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# State of Retail

## How Are Inventory Levels Heading Into The Summer Season?



### 1 Bend, Oregon

**Beverly Lucas, co-owner, Bend Bike 'n Sport**—The weather here has made it a slow start to the season, so they are somewhat higher than we would like. That said, many manufacturers are out of some of their key products. We significantly increased our inventory levels over last year in anticipation of a good season, so we've sat on a lot of bikes over a very long winter, but at least we have them in stock now that the sun is out.

### 2 Bettendorf, Iowa

**Bruce Grell, owner, Healthy Habits**—Our inventory levels are good at all price levels. We are stocking less depth and counting on suppliers to have adequate replacement stock and so far, so good. Our suppliers are getting low, but that's a good thing this time of year, and should mean less closeouts going into 2009.

### 3 Grapevine, Texas

**Clarence Muller, co-owner, Mad Duck Adventure Sports**—Our inventory levels have been sufficient this season, with a few exceptions but nothing out of the norm. It also seems that some suppliers have limited their color options this season to improve availability.

### 4 Solon, Ohio

**Dan Sirkin, owner, Solon Bicycle**—They seem to be better than prior years, but still a little lower than we'd like to see. It still seems crazy that every year our suppliers run out of bestselling models right when summer kicks in. If model years changed over around September, then we would be much less likely to face these supply problems.

### 5 Tampa, Florida

**Brian Eckman, owner, Carrollwood Bicycle Emporium**—Inventory levels are always tricky during the middle of summer when some of the current year models start going out of stock, and the new models aren't fully released yet. We do our best to stock up when we can on items that we know will become scarce and jump on the new stock as soon as it hits. A few weeks every summer people want to buy bikes you can't get.

### 6 Ladera Ranch, California

**Jeff Davis, owner, Ladera Cyclery**—We have cut our inventory dramatically since last year. We ended up sitting on a lot of product going into the off season of 2007, so this year we decided to keep less on hand and special order more bikes.

### 7 Cary, North Carolina

**Kevin Coggins, owner, The Spin Cycle**—We seem to have the proper supply of bikes right now. Many '09 models are available and we have only needed two so far. We are a little low on road bikes by design, but I am wondering if I am too low. The current economy dictates we be as lean as possible on inventory.

### 8 St. George, Utah

**Mark McLaughlin, owner, Bicycles Unlimited**—Our inventory levels are down slightly. Our best quarters are spring and fall. July and August are very hot here and they are slower months. I do plan to bring in extra '08s due to the reported '09 price increases. We plan on selling the '08s at full price, which should be a bargain for our customers.

### 9 Denver, Colorado

**Richard Hodge, owner, Cycle Analyst**—Our in-store inventory is still holding up, but we are starting to experience sell-through with several of the more popular models and outages from our vendors across the board. So far we have lost few sales, however, that will no doubt increase in the coming weeks. I haven't seen this much excitement in buying since the boom of the late '60s and early '70s.

### 10 Little Rock, Arkansas

**Richard Machycek, owner, Arkansas Cycling and Fitness**—I try to keep a handle on inventory by looking every other day or so and ordering 15 to 25 bikes often rather than buying large quantities at once. Pressure by vendors pushing preseason orders is about the quickest way a shop can get into trouble with inventory levels.



# Retail Briefs

## Jax Bicycle Center Grows to Seven Locations

MISSION VIEJO, CA—Dave Hanson, owner of Southern California's Jax Bicycle Center stores, has purchased Cycle Werks in Mission Viejo and will turn the shop into a Trek concept store. Hanson closed the deal on June 11, adding a seventh store to the Jax chain, which also has locations in Claremont, Irvine, Huntington Beach, Fullerton, Long Beach and Yorba Linda. Hanson said the company also has plans to build an eighth location from the ground up. The Mission Viejo Cycle Werks will take on the Jax name and undergo a facelift to match the chain's other stores. The Southern Orange County location allows Jax to stay competitive in the Orange County market, Hanson said. "We've had competitors move north on us and here we were, we weren't moving south," he said. Rock N' Road Cyclery, a Specialized dealer, has two locations in Northern Orange County and two in Southern Orange County. Cycle Werks has two remaining Orange County locations.

## Florida Shop Reopens Four Years After Storm

PORT CHARLOTTE, FL—After Hurricane Charley destroyed Gerard and Kim Campanella's Bicycle Center in August 2004, they set up tents in their parking lot and ran the shop out of shipping containers. That was only supposed to be a temporary setup, but it took nearly four years until the Bicycle Center was back in a permanent building. "It was a miracle we even reopened because the odds were so stacked against us," Kim Campanella said. After the hurricane hit, the Campanellas faced a series of issues, including a landlord who delayed rebuilding their store for two years, then called off the project, an unreliable contractor who walked out on the job and threats of foreclosure from the bank. The entire time they kept the shop running outside without electricity in temperatures that reached the 90s during the summer. Bikes were stored in shipping containers, while apparel was stuffed into plastic containers. Finally, last October, construction was completed on a new 6,000-square-foot building, owned by the Campanellas, thanks to a boost from Trek, which offered guidance, encouragement and help designing the new shop. "There was a time we had given up on ourselves. Trek never did. They continued to believe in us and our ability to rebuild our lives and our business. Business has exceeded our expectations. Even though we were outside for more than three-and-a-half years, our first month surpassed what we did the last October we were inside," Kim said.



## Over the Edge Sports Opens Two Franchises

FRUITA, CO—Over the Edge Sports opened two new bike shops this spring—one in Hurricane, Utah, and the second in Melrose, South Australia, both small towns near up-and-coming mountain biking areas. Troy Rarick, who founded



Over the Edge in Fruita, Colorado, in 1995, selected the new locations for their proximity to trails that are still relatively undiscovered, staying inline with Over the Edge's philosophy to draw people to new mountain biking destinations. The shops are franchises owned by locals who know the trails and the scene in each place. Over the Edge Hurricane is owned by Quentin and DJ Morrisette, while

the Australian shop is owned by Alastair Smart and Richard Bruce. Both shops carry the same brands as the Fruita shop including Ibis, Knolly, Pivot, Santa Cruz, Turner, Magura, DT Swiss and Ergon. The Melrose shop is also the Australian importer for Ergon. Rarick said he's open to expanding the Over the Edge franchise in the future. "I'm not in any great hurry to look for too many things too fast. I think the right things reveal themselves at the right time," he said.

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