

February 2014

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magazine

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MARKING INDUSTRY

magazine

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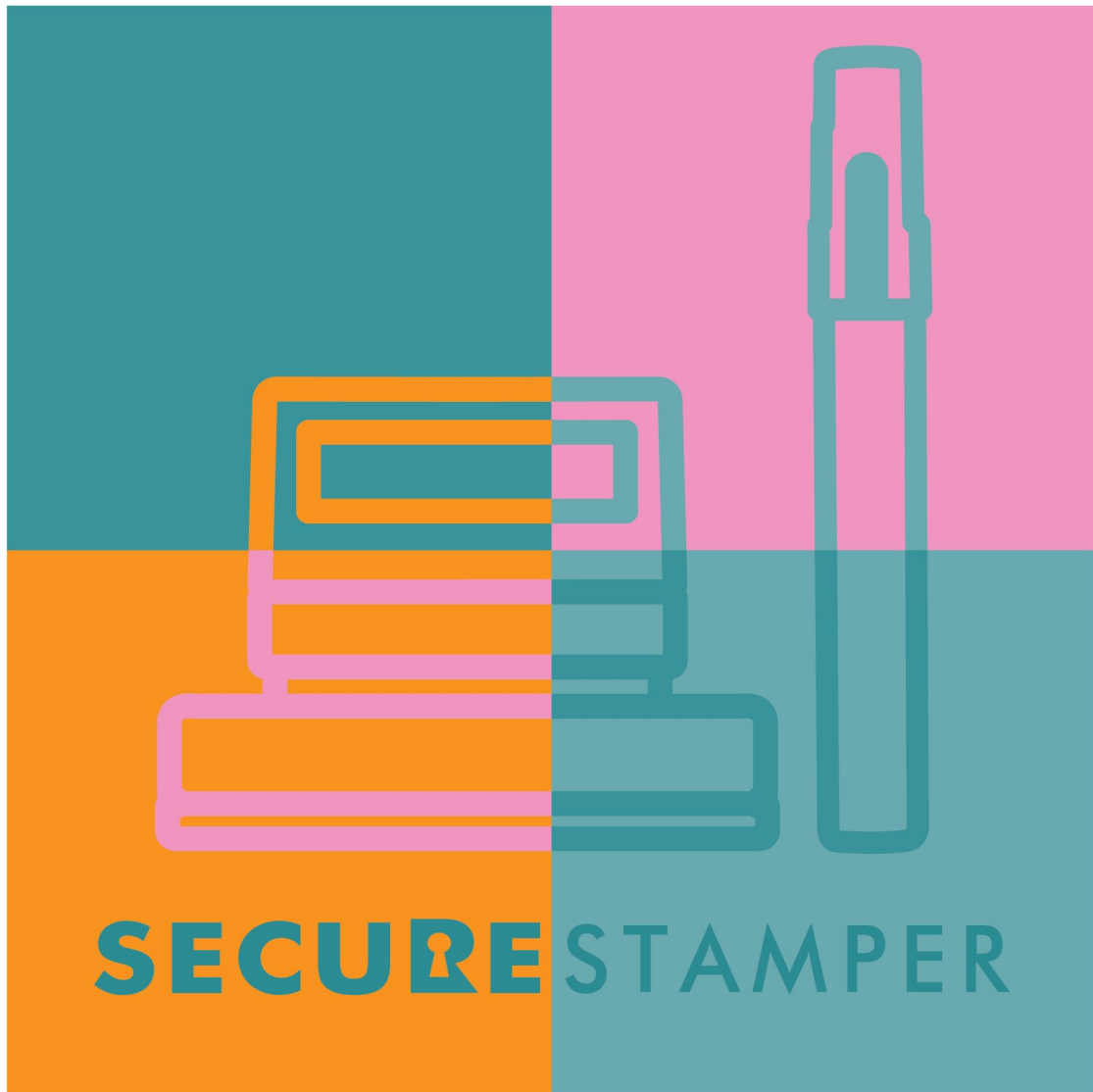
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by John and Judy McDaniel, contributing writers

In this issue, we turn our sights to mechanical engraving and explore the process and the potential products that can be created.



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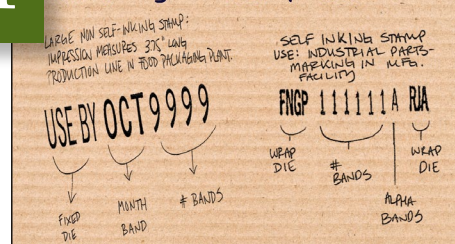
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Please note: Entrants must subscribe to *Marking Industry Magazine* and have been in business since January 1, 2012. Sales increase must not be the result of acquisition.

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You can also use the form below and fax your entry to **630/832-5206**.

Yes, I would like to enter my business in the 2014 U.S. Manufacturer of the Year competition!

Please include my entry in the following category, based on my **2013 annual gross sales**.

☐ **BRONZE:** \$10,000–\$250,000 annual gross sales

2012 Gross Sales: \$ _____

☐ **SILVER:** \$250,001–\$1,000,000 annual gross sales

2013 Gross Sales: \$ _____

☐ **GOLD:** More than \$1,000,000 annual gross sales

Percentage Growth: _____%

First name: _____ Last name: _____

Company name: _____

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City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____ Website: _____



Making money with CorelDRAW®

Mechanical engraving—The products

by Judy and John McDaniel, contributing writers

In this issue, we turn our sights to mechanical engraving and explore the process and the potential products that can be created.

What is mechanical engraving?

For the purpose of our discussion, we will consider any device or tool which marks a material through physical contact as a mechanical engraver. By this definition then, mechanical engraving includes hand tools, as well as machine-controlled engraving tools. Another characteristic of mechanical engraving is that it usually includes removing material. This can mean something as simple as scratching the surface or cutting grooves. It can also mean creating such things as signs or other objects using a CNC (computer numerical controlled) machine.

For a better understanding, here is Wikipedia's definition of engraving:

"Engraving is the practice of incising a design on to a hard, usually flat surface, by cutting grooves into it. The result may be a decorated object in itself, as when silver, gold, steel or glass are engraved, or may provide an intaglio printing plate, of copper or another metal, for printing images on paper as prints or illustrations; these images are also called engravings.

Engraving was a historically important method of producing images on paper, both in artistic printmaking, and also for commercial reproductions and illustrations for books and magazines. It has long been replaced by various photographic processes in its commercial applications and, partly because of the difficulty of learning the technique, is much less common in printmaking, where it has been largely replaced by etching and other techniques.

Traditional engraving, by burin (an engraver's chisel for making grooves) or with the use of machines, continues to be practiced by goldsmiths, glass engravers, gunsmiths and others, while modern industrial techniques such as photoengraving and laser engraving have many important applications. Engraved gems were an important art in the ancient world, revived at the Renaissance, although the term traditionally covers relief as well as intaglio carvings, and is essentially a branch of sculpture rather than engraving, as drills were the usual tools." For more information, please visit <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Engraving>.

As you can see, engraving covers a wide spectrum of methods and products. That said, our definition of mechanical engraving does not include laser engravers, which deserve their own separate section in this series. Because we are focused on creating the artwork in CorelDRAW and then applying it to a material, we'll consider what can be achieved using machine-controlled mechanical engravers, along with some hand engraving techniques that can use printed designs adhered to a material surface as templates.

Making money with mechanical engraving...The products

The photos accompanying this article illustrate various mechanically engraved products that were created in our shop in Sisters, Oregon:

Picture 1 shows a mechanically engraved acrylic award. The lettering is engraved using a conical tool. The engraving has the effect of picking up and reflecting light, a "look" for which some of our customers expressed a preference. When the light strikes the object at an angle, it sometimes has a prism effect, creating a rainbow reflection. Those who had a preference were willing to pay for the look.

Picture 2 shows mechanically engraved lens caps and lighted switches. It was not possible to laser engrave these items because the plastic material was too soft and melted unpredictably when we attempted to use the laser. For our business, this was an ongoing industrial engraving job which brought us a considerable amount of work spanning several years. To run the job efficiently, we needed to create special holding fixtures.

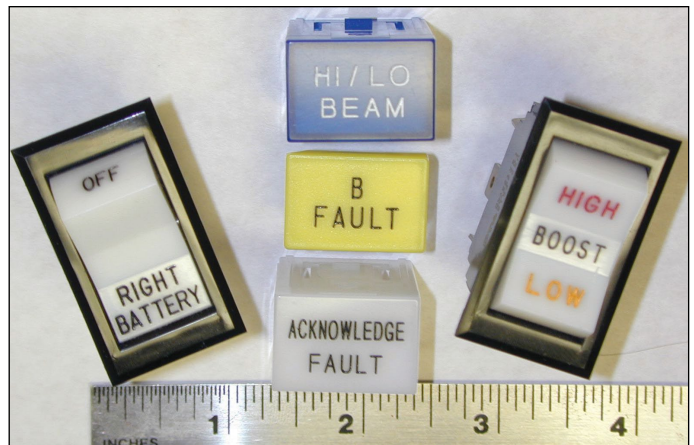
Picture 3 shows mechanically engraved valve tags and rotary switch markers. These parts were totally manufactured in-house using a heavy-duty mechanical engraving machine. Here are the steps we took to produce them:

1. We first engraved the lettering for the parts into blank aluminum sheet stock. Each sheet was large enough to product several pieces.
2. Once all the lettering was engraved, the part shapes were cut out from the aluminum sheets.
3. After the blank parts were cut out, they were cleaned and de-burred.
4. Then the pieces were sent out for anodizing.
5. Finally, they were paint filled.

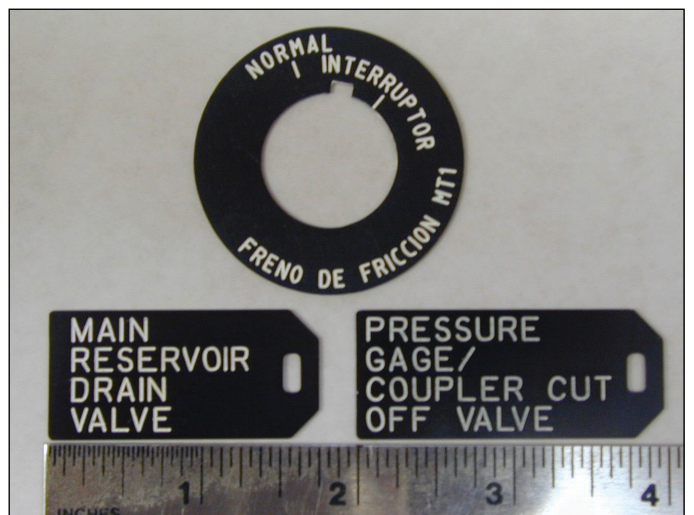
It was a long process, but the parts went into a high-use product that was exposed to the elements and is expected to remain in service for 20+ years.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4

Picture 4 shows mechanical drag engraving on stainless steel. This is another case where the customer preferred the “look” and was willing to pay for it. It’s not apparent in the photo, but the engraving was created using Contour Fill in CorelDRAW and has a very distinctive look in metal.

Picture 5 shows a charm bracelet that was also mechanically engraved using a contour fill.

Picture 6 shows an assortment of gift items which were mechanically engraved.

Pictures 7 and 8 show two different turkey eggs that have been manually engraved.

Pictures 9 and 10 show the front and back of an emu egg that was also manually engraved.

Conclusion

Next time, we’ll examine the products pictured here and discuss the equipment required to create them. We will also discuss the investment and training required to produce mechanically engraved products. *Mm*

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. You may contact them via email at mail@CorelDRAWhelp.com.*



Picture 5



Picture 6



Pictures 7–8

Pictures 9–10

Modified machines and custom bands: Not your typical “one size fits all” solution

by Sarah Chesebrough

Understanding how to offer these advanced marking solutions to customers with unique needs will benefit your bottom line.

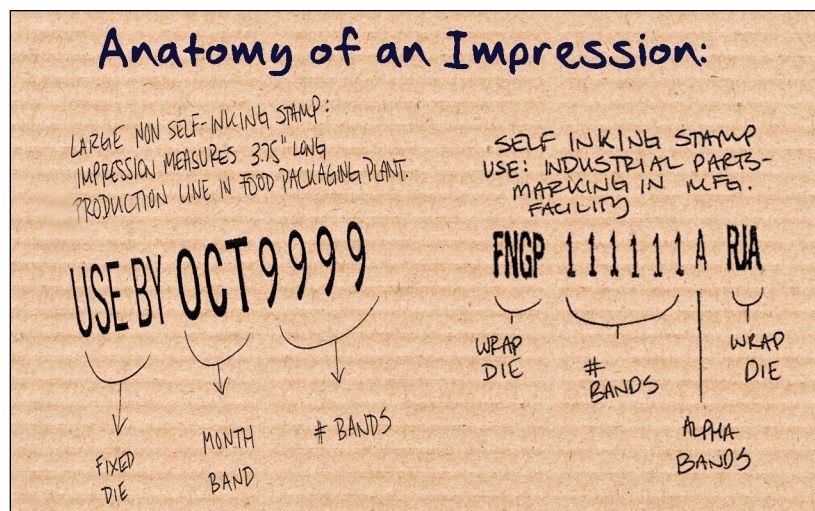
From circuit court clerks to candy cane manufacturers, many end-users face unique marking challenges. Whether marking complex case filing details in an office setting or lot codes on boxes of candy coming off a production line, custom marking solutions are necessary in just about any industry imaginable. Being able to identify these needs and offer serviceable solutions is a great way to grow your business; often, the best solution is a “modified machine.”

“Modified machine” describes the concept of customizing date or



This self-inking numbering stamp has been modified with custom bands and the positions of several bands on the machine were moved. Stamps like this are often used by various court systems and government offices, and these customers will appreciate a simple, reliable way to help them do their jobs.

There are so many ways to modify stamps for a customer. These two imprints give examples of various ways a machine can be modified to find the best solution.



numbering stamps with custom bands and/or dies in order to meet a customer's advanced marking need. Some common types of customers for modified machines would be the following: government workers, such as court clerks, jail employees, police, as well as lawyers, medical centers, packaging and shipping workers. We've found applications across the full range of office or production lines and manufacturing environments.

The concept can be applied to many different types and brands of self-inking or non-self-inking stamps. The options are endless, and while this might seem overwhelming, knowing the right questions to ask your customer will help you drill down to a solution. The keys to being able to sell these products to your customers are being able to think about dater and numbering stamps in a new way, to know your own production capabilities and identify outsourcing resources when appropriate.

Stamp house, know thyself

We would all like to be able to help every customer who contacts us, but every once in a while, we come across

a marking challenge that seems to lie outside the scope of our capability. For some stamp shops, creating custom bands or modifying machines with purchased custom bands might not be practical to produce in-house. Don't walk away from the sale, though! This can still be a revenue stream by partnering with a modified machine service provider. You will help your customer while avoiding the labor costs associated with customized products—it's a win-win scenario.

Indiana Stamp, located in the Midwest near Chicago, is one such service provider that fabricates their own custom bands and can provide any type of modified machine. There are other suppliers around the country who are also very skilled at these services. No matter who you partner with, or what you or your customer need, together, you will be able to figure out how to help your customer. Working with a good vendor that can provide fast turn-around times is important. Depending on the customer need, a modified machine can ship within days; you will still be able to wow your customer with excellent service!

Ask the right questions to get to the right solution

Now that you know you have the resources to offer modified machines to your customers, understanding the sales funnel will help you drill down to the best solution for your customer. They will know what they need to accomplish but probably won't know how to make that happen—that is why they've gotten in touch with you.

Excuse the pun, but you can simply start by asking what impression they want to make. Knowing this answer first will allow you to narrow down your list of solutions. Are they marking a date and inspection initials? Is there a custom impression on the die area as well? (Refer to the image on the left to see examples of some custom dies and how the impression is used). Remember, numberers and daters both can be customized.


From this point, there will often be multiple solutions in terms of self-inking or handle stamps, ink dry-times, etc. In order to find the best one, here are some more helpful questions:

- On what surface will you be marking?
- Is it an industrial or clerical stamp?
- Are there any temperature requirements or food-safety requirements?
- Are there any dry-time requirements?
- What size of type will you need?
- Are there any overall size limits for your impression area?
- Or, does your stamp impression need to fit a form?

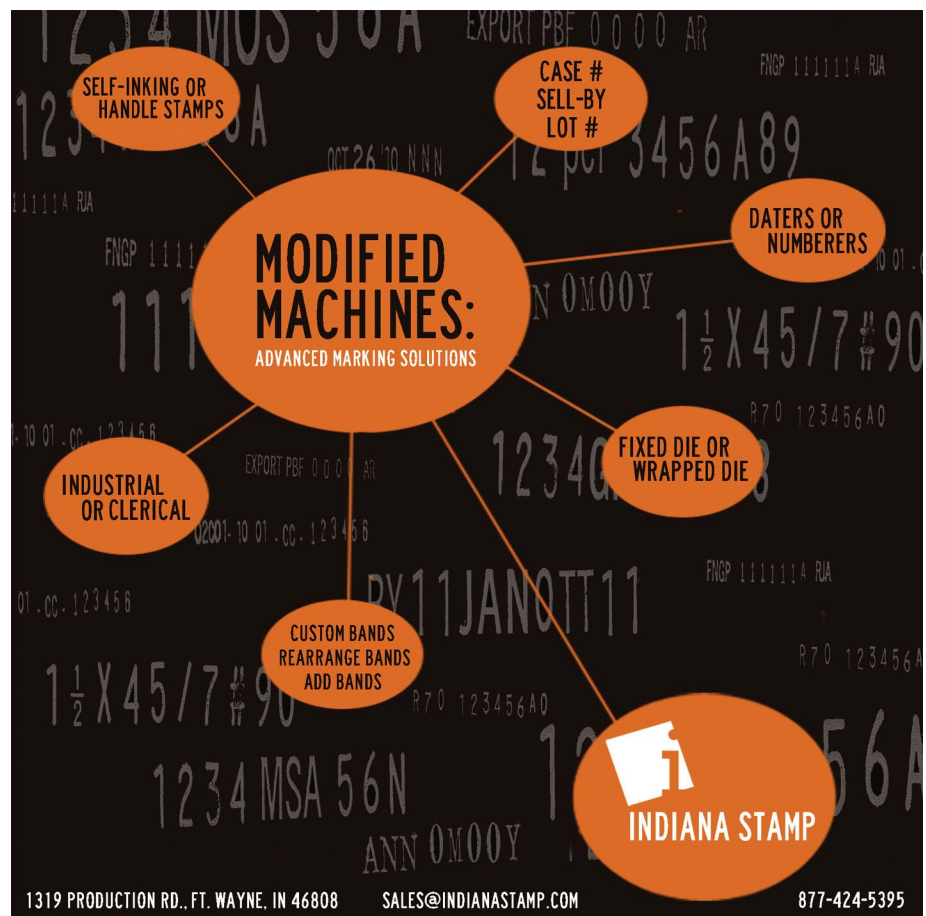
As you walk your customer through the process of finding the right stamp for their needs, you will not only be making a sale, you'll be building a

relationship of trust and making it more likely that your customer will come back to you for future needs.

You can go to YouTube at “Indiana Stamp” to see a short highlight video—get more ideas on how to use this selling tool to increase your bottom line! Remember, even if you are not equipped to produce this stamp at your shop, a supplier can help.

With technical knowledge, sales expertise and industry-leading turn-around times, the team at Indiana Stamp would be pleased to assist you in meeting your sales goals. If you have more questions about modified machines or custom bands, please feel free to contact them via email at sales@indianastamp.com or by telephone at 877/424-5395. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sarah Chesebrough is the Director of Marketing and Communication at Indiana Stamp. Contact her at 260/424-5395; Email: sarahc@indianastamp.com; Web: www.indianastamp.com.





IMIA at The NBM Trade Show 2014

Los Angeles was the site of the International Marking and Identification Association's annual gathering, bringing together stamp industry professionals from around the U.S., Canada and Europe.

The warm climate was a welcome relief for attendees escaping the polar vortex! Stamp manufacturers had the opportunity to visit with old friends, connect with new contacts and get inspiration and training from The NBM Show and IMIA presentations.

Make plans to attend the next meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana in June 2015!

Steve Hewitt, IMLA Executive Director, with his wife Sheila



Steve and Sheila Hewitt registering IMLA attendees



Steve Hewitt
Executive Director
International Marking & Identification Association

Glad to see you in LA!

I am happy to report that the show in Los Angeles exceeded all expectations for the stamp and sign makers and industry vendors.

With the best attendance in over four years, it seems that things are finally starting to improve. The weather gods shined down on us with temperatures between 72 and 77 degrees during the show, which allowed people to do some cruising around. I heard about excursions to Disneyland, Santa Monica Pier, Universal Studios and Santa Barbara.

I'm not sure what brought this larger group—whether it was the free room night for members, the equivalent of a free room night in product credits for all attendees from one vendor, the weather and sights, the cool t-shirts and running shoes given away by another vendor, the upscale dinner-with-a-view by another or the interesting classes by some of our people and the NBM folks. No doubt, all of the above.

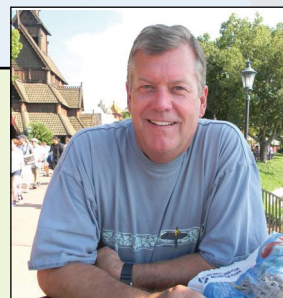
Without our vendor/sponsors, it would not have happened. They kicked in big, and it showed.

I have to say that it was just very gratifying to see so many stamp makers there.

One interesting thing was that half of the attendees were from west of the Mississippi and half from the east side (maybe escaping the freezing weather had something to do with it). What matters is that they came, learned, met with old and new friends and enjoyed the great weather in January. So much for “all shows being regional.”

The exhibitors voted unanimously to go to Indianapolis in June 2015. In 2013, Indy was voted “Best Convention City in the U.S.” The NBM is bringing back “The Big Show” there, which means more exhibits, more classes and demonstrations, as well as more people.

The board and I will be working hard to make it special for the marking industry manufacturers, as well. We hope you will put this on your 2015 calendar.



Note: All people identified from left to right.

Rich Zydonik, Vice President of Sales & Business Development for Rowmark, described a three-tier approach to marketing signage products.



Deborah Spiroff and Carolyn Hebel of Pilot Products, Inc., New York



The Modico team: Sean Lannigan, Chris Malczynski and Sergio Cotán



On hand at Shachihata's booth: Christopher Jones, Chris Wiederkehr, Martin Clemente and Terry Minato



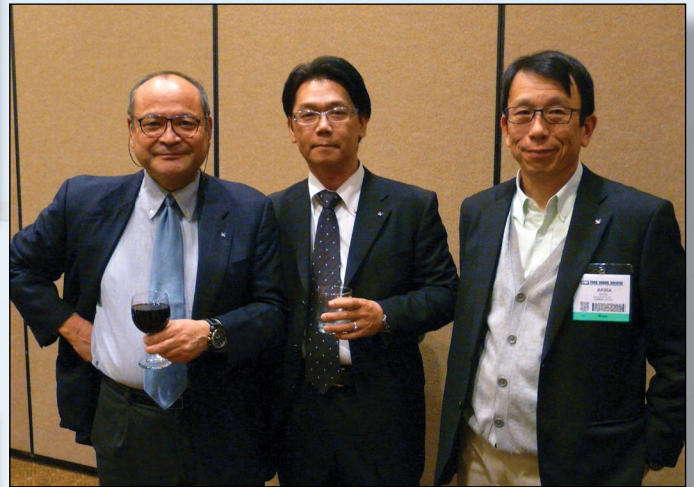
*Bryan Croft, Holmes Stamp & Sign, Florida;
Jeff Tice and Mike Hill of Trodat*



*Ricardo Jimenez, Sellos Titan, Puerto Rico;
David Atwell, Fred L. Lake & Co., Inc., Texas; Paul DeMartini of Trodat*



Yasuji Mori, Takabiro Shimizu and Akira Sato, Shachibata Japan



Wes DePourcq, The Geo. H. Hewitt Co., British Columbia; Russ Bernard, Quality Stamp & Sign, Utah; Derek Vink, Westminster Rubber Stamp, British Columbia; Deborah Smith, Trodat Marking Canada; and Lynn Vink, Westminster Rubber Stamp

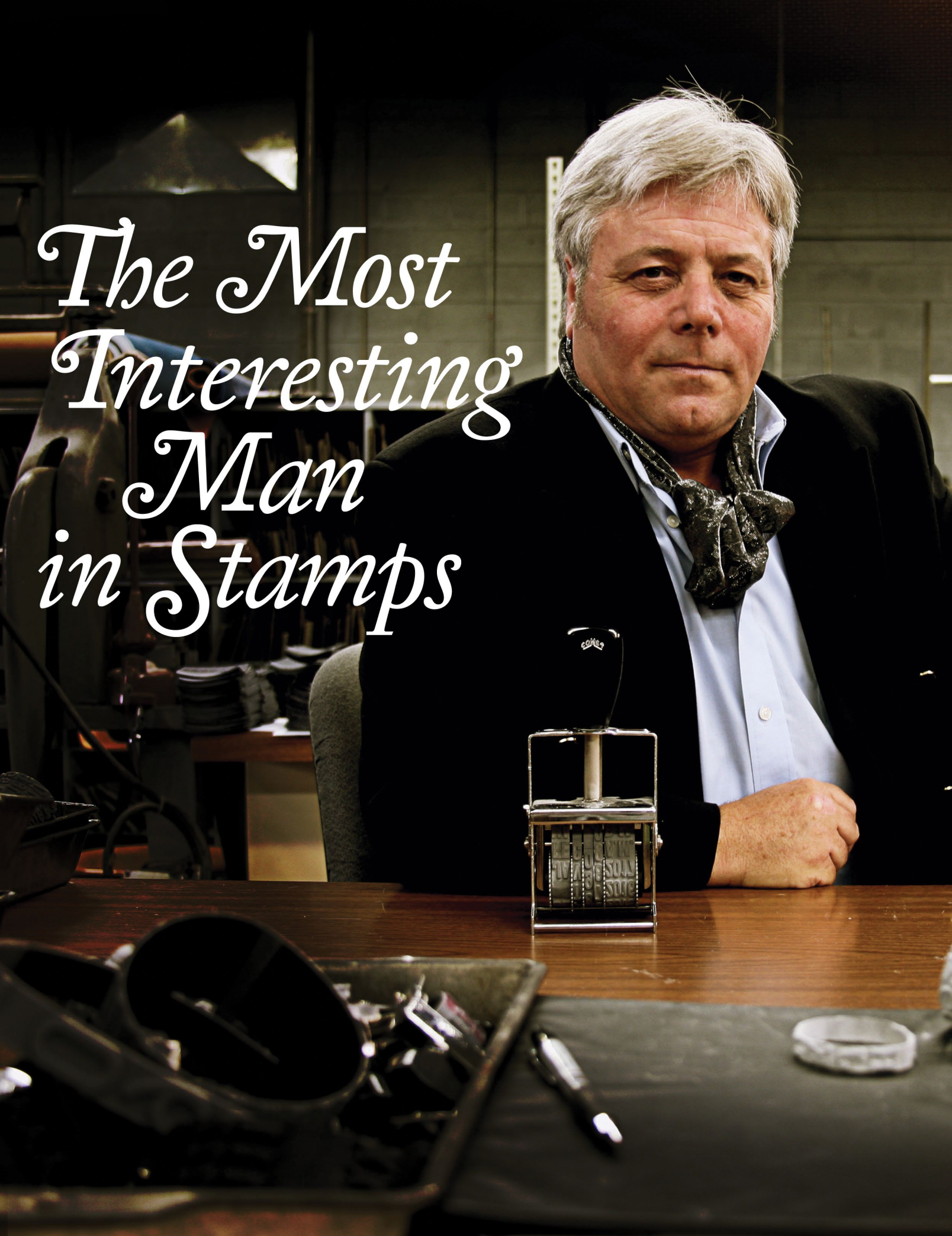


Jas and Nirmal Kakkar, Imprue, California



Tom Jackson and Gerald Mayo, Jackson Marking Products





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months, annually

Even the rubber soles of
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high school was 2360

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*Jeff and Melissa Boyd, Reynolds Rubber Stamp Co., Arkansas;
and Tom Kirchner of Trodat*



*John and Kristen Lohr, Bob's Rubber Stamps, Inc., California;
Rhonda and Jamie DeLeeuw, Fox Stamp, Sign & Specialty, Wisconsin;
and Keith Betti of Consolidated Marking*



*Lloyd Persaud, Rapid Rubber Stamps Inc., Florida;
and Bob Barlam, Huntington Park Rubber Stamp Co., California*



Kevin and Deanna Jarrett, Cummins Insurance Agency, Inc., California



*Janet Brewer, Ace Rubber Stamp & Sign, Florida;
Trudy Zajkowski, Ace Marking Devices, Florida;
Gregg and Karen Prest, Crown Marking, Minnesota*



Ernst Faber, Petra Faber and Tom Price of Consolidated Marking



Jessica Heldman-Beck, Rowmark; Dave Johnson, Johnson Plastics; Phil Noakes, Rowmark; Kevin Sheehy, Rodger Vieau, Kyle Hinton, Johnson Plastics; Jerod Guillen, Rowmark



Sue Hueg, The NBM Show; Warren Knipple, Trotec; Jeremy Horne and Rich Zydonik, Rowmark; and Laurie Zydonik, The NBM Show



Dave, Ron and Ken Windell of Grays Harbor Stamp Works, Washington



Mike Mauro, Consolidated Marking, with Jerry Jackson, Texas Marking Products, Inc., Texas



Kristina Jones, Trotec, with Chris Boyle, Trodat



Mike Beaulieu, Connectweb; Peter Reinhart and Darren Irvine, MarKing Equipment & Engraving Ltd, Canada; Gwendolyn Lee, Rubberstamps.net, Iowa; and Amanda Katon, Connectweb



Jennifer Niziolek, uTypia, with Simon Peter Alciere, Simon's Stamps, Massachusetts



George Murphy, Consolidated Marking, and Patrick Gaubert, Quick Stamp & Sign, Louisiana



Sheila and Steve Hewitt with Steve's parents, Dottie and Dick Hewitt



Mike Lawler, uTypia; Vickie Keith and Kevin Reagan, ArchiType; Daniel Kellogg and Steve Fernandez, Holmes Stamp & Sign, Florida



Jonathan Nikeli and Lisa Ehmke of Stamp Out, California



Chris Wiederkehr, Shachibata, with Dee Jackson, Texas Marking Products, Inc., Texas



uTypia team members Mike Lawler, Jennifer Niziolek and Gerd Schmid



Stéphan Derome, A. Derome, Quebec, with Kari Lunden, Durable Technologies, Massachusetts



At the Consolidated Marking booth: Ernst Faber, Keith Betti, Mike Mauro, Petra Faber, Vic Treiguts, Tony Pezze, Ed Sobota and John Anthony



Janet Brewer arrives at the Trodat launch party at Target Terrace at LA Live.





STAMP SHOP MANAGER™: *Step by Step*

How to set up and import web orders

by Becky Skelley

In this new series, we will teach you how to utilize Stamp Shop Manager from Connectweb Technologies, Inc. to get the most benefit from the program's automation features.

Stamp Shop Manager automates everyday actions such as order entry, typesetting, billing and shipping. You'll learn how the software program incorporates all of your business needs, including importing web orders into one location. Here we'll explore how to use Stamp Shop Manager to make your business the most efficient.

Starting in the most vital area of any business, the sales department, Stamp Shop Manager allows multiple users to manually take orders and typeset them upon request. At the click of a button, Manager will also "speak" directly to your website and import new web orders. Let's examine how to integrate your Stamp Shop Web, uTypia or other

websites with Stamp Shop Manager to streamline the order entry process.

Steps to follow

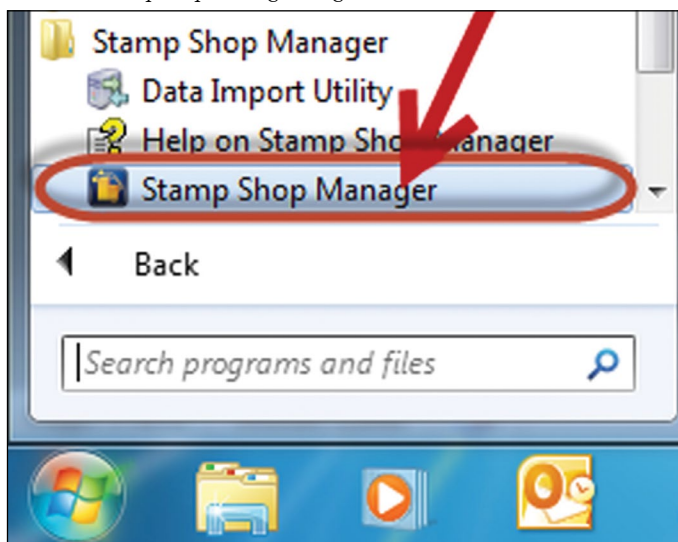
Web orders imported from Stamp Shop Web or uTypia based websites are automatically given a prefix (that you may customize), identifying the website from which it originates. To set up a

STAMP SHOP MANAGER™: Step by Step

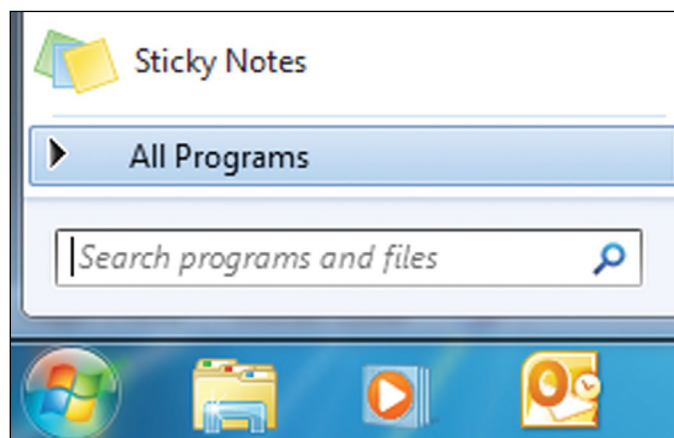
website in Manager for import, first start Stamp Shop Manager by clicking the Start button in the bottom left corner of your screen, and then click *All Programs* (See Picture 1). Expand the Stamp Shop Manager folder to see the program, click the program link and Manager will begin (Picture 2).

Next sign in to your company with your User Name and Password (Picture 3). Once you are signed in, click on the *Import Web Orders* button, located within the Start Menu on the *Customers & Sales* section (see Picture 4). Next click the Settings button and you'll see a *Websites* screen, where you can add a new website. To set up a Stamp Shop Web site, click on the Stamp Shop Web tab and then click the *New* button (see Picture 5). A new line will be added for you to type the website information.

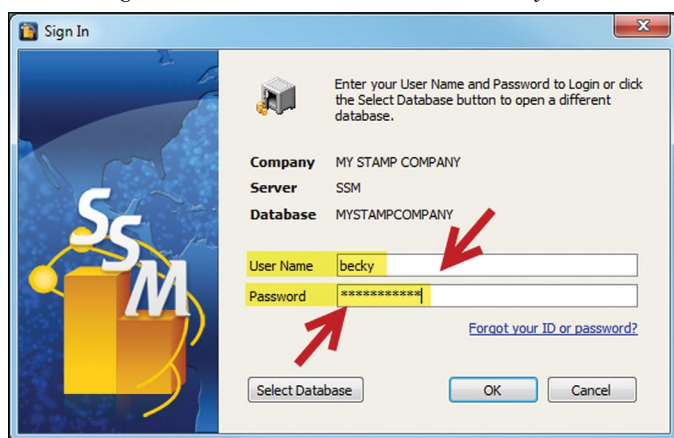
Picture 2: Stamp Shop Manager Program.



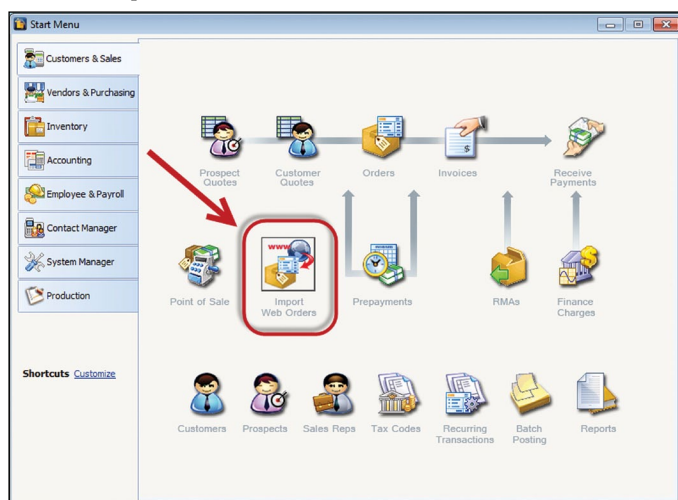
Picture 1: Start button with All Programs button.



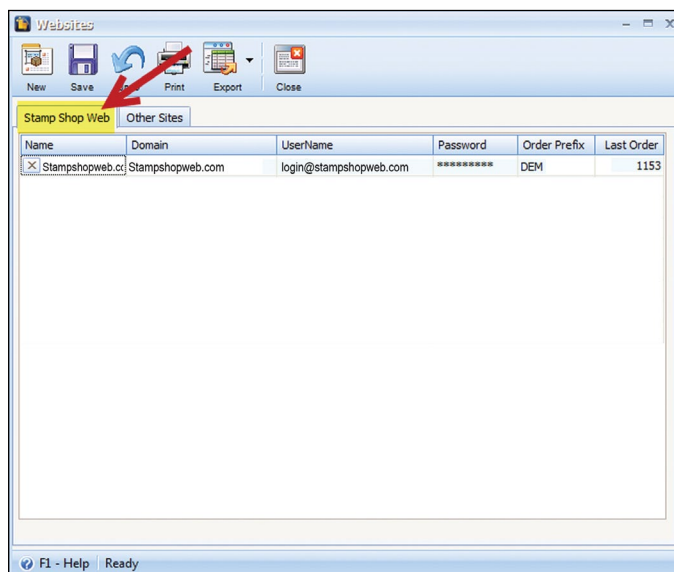
Picture 3: Sign In window with User Name and Password fields.



Picture 4: Import Web Orders button within Start Menu.



Picture 5: Websites screen displayed with the Stamp Shop Web tab and highlighted Save button.



Setting up a Stamp Shop Web site for import

Name: Any name that will help you identify this website (For example, <http://www.mystampcompany.com> might appear as My Stamp Company and a sub-web for a dealer, such as <http://bobsoffice.mystampcompany.com> might appear as Bob's Office.)

Domain: Here you would enter the domain name, with the dot com or other extension, such as dot net or dot biz. (For example, www.mystampcompany.com or bobsoffice.mystampcompany.com). Http:// is not necessary.

User Name: The login User Name, typically an email address, for the Stamp Shop Web site. This user must be assigned the web services role. Stay tuned for an upcoming discussion of Users and Roles on your Stamp Shop Web site.

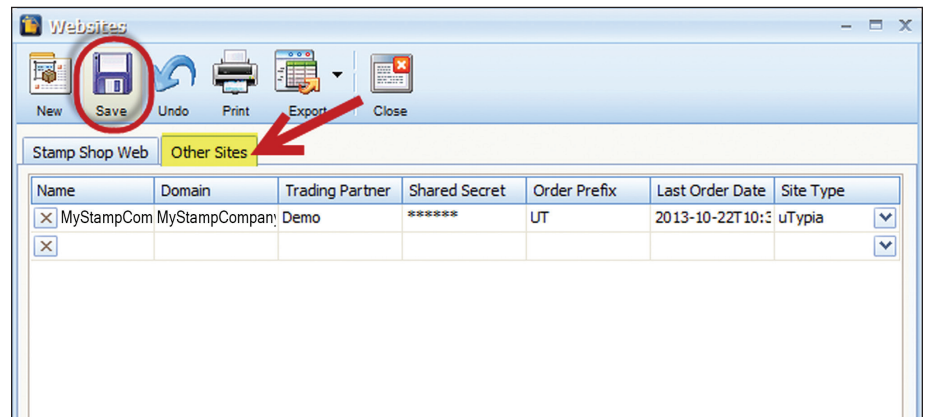
Password: The password for the above User Name.

Order Prefix: Set the prefix, up to three letters, which will identify orders imported from this website. These letters, along with a hyphen, will be prefixed to the web order number. (For example, web order #1000 on bobsoffice.mystampcompany.com imports into Manager as BOB-1000.)

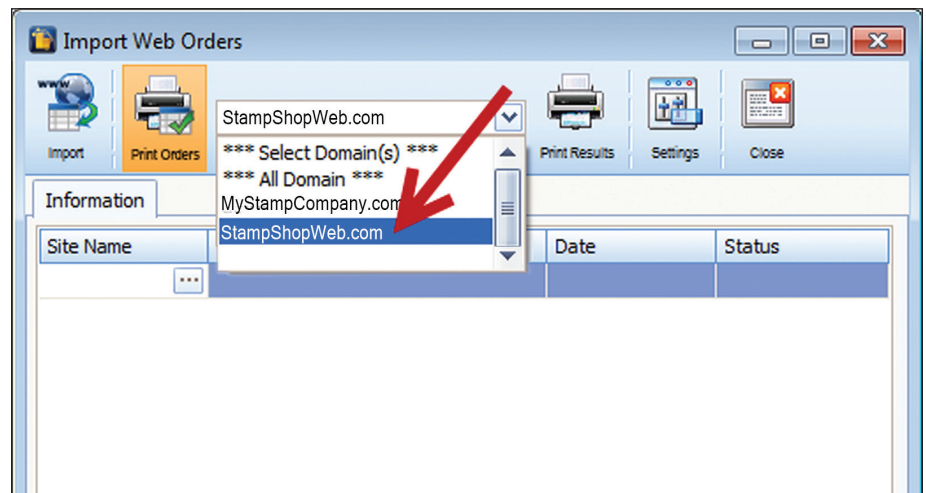
Last Order: Any order prior to this number will not be imported into Manager. This instructs Manager not to import orders that may have been previously processed.

Once all fields have been entered, click the *Save* button (see Picture 5). To set up an uTypia site for web order import, when you are on the Websites window, click the *Other Sites* tab. Click the *New* button at the top to add a new line. Then fill out the fields (see Picture 6).

Picture 6: Websites screen and highlighted Other Sites tab and Save button.



Picture 7: Import Web Orders screen with highlighted drop down menu.



Setting up all other types of sites for import

Name: Any name that will help you identify this website.

Domain: Here you would enter the domain name, with the dot com or other extensions, such as dot net or dot biz.

Trading Partner: A supplied element from uTypia.

Shared Secret: A supplied element from uTypia.

Order Prefix: Set the prefix, up to three letters, which will identify orders imported from this website. These letters, along with a hyphen, will be prefixed to the web order number.

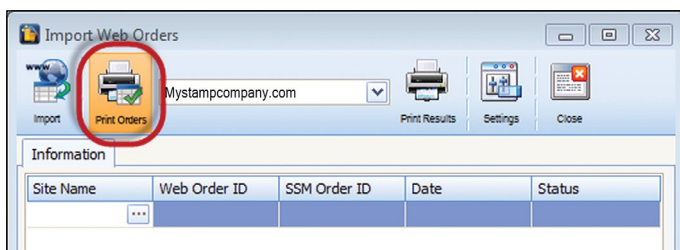
Last Order Date: The date of the last order imported.

Site Type: Click the down arrow to select the type of site you are adding.

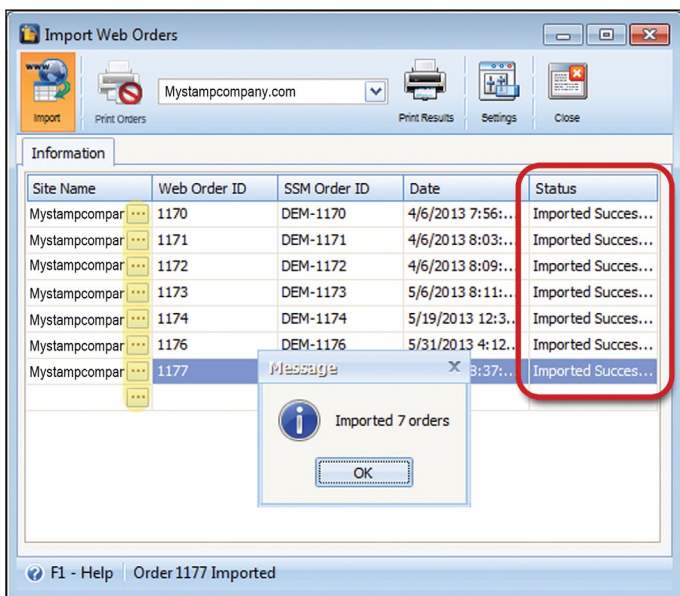
Once all fields have been entered, click the *Save* button (see Picture 6). Then click the *Close* button. Now a website is set up to import web orders. On the Start Menu, click the *Import Web Orders* button (see Picture 4). On the *Import Web Orders* screen, click the drop down menu located in the middle of the screen (see Picture 7) to select the website from which you will import orders.

STAMP SHOP MANAGER™: Step by Step

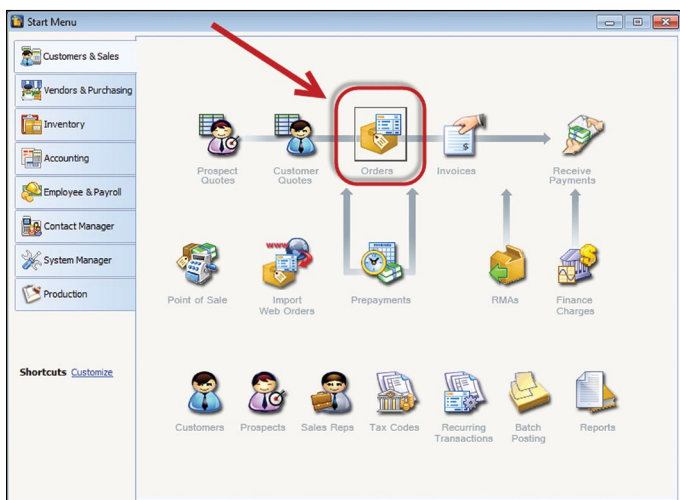
Picture 8: Print Orders button.



Picture 9: Imported orders shown as line items with highlighted Status field and ellipsis.



Picture 10: Order button within the Start Menu.



Once you've chosen the website, click the *Import* button. Manager will immediately “speak” to your website and import any new orders. As a default, the *Print Orders* button is selected (see Picture 8), which will print all imported web orders to your default printer. If you do not want to print your imported web orders, click the *Print Orders* button to de-select. The *Print Results* button will display all imported web orders in a spreadsheet format once the import is complete.

The status column located to the far right will indicate the success or failure status of each imported order (see Picture 9). If an order fails to import, you must check the order status on your web admin to correct the problem and then reimport the web order. The ellipsis button to the right of the *Site Name* will allow you to open an imported order for review, if necessary (see Picture 9). Once you have finished importing web orders, click the *Close* button. When you are ready to import web orders again, this window will be empty.

Now that all new orders have been imported from your site, let's look at where they are located in Manager. To view existing orders, click on the *Orders* button located within the Start Menu (see Picture 10). Here you will see a list of all orders. You can find a particular order by searching almost anything, such as Customer PO number, billing address and even text on a customizable product.

Let's take a moment to review all of the options available within the lookup window. The lookup window is common throughout Manager. In this example, we'll use the *Orders* lookup window to examine the features of all lookup windows. Once you have clicked the *Orders* button, on the Start Menu, click the *Settings* button (see Picture 11). The *Find Form Settings* window will pop up with two columns, *Available Fields* and *Selected Fields* (see Picture 12). *Selected Fields* are shown in the lookup window so that you choose what data is visible. By using the *Move Up* and *Move Down* buttons, you can easily move the *Selected Fields* up or down in the list. The top of the list will appear to the far left of the lookup window. Below the two columns, you'll see the *Options* section, where you have more options to set.

Locked Field: This drop down menu contains the most frequently used fields. A selected field will always appear in the far left of the lookup window and cannot be moved by the drag and drop feature.

Search Field: This drop down menu contains a list of all available search field options. For example, when you first open a lookup window and start typing, the program will first search in the previously set Search Field. This option saves you time by not having to click the field before typing to search.

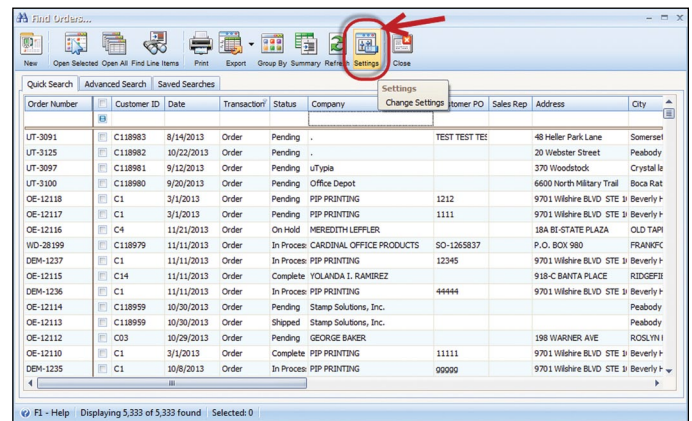
Matching: This drop down offers another helpful way to search. By changing the option to *Any Part of Field*, Manager will search for any of the typed words in any part of the column. This comes in handy if you are typing a company name—for instance, The National Bank—but you type National Bank and forget to type the word “The” first. If Matching was set to Start of Field, your search would be inconclusive.

Next let’s look at the *Sorting* section. Within this section, you’ll find *Allow Sorting*. When this is selected, the column that you set in the *Sort Field* input will be the field used to sort the listing alpha-numerically. Once Allow Sorting is checked, choose the field for sorting and select either an ascending or descending listing. Once you have altered the lookup window settings, click the OK button located at the bottom of the window (Picture 12). Now whenever you open a lookup window, these settings will appear. **Note:** By default, orders displayed within the order lookup window are sorted so that the last order entered is the first order in the list.

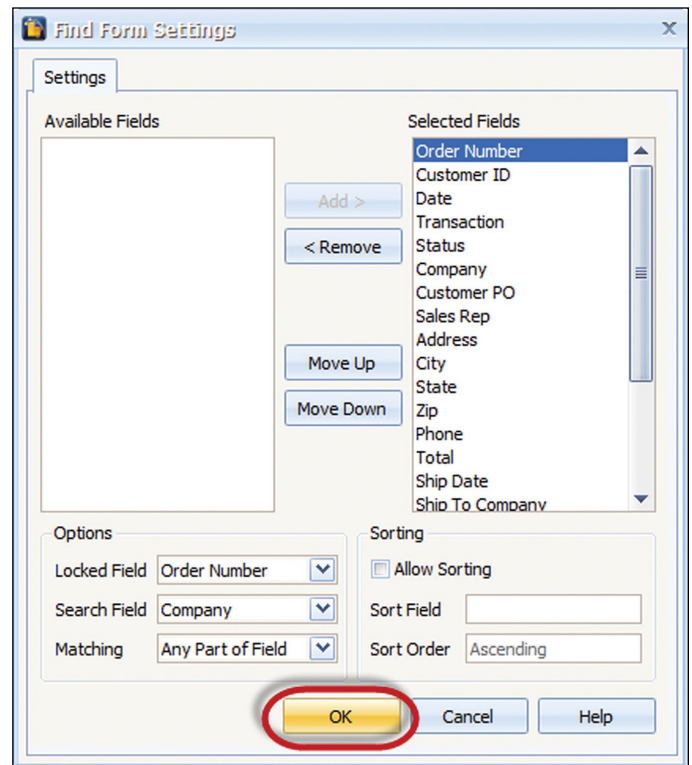
Congratulations! You’ve successfully set up websites for web order import and utilized the many search features within the order lookup window. Now that we have scratched the surface in Manager, we hope you return to explore the many features of Stamp Shop Manager in future articles! Mlm

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

Picture 11: Settings button within the Orders lookup window.



Picture 12: Find Form Settings window.



Trodat USA Introduces the ALL NEW Ideal Seal



Refined. Dependable. Effortless. These are the words that best describe the all new Ideal Seal from Trodat, the market leader in embossing seals.

After extensive feedback from end-users and seal manufacturers in the U.S.,

Trodat demonstrated the product at the 2014 IMIA Show in Los Angeles to overwhelmingly positive reviews. The new Ideal Seal's combination of leverage and shape means that less force is required to produce a perfect impression time and time again. With a smaller reach and multi-positional grip, even the most petite hands can find a comfortable position to use when embossing. The handle has been designed to look not only elegant but to provide a natural feel to any size hand. Not sure when the impression is completed with your current seal? The all new Ideal Seal provides you with finish notification—you'll know when to stop!

In addition, the Ideal Seal is designed as a dual use seal. Customers can use it as both a pocket seal and as a desk seal. The base is designed to allow the Ideal Seal to stand upright with no add-on parts or weight-increasing materials. And the non-skid feet keep the Ideal Seal in place for you to make your best impression.

The Ideal Seal will be available later this year. For more information, contact your Regional Sales Manager or call 1-800 TRODAT1.

AMS announces new acquisitions

American Marking Systems (AMS) has announced the acquisition of The Baumgarten Co. of Washington, located in Laurel, Maryland. AMS currently owns the Wm. Baumgarten Co. in Baltimore, Maryland and will be combining the two facilities in a new location in Laurel.

The new address is:
The Baumgarten Co.
14717 Baltimore Avenue, Unit E
Laurel, MD 20707-4852

In addition, the Master Stamp & Sign Co. of Pottstown, Pennsylvania and Reading Stamp of Reading, Pennsylvania have been acquired by the Quaker City Stamp Division of American Marking Systems and will be moving into their facility in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

With over 100 years of experience in the marking device industry, AMS has additional manufacturing facilities in New Jersey, New York, Maryland and Pennsylvania and is an industry leader in the manufacturing of rubber, self-inking and pre-inked stamps, signs, banners, seals and other marking devices.

For more information, contact AMS, 1015 Paulison Avenue, Clifton, NJ 07011; 973/478-5600; Fax: 973/478-0039; Email: Info@Ams-stamps.com; Web: www.Ams-stamps.com.

Trotec presents the Speedy 100 flexx

The unique laser system with two laser sources is now available as an entry-level model.



The Speedy 100 flexx is an ideal laser platform for entry-level laser users. With a working area of 24 x 12 inches, the unique laser engraver is optimally suited for all standard material sheet sizes.

"The Speedy 100

flexx means maximum flexibility for our customers. Being able to offer more capabilities to our entry-level users will help broaden their product offering, making their company more profitable," explains President Warren Knipple.

Speedy flexx series

The Speedy flexx series is equipped with both CO₂ and fiber laser sources. This allows customers to perform endless applications. The CO₂ laser source is ideally suited for engraving and cutting plastics, wood, rubber, leather and many other materials. The fiber laser is the right tool for marking metals and plastics. Depending on the material, the two laser sources are activated alternately—in a single job, without needing to manually change the laser source, lens or focus. The Speedy flexx series includes the Speedy 100 flexx, Speedy 300 flexx and Speedy 400 flexx.

Maximum flexibility—in applications and for the customers

With the flexx function, Trotec's patented technology, both laser sources can be activated in one easy step. The laser software JobControl guarantees time savings and flexibility throughout the day. The Speedy 100 grows with your business. The laser system is "ready for flexx"—this means a CO₂ or a fiber laser machine can be upgraded at any time to a Speedy 100 flexx.

A strong family

As part of the Speedy family, the Speedy flexx series offers many advantages. Speedy stands for the highest quality components, precision, innovative design and highest productivity. A large variety of options, such as various tables, lenses, a rotary engraving device or a camera system, makes it possible to configure the Speedy to suit your applications precisely.

For more information, contact Trotec Laser Inc., 7610 Market Drive, Canton, MI 48187; +1 734/927-6304; Fax: +1 734/927-6323; Web: www.troteclaser.com.

JDS introduces Laserable "Can" Travel Mugs



JDS Industries, Inc. introduces the latest design in travel mugs. The Laserable "Can" Travel Mugs are made of stainless steel and come in four colors: silver, black, red and blue. The silver can be lasered using a darkening spray agent and the other three colors all laser directly to a shiny, silver finish. The double wall of the can insulates it for holding warm or cold liquids up to 15 ounces, and the lid has a flip top opening that will help insulate and prevent spills when closed. The travel mugs have the diameter and feel of a traditional beverage can,

which makes the mug feel right at home in the user's hand. These new mugs are now in stock in all 14 nationwide JDS warehouse locations. A sample set containing one of each color is available.

For more information, to get show room samples or to place an order, call JDS at 800/843-8853; Fax: 605/339-1467; Email: sales@jdsindustries.com or visit www.jdsindustries.com.

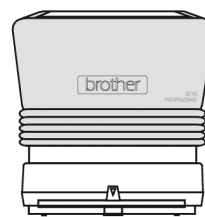
LaserBits introduces new product, LaserFlex® Heat Transfer Sheets

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INDUSTRY INDICATOR

by David Hachmeister

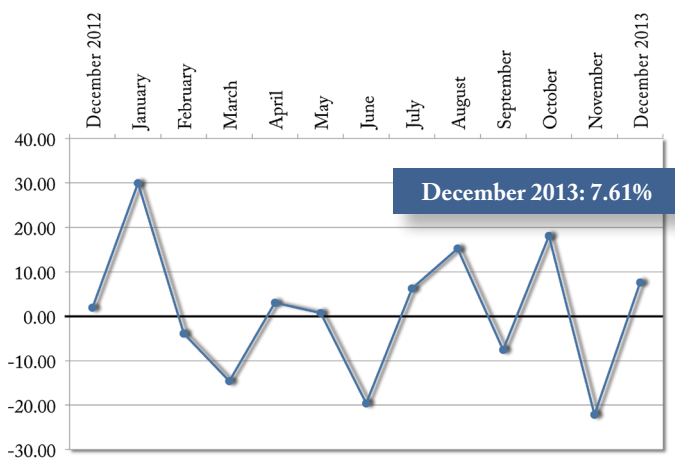
Another mixed bag...

The year ended on a mixed note with stamps up 7.61 percent from the previous month but down just 0.38 percent from the previous December. Other products rose a robust 12.46 percent, topping off a year where seven of the

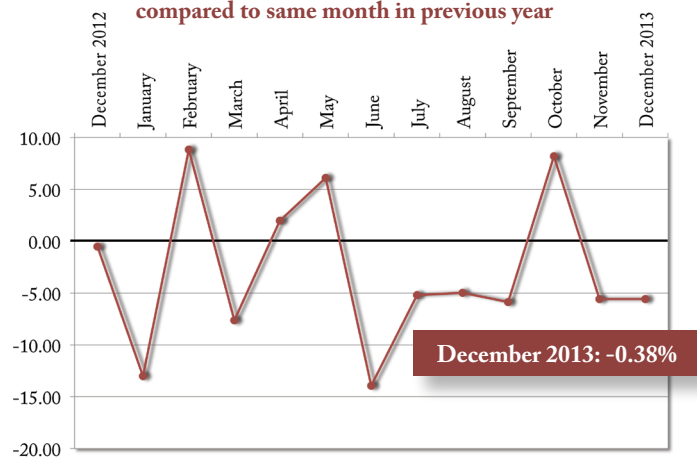
12 months were positive. The annualized change for gross sales of all products had a nice rise of 6.77 percent. Not bad at all! *M*

Stamps only

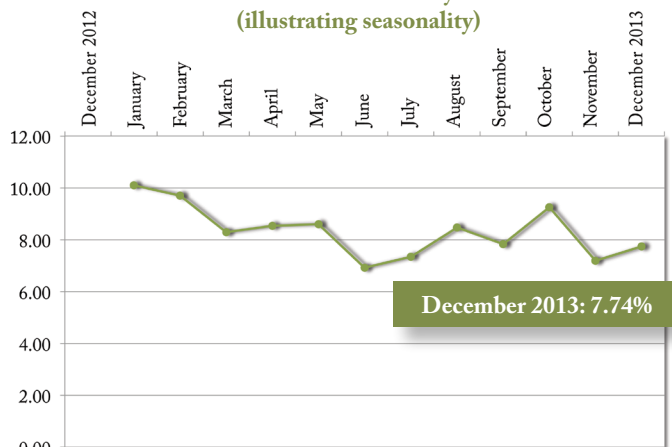
Monthly Sales—Gain/Loss Percentage



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

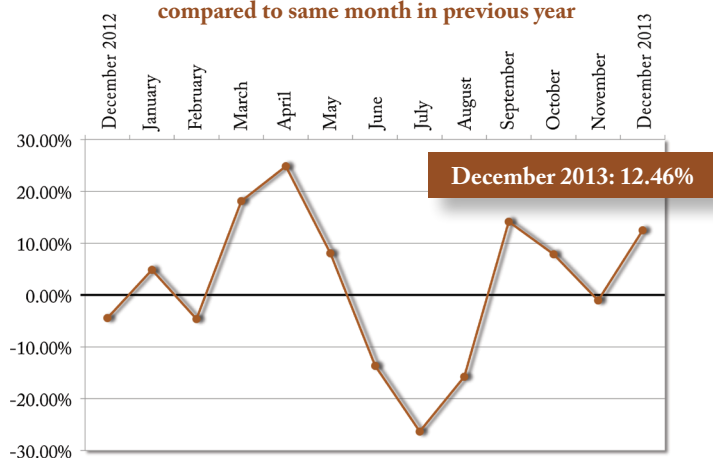


Percent of Annual Sales by Month (illustrating seasonality)



Other products

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



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

INDUSTRY IMPRESSIONS

by David Hachmeister

Let's talk!

We have had some success online with our other business venture, providing in-home care for seniors and veterans. We have purchased search words and gotten a decent number, albeit not always the greatest leads. SEO helps, but there are a lot of seemingly random people who click and cost us money.

So we thought it would be great if we could get pre-qualified leads. We pay either by the year or by the lead. We are one of a limited number of companies in our area they "front" for. When prospects click caringforseniors.com (not the real site), they have a one in three or so chance of landing on our site. Both services are consistently in the top five in organic search results. One service has an annual cost of just \$500. The service works on a per lead cost basis. Each lead costs just \$45! (Probably too expensive for the marking industry, but very cost efficient for us.) Both sources spend time with the potential client finding out if there is a real need and if he or she can afford to pay for it. The marking industry is different, but we think that if unified, the industry can do better than most shops can do on their own. Let us know what you think.

Speaking of such things, we are approaching Industry Survey time. It will be done via telephone by Nationwide Telemarketing, the service that has done a great job for us for many years now. Please participate. We have a drawing for two free nights at the next IMIA/NBM show in 2015. The award is for those who take the time to completely answer all the questions.

Would you like to have included some anonymous feedback about vendor service, price and quality? That will be a part of the program, if we can get three or more vendors to participate. This is meant to be an opportunity to express what you think about how well the vendors do. Good business people need and value CONSTRUCTIVE input about areas in which they excel and areas that need help.

It is also time to consider entering the Manufacturer of the Year. It is easy and fun. Just give us your sales stats for the last two full years—confidentially, of course—and we will determine the winner by the highest percentage growth in like-sized companies. There are three categories, so give it a try!

We look forward to hearing from you!

Personal notes:

Sorry to report nothing from the IMIA show. I got some flu or bronchial infection and just couldn't get there. Thanks for your expressed concern. Between the rotator cuff surgery, hand treatments and this flu junk, I think I have financed several years of college for the children of several medical types. First show I have missed in my 33 years of duty. I feel great now and really look forward to the next!

I also want to welcome Natasha Georgescu to our staff. She will be managing circulation and billing for us. Please be kind and patient as she gets started—she is learning from me! Mm



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