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Check out **THE PRODUCT ZONE** for new products to meet all your needs. >>>



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welcome

We hope with this first GearTrends Network publication we can take yet another step toward **CREATING COMMUNITY THROUGH COMMUNICATION. WELCOME!** And we hope you enjoy this book as much as we did putting it together and working with all the inaugural member companies.

You note our motto, "Creating Community Through Communication." As our GearTrends Network quickly grows to include various media as well as both consumer and trade outreach, we find that communication is what it's all about. Communication with the consumer helps the industry grow. Communication in the industry helps people stay in touch. And communication via both the web and in print in one network allows adaptable access that is dynamic, timely and consistent.

The GearTrends publications will be one element in that mix of communication. We plan to go beyond the monthly magazine format, which we feel isn't timely or necessary in today's fast-paced world. But that's not to say that using a printed publication isn't necessary to complement and to expand our GearTrends website information. Therefore, we have chosen to publish each of our GearTrends books—**Winter Outdoor, Fitness, and Summer Outdoor**—as seasonal/annual sourcebooks to appear at key times.

These books will be keepers, annuals that will stay on your shelves and on your customers' shelves for many months. Why? Because they aren't just directories and advertisements, they're also packed with strong editorial by the editors and contributors for **Specialty News (SNEWS)**, www.snewsnet.com, which will remain the advertising-free, call-it-like-it-is news component of the Network. The stories are the SNEWS take on trends, research, merchandising, surveys of retailers, and category reports.

In addition to the editorial, you'll also find The Product Zone, a collection of listings of new products from GearTrends member companies that will be just what retailers and the media need to pique their interest.

Have you noticed we don't call these companies "advertisers?" Nope, they are "members." We believe to best establish true communication that the pieces of our GearTrends Network must be linked. This allows a real community to be created, and allows the best representation of these companies, their products and their information.

The Network, therefore, also includes **GearTrends, The Web (www.geartrends.com)**, where readers of our publications can find expanded and up-to-date company and product information that takes what is found in the books several steps farther. Consider it a supplement to this book.

And the website is where the community that is embraced by the GearTrends Network grows greatly. That's because it is structured to encompass both the consumer and the trade professional. The consumer can research all the key information about all the best companies, with links to company sites, a searchable retailer directory that connects to each product, lots of photos, and plenty of detail for the heartiest enthusiast. The trade professional, with registration and approval, gets a password that allows access to a backend of trade-specific information, including expanded product information, company contacts and resources.

Our GearTrends Network staff members are those who truly live, breathe, love and participate in the worlds we cover. And we also are true journalistic professionals who know how to get a story, fact-check it, write it well, and treat it right to inform you, our customers and readers, in the best, the fairest and the most comprehensive way possible.

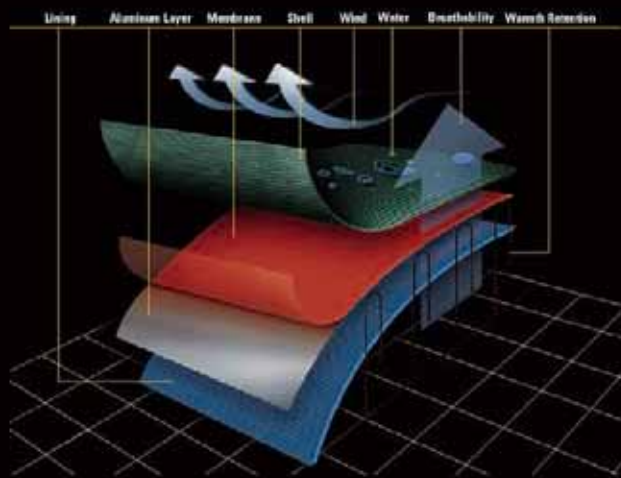
As our mission statement has stated since our inception in August, we at the GearTrends Network promise inspiration, truth and open discussion in a way that is always curious, but never too serious.

Thanks for being a part,

Michael Hodgson and Therese Iknoian
Co-publishers/Co-editors
GearTrends Network



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contributors

THOSE WHO MAKE THE GEARS TURN AT GEARTRENDS THE BOOK



MICHAEL HODGSON is an award-winning journalist and author of numerous books including *Camping For Dummies*, *Compass and Map Navigator* and *Facing the Extreme*. He is a volunteer for the American Red Cross, an instructor with the Nevada County Sheriff's Search and Rescue team, and continues to pen numerous articles for magazines such as *Hooked on the Outdoors* and *Outside*. He was the founder of *Adventure 16's Wilderness Outings* program and garnered extensive retail experience as a store manager there, before becoming the general manager for *Western Mountaineering*. Michael has also served as an editor for *Outdoor Retailer* magazine where he helped launch the successful trade show newspaper, the *Daily Exposure*.



THERESE IKNOIAN is an award-winning and internationally published fitness/sports journalist, has written numerous books, including *Mind-Body Fitness For Dummies* and *Fitness Walking*, and continues to write for magazines such as *Trail Runner* and *Hooked on the Outdoors*. She has worked as a news reporter for the *San Jose Mercury News* (where she was a member of the 1990 Pulitzer Prize-winning news team), has a master's degree in exercise physiology, and has consulted with numerous fitness companies on consumer programming. As an avid athlete and fitness enthusiast, Therese has been a nationally ranked walker and partakes in adventure races, trail running, mountain biking and weight-lifting.



WENDY GEISTER has been an outdoor lover and journalist for more than 10 years. Her editorial career started at *Outdoor Retailer* magazine in 1992 as Associate Editor. Within two years, she was named Managing Editor. As *Outdoor Retailer's* properties expanded, so did Wendy's responsibilities which included co-founding the *Daily Exposure* (the daily trade show newspaper), *Fly-Fishing Retailer* magazine and *Outdoor Retailer's* website. Wendy left *Outdoor Retailer* in September 2002 to join the *GearTrends Network*. Her outdoor passions include hiking, kayaking, rock climbing, camping and adventure travel.



SHARON LEICHAM has been a merchandiser and marketer for more than 20 years working with both large and small manufacturers and retailers. Her positions include merchandising/public relations/marketing vice president for the *Royal Robbins* apparel company and marketing communications manager for *Specialized Bicycle Components*. She held the position of merchandising manager at *Sierra Designs* and, most recently, was the Merchandising/Apparel Editor for *Outdoor Retailer* magazine. Sharon is the author of *Merchandising Your Way to Success* and *How to Sell to Women*, and recently created the merchandisingHUB.com website, a site of information, ideas and sources designed specifically for independent retailers.



CLYDE SOLES is the former gear editor for *Rock & Ice* and *Trail Runner* magazines, and has a decade of experience as a professional equipment tester. On top of that, he spent a decade in outdoor retail and has been climbing and skiing since the wood age. His latest book, *Climbing: Training for Peak Performance*, was recently published by *The Mountaineers*.



TOM PRICE: Reading promotional materials from some outdoor industry players reminds contributor Tom Price of his short life in dot-com PR. "There's this bizarre inverse proportionality," he recalls, "between actual utility and the number of adjectives used," yet every now and again he is surprised by gear that actually deserves the hype—"like anything with LEDs." He writes, reviews, and skis (in a 7-year-old *Patagonia* jacket and jeans) from his home in Salt Lake City.



MARCUS WOOLF has worked as a journalist in the outdoor industry for eight years and served as editor for *Outdoor Retailer* magazine. In 2002, he returned to his home state of Alabama where he works as a freelance writer for the *GearTrends Network* and consumer publications such as *Hooked on the Outdoors*. While he still travels West to go mountaineering, Woolf says he now spends much of his time exploring the great hiking, climbing and paddling destinations in the South.



ROGER LOHR is a writer and researcher, who lives in Hanover, N.H., and is involved with subjects including trails, snow sports, environment and family. He conducts the industry statistics for the *Cross Country Ski Areas Association*; writes for *Cross Country Skier* magazine, *Ski Area Management*, and a number of regional sports magazines; consults ski area clients; and created and runs the "Best XC Ski Area" poll and the *XC Skiing Eco-Active Leadership Award* program.

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