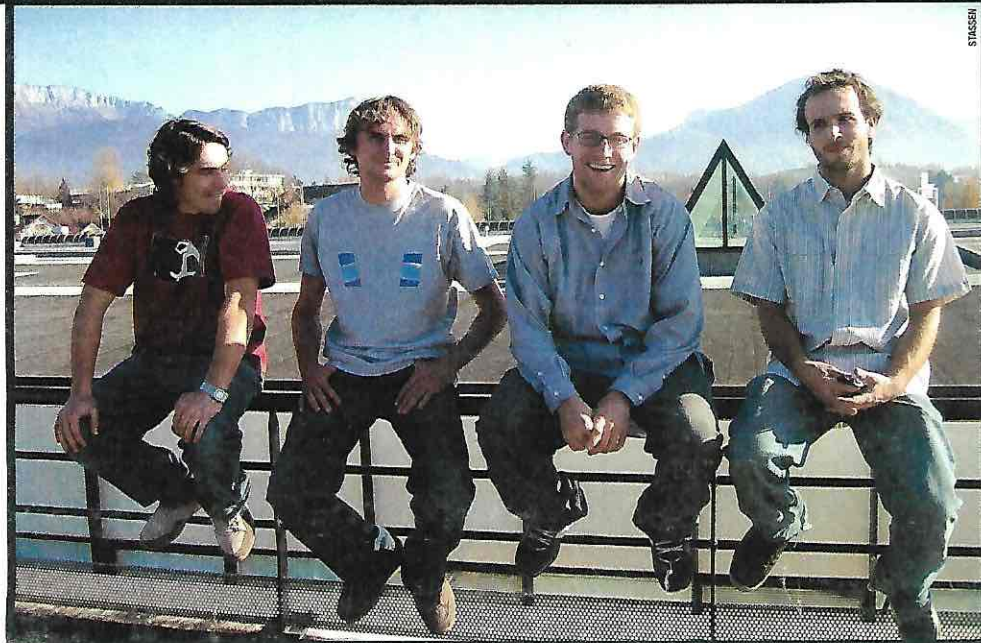


TRANSWORLD SNOWBOARDING BUSINESS

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STASSEN

Salomon's European based product development and marketing crew—David Farcot, David Adamczewski, Emanuel Krebs, and Henri Rançon.

THE SALOMON PROCESS

A renewed focus on team, and technical and functional design leads brand direction.

By Leah Stassen

After visiting almost every major snowboard manufacturer in Europe, it's hard to get riled up about a new one. But after taking two steps inside Salomon's design headquarters in Annecy, France, I could tell something was going to be different about this one. Armed with only my pen, paper, and a small digital camera (which was promptly taken away), I proceeded inside to get saturated in all things Salomon.

Accompanied by Salomon North America PR Director Hal Thomson, our tour was broken down into three parts. After meeting up with Snowboard Activity and Projects Development Manager David Adamczewski in Annecy, we proceeded to the snowboard and ski factory just down the road in Rumilly. Later that afternoon I was treated to a short

tour of the Annecy Design Center (ADC), then a day later—after a drive into Italy—we got a look at the boot-design facilities in the well-known Montebelluna area.

But, before dropping into factory overviews and specifics, it's important to understand what Salomon is planning for the 2004/05 season. By its calculations, Salomon's snowboard product group sales—including boards, boots, and bindings—accounts for nearly one-third of the market units worldwide. Of these sales, the brand predicts that nearly 90 percent occur in areas outside of France. In ethnocentrically dominated European markets, the numbers are significant because they show Salomon has been successful at pushing outside its home market.

SALOMON continued on page 23

PRESEASON SNOWBOARD SALES STRONG

Chains are weak in both hard- and softgoods.

Snowboard equipment and apparel sales were particularly strong in specialty stores for the preseason (August through October). Equipment sales (including boards, boots, and bindings) were up 22 percent to 40.1-million dollars for the preseason time frame, according to the SnowSports Industries America annual Retail Audit. However, sales of both snowboard hard- and softgoods were off in chains during the same period.

Overall sales for the entire wintersports market (including specialty and chain stores), increased by 3.9 percent in dollars to 314.5-million dollars compared to 302.7-million dollars in 2002 for the preseason period. Unit sales were ahead 6.2 percent. Sales at specialty ski and snowboard shops were up 7.2 percent compared to last season. In dollars, that translates to 254.8-million dollars in sales compared to 237.7-million dollars in 2002 and 234.1-million dollars in 2001.

Unit sales were up significantly from last season, tracking fourteen percent ahead. "Wintersports sales are shaping up well in the specialty snowboard and ski shops for the beginning of the season," says Julie Lynch, SIA director of market research. "With snow falling across the country, sales could hit an all-time high this season." This is the first report of six that looks at sales through March 31, 2004, which is the end of the winter season.

Specialty Snowboard Sales Hot

Snowboard equipment sales were hot in specialty stores this preseason. Boards increased 20.5 percent in dollars to 21.1-million dollars and 19.2 percent in units. The two hottest categories—those products seeing increases in dollar sales—were freestyle and all-mountain boards. Both experienced significant gains. Freestyle boards were up 40 percent to 8.5-million dollars and all-mountain boards gained 31.3 percent to 1.5-million dollars, while the usual biggest seller—freeride boards—declined slightly by 1.8 percent to 7.2-million dollars.

Men's snowboards still make up the majority of all units sold (79 percent). Although sales of women's and juniors' boards are starting to see gains, the categories are still fairly small. Women's snowboard units gained 38.3 percent over last season, while juniors' were up 19.8 percent.

PRESEASON SALES continued on page 29

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STAT CHECK

Preseason Snowboard Equipment Sales (in dollars—including boards, boots, and bindings)

	2002/03	2003/04
Specialty Stores	\$32.9-million	\$40.1-million (up 20 percent)
Chain Stores	\$7.3-million	\$5.9-million (down 18 percent)

ON-SNOW DEMO PRO

Mastering the art of the on-snow demo. By Ryanne Gerry

With demo season in full swing, everyone is finally getting an excuse to go play on the mountain. At just about any resort on any given weekend, hundreds of people are clamoring under tents in the parking lots, grappling for the first look at next season's gear. How do you make the best of your demo? How do you make sure you come out on top with loads of free swag and a couple hook-ups to boot?

SNOWboarding Business has discovered that it's all about skill and technique. On-snow demos are the gauntlet of the snowboarding industry, so you've got to be on the top of your game and ready for anything. Here are six tips to guide you and your shop staff through on-snow demos.

1. Be Fashionably Late

The first issue to address is the time constraints of the average on-snow demo. Now the layperson would assume there're two whole days to get through the entire demo, stopping by each booth, and sinking your meat hooks into all the important new product. Right? Wrong.

You've got to take into consideration, first off, being fashionably late. Who wants to be the first person there, sniffing around and buggin' all the reps before they've had a chance to absorb their caffeine? These are businesspeople, for god's sake. They've got a perpetual "case of the Mondays," so don't be the annoying ankle biter who shows up first and stays until last chair, cutting into their bar time. Plus, if you're a little late, it shows that you don't really care about the wack demo anyways, so you might be able to pull off playing the cool-kid card a little better—but we'll discuss that later.

2. Schmooze 'Til You Booze

Next, you've got to remember that about 50 percent of your time on snow shouldn't be spent riding or testing equipment, it should be spent schmoozin' up the reps to try to get free stuff. That's what you're here for after all, right?

proper brand selection.

So after you've got your heart set on the sickest manufacturer, it's time to move in for the kill. Now, for the ladies out there, you've got to understand that it's going to be a walk in the park to come out of that tent city with everything you need to open up your own shop. You've just got to make sure that you look like the hot little snow bunny that you are—i.e., on top of your game—like I mentioned before. All you have



Ancient demo secret—a straw works wonders clearing snow from binding screws.

to do is walk right up to that rep and make him putty in your hands—that is, if the rep isn't a woman. A female rep will probably be stoked to see a rad girl rippin' it up, so the ladies pretty much have it made for stocking up on gear.

For the guys, on the other hand, it's not that easy. Guys have got to make themselves stand out from the rest of the pre-pubescent pimple-faced wannabes, and it's gonna take some serious steez to do that. Not only do you have to look cool, but you have to convince people that you *are* cool. This is where playing the cool-kid card comes in. This takes some practice, but for most of you who went to high school it should be just like

to keep your tricks under wraps—when really you just don't want to blow your cover on your complete lack of backside 180 skills. If you can pull all of this off, guys, you should be okay.

3. Bar Time Counts

Another way for the guys to come out on top is to make sure that you just happen to show up at the same bar all the reps frequent after the first night. Take a seat next

5. Sleep Off The Hangover

The next time-constraint issue of the on-snow demo is the hangover. Now, last night when you were sucking up to the reps you had a little too much to drink. So what? Now your cell phone is blowin' up with your shred friends trying to get your lazy butt out of bed to no avail. You've got all day to get up there and get the same board you rode yesterday anyways, so what does it matter? Sleep the rest of the morning and get up to the demo with about two hours to ride your chosen board. Then the key here is to make sure you let everyone know how wasted you got the night before—this once again plays the cool-kid card and it will make you tons of friends.

Sporting a hangover is also a good time to let some people ride with you. When you can't butter up to the box and end up stackin' a 50-50, all you have to do is blame it on the booze. This will save you from utter embarrassment and perpetual uncoolness.

6. Offer To Break Down

Another way to sneak in the back door is to ask the rep if you can help break down the tents. This gives you the last-chance opportunity to pound the last nail into the board of your dreams and make sure that you will be remembered. Plus, what if some stuff doesn't fit into the truck? Reps have no other choice than to ditch it somewhere and who better with than you? You earned those extra stickers and board this weekend anyways considering you gave this company your undivided attention—they owe it to you!

For the ladies, however, it's most likely that you could spend all night sitting on the lap of your rep of choice and he won't recognize you the next day in all your snow gear. Secret: don't wear your goggles around the demo tents!

to your chosen "sickest" manufacturer's rep and just let the alcohol do the talking for you. Let 'em know that you love the company they rep for and would do anything to be a part of it. This, for sure, will get you hooked up!

For the ladies, however, it's most likely that you could spend all night sitting on the lap of your rep of choice and he won't recognize you the next day in all your snow gear. Secret: don't wear your goggles around the demo tents! Let him see those peepers he was gazing into all night, and the free stuff will start flying off the bed of the truck.

4. Test For Yourself

Now, I know that the boss said that you need to test out all of the stuff that will be sold in your shop come next season, but that's just a big waste of time. Why would you ride some board that you know is gonna be wack? Plus, if someone sees you riding it, they might question your coolness, and that, once again, could blow your cover. Ride only the board that you want for next season! If you ride it for the whole demo and keep telling the rep how much you love it, maybe you'll be walking out of that tent with it.

Plus, you don't wait on the customers who are obvious gapers in your shop anyways, so you only need to know about the hottest stuff that the killer rippers will be coming in to get. Leave the gaper sales to the gaper kids in your shop. They can identify with the customer better than you anyways. You don't want to have to dumb



Nothing like a snowy demo. Give me the longest board you've got...

The secret lies in selection. Why suck in to a rep from a brand you wouldn't tattoo

old times. You have to walk around that tent like you are the best rider there. talkin' like