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For each of these articles I interviewed the client, wrote the article, and edited the photos submitted by the client, then formatted each for the [www.ecrsoft.com](http://www.ecrsoft.com) web site and e-mails sent to the corporate mailing list.

## Footsloggers Stands Tall in the Outdoors

Since 1971 **Footsloggers Outfitters** has offered the best in backpacks, sleeping bags, footwear, tents, and outdoor equipment to the North Carolina High Country where outdoor activity is a year-round endeavor. The name is from the term meaning “one who walks, marches, or trudges, especially over a long distance,” which was in popular use during WWII. Home of the **Footsloggers Tower**, a 35-foot climbing structure for beginner and experienced climbers (right), the main store is easy to spot in the middle of downtown Boone. It happens to be right outside the ECRS office windows, so when owner Hanes Boren and office manager Jane Anderson went in search of an inventory automation system in 2001, they didn't have to go far.



Footsloggers has expanded to a second location in nearby Blowing Rock and an outlet store also in Boone. “When we opened second and third locations, we knew we needed to have a better handle on our merchandise,” said Jane. “Not only did ECRS show us a product that addressed those needs, the salespeople and support staff were extremely helpful and very professional from the start.”



(left) Inside the Main Store in downtown Boone, NC.

(inset) Office Manager Jane Anderson describes how Catapult has helped Footsloggers stay in control of its huge inventory.

Adopting an inventory management and POS system is no mean feat. Not only does it involve learning what the system can do, but how to use it effectively which means replacing former procedures and ways of thinking about and using business data. After years of depending on Catapult to help run Footsloggers, Jane remembers when she needed help getting used to the way it works or setting it up. “The transition was smooth. ECRS was there to help, so there were no real problems. Technical Support has always been fast, efficient, and professional. Messages left are returned promptly within 15 minutes or so.”

“Training at the **Catapult University** was very detailed,” recalls Jane. “Mac Mast was very captivating—before I knew it the class day was over. There was so much to learn, but it was all relevant to how we wanted to use Catapult.”

“Once we knew we needed a particular function or feature and how to use it, it was very easy to use. Catapult is definitely user-friendly.”

Most of the customer service employees at Footsloggers are college students, and there is the usual turnover for a college town. “There is never a problem with a new employee learning Catapult. Basic training on the register takes about 15 minutes.”

(right) The Footsloggers Family (a stone's throw from ECRS offices)

Besides tracking an inventory of tens of thousands of items, Catapult brings accuracy to Footsloggers. “Mistakes in inventory and at the register are easy to find with all the reports. There's a report for nearly everything. The End of Month Department Sales and Optimized Sales reports tell me exactly what's sold by department and subdepartment.” Footsloggers uses Catapult's PowerField feature to categorize within departments.



“From one computer Catapult helps with reordering, shows me which items are selling and which aren't.” Jane finds the Automatic Reordering feature particularly helpful. “It's definitely worth the time setting it up to do the work for you.”

(left) Footsloggers Outfitters shop in neighboring Blowing Rock

With over 1,000 customers a day when it's busy, which is directly tied to the weather, customer service is a particular concern at Footsloggers. “We use the POS Prompts to collect data about where our customers are coming from and how they heard about us or a particular sales event. It's helped save money by targeting our advertising where it's most effective. Having our Return Policy printed on every receipt gives customers assurance about their purchase, which is really the kind of service they're looking for.”

Footsloggers continues its respected tradition as a mainstay in the local economy, and ECRS is proud that Catapult plays a vital role in Footsloggers's ongoing success.

Copywriting Sample for [www.ecrsoft.com](http://www.ecrsoft.com) by Mark H Suggs





## Hollywood Pet Shop is a Treat for Pets and Owners



Todd Warner opened his pet supplies boutique **Tailwaggers** in the Beachwood community of Hollywood in Fall 2003. After 20 years in the movie industry (postproduction), Todd was inspired to set up shop in a vacant store he passed every day for two years. Already a fan of dogs, with two of his own (Logan and Dexter), Todd stocks his shelves with holistic pet foods and treats, including (Paul) Newman's Own Organic Dog Food; but Todd doesn't sell animals, explaining, "There are so many animals who need homes already." Along with meals like Kosher Chicken Livers and Cordog Bleu treats, you will find unique supplies at **Tailwaggers**, like custom handmade cat scratchers, designer carrying cases, eye goggles for dogs (to protect your pooch's peepers while he's cruising with his head hung out of the car window), and coordinating umbrellas for you and your pet.

### Dinner for dogs — Hollywood style!

Todd did his homework before making his entrepreneurial leap by checking out stores on both coasts with similar objectives and by looking into point-of-sale systems before choosing Catapult. "I liked Catapult's simplicity and logic," particularly the touch screen POS screen, he said, impressed with how it keeps cashiers from making errors, "by letting you know when there's a problem" with

the input. His employees were pleased that Catapult was easier than most other POS systems they had worked on. "New employees are up and running the first day."

"We use the POS Item Look-Up feature all the time to see if we have something a customer wants already in stock or if we need to order it."

The Catapult maintenance interface was easy to figure out for Todd. "I don't need to go to the [ *Catapult On-Line Manual* ] too often, but when I do, it's easy to understand—not overly technical." The on-screen help built into the interface is effective, as well, in guiding the user to make the right entries.

"I love all the reports that are available in Catapult. Of course, I don't use them all, but I'm always discovering new ones that have just the information I'm looking for." The Inventory Reorder Recommendation report is helpful for identifying items that need replenishing. "I can filter by Brand Name or Supplier to see just the items for the vendor I'm ordering from."

**"To pick up traffic (on our slowest day) we started Tailwagger Tuesdays when 5% of our profits go to local animal charities. Now Tuesday is our busiest day!"**

Todd Warner, owner

The Hourly and Daily Sales reports have helped Todd determine adjustments in his business hours. "When we were open from 9:00 to 6:00, the hourly sales showed the opening and closing hours were some of our busiest. So we expanded the hours to pick up even more business." These reports show customer counts and sales amounts for each hour. By identifying 2:00 as a typically slow hour of the day, Todd determined he could make better use of his employees' time by scheduling maintenance tasks during that hour.

**Catapult makes itself right at home among the feline and canine paraphernalia at Tailwaggers.**

Another trend Todd picked up on from his reports was that Tuesday was the slowest day. "To pick up traffic we started

Tailwagger Tuesdays—every Tuesday 5% of our profits go to local animal charities. Now Tuesday is our busiest day!"



## Nature's Market Grows with Catapult Leading the Way

**Nature's Market** is an upscale natural food store, the largest in a 30-mile radius of Kent, Washington. **Sally Honeysett** is proprietor over a huge selection of groceries and supplements, including organic produce, wines, and cheeses. The small deli serves a good-sized lunch crowd from the community of Kent.

While she was making plans to expand her store, Sally knew to run Nature's Market at peak performance she would need the help of a Retail Automation system. "That meant I needed to keep up with the changing times and technology." Sally first heard about Catapult at the National Nutritional Foods Association (NNFA) trade show in Las Vegas. "I knew the system had more features than I would use right away," she recalls. "Now (after using Catapult for eight months) I absolutely love the whole system, even though I'm nowhere near using Catapult to its full potential."

"I went to the Catapult University training eager to learn all there was to know about the system. There was so much to learn. I decided I would focus on learning one thing at a time and once I learned one thing, I'd move on to the next. Mac Mast was an outstanding instructor. He gave me the overall picture with enough information so I could work my way through the system. I'm not a computer mastermind with a lot of time. The class kept me from being lost with the system."



"Catapult is very user-friendly. Because I know the basics now, and the arrangement of and information of the screens are helpful, I don't normally need to go the documentation." But when she does, Sally says the Catapult On-Line Manual is helpful as well.

**Nature's Market owner  
Sally Honeysett (left):  
"Catapult is worth every penny."**

"My younger employees, the more computer-minded, they loved Catapult right away. The older staff took a little longer to get used to it. The daily Cashier Reconciliation report helps me determine which cashiers need some help with particular procedures so I can address those needs with them." Sally uses the hourly sales reports to decide when more or fewer employees need to be scheduled.

Building an inventory database with 25 to 30 thousand items is no easy task, but the payoff is worth it. Catapult helps Nature's Market stay compliant with government regulations. "The State of Washington is very strict about a scanned item's price at the register matching the shelf tags. Every month I put about 120 items on sale." Before Catapult, every item in the store had to have a price tag. And putting items on sale meant additional price tags—and headaches.

"Being able to create a Promotional Price Change ahead of time is a huge plus. I've got to where I can do that so fast, it really saves time. And the LabelVision signs are nice and uniform throughout the store—not hand-drawn like they were before—and they show the customers the sale price and when the sale ends. No more sale stickers—that really cuts down on labor costs."

**Nature's Market's new location shines.**



Tracking all the inventory movement is a big benefit to Nature's Market. "I really like the report showing items with zero movement."

When asked about how Catapult has helped with frequent tasks at Nature's Market, Sally said, "Scanning customer coupons is a breeze. And the Activity Summary reports have helped shorten processing my B&O (Business & Operations) Taxes by summarizing the nontaxable sales for me.

"I know I will eventually use more and more of the features. I'm looking forward to using the new Gift Cards feature and starting a Customer Loyalty program.

"The bottom line," Sally concluded, "Catapult is worth every penny. I shudder to think how I'd be running this store without it."

**Catapult helps Nature's Market keep control of its large inventory.**





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The following is an article I wrote on behalf of the team of men from Alliance Bible Fellowship, Boone, NC, who went on a Hurricane Relief mission trip to the Gulf Coast. The article was published in the monthly church newsletter in November 2005.

# Hurricane Katrina

## A Relief Story

Change. It can take years. Or it can happen “in the twinkling of an eye”—like the terror of hurricane Katrina that roared through Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama changing forever the landscape and lives in its wake.

You may have followed the news of Katrina’s impending landfall and the race to evacuate on August 28. You may have even said a prayer for the multitudes in its path. And when the worst-case scenarios played out on August 29, you may have seen the evening news reporting the death and destruction along with the other tragedies—manmade or natural—occurring around the world. Only this time it was a little closer to home. The lead story. Front-page news in the U.S. And you prayed again for the survivors and those struggling to survive.

The comparisons were almost immediate. Worse than Andrew. A death toll that could rival 9-11. As catastrophic as the Indian Ocean tsunamis last Christmas. How do you begin to respond to such a tragedy?

As the numbers were being tallied, thousands of Americans had already begun to give more than just their attention to the stories.

Donations poured in. Governments did what they could. The Red Cross set up shelters throughout the storm-torn region. And Samaritan’s Purse camped out in the aftermath preparing to do at home what it does around the world when disaster strikes: to show the love of Christ to those who are suffering.

ABF answered Jesus’ call to serve our neighbors by teaming up with SP to send 13 men to a neighborhood in need. We

didn’t go alone. The prayers and support of you—our families and friends—went with us. Other congregations from across the country sent workers, too. But clearly the One doing the work—through us all—was the Holy Spirit.

As we pulled into the Methodist campground on the Biloxi coast where SP had been for over a month, we only began to realize the extent of the catastrophe. While God had spared most of the buildings that provided our lodging for the week, only the frame of the church building survived—our first glimpse of the destruction that had virtually leveled this community.

Within a short walk along the debris-covered beach, the bare foundations and twisted shells of homes and businesses testified of the power of creation and the futility to withstand it.

You may have seen on television and in newspapers the pictures of trees snapped like twigs, billboards and windows blown out, roofs ripped away, hotels and homes collapsed—but no image can reveal the overwhelming devastation of mile after mile of material destruction. It looked like a bomb had been dropped. Among hurricanes in the last century, the National Weather Service ranks Katrina third in strength at landfall after Camille (1969), but Katrina is responsible for nearly five times the number of deaths.

Our assignments took us beyond the coast where the calm water belied the havoc it had wreaked just a month ago. And from the widespread ruin our focus turned to the trouble and heartache that still plagued the residents of Gulfport. Leaking roofs, downed and damaged trees, possessions and pride destroyed. We were there to help with hammers and chainsaws—oil and wine for wounded homes (Luke 10:33-35)—and with words of hope about a treasure that cannot be destroyed by rust or moth

or raging storm (Matthew 6:20).

Some of those we helped already knew the One who had saved them through all life’s storms, and it was a joy to do such a small deed that meant so much to them. For others—whose gratitude was just as genuine—our deeds provided the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to open their eyes to the love of Christ that energized us from one job to the next. When we finished our work, we presented each homeowner with a Bible and the good news that a greater work had been done for each one of us on the cross. Some were moved by the promise of eternity with Jesus and asked Him to change their heart as we prayed together. And for some, a seed was planted and a promise made that we would continue to pray for them.

Change. It happened to more than the landscape. To more than the believers whose help came from the Lord through fellow believers. To more than those walking in the darkness who got to see the light of Christ’s love in action (Isaiah 9:2; John 1:4,5). It happened to us. We were told it would, but I don’t think any of us expected so dramatic a change in so short a time. If you’ve worked in a mission field—foreign or domestic—with believers to complete the task set before you (Ephesians 2:10), then you know how we were changed. We were focused on helping others with a common desire to share with them the salvation we know they need. And how do we know they need it? Because when we needed it, the Holy Spirit opened our eyes. And it changed us.

Our prayer at the end of the week was that our bond as believers would continue to be strengthened long after the Gulf Coast has recovered and the work that the Holy Spirit began in us would spread through the church, here at ABF and throughout the world.

The ABF Hurricane Relief Team