

Retail Spotlight

Service Pays the Rent at Vecchio's

BY RAY KEENER

Vecchio's Bicicletteria opened in 2000 at Pearl and 19th Streets in Boulder, Colorado. Co-owners Sean Bragstad and Peter Chisholm shared a concept that they thought would work in Boulder.

"Our basic idea was expert repair and custom wheels," Chisholm said. "All three of us [including employee Jim Potter] had worked at other shops and had a following."

The concept clicked right from the start. In a 1,000-square-foot shop with an old world feel, Vecchio's did 85 percent of its gross sales in labor and service parts in the early years.

It wasn't long before Vecchio's customers wanted to buy bikes. So the store began fitting and assembling complete bikes from Waterford, Gunnar, Moots and Blue.



Peter Chisholm

In 2008, Vecchio's still did 60 percent of its gross sales (approaching \$1 million) in labor and service parts. The store sells about 90 bikes a year at an average price of \$3,000.

Vecchio's is also taking advantage of online purchases in an unusual way. The store encourages customers who buy their gruppos online to have

the shop assemble their bike for \$250.

"A customer buys a Super Record group from Germany for \$1,100, we say 'good for you,'" Chisholm said. "Take the money you saved on the parts and put it into a correct assembly."

Can the concept work in other markets? "We're lucky we're in Boulder," Chisholm said. "Our affluent clientele is not affected much by the economy. Plus, there's a strong cycling community here that appreciates quality."