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Outdoor Retailer - 2012 Summer Market Planning Guide

Gear Trends: Packed for Profit

Featuring: SS13 Women's Packs

Monthly Traffic: 11,100



SNEWS packs

Gear Trends

Packed for profit

Manufacturers look to suspension, breathability, women's specific to cinch up sales.

BY PETER KRAY

➔ More performance features are coming to smaller volume packs, even as larger models embrace designs that are cleaner and simpler.

Pack designers and manufacturers are responding to the continuing shift in demand from outdoor consumers toward daily and shorter multi-day adventures versus weeklong backpacking trips. Lighter tents, sleeping bags and stoves also are helping reduce longer multi-day pack sizes.

Consumers still want performance, though, so expect to see more beefed up medium- and small-sized packs with the latest suspension and breathability advances.

On example is at Black Diamond, where Category Director Nathan Kuder told us he wants to get as many people into the comparison suspension technology as possible — from daypacks all the way down to summit packs. "It may not be the biggest news in pack-

age," he said of the active suspension technology, "but I think it could be in the next three to five years."

"Women's pack sales growth is running well beyond overall market growth right now, so focusing on our women's product is a solid move," said Erik Hamerschlag, Osprey product line manager, who added that along with new women's packs, women's fit gets special attention throughout his line this year.

