

GoPro changes how people document their lives

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – GoPro is a storyteller. No words needed. Sometimes not even sound is necessary. It's all about motion evoking and provoking emotion.

The little silver cameras are changing the way people participate in sports, view their lives and socialize with family and friends. It's impossible to visit a Tahoe ski resort without seeing them used as a helmet-cam. And now snowboarders are putting them at the end of what looks like a ski pole, but is more like a tripod, to allow for more than helmet angles.

There's even an app people can use to see what the camera is seeing so the person knows if they would want to adjust the camera wherever it's mounted.



GoPro Marketing Vice President Paul Crandell speaks Feb. 28 at Harveys during Tahoe Snowcial. Photo/Kathryn Reed

GoPro founder Nick Woodman is a 36-year-old billionaire. The

humble beginnings of the company started somewhat by accident. Woodman wanted to document his buddies catching waves so he mounted a disposable camera to a surf leash. That led to what consumers know today as GoPro.

“GoPro enables people to self-document moments during their favorite activities,” Paul Crandell said.

Crandell, vice president of marketing for GoPro, spoke Feb. 28 on the first full day of the four-day Tahoe Snowcial confab at Harveys.

The fifth annual South Shore event sponsored by Heavenly Mountain Resort, and Harrah’s and Harveys Lake Tahoe is designed to bring together technology, social media and snowsports enthusiasts who are looking to increase their knowledge base and connect with other brands in the digital world.

“We’ve democratized content capture. We want to capture content sharing,” Crandell said. That is the company’s next goal. What that will look like Crandell would not divulge. But he did say there is enough innovation at the San Mateo-based company to keep their product fresh for the next three to four years.

Crandell, who came to GoPro from Red Bull, said what the two companies have in common is a focus on athletes and passion for the outdoor lifestyle.

“We built the brand through athletes. It took a lot of relationship building and working with these athletes. That’s the commonality between Red Bull and GoPro,” Crandell said. He said Red Bull’s approach was to be a sponsor to anything a bank wouldn’t. The energy drink company has risen to the top of its industry in short order.

Much of the video Crandell showed involved the use of more than one GoPro camera. This ensures not just your friends are

in the final product, but so are you. It also allows for more angles, more footage – and more editing at the end of the day.

“We are becoming a media company by default,” Crandell said.

GoPro sends video press releases that media outlets are using in newscasts.

Five years ago companies were creating social network teams. Now they are putting together video teams to share their story. And GoPro, naturally, wants the story told with their product.

Crandell had a camera strapped to his chest while he was on the stage. The red light was a clear indicator everyone in the audience was being filmed. While it would be boring to watch the group taking notes on their various devices, it showed that the GoPro camera can be a business tool beyond action sports.