

## Woven/Button-Front Shirts & Blouses



### **WINNER: EXECUTIVE NO-IRON ROYAL OXFORD (1865)**

Supplier: Vantage Apparel (asi/93390)

This button down is the ultimate easy-care shirt. Made from 100% cotton 80s two-ply pinpoint royal oxford cloth, this shirt offers a smooth, comfortable hand. "Its special no-iron treatment and taped seams keep this shirt looking new and wrinkle-free straight from the dryer," says Gina Barreca, director of marketing at Vantage Apparel. Fashion details include a spread collar with removable collar stays, polished pearl buttons and a left-chest patch pocket. Style tip: Pair this classy shirt with a navy suit and polished black dress shoes. RSN #164



### **FINALIST: 100% RING-SPUN COTTON POLO SHIRT (57090)**

Supplier: PremiumWear (asi/72725)  
RSN #165



### **FINALIST: OPEN NECK SHIRT (763)**

Supplier: Tri-Mountain/Mountain Gear (asi/92125)  
RSN #155

## Readers' Choice Award

### **BRODER (asi/42090)**

Here's one of our favorite parts of the Apparel Awards. We asked distributors to nominate their favorite supplier for the *Wearables* Readers' Choice Award. The winner was chosen based on its product selection; size range; brands, fabrics and colors offered; and available inventory. Broder is this year's winner.



Broder's Vice President of Marketing Girisha Chandraraj chats with *Wearables* about his company winning the 2008 Reader's Choice Award:

**Wearables:** What's your reaction to being chosen by our readers as favorite supplier for having the deepest inventory, great selection of styles (cuts, colors and sizes) and customer service?

**Girisha Chandraraj:** We're truly thrilled and excited that customers view us with such high regard. We work very hard on earning our customers' trust and to be acknowledged for that hard work is greatly appreciated.

**Wearables:** What steps have you taken to be strong in these areas? What's your secret to success?

**GC:** We've gone through a pretty aggressive change with the singular focus in helping serve our customers more effectively and efficiently. Elements of that have been consolidating a number of distribution centers and call centers. We even augmented our Web site. We've also been extending credit where it's needed so customers can grow their business.

It's very clear that not one element is the ultimate secret. However, we're firm believers that in order to be considered on the short list of preferred suppliers for our customers, you always have to be in stock and available.

**Wearables:** What advice would you give

to a distributor who really wants to pick the right wearables to pitch to her clients? How does a salesperson hone in on the "perfect" garment?

**GC:** Always provide customers with alternatives. A customer always needs to know what a good choice is and what the alternatives are, to stretch their thinking. Successful customers do a real good job of that. If a customer wants a product and it's very clear, bring two alternatives so the customer can always understand what they're trading off when they're making a choice. It could increase their willingness to pay or the number of items they're willing to buy. ■

*Matthew George is a staff writer for Wearables; Maurin Walchak and Jessie Weisgal are editorial interns.*