

How to Sell It: Winter Hats



This 100% acrylic watch hat (A18) from Carhartt ([asi/43861](#)) features stretchable rib-knit fabric and comes in a variety of colors. The color-block visor hat (A291), also from Carhartt, is made of acrylic and features a contrasting-color browband and visor.

Selling winter hats is all about pitching to both the young, fashion-forward market and the uniforms market, says David Goldman, vice president of Philadelphia Rapid Transit ([asi/77945](#)). "There are two uses, utilitarian and fashion-centered, and it's important to cater to both," he explains.

Even if design differences may determine the right audience, both demographics want the same thing: warmth. Because of that, Ron Pawlak, sales manager at Carhartt ([asi/43861](#)), says that 100% acrylic knit is still one of the most popular winter hat fabrics. "Our acrylic watch hat (A18) comes in multiple colors, and the acrylic color-block visor hat (A291) features a color-contrasting browband and short visor," he explains.

"They're great for uniforms and for younger audiences." Wool too is a warm choice. "It's great for *Mad Men*-inspired fedoras and top hats for proms and weddings, as well as for short-brimmed fedoras and cowboy hats," Goldman says.

What kind of selection is available? Bayo Simmonds, president of Assertive Creativity ([asi/37166](#)), says the company's hat offerings range from trappers, ski hats, bucket hats and floppies, to cadets, animal kingdom hats, fedoras, ivies and knit head wraps. "We also carry various knit hats, including beanies, berets and cabbies," says Simmonds. "The warmer winter hats are very popular in the northern-most states."

As an outdoor winter uniform option, winter caps have tons of potential landing spots. Erin Tricker, vice president of sales/operations at Broberry Manufacturing ([asi/42057](#)), recommends pitching them to the outdoor job market, like the agriculture and construction industries, and for prominently displaying a corporate image.

For the younger demographic, Goldman adds that it's important to offer different kinds of knit, like waffle weave and crochet weave. The slouch beanies, which measure about 11" or 12", offer a more laid-back, hippie look, while the cuffed caps with pompoms and the Peruvian style, featuring earflaps and side tassels, are trendy.

So how should distributors decorate winter hats for the different markets? While embroidery is largely agreed upon as the number-one decoration option, Goldman says to consider the shape and size of the embroidery as well as the placement. Simmonds says other decoration options can also work. "In some cases on tightly-weaved woven fabrics," he says, "you can use printing

methods and graphic heat-transfer applications. Pitch them as sets too, with coordinating scarves and gloves."