



Milano Hat Co. recently celebrated the official opening of its new facility in Garland, Texas. The 68,000 square-foot plant manufactures both straw and felt hats.

Milano Opens New Facility

What began as a small Western hat-making operation in 1982 has grown into an industry icon. On Aug. 16, Milano Hat Co. cut the ribbon on a 68,000 square-foot factory and distribution center in Garland, Texas.

The official opening of the plant solidified the city of Garland's claim to be the international Western hat capital. Just up the road is the Hatco facility, home of Stetson, Resistol and Charlie 1 Horse. The combined output of the two facilities represents more Western hats being produced in one city than anywhere else in the world.

Festivities began with a golf tournament in the morning, followed by a barbecue lunch, a short ceremony and a ribbon-cutting. Retailers, reps and special guests were treated to plant tours following the ribbon-cutting.

The company was founded by John Milano, an Italian immigrant. Dorfman Pacific Co. of Stockton, Calif., purchased it in 2004. The company has grown from six employees to 75. Richard Milano serves as president of the company and his father still plays an active role.

According to Scott Starnes, spokesman for Dorfman Pacific, the new facility is already straining under the rapid growth of the company. Additional equipment has been added to the factory, and four acres adjacent to the plant have been purchased for expansion. "Our five-year-plan was accomplished in one year," Starnes said.

The younger Milano developed and designed the plant, where both straw and felt hats are manufactured. The facility includes a number of pieces of equipment that were uniquely developed for Milano's hat-making purposes.

Milano is probably best known for its Larry Mahan line of hats, along with

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