

# Editorial

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## We Need Original Research Not New Analysis of Old Data

The 2007 U.S. Bicycle Market Overview, a new report released by the National Bicycle Dealers Association, compiles and analyzes data from a variety of sources. These include the National Sporting Goods Association, the Outdoor Industry Association, the U.S. Department of Commerce and this magazine.

While useful, this report must be viewed with a certain amount of skepti-

cism. Because the information is culled from multiple studies, its data sources, definitions and methodology are inconsistent. That means more leeway is necessary in analyzing and explaining the data. Projecting market totals often requires big leaps in logic.

The survey's author, Jay Townley, admits in his closing comments that, "We are presenting our best estimates because of the lack of complete and uni-

versal U.S. bicycle industry reporting."

When commenting on its monthly sales and membership report, the BPSA statistics committee chairman often offers similar caveats.

It's a shame that the industry's trade associations are forced to rely on incomplete and questionable statistics, in some cases gathered by other organizations, due to weak commitment by members to support accurate and time-

ly statistics programs.

Until there is consensus and momentum among bicycle brands to support reliable data capture programs, we will be forced to make educated guesses and assumptions on the size of the market.

By relying only on numbers provided by outside sources and not conducting our own scientific, original research we're undermining our success as an industry.