

DRESS THE PROFESSIONAL

Help your client dress for success. Whether they are looking for fashion or the utility of performance uniforms, we've got five professions covered from head to toe.

BY JULIE A. CAJIGAS

Knowing the ropes in business and uniform apparel can be a challenge, especially with so many industries looking to fill distinctly different needs through their clothing choices. Dressing a sales representative is worlds away from dressing a construction worker or a nurse. In an uncertain economy, clients will be looking for something different, whether that's a stronger connection to practical features, fashion-forward pieces or high-tech performance fabrics. Distributors must be on top of the latest technology and trends to inspire their clients to put last year's polo in the closet and order something new for 2009. To keep you up-to-date with the latest needs in some of the hottest careers, we've explored some great options to keep your client dressed for success.

Dress the Rep

Success starts close to home – how are your sales reps dressed? Or, if you are a sales representative, are you putting your best foot forward with an attractive outfit that meets all of your needs? The first step to choosing the perfect outfit for any client is to act as a consultant and evaluate their needs. A quick phone call or brief appointment can help you determine their wearables priorities.

Lisa Gilreath, a sales professional for Proforma Albrecht & Co. (*asi/300094*), is very clear on what she expects from her outfit. "Although many reps might prefer easy-care fabrics, I do like dry cleaning," she says, "because I want everything to be pressed and crisp. I do not wear polo shirts and I prefer pants over skirts." She uses samples extensively in her sales presentations and prefers the comfort of pants for lifting and carrying products.

As far as tops are concerned, she has clear preferences. "If I wear a blouse, I prefer three-quarter sleeves, comfortable fabrics and shirts that don't need to be tucked in," she says. A favorite blouse of hers is the "Carolina" from Tri-Mountain (*asi/92125*). Here are our picks for dressing your sales rep.



Sierra Pacific Custom Logo Tie - Staton Corporate and Casual (*asi/89380*)

When your rep wants to go a little more formal, a 100%-silk tie is just right. It's stain-resistant, with soil release and liquid-repellant performance. So, if that early morning coffee spills, your tie will still look great.



The Carolina and Emissary - Tri-Mountain (*asi/92125*)

The Carolina provides the ultimate in dress shirt comfort. The men's companion style features a subtle mini-plaid pattern, button-down collar, left chest pocket and central pleated yoke back.



Forenza Briefcase - LogoMark, Inc. (*asi/67866*)

The Forenza, starting as low as \$23.95, has many distinct advantages. This multi-use briefcase converts to a backpack, which is perfect for carrying samples. An additional laptop compartment and three zippered front pockets make it the perfect tool for a rep's next appointment.



Jonathon Corey Men's and Ladies' Teflon Treated Twill - Whispering Pines (*asi/97027*)

For the sales rep who prefers to wash and go, this long-sleeved dress shirt is the perfect solution. With Teflon treatment, water- and oil-based spills will bead up and roll off. Plus, it is wrinkle-resistant, keeping your rep looking great all day long.

Style the Chef

Jill Nussinow wears many hats, but all of them are chef's. A chef, culinary educator, registered dietician, self-proclaimed veggie queen and more, she has a lot of experience choosing uniforms. The key components for her are fit and feel. "The comfort and breathability of the cloth is crucial," she says. "The fit is also very important."

Nussinow orders custom jackets for her business. "I have my jackets custom made with a trim fabric I've selected myself," she says. Don't be afraid to use bold colors either. Her jacket is purple with green lettering that matches her brand, which is a far cry from the white uniforms that often come to mind. "Here's what I say about white," she says, "you can only wear white once, then it's never white again."

She also stresses the importance of having the right shoes. "When you're standing for a million hours a day, it really affects your posture, back and feet. If your feet are uncomfortable, it can affect your mood – no one likes a crabby chef." With comfort, brand and style in mind, here are our picks for styling your chef clients.



Pullover Chef Polo – Happy Chef Uniforms (asi/59610)

This pullover is lightweight and easy-care and comes in four colors to spice things up in the kitchen.



The Pacific Cooler – Golden Express (asi/57665)

If you can't stand the heat, and you're a chef, you certainly can't get out of the kitchen, so this neckerchief is filled with a super-absorbent polymer to keep you cool. Soak it in cool water, and slip it on to keep cool for hours.



Yarn-Dyed Baggy Chef Pant – Aprons, Etc. (asi/36558)

Crafted of an exclusive yarn-dyed fabric, they feature greater color retention and washability. Two side pockets and one back pocket make it easy to carry small utensils.

Clothe the Construction Worker

Clothing a construction worker is a little tougher than choosing the perfect stain-resistant tie for a sales rep. Depending on the type of construction work your client does, there are many considerations including the American National Standard Institute (ANSI) and International Safety Equipment Association (ISEA) standards. ANSI-ISEA standards protect construction workers against the hazard of low visibility and garments that meet their standards can be worn 24 hours a day to provide users with a high level of visibility through the use of fluorescent and retroreflective materials.

In addition to choosing apparel that meets these standards, distributors should also consider the type of work a construction worker is doing to make the best presentation and outfitting decisions. Perry McGillivray, member of the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) local 139, explained some of the most important characteristics that construction workers look for. "Weather protection is a big deal in our industry," he says. "We're often working in inclement conditions. Additionally, Kevlar gloves are a much better choice than the lined leather gloves we often wear, as they protect our hands from metal splinters, cuts and fingers getting caught in grinders."

McGillivray also says that versatility is very important. "We use a lot of equipment with our hard hats and it's important that they can accommodate it." Here are our picks for clothing the construction worker.



30R Hard Hat – American Custom Safety (asi/35494)

Protection and safety are the key elements in outfitting a construction worker, and what better way to do that than with a branded hard hat? A point ratchet classic cap, it features accessory slots for a face shield, hearing protection, welding helmets or communication devices. Its wider brim offers increased protection from the elements.



Kevlar Utility Gloves 480 W – OccuNomix (asi/74830)

This multi-purpose glove features a form-fitted design perfect for construction, mechanic and assembly workers. The Kevlar patches on the thumb, palm and fingertips, along with the heavy-duty reinforced finger sidewalls and snug fit, help protect their hands, providing cut-resistance. Reflective piping adds visibility.



Rubicon Safety Glasses – PromoVision Palomino (asi/79898)

Long gone are the days of big, clunky safety goggles. Instead, give the construction worker these safety glasses built to protect with a 180-degree optically correct viewing area, resilient spring hinges and a close orbital seal for maximum comfort and protection.



The Year-Round 5-in-1 Parka – Acadia (asi/30446)

This item will keep your client safe and warm year-round. It features water-resistant technology and functions as a winter parka, a three-season parka, a three-season jacket, a three-season vest and a quilted three-season jacket.

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Outfit the Graphic Designer

Graphic designers and other creative professionals are an important part of this and many other industries. While our first inclination might be to outfit them like any other corporate client, creative professionals have special needs.

“As a graphic designer, I feel that it’s important to demonstrate my creativity in my clothing,” says Linda Schellentrager, owner of Schell Design. “Whether it’s through bright colors, a signature piece of jewelry, or a lovely scarf,” she explains, “it’s crucial to wear your creative spirit on your sleeve when making client presentations.”

Here are some of our picks for graphic designers and other creative professionals.



Artist Portfolio # 812 - Uphill (asi/92765)

Carrying samples of their work to and from presentations can be a challenge, but not with this art portfolio that features leather-wrapped carrying handles, a tempered hardboard with an art clip and a removable deluxe organizer pocket for all of their art accessories. It’s the perfect accessory for transporting or storing their work.



Ladies’ Devon & Jones Pink Stretch Sateen Blouse - Ash City (asi/37127)

This is the perfect jewel-tone blouse to wear when presenting an exciting new design. Crafted of 97% fine-combed cotton in a sateen weave for an understated sheen, this vibrant shirt also features 3% spandex for stretch, front and back princess seams for a dressier look and pearlized buttons.



Custom Wet Dye Scarf - Buffalo Bay (asi/42416)

A custom silk scarf is the perfect complement to the female graphic designer’s wardrobe. Whether worn as neckwear or tied around her handbag, a custom scarf can feature her company name, her favorite colors and her style all at once.



Men’s Boo Crew - Boardroom Apparel (asi/40705)

This men’s long sleeved crew can be dressed up with dress khakis or down with denim.

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Fashion Your Nurse or Medical Assistant

Nursing is a calling, especially in family practice, pediatrics and the ER. When working with everyone from children to the elderly, these nurses and medical assistants need to be ready for anything and everything that walks in the door. Jennifer Krimaschewicz, a medical assistant for Ohio Family Practice, says that foot comfort is key. "I like good clogs, made with high-quality materials that stay on your feet and won't stretch out," she says. "Of course, you don't want shoes or scrubs that are too 'old' looking."

She looks for style and comfort in her apparel. "I like the comfortable, high-quality scrubs. A favorite brand of mine is Landau; they wear well, don't pill and last a long time." Here are our picks for the nurse that takes care of your family. ▲

Julie Cajigas is a contributing writer based in Cleveland, OH



Hip Poc and Scrub Cap - Crazy Scrubs (asi/46480)

An essential accessory for any family practice nurse, the hip poc is a comfortable nurse's "tool belt" with pockets for all the necessities, from tongue depressors to lollipops to make it all better. Crazy Scrubs also provides a line of scrub caps in patterns to brighten anyone's day.



Landau FootwearRX - Instant Tee House (62690)

These non-slip shoes with an anti-microbial sole are built for comfort. Shown here in a wine color, they feature a removable cushioned insert. The built-in foot stabilizer keeps them aligned to reduce fatigue.

Print Scrubs - Instant Tee House (asi/62690)

When treating children, no plain blue scrubs will do. Scrubs with fun prints will make children feel more comfortable in the office and give all the other patients occasion to smile. Available in multiple prints and styles, we recommend the V-neck monkey print.



Sprague Rappaport Stethoscope - Spectrum Uniforms (asi/88680)

A tool that every nurse needs is a good stethoscope. What better way to showcase your client's logo or help the nurse get to a patient's heart?

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