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MARKING INDUSTRY magazine

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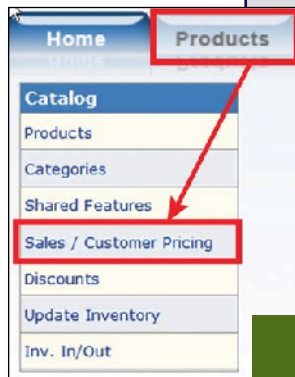
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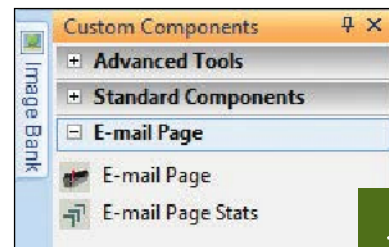
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STAMP SHOP WEB™: *Step by Step*

How to create special pricing

by Amanda Katon

Do you have loyal customers whom you'd like to repay for their continued support? Or maybe a big client to whom you'd like to offer special pricing and discounts? Stamp Shop Web makes it possible.

Being able to offer your customers special pricing on particular products or categories is so easy. The same is true of creating promotional codes. It's an ideal opportunity for you to promote new products, increase sales and reward your loyal and large clientele with special offers and prices.

Within the Stamp Shop Web system, there are three ways to do just this. First, you have the ability to create sales/customer pricing. This section allows you to generate new sales that are storewide or per product and that can be directed to individual customers or everyone. The second approach is by creating discounts. Discounts allow you to take an amount or percentage off the price of a product, a shipping method or an order total. This is typically also where Stamp Shop Web users can create promotional codes.

Finally, you have the option to create pricing levels. Price levels let you assign certain discount levels to particular customers. This is similar to sales/customer pricing but slightly different in that you can have 10 levels which you can set at varying discounts. They apply to your entire store, but you can choose which customers are assigned to specific levels. Let's start with the *Products Tab* where we'll explore sales/customer pricing in greater detail.

Steps to Follow

In order to set up special pricing, we must sign into the admin area of your Stamp Shop Web site. Once you are logged in, click the *Products Tab* to get started. First, we will dive into creating new sales/customer pricing.

Creating New Sales/ Customer Pricing

After you click on the *Products Tab*, you will choose the option *Sales/Customer Pricing* from the product menu on the left-hand side of your screen (see Picture 1). On the next screen, you'll see



Picture 1: Clicking on Sales/Customer Pricing from the Products menu.

the *New* button, which you will click on to create a new sale (see Picture 2). Once clicked, your screen will refresh and you will have some decisions to make about the type of sale you would like to create.

Sale Type

When creating new sales/customer pricing, you have several options: a Store Wide Sale, a Sale by Product that applies to everyone, or a Sale by Product that applies only to selected users. First you must choose whether this sale will be a *Store Wide* or *Sale by Product*, then choose *Everyone* or *Selected User* under the *Sale Type* section (see Picture 3, #1).

Store Wide Sale: Select this option to create a sale that applies to every product on your entire site.

Sale by Product: Select this option to create a sale that applies to only the product(s) that you select and move into the *Apply To* column (see Picture 4, #1). First, find the product(s) on your site using the *Search By* filter, and then click the *Find* button (see Picture 4, #2). You can search by *Keyword/SKU*, *Type*, *Category*, *Manufacturer* or *Vendor*. Next select the product(s) by clicking on the checkboxes (see Picture 4, #3). Then click the *Add* button the left of the *Find* field (see Picture 4, #4). This will move the selected products over to the *Apply To* section. All of the products inside the *Apply To* column will have the sale applied to them.

Everyone: Select this option to create a sale that applies to all customers on your website.

Selected User: Select this option to create a sale that applies to only the user(s) you select and move into the *Members Applied To* column. First, find the users you would like to apply the sale to

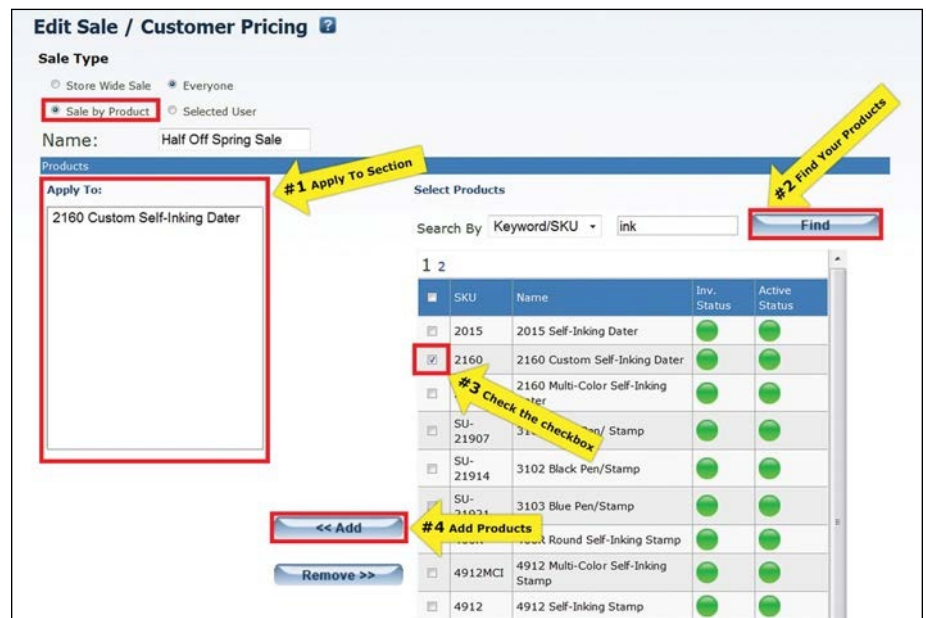
Picture 2: Click the New button to create a new sale.



Picture 3: The Sales/Customer Pricing setup screen.



Picture 4: The Sales/Customer Pricing setup screen if you choose Sale by Product.



STAMP SHOP WEB™: Step by Step

within the *Find By* filter and click the *Find* button (see Picture 5, #1). Next select the user(s) by clicking the checkbox to the left of their username. Then click the *Add* button (see Picture 5, #2). All users inside the *Members Applied To* column (see Picture 5, #3) will have the sale applied to them.

Name

In this section, establish a name for the discount/customer pricing to help identify it later within the listing of all your sales/customer pricing (see Picture 3, #2, page 9). The name will appear in bold only in the Stamp Shop Web admin area to make it easier to distinguish one sale from another.

Discount Type

This represents the reduction in the product's price that the customer will receive. First, choose whether to discount by a *percentage* or an *amount* off. Next, type the percentage/amount into the field *currency amount* on right (see Picture 3, #3, page 9). Your options include a percentage or amount off the List Price, Site Price (the price customer actually gets charged) or Site Cost. If you are using a percentage, enter the number with no decimal points; for example, 50% would be 50.

Start Date

Type in a start date for your sale/customer pricing to take effect. You may also click on the *Yellow Calendar* button which provides a calendar from which to choose a start date. Click on the date, and it will be added to the Start Date field (see Picture 3, #4, page 9).

End Date

Here you will enter your end date, just as you did with your start date (see Picture 3, #4, page 9). If you do not wish

Picture 5: The Sales/Customer Pricing setup screen for Selected User.

Edit Sale / Customer Pricing ?

Sale Type

☒ Store Wide Sale ☐ Everyone
☐ Sale by Product ☒ Selected User

Name: Half Off Spring Sale

Select Members

Members Applied To:
sswadmin@connectweb.net

Find By: Email Admin

Find

<< Add

Remove >>

Username	Last Name	First Name	Active
admin@ssw.com	User	Admin	<input type="checkbox"/>
sswadmin@connectweb.net	Support	Connectweb	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Picture 6: Sales/Customer Pricing Edit and Delete buttons.

Sales / Customer Pricing ?

New

Start Date	End Date	Details	
6/1/2013	6/30/2013	Half Off Spring Sale Storewide Sale For Everyone 50.00 % off Site Price	Edit Delete

to have the sale/customer pricing end, we suggest choosing a date far in the future.

Allow Sale Prices Lower Than Cost?

Check this box if you would like to permit the sale of products whose sale price is lower than the site cost (see Picture 3, #5, page 9). Please refer back to the June 2012 *MIM* article on the difference between sale price and site cost.

Now that you have made all the decisions about the type of sale/customer pricing you would like, it's time to *Save Changes*.

Editing existing Sales/ Customer Pricing

To edit an existing sales/customer pricing, click the *Edit* button within the

same row as the details of the relevant sale/customer pricing (see Picture 6). Make the necessary changes and then click the *Save Changes* button located at the bottom of the page.

Deleting existing Sales/ Customer pricing

To delete an existing sales/customer pricing, click the *Delete* button within the same row as the details of the relevant sales/customer pricing you wish to remove (see Picture 6). Next, click the *OK* button within the pop-up window to completely remove the sale from your website.

In Stamp Shop Web, you can also apply sales or special pricing within the *Discounts* section. To get to *Discounts*, be sure that you are still on the *Products Tab*. Then click on *Discounts* from the

Picture 7: Clicking on Discounts from the Products menu.



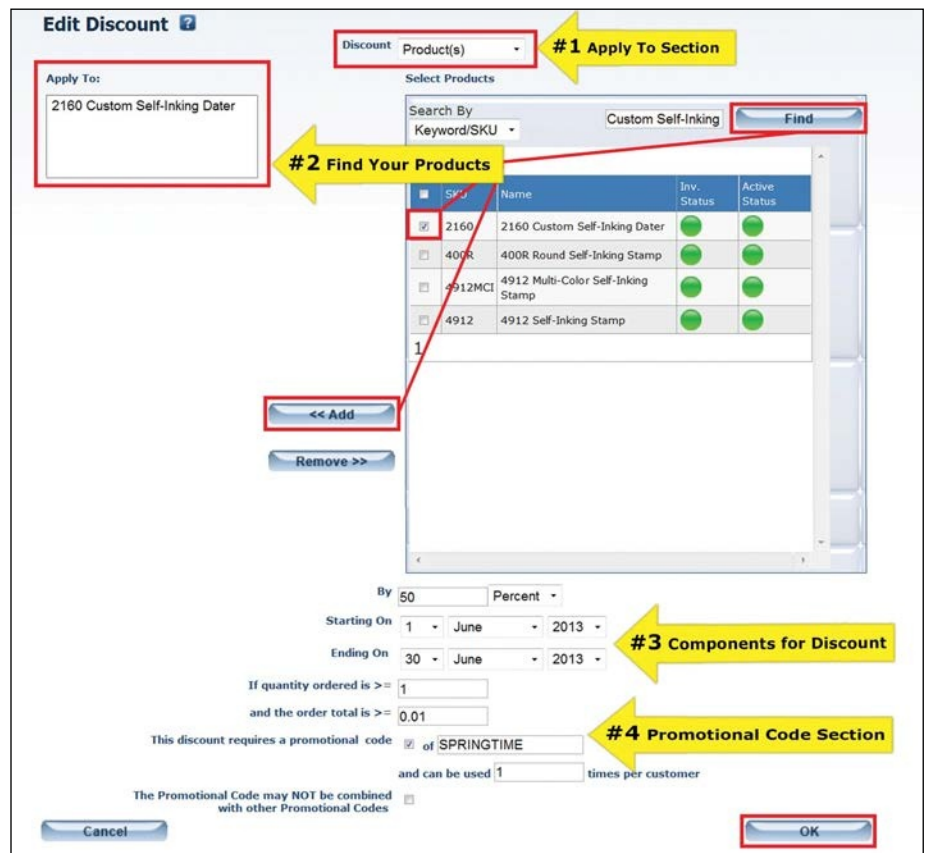
products menu on the left-hand side of your screen (see Picture 7). Within the *Discounts* link, you will have the option to add discounts to your site.

Discounts are similar to sales/customer pricing in that they allow you to take a certain percentage or amount off products. However, discounts also allow you to take a percentage or amount off the order total or shipping method. Discounts also give the option to create, require and use promotional codes. They differ from sale/customer pricing in that discounts do not allow you to make it available to only certain people. Discounts are available to everyone. Now that you know what discounts are, let's step through setting up a discount on your site.

Adding New Discounts

To add a new discount to your site, start by clicking the *New* button. Once inside, you must first determine which type of discount you would like to create: whether it will apply to product(s), an order total or a shipping method (for example, free shipping) (see Picture 8, #1). After you have chosen the discount type, you will need to decide which products to discount (this option is

Picture 8: Discount setup screen for discount by product(s).



Picture 9: Discount set up screen for discount by order total and shipping method.



shown in Picture 8), which amount to discount, or which shipping method the discount will apply to (see Picture 9).

If you choose to have your discount apply to products, then you first need to search for them in the column labeled *Select Products* and click the *Find* button. Once you have found the products, click the checkbox next to the products you would like to add, and then click the *Add* button to move them over to the *Apply To* column. Every product in the *Apply To* column is what will be

discounted (see Picture 8, #2).

After choosing the type of discount and the appropriate components associated with the discount, set the *amount* or *percentage by*. Next, determine the *start* and *end dates* for the discount just as you did in the sale/customer pricing section. Remember that if you do not want the discount to end, just select an end date far in the future. Then you can determine the actual discount by setting both of these fields: the *quantity ordered is greater than* (an

Picture 10: Under Users Tab, click on Price Levels link to get this setup screen for Price Levels.

Pricing Level	Discount Type	Value
Pricing Level 1	Amount Off Site Price	20
Pricing Level 2	Percentage Off Site Price	40
Pricing Level 3	Amount Off List Price	10
Pricing Level 4	Percentage Off List Price	30
Pricing Level 5	Amount Above Cost	5
Pricing Level 6	Percentage Above Cost	50
Pricing Level 7	Amount Off Site Price	0
Pricing Level 8	Amount Off Site Price	0
Pricing Level 9	Amount Off Site Price	0
Pricing Level 10	Amount Off Site Price	0

amount you set) and the *order total* is greater than (an amount you set) (see Picture 8, #3, page 11).

In the next area, *Promotional Code*, you can create a code for the customer to enter to obtain the discount. To do this, simply click the checkbox next to “This discount requires a promotional code,” and in the “of” section, you may type any code you would like. For example, if you were having a spring sale, your code might read *SPRINGTIME*. Then you can specify how many times the code may be used per customer. We recommend choosing a short phrase that is easy for your customers to type in. It should have no spaces and contain only numbers and letters. Finally, if you do not want the code to be combined with other codes, check the box. Leave it unchecked if it can be combined with other codes (see Picture 8, #4, page 11). Once you are done, click the *OK* button to save the discount.

The last area to apply special pricing is located under the *Users Tab*. Once on the *Users Tab*, click on the link in the

users menu called *Price Levels*. Within the *Price Levels* link, you’ll find 10 different price levels to set discounts for your entire store. If you’d like your customers to shop your site with a storewide discount, you can achieve that goal with a price level.

Creating the 1–10 Price Levels

First, you will need to set the price level in itself. To do so, simply select which type of discount you would like to set from the drop down menu next to each price level (see Picture 10). Your options include *Amount* or *Percentage* off of the *List Price*, *Site Price* or *Above Cost*.

Next fill in the *percentage* (as numbers, no decimals) or *dollar amount*. For example, if you are giving customers at price level 1 40% off your site price, you would select “Percentage off Site Price” from the drop down menu and type “40” in the box to the right.

To apply certain pricing levels to specific customers, you will need to edit that customer and set the pricing level

on their user accounts. The *Users Tab* and working with user information will be discussed in greater detail in an upcoming article. Once you have made the changes to *Price Levels*, click the *OK* button at the bottom of the page to save changes.

Nice work! We’ve now gone through the ins and outs of special pricing and the benefits it offers you. Try creating some sales for those loyal customers and big accounts, or even just to grab the attention of first-time customers. Special pricing, sales and discounts are a great way to generate even more sales. So what are you waiting for? Next month, we will begin the journey into the *Settings* tab. This area contains a vast amount of unique options that you won’t want to miss! *Mmm*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: *Amanda Katon 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. Katon is a graduate of Mount Ida College in Newton, Massachusetts, with a Bachelors of Science in Graphic Design. Upon graduating in May 2010, she started out working for a marketing company. After eight months, she went back to school at North Shore Community College in Beverly, Massachusetts where she earned her certificate in Web design. She joined the Connectweb family in June 2011, focusing her skills on designing custom websites for Stamp Shop Web customers. As part of Connectweb, Katon enjoys helping customers and building lasting relationships with them by implementing one-on-one customer service. Outside of work, Katon enjoys outdoor activities and doing crafts. For further help, contact Amanda Katon at 800/556-9932; Email: amanda@cwebtechnologies.com.*



SPECIAL REPORT

CorelDRAW's new version— X6, part 7

by Judy and John McDaniel, contributing writers

Learn more about the new kid on the block—Corel Website Creator X6.

So far in this series, we have covered all of the new features in CorelDRAW X6 and Corel PHOTO-PAINT X6. Last time, we covered the new and improved features in a key supporting application, Corel CONNECT X6.

This month, we will wrap up the series on what's new in CorelDRAW Graphics Suite X6 with an overview of the new kid on the block—Corel Website Creator X6.

First things first...

Do you have a business? Do you advertise your business? Do you have a website? Do you want one? If you do have a website, then who maintains it? Is your advertising budget large enough that you can hire a programmer or an outside company to build and maintain a website?

The reality is that the Internet and search engines have all but replaced the Yellow Pages. Today, most people search online for goods and services. Even if they don't buy online, they will search

there. If you have a business, it is almost a necessity to have a website in today's world. If it's not a necessity today for your business, it will be soon.

Website authoring tools

Corel Website Creator (CWC) is one of a group of programs designed to *Create Websites*, or in other words, program a computer remotely. That is what's really happening whenever a computer views a website.

In its most basic form, a Web browser is a program on your computer that receives some of its operating instructions from some other computer on the Internet—in other words, a website host. Instructions are most commonly sent in a language known as HyperText Markup Language (HTML).

If you are a programmer and you understand the syntax of HTML, then you may not need a program like CWC. If you are like the rest of us, then a program that converts what you see on

your computer screen to programming code—so that someone else can see the same thing on his or her computer screen—is essential.

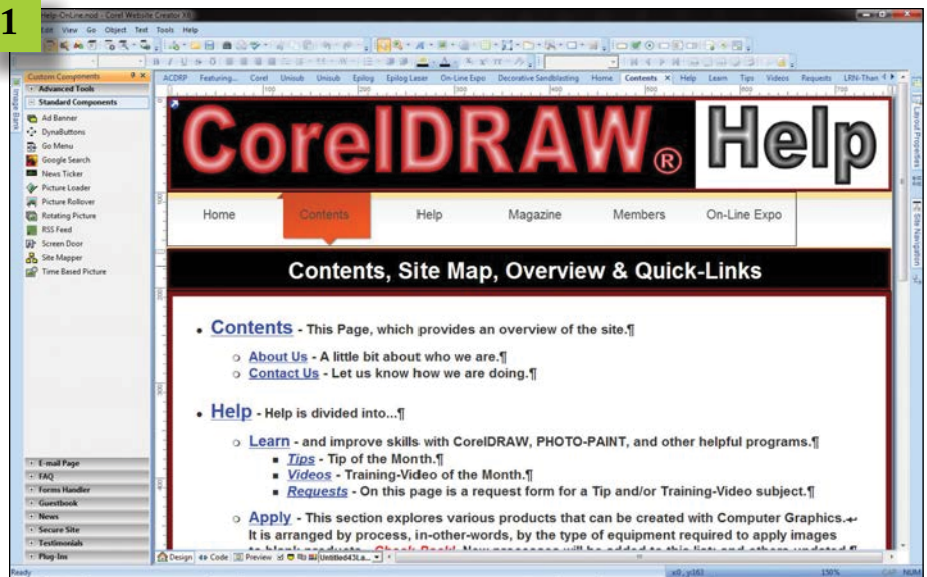
Background

Corel Website Creator was introduced to the CorelDRAW community with the release of CorelDRAW Premium Suite X5. It was then added as a standard feature of the Graphics Suite with the release of CorelDRAW Graphics Suite X6.

That said, in no way is this a brand new untested program. CWC is a licensed version of NetObjects Fusion, which has been around for many years. The origin of NetObjects Fusion reaches back to the 1980s. CWC X6 is a custom version of NetObjects Fusion 12.

For more background on the history of NetObjects Fusion, visit the online encyclopedia, Wikipedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NetObjects_Fusion.

1



Picture 1: Screen shot of CWC with Contents page of CorelDRAWhelp.com open. Note the Custom Components Docker on left.

Picture 2: Advanced Components.

Picture 3: E-mail component.

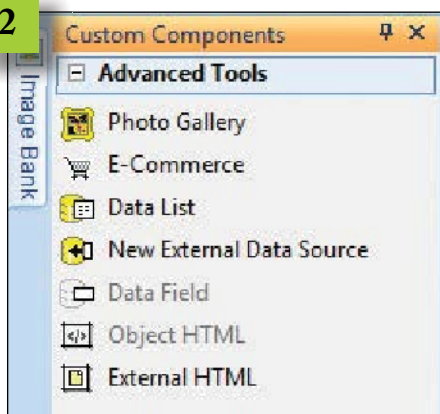
Picture 4: FAQ component.

Picture 5: Forms Handler component.

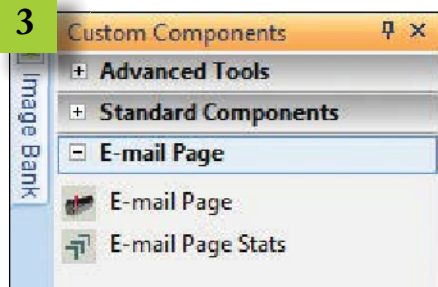
Picture 6: Guestbook component.

Picture 7: News component.

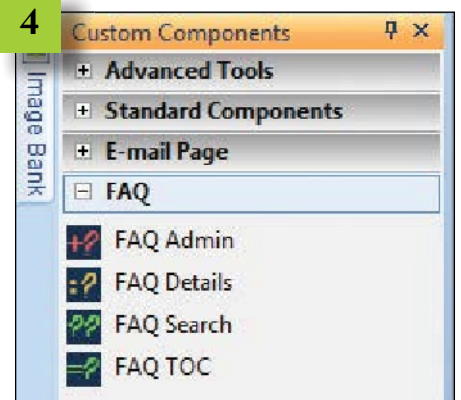
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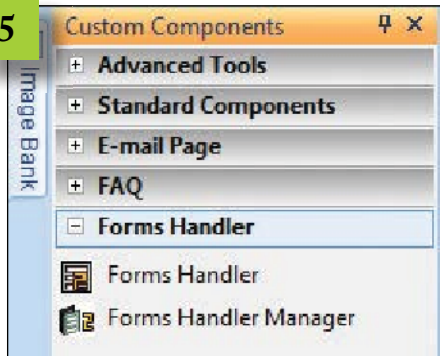
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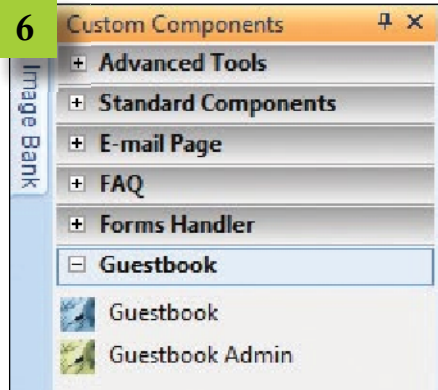
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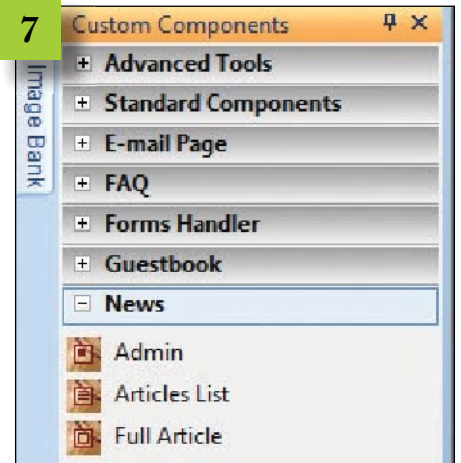
5



6



7



Features

CWC is a program that is rich in features. Picture 1 is a screen shot of CWC with the Contents page of CorelDRAWhelp.com open.

The feature we would like to point out in Picture 1 is the Custom Components Docker on the left side of

the workspace. The Custom Components Docker lists various website elements which can be incorporated into your website. The components are arranged by category.

Picture 1 shows the Docker open to Standard Components. Picture 2 shows Advanced Components. Pictures 3 through 10 show components available in other categories.

Working with Corel Website Creator X6

The beauty of CWC is that it has a look and feel similar to that of CorelDRAW

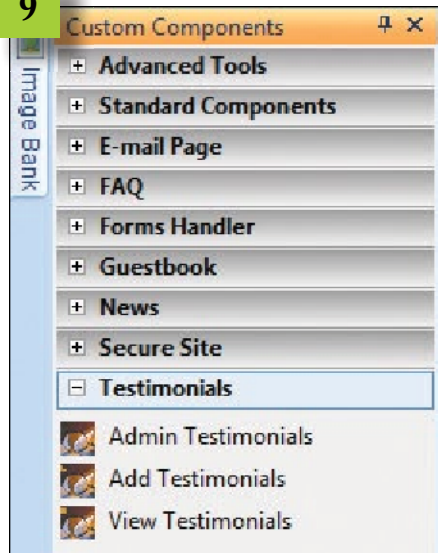
8



in many ways. It's visual. It uses Dockers. The workspace has layout rulers. Alignment guides appear when moving objects.

For the most part, what you see is what you get. You can create content in CorelDRAW and/or Corel PHOTO-PAINT, easily move it into CWC and display it on your website. You can drag

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and drop contents. You can simply add new pictures, drawings and other elements or remove old ones.

In fact, you can completely rearrange pages on your entire site. For example, picture 11 shows the structure of www.CorelDRAWhelp.com as of this writing. On this page, we can rearrange the order of entire pages or sections simply by dragging and dropping them. That represents great flexibility. This is something that would be very difficult

Continued on page 18

Picture 8: Secure Site component.

Picture 9: Testimonials component.

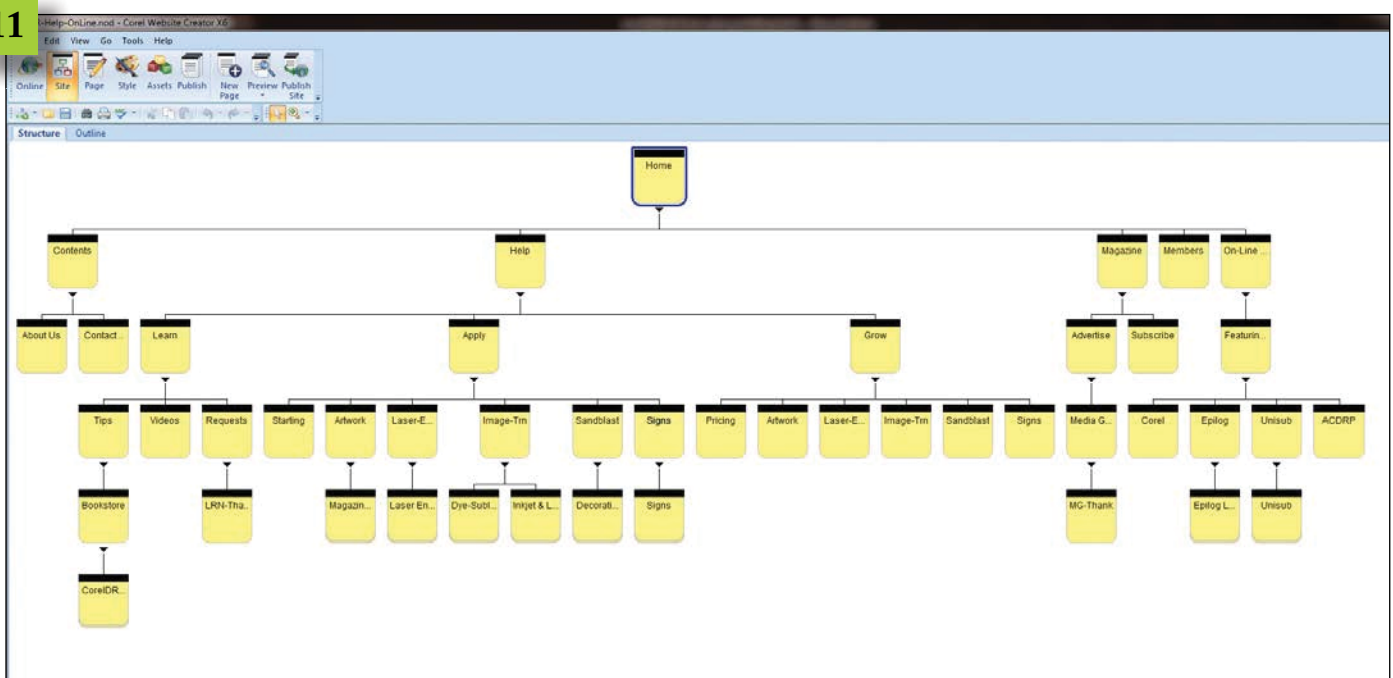
Picture 10: Plugins component.

Picture 11: Structure of www.CorelDRAWhelp.com as of this writing.

10



11



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Continued from page 15

to do if you chose to program your website in HTML.

In short, Corel Website Creator X6 is a powerful program that is a great addition to the Suite. Since most of us have—or are looking to start—a graphic products business, CWC provides a great tool to help us advertise it.

And of course, it is now included in the Graphic Suite at no additional charge. Thank you, Corel!

Conclusion

We are currently in the process of revamping our website using CWC X6. The entire site is being built and maintained using CWC. You can explore our progress at

www.CorelDRAWhelp.com. We also have a series of articles that provide step-by-step instructions in using the features of the program. Mmm

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.

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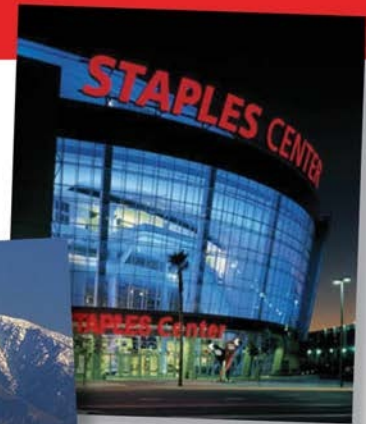
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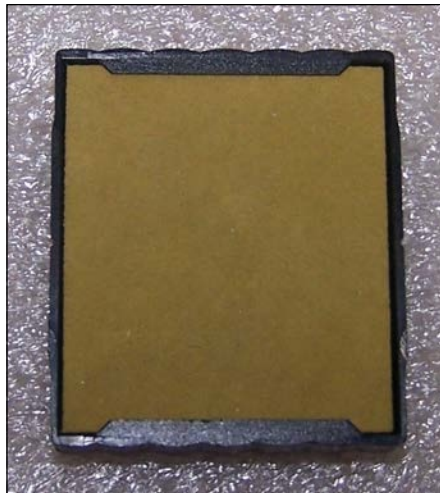


Fake stamps foiled!

by Michael Rodgers

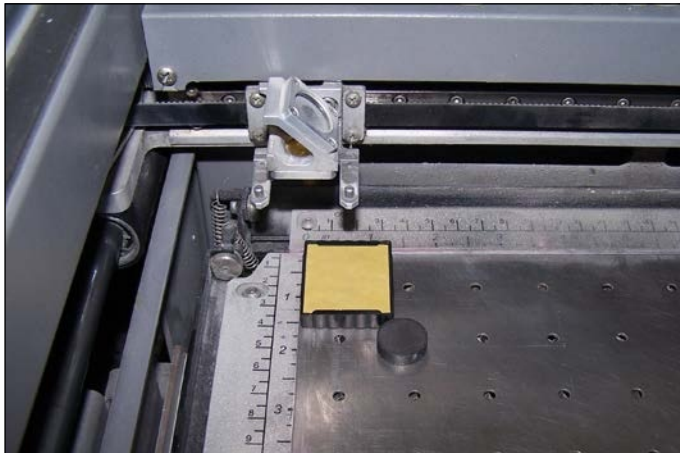
Thinking outside the box with laser technology helps stamp out counterfeiting.

About a year and a half ago, one of the nightclubs here in Las Vegas came to us about a problem they were having with people on the Strip counterfeiting hand stamps for club entry. There was a man on the street selling hand stamps for \$40 each to get into the club. He was carving the club's logo out of those big pink erasers and creating makeshift hand stamps. One night, he sent a couple to the wrong door and that is how the club caught him. When he was caught, he had every color of ink, the fake stamps

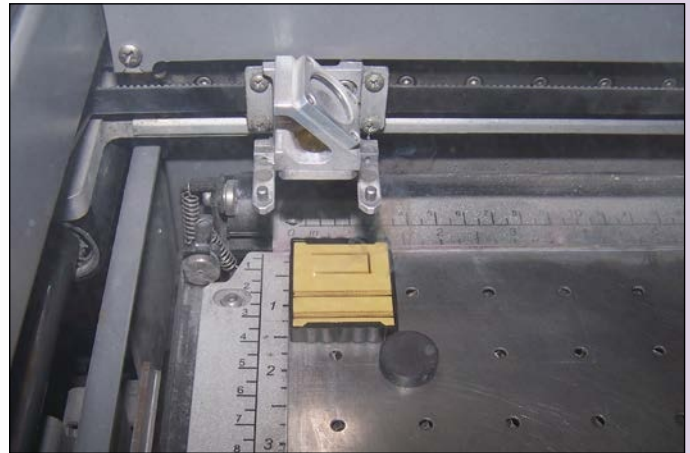


We begin with a Trodat 4923 pad.

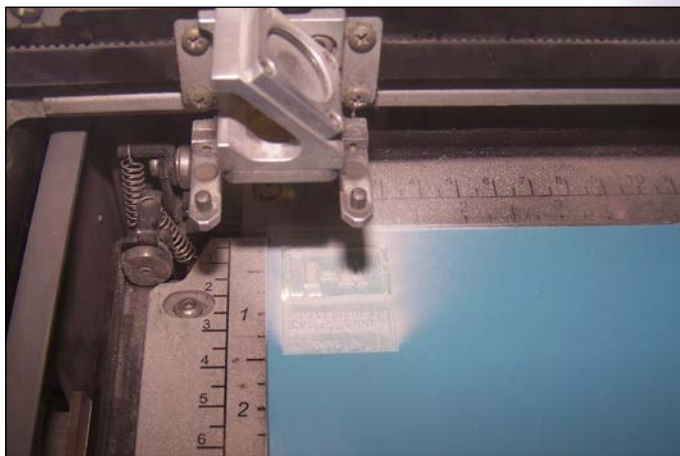
Fake stamps foiled!



Insert the pad into the laser vertically, as this way seems to leave more room for the logo/text. (Don't forget to adjust the focus!)



The lasering process: 45 watt Epilog laser, Vector at 50/50/500. (Make sure to remove the excess pieces before inking.)



Lasering the rubber: 45 watt Epilog laser, Raster at 40 speed-100 power. (Be sure to invert the graphic and adjust the shouldering before lasering!)



Normal light—Ink the parts you want visible with normal water-based ink.




UV light—Ink the other parts only to be visible under UV light.

and \$4,500 in his pocket! The police were notified and he was arrested.

The club needed stamps that were going to be hard to reproduce. We felt that we needed an out-of-the-box solution to this problem. After speaking with the client, we decided on multi-color ink pads for the stamps that use UV ink and normal stamp ink, all in one. We came up with the idea to custom laser cut the ink pads to fit their logos and use different inks. Each logo and pad is cut uniquely to eliminate any reproduction. The result is multiple two-color ink pads. One part of the logo impression appears in normal ink, and the other parts make contact with the

ultraviolet ink. When stamped on a person's hand, only the portion of the logo covered with normal ink is visible to the eye.

The goal was that when the stamp impression was put under a UV light, the entire logo would be visible to the security staff. Our solution worked! We have not had a problem as of yet with the counterfeiting of the club stamps. We have also implemented this technique for other venues now, and it seems to be the way to go.

I hope this is helpful to other stamp makers out there who may be dealing with any counterfeiting problems. 

For more information, contact Michael Rodgers at rodgers@boulevardtrophy.com.



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Sandblasting—Equipment and investment



by Judy and John McDaniel, contributing writers

In the last installment, we began our exploration of decorative sandblasting by looking at some of the products you can create. This time we'll discuss the investment and equipment required to successfully create sandblasted objects from computer graphics.

Equipment basics

For any sandblasting operation, you will need:

- A sandblast cabinet or blast room if your products will not fit into an available cabinet
- An air compressor
- Equipment and supplies for creating sandblast masks

Choose wisely

Before shopping for equipment, you need to decide what products you will offer. If you have an existing business, are you planning to offer the same or similar products to ones you currently offer? Are you planning to offer an entirely new product line? Poll your best customers because they can often help guide your decisions. If you are starting a new business, who will your customers be and what types of products will they purchase? Discuss your plans with friends, family and potential customers. In essence, the primary questions for equipment selection involve the

maximum size of the products you'll be creating and the materials you will be blasting.

Questions to ask

What is the largest size object that I'll be blasting?

The answer to this question will determine the cabinet size that you will need. If you plan to blast large blocks or glass pieces, then perhaps you will need a sealed room for blasting rather than a cabinet. If you will be offering a mix of small and large products, then you may need both.

What material(s) will I be working with?

The answer to this question will determine the type of masking material(s) required. This, in turn, will determine the equipment necessary to create sandblast masks. Once again, if you will be working in several different types of materials, then you may need a number of options for creating sandblast masks.

Will my product and material mix require frequent abrasive grit size changes?

Ideally, for general purpose sandblasting, you will use 180 grit. This includes most glass, crystal, wood and metal marking. For very fine detail work, like

photographic halftone blasting, you will want 220 or 240 grit. For heavier materials—rock, brick, stone—you'll use 80 grit. If your product mix will require frequent changes, you may want to consider more than one cabinet or perhaps one stand-alone cabinet with multiple pressure pots. One final point regarding product mix: if you plan to offer glass/crystal and brick/rock/stone products, do not blast glass and crystal with the same abrasive materials that you use for brick, rock and stone.

It turns out that in blasting brick, rock and stone, parts of the material will break off and mix with the abrasive. Tiny pieces of these materials will damage glass and crystal during the blasting process, easily going through a thin mask. Therefore, even if you are using the same grit, it is essential when switching from brick, rock and stone to glass or crystal to change abrasive materials.

You can go from glass to brick, but once you have used an abrasive on brick, rock or stone, it may become contaminated. You then run the risk of damaging glass and crystal with contaminated abrasive. Save the abrasive and mark it "contaminated 180 grit" and clean out the machine thoroughly. Put in fresh abrasive.

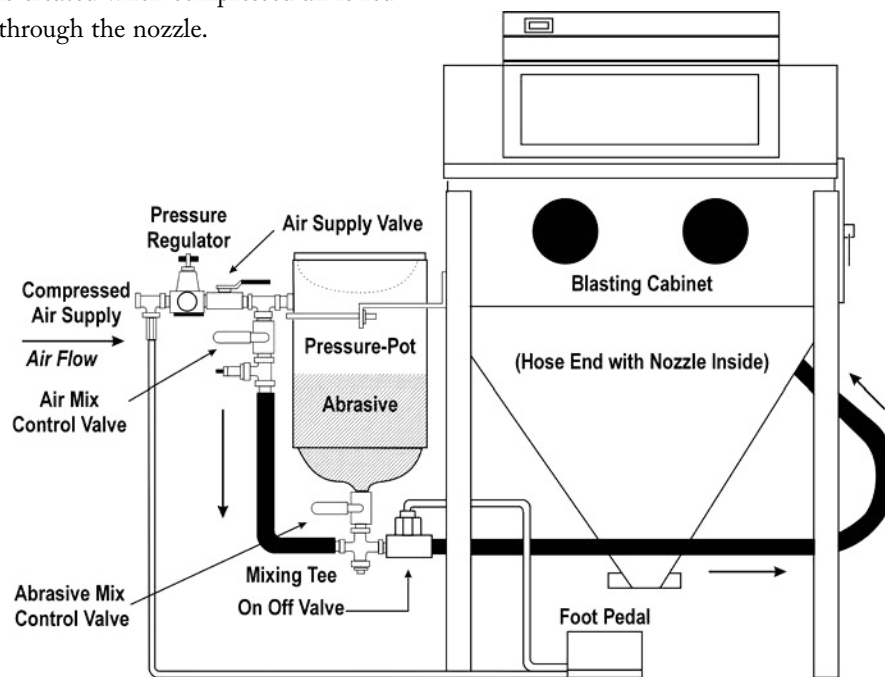
Equipment choices

Sandblast cabinets

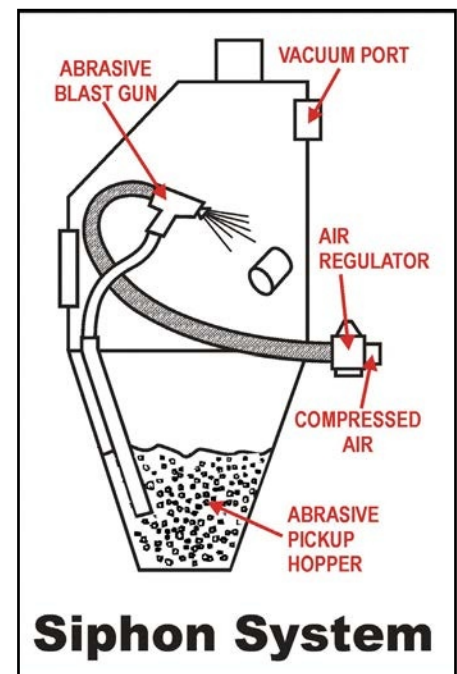
There are a large variety of cabinets from which to choose—everything from small desktop units to large industrial size systems. The two types of available cabinets are: pressure pot and siphon. Pressure pot systems inject abrasive media into the airstream from a pressurized container. Siphon systems draw abrasive media into the airstream from a reservoir via a venturi effect that is created when compressed air is fed through the nozzle.



Examples of all-in-one cabinets



Anatomy of a Pressure-Pot System



For decorative sandblasting, we recommend a pressure pot system for delivering the abrasive stream to the product. Siphon systems are cheaper to purchase and are used in the automotive industry for cleaning metal. They require much more air flow to operate properly, thus needing a much larger air compressor. They operate at higher air pressures, placing additional stress on the masking materials, and overall, they are slower to cut.

Some pressure pot systems have integrated pressure vessels and dust

collectors. Others are stand-alone cabinets that require a separate pressure pot and dust collector. Fully integrated cabinets require less floor space and are somewhat cleaner, but they are a little more expensive to purchase.

Systems that have separate pressure pots and dust collectors are a little messier to operate than fully integrated units. This is because they require that you manually fill the pressure pot with abrasive and then move the abrasive material from the cabinet back to the pressure pot from time to time. These

operations often introduce abrasive dust into the air. In integrated systems, the pressure vessel is mounted below the cabinet and the abrasive material can be moved back into the pot by remotely opening the top of the pot.

The one advantage that separate components have over integrated systems is that you can have multiple pressure pots, each containing different abrasive grits for different applications. This makes changing grits much faster. It's more difficult to change from one grit to another in an integrated system.

Sandblasting cabinet-component system



The ideal operation would consist of three separate fully integrated cabinets, each loaded with different abrasive grits for different applications.

Air compressor

Next on the equipment list is an air compressor. Air compressors come in two grades, industrial and consumer. Consider these specifications when shopping for an air compressor: horsepower rating, lubrication method, drive method and duty cycle.

Typically, industrial-class air compressors will have a horsepower rating that refers to “working”—a rating that is based on air delivery. Consumer units, on the other hand, are normally rated in something called Peak Horsepower. Peak Horsepower measures the amount of electrical energy the unit consumes under peak load.

Peak Horsepower is a useless rating—it’s a marketing gimmick. The maximum peak electrical load is achieved when power is applied to the unit and the motor’s rotor is locked; in other words, not moving. If the rotor is locked, the machine is not doing

anything except consuming electricity. It’s not compressing air!

To overcome this sham, look at the label on the compressor. You should see a rating of (___) CFM @ (___) PSI. The rating is (so many) cubic feet per minute of air at (so many) pounds per square inch of pressure. The industry standard is that one horsepower equals 3.4 CFM @ 100 PSI. A unit with 1.5 to 2 working horsepower should be adequate to meet your needs.

Another consideration is lubrication method: oil-lubricated versus oil-less. Consumer grade oil-less air compressors are essentially disposables. When they wear out, you replace them. Industrial grade oil-lubricated compressors generally last longer and can be repaired.

Then there is direct-drive versus belt-driven. Direct-drive means the air compressor is directly connected to the motor. That means it operates at a very high speed (RPM), which results in a very noisy operation. Belt-driven air compressors normally operate at a much lower speed and are therefore much quieter. Most oil-less compressors are

Industrial air compressor



5 HP 16.5 CFM @ 175 PSIG

direct-drive; most oil-lubricated units are belt-driven.

Finally, there is duty-cycle.

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Duty-cycle is normally expressed as a percentage. Its meaning has to do with the amount of on-time a compressor is rated for. For example, a unit that has a 50 percent duty-cycle means that it's rated to run 50 percent of the time or 30 minutes out of each hour. 100 percent means that it can run continuously. Sometimes duty-cycle is stated on the label, sometimes it's in the manual, and other times it's not revealed unless you contact the manufacturer.

Most consumer-grade equipment has a 50 percent duty cycle. Running it more than 50 percent of the time may cause it to overheat, shut down and wear out prematurely. Most of the industrial-grade units have a 75 to 100 percent duty cycle rating.

Equipment for creating sandblast masks

The final category of equipment is for the creation of sandblast masks. Masks can be created using UV photo exposure equipment, vinyl cutters and laser engravers. In this case, the questions to ask are:

- How large is the work?
- How much detail is in it?
- Is a heavy mask material required?

For very large projects, vinyl is usually required. Vinyl cutters can create very large masks. The only issue with vinyl is that it's not suitable for highly detailed work. For images with a lot of detail, photo-mask or laser masking are the methods of choice. Normally, however, these types of masks are limited in size. Photo-masking is usually limited to the size of exposure unit, the size of the masking material and/or the size of the film printer. In some cases, you can tile masks for a larger project, but this isn't anything you'll want to do for production applications. Laser masking is also well-suited for detail; however, it's limited to the size of the product that you can get into your laser engraver.

Finally, if you need heavy masking material, then in all likelihood, a heavy-duty vinyl cutter will be required.

Investment requirements

Sandblast cabinets—these can range in price from a few hundred dollars to \$4,000–\$5,000.

Air compressor—quality units are available in the \$500 to \$2,000 price range.

Masking equipment

Vinyl-masking—from a few hundred dollars for a table top vinyl cutter to \$4,000–\$5,000 for a large heavy-duty cutter. Vinyl is the least expensive mask material available. Adding a vinyl cutter to your equipment inventory also adds the ability to create vinyl-cut signs.

Photo-masking—from \$200 to \$300 for a small table top unit to \$2,000 or more for a more elaborate setup. Photo-masking materials are among the most expensive.


Laser-masking—from \$8,000–\$10,000 and up for a laser engraving machine. As far as price is concerned, laser-masking material costs more than vinyl but is much less expensive than photo-mask materials. If you don't already have a laser engraver, adding one to your operation adds a wide range of product possibilities.

Conclusion

Considering the basic equipment requirements—a sandblast cabinet, an air compressor and basic mask-making equipment—sandblasting is one of the least expensive processes you can incorporate into your existing business.


Next time, we'll discuss the training required to produce decorative-sandblasted products, along with some resources that can help get you started. *Mlm*

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.




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Texas Marking Products celebrates 34th anniversary

Texas Marking Products of Houston is proud to celebrate its 34th anniversary. Owners Jerry and Dee Jackson started the business in May 1979 at the ages of 26 and 24 with two small children. Jerry Jackson notes, "It was a gamble starting our business, but we had a belief that we could be successful. I would handle sales and oversee the operations, while Dee handled HR, payroll and the accounting. Along with believing in ourselves, having great employees, products and service, our business has been successful, which in turn has paid many dividends."

Texas Marking Products is a full service marking and identification products company. Jerry says that as times changed, they diversified over the years to expand their range beyond rubber stamps. Today, Texas Marking Products produces all types of signs, architectural indoor signage, ADA signage, graphic design, digital printing, full color logo badges, banners, corporate awards, embossing seals and is proud to be one of the Certified Xstamper manufacturers in the United States.

Dee and Jerry add: "Our relationships with the industry and peers have helped us to grow, learn from one another and diversify our business. We'd like to thank our peers and industry colleagues for their support and friendship over the last 34 years. Please give us a call to just talk or answer any questions about our business."

For more information, contact Texas Marking Products, 26019 IH-45 N; The Woodlands, TX 77380; 281/364-7100; 866/678-2677; Email: sales@texasmarkingproducts.com; Web: www.texasmarkingproducts.com; www.xstamper.us.



JDS introduces LazerDark™ Color Spray

JDS Industries, Inc. introduces another innovation to the laser engraving industry with new LazerDark™ Color Spray. This semi-transparent coloring spray enhances the

laser engraved area on most types of wood. Best of all,

LazerDark virtually eliminates the wicking that can occur when some color-fill methods are used on porous woods. LazerDark is available in black, dark brown and a clear finish coat.

For more information, contact JDS Industries, Inc.; 800/843-8853; Fax: 605/339-1467; Email: sales@jdsindustries.com; Web: www.jdsindustries.com.

Rosewood Knife from LaserBits



The Curved Handle Knife (WCN 213) has a heavy-duty design and feel. The large blade flips open with a snap and locks securely in place. A thumb knob on the blade helps to safely actuate the blade. The Rosewood handle will engrave a dark brown color. The stainless steel blade can also be engraved using CerMark products.

For more information, visit www.laserbits.com.

LaserBits offers Magnetic Sheet

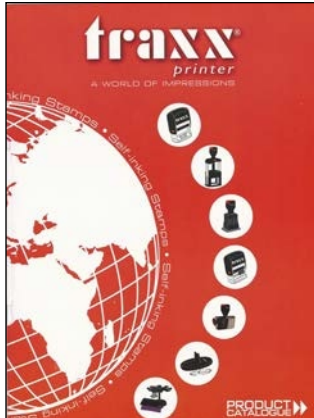


Create magnetic gifts with this laser-safe Magnetic Sheet. The sheet has a self-adhesive side and is ready to be applied to any material prior to laser cutting. The sheet is .025 inches thick and provides a firm grip to refrigerators, appliances

and any steel surface (except stainless steel). The Magnetic Sheet does not produce harmful outgassing and has a top quality acrylic self-adhesive. Laser cutting of the magnetic sheet does create a powder-like residue, so keep the air assist volume very low or off.

For more information, visit www.laserbits.com.

Traxx offers round plastic self-inkers and multi-color pads



This year, Traxx has introduced round plastic self-inkers, multi-color pads for metal self-inkers and additional sizes for pocket stamps and new accessories. Learn more details by requesting your free copy of the 2013 Traxx Product Catalog.

The 40-page catalog is divided into the seven lines of Traxx stamp components available: plastic self-inkers, plastic self-inking date stamps,

metal self-inkers, die-plate daters, pocket stamps, office products and accessories. All products have a lifetime guarantee.

Traxx products are distributed in 50 countries worldwide. Traxx USA provides a unique program wherein stamp manufacturers can import products directly from the manufacturing plant in China at the most favorable pricing available in the United States. Traxx USA provides all logistics for the import process relieving the stamp manufacturer from any involvement. Traxx USA maintains a warehouse in Libertyville, Illinois.

For more information and a free catalog, contact Gene Griffiths, TRAXX USA, 847/924-2520; Email: geneg@traxxusa.com or visit www.traxxusa.com. Mlm

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INDUSTRY INDICATOR

by Timothy Hachmeister

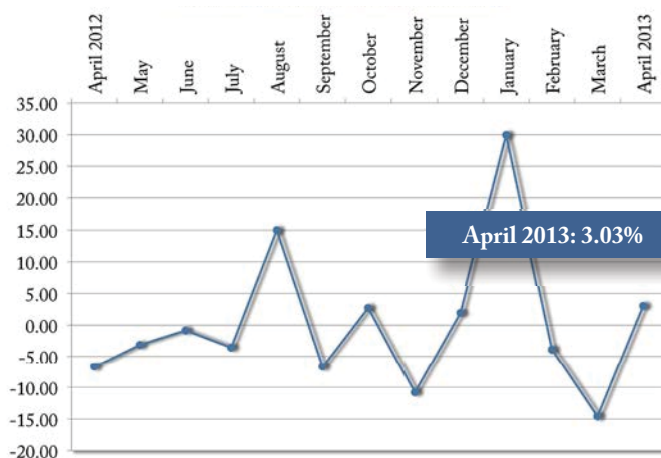
Positive news, and lots of it!

A lot of positive news from the April data: Total monthly sales increased by 4.30%, monthly stamp sales increased 3.03%, and monthly sales of other products increased 4.96%. Monthly stamp sales for small shops increased by 9.89%. April stamp sales represented 8.40% of the previous 12 months of total stamp sales, which is above the average of 8.33%. April sales of other products represented 9.64% of the previous 12 months sales of other products.

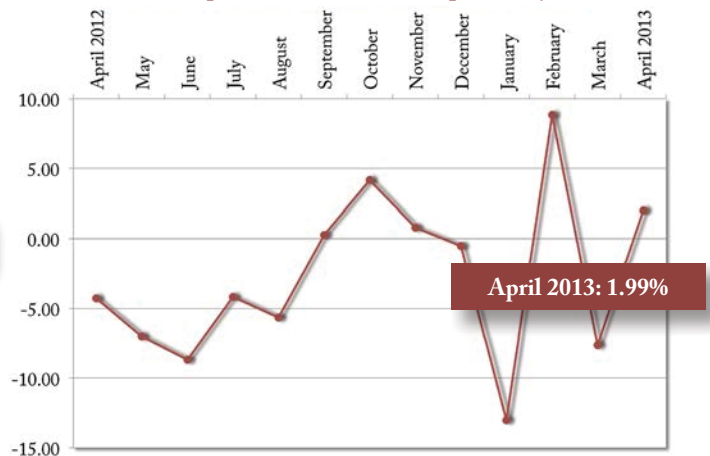
While sales of other products grew by 24.83% for April compared with April 2012, stamp sales still had an increase of 1.99%. Comparing individual months by year—such as April 2013 and April 2012—is a good metric for determining true growth since it is generally free of seasonal factors that can skew data. *M*

Stamps only

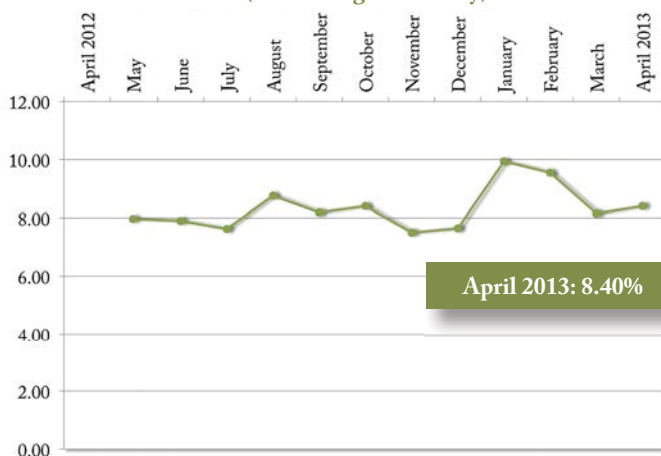
Monthly Sales—Gain/Loss Percentage



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

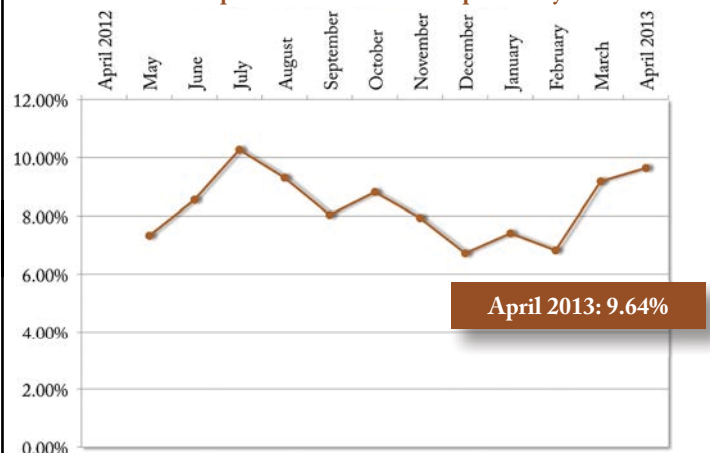


Percent of Annual Sales by Month (illustrating seasonality)



Other products

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



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INDUSTRY IMPRESSIONS

by David Hachmeister

Time flies

Dear Readers,

I have been told that I am nuts about time—and other things. I know what time it is at just about any point during the day, sometimes even in the middle of the night. That is why the delays we have experienced with our new format and digital editions have been especially painful to me.

As we get back on schedule, I apologize about the delays, but I'm also very excited about our future plans and the new things we will be able to bring to you. Despite the slow start, we remain very optimistic that these new ventures will add great breadth and vitality to *Marking Industry Magazine*, now in its 106th year of publication.

Best regards,



David



www.markingdevices.com

Your impressions matter

Now that we are more fully joining the digital age, we're curious what your impressions will be of the first digital edition of *Marking Industry Magazine*. We expect a few adjustments along the way, but fulfilling your needs is most important on our list of things to do.

We will send you more emails with updates on the latest in the industry. Feel free to pass along links to the website and digital editions to your colleagues. We are also on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. We know

electronic communication is easier, so we are looking forward to hearing more of your thoughts and ideas.

We don't know why we are still amazed when you tell us about the articles you liked or ideas you would like to see. After decades of writing to you and getting little direct feedback, we sometimes think we are like the tree falling in the empty forest. Then we come to an event and see you in person and discover that, not only do you really read what we write, but that you read it

in-depth. We are truly grateful for this. What we have discovered is that what we do really is important! Your participation is critical to our success.

Thanks again for the pleasure of serving this fine industry!

Finally, we have made some changes to simplify and improve how the Industry Indicator stats are presented. This is thanks to our new Associate Publisher, Tim Hachmeister! *MIM*

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