

Forget extra airline fees and lugging your skis...

CHRISTY SPORTS HAS A NATIONAL RENTAL NETWORK to SAVE on ALL YOUR EQUIPMENT NEEDS COAST-TO-COAST

LAKEWOOD, CO – Christy Sports, one of the largest ski and snowboard retailers in the Rocky Mountain region, launched the Christy Sports Rental Network last season. The company has created a national network of affiliate ski rental shops that will make up a massive resource for booking ski and snowboard rentals and demo packages.

The Christy Sports Rental Network is composed of numerous affiliate ski and snowboard rental shops, more than 40 Christy Sports' locations, and the company's rental delivery service called Door 2 Door. The Christy Sports Rental Network is currently serving Colorado, Utah, California, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York and Maine. Additional locations are being added on a daily basis.

To make a rental reservation, customers simply log on to Christy Sports websites (www.christysports.com) where visitors can select their desired location to rent skis. Once a convenient store is selected, the user will be given the opportunity to make an online reservation for the best brands and equipment, including K2, Rossignol, Burton, Nordica, Salomon, Volkl, Lange, Ride and Dynastar. "By establishing this rental network, our customers are able to have access to quality ski rental packages practically anywhere they want to ski or snowboard, using one booking source," said Gordon Wade, director of Internet commerce at Christy Sports.

"We have hand-picked ski and snowboard shops from California to Maine so our customers can rest assured they will receive a positive ski or snowboard rental experience in any location within the network. Whether they are searching for a ski or snowboard rental package or a ski or snowboard demo, Christy Sports is committed to making sure its customers have easy and hassle free rental, no matter the location," he continued.

The following is an interview with Gordon Wade, Director of Internet Commerce at Christy Sports where he addresses Christy Sports Rental Network, what went into the network design, the perks of the program, and the selection process for retailers.

How did this project come about?

Wade: I started the whole online reservation system for Christy's about 15 years ago and it's been going for the last 12. It was initially designed to accommodate additional shops later on. Over the past 12 years we've developed the company

NEW APPS for SKIERS

BOSTON, MA -- Martin Heckelman, producer of the outstanding SkiTips videos and CDs, has announced a new release of two new apps in the SkiTips series of instructional skiing apps; Ski Tips for 1st Timers, which is intended for first timers to skiing and boarding. It explains what newcomers can expect to find at a ski resort and provides them with all the relevant information to help them get started. The second is SkiTips Lite, a free app that presents extracts from the other four SkiTips apps. These apps will be available at the Apple appStore as of November 2011.

The three apps that are currently available are SkiTips1, intended for beginners and intermediates, which demonstrates and teaches all the fundamentals of skiing from the wedge to carving; SkiTips2, which demonstrates and teaches advanced techniques including high speed carving, control turns, bumps and ice and presents an intro to powder skiing; and SkiTips3, which demonstrates how to ski powder and all types of off-piste snow conditions. The apps cost just \$3.99, and each app contains 25 to 30 individual lessons plus many recommended programs to cure specific problems.

The SkiTips Apps sets new standards in sports instruction enabling skiers for the first time to take all of their instructional media, video, audio and text, on the slopes with them. And while the Apps are specifically designed for use on the mountain, they are also perfect for studying on your iPad. All the apps are being designed as well for the Android smart phones, which will be available in November. Check out the apps at www.skitips.com

online through email, Google AdWords, etc. and have built a tremendous resource base.

As a privately owned and operated company, Christy Sports understands the challenges of growing a ski business. By joining our rental network, affiliates are able to expand their customer base by leveraging our coast-to-coast marketing efforts.

We also noticed many of the Christy's customers during the holidays/Christmas season are from other shops, so we saw this as a way to reach out and expand our customer base through an affiliate program.

What standards did Christy's use in selecting affiliates?

Wade: It was really focused on two factors: The Snowsports Industry of America (SIA) list and discussion with several other people in the industry, including the ski manufacturers themselves. We asked around to find out those shops who were doing rentals the way we do it. The last step involved actually getting on a plane and visiting with these shops in person so we understand the customer experience of those renting from these shops.

How this will really grow the customer experience?

Wade: Once we get the network of both affiliate members and the customer base a bit more solid, we'll work towards bringing more benefits to the program. One of the things we currently do for Christy's customers is to work with our premier lodging partners and coordinate email campaigns featuring lodging specials that we dig up exclusively for them. In addition, customers who make rental reservations more than 24-hours in advance will qualify for discounts from 10 to 20 percent off, depending on affiliate store location.

Christy Sports locations will also honor its kids ski-free program, where one child under 12 receives a free rental package with the purchase of an adult 4-day rental package at the Christy Sports and Door 2 Door locations.

Any plans to expand to more regions?

Wade: We're still adding affiliate shops daily. Many of them are completing the necessary paperwork right now, and will be listed on the site map soon. But we are also open to adding new affiliates at any time, as long as a shop qualifies in their attention to rentals. We have standards to measure how well a shop turns over inventory to keep equipment fresh. However, we're less interested in saturating a given market, but instead want to ensure a shop meets certain quality standards. It's always good to check our website for updated locations at www.christysports.com and for extra savings, use promo code SN1112 when renting.

If a shop is interested in potentially becoming an affiliate, how would they go about exploring this selection process?

For ski shops looking for additional information on the Christy Sports Rental Network, contact Gordon Wade at 970-468-2428 or at gwade@christysports.com

You can also visit Christy Sports' website via an easily found link on the homepage of www.skiernews.com and you can find this exact page, and link from it as well, on www.skiernews.net/Oct-Nov2011-Features.pdf

With a rental scheduled 24 hours or more in advance, renters can save up to 20 percent off on skis and snowboards, with some restrictions.

Log on to www.christysports.com or call 1-877-754-7627 and for discounts, mention or enter the code SN1112.



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