

The Business of Outdoor Lighting: A History of UCO with Bruce Johnson

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By Chase Anderson | February 21, 2023



In the latest episode of the History of Gear podcast, Bruce Johnson, a gear historian and enthusiast, talks about the history of UCO - a company known for its innovative outdoor products such as the candle lantern and the ice cream ball.

UCO, established in 1971 in Redmond, Washington, was founded with the aim to create gear that could enhance experiences in the great outdoors. Johnson reveals that UCO's first product was the Original Candle Lantern, a lightweight device that provided a warm, comforting light for camping and backpacking trips.

UCO has continually expanded and innovated its product line, including other outdoor products such as headlamps, fire starters, and cookware. One of UCO's most unique inventions is the ice cream ball - a fun and easy way to make ice cream while camping or picnicking.

According to Johnson, UCO's success can be attributed to its commitment to creating gear that is both functional and fun. The ice cream ball, for instance, is not just a practical camping tool, but also a way to bring people together and create unforgettable outdoor experiences.

Throughout the podcast episode, Johnson shares fascinating insights and stories about UCO's history and evolution as a company. He also discusses the broader trends and developments in the outdoor gear industry, highlighting the ways in which UCO has contributed to the growth and evolution of the field.

YouTube video player [https://www.youtube.com/embed/gNRZbHL17Xo5603150border:none;min-width:min\(100%,430px\);BruceJohnson|UCO|HistoryofGearhttps://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=pkr2n-13ac7f7-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=8bbb4e100%150nopb-iframe-player](https://www.youtube.com/embed/gNRZbHL17Xo5603150border:none;min-width:min(100%,430px);BruceJohnson|UCO|HistoryofGearhttps://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=pkr2n-13ac7f7-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=8bbb4e100%150nopb-iframe-player)