



## BURTON X GPSNR - "STOMP SUSTAINABLY"

A CAMPAIGN PROPOSITION BY TALK COMMUNICATIONS

### I. INTRODUCTION – THE COMPANY AND THE PRODUCT

Ever since the snowboard was attempted to be marketed as “The Snurfer” by Michigan’s Sherman Poppen in 1965, snowboarding has grown into a giant sporting industry with an entirely unique culture to other winter sports and other sporting communities in general. One of the pillar companies of the snowboarding industry is that of Burton.

Created by Jake Burton Carpenter in 1977, after developing a love for the experimental “snurfer” product and making hundreds of prototype snowboard designs, Burton today is at every corner of the snowboarding world, selling boards,

boots, gear, helmets, bindings and more. Additionally, specialized products which they have created are innovating the snowboarding world, such as their strapless binding design meant to



bring ease and efficiency to any boarder's session. Among these boarders, Burton is iconically recognizable and a reliable brand for almost any snowboarding need.

Speaking of snowboarder needs, one product that is found placed near the back binding of any snowboard is that of the "stomp pad." A stomp pad usually is a piece or several pieces of shaped rubber/silicon used by snowboarders when they must push their boards (taking off the back binding and using their back leg to push themselves forward on flat or uphill terrain). These pieces of rubber or silicon offer boarders a place to put their back foot to help control the board with extra traction. Though to outside audiences this may seem like a redundant product, to the average snowboarder it is not only a practical essential, but a beloved aesthetic piece as well.



Though the stomp pad is a need for every snowboarder, the fact of the matter is that for environmentally conscious individuals (who make up a large portion of the snow sports market), there is a concern regarding the biodegradability of materials like silicon and other unnatural rubbers, and another concern focused around the ethical production of natural rubbers. It is a problem affecting many industries reliant on the production of rubber, such as car tires and

erasers. That is why the organization The General Platform for Sustainable Natural Rubber was created – to create guidelines for maintaining a healthy, sustainable and ethical supply chain of rubber and partner with companies to follow these guidelines. Though the GPSNR’s affiliations lie mainly within the automobile industry, partnering with Burton Snowboards could expand the overall knowledge of sustainability in rubber production while broadening the organization’s reach to include different industries, like that of snow sports. That is why for this campaign, Burton Snowboards and GPSNR will be collaborating to encourage snowboarders to “Stomp Sustainably,” through the production of customizable stomp pads made with GPSNR-approved natural and ethically sourced rubbers as well as recycled natural and unnatural rubbers otherwise being sent to landfills. These stomp pads will appeal to the nature-lovers and environmentalists that make up a large bulk of the snowboarding market, while also appealing to the diehard fans of snowboarding aesthetics through making the designs customizable.



## II. MARKETING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES – “BUY BURTON”

Though Burton is a prominent brand in the snow sports industry, their focus for most of the company's existence was solely on producing the actual snowboard rather than the other components needed by boarders, such as gear, helmets, and of course stomp pads. This, however, is changing as the company dips their toes into manufacturing and selling these components, and quickly, the brand is expanding to become an all-encompassing brand for the average snowboarder. Ideally, Burton would like the average boarder to be able to buy all of their needs straight from the company, and because snowboarders are less-than-frequent buyers, they are willing to spend a bit more money for a special, quality product that will last them a long time and aligns with their values.

“Stomp Sustainably” is Burton's way of continuing to expand their brand to encompass every product a snowboarder might need while differentiating themselves from other stomp pad manufacturers. This differentiation applies to firstly, the ethical considerations of Burton compared to other companies. Through partnering with an environmental organization and ensuring sustainability in their supply chains, Burton can appeal to the values of consumers and encourage them to spend their stomp pad budget on a more beneficial product. Secondly, this campaign would differentiate Burton from other companies in terms of quality. Through making the stomp pads customizable and ensuring the materials they are being created with are of high quality and ethical production, potential buyers are encouraged to choose Burton because they would be buying a product that would be more aesthetically special to them while it also appeals to their ethical values and material considerations.

In short, Burton would like to see stomp pad sales that rival other companies in the market and overall customer satisfaction in their products, so that more boarders are encouraged



to buy entirely Burton. On top of this, Burton would like to create a more favorable image for the company, as though it is a giant force in the snow sports industry, it is often criticized by diehard snowboarders of being inauthentic and too corporate to support buying from, especially considering the low purchasing frequency of these boarders. Additionally, GPSNR would like to increase brand recognition of their organization and increase overall awareness around sustainable rubber production and sustainability within all supply chains, and they could do this by using the campaign to educate and foster awareness. The more people that are aware of issues like the one GPSNR has dedicated itself to fixing, the more people are willing to support and fund these efforts.



### III. TARGET MARKET SEGMENT

**\*Majority of data gathered is from Snowsport Industries America's 2023-2024**

#### **Participation Study**

In the “Stomp Sustainably” campaign, Burton and GPSNR would be first targeting consumers internationally, for though the company’s biggest market is in their home country of the United States, having online availability of the product as well as messaging in other international snowboarding markets in places such as the European Alps, East Asia, New Zealand, or any of the 66 countries in the world that offer at least one mountain with ski lift access would broaden the outreach of the campaign and give the GPSNR international recognition. Defining the average targeted consumer, however, Burton would be looking at their home country, and at both men and women (though more primarily men or mothers with boys, as men make up a larger section of the market). Though men make up a larger market segment, data shows that the presence of women in snowboarding is growing rapidly compared to previous years. The company would also be looking at their largest-growing age demographic of 18-24 year olds or the families in which they come from to target their marketing efforts, as data shows that the participation of 25+ year olds has remained largely unchanged compared to the rapid growth of younger audiences. However, these 25+ audiences would also be important to consider in the marketing of a higher-quality and higher-priced product, as the younger 18-24 audiences hold less disposable income and buying power than their older counterparts (GVR, 2023). Looking at racial demographics of snowboarders in the United States, there is a reported growth in Hispanic and African American participants, with black males making up 13% of all snowboarding men – the largest segment in any snow sports industry.

The truth is when looking at the data, that the snowboarding industry is arguably the most diverse of all of the snow sports markets, and thus, messaging for the campaign is largely defined by its environmental focus – which has become a focus of all snow sports industries in recent years. Data suggests that consumers and companies alike are prioritizing sustainable practices for the environment, and for many higher-educated consumers, environmental concerns can even serve as an ethical dilemma when contributing to a sporting industry arguably rooted in environmental destruction (MWR, 2025).

In summary, the target market of the “Stomp Sustainably” campaign is diverse in age, race, location and gender. However, what is meant to unite the target market is their concern for the environment, sustainability in business, and a prioritization of product/material quality – values that are reportedly all growing amongst the consumers supporting snow sports industries.



#### IV. POSITIONING OF PRODUCT

To define the position of Burton and GPSNR's new environmentally friendly stomp pads is to define wherever consumers will be able to get their hands on the product (positioning of messaging will be defined in the next section). Firstly, as was previously mentioned, Burton will prioritize shipping the product internationally, allowing for online purchase of the stomp pads. Additionally, the ability to customize one's own stomp pad would only be available online through direct order on either Burton's or GPSNR's websites. This would incentivize buyers to check out the sites of the company and the organization and encourage them to sign up to email newsletters and further engage with the two organizations.

However, sale of the new stomp pads wouldn't be exclusively online, as a majority of ski & snowboard equipment buying happens in person at specialized stores. Thus, Burton could partner and have the product available in snow-sports-specific stores like Christy Sports as well as more broad retailers that service snowboarders, such as Scheels, Dick's Sporting Goods, and Tilly's among others. This would ensure that these in-store buyers are able to purchase the product in the same places as other stomp pad companies, letting consumers get a direct side-by-side comparison of these companies and Burton. All-in-all, the goal of the product positioning of these new stomp pads is to make them widely available and easy to buy.

To further make sure that every snow sports enthusiast is properly catered to, Burton will also collaborate with snow sports events such as the Winter X Games, Dew Tour, and the Winter Olympics to sell their products and use their messaging onsite. This allows snow sports fans to create an association between the events they love and the brand of Burton while the company stays true to their product-positioning values of availability and ease.





## V. POSITIONING OF MESSAGING

Defining the messaging of the “Stomp Sustainably” campaign is to define where communication efforts (advertising efforts for the product included) will be utilized. Firstly and also previously mentioned, Burton and GPSNR will use digital communication efforts in the form of sponsored social media posts, utilizing advertising space on specialized websites, and influencer partnerships to advertise their new product. Sponsored social media posts will be targeted toward users with prior tendencies of liking snowboarding content on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Facebook and more. Paid-placement will be utilized on websites that specialize in outdoor sports products and reporting, like on the aforementioned retailers’ websites; as well as websites that directly sell snowboarding gear, even extending to apparel

retailers like Vans. Influencer marketing will be utilized on the aforementioned social media platforms as well, with Burton-sponsored athletes representing and talking about the gear on their social media pages alongside other athlete influencers like Scotty James and Craig McMorris. Additionally and as with many extreme sports products, advertisement is through the sponsoring of competing athletes, who wear the gear when competing or participating in exhibition events to advertise them physically and through any TV/online content created in the process of the event(s).



Secondly, Burton and GPSNR will use traditional advertising efforts to advertise the product and the campaign as well. These will include billboards, print ads, and in-store advertisement to incentivise immediate action from consumers. “Billboards” in the sense of the snow sports industry can mean a lot of different platforms. For example, on the gondolas of several large ski resorts, advertisements are placed on the outside, being displayed to not just the users of these gondolas, but spectators in the towns they service as well. Additionally, on ski lift

bars there will often be a map in between two side-sections of advertising space. Utilizing these billboards is making sure that advertising efforts are reaching intended audiences directly, by ensuring that messaging is placed right in front of snowboarders as they're preparing to take their next run – and this is not including the several bus stop billboards that lie within ski towns, and the great abundance of window advertising space supplied by retailers in major ski towns like Aspen, Colorado, which would both additionally be utilized in the campaign. Print ads would be featured in specialized winter sports magazines, such as The Freeskier or POWDER Magazine, as well as other specialized sports magazines like Thrasher Skateboard Magazine (skateboarding and snowboarding tend to have a market overlap) or even larger all-encompassing sports magazines like Sports Illustrated. This is, again, an effort to make sure advertising efforts are being seen by the target audience directly and often, aligning with the product positioning values of wide availability and ease of access. Finally, in-store advertisements entail visual pieces of advertising in the aforementioned winter sports-specific stores and other specialized sports stores. In any section of any store selling stomp pads, Burton wants to make sure their product is seen through small pieces of advertising that can adorn the racks of any store. This encourages consumers who are immediately looking to buy a stomp pad to buy Burton over competing brands.

## VI. PROMOTION STRATEGY

When looking at the purchasing behavior of a stomp pad, the truth is that buying is infrequent for the individual consumer. Because stomp pads last essentially as long as a snowboard does, many people only buy one every few years. When looking at the values of the snowboarding market though, data suggests environmental considerations are on the rise, and

that consumers value reliability, practicality, quality and aesthetic in gear products (MWR, 2025). That is why the goal with Burton's new product is to offer something new to the stomp pad market with a direct focus on technological innovation and environmental concern while ensuring the quality of their product is evident. Additionally, letting consumers customize their own stomp pads appeals to their values of aesthetics. That is why much of the promotion strategy of these environmentally friendly stomp pads is going to revolve around letting the product speak for itself.

Whether it be through athlete sponsors showing off the product as they pull off sick tricks in competition, or through print and digital ads featuring finished stomp pads along minimal messaging and aesthetics, the actual product's design will be the key feature of promotion efforts. One may hear this and ask though, "but, aren't the designs meant to be customizable?" One of the goals of the product is to provide a customizable option for an upcharge, and ideally, allow customers to put whatever they want on a stomp pad for their board. The uniqueness of these stomp pad designs though is going to be reliant on the specific *colors* that can be used.

Though customers will have the ability to choose whatever design they want to make a stomp pad, a small amount of colors will be provided, each representing a different kind of rubber acquired sustainably for the stomp pads' production. A reddish-pink color would be made of recycled pencil erasers, black representing recycled automobile tires, an earth-tone green representing sustainably grown natural rubber, etc. This not only gives a unique distinction to the product for Burton, the product directly educates people on the environmental issues GPSNR focuses on. It makes the product of a simple stomp pad so much more by tying in ethical and environmental considerations and education alongside a distinct design and idea.

That is why the advertisements of the stomp pads will feature the different ways these different kinds of rubber can be designed, with sponsored athletes and influencers being able to create their own stomp pads that would be available for in-store purchase and would incentivize boarders to create their own and participate in stomping sustainably. The goal is to make the stomp pad, which is not often considered and bought infrequently by boarders, a special product and a piece of personal art rooted in a positive environmental movement to encourage sale above competing brands. It is not a far-fetched idea to suggest that the snowboarding market doesn't have the spending ability or buying power to splurge on a special product, as it is reported the average snowboarder makes far more than the average disposable income and the snow sports industry globally made \$5.5 billion in revenue in 2023 (GVR, 2023).

## VII. CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

First to consider in the creation of this new product and the implementation of this campaign is the broad costs and materials needed for the product's production. In terms of the creation of the actual product, methods of acquiring mass amounts of recycled rubbers would need to be used, and a GPSNR-certified natural rubber manufacturer would need to be sourced as well. Both of these efforts would be costly and require mass amounts of labor for a product that is unquestionably a risk to take even for such a large and dominant company like Burton. Additionally, upholding the positioning values of wide availability and ease of access would require even more materials and labor than most specialty products. However, a positive factor about the product being distributed is that its production process is far simpler than that of other pieces of snowboarding gear, especially boards, boots and bindings.

A second consideration is the cost of advertising efforts needed for the product. Because of the desire to use billboards and in-store advertising, cost of these efforts is heavily dependent on the amount of stores/paid slots the company would be willing to pay for. Though the company of Burton is large and has access to a large amount of funding, the effectivity of billboard advertising in this case would largely depend on how often it was being displayed, and choosing to pay a high amount for more frequent advertising is again, a risk for any company especially when debuting a new product.

A third and final consideration is a potential concern regarding a clash between snow sports and those with environmental concern. Snow sports like snowboarding receive much criticism from environmentalists for ruining natural ecosystems through the creation of resorts and encouraging other unhealthy practices for the environment such as littering and clothing waste. For Burton to put an environmental focus on a product meant for the snow sports industry is a contradiction for many environmentalists and it may cause backlash. Inversely though, Burton could also encourage other companies in the industry to implement more considerate practices, becoming a driving force of sustainability in snow sports. All-in-all, it is a risk with a high reward and potentially detrimental consequences.

## **VIII. STRATEGIES FOR EVALUATION**

To evaluate the “Stomp Sustainably” campaign, the first strategy Burton would of course utilize is that of comparing sales and revenues of their product to other competing products. Profitability for a product is important, and analyzing sales directly shows marketers how effective their efforts are. To do this, researchers either hired by Burton directly or commissioned by Burton through working at a research/consulting firm could research Burton’s overall market



share in stomp pads compared to competing companies as well as analyze the sales volume of Burton's stomp pads compared to competing companies in individual stores. Additionally, the profit margins (amount they made vs. amount they spent in production) of Burton's product would be analyzed in comparison to the rest of the market. All of these efforts would be to determine if Burton's new stomp pads are effective as a product for their lineup.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the messaging of the campaign, consumers' opinions would have to be studied. Burton could hire researchers to first ask buyers of the new product how they found out about said product to determine the effectiveness of marketing efforts on buyers as well as which communication channels are reaching the target audience most effectively. Then, random snowboarders and pedestrians in the physical locations of several billboard and in-store ads could be asked about their recognition of the advertisements and their opinions on them – do the ads encourage them to take action? Digital surveys could also be distributed as social media advertisements to users exhibiting behaviors with an affinity for snowboarding and outdoor sports, asking these individuals about the campaign, their awareness of it, their awareness of the product, and their feelings toward the messaging and product. In summary, the goal of these efforts is to determine the reception of communication efforts to the intended target audience and measure whether they were effective or not in getting said audience to become buyers.

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