



MAGPUL STYLE

Known for producing durable gun accessories, Magpul is now in the apparel game.

BY RICHARD JOHNSON

Breaking industry norms seems to be the Magpul *modus operandi*. Almost single-handedly, the company improved the shooting community's perceptions on the use and durability of polymer on battle rifles.

From the company's tough magazines and ergonomic grips to its precision buttstocks and M-LOK accessory system, Magpul has had a major impact on the

firearms industry. Now, the company is looking to make the same kind of impact on the apparel industry.

Launched at the beginning of 2016, Magpul rolled out a complete line of clothing that will likely appeal to many shooters for its style, performance and fit. For some, the expansion into the apparel market might seem perplexing—a deviation from the company's core mission. But Magpul saw it as an opportunity to address flaws within the apparel industry that affected its existing customers and bring new solutions to all consumers who appreciate performance products.

While researching the company's new gear, I had a chance to speak with Troy McMullen, the director of apparel at Magpul.

McMullen offered me valuable insight into the company's approach to clothing.

CORE PRINCIPLE

Solving problems through better design is a fundamental principle of the Magpul apparel line. Defining the goals of each garment, and identifying the problems being addressed, is a tool the company uses to ensure it produces apparel that actually solves customer problems.

In fact, a plan with defined goals is the foundation every new Magpul product is built on. "Nothing comes out of Magpul... that doesn't start with a defined mission," McMullen told me. "We need to know exactly what we're trying to accomplish before we go and put design resources [into the project] and start to build something."

Made in-house from scratch, Magpul's new T-shirts are available in three different weights—Fine Cotton, Megablend and Superweight—so they can serve as the perfect base layer for a wide variety of activities.

The apparel team at Magpul operates in a way that is similar to the rest of the company. The team starts with defining what the product—in this case, a piece of clothing—is supposed to do. As the product moves through the design process, all team mem-

bers are able to stay focused on the goal because it is clearly defined.

"Our philosophy on [product design] is...everybody buys into [the project] from the start, whether it's part of the development team or part of the production team," said McMullen. "Nobody gets the benefit of losing track of why we're actually doing the thing."

For Magpul, defining what a product is supposed to do often centers on solving specific problems that exist for its customers. This is one of the principles that has helped make Magpul so successful in the firearms accessories business.

"It's always been our philosophy to make what people need," said McMullen, who believes Magpul "is solving things that aren't too sexy or glamorous" but are still extremely important. Sometimes these are problems that the consumer may not even recognize until they have been fixed.



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One of those problems experienced by consumers? Being able to find the perfect garment...a second time. "A customer will find that shirt they like that fits them, and it performs how they want it to," said McMullen. "And, they'll go and they'll wear it for a year or 18 months, but when they go back to the same store and say, 'Hey, I want to buy this thing again. I found the thing I like.' They are told 'That was two seasons ago. We don't make that anymore.' That's one of the things that we're do-



(Closewise from top) Magpul's Flex pants, "El Original" Tejas Gun Belt and Rainey shirt look good while being durable enough to withstand hard use.

ing here—taking the time to get it right and then making it available for that person. We want to be the brand that is consistent in our quality, people know what to expect, and it's repeatable. They can go back and get that perfect garment."

MAGPUL DESIGNS

"We are apparel people internally here, but we're also Magpul," said McMullen. "And we

don't necessarily play by the same rules as the rest of the apparel industry."

With designers plucked from the top tiers of the apparel industry, Magpul set out to make clothing that was functional without the 'right off the battlefield' look that other companies have popularized.

"The talent and the skills necessary to apparel are drawn from a different set of people that we've pulled from all over the industry,"

said McMullen. He explained that with the group of people Magpul has drawn together, the company was able to hit the ground running with top-notch designs. "We have been able to attract people that have been in very high levels of the apparel industry.

"We don't want [Magpul clothing] to look out of place. We don't want to look like Tactical Timmy," said McMullen. "There's enough of that in the world." Instead, the company is focused on producing functional clothing that fits well—both to the body and in social settings.

"I pride myself on being here in Texas

“...Magpul has had a major impact on the firearms industry. Now, the company is looking to make the same kind of impact on the apparel industry.”

and, [after] being in the office all day, getting out to my ranch...and going straight to work. Obviously, I'm not wearing a suit and a tie in the office, but I'm not overdressed when I'm out fixing fences at night."

The Magpul philosophy of design is not limited to the aesthetic value of the garments. Magpul designers are meticulous about all aspects of clothing production. Take, for example, the company's T-shirts.



When work needs to be done, Magpul's stain-resistant Flightline pants are ready for overtime.

A CLOSER LOOK

Magpul now offers a full range of clothing products that covers the majority of social situations that you may find yourself in. Here is a quick look at some of the products the company offers.

SHIRTS

Magpul offers a range of polo and button-down-style shirts that serve well in both casual and business casual environments. A total of six different styles are currently available, from the lightweight, short-sleeve Rainey shirt to the heavy-duty, long-sleeve Workshirt.

Each of the shirts was designed with a purpose and has features that are designed to enhance the wearing experience. For example, the Mansfield is suitable for casual to work casual environments, and has split seams and a curved hem to give a more relaxed look. Its wicking fabric helps keep you cool while a hidden chest pocket allows you to tuck away your ID, credit cards or extra cash.

T-SHIRTS

Magpul makes high-quality T-shirts that have been designed from the yarn up by the company. A variety of styles are offered in one of three different weights: Fine Cotton, Megablend and Superweight. Fine Cotton shirts are soft and comfortable. Megablend shirts add manmade fibers to increase moisture wicking and airflow. The Megablend shirts also have an athletic cut. Super-

weight T-shirts are all cotton but use thicker yarn for a heavier feel and increased warmth.

PANTS & SHORTS

Seven different pants and shorts are offered by Magpul. Like the shirt line, these vary to match your activity. For those working hard, the Flightline pant uses a fabric blend that stretches and offers great stain resistance. It also has tool pockets as well as internal pockets to easily add kneepads if needed.

Another highlight in the line is the Bonnell pant that uses a very lightweight nylon for incredible comfort. Magpul says these are the pants to wear when you would rather be wearing shorts. The material stretches, dries fast and has anti-microbial properties. They include a hidden hip pocket and zippered thigh pocket.

BELTS

Magpul's "El Original" Tejas Gun Belt uses top-grain bullhide cut only from the shoulders combined with a polymer core to produce a strong, durable mount for carrying a handgun and just keeping your pants up. Magpul uses custom hardware that doesn't need any tools to allow you to swap out to a different buckle.

A second Magpul belt, "El Burro," uses polymer construction and aluminum hardware to be completely waterproof and corrosion resistant. Like El Original, it is also exceptionally strong and made in the U.S.A.



"We actually go right down to the yarn," said McMullen. "We manufacture our own textiles and cut and sew T-shirts. They are not printed on blanks. Our shirt costs us four times more than [cheap blanks], but I know you're going to be wearing that thing a year from now after 40 or 60 washes. The only way we could do that is to make it ourselves. And, so, we went out and did that.

"You only get one first time to get things right," said McMullen. And Magpul seems to be getting it right, as McMullen said the line is doing "amazingly well."

"I'm proud of this and proud of what the team's doing," said McMullen. Then he left me with a final thought about the Magpul apparel line: "There's more coming." For more information, visit magpul.com or call 877-462-4785.