

This month's featured "Platinum Member"

Q&A with Bob Broner of Broner Inc.



Tell us the history of your company...

Our company has an interesting and long history. In 1933, we started out in Highland Park, Michigan where my grandfather had a stand across from the original Ford Motor Company. This was pre-union days and the workers would come out on break and buy snacks like candy, tobacco, and work gloves. We ended up selling a lot of work gloves. Well, a long story short, unions came about and the workers no longer needed to buy their gloves because the employers provided them. So, we started calling on stores who sold work gloves. Work gloves led to work caps and work caps led to hats for sports and that led to hats for dress; and so over the course of 75 years we evolved into a full line hat company.

My grandfather passed the business on to my father, and a few years ago, he passed the business on to me and my sister Stephanie. We are headquartered in Auburn Hills, Michigan.

What type of customer buys your hats?

We are fortunate that our brand is sold in several markets. Based on our work glove history, our brand is still preferred in some of the finest working man departments in the country. Our work brand can be found in many of the nation's leading farm and fleet stores, army/navy stores, and sporting goods stores. Our contemporary hats are sold in many specialty stores, clothing and department stores, and resort shops.

What makes your company unique?

What makes our company unique is the fact that we are in so many markets. Our line compliments Carhardt clothing as well as Tommy Bahama. You will find Broner hats in

markets as diverse as Farm Stores to Tuxedo shops; Beach Stores to Denim Boutiques and everywhere in between. Retailers appreciate our honest answers and consumers like our quality products at fair prices.

What's your favorite hat?

My favorite hat is any hat that has less than a 2 inch brim. Here is a photo from last year's Headwear Dinner in New York where I am wearing one of my winter favorites. It makes me feel like I can hang with Sammy, Dean, Frank and the boys.