

# SGB

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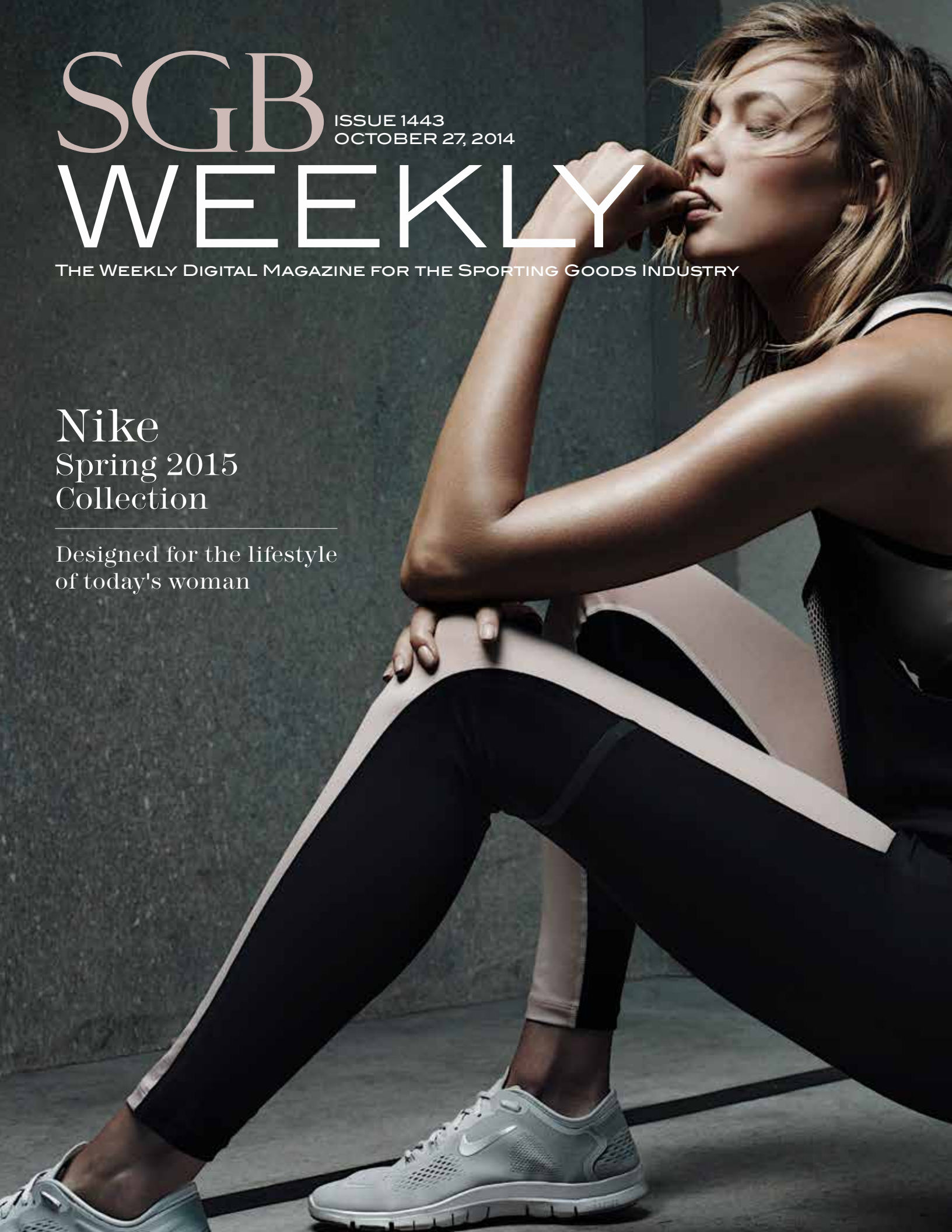
# WEEKLY

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Women's Opportunity

ON THE COVER: In a design collaboration like nothing seen before it, Nike will present a new women's training collection created in partnership with Brazilian designer Pedro Lourenço.

## MOVERS & SHAKERS

**Active Ride Shop** and **Tengram Capital Partners** appointed **Rick Mina**, former Foot Locker executive, as president. **Esmail Mawjee** has decided to transition into the role of a strategic advisor for Active Ride Shop but retains his seat on the board of directors.

**Crocs** appointed **Bob Munroe** to GM of Crocs Americas region; **Greg Sullivan** to the new role of SVP of global business transformation; Scott Yuan to GM of Greater China; and **Michelle Poole** to SVP of global product creation and merchandising.

**Element**, the skateboard brand, made several key appointments to their U.S. leadership team including **Donavon Darte** as VP of sales, **Candice Betancourt-Scott** as director of lifestyle marketing, and **Marc Falkenstien** as branch brands director.

**Finish Line, Inc.** promoted **Sam Sato** to president and to its board. Sato joined Finish Line in 2007 and has been president of the Finish Line brand since October 2012. He fills the director position previously held by **Bill Kirkendall**, who resigned from the board in April to become president of Running Specialty Group.

**Fletcher Sport Brands (FSB)**, the parent of the Sunice and AUR golf brands, appointed **Conrad Tappert** as president of FSB. Tappert succeeds **Mark Fletcher**, who decided to leave the company to pursue other opportunities.

**HanesBrands**, the parent of Hanes and Champion, appointed **David V. Singer** former CEO of snack food leader Snyder's-Lance, Inc., to its board.

**Off Broadway Shoe Warehouse** hired **Kristen Picard**, formerly head of U.S. women's marketing and merchandising for Reebok International, as its new director of marketing and **Brittany Moeller** as the company's new women's buyer.

**Pentland Brands** appointed **Richard Leedham** as brand president of its UK-based outdoor brands Berghaus and Brasher.

**Redington**, maker of performance fly rods, reels, waders, apparel and accessories, hired **Josh Prestin** as its brand manager.

**Spacecraft**, the headwear and lifestyle apparel brand, hired outdoor-industry veteran **Chad Perrin** as director of sales.

**Under Armour** appointed **Karen Katz**, president and CEO of Neiman Marcus Group, to its board.



## REEBOK FINDS BIDDER

An investment group is preparing a \$2.2 billion offer to acquire Reebok from Adidas AG according to a report last week in the Wall Street Journal that was later collaborated by Bloomberg News. Both news organizations attributed the report to anonymous sources.

The investment group is prepared to invest money to accelerate brand marketing and store openings and believes Reebok would perform better as a private stand-alone company. The investors' plan calls for leaving Reebok's current senior leadership team and strategy in place at its headquarters in Canton, MA.

The bid, which comes from a group that includes Jynwel Capital of Hong Kong and funds affiliated with the government of Abu Dhabi, comes as Adidas' stock plumbs new lows. Adidas' stock price closed at €56.61 on October 20, up slightly on the news, but still near its 52-week low and down nearly 40 percent from the beginning of the year. The stock has been under pressure amid concerns it is losing its self-proclaimed goal of winning global market share from Nike. Its share price tumbled 23 percent since mid-July when Adidas announced it would abandon its 2015 financial targets because of poor results at Adidas-Taylor Golf and in Russia.

While neither Adidas AG nor the investment firms would comment on the report, some observers said Adidas would be well advised to consider the offer. Since being acquired by Adidas in August, 2005 for \$3.8 billion, Reebok's share of the U.S. market has fallen from eight to two percent according to Matt Powell, analyst with The SportsOneSource Group.

While Reebok posted five consecutive quarters of growth, the growth has come from outside North America and wholesale channels. In the second quarter, for instance, Reebok sales grew 9.5 percent on a currency-neutral basis, driven by sustained sales momentum in the fitness training, walking, and studio categories as well as at Classics. Retail sales also continued their double-digit growth in currency-neutral terms as double-digit e-commerce sales growth boosted comp store sales; which grew 2 percent in the first-half.

Reebok's growth strategy has been focused in recent years on positioning itself as the leading cross training brand rolling out its FitHub stores in Boston, New York City, Washington, D.C., and California as well as Paris, Korea, Russia, Dubai, and London. Nevertheless, Reebok's overall sales declined in North America even as they increased 26 percent in Latin America and 20 percent in parts of Asia. Wholesale revenues, meanwhile, were only slightly above the prior-year level for the first six months of the year.

"Reebok has become a huge distraction for Adidas taking time and resources," said Powell. "I think Adidas is better without Reebok."



## PRO NINE SPORTS ACQUIRED BY PRIVATE INVESTOR

Pro Nine Sports, Inc., a wholesaler of high-performance baseball and softball sporting goods including balls, helmets, catcher's gear, bats, and field equipment, was acquired by a private investor.

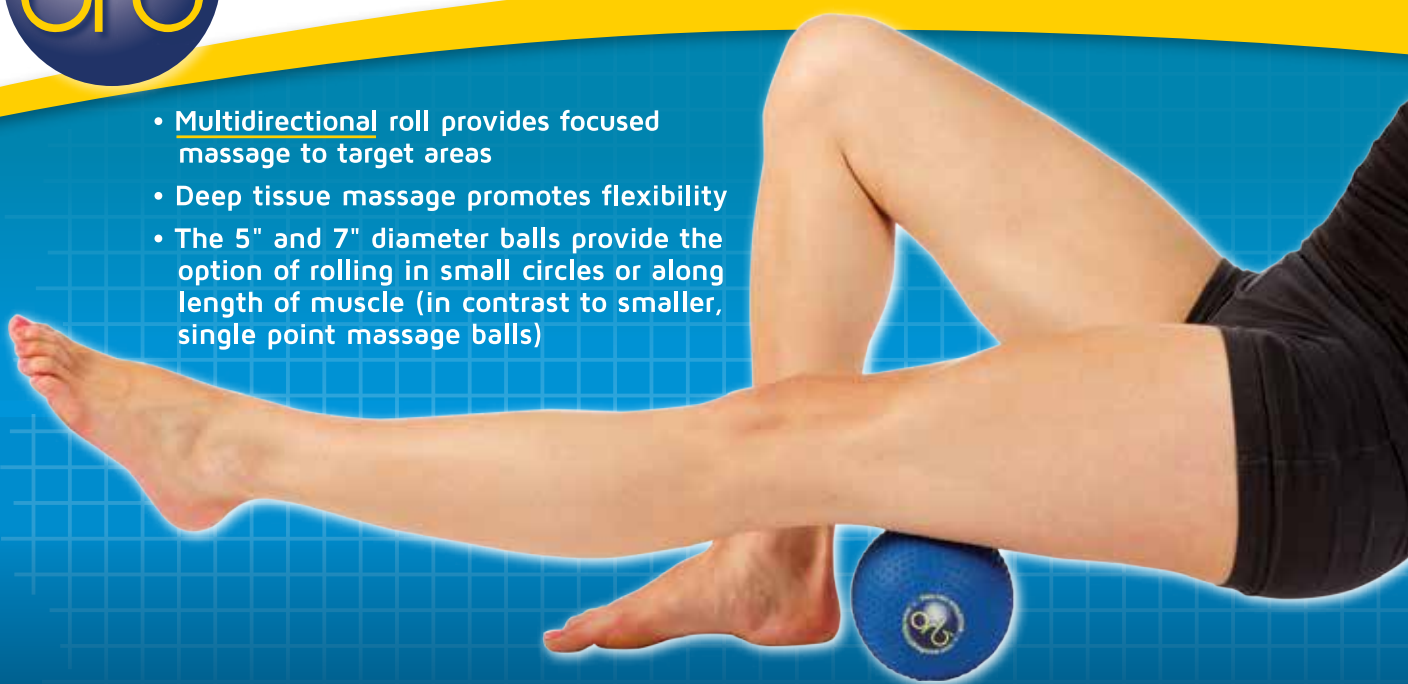
Founded in 2001 the company, headquartered in Garden Grove, CA, designs and contract manufactures (in China) its own line of baseballs and softballs, and private labels most other gear. Pro Nine is the fourth largest producer of baseballs in the U.S. behind Rawlings, Wilson, and Diamond.

The acquisition closed on October 1. The private investor's name was not disclosed. The announcement came in a statement from Generational Equity. A financial advisor arranged the deal.



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## BY THE NUMBERS

### +7.7%

VF Corp. said Timberland, Vans, The North Face, Kipling, and Wrangler drove a seven percent increase in revenues and an 11 percent increase in earnings-per-share in the third quarter ended September 27, 2014. In the Americas, revenues were up low double-digits at The North Face, high single-digits at Vans, and 15 percent at Timberland. VFC also upped its earnings guidance for the year and said it expected Timberland's full-year sales to grow 13 percent, up from 12 percent.

### +8%

Amer Sports reported net sales of €645.8 million (\$856 mm) for the quarter ended September 30 up 8 percent compared with €608.9 million a year earlier. Net sales increased 6 percent in local currencies. Double-digit growth in sales of Arc'teryx and Salomon apparel and footwear, Precor fitness gear, and Suunto instruments more than offset declines at bicycle components maker Mavic and the Ball Sports segment where Wilson continues to pare SKUs in a bid to gain profitability.

### +18.8%

Cabela's, Inc. reported third-quarter net income excluding certain items increased 18.8 percent to \$58.3 million on \$886.0 million in revenue. Revenue increased 4.1 percent as store expansion offset an 11.2 percent decline in comparable store sales.

### +30%

Under Armour, Inc. reported revenues increased 30 percent in the third quarter to \$938 million. Sales grew 26 percent in apparel, 50 percent in footwear, and 32 percent in accessories. Net income increased 22 percent to \$89 million, or 41 cents a share, slightly above Wall Street's consensus estimates and Under Armour again raised its guidance for the full year.

### + 30.7%

Skechers USA, Inc. reported third-quarter earnings jumped 90.4 percent to \$51.1 million or \$1.00 a share. Revenues grew 30.7 percent to \$674.3 million compared to \$515.8 million for the third quarter of 2013. Revenues increased 18.5percent in its domestic wholesale business, 60.6percent in its international wholesale business, and 25.0 percent in its ompany-owned global retail business.



## IMPLUS

### ACQUIRES TRIGGERPOINT PERFORMANCE

Implus acquired TriggerPoint Performance, Inc., best known for its stretching and recovery tools. The acquisition comes as Implus continues to expand its current product assortment in the company's Fitness and Specialty Divisions.



Cassidy Phillips is a biomechanical specialist, founder and CEO of TriggerPoint Therapy

TriggerPoint Performance was founded in 2002 by Cassidy Phillips an avid athlete, extreme sport enthusiast, and accomplished triathlete. The product line stemmed from Cassidy's drive to create self-care solutions to relieve muscle pain associated with the effects of fibromyalgia, a chronic muscular dysfunction that takes over the body's ability to maintain and regulate muscular pain. Starting the company from the

back of an RV, Cassidy soon built the brand, its products, and methodologies to be recognized globally for its effective, efficient approach to self-care, performance, and general efficiencies of movement.

"The addition of the TriggerPoint brand to the Implus family bridges current markets of run specialty and fitness as well as opening new possibilities to build incremental business in new channels," said Todd Vore, president of Implus. "In addition, their products and creative content will help our other brands within the same channels to thrive and increase consumer awareness and conversion."

In partnering with Implus, TriggerPoint plans to bolster product innovation and global brand distribution. For Implus, this marks a new direction into the therapy accessories marketplace and will help Implus' complementary accessory brands build products that can cater to new markets and demographics.

"I am proud to be joining the Implus' team and to be a part of their innovative approach to development and distribution of consumer products. TriggerPoint has been in the trenches for the past 13 years, empowering people to take care of themselves and do things they never thought possible," said Phillips. "There comes a time in a company's growth that you can no longer do it alone. Implus brings the efficiencies we need to continue our efforts and stay true to our mission to take care of those that are in need of better movement."

The acquisition marks the third made by Implus in 2014 following the addition of FitDeck workout programs to the Fitness Division in Sausalito, CA, and DryGuy/MaxxDry boot dryers to the Outdoor Division in Seattle, WA. Implus' brands also include Sof Sole, Yaktrax, apara, Airplus, Sneaker Balls, Sof Comfort, Little Hotties, Penguin, Perfect Fitness, and ICETrekkers. Founded in Austin, TX, TriggerPoint will remain in the area and work with its current team of employees.





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## SMITH OPTICS

### EXITING IDAHO TO GROW

Safilo Group will relocate key functions of Smith Optics from Ketchum, ID to a new global design center in Portland, OR and Safilo's North American headquarters in Parsippany, NJ in a bid to take the brand global. The decision follows an in-depth analysis conducted over the past year in collaboration with Smith's top management and with the goal of evolving Smith from its strong North American snow sport goggle position into a global eyewear brand.

As a consequence, three key decisions have been taken with regard to the future locations of Smith:

- » Portland, OR has been chosen as the U.S. West Coast location and will serve as the inspirational base for the product leadership activities of the Global Sports & Outdoor Lifestyle segment. Consequently, Smith design, product development, marketing, artwork, and e-commerce activities will relocate to Portland.
- » The manufacturing of all Sports brands ski goggles will be concentrated in Clearfield, UT, the current home of the Smith manufacturing and distribution center.
- » To enable joint capabilities with Safilo's U.S. headquarters, the IT, HR and Finance functions will move to Parsippany, NJ where Safilo USA is based.

By 2020, Safilo Group predicts Smith could more than double in size, provided it expands into international markets from its currently narrow sportswear distribution channels. "We believe in the Smith brand and we are taking decisions that are aimed at further developing it sustainably across the globe," said Safilo Group CEO Luisa Delgado. "To do so, we have to create a more efficient platform and Smith can strongly benefit from the synergies deriving from our Group as a whole. We need therefore to organize ourselves to leverage these opportunities".

The transition out of Ketchum, where Smith Optics employs 85, will be phased gradually between 2015 and 2018. Smith Optics was founded in Idaho in 1965. Safilo, based in Italy, bought Smith in the 1990s.

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## ESSENTIALS | EARPHONES

Fall temperatures are the perfect time for gearing up for a long run. But nothing is more aggravating than having to reposition your earphones the entire time when all you want to do is listen to your favorite playlist.

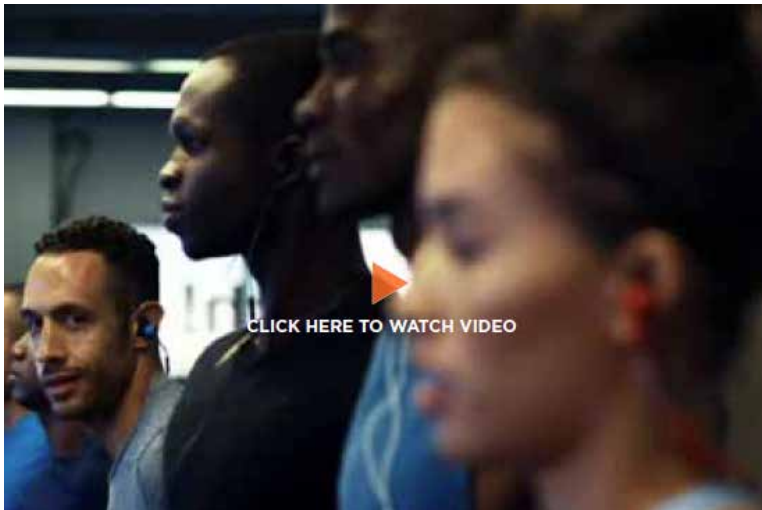
Advanced technology and innovation have led the way for made-for-movement earphones that can keep you comfortable and in the zone for running around town. Here are some options to choose from.



### SKULLCANDY CHOPS IN-EAR | \$45

Chops In-Ear is an ultra-secure earbud from Skullcandy that can keep up with your pace.

Fully sealed construction protects the technology from sweat and a swivel hinge allows you to swing the earbud out from your ear without taking them off during runs when you need to hear what's going on around you.



### JBL SYNCHROS REFLECT BT | \$99

Cut the cord connecting your headphones to your smartphone with the JBL Synchros Reflect BT. These wireless earphones use Bluetooth to sync with your phone so you can run unimpeded by dangling cables. Special ear tips are sweat-proof and designed to stay in place during movement. A highly reflective-cord provides night visibility and a unique tether design offers a customizable fit.

### NORMAL EARPHONES | \$199

Normal, a tech company, sells single, custom-made 3D-printed earphones that fit your ear and your ear alone. Normal's earphones can be delivered to you within 48 hours from its flagship and factory in New York City. Customers can either get measured via Normal's app or get sized in-store.



Normal's founder, Nikki Kaufman, 28, lives just around the block from her newly opened, 11,000-square-foot flagship and factory on West 22nd Street in New York City.







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BEST PRACTICES

## HEY BUDDY, CAN YOU SPARE A DIME?

By William F. Kendy

At the end of the day I always seem to have loose change in my pocket and so I drop it into the coin jar when I get home. The jar was recently full, so I took it down to the store and dumped it into the coin sorter. Much to my surprise, I had collected a little more than \$9. It wasn't enough to take a vacation on, but it could buy a couple gallons of gas or a casual lunch.

How much loose change do you have hanging around your store that could be turned into profitable dollars? Here are examples of loose change you may not be thinking about.

### 1. Catch You Later

How many times do you do something for a customer and say, "Don't worry about how much you owe me, I'll catch you next time." I'm not saying you shouldn't provide some free service every once in a while to loyal customers, but be aware that you are not a charity. If you do service work and repairs, there is nothing wrong with charging a nominal fee for time on task.





## 2. Discounts And Deals

Always take advantage of, or negotiate for, dating and terms or special manufacturer/wholesaler deals and programs. Make sure that your bookkeeping department (that may be you) stays alert and utilizes dating and terms. Go for the gold and see what your vendors can do for you especially if you know that someone else is getting a deal.

## 3. Turn Your Inventory

You need to turn your inventory at least three times a year if you want to maintain positive cash flow and make real money. Get into the “out with the old and in with the new” frame of mind. Don’t be emotionally attached to your merchandise - start viewing it like furniture or your retirement. Collecting dust doesn’t pay the bills.

On the other hand, don’t stock so close to the bone that you have a significant amount of unfilled shelf space or empty pegs. Develop an “open to buy” system so you know what your main sellers are by category and what the optimum number of products are that you need to have to fulfill customer demand and offer a good selection for a period of time.

## 4. Clutter Up Your Register Area

I know it may sound rather illogical, but the more selections for impulse purchases you offer the better off you are. The merchandise doesn’t have to be directly related to what you sell. Ace Hardware and Action Auto stores in our market are perfect examples. Both retail stores offer candy, gum, pocket knives, power drinks, batteries, jerky, bumper stickers, key chains, all kinds of stuff...and Ace even offers popcorn. People often buy on impulse and there are high margins to be made on impulse items.

## 5. Discount Tables

Customers love a bargain. They may not really have a need but if it looks like a good deal and it doesn’t cost an arm and a leg, there is a good chance they will pick it up...just because and buy it. I know a retailer who set up a table at each of his two entrances and those tables alone accounted for nearly five percent of his total store sales.

The key to discount tables is to progressively mark down merchandise and regularly refresh or rotate product.

## 6. Staff Scheduling

Scheduling is tricky because you never know when customers are going to walk in your door. Still, if you have any history at all, you should have a pretty good idea of when customers are going to visit your store. In the tax business, depending on the volume of the tax office, the rule of thumb is to have at least one tax professional and one customer service person on hand at all times. Most customers come in between 4:00 pm and closing time and the closer you get to tax day, weekends start booking up solid so staffing needs must be adjusted accordingly.

You don’t want to have a lot of staff standing around doing nothing but you have to have enough personnel on hand so that customers don’t feel they are being ignored. If that happens, they will walk away and you will have missed sales opportunities.

## 7. Add On Sales

It can’t be emphasized enough the importance of suggestive selling at the register. Having spent a couple of years working out-of-town at a full-time job away from family and friends, I didn’t have much to do on my time off and I couldn’t hang around with the people at the office 24/7, so I took a part-time job at an upscale market. We clerks started a fun competition to see who could sell the most add-ons. No item would be an expensive purchase - just standard convenience store fare. For example, when someone came for their morning cup of coffee at \$1.25, we would suggest a donut, breakfast sandwich, banana, orange juice, and/or a newspaper to go along with it, not to forget candy bars. Not everyone took the bait, but enough customers did to increase our average unit of sales and we had a positive affect on the store’s bottom line. It’s not hard and the worst a customer can say is “no thanks”.

At the register a customer can’t get away and you can’t make a sale until you ask...and everyone needs accessories.

Keep up-to-date on your inventory. A firearm retailer who I know received a shipment of brightly colored soft gun cases. They sold like hotcakes for a while and then the excitement and enthusiasm wore off and they were relegated to a back room where they were forgotten. The owner found them, cleaned them up, re-priced them, promoted them with signage, displayed them on an end-cap and within a short period of time they flew out the door.

What do you have piling up in your back room collecting dust and not generating cash flow?

## 8. Co-Op Advertising And Territory Development Funds

Co-op advertng is where a manufacturer helps a retailer in advertising based on the amount of net purchases that retailer makes of the manufacturer’s products. Co-op must be equally proportional by dealer level. If a retailer is top of the pack, they may receive a better program than a smaller volume retailer...but that retailer must receive the same consideration as other retailers in that level. Co-op programs can range from two to four percent reimbursement and if a retailer doesn’t take advantage of the program, it is the same as throwing money away.

Territorial development funds are earmarked to help dealers and do not have to be offered equally and fairly. Most of the time these funds are awarded based on sales, potential and clout, the merit of the request... and your rep. If you want to seriously be considered for territorial development funds, you need to put together a detailed proposal and submit it at least six months prior then your projected start date.

Nickels and dimes all add up to dollars...especially forgotten ones. ■



A rendering of the exterior view of the new 125,000-square-foot dome planned for the Louisville Slugger Sports Complex. Construction is set to begin next year.



## LOUISVILLE SLUGGER BREAKS GROUND FOR PEORIA'S SPORTS COMPLEX

By Thomas J. Ryan

On October 17, officials gathered at the Louisville Slugger Sports Complex located in its hometown of Peoria, IL to put shovels in the dirt and officially break ground. The complex, at Orange Prairie Road north of The Shoppes at Grand Prairie, is expected to attract people from throughout the Midwest and across the U.S. and plans to open in Spring 2015.

"We've all been anticipating this day since our very first meeting with the Peoria team last year," said Louisville Slugger's VP of Marketing, Kyle Schlegel. "A tremendous amount of planning and effort has gone into getting to this point. The Louisville Slugger Sports Complex in Peoria is not just a dream anymore. By next spring and summer there will be kids playing ball here and families from across the Midwest and America putting money into the Peoria economy."

The Louisville Slugger Sports Complex will have 10 outdoor all-synthetic turf youth baseball and softball fields plus a 125,000-square-foot dome for year-round play. The complex celebrates Louisville Slugger's 130 years as the number one name in diamond sports and the leader in baseball and softball.

"A quarter-of-a-million baseball and fastpitch softball players and their families will be coming here every year," Schlegel said. "That provides Louisville Slugger the opportunity to promote the games we love, as well as our brand and products, to core baseball and softball consumers in a very large way as we work with the Peoria management team to create the absolute best youth sports experience these kids and their families will ever have."

The Louisville Slugger Sports Complex is expected to draw a majority of participants from the 23 million people living within 300 miles of the central Illinois city; however, the facility, entertaining family experience, and reputation of the Louisville Slugger brand are expected to also attract interest and participants from across North America. The United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA), among the largest amateur sports organizations in America and governing 13 sports, agreed to make Peoria its Midwest baseball tournament hub, joining facilities in Florida and California as national tournament sites.

"USSSA's partnership makes a huge statement," said Dan Cunningham, the Sports Complex's executive director. "It's a national organization with a





Louisville Slugger's VP of Marketing, Kyle Schlegel, speaking at a press conference announcing the company is partnering to build a new Peoria sports complex. Photo courtesy Denise Molina-Weiger / Peoria Public Radio

reputation of doing things first-class. USSSA will be directing teams from across America to Peoria because of the confidence they have in what we're building here."

The Louisville Slugger Sports Complex is expected to host more than 11,000 competitive games a year. The experience for players and families will include a big-league atmosphere with major-league walkout-style dugouts, bullpens, lights, electronic scoreboards, and public-address systems. Opening ceremonies will be second to none with a brilliant laser show and video welcome playing on the ceiling of the dome.

Louisville Slugger's branding and merchandise will be prominent throughout the complex. The storied baseball company – supplier of equipment to players from Babe Ruth to Jackie Robinson and Roberto Clemente to Derek Jeter and Adam Jones – will create a Youth Hall of Fame section on its website where every participant will be featured. Players can share the page with family and friends for years to come. Also, every player in Louisville Slugger Hall of Fame events will receive a personalized Louisville Slugger bat as a keepsake, much like ones used in Major League Baseball by players like Peoria's own Jim Thome, Joe Girardi and Ben Zobrist.

The partnership agreement with developers provides Louisville Slugger with naming rights, use of the facility for special marketing events – such as showcases and product demonstrations – and product merchandising, among other things. The complex will house a satellite of the renowned Louisville Slugger Museum as well as a Louisville Slugger store with baseball and softball products, branded apparel and other items.

"To say we're excited would be an enormous understatement," Schlegel said. "We are truly ecstatic over this partnership and what it can do to promote youth baseball and softball, the games we love. This is the first such partnership for Louisville Slugger, speaking volumes about our confidence in the development and future of the complex under Dan Cunningham's leadership. This is an amazing opportunity for Louisville Slugger to connect with young players and their families as we start our next 130 years." ■

## SGB UPDATE TEAM SPORTS

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Nike revealed new advances and upgrades to its workout collection and mobile apps calling in 27 professional female athletes for a Nike Women's Showcase. The female athletes as pictured here are: Angelica Bengtsson, Sofia Boutella, Leticia Bufoni, Xue Chen, Skylar Diggins, Brienne Theisen-Eaton, Marlen Esparza, Allyson Felix, Joanna Jozwik, Sally Kipyego, Daria Klishina, Carissa Moore, Li Na, Alana Nichols, Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, Paula Radcliffe, Sarah Reinertsen, Laura Robson, Brianna Rollins, Sanya Richards Ross, Carolina Salgado, Maria Clara Salgado, Joan Benoit Samuelson, Dafne Schippers, Zhang Shuai, Adelina Sotnikova and Katarina Johnson-Thompson.

## NIKE DOUBLE DOWNS ON WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITY

By Thomas J. Ryan

At a media event in New York City this month, Nike brought out 27 of its top women athletes to showcase a breadth of performance and lifestyle products as well as new digital services as the company continues to accelerate growth within its women's business.

Nike's Spring/Summer 2015 Women's collections include new products across running, training, and sportswear categories ranging from high-performance tights to Nike Flyknit footwear to innovative sports bras. Nike also revealed its collaboration with Brazilian designer Pedro Lourenço, a collection of training apparel and footwear that blends performance with style.

In digital technology, Nike revealed plans to introduce its N+TC and Nike+ Running App updates to its popular Nike+ Training Club (N+TC) App for women.

But bringing out the global lineup of athletes in New York – including Olympic gold medalists Allyson Felix, Sanya Richards-Ross and Adelina Sotnikova; two-time tennis Grand Slam champion Li Na; and professional basketball star Skylar Diggins – was designed to underscore Nike's commitment to the women's opportunity at a time when Lululemon, Under Armour, fashion houses and scores of mainstream retailers are also aggressively targeting the active women's market.

"Sport and fitness are powering a new lifestyle shift for women around the world," said Mark Parker, president and CEO of Nike, Inc.

Nike executives said the women's business represents just 20 percent of Nike brand's total revenue currently, but is expected to continue to outpace men's growth. Nike reiterated its goal to reach \$7 billion in women's sales by fiscal 2017, a 40 percent jump from the company's most recent fiscal year. The goal was set by Nike last October at its annual investor day.





N+TC App

“With such an explosion of creativity in sport and a growing lifestyle that seamlessly integrates her run and workout with the rest of her day, Nike has never been better positioned for growth,” said Amy Montagne, VP & GM of Nike Women. “Today we’re introducing the most comprehensive and innovative women’s collection Nike has ever created.”

From a design standpoint, Nike said performance is its first, and most important filter, but movement is a primary source of inspiration.

“Our designs are led by performance, formed by beauty, and backed by science,” said John Hoke, Nike VP of global design. “We strive to enable her body in motion, flatter her senses, inspire her individual expression and, ultimately, help her achieve her performance goals.”

But much of its inspiration comes from working on solutions for athletes.

“For example, working out in bare feet is common in the studio,” said Julie Igarashi, VP of global design for Nike Women’s Training. “But bare feet can lead to issues with slipping or hygiene. To solve this, we introduced the Nike Studio Wrap, footwear that provides traction and coverage for her yoga, dance, and barre classes.”

To make sure footwear and apparel stand up to the female athlete’s performance demands, the Nike Women’s design team isolated six core moves central to almost every sport or workout: push, pull, lunge, squat, bend and rotate.

Nike tested these moves in its sport research lab. This testing results in part pressure mapping data illustrating where the athlete feels pressure underfoot. Armed with this knowledge, designers can create footwear that provides cushioning and traction where an athlete needs it most. For example, pressure-mapping data informed the placement of the hexagonal pods of Zoom Air in the new Nike Flyknit Zoom Agility.



This shoe’s upper also relies on expertise of the body in motion. Using Flyknit technology that features an upper knit with strands of yarn, as well as knowledge of how the foot naturally moves, designers can engineer in stretch, support, and breathability in optimal areas. “The body in motion informs not only product conception, but product refinement as well,” Igarashi said. “When we do fittings with our footwear and apparel, we do them on athletes in motion, not static models. This helps us create product with zero distraction while she’s running or performing any of the six core moves.”



Other Spring 2015 highlights in footwear include the Nike Flyknit Lunar 3, which marries a Flyknit upper with a responsive Lunarlon midsole to give runners an ultra-light plush and responsive ride. The evolved upper design

features Flyknit with a tighter knit structure in the heel for support and a looser knit structure in the forefoot for increased breathability, stretch, and support. The midsole features reformatted Lunarlon cushioning that delivers a lighter, more responsive plush ride.

The Nike Roshe, the popular sportswear shoe, also introduces Flyknit to its women’s silhouette. Flyknit creates a lightweight upper that partners naturally with the one-piece Phylon midsole/outsole.



For apparel, Nike highlighted its Dri-FIT Knit technology, which is said to exemplify the brand’s zero distraction approach. In Dri-FIT Knit all lines, colors, and fabrics are knitted into the garment. In traditional cut-and-sew garments these elements are often pieced in.



Nike points to distinct advantages to Dri-FIT Knit. First, the knitting is done in circular tubes reducing the number of seams necessary to construct the garment. Fewer seams lead to less potential for chafing, or distraction. Secondly, with Dri-FIT Knit, designers can precisely engineer stretch, warming, and cooling exactly where the female athlete needs it most. For example, tighter zones are knit for warmth and open textures are knit to enhance breathability in key sweat zones. Finally, like all Dri-FIT technology, Dri-FIT Knit wicks away moisture to keep an athlete dry.

Much like in footwear, Nike designers focus on creating apparel that provides visual motivation. “We are obsessed with flattering the female form,” Igarashi said. “We know that athletes demand products that look as great as they perform. So we strive to create products that motivate her to wake up at dawn to run before work, or stop at the gym on her way home. One insight we continually get from top athletes is that if they look good, they feel good, which means they’ll perform their best. This insight serves as a constant source of inspiration as we design.”

Nike also unveiled the Nike Tech Aeroshield, which features a new fabrication, highlighted by internal flocking nodes that work to maximize space between the garment’s outer shell and the wearer’s skin. Combined with Tech Aeroshield’s laser-perforated ventilation, the flocking allows air to circulate more freely helping keep the wearer cool and comfortable. The garment’s outer shell is constructed of high denier woven nylon, which provides a light, comfortable and breathable solution to traditional nylon construction. The Nike Tech Moto Jacket will be the first women’s silhouette to feature Tech Aeroshield.



Nike Tech  
Aeroshield  
Moto Jacket

Other key launches in women’s apparel included the Nike Epic Lux Printed Tight, offering solutions specific to the needs of runners. It features a wide elastic waistband and internal drawcord, a zippered back pocket for personal items, and reflective elements for enhanced visibility. The tight’s soft Dri-FIT fabric works wick moisture, while ventilation is built into key sweat zones for cooling.

The Nike Legging T2 provides comfort for all-day wear with a brushed elastic waistband and a soft cotton finish. The burnout pattern that runs down the side of the tight couples with stirrups to deliver a fresh aesthetic. Nike also unveiled the Nike Pro Rival Bra, which now features A-cup sizes in addition to the current B-E selection.



Nike Epic  
Lux Printed  
Tight



Nike Legging T2

The legendary Lava Tight was offered as an example of how Nike designers look to flatter the female form. This tight features a print applied with digital direct printing. Unlike other printing techniques, which can range from ink dyeing to heat transfer, this process prints art directly onto the fabric. The result is a bolder and more vibrant application of print and color. The digital technology also enables Nike designers to customize the print for every available size of the tight.

“The explosion of women’s sport and fitness is a lifestyle shift that is here to stay,” Igarashi said. “And because it is now so ingrained in what women do and who they are, fitness footwear and apparel have become seamless extensions of her everyday wardrobe. To serve her modern lifestyle of movement, we focus on a unique blend of performance and style. We won’t compromise one element for the other, which means we can equip the athlete for whatever workout she chooses and wherever she chooses to go before or after.”

Finally, Nike brought out the latest updates to the Nike+ Training Club (N+TC) App for women; which has been downloaded 16 million times by nine million women. The updates include adding dual-screen functionality for users looking to view the app through Apple TV, Google Chromecast or an HDMI cable. The updates will also nearly double the number of languages the app is available in, and add a new bottom navigation bar for easy access, as well as several new social features. For the first time, a user will be able to stay connected with her Nike+ friends within the app.

“The N+TC App is connecting our community of athletes like never before,” said Kerri Hoyt-Pack, VP of brand marketing, Nike Women. “Women will now be able to communicate with each other through the news feed, from organizing local group workouts to sending encouragement around the world.”

To build on that momentum, Nike in 2015 for the first time will host a global Nike Women’s Event Series. This will include both Nike Training Club (NTC) Tour stops and a Nike Women’s Race Series. In its second year, NTC Tour will expand from three cities to 14. The tour begins March 8 in Shanghai and wraps up June 26 in Stockholm. Thousands of women are expected to gather to test their limits over five hours of training at each stop. The workouts will be led by some of the world’s leading trainers and will include studio, gym, and high intensity exercises.

The Nike Women’s Race Series will bring together the Nike female running community at 20 stops in 2015. Its races range from 10K’s to half-marathons with runs taking place in cities such as London, Mexico City, Seoul, and Istanbul. ■



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Nike Lava tight

## NOVEMBER

3-5 NBS Fall Athletic Market  
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15-16 A.D.A. Fall Show  
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23-25 Sports, Inc. Fall Team Dealer Show  
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## DECEMBER

2-4 EORA Southeast Market  
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9-10 EORA Southeast Market  
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10-11 Atlanta Fashion Shoe Market  
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