



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Merit Brass Named 2026 AD PVF Supplier of the Year

Prestigious Affiliated Distributors recognition celebrates Merit Brass' commitment to partnership, growth and exceptional support of independent distributors



CLEVELAND, OH, October 6, 2026 – Merit Brass, a leading manufacturer and master distributor of pipe, valve and fitting products, is proud to announce that it has been named the **2026 PVF Supplier of the Year by Affiliated Distributors (AD)**.

The recognition represents a significant achievement for Merit Brass and underscores the company's commitment to strengthening independent distribution through exceptional service, meaningful collaboration and long-term partnerships.

Affiliated Distributors' Spirit of Independence Awards recognize the commitment of AD members and supplier partners to independent distribution and the entrepreneurial spirit that helps their businesses grow and outperform in the marketplace. Within AD's PVF business, Supplier of the Year recognizes supplier partners that provide exceptional support and engagement with AD members, grow sales with AD members and actively participate in AD's sales incentive and marketing programs.

For Merit Brass, the honor represents more than business performance. It reflects the relationships and trust built between Merit, independent distributors and the people who serve customers throughout the industry.

"Being named AD's PVF Supplier of the Year is an incredible honor because it reflects the strength of the partnerships we've built with AD members," said Darren Hilliard, President & CEO of Merit Brass. "Our strategy has always been bigger than supplying products. We want to help our distributor

partners compete, grow and win in their markets. This recognition belongs to every Merit team member who shows up each day determined to deliver that level of partnership."

AD brings independent distributors and supplier partners together to pursue accelerated growth and increased profitability, using their collective strength to create greater growth and earn opportunities for both groups. That shared-growth philosophy closely aligns with Merit's approach to its distributor relationships.

"The strongest supplier-distributor relationships are built when both sides are committed to creating value together," said Don Russell, Executive Vice President of Merit Brass. "Our AD partnerships push us to listen closely, respond quickly and continuously look for better ways to support our customers.

Receiving this award tells our entire organization that those efforts are making a difference, while also challenging us to keep raising the standard."



The award comes during an important period in the company's history. Merit Brass recently announced its leadership succession, with Darren Hilliard becoming President & CEO effective October 1, 2026, while longtime Co-CEOs Alan Lipp and Marc Schlessinger transitioned from their executive roles to become Co-Chairmen of the Board.

"Our company has always believed that relationships are at the heart of this industry," said Alan Lipp, Chairman of Merit Brass. "To receive this recognition from AD is especially meaningful because it reflects what generations of people at Merit have worked to build: a company our customers can depend on and a partner invested in their success. I'm tremendously proud of our team and even more excited about where they're taking Merit next."

As Merit Brass looks ahead, the 2026 AD PVF Supplier of the Year award serves as both recognition of what has been accomplished and motivation to continue investing in the partnerships, products and services that help independent distributors succeed.

About Merit Brass Co.

Merit has a rich history of offering the most comprehensive flow control and piping connection technology. Their goal is to make the Merit Experience for their customers seamless by bundling a complete line of consistent, high quality piping products, flow control devices and piping system solutions. Merit features a full range of stainless steel and brass pipe fittings, pipe nipples, pipe, pipe valves, pipe flanges, stainless & copper tubing, forged steel fittings and press technology known as MeritPress™, which includes carbon, copper, and stainless steel. Contact: Marketing Department
mbmarketing@meritbrass.com (216) 261-9800.

About AD

Affiliated Distributors (AD) brings independent distributors and supplier partners together across multiple industries. AD's Spirit of Independence Awards recognize members and supplier partners for their commitment to independent distribution and the entrepreneurial spirit that drives growth, service and marketplace performance. For more information, visit

<https://www.adhq.com/>.