

Retail Spotlight

Orange Peel Uses Multi-Tier Approach

BY RAY KEENER

How many bike shops share a building with a bike supplier, have an average selling price of almost \$3,000, and a name that doesn't remotely refer to bicycles? One: Orange Peel in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

Owner Brock Webster started out 10 years ago as a repair-only shop in the back alley below Honey Stinger's offices. When a competitor went under in 2004, he moved into their vacated space and went full-range.

Well, more like multi-range. Orange Peel uses a unique multi-tier sales approach that works in this ski town with a mix of affluent enthusiasts, ex-Olympians and regular folks.

"We have three levels of bikes," explained buyer and salesman Essam Welch. "The \$500 good-enough-to-start mountain bike, then we go up to

the \$2,500 to \$3,200 range, then up to the \$4,800-plus pick-your-parts-and-frame custom package.



"This doesn't suit every rider, but we have to make choices with our small space [1,200 square feet] and limited sales base [under \$1 million]," Webster said. "Our customers have

learned to trust us,

and our vendors have learned not to put pressure on us.

"You don't have to spend \$8,000 to get what you want," Webster tells his customers. "You can have a \$2,800 BMC mountain bike with Shimano SLX parts, pick your wheels and tires, and we custom-fit the stem and cut the fork to match."

What brands does he rely on? "Our brands change every year," Webster said. "Essam is great at sniffing out the best values. This approach may not work for everyone, but it does for us."