



Channel Mastery Podcast, Episode #80: Kristin Carpenter-Ogden Interviews
Nick Sargent, of Snowsports Industries of America

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- Kristin: [03:50](#) Welcome everybody to another episode of the Channel Mastery podcast. I have a very important guest today. Nick Sargent, welcome to the show. You are the President of Snowsports Industries of America and we are so excited to host you here today. Welcome.
- Nick Sargent: [04:04](#) Thanks, Kristin. Great to be here. Really, really honored to be on your program. I've listened to it quite a bit. Fun to be here so thank you.
- Kristin: [04:15](#) Oh thanks. That's awesome to hear. So here we are in March of 2019. We've gotten through I think, this must be probably the best winter you've had since you've been in the chair, almost four years. Would you agree?
- Nick Sargent: [04:27](#) Absolutely. There is snow coast to coast. There is snow globally. We haven't had a winter, our industry hasn't had a winter this strong in at least a decade. There's always snow in Europe, there's snow in Asia, there's no snow in North America or vice versa. The fact that we have snow globally is great for our business. Really a good kickstart where our business needs to be with the growth and the change that we're experiencing.
- Kristin: [05:05](#) All right, and that's what we're going to get into today. I'm so excited to have you on the program. I've wanted to host you for a while now. Probably, I mean the podcast is going to be two years old in June, so probably since I literally started the podcast. Because you've done some very disruptive, progressive

things with the Snowsports Industry of America, which I'm going to call SIA for the rest of the show here.

- Kristin: [05:22](#) Let's start by talking about, I actually have a quote from an article that ran in Ski News in January of this year. You said that you were, "excited to have the entire North American outdoor community under one roof," referring to the Snow Show this year because obviously in, I believe it was 2017, you brokered the sale of SIA's trade show to Emerald. Outdoor Retailer and SIA now have a show conjoined in January, which has been happening for a couple years now. But I loved that quote because essentially the end consumer has no care and no idea that these trade shows are in different markets, or in different halls rather in different times and days. I love that quote because you're basically like, "Hey, everybody's together because we're here to serve that end consumer who doesn't even know that we've been siloed."
- Kristin: [06:09](#) Do you have any takes now that we have two shows under our belt around like expectations or things you were hoping to see that may be starting to come to fruition around that conjoined show?
- Nick Sargent: [06:23](#) Yeah, it was a heavy lift. When I took this role on just a little under four years ago I couldn't make ends meet on the single winter sport trade show. I couldn't wrap my hands around why we were so siloed. I had been to Outdoor Retailer a number of times. I had been to SIA a lot of times, having been in this industry for 25 years. The same thought kept occurring to me. We really need to make a change here. We need to put these two industries together. The obvious anchor was outdoor and Winter's outdoor, Outdoor's outdoor. We're all playing in the same sandbox.
- Nick Sargent: [07:20](#) The shows were together 30 years earlier. For whatever reasons, Outdoor and Winter separated to make room for Snowboard when Snowboard started to grow in their respective space. Outdoor went to Nevada and did their own show and started to build their own following. Which was cool, but it really put a line in the sand and a division. Like I said, I couldn't make ends meet of the budget that we had at SIA specifically as I was looking at the amount of consolidation that this industry has experienced in the last 10 years. We've got resorts buying resorts. We've got groups buying resorts. We've got retailers buying each other. We've got manufacturers buying each other. The industry isn't getting any bigger, but the consolidation was starting to have a serious effect on our business.
- Nick Sargent: [08:29](#) As I dug deeper into it I was seeing a lot of winter sport brands that were operating in counter-seasonal spaces: footwear,

apparel, bags, packs, buying camping gear, baseball gear, fishing gear, paintball gear, so on and so forth. It didn't take a rocket scientist to figure this out but it just took someone to take a vision and really run with it. That's where when I took this job the opportunity that I saw was to consolidate and really put everything under one roof.

- Nick Sargent: [09:11](#) So here we are, it'll be two years in ... when did we close that deal?
- Kristin: [09:18](#) I think it was April?
- Nick Sargent: [09:18](#) I think the middle of June.
- Kristin: [09:18](#) Oh, June, okay.
- Nick Sargent: [09:21](#) June. Middle of June a couple of years ago. We've had two shows under our belt. The first show being January '18, which was a massive consolidated show. My expectations were met the moment I walked in the door and I saw how full the Denver Convention Center was. I saw the number of people. I saw the buyers. And most importantly, I saw the smiles and the excitement. You could feel the energy in the building. From a guy who, myself and my small team who did the deal, we all kind of gave each other a little fist pump like, "Hey, we did it. That was awesome." Darrell Denny from Emerald and Outdoor Retailers, we knew what we had done. We knew it was the right thing to do.
- Nick Sargent: [10:11](#) Fast forward a year to this January, the show was a little smaller. Outdoor Retailer has launched a November show. You saw a lot of outdoor brands and a few winter sport brands try that show to see if it was going to work for them. There's this huge debate on order cycles and timing and all that stuff. It made a lot of sense to a lot of apparel brands to try that November show. So when they got to January, some of those brands were not showing because they had been at the November show. But it really felt like we had taken the industry and really weeded out some of the soft good brands. You had your true outdoor winter brands that were there at the show.
- Nick Sargent: [11:14](#) Again, that the vibe was equally as good. The smiles were ear to ear. People were really excited about that show. Unlike shows that I've been to where you go, if it's a three or four day show, that last day is really slow. The first two days are really where all the activity's happening. The third day was just off the charts. I mean people were doing business bell to bell. So I thought that was great. It really proves that one, we belong together, Outdoor and Winter. It really proves that our trade show is

better together. Then more importantly, it really exemplifies that change is good. Our world is changing around us. Other industries in our space are changing. This change was really good and, I feel, beneficial to the future of our industry.

- Kristin: [12:24](#) I whole-heartedly agree with you. I have to say you now are a change agent for us and you have to keep driving that. Because ultimately, a lot of the things you touched on, I want to just bring a couple points up for clarification or to get more of your opinion on it. Let's talk about the order cycle. Trade shows traditionally have provided pre-seasons and kind of the kickoff around an 18-month or even longer product cycle with the technical products that are made in outdoor and winter sports, right?
- Nick Sargent: [12:52](#) That's right, yeah.
- Kristin: [12:52](#) You have such an extensive global background, obviously, 12 years at Burton. You've been I think in probably a lot of factories and seen this process from every side. What do you think is going to happen in the next year or so in terms of manufacturing and timing and shipping? Because ultimately that closed trade show, like B2B environment, is almost a little bit of an oddity today if you were to look at all business, because consumers are wanting that immediate gratification. They don't want to see something. Because everybody's reporting from the floor in the trade show.
- Kristin: [13:28](#) No matter what we want to do, I mean as a PR professional with an agency we're not just doing that is making it possible for media and influencers to do that. Yet there's still a big lag between the time that that product's seen and when consumers get it. I don't know if there are a lot of other points in their life as a consumer that they have that going on. But what's your take on that in terms of like the role of the trade show, how it kind of kickstarts or is the actual flywheel of production, marketing, et cetera in our spaces? And do you think that's consolidating? Do you think that's going to be changing at all?
- Nick Sargent: [13:59](#) Man, that's a loaded-
- Kristin: [14:02](#) I know and PS-
- Nick Sargent: [14:05](#) A loaded couple of questions but-
- Kristin: [14:06](#) It is and I'm-
- Nick Sargent: [14:09](#) I'm going to tackle it to the best of my ability.

Kristin: [14:11](#) Okay, thanks.

Nick Sargent: [14:14](#) There's a couple of things here. One is, let's just talk about manufacturing timelines. What a lot of people don't understand is that, and I'm just going to focus on Winter here because that's obviously where a lot of my knowledge and experience is. So we have, in Winter you've got hard goods, you've got soft goods, you've got accessories, so on and so forth. You've got a ton of different materials. You've got products that range from 500 to \$2000. In the hard good space you've got products that range in soft goods from price point 169 up to almost \$5000. There's a lot of intricacy that goes into the manufacturing of these products.

Nick Sargent: [15:03](#) You have historical winter sport brands who own their factories in Europe. The product is made on a production calendar. A North American product is ordered in February, March, April. Those orders are submitted. That product is built in that June, July, August timeframe for delivery in August, September, October. Most of that comes in in August, September. Then you have the rest of the world. So if you figure out just the North American market, you still have the European market, which is 13 to 15 individual countries who are going through the same thing that we're going through here in the US and North America. They're collecting orders from their retailers. They're submitting them to the factory. It's like a ... there's an annual calendarization. The Swiss skis are ordered in ... March, April. Those orders are submitted. That product is made and it's delivered in October, November.

Nick Sargent: [16:21](#) Add that up just around the European countries. Then throw in Asia, then throw in Scandinavia, then throw in Eastern European countries including Russia. Then include in the Tasmanian region, Australia, New Zealand. Then you have to throw in South America. These factories are moving 12 months a year and building product and delivering at different timelines. So there's this historical production calendar that's put in place. So when we talk about adjusting manufacturing to deliver product later, so a retailer will say, "I'm going to order my product April. I don't want it in August and September. I want it in October, November." Now you've got to change the whole production cycle.

Kristin: [17:14](#) Right.

Nick Sargent: [17:15](#) And that's not going to happen.

Kristin: [17:18](#) Right.

Nick Sargent: [17:19](#) For reasons that aren't clear to me but there's a historical calendar that's been in place for a lot longer than I've been around and they're not willing to change.

Kristin: [17:27](#) Right.

Nick Sargent: [17:31](#) You then look at more soft goods and accessory product, which is made in Asia. This is made, these products are made primarily in China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, other areas around the world. You show your product, you get your orders, then you submit those orders to the factories in Asia. Again, there's a time cycle. There's a timeline where they fit you in to their production cycle. You have to hit minimums. You have to hit a certain number of material made to keep your pricing down to enhance your margins, as well as to cover off your cost of goods to manufacture, transport, et cetera, et cetera. So if you delay those orders, it's only going to cost you more money to build it. Then [inaudible 00:18:32] margin you make, so on and so forth. It's this cycle that's really, really hard to break.

Kristin: [18:40](#) Yes.

Nick Sargent: [18:41](#) So when people say to me, "Oh, the trade show needs to be in early, early January," or, "The trade show needs to be in November," it's not as easy as saying, "Okay, sure, yeah. We're going to move this trade show because it makes a lot of sense because we're going to get ahead of our production." That's not the case.

Kristin: [19:05](#) Yeah.

Nick Sargent: [19:05](#) Here in North America we have these other issues, which are called holidays. The one that really screws us up is Thanksgiving. That's really the unofficial start of winter here in North America. As opposed to Europe where Christmas is really the start of the winter season.

Kristin: [19:26](#) Right.

Nick Sargent: [19:27](#) So that really kicks off after Thanksgiving. It bleeds before Thanksgiving too. There's like 35 showings before Thanksgiving and then there's like another 35 after Thanksgiving before Christmas. Meanwhile you have retailers who are trying to staff up, train, get the new product on the floor, and you're getting pulled out of their stores. You got to look at [inaudible 00:19:49] product.

Kristin: [19:50](#) Right.

Nick Sargent: [19:52](#) Then you have Christmas. Then you have New Years. Then you have Martin Luther King. Then you have President's. This whole cycle that we are in is very challenging, especially when you look at the calendar and think the entire winter season is really arguably between 12, 16, 20 weeks. The resort, the retailer, the manufacturer, the rep, they're all trying to make their annual earnings in that time.

Kristin: [20:29](#) I think that explanation is really important.

Nick Sargent: [20:30](#) It's complicated.

Kristin: [20:31](#) This length [crosstalk 00:20:31] is really important because ultimately, we can read articles all day long. We can talk around the water cooler, which as you know as well as I do, a lot of our industry, we do that. We sit around and watch what's going to happen and then we make our decisions in our own businesses in our markets.

Nick Sargent: [20:47](#) That's right.

Kristin: [20:48](#) [crosstalk 00:20:48] forever. But what you just explained we can't read in an article. This is actually great to hear it from you. To hear somebody who's been on the marketing and brand and sales side in-house as well as now running this organization. We're doing the best we can. This is specialized product. This podcast is for specialty businesses. That's literally like one of the things that I cover often is threats from direct manufacturers like Amazon producing product that they can make so quickly and figure out demand and whatnot.

Kristin: [21:17](#) We have to really hold up our end of the bargain, I think, in our channels to do the job to sell this specialized high-tech product. That's really what's going to, I think, insulate our businesses. Let's not focus so much on the order cycles or the dates that the trade shows fall on. Let's really focus on what our opportunity is in the specialty channel. Would you agree?

Nick Sargent: [21:40](#) Absolutely. That's where the bulk of the business is happening. That's where these stores are the centerpiece of any winter community. That's where you go to see the new stuff. Everyone has their friends at the specialty retailers. They're comfortable. They can talk gear, they can try it on. They can go get a problem fixed. They can get new gear. That is the real engine of our industry. We have to preserve specialty. There's a lot of competitive angles out there, internet being the one. How many times do you go into a store or I go into a store and you look at something, then you leave and you get on your phone and you try to see if you can find it somewhere cheaper.

Nick Sargent: [22:33](#) I mean that is a real threat to that specialty retailer. We're working on a way to try to combat that and insulate those specialty retailers from the Amazons of the world. The Amazons of the world, they're not the bad guy. That's just another opportunity, an option. But we have to train our consumer to really understand the benefits that a specialty retailer provides and that Amazon does not.

Kristin: [23:03](#) Absolutely. I think that's a big focus of the show here. I know you've listened to some episodes and we definitely touch on that. But having somebody like you in the role that you're in, let me just ask a question here because you just teed it up perfectly. So the SIA membership, we all have opinions. We're inherently a group that can at odds with one another. Retailers, brands, reps, resorts, the marketing people, our community, the athletes, the influencers, the media, they all have very visible opinions. Oftentimes we're all in the same room with each other or building with each other. We have this changing landscape with retail, with resorts, with consolidation. How do you keep the membership running and gunning toward the future growth goals that you've set out for SIA?

Nick Sargent: [23:52](#) It's not easy. I'm going to be honest. It really isn't easy. You hit the keyword that makes my world challenging, opinions. I get more opinions than I get solutions.

Kristin: [24:08](#) I bet.

Nick Sargent: [24:08](#) When I first started, I spent a good part of my first year exploring and discussing and more important, listening. I called it the Listening Campaign. People were getting kind of sick of the Listening Campaign, like, "Oh yeah, I want to hear your thoughts." You've been doing more listening than talking. I felt that was necessary for a number of reasons. One was it didn't make a lot of sense for me to come out of the box and start making some huge changes. Albeit I did eventually, out of the box that wasn't the way that I worked.

Nick Sargent: [24:54](#) Secondly, I really wanted to hear from all constituents, retailers, reps, resorts, manufacturers, retired, current, teachers. I wanted to understand where this industry had opportunity, where there was weakness, threat. I really did a SWOT analysis. I still do these all the time to really understand whatever issue I'm trying to tackle. One thing that was apparent, of all the opinions there were very few solutions. The only consistent solution that I had heard was, "If you move the trade show back to March, back to Vegas, we're all going to win." My answer to that was, "Hey, I want to be 16 again too, but that's not reality."

Kristin: [25:52](#) Awesome.

Nick Sargent: [25:54](#) The world has changed. I have changed. We have to change. Again, change is good. How do I work with all these segments and how do I keep SIA on the forefront? We constantly look for solutions. We just spent most of last week in our planning for next year. I don't like status quo. I like to keep moving and progressing and evolving. We have to do that as an organization for our industry for us to keep our constituents consumed, interested, and moving in the right direction.

Nick Sargent: [26:47](#) So coming up with solutions. Again, consolidating the trade show was one of them. Updating our research was another one. Moving our organization to Park City from McLean, Virginia was another one. Changing our employee base, not that we had bad employees, but again, to be successful you have to continue to change your employees and look for ways to bring in talented individuals that are going to challenge the organization, that's going to challenge management and challenge the industry. I really wanted to bring in people that had experience in the digital space, in the social space, in the analytic space, and most importantly, in the econ space.

Kristin: [27:33](#) Yep.

Nick Sargent: [27:34](#) We are continuing to reinvent ourself. We are continuing to add different member benefits that provide solution for a 21st century business, not a 20th century business. In some cases, we're really looking as far as the 22nd century. Granted that's a long way a way. We're not going to be here for that. But we are positioning ourselves for that type of incremental growth, for the next group of people that come in and run this organization.

Kristin: [28:08](#) I think that's awesome.

Nick Sargent: [28:11](#) That's where we are looking right now. Again, we get stuck. We get stuck looking in the rear view mirror constantly. I hear that, that's probably the most consistent message that I hear. We have to look for forward thinking and forward opportunities for us to grow.

Kristin: [28:37](#) Absolutely. That actually is another question that I have for you. Obviously SIA as an industry organization, a trade organization, is responsible for generating growth in the segment. I mean that's just, I think, something we all agree on. That's the purpose: You're a vehicle for the industry in many ways. What do you see as the top two growth opportunities for the industry or community in the next two or three years? You just touched on this strategic planning meeting that you had. My guess is you

probably have a range of these, but what are the ones that are maybe like short- to mid-term that you feel comfortable sharing?

Nick Sargent: [29:11](#) Sure. There's two things that jump out right away. One's climate. Without snow we have no business. We have to wrap our hands around climate. For whatever reason, our winter sport industry, generally speaking, is late to the game. When I speak to a lot of our members they kind of cross their arms and they point their fingers left and right and say, "That's someone else's problem. I need to get consumers in my store." I'm like, "Well that's funny because if there's no snow there's no consumer and they're not then coming into your store."

Kristin: [29:55](#) Right.

Nick Sargent: [29:56](#) What are you doing to preserve snow for the next generation? This is everyone's problem. It's not isolated between a few people. There are a couple of groups out there that are doing great things, like POW. They're doing great work in mobilizing athletes around climate. They have a few big brands that are players in their space, Burton being one of them. But the conversation that I have with POW is like, "Where is the rest of the industry? How come they're not engaging?"

Kristin: [30:31](#) Right.

Nick Sargent: [30:31](#) And that's not POW's problem. I keep saying to POW, this is an opportunity for you. So we are tackling climate and we have a platform called United By Winter. It's a way that we can raise awareness to our members. We have over 650 active members. We have over 1200 members in our pool of our members. We have to raise the level of awareness to these members so they can start to make decisions based on what they're able to do to support climate. It could be just recycling containers and light bulbs. Or maybe it's something in between where we want to get more active, we want to reduce our carbon footprint, we want to be more active with government. Or maybe it's a high-end user who wants to go in 100 percent and they want to change the way they do their business, the way they do their manufacturing, the way they package, the way they sell, the way they represent themselves. I.e. lowering their carbon footprint, lowering the waste that they create manufacturing, so on and so forth.

Nick Sargent: [32:06](#) We are active in that climate discussion. We have recently created an Outdoor Business Climate Alliance with OIA and NSAA, National Skier Association and Outdoor Industry of America, where we are going to tackle policy and we are going

to work with state, local, and national government on policy efforts.

Kristin: [32:31](#) That's fantastic.

Nick Sargent: [32:33](#) That's one of the areas that we are focusing our energy on, and feel that it's very important to include that. The next area is participation. This is a big topic. It's loaded. It's an area that there are a number of different groups within our space that are working on different initiatives. You've got OIA, you've got NSAA, you've got TSIA, you've got National Ski Patrol, you've got NSSRA, National Ski and Snowboard Retailers Association, you've got SIA, ourselves, and you have USSA. I call them the As. These are all of these associations and we're all kind of cousins one way or another. We are ... for good or for bad, we are all tackling participation individually.

Nick Sargent: [33:38](#) We have Thrive Outside. We have Ski and Snowboard Month. We have Get Outside. We have SOS. We have Chill. We have all these other groups that are out there focusing on bringing new bodies outside. It doesn't have to be getting them on snow. It can be as easy as getting them off the couch and getting them outdoors and getting them comfortable putting a scarf, a hat, gloves, boots on and going for a walk. It can be as easy as going cross-country skiing. Our initiative there is called Winter Trails, getting people outside to cross country ski. It's getting people to snow shoot, sled, which will lead to someone standing up on a sled and trying to surf it, which then leads to a snowboard, which potentially leads to a pair of skis. Then that leads to resort, that leads to ticket sales, et cetera, et cetera.

Nick Sargent: [34:36](#) We're all working on this together. Our interest at SIA is to collaborate and consolidate these growth platforms and identify one or two that we all can collectively get behind, share our resources for a greater return. This is a big lift that we are focusing on. We're working with NSAA on this. They have some growth committees around what it means to them and how they're going to tackle this. We have some growth committees as well. We're also working with another organization called Share Winter, which is another nonprofit on the East Coast, which focuses on participation. We are looking to consolidate these initiatives and activities so we can help bring more people outdoors, on snow, and eventually to resort.

Nick Sargent: [35:44](#) We all know it's out there. There are articles it seems like in every periodical, in every newspaper about baby boomers leaving sports, moving to warmer climates. That's going to leave a huge hole in our 22 million annual active users when they leave our sport. They've been the backbone of winter sport for the last 30 years. We have to fill the funnel. We have to look at

new opportunities to bring in diversity to the sport, new first timers. But more importantly, keep the people that are currently in their sport. That includes the individuals who have stepped away from winter sport for reasons of school, marriage, first time jobs, children. People are looking at their wallet and making life decisions. "Do I buy a house? Do I do a renovation? Do I buy a car? Do I do daycare? Is it private school? Is it soccer?" Whatever. Everything has an expense these days.

Nick Sargent: [36:53](#)

We really have to look at those individuals who have stepped away from the sport and work at pulling them back in to the sport. That's the lowest hanging fruit. Then, I touched on it just a second ago, but diversity. We all talk about diversity. We need to get more color. I'm like, "Hey, we do. But what are the chances of going into an urban environment and getting someone out of that environment who's not comfortable being cold, and putting skis, boots, bindings, base layer, outerwear, helmets, goggles, gloves on their body after they've spent a couple grand to get to a resort. They're spending a couple grand to stay at a resort. What's the reality of getting that person back a second or third time? We need to be focusing on surrounding urban areas, and really look at areas that are germane to colder climates and start there and then slowly work inward.

Nick Sargent: [38:01](#)

Again, that's just my speculation and thought on this one in business in an area that we're still developing. But we have to look at that. A lot of energy is spent on the core. We already have the core. The core's coming back whether we're here or not. Let's focus on bringing these people that have stepped away from the sport first. Let's focus on bringing in first timers. Then let's focus on bringing those first timers back a second and a third time to get them really pulled into the sport.

Kristin: [38:38](#)

That's a fantastic overview and I really appreciate that. One of the things I think that's so telling about what you just said is your group, the As, that's a lot of acronyms, but there's a lot of boots on the ground. It's almost like a little bit of a microcosm of the way that we talked about the trade shows earlier. They're all doing the same thing but their arrows are pointing in a slightly different direction. It's like you chase two rabbits and you don't catch the rabbit, either one of them. I love what you're doing there and it's also-

Nick Sargent: [39:07](#)

That's a great analogy too.

Kristin: [39:08](#)

Yeah. But also, what I noticed about your website when I was researching this podcast, your mission on there says SIA is committed to helping the winter sports industry and community thrive through insightful research, innovative education, and growing participation nationwide. We are united by winter. You

say in there, "industry and community". That's the first time I've ever seen that called out, frankly. That's actually the way that we've started to talk about outdoors as a broader grouping of markets. It's a community.

Kristin: [39:42](#) I think that what you just talked about there in terms of climate and participation elevates the conversation to community over industry. Everybody's been so used to granularity with industry and, "get more people to my store," and create more sell-through et cetera. I like that you're doing. I know it has to be, I mean talk about heavy lifting. That's got to be the biggest life of all is evolving from industry to community mindset.

Nick Sargent: [40:09](#) It is. You have to remember, community comes first. We're all human beings. We all operate in different manners. What makes our groups come together is through community. We have to really look at community long and hard and understand what that means. In a lot of cases we have to preserve community. As I said earlier, change is good. We have to look at community and think about what change has to offer. In doing so, that's when you can layer in industry and start to think about what can industry do to provide change to community.

Nick Sargent: [41:05](#) That's something that we think about a lot here. We challenge ourselves with that. The one thing that really comes to mind is, we touched on this a little earlier in the podcast was, there's been a lot of consolidation. Again, as we were discussing in resort, in manufacturing, in retail, in rep groups, et cetera, there hasn't been a lot of overlap or consolidation or collaboration with the A groups. The fact that we're all working on very similar initiatives is really concerning to me.

Nick Sargent: [41:50](#) Our industry is only so big and there's only so much of the pie to go around. I question whether we need all of these associations or whether we can consolidate, collaborate, partner, joint venture to really pull it in. Because we are focusing on the same end user. We are all looking for new areas. That's why I was saying through our collaboration with climate we've been able to succeed working together. With participation, we're working on that as well. I think that's going to lead-

Kristin: [42:34](#) That makes total sense.

Nick Sargent: [42:34](#) That's going to lead to other areas of collaboration around education, around marketing, around et cetera, et cetera. I say this to my board and a lot of our people, that whether it's me or someone else, it's inevitable. I'm not looking myself out of a job or anyone else but I am looking to say it seems a little strange that they're spending that kind of money on participation, we're

spending that kind of money on participation. Why can't we be doing this together? Because at the end of the day it's not my money, it's the industry's money. All of us are responsible for our contribution to the industry. That's where we really need to focus hard and challenge ourselves on what does that look like. It might not be ideal. It might not be beneficial to some. But for the majority it may make better sense.

- Kristin: [43:40](#) Totally.
- Nick Sargent: [43:40](#) Again, I think it's a matter of time but more importantly, again, it's having the ability to look forward and say, "I'm going to put my sword down and I'm going to go talk to another group of the As and say, 'Hey, how do we do this together? We're stronger together than we are apart.'"
- Kristin: [44:03](#) Absolutely.
- Nick Sargent: [44:04](#) That's where we are focusing a lot of our efforts right now, is in collaboration with a lot of these other groups. Again, who would have thought, SIA is almost 70 years old. Who would have thought 50, 30, 40 years ago that the resorts would be the largest retailer in the space?
- Kristin: [44:27](#) Wow.
- Nick Sargent: [44:28](#) I mean, go figure. That wasn't even on anyone's radar, let alone 10 years ago. Now this is where the manufacturer needs to align with the resort. Well SIA's a manufacturer trade organization. NSAA is a resort trade organization. We're servicing the same client either way so it makes a lot of sense that we should look for areas of collaboration.
- Kristin: [44:55](#) Well that actually kind of wraps it up perfectly because my last question was what are the top obstacles to achieving growth. I would say fragmentation is probably the top obstacle. Then the biggest growth opportunity is collaboration. Would you agree?
- Nick Sargent: [45:10](#) For sure. Absolutely.
- Kristin: [45:12](#) All right-
- Nick Sargent: [45:12](#) 100 percent.
- Kristin: [45:12](#) Well there's your strategic plan, Mr. Sargent.
- Nick Sargent: [45:17](#) Hold on. I'm rapidly taking notes.

Kristin: [45:19](#) Okay. Well I really, I truly appreciate having you on here. I would really love to have you back. I think it would be super interesting to have you maybe in the summer, kind of giving us a line of sight into fall and the kickoff to the season. Or if, when your number, when did you say your big reports were coming out for participation?

Nick Sargent: [45:38](#) They're going to be in the May and June timeframe.

Kristin: [45:41](#) Maybe we can also do a show then as well because I think it'd be great to get your analysis and some of your takes on that. I just feel like with the conglomeration that's happening there will probably be some surprises in there. Also, I just want to let everybody know today, that March 22nd, members have access, correct, to the most recent January data that SIA launched just this morning?

Nick Sargent: [46:05](#) That's correct.

Kristin: [46:07](#) Yup. So that's something they could find by heading over to their website or I'm sure they're getting that delivered in their inbox through First Tracks. If you guys haven't signed up for that First Tracks newsletter I highly recommend it. So head on over to SIA. Their website is, let's see, I have it open here snowsports.org.

Nick Sargent: [46:23](#) Snowsports.org.

Kristin: [46:25](#) Yep.

Nick Sargent: [46:26](#) Absolutely.

Kristin: [46:27](#) And you have access to everything there. But I'd love to have you back just to kind of talk through some of those numbers and get your take on it as we get that report in May.

Nick Sargent: [46:35](#) Yeah, I look forward to it. Thank you.

Kristin: [46:37](#) All right. Thanks so much, Nick. It'll be great to host you. I'm so grateful we had you on the show here today, thanks.

Nick Sargent: [46:43](#) Thank you very much. Appreciate it.