPACK		
TRAIL CAMERA		
CELLULAR TRAIL CAMERA		
GPS		
HUNTING APP		
KNIFE		
CAMO PATTERN		
APPAREL		
FAVORITE DISTRIBUTOR		

NEW PRODUCT (Introduced in 2025) _____

FAVORITE *SSR* ARTICLE/DEPARTMENT _____

FAVORITE *SSR* WRITER _____

DID WE MISS ANY IMPORTANT CATEGORIES THAT SHOULD APPEAR IN NEXT YEAR'S CHOICE AWARDS?

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NEW PRODUCTS

EC

EDITOR'S CHOICE

By Gordy Krahn

1

OTIS TECHNOLOGY SUPPRESSOR CLEANING KIT

A suppressor is essentially an extension of the firearm's barrel, so it stands to reason that, like the barrel, it suffers from the same carbon and lead fouling issues and should be cleaned at regular intervals to maintain optimum performance. There are basically two types of suppressors — sealed and non-sealed. A quick look at the manufacturer's recommendations will determine the cleaning process and frequency for each. Shooters can extend the life of their suppressors with the Otis Technology Suppressor Cleaning Kit. This kit includes everything needed to remove most carbon fouling and build up from suppressors — soaking container, 16-ounce bottle of Suppressor Cleaner Concentrate, baffle and all-purpose cleaning brushes and microfiber cloth. And the cleaning process is quick and easy — soak, scrub, rinse, dry and lubricate. The included soaking container accommodates up to a 12-inch suppressor and AP brushes (one bronze, one nylon and one stainless steel) and a nylon baffle cleaning brush to help scrub fouling loosened during the soaking process. The 16-ounce bottle of biodegradable Suppressor Cleaner Concentrate creates 32 ounces of cleaning fluid, and is safe to use on all Mil-Spec and factory finishes, including anodized aluminum, stainless steel, Inconel and titanium. Otis' recommended cleaning interval: For rimfire suppressors, clean after every 350 to 500 rounds. For centerfire suppressors, clean after every 1,000 to 2,000 rounds. MSRP: $39.99

WWW.OTISTEC.COM





2

AGM GLOBAL VISION ADDERV2 LRF 60-1280 THERMAL RIFLESCOPE

AGM brings its first ever 1280x1024 resolution thermal device to the market in a sleek traditional 30mm tube design — the AGM AdderV2 LRF 60-1280 Thermal Riflescope. It also packs a well-disguised 1,000-meter laser rangefinder into the germanium lens assembly, and is equipped with a high-resolution 2560x2560 display that provides an incredibly detailed thermal image. The 60mm lens brings the 1280's base magnification to an extremely comfortable 2.5X base, with 8X digital zoom and an on-board ballistic calculator. Like all models in the AdderV2 product family, this unit comes with an American-made one-piece 30mm ADM mount, so hunters have nothing to do but get zeroed-in before getting out into the field. MSRP: $7,345

WWW.AGMGLOBALVISION.COM



3

ARMASIGHT WARDEN 640 HANDHELD THERMAL OPTIC

The Warden 640 Handheld Thermal Handheld Optic is built on Armasight's Iron Wolf platform, featuring the proprietary ArmaCORE 640x480 12-micron thermal sensor, delivering exceptional clarity and smooth 60Hz performance. With its 35mm germanium lens, the Warden 640 provides sharp, high-contrast visuals and detects heat signatures at distances up to 1,300 meters, even in fog, smoke or severe weather conditions. Engineered for durability, the Warden 640 is IP67-rated for waterproof performance and is built to thrive in a wide range of environmental conditions. Despite its rugged construction, the Warden remains lightweight at just 22.4 ounces, ensuring maximum portability without sacrificing capability. Key features include video and image capture, USB-C connectivity, quick detach mount, battery status indicator and multiple color palettes. MSRP: $3,799

WWW.ARMASIGHT.COM

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NEW PRODUCTS



4 CCI UPPERCUT .22 WMR AMMO

Uppercut .22 WMR Ammo from CCI Ammunition offers self defenders a new rimfire option. The difference in CCI Uppercut lies in its exclusive projectile. Unlike the simple lead round-nose or copper-plated hollowpoints typical of most rimfire ammunition, it features a 40-grain jacketed hollowpoint bullet with nose skiving, which initiates full and reliable expansion across all firearms platforms while retaining the weight needed to hit critical penetration depths. Plus, CCI's legendary primers ensure it will always be ready when needed. Uppercut ammo is available at dealers nationwide and online. MSRP: $25.99/Box of 50

WWW.CCI-AMMUNITION.COM



5 CMC TRIGGERS ENHANCED MIL-SPEC AR-15/10 TRIGGERS

CMC's new Enhanced Mil-Spec Component Triggers were designed for precision and reliability — made in-house in Fort Worth, Texas — and provide an unprecedented level of accuracy and consistency for firearm enthusiasts and professionals alike. With flat, curved and combat curved bow DLC-coated options available, buyers can choose their preferred trigger feel. What additionally sets CMC triggers apart is their innovative assembly tool, which simplifies installation. This groundbreaking tool, which is available in black and red, allows for quick and effortless assembly, ensuring that even those new to firearms customization can experience professional-level results. With CMC Triggers Enhanced Mil-Spec Component Triggers and assembly tool, users not only upgrade their firearm, they elevate their entire shooting experience. MSRP: Prices vary per model

WWW.CMCTRIGGERS.COM



6 FAXON FIREARMS TWENTY-TOUCAN .22-CALIBER MODULAR SUPPRESSOR

The Faxon Twenty-Toucan .22-caliber Modular Suppressor is a game changer for shooters seeking durability and whisper-quiet performance. Built tough with 17-4 stainless steel baffles, blast tube and end cap and paired with a lightweight aluminum extension tube, this suppressor is engineered for longevity and reliability in the harshest shooting conditions. It delivers an impressive 114 dB performance with .22-caliber LR ammunition, while also providing significant sound reduction for .22 Mag. and 5.7x28mm loads, making it a versatile choice for any small-caliber enthusiast. The Twenty-Toucan is self-serviceable, allowing easy maintenance to keep it performing at its peak. Featuring a direct-thread mount (1/2x28), it offers seamless compatibility across a wide range of rimfire and small-caliber firearms. MSRP: $400

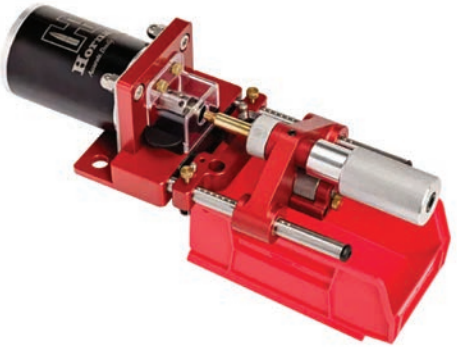
WWW.FAXONFIREARMS.COM



7 FIREFIELD IRONCLAD MINI REFLEX SIGHT F3

Firefield's Ironclad Mini Reflex Sight F3 is a compact sighting solution for shooters seeking durability and versatility. With its rugged rubber coating and custom lens shape, it ensures a solid grip and quick target acquisition. Featuring 10 brightness settings and compatibility with the RMSc footprint, it offers flexibility for various setups. Crafted from aircraft-grade aluminum, it's shockproof and fogproof, ready to handle heavy recoil from firearms such as the 1911 (.45 ACP or AR10 (3.8). Whether it's for primary pistols or backups, the Ironclad delivers performance in a compact package. Included is a lens cloth, T10 and T15 Torx wrenches, CR2032 battery, labeled mounting screws, rubber shim and low mount. MSRP: $59.97

WWW.FIREFIELD.COM



8 HORNADY 3-IN-1 POWER CASE TRIMMER

The Hornady 3-in-1 Power Case Trimmer offers maximum efficiency and unmatched consistency without sacrificing accuracy and precise control — carefully designed to provide fast, consistent and exacting case prep results. Brass cases are quickly trimmed, chamfered and deburred, utilizing one easy step thanks to the quiet 2,000 rpm+ electric motor. Capable of trimming brass from .22 to .30 calibers and case lengths from 1.45 to 3.5 inches, the Power Case Trimmer can make quick work of brass prep for various rifle chamberings. The combination of macro and micro adjustment provides quick and exact settings down to .001-inch. The case length click-adjustment micro-dial ensures settings are locked in and guarantees quick and consistent trimming, case after case. MSRP: $775.33

WWW.HORNADY.COM



9 HYDRA WEAPONRY BMP-23 PISTOL

Hydra Weaponry's BMP-23 Pistol in 5.56mm is a modernized evolution of the legendary Bushmaster Arm Pistol, reimagined for today's shooters with advanced materials and precision CNC manufacturing. Featuring an 11.5-inch chromemoly barrel and an AK-47-style gas piston operating system with an A2 grip, the BMP-23 delivers reliability and performance in a compact, lightweight aluminum and steel firearm weighing just 5.2 pounds. Built-in iron sights and a unique 40-degree swivel design allow for seamless right- or left-hand operation. Credited as one of the first personal defense weapons, the modern BMP-23 pistol is a continuation of the masterful evolution of the original Bushmaster Arm Pistol from the next generation of Gwinn family ownership. MSRP: $2,350

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NEW PRODUCTS



10 MEPROLIGHT MVO 3-18X44MM FFP RIFLESCOPE

The MVO 3-18x44mm FFP Riflescope from Meprolight offers a balance between performance, size and weight for a wide range of hunting and shooting applications — at a wide variety of target ranges. Featuring the M3 Mil reticle, this first focal plane riflescope utilizes a grid reticle pattern that allows visual holds for long-range precision shooting — changing size as the magnification changes. Additionally, the 44mm objective lens enhances light gathering capabilities, improving visibility in low-light conditions. Other key features include high-quality German Schott glass, multicoated lenses, 92% light transmission, red and green reticle illumination, intuitive lockable and zero-resettable windage and elevation turrets and 12-hour auto shut-off. MSRP: $1,799.99

WWW.MEPROLIGHT.COM



11 MOSSBERG 590A1 PUMP-ACTION SHOTGUN

Mossberg continues to refine and upgrade its 590A1 Series of pump-action shotguns, as it joins the new Professional Series of firearms. Each gun in this series undergoes an enhanced assembly and quality control process, and has special finishes and features such as refining touches to the loading port to help optimize performance. Mossberg is offering nine versions of the 590A1 in its Professional Series, including nine-shot and seven-shot versions with the option of Cerakote or Marinecote metal finishes, compact stocks and Magpul-equipped models, a six-shot NFA/Class 3 offering and options with orange furniture. Carried by members of every branch of the U.S. Armed Services and by military and law enforcement agencies in countries worldwide, the 590A1 defines "field proven." MSRP: Starting at $959

WWW.MOSSBERG.COM



12 SHOOTER'S CHOICE UNIVERSAL GUN CLEANING KIT

Shooters can get all their gun cleaning gear in one convenient kit with the Shooter's Choice Universal Gun Cleaning Kit for Rifles, Pistols and Shotguns. This complete kit includes 10 brushes, 10 mops and 10 brass pierce point jags, and cleans a variety of firearms from .22-caliber to 12-gauge. Two different-diameter brass rod sets with swivel handles are included in the kit. Attach the separate T-handle to a rod section to use in conjunction with the 5.56mm chamber brush. Slotted tips, three different-size cotton patches and muzzle guards help ensure an effective swab of the firearm's bore. Also included is a .5 fluid ounce bottle of Shooter's Choice FP-10 Lubricant Elite CLP. MSRP: $74.99

WWW.SHOOTERS-CHOICE.COM



13 SMITH & WESSON MODEL 1854 .45-70 GOVT. LEVER GUN

Smith & Wesson first introduced the 1854 lever-action series in a paired synthetic black polymer and stainless steel finish, as well as an Armornite and walnut furniture combination, across several pistol calibers including .44 Rem. Mag., .45 Colt and .357 Mag. Now lever-action enthusiasts can own one of these smooth lever guns chambered in the time-honored .45-70 Government rifle cartridge. The rifle comes equipped with several out-of-the-box features such as a 5.75-inch Picatinny base for optics mounting, an adjustable XS Sights ghost ring rear sight, gold bead front sight and a fixed magazine tube. The forend on the stainless steel model offers three M-Lok compatible slots for the user's preferred accessories and both variants incorporate mounts for the addition of a sling. MSRP: $1,399

WWW.SMITH-WESSON.COM



14 VERSACARRY CRUSADER MOLDED-LEATHER OWB HOLSTER

The new Crusader Outside-the-Waistband Holster combines timeless craftsmanship with practical functionality, featuring premium water buffalo leather hide construction — offering a sleek, minimalist design while prioritizing all-day comfort. It includes a double-ply leather backing, which ensures the firearm stays off the user's body during extended wear. With its forward cant, the holster is designed for smooth, easy and quick draws. For a secure hold, the Crusader is equipped with two large leather belt loops, ensuring reliable attachment to the belt. Users can choose between two style options: the Arc Angel design for a bold, detailed look or the Classic version for a clean and traditional appearance. The Crusader is custom-molded to fit a wide variety of popular handguns. MSRP: $67.99-$69.99

WWW.VERSACARRY.COM

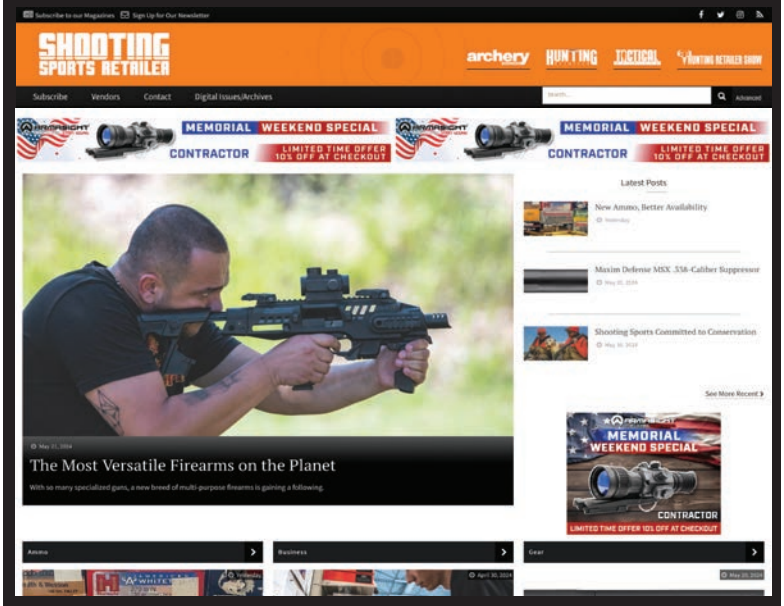


15 XS SIGHTS HENRY LEVER-ACTION RIFLE HANDGUARD

XS Sights' Handguard for Henry Lever-Action Rifles was designed for firearms enthusiasts who want to upgrade their Henry rifles. This highly customizable handguard is equipped with six M-Lok slots on each side and seven on the bottom to accommodate a wide array of accessories. Made of aircraft-grade aluminum, the LVR-HG is rugged, yet lightweight, with an aesthetically pleasing look. The handguard's sleek profile matches the receiver's lines, enhancing the structural integrity of the rifle while preserving the traditional look and feel of a lever gun. The angled slot cuts dissipate heat effectively for comfort during extended shooting sessions. It fits all Henry rifle models chambered in .357 Mag./.38 Spl., .44 Mag./.44 Spl. and .45-70. Retail: $247.50

WWW.XSSIGHTS.COM

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SHOOTING SPORTS RETAILER

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SELLING PRECISION

The precision shooting market is loaded with opportunities for the savvy retailer.

By Steve Comus

Precision shooting is one of — if not the — biggest trends in shooting sports, which means that it affects shooting sports retailers regardless of whether they recognize and focus on that segment of the market.

The reason precision shooting affects all retailers is that precision shooting is now a significant factor in the industry, which means that it represents a measurable amount of the money spent by all shooters across all segments, which further means that there is a potential for added sales for retailers who are in the game, so to speak.

The concept of precision shooting is simple: put every shot precisely on target every time, regardless of distance or atmospheric conditions (wind, light, etc.). As simple as the concept is, getting from Square One to success is mind-bogglingly complex, which means there is a seemingly endless array of guns, ammo and gear needed for the customers to live their precision shooting dreams. Helping customers realize their dreams is what keeps the cash register ringing, so to speak.

But how precise is "precise" in precision shooting? It depends on the shooting discipline. Traditionally, the concept of precision shooting was embodied in benchrest shooting, where the object is to put successive bullets literally through the same hole.

Benchrest competitions are shot at various distances, ranging from 50 yards for rimfire to 1,000 yards for centerfire rifles. A record group at 1,000 yards is 3 inches. That's precise.

More recently, there has been a trend in what is generally referred to as long-range shooting. This often differs from benchrest in a number of ways, not the least of which is that long-ranging can involve shooting from various kinds of rests, not simply from a bench. But the object is the same – putting the bullet precisely on target at distance.

The beauty of all this to retailers is that it takes a lot of specialized gear for their customers to shoot precisely. Think guns, sights, ammo, etc. And the more serious the long-range shooter, the more high-performance equipment it takes to be successful.

Although it all starts with a precision rifle, it takes precision sights (scopes in most instances) and the highest quality ammo as a bare minimum.

Things like wind meters, bipods and laser rangefinders are used commonly among long-range shooters. And in recent times, some telescopic scopes "talk" to cell phones or tablets to provide all the "dope" (distance, wind, etc. measurement information) necessary to make successful shots regardless of distance and atmospheric conditions.

Handloading is common among precision shooters as they fine-tune loads for specific rifles. Hence, there's an expanded market for reloading presses, dies, calipers and scales, as well as powder, primers and premium bullets to say nothing of bullet comparators and those kinds of things.

The point in all of this is that there are significant additional sales and many repeat visits to the store by customers who want to be precision shooters. And the operative question for the store is just how involved to get in this trend.

The more esoteric any shooting discipline or trend is, the greater the need for in-store expertise if that potential is to be realized to its fullest extent. This, of course, can range from tacit recognition and incidental sales, all the way to shops whose primary focus is on precision shooting.

Most shops probably fall somewhere between the extremes. One strategy for those in the middle of the spectrum is to consider what kinds of products make sense, both for precision shooting and more general shooting. For example, if the shop primarily serves a general shooting and/or defense clientele, it's logical to offer at least some of the more entry level precision products and market them in more of a crossover mode. That's the equivalent of dipping a toe in the water to judge the temperature.

For shops that already focus heavily on AR/AK types of rifles, upselling to better barrels/uppers makes sense, as does stocking at least one or several higher-performance telescopic sight lines that incorporate reticles and adjustments that are designed for serious precision shooting, but which logically can be used on more universal rifle rigs.

The digital world has infiltrated the shooting sports generally and more heavily into the precision shooting arena. Depending on how invested a shop wants to be in the digital world, this is one area where sales can expand rapidly and widely for customers who use those devices to their maximum effectiveness, or to customers who want to use them, simply for the enjoyment of expanding the presence of electronics in their daily lives.

One thing is certain when it comes to precision shooting: It's here to stay. There is no looking back.

"One thing is certain when it comes to precision shooting: It's here to stay."

Hence, the question is whether the individual retailer wants to capitalize on the trend and if so, at what speed and at what level?

There is no right or wrong answer universally. Such decisions depend on the clientele of individual shops — both the current clientele as well as the potential clientele should greater focus be placed on precision shooting.

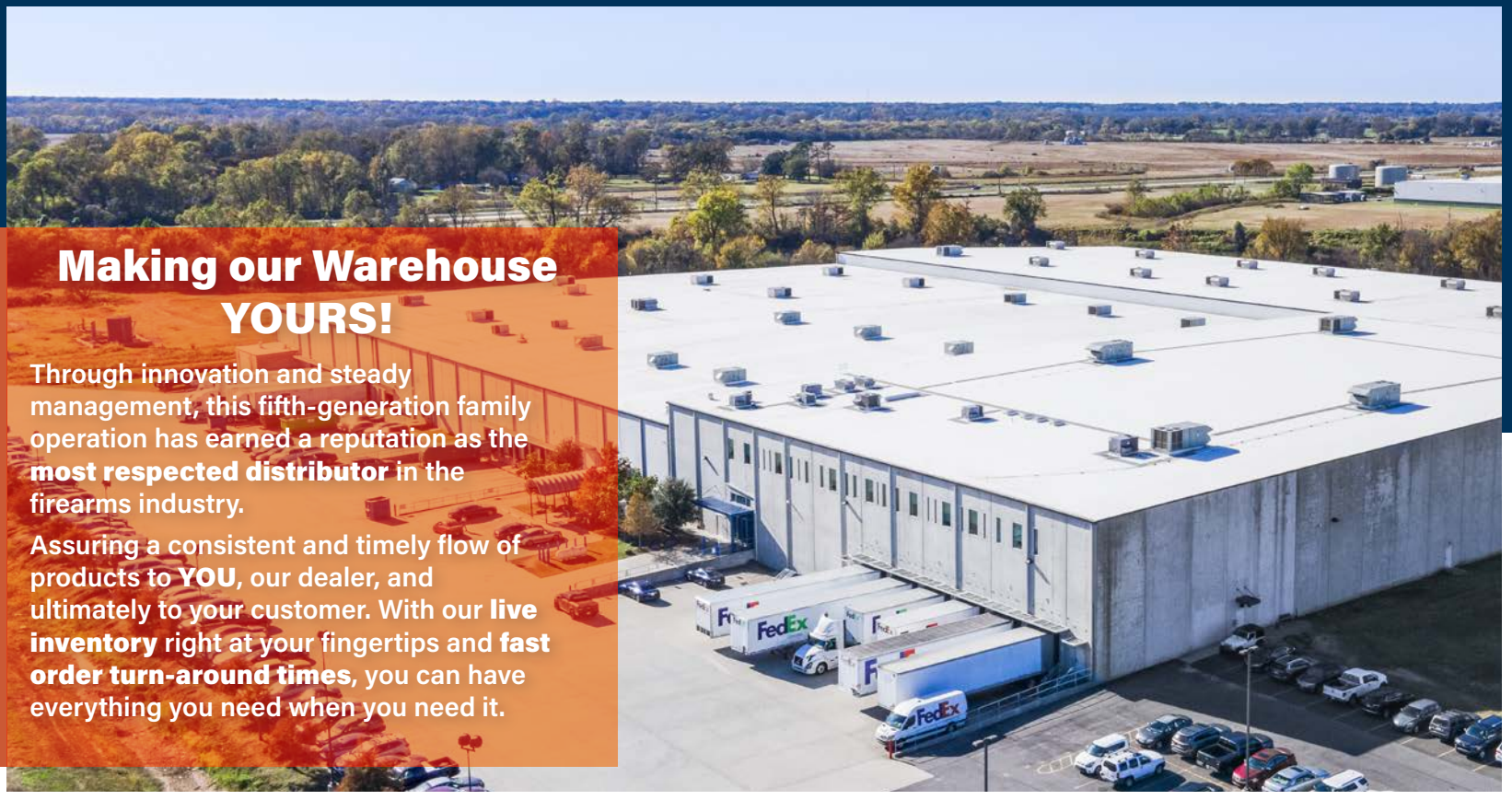
The good news is that a shop can increase focus on precision shooting without sacrificing any other areas of focus that might already exist. In other words, if the focus is on tactical, the store doesn't have to drop tactical to increase focus on precision tactical.

With that in mind, there is no logical reason not to give a shot at retailing precision shooting gear. And there also is no logical reason for shops that are already in that space not to increase their presence there.

In the end, it's about riding the wave to higher sales. The industry has given shooters the ability to be more precise. Why not take advantage of it? SSR

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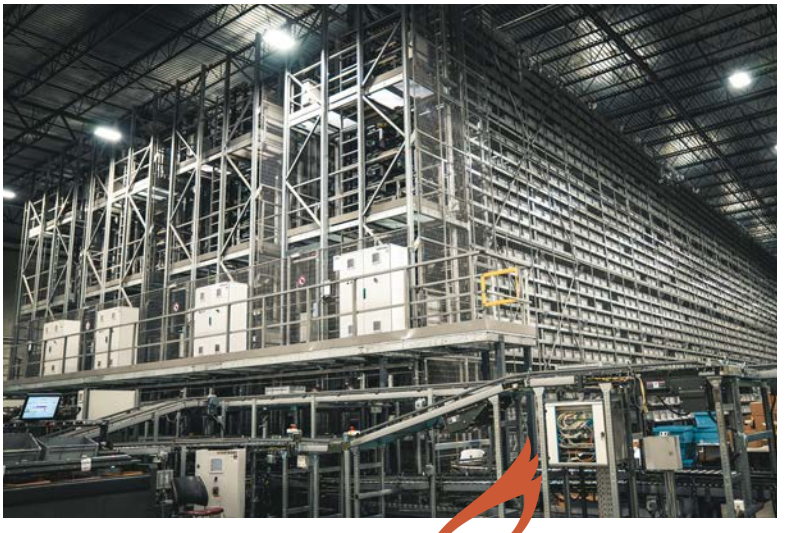
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