



Media Information, 21 April 2010, QBP  
6400 West 105th Street  
Bloomington, MN 55438  
www.qbp.com  
Contact: Jesse Roehl, Marketing Manager  
800-346-0004, ext. 1425  
jroehl@qbp.com

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **QBP Taps Emerging Trend by Offering Camping Equipment to Bike Dealers**

Responding to growing demand, QBP has opened its entire selection of camping products to bike dealers. These items are available immediately for order. QBP account executives servicing key markets across the United States report increased sales to bike dealers for products traditionally associated with backpack camping, including lightweight sleeping pads, cooking kits, water filters and portable stoves.

“Most outdoors enthusiasts participate in multiple outdoor sports: paddling, cycling, climbing, etc. So there is terrific consumer cross-over and bike shops are taking advantage of that,” said Leigh Carter, QBP account executive. She notes that fast-and-light backpacking, which emphasizes lightweight, easy-to-carry and stow camping gear, is being eagerly adopted by cyclists for bike touring, mountain biking, adventure racing and 12 and 24-hour racing. Family-oriented, weekend bike-camping trips on greenways and rails-to-trails corridors are also growing in popularity. Additionally, international bicycle tours and off-road excursions are on the rise.

“Being able to fully serve these customers in one shop is a powerful advantage for these bike dealers,” Carter says. Shops are increasing sales opportunities with their existing customer base and paving the way for new customers.

While it might seem counterintuitive, consumer demand among cyclists for lightweight, portable camping gear continued to grow throughout the recession. Jim Sayer, executive director of Adventure Cycling, offers some insight into the trend.

“In tough times, more people than ever are turning to bicycle travel. It’s a liberating, affordable, and green way to see the country,” Sayer said. “Over the last year, Adventure Cycling has seen a surge in tour sign-ups, web traffic, social media activity, and inquiries about how to travel and camp by bike.”

Catering to the needs of this largely untapped market, some outdoor manufacturers are finding fertile ground for sales in bike shops. Pacific Outdoor Equipment, which produces sleeping pads, waterproof gear, bike bags and other camping products, has experienced rising demand from bike shops.

“We see a huge crossover of customers who both bicycle and participate in traditional backpacking,” said Aaron James, U.S. director of sales for Pacific Outdoor Equipment. “Due to the common interest between these two activities by a common customer, we have seen an increase in demand for outdoor gear from shops that have been traditionally cycling only.” He adds that bicycle manufacturers are diversifying their product lines to include accessories, gear and apparel that “support the cycling lifestyle and not just the sport.”



Salsa Cycles, a small bike manufacturer focused on the adventure bicycle niche—including extended touring and off-road camping trips—is a case in point. The brand, which is owned by QBP, is realizing enormous success with products like the Fargo, an adventure touring mountain bike.

“Just as traditional cross-country racing has evolved into longer, ultra-style 24-hour and 100-mile races, we believe mountain biking will evolve into riding greater distances for recreation,” said Mike Riemer, Salsa marketing manager. “The bikes will let people go further into the backcountry necessitating other camping and safety equipment. We are working hard to help lead the way.”

The Katadyn Group, a Swiss company that manufactures Katadyn water filters and Optimus camping stoves, reports dramatic increases in sales to bike shops and online bike dealers across the U.S. for 2008 and 2009.

“We attribute much of that to an increase in tent camping and overnight bike trips,” said Shawn Hostetter, vice president of sales for Katadyn North America. “Even in a challenging economy, our products are in high demand. We think consumers must be spending less on extravagant overseas trips and spending more nights in tents staying closer to home. This is true for both bikers and hikers.”

Steve Flagg, president of QBP, believes the product lines for biking and adventure travel, including bike camping, will continue to increase well into the future. He said rising gas prices and growing public awareness about environmental and personal health issues make the bicycle an increasingly attractive vehicle for commuting, touring, camping and other forms of transportation that traditionally utilize automobiles.

“This trend provides independent bike dealers with an intriguing opportunity to increase sales by capitalizing on a niche category,” said Flagg.

#### **About QBP**

Based in Bloomington, MN, QBP is a leading distributor to the cycling industry. Carrying more than 30,000 SKUs from 400 vendors, QBP offers domestic and international retailers a wide array of products and services including a 1,600-page catalog; an online ordering system; a merchandising and store-design program; a renowned custom-wheel service; a specialty bike-building program and more. The company owns four bike brands including All-City, Civia, Salsa Cycles and Surly. QBP is also the exclusive U.S. distributor of Ridley, a Belgian manufacturer of road, mountain and cyclocross bikes. Through its Q-Active division, the company distributes products to independent ski, run and outdoor retailers. A strong proponent of environmental business practices, QBP operates from a Gold-level LEED-certified distribution center and office complex and is building another LEED Gold facility in Ogden, Utah. For more information, please contact Jesse Roehl, marketing manager at 1-800-346-0004, Ext. 1425; email [jroehl@qbp.com](mailto:jroehl@qbp.com) or visit: [www.qbp.com](http://www.qbp.com).