un control measures and the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement between the U.S. and 11 other countries are shaping up as the hot button issues of the fall presidential campaign.

The proposed Pacific Rim trade pact wants to reduce trade barriers, including the elimination of certain tariffs (including some on footwear), raise copyright protections and set standards on labor and environmental rules. Seven years of negotiations between TPP members Japan, Vietnam, Australia, Malaysia, Chile, the U.S. and others ended last October.

Perhaps playing into blue collar voters' anxiety over the future of American manufacturing jobs, both presidential nominees Donald Trump for the GOP and Democrat Hillary Clinton are opposed to the TPP as currently written, citing trade deals for contributing to the outsourcing of jobs. Clinton's position is a bit of reversal given her earlier stance that TPP would serve to “set the gold standard for trade deals.”

That alone may not be enough to get TPP enacted. But China's push to enact its own trade agreement for the Pacific Rim that would boost its exports and establish labor and environmental standards across APAC might.

Nike, which has a contract manufacturing base in Vietnam, has long been in favor of TPP. New Balance, with three factories in Maine, is against the trade pact.

U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman last week expressed optimism that Congress will still pass TPP, perhaps in the lame-duck session after the Nov. 8 election. He also referred to the pending trade deal as a “scapegoat” for legitimate consumer concerns over stagnant wages, income inequality and jobs lost to automation. The U.S. International Trade Commission, meanwhile, estimates TPP will push U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) up $42.7 billion and create 128,000 additional jobs by its 15th year in force.

That alone may not be enough to get TPP enacted. But China's push to enact its own trade agreement for the Pacific Rim that would boost its exports and establish labor and environmental standards across APAC might.
Above and Beyond

A new customer service record was broken at Zappos in June. A call to the customer service line of the online, Las Vegas-based shoes and apparel retailer lasted 10 hours and 43 minutes!

The length of the interaction, while maybe seen as unnecessary or ridiculous to some, wasn’t to Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh, who has long made customer service the most important plank of the retailer he has helmed for more than 15 years. While shoes can be purchased from many different places, it’s his belief that an online store that goes out of its way to please can build a loyal customer base.

Ask any retailer, customers today expect more than ever from their shopping experiences. Disappoint them and they will pick up and go elsewhere. They won’t wait. And they may not shop with you again.

IBM and Bridge Solutions Group co-sponsored a recent study of 1500 U.S. consumers, equally divided by gender and six age groups. They discovered that U.S. consumer expectations have soared over the last five years, all as technology has grown in influence and the number of brick-and-mortar bankruptcies has mounted. Interestingly, retailers rated themselves much higher than the 135 mystery shoppers that visited their stores.

With back-to-school shopping in full swing across the U.S. this month, there are a number of key findings from the study. Among them:

• Price consistency by channel must be resolved.
• Free store pick-up is more important than in 2011. It needs to be easy and convenient. Only 22 percent of retailers were rated for that.
• Brand loyalty is less important to women. An estimated 33 percent of men have a stronger relationship with the retailer.
• Shipping charges can be a deal breaker.
• Avoiding checkout lines is crucial to consumers.
• Flexible fulfillment has become the cost of entry into the retail business.
• 79 percent of consumers will buy if the retailer can find the item in stock.
• Just shy of 50 percent of consumers would like one- to two-hour delivery of their order, with 13- to 29-year olds having the highest expectations for the shortest delivery window.
• 80 percent of young males prefer seeing in-store sales associates using mobile devices.
• Younger males are more willing to pay for expedited shipping than younger females. But women age 50 and higher are also willing to pay to receive their order faster.
HE REPRESENTS YOU.
HE REPRESENTS US.
HE REPRESENTS GREATNESS.

THE AWARD-WINNING SKECHERS GORUN 4™-2016. BUILT WITH A SOFT, SOCK-LIKE GO KNIT UPPER AND OUR HIGHLY RESPONSIVE 5GEN® CUSHIONING, THIS SHOE IS INCREDIBLY LIGHT, SO YOU CAN FLY.

CHOOSE GREATNESS™
Brooks Behind Rule 40

Brooks is the brand behind the yellow generic branding and Olympic Charter-slamming message of Rule40.com. The Seattle-based brand was revealed last week after a story in the Wall Street Journal pegged it as the firm responsible for the website and social media presence named for the section of the International Olympic Committee's rulebook that prohibits any Olympic athlete or participant from commercializing their image for the duration of the Games.

Brooks has charged that the rule effectively hamstrings athletes from participating in one of the biggest, and in some cases, only, chance they have to earn sponsor dollars. (It also prevents brands like Brooks from being able to celebrate or even mention its sponsored athletes, all of whom compete in official sponsor Nike's kit.)

Conceived of over the winter and launched in late May, the campaign posted slogans meant to point out the discrepancy between the multi-billion dollar Olympics and the athletes who make it happen: “Only half of American track and field athletes who are ranked in the top 10 in their event earn more than $15,000 a year from the sport,” or “Not pictured here: an athlete earning a living below the poverty line to bring glory to their country.”

The Rule 40 guidelines are extensive. According to the guidelines recently issued by the U.S. Olympic Committee, brands are prohibited from posting on their official accounts about the Olympic Trials, the Olympic Games, using any pictures taken at the Olympics, and are not allowed to share event results. They are even restricted from using hashtags like #rio2016 or #teamUSA.

According to a Brooks spokesman, the goal was to start a conversation about what benefits athletes. The rule40.com website and social media accounts will continue to operate for the foreseeable future, he said. And a post revealed, “We're not going to go back and turn all the yellow font into blue,” he said. “But we're going to keep having that conversation.”

— Jennifer Ernst Beaudry
Where Innovation Meets Comfort.

Outdoor Retailer Booth #32150
INSIDE ADS

Connecting with Consumers Worldwide

Nike An Unlimited Future Baby Commercial 2016. Vinyl's Bobby Cannavale gives baby athletes a few words of advice in the new spot from Nike. Among the famous babies represented are Neymar Jr, Serena Williams, LeBron James, Mo Farah and Zhou Qi.

James Harden gets confidence by looking fresh in his Adidas Ultra Boosts from Foot Locker, and also trusting the little voice in his head, which happens to be the voice of Colin Farrell. #HardensInnerVoice.

We Are THE Arsenal is an insight into the experience and pride of fans, players — both past and present, all of whom share a unified passion for the North London club. It features real fans from Mumbai, Shanghai, New York City and London.

17,760 views as of 7/26/16

710,051 views as of 7/26/16

59,566 views as of 7/26/16
Cabela’s Mum On Review

No revelations emerged about the status of the outdoor specialty retailer’s nine-month old strategic review process when it reported second quarter results. Earlier in July, reports swirled that a Bass Pro Shops-Goldman Sachs’ bid was closing in on acquiring the Sidney, NB-based chain.

Cabela’s senior management did re-confirm the public company’s ongoing commitment to be a 200-225 door chain in North America with a primary focus on the merchandise categories of hunting, fishing, camping and recreational shooting.

Bolstered by price cuts, Cabela’s generated positive in-store and internet/catalog comparable store sales for the first time since the third quarter of 2013. Second quarter same-store sales rose 1.5 percent, including a two percent gain in the U.S., as total revenues jumped 11.2 percent to $929.9 million. The topline exceeded Street forecasts. But profitability during the period ended July 2 was down six percent and came in $0.05 a share below the Street forecast. Merchandise gross margins, on the discounting, declined 290 basis points.

Internet/catalog sales were 3.3 percent higher on strength in shooting sports, optics, camping, fishing and hunting apparel. But there was softness in casual apparel and footwear.

Senior management said Cabela’s revenue growth for FY16 should be in the high-single to low-double digit range.

Sport Chek Opens Sixth Flagship

The Canadian chain, owned by Canadian Tire-controlled FGL Sports, recently opened its sixth flagship overall and third in Toronto market with an 80,000-square-foot location in CF Sherway Gardens.

Besides eight in-store, branded specialty shops from the likes of Under Armour, The North Face and Columbia, the Sport Chek uses RFID tags in footwear that can be held in front of digital screens to see additional product benefits, a 1000-square-foot basketball shop; hologram podiums; an outdoor specialty area focused on camping, hiking, climbing and outdoor living; and a New Balance Stride I.D. Experience Lab that provides a 3-D scan of a customer’s foot and fit recommendations.

Retail Briefs

Dick’s Sporting Goods begins construction on a $100 million, 650,000-square-foot distribution center in Conklin, NY, this month. The facility, which is five miles from Dick’s original store in Binghamton, NY, will eventually employ more than 450. DKS will receive up to $12 million tax incentives from the state of New York and up to $450,000 in economic development grants.

Kohl’s will begin selling Under Armour products in women’s, men’s, kids, accessories and home in early 2017.

Rack Room Shoes will feature real customers in all of its seasonal advertisements this fall, instead of professional models. The family footwear chain is doing so through the launch of its “The Real People Project.”

Gander Mountain is partnering with the National Shooting Sports Foundation on the trade group’s #GUNVOTE campaign to support voter education through the remainder of the election year. The chain, which offers training and safety courses for customers at six Gander Mountain Academy locations, will provide #GUNVOTE information to store customers throughout the summer and fall.
IN THE NEWS

**Adidas Increases Outlook on Strong Momentum**

Bolstered by double-digit growth rates in all key regions and major categories, the Adidas Group raised its full-year outlook last week when it reported preliminary second quarter results. The Three Stripes is now forecasting currency-neutral revenue growth in the high teens for FY16, up from an earlier estimate of 15 percent. Annual profitability from continuing operations is now forecast to increase 35-39 percent to a range equivalent to $1.07-$1.1 billion.

Adidas Group revenues jumped 13 percent in euros (21 percent in constant currency) to the equivalent of $4.84 billion. Group operating profit rose 77 percent to more than $455 million, bolstered by the German company’s decision to terminate its contract with the Chelsea F.C. soccer team. Net profit from continuing operations were 99 percent higher at approximately $320 million for the period ended June 30.

The company formally releases second quarter results on August 4.

**Puma Making Inroads in U.S.**

Puma CEO Bjorn Gulden says The Cat has enjoyed “very good sellthroughs” in women’s in the U.S. market and is currently working on gaining product and shelf distribution in Foot Locker stores in both the U.S. and EU. The added shelf space should translate into additional sales to consumers.

While admitting the brand “is going in the right direction” in the U.S., Gulden admitted Puma’s lack of exposure in “American sports” is a drawback.

In the second quarter, helped by better products across categories, Puma posted growth in all business units – running/training, sportstyle, team and golf – with the exception of motosport. The company also recorded mid-single digit growth in all global regions with the exception of U.S. factory outlets as more of the business shifted to ecommerce. Overall period revenues were up 13 percent on a currency adjusted basis (seven percent in constant currency) to the equivalent of $909.2 million. Operating income was 75 percent higher at the equivalent of $13.2 million. By category, footwear sales were approximately $396.0 million; apparel came in at $328.8 million; and accessories rose 14.1 percent on a currency adjusted basis to $183.7 million.

**Columbia Gets Solid Contributions from prAna, PFG**

PrAna, the lifestyle apparel brand acquired 26 months ago for $188.5 million, is now Columbia’s second largest first-half brand, with $74 million in sales, most in the U.S., with 16 percent year-over-year growth. With a significantly expanded swimwear line and broader men’s and women’s outdoor lifestyle and men’s yoga and fitness lines, prAna initiated integrated brand positioning platforms at retail and in wholesale channels in the second quarter. The effort included regional marketing campaigns in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver and Boulder and new fixturing and point-of-sale signage at retail.

Columbia CEO Tim Boyle told analysts last week that the Carlsbad, CA-based company has a real opportunity in the swimwear category. “They (prAna staff) have a sense of what products are going to be in demand there (in SoCA) and just the unique positioning of the brand between yoga and climbing.”
"Additionally, it's heavily favored by women, so we like that… There are opportunities in other seasons for prAna, which we think we'll be focusing on in the future."

As for PFG (Performance Fishing Gear), Boyle said the label’s sales, concentrated in the southern U.S., Central America and northern South America, are north of $120 million annually. Columbia has several PFG retail stores, including one recently opened in the Walt Disney World area.

"With PFG, we’re able to get that consumer who wants to make sure not only his wardrobe performs when he’s fishing, but also when he’s at work or reasonably casually dressed that it reflects he’s a fisherman."

In its seasonally smallest quarter, Columbia posted a two percent increase in second quarter revenues to $388.8 million. U.S. sales were eight percent higher at $228.8 million. The company’s first half revenues rose six percent to $913.9 million.

**Under Armour Takes On Style with UAS**

Under Armour Sportswear collection debuts at retail next month. CEO Kevin Plank says the line is about “bringing a new consumer into the (Under Armour) brand.”

UAS, developed by Tim Coppens, the former Barney’s designer turned Executive Creative Director at Under Armour in June, will bring “a young, fresh and modern voice to sportswear,” says Plank, and “reflects the insights we’ve gained as a performance brand now applied to the everyday wardrobe.”

Plank asserts Under Armour will not abandon its authentic, on-field/on-court garb with UAS, but confirms the collection will give the company an opportunity to offer more street-ready wear to its retailers for consumers to wear “to school, out at night and other wearing occasions.”

Elsewhere, Under Armour will open a flagship store in New York City, in the 53,000-square-foot former FAO Schwarz store on Fifth Avenue, by 2019, and is eyeing the Golden State as a big opportunity for the brand domestically. The company has already forged sponsorship agreements with UCLA and Cal-Berkeley that should provide added brand exposure for the brand in California.

At Rio this month, Plank says Under Armour will have four times as many athletes than at the 2012 London Games representing national governing bodies from more than 30 countries competing in either UA footwear or apparel. Some of these Olympians will also utilize the brand’s Connected Fitness platform, which currently counts more than 175 million users across its suite of apps.

The company continues to peg FY16 global revenues at $4.925 billion. In the second quarter, North American sales rose 21.5 percent to $827.1 million. Overall apparel sales rose 19 percent to $612.8 million; footwear sales were 58 percent higher at $242.7 million.

**VF Corp. Makes Further Strides in DTC**

The North Face, Vans and Timberland parent generated a seven percent increase in direct-to-consumer sales in the second quarter (up mid-teens internationally) with low double-digit growth in the Outdoor & Action sports segment. DTC accounted for 27 percent of all
IN THE NEWS

Timberland parent VF Corp. has grown its store base 11 percent.

Wolverine Eyes Supply Chain, Portfolio

The Merrell, Sperry, Saucony and Chaco parent intends to generate a 12 percent operating margin by the end of 2018, despite the current existence of “a low growth global environment. In order to meet that lofty objective, WWW is continuing with a strategic review of its portfolio of footwear brands, which may result in sale of several, and taking an intense look at its supply chain. That scrutiny by the company’s global operations team includes factory rationalization, component vendor rationalization and a review of logistics, warehouses and the company’s distribution model.

“We expect about half of the total benefit or expansion in operating margin to really come from the supply chain,” Blake Krueger, chairman, CEO and president told analysts last month when the company reported a seven percent decline in second quarter revenues to $583.7 million. During the period ended June 16, Merrell had flat global sales, hurt by a soft U.S. market that was offset by strong revenue gains in other regions and a more than 30 percent increase in e-commerce sales. Saucony sales, meanwhile, rose mid-single digits, bolstered by high teens growth in the run specialty channel and double-digit in its three largest regions outside the U.S. Sperry sales fell high teens, hurt by persistent softness in the boat shoe business, but the brand is aiming to “re-invigorate” the boat segment with its introduction of the Seven Seas collection, an athletic-inspired, modern interpretation of the classic boat shoe.

PSG Consolidating Baseball/Softball Ops

Performance Sports Group is moving the composite technology developed by Combat, a Canadian company it purchased in May 2013 for C$4 million, into its Easton-branded products and consolidating all performance sports bat production to Thousand Oaks, CA.

As a result, PSG intends to shutter Combat’s Ottawa, Canada and Kent, WA, factories, lay off a reported 85 before October and immediately exit all Combat-branded products with the exception of the Maxxum line.

PSG, also parent of the Bauer hockey brand, will incur an estimated $13.2 million in expenses related to the consolidation. According to the company’s most recent annual report for the fiscal year ended May 31, 2015, Combat sold three percent of its products to big-box and sporting goods chains, with the remainder distributed in baseball specialty accounts. Easton, conversely, sells 51 percent of its merchandise to big-box and sporting goods chains and the remaining 49
percent to baseball specialty retailers. The company’s baseball/softball segment, consisting of both Easton and Combat, generated annual revenues of $199.3 million in FY15. For the nine months ended Feb. 29, baseball/softball segment sales were down 8.6 percent year-over-year at $140.3 million.

Callaway Gaining Ground in Green Grass, Balls

Despite a challenging U.S. market in the quarter, Callaway continued to make inroads with its green grass and golf ball businesses in the period ended June 30. Sales to green grass, or on-course golf shops, rose double digits and ELY’s golf ball sales lifted 14.9 percent to nearly $47 million.

Overall, Callaway’s second quarter profits improved 166 percent to $34.1 million on 6.5 percent topline growth to $246 million. U.S. sales were four percent higher at $127.2 million as the company reported an improved core business and highest first half dollar share of the U.S. golf equipment market in a decade.

CEO Chip Brewer told analysts there is a consolidation to the bigger golf brands going on in the U.S. and internationally, pointing to data that suggests the top four brands currently own 80 percent of sellthroughs at specialty retail and green grass shops currently. Another trend point to more managed inventories now that major golf brands have moved to longer product cycles.

Callaway’s June market share in golf balls was said to be 14.9 percent in the U.S., up from 11 percent a year earlier.
Outdoor Voices Raises $13 Million

The three-year old, dual-gender activewear brand, founded by Parsons School for Design graduate Tyler Haney, 27, last month raised $13 million in Series B funding. Proceeds will be earmarked for technical systems to improve customer shopping experiences and an expanded product assortment. To date, Outdoor Voices, which operates stores in New York City and Austin, TX, has raised a total of $22.5 million to develop the brand that focuses on recreation and zeroes in on hipsters and fashionistas. The company, which employs 46, is moving its headquarters to the Little Italy section of New York City.

General Catalyst of Cambridge, MA, Forerunner Ventures of San Francisco, the Collaborative Fund and Liberty Interactive board member Mark Vadon led the latest investment round. Actress Gwyneth Paltrow is an existing Outdoor Voices investor.

French designer Jean Touitou through A.P.C. is releasing a collaborative collection with Outdoor Voices this month.

Brunswick Acquiring Indoor Cycling Group

The deal, to close in the third quarter, will mark Brunswick’s third acquisition of a fitness company in 13 months, having purchased Scifit Systems in July 2015 and Cybex for $195 million in January.

Indoor Cycling Group, founded in 1995 and based in Nuremberg, Germany, has supplied Life Fitness’ group cycling bike since 2011. The business generated $41 million in revenues in FY15. Besides strengthening BC’s position in indoor cycling, the acquisition is projected to help Life Fitness expand its positioning in group exercise and in boutique studios.

Meanwhile, Brunswick is forecasting a mid- to high-20 percent growth rate, including acquisitions, for its fitness unit this fiscal year. For the first six months of FY16, the business segment generated 26 percent revenue growth in constant currency (Acquisitions contributed 19 percent of the increase.) to $448.1 million. By 2020, Brunswick wants Life Fitness to generate $1.5 billion in annual revenues.

Garmin Sparked by Fitness, Outdoor

Second quarter revenues and net income beat expectations on the strength of results within its Fitness and Outdoor segments. Fitness sales were 34 percent higher at $213 million as Garmin realized strong demand for newly introduced wearables, including the vivosmart HR+ and vivomove.

Outdoor sales increased 23 percent in the period to $133 million as the company introduced the Approach X40, an activity tracker for golf. Overall, Garmin second quarter revenues were 5 percent higher, or more than $48 million more than expected at $811.6 million. The company is now projecting approximately 20 percent growth each from its Fitness and Outdoor units, up from a previous forecast of 10 percent. ■
It’s ‘Team On’ for Russell Athletic

With team sports in America facing a participation crisis, Russell Athletic, which has been serving the team business for more than a century, last week launched a unique “Team On” integrated marketing campaign with a content series entitled #SettleYourScore.

The national campaign, launched at a press conference last week at football powerhouse Union City High School in Union City, NJ, hits full stride during the heart of the pre-season football and will include digital, social, out-of-home, a study on the evolution of high school two-a-days, and a two-a-days sale at RussellAthletic.com with a buy-one, get-one-free offer on all performance wear. Heisman Trophy winner and NFL legend Eddie George is serving as brand ambassador for the effort.

The most unique aspect of the far-reaching campaign is that instead of celebrating the champions, the series focuses on 101 teams that last season lost their football state championship by a touchdown or less. To make it even more personal, Russell is partnering with seven of these high school football teams from across the U.S. to turn the one thing that haunts them from their state championship loss into their ultimate motivation.

“We felt it was important for our brand to invest in where we wanted to take the business,” Matt Murphy, Russell Athletic VP-marketing, said at the New Jersey press event. “We feel there is a space for a brand to talk about what is right about team sports.”

“What haunts you?” is a tough question to ask high school coaches, Murphy admitted. “The eight seconds, one play or 99 yards that led to the loss hurts, but it could also become the perfect fuel for a new season,” he said. “Their untold stories will resonate with any team that has a score to settle this season.”

“There’s a story for every team that didn’t make it all the way,” added George. “I experienced it and it taught me to finish, not just in football but in life as well.”

As part of the campaign, players, coaches and towns will literally stare down what haunts them in the form of outdoor billboards near each high school with reminders like “8 Seconds.” They will wear sweat-activated practice gear that reveals inspiration when they sweat through their shirt. And, right before the season starts, they will tear down the “haunt” billboards to reveal the team’s new mantra for the season. Finally, each of the selected schools’ stories will be documented on TeamOn.RussellAthletic.com and on Russell Athletic social media channels.

“Our goal was simple: tell the story of the birthplace of team in America,” said Murphy. “Unlike a lot of what is out there today in sports, this inspiration is drawn from the untold stories of real teams.”

Murphy says the football effort is just Chapter One of an ongoing campaign that will eventually include other team sports where Russell has a strong presence.

The current #SettleYourScore campaign and the Russell Athletic effort to defend team sports in America will be highlighted at TeamOn.RussellAthletic.com and @RussellAthletic on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

— Michael Jacobsen
**NUMBERS IN PLAY**

Week of 7/18-7/29

- **Largest Gainers**

  **Retail**

  Zumiez: June’s 4.5 percent decline in comparable store sales marked retailer’s 15th consecutive monthly decline, but the drop beat Street expectations.

  **Brands**

  Adidas: Brand’s increasing momentum in North America is evident. However, currency impact and higher labor costs could negatively impact upcoming second quarter results.

- **Largest Decliners**

  **Retail**

  Hibbett Sports: Seems to be losing market share to competitors entering its markets with omnichannel ops, according to Zack’s. Also, seasonality of HIBB’s business exposes it to significant risk.

  **Brands**

  Skechers: Domestic wholesale net sales fell 5.4 percent in second quarter due to “significant pull forward of orders into first quarter and challenging and promotional environment.”

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### Retail: 84

16.30% change over period

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### Brands: 99

0.32% change over period

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<td>+5.84%</td>
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embracing sport lifestyle trends
key pieces for the workout

the retailer's guide to yoga
participation trends
the yoga lifestyle

retro footwear sneaker sizzle

PREMIERE ISSUE
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Off Broadway Shoe Warehouse, the national shoe retailer with more than 75 locations nationwide, has hired Craig Scheiderer as marketing director. He joins Off Broadway from the Scorch Agency in St. Louis. In his new role, Scheiderer will lead the development and execution of strategic marketing, creative and digital initiatives under Mark Lardie, the retailer’s president and CEO.

National Sporting Goods Association chairman through May 31, 2018 is David Labbe, SVP–finance and administration and CFO for the Kittery Trading Post. The specialty retailer has been a southern Maine staple since 1938. He began his term at trade group on June 1. Also, Cathy Pryor, SVP–store operations for Hibbett Sports, has joined the executive committee of the NSGA as treasurer and chairperson-elect.

Nike’s new VP/GM of global running, Steve Lesnard, begins his new job on August 1. The 19-year veteran of the Swoosh spearheaded global brand campaigns for the London and Beijing Games as global running brand VP from 2008 to 2012. He takes the helm of a business unit that generated 3 percent wholesale equivalent sales growth (10% on a constant currency basis) to more than $5 billion in FY16 ended May 31.

Blizzard/Tecnica names Dana Greenwood as principal sales representative for its alpine products in New England. Most recently, he had same position for the California/Nevada market. Also, Charlie Hepburn, a California and Nevada sales associate since 2014, is promoted to principal sales representative for the region.
The sporting goods industry’s version of “Shark Tank” will take place in Denver next month as five finalists compete to win the first “Start-Up Challenge” sponsored by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA). A panel of nine experts, led by senior executives from Brooks Running, Under Armour, United Sports Brands, Rawlings and New Balance, will judge the contest following 10-minute presentations on September 14 during the SFIA Industry Leaders Summit.

The start-up that wins the contest will receive a free year of SFIA membership, additional industry exposure through the trade group’s marketing channels and a free public relations campaign from Uproar PR.

“These start-ups have demonstrated proven leadership qualities and innovation within our industry and we can’t wait for their ideas to take stage,” says John Peters, senior director of sales and membership services for the SFIA.

The ‘Start-Up Challenge’ finalists are:

- **OrderMyGear**: A software platform connecting sports teams, brands/manufacturers and distributors for group apparel and equipment purchases online.
- **Hookit**: A sports technology platform that quantifies and tracks the value and performance of sponsorships through big data and deep analytics.
- **Shnarped**: A sports app allowing users to join a community of athletes, inspire others, learn new things and showcase skills via video editing tools across all sports.
- **SymGym**: Interactive, augmented reality workout based on the SymGym controller that uses body movements to control video game actions.
- **Gearsay**: A search and discovery engine optimized for recreational sports that encourages consumers to find, store, share and interact with content from brands, coaches, events, experiences and top performers.
The Social Scene

Nike takes technology to the pitch.

OIA makes its position on public lands known to GOP.

Majestic in play. Might Michael Rubin have a say?

Adidas pitchman lands on cover of NBA2K16.

Lululemon details its design approach for Olympic garb.

Lids touts cap brand from United Kingdom.

Under Armour’s Steph Curry gets lifestyle kicks.
MATCH-UP

Brace Yourself

Technology has changed the way athletes play the game and no where is that more apparent than in the development of high-tech ankle braces, designed to either prevent injuries or to get players back on the field or court faster. These state-of-the-art ankle braces are also touted as being able to replace traditional taping with a more comfortable, easier to apply and more effective alternative.

DonJoy Performance’s Protection On Demand Ankle Brace (POD) is designed to engage specifically when needed to pro-actively resist ankle roll and other common ankle injuries. POD, unlike taping, provides freedom of movement, adjustability and stability without breaking down. POD is also 30 percent lighter than the average ankle brace, and features a soft EVA lining, low-profile cuff and adjustable underfoot closure. MSRP: $79.99.

Active Ankle’s Eclipse II multi-sport rigid ankle brace, improved from the classic T2 Ankle Brace, provides maximum protection through its solid U-shaped design and multi-point strapping system. The anatomically correct bilateral hinge allows for unencumbered forward/back and vertical mobility, while the unique, contoured stirrup shape improves fit and creates a more compact ankle device that is lighter in weight. MSRP: $49.99.
Back to School: Deloitte Survey

School supplies, clothes/shoes, and backpacks top the list of products that parents plan to buy for their children

- **School Supplies**: 95%
- **Clothes/Shoes**: 92%
- **Backpack/Book Bag/Lunch Box Accessories**: 78%

While clothing and school supplies still dominate back-to-school lists, computer and gadget shoppers spend the most on tech

- **93 PERCENT** plan to buy Clothing & Accessories
  - Avg spent: $239
  - 63% plan to buy In-Store
  - 19% plan to buy Online
  - 18% plan to buy at both

- **98 PERCENT** plan to buy School Supplies
  - Avg spent: $122
  - 66% plan to buy In-Store
  - 14% plan to buy Online
  - 20% plan to buy at both

- **20 PERCENT** plan to buy Electronic Gadgets
  - Avg spent: $286
  - 40% plan to buy In-Store
  - 32% plan to buy Online
  - 28% plan to buy at both

- **19 PERCENT** plan to buy Computers & Hardware
  - Avg spent: $456
  - 35% plan to buy In-Store
  - 35% plan to buy Online
  - 30% plan to buy at both
Paint By Numbers: Back to School

43%  87 PERCENT
Of all Back-To-School shopping will be done in August (ICSC)

41%  76 PERCENT
Percentage of families shopping for sales this year versus last year. (National Retail Federation)

78%  $673.57
Amount families with children in K-12 intend to spend on average on apparel/accessories, electronics, shoes and school supplies. (National Retail Federation)

67%  8-13
August date that is most popular for purchasing teen-specific apparel. (RetailMeNot)

50%  $233
Back-To-School Shoppers who intend to spend more this year versus those who did in 2015 and 2014. (Intl. Council of Shopping Centers)

$1378
Average B-T-S by parents of incoming college freshman, nearly double ($684) spent by parents of K-12 students (Rubicon)
Senior Executives Speak

I would say the U.S. right now… primarily in apparel and footwear, remains over inventoried at retail. That’s reflected in the pretty high promotional environment that you see in any mall that you walk into. And we think that’s going to continue for a little bit.

Blake Krueger, Chairman, CEO and President of Wolverine Worldwide

Frankly, there’s opportunity in wholesale. Other brands don’t have the kind of brand strength we have… We have a very strong position especially with our PFG line… We have very little competition in that area and it’s an area of significant focus for the company.

Tim Boyle, CEO of Columbia Sportswear

Our presence will be significantly higher than it was in London in 2012, with four times as many athletes representing national governing bodies from more than 30 different countries competing in Under Armour apparel or footwear, and in some cases, utilizing our great Connected Fitness platform to measure their performance.

Kevin Plank, Chairman and CEO of Under Armour

More than a dozen Skechers Performance brand ambassadors will be participating in the Rio Games and the entire Belgian team is wearing Skechers in the country’s colors off the field.

David Weinberg, Chief Operating Officer and CFO of Skechers USA

Overall, the U.S. (golf) market has underperformed expectations year-to-date. And so we definitely have called that out as a risk. But having said that, our business has performed very well, both globally and in the U.S.

Oliver “Chip” Brewer, CEO and President of Callaway Golf Company

The apparel and footwear categories have improved meaningfully from previous trends, but we continued to face softness in these categories through the second quarter.

Tommy Millner, CEO of Cabela’s Inc.