

● GETTING TO KNOW ...

Cathy Groves, Dri Duck Traders Inc.



Cathy Groves is vice president of sales and marketing for Dri Duck.

What's the background of Dri Duck?

Twelve years ago a company called Design Resources was formed, which is a private-label global sourcing company. It's privately owned by Dave and Mary Reed. They were doing a lot of private-label programs in placketed shirts, woven shirts and outerwear, including some heavy workwear styles for other companies.

Where did the name come from?

The company's full name is Design Resources Inc., or DRI. Then the duck was added for the duck cloth, which is what canvas is often known as in the fabric world. It's a little play on words along with the logo, which is a canvas-backed duck.

DRI has a background in the apparel industry?

Dri Duck has been in the industry since 2003 but DRI

has had partnerships for many years with companies that have some big brands. We've been really involved in the design and production in the realm of outerwear, but also other types of products, from wovens and knits to sweatshirts and caps.

How did you enter the promotional industry?

Our plan with Dri Duck was always to build a brand name. First we sold into retail markets. We did that very quickly by establishing ourselves in the workwear area, specifically in the farm and fleet markets. Then we started to move into some of the higher-end sporting good/outdoor stores. What evolved from there was the promotional products industry, which sees a successful brand and wants it. That was three years ago, and our promotional products business has grown rapidly ever since.

What has been the biggest adjustment?

Just keeping up with our demand. One major change is that we have a new warehouse. It has an inventory-control warehouse management system and state-of-the-art equipment. We also had to rewrite our business model slightly. We found there were so many types of customers out there we couldn't reach, so we started using wholesalers. Now we have five that take very nice inventories and

have their salespeople reach a lot of customers we could not.

What are Dri Duck's most popular markets?

At first it was the avid worker, then outdoor professions. It has since grown into a whole myriad of industries such as fleet and farm, big-box retail-

waterproof, element-resistant and stain-resistant.

What is Realtree?

It's a very highly sought out property of camouflage invented by a famous hunter named Bill Jordan. Last December we secured the license and have gone out with

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ers, sporting goods stores, western wear and corporate wear. We also just launched at military outlets.

How is Dri Duck different from other workwear companies?

We hit a niche in interesting fabric innovations and design. Canvas duck has always been a very stiff fabric at first. The concept was to have a fabric that was soft from the start, which is what we offer. Then the right price on top of features, such as cell phone pocket, zippered pockets, and hidden hoods, that make it more upscale. We've also introduced several performance fabrics that you don't ordinarily see in the workwear market. We have the first cotton canvas that is completely

a full-blown line of camouflaged products. So far it has been highly embraced at retail as well as the promotional industry. There are millions of hunters and many are the same people involved in workwear and corporate buying.

What's new for fall and 2008?

You will see the Wildlife cap line grow, which has already had incredible growth in the past year. We are expanding our ladies' styles. We are also doing an offshoot line with woven shirts, which is exciting because we are known more for our jackets. And the most exciting thing is going to be our new Expedition line. It will take our fabrics and design capabilities to a new high. *