NOVEMBER 2025

GRAPHICS PRO

APPAREL DECORATION • AWARDS & CUSTOMIZATION • SIGNAGE • WIDE-FORMAT PRINTING • WRAPS

GRAPHICS-PRO.COM



Laser-focused

on personalization

How to expand your engraving operations

+

Restoring old photos

Beyond the T-shirt

Succession planning


HD
HD13OZ
HEAT-SEAMED
WELDING
GROM
NEW
FULL BLEED
POLE POCKETS
SEAM
UP TO 1
24 HOUR
STANDARD
PRODUCTION
Overnight
$10 Overnight Shipping To


BANNER
HD15 OZ
HD18 OZ
METS
ROPE
WINDSLITS
LESS
6 FEET
SINGLE SIDED PRINTS
DOUBLE SIDED PRINTS
Anywhere™
Anywhere Within The USA
SIGNS 365

ANY HAT. ANY STYLE. ANY LOCATION.

Hotronix®
360 IQ® HAT PRESS

Get the only hat press your business will ever need.

"Another run of 60 hats, machine is paid for in 3 jobs."

RAY W., SIDE MIND CREATIONS

"The 360 IQ hat press was a natural progression for my business in order to gain some versatility and new revenue streams."

MIKE G., MAD INK APPAREL

"Cannot believe it is so easy to make money with this machine!"

CRAIG R., SCREEN 13

"This is the best hat press on the market and has the cutting edge technology needed to keep up with this ever changing industry."

JESSICA L., SMASHING INK VINYL



STAHLS' Hotronix®

BUILT FOR BUSINESS

Patented with UL/CE safety certifications

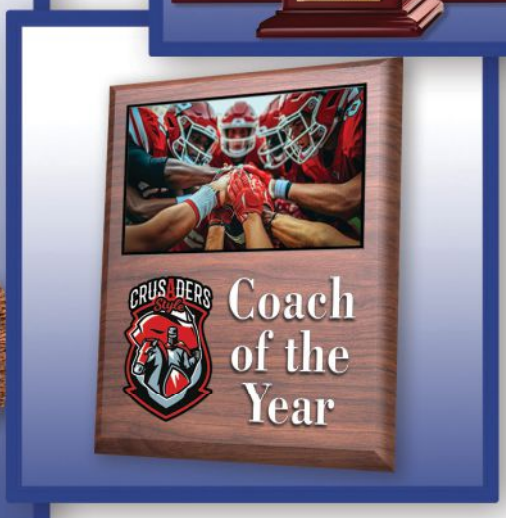
ORDER NOW

TURN RECOGNITION INTO LASTING INSPIRATION WITH THE MUTOH XPERTJET 1462UF









Increase productivity and profits with MUTOH XpertJet 1462UF 55"x 27" UV-LED printer. Designed for precision and performance, it's ideal for corporate awards, ADA-Braille signage, yard signs, name badges, textured wall art, and more. When quality matters, professionals can trust our reliable, made-in-Japan, UV printers to get the job done.

With the included Start Right Kit™, you'll get printed samples and step-by-step lessons to hit the ground running with confidence.

Enhance your printing capabilities with the award-winning MUTOH VerteLith™ RIP software and a complimentary one-year subscription to SAi Flexi DESIGN MUTOH Edition, a combined value of $1,600. Unlock limitless design potential and embrace the future of printing today.



www.MUTOH.com
1.800.99.MUTOH

MUTOH
PRINT WITH PRECISION

REQUEST FREE PRINT SAMPLE

GRAPHICS|PRO

CONTENTS

VOLUME 39 | November 2025 | NUMBER 7



10



On the Cover:
Laser-focused on personalization
How to expand your engraving operations.
(Image courtesy of Radian Laser)

EDITOR'S NOTE

6
Beyond the T-shirt
By James Anderson

SIGNAGE & PRINTING

10
Printing by the numbers
By Bill Schiffner

17
Grit, growth & giving back in the Windy City
By David Korvah

AWARDS & CUSTOMIZATION

20
Season finale: It's your time to shine
By Natalie Albers

22
Laser-focused on personalization
By Stefanie Galeano-Zalutko

32
Direct-to-profit
By Jessica Makrinos



32

WE HAVE A SOLUTION TO ALL OF YOUR FRAMING NEEDS

GAS PUMP FRAMES
Sell more in your store!™






Eye level mini ads at pump to entice gas pumpers and passengers in the cars to buy in your stores. Easily changeable 5 x 7 and $8^1/_2$ x 11 size ads.

gaspumpframes.com

Pivoting Pole Banner System



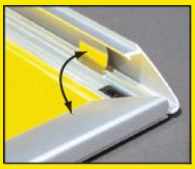
Ban"45" means it pivots 45 degrees to either side to deflect and re-direct the force of high winds off the banner.

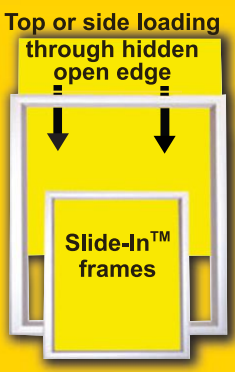
Patents Pending. All Rights Reserved.

ban45.com

FAST CHANGE FRAMES
Easiest way to display graphics!

FlipUp™ front load frame

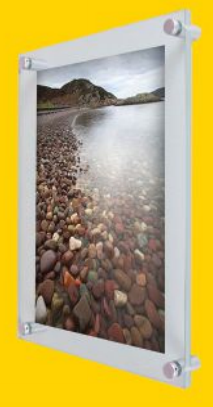




Any Size
1 minimum
Low Cost

NEW LED edge lit frames
Any Size, Any Color
1 Minimum

Acrylic Standoff Frames, any size, any shape.



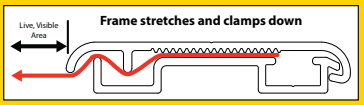
fastchangeframes.com

2 NEW Banner Stretching Frames

Beautiful Banner Display, Wrinkle free, Drum Tight



Only our frame offers perfect linear alignment with our included "Joiner Straps." Longer sections join easily and perfectly for the best results!

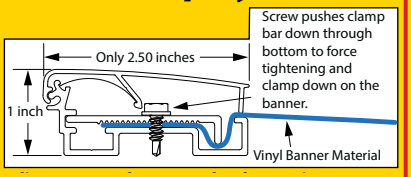






Create large and beautiful, drum-tight stretched vinyl banner displays!

SLIM PROFILE



Flip top snaps down completely covering all screws and stretcher bar. Clean, perfect look!

bannergrip.com **sales@bannergrip.com**



Beautifully display any size banner ! Patented

bannergrip.com

1-800-915-2828 **sales@bannergrip.com**

Easy online ordering 24/7 • Our Intelligent, informed Sales pros answer our phones and respond to your emails. Fast responses!

ALPINA®

Alpina Manufacturing
6460 W. Cortland St. Chicago, IL 60707

sales@fastchangeframes.com

1-800-915-2828

ban45.com • gaspumpframes.com • fastchangeframes.com • bannergrip.com

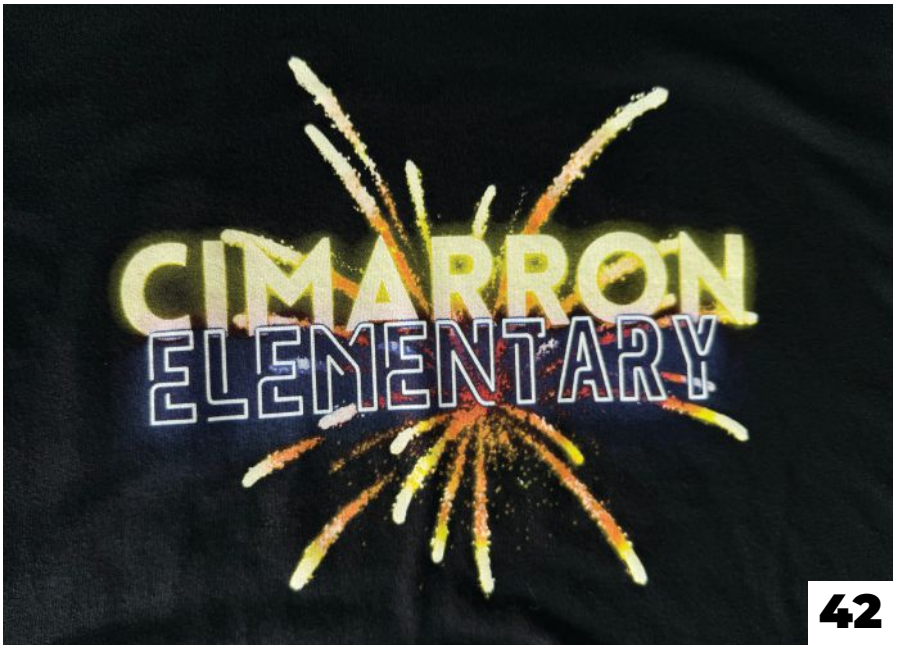
American Owned



American Made

GRAPHICS|PRO

CONTENTS



42

APPAREL DECORATION

36
Passing down the family business
By Megan Griffith

46
Moving beyond the basics
By Aaron Montgomery

42
Pathway of purpose
By Lon Winters

BUSINESS STRATEGIES

50
How to reduce workplace burnout
By Phillip M. Perry

58
Restore & revive
By Stephen Romaniello

54
Q1 sales don't wait for January
By Marshall Atkinson

EXTRAS

8
Industry updates

31
5 questions

16A
GPX news

62
Product picks

FROM OUR PARTNERS

48
Product highlights

64
Marketplace

64
Ad index



58

©2025 Cahaba Media Group Inc., all rights reserved. GRAPHICS PRO (ISSN 2766-953X) is published monthly by Cahaba Media Group Inc., PO Box 530067, Birmingham, AL 35223. Periodicals Postage Paid at Birmingham, AL 35223 and additional mailing offices. USPS/Cahaba Media Group Inc. Automatable Poly. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to GRAPHICS PRO, PO Box 460794, Escondido, CA 92046-0794. All items submitted to GRAPHICS PRO become the sole property of GRAPHICS PRO and Cahaba Media Group Inc. and cannot be reproduced without the written consent of the publisher. Advertisers and/or their agencies, jointly and severally, assume all liabilities for printed advertisements in GRAPHICS PRO. Opinions expressed in GRAPHICS PRO not necessarily reflect the opinion of the magazine, its management or its advertisers.
Letters, pictures and manuscripts welcome.

CERTIFIED AUDIENCE
PRINTED WITH SOY INK

6Sign

Trade only

Quality, Time, Lowest Price Guarantee

SCAN ME



Custom Flags
-Start from $ 59



Fabric Pop Up Display
-Start from $359



Standard Retractable Banner
-Start from $49



DTF Gang Sheet
-$1.49/sqft Only!

Sublimation -Rigid signs-Tradeshow displays



James Anderson is the editor-in-chief of GRAPHICS PRO magazine. He can be reached at janderson@cahabamedia.com.

Beyond the T-shirt

Talking to GRAPHICS PRO readers

and attendees at GRAPHICS PRO EXPO events has allowed me to meet a good number of people who got their start in business by decorating T-shirts. Printing T-shirts can be the backbone of an apparel decoration business. Build a good client base, do exceptional work, market your services, and you can make a career of it. But often, screen printers look to expand their business beyond tees. If that sounds like you, I encourage you to read Aaron Montgomery's article on page 46 of this issue. Aaron shares some good insight into how you can build your apparel decoration business beyond T-shirts.

Speaking of building a business in apparel decoration, be sure to check out Megan Griffith's article on page 36. Megan's story of her family's three-generation business is not only inspiring, but essential to many as baby boomers look to pass along their business to the next generation.

On page 58, Stephen Romaniello, our regular Photoshop contributor, has some great tips for reviving and restoring old photos. See how editing software can touch up spotty photos and rebuild missing content in an image.

Our awards and customization content this month includes a contribution from Stefanie Galeano-Zalutko that provides an in-depth look at laser engraving. Whether you're considering your first laser purchase or looking to maintain or upgrade your current system, you'll want to read Stefanie's article on page 22.

If you're in the signage and wide-format printing business, be sure to give Bill Schiffner's article on page 10 a read. Bill explores how you can maximize operations by getting the most out of canvas, fine art, and photographic media for your shop.

For all businesses closing out the end of the year, it's important to take a look at Marshall Atkinson's article on page 54. Marshall shares how to look ahead to next year and fill your sales pipeline now. And for all of us working in a busy season as holidays approach, I have to recommend Phillip M. Perry's article on page 50 on how to reduce workplace burnout.

We aim to include something for everyone in each issue of GRAPHICS PRO, and I think we've done it this month. As always, if there's something you'd like to see covered, please don't hesitate to let us know.



James Anderson
Editor-in-Chief

GRAPHICS|PRO
GRAPHICS|PRO|EXPO
GRAPHICS-PRO.COM

Editor-in-Chief
James Anderson
janderson@cahabamedia.com

Managing Editor
Marie Fennema
mfennema@cahabamedia.com

Account Executive
Seth Messer
smesser@cahabamedia.com

Account Executive
Kaitlyn Everts
keverts@cahabamedia.com

Associate Director - GPX Sales
Katie Ditallo
kditallo@cahabamedia.com

Account Executive – GPX
Leigh Ann Messer
lmesser@cahabamedia.com

Art Director
Iveth Gomez
igomez@cahabamedia.com

Web Designer
Charlie Fox
cfox@cahabamedia.com

Client Services Coordinator (Advertising)
Sonya Crocker
scrocker@cahabamedia.com

Contributing Writers
Bill Schiffner, David Korvah, Natalie Albers, Stefanie Galeano-Zalutko, Jessica Makrinos, Megan Griffith, Lon Winters, Aaron Montgomery, Phillip M. Perry, Marshall Atkinson, Stephen Romaniello

Associate Director - GPX Operations
Jackie Ramsier
jramsier@cahabamedia.com

Event Services Coordinator
Joie Martin
jmartin@cahabamedia.com

Subscription Changes & Inquiries:
graphicspro@omeda.com

CAHABA MEDIA GROUP
PO Box 530067, Birmingham, AL 35253

Publisher
Matthew G. Conroy

VP of Sales
Greg Meineke

VP of Finance
Brandon Whittemore

Director of Content
Elizabeth Manning

Director of Operations
Laurie Tisdale

Director of Sales
Stacy Marshall

FLEXFIT®



6609T



6609

Infinite Possibilities, *Endless* Opportunities.

The YP Classics® High Profile Trucker Cap and 2-Tone edition are built for creators who demand more from a hat. Featuring a **structured,** 5-panel high crown for maximum embroidery real estate, premium polyester mesh for **breathable** comfort, and a classic **snapback** closure for a universal fit, these caps are ready to showcase your craft. From bold screen prints to intricate patches, every detail pops on their smooth front panels. **Two-tone** options add an extra layer of design flexibility because your vision deserves the perfect foundation.

LEARN MORE

YP Classics® and FLEXFIT® are registered trademarks of YUPOONG INC. | FLEXFIT.COM | @FLEXFIT

INDUSTRY UPDATES

NEW HIRES, PROMOTIONS & RECOGNITIONS



Laura Slovensky
Nekoosa Coated Products

Nekoosa Coated Products, a manufacturer of specialty print media, promoted **Laura Slovensky** to the role of segment manager – graphics. In the role, Slovensky will be responsible for leading the strategic development and execution of initiatives within Nekoosa's wide-format and application tape product lines, working closely with cross-functional teams to drive innovation, market growth, and customer engagement. Slovensky has held several marketing positions over more than 15 years at Nekoosa.





Melissa Casey & Holly Bray
Charles River Apparel

Charles River Apparel added two experienced professionals to its sales organization: **Melissa Casey**, left, and **Holly Bray** have joined as outside territory managers. **Casey** joins Charles River Apparel with over 10 years of promotional products experience. **Bray** brings 20 years of sales experience, including 14 years in the promotional products industry.

ANNIVERSARIES



Carol Lozada
Q-Tees

Carol Lozada, a longtime member of the **Q-Tees** family, is celebrating her 20th anniversary with the company. Lozada has played a key role in shaping Q-Tees over the past two decades. She began handling financial records and day-to-day bookkeeping, but her responsibilities expanded to include managing and supporting broader business operations. "I joined the company as part of a new life chapter in Atlanta, and I've stayed because of the genuine respect, flexibility, and open communication with the owners," Lozada said. "What I value most about working at Q-Tees is the opportunity to be part of an industry with such strong potential for growth and continued impact."

DEPARTURES



Dan Pantano
S&S Activewear/ alphabroder

Following its acquisition of **alphabroder** in October 2024, **S&S Activewear** recently announced that **Dan Pantano**, president and CEO of alphabroder, departed the company effective Oct. 1, as planned. Pantano had been a driving force since joining alphabroder in 2013. Under his leadership, revenues grew from $800 million to nearly $2 billion while strengthening profitability. He was also instrumental in positioning the business for its successful sale to S&S Activewear.

EVENTS

GPX Charlotte
November 6-8
Charlotte, North Carolina
g-p-x.com/nc

UPDATES

After 30 years of specializing in crystal, **Crystal D** introduced designs made of stone, wood, and acrylic.

Ninja Transfers launched a new in-browser design platform, Ninja Design Studio.

INX International Ink Co. published and made available its 2024 sustainability report; the report includes Scope 2 emissions reduction progress and other sustainability highlights.

Nazdar marked a major milestone in its strategic growth with the ribbon-cutting ceremony of a new distribution center in Grapevine, Texas.

STAHLS' officially celebrated the grand opening of STAHLS' Fulfill ONE, its new innovation lab and fulfillment center, on Sept. 23. The event brought together over 100 guests to experience the innovation laboratory & fulfillment center.

The CHT Group has published its sustainability report for 2024, which shows that 84% of its sales were generated with sustainable solutions.

Monster Digital was featured on **Now We Know!**, a nationally broadcast educational series hosted by Steve Guttenberg on CNBC.

ACQUISITIONS

Koozie Group was acquired by **Mill Point Capital**, and as part of that transaction, Koozie Group and **Garyline** are set to combine.

WEBINARS

OMTech Laser
November 4

ColDesi
November 13

AP Lazer
December 4

All times 12 p.m. CST
Register at **gpro.link/webinars**

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

INX International Ink Co. earned recertification as a Great Place to Work by the Great Place to Work organization.

Infinity Product Group, parent company of Infinity Her, was recognized as one of PPAI's Greatest Companies to Work For 2025.

PARTNERSHIPS

JERZEES realigned its industry relationships and will work closely with **SanMar, One Stop, Carolina Made, Mission Imprintables, Wholesale Printables & American T-Shirt Co.**

Avery Dennison collaborated with Alex Hirschi, aka **Supercar Blondie**, to release a collection of four new wrapping film colors.

Vantage Apparel launched its Custom Color Apparel Program, powered by **Redwood Classics**.

Gemline announced its newest brand partner, bag company **Timbuk2**. Gemline has also partnered with **Yankee Candle** and launched of a mini version of the **Igloo** Playmate cooler.

Imperial Headwear is now the official headwear partner of **CityPickle**, a provider of pickleball experiences in cities across the U.S.

IN THE FIELD



Minuteman Press franchise owners score big with Marion Berries partnership & win volunteer award

It has been a busy and productive year for second-generation **Minuteman Press** franchise Owners **Craig Davidson & Carolyn Davidson** and their fellow Co-Owners **Christopher Brown & Lisa Brown**. Together, they own Minuteman Press in Tigard, Oregon, which has been in the Davidson Family for 38 years since 1987, as well as Minuteman Press in Salem, Oregon, which they purchased in April of 2024.



First, in April of 2025, Craig Davidson was presented with the Volunteer of the Year Award by the Tigard Chamber of Commerce. Craig Davidson shared, "It was amazing to be selected as the Volunteer of the Year by the Tigard Chamber. It was an honor I never set out to get, and I was shocked when I got the phone call from my Tigard Chamber CEO that I had received this recognition. Honestly, I just made myself available whenever I could. You'd be surprised at the opportunities that come your way when you are able to do this. Whether it's helping set up tables and chairs at a networking event, or stuffing food boxes for a local charity, I was just trying to be as involved as I could be."

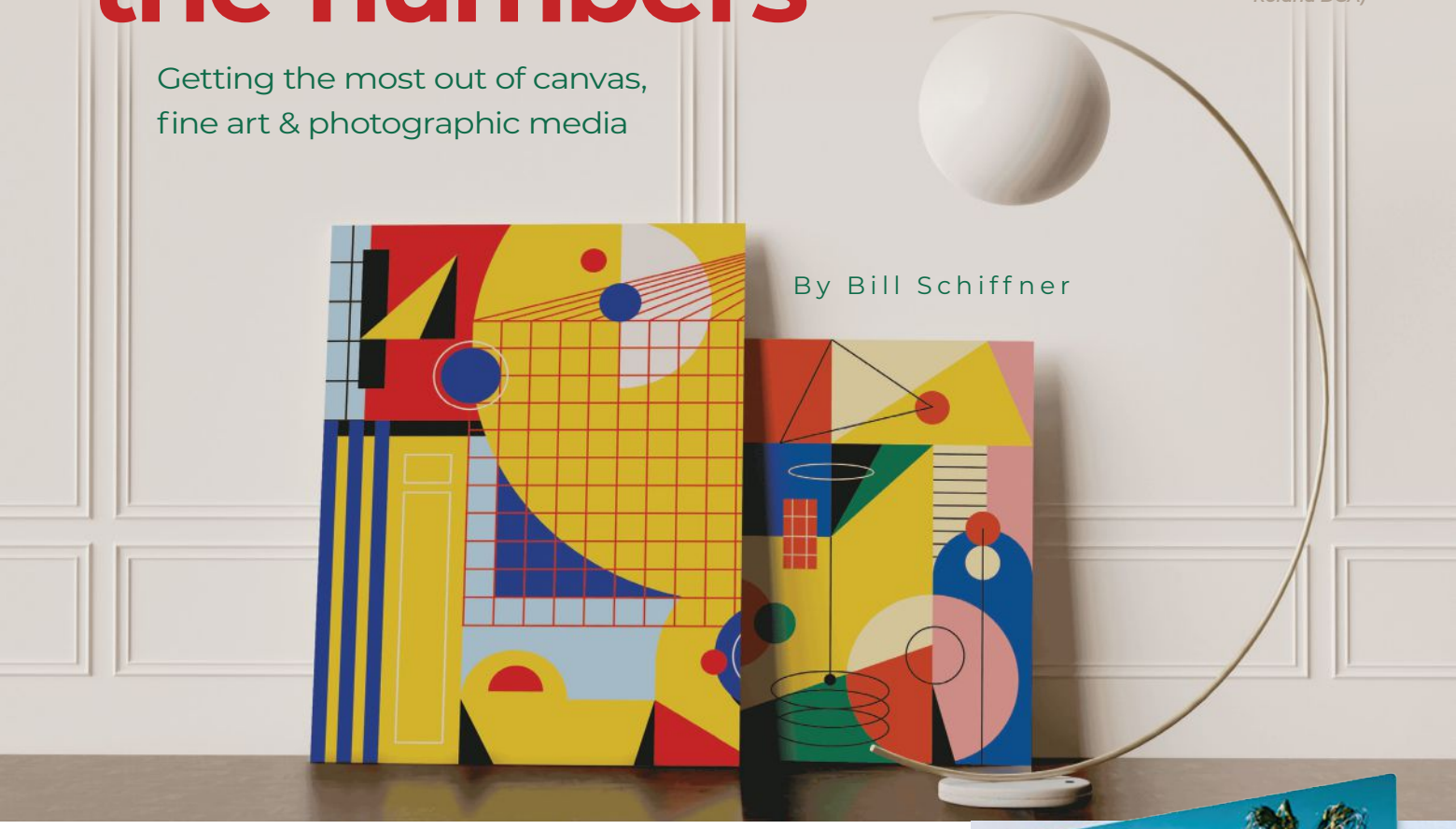


This summer, the hits kept on coming for Craig Davidson and Co. when Minuteman Press in Salem became the printing partner for the Marion Berries, a new baseball team competing in the West Coast League. The partnership has helped Minuteman Press in Salem expand its brand awareness and visibility in the community. Craig Davidson shared, "The visibility has been huge! The general manager of the Marion Berries, Patrick, has been keen to send as many of their sponsors to us as possible. As a result, we are now doing business with several large Salem-area businesses that we hadn't before. Our Minuteman Press banner is right next to the scoreboard, so every time fans are looking at the score, they see our banner! Having our logo repeated across several items and locations in the ballpark is nice to see, and I can't help but believe that our overall presence in the Salem marketplace will continue to grow because of this partnership."

Printing by the numbers

Getting the most out of canvas, fine art & photographic media

By Bill Schiffner



Eco-solvent printers and inks can also create high-quality fine art reproductions. This piece was printed on canvas using a Roland DG XG-640 large-format printer/cutter and TR3 eco-solvent inks. *(Image courtesy of Roland DGA)*

When a painter plans to create their latest masterpiece, they look for the finest papers and a full palette of colors to help achieve their message. To "paint your next masterpiece" is to find inspiration, create, and experience life to the fullest, to borrow from Bob Dylan's reflections in his song "When I Paint My Masterpiece." That is, while aiming for a masterpiece is aspirational, the process of art is about making more art. This is much the same for wide-format shops and photographers who require the right tools to produce fine art and photographic print projects for their clients. We spoke to several suppliers and asked them what the differences and similarities between canvas, fine art, and photographic media and inks are, which ones are best for different projects, as well as tips for getting the most out of them.

New display options

"We're seeing more creativity in the way artwork is presented, with unique framing approaches and a rise in printing on alternative substrates such as metal, acrylic, and wood," said Andy Everding, national accounts manager at IT Supplies, which operates as a reseller and distributor of the papers, inks, and technologies used to produce fine art and photographic prints. "These mediums allow artists and photographers to push beyond traditional papers and create distinctive display pieces. That said, the overall fine art/photographic market remains fairly stable, with many foundational practices unchanged over the years," he added.

Everding explained that when choosing the media to output to, there are both similarities and differences between canvas, fine art, and



Chromaluxe metal wall art. *(Image courtesy of IT Supplies)*



Sponsored by

GRAPHICS|PRO webinar

MASTERING PAPERS AND MEDIA IN FINE ART PRINTING

FREE | OCTOBER 16 | 12 P.M. CENTRAL

Photo Credit: Adobe Stock mikeosphoto

Join us for a practical overview of fine art and photo print media.

Explore today's most important papers and media—from cotton rag and canvas to baryta and metal—and see what sets each apart. Learn how to match the right media to your creative vision and applications.

Perfect for artists, photographers, and print professionals, this class will give you the insight to choose the best media whether you're in the studio or evaluating options at a trade show.

In this session you'll:

1. Learn the top brands and key terms in fine art printing
2. Understand how fine art paper is made and why it matters
3. Use a simple framework to choose the right paper or media for your projects
4. Walk away with resources, tools, and free samples to support better print decisions

SPEAKERS:



Jeff Lucido
General Manager
IT Supplies



Andy Everding
National Accounts Manager
IT Supplies

REGISTER AT
GRAPHICS-PRO.COM/WEBINARS

SCAN ME



Jim Richardson, National Geographic photographer, Jim Richardson Photography, showcases an image printed on Epson Legacy Baryta II fine art media. *(Image courtesy of Epson America)*



Chromaluxe metal print lobby display *(Image courtesy of IT Supplies)*

photographic papers. "All three can have archival qualities and are most often produced using digital inkjet printers, with aqueous inks being the most popular choice. High-production canvas, however, is typically printed with latex or solvent inks for added durability. The biggest distinctions come down to surface, sheen, and how each medium is best displayed."

Jeff Smith, product manager, professional imaging, Epson America, added that one of the great things about working in fine art/photography is the wide range of media available. "Artists and photographers are no longer confined to a few media types; they can explore everything from traditional photographic papers to fine art media, canvas, and more."

Smith said that with so many choices and options, it has become increasingly important for artists to educate themselves on the different media to make the best choice for their work. "Media manufacturers will often introduce subtle variations in how they manufacture specific media. For example, one company may offer an optical brightening agent (OBA)-free baryta paper, while another includes optical brightening agents."

"Other key distinctions include cotton fiber vs. alpha-cellulose bases, and thickness and lightfastness ratings. Fortunately, there are resources that can provide background and education on these media parameters, including Epson Print Academy. Each of these media will completely transform how viewers experience the final print and can make a difference in the details and permanence," he added.

Smith also noted that while canvas, fine art paper, and photographic papers are all popular choices for displaying artwork, each offers distinct qualities. "Canvas is comprised of a cotton-poly base and is available in matte, satin, and glossy finishes. It can be stretched for a frameless presentation and is widely used in wedding and portrait photography, as well as the decor market. Fine art media encompasses a range of paper types. They tend to be comprised of a cotton fiber base and can have smooth to textured matte surfaces. These papers are popular with artists for both the fine art look and how the paper feels when held. Photographic papers predominantly have a smooth surface and offer the widest color gamut and the richest blacks. These qualities make them the go-to choice for many photographers who are producing exhibition-quality prints."

Christopher Martin, senior marketing specialist at Canon USA, pointed out that more and more studio photographers are bringing large-format printers in-house for the first time, typically starting at 24", rather than outsourcing as these devices become more affordable and easier to use. "We're seeing more and more photographers and framing companies, for instance, printing their own work



The Canon imagePROGRAF 44" PRO-4600 professional large-format printer offers an 11-color plus Chroma Optimizer ink system that allows users to bring photos and reproductions to life.



The Canon imagePROGRAF PRO series is designed for professional photographers and graphic designers who desire a wide color gamut that accurately reproduces even the most difficult colors. *(Image courtesy of Canon USA)*



Photographic papers are ideal for portraits, weddings, and landscape photographs. *(Images courtesy of Canon USA)*

Fine art papers are ideal for the texture and feel of watercolor, deep blacks, smooth gray tones, and true saturated colors. *(Images courtesy of Canon USA)*



instead of outsourcing to a lab. This has allowed them to not only save money in the long run but also control the quality of the output from the printer. The UV and latex market tends to offer more interior decor trend products to a growing and expanding marketplace."

Martin explained that photographic papers, depending on the ink set, can provide archival images that are used in photography for portraits, weddings, and landscape photographs. Choices include glossy, satin, or luster surfaces and more premium weights as well. "It's fast-drying and has a resistance to the effects of lighting, making it perfect for exhibition and galleries. In the UV and latex market, the photographic papers include fewer choices — glossy and satin — alternative matte-coated materials are used as well, but for more interior decor or poster images."

More bolder colors

Dave Hawkes, media product manager at Roland DGA, noted that one consistent need in the world of digital art is for greater gamut. The ability to print with more colors provides the artist with the ability to explore the possibilities of their work. This doesn't just allow for beautiful, bright images — it also enables greater depths of color and shadows that provide more detail to the artwork.

"Perhaps the most notable change we have seen in the industry is a dramatic increase in texture options. The impact of this has been striking — printers, media, and ink are all playing significant roles in adding the tributes of texture. UV ink allows for







Fine art pieces, like the painting shown above, can be reproduced with vibrant color and detail on an advanced UV flatbed printer, such as the models offered in Roland DG's VersaOBJECT CO-i Series. Such UV devices also make it easy to incorporate textural effects like those featured in this piece, which was printed on canvas media. *(Images courtesy of Roland DGA)*

the easy creation of textures using the layering of the ink as well as the glossy highlights."

Hawkes continued, "In addition to UV ink, DIMENSE digital printing [combines] heat, ink, and media to create custom textures without the need for multiple layers, thus allowing for less ink usage and reduced print time in a single-pass system."

He said that the difference that texture makes to an image is like the difference that color made when only black and white film was available. Incorporating textural effects makes an image come alive and stops people in their tracks.

Hawkes pointed out that using the right media with the right image can make all the difference. "Canvas images can 'stand on their own' without the need for elegant frames or borders. Canvas provides a durable substrate that can be archival, plus high-gamut images stand out on this material, and you have the option of choosing from high-gloss, semi-gloss, or matte."

He explained that fine art paper can reproduce classic images without the issues that time and the environment can have on historical images. Art paper works with a matte-based substrate that needs to be handled delicately to avoid creases and tears. A photo-based paper brings out the detail and the gamut of images. These types of paper work easily with matte, semi-gloss, or gloss-based substrates and provide a softer contrast. Like art paper, photo-paper images also need to be handled delicately."

Pros & cons

Everding said that the right choice of media depends on the application. "Canvas is great for gallery wraps and durable, frameless displays, though it sacrifices some detail compared to paper. Fine art paper delivers the longest archival life and unmatched fidelity to original works, but typically requires framing and UV protection. Photographic paper provides the most cost-effective option with vivid detail, though it lacks the texture and tactile qualities of canvas or fine art

papers. Ultimately, it comes down to the intended display, longevity requirements, and whether the print is meant to be timeless or swapped out for newer images over time."

He added that when it comes to inks, there are pros and cons of giclee (aqueous pigment) inks vs. UV, latex, and solvent inks. "Technically, 'giclee' simply means 'to spray' in French, so any inkjet technology qualifies. However, the term has come to be associated with fine art printing using aqueous pigment inks, which offer the best archival performance. These are the preferred choice for fine art and photographic papers where longevity and color accuracy matter most."

Hawkes added that since canvas already has a textured surface, it will not work well with layered ink types. It can create magnificent images, but texture can lose some of its detail when printed on this media. Another downside is that canvas is a bulkier, heavier substrate that will cost more to ship. "Art paper provides a matte image with softer contrast for museum-grade images. It also works well with textured imaging. Photo papers provide beautiful detail and gamut, while also offering a lot of flexibility when it comes to surface types. They also tend to be more affordable than other options. The downside to using photo paper is that this media is typically more fragile and scratches easily, therefore requiring careful handling."



This painting was reproduced on a Roland DG TrueVIS LG Series UV roll-to-roll printer/cutter, which is designed to deliver outstanding image detail and color accuracy. *(Image courtesy of Roland DGA)*

Thinking about ink

As far as the ink, Hawkes noted that giclee prints produce stunning images.

Rowmark

WOW! That's some DURABLE SHEET!

We test our products so you can trust they'll last!



Scan me!

Find your Authorized Rowmark Distributor

877.rowmark // rowmark.com

ADA Alternative



LaserMax®



Durmark





Roland DG's DIMENSE DA-640-dimensional surface printer, in combination with specialized DIMENSE water-based inks and DIMENSE media, can produce fine art pieces like this with dimensional and textural effects in one process. *(Image courtesy of Roland DGA)*

Giclee's pigment ink provides a base that makes it much easier to meet a specific gamut and achieve smooth gradations for applications like archival images. However, pigmented ink can have limitations on the drop size and resolution of the image. In addition, pigment inks often require lower print speeds and higher levels of printer maintenance.

Hawkes said that UV inks allow artwork to be printed on almost anything, opening up a new world of creative options. It allows the user to easily add textural effects to prints and pinpoint the use of gloss with amazing results. One possible downside is that the gamut is usually reduced due to the vast array of substrates that can be printed on. The UV ink and layer process can also take longer than other inkjet types and tends to require more maintenance.

He added that solvent-based inks are widespread in the industry. "They offer a vivid gamut, high production rates, and there are many affordable options. Most offer an archival life span as well as environmental advantages. Water-based inks can provide excellent colors, and they're also environmentally friendly. However, they may not have the archival qualities sometimes demanded in the art market."

Martin said that aqueous inks are not categorized as giclee inks, but they are standard pigmented inks with excellent color gamut, print quality, and lightfastness. "Giclee printing uses high-end media and an excellent gamut ink set to provide these prints. UV and latex inks are considered to yield smaller color gamuts but can cater to a wider variety of applications and at faster output speeds that fill the graphic space, interior decor, and commercial spaces for these types of media products."

Tips & tricks

Martin added that when it comes to getting the best resolution/colors, using an ICC profile is always recommended. He added that Canon also provides .am1x files for a variety of media. These files set printer parameters (such as ink density limits, print head height, media vacuum strength, media roll length, custom media name, etc.) to be used for each media type that can then be selected from both the printer's control panel (when loading media) and the printer driver (when printing).

Everding said it's important to note that latex and solvent inks provide excellent durability and elasticity, making them ideal for stretched canvas gallery wraps. UV inks have gained popularity for rigid substrates such as metal, wood, and acrylic, but because they lack strong archival properties, they're less common in fine art applications where long-term preservation is critical.

When asked about tips for best resolution and colors that pop, Everding said, "Modern printers can include up to 12 inks to reproduce nearly the full visible color gamut, but maximizing results requires good color management. We recommend creating custom ICC profiles for each paper type. This can be done in-house with a spectrophotometer or outsourced to a color consultant. Every substrate has different white points and ink absorption levels, so proper profiling ensures accurate color reproduction and consistent results across projects."

As far as applications, Everding said that canvas is best used for abstract and modern art, bold landscapes, oil/acrylic reproductions, contemporary



Another fine art piece with eye-catching textural effects produced in one easy, seamless process using a DIMENSE DA-640 dimensional surface printer, eco-friendly DIMENSE water-based inks, and canvas DIMENSE media. *(Image courtesy of Roland DGA)*

decor, and family portraits. "Fine art paper is ideal for watercolors, pen-and-ink drawings, pastels, charcoal, black-and-white photography, museum-quality reproductions, and limited editions. Lastly, photographic paper is best used for portrait photography, landscapes, architectural photography, high-contrast or commercial imagery, and vibrant color photographs."

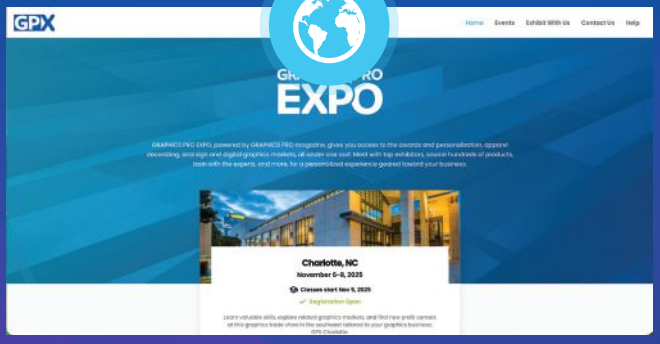
Smith said that for fine art applications, pigment-based ink is the most popular due to its print permanence characteristics. "To achieve the best quality, it comes down to workflow and is not related to media. When possible, work from RAW files in the widest color space (such as ProPhoto RGB) and in the greatest bit depth (specifically 16 bit) at 360 PPI, not DPI. Each media lends itself to different vertical markets and applications. These applications overlap, and include photography portraits, weddings, landscapes, advertising, fine art reproductions, home decor, gifts, and collectable prints, and more," he concluded. **GP**



Bill Schiffner, a former freelance writer/editor based in Holbrook, New York, covered the imaging industry for over 25 years. He was the editor for several imaging publications and websites. He can be reached at bschiffner@optonline.net.

6 ways to connect with GPX

This month, the GRAPHICS PRO EXPO team will wrap up its 2025 show season with its return to Charlotte, North Carolina, Nov. 5-8. As you make your travel plans for 2026, keep GPX in mind — we're coming to four cities across the U.S. and want to see you there! In the meantime, stay connected with the GPX team and find out what's coming up at GPX 2026 through the website, GPX newsletter, and on social media. Have memories from this year's shows to share on your own pages? Make sure to tag GPX when you do! GP

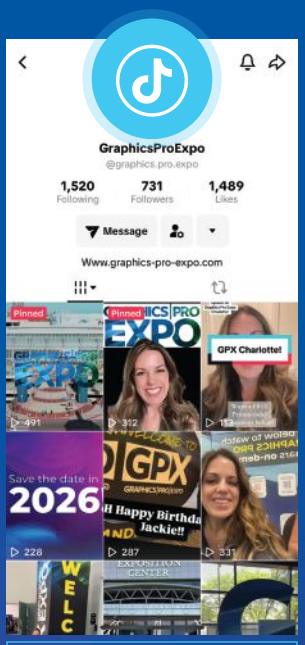


Get all the details on 2026 shows at **graphics-pro-expo.com**.

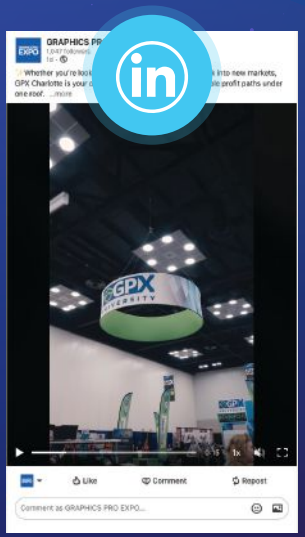




Follow us on Instagram at **@graphics_pro_expo** and find us on Facebook at **Graphics Pro Expo**.



Connect with us on TikTok and get show previews, behind-the-scenes info, and more.



Connect with our team and get key show updates on LinkedIn.



Subscribe to our newsletter and other show emails at **graphics-pro-expo.com**. Be on the lookout for a 2026 update coming soon!

Connect all in one place!



Register now for 50% off!

Use promo code: **GPNOV**

GPX returns next year...

Save the date in 2026!

- **Irving, TX**
  March 12-14, 2026
  Education starts March 11
- **Long Beach, CA**
  August 13-15, 2026
  with WRAPSCON
  Education starts August 12
- **Cleveland, OH**
  September 11-12, 2026
  Education starts September 10
- **Charlotte, NC**
  November 13-14, 2026
  Education starts November 12

For more information visit **g-p-x.com**

After you register, be sure to check out our new app for all the latest show info!

Grit, growth & giving back in the Windy City

Chicago Wrap's journey from basement to national provider

By David Korvah

Chicago Wrap bills itself as one of the oldest commercial vehicle fleet wrapping providers in the Windy City. Along with its focus on commercial vehicle fleet wrapping, the company gives back to the community through charitable efforts. And it helps move the industry forward as a training hub for the next generation of vehicle wrappers.

From DIY to a state-of-the-art workspace

Sean Heffner started Chicago Wrap in the family's basement in 2003. To help get the business going, he relied on referrals from local car dealerships. With few resources on hand, Heffner needed a lot of grit and determination to get through those early years.

"I couldn't afford a laminator," he said. "So, I would print a wrap, then spray the laminate with soapy water, flip it over, set it on the material, and hand-squeegee everything out. It was the only way we could get started. We just did whatever it took to wrap vehicles back then."

The business grew steadily while still operating out of that basement. Neighbors eventually got upset; the last straw was when a customer dropped off his semitruck cab to be wrapped. Heffner finally leased a commercial space, and Chicago Wrap never looked back.

The company now owns and occupies a 10,000-square-foot facility in Aurora, Illinois, a Chicago suburb roughly 30 miles west of downtown. Here, it focuses on commercial vehicle/fleet wrapping services, though the company does color-change and clear paint protection film requests as well. The team includes two designers and five installers. Heffner's father and sister are also involved in the business. New car dealerships remain an important customer pipeline. Heffner and the team not only wrap parts, trucks, and courtesy cars owned by the dealerships, but they also benefit from referrals: Local businesses purchasing new commercial vehicles are frequently directed to Chicago Wrap for their wrapping needs. The days of laminating manually are long gone! The company's production equipment includes a Roland SOLJET Pro 2 XR-640, two Roland TrueVIS VG Series wide-format eco-solvent inkjet printers, and a GFP cold laminator.

Images courtesy of Avery Dennison



An 80-vehicle fleet-wrapping project for Nicor Gas (shown here) helped the Chicago Wrap team get through the pandemic. The full, printed vehicle wrap uses Avery Dennison MPI 1105 Easy Apply RS with Avery Dennison DOL 1060Z digital overlaminate.



A fleet of Volkswagen Atlas SUVs for the Chicago Auto Show presented various difficulties that really pushed the team and brought it together. The consistent, printed color pop was achieved with Roland eco-solvent printers and Avery Dennison MPI 1105 Easy Apply RS Supercast digital wrapping film.





Local work, national impact

Chicago Wrap has customized countless vehicles over the years, but some projects have left a lasting impression. An 80-vehicle fleet-wrapping project for Nicor Gas, for example, helped the team get through the pandemic. A fleet of six Volkswagen Atlas SUVs for the Chicago Auto Show presented various difficulties that really pushed the team and brought it together.

In early 2025, Chicago Wrap donated its time and expertise to wrap a new, 38' RV for the Skin Cancer Foundation. The RV tours the country as part of the Foundation's Destination Healthy Skin project, working with local dermatologists to provide free screenings to anyone interested. The green-and-blue wrap is printed on MPI 1105 and protected by DOL 1360 Max overlaminate (donated to the project by Avery Dennison) and is helping attract attention to the RV and the project.

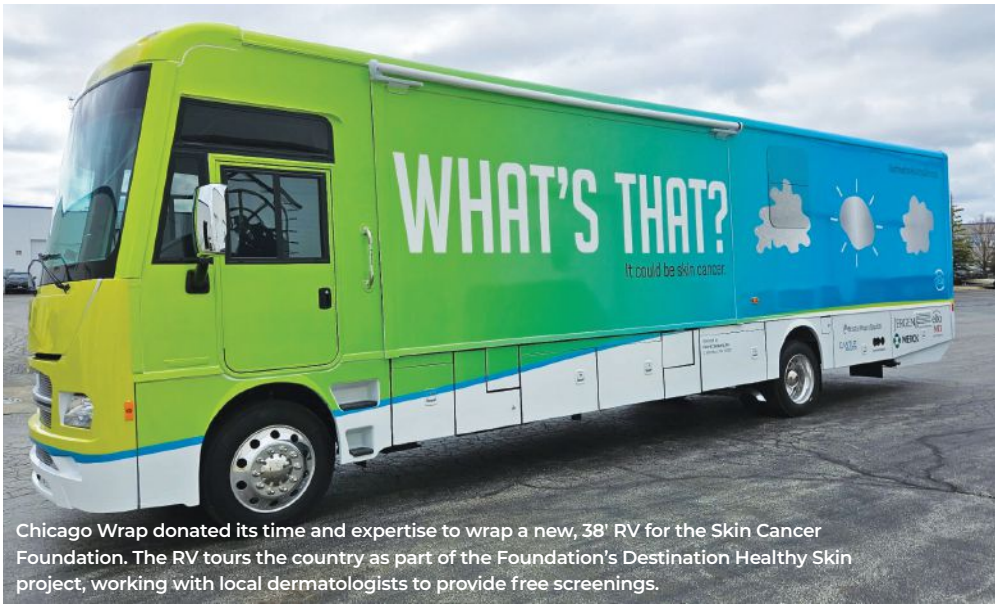
Giving back to the next generation of installers

The shop has developed its own vehicle wrap training program called Chicago Wrap University. The goal is to arm others with the knowledge they need to get hired in the industry or even start their own business. Chicago Wrap also hosts Avery Dennison vehicle wrap training. And, even with his decades of experience, Heffner himself continues to take advantage of Avery Dennison training.

"Avery Dennison has taught us so much over the years," he stated. "They've just helped us immensely to be successful." **GP**



David Korvah is marketing manager for Avery Dennison Graphics Solutions in Mentor, Ohio. An industry expert with more than two decades of professional experience, Korvah manages the company's North American marketing and communications strategy for its automotive and fleet segments.



Chicago Wrap donated its time and expertise to wrap a new, 38' RV for the Skin Cancer Foundation. The RV tours the country as part of the Foundation's Destination Healthy Skin project, working with local dermatologists to provide free screenings.

FREE • NOVEMBER 13 • 12 P.M. CENTRAL

GRAPHICS|PRO webinar

PERFECT YOUR COLORS: THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE FOR UV & DTF BUSINESS OWNERS

When your colors are off, your customers notice. A logo that doesn't match brand guidelines or a blue that looks purple can quickly undermine trust and worse... cost you repeat business. Getting color right isn't just about accuracy, it's about proving to your customers that they can rely on you every time. You are the printing expert and they trust you will make them look the best.

It's a lot like cooking with the wrong ingredients. You can follow the recipe perfectly, but if the salt is missing or you use a wrong ingredient, the dish won't taste right. Printing works the same way. Your artwork, software, inks, and printer calibration all have to be aligned for the final product to come out just as expected.

In this webinar, we'll break down the essentials of getting the best colors for UV and DTF (Direct to Film) printing. From file setup and RIP adjustments to the role of inks, films, and maintenance, you'll learn practical steps to achieve accurate, consistent results. The payoff is clear: fewer wasted prints, faster turnaround, and happier customers who trust you with every job.

SPEAKER



Marc Villa
Director of Marketing
ColDesi, Inc.

Marc Vila is a seasoned leader in the printing and customization industry, serving as Director of Marketing at ColDesi, Inc.

Marc takes a strategic, customer-first approach to the industry. He has developed hundreds of helpful articles, podcasts, webinars, videos, and white papers that guide business owners in making informed decisions and achieving reliable production success.

He values education and long-term relationships over transactions. Marc believes that success in the printing business comes from more than just buying the right equipment. It comes from access to training, resources, and real human support. That philosophy has helped shape ColDesi into a company known for consultative guidance and a true customer-first culture.

Marc is also a hands-on presenter. He regularly collaborates in live and recorded webinars to help educate business owners and operators at all levels.

Sponsored by

ColDesi
Built on Trust. Driven by Innovation.

SCAN ME

REGISTER AT GRAPHICS-PRO.COM/WEBINARS

Season finale:
It's your time to shine

Wow-worthy awards for year-end recognition

By Natalie Albers



Images courtesy of Crystal D

At the end of a season, the spotlight turns to celebrating the best of the best — the ones who left it all on the field, the ice, the stage, or the screen. For most corporate organizations, the year's end is their championship moment, their annual opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of the past 12 months. That moment is now, and you can help them get ahead of the game.

Prepare to party

Recognition has always been a big deal in workplace culture, and even in our screen-saturated world, nothing beats the moment someone is handed a shining, personalized award. Receiving a custom piece with a special sentiment makes a bigger splash than a social media shoutout or a paper certificate — it's a keepsake that says, "We see you and appreciate you."

Now, here's a poorly-kept secret that shop owners know well: The final stretch of the year is a whirlwind! Holidays pile up, projects wrap up, and calendars fill up with gatherings and celebrations. Chances are, most end-of-year events are already booked — but between the hustle and bustle, ordering awards for them often slips to the last minute.

Be the MVP your customers didn't know they needed: Look back at 2024's orders and reach out now to get the next round of awards in the pipeline before it's crunch time.

Trends for 2025-2026

Crystal awards will always be a timeless favorite, but this year, many organizations are also looking for fresh options that fit today's priorities — like durability, sustainability, and affordability. By offering awards in a variety of materials, you give your customers the flexibility to choose designs that best reflect their culture and values, while also meeting budgets of all sizes.

Awards made from stone, wood, acrylic, and recycled glass are increasing in popularity every year. So much so that we launched an expansion of our product line to include more than just crystal; we now feature awards crafted with multiple substrates.

Each brings its own unique look and advantages, along with a few things to keep in mind when selecting the perfect fit.

Stone awards

- **Features:** In conveying strength and endurance, stone awards (often created as cast stone) have a presence that speaks for itself. They can be shaped to look like a natural rock or refined to portray a more traditional award design. Meanwhile, unique textures (like the popular look of carbon fiber) add even more intrigue. Stone awards come in a variety of colors and can coordinate nicely with interior decor.
- **Popular customization:** Full-color images, like logos and text

Wood awards

- **Features:** As an eco-friendly resource, wood immediately resonates with organizations prioritizing sustainability, while the warmth of the material creates an organic sense of connection. Wood awards are created in a wide variety of shapes and, depending on the supplier, may be crafted from renewable sources and layered with other species of wood to create depth and interest.
- **Popular customization:** Laser engraving

Acrylic awards

- **Features:** Lighter weight than crystal, acrylic caters to bold, modern aesthetics at accessible price points while retaining the gleaming appearance synonymous with elegant awards. Acrylic can also be chosen to complement crystal designs: Some organizations appreciate having the option to display a crystal showpiece while gifting durable acrylic versions to each of their employees.
- **Popular customization:** Full-color images, like photos and vibrant graphics

Recycled glass awards

- **Features:** Glass can be recycled over and over and over, making it a sustainable substrate beyond compare. Locally sourced, 100% recycled glass featuring unique textures and variations that reflect the beauty of nature makes every award subtly unique. When paired with wood bases made with responsibly-sourced wood like bamboo, recycled glass awards stand out for customers seeking an especially Earth-honoring award option.
- **Popular customization:** Full-color images with logos and text in earth-tone hues



Tough to decide? Ask your suppliers about mixed-media awards!

Awards for today's organizations

Leaders always want to honor the teamwork, grit, and standout performances that fueled their success over the past year. But recognition is no longer limited to sales records or years of service awards (though they are always in the mix).

When working with customers on their award needs this season, encourage them to look deeper into their organization and expand who they honor this year — maximizing engagement for more people. This broader approach ensures recognition is inclusive, consistent, and relevant across the workforce, while making it possible to honor more people, at more levels and locations across the organization.

Awards to add include:

- **Leadership and teamwork:** Highlighting effective collaboration and synergy
- **Innovation and creativity:** Celebrating new ideas and initiatives
- **Cultural impact:** Embodying organizational values or advancing inclusion
- **Personal milestones:** Acknowledging achievements outside of work, such as earning advanced degrees or certifications
- **Volunteerism:** Spotlighting community involvement and mentorship participation
- **Retirements:** Honoring employees, board members, and key partners

As businesses continue to adapt to new workforce expectations, recognition delivered through thoughtfully-designed awards, created to reflect what makes each recipient special, remains one of the most effective strategies for building loyalty, engagement, and performance — and driving future success. **GP**



Natalie Albers is a Twin Cities-based writer and editor with more than two decades of communications experience for small businesses and large corporations. Natalie serves as communications manager at Crystal D and is passionate about recognition, as well as about helping organizations connect with their people in meaningful ways.



Image courtesy of Radian Laser

Laser-focused on personalization

How to expand your engraving operations

By Stefanie Galeano-Zalutko

Few mediums offer the creative freedom of laser engraving. Highly advanced and versatile, laser engraving allows creators to flex their craftsmanship and woo customers of their craft with premium, personalized goods. From custom gifts and corporate branding to industrial compliance, the technology is making its mark.

"Engraving is one of the most versatile forms of customization available today," said Corey Kelly, marketing manager at Trotec Laser, Inc. "It allows businesses to work across a wide range of materials such as wood, acrylic, metals, glass, and leather, all while delivering high-quality and permanent results."

"Engraving also opens the door to product diversification and new revenue streams," he continued. "A sign shop can add promotional products. A print business can offer personalized drinkware or awards. Even small creative shops can expand into corporate branding, custom gifts, or packaging enhancements."

Driven by personalization and industrial use, laser engraving is the fastest-growing subcategory. Currently, the laser equipment and services market is estimated at $5 billion–$7 billion, with a global compound annual growth rate of 5%–8%. In the U.S., modest but stable 2%–3% annual growth is expected.

"As consumers continue to demand personalized experiences, we expect engraving to become an even bigger part of product design, packaging, and retail experiences," Kelly added.

While shop owners are eager to explore the potential of laser engraving, it is an investment worth weighing. Industry professionals from Trotec Laser, Radian Laser Systems, and OMTech teamed up to deep dive into laser system options, innovation on the horizon, considerations before purchase, and maintenance – all of which influence a purchase.

Galvo laser systems

Galvo systems use high-speed, mirror-driven galvanometers to direct the laser beam across a work area without moving the laser head. As such,

LASER BUSINESS GROWTH:

THE POWER OF LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

ON DEMAND

The session will cover strategies for connecting with nearby makerspaces, schools, small businesses, and community events; how collaborations can boost visibility and credibility; and practical tips for turning local networks into long-term customers and advocates. By the end, attendees will understand how to leverage community relationships to expand reach and increase sales in the laser engraving/cutting industry.

SPONSORED BY

omtech

GRAPHICS|PRO webinar

SPEAKERS:



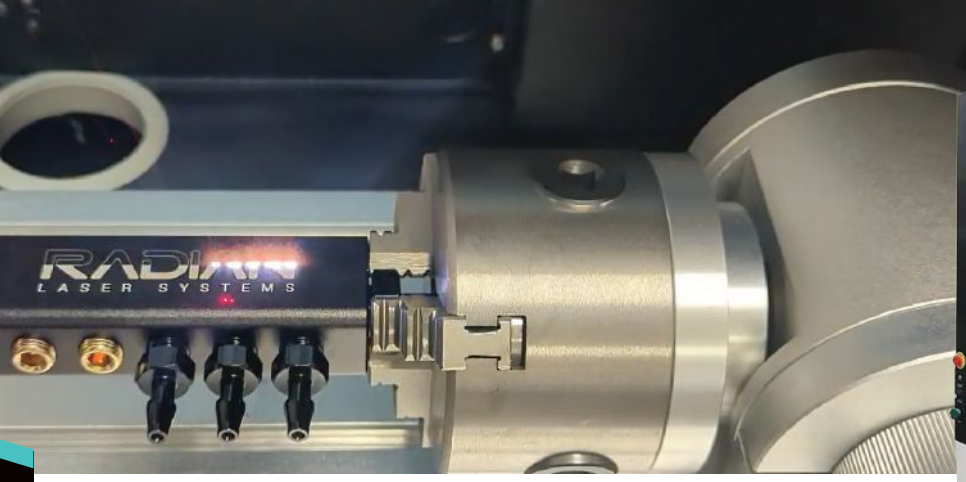
Ethan Coulter
CEO
OCreate



Frederick LeMottee
OMTech Business Development
OMTech

SCAN ME

SIGN UP FOR FREE AT
GRAPHICS-PRO.COM/WEBINARS







Images courtesy of Radian Laser

the system exponentially increases the speed of specialized or high-volume marking and engraving by incorporating a Z axis into the process, according to Radian Laser Systems.

"The rise of galvo technology has reshaped what distributors are capable of producing – improving production speed, as well as quality," said Avinash Garikiparthi, marketing manager at Radian Laser Systems.

The modern engraving community relies on galvo laser systems to perfect fine, intricate details on small, curved, and complex items or surfaces. The substrate choices are vast, and the quality is superior. From metals and plastics to fabric, ceramics, and even paper, galvo systems provide creators with various options to personalize. Common goods include jewelry and electronics; firearms, knives, and tools; serialization and logos; as well as medals, nameplates, and promotional items.

"Sports personalization is a hot topic right now. Being able to offer on-demand engravings for souvenirs at events is a great opportunity for businesses," Kelly added.

In addition to capitalizing on consumer and awards markets, opportunities continue to expand in industrial sectors like automotive, medical, and aerospace. These segments require precise and permanent marking for safety, compliance, and traceability – boosting demand for engraving services.

"The opportunity to work with various applications and use cases allows owners to grow their businesses," said Serena Wang, marketing manager at OMTech.

Galvo systems, she says, open the door for customization, automation, and production at a large scale. While this technology can serve both small and large volumes, it shines bright in integration and automation. With these features, business owners can streamline operational efficiencies with ease, while appealing to a broader customer base and personalizing diverse goods.

"For distributors running high-mix, high-volume orders, the difference in speed can either create a bottleneck or fuel expansion and growth," Garikiparthi said. "With galvo lasers, you gain speed, accuracy, less wear



Image courtesy of Trotec



Image courtesy of Trotec

and tear, plus the ability to produce at scale. It creates a better production experience for your team – and a better service experience for customers."

In addition to producing consistent, high-quality results, the equipment eliminates outsourcing costs, unlocks more capacity with less downtime, allowing engravers to take on more jobs without increasing labor.

Flatbed laser systems

A flatbed laser system can use a CO_2, laser tube, fiber laser source, or, in some cases, a diode laser source to generate its beam — depending on the materials or specific application. For example, industry professionals note CO_2 lasers are common for nonmetals like wood and textiles, while fiber is popular for cutting and engraving metals.

Unlike galvo, the flatbed system relies on a gantry to physically move the laser head and optics to cut, engrave, or mark flat materials — covering a larger work area more effectively but at a more laid-back pace.

"The flatbed is a more straightforward device that will do the task at hand, but speed is limited and parts have to be replaced a little more frequently," Garikiparthi said.

Simple but effective, engravers marvel at its ability to create flawless shapes in various materials like metal, glass, plastic, textiles, and even leather. The flatbed laser, featuring smooth cuts with minimal to no burrs, provides exceptional detail and finish at an attractive price point as well.

While galvo systems range from $25,000–$75,000 (or more) due to advanced components and capabilities, business owners can invest in a gantry CO_2 laser system for $15,000–$45,000. As a result, Garikiparthi





Images courtesy of Trotec

stated gantry-style options command approximately 70% market share.

"It is like printing presses, in that most users will start with a flatbed because of the price point, then once their needs evolve beyond the machine, they move to galvo technology for the gained speed and expandability — but that flatbed still will have unique applications and prove useful — thus leaving a hybrid setup," Garikiparthi explained.

Flatbed lasers are available in a range of sizes, from compact systems specially designed for small-scale shops and tight workspaces to large-format machines that can handle full sheets of material.

With a larger field size and lower price tag, the flatbed system is a common option for wide-format engraving and batch processing as well. It can accommodate 2D scale volume and large-scale production across a wide range of industries.

"Flatbed lasers shine when it comes to flexibility," stated Kelly. "Their larger work area and ability to handle thick or flat materials like wood or acrylic make them ideal [for large-format pieces and a wider range of versatile applications], from signage and prototyping to personalization across many substrates."

Together, Kelly said, the two laser systems complement each other: galvos deliver unmatched efficiency in marking and coding tasks, while flatbeds excel in versatility and creative applications.

Innovating for tomorrow

In a growing market, manufacturers are challenged to solve tomorrow's problems *today*.

According to Wang, manufacturers are pushing boundaries to create more opportunities for laser business owners to thrive.

For example, OMTech stated it plans to incorporate both a flying galvo CO_2 laser head as well as a CO_2 laser cutting head.

"RF laser engraving and flying galvo head laser engraving will bring speed and increased efficiency in production, while improving overall resolution, detail, and quality," Wang said. "As a result, customers can enjoy the benefits of cutting and engraving quality all in one laser."

Looking ahead, innovators remain focused on AI technology, as well as its impact on the industry at large. Smarter design workflows, batch processing, and real-time quality control are front and center, as well as seamless customization tools embedded directly into online shops.

"We've seen huge improvements in optics, software, and automation, which allow for greater throughput and ease-of-use. Modern systems also integrate more seamlessly into existing workflows, reducing setup time and human error," Kelly explained.

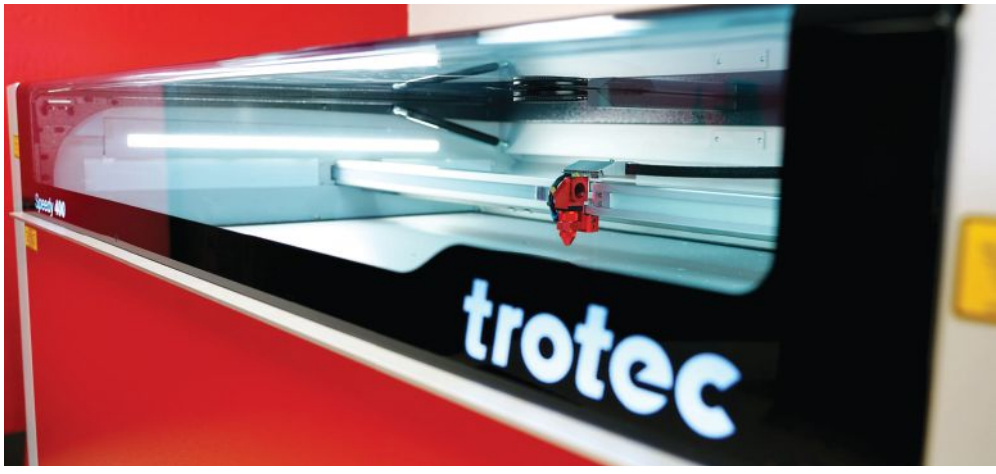
He foresees continued momentum in automation and workflow integration, like camera systems for positioning and even robot-assisted marking for industrial environments.

"One of the most exciting developments is the integration of camera systems and smart positioning tools that make setup faster and more accurate. For example, vision-driven placement ensures designs are aligned correctly on irregularly-shaped or pre-cut parts," Kelly said.

"We're also seeing more automation features, such as robotic part handling or software integration that connects lasers directly to ERP or design workflows," Kelly explained.

Garikiparthi is eyeing industry crossover opportunities. She expects to see even more engraving services merging with laser cutting, 3D printing, CNC, and packaging for end-to-end product production.

Sustainability is another key factor in the evolution of laser systems, as customers demand eco-friendly materials (i.e., bamboo and recycled wood) and clean engraving methods.



Conquer New Markets with Dual Laser Power



Dual Lasers. Unlimited Potential.

The **SN6240DLR** is the first of its kind - combining CO_2 and fiber laser power to engrave or cut virtually any material, at any size or scale.



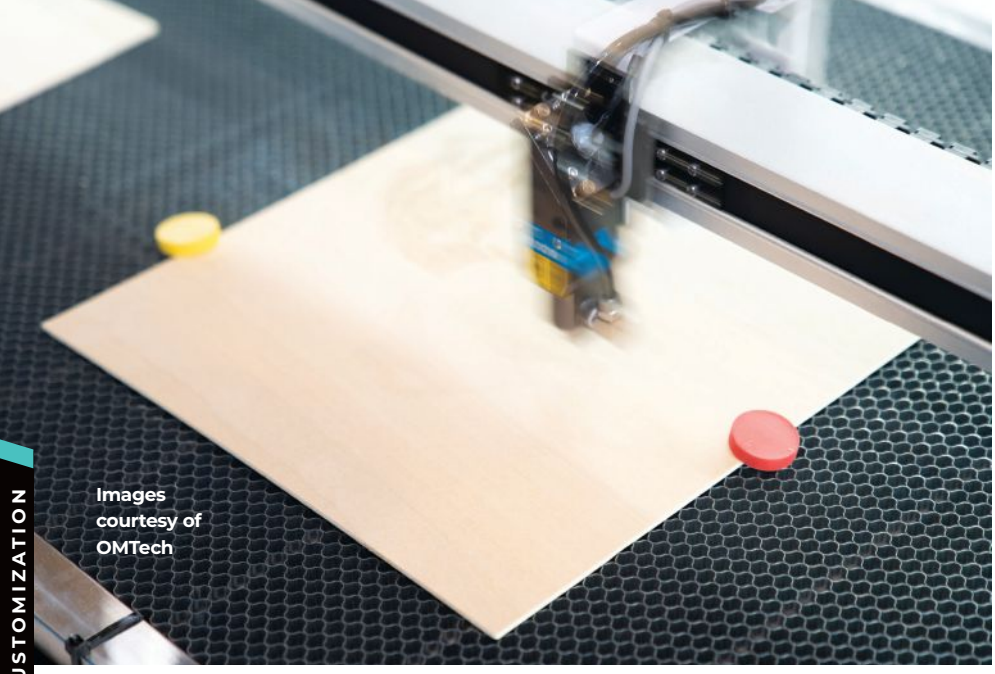
Perfect for signage, memorials, gifts, industrial tags - *and so much more!*

Call us or scan the QR code for more details and exclusive info.

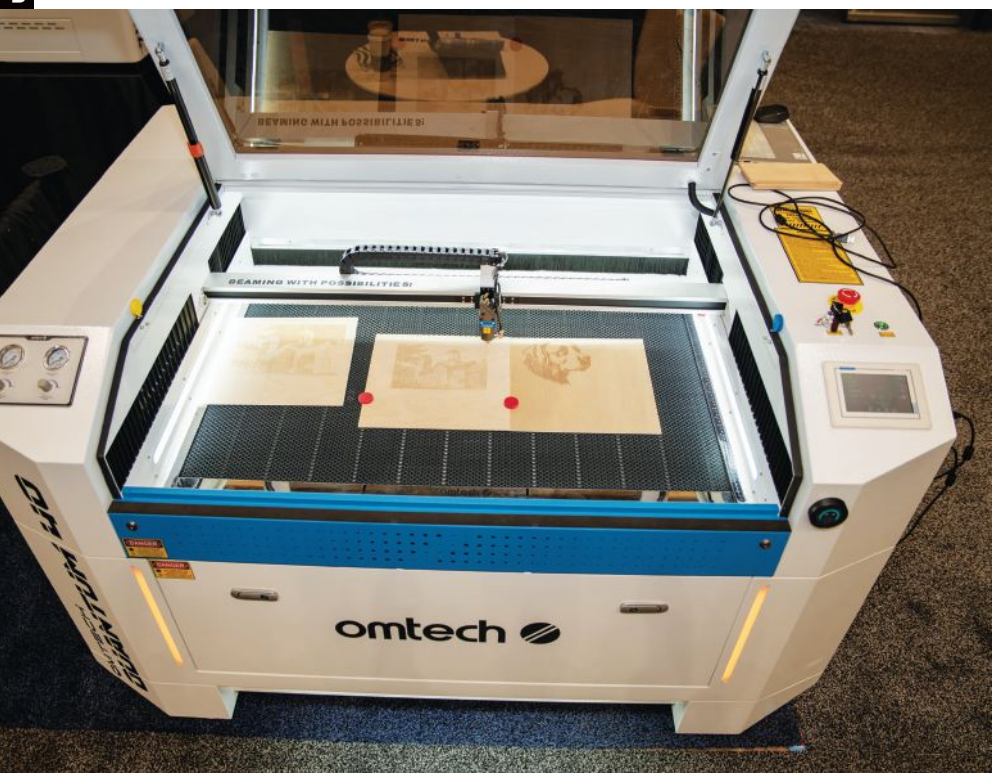
aplazer.com
(800) 585-8617

AP LAZER
LEADING THE WAY

4215 LEGION DRIVE, MASON, MICHIGAN, 48854



Images courtesy of OMTech



Digital design integration not only allows for perfect replication of complex logos and images, but also boasts a noncontact process, reduces waste, and is environmentally friendly.

"In general, laser engraving is often seen as more sustainable than printed or chemical alternatives," Garikiparthi said, noting laser engraving is devoid of inks and solvents.

Considerations before purchase

Before making any equipment investment, owners should study niche areas to specialize, substrates to explore, and new market opportunities.

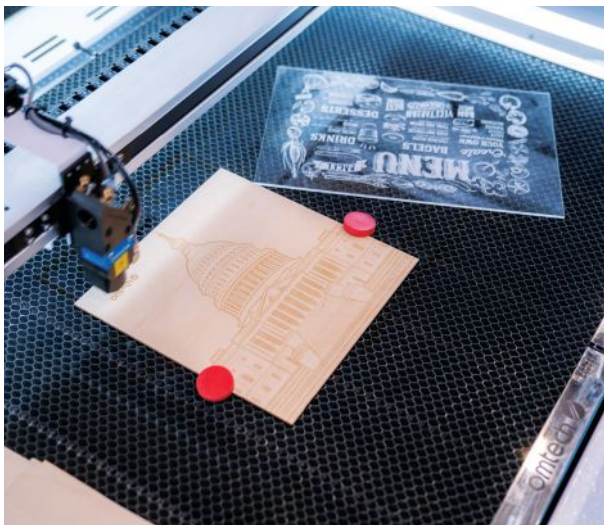
"My advice is to think beyond your current product line and consider how engraving can enhance the services you already offer. Look at where your customers are spending money — promotional items, signage, gifts, and packaging — then identify how and where engraving can add value," Kelly stated.

In addition, evaluate volume production, throughput goals, and the ability to scale output long-term, as volume often dictates space and equipment requirements.

"Flatbed systems require more floor space to accommodate the working area and operator access, while galvo systems are generally more compact and can fit into smaller shop environments or production lines," he explained.

For example, the Trotec Laser's galvo









features a 12" X 18" working area, while their flatbed covers 49" X 28".

Regardless of the system setup, Garikiparthi suggested “a decently-sized area” for anything over 100 units per day, giving engravers space to spread out and be creative.

Trusted quality, desired functionality, and overall capabilities also impact the right equipment investment — and budget. Do not skimp where it counts, they agree.

“Be cognizant of the laser tubes when looking for the right product. Unless you are tight on budget or lower production level, you should be looking for a metal tube for your laser,” Garikiparthi noted. “They last considerably longer and are more of a workhorse.”

Industry colleague Wang advises against investing in a CO_2 galvo with no cutting head and/or low wattage compared to a user’s desired cutting thickness.

“Don’t buy a machine that requires you to make multiple passes — decreasing quality, tolerance, and accuracy with each pass,” Wang added.

Of course, as the world automates at lightning speed, company representatives also emphasize investing in professional-grade equipment with strong software support to enhance workflow efficiency and ensure more consistent results – further maximizing the return on investment.

“The biggest learning curve is always the software itself — learning proper alignment and how to use parameters, adjust them, and maximize speeds and feeds,” said Wang. “Master your average parameter settings and you will master your craft.”





She also encourages owners to look past the machine itself and consider consumables and spare part availability, as well as U.S.-based technical support, in the decision-making process.

"Be wary of unclear service or warranty terms, limited material compatibility, or systems that appear inexpensive upfront but lack long-term reliability, training, or support," Kelly added.

In the end, a laser purchase should be viewed as a long-term business tool, rather than a short-term cost. While laser systems are a significant investment, Kelly said demand is soaring and the ROI is strong.

"Financing and tax incentives often make ownership more accessible, and the ability to diversify services and tap into new markets can quickly offset the initial cost," he said.

Maintaining for the long haul

According to company representatives, routine maintenance is minimal but essential to operate efficiently and extend the equipment's lifespan.

"Wipe down the interior of the unit, shop vac the excess material in the catch tray, and clean the focal lens with a microfiber cloth," Wang said.

For those who want a helping hand in maintenance, companies like Trotec offer service plans and annual health checks to keep systems running at peak performance.

While galvo systems typically require less day-to-day maintenance due to fewer moving parts, users should be mindful to monitor laser tubes and small parts such as mirrors for natural wear and tear.

"The lifespan of the functionality is more often tied to the laser tube than the mechanical components of the laser, such as the laser head or controller board. Glass tube lasers typically only have lifespans of 10,000 hours, whereas metal (RF) tubes can last up to 40,000," Garikiparthi explained.

Regardless of the laser system, proper fume extraction is critical for operator safety, machine performance, and material quality. Filtration systems remove harmful particles and gases generated during laser processing — protecting both people and equipment, while ensuring consistent, high-quality results.

"With proper care and maintenance, lasers can last 10-plus years, with many systems in the field performing well beyond that. Regular maintenance and access to replacement parts and service extend longevity, ensuring a strong return on investment," Kelly said.

Capitalize on demand

As more independent shops and hobbyists enter the engraving market, you must dare to be different. At first, tap into profitable, high-demand categories with guaranteed interest to hone your craft, then identify a specialization or niche to best serve. Build a lasting rapport with fellow community businesses, teaming up with trophy shops, schools, realtors, and even corporate gift suppliers. Remember to lean into the business's strengths, bundle services where appropriate, and master the art of customer retention.

With a captured audience and engraving services on a steady incline, the time is right to laser your focus on personalization. **GP**



Images courtesy of OMTech



Stefanie Galeano-Zalutko is the president/CEO of Zalutko Business Services, Inc., a marketing agency based in Central Florida. She can be reached at szalutko@zalutkobusiness.com.

5 questions with... Lori Champagne



Lori Champagne has owned two shops in her 28 years in the engraving industry. Her California shop was a retail space with employees and a neon sign in the window proudly proclaiming OPEN for far too many hours of the day and night. She now has a home-based studio in Michigan where she lives on seven acres of woods and wetlands with her husband. No neon, but if she is home, she is open.

1 How did you get your start in this industry?

Back in 1994 when I married my first husband, we were looking for a business that would be creative and virtually recession-proof. I had done picture framing in the past, but that was not a recession-proof occupation. We stumbled on the awards industry and determined that when times were good, companies bought gifts and awards for their employees, and when times were bad, companies did not give raises but instead gave awards to help keep their employees happy. Additionally, there would always be youth sports trophies, school awards, and community gifts of appreciation.

2 What advice do you have for someone just starting in engraving?

Attend the trade shows. This will give you an idea of what is out there as far as machines, materials, and processes. Have lunch at the tables that are usually set up in the exhibition hall and talk to other people about what they do and how they got started. It will give you lots of ideas, and you can get honest opinions about machinery and products. Don't worry about finding your niche; your niche will find you. Also, don't over-buy products at the trade shows. Everything is cool in the beginning, and you could end up with a storage room full of product that might be difficult to sell. Bring on new equipment slowly, so you have time to learn each machine before the new one arrives.

Also, regarding machines, read the manual when you first get the machine. You may only understand 20% to 40% of it. Then, after you've been playing with the machine for at least six months, read the manual again. You will understand so much more and absorb more of the tips and tricks that your machine can provide.

3 What challenges do you see coming for engraving professionals?

New processes and computers are wonderful things, but as with every industry for hundreds of years, the artisan who can create with their hands is being lost to time. We have just four hand engravers in the metro Detroit area. Although there are plenty of videos online to teach, people are turning to processes that are computer driven, not finger driven. These arts may not be necessary anymore, but I mourn their loss. It saddens my heart to see perpetual trophies that have been imperfectly hand engraved for more than 100 years, now have the precisely formed letters of our computerized age. The warmth, the character, and the human touch has been lost.

4 The flip side of that question: What are the biggest opportunities?

Back when I started in this industry, the offerings of engraving shops were virtually the same. Pantograph or mechanical engraving on simple plaques. You had two choices: metal or plastic. Then came sandblasters, sublimation, lasers, and now DTF and DTG printing. The industry has expanded in a million directions, and there's so much to choose from. Each engraving shop is now very different from the one before. And because of Etsy and other online selling opportunities, we have expanded from neighborhood shops to worldwide enterprises that can specialize in something as specific as dog collars. And yet, even with the global expansion, there's still room for those who practice the old ways of hand engraving.

5 What's the coolest thing you've engraved?

I tend to be the shop that other shops send things to when they won't touch it or don't know how to engrave it. I see a lot of weirdness. From Adirondack chairs to coconuts to shark teeth, to KitchenAid mixers. So many bizarre objects. I've done work for Betty White, Magic Johnson, Jewel, and Stan Lee. Strangely enough, my favorite award that I've ever created was for a father to give to his son. The two used to walk together a lot, and it was their goal to walk around the world together. I created an award that had a globe in the middle, and the silhouettes of a father and son that you could move to make them walk around the Earth. GP



Images courtesy of Inkcups

Direct-to-profit

Why direct-to-object printing should be your business' next investment

By Jessica Makrinos

Throughout the print industry, lines are blurring. Where once a signage specialist focused only on signs, today many also wrap cars or produce printed home decor for B2C customers. Brand-focused commercial printers are dabbling in the worlds of packaging and POS. And apparel decorators are turning their hands — and equipment — to products ranging from drinkware and sports bottles to coolers and work safety gear.

There are blurred lines in the world of technology, too, with many graphics shops diversifying their equipment portfolios as they seek to add new revenue streams, better meet customer needs, and boost their profitability.

The growing appeal of direct-to-object printing

One technology getting a lot of interest from those seeking to expand their capabilities is direct-to-object UV digital printing. Direct-to-object (DTO) or direct-to-shape printing has been shaking up the promotional and industrial printing markets since its advent in the late 2010s. That growth shows no sign of slowing down, with market projections suggesting a CAGR of 9.5% for the U.S. direct-to-shape market through to 2030.

Simply put, DTO printing involves using inkjet digital printing to apply a two-dimensional image to a three-dimensional item before fixing this in place by "curing" the ink with UV light. It moves print far beyond the printed page, T-shirt, or even flag, making it possible to print directly onto drinkware, glass bottles, pens, coolers, candle holders, sporting goods, reusable tote bags, beverage cans, automotive parts, ceramic tiles, tech accessories, tools, candy, and so much more. Cylindrical DTO printing takes this even further, making it possible to seamlessly print 360-degree designs featuring vivid colors and intricate designs onto cylindrical items such as packaging and drinkware.

Furthermore, because this is digital printing technology, it is entirely viable to switch between printing one-off

items, small batches, and larger runs all in a single shift, with minimal set-up and clean-up in between, and very little waste. This makes it an ideal technology for prototyping, small batches, mass customization, and personalization.

Make it personal to profit from print-on-demand

Driven by demand from consumers for personalized products alongside the rapid expansion of e-commerce that we've seen since the start of the 2020s, the $2.5 billion U.S. print-on-demand market is forecast to grow at between 22% and 27% over the next decade. Of course, with T-shirts and hoodies typically topping the print-on-demand sales charts, none of this will be news to graphics shops that offer apparel decoration. But for those who have begun to tap into this market, DTO printing has the potential to broaden the range of personalized items they can create and potentially derive greater profit margins from higher-value products.

Many of the fun sayings and graphics that sell well on apparel in the consumer print-on-demand market can prove equally popular on mugs, reusable water bottles, tote bags, or notebooks. And with some of these items just as, or even more popular than apparel when it comes to personalized gifts, expanding your capabilities can be a shrewd investment for businesses already supplying drop shippers or consumer-facing businesses.

A great example of the power of personalization is Proper Goose, an Inkcups customer in the UK that has built a gifting business out of personalizing products using DTO technology. They offer their customers drinkware, homeware, phone covers, and even bottles of gin, all of which can be personalized with messages or photographs to create unique gifts, as well as supplying other B2C businesses with personalized drinkware.



Printed by Bottled Goose using the Inkcups Double Helix (Image courtesy of Bottled Goose)



Image courtesy of Inkcups


Image courtesy of Inkcups



Printed by Bottled Goose using the Inkcups Double Helix (Image courtesy of Bottled Goose)



Images courtesy of Inkcups

unusual flavors, local-first ingredient sourcing, and more sustainable production practices. Alongside this, "indie" cosmetic brands are also tapping into consumers' quests to find brands that feel personal to them. As a result, there is a growing market for "small batch" packaging that can be produced as needed, and customized or even personalized, all of which is hugely appealing for brands seeking to maximize their artisanal image and unique value proposition.

Consider the example of Sterkstokers, a Belgian distillery that has built a business out of inviting restaurants, hospitality businesses, companies, and even individuals to design their own spirit, right down to the bottle, which is then printed on-site using DTO technology.

Meanwhile, Bottled Goose, the trade-focused arm of Proper Goose, regularly prints small batches of bespoke and limited-edition packaging for both fledgling and established brands.

Upsell to unveil new revenue streams

One of the maxims of sales is that it is easier to sell to an existing customer

Open up opportunities in packaging

Another of the market segments driving significant growth in DTO is packaging, where it is giving rise to leaner and more sustainable models by enabling on-demand production, low-inventory supply chains, and even waste reduction through the elimination of shrink sleeves and adhesive labels. It is also ideally suited to the creation of limited edition products, seasonal variations, and mass customization campaigns.

Following the success of the craft beer industry, growing numbers of small distilleries and independent beverage producers are taking advantage of the consumer appetite for





than a new one, which is why the route into DTO printing for so many graphics businesses sees them expanding their capabilities to complement an existing offering. For workwear specialists or vehicle branding businesses, complementary products might include branded drinkware, toolboxes, and tablet covers, while merchandise producers could look to stadium bags as a profitable new product line.

One Inkcups customer did just this when they spotted an opportunity to expand their offering beyond garment branding. The Branding Lab in the UK is a trade-only business that invested in cylindrical DTO printing technology to broaden the range of branded products it offers and is now also able to use the short turnaround times it can offer on 360-degree bottle printing to help it stand out from the competition.

Entry-level investments that can grow with the business

As with all new technologies, a considerable investment in DTO printing capabilities may seem like something of a gamble to those unfamiliar with it. However, one of the reasons that DTO printing is already so popular in the promotional products arena is the availability of high-quality entry-level options. With lower price points and smaller footprints, these options can make it easier to "test the waters" of new market segments and demonstrate potential new product lines to existing customers. There are also modular ranges, which make it possible for businesses to expand their capabilities as they grow.

Market segments are converging as businesses everywhere look for new ways to deepen their customer relationships and increase their profit margins. For those who think creatively about ways to complement their existing offering and strengthen their USP, the changing market landscape could mean a bright future. The only question is, what are you going to print on next? **GP**





Jessica Makrinos is the marketing manager at Inkcups, a supplier and manufacturer of direct-to-object inkjet printing equipment, pad printing equipment, laser plate-makers, and corresponding supplies. Makrinos has spearheaded the company's global marketing efforts since 2016. Before joining Inkcups, she earned marketing experience through formal education and in marketing roles at robotics and software companies.

Images courtesy of Megan Griffith

Passing down the family business

How P&M Apparel tackled succession planning as a third-generation, family-owned shop

By Megan Griffith

Our print shop, P&M Apparel, is third-generation family-owned, starting with my grandparents in the basement of their house and a two-head Barudan, with hopes to make $300 a week. My mother took it over 10 years after its inception. She added screen printing and heat presses to our decoration methods, but more than that, she added financial organization, staffing, structure, and business goals to a mom-and-pop shop that was quickly evolving into a respected small business. P&M Apparel has grown from the basement to an 8,000 square-foot facility with 16 employees and customers all over the world (126 countries just last year).

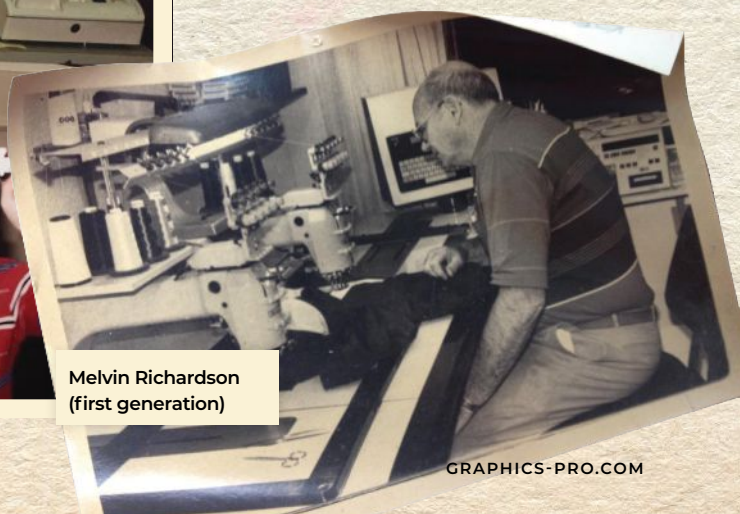
When she was ready to retire two years ago, my brother and I had already been working there for years and had already declared our intent to take over, but there was never pressure from the previous two generations about keeping the business going. If anything, the pressure was coming from us, honoring a legacy established by our grandparents and parents of nearly 40 years in business, and making sure we were leaving a legacy for the future of P&M Apparel.

First steps

Our "first step" when we started planning for succession was looking for books and articles that would help guide us on how to pass the torch. When my mom took over for my grandparents, there wasn't a lot of formal transition: she kept them on payroll to take care of them, and they would come in to work when they were bored at home. The most formal part of the transition was purchasing the building from them, a very simple bill of sale of the company, and acquiring a



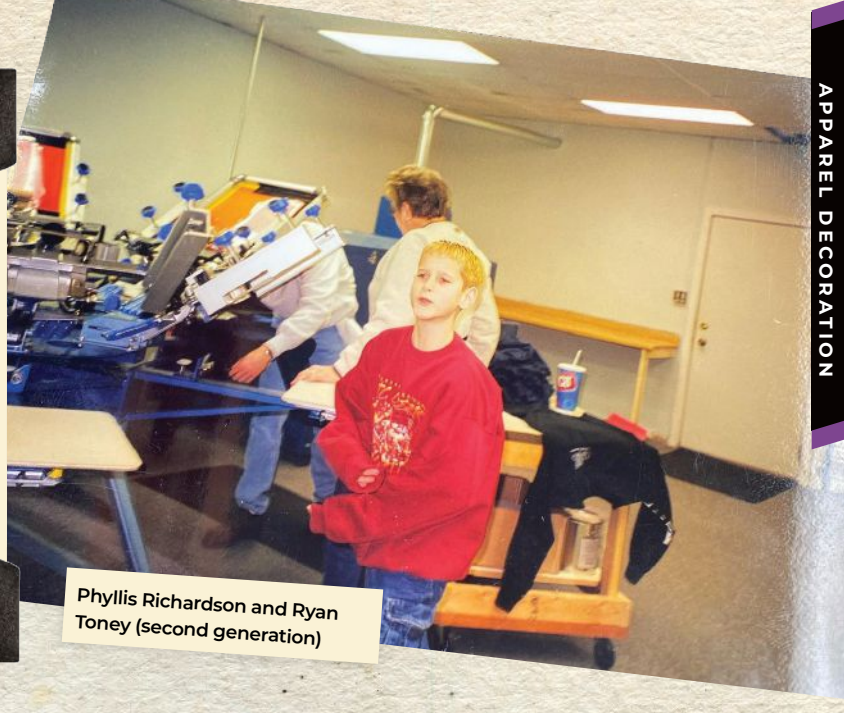
Melvin Richardson (first generation), Will Richardson, Brian Richardson, and Dan Richardson (third generations)



Melvin Richardson (first generation)



Kay Ferin and Eleanor Griffith (fourth generation)



Phyllis Richardson and Ryan Toney (second generation)

lot of debt that my mom had to address. By the time she was ready to retire, we were a thriving business with a full staff and a lot of valuable "blue sky." Whatever that means. Because I'm going to cut to the chase here: There isn't a lot of great information on how to transition a business, while keeping it in the family, while no one has a background in business, while everything is amicable and all parties are well-equipped and ready, without giant stock profiles and boards because we're still a relatively small business, and while making sure all parties are taken care of for the future.

So, our actual first step was talking — a lot. When my mom took over, she felt very stuck, like it was her or nothing. She didn't want my brother and me to ever feel like we couldn't leave, and made that clear from our first day of employment. Family matters more than business, and if the business was affecting our relationships, she wanted to make sure there was a clear path to an exit if necessary, one that she never felt she had.

Neither my brother nor I had intentions to take over: I was planning on being a big shot graphic designer working at a magazine house or design firm somewhere very metropolitan, and my brother was planning on going into social work. I happened to join P&M when my company had layoffs and they needed a designer; my brother joined as a temp when I went on maternity leave. On our own paths, we realized we weren't printing shirts; we were helping tell stories for clients and had opportunities to make a difference in our community in a way no other job had offered. It took longer to convince our mother that we really wanted to take over than it did to convince ourselves that this is where we belonged. So we talked a lot.

We talked about why P&M is important to us. We talked about where we wanted to take P&M in the future. We talked about what business looked like in the past and what we would have done differently. We talked about how we wanted staff to evolve and what made our business different than our competitors. We went through "traction" together and talked about our core values. When we butted heads at work (this was mostly me, the



Mid-States Racing News, Racers' Marketplace, November 19, 1997 • Page 31

P & M Monogramming: offers customized racing apparel

WEBSTER CITY, Iowa — Phyllis and Melvin Richardson started P & M Monogramming more than 10 years ago in the basement of their home. After outgrowing the space there, they moved their business to 915 Seneca Street in 1991. In March 1993, Phyllis retired from her position at the Land O'Lakes Answer Farm and has since been working full time at the embroidery business.

It soon became necessary to increase capacity and so a six head embroidery machine was installed. With this addition, they now have the capability to eight pieces at one time. With continued growth, more and newer high technology equipment has been added. Most, a Texicut machine, which has a hot tip that cuts man-made fabric. Any shape pattern can be worked up on computer and then cut out of fabric for an applique. This applique can then be applied and additional detailing added to truly customize the design.

The most recent addition to P & M Monogramming has been the addition of another person to the staff. Kay Toney, Phyllis and Melvin's daughter, recently moved into the area and will be working as a sales representative.

P & M Monogramming offers much more than monogramming. Any design, logo or lettering capable of being transferred to their computer system can be sewn or applied on just about any fabric; including shirts, hats, bags, etc.

Screen printing and tackle twill are a few of the other services P & M Monogramming offers.

Of course, the main product of the business is still the computer stitched lettering which has been done in several racing applications both for tracks and individual race teams and drivers.

Several tracks have ordered jackets for their officials and champions. Race teams have ordered team shirts and jackets. Several jackets have been done using a combination of stitching, plus a cut out of the driver's car on the back. Details can be added to truly customize the design for each individual race team.

If you're in the market for a beautifully designed and stitched piece of apparel — from shirts to driver's uniforms — give Melvin, Phyllis or Kay a call at (515) 832-3596. Or, stop in for a visit or write P & M Monogramming, 915 Seneca Street, Webster City, IA 50595. Their E-mail address is monogram@mail.ncn.net. You can find their home page on the Internet at www.ncn.net/~monogram.

Melvin Richardson

Melvin Richardson setting a logo on the computer.

Phyllis Richardson and Kay Ferin

Phyllis Richardson and Kay Toney looking over some the merchandise av... in their showroom.

Phyllis Richardson (first generation), Melvin Richardson (first generation), and Kay Ferin (second generation)



Megan Griffith (third generation), Kay Ferin, and Ryan Toney (third generation)



Megan Griffith and Ryan Toney



Jackson Toney (fourth generation)

bull-headed eldest daughter coming out), we talked about our reasoning for coming to different conclusions.

We talked about how much our bills were each month, a monthly payment for selling the company, how to plan for pay raises and bonuses, when to buy new equipment, and whether to use cash or get a loan. We talked about customer loyalty, why they come to us, and how to preserve that relationship building. We talked about pricing and overhead, when to give in to a cranky customer, and when to stand your ground. We talked about looking at the bigger picture of the company when every other employee will be looking at a much more zoomed-in perspective. We talked about leaning on each other when it gets hard and remembering that family is more important than business.

Timelines & paperwork

Step one: talk. Step two: lay out a timeline. Knowing when things would go into motion not only helped us plan accordingly, but it also helped our staff in the transition. The three of us had a general idea, but through our conversations, it became clear what the timeline for transition would look like. There was a clear moment when our mom backed away from the management side of things and focused on the accounting side. From then on, most decisions were made by my brother and me unless they involved money. Then there was a clear moment when even money decisions became our responsibility. There was a moment when she started coming into work less often and moving to more of a part-time role.

Finally, there was a moment where the papers were signed and the business was ours. This was probably the most anticlimactic of all the moments, and the only real time we had a lawyer involved. The lawyer's responsibility was to draft up a transfer of all titles and paperwork, create formal shares and the division of the shares, develop the payment schedule for paying for the business, and file all details with the state. Some businesses may need lawyers to play more of a



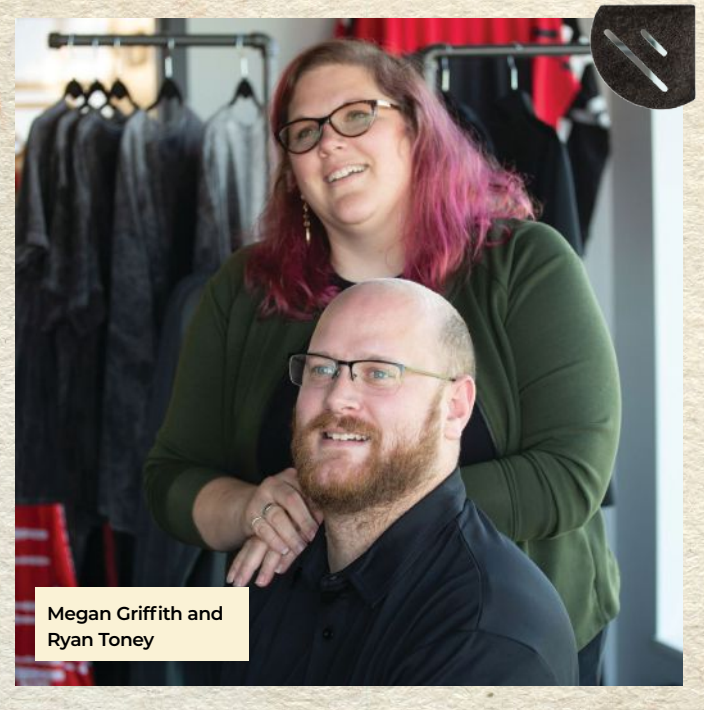
Kay Ferin, Megan Griffith, and Phyllis Richardson



Melvin Richardson



Ryan Toney and Eleanor Griffith



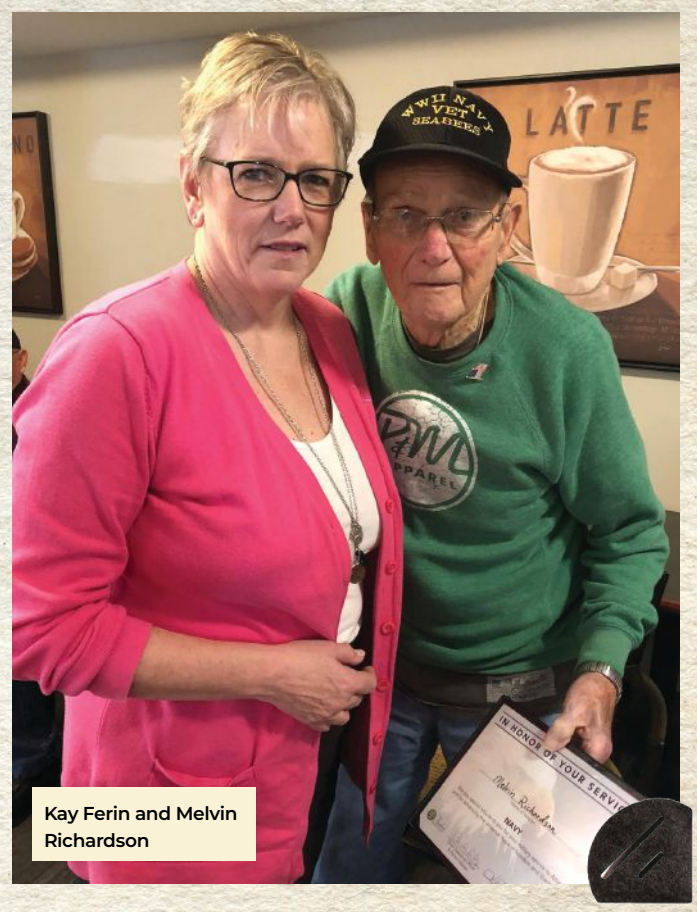
Megan Griffith and Ryan Toney

mediator role in determining what's fair for both parties, and that's a great way to protect your investments and your relationships. For us, we had invested a couple of years talking through everything, so we felt comfortable having one lawyer and using them just for the formal business stuff that was way over our heads.

The work of generations

There is a weight that comes with taking over the family business that my brother and I didn't feel, even when we were managing the company. I think the first time I felt that weight was when a customer read through our website bio after not getting the basketball jersey number his kid wanted, and on the phone, told me my grandparents would be ashamed of how I'm running their business into the ground. Was he being wildly dramatic, and it wasn't at all true? Sure. Did it still make me spiral, worrying that I was falling short of honoring the legacy of the two generations that built this company? Also yes. Second-generation family-owned is a cool thing, but at the third generation, it feels like the pressure is on, and it's not just a fluke.

We are now the people for whom the buck stops. We are responsible for putting food on our employees' tables. We are responsible for client satisfaction. It's a heavy burden, and my brother and I have a running joke that we schedule our panic attacks at 2 a.m., because that's the only time we're available. But we have each other, and that's been a big support in taking over P&M; one of us can always pick up where the other falls short. We don't know if the fourth generation will take over or if we will be the third and final, but we don't plan to put any pressure on them. It helps that the youngest is 6, and there's no way they're in a position to take over right now anyway. For now, we'll just run P&M with the legacy of the past and future in mind. **GP**



Kay Ferin and Melvin Richardson



Megan Griffith co-owns P&M Apparel in Polk City, Iowa, with her brother Ryan Toney. Their print shop is third-generation family and woman-owned, and was founded by a WWII veteran. Megan is a 2024 Women in Screen Printing award winner, 2018 Business Person of the Year award winner, and 2017 Screen Printing Magazine Rising Star Award winner.


Live
&Tell®
BY L.A.T.
THE VERSATILE LUXURY COLLECTION
Our most *anticipated*
launch of the year.



6906 LUXURY HEAVY TEE

Styled 3 Ways

Casual Friday

The elevated details of our luxury tee keeps things polished – perfect for the transition from early morning meetings to after work happy hours.



Country Club Classic

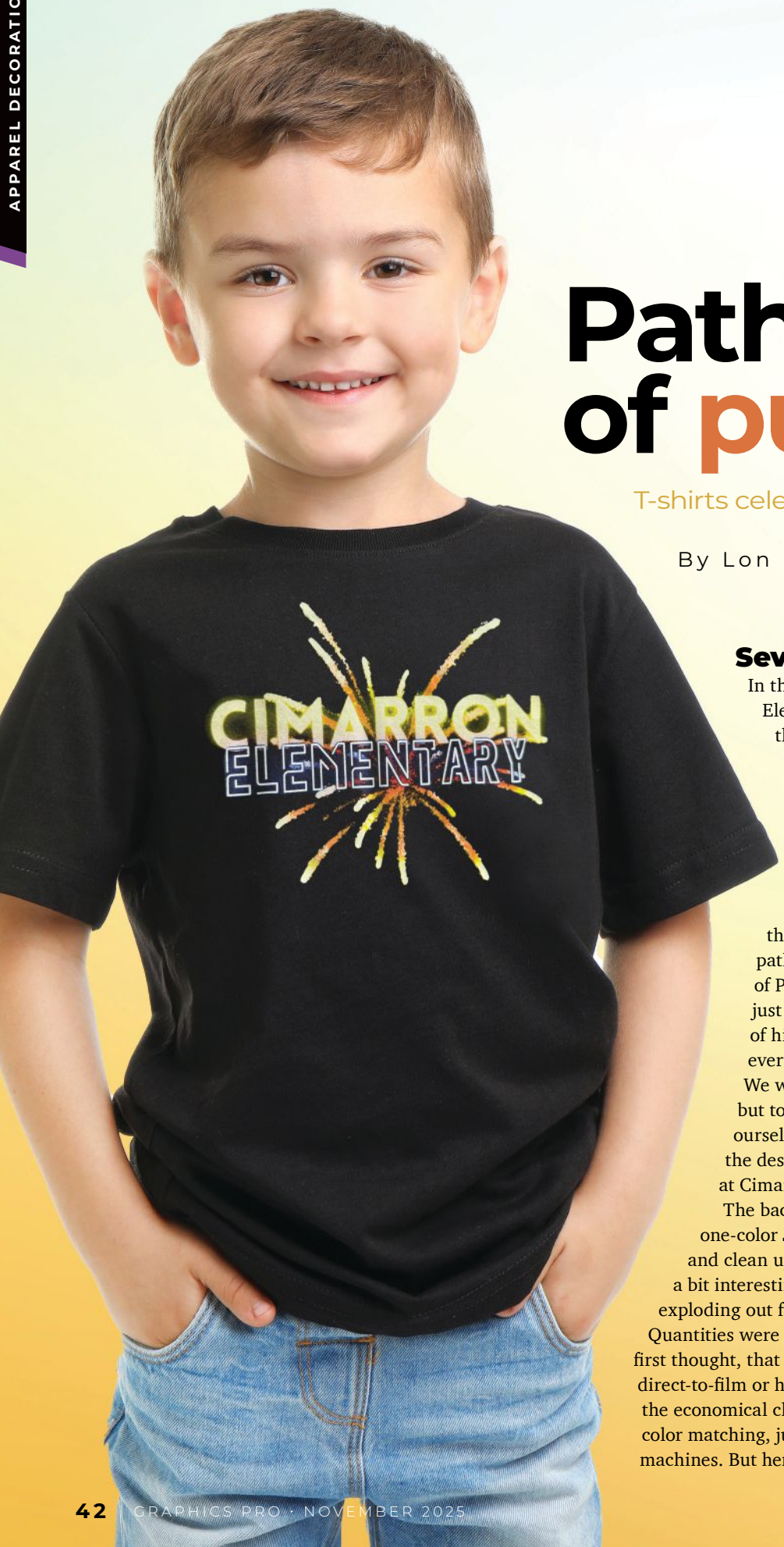
From the courts to the clubhouse, this collection was built for prestige. Premium fabric and tailored details give it the polish look for a members-only setting.



Street Scene

Soft, durable, and made for movement, this collection fits seamlessly into city life. Layer it or wear it solo for effortless comfort on the go.

www.latapparel.com



Pathway of purpose

T-shirts celebrate school anniversary

By Lon Winters

Seventy-five years is a long time. In the changing Colorado region, Cimarron Elementary has stood since its founding by the Cherry Creek School District in 1950. Cimarron has educated generations of students and has been a constant in Elizabeth, Colorado, a community that has seen plenty of growth. Elizabeth is a sleepy little cow town from which my company, Graphic Elephants, hails. Cimarron has always been more than an elementary school, it has been a pathway, living up to its motto: "Pathway of Purpose." So, for us, this project wasn't just another spirit tee. It would be a piece of history. Every alum, every teacher, and every parent were a part of Cimarron's story. We would be tasked with not just an image, but to capture a legacy. This is how we build ourselves up and make it seem important. And the design certainly was important to the admin at Cimarron.

The back was simple. The client provided a one-color JPEG file that we would need to trace and clean up for printing. The front, however, got a bit interesting. A bold, full-color starburst graphic exploding out from the Cimarron name and slogan. Quantities were modest at about 100 black shirts. At first thought, that kind of volume at full color screams for direct-to-film or hybrid transfers. In many cases, that's the economical choice. No seps, no screens, no setups, no color matching, just a digital transfer applied with transfer machines. But here, the artwork had other ideas. Too



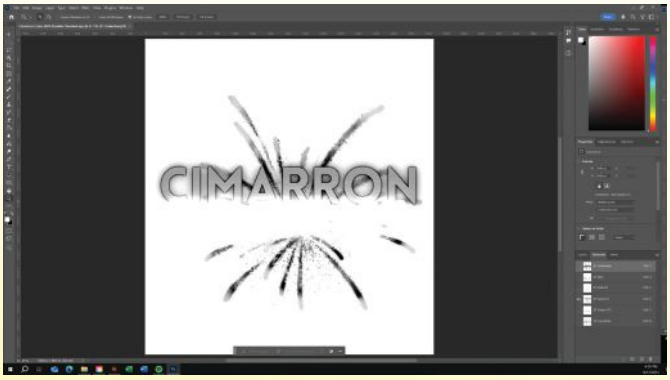




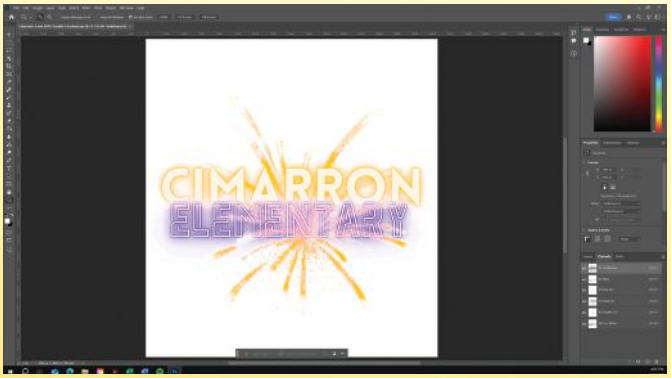
many color transitions from bright to fading into the background. Too much subtlety. Too much color directly on black fabric. This wasn't going to translate well to a transfer. Screen printing was still the way to go. Maybe the only way to go.

The heart of the design was the starburst, a radiating explosion of colored light and energy. In Photoshop, we worked in RGB to size at 300 DPI on a black background. The burst was built using Gradient Tools and Radial Options. A yellow and orange core expanded outward and dissipating into darker tones as it blended with the shirt color. A second purple and blue were built similarly below that. Layers stacked, each one masked and adjusted. We used a combination of Gaussian Blur, Soft Brushes, Linear Dodge, and

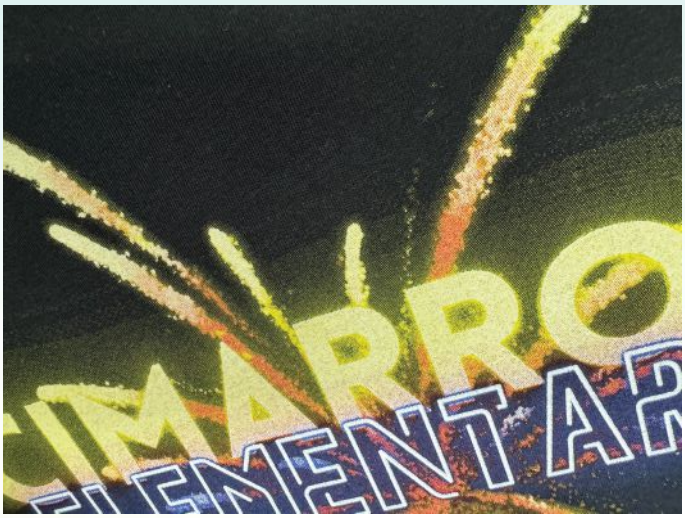


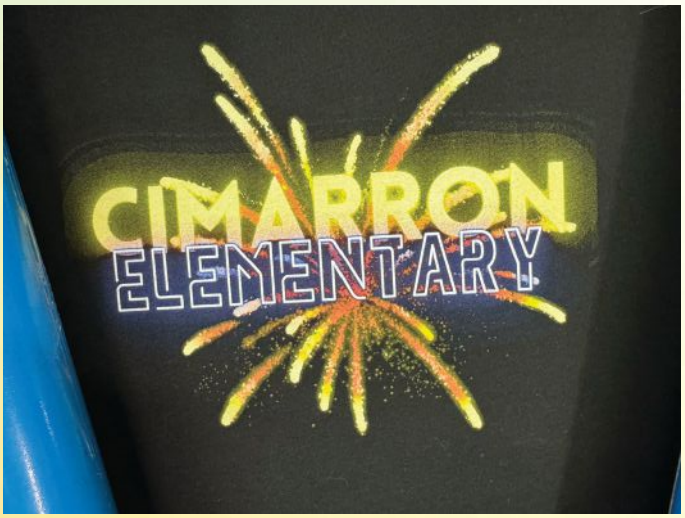














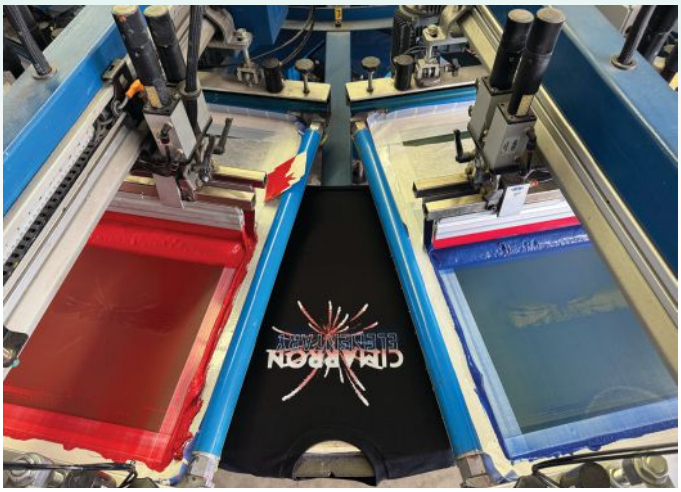
Overlay to simulate light radiating outward. The Cimarron and Pathway of Purpose text were set and outlines wrapped the type. The burst was alive, vibrant, and loaded with transitions.

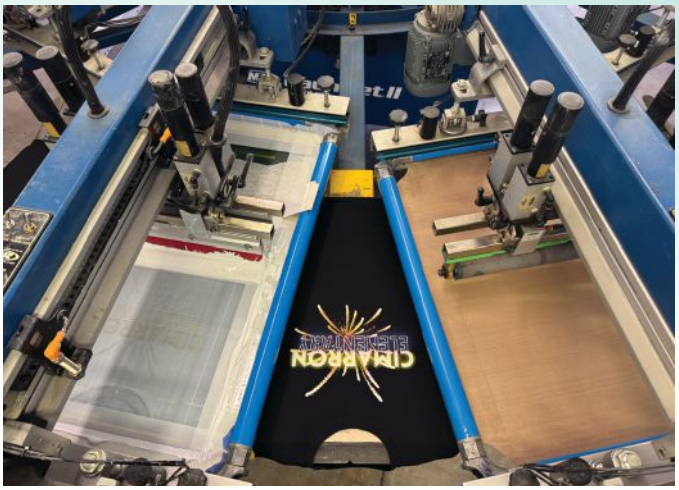
Simulated process separation was the obvious choice. We built alpha channels for each color: yellow, red, blue, purple, and highlight white. A secondary black channel was added to help us simulate how this channel stack might look when printed. A bit of a guess at that point. The white printer or base plate would be of most importance. We would need 100% under the areas of colors that popped while transitioning down to zero. The colors would overlap with significant higher percentages, and they'd also transition to zero.

Once the channels seps were completed, we output to CTS (computer to screen). Even though there were subtle fades and transitions, we chose a frequency of 45 LPI (lines per inch)









at a 22.5-degree angle. We would need to try and hold as much of the low-end halftone as possible, especially in the gradients where glow transitioned to shirt black. The larger dot would be a little easier to resolve. The screens were coated with a dual cure emulsion for that maximum resolution. We used 230 TPI (threads per inch) dyed mesh for the highlight and colors and a 156 TPI for the white printer. The screens were all in the 35 N/cm^2 tension and EOM (emulsion over mesh) at about 15%. While developing, we were able to get some of the 1% to hold open while the 90s still held on.

The initial set up didn't go so well. The yellow quickly became a problem. On the computer screen, it looked as bright and explosive as it should. But on black cotton, it was too much. Too dense. It overwhelmed the design and killed everything. It just had way too much information. We went back into Photoshop and isolated the yellow channel. Using Levels and Curves adjustments, we pulled the top end way back. This let more of the other channels and the shirt do their work.

On the press, setup was tight, but straightforward with our registration system. Print order was white printer, flash, smooth, blue, purple, red, yellow, another flash and cool, and finally the highlight white. Darkest to lightest, and most coverage to least — unwritten rules pretty much applied on this one. Ink color selection was primary and ready for use for its consistency and predictability. The transparent blends sat over the white printer and each other, adding warmth and depth while feathering into the gradient zones. The yellow was the last color in the rotation and was the ink we'd battled in round one. Because we'd dialed it back digitally, the transitions were much better. It popped where it needed and faded into the shirt as desired. The highlight white punched up the type solution at the end. After a few test prints, a hundred tees were folded and stacked at the end of the belt.

Each shirt carried a bright starburst with Cimarron's 75th shone proudly. The school staff beamed. See what we did there? For them, it wasn't about screen tension or channel adjustments, it was about school pride that celebrated their history. Cimarron Elementary has been part of the Cherry Creek story for three quarters of a century. Kids who walked those halls in the 1950s have grandkids attending the school. The building has changed, the neighborhood has grown, but the pathway of purpose remains. Cimarron is an anchor in our community. We did our best to represent that legacy. **GP**



Lon Winters is founder and president of Colorado-based Graphic Elephants, an apparel decorating studio and international consulting firm. He was inducted into the Academy of Screen and Digital Printing Technologies in 2013 and is widely recognized for his contribution to the graphic printing industry. Learn more at graphicelephants.com.



Moving beyond the basics:

How to grow your apparel business beyond T-shirts

By Aaron Montgomery

Being in the apparel decorating business for 25-plus years, I know that the standard T-shirt is where most people start. They pay the bills and keep the press running. But after a while, they can also hold your business back. There's only so much room to grow when your product line looks like everyone else's. When every shop down the street prints shirts, you end up competing on speed, price, or luck.

I remember working with a shop owner who was doing steady T-shirt business but constantly chasing volume. She was working hard, but her margins were shrinking. When we looked closer, we realized her customers were already asking for polos, hoodies, hats, and tote bags. She just didn't have the time or equipment to say yes. Once she started outsourcing embroidery and adding print-on-demand partners, her average order jumped 40%. That's the real opportunity. Expanding what you offer without losing your sanity. The goal isn't to do everything yourself. It's to create more ways for customers to say yes.

New product, new possibilities

Every decorator knows the comfort of a good cotton tee. It's easy to order, easy to press, and you can almost quote the pricing in your sleep. But that comfort can slowly turn into a ceiling.

So where do you go from here? Start by looking at what you already know and who you already serve. You don't need to reinvent your business overnight. You just need to listen to your customers a little differently.

If you work with schools or sports teams, they probably need spirit wear beyond tees. Think hoodies, bags, hats, warmups, and even team blankets. If you serve small businesses, think uniforms, polos, and branded merch for client gifts. A decorator I coach recently made this exact shift. She started promoting lightweight jackets and custom beanies during the fall. Within two months, her regular T-shirt customers were ordering full matching sets for their teams. Her average sale doubled. Not because she added new customers, but because she offered more to the ones she already had.

Thinking beyond apparel

Once you've built comfort there, you can start exploring nonapparel items that connect with your audience. Think drinkware, signage, mousepads, or home decor. Products that fit the spirit of your existing brand can open up completely new markets. This is where techniques like sublimation, UV printing, and laser engraving shine. You don't have to bring them all in-house. Partner with vendors who specialize in these methods and can produce high-quality work under your brand name.

For example, one small shop I know in Ohio partnered with a sublimation producer for photo gifts like mugs, coasters, and ornaments. They ran a "Family Holiday Collection" campaign featuring matching shirts, mugs, and ornaments. Their December revenue tripled compared to the year before, and they didn't buy a single new piece of equipment.

That's the beauty of thinking beyond apparel. Every new product gives you another way to serve your customers and keep them coming back for different occasions throughout the year.



Emu301 – stock.adobe.com

Outsourcing: Smart growth, not surrender

A common myth in our industry is that outsourcing means losing control. But the truth is, outsourcing often gives you more control over your time, quality, and profitability. Outsourcing lets you scale without adding overhead. You can test new products, offer new decoration methods, or handle larger orders without overloading your production schedule. You can start small by partnering with a trade printer for embroidery or a DTF fulfillment service for full-color transfers.

I've worked with shops that built entire new profit centers by outsourcing. One started offering laser-engraved tumblers through a local engraver. They marked up the price and managed the order just like their own production. Their customers got variety, and the shop got new revenue with zero new machinery.

If you ever feel hesitant about using partners, remember this: big brands outsource too. Nike doesn't make most of its products. Apple doesn't build every component in its products. Outsourcing is collaboration. You don't have to own every tool to deliver an incredible product.

How to market beyond the tee

Adding new products only works if your customers know about them. Start with your samples or what a friend of mine, Daniel Frank of SilverScreen, calls "innovation packs." Most customers can't picture what they haven't seen. Build a small display wall or a "branded bundle" photo shoot. Show a matching hoodie, hat, and tote bag. Post videos of you testing a new technique. Customers love behind-the-scenes looks, and they build trust and curiosity.

Then, update your social posts and emails to reflect your expanded range. Highlight stories about the results your customers are achieving. A corporate client ordering embroidered polos for their whole team? Snap a photo of the stack and tag them. A high school booster club buying hats and blankets? Celebrate their support publicly.

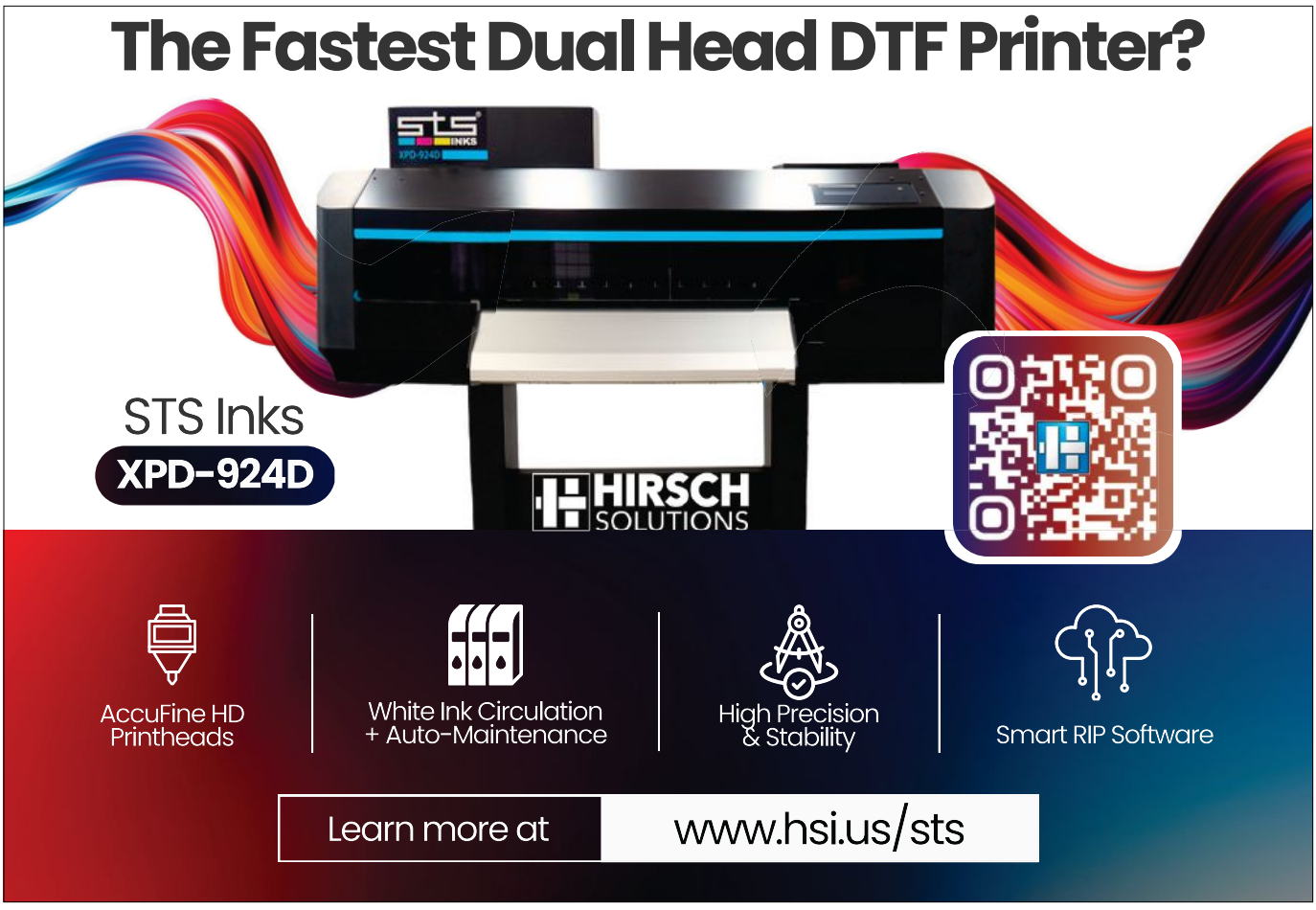
One trick that works incredibly well is creating themed product drops. A "Fall spirit pack" that includes a hoodie, cap, and tote bag is more exciting than just listing prices. You're giving customers a ready-made solution, not just another product.

The power of purposeful products

When you start selling beyond T-shirts, you're creating meaning. Each new item carries a purpose for your customers. A custom hoodie can represent unity for a team. A laser-engraved tumbler can be a thank-you gift that builds loyalty. A canvas tote can help a business share its story every time a customer carries it.

When you sell products that help people express identity, pride, or connection, you stop being just a decorator and start being a partner in their story and a true solution provider.

And don't underestimate the emotional pull of bundling. When a customer buys a shirt, a mug, and a sticker that all share their logo or



message, they feel more connected to their brand. That emotional connection often leads to repeat orders and referrals.

Grow without overwhelm

Growth doesn't have to mean longer hours or bigger payrolls. It can mean cleaner systems, better focus, and smarter use of partnerships. For example, test one new product line at a time. Trust reliable partners who can produce what you can't. Keep a simple spreadsheet to track what sells and what doesn't. The data will tell you where to double down.

And give yourself permission to stop doing what no longer serves you. Maybe that's cutting back on low-margin jobs, or saying no to clients who only shop on price. When you free up that energy, you can focus on the customers and products that make your business stronger.

One of my favorite things about this industry is how much room there is to reinvent yourself. Every new product, partner, or process can open a door to something bigger. You just have to be willing to step through.

T-shirts will always be the heart of this industry, but they don't have to be the limit. Your creativity deserves more than one product line. Start with one new idea, one new partner, or one new collection. Learn, adjust, and build from there. Growth often begins with a simple "What else could we offer?"

You might start with a shirt, but you can end up building an entire brand of products that carry your creativity. **GP**



Aaron Montgomery's company, Our Success Group, assists with business plans and pricing strategies, as well as customer service and marketing. He is the author of "The FUNdamentals of Business Success" and the co-founder of a facilitated six-month mastermind collective called Radical Goal-Getters. Aaron also co-hosts the 2 Regular Guys podcast.











GRAVOTECH
EXPRESSION OF THINGS



LS900 Large Laser Table Engraving and Cutting Machine with Integrated Exhaust Unit



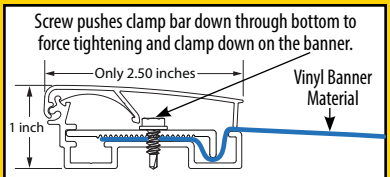
LS900

www.gravotech.us
1.800.843.7637 / sales.us@gravotech.com
We're now textable at (770) 762-1904

Banner GripFlip™

Amazing new flip up frame that stretches any size vinyl banner within the frame, and the tops snap down to cover the banner edges. There are no visible external screws, and the profile is only 2.5 inches wide!

Create large and beautifully, drum-tight stretched vinyl banner displays!



Flip top snaps down completely covering all screws and stretcher bar. Clean, perfect look!

To see more:
bannergrip.com

HOTRONIX® 360 IQ® HAT PRESS



The MVP when it comes to applying Emblems & Patches.

GET YOURS TODAY
stahls.com/hat-mvp

STAHLS'
GP0425

JOHNSONPLASTICS PLUS

FLUX LASERS:
Smarter cuts
BIGGER PROFITS.



FLUX

scan me TO SHOP

JPPLUS.COM
1.800.869.7800

FLEXFIT



6506
MADE TO EMBELLISH



YP Classics® 5-Panel Retro Trucker Cap: Smooth front for flawless prints & embroidery. High crown maximizes design space. **Breathable** mesh + **snapback** fit keeps it classic.

LEARN MORE

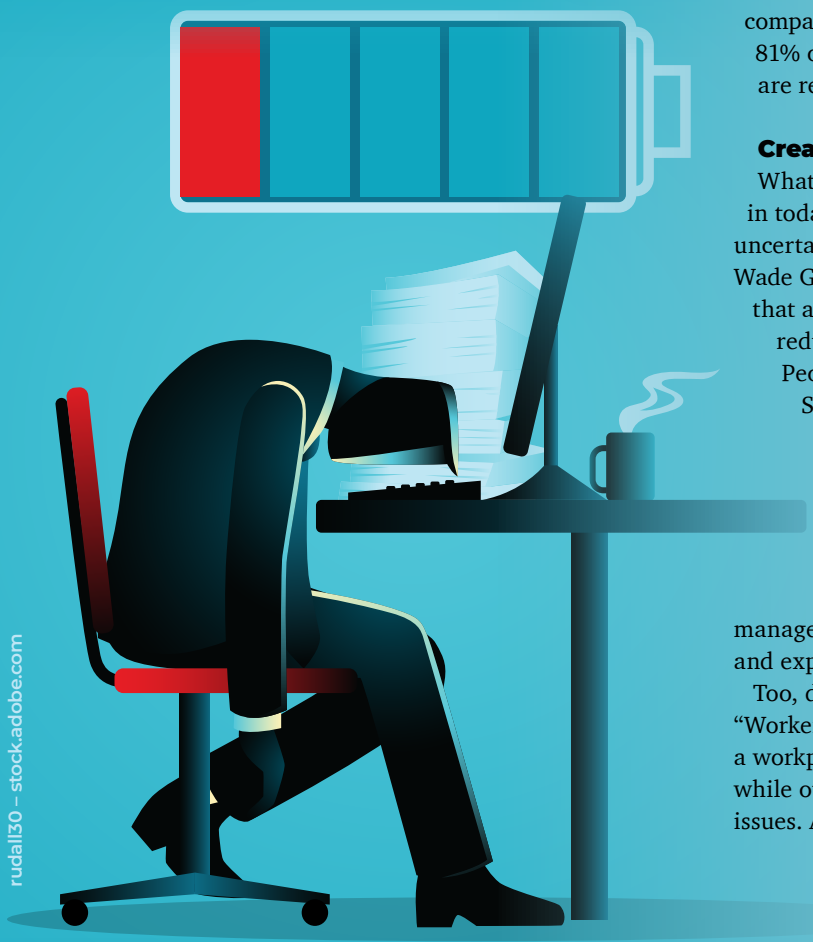
How to reduce workplace burnout

Spot & reduce stress at your company

By Phillip M. Perry

Jason has always been a standout employee. Lately, though, he's shifted into overdrive. He arrives before the crack of dawn, stays until 7 p.m., and gets his projects done three weeks before they're due.

Every manager's dream? Maybe. But there's another possibility: Jason is overcompensating for chronic stress that will eventually lead to a mental breakdown and his departure from the company.



rudall30 – stock.adobe.com

Stories of employee breakdowns are increasingly common in today's workplace. Some 66% of American employees are experiencing burnout, a common result of stress, according to a new study from Moodle, an online learning technology company. Younger workers seem to be suffering more: Over 81% of survey respondents between 18 and 34 years of age are reporting burnout, much higher than the 49% over 55.

Creating stress

What's fueling the problem? "Of the many causes of stress in today's workplace, the one leading the way is economic uncertainty," said Randy Goruk, president of The Randall Wade Group, Scottsdale, Arizona. "Everybody's concerned that a general business downturn might lead to staff reductions. On top of that, we have the technology factor: People are afraid AI will replace their positions."

Such fears are only magnified by incursions of business activity into the domestic sphere. "Recently there has been less of a distinction between home and work, a trend that started during COVID when many people started operating remotely," said Brittany L. Truszkowski, chief operating officer, Grand Canyon Law Group. "At the same time, managers are demanding more productivity than ever before and expecting workers to be constantly available."

Too, domestic life itself has become more complicated. "Workers are facing more challenges at home," said Joe Mull, a workplace engagement consultant. "Some are economic, while others are related to an increase in mental health issues. And more people are acting as caregivers for family members." Pressures can mount when people lack the opportunity to de-stress after work.



Konstantin – stock.adobe.com

Spotting stress

Not all stress is bad. Some anxiety is a normal and even productive reaction to workplace challenges. "Healthy stress is a natural response to a new project and can actually motivate people to get things done," said Samantha Edu, a workplace wellness consultant. "Stress starts to get problematic, though, when it damages peoples' ability to perform at their peak."

How to tell the difference? Bad stress often causes a change in employee behavior. In this article's opening story, Jason's performance shot through the roof. But performance can also plummet. "Stressed individuals may start missing deadlines," said Max Friar, managing partner of Calder Capital. "They may exhibit less creative problem-solving or become easily irritated and forgetful. The quality of their work may drop, or they may start arriving late or calling in sick."

Often, stressed individuals exhibit emotional detachment: This can manifest as a retreat into silence, a withdrawal from team interactions, or lack of interest in outcomes for which they once took pride.

Finally, one system-wide condition is a real red flag: High employee churn. "Organizations that have high chronic turnover, especially if employees jump ship for competing businesses, are often suffering from workplace stress," said Mull.

Reducing stress

The good news is that companies can take steps to spot and reduce workplace stress. Doing so can bolster profitability. "People who are less stressed are more engaged with their work, incur less absenteeism, and exhibit greater productivity," said Susan Snipes, head of Remote People, a recruitment firm. "All of that contributes to the bottom line."

Techniques for stress reduction tend to revolve around one central idea: Employees become happier and more productive when they are treated as people rather than as cogs in a machine. "Managers can go a long way toward reducing stress by introducing more humane practices in the workplace and minimizing the degree to which jobs impact individuals' domestic lives," said Mull. Here are some effective techniques:

Listen better

Humanizing the workplace starts with listening. "Go talk with your people and listen to what they say," said Goruk. "Come up with a couple of great questions you can ask that result in feedback about their greatest concerns. This can help get to the bottom of what's creating stress."

Here are a few questions that can elicit useful feedback:

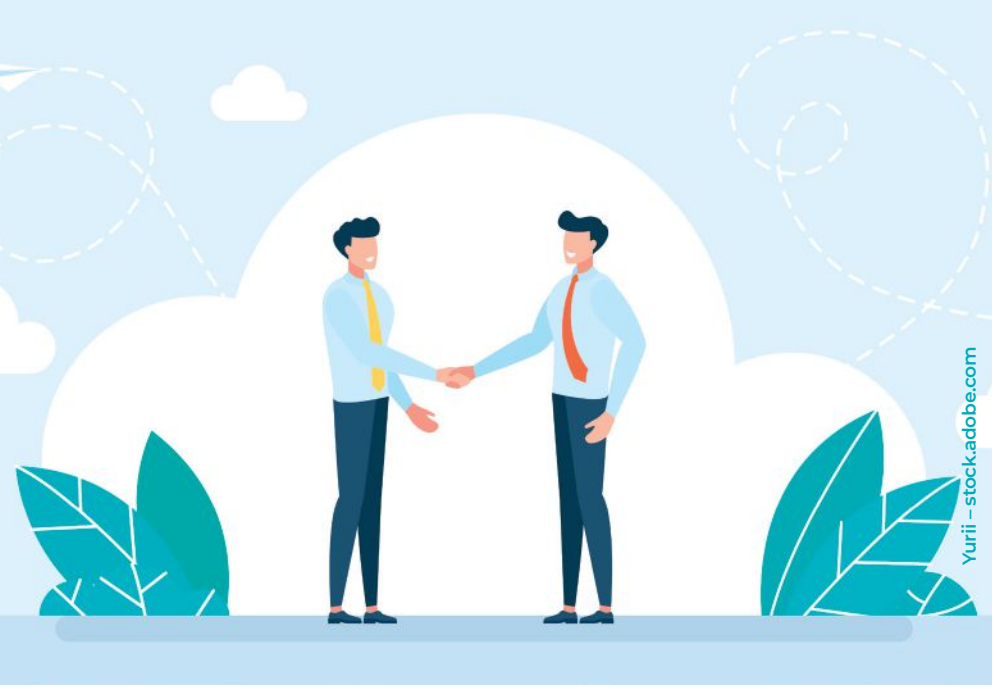
- What can we do to make your job easier?
- How can the work environment be changed to make our business more productive?
- Is there any part of your job that seems unnecessary or requires more time than it's worth?

Bonus tip: Some managers maintain open-door policies, making themselves available at specific times when employees can air their feelings in a private setting.

Build trusting relationships

Managers who build trusting relationships with team leaders will be better able to spot signs of stress. They may discover that some people are engaging in too much or too little social interaction, or they may perceive a negative personality conflict among team members.

Managers and supervisors should tell staff members that it's okay to talk about what is bothering them. Otherwise, they may fear opening up. "People may sense it is inappropriate to talk about emotions at work," said Snipes. "They may think they will be perceived as weak if they admit they're stressed."



Yurii – stock.adobe.com



Biscotto Design – stock.adobe.com

Trust can also be built with proactive and transparent communication. "Suppose a rumor about a pending company merger or departmental change is causing everyone to be stressed out," said Goruk. "Proactive and detailed messaging can dispel fear and ensure everyone knows where they stand."

Bonus tip: Gaps in communication can result when team members differ by age, experience, education, or language. These gaps can cause stress because people are not sure they are communicating effectively.

Set clear work guidelines

"Ambiguity when it comes to job expectations can create stress," said Snipes. This can be avoided by describing the parameters of each position in easily-grasped words. Focus on outcomes rather than micromanaging processes.

People also need context. How do their assigned tasks fit into the larger company picture? What happens to the results of their labors at the next step in the production process?

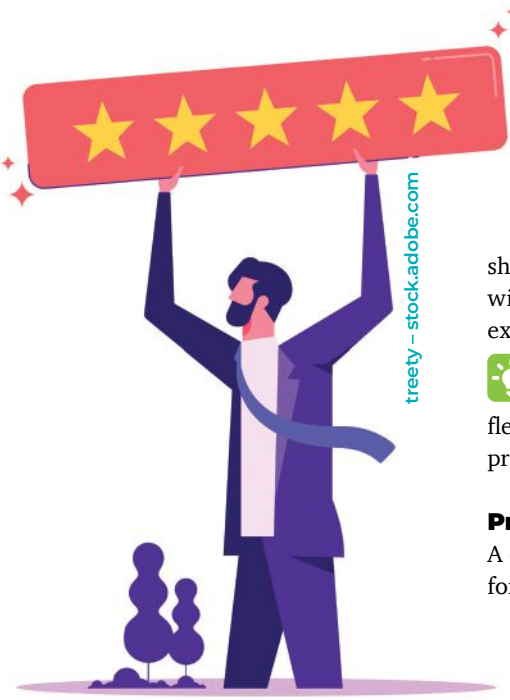
"Managers also need to be clear about each employee's career path," said Snipes. "Setting realistic goals will avoid situations where people have inflated ideas of their future at the company."

Bonus tip: Ask employees if anything is unclear about their job performance parameters.

Give regular feedback

How is Deborah doing? Has she met or exceeded her job requirements? "Managers need to give people assurance that they're doing a good job," said Goruk. "Constructive feedback will help people feel better about themselves and the work that they're doing." Clear communication about sub-par performance is also essential.

Bonus tip: Rather than wait for annual performance evaluations, regularly praise employees on their achievements and point out any areas where they can improve.



treety – stock.adobe.com

Eliminate silos

Too often, teams separate themselves from their coworkers by building walls around their private fiefdoms. "Workplace silos can lead to unproductive competition that creates stress," said Goruk. Silos can be discouraged by a workplace culture that encourages social interaction and collaboration. Social events, outings, and team-building activities can also help.

Bonus tip: Managers should go on record as denigrating silos and communicate company goals that can be shared by every department.

Introduce workplace flexibility

"Flexibility is one of today's most requested workplace benefits," said Mull. "Unfortunately, most of the conversation around flexibility gets relegated to the possibility of working from home, but that's really just one kind of flexibility. Flexibility is really about giving employees input into some aspect of when, where, and how they work."

Managers might give employees some influence over their start or end times, or the lengths of their shifts or the days that they work, with whom they work, or how they execute their work product.

Bonus tip: Run pulse surveys that ask employees what kind of flexibility will make them more productive.

Provide helpful resources

A company can provide resources for employees experiencing stress. These might include employee assistance programs, workplace accommodations, or dedicated



break rooms. It can also be useful for employers to offer — and encourage the use of — gym memberships, yoga classes, wellness workshops, and discussion groups.

Bonus tip: Management can encourage the formation of employee resource groups (ERGs), where people with shared identities, interests, or backgrounds can find emotional support.

Management buy-in

An effective stress reduction program requires buy-in from top management. "There's a ceiling on what frontline and mid-level managers can accomplish when it comes to reducing stress for employees," said Mull. "Many stress producers are systemic problems. And only business owners and C-suite leaders have the power to drive change at that level."

Managers and supervisors at every level are subject to their own stressors. "Dealing productively with workplace stress starts with self-care," said Edu. "Managers need to ensure they receive the coaching and counseling they need to handle their own stress."

Managers sometimes become stressed because they feel the business will fall apart without their input. As a result, they hesitate to take vacation time that might leave their company vulnerable. The cure here is to document all processes and procedures so others can fill in the gaps when managers step away.

For managers and employees alike, the creation of a productive work environment requires the reduction of stressors in both the business and domestic spheres. "We're all trying to be whole healthy human beings," said Edu. "Creating healthy work environments means creating healthy homes and healthy children and healthy marriages and relationships. It all goes around in a cycle." **GP**

Are you providing a stress-free workplace?

Are you doing enough to foster a stress-free workplace? Find out by taking this quiz. Give yourself 10 points for each "yes" answer to the questions below. Then total your points.

- ☐ Do you counsel employees who exhibit sudden changes in behavior?
- ☐ Do you ask questions that can reveal hidden sources of employee stress?
- ☐ Do you build trusting relatioships with key employees?
- ☐ Do you set clear guidelines for employee performance?
- ☐ Do you ask employees if anything is unclear about their job expectations?
- ☐ Do you give regular feedback to employees?
- ☐ Do you focus on outcomes rather than try to micromanage employees' work?
- ☐ Do employees understand how their work contributes to company goals?
- ☐ Do you take steps to eliminate silos?
- ☐ Do you introduce workplace flexibility when possible?

What's your score? Over 80: Congratulations! Your company has gone a long way toward reducing workplace stress. Between 60 and 80: Additional work is needed. Below 60: Take steps now before stress levels start to affect the bottom line.



Award-winning business journalist **Phillip M. Perry** publishes widely in the fields of management, workplace psychology, and employment law. He can be reached at phil@pmperry.com.



Q1 sales don't wait for January

Build your pipeline now

By Marshall Atkinson

Raise your hand if your January (and frankly, the rest of Q1) sales are usually on the sucky side of success. Yeah, it's a thing for this industry. There are reasons for that, but we don't need to dwell on them.

What we do need to talk about is how you can have a better Q1 than you have ever had before, but you have to do some things differently. How you always handle Q1 sales hasn't worked, which is why you have the same problem every year.

To get a different result, you have to make changes. It's that simple.

The truth is that Q1 sales are already in motion. Once Thanksgiving rolls around, most prospects hit the brakes with the tired and all-too-familiar line, *"Let's talk after the first of the year."* When January rolls around, by then it's too late to fill your pipeline, and this domino effect means you'll spend the rest of the first quarter of 2026 playing



Vitalii Vodolazskyi – stock.adobe.com

catch-up instead of gaining momentum.

So here is the pattern break. Treat September through November as the months you spend working on filling your pipeline for the beginning of next year. Start planting seeds, having conversations, and creating opportunities.

The result? When the calendar flips, you have business and revenue already lined up and ready to hit your books.

To be clear, this isn't about pushing holiday orders or chasing last-minute work. Holiday work is important, but your effort here is about building your Q1 sales pipeline so it is strong, full, and ready to carry you into next year. The work you do now determines your sales fate for 2026. Will you be behind or ahead? It's up to you.



Jacob Lund - stock.adobe.com

The mindset shift you need

Most shops in this industry treat the first week of January as the official launchpad for the new year. However, it is often the toughest month financially. That first week in January is dormant for sales, as customers are just getting back from vacations. Activity in the second and third weeks can be good, but by the time those deals close and work, you are now into February. In the meantime, Payroll still has to be met, and bills have to be paid. Cash flow is razor-thin.

These aren't observations of the industry. These are clues for change. The REAL start of Q1 isn't January. It's right now. This second.

The mindset shift is simple: When you view September through November as the launchpad for Q1, you start taking the action needed for a more positive first quarter. It doesn't have to be rocket science to have an explosive effect. Here's how you can put this mindset into action using habits and new systems:

- **Anchor pipeline work into a daily routine:** For example, "After I pour my coffee, I spend 20 minutes prospecting." Turn your daily outreach into a solid habit.
- **Track the system, not just the outcome:** Commit to five solid touches a day. Do the math: If you start today, how many would that be by Thanksgiving? Build a pipeline you can measure, not simply wish for.
- **Make it visible:** Post your "top 10 accounts" you will contact this week, somewhere you can see them. Cross them off or take notes as you take action. Don't have this buried in a spreadsheet. Use a whiteboard or printed sheet on your desk.
- **Shape your environment:** No email, no production work, no order entry, no other work except your prospecting work during your prospecting block. Protect this time like it is gold, because it is.

Why does this matter? Let's consider the financial impact on your shop. If your company is in the red every Q1 because of the lack of sales, you spend another chunk of time crawling out of that financial hole. You might not even be profitable until late Q3 or even Q4.

Imagine your future if you break even or have a small $5,000 profit instead. Now, your company is profitable earlier in the year. By the time December rolls around, you could be more profitable than you have ever been in your company's history. It pays to start sooner.

Brainstorming an action checklist

By the way, you don't need more work in Q1; you need smarter work. When shops are slow, they usually start saying yes to anything to keep employees busy. It's like eating a candy bar. It might be okay now, but in the long term, it isn't healthy.

What you want are customers who keep you busy, with healthy margins, and who bring you other clients. Those folks are out there; you simply may not have met them yet.

Here's how to build better opportunities for Q1:

☑ Audit your current channels

Review where your sales have come from in the past. Which accounts are steady? Which ones have slowed down? Who are your top customers based on volume and margin?

Go on tour. Get in front of these folks and discuss their business. Talk to them about next year. Understand their situations. Are they expanding? Struggling? Hiring? With what you do, how could you be a benefit to them? Don't sell them stuff. Solve their problems.

☑ Define your upsell process

Restaurants never miss the chance to ask if you want an appetizer or dessert. It's part of their standard process. What is yours?

In Q1, you might have fewer



Vitalii Vodolazskyi – stock.adobe.com

opportunities for orders. But with each, can you imagine the impact you would have on your business if the average order value were higher because you added more items to each order? Add stickers, an embroidered hat, T-shirts, banners, promotional products, tote bags, or a gazillion other things to any order simply by making the upsell part of your standard routine.

If you upsell $200 on 50 orders, you added another $10,000 in revenue without adding a single new customer.

Focus on profit, not just orders

Quick, can you name the absolute sweet spot in your shop for an order? You know, the quantity, decoration type, garment brand, color or stitch count, timeframe for delivery, or any other attribute that adds margin to anything you do. For most shops, this is impossible as they haven't actually done the work and measured it on this before. Maybe it is time to start.

Before you say yes to an order, ask three quick questions:

1. Is this profitable?
2. Is this a customer worth building a relationship with for the future?
3. Does this order block capacity or resources for better work?

Saying no to the wrong order frees you to say yes to the right ones. Help your future self by creating a profit logbook for your business. Record jobs you regret taking, or ones that were home runs. Describe the circumstances and the impact on your business with these jobs. Use a journal only for this task and read through it when you need clarity.

Bird-dog new customers

Opportunities don't land in your lap on a constant basis. You have to do the work to sniff them out. Get out of your office and discover new opportunities around you. Prospect in new places. Look for interesting partnerships or collaborations. Revisit prospects who went cold earlier.

The worst thing you can do is assume anything. Talk to people. Ask clarifying questions. Your new best customer is out there. You simply haven't met them yet.

One more thing. They are not going to come to you. Therefore, take the "Bird-dog Challenge" each week. Commit to:

- Meet three new people this week.
- Visit two local businesses in person.
- Ask one customer for a referral.

Build an idea bank

Do this daily: Set a timer for 15 minutes and write down ten outreach or upsell ideas. Don't edit yourself. Simply start writing. You want a free flow of ideas, and it doesn't matter how funny, ridiculous, or lame they are. Keep going. Fifteen minutes is a long time, and your brain will start connecting things, and some good ideas will show up.

At the end of the period, circle three ideas that look like they could be something you can use. Start banking the top three into a weekly list for action. Find the ones that will bring the most profit with the least friction.

Commit to executing these ideas before Thanksgiving.

Tip: If you get stuck, ask yourself, *"What else could a customer need that I provide, or what work should I avoid because it isn't profitable?"*

Tactical steps to fill your Q1 sales pipeline

This is where the rubber meets the road. Ideas and a new mindset are great, but they only pay off through consistent, measurable action. Use this OKR framework to hold yourself accountable.

Objective:

Fill your sales pipeline with profitable, high-quality opportunities before Thanksgiving so you can start January with work already booked.

Key results:

These are the actions that will deliver positive results for you if you implement them.

- **Daily prospecting routine:** Block a consistent segment of time daily for prospecting, follow-ups, and customer outreach. This is the only activity you are doing during this time.
- **Reconnect dormant accounts:** Reach out to at least 25 customers or prospects a week who haven't ordered recently. Goal: Reactivate 20% into quoting or ordering by January.
- **Sharpen your story:** Update your pitch to focus on customer problem-solving, not selling "stuff." Create a one-page leave-behind or PDF for emails that clearly explains your value.
- **Leverage referrals:** Before the holidays get into full swing, ask at least 10 current customers for introductions to someone else they feel could be a great fit for your shop. Then, follow up.
- **Systematize follow-up:** Of course, you can buy or use software, but if you aren't using that yet, create a simple CRM, spreadsheet, or whiteboard system to track every lead. No contact should go more than two weeks without a touch.



Send a newsletter, postcards, emails, or even samples. Get top of their mind and stay there.

- **Intentional upselling:** For every order quoted, present at least two upsell options. Your goal: Increase your average order value by 20% in Q1. Upselling can be a better garment blank, a different item, better packaging, or getting them to start an online store. Use what fits the situation.

Be the boulder rolling downhill

This is all about building momentum. But like the boulder at the top of the mountain, it only makes it to the bottom if it starts rolling.

A strong Q1 pipeline and sales heading into January isn't the result of one big push, it's the cumulative effect of small, consistent actions stacked over time. This is why momentum is your best friend.

Every touch you make today leads to a conversation tomorrow. This creates a quote next week. Which turns into an order for January. That's the pipeline math you can't escape.

The best salespeople understand this. They don't whine about slow seasons or blame the market. They take responsibility. They create their own opportunities. They own the result. Because they know all too well the dangers of an empty pipeline.

Here's how to keep the energy alive and the pipeline full:

Measure activity, not just results

You can't control when an order closes, but you can control how many touches you make. Track your behaviors: prospecting calls, upsells offered, and referrals requested. The more quality touches you make, the momentum you build toward a brighter Q1.

- **Own your work:** Excuses don't build sales pipelines. Action does. Make prospecting calls a daily, nonnegotiable part of your schedule. Even 20 minutes a day separates you from shops who wait around all day hoping the phone will ring. Sales is the most important part of your business.
- **Celebrate small wins:** Closing orders are great, but sustaining momentum lives in the little victories along the way. Celebrate when you book a meeting, reactivate a dormant account, or obtain a referral. When someone sends you a nice letter or email, create a folder of "wins" you can look through when you need some motivation or an uplift. Sometimes a positive feedback loop is all you need to have in your corner to make "one more call today."
- **Always ask: What's the next step?** In every call, meeting, or email, be sure to define the next move for both you and the customer. You want to keep everything moving forward. Always nail down the next step. Great salespeople never end a conversation without a next step on the calendar. Clarity is your friend here.
- **Build habits that stick:** Don't leave energy up to willpower. Some days your mojo won't be there. You can't let victory be powered by "when you feel like it." Anchor your important tasks such as prospecting, customer calls, upselling, and follow-ups to daily routines. Systems beat motivation every time.
- **Stay human and visible:** It's easy to sell one T-shirt with a social media post. Impossible to sell one order of 20,000 the same way. Why? Because orders that are connected to numbers with commas are sold on trust. Your customers want to trust who they are working with for things that matter. Stay visible and connected with updates, samples, or a quick "thinking of you" note. Your mission should be to communicate with them before they do. It shows you care and keeps you top of mind and referrable.
- **Focus on the right work:** You don't need to fill your Q1 pipeline with busy orders. You want it to be jammed with profitable ones. Know the difference.

If you want to win Q1 next year, don't wait around for the calendar to change to get busy. Start now and create opportunities, fill your pipeline, and drive momentum. For example, 50 touches can create 15 conversations, which leads to five quotes, which produces two orders.

Keep planting seeds, moving forward, and when January finally arrives, you'll be ahead of the curve instead of chasing it. GP



Marshall Atkinson lives and works in Mesa, Arizona. He is a frequent contributor to industry magazines and a popular trade show educator. Recognized for his industry education contributions, he was elected to the Academy of Screen and Digital Printing Technologies in 2020.



ARAMYAN – stock.adobe.com

Figure 1. Is it worth restoring? Critical parts of the image are missing, portions of the highlight areas are blown out, the photo is blurred, faded, stained, covered with scratches and dust, and the faces are barely decipherable.

Restore & revive

Bringing old images to life

By Stephen Romaniello

Image editing software has made it possible to easily restore and revive damaged photographs. Before computers, artists and technicians had to rely on manual or optical tools such as the airbrush, liquid opaque, masking techniques, and giant process cameras. These techniques were labor intensive and required considerable skill.

Enter Photoshop 1.0, released in 1990. Since then, a vast arsenal of photo-restoration features have been introduced. Currently there are numerous tools and techniques that are specifically designed for the restoration workflow. Some of these features are manual, some are intuitive and automatic, and the latest features are driven by artificial intelligence (AI).

Old photographs

Time is not on our side when it comes to the life of a photograph. Several factors erode photographic prints over the years unless they've been archivally preserved in a literal vacuum, devoid of oxygen, light, and of course, the human touch. Physical damage such as dust, scratches, mold, tears, and abrasions may have been unintentionally inflicted from neglect or accident. Emulsion on an image can deteriorate or change color caused by exposure to ultraviolet light, air, or fluctuating temperatures. The photograph might be clear and crisp on one side and gradually fade in one or more directions. Color photographs can develop yellow, green, blue, or red colorcasts, usually the result of the emulsion's chemical reaction with air or the paper it was printed on.

A vital portion of the image such as a hand or a face might have a severe scratch or might be entirely missing. A corner might be torn, or an area of the photograph might have peeled or faded.

Finally, there is bad photography. The image could have been shot at the wrong moment, the composition might be unbalanced, or the image might be under or overexposed.

Consider this

Photo restoration can be quite labor intensive. Even though the challenge is seductive, some photos are not worth the effort. After examining the image and before attempting the restoration, ask yourself: "Is this photograph worth the time and effort?" Critical parts of the image may be missing, portions of the highlight areas are blown out, the photo is blurred, faded, stained, and covered with scratches and dust, and the faces are barely decipherable **(Fig. 1)**. It's conceivable that no matter what super tools you have at your disposal, your efforts will not be fruitful after investing a lot of labor into the restoration.

One possible solution to restoring an unworkable photo is that you can cut and paste portions of another similar image if one is available. Or as a last resort, you can simulate a restoration using AI technology — which doesn't necessarily produce satisfactory results.

Scanning

Before scanning an old photograph, examine the image closely. Observe the darkest and lightest areas and see if there are details that need to be preserved. If so, adjust the contrast by using the scanner software's brightness and contrast features. Don't expect to correct the entire image. Adjust the image just enough to capture the details. You can later make more

refined adjustments when you open the image in Photoshop.

Scanning at higher resolutions helps preserve detail. Scan the image at 300 pixels per inch or higher on a flatbed scanner. If the image is small, increase the scale and the resolution. Avoid exceeding the scanner's optical resolution. For example, if the scanner's optical resolution is 1200 DPI, you can scan it at 300 DPI and increase the size to 400%.

Scan black and white images in grayscale mode to eliminate discoloration or stains. For best results, scan the photo as a 16-bit grayscale to maximize the tonal range. After repairing it, convert it to an 8-bit grayscale before printing. If you later decide to add color or a sepia tint to the image, you can convert it to RGB mode and colorize it.

Always save the original scan as a background layer. Work on a duplicate layer so you can reference the original.

Basic retouching tools

The seven basic retouching tools are available on the Tools panel. Some of them are intuitive, but they all are more-or-less manual, being applied directly to a layer by dragging a mouse or stylus. Even if you use Photoshop's automated techniques or AI retouching features, inevitably you'll have to rely on the manual tools for cleanup and final tweaks.

- The **Spot Healing Brush** quickly removes small scratches, dust spots, and blemishes by intuitively blending them with surrounding pixels. It's best used in *Content-Aware* mode for natural blending. **(Fig. 2)**
- The **Healing Brush** is similar to the Spot Healing Brush, but requires that an area be sampled first. It provides more control over texture and tone.
- The **Patch Tool** repairs larger damaged areas. First, encircle the damaged region. Then drag the selection marque over a clean area to copy and replace the content.
- The **Clone Stamp Tool** copies pixels from one area to another. It's ideal for reconstructing missing details when the healing tools aren't precise enough.
- The **Remove Tool** removes elements such as unwanted objects and figures. **(Fig. 3)**
- The **Content-Aware Move Tool** selects and moves an area then automatically fills the area left behind.
- The **Red Eye Tool** restores red eye caused by flash photography.



Figure 2. Spot Healing Brush quickly removes small scratches, dust spots, and blemishes by intuitively blending them with surrounding pixels.

Rebuild missing content

A frequent problem encountered in restoration is that part of the photo such as a corner or edge has been torn and is missing. The technique for this type of restoration uses other areas of the photo to simulate the missing content. Using the *Content Aware Fill*

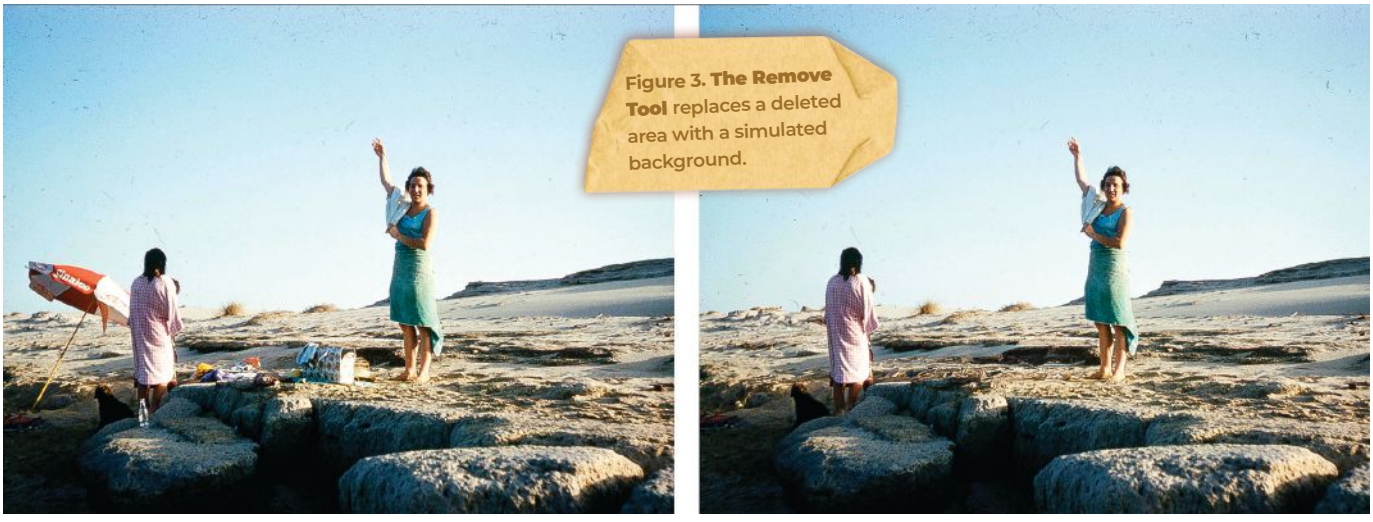


Figure 3. The Remove Tool replaces a deleted area with a simulated background.



Figure 4. **The Content Aware Fill** interface displays a green overlay that indicates where the content is sourced.

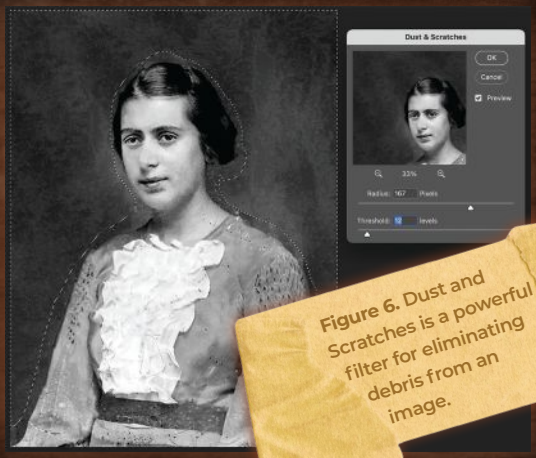


Figure 6. Dust and Scratches is a powerful filter for eliminating debris from an image.

command, fills missing areas with automatically-generated texture from nearby content. It's useful for repairing tears, missing edges, or holes in the image.

When Content Aware Fill is chosen from the Edit menu, the interface displays a green overlay. The overlay can be added to or subtracted from with a brush tool, thereby controlling the source of the new content. A preview window displays the result as it happens. **(Fig. 4)**

The new content is generated on a new layer. Merge the new layer with the source layer when satisfactory results are achieved.

Black & white conversion (from color to monochrome photos)

Sometimes converting a badly faded color image to black and white yields a better result. The *Black and White* adjustment feature found in the Adjustments panel will convert a color image into the perfect monochrome. Control the intensity of the tones by dragging the color sliders. **(Fig. 5)**

Dust & scratches

Superfluous artifacts are unavoidable when scanning old photos. These flaws are easily removed with the *Dust and Scratches* filter. It's a powerful tool for eliminating the unwanted debris from an image. **(Fig. 6)**

When using the filter, select areas of similar texture. Each area of the image might require different settings. Applying the filter to the entire image all at once can result in a loss of detail.

The Dust and Scratches filter has two controls, *Radius and Threshold*. The Radius slider blurs, and the Threshold slider restores. Use the minimum Radius and Threshold you need to achieve the best results. Do not over blur the area with the Radius slider. Drag the Threshold slider just enough to restore the surrounding texture but not enough to restore the unwanted specks.

The Dust and Scratches filter is destructive. Convert the layer to a Smart Object first and apply it as a smart filter to keep the editing process dynamic.

Fading

Inevitably, black and white or sepia photos will fade from exposure to UV light or the deterioration of emulsion over time. As long as there is some vestige of tonality in a faded area, the photo can be salvaged. If the areas are entirely blown out, not much can be done except for cloning content from a similarly textured area. The two basic tools for tonal correction are:

Levels, which restores contrast in faded photos. Adjust the black, white, and midtone sliders under the histogram to bring back tonal depth.

Curves adjusts contrast more precisely by bending the brightness curve upward to brighten or downward to darken. Create an "S" curve to enhance contrast. **(Fig. 7)**

Neural filters

Within the past few years, Adobe has introduced a series of AI features to Photoshop that are designed to be an all-in-one solution to common workflow scenarios. The *Neural* filter, *Photo Restoration,* has several features that automatically restore images. It provides controls for Photo Enhancement, Face Enhancement, Scratch Reduction, Noise Reduction, and Artifact Removal. As you can see by the example, results are not always perfect. This AI-controlled filter, however, can be a time saver, especially if the photo is badly damaged like the example in **Fig. 8**. After the Neural filter is applied, glitches and mistakes can be cleaned up with the manual tools.

Colorize

Colorizing an old black and white photo is a snap with the *Colorize* Neural filter. It's so easy and accurate you'll want to experiment with it just to see the variations you can achieve. Select the Neural filter option in the filter menu. Drag the Colorize button to the



Figure 5. A **Black and White** adjustment will convert a color image into the perfect monochrome.

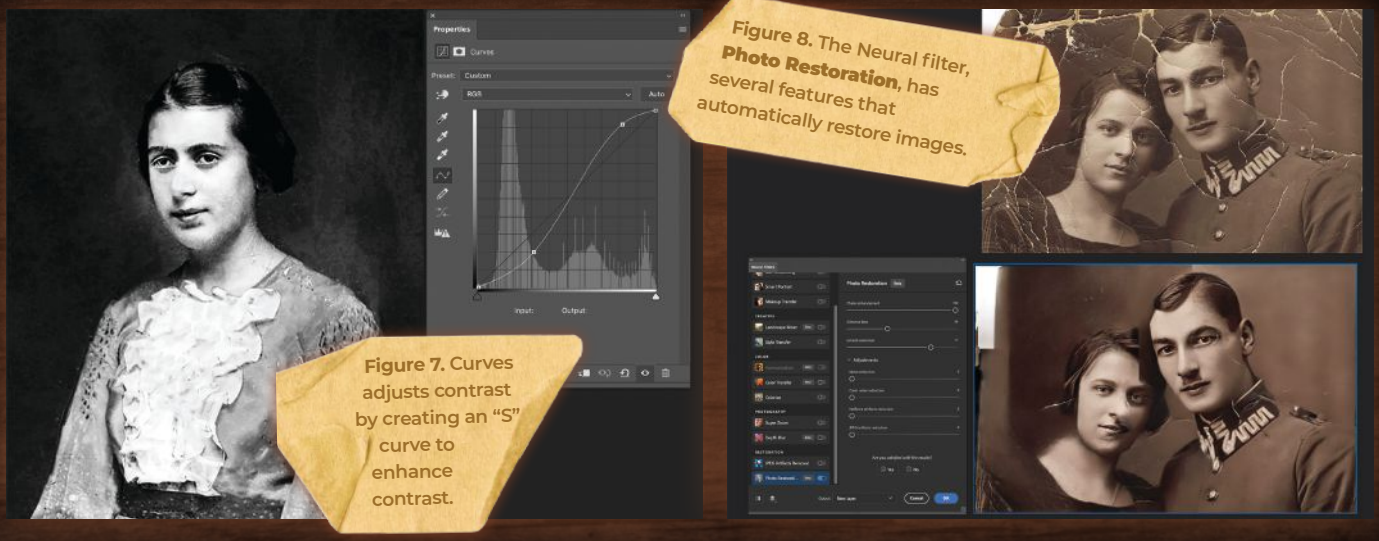


Figure 7. Curves adjusts contrast by creating an "S" curve to enhance contrast.

Figure 8. The Neural filter, **Photo Restoration**, has several features that automatically restore images.

"On" position. If the *Auto Color* box is checked, the process is completely automatic, or you can scroll down the interface and play with numerous manual color adjustments. The amazing results make it very seductive and a real time saver. **(Fig. 9)**

Common pitfalls

Here are a few common pitfalls that are often seen on restored photos. Be aware of them so that you can avoid these mistakes.

- **Over-smoothing** is caused by too much noise reduction, blurring, or aggressive healing and cloning. Texture and grain are part of a photo's characteristics. Removing too much can make faces look plastic or waxy. To avoid this problem, work on smaller areas and preserve the natural texture.
- **Repetitive cloning** is caused by dragging the Clone Stamp or Healing Brush over large areas without varying the sample points. It produces repetitive patterns and patchy surfaces. Instead, as you clone or heal, sample from several nearby areas until the effect looks natural.
- **Over-sharpening** is caused by applying low radius, high amount sharpening to enhance detail. It over-emphasizes grain, cracks, and dust, making the damage more visible. Remedy this by sharpening selectively at the very end of the retouching process.
- **Over-adjusted contrast** is caused by applying the Levels or Curves adjustments too aggressively. Old photos often have soft shadows and highlights. Filling blacks or blowing out whites can subdue subtle details. Instead, apply contrast adjustments selectively on adjustment layers. Adjust the opacity of the adjustment layers until a natural contrast is achieved. Use the Adjustment Layer's layer mask to isolate the contrast to specific areas.
- **Overuse of automatic features** by relying too much on Content-Aware Fill or Neural filters. This practice can produce blurry or mismatched areas. Automatic and AI features will speed up the restoration but can create problems. Use automation as a starting point. Then refine the image with the manual retouching tools and techniques.

Dynamic workflow

After restoration, a final sharpening is a must. Use the *Unsharp Mask* or *Smart Sharpen* filters applied as Smart Filters to enhance detail. Don't over sharpen! As always, work with a dynamic, nondestructive workflow by creating duplicate layers, smart filters, layer masks, and adjustment layers. Be sure to retain the unedited original scan on a separate layer. Observing these practices will assure that your restoration will proceed smoothly and efficiently as you revive a picture to its original glory. **GP**

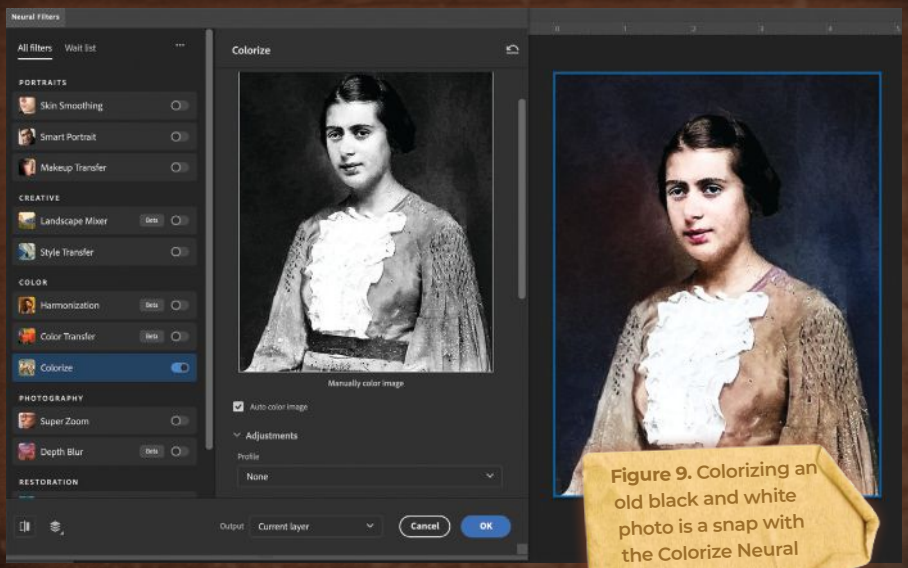


Figure 9. Colorizing an old black and white photo is a snap with the Colorize Neural filter.



Stephen Romaniello is an artist and educator who has seen the evolution of digital graphics since the beginning of the digital revolution in the 1980s. He is CEO of GlobalEye Systems, a graphics software and creative imaging consultancy, and founder of Gorilla Geeks, a creative consulting firm.

PRODUCT PICKS

Each month, the GRAPHICS PRO team receives hundreds of product press releases. Here are a few that recently caught our attention.



Mimaki TS200-1600

The TS200-1600 from Mimaki is a 64" dye-sublimation printer designed to deliver professional-grade quality and versatility at an accessible price point. According to the manufacturer, the TS200-1600 offers significantly faster production speeds and an expanded feature set, making it the ideal solution for small shops, start-ups, and businesses looking to expand into on-demand textile and customized goods production. Powered by a single print head from Mimaki's higher-end 330 Series, the TS200-1600 includes new orange and violet inks for a wider color gamut, as well as newly-developed fluorescent pink and yellow inks. To maximize operation time and reduce waste, the TS200-1600 features an improved ink supply system with 2-liter degassed ink packs. **mimakiusa.com**



LaserBond 100 laser marking spray and paste

Johnson Plastics Plus is now offering LaserBond 100, an all-purpose laser marking spray and paste. LaserBond 100 is designed to be an all-purpose solution for permanent laser marking on metal, glass, ceramics, and other materials. LaserBond 100's ethanol-based laser bonding formula is engineered to produce permanent black marks on a variety of materials with a fast-drying time for efficient workflows. **jpplus.com**



Ninja Transfers clear backing

Ninja Transfers has introduced custom vinyl stickers with a clear backing option, designed to create decals with cutouts, floating elements, and transparent gaps. Users can now design artwork featuring separate elements that are designed to appear to hover naturally when applied to glass, metal, plastic, or other surfaces. The stickers feature high-resolution, full-color printing on weatherproof vinyl. They're engineered to be dishwasher safe and fade resistant. Each sticker includes Ninja's signature EasyPeel tab, designed for damage-free application and ships free within 2–3 business days. Customers can choose from gloss or matte finishes and order in custom shapes or preset dimensions, starting at just 22 cents per piece with no setup or art fees. **ninjatransfers.com**

Catalyst Nanos Business Ready Package



DPI Laboratory has launched the Catalyst Nanos Business Ready Package, a fully-equipped UV-printing system designed to break down barriers of cost and complexity. Businesses can access a complete, professional-grade UV-printing solution for under $20,000. According to DPI Laboratory, the Catalyst Nanos Business Ready package delivers everything required to start profitable UV printing operations immediately. Powered by the latest Epson printhead technology and paired with professional RIP software, U.S.-made inks, and full support, the Catalyst Nanos Business Ready package is built for small businesses, startups, makers, and manufacturers looking to enter the UV-printing market, or cut their own printing costs. **dpi-lab.com**



Independent Trading IND50TEE Interlock T-shirt

The IND50TEE Interlock T-shirt from Independent Trading Co., is crafted from ultra-fine 50 singles 100% combed cotton yarns in a substantial 210-gsm heavyweight fabric. The IND50TEE uses a double-knit interlock construction designed to create a dense fabric composed of ultra-fine yarns engineered to be a specialty knit typically reserved for the luxury market. The shirts are prelaundered to increase softness and reduce shrinkage. Unisex sizes range from XS up through 3XL. **independenttradingco.com**

Stay ahead in the industry

Sign up for our newsletter!



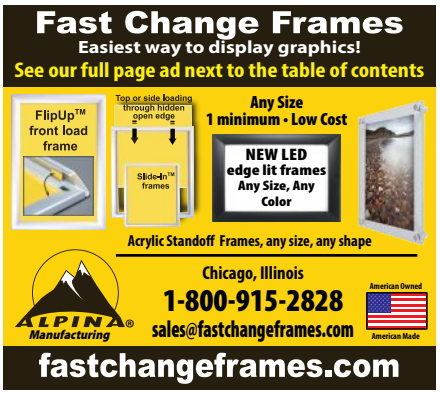
GRAPHICS|PRO TODAY

Covering the latest news and trends for the awards and engraving, apparel decoration, and sign and digital graphics industries.

Scan or visit: **graphics-pro.com/subscribe** to sign up today!

SIGNAGE & PRINTING





APPAREL DECORATING





AWARDS & CUSTOMIZATION



You could be here!
To advertise, visit:
graphics-pro.com/advertise

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

Publication Title: Graphics Pro
Publication Number: 000-837
Filing Date: 10/01/2025
Frequency: Monthly
Number of Issues Published Annually: 12
Annual Subscription Rate: $60.00
Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication
Cahaba Media Group
217 Country Club Park STE 101
Birmingham, AL 35213
Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher
Cahaba Media Group
217 Country Club Park STE 101
Birmingham, AL 35213

Full Names and Complete Mailing Address of Publishers, Editor and Associate Editor
Publisher: Matthew G. Conroy
217 Country Club Park STE 101
Birmingham, AL 35213
Editor: James Anderson
217 Country Club Park STE 101
Birmingham, AL 35213
Managing Editor: Marie Fennema
217 Country Club Park STE 101
Birmingham, AL 35213
Owner: Cahaba Media Group
217 Country Club Park, Suite 101
Birmingham, AL 35213

Known Bondholders, Mortgagees & Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1% or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. None

Tax Status: Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months

Issue Date of Circulation Below: September 2025	Average No. of Copies Each Issue During Proceeding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to the Filing Date
Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run)	15,405	15,459
Paid/Requested Outside County Mail Subscriptions Stated on form 3541 (Include advertisers proof and exchange copies)	14,404	14,455
Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid or Requested Distribution Outside USPS®	0	0
Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	14,404	14,455
Non-Requested Distribution Outside County as stated on 3541	840	798
Non-Requested Copies Distributed Outside the Mail	161	206
Total Non-Requested Distribution	1,001	1,004
Total Distribution	15,405	15,459
Copies not Distributed	0	0
Total:	15,405	15,459
Percentage Paid and/or Requested Circulation	93.5%	93.5%
Electronic Copy Circulation		
Requested and Paid Electronic Copies	451	0
Total Requested and Paid Print Copies + Requested/Paid Electronic Copies	14,855	14,455
Total Requested Copy Distribution + Requested/Paid Electronic copies	15,857	15,459
Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Both Print and Electronic Copies)	93.7 %	93.5 %

I certify that 50% of all distributed copies (electronic and print) are legitimate requests or paid copies. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on the form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civic penalties). Matthew G. Conroy, Publisher 09/09/2025

ADVERTISER INDEX

Advertiser	Page
6Sign	5
Alpina Mfg LLC	3, 49, 64
AP Lazer	27
AWT World Trade Inc	64
ColDesi Inc	19
Flexfit	7, 49
Gildan Activewear SRL	CVTP
Graphic Parts Intl	64
Gravotech Inc	25, 49
Hartlauer Bits	64
Hirsch Solutions LLC	47, 48
GRAPHICS PRO	**63**
GRAPHICS PRO EXPO	**16B**
IT Supplies	11
Jackson Marking Products Co Inc	64
Johnson Plastics Plus	29, 49
LAT Apparel	40, 49
Los Angeles Apparel	48, IBC
Mutoh America Inc	1
OMTech Laser	23
Rowmark LLC	15
Signs365.com	FCG
STAHLS'	IFC, 48, 49, BC

The Advertiser Index is intended solely as a convenience for our readers and is not a written or implied part of any advertising commitment. As such, GRAPHICS PRO assumes no liabilities for unintentional errors or omissions.

Cheese Cloth.



MADE IN THE USA

Our cheesecloth is made from a super fine 60 singles jersey with extraordinary and unprecedented stretch and recovery.

This fabric has a gauzy, dry hand-feel reminiscent of cheesecloth and is extremely lightweight and breathable, while the spandex properties allow the garment to cling close to the body with a semi-sheer appearance.

CC301

— Women's
— XS/S & M/L
— Made in Los Angeles
— 4.3 oz/yd²
— 60/1 Jersey
— 95% Cotton 5% Elastane

Natural

**Custom dye available for quantities of 300 pieces or more*

You Can Order Mill Direct!

Scan the QR code above to open an account today

LOS ANGELES APPAREL
Wholesale-Imprintable Division
www.losangelesapparel-imprintable.net
info@losangelesapparel.net
(213) 275-3120

CC356
Cheesecloth Fitted V-Neck Tee

— Women's
— XS/S & M/L
— Made in Los Angeles
— 4.3 oz/yd²
— 60/1 Jersey
— 95% Cotton 5% Elastane

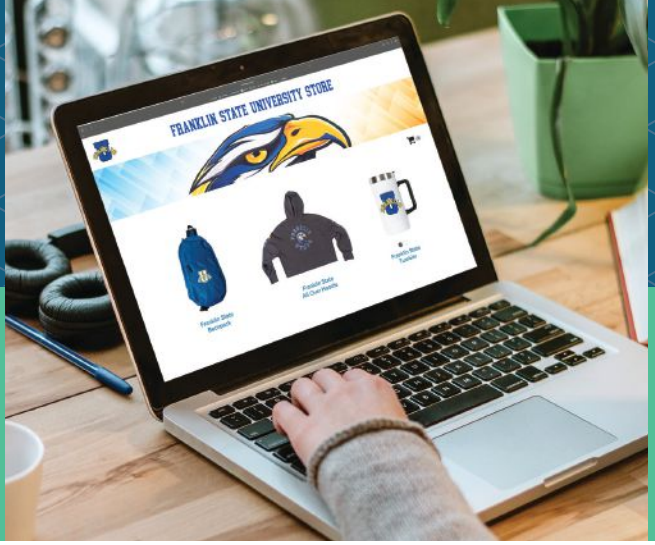


CC320
Cheesecloth Spaghetti Tank

— Women's
— XS/S & M/L
— Made in Los Angeles
— 4.3 oz/yd²
— 60/1 Jersey
— 95% Cotton 5% Elastane



STAHLS'
Fulfill Engine



Profit More with Print On Demand

Powered by STAHLS' Fulfill Engine™

Tap into a network of more decorating potential on demand, in quantities as little as one. From UV printing and laser engraving to LIQUID 3D™ dimensional branding, expand your catalog without adding any equipment, overhead, or hassle.



Unlock New Profit Opportunities











