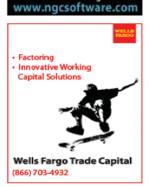






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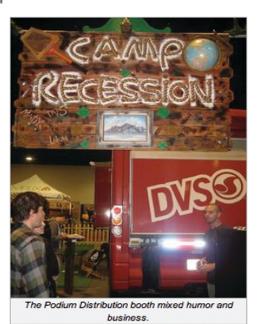


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ASR Report: Smaller, but doing business

January 23, 2009 09:21 AM



Here's a quick update on the scene at ASR.

As expected, there are definitely fewer brands and retailers at the show. The overall space the show occupies at the San Diego Convention Center is relatively small compared to previous January events, and many brands have smaller booths than usual. It's a little strange to have Hurley and Quiksilver absent (a large skate ramp is in the space usually occupied by Quiksilver), and brands such as Reef and Rip Curl upstairs in meeting rooms. I did see key members of the Quiksilver sales team at the show meeting with an account, however.

We're staying at the Omni, which usually has ASR attendees clogging the bar, lobby and elevators. Not so this time around.

While the show is definitely smaller, there's still lots of energy and conversation in the aisles. We saw lots of retailers, including executives at Sun Diego, Tilly's, Macy's and ZJ Boarding House, and the booths I went to yesterday were pretty busy. DC Shoes has five meeting rooms upstairs, including an "at once" inventory room, and most DC stations were full in several of the rooms that I saw. Similar to Surf Expo, several people I spoke to said they were expecting the show to be a lot worse, and that they were pleased that many retailers were there to do

Dave Bock, owner of Earthpack, which sells recycled paper bags and products to retailers, told us the visitors to his booth are intent on doing business, and although the overall traffic is down, the quality of visitors is up.

Body Glove spokeswoman Sarah Lalau said the company saw strong orders at Surf Expo and the trend was continuing at ASR. That built on December sales that were higher than the year before.

We'll have more in-depth stories and interviews with top brand executives from both ASR and Surf Expo starting Monday.



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