

Retail Spotlight

Chris Brown Thinks Outside the Box

BY RAY KEENER

Chris Brown of Brown's Cycles in Grand Junction, Colorado, believes in making things happen. To drive Christmas traffic, he set up an ice skating rink in front of his store in December and offered \$5 skate rentals.

"We wanted to create a 'Rockefeller Plaza' feel during the holidays," Brown said.

Brown spent \$4,500 on the rink, recouped some of the cost from local sponsors, and saw a sales increase for the month. "Plus, you've got to give back to the community a couple times a year. It's not all about money," he added.

Another one of Brown's ventures is the Grand Junction Institute of Bicycle Mechanics. "We're opening a repair school to train and find employees for our shop and the other shops in town," Brown said.



An outdoor ice skating rink drew holiday traffic into Brown's Cycles.

Brown also is inventing a new way to ride a bike. "We started doing what we call 'Free Wheeling.' We took the brakes off our mountain bikes to ride the tamer trails and try to stay on," Brown said, chuckling.

"Last summer our fixie club rented out the local go-cart track for some criterium racing. It was an excellent venue: wide track, banked, twisty

turns, clean surface, night lights, bleachers, bathrooms, snack bar, music, the whole package.

"Pedaling around the mall in a clockwise direction early in the morning makes a great crit course as well," Brown added. "There are plenty of places to ride, you just have to look around your community and use your imagination."

Go to browncycles.com for more inspiration from the prolific Chris Brown.