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POLAR PICKS UP THE PACE

Stan Brajer, SVP sales and marketing, Polar.



INSIDEINSIGHT PODCAST

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The heartbeat at Polar is getting stronger. In the past four months, the company has signed on a new executive team, re-organized its sales force, inked three world class athletes and begun shipping its new

M600 smart sport watch.

In 2017, the Finnish company will celebrate its 40th anniversary with another new product rollout at the CES Show in January. And new SVP of sales and marketing Stan Brajer promises the best is yet to come.

"We've always been known as a great heart rate monitor company," Brajer told *Running Insight*, "but going forward, retailers will see that we are very much a technology company

with an emphasis on sports and fitness, grounded in running."

Polar made a statement in the running category by signing three high profile runners to endorsement deals. On August 1st, Polar signed an agreement with triathlete Miranda Carfrae and in the past month Polar has finalized deals with U.S. Olympic Trial Champions Molly Huddle and Kate Grace.

"The goal is always to sign the best athletes that represent who we are as a brand and share the same vision," Brajer said. "Initially, the first athletes happened to be female, which works out nicely because this is the fastest growing segment of the market."

Polar is also working with Team Run Eugene, NJNY Track Club, Northern Arizona Elite and the Mammoth Track Club, according to Brajer,

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Polar (continued)

and plans to sign several male athletes, as well.

Brajer joined Polar USA this past summer along with new president Tom Fowler, who spent some time at Intel, but is best known for building the Cervelo cycling brand in the US. Brajer is a former runner and run store owner, who has worked at Brooks, Puma and Timex and is best known for establishing Garmin as the leader in wearable technology in the U.S. (To listen to an interview with Fowler, click on the podcast link on page 2).

"For the first time, we have executives at a high level that understand the sports market and that's critical," says Brajer.

Among the first moves Brajer made at Polar was re-organizing the sales force, switching from a hybrid model of employees and reps to a 10-person sales team of company employees that will focus on run specialty stores, bike dealers and select sporting goods stores.



Polar M600

"We want a team in the market that can back up stores with clinics, fun runs and help out at marathon expos and believe this structure will accomplish that," Brajer said.

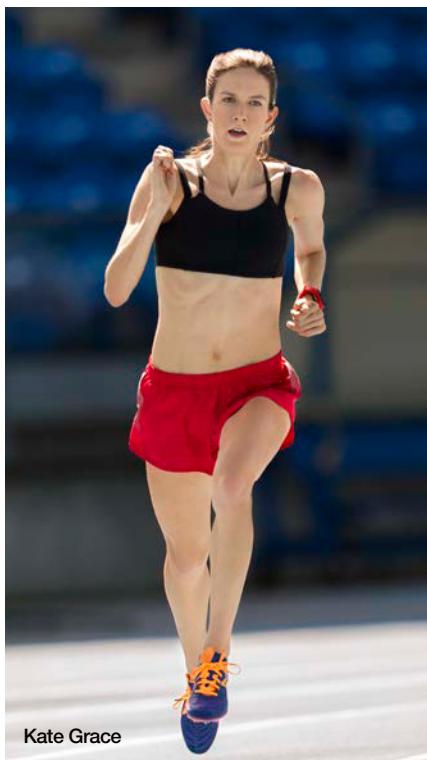
Going forward, Polar will also launch product in the sports specialty market before branching out to electronics stores and other channels of distribution. "We will stage product," he said, "and have a clear strategy of product segmentation, making sure that each channel of distribution gets the product they can be most

successful with."

Brajer says this will make it easier to enforce MAP pricing for Polar, which will make it a more profitable brand for its retailers. "We are over distributed right now and that has led to discounting. Going forward, we'll be more strategic and that will be in everyone's best interest."

Polar's M600 is being marketed as "smart coaching meets smart watches." The M600 has an optical heart rate feature, GPS, which allows for speed, distance, pace and route tracking, and 24/7 activity monitor functionality. The watch is also waterproof and can be worn while swimming. The watch runs on an Android platform and is compatible with most popular apps. It also syncs up with Polar's proprietary Flow web service and mobile app, which the company established in 2012. Flow allows users to track their daily activities and analyze their recent training sessions. ■

Three New Athletes Join Polar Team



Kate Grace

"Polar has an extensive audience of athletes that spans beginners to professionals, and we're excited to add Molly Huddle and Kate Grace to the growing roster of Polar runners" said Polar's Stan Brajer. "Our products are vital to understanding key training opportunities and areas for improvement. It's not just about the time you finish the race; it's about all the metrics and guidance that help you get there, and how you apply them to training. Pace, heart rate, cadence, training load and recovery are performance metrics that Molly and Kate rely on to improve, but what sets Polar apart is that we offer guidance in addition to metrics, so a beginner can use our products and understand how to use the same metrics as an Olympic runner."

Molly Huddle

A nine-time All-American at the University of Notre Dame, Huddle has won 21 U.S. titles and most recently, she shattered the American record in the 10,000-meter race at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro with 30:13 in finishing 6th. In winning the 2013 U.S. 12K championship, Molly set a world best time over that distance in 37:50.

Kate Grace

Grace was the lone American to advance to the women's 800-meter final in Rio. A few weeks later she posted a season's best 1:58.28 at the highly competitive Weltklasse Zürich Diamond League 800. She is only the second female Yale graduate in history to represent the school in Track and Field at the Olympic Games. During her time at

Yale, Grace set four school records, made it to the NCAA championships in the 800 and 1,500-meter races and earned NCAA All-American honors four times. Her mother, fitness icon Kathy Smith, instilled a love of athletics in Kate from an early age and has always been a positive influence and source of advice.

Miranda Carfrae

Carfrae is a celebrated athlete having achieved podium positions in six of the seven Ironman World Championships in which she has competed. She's won a gold medal in 2010, 2013, 2014, silver in 2009 and 2011 and bronze in 2012. She also holds the Ironman World Championship course record finishing the race in 8:52:14, making her one of the fastest distance runners in the world.



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10 TIME-MANAGEMENT TIPS

Many running store owners and operators are time-starved souls. Here's how to better control your day.

By Daniel P. Smith

Bob Shooer, like so many other running retailers, would love more time. But he knows the day isn't making any more of it—a recognition that drives him to be more efficient with the time he does have. "If you're going to succeed and your store is going to reach its potential, then you're going to have to learn how to manage your time, delegate and prioritize," says Shooer, owner of Fleet Feet Sports Pittsburgh since 2007.

For many small business owners, natural hustlers who immerse themselves in their business, time management is a tricky balancing act.

"Small business owners often believe that the success of their business depends solely on them and, truthfully, it does because we are the ones so invested in it," confirms Lorna Kibbey, a Florida-based leadership consultant who speaks to small business owners about time management.

But with the 24-hour day here to stay, small business leaders must learn to work within that daily construct and develop strategies to better manage their time to ensure maximum effectiveness.



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10 Time-Management Tips (continued)



Fleet Feet CEO Jeff Phillips
and Fleet Feet Pittsburgh's
Bob Shooer

No business leader can possibly do it all. And attempting to tackle every little task consumes too much energy and time. To counter this, prioritize the most important efforts.

Tip 1: Invest in people

Over the years, Shooer has built a competent team of cross-trained employees whom he trusts to execute his vision. He can delegate certain responsibilities and be freed to tackle other key business-building tasks.

"I manage my time by getting tasks done through people I trust," says Shooer, adding that it's critically important people are held accountable for their assignments.

That's admittedly a tough thing for many small business operators, Kibbey admits, but critically important.

"Your time needs to be devoted to things that move the needle," she says, "and you need to be willing to outsource tasks such as bookkeeping, website or social media and put your time, strengths and talents where they are best utilized."

Tip 2: Leverage tech

Technology can be used to help boost productivity and efficiency. There's dictation software like Dragon to expedite computer work; online note-taking services like Evernote; team task managers like Flow; intelligent calendars like Timeful; and RescueTime, which discreetly monitors your computer use so you can see where your time is really spent and make the

necessary corrections.

"Experiment and find out what works for you," Kibbey suggests before warning against "spending too much time trying to copy someone else's model."

Tip 3: Curtail time-consuming paperwork

Dave Welsh, the veteran owner of the four-store Running Companies of South Jersey enterprise, limits paperwork – and saves time in the process – by doing two things: first, he sets his futures orders, which account for about 90 percent of his inventory, and only revises them twice each month; and second, he only pays outstanding bills on the first of the month rather than paying invoices as they come due.

"I get rid of all the extra steps and that simplifies everything," he says.

Tip 4: Have an escape

When Shooer's original office sat in the store's stock room, a stream of constant disruptions was inevitable that challenged his productivity. Shooer responded by investing in office space above his store. He now enjoys a quiet place to address necessary office tasks and better control his day's schedule.

"When I feel the sales floor's in good hands, I'll come upstairs and pound out work with the door closed," he says.

Tip 5: Daily planning

Kibbey urges small business leaders to make planning a part of each day's agenda. She recommends plotting a daily schedule, determining what needs to be accomplished and when, though she cautions against creating one all-encompassing to-do list.

"That gets overwhelming quickly," she says, suggesting instead operators pen different lists for different things: a list for short-term tasks and another focused on long-term objectives, for instance, or breaking down a long-term effort into smaller pieces on one list for a "baby step" approach.

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10 Time-Management Tips (continued)

If the “you’ve got mail” ping on your cell phone beckons you to check your email account dozens of times each day, then turn off that setting.

Tip 6: Prioritize

No business leader can possibly do it all. And attempting to tackle every little task consumes too much energy and time. To counter this, prioritize the most important efforts.

At targeted weekly meetings with his general manager, Deb Doyle, for instance, Shooer reviews the week's priorities and defines what needs to be done sooner rather than later. This, he says, focuses his efforts to ensure his limited time is devoted to the right tasks.

Tip 7: Offload tasks

For a few days, Kibbey suggests operators keep a simple time log of what they did and when. This provides data on what's consuming their time and can help operators push non-essentials off their plate.

“Then, have a strategic meeting with yourself and give yourself permission to let go of things by using the talents and resources you have in house,” she says.

Welsh, for example, doesn't touch scheduling, social media or coordinating a store's physical events.

“I don't need to call Saucony and talk to them about setting up a spike night because I have staff capable of coordinating those details,” he says.

Tip 8: Minimize distractions

If the “you’ve got mail” ping on your cell

phone beckons you to check your e-mail account dozens of times each day, then turn off that setting – or follow Welsh's lead and eliminate e-mail from your smartphone completely.

Block URLs from your work computer that suck time and eliminate distractions that drain your ability to be productive. As a result, efficiency will increase.

Tip 9: Establish a routine

Each morning, Welsh checks his American Express card, his Bank of America account and then e-mail. Then, he runs. Thereafter, he will not check e-mail more than twice throughout the day.

“Establishing a routine and sticking to it helps me manage my time in a practical way,” Welsh says.

Tip 10: Learn new productivity-boosting tricks

Many Apple stores offer free one-hour workshops on how to effectively use your Mac devices for photography, video and more, while online courses on Coursera and edX offer tips on customer service, accounting and other key business-driving topics. By improving your skills in certain areas, you can become a more confident, speedier professional.

“Take the opportunity to learn how to become more productive,” Kibbey says. ■

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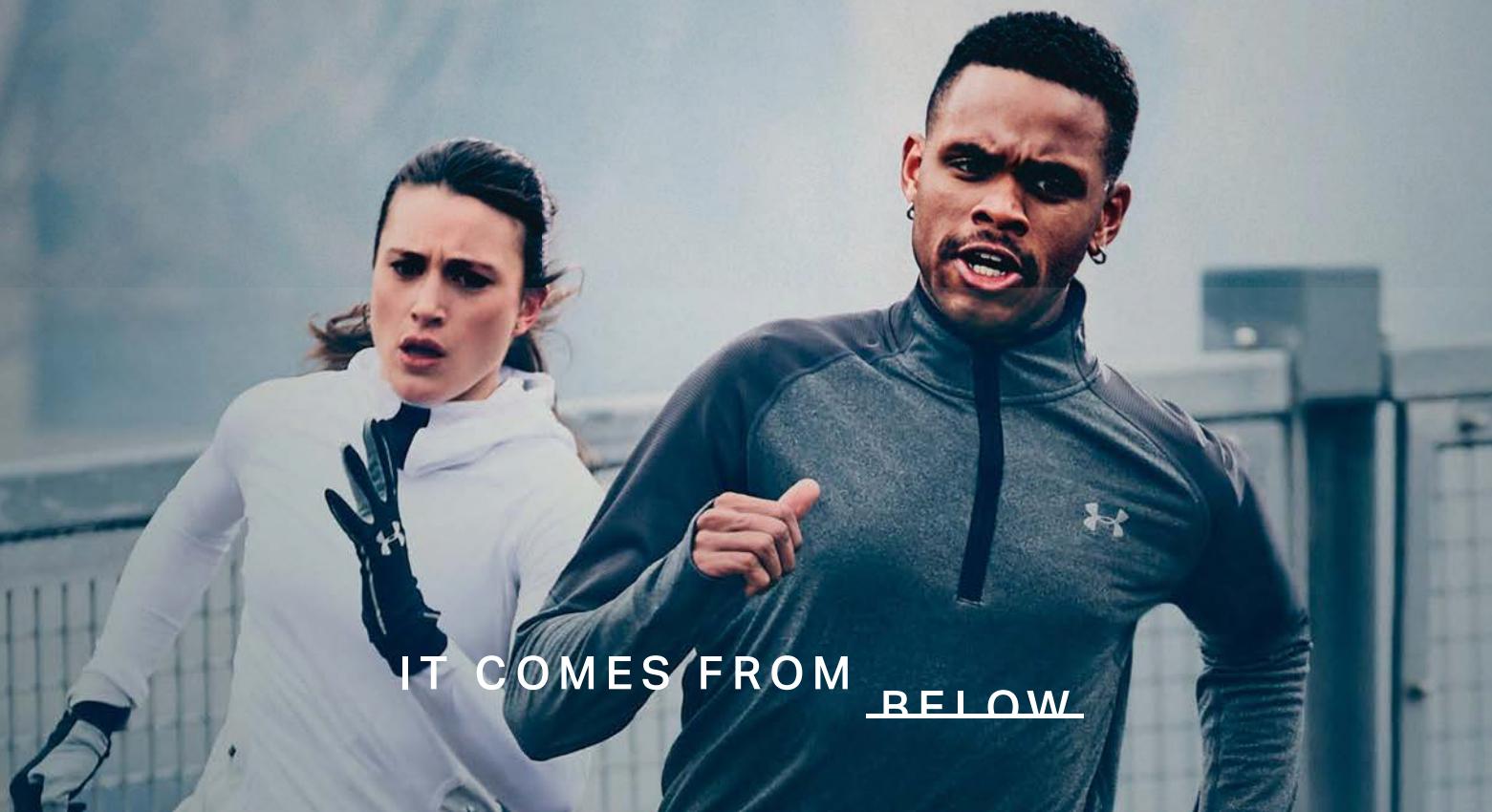
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NYC Connection

The New York City Marathon is just around the corner. And this year, as always, brands are unveiling eye-catching NYC-inspired styles. ASICS, whose 25-year sponsorship of the NYC marathon ends with the 2016 race, offers up three styles with a New York theme. The ASICS collection has a passport theme, which it says is "inspired by New York's rich melting pot and the international diversity of the marathon's runners and spectators." All five boroughs are highlighted as retro-style stamp graphics on the ASICS shoes. The passport theme includes shades of blue and coral and is featured on ASICS' GEL-Kayano 23, GEL-Nimbus 18 and fuzeX shoes. This year's TCS New York City Marathon takes place on Sunday, November 6. Here's a look at some 2016 NYC standouts from several brands, including New Balance, who takes over as footwear and apparel partner at the NYC Marathon in 2017.

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NYC Connection (continued)



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Inov-8 Sponsors Trail Film Fest



The “One Step At A Time” film documents inov-8 athlete Yassine Diboun as he set a new supported “fastest known time” for the Oregon section of the Pacific Crest Trail.

Photos: Chris Low



Roclite 290



Roclite 305

All-terrain running brand inov-8 is a sponsor of the 2016 Trail Running Film Festival (TRFF). The 2016 TRFF kicked off in late September of this year at The Seattle Trail Running Expo. The festival tours through the end of the year and beyond in cities outside of Seattle.

The film festival features hours of rousing trail running films, athlete keynote speakers, local craft beers and exhibitors, and in some cases group runs.

The Film Festival will feature film producer Steven Mortinson’s film: One Step at a Time, sponsored by inov-8, which tells the story of inov-8 ultrarunner Yassine Diboun, and his crew members Scott

The film festival features hours of rousing trail running films.

Loughney and Travis Liles as they attempt to set the new Oregon Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) Fastest Known Time. Mortinson followed the trio as they embarked through the Oregon section of the PCT, capturing their emotional journey and the unforeseen challenges that come with a running endeavor of this magnitude. Yassine will be present at select shows to speak to local athletes about the PCT FKT attempt.

View the One Step at a Time trailer here: <https://vimeo.com/176564174>

To see the full film festival schedule as well as activities, and where Yassine and inov-8

will be travelling with the tour, visit <http://www.trail-filmfest.com/>

The Film Festival Tour coincides with the launch of inov-8's revamped 2017 Roclite line and the brand will be demoing the shoes in select cities to exhibit the multi-terrain grip. The 2017 Roclite line has been completely redesigned from the ground up, but as Graham Jordison, founding design manager at inov-8 states, “The latest outsole is only a slight evolution over the original because we didn’t want to risk losing the highly reputable grip performance.” The uppers have undergone a complete facelift with new materials and construction all while staying true to the All-Terrain brand’s lightweight DNA. ■

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TRE Opens Doors to Race & Event Directors

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The Running Event (TRE) is opening its doors to the sport's most influential race and event directors for the first time since the show began in 2005. TRE 2016 takes place Nov. 29-Dec. 2 in Orlando, FL.

A separate three-day package for race directors includes conference seminars focused on their specific needs, a keynote address by IRONMAN CEO Andrew Messick, admission to the trade show floor, and entry into the Indie 5K road race scheduled this year at Disney World EPCOT Center.

"The race director program recognizes the growing impact that events play in the running ecosystem," says Mark Sullivan, president of TRE, organizer Formula4 Media, the

company that publishes *Running Insight*. "You can't buy a running experience on the internet. Race directors bring the sport to life for millions of participants around the world each year. We hope stores that own or are affiliated with events will make sure those folks attend TRE this year."

Messick's keynote is scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 30 at 11 a.m. at the Hyatt Regency Orlando. The hotel is adjacent to the Orange County Convention Center where more than 250 running industry exhibitors will attract an estimated 800-plus running specialty buyers to TRE 2016.

Messick, who has more than a decade of experience in leadership roles at global sports and entertainment companies, will talk about

the growth of endurance sports, in North America and globally.

Prior to joining IRONMAN in 2011, he served as president of AEG Sports since 2007. At AEG, Messick played a leading role in its international development and for its sports teams and properties, including the Amgen Tour of California, Bay to Breakers foot race, EuroLeague Basketball, and AEG China.

Elite race directors representing road, trail, triathlon or obstacle races attracting over 5,000 participants will be invited to attend all conferences and walk the trade show floor.

"Opening TRE to race directors recognizes their important role in creating new runners or obstacle

racers, driving business into specialty stores, and influencing the sale of running-related products and services," Sullivan said. "They also have an incredible track record in regards to helping raise millions of dollars for charity, whether it's the National Multiple Sclerosis Society's Ride MS and Walk MS, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Team in Training, or Girls on the Run, to name a few."

The TRE Conference will take place in the Hyatt Regency Orlando. The three-day race director package is \$195.

Race directors and event managers can register for TRE at https://formula4media.swoogo.com/therunningevent2016/register?reg_type_id=5231. ■

SPEAKER PROFILE: ANDREW MESSICK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, IRONMAN



Andrew Messick has more than a decade of experience in leadership roles at global sports and entertainment companies. He has a tremendous track record of helping global companies bolster their brands and grow internationally while delivering the highest quality events and products to participants, sponsors and media partners.

Prior to joining IRONMAN in 2011, Messick was President of AEG Sports since 2007. At AEG, he

played a leading role in its international development and for its sports teams and properties, including the Amgen Tour of California, Bay to Breakers foot race, Euroleague Basketball and AEG China.

From 2000 through 2007, Messick was the SVP of NBA International. He was responsible for overseeing the NBA's network of international offices and for leading the NBA's efforts to globalize.

Messick joined the NBA from

Sara Lee Corporation, where he held a range of business development, marketing and general management positions in the UK, Australia and Canada.

He earned a BA in Economics and Psychology from the University of California, Davis and an MBA from the Yale School of Management.

Messick will speak at TRE on Wednesday, November 30 from 11:00 a.m. to 12 noon. ■

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TRE Training Camp Targets Staffers and Managers



The TRE Training Camp will be run by Tom Griffen, a former teacher and retail trainer.

Wed, Nov. 30, 2016
11:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
(includes lunch)

Open to all retail attendees who signed up for TRE conference access.

M

any stores tell us at *Running Insight* that they would like to do more employee training and development, but lack the time and resources to do so.

Working with the Running Industry Association, Formula4 Media, the owners of The Running Event and publishers of *Running Insight*, have created TRE Training Camp, a new session at The Running Event designed for store managers and staffers. "We encourage stores to bring their staffers to TRE Training Camp for valuable

education that will make them better more valuable employees once they return to the stores," said Mark Sullivan of Formula4 Media.

TRE Training Camp will be run by Tom Griffen, a former teacher and retail trainer.

TRE Training Camp will take place Wednesday, Nov. 30 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Orlando, and includes lunch. It is open to all retail attendees who signed up for TRE conference access.

Retailers with questions about how to attend can contact Jenny Swan at jswan@formula4media.com. A summary of key topics that Griffen will cover appears on the following pages.

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TRE Training Camp (continued)



Tom Griffen, Moderator
TRE Training Camp
Wednesday, Nov 30, 2016
11:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

“

Owners and managers need to make sure the brand's story is being told. And told often.

Outside of the House

Tell Your Story. It's What Makes Your Brand Interesting.

What's your story? How did you end up in this industry? Why do you stick around? Certainly, it's not to sit back and watch the cash roll in. Your impetus to do what you do probably goes deeper than face value. The details of your motivation might not be obvious, but really, they should be.

Your unique story is exactly what makes you interesting. Though its reach might be impossible to measure, it attracts like-minded people: from new hires, to new (and returning) customers, to marketing opportunities and community partners, etc. Folks want to connect with you because something about your narrative rings true with them, too. As such, your vision and passion are the ultimate revenue-drivers even if they are largely intangible.

Owners and managers need to make sure the brand's story is being told. And told often. Now's a great time to revisit your story to make sure it's still accurate. To make sure it's relevant to our rapidly evolving industry. You may have started your business to get your kids through college, now you're working on a legacy. Make no mistake, when folks know your story, they're more likely to keep coming back.

Consider storytelling to make your external appearance more compelling:

1. Recruitment Is Marketing:

Remember, everything you publish should reflect your big picture. Let your cause be known. Attract customers, community partners, and potential employees by selling the benefits of being in your store. Post videos that show employees sharing their authentic experience. Publicly celebrate who you are.

2. Break The Mold:

Pub runs, diva nights, group runs, and medical events are still relevant, but they've become standard fare. Mix things up a bit. Ever considered a book club? A movie night at an independent theater? How about a health and wellness booth at your local farmer's market? Deepen your local connection and create new customer associations by interacting in fresh

ways with the community. Reinvent yourself while still singing the hits that made you famous.

3. Cross-Pollinate:

With a little creativity and out-of-the-box thinking, your store could combine forces with any business in town. That's right, any. It just requires that you to step out of your comfort zone. Get to know other small business owners and brainstorm with fellow entrepreneurs. With a little forethought, you might host an event with your local pawn shop, pet store, or burger joint and get some new faces in the door.

4. Sling Shoes From Your Van:

OK, not really. But there's no doubt circling back to our roots just might be the ticket. Pack up a truck and bring your fit expertise to a local hospital staff. Or set up a temporary store in the lobby of the downtown corporate giant. Carry your business to the people who are too busy to come to you. Do what folks did to put our industry on the map.

We need to revamp our specialty behaviors. Add new life to them. Sure, there's still a place for best business practices, but a bank of fresh ideas is necessary for our survival.

So, tell your brand's story. Tell it to grow enthusiasm about your business. Tell it to ultimately grow your bottom line.

Back of the House

Shift the Route to Amazing. Edit Your Mountain of Candidates.

Amazing specialty run employees are tough to come by. Not only are they genuinely nice people, they also are service-minded, have a knack for connecting with others, and can turn a passing conversation into dollars without seeming like a used car salesperson. The ideal employee is motivated to go above and beyond the call of duty. They show up to work drama-free and ready to kick butt for eight (or more) hours. Finding them? Well, that's a challenge.

We all have stories about a candidate whose résumé was impeccable or who dazzled at their interview, and yet they turned out to be a total flop. We wasted time, resources, and energy until finally cutting the cord. Then we were left

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TRE Training Camp (continued)



The ideal employee is motivated to go above and beyond the call of duty.



Surveys tell us that customers want connection more than anything.

scratching our heads.

As our store culture grows stronger, we'll become more attractive to employment candidates. The stack of applications will only grow taller. So, we need to figure out better ways to edit them down. I propose we shift our paradigm a bit.

Stop paying attention to these four common hiring measures:

1. Industry Experience:

Just because someone's worked in the industry doesn't make them a good choice. In fact, it stands to wonder why they want a similar job again. Metaphorically, just because it's a shoe, doesn't mean it's a good fit for your foot.

2. Personality Tests:

Sure, these assessments are interesting, but labeling candidates contradicts what we do with customers. Plus, just like in school, such tests are easily manipulated. Better to read the person, not their personality score.

3. Past Salaries and Education:

We often let these details define the individual. They don't. None tell us much about a candidate's ability to connect with another human being.

4. Five-Year Plan:

Asking about this implies they need to commit to the long haul. Savvy candidates will tell you what you want to hear. Good hires improve your business whether they stay for 6 months or 5 years. Don't sweat locking them in before they've even started.

Look for these traits when hiring:

1. Good Communicators:

Seriously, if you aren't enjoying your conversation with an applicant, neither will your customers.

2. Varied Life Experience:

Don't eschew a candidate simply because their resume looks scattered. These candidates might be your risk-takers—folks who can work in diverse environments and make a decision on the fly. Plus, they're probably more interesting (which makes your store more interesting, too).

3. Energy, Intuition, and Curiosity:

You can't teach this, so folks need to show up with these innate traits. Match their vibe with that of the store.

4. How This Position Makes Sense:

Have the candidate explain why this job is a good choice for them. Ask how they think they fit into the store environment, how their path intersects with your store. Look for a tight, concise answer.

To find the best employees, we need to shift our hiring paradigm a bit. Stop taking the same old route and blaze a more efficient trail to the top.

Front of the House

Get Emotional. Deepen Your Connection with Customers.

Think back to the days, not long ago, when customers were completely blown away by the in-store experience. Back when the types of services offered were so varied that innovation happened all the time. Fitting processes, treadmills, video analyses, pressure pads, shoe modifications, and who-knows-what-else wowed customer loyalty. Ahhh...the good ol' days.

Now back to the present—most stores have settled into a particular way of doing things, and though they do it well, it's less of an attraction than it used to be. These days, thanks to the internet, hurried customers inundated with information arrive knowing exactly what they want. This often throws us off our game. We're left in want, unable to facilitate the experience that put us on the map. An experience that, arguably, hasn't evolved as quickly as our customer.

We've grown into an environment anchored by logic. But the internet does this too, and probably better than us (if nothing else, it's 24/7). We need to rethink how we work with that next person in the door. Rather than be fancier, or add more tech, we ought to consider how we can make customers leave feeling better about themselves.

Surveys tell us that customers want connection more than anything. They want to know that someone listened to their story. When we focus on each person's unique needs, we customize the moment to match them perfectly.



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TRE Training Camp (continued)

“

Give customers what they want the most—connection. It'll keep 'em coming back.

We need to shift our approach and create a more emotional customer experience.

Add the following three components to your repertoire and customers will sing your praises:

1. Use Your Language:

Once you know your customer's story, you can use your language to more effectively connect them to products. Incorporating "just imagine" statements puts products deeper into the customer's world. Just imagine still feeling fresh and strong while crossing the finish line...Just imagine having less back pain as you do a lap around the block...Just imagine being able to listen to music while still holding onto the dog's leash.

2. Incorporate Their Body:

Whenever you can, get the customer's body involved before you start rattling off tech. Take a watch, for example. There's a huge difference between discussing the watch's attributes while

it's still in a box and discussing them while it's on their wrist. If customers are able to physically experience a product, they are more likely to connect with it, emotionally. Lead with the physical experience—don't lead with tech.

3. Use Their Language:

Consider yourself the customer's virtual gym partner. Get them talking about when they plan to use the product, about where will the use it. Customers are far more likely to use the product if they've heard themselves make a commitment. Deepen their sense of accountability by letting them know you can't wait to hear all about their experience.

The shift from logic to emotion may be something that you already do. But is it the default? Lead with evocative language and emotive strategies when suggesting relevant products and information. Give customers what they want the most—connection. It'll keep 'em coming back. ■

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Running Shorts



Actor Ian Ziering and family at the SKECHERS Pier to Pier Friendship Walk.

SKECHERS Walk Raises Over \$1.6 Million

The SKECHERS Foundation announced that its eighth annual 2016 SKECHERS Pier to Pier Friendship Walk raised more than \$1.6 million for children with special needs and education. Supported by lead presenter Nickelodeon and new media sponsor NBC4, the Walk reached a new attendance high with 12,000 people taking part in the event.

Celebrities at the SKECHERS Pier to Pier

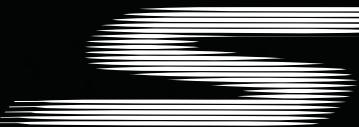
Friendship Walk included actress, model and long-time SKECHERS supporter Brooke Burke-Charvet; legendary boxer Sugar Ray Leonard; model and entrepreneur Camila Alves; actor Ian Ziering; mother/daughter fitness icons Denise and Katie Austin; and Hall of Fame baseball manager Tommy Lasorda, a Walk Board of Director who has appeared every year.

“The SKECHERS Pier to Pier Friendship Walk has taken a life of its own in so many incredible ways,”

said Michael Greenberg, president of SKECHERS. “More celebrities and walkers are attending than ever before; the media attention’s bigger than ever thanks to NBC4 and other outlets; and our Walk’s reach on social media has surpassed four million viewers.” Added Greenberg: “I think our Walk has really resonated with people because in our hearts, we love putting our kids first. We’re witnessing a growing culture of inclusiveness for our children with special

needs, which has brought joy to so many. And we want to play a direct role in the success of our schools and follow through on our educational promises to our kids. I’ve absolutely loved taking part in this Walk for the past eight years, and am already looking forward to next year.”

The nation’s largest event supporting children with special needs and education, the SKECHERS Pier to Pier Friendship Walk has raised more than \$7 million since its 2009 launch. Funds support



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Running Shorts (continued)

The Friendship Foundation, an organization that assists children with special needs and their families through one-on-one peer mentoring, social recreational programming, field trips and sporting events, as well as education foundations committed to retaining vital academic programs, maintaining smaller class sizes, improving libraries, and upgrading school technology.

The SKECHERS Foundation is also entering the third year of its scholarship program, and plans to donate \$100,000 to deserving students across the country in 2017.

New Galaxy Collection from Brooks

A new, limited-edition shoe line from Brooks draws on inspiration from the deep night sky and the stars that illuminate the darkness. Called the Galaxy Collection, it features the popular Adrenaline GTS 17 and Ghost 9 which have been recreated in a Galaxy motif.

Each shoe features a monochromatic upper that captures the deep darkness of the night sky and serves as the backdrop for stars and galaxies to shine through. Galaxies—systems of stars, stellar remnants,

gas and dust—are brought to life via design touches on the midsole, collar lining, sock liner and lace aglet.

The line features three colorways for men and women. The shoes, MSRP \$130, are available at retail as of Nov. 1.



Feeutes! Announces Winners of Sales Contest

Performance sock brand Feeutes! has tallied the results of its second annual “Pair Up” sales promotion, and reports that nearly 50 percent of participating retailers achieved or surpassed the 1-to-1 sock to shoe ratio threshold and some stores more than quadrupled the national average sock-to-shoe ratio of 0.6.

Feeutes! developed the “Pair Up” sales contest as a way to provide a fun, creative incentive for run specialty retailers and their associates to improve their customers’ in-store

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Running Shorts (continued)

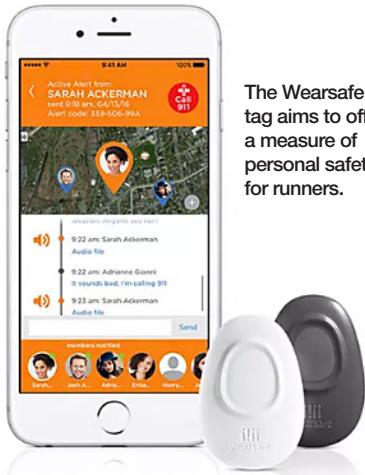
experience by educating them on the importance of wearing performance running socks. After a positive 2015 debut, Feetures! streamlined the contest based on customer feedback to offer more incentives to retailers. The 2016 program was a success, with 46 percent of participating retailers who reported their results achieving a 1-to-1 ratio.

Feetures! will reward the eight Grand Prize winning retailers who achieved the highest ratio of socks to shoes sold for the period. The eight stores will each receive a \$1,000 cash prize to go towards a staff party celebrating the team's successful results. The

winners are: Fleet Feet Cleveland – Pepper Pike; Fleet Feet Gaithersburg; Fleet Feet Roanoke; Fleet Feet Pittsburgh; Fleet Feet Rochester – Armory; A Snail's Pace Fountain Valley; Fleet Feet Mount Pleasant; and Fleet Feet Round Rock.

Wearsafe Expands into Fleet Feet Stores

Wearsafe Labs, maker of the Wearsafe Tag, announced that it has shipped product to nine of Fleet Feet Sports' independently owned stores. The Wearsafe Tag is now available at Fleet Feet retail outlets in nine states and



The Wearsafe tag aims to offer a measure of personal safety for runners.

online at fleetfeet.com. The Wearsafe Tag is a wearable personal safety device that instantly sends preselected contacts the wearer's precise GPS location, and a live audio stream from the wearer's location.

"I'm thrilled to offer this innovative product and service at Fleet Feet that provides peace of mind to my customers and keeps them safe" says Anne Stancil, owner of Fleet Feet Tucson, "We're proud to offer the innovative Wearsafe Tag to help keep runners and others well-connected and fully able to enjoy their outdoor activities."

The partnership with Fleet Feet includes in-store sales at locations in Connecticut, California, New York, New Hampshire, Maryland, Mississippi, Arizona, Oklahoma, Alabama and Chicago, IL as well as online. The tags will retail for \$30. The price includes six months of free subscription service.

The company is also offering the "Wearsafe 30

Day Running Challenge." Runners can try Wearsafe for free for 30 days.

Exec Appointments at MISSION

MISSION, the company known for its thermoregulation technologies, announced appointments to its leadership team, including the promotion of Michael Abbott to Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer, Shawna Hausman, Executive Vice President of E-Commerce and Digital Marketing and Travis Blasingame, Senior Vice President of Innovation & Merchandising.

Michael Abbott will serve as both Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer after serving as MISSION's Chief Financial Officer since 2014. Prior to joining MISSION, Abbott was the Chief Operating Officer for Specialized Bicycle Components. Previously, he served as Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer for Burton Snowboards.

Shawna Hausman, Executive Vice President of E-Commerce and Digital Marketing, brings more than 18 years of retail experience to MISSION, with over 10 years focused exclusively on e-commerce and digital innovation. Prior to joining MISSION, Hausman was Vice President of E-Commerce & Digital Marketing at Giggle in New York City. Previously, she worked for West Elm, American Eagle, Bed Bath & Beyond and Old Navy.

Travis Blasingame, Senior

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Running Shorts (continued)

Vice President of Innovation & Merchandising, joins the company with close to 30 years of experience in the Product Merchandising, Development and Innovation space including accessories and apparel for both men and women. Prior to joining MISSION, Blasingame was the Global Director of Apparel at Easton Baseball / Softball in Van Nuys, CA. Previously, he also held various Global Product roles for Nike, Vans and Adidas.

MISSION first unveiled its line of instant cooling towels in 2012, and has since expanded the line to cover a wide range of thermoregulating gear, accessories and apparel.

Icebug Tackles the Ice

The new DTS2 BUGrip GTX, MSRP \$219.95, is designed to take on wintry conditions. It is a stable, cushioned everyday shoe offering traction on slippery surfaces. Emphasizing comfort, the DTS features rich, soft collar padding, and a wide, ergonomic last. The ripstop nylon, laminated micro suede and Gore-Tex upper is designed to be durable and water repellent. A fully cushioned Ortholite midsole and BUGrip, 19 dynamic carbide steel studs, outsole allows for a natural, relaxed stride.



Icebug's BUGrip outsole is built for winter conditions.

An advertisement for SWEAT X SPORT laundry products. On the left, a female triathlete is shown in a starting position on a track, wearing a white tank top and dark shorts. The background features colorful diagonal stripes. To the right, large green text reads "SERIOUS RESULTS FOR SERIOUS ATHLETES". The SWEAT X logo, consisting of a stylized 'X' with the words "SWEAT X" above it and "SPORT" below it, is positioned above the text. Below the text, there are three bottles of SWEAT X products: a large bottle of detergent, a smaller spray bottle, and another smaller bottle. At the bottom, the text "Available at sweatxsport.com" is followed by social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. The USA Triathlon logo is also present.

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Tailwind Nutrition Is Official Hydration for New Zealand Endurance Races in 2017

The ninth annual Tarawera Ultramarathon and the Kathmandu Coast to Coast World Multi-Sport Championships, two of New Zealand's most celebrated endurance events, will be powered by Tailwind Nutrition in 2017. Both races will offer Tailwind Nutrition on course at all aid stations.

Jenny Vierling, co-founder of Tailwind Nutrition says, "Both of these races are extremely tough and capture the essence of the endurance community: testing your personal limits to just cross the finish line in an incredibly beautiful place, encouraging and supporting other participants along the course, and afterwards sharing your stories of pain and glory. Tailwind is excited to support such extraordinary experiences."

Tailwind Nutrition is a complete fuel, [calories+electrolytes+hydration] containing a full complement of electrolytes (sodium, potassium, calcium, and magnesium) as well as calories, so competitors don't have to worry about carrying gels, chews, bars or pills.

Honey Stinger Extends Nutrition Partnerships to Four NCAA Colleges

Honey Stinger, manufacturer of honey-based nutritional products, will partner with four NCAA universities for the 2016-2017 school year. The company will continue its partnership with the University of

Denver (DU) and will add Colorado State University (CSU), the University of Wyoming (UW) and Southern Methodist University (SMU) to its roster of sponsored universities. As an official sports nutrition partner, Honey Stinger will "fuel" each university's student athletes and receive signage, marketing and product sampling opportunities.

Honey Stinger will activate with a variety of on-campus opportunities. Signage will be on display at various home sporting events and in athletic facilities at the universities. Students will have the opportunity to enjoy product sampling at select home games and events. Honey Stinger will also have a digital presence on the athletics homepage of the schools.

More Americans Plan to Buy Sporting Goods This Holiday Season

Fifty-nine percent of Americans plan to purchase sporting goods as a gift this holiday season, up eight percentage points versus a year ago, per a recent survey from the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA). This figure is higher among millennials, with 71 percent planning to purchase sporting goods.

That should be good news for retailers and dealers this holiday shopping season. The survey also revealed other planned gift categories. Sporting goods tied for the number two spot with general apparel. The number one category was gift cards/money. More info: nsga.org/research. ■

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