



PHOTO: COURTESY SIA

The On-Snow Demo is always a good time, but showing up on game day with a solid strategy is a sure-fire way to make it not only fun, but profitable in the long run.

people I respect and talk with them about the gear I'm trying out."



Ben Clarke
Owner, People
Skate and
Snowboard
Keego Harbor,
Michigan

GET OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE

"I make sure all the guys I have demoing gear try stuff they don't normally ride. Sticking with the gear that you usually ride doesn't do much for you, so I make sure that we are trying something new every run."



Rob Asselin
Owner, Civil
Greenwich, Rhode
Island

KEEP IT CONSISTENT

"If you're testing snowboards, use your own bindings. Tape the discs to the baseplates—this secures your stance and your disc screws as well as gives you a consistent platform to judge decks on. If you're testing bindings, ride your own board. See above."

"Figure out which tent has beer and hamburgers—be there around noon. And also remember that you're getting paid to test snowboards—not a bad life, eh?"



Johan Malkoski
Sales Manager,
C3 Worldwide

DAY 1=BOARDS, DAY 2=BINDINGS

"My strategy for demoing new product is trying all boards one day and all bindings the next. Since a lot of time can be spent waiting in line at the On-Snow Demo, [this] really cuts set-up time and allows for more time riding."



Steve Reaves
Owner, Bird's Eye
Board Shop
Brooklyn, New York

BRING THE RIGHT PEOPLE AND GEAR, TEST ALL THE PRODUCTS

"Always bring a female to demo the women-specific models. Ski shops, bring a snowboarder to try the snowboards. This can be overlooked when booking your group travel. Also, don't forget to pack properly including lotion, lip balm, and sunscreen. The Colorado elevation and dry air will take a crack at your face, fast!"

"I also like to recommend testing out pricepoint models too. You should know how well they ride for all ability levels—your customers!"



Nichole Nemmers
Sales Rep,
Mervin
Manufacturing,
Quiksilver, Sun Bum

Making The Most Of On-Snow Demos Top Retailers And Reps Share Their Secrets

By Jamie Magyar

Heading up to Winter Park for SIA's post-trade show On-Snow Demo and Ski-Ride Fest, it's easy to let the excitement of getting on the hill keep you on your own gear or tried and true carryover product favorites. While being stoked on finally riding after four long days of talking about it is far from a bad thing, heading into the Demo with a fine-tuned strategy of how to most effectively test gear gives you the tools you'll need to make informed buying decisions and get the most out of the experience.

We caught up with some of the industry's most insightful retailers and sales gurus for their tips on how to make the most of their time on snow and ensure that next season's sell-through is made that much better by making some turns with their bros in Winter Park on February 4 and 5.

SELECTIVELY TARGET PRODUCT AND SEEK THE STROKE

"On-snow demos are very important to our buying process, and a lot of retailers we talk to tend to under value them. [At demos], the first thing we do is target brands we are considering bringing in, or dropping, and making sure that they are a priority for testing first. Then, we make a point to test out new models or models we are potentially missing the boat on from the brands we always carry. We try to bring at least a couple of our shop employees so that we get a few different riding styles in the mix. It's usually fairly obvious, based on personal reactions and stoke level, what [product's] making the cut and what isn't."



Sean Robinson
Co-Owner,
Emage Network
Denver, Colorado

DOUBLE CHECK YOUR SPECS

"Make sure the setup is right for you before you head to the lift. It happens every demo, and to even the most experienced tech in a rush, but sometimes a regular rider is set up goofy, or the bindings are set up with the wrong angles or width, or a strap is not tight enough. Make sure you're dialed in proper before you wind up on top of the hill."



Mike Gagliardi
Sales Manager, Never
Summer Snowboards

PLAN YOUR TEST AND TEST YOUR PLAN...FOR THE MOST PART

"You should have a list of what is critical to check out and stick to it. Make notes so you have some kind of memory cutting through the end-of-day PBRs. If there's any time at the

end of the day, check out something not on your list that you've been hearing buzz about or a brand you've been thinking about giving a shot. It's always good to check out something that isn't a shop constant, even if it's not on the buy list. You might find a new stick that ends up being in high demand."

Mike Gagliardi

TRUST YOUR GUT...AND HEAD

"The best tool I have when it comes to demoing gear is my brain—I remember which boards really make an impact. If it doesn't make an impact, I don't buy it. I also try not to be concerned with how well-marketed a board is going to be. Just because it may market well doesn't mean it's a solid board. I think one of the most important things to me actually is just getting up to the mountains for the On-Snow and being able to ride with