

# ATA Launches Bowhunting 360, Redesigns Archery 360

By ATA Staff

Helping people to learn what archery is. Getting people excited to shoot their first arrow. And now teaching people how to bowhunt. The Archery Trade Association (ATA) recently launched Bowhunting 360 on Facebook and as a content site, targeted at recruiting new and re-engaging existing bowhunters. The site launch is a direct response to ATA Board, staff and member concerns regarding the recent downturn in the bowhunting market.

Bowhunting 360's launch accompanies a redesign of Archery360.com, which delivers written and visual content to new and beginning archers who seek news, how-to, lifestyle, technology and entertainment pieces about archery. Together, the sites address the industry's urgency to strengthen sales and promote archery and bowhunting.

Archery 360 launched in November 2013 in response to the sport's popularity in movies, TV shows, popular culture and the London 2012 Olympic Games. Since then, Archery 360 has exposed millions to archery while building a nearly 150,000 member Facebook community and generating 38 million YouTube views on a "Dude Perfect" video collaboration. The ATA hopes Bowhunting 360 will have an equally widespread impact.

"Since 2012, archery participation in America has grown by 26 percent, from 18.9 to 23.8 million Americans," Jay McAninch, ATA president/CEO, said. "Continued growth serves as a testament to the efforts made by the ATA, states and nonprofit archery organizations to help grow the sport at the grassroots level. Even so, bowhunting has been lagging behind in recent years. We hope Bowhunting 360 will strengthen bowhunting sales while also helping our industry recruit new



Photo by ATA

The Archery Trade Association (ATA) recently launched Bowhunting 360 on Facebook and as a content site, targeted at recruiting new and re-engaging existing bowhunters.

as well as revive lapsed bowhunters."

"The ATA Board prioritized bowhunting during the Industry Strategic Planning Meeting in May," Ben Summers, chairman of the ATA Board of Directors, said. "Bowhunting 360 addresses the board's urgency to grow bowhunting by providing interactive content to promote the sport and drive customers to member shops."

Bowhunting 360 and the redesigned Archery 360 site equip beginning archers and bowhunters with resources to try archery and bowhunting right away. This redesign includes updated aesthetics, online curricula and lessons and a more robust store locator to help archers find the nearest archery shop.

"It's important for new archers to interact with the products and feel the emotions that come with arrowing

their first target," Summers said. "The store locator provides that crucial opportunity, sustaining that interest and fostering a passion for archery and bowhunting."

Bowhunting 360 builds on Archery 360's traction while addressing the need for a safe, encouraging community to recruit, retain and re-engage new and existing bowhunters.

"We needed a safe space for new bowhunters to share their passion for the outdoors," Teresa Johnson, the ATA's senior director of communications and administration, said. "Bowhunting 360 provides that space while also offering how-to and human-interest pieces to re-engage former bowhunters."

To learn more, visit Bowhunting360.com and Archery360.com.

## ATA Targets Engagement with Revitalized Retail Council

The Archery Trade Association (ATA) has revitalized its Retail Council to provide more guidance and support to the organization's retail members.

During the archery industry's strategic-planning meeting in May that drew nearly 40 business leaders to Minneapolis, the group focused on how to best help retailers grow their stores and become stronger. Whether it's best-practice statements or ongoing support for retailers, the attendees agreed the ATA must first revitalize its Retail Council to improve the industry's archery and bowhunting markets.

"Things are changing," ATA President/CEO Jay McAninch said. "It's clear from our strategic planning meeting that our industry understands that its success depends largely on the success of archery and bowhunting retailers. The ATA's Retail Council is

rejuvenated, highly engaged and ready to help forge a better future for everyone in our industry."

The Retail Council is led by members of the ATA Board of Directors, including Council Chair Mark Copeland, general manager of Jay's Sporting Goods in Michigan. Copeland also serves on the ATA Board's Executive Committee. Copeland is joined by Vice Chair Randy Phillips, owner of Archery Headquarters in Arizona and Peter Gussie, owner of Midwest Cimarron Archery in Illinois.

"There's so much work to be done,"



"I'm appealing to every archery retailer...to step up and be part of the solution," Retail Council Chair Mark Copeland said.  
Photo by Shannon Rikard/ATA.

Copeland said. "We've needed an active and engaged platform for retailers to discuss important issues where the conversation is educational and productive. I keep hearing that retailers are the industry's backbone. I'm appealing to every archery retailer to use our backbone to step up and be part of the solution."

McAninch named Michelle Zeug, the ATA's director of community and international programs, to serve as staff liaison to the Retail Council. "We're trying to focus more of our staff time on these critical issues," McAninch said. "There's nothing more important to us than helping ATA's members succeed."

Zeug echoed McAninch's thoughts. "I'm excited to help lead the charge to rejuvenate ATA's Retail Council," she said. "As we've built the Retail Growth Initiative the past three years, we've needed core retailers to help develop best practices for the industry's 'backbone' and now we have it. I look forward to working with the council to expand this program to help make retailers more efficient and profitable."

The Retail Council meets weekly to discuss pressing issues raised during May's strategic-planning meeting. Its members expect best-practice statements to emerge as the council's agenda takes shape. To learn more or to get involved in the Retail Council, contact Zeug at michellezeug@archery-trade.org.

## Ranges Can Be Bowhunting Friendly

An archery range can attract more archers by offering target areas geared toward varying interests. Shooting from a treestand or ground blind is more difficult for many archers than shooting flat-footed. Recreate typical hunting scenarios and help bowhunters prepare for success with these tips for building a bowhunting range.

Bowhunters can sight in their equipment by using targets designed to stop broadheads and their blades. You can also create an area with broadhead pits - targets barricaded or backed up by a sand pit - that safely stop errant arrows without damaging the arrows or broadheads. The sand-filled backstops catch the broadheads should an arrow miss or pass through the target. If those aren't viable options when other archers are using the range, set aside specific days and hours for broadhead targets and encourage bowhunters to use the range at those times.

Distances at the range should reflect common hunting scenarios in that area. Targets should be designed

for heavier draw-weight bows and crossbows. Special broadhead targets should be considered in this area and safety barriers should surround the practice area where appropriate.

In eastern states, most bowhunters use treestands or ground blinds and most shot opportunities are at 40 yards or less. An elevated platform large enough to accommodate at least two shooters and targets 10-40 yards away can mimic common hunting scenarios. A simulated ground blind can be built below the platform or set up as a separate shooting lane on the ground.

In western states, most bowhunters spot and stalk wildlife, which often presents longer shot opportunities. Targets out to 70 yards help prepare bowhunters for western hunting conditions while helping them learn their effective shooting range.

Bowhunters and other recreational shooters often practice before work or in the evenings. A lighted facility can extend shooting hours and attract more potential bowhunters.