

October 2013

# MARKING INDUSTRY

*magazine*



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# MARKING INDUSTRY

magazine

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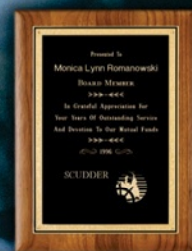


**Marking**





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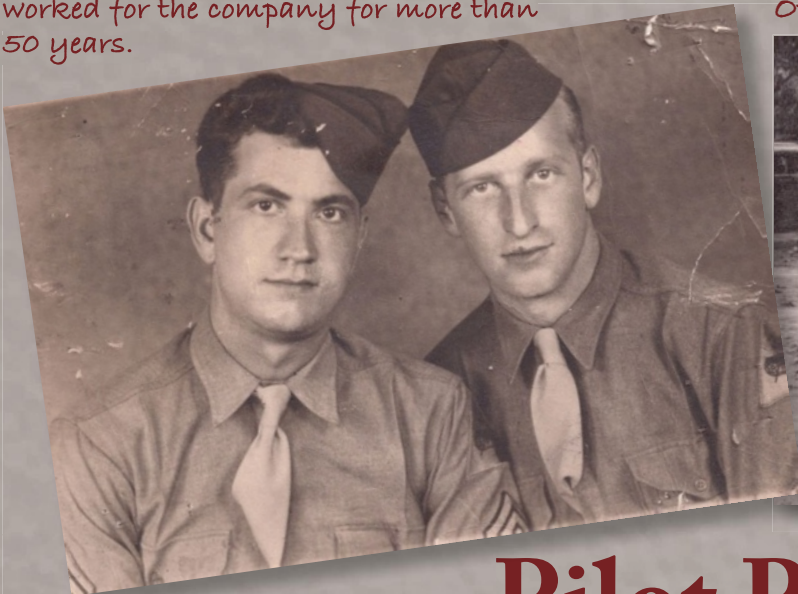


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Peter Mongone (on left), Pilot Products' first employee, who became foreman and worked for the company for more than 50 years.



A young Herbert Hebel on the far left, next to his mother, Irma, who holds Otto Hebel's arm.



# Pilot Products, Inc.: Setting course for the future

by Carolyn J. Hebel

*A closer look at a New York-based business  
that has provided natural rubber gums for the  
rubber stamp industry since 1949.*



A scene of classical art cast  
in rubber by Otto Hebel.



Otto and Herbert circa 1950.

## The partnership forms

The business known today as Pilot Products, Inc. was first established in 1947 by Otto Philip Hebel, Herman Apt and August Krakehl. Each of these men, all related by blood or marriage, immigrated to the United States from Germany in the early 1920s in the hope of achieving a better life in America.

The founding trio's first meeting was actually the byproduct of an unfortunate accident. As a young man, Herman Apt became disabled while travelling on a bus in New York City. The man sitting next to him was smoking, and somehow Herman's sleeves caught on fire. He ran off the bus into Central Park where a Good Samaritan saw Herman on fire, knocked him to the ground and doused



*Below: Herbert Hebel in the office—1996.*

*Right: Company Christmas parties, circa 1978 (top) and 1998 (bottom).*



the fire with dirt and his own jacket. The bandages applied to Herman's severely burned hands were too tight, and his fingers and thumbs became gangrenous. He lost them all beyond the first knuckle.

Herman then became a welder through a government-sponsored program to train the physically disabled to fill the places of men leaving to fight in World War II. He went to work at a rubber factory in College Point, New York where he met Otto Hebel, a self-taught rubber engineer. Herman eventually married Otto's sister-in-law. The third founder, August Krakehl, was Otto's cousin.

Soon after World War II ended, the rubber factory where Otto and Herman worked closed its doors, when its main products, parts for U.S. war planes, were no longer needed. Otto and Herman opted for an alternate form of final payment from the factory—they were paid with the company's rubber equipment and machines. From this arrangement, Pilot Products began its operations.

## **A new company with a unique name**

In October 1949, our trio of founding fathers cemented their commitment

to rubber and plastics production by incorporating Pilot Products, Inc. in the State of New York. Initially, Pilot Products manufactured plastic "biscuits" or brickettes for the record industry before records were made of vinyl. The brickettes were then pressed into a record shape via molds still housed in our Long Island City office. Later, Otto experimented with various products and finally decided to manufacture rubber stamp gum. He was especially partial to casting scenes from works of classical art in rubber.

The name of our company, Pilot Products, Inc., has been a source of confusion, judging from the phone calls we receive with inquiries about airplane parts. The founding fathers' decision to name the company "Pilot" was a historical reference to World War II. During the war, Americans saved their scrap rubber and other used household items, which were donated to the war effort to make parts for airplanes.

Americans also made model airplanes out of hard rubber, which they painted black. These model planes were used to train ground forces and American civilians in spotting enemy airplanes. They were also used by the Armed Forces to plot strategic war maneuvers. This is why our logo features a plane

piloted by a Mr. Magoo-like figure (actually, a caricature of Otto's son, Herbert).

## **Family business welcomes the next generation**

During the late 1970s, Herman Apt and Irma Hebel, Otto's widow, ran the company. At this juncture, my father Herbert S. Hebel came to work for his uncle and mother, extending the family business to the next generation. After serving in the Korean War, Herbert had received his degree in chemical engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts on the GI Bill.

Before joining Pilot, Herbert gained valuable experience in rubber and sealants while employed at Armstrong Rubber and Grumman Aerospace. In fact, he was the senior Chemical Engineer on Grumman's Tom Cat and Apollo programs with the U.S. Government. As a child, I remember seeing the lunar module on site in Old Bethpage, New York.

On November 12, 2011, my father lost his protracted battle with prostate cancer. At this point, the torch was passed from him to me. Currently, Pilot is a woman-owned and managed





Herbert Hebel on Lake Groton, Vermont, 2006.



Carolyn J. Hebel, current president and CEO of Pilot Products.

business in a male-dominated industry. As proof of our commitment to New York City and the local economy, Pilot has been at its present location since 1949.

### Staying true to tradition

We are “Made in the USA” and deeply committed to quality control that is “second to none,” with a proven record of loyalty to manufacturing in the United States. As such, Pilot strives to use domestically produced backing materials, such as Holland Cloth release paper, chemicals, additives and pigments, whenever possible. We do this to not only further the local and national economy but to maintain competitive pricing on raw materials and to minimize freight expenses. All of these steps help us to maintain extremely competitive pricing on our rubber stamp gum products.

While many others have walked away from the “old standards” due to the additional production time and cost, Pilot continues to maintain the

procedures established by its founding trio. We maintain these standards out of respect for the founders but also for our customers—to deliver the best and most convenient-to-use product! We do not subscribe to the philosophy, “If it isn’t broken, don’t fix it.” We are continually striving to produce the best products. That being said, the founders of Pilot developed an assortment of products and processes that have needed very little tweaking to maintain their relevance and are virtually the same as when Otto, Herman and August ran Pilot.

### Leaping ahead... and growing

When I joined Pilot Products in December 2000, the office still did all transactions with paper, pen and typewriters. In January 2001, Pilot purchased its first computer system and today has a networked computer system. In fact, the office staff now scans everything as we strive to become completely digital and improve our carbon imprint.

During the first quarter of 2012, Pilot’s “pilot” website was launched at [www.pilotproducts.com](http://www.pilotproducts.com), and we’ve begun receiving orders and inquiries regarding our All Natural Rubber Stamp Gum. At the request of our customers, we also began accepting credit cards at the start of this year.

Business keeps chugging along. In 2012, Pilot was thrilled to have bested 2011 by over 30 percent! In addition to being very price sensitive when making purchases of raw materials, we have actively attended trade shows and visited our regular customers. We continue to advertise and have attended numerous rubber stamp trade shows in Massachusetts, California, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Georgia and Nevada. And we’ve witnessed the positive results with the uptick in sales of our rubber stamp gum!

### New frontiers in the craft industry

In my experience, I’ve noticed a shift from the commercial applications



of rubber stamp gum to art stamp applications. While the commercial applications are primarily manufactured in the standard gray, pink and brick colors, the sky is the limit for the art stampers who appreciate trendy, fashionable colors. As a result, we are working to expand our standard color assortment offerings and to customize colors for specific customers. Since many of the art stamp customers are smaller than their commercial counterparts, we have decreased our minimum rubber order to better accommodate their needs. We have also initiated high-volume discounts for those customers able to guarantee staged deliveries and payments.

While commercial customers are turning away from 100 percent natural rubber, the art stampers, scrapbookers and crafters are embracing it. So much so, in fact, that the Craft and Hobby Association reported \$9.724 million in

sales for its fiscal year ending in June 2011. As technology's impact increases in every aspect of our daily lives, it seems that the crafting community seeks a more hands-on, personal approach which, in its simplest terms, includes natural rubber sap mounted on sanded maple blocks.

The explosion of the crafting industry—including art stamps and scrapbooking, to name a few—has led to an energized focus on new and expanded product lines for Pilot. Pilot now offers EZ Mount Cling Foam and has become its East Coast distributor. Based on customer inquiries and requests, we also offer Wood Mount Foam; both foam products are made in the USA. In addition to backing our rubber stamp gum with Holland Cloth release paper (which is included in the price), we also offer sheets of Holland Cloth for purchase. In the very near future, Pilot will be offering wood

mounts made in our NYC factory to art stamp customers.

We have expanded our assortment of products, as well as amended our business model, to better serve the needs of our rubber stamping customers. Essentially, we aim to work with each individual customer to meet his/her specific needs, regardless of whether that customer is a high-volume commercial rubber stamp company or a small mom-and-pop shop operating from a basement, home office or garage. *Mlm*

---

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# Making money with CorelDRAW®

## Heat-applied graphics—The resources

by Judy and John McDaniel, contributing writers



*In the last two installments, we looked at the products you can create, along with the equipment required and its cost. This time, we'll look at the training and other resources available to help you get started.*

### Resources for equipment

As we pointed out in Part 2, other than a computer and software, the equipment needed for this process consists of:

1. A heat press big enough to handle the largest product that you intend to create.
2. A vinyl cutter suitable to cut the materials you plan to use. It should be large enough to cut whatever raw stock you will be working with and have enough down-force to cut the weight of the heaviest material you'll be using.
3. Optional: a print and cut machine, capable of printing on the materials you plan to use and then cutting them.

We also pointed out that depending on your product mix, you may want both

a print and cut machine and a stand-alone vinyl cutter. Because of the investment required, though, the acquisition of a print and cut machine should probably follow the purchase of a vinyl cutter.

In short, that means almost everyone offering heat applied graphic products will have a heat press. However, since precut lettering and other heat applied items are available, not everyone will have a vinyl cutter or print and cut machine. Therefore, if you choose to enter this field, the logical first equipment acquisition is a heat press, assuming that you don't already have one. Your next acquisition would be a vinyl cutter and finally, a print and cut machine.

Whatever your decision, here are some companies that can help you get



started with heat applied graphics equipment and training:

### 1. Johnson Plastics

[www.johnsonplastics.com](http://www.johnsonplastics.com)

*Primarily a resource for heat presses for this process.*

Johnson Plastics is a national distributor of sublimation, engraving and sign supplies including: Unisub materials, AcryliPrint, Geo. Knight heat presses, Sawgrass inks, Rhinocoat mugs, Rowmark, IPI, and Scott engraving material, JRS frames, magnetic sheeting and tape, findings and other accessories.

### 2. Stahls ID Direct™

[www.stahls.com](http://www.stahls.com)

*Stahls is a resource for everything required for heat applied graphic products.*

Stahls ID Direct™ specializes in the development, manufacturing and distribution of heat printing technologies.

### 3. Imprintables Warehouse

[www.imprintableswarehouse.com](http://www.imprintableswarehouse.com)

Imprintables Warehouse is a full-service distributor of equipment and supplies to create a wide range of heat-applied graphics, including digital inkjet and laser transfers, digital cutters, digital cutting software, heat-applied materials, sign materials and heat presses.

### 4. Condé Systems Inc.

[www.conde.com](http://www.conde.com)

*Primarily a resource for heat presses for this process.*

Condé Systems is a leader in the digital transfer market and offers a range of heat press products.

### 5. ACDRP, The Association of CorelDRAW Professionals

The world's only association for CorelDRAW users, specializing in

publications and training that provide help with graphics and entrepreneurial growth. One of the many services ACDRP provides is online CorelDRAW training videos for their members at [www.coreldrawhelp.com](http://www.coreldrawhelp.com) and [www.coreldrawpro.com](http://www.coreldrawpro.com).

For information on additional companies that provide blank products, equipment, supplies and training services to the industry, check out the Graphic Products Guide (GPG) maintained by ACDRP at <http://acdrp.org/QuickSource.asp>. If you wish to outsource product production, refer to the Graphic Services Guide (GSG) maintained by ACDRP at <http://acdrp.org/QuickFill.Asp>. (Note: If you offer blank products, equipment, supplies and training services for the industry and would like to be listed in either of the guides, contact the association via email at [editor@coreldrawhelp.com](mailto:editor@coreldrawhelp.com).)

## Conclusion

The process of heat applied graphics shares some equipment requirements and skill sets with other processes. They include image transfers and sublimation, and depending upon the level of commitment you make to equipment acquisition, perhaps sign making and even embroidery.

If you are already involved in any of these processes, you may wish to add heat applied graphics to your mix. If you choose to start a business based on offering heat applied graphics as a core component, then be sure to consider the other business opportunities that are available with the same equipment and skills.

In closing, one final point: the main products produced with heat applied graphics consist of garments and other

fabric items. Keep in mind that this may mean that you'll need to find storage and display facilities available for garments, if you are not already involved in similar product offerings. All of that said, heat applied graphics is one of the least expensive processes to begin a new business or to add to an existing one. Mlm

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**ABOUT THE AUTHORS:** *John and Judy McDaniel are owners of CorelDRAW® Help, Inc. 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](http://www.CorelDRAWhelp.com). You may contact them via email at [mail@CorelDRAWhelp.com](mailto:mail@CorelDRAWhelp.com).*





U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

# ICE and stamp makers: Partnering to fight document and benefit fraud

*In 2010, ICE launched Operation Genesis, a program which focuses on identifying suspicious purchases of stamps and printing equipment that could be used to manufacture identity documents.*

In August 2011, a Florida man places an order for a rubber stamp. A diligent employee of the stamp company finds something suspicious about the order. Thanks to outreach conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) under a program known as Operation Genesis, that employee knows whom to call. After HSI special agents and analysts review the order, they can tell right away that the man is attempting to procure a fraudulent ADIT stamp. An ADIT stamp is an official U.S. government stamp that is added to an individual's passport as proof of "temporary" permanent residence while the individual awaits his or her plastic "green card." Such a stamp allows the holder to travel freely in and out of the United States and to reside and work anywhere in the United States. It can also be used as an identity document for a state driver's license or ID card and may be used to gain access to



critical infrastructure such as airports and government buildings.

In 2012, the man who ordered the stamp pleaded guilty to various criminal charges, including possession of a document-making implement and misrepresenting himself to be a U.S. citizen on a voter's registration application. He was sentenced to serve federal jail time and later deported from the United States. Without the

proactive help of the stamp company, the man could have used that fraudulent stamp to remain illegally in the United States undetected. He could have sold stamps to other illegal aliens seeking to legitimize their status through fraud, including criminals or others seeking to harm the United States.

Combatting immigration document and benefit fraud is one of the missions of HSI, the largest investigative body within the Department of Homeland Security, and the second largest investigative agency in the federal government. In

2010, ICE launched Operation Genesis, a program which focuses on identifying suspicious purchases of stamps and printing equipment that could be used to manufacture identity documents. By sharing information with HSI, printing and marking device companies help develop investigative leads which could lead to criminal convictions, and intelligence leads that expose the practices of organized document fraud rings and individuals who are attempting to perpetrate fraud.

Operation Genesis is based on Project Genesis, which was launched in 2008 by the London Metropolitan Police Service (MET). Project Genesis is centered on an ongoing partnership with the printing equipment industry in order to prevent specialized machinery from getting into the hands of criminals involved in making false identity documents. HSI established a similar program, Operation Genesis, in 2010, and in July 2011, expanded it to include outreach to the stamp making industry, which had been part of a program called Operation Bogus, administered by ICE's Forensic Laboratory since 1988. Operation Bogus referrals are now included in the Genesis program and administered by HSI's Identity and Benefit Fraud Unit.

Since the inception of Operation Genesis, fraudulent requests referred to HSI have included orders to produce:

- a Mexican immigration stamp;
- Peruvian immigration stamps;
- Cuban government stamps;
- Indonesian police stamps;
- an Iraqi medical stamp;
- Israeli immigration stamps; and
- drivers' license overlays for two U.S. states.

The importance of cooperation with the stamp making and printing industries cannot be overstated. Had employees in these companies not

recognized the potential use of these items and stopped them from being produced, the impact could have been far-reaching. The use of fraudulently obtained or altered passports, visas and entry and exit stamps by members of terrorist organizations has been well documented as a means of legitimizing their travel and avoiding detection as they move across borders.

Employees in the marking device and printing industries are uniquely positioned to assist in the prevention and investigation of document fraud. Industry employees are experts who can recognize orders of items that may be used to perpetrate fraud and see that those orders are brought to the attention of the Department of Homeland Security. Some examples of "red flags" that may indicate that an order may be suspicious are: an order for a stamp or embosser bearing a U.S. government seal when that stamp or embosser is being shipped to a non-governmental address, or an expensive, high-tech printer being shipped to a private residence. Requests for the production of foreign government stamps being shipped to residences may also be indicators of fraud. Other suspicious indicators are:

- cash purchases or payment from a non-business account;
- no company name/lack of business stationery associated with the order;
- orders purporting to be from government sources coming from private email addresses;
- a customer's address and phone number do not correspond;
- no contract for repairs/service; and/or
- suspicious behavior displayed by the customer.

Marking device and printing industry employees who encounter orders of

concern may contact HSI's Identity and Benefit Fraud Unit (IBFU) for assistance directly by email at **IBFU-ICE-HQ@ice.dhs.gov** or by phone at the ICE tip line, **1-866-DHS-2ICE**. All leads sent to HSI are carefully reviewed to determine the potential purpose of questionable rubber stamp(s) and whether a formal investigation is warranted. HSI has the capability to translate foreign stamps where needed.

In 2012, HSI streamlined the process for signing up as an industry partner with Operation Genesis. Partners sign an agreement committing to careful review of new orders for suspicious requests based on criteria provided by HSI. Companies also agree to refer suspicious orders to HSI and retain records of transactions with all domestic and international customers. In addition, partners attend a one-time presentation on the ICE Mutual Agreement between Government and Employers (IMAGE). IMAGE is a partnership initiative between the federal government and private sector employers designed to foster cooperative relationships and strengthen overall hiring practices. The former requirements of enrolling in E-Verify and the Social Security Number Verification Service (SSNVS) have been removed.

Partner companies are authorized to display an ICE banner indicating cooperation with law enforcement as a means to promote their involvement in combatting fraud and deterring orders which may be fraudulent. *M*

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*For more information on Operation Genesis, or to request a partnership with HSI, contact the Identity and Benefit Fraud Unit at **ibfu-ice-hq@ice.dhs.gov**.*

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THE TALE OF  
*The Ant &  
The Grasshopper*



**MAIN OFFICE**  
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In his stamp shop one Fall day, the Grasshopper was waiting for his phone to ring, when his friend the Ant passed by, carrying a case of Classic Line Daters from Consolidated Marking.

“Why not come in my shop and chat with me,” said the Grasshopper, “instead of worrying about daters?”

“I am getting my dater supply ready for the end of the year,” said the Ant, “and recommend you to do the same.”

“Why bother with that?” said the Grasshopper; “We have got plenty of daters at present.” But the Ant went on his way and continued his inventory planning.

When December came the Grasshopper had no 2014 daters, dater assemblies, or replacement pads and found he was losing the bulk of his business—while he saw the Ant supplying his customers with 2014 daters every day from the inventory he had collected from Consolidated Marking in the Fall. Then the Grasshopper knew: ***It is best to prepare for dater season.***

***Be smart like the Ant  
Prepare for dater season with  
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## STAMP SHOP WEB™: Step by Step

# How to change settings in your website—Part 4

by Becky Skelley

*This month, we continue our journey through the Settings Tab with the Payment section, Product Reviews section and Returns section server settings and orders.*

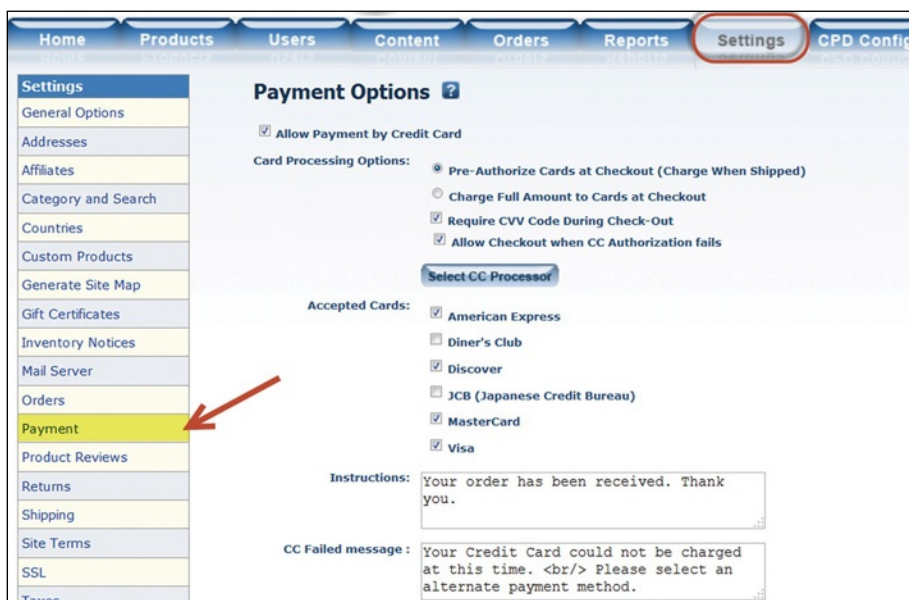
As you may know, Stamp Shop Web is a complete shopping cart system that allows automatic payment for your customers. Set up of automatic payment can be done by following a few simple steps, and in no time, you will be receiving paid orders from your customers. Here at Connectweb Technologies, Inc., we strive to provide our customers with variety. The depth of the *Settings* Tab is proof of that. With all the available options, every SSW customer can set up a unique experience for their customers' payment, product review and return experience.

### Steps to Follow

#### Payment

To begin, as with all Stamp Shop Web lessons, first sign in to the admin area of your Stamp Shop Web site. Once you are logged in, click the *Settings* Tab. Next click the *Payment Options* menu link located on the far left of the

**Picture 1:** The Settings Tab shown with Payment Options menu link highlighted.



window (see Picture 1). The *Payment Options* section contains the most important information regarding your site's setup and the settings that will determine how your customers will check out.

The *Payment Options* are divided into subsections in which you can select the options to be provided to your customers (see Pictures 2A and 2B). The first subsection contains all settings related to payment by Credit Card. Once you

**Pictures 2A and 2B:** The Payment Options menu with each payment subsection highlighted.

**Picture 3:** A listing of all Credit Card Processors available within SSW. Default offline/manual option and edit link highlighted.

check the box to allow payment by Credit Card, you must click the button, *Select CC Processor*, to set up your Credit Card Processor. Within the *Credit Card Processors* screen, there is a list of pre-approved processors that work with Stamp Shop Web (see Picture 3).

As a default, when you purchase Stamp Shop Web, the option *Offline/Manual Credit Card Processor* is chosen. This option allows you to accept payment by Credit Card. However, the card is not charged until you manually process the payment (the way you would process non-web charges).

To set up a processor, click the *Edit* button (see Picture 3 for highlighted example). Next you will see the *Edit Credit Card Processor* screen (Picture 4) where you can enter the processor's information. Once the information has been entered, click the *Save Settings* button. Most processors permit the use of a test URL; this feature allows you to place test orders on your site. Next click the *Continue>>* button to return to the *Payment Options* screen.

**Picture 4:** Edit CC Processor Screen with editing the Authorize.Net Processor.



**Picture 5:** Credit Card options with editable instructions fields highlighted.

**Picture 6:** Users Tab with edited user with Purchase Order option selected.

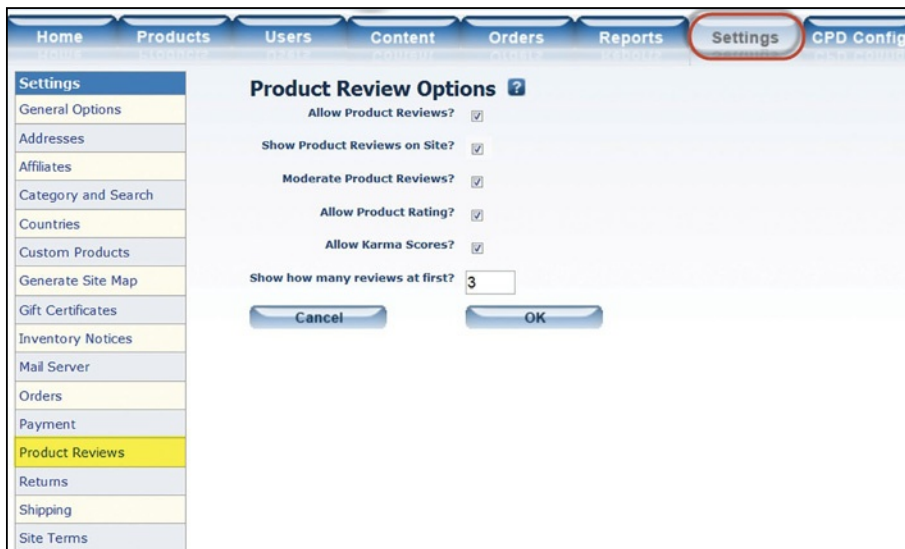
Moving back to the *Payment Options* screen, below the *Select CC Processor* button, you may set which credit cards will be accepted (Picture 5). Check the boxes next to the cards that you will accept. You may type instructions below this section. As a default, there are instructions to the customer already typed for you; however, feel free to customize the text. Below this section is the *CC Failed* message. This box contains the text that your customer will see when his or her credit card fails to be charged. This text can also be customized; click inside the box to edit.

The next subsection deals with payment by PayPal. If you check the box to allow payment by PayPal during the checkout process, your customers will temporarily leave your site to sign in to their PayPal accounts on PayPal's website. There they will pay for their transactions and return back to your site to complete the order. Within this subsection, you will need to enter your PayPal username.

The next subsection, *Allow Payment by PayPal Express*, relates to the PayPal processor. To use this feature, you must have an account set up with PayPal Express. This option differs from PayPal because it is simply the processor portion. Your customers will not leave your Stamp Shop Web site during the checkout process.

The *Allow Payment by Purchase Order* subsection contains all options regarding payment by purchase order. A fairly new feature for this option lets you limit the use of purchase orders only to selected customers. When you check the box to limit the use, you must go to the *Users* Tab and edit each user that you will permit to check out with a purchase order (Picture 6).

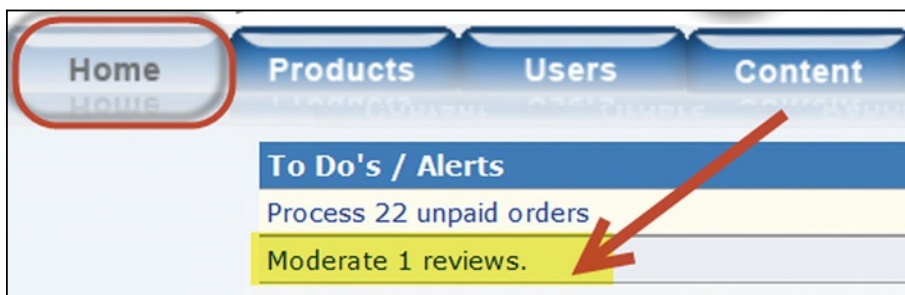
**Picture 7:** Product Reviews link within the Settings Tab.



**Picture 8:** Product Reviews on store side and Write a Review link.



**Picture 9:** Admin home area with Moderate Reviews link and review screen.



The next few subsections, *Allow Payment by Telephone, Fax, Email* or *by Check* are pretty straightforward. However, you may edit the description and instructions fields for each section, as well as the *Telephone, Fax, Email* and *Check* words. Each word may be altered

by utilizing the Site Term feature. For instance, you may want to *Allow Payment by Money Order*. To make this change, you would edit the Site Term (Check) and change it to Money Order. We will discuss Site Terms in greater detail in a future installment. Once you

have completed the set up of your Payment Options, scroll to the bottom of the screen and click the Save Changes button.

## Product Review

Did you know that you can allow your customers to write reviews of all the products on your website? Let's continue our review of the *Settings* Tab with an explanation of the *Product Reviews* option. On the far left of the screen, click the *Product Reviews* link (Picture 7). Once on the *Product Review Option* screen, you will see a list of options that you can select to make them active on your site. If you will allow product reviews to be written, you can also set them to appear at the bottom of the product detail page (Picture 8). To write a review, a customer simply clicks the link, *Write a Review*, which appears directly underneath the *Add to Cart* button on the product detail page.

Furthermore, you can create a setting so that the reviews will be moderated. If you choose to moderate the reviews, customers will be able to write reviews and submit them. Then you will see a *Moderate Review* link on the *Home* Tab of your admin area (Picture 9) where you can read each review and approve, edit or delete it. Once you approve the review, it will appear at the bottom of the product detail page.

The *Allow Product Rating* option provides customers with a drop down menu on the review screen. They may choose to assign from one to five stars to their reviews. The *Allow Karma Score* provides the customer with an option to set the Karma Score. The last option in this section allows you to set the number of customer reviews that will appear per product. If you have made any changes within this section, be sure to click the *OK* button located at the bottom of the screen.



**Picture 10:** Returns menu option within Settings Tab.

The screenshot shows the 'Settings' tab selected in the top navigation bar. On the left, a sidebar lists various settings categories: General Options, Addresses, Affiliates, Category and Search, Countries, Custom Products, Generate Site Map, Gift Certificates, Inventory Notices, Mail Server, Orders, Payment, Product Reviews, **Returns** (highlighted in yellow), Shipping, and Site Terms. The main content area displays the 'Return Request Form Settings' with the following options:

- Enable Return Form:** ☒ (appears under customer service area)
- Email return request to:**
- Buttons:** Cancel, OK

**Picture 11:** Return Form on the store side with link highlighted.

The screenshot shows the 'Return Request Form' on the store side. On the left, the 'Customer Service' menu has 'Return Requests' highlighted with a red circle and an arrow pointing to it. The main content area shows the form with the following sections:

- Home > Return Request Form**
- Return Request Form**
- To return an item please fill out this form completely.
- Original Order Information**
  - Order Number:
  - Order Date:
  - Ship To Name:
  - Your Name:
  - Your Email Address:
  - Your Phone Number:
  - Ship To Postal Code:
- Item to be Returned**
  - Item Number:
  - Item Description:
- Reason for Return**
  - ☒ I changed my mind; did not like
  - ☐ I ordered the wrong item
  - ☐ The item was damaged but NOT due to shipping
  - ☐ The item was damaged during shipping
  - ☐ I received the wrong item; incorrect item was shipped
  - ☐ Other... Please describe in the comment box below
- Would You Like a Replacement?**
  - ☒ Yes
  - ☐ No

## Returns

As with all stores, there must be a plan in place for when a customer would like to return a purchased item. Within Stamp Shop Web's *Settings* Tab, the *Returns* section is just that place. Located directly beneath the *Product Reviews* menu option is the *Returns* menu option (Picture 10). Using the *Email return request to* option, you can enter the email address of the person who would receive the return request forms.

Click the link to see the *Return Request Form Settings*. Here you can enable the return form, which allows customers to see the form when signed into their accounts (Picture 11). This form contains their original order information, information on the item to be returned and the reason for the return.

That concludes our review of the *Payment Options*, *Product Reviews* and *Returns* sections within the *Settings* Tab. As you may have guessed, we are chipping away at the *Settings* Tab month by month to fully divulge its vast benefits to you, the Stamp Shop Web user. Stay tuned for next month's article when we continue our review of the *Settings* Tab with a complete look at the *Shipping* section and much more! *Mmm*

**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. In addition to design, she also trains and assists customers on the vast product line Connectweb offers. For further help, call Becky at 800/556-9932 or email her at becky@cwebtechnologies.com.*



# Cloud computing—Part 3

# The next computer revolution

by John McDaniel, contributing writer

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*Cloud computing is the next big ongoing movement within the computer revolution. What we'll explore in this series is how cloud computing will impact our personal lives and the way we do business.*

To review, cloud computing—in other words, distributed computing—is really nothing new. Distributed computing has been a part of the computer revolution from the beginning. It has been used in universities, government agencies and large businesses for some time.

What's new is that distributed computing is becoming available through the Internet to everyone. Basically, it's computer power delivered as a utility to our homes and businesses, similar to the way in which electricity is supplied.

In the first article, we discussed the growth of the Internet, which is a core requirement. The computer power of the Internet is the first basic element necessary to make a computer utility service a possibility. Then we explored another key element, the delivery system, and how the infrastructure has grown to accommodate a computer utility service.

In this article, we will look at computer hardware and its contribution to computing services delivered as a utility. In the final article, we will explore

what's available now via the cloud and what we might expect in the future.

### Computer hardware— a little history

Coupled with network growth, there have been significant improvements in computer hardware and software, along with continuing pressures for portability.

There is a vast—and growing—number of Internet access points: Wi-Fi, cellular, DSL, cable and even satellite. This has fueled a demand for portable devices. There is, and continues to be, an expansion in hardware miniaturization in both computers and cellphones.

The computer revolution started in the early 1960s with computers replacing tabulating machines. Medium- to large-sized businesses, universities and government agencies were the primary customers. At that time, they were the only ones that could afford them. By the way, that was a computer utility service delivered over limited networks—that is, cloud computing. There were large mainframe computers

serving multiple clients via dedicated terminals. This model still exists in medium- to large-sized organizations.

By the end of the 1960s and into the 1970s, mini-computers and some of the first desktop PCs began to appear. This made computer power available to smaller businesses. Computer hobbyists began purchasing some of these early systems, leading to the birth of the home computer market.

During the 1980s and 1990s, there was an explosion in the desktop PC market. This made computing affordable for home use. At the same time in the business world, there was a push for portable computers to serve salespeople and other business travelers. The first portables were lug-able desktops and then came battery power.

### A little more history about computer hardware

Until the last few years, the main computer for small business and home offices has been the desktop system. In most cases, mobile computers were



much less powerful and much more expensive.

That has changed. Now, in fact, some smartphones have more computing power than older desktop computers. Computer chips have become more powerful, and portable desktop replacements are now common. In most cases, these mobile computers don't cost any more than their desktop counterparts, and they add the convenience of portability—work at the office, at home or while traveling.

The next generation of computing devices is upon us; it's the tablet computer. It's a product that fits in between the smartphone and the laptop computer. Tablet computers rely on Internet and/or cell system connectivity and off-device storage, otherwise referred to as cloud-storage or cloud-computing. Like smartphones, tablets allow users to interface via touch. In fact, until recently, most tablets did not offer a keyboard option. That is also changing.

Originally, tablets were designed as consumption devices for the purpose of selling products and services. In other words, tablets were originally designed as a way to sell e-books, games, music and movies—essentially, iPods on steroids; enter the iPhone and then the iPad. As consumption devices, tablets didn't need anything more than an on-screen keyboard for data entry—something adequate to enter your account number and credit card information so that you could spend painlessly (until the bill arrived for your child's “needs”).

The one thing that all of these consumption devices require is content providers. Enter Apple, which doesn't like sharing; Google, which wants to unseat Microsoft; Amazon, which wants to become retailer to the world; and

now, the elephant in the room, Microsoft, which is feeling the pinch from declining PC sales.

That said, not wanting to be a “me too,” Microsoft, with the release of Windows 8, has raised the bar in the world of tablets. For the first time, the focus is changing from consumption to production for tablets. Windows 8 provides a touchscreen interface to an OS that can run all your current applications (well, most of them). So that means keyboards and mice are back, along with the new touch interface.

In addition to desktop and laptop computers, cellphones and tablets, there are an increasing number of other devices available now that have Internet access built in. We now have smart TVs that can connect to the Internet via Wi-Fi. Television manufacturers are including applications (apps, for short) to access the growing number of online content providers.

For those of us with older TVs (five years and older), there are other devices available that will turn our dumb TVs into smart ones. Almost every new DVD and Blu-ray player has the ability to connect to the Internet for content. Dedicated gaming consoles—Xbox, PlayStation, and Nintendo—all have built-in Internet access for games, movies and other content.

Essentially, all of these devices have some built-in computing power and memory designed for streaming content from the Internet. Some even have full-scale built-in Internet browsers. And just like computers, they run software which is updated by the manufacturer from time to time.

Automobiles are yet another product that is becoming Internet savvy. Many new cars can connect to the Internet

through your cellphone. Some have Wi-Fi capabilities. They can provide GPS guidance, streaming music and other services from the Internet.

## Conclusion

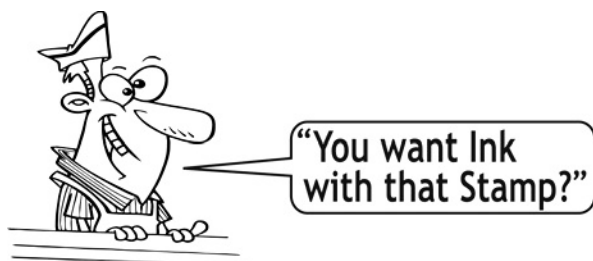
The development of smaller, more powerful computers has led to an array of devices capable of accessing the Internet. Miniaturization has allowed manufacturers to build computer capabilities into a variety of devices. The driving force continues to be content available on the Web. In the final article in the series, we will explore services that are available now and what might be coming to a device near you soon.

Next time, we'll look at computer power (at our end) and consider how all of this will continue to impact the way we do business. *Mmm*

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** *John McDaniel, along with his wife Judy, are owners of CorelDRAW® Help, Inc. They started in the personalization business in 1989 with CorelDRAW version 1.0. 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 and for making sandblast masks, screen-printing screens, pad-printing plates, signs, banners, sales literature and flyers. In essence, they have over 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](http://www.CorelDRAWhelp.com). You may contact them via email at [mail@CorelDRAWhelp.com](mailto:mail@CorelDRAWhelp.com).*

## Jackson Marking Products offers 10cc ink bottles for add-on sales



Stamp makers can easily add a small bottle of refill ink to every self-inking stamp and stamp pad sale. Small quantity and low-cost refill inks are now offered by Jackson Marking Products. 10cc (1/3 ounce) bottles are supplied in black, blue and red. This is a high quality, full-bodied re-inking solution (Specialty #8084) made for all self-inking stamps, plus standard ink pads. The dropper tip bottle makes application clean and simple, and the cap seals securely to minimize mess. It makes a great add-on sale: "You want ink with that...?" The ink is sold in boxes containing 24 bottles. For complete details, visit [www.10ccInk.com](http://www.10ccInk.com).

*For more information, contact Jackson Marking Products; 9105 N. Rainbow Lane, Mt. Vernon, Illinois 62864; 800/782-6722 or 618/242-1334; Fax: 800/782-6732 or 618/242-7732; Email: [jmp@rubber-stamp.com](mailto:jmp@rubber-stamp.com); Web: <http://RubberStampMaterials.com>.*

## Private label programs for stamping ink products available from Stewart Superior

Stewart Superior offers the marking device industry a full line of high-quality U.S.-made industrial inks and stamp pads for all stamping needs. They manufacture and stock hundreds of colors for virtually all industrial and craft stamping applications. To go along with their stock product line, Stewart provides custom color matching and special ink formulations made daily from their U.S. lab. To help its customers market their company name, Stewart will private label any ink and stamp pad products. The company takes pride in its long history of working together with customers to develop ink products to expand the stamping industry.

*For more information, contact Stewart Superior Corp.; 800/558-2875; Fax: 510/346-9822; Email: [Sales@stewartsuperior.com](mailto:Sales@stewartsuperior.com); Web: [www.stewartsuperior.com](http://www.stewartsuperior.com).*

The advertisement for TRAXX printer features a large image of Mount Rushmore at the top. Below the image, the text "a world of impressions" is written in a cursive font. The TRAXX logo is prominently displayed, with the word "printer" underneath it. A smaller image of the TRAXX printer is shown on the left. To the right of the printer, a text box describes the product. At the bottom, the company name "TRAXX USA" is listed along with their address, phone number, and website. A QR code is also present in the bottom right corner.

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printer

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Tel. (847) 924-2520  
[geneg@traxxusa.com](mailto:geneg@traxxusa.com)

[www.traxxusa.com](http://www.traxxusa.com)



## JDS now carrying CerMark™ and TherMark™ products

JDS announces that it now offers CerMark™ and TherMark™ products for making black marks on uncoated metal using laser engraving. JDS will carry the darkening agents in aerosol spray, liquid, paste and tape forms and in various sizes. There are products specifically for darkening on uncoated metals, such as stainless steel; smooth or polished metals, such as brass and anodized aluminum; and glass or ceramics. With all of these new product options, JDS truly is your one stop shop for laser engraving!

*For more information, visit the JDS website at [www.jdsindustries.com](http://www.jdsindustries.com). See the products demonstrated at their YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/JDSINDUSTRIES>.*



## Direct Color Systems announces further advancements in ADA-compliant/Braille sign printing

DCS is humbled by the enthusiastic response to its new patent-pending ADA-compliant Braille sign printing\* capability. In mid-September, the company will release a new printer package that offers two new options for ADA printing with the Direct Jet 1024UVHS UV LED inkjet printer:

- 1. Flat-Top Printing Option**—Print flat-top text to more closely match the look of existing lasered/engraved signage. Please note that flat-top printing requires more passes than round-top printing, resulting in longer throughput times.
- 2. Clear Braille Dots**—Print clear Braille dots, more closely matching the look of the insertion of glass beads. This also allows you to see the background of the sign through the dots.

Additionally, DCS announces that it has achieved improved throughput times and reduced the ink costs for its existing ADA print options. Contact them for more information about ADA printing requirements and example sign-making metrics. This new printing capability will be on

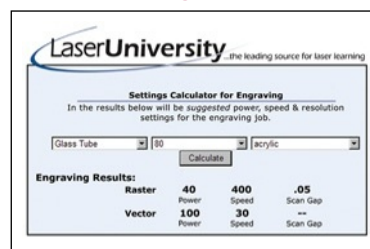
display at all upcoming DCS regional Technology Showcases and trade show appearances, which are listed on its website.

*For more information, visit [www.directcolorsystems.com](http://www.directcolorsystems.com). Direct Color Systems, 99 Hammer Mill Road, Rocky Hill, CT USA 06067; 800/693-6376; 860/829-2244; Email: [info@directcolorsystems.com](mailto:info@directcolorsystems.com).*

\* While the components of the ADA signage, produced on Direct Jet 1024UVHS printers, have tested to be in compliance with federal USA ADA signage guidelines outlined in the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (Department of Justice—September 15, 2010—[www.ADA.gov](http://www.ADA.gov)), it is the responsibility of the signage manufacturer to ensure compliance with the governing local, state and federal authorities. All substrates should be tested for image receptivity, adhesion and durability, with final acceptance and suitability determined by the customer.

## LaserU adds Glass Tube settings

LaserU announces another addition to its Settings Calculator. They have updated the calculator to include seven wattages of laser settings (40 watts–150 watts) for Glass Tube



laser systems. The calculator takes all the guess work out of engraving settings: select Glass Tube, the wattage, the substrate and the calculator gives the results. LaserU is a cost-effective way to learn laser engraving at your own pace, on your own time, in your own comfortable environment.

*For more information about the free 7-Day trial, visit [www.laseru.com](http://www.laseru.com).*

## Solid Surface Sheets from LaserBits



Solid Surface Sheets are ideal for both cutting and engraving with a laser. The sheets are similar in nature to other solid surface materials offered by Corian®, Wilson Art® and Avonite®. The engraving creates a white color with a speckled finish. These

sheets can be fabricated into cutting boards, key chains, plaque plates, jewelry, coasters and many other products that require durability and a stone-like look.

*Visit [www.laserbits.com](http://www.laserbits.com) for more information.*

## Epilog Laser launches new Fusion 40 laser system with 40" x 28" engraving table

Epilog Laser, a leading producer of CO<sub>2</sub> and fiber laser engraving, cutting and marking systems, announces the addition of the Fusion 40 to the company's CO<sub>2</sub> laser product line.

With a 40" x 28" (1016 x 711 mm) engraving table, the Fusion 40 offers laser operators a generous engraving table and wattage configurations up to 120. The design of the Fusion 40 was created to maximize engraving space, while maintaining the physical footprint of comparable laser systems with a smaller bed.

"The performance and features of the original Fusion 32 are so popular with customers, we decided to create a bigger system that offers users the same amazing results and benefits and will allow them to increase throughput and production volumes," says Mike Dean, vice president of sales and marketing for Epilog Laser. "What's even better is that we're offering this impressive 40" x 28" table in the same physical framework as other systems with smaller 36" x 24" beds, so operators are getting more room for engraving and cutting without taking up any extra space in their shops."



The Fusion 40 includes the same features as its predecessor, the Fusion 32, including the redesigned motion control

system that allows for higher speed engraving and amazingly precise cutting quality. Other features of the Fusion 40 include:

- Intuitive joystick control that allows operators to move the table, fire the laser directly and more.
- Comprehensive job management software that includes job-time estimator.
- Industrial DC servo motors for lightning fast speeds.
- Unparalleled chassis strength for increased durability and longevity.
- Drop-down front door for easy-access and convenient part loading.

For more information on the Fusion or FiberMark Fusion, visit [epiloglaser.com/fusion\\_40.htm](http://epiloglaser.com/fusion_40.htm). MIM

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1-3 boxes	\$10.00
4-9 boxes	8.00
10-19 boxes	7.00
20-49 boxes	6.00
50+ boxes	5.00
Cost per box of 24 bottles	



**www.10ccInk.com**



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# INDUSTRY INDICATOR

by David Hachmeister

## August angst

Sales of stamps rose against last month by more than 15 percent. Other Products rose more than three percent. That's the good news.

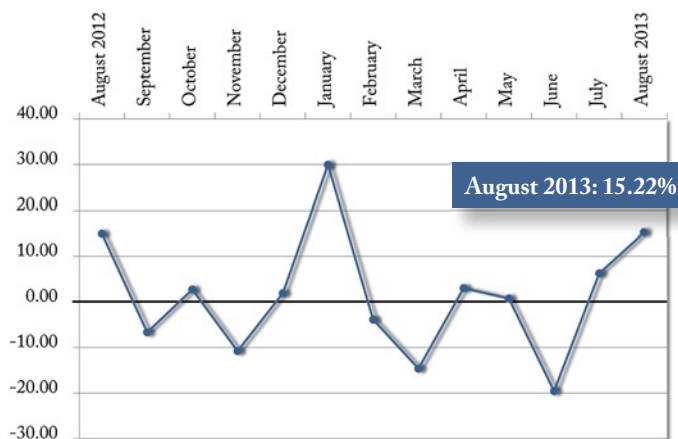
Stamp sales against August of last year fell by about five percent. Other products fell by almost 16 percent. The net was that total sales fell against last August by about 12 percent. Let's hope things heat up a little in September.

Despite a rough summer, the up months and down months are equal at eight. Keep on stamping! *MIM*

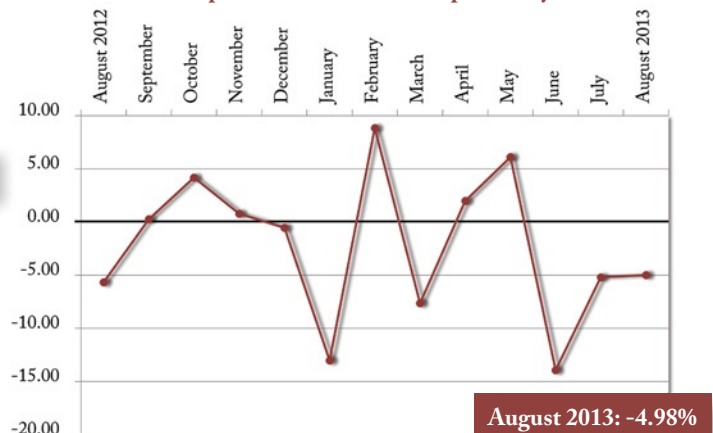
**Editor's note:** In the September 2013 MIM, the Other Products chart included incorrect data. We apologize for the error. This month's chart reflects the correct information.

## Stamps only

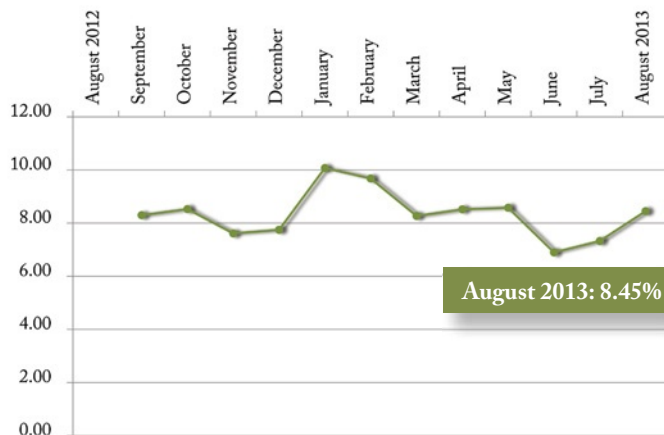
Monthly Sales—Gain/Loss Percentage



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

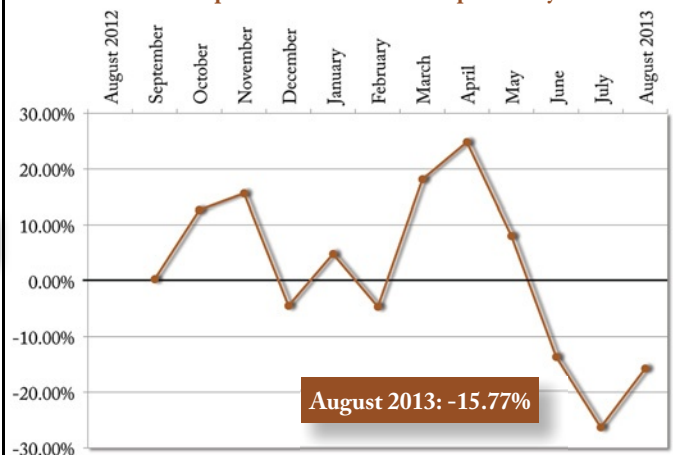


Percent of Annual Sales by Month (illustrating seasonality)



## Other products

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



Visit [www.markingdevices.com](http://www.markingdevices.com) today for the latest news and industry statistics!

by David Hachmeister



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## Only the \_\_\_\_\_ survive

If you filled in the blank with “strong,” we politely disagree. We are amused when people say only the strong survive. This is wrong. Only the adaptable survive. The strong are blown away by some inevitably stronger storm of life or they are felled by a microscopic virus or a tiny wound to the heel, like Achilles (more on ancient Greece later!). The adaptable find a hiding place from the breeze or bend with it; they have biological resistance to more microbes; and generally, they have an additional backup plan or two, as well. We are amazed at some of the adaptations that people have made all around the world to keep their stamp businesses going. On the production side, some have created their own shims, routing procedures or even a way to cure photopolymer in direct sunlight! They have learned to love the Internet.

Seldom will you see Greek philosophy majors, heating and air conditioning repair guys and rubber stamps in the same editorial, but here we go.

After the coincidence of three different air conditioning breakdowns in one day, we got to talking to our repair guy. It turns out that, for a short time, he was a Greek philosophy major in college. After a few twists and turns, he ended up in his current business and has continued there for the last several decades. He had taken a very unexpected path

but because he was open to new ideas, he had a very successful career.

For this very traditional industry, change is not always welcome. We aren't going to “should” ourselves to death here but rather ask you to consider change as a consistent pattern of an ongoing life—not as a threat.

So here is another change and adaptation idea: stamp makers need to exhibit at local shows. We often talk about the benefits of attending your industry trade show but seldom about the benefits of *exhibiting* at a show. There are many shows which highlight local businesses that may be of great help to you. We were just on the phone with a reader who got one order well into five figures from a show in which he participated. Wow! Is there an investment and risk involved? Of course, but that is a part of why we go into business for ourselves—the thrill of having something you make or do be of tremendous value to someone else!

Before we leave the trade show business, be sure to attend the IMIA/NBM show in sunny Los Angeles from January 9–11, as well as the ARA show from November 1–2, right here near Chicago's O'Hare airport, not 20 minutes from our office. Mlm

*From the September 2013 ZSP newsletter, published by ZSP Manufacturing, Inc., Pomona, California*

## ZSP thwarts immigration scam

Recently a man came to ZSP saying he was an official at the Mexican Consulate in Los Angeles. He had an extensive list of rubber stamps he needed. They all looked very official. He wanted one set in Spanish and one set in English. He even had identification that said he was an assistant to an assistant of some big wig.

It seemed odd the consulate would show up at our modest establishment, but we took the order, which was quite substantial. Something just felt fishy. We called the number he left to verify the order, but we could only leave a message. There was no number in the phone book so we called our local congressman's office to see if they had the number. We explained the situation to them and they said they'd call back.

About an hour later, Homeland Security and the FBI show up. Not an everyday occurrence around here. They scoured the order and pronounced it “very suspicious” and confiscated it and also took the partial payment we received. Bummer, but the check was probably phony anyway. We were instructed to call them if the man showed up but they figured he wouldn't because our call to his number probably tipped him off. They were right—we never heard from the “customer” again.

So, the next time someone says, “It's just a rubber stamp,” think again.

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# TRADE SERVICE

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## CLASSIFIED

Rates are \$40 for every 25 words and \$25 additional for use of box number (payable in advance). The closing date for classified ads is the first day of the preceding month. Trade Service Ads must be paid in advance. Trade Service Ads are non-commissionable.



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