



We Provide the Ride

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MEDIA RELEASE

Frostbike '08 Defies Wind Chills as Bike Industry Heats Up

Owners and staff from 349 bike shops and 155 vendors converged on this wind-chilled Minneapolis suburb from February 15 – 17th to attend Frostbike, an annual bike industry conference. Hosted by QBP at its sprawling distribution center and office complex, the event's size and success testify to the growing importance of bicycles in America's economy and culture. Frostbike has evolved from simple open house held 20 years ago into a premiere forum offering educational seminars, sophisticated product displays and a warm dose of North Woods hospitality.

Inside the company's modern facility, hundreds of bike dealers roamed carpeted aisles, peering at vendor booths brimming with high-tech gadgets, apparel, accessories, wheels, shocks, socks, nutritional bars and drinks—in brief, anything people might use or consume while biking.

Though Frostbike projects the carefree ambiance of a summer carnival, its underlying intent is all business. Even as the bike industry experiences record growth, there is a sense of urgency among independent dealers. Competition from well-financed big-box stores has never been greater. Many come to Frostbike looking for an edge, whether that means tightening wrenching skills at a technical seminar or learning more efficient ways to manage the books. Although the venue has grown exponentially over the years, Frostbike remains true to its mission of providing a relaxed forum for engaging conversations.

“Our shop is all about relationships,” said Mike Swafford, purchasing and inventory manager at Wheat Ridge Cyclery in Colorado. “Frostbike allows us the chance to further those relationships; both business and personal.” Swafford, who has attended Frostbike every year since its inception, values the chance to network with vendors and other dealers and places a premium on the educational opportunities: “It provides our staff with the opportunity to take part in seminars that relate to their jobs, and hopefully create a higher level of thinking in how it relates to their day-to-day work.”

Because relationships form the core of the Frostbike ethos, QBP deliberately keeps the scale relatively small and intimate. For vendors, this brings a much-needed opportunity to step outside the traditional sales-oriented format of venues like Interbike. Face-to-face conversation with dealers brings them something of inestimable value—feedback.



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“We get valuable information about the style, form, function and technical quality of our components—both pro and con,” said Charles Fernandez, marketing and promotion manager for Profile Racing, a Florida-based manufacturer of BMX parts and components. “Frostbike works because of the informal and relaxed relationships that develop between customers and vendors.”

While the ongoing success of Frostbike can be attributed to many things, from organizational excellence to aesthetic innovation, one of the key factors is the ability of the event’s organizers to listen. “We listen to our vendors and dealers about what did and didn’t work for them. Then we make incremental improvements, year after year,” said Mike Lind, QBP purchasing and inventory director. “That’s how we continue to refine and deliver a high-value event to our business partners.”

About QBP

Based in Bloomington, MN, QBP is a leading distributor to the cycling industry. QBP offers domestic and international retailers a wide array of products and services including a 1,500-page catalog, a robust online ordering system, a renowned custom wheel service, a specialty bike-building program and more. QBP continues to be a vigorous advocate for the cycling industry. For more information, please contact Jo Wright, director of marketing at 952 -941-9391, or visit: www.QBP.com.