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TACTICAL RETAILER

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THE SCYTHE STM

THE NEWEST MEMBER OF THE SILENCERCO SCYTHE FAMILY

THIS ISSUE'S COVER BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

SILENCERCO

We were in Louisiana, hot off a hog slaying trip in Texas, to kill Nutria. An invasive asshole, the Nutria has plagued Louisiana for a while now. Tearing up grass and wetlands. Pushing out native species. So what do you do? Well you grab a few buddies, a boat, and some well equipped rifles to shed the land of these furry little varmints.

It didn't take long for muffled shots to start slapping the water. Look to one side of the boat, and someone is pointing at a floating pile of fur, look to the other side and the guide is hooking in a fresh kill.

However the purpose of this trip wasn't really about the Nutria. It was about testing out our new addition to the Scythe family. The Scythe STM.

It wasn't that the Scythe-Ti wasn't enough. It's a perfect suppressor for the given task. Incredibly light weight and at home shooting subs or supers on your bolt gun. It's a refined, purpose built suppressor. It was more about finding a suppressor that could cover the gambit. Like dumping mags into hogs with .308 then heading to Louisiana to snipe Nutria with 300 Blackout.

When it comes to hunting, the entire game has changed. AR-15s sit alongside bolt guns on a hunting trip. Each has their uses and there isn't a wrong answer. However, if you're like us, you're out for every single season. That's where a modular, durable suppressor comes into play. Dumping mags into steel with your buddies, or take an elk with a magnum caliber.

The Scythe STM shares its design with the Scythe-Ti but with a few twists. Crafted from 17-4 Stainless Steel, the STM adds toughness where it counts for .30 caliber rounds. Stainless Steel opens up the possibility of shooting fully automatic on a wide range of calibers and shooting high pressure rounds up to .300 RUM. This suppressor also features an additional modular baffle stack that shortens or lengthens the suppressor on the fly, giving you the added benefit of tailoring your system for optimal performance. Perfect for moving from subs to supers or modifying the cyclic rate of your gas gun.

Available this ShotShow 2025, the Scythe STM provides users with a durable, modular .30 caliber suppressor that makes no compromises and sounds amazing doing so. **TR**



WWW.SILENCERCO.COM



LEARN MORE

The acquisition, ownership, possession and use of firearms are heavily regulated. Some models may not be legally available in your state or locale. Whatever your purpose for lawfully acquiring a firearm – know the law, get trained and shoot safely.

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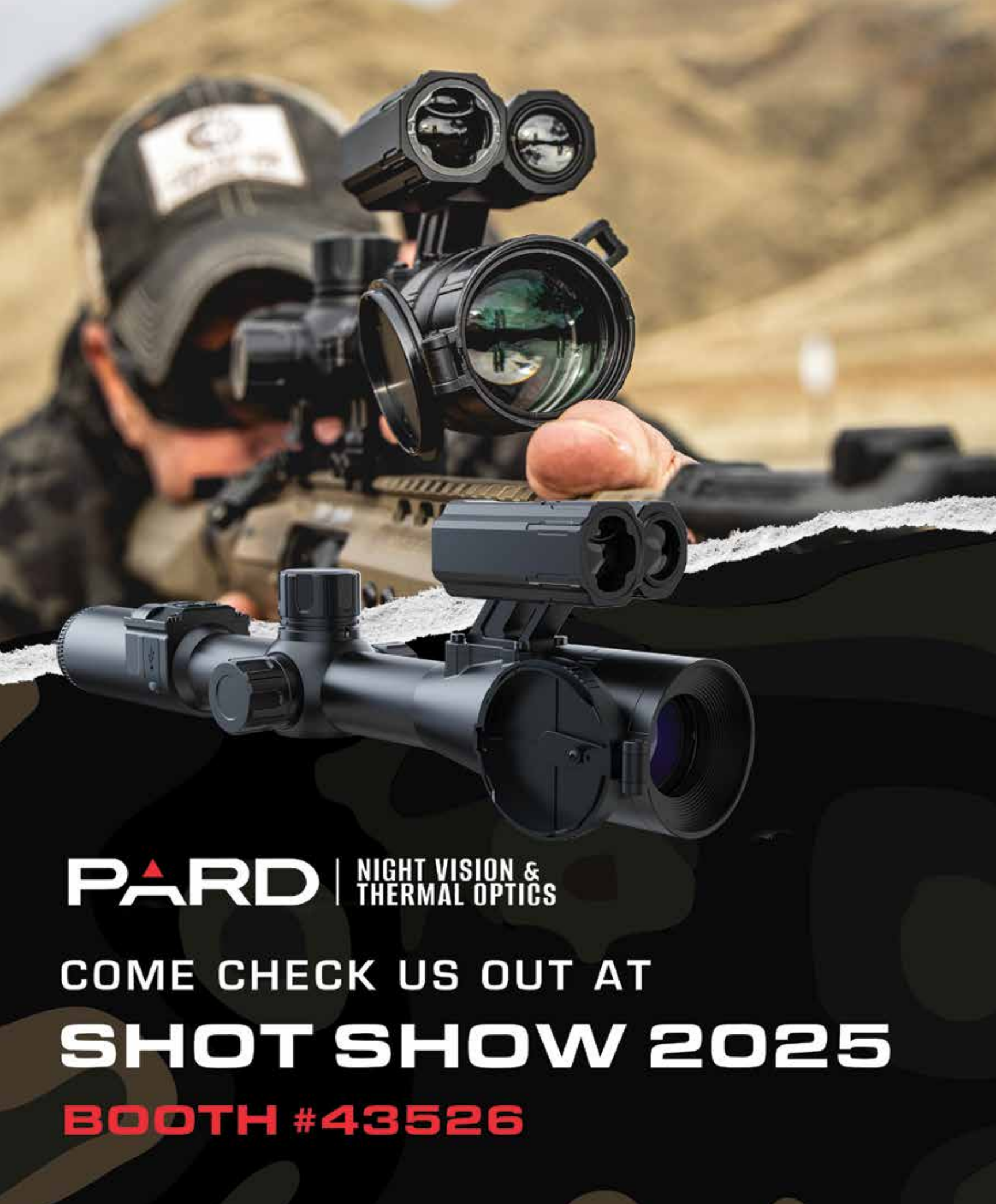
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SCYTHE STM

THE CAGE

Hot new products you should stock

1. | CHARTER ARMS DOUBLE DOG MAG PUG REVOLVER

Charter Arms' Mag Pug Combo revolver is a combination of its Mag Pug and Pit Bull chamberings.



Engineered for reliability, versatility and performance, the new Double Dog Mag Pub Revolver from Charter Arms comes standard with two interchangeable cylinders – .357 Mag. and 9mm – with no moon clip technology, allowing for easy caliber conversions. Equipped with a 2.2- or 4.2-inch ported barrel with diamond cuts, this revolver combo has a five-round capacity, making it a great choice for personal defense and sport shooting. It is available in a stainless-steel or black passivate finish with classic walnut and professional backpacker wooden grips.

- Fixed sights
- Transfer safety bar
- Transferable lifetime warranty

MSRP: $637/2.2-inch barrel; $659/4.2-inch barrel

WEBSITE: www.charterfirearms.com



2. | DARK 30 DEFIANCE THERMAL CAMERA

The vehicle-mounted Defiance thermal camera from Dark 30 enhances the nighttime capabilities of hunters and enforcement professionals.

The rugged weather-resistant Dark 30 Defiance, a state-of-the-art 360° pan tilt zoom (PTZ) vehicle-mounted thermal camera is a groundbreaking device that is set to transform the way professionals monitor wildlife, enhance security and conduct inspections with its superior imaging and intuitive controls. It's compatible with any vehicle with a 12-volt cigarette lighter, and users can control the device's angles and rotation with the included low-latency HDMI screen or via their phones with the Dark 30 app. The camera's adjustable panning speeds provide optimal performance across various environments.

- Adjustable panning speeds
- Ideal for a wide range of applications
- Lynred sensor ensures exceptional image quality

MSRP: $6,499.97

WEBSITE: www.dark30.com



3. | ELITE TACTICAL SYSTEMS GROUP OMEGA 9MM GLOCK 18 MAGAZINE

ETS Group has introduced an Omega 9mm magazine for the Glock 18 handgun.

Engineered to combine the durability of steel with the lightweight, impact-resistant properties of ETS polymer, the Glock 18 Omega 9mm ETS Magazine from Elite Tactical Systems (ETS) Group, is compatible with all standard double-stack 9mm Glocks. It features hardened steel feedlips, an Omega Joint and a military-grade teflon coating for corrosion resistance. Weighing 50 percent less than all-steel magazines, it offers 30-round capacity, 100 percent drop-free reliability and compatibility with Gen 1-5 Glock handguns. The ergonomic design ensures easy handling, and it is fully compatible with Glock extensions.

- Lifetime warranty
- Compatible with Gen 1-5 Glock handguns
- Combines the durability of steel with impact-resistant polymer

MSRP: $27.99

WEBSITE: www.etsgroup.us



4. | HIGH SPEED GEAR GEN 2 LARGE RADIO TACO

Weighing nearly 20% less than the first generation, the Gen 2 Large Radio Taco from High Speed Gear is designed to be sleeker, lighter and more versatile than its predecessor.

The High Speed Gear Gen 2 Large Radio Taco features .5-inch interval MOLLE on the front and back, providing both MOLLE and belt mounting options, and allowing for the attachment of additional pouches (2 HSGI MOLLE clips included). This large-size radio taco securely accommodates U.S. military radios, including the PRC-148, PRC-152, PRC-163 and MPU5, ensuring quick and easy insertion and removal with adjustable retention for optimal security. The top retention strap, equipped with a side-release buckle, adds an extra layer of protection, keeping the radio firmly in place during the most demanding operations.

- Adjustable retention
- Accommodates U.S. military radios
- Quick and easy insertion and removal

MSRP: $55

WEBSITE: www.highspeedgear.com



5. | HOLOSUN DRS-TH RED-DOT SIGHT

The Holosun DRS-TH (Digital Reflex Sight – Thermal) redefines the boundaries of red-dot optics technology.

Holosun's DRS-TH fusion optic combines advanced red-dot sight technology with thermal imaging capabilities. This innovative optic features a stunning 1024x768 resolution display at 50 fps, enabling users to see clearly in various lighting conditions. The DRS-TH integrates a 256x192 thermal sensor and multiple thermal image palettes, including White Hot and Highlight modes, ensuring unparalleled visibility. The DRS-TH also boasts a rechargeable battery life of up to 10 hours for the thermal sensor and over 50,000 hours of runtime for the red dot.

- User friendly design
- IP67 waterproof rating
- Seamless overlay of thermal imaging

MSRP: $1,882.34

WEBSITE: www.holosun.com

6. | PREMIER BODY ARMOR BALLISTIC BRIEFCASE

Premier Body Armor's Ballistic Briefcase is a compact, sophisticated solution for high-risk environments.

The Ballistic Briefcase from Premier Body Armor was designed specifically for professionals in executive protection and private security. Combining sleek aesthetics with advanced level IIIA ballistic protection, this briefcase provides discreet, ready-to-deploy security in high-risk situations, ensuring both functionality and safety. It features a seamless ballistic package made from woven aramid fibers that maintain flexibility and resilience, even after repetitive folding. Constructed with premium Cordura and Milliken Tegris thermoplastic composite fabrics, it offers exceptional durability while maintaining a lightweight, compact design that seamlessly integrates into everyday professional routines.

- Lightweight and portable
- Seamless Level IIIA ballistic protection
- Measures 14x19.5 inches when folded

MSRP: $1,320

WEBSITE: www.premierbodyarmor.com





7. | PULSAR COMPACT AXION XG30 MONOCULAR

The pocket-size Axion XG30 thermal monocular from Pulsar raises the bar for thermal imaging for professional and recreational usage.

The Axion XG30 was designed to be compact yet powerful, featuring a high-resolution 640x480 pixel Lynred sensor with a 12-micron pixel pitch. This pocket-size powerhouse delivers exceptional image quality, even in the most challenging environments, making it ideal for hunters, law enforcement personnel and outdoor enthusiasts who need reliable thermal imaging on the go. The Axion XG30 boasts a rugged magnesium alloy housing, providing durability while maintaining a lightweight feel. It delivers an impressive 14.6° wide field of view and a detection range of 1,421.70 yards.

- IPX7 waterproof rating
- Stream Vision 2 integration
- Quick-change long-life batteries

MSRP: $2,199.99

WEBSITE: www.pulsarnv.com

8. | SAFARILAND INCOG X IWB HOLSTER

The Incog X inside-the-waistband (IWB) holster from Safariland now accommodates Glock pistols with large lights.

The Incog X Inside-the-Waistband (IWB) Holster from Safariland is a collaboration between Haley Strategic Partners and Safariland, and provides exceptional features for a top-tier concealed carry experience. This ergonomic, RDS-compatible, multi-positional holster features an improved clip strut design, combining functionality and customized concealment shims. Users can insert or remove them effortlessly without needing any tools, allowing for a fine-tuned concealed carry experience that suits any preferences. This holster is micro and full-size red-dot compatible.

- Over-the-belt polymer clips
- Microfiber suede-wrapped Boltaron body
- Optional magazine caddy with tension adjustment

MSRP: $92.50-$122.50

WEBSITE: www.safariland.com



THE CAGE

Hot new products you should stock

9. | TELUM TACTICAL GLAIVE AUTOMATIC KNIFE



The Glaive automatic knife from Telum Tactical quickly springs into action.

Featuring a unique design for quick and easy operation, the Glaive Automatic Knife from Telum Tactical can be fully opened with the push of a button to release its coil spring. The bottom also works as the locking mechanism to hold the blade securely in the open position. A slide safety lock on the side can be used to lock the button in the open or closed position. The Glaive measures 5 inches when closed and features a 4-inch D2 satin stone-washed hollow-grind clip blade with a sleek, contoured G10 handle.

- Extra-long pocket clip
- Backed by a lifetime warranty
- Tip-up design for added security

MSRP: $74.99

WEBSITE: www.telumtactical.com



10. | VERSACARRY BLACKOUT LASER/LIGHT COMPATIBLE HOLSTER

Versacarry has introduced the Blackout IWB holster: a laser/light compatible model for Sig Sauer P365/P365XL handguns with a Streamlight TLR7 light attached.

The Versacarry Blackout Inside the Waistband (IWB) Holster, marks a significant milestone as the brand's first laser/light compatible holster, offering functionality and durability, tailored specifically for Sig Sauer P365 and P365XL handguns with a Streamlight TLR7 light attached.

- Crafted from Versacarry's signature vegetable-tanned water buffalo leather, the Blackout ensures a long-lasting, reliable, comfortable carry solution. The holster features the updated Versahub compatible metal belt clip, allowing it to be used with Versacarry's Versahub bedside mount.
- Made in the USA
- Streamlight TLR7 compatible

Premium water buffalo leather

MSRP: $49.99

WEBSITE: www.versacarry.com

11. | VIKTOS RANGE TRAINER PANTS



Viktos Range Trainer pants were designed for both tactical training and operational use.

Viktos Range Trainer Pants feature a four-way stretch chassis that ensures comfort during activities, while the durable nylon/spandex fabric can withstand harsh conditions. The adjustable waist closure provides a low-profile fit while the hand pockets are notched, allowing vertical knife orientation. The zippered front pocket is great for secure storage, while secondary slip pockets offer EDC organization. The Hipshoot rear pockets allow concealed AR magazines, and mesh pocket bags provide quick drainage. The padded waistband ensures comfort from stiff gunbelts and a StormStrike DWR finish sheds the elements.

- Designed by U.S. veterans
- Blocks 98% of the sun's harmful rays
- One-year workmanship and materials warranty

MSRP: $95

WEBSITE: www.viktos.com



12. | XS SIGHTS PRE-DRILLED S&W AND RUGER REVOLVER SIGHTS

XS Sights is now offering pre-drilled night sights for S&W and Ruger revolvers.

XS Sights pre-drilled night sights for S&W and Ruger revolvers make do-it-yourself installation quick and easy. New, pre-drilled front sights, featuring a self-illuminating tritium Glow Dot, are now available for S&W K-Frame, L-Frame, J-Frame and Ruger SP101 revolvers. The dual-illuminated front sight has a self-luminous tritium vial surrounded by XS' proprietary photoluminescent Glow Dot that absorbs ambient light to glow in low-light conditions. The pairing ensures the front sight will glow brightly in low-light and contrast well in bright-light conditions.

- Limited lifetime warranty
- Selt-luminous tritium vial
- Work in low-light conditions

RETAIL: $64.99-$109.99

WEBSITE: www.xssights.com

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By Guy Sagi

INSTALLING A PRECISION BUTTSTOCK ON AN AR

Customers who want to shoot longer ranges with their AR – or just increase the comfort level – will appreciate this simple upgrade.

The versatility of an AR rifle or carbine wearing a buttstock easily adjusted for length-of-pull is undeniable. Squeeze a paddle under the cheekrest and the gun takes up less space in the safe, fits into shorter cases and reconfigures instantly for shooters of different statures. It is a huge advantage for tactical retailers, who never know whether their next customer will be as tall as an NBA all-star or a Kentucky Derby jockey.

The majority of modern sporting rifles ship from the factory wearing one. There is a drawback, however. Most fail to provide the rock-solid foundation required to squeeze the platform's full precision at distance.

Admittedly, most enthusiasts didn't take an AR home to print ¾-MOA groups at 500 yards. Still, the number of owners stretching the gun's distance is growing at a steady pace. The pursuit is infectious and catching on at firing lines nationwide.

Add the number of rimfires and even bolt-actions with modular, modern sporting rifle-compatible furniture, and even a modest inventory of equipment for accuracy addicts is a wise investment. Perhaps best of all, it's still attractive for owners more concerned with home defense at 20 yards than drop at 300.

There's no shortage of aftermarket AR buttstocks that provide unfailing stability without surrendering adjustability. They may abandon some rangeside convenience — requiring a little more effort to alter configuration — but they help deliver precision downrange.

Perhaps best of all for tactical retailers is the fact they install in a few minutes, making them an ideal over-the-counter, value-added service. The procedure is slightly different than the slip-on convenience of the more-standard adjustable AR stock, though. Here's a quick look at the procedure.

First, determine the buttstock that best fits the customer's needs. Some of the options to discuss include an adjustable cheekrest, buttpad and other features. Don't forget to ask about sling slots, quick-detach mounts and buttstock toe profile — just in case they do most of their shooting from the bench. It's a great opportunity to learn more about them and, if the opportunity presents itself, recommend upgrades to consider in the future.

Once you've agreed on the ideal buttstock, open the package and inspect for cosmetic blemishes. Inventory parts, although odds are good it will arrive fully assembled. Check for interior burrs or imperfections that could prevent it from installing easily, consult the instructions and collect necessary tools.

> "Perhaps best of all for tactical retailers is the fact they install in a few minutes, making them an ideal over-the-counter, value-added service."

Safety, as always, is first, foremost and always emphasized here. New and inexperienced employees, after all, are business reality.

While keeping the firearm pointed in a safe direction, engage the gun's safety if it is not already in that position. Maintain that muzzle direction and drop the magazine.

Work the charging handle or bolt and inspect inside the chamber. Ensure no cartridge remains. If one is there, remove it. Double check and use a flashlight if necessary.

Place the magazine and any cartridges away from your immediate workspace. Distractions are common during store hours.

Now you're ready to remove the installed length-of-pull adjustable buttstock. In most cases, pushing the lever under the cheekpiece down, instead of squeezing up, releases the locking mechanism. It then slides off the back of the buffer tube. In rare versions, it may be slightly different. In those cases, consult the manufacturer's website or instructions to avoid damage.

Inspect and clean the buffer tube if necessary. Odds are good it won't be necessary, but grime collected there is sometimes surprising.

The front of the new buttstock will have a bar or bolt to anchor it firmly up front on the buffer tube. In this model's case, it took a hex wrench for removal.

With that bolt/bar pulled out, you can now glide the new model onto the buffer tube. Do so firmly toward the upper receiver. Reinstall the bolt/bar. Use thread-locking compound if recommended and tighten per manufacturer instructions. Give the buttstock a tug afterward to determine if there's any wiggle.

Hand the unloaded gun back to the customer, reminding them to keep it pointed in a safe direction. Then inquire if the length of pull feels comfortable. If not, follow the instructions to adjust and repeat until the ideal position is found. Do the same with the cheekpiece and recoil pad setting, one at a time.

Don't forget to mention things may change during the winter, when they don a thick coat. Walk them through the adjustment steps if they feel any are needed later, and you're ready to send another happy customer out the door.



1

Discuss buttstock options with the customer, offering advice on adjustable cheekpiece height, buttstock position and other features available. Then, after a model has been selected, open the package, inspect for blemishes, inventory parts and consult the instructions.



2

Keep the firearm pointed in a safe direction and engage the safety if it is not already in that position.



3

Remove the magazine from the gun.



4

Work the charging handle or bolt and inspect the chamber to ensure no cartridge remains. If so, remove it. Use a flashlight for a better look inside if necessary.



5

Place the magazine and any cartridges away from your immediate work area.



6

Push the bar underneath the cheekrest down fully – instead of squeezing up – and the installed, adjustable buttstock can now be slid backward off the buffer tube. In a few rare cases, the procedure is different. Consult manufacturer's instructions for the proper steps to prevent damage.



7

Clean the buffer tube if necessary.



8

Remove the bolt/bar at the front of the new model using the proper tool to prevent scarring or blemishes.



9

Slide the new unit onto the buffer tube fully forward toward the receiver, reinstall the bolt/bar according to manufacturer instructions, and use locking compound if recommended.



10

Hand the firearm back to the customer and ask them, while keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction, to determine if length of pull feels correct for their shooting style. If not, adjust according to manufacturer's instructions, until the proper distance is obtained. Do the same for cheekrest height and buttpad settings, if possible. **TR**



Selling Precision Rifle Upgrade Solutions: Featuring the Tikka T3x CTR

Great guns are made even better with some upgrades from MDT.

By Max Archer

The precision rifle market has exploded over the last decade. Dealers have huge upgrade opportunities on new sales and previous customer purchases. To meet this demand, aftermarket manufacturers are delivering exceptional upgrades for OEM firearms manufacturers and DIY rifle builds. Thankfully, performance-enhancing ergonomic, accuracy and long-range precision upgrades are often simple two-minute upgrades with plenty of options to fit all budgets. Chassis and trigger upgrades are the easiest and have the highest-performance impact, and they can be upgraded in minutes with simple hex/torque wrench tools. As an example, MDT Tac and Timney support over 30 rifle inlet and trigger options, respectively. With just a chassis and trigger upgrade, group sizes regularly shrink by half.

Most factory and DIY precision rifles are upgrades of standard factory-barreled rifles. Most customers lean toward heavier varmint profile rifles with proven factory accuracy. Models like the Tikka T3x Compact Tactical Rifle (CTR) reliably deliver excellent accuracy, including a 1 MOA guarantee. This writer's experience with a number of Tikka platforms have delivered consistent sub-½-MOA groups with premium match ammunition after chassis and trigger upgrades. Tactical Retailer had the opportunity to tour the MDT facilities and perform this upgrade test with the Tikka T3x in collaboration with Tikka, MDT Tac precision and Timney triggers.

The Tikka T3x CTR

The T3x series represents the refinement of Tikka's T-series with features like a cold hammer-forged barrel, match-grade trigger, and a steel recoil lug. The T3x action stands out with extra metal for increased stiffness and accuracy, a glass-smooth broached receiver, and a two-lug bolt designed to minimize friction during cycling. The model's signature smoothness is enhanced by a meticulous fit that feels hand-tuned, creating a custom-like experience right out of the box. The fit is so high tolerance that headspacing of new aftermarket barrels can just be torqued on to spec without the need of a secondary torque nut. The factory single-stage trigger breaks crisply at 2.4 pounds and is adjustable, but adjustments require disassembly.

The .308 chambering was chosen for this test due to the versatility with lower-cost ammunition compared to the more expensive 6.5 Creedmoor. The 20-inch 5/8x24 threaded 1:10 twist heavy varmint profile barrel pairs well with a suppressor. The factory Tikka stock accepts Tikka proprietary 10-round magazines, includes a customizable grip, and is a comfortable factory stock for hunting and field use. This stock is light, but as a PRS or precision stock, it lacks AICS magazine compatibility and flexibility, and it offers limited ergonomics, heft, and configurability for the needs of competitive PRS (Precision Rifle Series) or precision hunting requirements. As factory configured with a

The MDT AAC Premier Gen 2 chassis has a competition pedigree that was upgraded further with MDT rings and accessories and Timney Match trigger.



MDT did not forget about the underside of the Premier Gen 2 Chassis, complete with ARCA, MLOK and screw mount points.



MDT offers a full set of precision products. including chassis rings, magazines and bipods.



The AAC Premier Gen 2 offers shooters a tier of refinement that elevates excellent actions like the Tikka T3x to specacular.



MDT also offers tuneable precision muzzle brakes that allow competitors to get the exact recoil impulse they want.



MDT designers have even addressed vibration and stock deadening with rubber stock dampeners.



The Howa 1500 was dressed out with Primary Arms' GLX 4-18 optic, Timney trigger, and MDT rings, magazine, bipod and XRS chassis.



The ultimate precision accessory is the 11.5-pound glass fill Chunky Peanut shooting bag from MDT. Literally throw this heavy duck canvas bag anywhere on anything for a stable shooting platform.



The XRS chassis is a great, affordable, highly configurable precision crossover chassis that is comfortable in the field and on the bench.



Bushnell Elite Tactical 3.5-21x50 DMR3 G4P reticle scope, the CTR printed .8-1 MOA consistently, just under the 1-MOA guarantee at 100 yards with Federal Gold Match 168-grain rounds. The FFP Bushnell Elite Tactical series has consistently delivered premier-tier clarity across nearly a 7x low/high magnification range and was a perfect fit for the upgrade plans of the rifle.

The Tikka is well regarded for custom level smooth cycling and great accuracy, but it can get even better. Recently, Criterion, Proof and other aftermarket barrel manufacturers are offering pre-fit match options just like shooters would find on Savage and Remington actions. With a

> "'We ensure every shooter is extremely comfortable with design options to make the rifle fit the shooter and have a natural sight picture.'"

dealer retail averaging $1,160, the Tikka fit finish and precision far above its price point and delivers an exceptional starting point for precision builds.

MDT Factory Tour & Upgrade Guidance

Tactical Retailer had the opportunity to visit the three MDT facilities in Chilliwack, British Columbia. The tour included handling the recently released MDT CRBN - Carbon Fiber, LSS 3, JAE G5 chassis plus a wide array of new products yet to be released. MDT is the largest precision OEM chassis company globally for nearly all firearms manufacturers, but it offers an expansive dealer/consumer line that spans a complete line of chassis, stocks, bipods, scope rings and bases, muzzle brakes, AICS spec magazines, shooting bags and many more products coming.

According to MDT's CEO, Maarten Van Ruitenburg, "For the Tikka action specifically, Tikka sales have grown significantly as the legendary T3x platform has continually been proven as a high-quality precision rifle, with even custom rebarreled Tikkas appearing in competitions. Dropping the T3x into one of our 10 Tikka inlet MDT chassis options delivers dramatic upgrades in ergonomics, accuracy and comfort for all shooters."

According to the MDT team, customers typically see significant improvements in accuracy from mechanically bedding the action to an MDT chassis plus greatly increased shooter comfort. Ergonomics and shooter comfort are often the most significant enhancements that allow the potential precision to be realized. According to Derrick Guay, VP of Sales and Marketing for MDT, "Potential accuracy of a rifle is only one component. An uncomfortable shooter behind a poor-fitting gun will struggle with accuracy. We assure every shooter is extremely comfortable with design options to make the rifle fit the shooter and have a natural sight picture."

After establishing a factory accuracy baseline and discussing the Timney trigger and potential future barrel upgrades, Derrick recommended pushing the T3x to the limit with either their competition-winning MDT AAC Premier or AAC Elite chassis. I chose the AAC Premier, since it still features many of the elite-tier competition features of the AAC Elite at about $500 less in price. Derrick Guay noted, "Both these chassis offer significant refinements in balance, expanded fitting and adjustment options, wide accessory compatibility support and an expansive accessory line. The AAC Elite is a premier-tier competitive PRS shooter chassis that delivers everything competitors want for Remington and Tikka actions, including instant adjustment options. Customization was a major focus to support the unique accessories of PRS shooters. We talk about 18 key features, but there are also a large number of other little details, like adding weights and minimizing vibration, that our design has thought through. The Premier is just one step down with plenty of adjustment options, but without the expense of the instant adjustments. The AAC Premier is an outstanding class-leading tier chassis, but it saves the more casual shooter a little cost."

The MDT team wanted to show that dealers can offer customers a complete precision rifle upgrade solution with impressive results. The T3x action was secured to the AAC Premier Chassis in Charcoal Green with the included bolts after the amazing Timney two-stage 8 ounce + 1 ounce trigger was installed. The function testing after adjusting the fit delivered an extremely dramatic upgrade from the stock CTR field style chassis. Focusing in on a competition precision build, MDT included their rugged one-piece 35MM scope rings, ammo quiver, data card holder, rubber chassis vibration dampeners, MDT steel 10- and 12-round magazines, a poly magazine, and competition muzzle brake. For stable shots regardless of any shooting position, MDT suggested their heavy glass filled 11.5-pound Chunky Peanut Shooting Bag.

With the Tikka T3x fully re-dressed with MDT upgrades, the accuracy impressively jumped from .8-1 MOA to an average set of groups measuring .21-.45 MOA with the same match ammunition and optic. The most notable upgrade for me was the ergonomics that allowed for more natural shouldering and perfect fit. With the MDT AAC Premier chassis, I was no longer struggling with fit, comfort or a steady hold and was able to comfortably settle behind the rifle and take a stable shot. Though a very simple support tool, the Chunky Peanut is truly an indispensable and remarkable tool for precision shooting far beyond typical range bags — squish it, mold it, smash it to get the perfect stable shooting hold, even draped over a tripod head. Everything worked as a well-designed solution, from the chassis, rings and accessories to the smooth-feeding MDT magazines. The chassis is fully compatible with MDT and industry-standard attached MLOK upgrades. The upgraded accuracy from the Timney trigger and chassis was impressive and certainly appreciated; however, the human interface of a perfectly fit chassis and crisp trigger likely contributed most to the ability to improve groups.

Upgraded accuracy, comfort and ergonomics are not just features of the T3x or MDT AAC Premier or Elite chassis. We also upgraded a Howa 1500 H7 carbon fiber barrel .308 to the MDT XRS chassis that offers a more budget-friendly $549 MSRP. Though about a third the price of the top-of-the-line AAC Elite chassis and about half the price of the AAC Premier chassis, the XRS delivers AICS magazine com-



Tikka T3X CTR that was reviewed, then upgraded.

patibility, and a huge amount of fit and customization that included length of pull, cheek rest height, lighter weight, full length internal billet frame, plus included straight or angled grips. Though the Howa Hera H7 stock is an advanced field stock, the comfort of the XRS was far superior from comfort, adjustment, ergonomics and stability when precision shots were required. This Howa build was upgraded with the MDT Oryx bipod, MDT 20-MOA base, MDT Premier Lightweight 34mm rings and Primary Arms GLx 3-18x44 FFP scope. A match Timney trigger was added to improve accuracy and trigger feel a bit further. With the carbon fiber Howa 1500 barreled action and lightweight MDT Chassis and accessories, this build remains light, decreased groups by about 15%, and is extremely accurate, versatile and comfortable.

Inside MDT

One would expect that the largest OEM and chassis manufacturer for precision rifles would be sizable, but the expanse of capabilities across MDT's four Chilliwack, BC, and Idaho Falls, U.S., operations was massive. With so much manufacturing occurring offshore in Asia from other companies, it was refreshing to see that MDT is making nearly every component in-house in the U.S. or Canada. They are even sourcing raw parts like screws within the U.S. or Canada. MDT is milling all aluminum components, injection molding on site, CNC milling wood stocks, and hand-laying carbon fiber, and even the soft goods like the shooting bags are 100% made in the USA. MDT distributes production, assembly and shipping across Canada and U.S. facilities.

I have been in many machining facilities, but to see wood chips flying inside CNC machines for the Timbr Frontier stock and watch injection molding machines pressing out parts and stocks with several tons of molding tooling organized on racks representing dozens of parts is impressive. There are few companies who have the expertise to work with carbon fiber; however, I watched the MDT laying out, forming and finishing grips, stocks and some accessories with speed and precision. Though now released, I was the first editor to handle their new shockingly light 27-ounce CRBN Carbon fiber stock, which still manages to include an adjustable cheek riser and length of pull adjustment. For dealers looking for precision rifle upgrades, they should definitely look first to MDT to offer customers a complete solution designed to deliver a premier tier precision shooting experience. **TR**



Assembly clean room, where every part is inspected and packaged



HNT26 chasiss ready for Cerakote



Yes, MDT makes bottom metal for rifles as well.



The new MDT CRBN carbon fiber chassis



MDT Precision Billet rings fresh out of the CNC machine



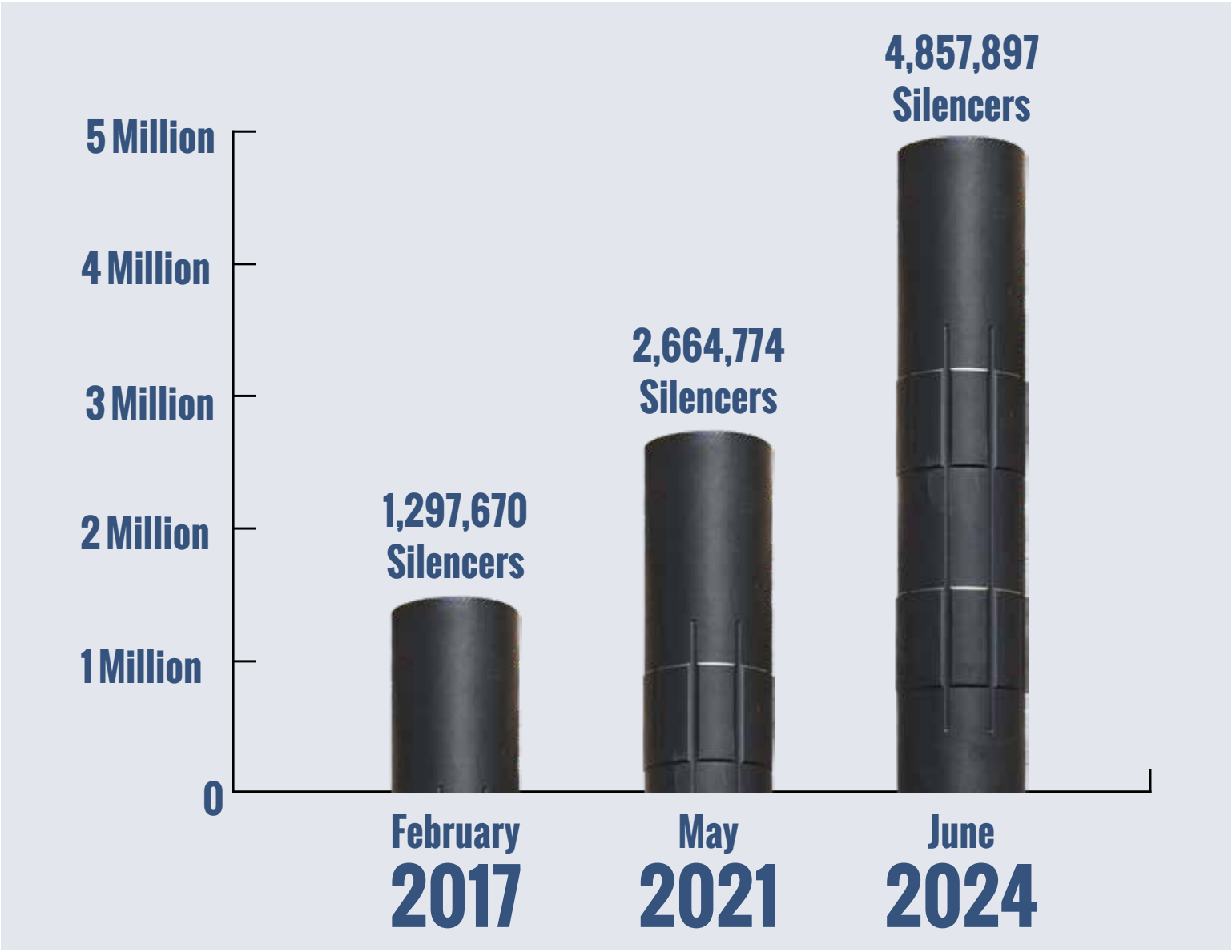
MDT's engineering lab, where everything is possible



The ACC Premier stock milled from solid millet



One of MDT's injection molding machines pressing out exterior chassis before billet insets



Firearm Suppressor Registrations Outpace Historic Figures

Suppressor ownership is on a meteoric rise. Next up: Let's pass legislation to get them removed from the NFA.

By Salam Fatohi

Shooting suppressed is as normalized among the shooting and hunting community as TikTok is with Gen Z. Though it was a rarity as recently as a decade ago, it is now a normal occurrence to find a suppressor-equipped firearm at a local range or hunting camp.

For many years, the expectation was to "buy it and forget it." Customers were unlikely to physically grasp their paid-in-full item for several months or a year. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) has received exponentially more Form 4s for silencers as their popularity has grown. Through the combined efforts of NSSF, the firearm industry, and ATF, however, the process has dramatically improved beyond anyone's expectations.

RECORD OWNERSHIP

Today, the ATF is processing suppressor applications in record time — in some instances, the same day. Long gone is the wait time barrier, and it is drawing shooters and hunters to purchase a suppressor who had previously dreaded the long wait time to purchase one. As a result, silencer registration metrics are off the charts.

The now discontinued ATF Firearms Commerce in the United States report displayed the number of silencers that were registered in each state. The May 2021 edition reported 2,664,774 silencers in the U.S., more than doubling the 1.3 million suppressors disclosed by the Department of Justice (DOJ) in 2017.

In a recent Freedom of Information Act

request (FOIA), NSSF received from ATF the additional number of suppressors from May 2021 to July 2024. An incredible 2,193,123 more suppressors are protecting the hearing of hunters and shooters. That means a whopping 4.86 million silencers and counting are in the possession of law-abiding Americans.

To review, the NFA started requiring the registration of suppressors in 1934 and up to May 2021 had 2.66 million suppressors on the books. Now American gun owners are on track to exceed 87 years' worth of registered silencers in just the latest three years.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The NSSF-supported Hearing Protection Act, H.R. 152 introduced by U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-S.C.) and S. 401 introduced by U.S. Sen. Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), would remove silencers from the NFA, eliminate the $200 tax stamp and allow firearm owners to purchase a silencer, like any other firearm, after an FBI National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) verification. This would allow more gun owners to more easily acquire a suppressor and safely reduce the report of their firearms to hearing-safe levels without the additional $200 tax. Suppressors are already legal to own in 42 states and 41 states allow them for hunting (as of this writing).

The NSSF-supported Tax Stamp Revenue Transfer for Wildlife and Recreation Act, H.R. 6352 introduced by Rep. Blake Moore (R-Utah), offers an alternative approach. This bill would reallocate the funding generated from suppressor tax stamps. A total of 15% of the revenue would go to the ATF's NFA division to fund and further improve the processing of Form 4s. The remaining 85% would go to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and be split between the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Trust Fund and a portion dedicated to recreational shooting range development.

> "Today, the ATF is processing suppressor applications in record time – in some instances, the same day."

Gun ownership has skyrocketed over the past several years, including more than 22.3 million new first-time gun owners since 2020. Likewise, as millions of Americans have become more knowledgeable and familiar with firearms, they've also become more familiar with what a suppressor is and isn't. As you know, suppressors, or "silencers" as they are called in the law, are nothing like the way they are characterized in Hollywood films. They do not silence the firearm's report. They act like a muffler to reduce the sound level.

Firearm legislation is always going to divide people and face gridlock in Washington, D.C. and in state capitals across the country. No matter how logical it would be to streamline the process of purchasing a firearm suppressor or better allocate the tax stamp revenue, getting Congress to act will take effort, but we're well-positioned to get it done after the 2024 elections.

As it has with gun ownership more broadly, the tide has turned on suppressor ownership, too. **TR**



SHOT·SHOW® 2025

NEW PRODUCTS, TRENDS AND TIPS

Headed to Vegas for the SHOT Show?
Here's what you need to know and what to look for.

By Kat Ainsworth Stevens

SHOT Show 2025 will span more than 800,000 net square feet, making it difficult — if not impossible — to walk the entire show floor. Planning out your route and deciding which vendors you'll visit in advance helps quite a bit, and we're here to help. We've been following new products and trends to let you know what to be on the lookout for at SHOT Show 2025. From optics to firearms to holsters, there's a lot of great gear to see. Here's what we think you shouldn't miss.

GALCO HOLSTERS



The Galco Thunderclap is part of the manufacturer's Masterbilt line of premier holsters.

There's an entire stack of new holsters from Galco, a manufacturer with a well-deserved stellar reputation for quality. Galco's new holsters are both leather and Kydex and available for semi-autos and revolvers, so whatever your customers prefer, Galco has it.

The latest line from the holster maker is the Masterbilt series. First to launch in the Masterbilt family of holsters is the Thunderclap, a fully lined, premium steerhide holster that's great for either daily carry or showing off a barbecue gun. The Thunderclap is designed as a top-tier holster, both aesthetically and functionally, and it delivers. It has a reinforced mouth that remains open for re-holstering and a belt tunnel that's also stoutly reinforced to retain its shape and strength for the long haul. It fits belts up to 1.5 inches in width and is available in black or tan.



The Galco Corvus Speed Cut Belt/IWB Holster is a Kydex model with adjustable cant and ride height.

Another model that speaks to Galco's dedication to quality is the Corvus Speed Cut Belt/IWB Holster. This model is an enhancement of the existing Corvus holster and is made from durable Kydex. The Corvus Speed Cut is adjustable for cant and ride height, accommodates most popular red-dot sights, and has a raised sweat guard to protect the user's skin (and the gun). As its name suggests, this model features speed cuts to reduce friction and slightly reduce overall weight. The Galco Corvus Speed Cut Belt/IWB Holster is a great option for customers focused on concealed carry and self-defense.

DESANTIS GUNHIDE



The DeSantis Gunhide Pocket Partner is a well-made holster created to improve retention and speed drawstroke among those who pocket carry.

With more than 40 years of experience behind the company, DeSantis Gunhide is constantly looking for ways to improve carry options. The holster maker's latest endeavor is the Pocket Partner, a design that manages to distinguish itself from other pocket holsters rather easily. The Pocket Partner is manufactured from Kydex that's carefully formed to match the user's handgun. Thanks to precision molding, this holster provides retention, something that's even more important with pocket carry. To ensure the holstered pistol stays put, DeSantis created a winged extension facing away from the trigger guard. The tri-tipped extension helps hook the holster in place in the user's pocket for carry and security during the drawstroke — the last thing your customer wants is their pistol leaving their pocket still inside the holster. For additional security, there are also elongated thumb tabs the user can utilize to smooth out and speed up their draw. The Pocket Partner is a good holster to suggest for customers whose main carry is a micro-compact but also for those who want a diminutive backup gun.

SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 10967 (VE2)

IRAY USA



The iRay USA RICO Micro is the company's second generation of its popular thermal and offers clip-on compatibility and many improved features.

For customers interested in adding thermal to their tactical toolbox, there's the iRay USA RICO (Rugged Infrared Compact Optic) Micro. This second-generation thermal is a good option for those looking to broaden their readiness kit, whether for safeguarding their property, home defense, or general preparedness. The RICO Micro does it all, from acting as a handheld scanner or weapon sight to use as a helmet-mounted monocular. It can also serve as a thermal clip-on. It offers a bevy of useful features, such as an updated eyepiece that offers superior comfort and is compatible with optics up to 6X magnification. The display is also improved to 1440x1080 AMOLED (Active-Matrix Organic Light-Emitting Diode — technology utilized in smart phones and watches — and uses iRay's 12µm sensor for higher resolution. A USB-C port can be used for file transfer or to power an external battery. The RICO Micro offers 64GB of internal storage. It's available in either 640 or 384 resolution models.

SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 70131 (CF)

DARK 30

New from the same parent company as Sightmark, Sellmark, and Pulsar comes the all-new brand Dark 30, which manufactures vehicle-mounted thermal imaging devices. At SHOT, check out the rugged, weather-resistant Dark 30 Defiance, a state-of-the-art 360° pan tilt zoom (PTZ) vehicle-mounted thermal camera. This groundbreaking device is set to transform the way professionals monitor wildlife, enhance security and conduct inspections with its superior imaging and intuitive controls. It enhances the capabilities of nocturnal hunters and law enforcement professionals who have previously had to use thermal handheld devices on foot and through vehicles, which obscured their view through windows and windshields. The device is compatible with any vehicle with a 12-volt cigarette lighter, and users may control the device's angles and rotation with the included low-latency HDMI screen or via their phone with the Dark30 app. The camera's adjustable panning speeds provide optimal performance across various environments.



SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 11419 (VE2)

RITON OPTICS



The Riton 5 Primal 3-18x50 Crossover is the answer to shooters who need a versatile scope for precision shooting and hunting. (Photo credit: Riton)

Quality riflescopes are a must for the result-driven customer, and that's something Riton Optics excels in. The latest tactical scope from the trusted manufacturer is the 5 Primal 3-18x50 Crossover, a scope created to combine precision shooting and hunting features for a versatile optic. Capped turrets provide an additional layer of protection from loss of zero due to bumps and scrapes and the durable chassis is made to withstand serious use. This is a great optic for customers interested in precision and long-range shooting and offers the bonus of being useful for hunting, too. That means there's no need to swap scopes when deer season rolls around, enabling precision shooters to use their favorite rifle setup year-round. Glass on the 5 Primal series of riflescopes provides beautiful clarity and a broad field of view. A Christmas-tree reticle — Riton's popular Long-Range Hunter duplex-style — is perfect for making rapid adjustments. This is a FFP (first focal plane) scope with a 34mm tube.

SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 10331 (VE2)



Rost Martin is a newcomer to the gun world, but the company's RM1C pistol promises to be a standout. (Photo credit: Rost Martin)

ROST MARTIN

Although Rost Martin is a newcomer to the firearms manufacturing world, they've already made a mark on the industry. The Dallas-based gun maker produces firearms in Texas, making their flagship model — the RM1C — a true Made in America pistol. This a great gun for customers in need of an affordably priced yet well-made handgun. The Rost Martin RM1C is a striker-fired handgun chambered in 9mm that's specifically designed for defensive use.

This compact pistol's hammer-forged barrel is 4 inches in length, and the gun's overall length is 7.1 inches, leaving it small enough to conceal easily. It fulfills both form and function demands thanks to the trio of finishes it's available in — black, FDE and Stone Gray — and the attention paid to quality control. The nitrocarburized steel slide has wide serrations at both the front and back of the slide to facilitate racking. There's also an accessory rail in front of the trigger guard. Aggressive texturing gives shooters a nice surface for a firm hold during live fire, and the undercut trigger guard encourages a high grip. The Rost Martin RM1C comes with one each 15- and 17-round magazine. This is an optics-ready pistol with an RMR footprint. There's a lot to recommend this gun for concealed carry or home defense, and it's sure to appeal to customers of all experience levels.

SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 40331 (VE1)

The Kimber CDS9 is a highly concealable double-stack 9mm created for superior performance.



KIMBER AMERICA

The CDS9 (Covert Double Stack) is the newest answer to concealed carry from Kimber. This 1911 platform 9mm pistol is compact enough for deep concealment but remains large enough to offer the shooter a secure firing grip. The Kimber CDS9 has a barrel length of 3.18 inches, length of 6.2 inches, and height of 5 inches. It weighs 20.8 ounces empty. With the 15-round magazine, there's plenty of real estate on the grip for larger hands — something that will appeal to many customers — but there are also 10- and 13-round magazines available.

Kimber included numerous carry-friendly features on the CDS9, including rounding edges on the frame and slide to reduce snagging and an accessory rail in front of the trigger guard. That means this gun can be paired with a weapon-mounted light or laser for customers interested in low-light/no-light use. The magazine release is reversible, making this gun more appealing for left-handed shooters or right-handed shooters who want to shoot mirror, and the external thumb safety is ambidextrous. A Tag Fiber Lock front sight comes standard along with a blacked-out fixed rear sight. And for those who want a red-dot sight, the CDS9 has a removable optics plate for easy installation of aftermarket sights. The Kimber CDS9 is a fantastic choice for new and seasoned concealed carriers alike.

SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 11421 (VE2)



CITADEL

Citadel firearms are imported by Legacy Sports International, and for 2025 the company is introducing the AD500, a semi-auto rifle chambered in .308. It's got a 20-inch barrel and an overall weight of 42 inches, with a total weight of 6.6 pounds. A tough black synthetic stock, front fixed sight, rear adjustable fiber optic sight, integrated Picatinny rail, crossbolt trigger safety and swivel studs round out the package. It comes with two five-round magazines and an MSRP starting at $739.

SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 13832 (VE2)



The SIG Sauer P320 MAX SVG is a competition-ready handgun that's also a fantastic fit at the range.

SIG SAUER

The AR-15 platform is a popular choice among home defenders, and SIG Sauer is answering the call for quality rifles with their new M400-SDI. The SIG Sauer M400-SDI is a carbine-length gun chambered in 5.56 NATO that's sure to draw the eye of AR-platform fans. Its 16-inch barrel is chrome-moly steel for longevity and topped by a SIG flash hider. The carbine has a mid-length direct impingement operating system for improved accuracy. Features include a six-position Magpul MOE stock — so customers can quickly adjust length of pull — and a SIG two-stage Matchlite Duo trigger. The handguard is M-LOK compatible and has a full-length Picatinny rail, making the addition of optics, lights and lasers simple. The SIG Sauer M400-SDI has an overall length of 36.5 inches and a collapsed length of 33.25 inches. It's available in either Moss Green or Flat Dark Earth Cerakote.

SIG is also introducing the latest iteration of its famed P320 family of



The SIG Sauer M400-SDI is a carbine-length gun chambered in 5.56 NATO.

handguns, the SIG P320 MAX SVG. This handgun is the result of a collaborative effort with Max Michel, the captain of Team SIG. It's the ideal pistol for customers into competitive shooting but also an excellent choice for range use in general. The SIG P320 MAX SVG is chambered in 9mm and is a full-sized handgun with a 5-inch bull barrel. It has a removeable magazine funnel, ambidextrous slide release and reversible magazine release. A flat blade trigger provides good finger contact and trigger control. The gun has a solid one-piece, 1911-style guide rod and ships with two additional recoil spring weights. A solid steel grip module, alloy Hogue grip panels, and custom Max Michel slide give the pistol aesthetic appeal and durability. The SIG P320 MAX SVG is versatile, high-quality, and destined to be the favorite of many customers.

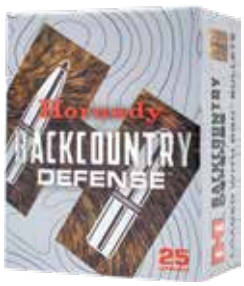
SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 73039 (CF)



The 338 ARC is the latest cartridge from Hornady, and it's an excellent round for tactical-minded shooters focused on close-quarters defense.

HORNADY

On the heels of the popular 6 ARC and 22 ARC, Hornady's launching the 338 ARC, a cartridge the renowned ammo maker calls "the big little cartridge that packs a punch." The 338 ARC is designed for the AR-15 platform and for enhanced performance as a subsonic round. It can also be used in micro-bolt actions. The team at Hornady engineered 338 ARC for consistent pressure — which translates to greater accuracy — and reliable cycling, whether the shooter's using subsonic or supersonic loads. Terminal performance of the 338 ARC is increased thanks to Hornady's 307-grain subsonic load. Practical twist rate for barrels is 1 in 8. The 338 ARC is a good cartridge for customers with an eye for home defense and close-quarters applications.



Backcountry Defense is Hornady's answer to outdoor self-defense capable of outperforming traditional hardcast.

For customers who demand personal protection in the great outdoors, Hornady's new Backcountry Defense load is sure to be a winner. Unlike similar loads that tend to be offered in big bores, Backcountry Defense is offered in 9mm +P. That means customers with +P rated handguns can utilize their favorite carry gun for defense against four-legged predators. For those who prefer big bores, this line of outdoor defense ammo is also available in .357 Magnum, 10mm, .44 Magnum, .454 Casull, .460 Smith & Wesson and .500 Smith & Wesson. The Backcountry Defense line delivers straightline penetration, rapid follow-up, and increased energy. All loads feature the ammo maker's DGH (Dangerous Game Handgun) jacketed bullets.

SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 12438/12446 (VE2)

WINCHESTER

Winchester Ammunition is seeing the future by designing a new rimfire cartridge — something the industry doesn't see often. The Winchester .21 Sharp promises a broader range of bullet choices and solid ballistics. That's partly because, unlike the .22 LR, the new .21 Sharp doesn't have a heeled bullet — not only is it possible to create far more loads, but the results will be superior as well. The .21 Sharp's bullet is .210 inches in diameter and utilizes a .22 LR case. That makes it possible to simply manufacture new barrels without altering the existing .22 LR chambers. Initially, .21 Sharp loads include a 25-grain all-copper bullet, 34-grain hollowpoint, 37-grain copper-plated lead bullet, and 42-grain full metal jacket. This is a rimfire that's equally at home plinking at the range and squirrel hunting in the woods. The .21 Sharp is a nice fit for customers getting a teaching rifle for their kids, and it also works well for any shooter who wants fun rimfire range time.

SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 11828 (VE2)



Retention Ring is a tiny but mighty keeper for tactical gear.

RETENTION RING

Sometimes it's the little things that make or break a customer's daily carry gear. A dropped canister of pepper spray, a lost micro tool for a pistol — these are the things that matter, and there's a solution. New to the industry — but also seeing a lot of use among various manufacturers — is the Retention Ring, a durable ring with an attachment point designed to keep gear where it should be, when it needs to be there. The Retention Ring is often paired with the Nano or Nano2 optics tool, POM pepper spray canisters, speed strips, and Streamlight and Modlite handheld lights. A Retention Ring display at the counter is great for add-ons with customers buying secondary tools such as lights and pepper spray. This device is fantastic for customers who want their gear to be exactly where it needs to be, because there's not much worse than a lost light.

VARIOUS SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTHS AS AN ACCESSORY, ONLINE AT RETENTIONRING.COM.

AMERICAN TACTICAL

Every customer with a rifle needs a soft-sided carrying case for range days, and American Tactical's RUKX Gear line provides rugged, useful options. The RUKX Double Rifle Case is soft-sided but reinforced to maintain its shape and protect the firearms within. And thanks to a series of strong zippers, this case is impressively modular. The customer can use it with the interior barriers folded to carry longer rifles or with the barriers fastened in place to transport a pair of smaller guns. Even better, the two sides can be totally separated to create two smaller soft-sided cases — this really is a case with many applications. A carry handle makes it easy to take this case to the range or out on a hunt. There are also numerous pockets and fastening points for magazines, ammunition, lube, and tools. The case is constructed using 600D Polyester for resistance to snags and overall durability.



American Tactical's RUKX Double Rifle Case allows the user to transport two rifles but also has numerous compartments and modularity.

SHOT SHOW 2025 BOOTH 72405 (CAESAR'S FORUM) **TR**

PLANNING FOR LOSSES: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE



Speak to your tax preparer about minimizing the effect and maximizing the tax benefits of your business losses.

By Mark E. Battersby

iStock / Yuliia Sydorova

Although no one plans for a loss, many of the retailers catering to the tactical market do, or should, "plan" to minimize the effect of potential losses, reverse them more quickly and, in some cases, reap the benefits of increased cash flow and lower tax bills today and in the future.

Whether the result of the economy, competition or events outside the control of the business's owner or manager, losses are almost inevitable. Thanks to our tax laws, however, planning for losses, whether past losses or anticipated losses, can help every tactical retailer ease the bite of those losses, recover faster and, in many cases, reap tax breaks.

Ensuring applicable tax treatment — and a lower tax bill — for losses should begin now, well before any loss occurs. Consider, for example, typical, everyday losses.

OPERATING LOSSES

While lost profit is not actually a loss, an unpaid invoice might be. In fact, it may be possible to write unpaid invoices off on the annual tax return. Unfortunately, these losses are available only to those retailers using the accrual method of accounting, where the invoice amounts were already included in the operation's gross income.

Business bad debts, on the other hand, are often labeled as losses. Regardless of whether the business bad debt arose from an owner's loans to his or her business, or from loans to others, so long as they are business-related, they can be deducted to the extent of their worthlessness. Unfortunately, business bad debt deductions are not available to shareholders who have advanced money to a corporation as a contribution to capital, or to creditors who hold a debt that is confirmed by a bond, note or other evidence of indebtedness.

There are also those losses that can be controlled. Quite simply, a loss is allowed for the abandonment of an asset. If a depreciable business asset or an income-producing asset loses its usefulness and is subsequently abandoned, the loss is equal to its adjusted basis. Obviously, an abandonment loss must be distinguished from anticipated obsolescence.

Best of all, this type of loss applies to the abandonment of a business, as well as the abandonment of intangible assets, such as contracts for services.

Inventory losses, casualty and theft losses not covered by insurance, and losses on the sale of business assets may also be deductible. Losses occurring from fire, storm, shipwreck or other catastrophic events are clearly tax-deductible. Of course, casualty losses must be due to a sudden, unexpected or unusual event in order to qualify as a tax deduction.

Casualty losses, at least if they are the result of a legitimately declared "disaster," can be utilized to recoup taxes paid in the previous tax year. In essence, a casualty loss resulting from a declared disaster may be claimed as a tax deduction in the year preceding the year in which the disaster actually occurred. This allows the retailer to amend its prior year tax returns and receive an immediate refund as a measure of relief.

The owners and operators of many troubled businesses have discovered the advantages, yes, advantages of big-time losses.

NET OPERATING LOSSES

A Net Operating Loss (NOL) occurs when a business's deductions exceed its taxable income or adjustable gross income. In other words, when it hasn't been making enough profit to overcome expenses. Depending on how much of a loss it sustains, the business can benefit from the negative income for a prolonged period of time until it becomes profitable again.



iStock/Yuliia Sydorova

A NOL is the total excess of allowable deductions over gross income, with required adjustments. Thus, if all of the retailer's expense deductions exceed the income shown on the tax return — or the owner's return — there may be a NOL.

Owners of an unincorporated business — a sole proprietorship, partnership or limited liability company (LLC) — can claim their business operating losses on their annual individual tax returns. Currently, NOLs can no longer be carried back to offset the taxable profits in earlier years. They can, however, result in lower tax bills down the road.

NOLs can now be carried forward indefinitely, although they are limited to a maximum of 80% of the retailer's upcoming year's taxable income. A 20-year limit applies for losses that occurred prior to the 2018 passage of the rule.

TOO MUCH LOSS

A number of unfortunate business owners, particularly those whose businesses operate as pass-through entities, have discovered that there can be such a thing as too much loss. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act continues to restrict the amount of losses a sole proprietor, partners, S corporation shareholders and lLLC members, can currently deduct.

If a pass-through business generates a tax loss in 2024 or 2025, it cannot deduct an "excess business losss." An excess business loss is the excess of the retailer's total deductions for the tax year over the sum of the aggregate business income and gains for the tax year, and $250,000 ($500,000 for taxpayers filing jointly).

The excess business loss is carried over to the following tax year, where it is deducted under the NOL rules.

For those business losses passed through to individuals from S corporations, a pass-though partnership or an LLC that is treated as a partnership for tax purposes, the excess business loss limit applies at the owner level. In other words, each owner's allowable share of business income, gain, deduction or loss is passed through to the owner and reported on his or her personal federal income tax return.

It should be kept in mind that the excessive business loss limits apply after applying the Passive Activity Loss (PAL) rules. The PAL rules prohibit taxpayers from using passive losses to offset earned or ordinary income.

LOSSES FROM PASSIVE ACTIVITIES

The tax rules are pretty clear: Ordinary losses can only be deducted against ordinary gains, and capital losses can only be deducted against capital gains. Since most people usually have much more ordinary income than capital gains, ordinary losses are usually more useful than capital losses in reducing taxable income.

Passive activities are those in which the owner or shareholder doesn't materially participate. Material participation is generally defined as being involved in an activity on a regular, continous and substantial basis. Under these rules, passive activity losses that exceed income from passive activities are disallowed for the tax year, although they can be carried forward to the next tax year, where they face the same passive loss rules.

ESSENTIAL PLANNING ESSENTIALS

Planning to cope with anticipated and unplanned for losses begins with the key types of losses recognized by the IRS. The tax rules allow deductions for ordinary losses from ordinary income. This reduces the amount of taxable income and reduces the income tax bill.

Capital gain, on the other hand, is the profit received when property is sold other than in the ordinary course of business. Capital losses arise when that kind of property is sold at a loss.

The sale of publicly traded stock (such as shares of IBM) by someone other than a stock trader is an example of capital gains and losses. Deducting capital losses against capital gains reduces the amount of taxable income, thus reducing the amount of income taxes.

Owners of unincorporated businesses who sell or liquidate their businesses at a loss are allowed to deduct those losses against their ordinary income. Owners of corporations who sell or liquidate their corporations at a loss are required to deduct those losses against their capital gains.

If their capital losses exceed their capital gains, they are allowed to divide the loss into increments of up to $3,000 per year and deduct that amount against their ordinary income. At that rate, depending on the amount of the capital loss, it may be many years before the entire loss is deducted.

LOSSES

Many business owners and managers are discovering that tough times mean making the most out of a bad situation by utilizing the tax laws to reap benefits from those losses. Whether as a result of economic conditions, competition, or factors outside the control of the operation's owner or manager, every retailer is at risk of losses. Planning can help every retailer reap favorable income tax deductions which may, in turn, ease the risk of failure.

Under our present tax rules, any loss sustained during the taxable year or a loss not covered or "made good" by insurance can be claimed as a tax deduction. Would a refund on taxes paid by the formerly profitable business in years past help ease the pain of lingering losses this year? What if last year's business losses could offset next year's profits and reduce the tax bill for years to come? All this, and more, is possible with proper loss planning. **TR**

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UP AND COMERS:
NEW MANUFACTURERS TO KNOW



Perhaps the most promising new manufacturer is Rost Martin, a handgun maker based in Dallas, Texas.

You might not have heard of these new companies yet, but they're all worth a serious look.

By Kat Ainsworth Stevens





The Rost Martin RM1C is the Dallas-based company's first gun, and it's already proven itself as a quality, reliable pistol.

There's never a shortage of new companies joining the outdoor industry, and it can take time to figure out which ones are worth following (and eventually stocking in your store). To make it simpler, we've done the research and hands-on time to figure out some of the most promising new brands in the outdoor industry. These are some fantastic up-and-coming manufacturers that are well worth the investment of time — and product to stock your shelves.

ROST MARTIN

It's not often a new handgun manufacturer comes along offering impressive potential right off, but Rost Martin manages it. Chris and Stefany Toomer are the names behind the brand, and even though they're new, they're not inexperienced. Chris is the face of the company, and he's personable and knowledgeable. He's also taken care of ensuring the company's website is properly set up (that's an area many manufacturers fail). Rost Martin is getting its start with the RM1C, a compact 9mm that isn't just another polymer pistol — not even close. More on that in a second.

UP AND COMERS: NEW MANUFACTURERS TO KNOW

Rost Martin is based in Dallas, Texas — and who doesn't love a Lone Star State brand — but even more importantly, their guns are truly made there. These are made-in-America pistols, something that becomes even more impressive when you realize the company is keeping price points down despite the higher cost of American manufacturing. They've branded themselves as "The Next Generation of Freedom," and the moniker fits.

The RM1C is an aesthetically attractive handgun that also manages to be reliably functional. It's full of features that cater to the needs of self-defenders, and it's clear Chris Toomer himself put a great deal of thought into design and quality. This is a striker-fired gun with a polymer frame and nitrocarburized steel slide, giving it the best of both worlds for cutting overall weight and remaining ruggedly built. It has a 4-inch barrel and an overall length of 7.1 inches, making it great for concealed carry. Features like the aggressively textured grips, angled slide serrations, and optic-ready RMR-compatible plate make it all the more appealing. The RM1C is currently offered in black, Stone Gray, and FDE. MSRP $459.

Rost Martin can be visited at SHOT Show booth 40331 (VE1).



Gideon Optics is producing quality optics for competition shooters, concealed carriers and home defenders. Pictured: Granite MOS Competition Red Dot Sight.

GIDEON OPTICS

As a relative newcomer to the optics market, Gideon Optics has hit the ground running. They've gone from new and unknown to making their mark as a trusted, established brand. This is at least partly thanks to the addition of Mike Branson to the team — Mike is a seasoned outdoor industry professional with years of experience in the optics industry. This means Gideon got started well-positioned to put its best lens forward among serious shooters. Gideon Optics is based out of Pennsylvania.

Gideon Optics has carved out a niche designing quality red-dot sights, although they're also making riflescopes. The Gideon Granite MOS Competition Red-Dot Sight is a fantastic model for customers who are competitive shooters — or really any pistol shooter looking for a larger window on their optic. Window size is 28.33mm x 22.5mm. The Granite is parallax free to 33 yards, boasts an 8-MOA red or green dot, and uses motion-sensing technology for longer battery life. MSRP $319.99.

For customers focused on concealed carry, there's the more compact Rock Pistol Red-Dot Sight. The Rock is compatible with the RMR footprint and is offered with a red or green circle dot or red or green only dots. The circle dot reticle is a 45-MOA circle surrounding a 3-MOA dot, and the dot-only reticle is a single 3-MOA dot. This sight is meant for rapid target acquisition, ease of concealment, and durability. MSRP $199.99.

Gideon Optics can be visited at SHOT Show booth 42208 (VE1).



Customers looking for rugged range bags and rifle cases will benefit from Patriot Tactical's product line. Pictured: Dual Rifle Case.

PATRIOT TACTICAL

At Patriot Tactical, the tagline is "Average is the enemy." As a company with only a few years behind them, they're now gaining a foothold in the tactical world for everything from knives to rifle bags. The company's blades, backpacks and gun bags are exceptional quality and made to withstand hard use. Gun owners need ways to store gear and transport firearms to the range, and Patriot Tactical manufactures solid gear to fulfill that need.

The Patriot Tactical Range Bag is made using durable, heavy material and features numerous pockets and storage loops for gun gear. Side pockets are great for keeping eye and ear pro where it can be found quickly, and a front zippered pocket contains magazine loops for easy access to spare mags. The Range Bag is 16 inches wide and 12 inches deep. MSRP $59.99.

For customers who spend a lot of time at the range or take classes with their long guns, the Patriot Tactical Dual Rifle Bag in Desert Khaki is a nice fit. It's a soft-sided case made from ballistic nylon, and as its name suggests, it's big enough to carry two rifles. The bag is 36 inches long, 8 inches deep and 12 inches tall. Velcro straps hold rifles in place during transport, and the customer has their choice of utilizing padded carry handles or integrated backpack straps. MSRP $119.99.

Patriot Tactical can be visited at SHOT Show booth 43951 (VE1).

SHOW LOW MFG

A company that's making a name for itself in the PCC (pistol caliber carbine) world is Show Low MFG. The gun maker's BlackJack line of PCCs are made with an eye for detail and attention to quality, and even though they're new, there are a variety of model options. And because pistol caliber carbines are versatile



The Show Low MFG BlackJack is a 9mm PCC that will appeal to customers who compete as well as those focused on self-defense.

and portable, they're a great product to keep in stock for tactical-minded customers.

The Show Low MFG BlackJack 16.1-inch model in High Roller Green is a great option for home defense, use as a truck gun, or working on tactics at the range. Customers interested in maneuverable, lightweight firearms that deliver fantastic accuracy will want a look at the BlackJack. This 9mm PCC comes standard with a Magpul MOE stock, ACE Rail DLG polymer flip-up sights, and a 35-round magazine. It has a barrel length of 16.1 inches, an overall length of 34.75 inches, and an empty weight of 6.23 pounds. There's also a California-compliant model for residents of the Sunshine State. MSRP $1715.00.

Show Low MFG can be visited at SHOT Show booth 41155 (VE1).



DNT Optics ThermNight Thermal & Night Vision Multispectral Scope with Laser Rangefinder and Ballistic Calculator is a versatile optic with numerous useful features.



Truly compact pocket pistols are rare, and Third Bay manages to fill that need with The Ounce CCW Pistol.

THIRD BAY

Although revolvers remain a popular option for pocket carry, you'll find many customers more interested in Third Bay's Ounce CCW Pistol. The Ounce is what it sounds like — a tiny pistol that's made to provide the ultimate in concealability and subtlety. Interestingly, Third Bay launched for the purpose of introducing this folding pocket pistol. The company saw a niche and filled it, and now your customers can benefit with a pistol that's ideal for non-permissive environments.

The Ounce CCW Pistol weighs in at 8 ounces and folds into a size comparable to a deck of cards (4 ¾ inches x 3 inches x 7/8 inches). Unfolded, the Ounce isn't much bigger, coming in with dimensions of 5 ¾ inches x 4 ¾ inches x 7/8 inches. The pistol's barrel is 3 ¾ inches in length, which is sufficient for the .22 LR chambering. It can't be fired when it's closed. Features include a loaded chamber indicator, low barrel axis, and bottom ejection rather than a side ejection port. This is a gun that's designed for deep concealment and close quarters use, and it might be perfect for customers shopping for a back-up gun. MSRP $899.

Third Bay can be visited at SHOT Show booth 43004 (VE1).

DNT OPTICS

The U.S.-based arm of DNT Optics is new and based in southern Texas. DNT Optics' focus is bringing superior quality digital optics to market, and they've done that with the ThermNight TNC225R, the Thermal & Night Vision Multispectral Scope with Laser Rangefinder and Ballistic Calculator. The tactical applications of state-of-the-art thermal optics are broad and include a definite appeal to home and property defenders in rural areas. There's also crossover between tactical and hunting applications, because pastimes like hog hunting give tactical-minded shooters an excellent chance to hone their low light/no light skills.

The ThermNight from DNT Optics offers 32 GB of internal storage and is Bluetooth-compatible. It's a compact optic that measures 6.7 inches x 3.3 inches x 3.1 inches and weighs 22.8 ounces. Operating temperature ranges from -4 degrees Fahrenheit to 122 degrees Fahrenheit. Display resolution is 1024 x 768 pixels. The thermal operates using one 18650 flat-top battery and also has a Type C USB external power supply. MSRP $1,299.99.

Also new from DNT Optics is the DNT-7535LR, a long-range riflescope made with precision shooters in mind. The scope offers 7-35X magnification, clear glass, and a wide field of view. This is a first focal plane scope offered in either MOA or mil. The windage dial is offset at 45 degrees for quick operation, and the illuminated reticle has off positions between brightness settings. The DNT-7535LR is nitrogen purged, fog proof, and waterproof. The scope tube is 34mm and the objective lens is 56mm. MSRP $699.99.

DNT Optics can be visited at SHOT Show booth 41762 (VE1). **TR**

REVIEWED:

TRIJICON VARIABLE RIFLESCOPES

With the Tenmile, Ascent, Credo, AccuPoint and Huron scope lines, among others, Trijicon has a solution for every tactical, hunting and shooting application.

By Brian McCombie



The Tenmile 3-18x44 ready for action.



My first shots hit way high, the dirt two-thirds of the way up the berm telling the story. Not a problem. I adjusted the elevation turret on the Trijicon Tenmile 3-18x44 riflescope. That got me on paper, according to my next two shots. A few more adjustments DOWN and a several clicks RIGHT and I was at the bullseye.

Those shots were done for my standard 50-yard zeroing. I moved to my shooting range's 100-yard lane. My first hits here led me to do some fine tuning, and I was soon zeroed for this distance.

The MRAD adjustments on the Tenmile were very precise, and at 10X magnification at this distance, the images were sharp-edged. The colors were vibrant and clearly defined, too, a distinct line or separation from one color from another — all features that are paramount for a high-quality tactical scope. But Trijicon didn't stop there.

MORE FEATURES

This first focal plane, variable-power scope featured a rugged 30mm tube made from aircraft-grade 6061 aluminum. The exposed elevation adjuster included a return-to-zero feature, with a capped windage adjuster. Those adjustments were at 0.1 MRAD per click, with a total travel capability of 17.45 MRAD on this particular Tenmile model.

Trijicon's illuminated MRAD Precision Tree reticle was powered by a single CR 2032 battery, the battery easily inserted atop the parallax control on the left side of the tube. And the reticle illuminated in either red or green. I really appreciated the green option, which works better for my eyes than red.



The Ascent 3-12x40 scope, designed for tactical shooters.



The Tenmile features a repositional magnification lever, also standard on many other Trijicon variable scopes.



The first-focal-plane Trijicon Tenmile 3-18x44 scope employs an MRAD reticle system with 0.10 MRAD adjustment per click.



The left side of the Tenmile tube controls the red/green illumination (here set between G4 and G3, left of knob) and parallax.



At 100 yards, the Tenmile 3-18x44 helped peg this five-shot group.

THE RIFLE

To test out the Tenmile, I mounted it on a Remington 700 Magpul Enhanced rifle chambered in 6mm Creedmoor. Remington built this bolt-action as a longer-range competition rifle, and I knew it was a very accurate rifle from past shooting.

The 700 Enhanced also features a Magpul Hunter stock, made from reinforced polymer constructed around an anodized aluminum bedding block. It sported a 20-MOA Picatinny rail on the receiver, a Magpul 10-round AICS short-action magazine, and Remington's X-Mark Pro adjustable trigger.

For ammunition, I used a 105-grain Hybrid Target round made by Berger Bullets.

Shooting from a rest at 100 yards, I began to get a little frustrated. I kept putting my first two shots nearly or actually touching, but then my third shot went high or wide. These three-shot groups were not large, right around .6-inch. Yet, those two touching shots told me the ammunition, rifle and scope combination likely could do a better job — if the shooter did his job.

I loaded up five rounds and gave it my best effort. I shot more of a line versus a group, and it measured .9-inch. Pretty good, but still …

To let the rifle (and my brain) cool down, I took a walk around the range. Then I slid back into position behind the rifle and shot five more times at a new bull's-eye. That cluster came in at .45-inch, all shots touching, with the Tenmile set on 12X magnification.

The scope had proven itself many times over, and the shooter was unlikely to do any better, so it was time to quit.

VARIABLE AND TACTICAL

Trijicon built its line of Tenmile riflescopes for long-range enthusiasts, and these optics feature seven different illuminated reticles in MRAD or MOA configurations. Available in six variable-power scope models, from 3-18x44 to 6-24x50, in first and second focal plane models, the scopes sport either 30mm or 34mm stout aluminum tubes.

The eight reticle options are all LED, powered by a single CR2032 lithium battery. The Tenmile offerings allow for up to 100 MOA or 29 MRAD of adjustment (depending on the model) from crisp and precise adjusters.

Actually, Trijicon offers shooters dozens of variable-power riflescopes for every application, from competition to hunting, from self-defense to just plinking.

A TACTICAL PAIR

In addition to the Tenmile scopes, Trijicon's other more tactically focused variables are found in the company's Ascent and Credo lines.

Trijicon's Ascent line is composed of two scopes, a 1-4x24 and a 3-12x40 model. Both feature a BDC (Bullet Drop Compensator) target hold MOA-based reticle, and both are second focal plane builds. Tested to military standards and featuring low-capped adjusters with .25-MOA clicks, Ascent scopes feature fully multi-coated, broadband anti-reflective glass for excellent light transmission and brilliant edge-to-edge clarity.

With their aircraft-grade aluminum 30mm tubes and weighing less than 17.8 ounces, Ascent riflescopes sport a matte finish and turrets with tactical knurling for quick and easy adjustments.

Featuring user-selectable green or red LED illumination, Credo tactical riflescopes deliver any-light aiming and superior target acquisition from a ruggedly durable platform. A result of Trijicon technology that's been honed over decades of actual military deployments, the Credo line is available with 10 different illuminated reticles in various MOA, MRAD or BDC configurations.



The eight Credo scope options range from 1-4x24 to 4-16x50 and are available in first or second focal plane reticles. The extra-wide field of view makes for improved situational awareness.

Debuted at the 2024 SHOT Show, the Credo 1-10x28 quickly became Trijicon's top selling riflescope.

HUNTING OPTIONS

For your more hunting-focused clientele, Trijicon has a wide selection of variables too.

Trijicon engineered AccuPoint scopes for hunters who prefer battery-free, tritium and fiber-optic illumination that is always on. Like all Trijicon optics, AccuPoints feature high-quality lenses for very clear sight pictures with zero distortion. Available with eight reticle options and in green, red or amber illumination.

The AccuPoint lineup encompasses nine different models, from 1-4x24 to 5-20x50. With up to 100 MOA or 29 MRAD of adjustment, the AccuPoint riflescope delivers ultra-durable construction with both-eyes-open shooting at any range. The newest models include the 3-18x50 and 4-24x50.

Trijicon designed the Credo HX scopes to handle the hazards of tough hunting in any conditions. The seven Credo HX models offer rapid target acquisition from dawn to dusk thanks to high-quality lenses and seven reticle options, including red and green illuminated reticles. The exposed elevation adjusters feature a zero stop, and a repositionable magnification lever is included with each scope. The newest model is the Credo HX 1-10x28, hunting cousin to the more tactical Credo 1-10.

Trijicon designed and constructed its Huron variable power scopes specifically for the North American deer hunter, and they feature high-quality glass and the same military-grade construction found in other Trijicon optics. Available with three uncluttered reticles that deliver fast and accurate shots, Huron riflescopes are available in 1-4x24, 2.5-10x40, 3-9x40, and 3-12x40 variants, with either a 30mm or 1-inch main tube.

Offering up to 100 MOA of adjustment, Huron riflescopes utilize low-capped, easy-to-use adjusters with .25-MOA clicks for consistent elevation and windage adjustments.

For long-range hunters, Trijicon makes the Tenmile HX, which features four green or red illuminated reticles, three variable-power choices, outstanding glass, and rugged 30mm tube construction. Available in both MOA and MRAD reticle and adjustment configurations. For 2024, Trijicon added a first focal plane version of the 5-25x50 model.



To test out the Tenmile scope, the author mounted it on a Remington 700 Magpul Enhanced rifle chambered in 6mm Creedmoor.

HELPING DEALERS

Trijicon doesn't simply offer an impressive number of variable optics. The company works hard to help its dealers.

"Trijicon wants our retailers to be successful, and we understand the value to consumers of having the chance to look through high-end optics in person," said Joshua Lyall, Trijicon's director of marketing. "So, we make every effort to drive traffic to our local dealer network.

"Trijicon supports our brand with an integrated marketing plan that includes print and digital advertising, TV advertising and sponsorship, social media marketing, and email marketing. We are always looking for additional ways to reach our target consumers to drive them to our local dealers to purchase Trijicon products."

Trijicon optics are regularly featured in print articles, online reviews and videos. Recent print coverages include work in Field Ethos and Shooting Illustrated, while web platform work includes The Firearms Blog, Pew Pew Tactical, and Recoil Web.

Meanwhile, the Honest Outlaw, the Mrgunsngear Channel, and Pew Pew Nation are just a few of the dozens of video outlets regularly reviewing Trijicon tactical and hunting products.

"Many articles and videos focus on the incredible durability of Trijicon products that have resulted in our optics seeing more time in combat with U.S. military forces than any other optic," Lyall noted.

IN STORE

Brick-and-mortar retailers carrying Trijicon products can receive substantial support from the company, too.

"Trijicon is happy to provide sales staff training for new dealers," said Lyall. "Training is also available through an online portal available only to brick-and-mortar dealers."

These same dealers have access to the Trijicon Dealer Training and Rewards Tool, a sales incentive program that provides sales staff with the opportunity to earn points for selling Trijicon products; those points can then be redeemed for free product.

"We also make available a number of sales aids to our dealers, from POP displays and merchandisers to marketing assets and sales tools," Lyall noted.

Trijicon regularly partners with key local dealers, too, to offer in-store events and promotions to help sell Trijicon products.

OFFERING TRIJICON

For a retailer, Trijicon sells both direct and through distributors.

Most major industry distributors carry Trijicon products, including Bill Hicks & Co., Chattanooga Shooting Supplies, Crow Shooting Supply, Lipsey's, Sports South and Zanders Sporting Goods.

The easiest way to become a Trijicon dealer? Visit *Trijicon.com* and fill out the "Become a Dealer" form. A Trijicon representative will follow up soon afterwards. **TR**

SPECS: TRIJICON TENMILE 3-18X44

FOCAL PLANE: First

MAGNIFICATION: 3-18X

OBJECTIVE SIZE: 44mm

TUBE SIZE: 30mm

RETICLE PATTERN: MRAD Precision Tree

DAY RETICLE COLOR: Red/Green

ILLUMINATION SOURCE: LED

ILLUMINATION SETTINGS: 5 Red, 5 Green

POWER SOURCE: 1 CR2032

BATTERY LIFE: Red 39 hours, Green 94 hours

ADJUSTMENT: 0.1 MRAD Per Click

ADJUSTMENT RANGE: 17.45 MRAD Total Travel

EYE RELIEF: 3.4 to 3.9 inches

EXIT PUPIL: 0.45 to 0.09 inches

FIELD OF VIEW (FEET): 35.3 to 5.9 @ 100 yards.

HOUSING MATERIAL: 6061 Aircraft Grade Aluminum

FINISH: Matte Black

LENGTH X WIDTH X HEIGHT: 15.02 x 3.26 x 2.4 inches

WEIGHT: 24.4 ounces

MSRP: $2,345

WWW.TRIJICON.COM

THE NEW COLT



Colt's excellent-quality snake series revolvers are back, including the Pyton, Anaconda and Cobra lines.

Colt has been making huge strides since its acquisition by CZ Group a few years ago. by Max Archer

We all know that the legendary Colt brand has had a rough journey, but this is not a surprising story. A similar story could be told for nearly all legacy U.S. firearms brands, and internationally, the list and story could grow very long.

At one time, Colt was the leader in revolver, 1911, hunting firearms and AR-platform innovation and quality. It was the brand that generations of military members took to the battlefield, sportsmen and hunters kept the family fed with, collectors sought after, and marksmen and competitors preferred. Since its start, Colt was challenged with aggressive competitors who were pushing innovation, machining and technology to the limits to overtake Colt's lead.

Colt's financial and management challenges occurred a few times throughout the company's history, centered around its dependance on military contracts. In 1854, they closed due to lack of military contracts; from 1940-1950 they were in financial bankruptcy after WWII; and the brand went through a 2015 bankruptcy when the Pentagon's M4 contracts were changed to FN. The industry really did not know whether Colt would survive after the last restructure, but it has. What is a bit unique is that a legendary U.S. firearms brand was sold to a European company in May 2021 when Colt holdings was acquired by CZ Group. Nothing against CZ, but there were a lot of Colt fans that winced at the idea of a non-U.S. company buying Colt.

The fear for most Colt fans was that CZ would follow the same strip-and-gut investment banker strategy we have seen occur with predictable regularity in the firearms industry. Over three years later, all agree that the strategic support, deep pockets and bold innovation CZ brings to the relationship are what Colt needs for stability and the next phase of growth.

In talking with Colt and CZ leadership, the emphasis was to not make sweeping changes at Colt, but to concentrate on thoughtful steps that would lead to predictable and solid growth for Colt and CZ. The next chapter of Colt is likely a significant decade-long journey that started in 2021. One of those decisions was to keep Colt operating with its own management team under CEO Dennis Veilleux instead of having CZ leadership run Colt as a sub-brand. The management team is pushing to fully restore the excitement around the brand, and it was clear that CZ wants the Colt brand to thrive. Though CZ is well known for its high level of product innovation, they are making strategic moves jointly with Colt management on how to best leverage the two brands. Some of the strategies will be independent design,

production and marketing; however, there are areas where joint design and product collaboration will deliver something unique to the market. Both companies offer unique products and expertise the other does not have.

With investment and engineering support from CZ, Colt is again on stable footing but making cautious, thoughtful steps. The first major step was creating a modern production environment for the Colt revolver line. Colt's snake-themed Anaconda, Python and Cobra revolver line is back and upgraded, with cutting-edge machining delivering higher-quality tolerances, strength and finishes than legacy models. Most also feel that the trigger has been significantly improved thanks to better machining and updated manufacturing methods. We are also seeing a large diversity within the revolver line emerge, including .22LR, .38 Special, .357 Magnum, and .44 Magnum in stainless polished, matte and now blued steel versions. Even more encouraging is seeing laser engravers using Colt stainless revolvers again as the canvas for exceptionally beautiful firearms art. It is exciting to see a resurgence of factory new engraved Colt revolvers growing as collector items.

Colt's strong long-term 1911 sales have supported the company even through difficult times; however, production volumes have always been relatively low. In a recent discussion with Colt, they noted the 2024-2025 goals include ramping up 1911 production to reduce backorders. The plan is to follow a similar strategy to improve manufacturing and production as done with the revolver line. Some of this strategy includes leveraging more advanced machining capabilities and increased tolerances to reduce the high percentage of hand-fitting of each of the 1911's roughly 58 parts. Colt could have just started pumping out a stream of new models which ultimately would have led to even more backorders. Instead, this is another example of where Colt is focusing on making the careful steps of streamlining production with a focus on increasing volumes and quality.

Colt's rifle platforms are also getting updated beyond the legacy models. The new M5 model was added, which includes a more modern update to the M4 with some ambi controls and styling, along with a monolithic upper. The M5 represented Colt's first new AR platform in decades and a good first step in offering updates to the classic AR line. In collaboration with CZ, the Colt



Colt's Anaconda 6-inch revolver in stainless has become one of the brand's best sellers.

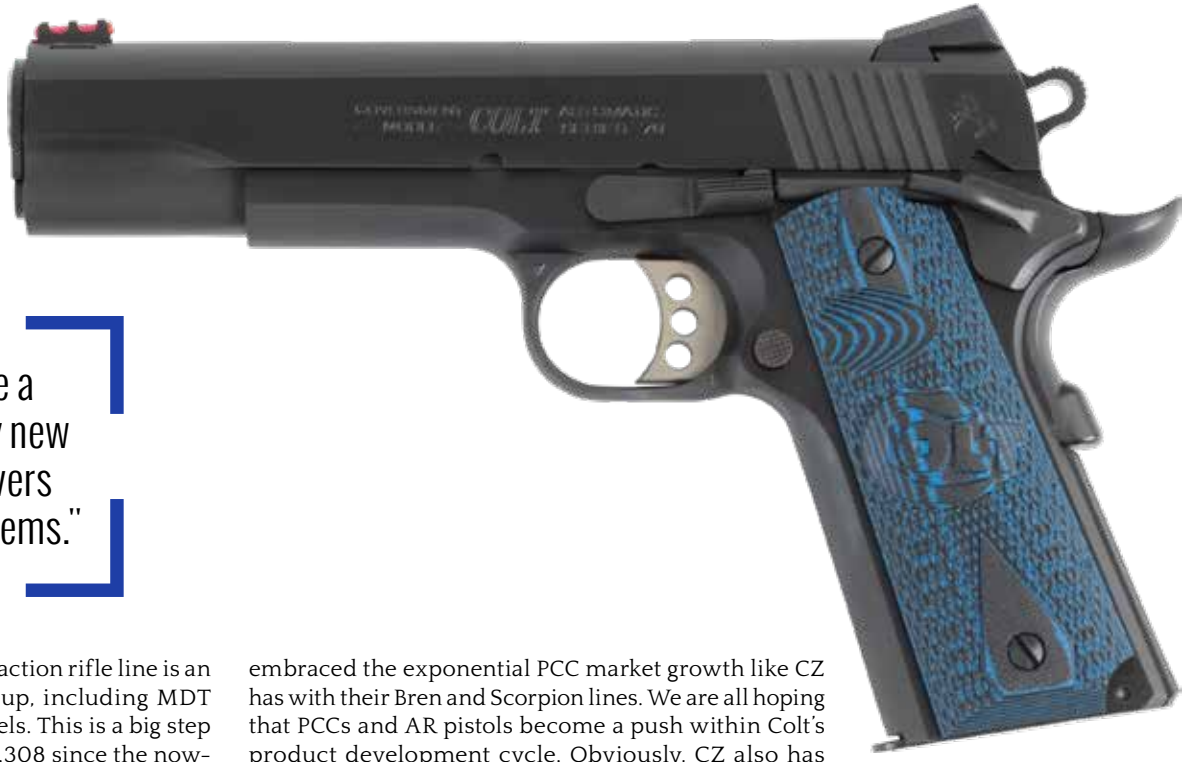
> "Some of the strategies will be independent design, production and marketing; however, there are areas where joint design and product collaboration will deliver something unique to the market."



The new Colt CBX Precision delivers proven action, accuracy and reliability in MDT's precision chassis.



Colt's M5 series is a major first step for Colt in competing with premier-tier, feature-loaded AR platforms.



"It is exciting to see a resurgence of factory new engraved Colt revolvers growing as collector items."

CBX 6.5 Creedmoor and .308 bolt-action rifle line is an exciting addition to the Colt lineup, including MDT chassis on the CBX Precision models. This is a big step for Colt, as this is the first civilian .308 since the now-discontinued AR10. The CBX rifles offer Colt customers already proven accurate and reliable rifles based on the CZ 600 actions. Additions like the CBX Precision models with MDT chassis are extremely accurate.

Customers I spoke with during several local gun shows were excited over what crossover collaboration might include, with speculations that ranged from high-capacity polymer 1911s that combined Dan Wesson, CZ and Colt designs, to AR-based Colt PCCs that accept Scorpion magazines. There were also some simpler hopes that the legendary Colt brand would deliver a series of affordable retro rifles that echoed back to their first models. There are many natural collaboration synergies between CZ and Colt we can hope materialize into unique products.

For CZ, there is a natural opportunity to leverage Colt's deep military relationships, and for Colt, there's the opportunity to take advantage of the forward-leaning engineering innovation of the CZ catalog. CZ has a lot of polymer and alloy pistol engineering that Colt could leverage as a new market. Though Colt has offered some 9mm AR platform PCCs, they have not embraced the exponential PCC market growth like CZ has with their Bren and Scorpion lines. We are all hoping that PCCs and AR pistols become a push within Colt's product development cycle. Obviously, CZ also has developed an epically reliable short-stroke Bren platform that has possibilities within Colt to potentially rejuvenate military contracts with something unique.

Although we like to believe that legacy brands could survive on their own and have the capital to adapt, the reality is that the competitive market in firearms has radically changed in just the last 20 years. The most important piece of CZ Group stepping in purchasing Colt was that they are not approaching Colt with an investment banker acquisition mindset, which would have certainly gutted Colt. Instead, CZ is bringing well-respected design and operations support to Colt and helping them rebuild to be competitive with new engineering, processes and manufacturing methods. The investment from CZ is allowing Colt to reset, retool, skill up, and update decades-old methods that are no longer competitive. The CZ Group acquired Colt and has made noticeable moves forward in only three short years, with new models and innovations already in customer hands. We will all be following this legendary brand as they evolve during this exciting new chapter of Colt. **TR**

▲ The 1911 series remain coveted guns for collectors, and Colt is promising major advancements in this line.

The Colt CBX Precision ▼



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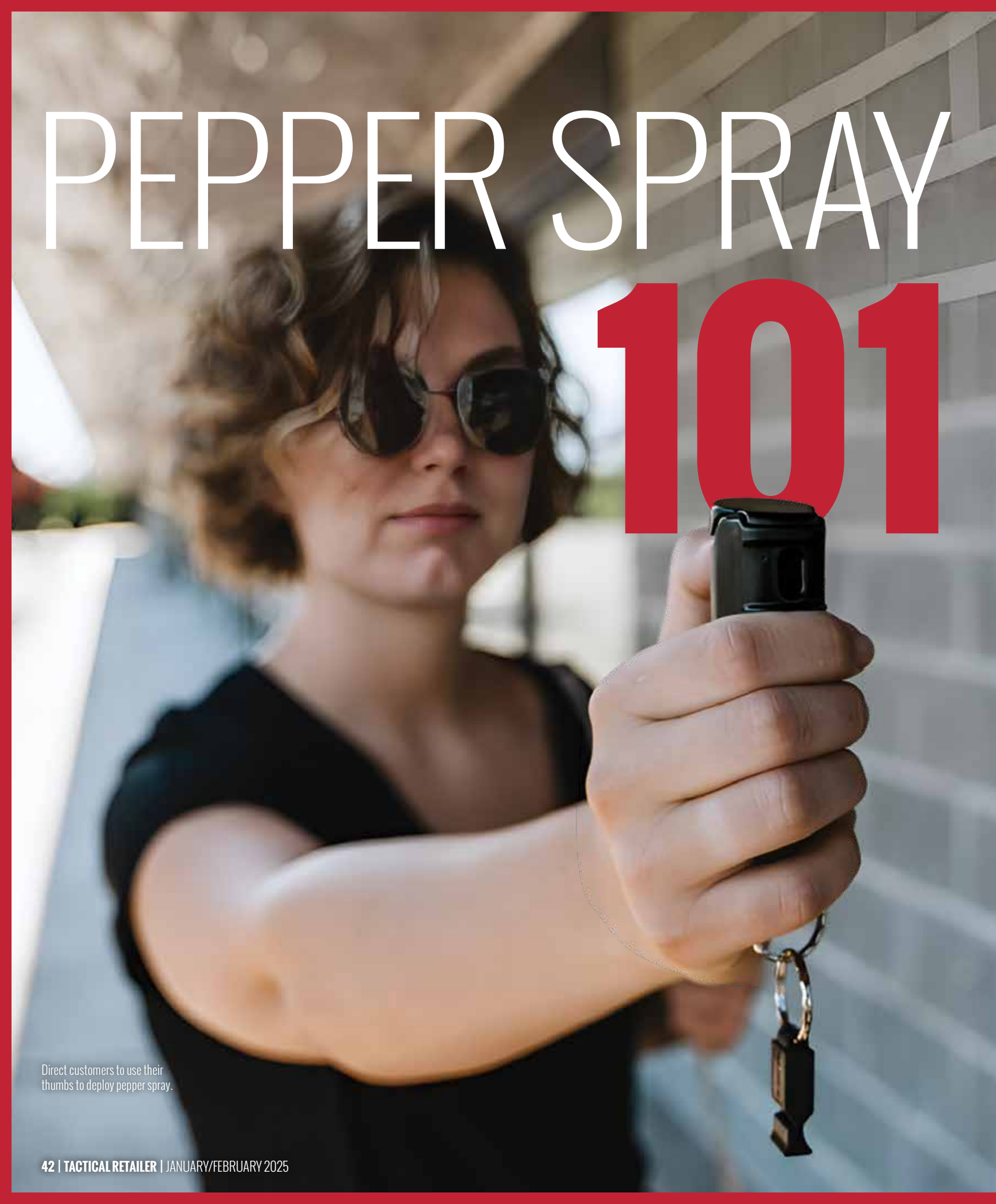
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PEPPER SPRAY 101



Direct customers to use their thumbs to deploy pepper spray.

Pepper spray and other less-lethal defense tools are great options for customers and great sales opportunities for you.

By Kat Ainsworth Stevens

In an industry where the focus tends to be on firearms and related accessories, it can be easy to overlook the need for secondary defensive measures. However, products like pepper spray are fantastic less-than-lethal tools that can serve multiple uses for the end user. Pepper spray is a tool that shouldn't be forgotten and can be great for counter displays and sales add-ons. Here's what you need to know to better market and explain pepper spray and all its derivatives to your customers and why you should stock it.

What is pepper spray, really?

While it might seem like an obvious answer, there's more to pepper spray than simply being an irritating spray. All pepper sprays aren't created equal, and the best way to know which brands to stock in your business is by gaining a basic understanding of quality.

Pepper spray is generally made from oleoresin capsaicin (OC), an oil that's made using chili peppers. True OC comes from pepper plants that are part of the Capsicum genus. This is all important because there have been manufacturers that use entirely different products in their pepper-spray-labeled sprays. For example, chemicals such as chloroacetophenone and phenacyl chloride might be used by companies that aren't utilizing organic, pepper-derived OC. The answer to which is ideal is simple: It's the oleoresin capsaicin. But even then, you need to know what OC is best.

How do you know how strong pepper spray is?

Many manufacturers label their pepper sprays by OC percentage in ranges spanning from 5% to 20%. This marketing method might give you the impression you'd be smart to stock higher-percentage OC, but that isn't always true. The strength of pepper spray isn't controlled by the percentage of OC oils used, and it's also not determined by the Scoville Heat Units (SHU) of the specific peppers the oil is derived from. Strength depends on the major capsaicinoids (MC) rating. Generally, an MC rating of 1% to 2% will be sufficient for self-defense use. Some manufacturers list their MC rating on the packaging, but others don't — if the MC rating is there, it's a good sign the spray is a quality product.

POM pepper spray lists their POMClear Formula MC rating as 1.40%. Another popular brand, SABRE, lists their SABRE Red spray as having an MC rating of 1.33%. When you're suggesting pepper spray to a customer, it's ideal if the MC rating is higher than 1%. There are quite a few brands with a significantly lower MC rating, and their efficacy directly correlates to that rating.

Is there a difference between pepper spray and pepper gel?

Yes, there are noteworthy differences between the various types of defensive sprays. The three common types are pepper spray, pepper gel and pepper foam. Each product offers pros and cons, and knowing what they are can help you direct your customer to the best product for their needs. Here's what you need to know:

- Pepper spray is the fasting-acting defensive spray delivery method.
- Pepper gel and pepper foam must stay in contact with the attacker's mucus membranes for greater lengths of time before fully activating.
- Sprays are an aerosol, meaning they're affected by the wind more than other types.
- Gels and foams can be scooped off the attacker's skin and flung onto the victim.

This doesn't mean pepper gels and foams can't be effective, only that customers should be educated in how they work. Offering a pepper spray use class is a great way to bring in business, sell larger quantities of pepper spray products, and provide a greater value overall to customers.

Why stock pepper spray?

The customer base for pepper sprays is broad. It's a fantastic primary defensive tool for anyone who isn't comfortable with firearms yet or cannot carry due to being in a non-permissive environment. Perhaps one of your biggest marketing targets is college students who aren't old enough to carry a handgun yet but are 18 or older, meaning they can legally possess pepper spray in most states. It's important for you to be familiar with the regulations regarding age in your area, because many of your customers won't realize there are laws restricting pepper spray use.

Pepper spray is a stellar secondary defensive tool, too. Gun owners can benefit from carrying it because it gives them more options than just



▲ SABRE's Smart Bluetooth Pepper Spray allows customers to track the canister using GPS.



▲ SABRE offers a large home defense canister that includes a wall mount for storage and easy access in case of a home invasion.

"When you're suggesting pepper spray to a customer, it's ideal if the MC rating is higher than 1%."



Pepper spray is a great product to offer as an add-on or standalone sale.



POM Pepper Spray is MC rated above 1% and offered in a variety of sizes and styles.

their firearm when facing a potential threat. Not every credible threat requires a firearm, and having another self-defense option available makes defenders' lives easier. Because of that reality, pepper spray makes a good add-on to firearm and ammunition sales.

It's important to understand pepper spray isn't a female-only product. Anyone focused on self-defense can benefit from carrying pepper spray. It's simply a good, reliable tool for customers to add to their daily carry.

What brands of pepper spray are there?

The market is saturated with pepper spray brands, but some stand out above others. Brands like POM, SABRE, and Fox Labs are known for being high quality and effective. All three offer MC ratings above 1% and a wide variety of canister sizes and styles. Keep in mind that you don't want to market products marked as bear spray for self-defense use. Stock self-defense pepper sprays, gels and foams for defensive purposes. Sprays labeled for wild animals are just that.

Are there tips and tricks to using pepper spray?

Yes, there are tips for pepper spray use that you can pass on to your customers. One piece of advice that isn't commonly given is that people should familiarize themselves with the stream spread and reach of their chosen defensive spray. That's one reason why offering classes that utilize inert canisters for training purposes can be so handy. After all, once a canister is used, it's recommended the user should replace it. Other tips you can give to encourage customers to purchase and carry pepper spray include:

- The thumb should be used to deploy defensive spray. This leaves four fingers for a solid grip on the canister and allows greater control of the stream.
- Painting a smiley face on the attacker tends to give the user the best coverage of mucus membranes.
- Taking a class where they're sprayed can help the customer understand how pepper spray works and that it's possible to keep fighting through the burn. In a close-quarters fight, defensive spray transference can happen, so it's important for the user to know they can keep going even if they start feeling pain.

Also encourage customers to purchase multiple canisters so they have another available if they're forced to use one (once a canister is used, it should be replaced). Remind them to pay attention to expiration dates and proper storage.



Fox Labs' products offer a Scoville Heat Unit of 5,300,000 and MC rating of 1.4%.

Where in the store should you display pepper spray?

Although it's a good idea to have a larger pepper spray display elsewhere in the store, counter displays are great for generating sales. Many people will visit your store for ammunition, holsters, or knives without considering something like pepper spray. But if they see a display when they approach the counter to pay, they're more likely to grab one. That's another reason it helps to have a basic understanding of how pepper spray works, because you and your team can explain the pros of carrying pepper spray to the customer. **TR**

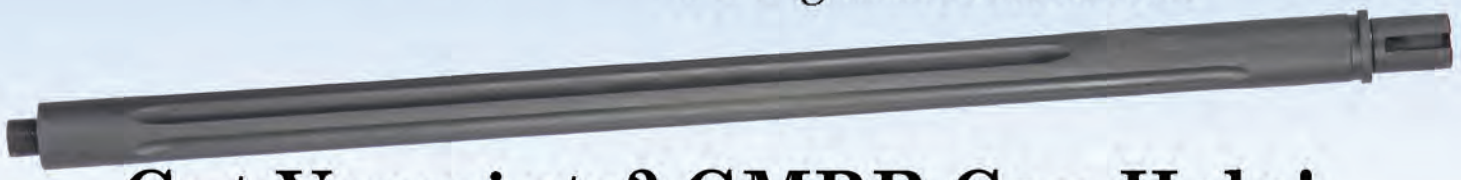
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GEAR ROUNDUP: SUPPRESSORS

By Gordy Krahn

Attending stadium rock concerts and shooting firearms without some form of ear protection are two of the most surefire ways to sustain hearing loss. I'm betting there are very few Dead Heads (Grateful Dead fans) out there who don't answer every question with, "What?" Same goes for those rifle range junkies who go through ammo by the crate without giving their ears a second thought. Studies show that prolonged sounds above 70dB can cause hearing damage – everyday activities such as listening to loud music, frequenting loud bars and restaurants, mowing the lawn or operating power tools, for example. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the maximum level humans can tolerate without doing damage to their ears is 70dB over a 24-hour period. And loud noises above 120dB can cause immediate harm – even a single extremely loud noise event such as close proximity to the discharge of a firearm. Here are some other examples: Rock Concert = 110-120 dB; Nearby Thunder = 120dB; Jet Engine Takeoff = 140dB; Power Tools 100-110dB. Even noisy workplaces with a decibel rating of over 85dB can damage ears over the course of time.

Wearing hearing protection devices, such as earmuffs, plugs and such reduce gun reports by roughly 20 to 30dB. Unfortunately, these devices can be cumbersome in the field. A better solution for hunters and shooters is to tame muzzle blast at the source – reducing the sound signature of their firearms by equipping them with a suppressor. Suppressors decrease the acoustic intensity and recoil of the shot by modulating the speed and pressure of the propellant gas from the muzzle and suppressing the muzzle blast – anywhere from around 23 to 36dB sound reduction depending on the type of suppressor. Suppressors turn the mighty roar of that favorite high-octane rifle into a muffled snarl. Many rifles today come factory threaded for adding muzzle brakes or suppressors, which can be easily attached. Here are several models your patrons will want to check out.

DANIEL DEFENSE

SoundGuard SG-30 Powered by KGM

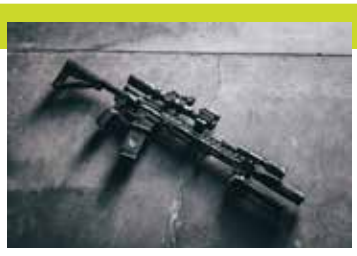


Daniel SoundGuard Powered by KGM Suppressors utilize cutting edge gas-flow dynamics that eliminate over-gassing by directing most gasses forward, not back in the shooter's face. KGM technology significantly lowers impulse noise levels, protecting against hearing loss, while the baffle stack and proprietary coating on internal parts reduce a firearm's flash signature to virtually zero. Gas-flow pathing stabilizes rounds to ensure extreme accuracy with minimal point-of-impact shift. The SG-30 is compatible with .223- through .300 PRC-caliber firearms and is constructed of lightweight, durable stainless steel. It attaches/detaches in seconds via an included adapter utilizing the HUB standard 1.375-24 UNS, which provides secure attachment while adding minimal length and allowing for the use of a variety of other muzzle attachments.MSRP: $773.

www.danieldefense.com

DEAD AIR SILENCERS

Lazarus 6



The Lazarus 6 from Dead Air Silencers was designed to withstand the most demanding firing schedules and harshest environments. Featuring the innovative Triskelion Gas Management System, this silencer offers exceptional acoustic performance and minimal back pressure, keeping gas away from the face while reducing wear on firearms. Crafted from advanced Haynes 282 material and utilizing the company's proven Triskelion Baffle technology, the Lazarus 6 optimizes sound suppression across a wide range of frequencies. It is HUB compatible, allowing the use of a variety of industry mounting systems, including the KeyMo, Xeno and direct thread options. The enhanced thermal management system rapidly conducts heat from the core to the outer skin, cooling it quickly and maintaining optimal performance even under intense conditions. MSRP: $990-$1,050.

www.deadairsilencers.com

ELITE IRON

Thud Lite



The Thud Lite from Elite Iron boasts a newer skinless design, featuring a meticulously crafted suppressor sealed with laser-welded Grade 5 titanium baffles. This achieves an unparalleled level of lightweight construction and guarantees exceptional durability, ruggedness and superior sound suppression. Crafted with versatility in mind, the Thud Lite is purpose-built to accommodate semi-automatic and bolt-action rifles. Its adaptability is further enhanced by interchangeable direct thread mounts utilizing a standard HUB system, allowing seamless integration with various platforms spanning from 5.56mm to .300 Win. Mag. For those seeking extraordinary performance, the Thud Lite M variant extends compatibility to the formidable .338 Lapua Mag. The Thud Lite features swappable end caps that empower users to optimize sound reduction performance. MSRP: $995.

www.eliteiron.com

HUXWRX

Flow 762 Ti



By 3D-printing with Grade 5 titanium, the Flow 762 Ti is the lightest rifle suppressor available from Huxwrx Safety Company, with zero sacrifice to quality, longevity, durability and functionality. The Flow 762 Ti is the latest evolution in Flow-Through technology, delivering above and beyond toxic fume mitigation, accuracy and repeatability. This innovative multi-caliber suppressor utilizes proven Flow-Through and Torque Lock technologies. The integrated GeoFlash Cap geometry effectively mitigates flash as part of its overall signature reduction functionality. The Flow 762 Ti is full-auto rated and compatible with 5.56mm, 6.5 and 7.62mm platforms with no barrel restrictions. No modifications (other than QD muzzle device) to the platform or gas system are required to install or operate this suppressor. MSRP: $1,623.

www.huxwrx.com

MAXIM DEFENSE

QD Suppressor System



The Maxim Defense QD Suppressor System utilizes a proprietary flash hider to quickly attach and remove the suppressor without the use of tools. The system is multi-caliber compatible, making it perfect for military, law enforcement, hunters, sports shooters and firearm enthusiasts. Available in the DSX, DS and DS-K models, the QD suppressor system allows for use across multiple calibers, making it easy for customers to use one suppressor for several different firearms, saving both time and money by needing only one tax stamp. Utilizing M-Kore technology, the QD ensures unmatched durability and optimized performance. This suppressor is UTM safe and passed SOCOM's rigorous endurance and destruction tests – finished with a CR-DLC coating, providing better resistance to wear, heat and carbon buildup; making maintenance easier and less frequent. MSRP: $1,150-$1,550/Includes suppressor and QD muzzle device.

www.maximdefense.com

NOSLER

SR-30K Compact



The SR-30K Suppressor is based on Nosler's SR-30AITi, which features aluminum and titanium construction for the lightest possible weight, striking a balance between overall length and noise reduction. At less than 6 inches long and weighing 7.2 ounces, the K-Can is a pleasure to carry and easier to maneuver than a full-size suppressor, making it ideal in a treestand, ground blind or on longer rifles. It incorporates the same attachment system as the rest of the Nosler suppressor line and can be mounted either over a brake or direct-threaded to the muzzle with the use of the included adaptor. When space and weight are at a premium, the K-Can is a great, economical solution for noise and blast reduction. MSRP: $729.

www.nosler.com

SILENCERCO

Scythe-Ti



The Scythe-Ti is SilencerCo's first suppressor completely constructed from titanium. This premium .30-caliber suppressor is extremely lightweight and short, with the body of the suppressor weighing just over 6 ounces and measuring under 6 inches in length. The real magic, however, is that the Scythe-Ti boasts impressive sound suppression while maintaining this featherlight quality – a unique accomplishment for suppressors in its class. It's the optimal choice for suppressed hunting, long-range precision shooting or days at the range. With no barrel length restrictions and rated for calibers all the way up to .300 RUM, the capabilities of the Scythe-Ti are extensive. It ships with a new radial tool, Bravo tool, basic tool, 5/8x24 titanium direct thread mount and .30-caliber aluminum single-port anchor brake. MSRP: $1,174.

www.silencerco.com

SILENCER CENTRAL

MeatEater Suppressor



Silencer Central has teamed up with MeatEater to launch the new MeatEater by Banish suppressor. Designed for hunting, this .30-caliber suppressor is rated for cartridges up to .300 RUM. It features an anchor brake that reduces recoil by up to 40% in the open position and 30% when closed, while also delivering an additional 5dB of sound reduction. Overall, the suppressor cuts average sound levels by 32dB, ensuring a quieter shooting experience. With a muzzle cap insert to accommodate various calibers, users can optimize the suppressor for their specific rifle setup. Constructed from lightweight titanium, the suppressor weighs just 10.3 ounces, measures 5.85 inches in length and has a 1.73-inch diameter with an industry-standard hub mount. MSRP: $1,299.

www.silencercentral.com

YANKEE HILL MACHINE

Victra-12 Modular Shotgun Suppressor



Yankee Hill Machine has announced the debut of the Victra-12, a new modular sound suppressor designed for 12-gauge shotguns. It is nearly 50 percent lighter than competitors' models, user-configurable to a range of sizes and offers outstanding dB reduction, all at a value price.

The Victra-12 has a robust modular design, and users can easily configure it to a 12-, 10-, 8- or 6-inch suppressor. It ships with an improved cylinder choke, and full and modified chokes will be available later in 2025. The host mount and choke are at opposite ends of the suppressor, so the Victra-12 requires only one mount, and users can add lower-cost chokes as desired. MSRP: $929.95

www.yhm.net **TR**



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COMMERCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE MILITARY'S BLUE USA RULES

While militaries around the globe make good use of attritable drones, the new technology has plenty of commercial application, too.

Chinese drone manufacturer Shenzhen DJI Innovation Technology Co., Ltd., known by consumers as DJI, recently sued the US Department of Defense over its 2022 designation as a Military Company Operating in the United States.

In 2021, DoD added DJI to a list of commercial off-the-shelf drones which could not be procured or used by the military due to concerns over back doors in hardware and software. Interestingly, DoD has asserted that DJI is complicit in Chinese government surveillance programs, including biometric tracking of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang.

DJI is by far the most popular commercial drone in the US. Some in Congress want to go further and completely ban DJI drones from use in U.S. airspace. Most recently the House Select Committee on China urged the Commerce Department to investigate DJI for allegedly attempting to circumvent U.S. trade restrictions using front companies.

If you follow my writing elsewhere, you're going to hear this from me a lot: The attritable drone is the 155 shell of the future. That's the elevator pitch. For those unfamiliar with the term, "attritable" means that they'll be consumed or destroyed during use; possibly during their first flight.

Ukraine uses 10,000 to 30,000 drones per month in its war with Russia. As I'm sure you're familiar, many of your customers watch what is happening in Ukraine and want to learn more about emerging capabilities like drones, precision target engagement, novel communications, and ditch medicine. Some will go so far as to acquire the means to train in these new skills. While basic pistol and carbine classes are still going strong, interest in more advanced courses has waned as many take to long-range rifle training, communications courses, and online training in drone use. In many ways, Ukraine is a view of the future. This is particularly true for drones, which have allowed Ukraine to keep a much larger adversary off balance.

In 2019, the President signed the Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act into law, which led the military to ban the use of drones from the CRINK countries (China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea) due to security concerns. The recent pager and cell phone attacks by Israel against its enemies demonstrates how important it is to have confidence in the fidelity of our systems.

This move is referred to as the Blue UAS program. The military terminology for handheld drones is "small unmanned aerial system (sUAS)." In order to be accepted for use, they have to meet several standards, including cybersecurity, video transmission encryption, and so on. Additionally, components must come from a country approved by DoD. Like complete drone systems, even the components can't come from a CRINK country. Basically, we don't want our drones turning on us.

When these standards are met, the drone type is placed on the Blue UAS Cleared List and granted an Authority to Operate by the Defense Innovation Unit, who manages the program. DIU also works with industry to identify and procure traditional warfighting technologies directly from industry, like attritable drones.

Because of the extra requirements for small military drones, they are much more expensive than their commercial counterparts made in China. The goal is to bring the cost down significantly by investing in a domestic industrial base to build thousands of drones per month. Earlier I mentioned the 155mm artillery shell, and the goal is to get the cost down around that level.

Short of active war, the U.S. military isn't going to use drones up at the pace we are seeing in Ukraine and elsewhere. Consequently, manufacturers are considering dual-use drones, which can be sold to consumers as well as to the government, as more agencies begin to consider the security of their systems, including drones.

The biggest challenge is in the components. Having a U.S. source of supply, or one from a friendly country, means that drone users won't be at risk that one day their drones won't work, or worse yet, turn on them. It also means that we'll be able to manufacture drones in times of international tension when trade is restricted.

As with many innovations that begin on the battlefield, so it goes with small drones. We keep a keen eye on Ukraine, where innovators are using 3D printing or additive manufacturing to craft mechanisms to deliver food, medicines and radios to isolated outposts or create delivery systems that mate legacy munitions and explosives to the drones for aerial bombardment of trenches. They are inspiring others to create low-cost and low-risk delivery methods. Drones can go places where you don't want to place a human at risk of harm.

One place where drones are seeing extensive use by firearms owners is on the range. They can hover above the danger zone and give a bird's-eye view of the area, including shooters, targets, and anyone in and around the range. Safety and feedback are drastically increased.

Other great civilian uses have been demonstrated during the recovery from Hurricane Helene, where drones delivered supplies to those stranded and conducted surveys of damaged areas.

Unmanned drones are a growing market and will become even more popular as they take on new roles. The Blue UAS initiative will incentivize industry to invest in a domestic manufacturing base for continued development and supply. **TR**





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