

Shade by TUUCI

QUITE SIMPLY, THE BEST

Among the players in the shade product category, one company has earned a distinction as “the best in the industry” in a mere 10 years – TUUCI.

“Our goal from day one was to develop a unique combination of form and function, and to do it better than anyone else,” remarks Dougan Clarke, Founder and CEO of the Florida-based manufacturer. And as entrepreneurs go, Clarke was extremely well prepared to make that vision a reality.

Growing up seaside, Clarke began his young adulthood working at a boat shop, becoming skilled in the art and science of doing custom work with fiberglass, polymers, UV-stable finishes, aluminum and more. He then rose through the ranks of an outdoor furnishings retail chain, starting up a commercial division and, along the way, learning about the unique requirements of the hospitality industry.

“We always had great furniture, but we could never find a great parasol,” he recalls. “They would break and come back to us, so we always knew we’d be repairing or replacing product. With all my experience making custom bimini and T-Tops for boats, I knew I could develop an umbrella that could weather any extreme environment and embody the best in minimalistic design.”

With that as the starting point, Clarke began by creating a unique hub and runner system, which opens and closes the parasol. “Typically manufacturers have used operating systems that weren’t durable or easy to service,” he explains. “With TUUCI’s innovative hub design, we were able offer a 15-year warranty and dramatically reduce repair time, if required.” TUUCI uses tough, long-lasting materials, such as marine-grade aluminum alloys, fiberglass composite frames, and stainless steel fasteners and pulley systems.

“Our products immediately resonated with customers around the world in every market, from residential end users,

architects, and designers through the luxury hospitality industry,” Clarke states. The company’s long list of clients and repeat customers is testament to the confidence in the TUUCI brand and long life of their products.

Naturally, the fabric TUUCI uses is also top-of-the-line, supplied from industry leader Sunbrella®. Yet even here, the company takes the quality to the next level. “We call our canopies Tuff-Skins®, and for a very good reason,” Clarke says. “We use four and five additional layers of ballistic nylon

at every stress point to withstand impact with the ground or from foreign objects and certainly to hold up in gale-force winds.”

Even with all of its emphasis on superior construction methods and

materials, TUUCI is at its core a remarkably “green” company. From manufacturing to office functions, every business process is deliberately designed to minimize the environmental footprint. The company also supports literally dozens of conservation groups and causes.

TUUCI’s earth-friendly business practices are so comprehensive and extraordinary that the world’s largest green-initiative coffee company has given them their highest rating ever bestowed on any vendor – AA. “This company won’t work with you unless you can demonstrate a proven, long-term track record, from your operations through the way you treat employees,” Clarke states, adding, “And it’s our honor and duty to be responsible stewards of the environment.”

In the end, TUUCI’s story is full of elements that make it distinct and different from any other supplier in the shade industry, which may be the most valuable advantage it offers retailers. Clarke sums it up this way: “We don’t expect to be the biggest, but we are trying to redefine the market by being the undisputed category leader.”

For more information, visit www.tuuci.com or call 305.634.5116.

