Let Freedom Reign
What a year this has been!

From retail firearms and ammunition sales breaking all records to the election of the most pro-Second Amendment President in recent history, the past year has been one of this industry’s most successful.

The SHOT Show continued to be an outstanding success, maintaining its highest satisfaction levels ever. Highlights this year included the first-ever SHOT Show Supplier Showcase, an event that allowed third-party OEM suppliers to connect with the industry’s manufacturers, and the introduction of 100 new exhibiting companies to the SHOT Show NEXT area of the show. Our third SHOT Show Exhibitor Academy was held in June to help new exhibitors get the most out of their show experience.

A series of Project ChildSafe launches across the country reinforced our decades-long commitment to true gun safety by providing gun owners both the messages and means for secure firearms storage. The Project ChildSafe Foundation can now accept individual contributions at projectchildsafe.org. We also extended our safety messaging in a new and different manner, by introducing the industry’s first comprehensive suicide prevention program. This program has us working directly with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, developing messaging for ranges, retailers and firearms owners about the warning signs of possible suicides and providing information about where to seek help to prevent them.

Industry information remained a top request from our members, and our research department continued to release dozens of reports on such topics as women in the shooting sports, recruitment and retention, profiles of hunters and target shooters, demographic and statistical studies of imports and exports, background checks and firearms safety.

On our industry’s front line, NSSF initiated efforts to help our retailers better prevent thefts of their products, with the introduction of our Store Security Audit Program, a natural complement to our long-standing rewards program for information leading to the arrest of gun store thieves and burglars in conjunction with the ATF’s investigation of these crimes. We also conducted a Firearms Industry Compliance Conference together with Orchid Advisors, providing another forum with which to assist retailers in their efforts to comply with the myriad laws and regulations concerning firearms sales, record-keeping and inventory control.

Our Communications Department released a bevy of videos for online viewing, for diverse programs such as “Pull the Trigger,” with tips for new hunters and shooters, and timely voter education videos for #GUNVOTE, which were viewed more than 20 million times. One #GUNVOTE video detailing Australia’s gun confiscation program reached more than one million viewers on its own. Spanish language videos were also produced and posted on nssf.org and the Spanish language YouTube. Our weekly “Bullet Points” e-newsletter, a must-see information piece for all NSSF members, was reformatted and made much easier to read on mobile devices, where more people are getting their news these days.

Our social media efforts were outstanding. Almost 200 million impressions were achieved on #GUNVOTE’s Facebook account, which boasts more than 450,000
followers, and on Twitter we had over 30 million impressions and almost 40,000 followers. New infographics, such as “Gun Crimes Plummet–Gun Sales Rise,” went viral.

Our work on Capitol Hill continued at a dizzying pace. Among our successes, the Bipartisan Sportsmen’s Act passed the Senate, after years of work, and went to conference for reconciliation with the version passed by the House of Representatives. The case of Soto v. Remington, seeking to hold that company liable for the tragic, intentional criminal shootings in Newtown, Connecticut, in 2012, was dismissed as being legally prohibited by the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act. A Harper poll indicated that almost three-quarters of registered voters agreed that lawful firearms manufacturers and sellers should not be sued for criminal misuses of non-defective products.

Hunting Works for Alabama and Hunting Works for Michigan represent the success of two state-level initiatives, demonstrating in bold terms the economic value of hunting and the shooting sports across this nation. Highlighting 2016 legislative activities was our largest annual NSSF Congressional Fly-In to date, with firearms industry executives advocating for our industry’s federal legislative priorities.

The NSSF Industry Summit, held in Pittsburgh in June, demonstrated novel ways of thinking about industry issues and how to better communicate our message of promoting, protecting and preserving hunting and the shooting sports to both current and prospective participants. Such work is exemplified by the 11 colleges that were awarded NSSF Collegiate Shooting Sports Initiative grants, which are used to create and maintain new recreational target shooting programs.

Going beyond our usual audiences, NSSF participated in two fundraising events for Ronald McDonald Houses in Connecticut and New York. We also conducted numerous interviews and presentations on a variety of topics with the National Safety Council, Business Week, the Associated Press, Slate.com online magazine, The Guardian, Stars & Stripes, USA Today and the Government Accounting Office, all detailing our industry’s many efforts to help stop the misuse of its products.

The tide of public sentiment seems to definitely be shifting toward more acceptance of lawful firearms ownership. We see it both in the voice of the customers who have been voting with their wallets and pocketbooks during the last eight years and in public opinion surveys showing support for gun control proposals such as banning modern semiautomatic sporting rifles dropping dramatically to only 36 percent of the population. Furthermore, one party clearly embraced gun control as part of its platform – and lost.

Our extensive PAC efforts helped assure a pro-Second Amendment Congress. We will now see a new administration promising to fully respect the Second Amendment, with all their Executive Branch appointments likely to embrace that promise, from agency and department heads to ambassadors, regulators and all the government operatives who have authority over our highly regulated industry. We hope to work with them in a respectful fashion so that the law-abiding citizens of this nation who chose to responsibly manufacture, sell, purchase, own and use firearms can do so without harassment or needless regulations and infringements.

The fact that so many more people have joined our ranks during the last eight years and have purchased record numbers of firearms and ammunition – without the dire consequences predicted by the gun control lobby, it should be emphasized – give the lie to the oft-heard and totally unfounded assertion that more firearms in the hands of average citizens would equal more crime and accidents. Clearly, they have not.

We thank you so very much for your help and support. You, our members, have made the National Shooting Sports Foundation, your trade association, the success that it has become during the last decade of unparalleled growth, and we look forward to many more mutual successes in the year ahead.

Stephen L. Sanetti
President & CEO
The National Shooting Sports Foundation, Inc.
Promote voter education.
#GUNVOTE

Gun owners are a powerful voting bloc and can sway an election. The importance of their involvement in the 2016 elections appears evident.

NSSF’s 2016 #GUNVOTE voter education and registration initiative exceeded all previous election cycle efforts by several orders of magnitude.

The #GUNVOTE campaign was made possible by the significant commitment of NSSF member companies, the enthusiastic involvement of retailer and media partners and the participation through social media and at the ballot box of #GUNVOTE supporters.

Many political observers believe that 2016 demonstrated the ascendancy of social media over traditional news sources. To illustrate the reach of #GUNVOTE social media, #GUNVOTE video views were more than 20 million on all platforms. Almost 200 million impressions were achieved on #GUNVOTE’s Facebook account, which grew to 450,000 followers. Average total Facebook reach per day in the last 90 days before the election topped 776,000. On Twitter, #GUNVOTE saw over 30 million impressions and earned nearly 40,000 followers.

#GUNVOTE worked because it was designed as a voter registration and education campaign platform for ease of use by firearms industry manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors, retailers and media members, as well as the pro-Second Amendment customer. All became involved in asking fellow citizens not to risk their rights on Election Day and to #GUNVOTE.

Retailers prominently displayed the #GUNVOTE poster, counter cards and window decals in stores and made #GUNVOTE stickers available to customers. Customers were encouraged to visit gunvote.org, to learn how to register to vote, locate their polling location and find up-to-date election information.
SAFETY

Project ChildSafe is NSSF’s flagship firearms safety community outreach program. It is committed to promoting firearms safety among firearms owners through the distribution of safety education messages and free firearm safety kits. To date, more than 15,000 law enforcement agencies have partnered with the program to distribute more than 37 million firearms safety kits (including those in Spanish) to gun owners in all 50 states and the five U.S. territories. The program’s achievements in 2016 include:

- An estimated 350,000 gun locks distributed in more than 40 states.

- NSSF received an $80,000 grant from the Cabela’s Outdoor Fund to provide Project ChildSafe gun locks and literature to hunter education students through state departments of natural resources. All 50 states received these gun safety materials.

- After receiving a $2.4 million federal grant in 2015 through the U.S. Department of Justice to administer a national gun lock distribution and safety education program, NSSF rolled out the program in late 2016. The initiative will distribute approximately 750,000 Project ChildSafe gun locks in all 50 states and the U.S. territories.

- In August, NSSF partnered with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention to develop a first-of-its-kind, national campaign to provide suicide prevention education materials for distribution through firearms retailers, shooting ranges and the firearms community.

- NSSF also partnered with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, with each distributing the other’s gun safety and suicide prevention materials and creating an education program for future dissemination.

The Project ChildSafe Foundation, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, non-profit charity that accepts donations in support of the Project ChildSafe program and NSSF safety initiatives.

NSSF President and CEO Stephen L. Sanetti addresses the media about Project ChildSafe and the importance of securely storing firearms when not in use.
MEMBERSHIP

NSSF’s membership department works diligently to provide benefits that can be seen as a positive return on investment for the association’s nearly 13,000 firearms industry members. It is from this department that the programs and services created to best suit the individual needs of our manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers and ranges derive. In 2016, the membership department’s accomplishments were many.

Firearms Industry Health Advantage Debut
Open to anyone in the firearms industry, this healthcare option works to save business owners hundreds of thousands of dollars in missed work, out-of-pocket expenses and wasted time at doctor’s offices when non-life threatening illnesses or injuries occur.

Flood and Hurricane Damage Financial Aid
Two natural disasters in 2016 damaged or destroyed a number of NSSF member retailers, ranges and manufacturers.

- $100,000 to qualifying NSSF members in Louisiana
- $75,000 to qualifying NSSF members in Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas.

New Associate Member Category
Designed specifically to connect mainstream firearms industry members with third-party suppliers, this new category enjoyed immediate success and now boasts more than 300 member companies.

A Growing List of Corporate Affinity Partnerships
NSSF continues to add to its list of reputable vendors specializing in products and services utilized by its members. These benefits range from point-of-sale and employee background check services, to new benefits introduced in 2016 focused on enhancing security for ranges, retailers, wholesalers and manufacturers.

Approval of New Voting Members
NSSF voting members are industry corporations, organizations, associations, clubs or partnerships with $2 million minimum annual sales who, in the judgment of the NSSF Board of Governors, will further NSSF’s mission. The four new voting members approved in 2016 were:
RETAILERS

NSSF’s retail members were faced with ever-increasing compliance challenges, legislative issues and a year of record firearms sales transactions in 2016. NSSF introduced a bevy of programs and benefits created to help them stay compliant and improve their growth.

Expanded Webinar Learning Library
Eight new webinars were created covering topics such as ATF compliance, merchandising and social media best practices.

New Store Security & Loss Prevention Audit Program
NSSF’s store security consultants conducted 55 audits and 22 post-event service recoveries for member retailers who had been burglarized.

Improved SHOT Show University
The event set new attendance records, scored the highest satisfaction score ever and included a new learning track designed for range owners and operators.

Creation of Starting Point
A compliance and startup resource was begun for FFLs newly established in the industry, those looking to open a firearms retail establishment for the first time and those seeking to expand their current footprints with new locations.

NSSF Partnership in Firearms Compliance University
Established as a partnership with industry compliance consultancy firm Orchid Advisors, this online learning resource provides continuing, flexible, on-demand education to all FFL holders.

Firearms Industry Compliance Conference
NSSF co-sponsored this annual event for the first time with Orchid Advisors. The 2016 conference focused on the future — where regulations are headed, how product research and development affects FFLs and what processes and technologies FFLs are using to improve their businesses.

Premium Retailer Membership
Forty-eight new members were added to NSSF’s top-tier retailer category. Premium retailer membership offers FFLs unparalleled protection and resources.

NSSF Compliance Consultant Team
Team members conducted 168 in-store compliance audits for our NSSF retailer, corporate and distributor members. Three new team members were added to meet increased demand for services, including one dedicated to the special concerns of California retailers.
RANGES

In 2016, added pressure in the form of increased OSHA inspections and penalties had many more range members seeking ways to keep their facilities healthy and safe. NSSF staff heeded their call.

Premium Range Membership
- Three new consultants were added to the OSHA Compliance Team, along with a fourth to focus on assisting range members in the startup stage.
- Designed a new grant program to benefit ranges in the startup stage.
- More than 40 new premium range members signed on in 2016, bringing the total of NSSF’s top-tier range membership to more than 80.

Lead Management & OSHA Compliance Workshops
- Three events were held in 2016; one in Portland, one in Dallas coinciding with Nation’s Best Sports Show, and a fall workshop in Minneapolis.
- Workshops attracted nearly 150 range owners and operators.

New Star-Rating Range Program
NSSF launched a completely revamped Star-Rating Range Program. Created to acknowledge facilities that excel across a wide variety of criteria, the program highlights businesses that provide an outstanding facility, excellent customer service and work with their communities to be seen as positive business influences.

The new program requires reevaluation every three years, and that, coupled with a much more comprehensive and in-depth set of criteria for making the grade, is intended to help ranges provide a consistently high-quality experience for their customers, while improving business practices.
RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

The recruitment of new shooters, hunters and general firearms enthusiasts, along with finding new pathways to keep these participants involved in the shooting sports once they’ve become acclimated, continues to be a primary goal of NSSF.

Attended by nearly 250 industry professionals and hosted by the city of Pittsburgh, this yearly roundtable provided valuable content for all segments of the industry and continued a theme begun last year on how best to engage with diverse audiences.

Modeled after the sports camps of Major League Baseball and NASCAR, wherein consumers have the chance to experience what it’s like to be a professional in those sports, NSSF’s Shooting Sports Fantasy Camp — the first of its kind in the firearms industry — proved enormously successful.

This is NSSF’s premier introduction to shooting program. In 2016, 220 First Shots events were held at 53 locations across the country.

Also, two Big City Tour events, one in the Seattle and Portland areas, the other in Salt Lake City, introduced hundreds of new people to the shooting sports in these regions.

This fast-paced, highly enjoyable program was designed to provide an introduction to firearms competition. Now in its third year as an NSSF program, Rimfire Challenge continues to grow in popularity, with 260 local matches held in 2016 and record attendance at its World Championship event.
RESEARCH

From new to well-established retailers, ranges and manufacturers, more and more businesses each year are turning to NSSF for the tools and resources they need to keep their enterprises growing and prospering.

- In 2016, NSSF released more than 150 research reports to help guide our industry’s businesses.

- Awarded a $98,000 multi-state grant from the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies to be used to update economic impact research reports.

- Successful introduction of Phase 1 of three phases of a new needs-based consumer segmentation project. This resulted in partnership with 25 member companies and other partners to generate nearly 100,000 survey responses from consumers for Phase 2. (Development of Phase 3, including a specialized report, is underway.)
2017 SHOT SHOW

The one event every industry member looks forward to the most, the 2017 SHOT Show set the bar for innovation and customer satisfaction. Highlights of the annual show, held at the Sands Expo in Las Vegas, included:

- Second highest attendance and highest satisfaction rating ever.
- Expanded presence of SHOT Show TV, including live interviews taking place in the lobby of the main show floor and featured in hotels across the city.
- An expanded New Product Center featuring more than 400 new products from more than 350 companies.
- 2017 exhibitors renewed their booth space for the 2018 SHOT Show at an unprecedented rate of 97 percent, widely beating the nationwide trade show renewal rate of 76 percent.
- SHOT Show NEXT, an exhibitor row of 100 companies new to the SHOT Show, experienced intense traffic and provided an exceptional level of connection between the exhibitors and visiting buyers and media members.

New SHOT Show Supplier Showcase an Overwhelming Success
This first-of-its kind venue, debuting the day before the show opened, was designed to network exhibiting manufacturers with third-party OEM suppliers.

- Sold-out OEM exhibitor space to more than 260 suppliers.
- Exceptional attendance by nearly 3,000 manufacturers, purchasing agents and design engineers.

The 2017 SHOT Show's statistics are impressive:
- Now the fifth largest trade show in Las Vegas, SHOT Show contributes nearly $90 million in non-gaming revenue to the Las Vegas economy.
- More than 1,600 exhibiting companies.
- More than 640,000 net square feet of exhibit space.
- 13 acres of product displays.
- More than 100 new exhibiting companies added to the main show floor.
- Nearly 65,000 in total attendance.
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

NSSF, working both from the association’s headquarters in Newtown, Connecticut, and its offices on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., have as its foremost goals the ongoing protection of the lawful commerce in firearms, defeating threats to citizens’ Second Amendment rights, and enhancing the ability of law-abiding Americans to enjoy hunting and the shooting sports.

- In the 114th Congress, NSSF played a leading role in the coalition that secured unanimous passage of the Bipartisan Sportsmen’s Act (97-0) in the Senate. Unfortunately, this package of pro-sportsmen’s legislation was ultimately stalled over energy policy.

- Protecting the ability of our businesses to operate, we worked diligently with Congressional allies for successful passage of legislation in the U.S. House to stop and de-fund “Operation Choke Point” program abuses that had resulted in the unwarranted, politically-motivated denial of financial services.

- NSSF can report continued progress in defeating unnecessary and misnamed “armor piercing” ammunition legislation, affecting popular ammunition widely used by law-abiding Americans.

- In addition, we activated our network of grassroots support in response to defeat gun control measures introduced by Sens. Dianne Feinstein of California and Chris Murphy of Connecticut.

Congressional Fly-In
The annual NSSF Congressional Fly-In brought a record number of industry executives from firearms and ammunition manufacturers, distributors and leading retailers to Washington, D.C., in April for meetings with members of both houses of Congress.

During the Fly-In, U.S. Rep. John A. Culberson (R-Texas) was officially recognized as NSSF’s 2015 Legislator of the Year.
Industry Conferences

NSSF and the FAIR Trade Group jointly presented the annual Import/Export Conference to help federal firearms license holders and other members of the industry stay on top of federal laws and regulations that govern the import and export of firearms and related products.

The annual Firearms Industry Compliance Conference, co-sponsored with Orchid Advisors, focused on the future direction of regulation and the business improvements available to FFLs to improve compliance.

- “Right to hunt” constitutional amendments were passed in Indiana and Kansas.

- A bill permitting Sunday hunting on private lands was passed in Delaware, while Sunday hunting was expanded to several additional West Virginia counties as part of our continuing work in that state.

- On the state level, the firearms industry continued to face an unprecedented number of challenges, a trend we can anticipate will continue for at least the next two years as the ability of gun control advocates to pass legislation is constrained on Capitol Hill.

- NSSF was instrumental in defeating an unnecessary, redundant and extremely onerous retailer licensing bill in Illinois. We also successfully worked to defeat threats to the continued use of traditional lead-component ammunition in Vermont, Rhode Island and Oregon, as well as additional magazine capacity restrictions in Rhode Island.

- We gained passage in New Jersey of legislation allowing U.S. firearms manufacturers to sell directly to law enforcement, while we saw a state mandate requiring retailers to carry one “smart gun” in inventory vetoed by the governor. In Georgia, we won passage in the state legislature of firearms industry anti-discrimination protective legislation although it was vetoed by the governor.

- NSSF and a co-plaintiff recovered $400,000 in attorneys’ fees from the City of Pleasant Hill, California, in a settlement to end a lawsuit challenging a 2013 ordinance that sought to impose burdensome firearms and ammunition sales restrictions on local retailers.

- A California Appellate Court reversed a lower court’s dismissal of the NSSF and SAAMI lawsuit seeking an injunction to block enforcement of the state’s ammunition microstamping law and remanded the case back to the lower court to hear arguments.
COMMUNICATIONS

NSSF works daily to keep its members informed on important issues affecting the industry. Through its newly redesigned Bullet Points e-newsletter to critical updates on regulations and legislation, NSSF provides all segments of the industry with need-to-know information. Here are some highlights from 2016:

• NSSF’s award-winning communications team added three more accolades, winning two Telly Awards for video production—one in the Business-to-Business category for its 2016 SHOT Show promotional video and a People's Telly for the animated infographic “Ammunition Under Attack.” The association was also awarded an American Business Award (Stevie) for its 2015 Annual Review.

• The association’s digital reach continues to grow remarkably through its video and social media efforts. NSSF is America’s leading trade association on social media with 28 million YouTube video views and more than half a million Facebook subscribers. Its in-house produced videos, infographics and other content reached millions virally.

• From CNN to The New York Times, to the morning and nightly news at the national and local level, NSSF was again everywhere, speaking on behalf of our industry, correcting errors and providing factual information to make our collective voice heard in the media.
Hunting Works for America is an NSSF-created grassroots effort that connects business leaders, workers, and non-traditional hunting entities such as chambers of commerce, convention and visitors bureaus and other trade associations, who are positively impacted by the hunters in their communities. Through these connections, hunters gain a powerful and united voice speaking to the economic benefits hunting brings to the states and individual communities when matters that affect hunting arise in their local and state legislatures.

In 2016, Hunting Works for America added two new states to its growing ranks, with Alabama and Michigan bringing the program total to 14 state chapters, joining Maine, Washington, Oregon, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, Minnesota, North Dakota, Iowa and Missouri. The program was founded in 2010, and on average two new state partnerships are organized each year.
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