

How ski retailers have evolved in the digital age

By Devon O'Neil, Powder

Ever since the traditional ski-shop business model—buy a lot of product and hope to sell it for twice as much—ran into the e-commerce meat grinder a decade ago, it has only gotten tougher for shops to exist, never mind thrive.

According to SnowSports Industries America, consumers bought nearly \$1 billion worth of snow sports equipment online last winter, up more than 20 percent from four years ago. It is probably not a coincidence that more than 1,300 snow sports retailers—or about 20 percent of the total—have closed in the past six years.

In addition, direct-to-consumer sales have become more widespread by manufacturers, many of which have opened their own retail stores in ski towns.

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