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MARKING INDUSTRY magazine

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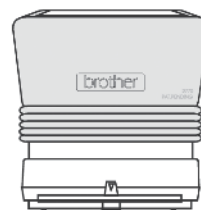


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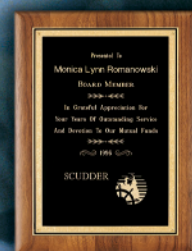
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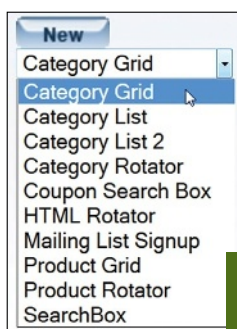
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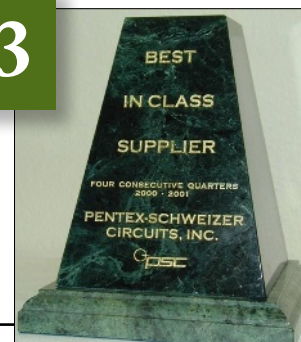
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STAMP SHOP WEB™: Step by Step

How to freshen up your homepage

by Becky Skelley

For the last two months, we've walked you through updating and working with your store's content. Now that spring is here, let's talk about freshening up your homepage.

Your homepage is the first impression that your customers have of your website, so it's worth revamping it every once in a while to make the content friendly and inviting to your customers. Part of that process involves altering your store content.

Some may confuse freshening up your website by altering the store content with changing its look and feel.

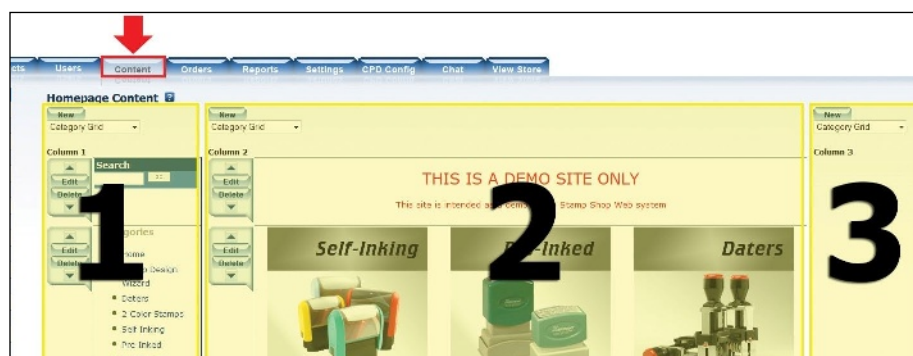
The difference between the look and feel of your site and your store content is significant. The look and feel of your site consists of the colors used in the background, borders, font colors, font sizes and the header and footer of your site's theme. The store content is the actual information presented to your customer in the format of text, links and product information. Let's begin the

process of altering your store content by reviewing the *Content* tab, the location of all homepage content changes.

Steps to Follow

To begin freshening up your website's homepage, we must sign into the admin area of your Stamp Shop Web site. Once you are logged in, click the *Content* tab. When you click on the *Content* tab, you will first see all of your homepage content, displayed in three columns (see Picture 1).

Column 1 is the one to the far left of your homepage, where your website's Categories usually reside. Column 2 is located in the middle of your homepage, while Column 3 is located on the far right of your homepage. At the very top of each column, you'll note a *New* button and a drop down menu. These

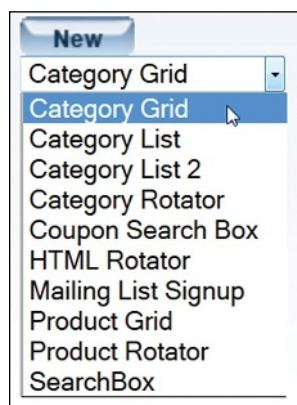


Picture 1: Content Tab with Columns 1-3 highlighted.

allow you to add the drop down menu elements to each column.

To do so, simply choose the column to which you would like to add an element. Then click the drop down menu to select the element. Once the element is highlighted, click the *New* button to add it to the appropriate column.

Let's review the different elements you may add to your homepage (see Picture 2):



Picture 2: Category Grid element.

Category Grid—this element displays your categories in a grid format. The images used are set inside the individual Category, using the Icon image. We highly recommend adding a *Category Grid* to your homepage within Column 2. We do not recommend placing this element in any other column, due to its varying size.

To add a *Category Grid* to your website's homepage, click the drop down menu at the top of Column 2. Highlight it and then click the *New* button (see Picture 3). You will then see the *Edit Homepage Block* page (see Picture 4).

At the top, you'll see *Block Type* *Category Grid* with the *Grid Columns* box. Here you may type the number of columns for the grid (or how wide you like it). We recommend two to five columns wide. Below this area, you'll see the word *Items* with a *New* button next

Picture 3: Within Column 2, Category Grid element and *New* button.



to it. Click the *New* button to add your categories one at a time.

Once you click the *New* button, you'll see the *Edit Homepage Block Item* page (see Picture 5). Here you can view all of your website's categories within the drop down menu. Once you've located the category you would like to add, highlight it and then click the *OK* button.

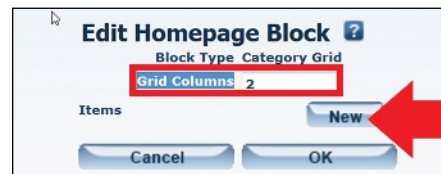
Now you will see the *Edit Homepage Block* page with a new item (see Picture 6). Click the *New* button to add as many categories as you would like to appear in your *Category Grid*. Once you are finished, click the *OK* button to view your grid on the homepage Content page.

Another benefit of the *Category Grid* is the functionality of a mouse-over at your fingertips. A mouse-over is what happens when you move your mouse over something on a web page. In Stamp Shop Web, we've set up a mouse-over field for your use. When you set a



Picture 5: Self-Inking selected within Edit Homepage Block Item page.

Picture 4: Edit Homepage Block with number of columns. Click *New* to add Items to your Category Grid.



different image within this field, the image will be displayed only when the mouse hovers over the *Category Grid* image.

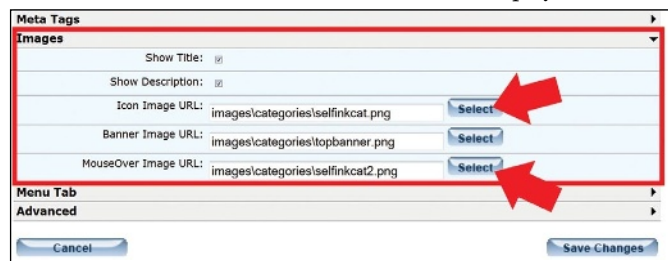
This functionality helps customers know where they are about to click on your website and also provides a much more technically savvy experience for the customer. There's no need for special coding to achieve an interactive look on your homepage because we've done all the coding for you.

To achieve this look, simply edit a category (that appears within your category grid), and then set the "icon image" and the "mouse-over image," located in the *Images* section of the *Edit Category* page (see Picture 7). The mouse-over image should be the same size as the icon image but slightly different in appearance, so that when the mouse-over effect displays the different image, it can be noted by the customer. For example, you could add a colored border to the mouse-over image.



Picture 6: Within Edit Homepage Block page: add Categories (or Items) to Grid by clicking *New*.

Picture 7: When editing a Category, scroll to bottom, expand Images section and select an Icon Image and a Mouse-over Image.



Category List—this element displays your categories in a list format. We highly recommend placing a *Category List* within Column 1 or 3 on your homepage. This allows your customers to view all the different categories on your website when they first arrive on your site.

To add a *Category List*, highlight *Category List* within the drop down menu at the top of either Column 1 or 3 and click the *New* button. You will then see the *Edit Homepage Block* page. Click the *OK* button. Now you will see that *Category List* has been added to the bottom of the column. You can move the *Category List* to the top by clicking the *UP* arrow (connected to the element). This will move the *List* up one slot. Keep clicking the *UP* arrow to move it to the top.

Category List 2—this element displays your categories in a list format with all sub-categories shown. To add *Category List 2* to your homepage, click and select the element within the drop down list at the top of Column 1 or 3 and then click the *OK* button. The *Edit Homepage Block* page will appear; click the *OK* button (see Picture 8). You'll note that *Category List 2* has been added to the bottom of the column. To move the *Category List* to the top, click the *UP* arrow to move the *List* up one slot (see Picture 9). Keep clicking the *UP* arrow to move it to the top.

Category Rotator—this element allows you to choose several categories to be displayed in a rotation. The categories will randomly alternate each time the homepage refreshes. As with the *Category Grid*, the images used here are pulled from the *Icon* image set within each individual category.

To add a *Category Rotator* to your website's homepage, click and select the *Category Rotator* element from the drop down list of the desired column. Click the *New* button (see Picture 10). The *Edit Homepage Block* page will appear; you can then add Categories to your *Category Rotator* (see Picture 4).

To add Categories, click the *New* button. Now you will see a drop down menu showing every category on your website (see Picture 5). Select the category you would like to add and



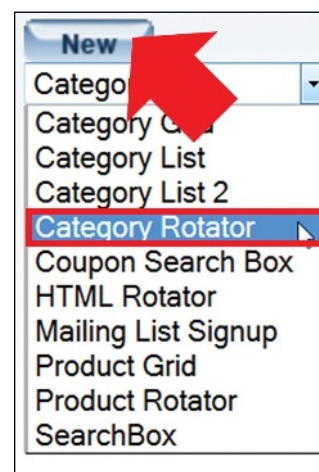
Picture 8: To add a *Category List 2*, click *OK* on *Edit Homepage Block* page.



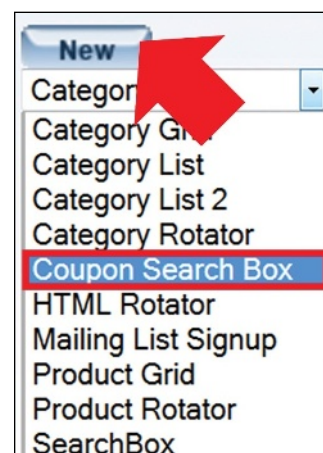
Picture 9: Each element within *Homepage Content* can be moved up and down within its column using arrow (you can also edit or delete the element).

highlight it. Then click the *OK* button to add it to your Rotator. Add as many categories as you'd like. When you are finished, click the *OK* button on the *Edit Homepage Block* page, and your *Category Rotator* will be added to the bottom of the column.

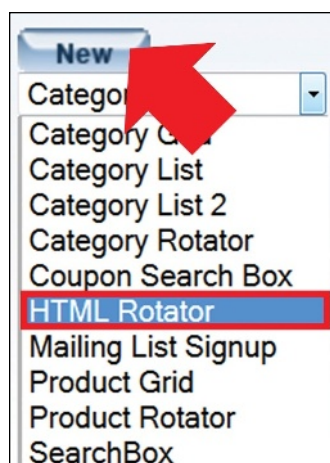
Coupon Search Box—this element allows your customers to search your website for coupons that you have set up. To add a *Coupon Search Box* to your website's homepage, first choose the column to which you would like to add it. Then click and select the element from the drop down menu at the top of the column; click the *New* button (see Picture 11). After this, you will see the



Picture 10: *Category Rotator* selected from the drop down menu.



Picture 11: *Coupon Search Box* selected from the drop down menu.



Picture 12: HTML Rotator selected from the drop down menu.

Edit Homepage Block page. Click the OK button. Now the Coupon Search Box has been added to the bottom of the chosen column.

HTML Rotator—this popular element is the most flexible within Stamp Shop Web. It lets you add text, HTML, images, links, tables and much more to your homepage and can be placed within any column. To add an HTML Rotator to your website's homepage, first choose the column in which you would like to add it. Then click and select the element from the drop down menu at the top of the column; click the New button (see Picture 12). Next you will see the Edit Homepage Block page. Click the Edit button (see Picture 13).

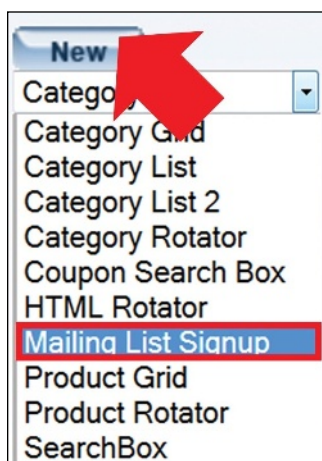
Then you'll see the Edit Homepage Block Item page with the WYSIWYG editor. To review the WYSIWYG editor's functions, please refer to our article in the February 2013 MIM issue. Add your content and when you are finished, click the OK button. If you want your website to display rotating content in this block, you may add new HTML areas by clicking the New button. If you would prefer that your homepage content not rotate, click the OK button. You'll note that the HTML Rotator has now been added to the bottom of the column.



Picture 13: Edit Homepage Block page of HTML Rotator: click Edit to add content to block.

Mailing List Signup—this element lets customers sign up to receive mailings sent out by you through your Stamp Shop Web website. We recommend placing this element within Column 1 or 3, due to its smaller width. To add it to your homepage, first choose the column in which it should appear. Then click and select it from the drop down menu at the top of the column.

Next click the New button (see Picture 14). Now you will see the Edit Homepage Block page; you'll see the words Mailing List next to a drop down menu. Here you can select which mailing list your customers can choose to receive. As a default, we've set up the Store Mailing List for you. In a future article, we will review Mailing Lists which can be edited and created in the Users tab. Stay tuned! Click the OK button to see the Mailing List Signup



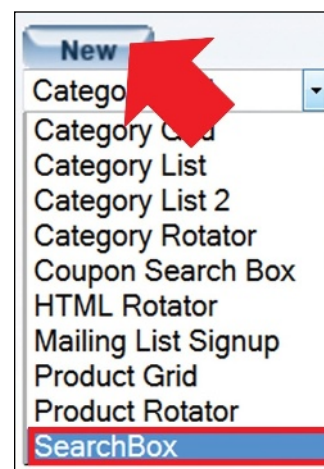
Picture 14: Mailing List Signup selected from the drop down menu.

element added to the bottom of the column.

Product Grid—this element displays your products in a grid format. Setting up this element is the same as the Category Grid; however, instead of adding Items that are Categories to your grid, you will be selecting Products that currently exist on your site.

Product Rotator—this element allows you to choose several different products to be displayed using their small images, product names and site prices in a rotation. The products will rotate each time the homepage refreshes. Setting up this element is the same as the Category Rotator; however, instead of adding Items that are Categories to your Rotator, you will be selecting Products that currently exist on your site.

Search Box—this element allows your customers to perform searches on your website. We recommend this box be added to either Column 1 or 3, due to its smaller width. To add a Search Box to your homepage, choose the desired column. Then click and select the element from the drop down menu. Click the New button (see Picture 15). You'll see the Edit Homepage Block page;



Picture 15: Search Box selected from the drop down menu.

click the *OK* button. Now the *Search Box* has been added to the bottom of the column.

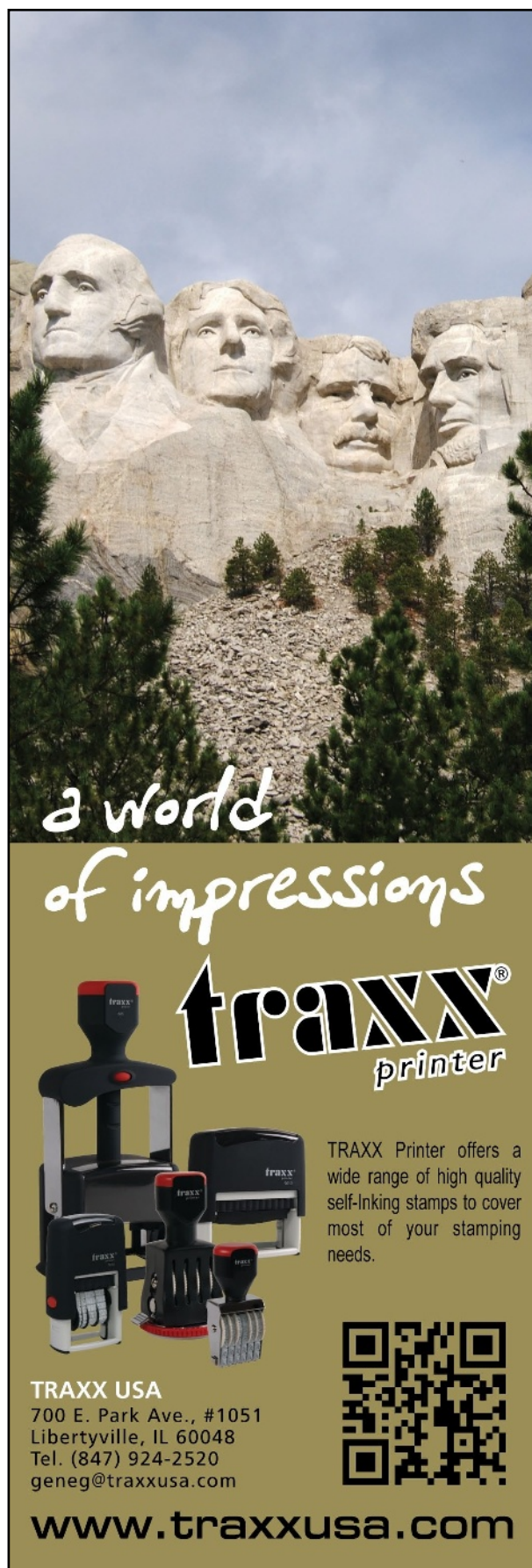
Now that we've reviewed the different elements that you can add to your homepage, let's take a look at the *Category Page* and *Product Page*, menu items that appear on the far left within the *Content* menu. The *Category Page* allows you to choose and add elements that will appear within Column 1 on all *Category Pages*. As a default, we've added the *Search Box* and *Category List* to the *Category Page* for you. This allows your customers to see all of your categories while shopping and lets them search for different products that exist on your site.

The *Product Page*, similar to the *Category Page*, lets you add elements that will appear in the first column on all *Product Pages*. Once again, as a default, we've added the *Search Box* and *Category List* for you. We do encourage you to explore adding links or even rotators to these pages as you see fit.

Well done! We've completed our review of the *Content* tab. Now here's some homework. Try adding or updating content each week to keep your website fresh and up-to-date. Even adding a simple product rotator to the *Products Page* will force your customers to see change. The benefits of change in this respect are substantial: your customers will see that your website is active, and the search engines will note the changes when they re-index your site.

Stay tuned for next month when we'll discuss Special Pricing. And just around the corner, we'll dive into the many possibilities contained within the *Settings* tab. It contains a wealth of different options that you won't want to miss! Mm

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: *Becky Skelley is a member of the Connectweb Technologies, Inc. family, a software development and Web hosting company that specializes in software for the marking devices industry. Skelley is a graduate of Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts with a Bachelors of Science in Graphic Design. She got her start in design at a marketing and communications company. She joined the Connectweb family as a designer in early 2010, focusing her talents on creating custom-designed websites for the Stamp Shop Web system. In addition to design, she also trains and assists customers on the vast product line Connectweb offers. She is a new mom who enjoys photography, oil painting and reading when she finds time. For further help, call Becky at 800/556-9932 or e-mail her at becky@cwebtechnologies.com.*



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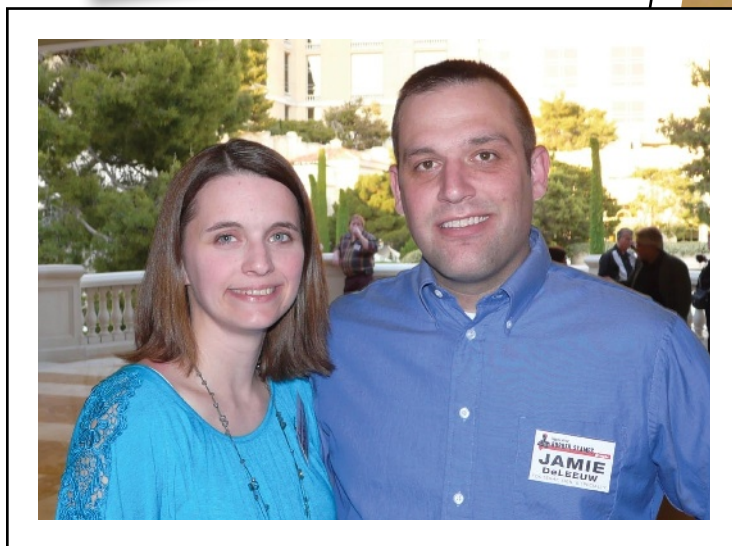
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Tom Jackson (center), **Jackson Marking Products**, with his mother
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SPECIAL REPORT

CorelDRAW's new version— X6, part 6

by Judy and John McDaniel, contributing writers

In 2012, the latest version of CorelDRAW's Graphics Suite was released. The new version (16) is dubbed X6.

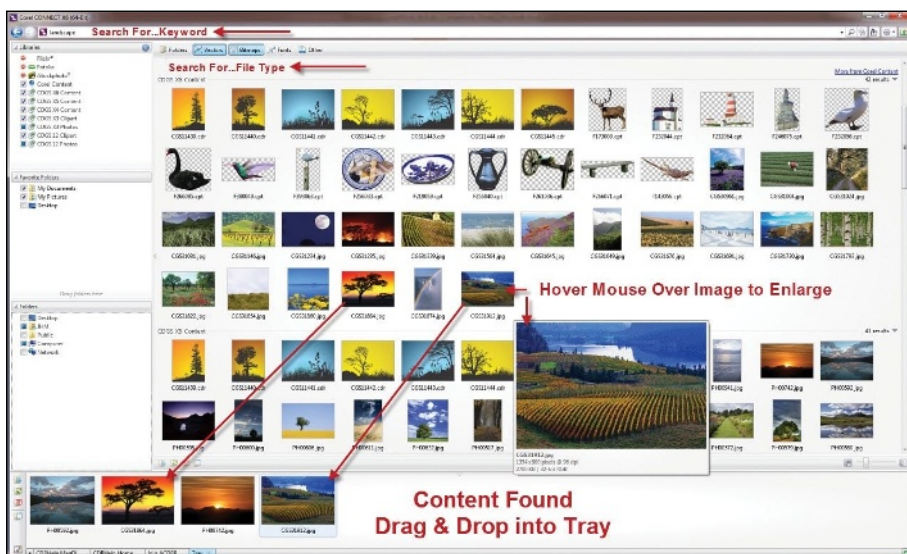
So far in this series, we have covered all of the new features in CorelDRAW X6 and Corel PHOTO-PAINT X6. This time we will take a look at the new and improved features in a key supporting application, Corel® CONNECT™ X6.

What is Corel CONNECT?

CONNECT is a full-screen browser, and it is also available as a Docker in both CorelDRAW and Corel PHOTO-PAINT. See Pictures 1, 2 and 3.

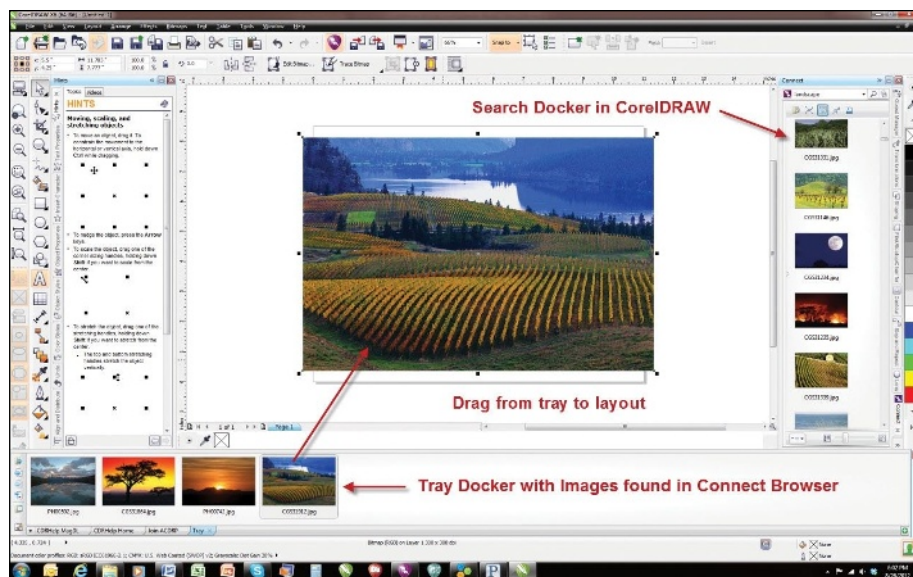
It's designed to assist you in finding digital content for your projects. It is linked into Windows' search and indexing for content on your hard drive and network. All you need to do is type in a keyword in the search bar and select the type of files you want to locate.

For the search shown in Picture 1, we searched on the keyword "landscape" and asked for both bitmap and vector files to be returned in the search. CONNECT then searched through all the folders we had checked on the left side of the screen and returned the files that matched our keyword search. From the results of the search, we then dragged and dropped four files from the search results screen into the Tray Docker, which is located at the bottom of the screen.



Picture 1: Searching on "landscape" in Connect returned these images.

Picture 2: We dragged the image from the Tray Docker into Connect in CorelDRAW.



We then opened CorelDRAW X6 and opened the two CONNECT Dockers located in DRAW. We dragged one of the images into the layout. Since the image was a bitmap, dragging it from the Tray Docker onto the page had the effect of importing it into Draw. That's shown in Picture 2.

We also opened CONNECT in Corel PHOTO-PAINT. We dragged one of the images from the CONNECT Tray Docker into the work space in PAINT. Once again, we dragged in a bitmap image. So in this case, dragging the bitmap into PAINT had the same effect as opening it. That's shown in Picture 3.

You'll also notice that there is a CONNECT search Docker in both DRAW and PAINT, so you can search for content from within those programs as well. However, we find it easier to deal with the search results in the full-screen CONNECT browser, then transfer what we want into the tray and open the Tray Docker in either CorelDRAW or PHOTO-PAINT.

Other areas CONNECT will search for content

In addition to your hard drive and network, CONNECT can also search

for content on the Web. Corel offers additional content on their Cloud server. Standard level content is available at no extra charge with the purchase of CorelDRAW X6. All you need to access that content is an online account. Premium content is available for an additional annual subscription.

Currently, CONNECT also connects to three outside services: Flickr®, which claims to be "one of the world's leading online photo management and sharing application, hosting over 4 billion images"; Fotolia, which claims to have "18,469,223 Royalty Free Stock Photos";

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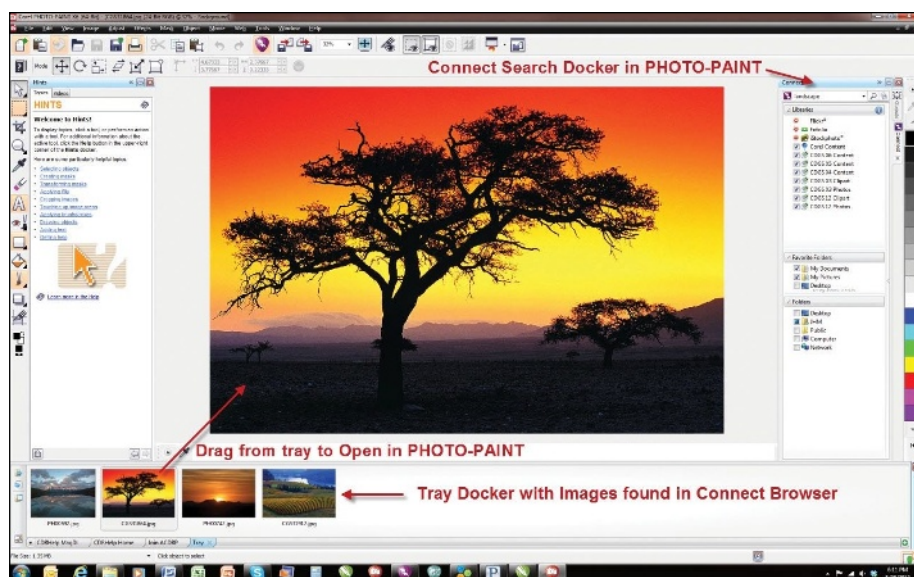


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and iStockphoto®, which claims to have "the perfect stock photo, vector illustration, video or music track for your projects." We haven't tried any of these services, but their databases of images are available through Corel CONNECT.



Picture 3: We dragged the image from the Tray Docker into Connect in Corel PHOTO-PAINT.

One additional web service that may be helpful when dealing with client images is the ability of CONNECT to capture images from websites. Picture 4 shows the images that we were able to capture from Corel's website. To capture images from a website, type the URL into the search bar. As long as your computer is connected to the Internet, CONNECT will go to the website and capture all available images.

What's new in Corel CONNECT X6?

Corel CONNECT was first introduced in CorelDRAW Graphic Suite X5. In X6, it has been updated and enhanced. It now includes the following:

NEW—Native 64-bit support for handling large files.

NEW—Multi-core processor support for execution speed.

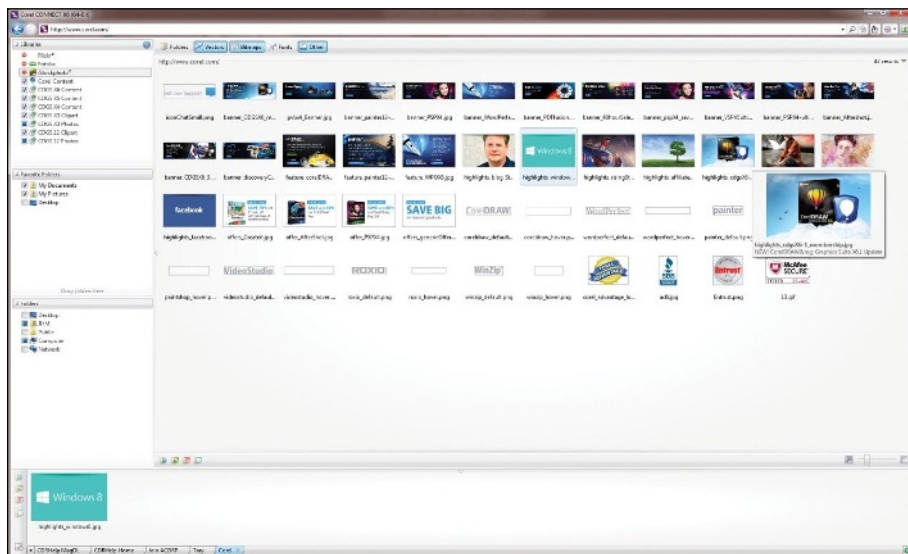
NEW—Multiple trays in Corel CONNECT.

Corel CONNECT now lets you work with several trays concurrently, which gives you increased flexibility for organizing assets for multiple projects. Trays help you gather content from various folders or online sources and share them between CorelDRAW and Corel PHOTO-PAINT.

NEW—Search capability in Corel CONNECT.

The new Corel CONNECT search toolbar lets you extract images from a client's website. In addition to searching iStockphoto, Fotolia and Flickr, you can simply type a web address in the Search box and Corel CONNECT will gather

Picture 4: This shows the images we were able to capture in Connect from Corel's website.



all images defined with an HTML tag from the web site. This makes it quick and easy to obtain content from online sources. You can also type search terms or a folder path to have Corel CONNECT search your computer, network or other online resources for content.

Conclusion

Corel CONNECT is a powerful tool in accessing images. With the ever-growing size of hard disk drives, it is becoming more time-consuming to find what you need. CONNECT provides an elegant solution to this problem.

The final new main element in Graphics Suite X6 is Corel Website Creator X6. We are working with that program in another series that's focused on creating your own website. We will, however, conclude this series next time with an overview of the features available in Corel Website Creator X6. M

ABOUT THE AUTHORS: John and Judy McDaniel are owners of CorelDRAW® Help, Inc. and MomentsRemembered.com. They started in the personalization business in 1989 with CorelDRAW version 1.0. John's background is in computers; Judy's is in art and retail. In their businesses, they apply CorelDRAW. They've used it with mechanical and laser engravers to produce awards, gifts and industrial products. They've also used it with all types of printers and vinyl cutters for creating sublimation and other image transfers; for making sandblast masks, screen-printing screens, pad-printing plates, signs and banners; and creating sales literature and flyers. With the release of CorelDRAW Premium Suite, they are adding website design to their use of CorelDRAW. In essence, they have more than 20 years' experience in applying CorelDRAW. They have written hundreds of articles and tips, lectured across the country and have been teaching CorelDRAW since 1991. For information on training services and video lessons available, visit www.CorelDRAWhelp.com. You may contact them via e-mail at mail@CorelDRAWhelp.com.

10 perks your small business can afford

by Suzanne Lucas

Offering a “fitness bootcamp” can help to build camaraderie, while keeping employees healthy.



Perks that make your employees happy don't have to cost an arm and a leg—really.

A happy, engaged workforce is a high performing workforce. When you hear of companies like SAP that offers on-site putting greens or Google, which offers on-site everything, you probably think, “We have 25 employees and cannot compete on that level. And where would we put a putting green anyway?”

Because small businesses can't offer it all like the big players, they often think that it's too expensive to offer anything that isn't required by law. But here are 10 small businesses that offer perks that are doable for many small businesses—and

make them more attractive to current and prospective employees.

Catered lunches—*Mimecast*. We know that food makes employees happy. Mark Bilbe, Mimecast's general manager of North America, explains that it goes even further—towards team unification. “We started catering lunches four days a week to allow employees to take a break, socialize, swap stories and enjoy a lunch on us. Food in general is a great unifier of cultures, functions and personalities.”

Nap room—*Engauge*. Sleeping during the day has also been in the news lately as a way to re-energize and re-invigorate

workers. Jenni McDonough, V.P. of human resources, explains that they took a small, windowless room, added a sofa, a blanket and an alarm clock, turning what would normally be wasted space into a valued place.

Recess—*SHIFT Communications*. Remember when you were a kid and adults would ask you what your favorite subject in school was? How often was that answer “recess”? HR Director Leah Ciappenelli realized that sentiment never went away. In addition to things like running or walking clubs, they offer an occasional, spontaneous outside recess

Dog-friendly workplaces can help reduce employee stress and tension.



break as one of the things to encourage a healthy lifestyle. This is not only good for employee morale but also the health insurance budget.

Dog-friendly environment—*Zoosk*. If you're a dog lover, this may work for you. CEO Shayan Zadeh says, "Like any successful company, we want to foster a happy and productive workforce. In order to promote a stress-free environment, Zoosk has a dog-friendly workplace, which helps relieve employee tension."

Massages—*Joss & Main*. Wellness is the hot word in employee perks, and John Mulliken, general manager and co-founder, is a big believer. "We believe healthy, happy employees are more engaged and productive when they come to work each day." But rather than just encouraging healthy eating, they offer benefits such as on-site chair massages.

Yoga classes—*inPowered* and *Wayfair.com*. Both offer on-site yoga classes. InPowered's CEO Payman Nilfroush explains, "Nothing makes a start-up more productive than having happy people who love what they do!" This is something most small companies would love to have.

Volunteer day off—*Angel*. This is vacation with a purpose. Company president Dave Rennyson recently implemented a new program which allows employees to take a paid day to do some volunteer work in the community. Good for morale, good for the community and good for the company.

Fitness bootcamp—*Bigcommerce*. While other companies focus on the calmer methods of wellness, such as yoga or massage, Co-CEO Eddie Machaalani, says his company channels its inner drill sergeant. "Bigcommerce offers employees a weekly hard-core boot camp workout with a certified trainer. The class gives employees a guaranteed stress-free hour and is offered to build team camaraderie."

No vacation policy—*Rapid7*. "Unlike many employers with formal paid vacation, holiday, personal and paid sick-time policies, Rapid7 has no formal policy regarding pay during absences from work," says Christina Luconi, Chief People Officer. They trust their employees to balance their time off with their work time, making it a good balance for everyone.

Gym membership reimbursement—*Tango*. Can't afford an onsite gym and don't have space for a yoga class? Tango CEO Uri Raz doesn't let that stop him from offering a wellness perk, reimbursing employees for gym memberships. Employees are energized and healthy with no additional capital expense.

Video and board game meeting spaces—*Sparta Systems*. Employees who play together work well together, says Eileen Martinson, CEO, who encourages employees to "step away from their desks." Not only do games like Scattergories provide fun, they stretch brains and encourage cross departmental interactions. *Mim*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: *Suzanne Lucas writes the blog, www.evillhrldady.org, where she demystifies your Human Resources department, one question at a time. Follow her on Twitter at @RealEvilHRLady or e-mail her at EvilHRLady@gmail.com.*

*Originally published at www.inc.com.
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Do you enjoy (or offer) a unique perk or benefit at your rubber stamp business? Let us know and we'll highlight the responses in an upcoming issue!
E-mail editor@markingdevices.com!

Making money with CorelDRAW® Sandblasting—Products

by Judy and John McDaniel, contributing writers

In the general population, sandblasting is often thought of as bead-blasting; in other words, parts cleaning, primarily for the automotive market, or as the removal of paint on structures, buildings and bridges.

In the world of graphic products—or products produced using some form of graphics as a starting point—sandblasting generally refers to decorating an item using sandblasting as the application process. Therefore, we suggest that a less confusing and more appropriate term would be *decorative sandblasting*.

Keep in mind that sometimes decorative sandblasting is referred to as sand-carving. Although this avoids the confusion with parts cleaning and paint removal, sand-carving is a more advanced sandblasting process that is different than simple surface decoration.

Sand-carving is a more advanced process. It uses the same equipment and abrasive air stream. However, the artwork and technique are different; therefore, it's a different process.

So what is decorative sandblasting?

Decorative sandblasting can be defined as the controlled disruption of a material's surface which results in a

visible pattern. Control is accomplished through artistic techniques using a stream of pressurized abrasive media, along with resist materials in the form of masks or stencils.

In this series, sandblasting refers to decoration where the image is formed by the presence and absence of disruption/frost/etch—in essence, images that are formed by silhouette artwork (black and white artwork).

What materials can be used in the decorative sandblasting process?

Although glass and crystal are most often thought of first as materials appropriate for sandblasting, in reality, almost any hard material is suitable. Materials that can be sandblasted include brick, crystal, ceramic, glass, marble, metals, rock, stone and wood.

What products can you produce with sandblasting?

The products you can produce with sandblasting are as varied as the materials you can use. Over the years, we have created sandblasted products for:

Special Occasion Gifts—this category has probably been the most active for us. We've produced gifts in glass and crystal including wedding and anniversary flutes, wine bottles, oil lamps, glass



picture frames for all occasions and glass clock holders for anniversaries. As far as other materials, we've created gifts in rock and stone from small to large, including a wedding gift of a small boulder with the couple's name sandblasted into it to be placed at the front door of their new home. We've sandblasted stainless steel flasks for groomsmen's gifts, Christmas gifts and other special occasions. We've also sandblasted ceramic mugs as birthday gifts for teachers from their school district.

Thank You Gifts—one job involved creating specially decorated wine bottles for a construction project that the owners thought was especially well done.

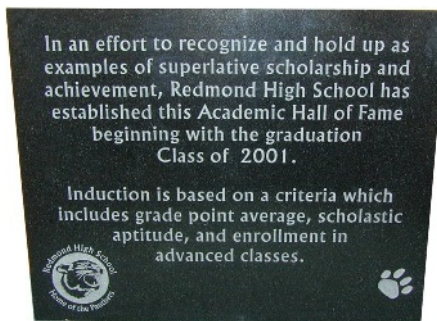


Awards—this category is also very popular. Here we've used crystal and marble items for high-end awards; glass picture frames and beverage mugs for coaches' gifts; and glass construction blocks as awards in the building industry.

Advertising Specialties—in this category, we've sandblasted crystal Movado clocks; glass and ceramic coffee mugs; beer mugs for microbreweries; and wine glasses and bottles for wineries and golf courses. For many years, we also produced beer mugs and wine glasses for a local chamber of commerce to give away at their annual Christmas party.

Architectural Elements—in this category, we've sandblasted a number of rocks and boulders that were used in various building projects.

Fund Raisers—we've produced bricks that the city sold to raise funds for street lighting; various souvenir items for another chamber to use for fund raising; and crystal Christmas ornaments that were sold to raise funds for families of children afflicted with cancer.



Signs—we've produced edge-lit signs in glass; signs in wood and composition materials; cornerstones for buildings; and a granite wall commemorating graduating honor students for a local high school.

Souvenirs—Sisters Oregon is a resort community. When we had our store there, we produced glass and ceramic souvenir products that were popular with visitors.



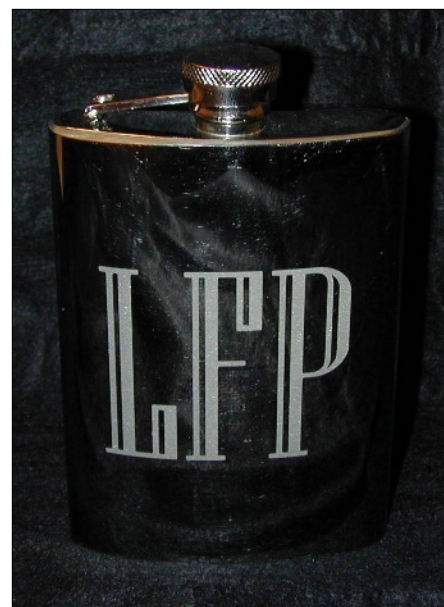
Decorative sandblasting is a creative tool which allowed us to produce a wide variety of products to meet our customers' needs.

Conclusion

Sandblasted products have a high perceived value. In fact, it's been our experience that the perceived value of a sandblasted item is higher than the same or similar item produced using other decorative methods.

Next time, we'll discuss the equipment, investment and training required to produce decorative sandblasted products. *M*

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Morgan provides flexo experience as new technical sales representative for Anderson & Vreeland



Joe Morgan, technical sales representative for Anderson & Vreeland

Bill Bower, director of sales, announces the appointment of Joe Morgan as technical sales representative for Anderson & Vreeland, a leading manufacturer and distributor of flexographic plate processing equipment and materials.

"Joe's in-depth flexo industry experience makes him a great resource for A&V customers. His experience, coupled with A&V's state-of-the-art flexo solutions, present a winning combination for A&V and our customers," says Bower.

Joe Morgan will provide technical sales and support, including introducing new, innovative solutions and technologies to A&V customers in Tennessee and North and South Carolina. He brings to his new position 26 years of flexographic printing experience, having served in various roles including plant manager for Georgia Pacific and Southern Container. Joe's experience as a printing manager and process engineer broadened his prepress and pressroom skills and experience, which will benefit Anderson & Vreeland customers.

For more information, visit www.AndersonVreeland.com.

RubberStampChamp.com upgrades rubber stamp production speed and efficiency with exclusive new laser engraver

RubberStampChamp.com, one of America's largest online suppliers of custom rubber stamps, announces the addition of exclusive, new Trotec Laserati drum laser engraving capabilities for the fastest, most efficient and effective rubber stamp die engraving.

In an ongoing commitment to serve customers better and faster, this new, state-of-the-art equipment makes RubberStampChamp.com the first custom rubber stamp manufacturer in the United States to offer customers the increased speed and effectiveness of the Laserati drum custom engraver. The drum Laserati at Rubber Stamp Champ is capable of producing, simultaneously, up to four flawless quality full size sheets of laser rubber, in just one run.

The newly acquired Rubber Stamp Champ laser-engraving technology allows more and faster production of the highest-possible-quality rubber stamp dies and assures Rubber Stamp Champ customers of the top quality and fast turn-around times they require.

www.markingdevices.com

The Trotec Laserati is a particularly powerful laser engraving machine utilizing a very powerful CO₂ engraving process developed specially for stamp makers using laser-engraved rubber for stamp production.

In serving over 625,000 customers in just the last 10 years, www.RubberStampChamp.com continually strives to improve product, rubber stamp impression quality, turn-around times and customer satisfaction with their final products.

For more information, contact Mike Roozen at Rubber Stamp Champ; 409 Enterprise Street, San Marcos, CA 92078; 800/469-7826; www.rubberstampchamp.com.

Stamp & Smart Pen: A successful hat trick



A life without smartphones and super-slim tablet PCs in the private world, as well as in the business world, is nearly unimaginable. The modern communication devices with touchscreens have to be cool and trendy. In order to facilitate writing, typing and drawing

manually, the Black Forest traditional company "HERI" has implemented a great idea in their range of writing instruments and developed the Stamp & Smart Pen.

A writing instrument with three functions, which combines design and application perfectly, has been created. The casings of the series "Stamp & Smart Pen" are completely made of metal and furnished with a first-class glossy finishing in different colors. New—and as a special edition—are two colors selected specifically with women in mind. These two colors are suited to the colors of the cover of the touch devices for the modern woman.

In addition to the touch function, the Stamp & Smart Pen is used as a pen. Inside, there is a giant refill in G2-format for a clear and nice script. A further function and the central point of the product philosophy of HERI is the integrated stamp. Just pull off the cap and out flies the well-established HERI-stamp. The precision stamp mechanics are made of metal and laid up for a stamp plate with up to 4 lines of text. Pre-inked and self-inking versions are available.

Heri provides its distributors not only with product information and pictures, but also with a flash animation for their websites and online shops.

For more information, visit www.heri.de.



JDS introduces glass laser tape for use on glass and crystal products

JDS Industries introduces a new product for improved results when lasering on glass and crystal. The new Glass Laser Tape is an adhesive tape that is placed over the glass or crystal products before lasering them. Lasering through the tape into substrate significantly reduces the “flaking” look that laser engraving traditionally leaves in glass, resulting in a more frosted finished appearance. The Glass Laser Tape is available in two sizes: 2 inches x 36 yards and 6 inches x 36 yards. Both sizes are stocked in all 13 of JDS’s nationwide warehouse locations.

For more information or to get showroom samples, contact JDS Industries, Inc.; 800/843-8853; Fax: 605/339-1467; E-mail: sales@jdsindustries.com; Web: www.jdsindustries.com.



LaserBits Offers Peel-Press Impress Awards

The beveled Impress awards are rich and elegant classic looks, featuring one-inch thick cast

acrylic. A black base with blue or gold accents reflects into the beveled edges of the award. These awards come in three designs—beveled, diamond and frosted—with each design available in three sizes. No acrylic glue or special adhesives are required to assemble. Using special anaerobic adhesives on the award top, the assembly process has become a simple peel-and-stick method.

For more information, visit www.laserbits.com.



Metalcraft announces destructible RFID windshield tags

Metalcraft announces the availability of their Destructible RFID Windshield Tags designed to securely deliver long read range at lower cost for customers automating vehicle tracking and access control.

“We’ve taken Metalcraft’s best-selling RFID Windshield Tags and made them even better,” says Metalcraft president and CEO Steve Doerfler. “By using destructible material for the composition, it’s virtually impossible to remove from the windshield in one piece—increasing the security of the tag and range of useful applications for this RFID tag. This is the perfect product for access control applications where security

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is a high priority or you want to eliminate the transfer of tags to other vehicles.”

The Destructible RFID Windshield Tag is a 4-3/8 inch by 1-1/8 inch label that can be placed on the interior of an automobile windshield and is printed on both sides—one side with variable copy like a bar code and the other with constant repeating content like a logo or disclaimer. Strategically placed security slits assist in the destruction of the tag. Specialized inlays read well both attached to and through windshield glass; the passive RFID label provides a read range over 18 feet and supports 496 bits of EPC memory and 512 bits of user memory.

For more information, visit www.idplate.com or contact a Metalcraft ID Specialist at 800/437-5283.

Trotec Laser, Inc. moving to Canton, Michigan to accommodate business growth

Trotec Laser, Inc. announces that they have acquired a new building in Canton, Michigan and will move into their expanded space by May 20, 2013. Trotec Laser, Inc., was established in the U.S. in Mississippi in 2002. Since that time, the business has grown over 400 percent, moving first to Ypsilanti, Michigan and now to Canton.

The new facility boasts a larger office space to accommodate their growing staff and a beautiful new Demonstration Area and Applications Lab. “We are thrilled about this move, not just because we will now be in a new building, but because it signifies our growth as a company,” says Warren Knipple, President of Trotec Laser, Inc. “We now have the space we will need to continue moving forward and bringing our customers top-notch products and after-sales support.”

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YOU
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“We are very happy that Trotec Laser chose Canton for its newest location,” states Canton Supervisor Phil LaJoy. “Our community continues to be a draw for high-tech and manufacturing businesses, and this company is certainly a welcome addition. We think they will do very well in Canton.”

Trotec’s new contact information will be: Trotec Laser, Inc., 7610 Market Dr.,

Canton, MI 48187; 866/226-8505; Fax: 734/927-6323

In other news: Trotec Laser featured in Iron Man 3

Catch a glimpse of the Trotec Speedy 300 in the Iron Man 3 trailer at the 12-second mark here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLorLVa95Xo>
You can also see it many times in the actual movie! Mmm

INDUSTRY INDICATOR

by Timothy Hachmeister

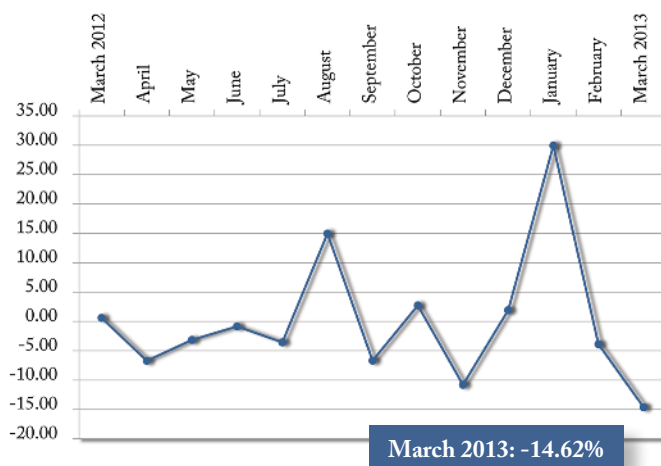
Sales still up since start of 2013!

While there was a 14.62% decline in monthly sales of stamps for March 2013, monthly sales are still up 6.65% from the beginning of the year. Furthermore, stamp sales for small shops are up 11.05% since the beginning of the year. March stamp sales represented 8.16% of the previous 12 months of total stamp sales. Year-on-year stamp sales dropped 7.63%, but still represent a net gain year-on-year when partnered with February.

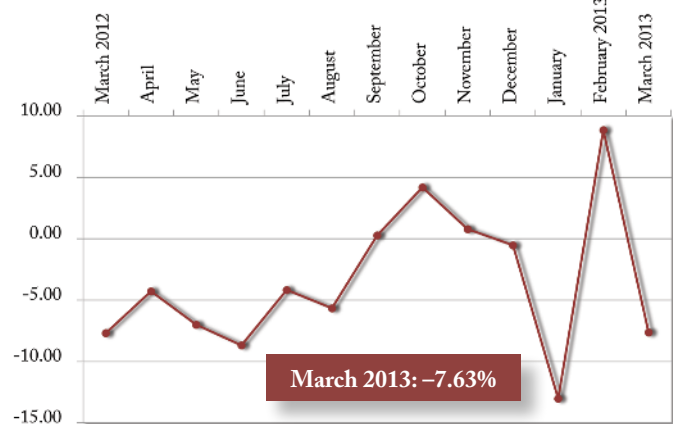
Sales of other products decreased by 14.25% when compared with March 2012. However, 75% of respondents showed an increase in sales of other products over last month. As a result, total sales increased in March by 12.38% when compared with February. *M*

Stamps only

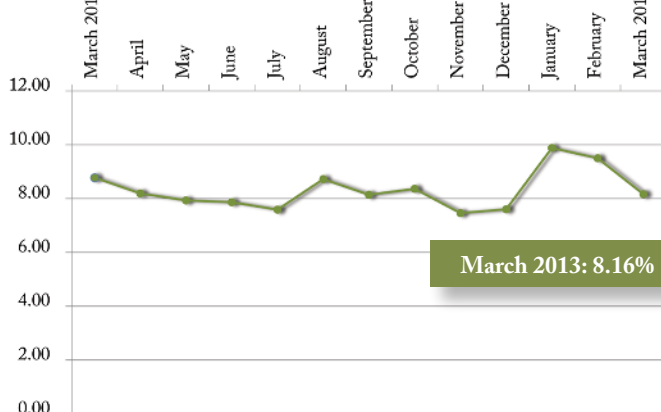
Monthly Sales—Gain/Loss Percentage



Gain/Loss Sales Percentage compared to same month in previous year

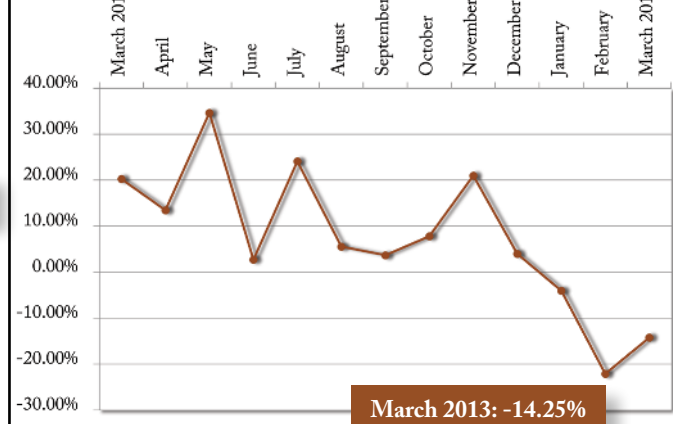


Percent of Annual Sales by Month (illustrating seasonality)



Other products

Gain/Loss Sales Percentage compared to same month in previous year



Visit www.markingdevices.com today for the latest news and industry statistics!

INDUSTRY IMPRESSIONS

by David Hachmeister

Places to call home

Digital is a new place that we call home! Check out our digital version of *Marking Industry Magazine* at www.markingdevices.com. Please be sure to give us your e-mail address so that we can inform you when the digital edition is available and send you the latest industry news.

Speaking of home, our new business, providing non-medical in-home care for seniors, has heightened our appreciation of the importance of “home” for all of us. We have long advocated an event exclusively for the marking industry—a “coming home” if you will—to occur every so often. Without such a happening, our sense of an industry “home” is weakened. The economy and the reduced use of stamps has already weakened the industry. Continued industry identity and viability require a unified and unifying event.

As our other business has also shown, the older folks eventually reduce the circle of people with whom they feel

comfortable down to maybe just a spouse or a favored child. Similarly, as an industry, we appreciate being a part of the NBM family, but we are not in their absolute inner ring. This is why we still feel strongly that the NBM should be a part of our lives, but that they cannot be in the inner ring of stamp makers. Burnt rubber and flash may elicit much different thoughts to them. We strongly support a continued presence and relationship with NBM. They have been great to us, but we need more.

What to do? As we saw at the recent well-done Rubber Stamps and More Convention, there is a real desire for some kind of exclusive marking devices event. The details are where the difficulties always seem to arise. We all have admirable objectives, but the debate over how to best achieve them has been debated and will continue to be debated. It's not unlike the push to achieve cleaner air and healthier kids, pleasant outcomes that stir much debate in how to get there. While we still debate

methods, much progress has been made in the interim because different ideas have been tried. As a rule, the ones that work seem to survive and so the air is cleaner and kids are healthier than generations ago.

Can't we as an industry do the same and explore new ideas? Does an industry meeting need to have a full-blown trade show? Probably not. Can we meet and use the opportunity to go over numbers—sales per employee, stamp production times, profitability of all goods, marketing hours and expenditures per hour of sales and more? Maybe we can give the vendors a few minutes between sessions and some other promotional opportunities. Toss in an outside marketing guru or two and of course, we can. We think that a reception the day before and a dinner following the meeting could work very well.

We look forward to hearing what you think! Send your thoughts to david@markingdevices.com. MIM

IN MEMORIAM

OJ Bischoff 1924–2013

Oswald Julius “OJ” Bischoff, a native Houstonian and third-generation Texan, passed away on April 4, 2013 at the age of 88.

OJ was born in Houston, Texas on June 8, 1924. In 1942, at the age of 17, OJ volunteered as a Coast Guardsman in World War II. He served on the original crew of Destroyer Escort USS Hurst as an Electrician First Class, completing 24 round-trip convoy missions across the Atlantic in support of the Allied Forces. Following V-E



Day, the USS Hurst traveled to the Pacific Theatre where OJ supported the search for survivors of downed aircraft on South Pacific Islands until being honorably discharged on April 16, 1946.

Following the war, OJ returned to Houston and married Elvie Staples Bischoff, who remained his loving and steadfast companion for 67 years. OJ attended the University of Houston and then began his professional career at Gribble Stamp & Stencil Co. In 1974, he set out on his own, founding Approval Stamp Works with one other employee. Together with Elvie and son Mike—and daughter Dee and her husband Jerry from 1977 to 1979—OJ grew the business, eventually employing 85 people and producing over 6,000 custom marking devices per day at the time he sold the

company to Johnson Worldwide Associates in 1991.

Surviving OJ are his three children, Richard Lee Bischoff and wife Linda; Dee Linda Jackson and husband Jerry; Michael Lynn Bischoff, Sr. and wife Colleen; 11 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. A caring man, who always put family first, OJ spent countless hours at family events. He spent some of his most cherished moments at his lake house, “The Bischoff Compound,” where his large, loving family gathered and built around him.

Condolences may be sent to: Dee and Jerry Jackson, Texas Marking Products, 26019 I-45 North, The Woodlands, TX 77380; 281/364-7100. MIM

Edited obituary from the Houston Chronicle, April 7, 2013.



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