

Riding the wave of local surf culture

By Brandon Bosworth

Surfing has long been part of what makes Hawaii special. Even people who never go near a board often find themselves connected to surf culture by wearing clothes inspired by wave riders.

The 1,145-square-foot Quiksilver Board Room at Kahala Mall is Hawaii's go-to spot for this water-centric style. The locally owned and operated franchise caters to hardcore surfers, casual beachgoers, and all those in between. Previously at Ward Centers, the shop opened its current location in February of this year. Its full line of surf-related clothes and accessories include top brands such as Quiksilver, Quiksilver Waterman Collection, Quiksilver Originals, Roxy, Roxy Outdoor Fitness, Da Kine, Electric, Oakley and Fu-wax.

The store is an offshoot of the popular Quiksilver brand, which was founded in 1969 and is known for its high-quality and innovative products. For example, Quiksilver was the first company to offer boardshorts using two snaps and a Velcro closure for a secure fit, and a yoked waist and scallop legs for ease of movement. Then in the early '80s, the manufacturer introduced stretch fabric boardshorts. This dedication to cutting-edge products helped Quiksilver become the first surf company to break through a billion in sales, with a revenue of \$1.3 billion in 2004.

Locally, Quiksilver Board Room got its start as a Roxy store about 17 years ago, and then as one of the only three Quiksilver Youth stores in the world. Keeping true to its name,



J.D. Small

the Quiksilver Board Room houses an impressive array of surfboards. With quite a few popular surf spots just minutes away from the shop, the boards sell well. "We have a great selection; we keep a full stock of about 85 boards," said J.D. Small, general manager.

Small explained that the store values local manufacturers, so it carries many boards crafted by island shapers and is the official showroom for Wade Tokoro surfboards.

"Wade is one of the greatest surfboard shapers in the world today, especially for the Hawaiian waters, and we're excited to showcase his boards alongside the latest water sports clothing and accessories on the market," said Jake Mizuno, co-founder (with Shyrh Maurer) of Republic Retailers Inc., the store's parent company that oversees operations.

While more than a few tourists find their way to Quiksilver Board Room, many customers are locals who tend to appreciate the store's focus on functionality over fashion. As Small noted, employees aim to fulfill these customers' needs by carrying a thoughtful array of high-quality products.

"We talk to people and bring in what will sell best. We have a local

buyer and try to cater to local customers," he said.

Big sellers include rashguards and bikinis, as well as accessories like caps and backpacks. "We're stoked by what we have here in the store," Small added.

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Photos courtesy of Quiksilver Board Room

With beach-ready products for men, women and children, the shop is Hawaii's source for all things surf-related.

Clothing catered to watermen

Through a variety of surf-inspired clothes, sportswear and accessories, Quiksilver Board Room caters to a wide range of local clientele. The store also houses niche products, such as Quiksilver's Waterman Collection, catered to specific needs.

The Waterman Collection is geared toward men and features items suited for water sports, such as boardshorts, as well as T-shirts and aloha shirts that carry over into other areas of island living.

"It combines fashion and function," said J.D. Small, general manager. "The price points are really good for the construction and quality of the clothes."

The line's aloha shirts are especially popular and versatile because they are cut with the physiques of surfers, paddlers and other water sports enthusiasts in mind. They appeal to buyers because the shoulders are a bit more relaxed, and the fit is not too casual or too dressy.

"We sell a lot of them. Both younger men and older businessmen buy them," added Small.

► The 411

Name: Quiksilver Board Room

Address: Kahala Mall
4211 Waialae Ave., Honolulu HI 96816

Phone: 596-2773

Website: www.quiksilver.com

General Manager: J.D. Small

Employees: 8

Founded: 2014

Benefits: Employees receive medical and discounts.

Noteworthy: Earlier this year, Quiksilver Board Room participated in the annual Oakley Surf Shop Challenge, a popular contest for surf retailers.