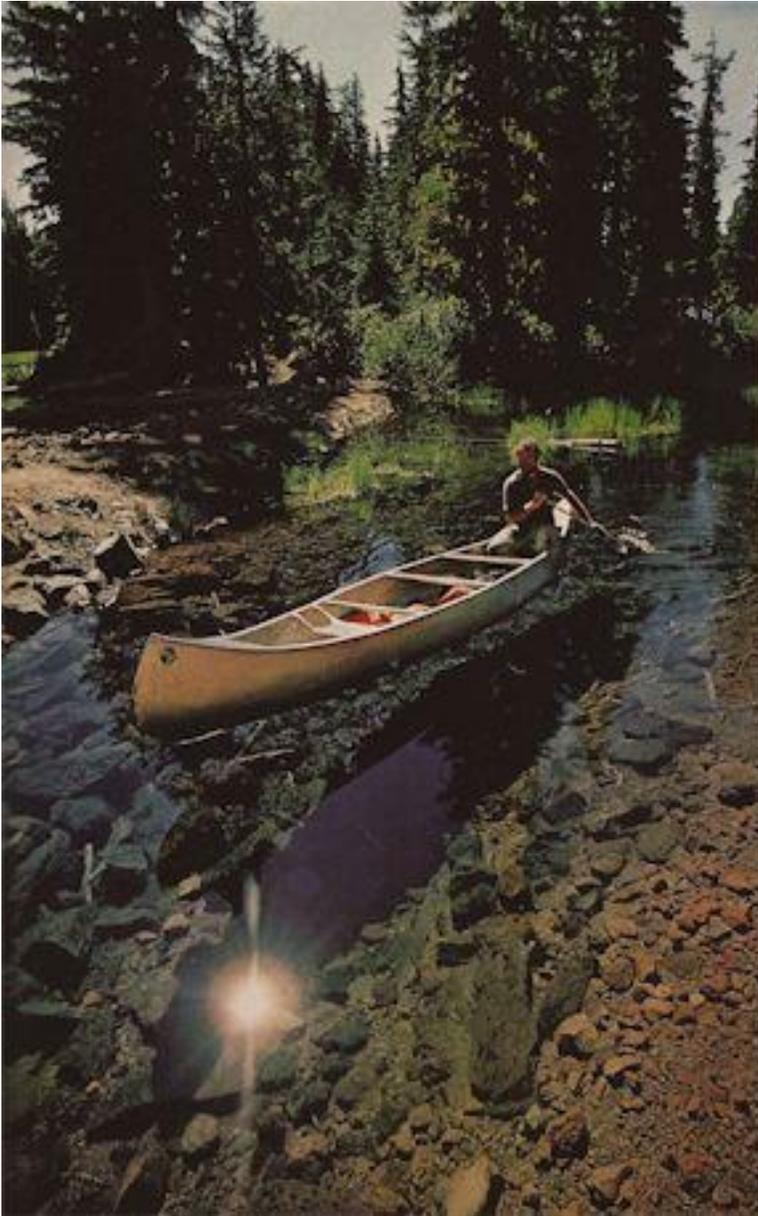


Outdoor



Loyalty

The Outdoor Industry Needs To Listen



The Outdoor Industry is finding itself, as best one can tell, looking for answers that will make marketing more effective and profitable. The Gurus of Marketing who focus on the business of retailers, manufacturers and distributors are compiling mass amounts of information utilizing the latest tools at hand such as Analytics, Big Data and the Icloud Systems that curate this mass amount of data into usable categories to strategize marketing plans for the full range of Outdoor Retailers so as to more effectively market to the Outdoorists on all levels of activities. These defined categories are utilized to Analyze apparel and gear trends, Predict what segments of the population are actively purchasing products, what Sources will be available for production of products and what Levels of merchandise will be purchased to meet the needs of the Outdoor Consumer. Curating vast amounts of Mass Data information into categories that can predict the Where, When and Who of knowledge uncovering the "Crucible of the Truth" about everything Outdoor.

There is a human element missing in this new trend of thought. How about merchandisers and designers developing products by collaboration with sourcing agents, timelines and color

themes necessary to predict what will be happening two years "down the road". Humans who own manufacturing companies, outdoor retail businesses and outdoor consumers collectively make-up the human element in the comprehensive Outdoor Industry. The flow of information and knowledge from the grassroots participants, at all levels, is indispensable in the Ideation of this encompassing process.



I have been involved with the Outdoor Industry for over two decades. My points, thus far in this blog, are not a condemnation of the industry and those involved. I am, through my website www.outdoorloyalty.com, interested in the latest trends emerging which will only expand the thought process of the whole system. A recent incident occurred at the last Outdoor Retailer Show in August of this year in Salt Lake City that exposed some marketing trends in progress. At the OR Show there was an open forum about marketing formulas sponsored by Outdoor University presenting featured experts as commentators on the panel with marketing background experience. The audience consisted of retailers, manufacturers, marketing agents and guests of the show. The subject being discussed was in regards to marketing strategies needed for independent outdoor retailers to be able to compete with large mass merchants who have "in house" marketing experts guiding the programs being used by these merchants to reach and incentivize the Outdoorists to purchase products from them.

During the discussion, one statement caught my attention about utilizing renowned athletes to be the experts on Outdoor Activities. They would draw a large and diverse crowd to the location of the event. The larger the crowds were, the more potential there is for new customers. This marketing tool was considered by the panel as one of the more effective ways to reach out to outdoor activists. All research utilizing analytics and big data showed the successful trend of these athletes and outdoor retailers. A parallel program for manufacturers attending OR was to have LeBron James or Peyton Manning in their booth to draw incredible crowds to surround their location. The results of these events were remarkably successful and, beyond having free beer at the booth, the stats showed its success.



Back to the panel discussion, where I approached the microphone and asked why they would use basketball and football athletes instead of a true Outdoorists who are recognized by the Outdoor Industry as having made great impact on our industry advancing those activities foreseen as unattainable to the majority of us. Some examples were put forth recognizing the infamous Apa Sherpa who holds the record of successful ascends to the peak of Mt Everest over 20 times and has ascended this mountain several times without oxygen breathing apparatus support. The true Odyssey of Ma Gatewood, who first trekked the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine at the age of 67. These examples of great outdoorists would be more effective than renowned athletes from organized/professional sports. The panel responded with the statement which astounded me, that "Outdoorists" are Recreational Participants whereas the Professional Sports Participants are true athletes and would be much more successful as Marketing Agents...REALLY??? THIS IS AN "OUTDOOR" SHOW.

Sometimes I feel like a Sockeye Salmon swimming upstream from the mouth of the Columbia River all the way to Red Fish Lake in Northern Idaho to spawn. We, the team at OutdoorLoyalty.com, are firmly committed to the "True Outdoorist" and the "Points for Participation" recognition of Outdoor Activities by rewarding their efforts to scale, trek, climb, walk, ride bikes and equines to test their limits and dreams. The support we all give each other is a

cherished gift not to be taken lightly. I applaud all those who cherish the Outdoors to a point that they volunteer, support, sustain and create a better Earth for everyone, now and for the future.

Remember our tagline: Reward...Outdoor...Activities

www.outdoorloyalty.com

Contact: jack@outdoorloyalty.com