

June 2014

MARKING INDUSTRY

magazine

The 2014

**Rubber
Stamp
Manufacturers**

Report

The results of our industry survey are in!



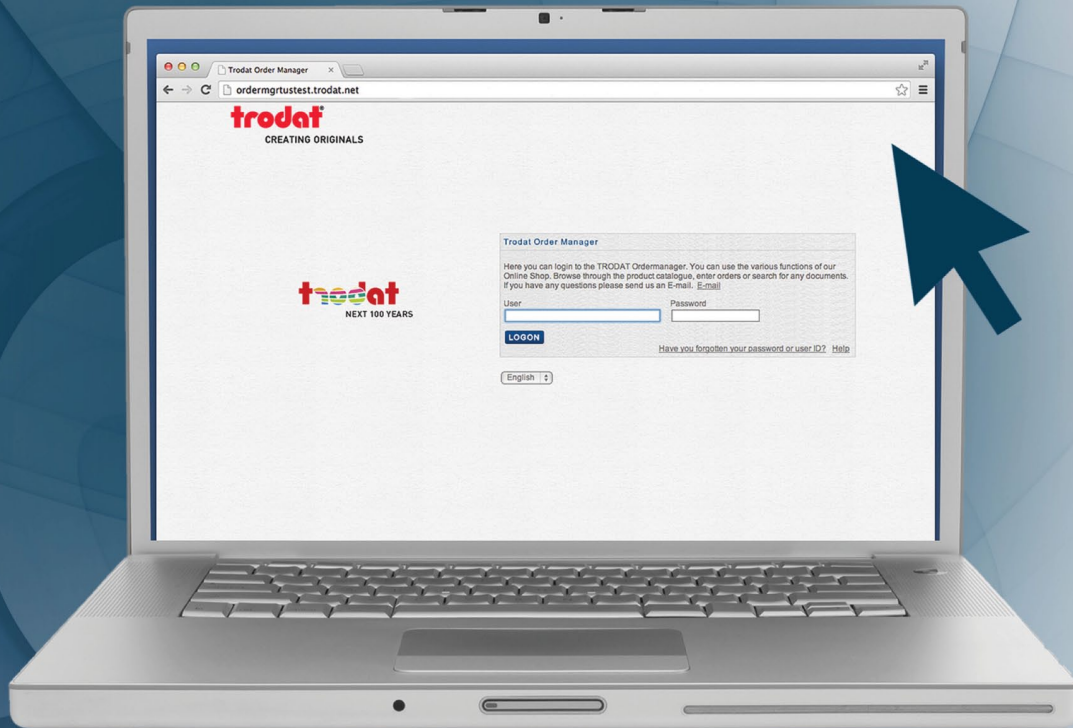
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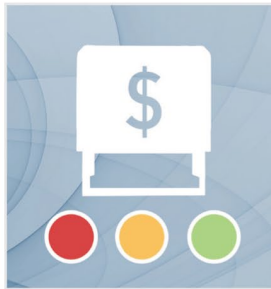
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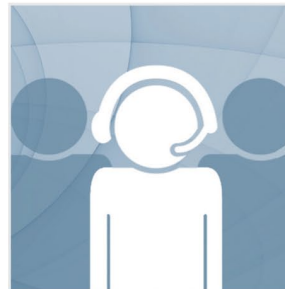
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PUBLISHER
David Hachmeister

MANAGING EDITOR

Anne Shadis
Anne@markingdevices.com
Editor@markingdevices.com

**PRODUCTION MANAGER/
ASSISTANT EDITOR**

Patricia LaCroix
Patricia@markingdevices.com
Ads@markingdevices.com

OFFICE MANAGER

Natasha Georgescu
Natasha@markingdevices.com

SALES MANAGER

David Hachmeister
David@markingdevices.com
Ads@markingdevices.com

MARKING INDUSTRY

magazine

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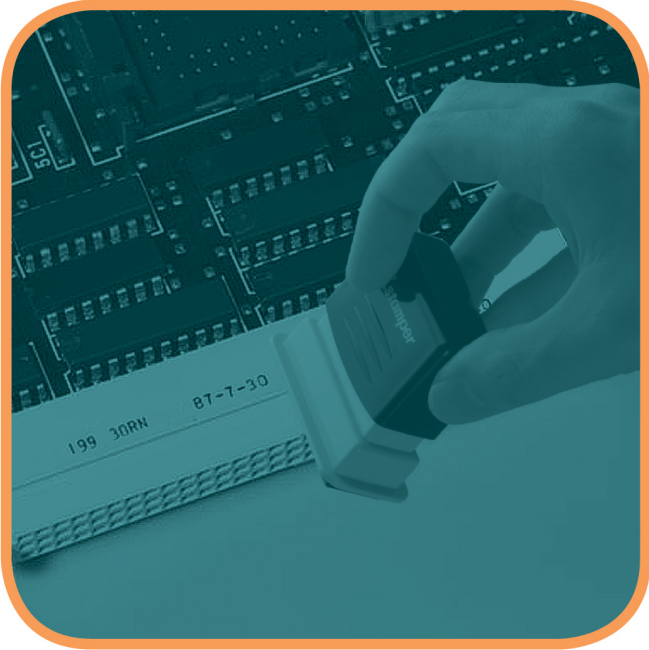
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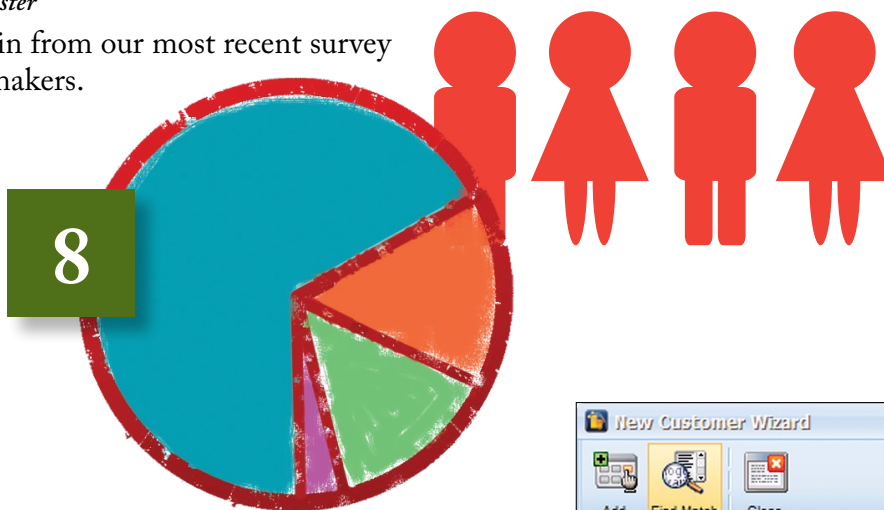
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by David Hachmeister

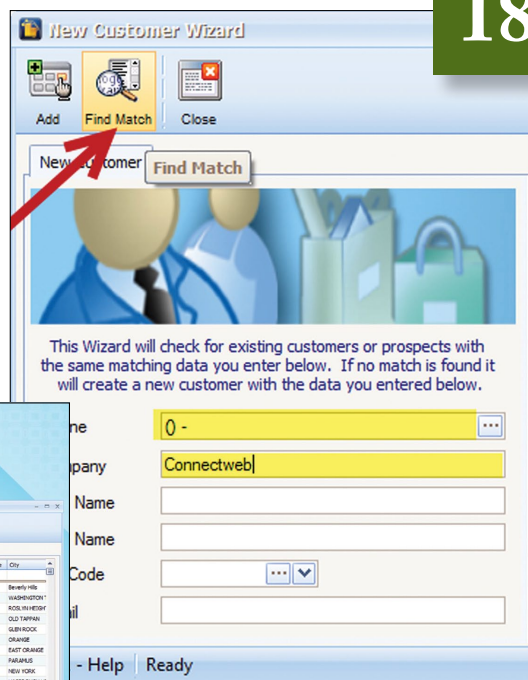
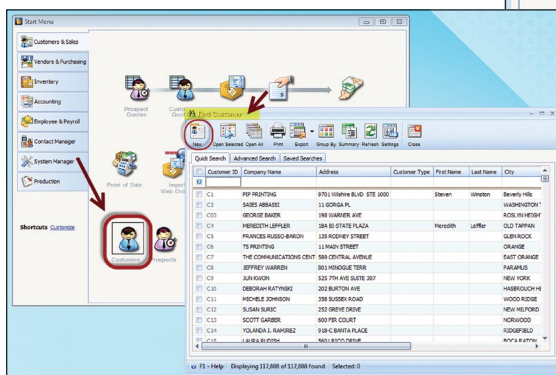
The results are in from our most recent survey of U.S. stamp makers.



18 Stamp Shop Manager™: How to manage and create customers

by Becky Skelley

In this month's exploration of Stamp Shop Manager™, we'll focus on how to manage and create customers, a vital part of any successful online e-commerce business.



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The 2014

RUBBER STAMP MANUFACTURERS

Report

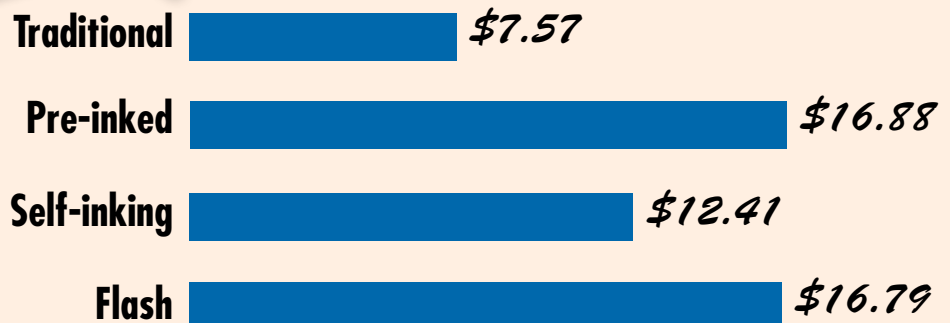
Price

RETAIL

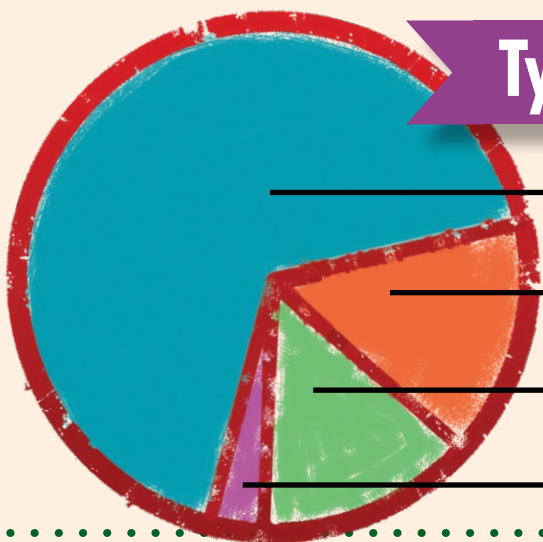
(individual 3-line, 2-inch stamp)



WHOLESALE



Types of stamps manufactured



67% Self-inking stamps

15% Traditional wood stamps

14% Flash stamps

4% Pre-inked stamps

And the survey says...

by David Hachmeister

The results are in from our most recent survey of U.S. stamp makers.

Thank you to all who participated in our *Marking Industry Magazine* 2014 Survey. Five respondents who completed the survey have been randomly chosen by our telemarketing firm and will receive a \$100 thank you from Marking Devices Publishing. The lucky winners are:

Rickey Hall, *Quality Trophy & Engraving*, Birmingham, Alabama

Jim Beck, *California Marking Device Co.*, Hermosa Beach, California

Laura Robertson, *Corporate Kits Plus, Inc.*, Peachtree Corners, Georgia

JoAnn Passalaqua, *JFP Stamp & Engraving*, East Dundee, Illinois

Paul Newhof, *Richmond Stamp Works*, Grand Rapids, Michigan

This year, we approached the survey as a telemarketing venture. While this was a more expensive option, it yielded a much more comprehensive picture of the industry, and as a result, we think a

Average sales

2013

\$153,799

Stamps

\$385,760

**ALL products
and services**

2014

Estimated

\$156,937

Stamps

\$396,017

**ALL products
and services**

far more accurate one, than any survey we have done in many years. We also eliminated some of the previous questions to shorten the survey so that more of you would respond. The tradeoff is a difficult one. While more respondents mean a greater likelihood of

statistical accuracy, the price is that broader data for analysis is sacrificed. Next time, we may add an additional question or two. After the survey was completed, we heard from some stamp makers who would like to know not just the average but also the “down-and-

TOP FIVE software programs used to design stamps

1. CorelDRAW
2. Adobe Illustrator
3. Adobe PageMaker
4. Adobe InDesign
5. Adobe Photoshop

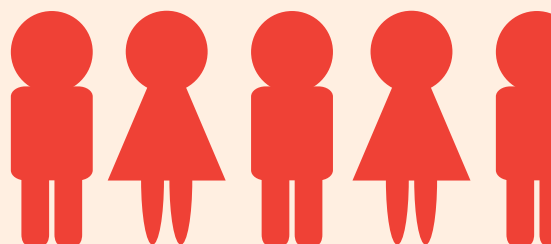
Number of employees

Total



5.60

Full time



4.77

dirty, rock-bottom pricing” that others in the industry use, as well as a few other items of interest. Your thoughts on what you would like to learn from future surveys are very welcome.

This year, our telemarketing firm gathered 200 completed surveys. This is the highest total achieved since we used a professional research firm in the 1990s. Because the results from past surveys are likely skewed due to smaller sample sizes, we plan to draw only a few comparisons to these previous studies. Even this survey must be viewed as a good guess—good enough to get the general idea, but not much more.

We have 1,418 active names on our complete and current database. Through ongoing updates of our list, our telemarketer has been able to confirm that 774 of that group are rubber stamp makers who make the dies for rubber stamps at their locations.

The remaining 644 are individuals who are affiliated in some way with the stamp industry but may not actively make dies for stamps. In our experience, we have found that there are some small operations that prefer to not answer any telemarketing calls. To estimate the size of the stamp industry, we had to gauge how many of these individuals are actual stamp makers.

If the telemarketer made repeated contact attempts and couldn't confirm that the company makes stamps, then we assumed that these individuals were unlikely to be in the business of making stamps. We also deleted duplicate individual names at one location to have the company represented only once in the total. Our guess is that of our 644 suspect names, only 20 percent, or one

out of five names, actually qualifies as a stamp maker.

Using this figure of 20 percent, 129 of the 644 would be included as stamp makers. By adding in the 774 already identified, we arrive at our estimate of 903 U.S. business stamp manufacturers. The all-time high was 2,790, based on the 2000 survey, but that number included many art stamp makers. If we look back to 2003's study, the number was a more realistic 2,200 or so. In 2010, the results suggested about 1,400 stamp makers, a decline of about 36 percent.

Our 2014 estimate of 903 U.S. business stamp manufacturers is a decline of 35.5 percent from our 2010 survey. As the industry has contracted, our definition of stamp makers has evolved over the years. We now recognize as “stamp makers” those for whom stamp making is a significant portion of their businesses. We don't include the stamp production of the individual locations of office supply stores that make 50 to 75 a year. While we know that this represents only a tiny number of stamps per year, if it is multiplied by thousands and thousands, there is an impact on the traditional industry. We also don't include the online stamps sold by these office supply stores, which are produced offsite by traditional stamp makers or in-house divisions.

We think the number represented by these sales is now well into the millions, making us very curious about the impact of the recently announced closings of many of these office supply store locations nationwide. Our guess is that the big box stores will continue to consolidate manufacturing to just a few locations around the country. Maybe

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some will start to think of themselves as being a part of this industry. That would be helpful for both the magazine and the Association. While we do have most of the major stationers on our list, they were not participants in the survey.

Our informal discussions with stamp industry vendors confirm the idea that the number of stamps made seems no longer to be in steep decline and certainly not at the pace of a few years ago. It rather appears to be shifting into the many outlets discussed above.

Let's return to the 903 stamp makers. Given the continuous updating of our subscriber list by our telemarketer and the ongoing Web searches we conduct, we think this number is not too far below the actual total. It is also given that most of the ones we missed are probably very small companies. So we will use that number as the basis for reviewing the survey results.

As you can see by the accompanying graphics, the questions were very simple. The results have emboldened us to start thinking about expanding the next survey to include more production information and a question about the number of dies manufactured. This process is very much like painting a house. There is a great deal of

preparation before you get to apply the first brush stroke. If you don't set up properly, the results won't be very good.

Typically, in years past, we have looked at average figures as we review the results. As an example, of the 200 companies surveyed, the average of the total gross stamp sales reported in 2013 was \$153,779. However, it may be more instructive to look at the median figure, that is, where one half makes less and one half makes more. This is a very logical step, considering that a few large stamp makers (\$1,000,000+ in sales) comprise a larger percentage of stamp production output than ever. The median figure for total gross stamp sales is \$72,000.

The possibility of skewed results for the averages in sales becomes greater as the industry consolidates. There are two potential reasons: first, that the sample is smaller and second, that those few companies making a million or more dollars in stamps have a greater likelihood of altering the results in a big way, even with 200 companies included in the survey. The addition of one \$5 million dollar company would add about \$25,000 to the average result, but it would have very little effect on the median.



	2013	2014 (Est.)
Average total gross stamp sales	\$153,779	\$156,937
Median total gross stamp sales	\$72,000	\$73,400



Looking back to the 2010 survey, the median for total gross stamp sales was \$118,000. The steep drop in the median from the previous study could mean a number of things. It could be that many of the middle-sized businesses have disappeared, either having gone out of business or having been bought up by another entity. The small sample size in 2010 is certainly a factor. It almost certainly skewed toward a representation of the industry—and the average and median figures for stamp shops—as much larger than they actually were. It may be that conducting the survey solely on the Internet was a factor as well. Some of the smaller companies may have felt less comfortable responding. It's possible that by using the more personal touch of a phone survey this year, we improved our response rate.

In this year's survey, only two companies out of 200 reported that they made more than \$1,000,000 a year in stamps. Projecting that on to the industry, that would mean that there are just nine companies selling more than \$1,000,000 in stamps annually—or just one percent.

In 2010, the number making \$1,000,000 or more was three out of 44. Taking the average of the 2010 and 2014 percentages, we come up with 3.9 percent. Applying that to our estimated 903 total stamp makers, we arrive at 35 companies that make \$1,000,000 or more in stamps.

While we know the 2014 survey representation that only one in a hundred of you makes more than \$1,000,000 a year in stamps is far too low, we know that one out of roughly 15 is too high. The estimate of 35 noted above is somewhat confirmed by consultations with stamp industry suppliers, who put the figure at 25–35 companies from their sales statistics.

So we continue with our compulsive need to guess at the national stamp sales figure by the rubber stamp manufacturing industry. Our guess is that it is somewhere in the neighborhood of \$200 million. We arrived at that number by taking the midpoint of the vendors' estimates of 25–35, which is 30.

To correct for the underrepresentation of the million-dollar-plus companies in the 2014 study, we must add 21 to the nine represented by the survey, making a total of 30.

After consulting with knowledgeable industry sources, we concluded that the average stamp sales of these large companies is roughly \$3 million dollars. The math then puts us at an industry sales total of about \$197 million.

In addition, the survey results indicate that the average total gross sales of all products and services, including stamps, was \$385,760 for 2013. The median was \$193,000. So the ratio of average to median is about the same for both total

2

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gross stamp sales and total gross sales of all products and services.

Stamps as a percent of sales

In 2009, stamp sales represented 48 percent of all sales. In 2014, stamps were just under 40 percent of all sales. This is a very sharp decline in just four years, but it also reflects the sale of many small stamp shops to larger, more diversified companies in the last few years. While this may seem like a huge drop, it is, in fact, fairly close to our historical averages. The all-time low was actually set in 2001 when stamps represented 36 percent of all sales. Stamps sales as a percent of business have been between 36 and 45 percent throughout the history of the survey, except for the tiny sample in 2010.

Wholesale versus retail

In 2010, the percent of stamps sold wholesale was 41 percent, with 59 percent of sales in retail. In an effort to cut down the time taken to complete the survey, we didn't ask this question this year. Should it make it on our list for next time? Let us know.

Pricing

As you might expect, pricing remains remarkably consistent. The average retail price for a traditional rubber stamp selling for \$12.00 in 2010 now sells for \$12.23. Overall prices appear to have nudged up just a few percentage points from 2010. Contrary to the belief of many, we have seen very little price difference based on company size over the years. This is one of the reasons why survey answers regarding pricing have remained consistent and we think, fairly accurate.

For the first time, we included flash as a separate category. Flash and other pre-inked stamps sell for about the same amount of money, retailing just below \$27 and wholesaling just below \$17. Discounts on pricing appear to be pretty consistent at just a few points below 40 percent. If the industry were truly falling apart as many fear, we believe it would be reflected in much lower prices, rather than in the noted modest increase. So we find this result encouraging.

Types

The traditional rubber stamp is down to just 15 percent of the total percentage



Be part of our next survey...

and you might be one of the lucky winners, like Paul Newhof of Richmond Stamp Works!

of units made. Pre-inks, including flash at 14 percent, have now risen to more than 18 percent of all stamps made. Self-inking stamps now make up 67 percent or about two-thirds of all stamps made in the USA.

Here again, averages are deceiving. The vast majority of shops do not make pre-inks. The ones that do tend to be much larger. In fact, they frequently make them for other stamp makers. If a shop doing \$1,000,000 in sales has 25 percent of its sales in pre-inks, that's \$250,000 a year. If a shop does not make pre-inks and does \$100,000 a year, it would appear by our survey reckoning that 12.5 percent of the stamps made by these two shops are pre-inks ($25\% + 0\%/2$). This average is misleading because the company sizes are not close to equal.

A better average would be gained by adding the gross sales of the two firms and dividing the sales of pre-inked stamps. In fact, the average would then be 22.7 percent. We would have divined a better representation of pre-inked stamp sales from the numbers if more of the pre-inked manufacturers had provided their sales figures.

Composition

It should come as no surprise that CorelDRAW ranks as the leading software for the creation of stamp artwork by a ratio of almost two to one over all others combined. Several companies used multiple platforms, and several declined to answer this question at all.

Forecast

The good news is that those surveyed in the industry are projecting about a two percent gain in stamp sales from \$153,799 in 2013 to \$156,937 for this year. Sales of all products and services are expected to rise from \$385,760 in 2013 to \$396,017 in 2014, a gain of about three percent. In this economy, we'll take it!

Conclusion

After years of decline, we are not sure whether the bottom has been found, but it seems certain that there has been a deceleration in the decline of stamps made. Just learning that the manufacturers themselves express optimism for sales growth in 2014 gives us some hope. Their projections indicate growth approximately in line with their other products and services. The fact that stamps remain a stable percent of stamp makers' businesses is also very positive.

Thanks again for your help in putting this survey together. We look forward to seeing where the industry has moved again in two years! M



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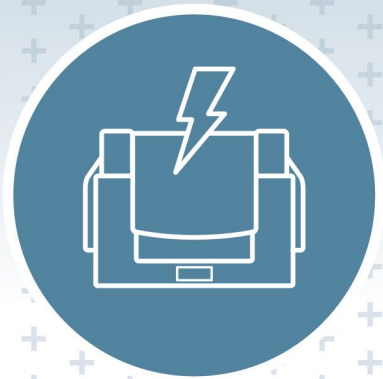
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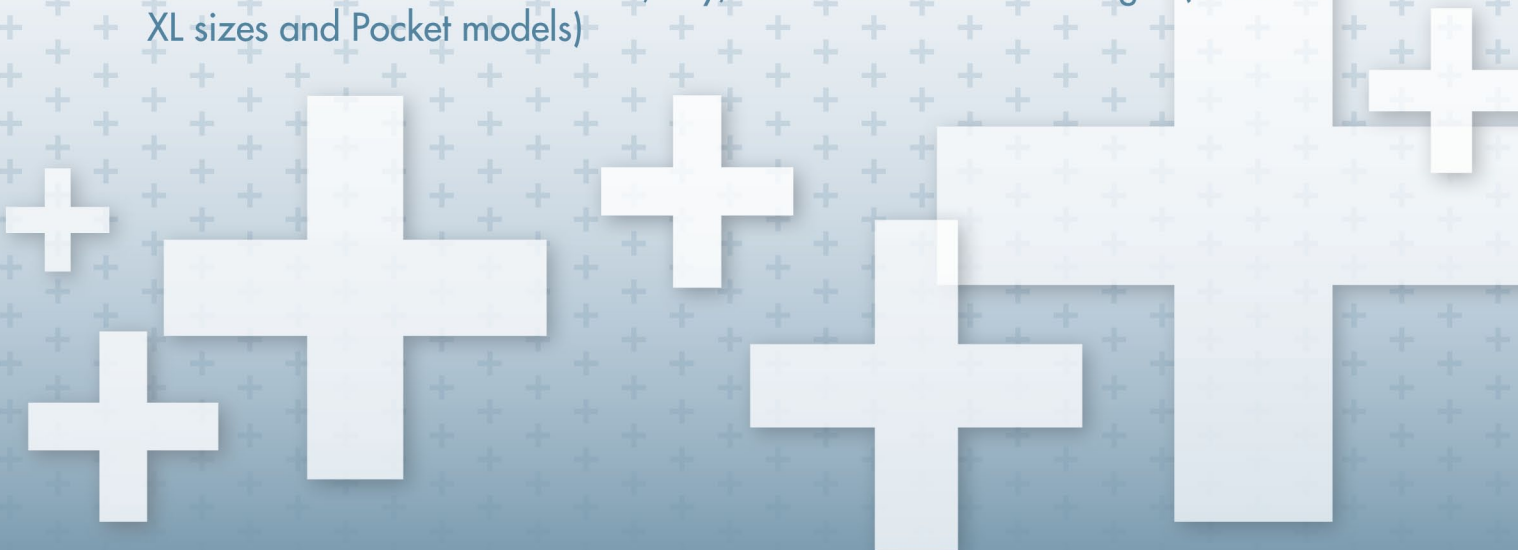
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STAMP SHOP MANAGER™: Step by Step

How to manage and create customers

by Becky Skelley

In this month's exploration of Stamp Shop Manager™, we'll focus on how to manage and create customers, a vital part of any successful online e-commerce business.

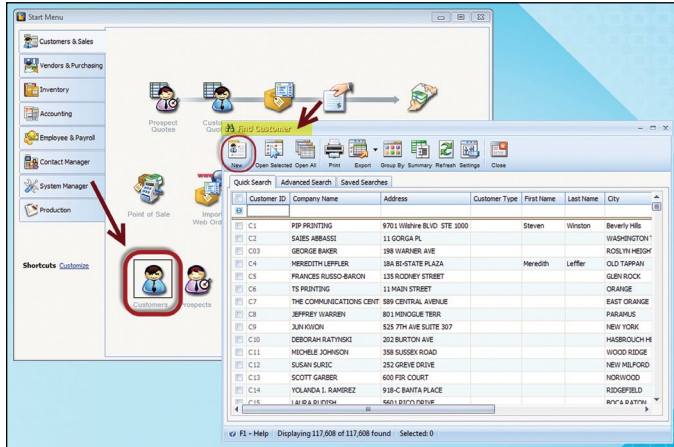
In this month's exploration of Stamp Shop Manager™, we'll focus on how to manage and create customers, a vital part of any successful online e-commerce business.

We will also examine the set-up process and important tools to help you better manage your customers. Customer Management is simple to use and includes a vast array of potential information that you can link to each individual customer. You might need to keep track of multiple contacts for one customer or company while also managing the specific

requests of another, and Manager can assist in both situations. Knowing more about these tools can also help you ease any confusion that may arise when the same customer orders via the Web and phone.

With customers correctly set up from the start, you'll be able to eliminate future errors and also manage them from your Stamp Shop Web site, making life a lot easier for your employees and customers. Let's begin with how to set up a customer in Manager.

Picture 1: Start Menu with Customers button and Find Customers window with New button.



Steps to follow

Begin by double-clicking the Stamp Shop Manager desktop icon or single-clicking the pinned icon on your task bar. Then, sign in to your company with your User Name and Password.

Customer Setup: New Customer Wizard

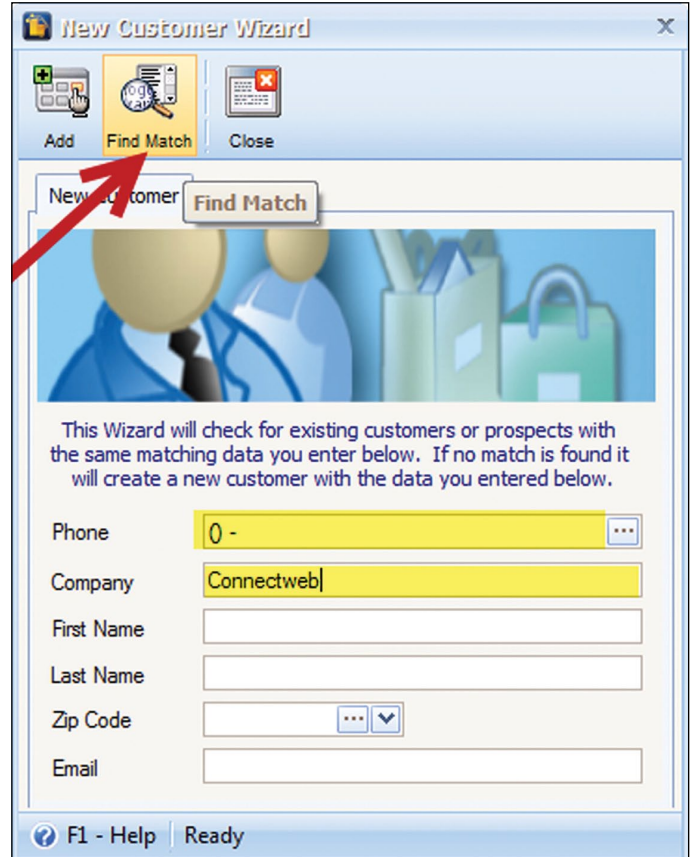
Once in Manager, under the *Start Menu*, click on the *Customers* button, and the *Find Customers* window will appear (see Picture 1). In the upper left hand corner of the *Find Customers* window, click on the *New* button.

Next, the *New Customer Wizard* will pop up (this happens only if you have turned on the *Use New Customer Wizard* in your user preferences.) You must enter at least a phone number and/or a company name. If you click on the *Find Match* button, you will be able to verify whether a customer with the same phone or company name exists in your database (see Picture 2). If you don't have the Wizard turned on and you click on the *New* button, you'll be taken directly to the *Customer* record screen, where all of the important data about the customer and his or her preferences are configured.

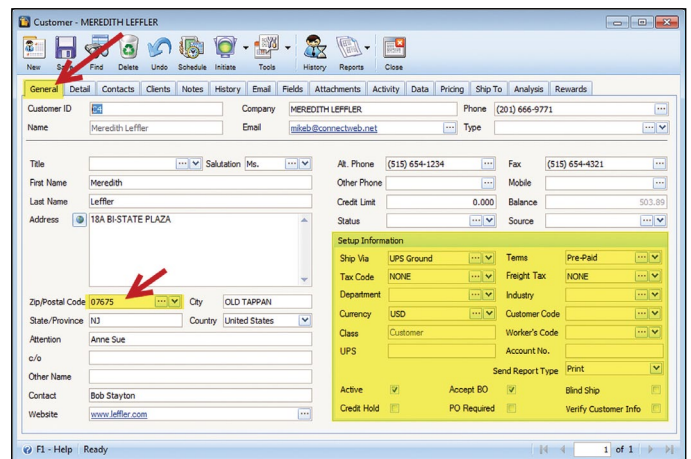
General tab

Within the *Customer* screen, there are 15 tabs across the top which allow you to store extensive customer details and establish special parameters for that client (see Picture 3). On the *General* tab, you'll see that the basic customer information is configured, including contact and address information. Because Manager includes more than 80,000 U.S. ZIP codes and over 800,000 Canadian post codes, when you enter the ZIP code, the city, state and country are automatically filled in

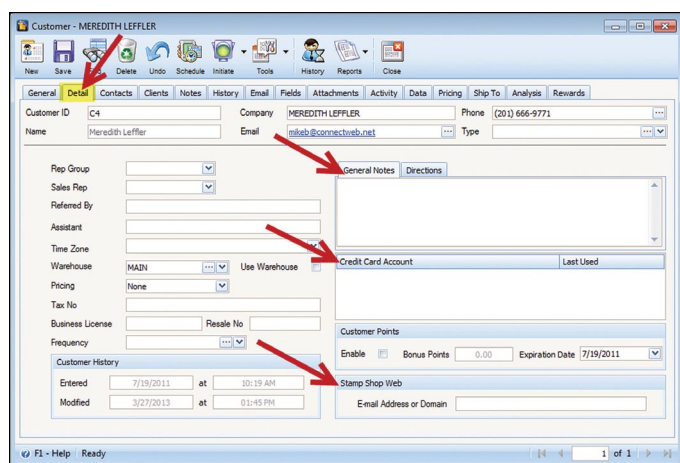
Picture 2: New Customer Wizard screen with Find Match button and Phone and Company name fields.



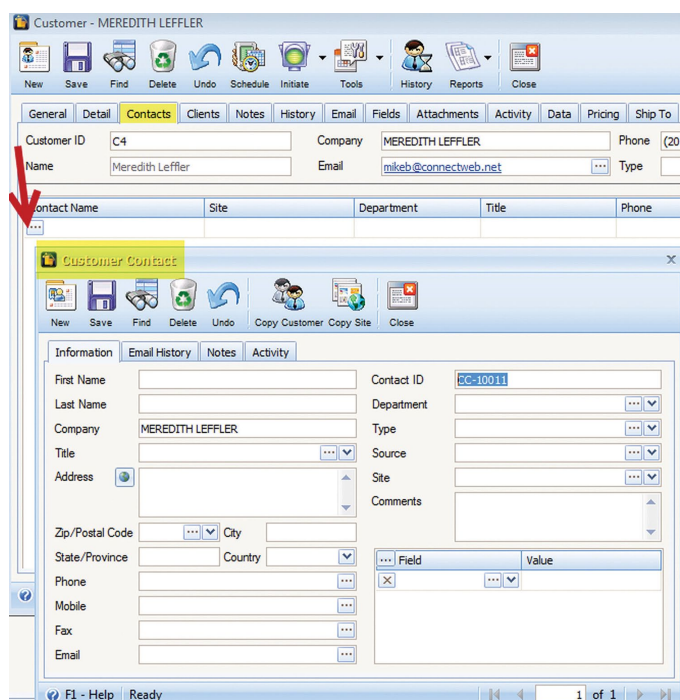
Picture 3: Customer window showing General tab, ZIP/postal code area and the Setup Information section.



for you. At the bottom on the right, you'll find the Setup Information section (see Picture 3). Here you can establish important options, such as the customer's appropriate tax rate (if any), as well as the default shipping method and other



Picture 4: Detail tab within Customer window, featuring the General Notes, Credit Card Account and Stamp Shop Web sections.



Picture 5: Customer window showing Contacts tab and the ellipsis (...) button. Once the ellipsis is selected, the Customer Contact window appears.

special circumstances. Let's look at this section in greater detail:

Setup Information

- **UPS**—Enter the customer's UPS or FedEx account number, and it will automatically be used for billing shipments.
- **Active**—Orders may be entered for this customer when this status is noted.
- **Accept BO (Back Orders)**—When checked, back orders can be created for this customer.
- **Blind Ship**—If this option is checked, when an order is created, Manager will print a packing slip instead of an order slip. Neither your company name nor any pricing information will appear on it. The shipping label will indicate that the package is coming from a dealer of yours to their customer.
- **Credit Hold**—With this option selected, no new orders for this customer may be placed until his or her bill is fully paid. Customers will automatically be placed on credit hold if the account is more than 75 days past due. As with everything in Manager, you can also adjust the timing of the hold according to your particular needs.
- **PO Required (Purchase Order)**—If this option is checked, an order cannot be processed without a purchase order (PO) number being entered.
- **Verify Customer Info**—When this option is checked, a sales representative from your company will be prompted to confirm contact details the next time this customer places an order.

Detail tab

Inside the *Detail* tab, there are three special areas (see red arrows in Picture 4). The *General Notes* section, the top area on the right side, contains handy reminders, such as "No stickers" or "This guy's picky. Wipe fingerprints." These notes will automatically pop up when a new order or invoice is created for this customer.

Directly below *General Notes* is the *Credit Card Account* section. If you're using the built-in credit card processing feature, the encrypted card information is stored here. You cannot access it, but you will be able to see that it is, for example, a Visa card ending in 3442, last used on April 20, 2014. If you need to pay an invoice, the card is automatically charged when you instruct the system to do so. Manager is fully PCI compliant and allows you to easily do recurring charges.

The third section is the Stamp Shop Web interface tie-in, located at the bottom on the right, where you'll see the *Email Address* or *Domain* field. To link a customer's website login to his or her particular account in Stamp Shop Manager, enter the appropriate email address or domain name here. When web orders are imported, they will then be added to this customer's account. If more than one person orders online for this customer, enter only the domain portion of the client's email address. Anyone with an email address in that domain ordering from your site will be linked to this customer's account in Manager.

Contacts tab

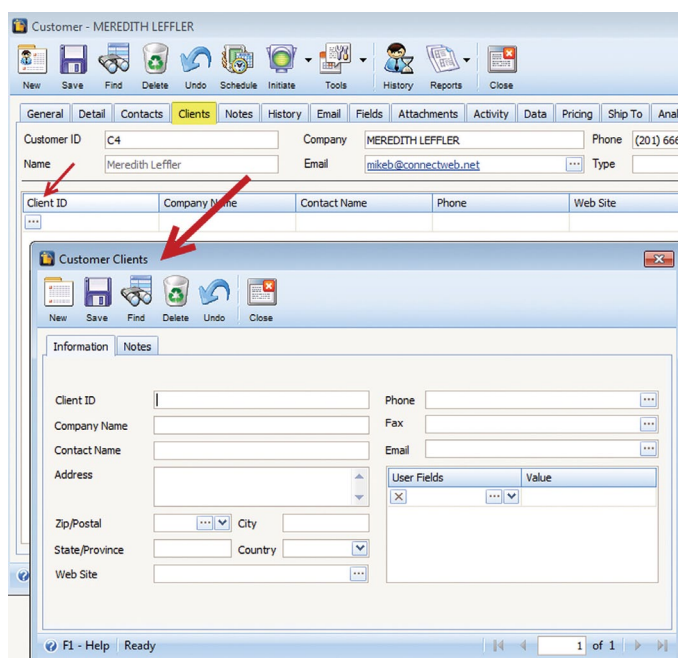
Within the *Contacts* tab, you can add specific information about the contact person for this particular customer. Click the ellipsis (...) button to view the *Customer Contact* window (see Picture 5). You can also enter additional contacts for this Customer ID. Once you have finished, click the *Save* button. Now you will see your new contact name within the first row.

Clients tab

Inside the *Clients* tab, you can add a *Client ID* for the customer. Click the ellipsis button in the corner, just as you did to add information about the contact person. Then the *Customer Clients* window will appear, and you'll be able to enter the general contact information for this client company (see Picture 6).

As you can see, the Customer Management tools within Manager are quite extensive. Stay tuned for our next installment, where we'll review the *Notes*, *History* and *Email* sections and more within the *Customers* window. Each tab holds valuable information for your interactions with customers, and we'll explain how to utilize each to your benefit. *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. 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 6: Customer window showing Clients tab, highlighted ellipsis under Client ID, and the Customer Clients window that appears.

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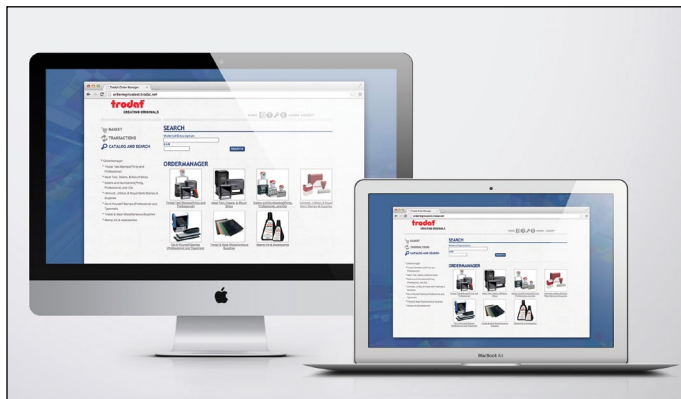
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Trodat USA launches Order Manager



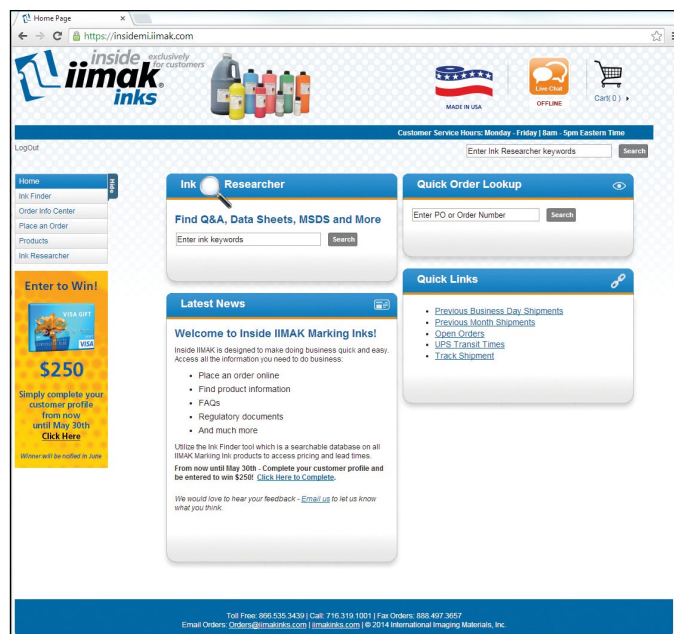
Trodat USA has launched a new state-of-the-art online ordering platform for rubber stamp makers to order their stamp components and manufacturing supplies. With three national distribution centers and more extensive phone support, Trodat has made it easier and faster for customers to place, track and receive their orders.

Order Manager can be brought up on the most popular Internet browsers and is tied directly into Trodat's inventory system. This provides customers the most accurate information possible on product availability and pricing. It also means customer orders go directly to the warehouse where they are picked, packed and on their way faster than ever before.

The real-time inventory information is set up as an easy-to-read, color-coded system. When a customer sees an item is "in the green," it is available and ready to order, and the system also reflects customer-specific pricing. In the interest of speed, Order Manager can save customer orders to help make re-ordering as easy as clicking the mouse button.

With Trodat's Order Manager, customers will save time through every step of the ordering process, and the less time spent ordering product means more time can be spent selling and growing their businesses.

To get started on Order Manager or arrange a demonstration, send an email to orders.us@trodat.net, or call your Trodat Regional Sales Manager.



IIMAK Inks launches website exclusively for stamp shops

IIMAK Inks, a global leader in the manufacturing and development of printing, imaging and marking consumable supplies, is excited to introduce the Inside IIMAK Marking Inks website, insidemiiimak.com, designed exclusively for stamp shops; it's a password-protected site that makes doing business quick, easy and convenient.

Customers are now able to access resources 24/7, including online ordering, product and application information, frequently asked questions, technical specifications, shipping details and much more. The site makes it easy to find AeroBrand™ inks for specific applications; by simply entering in keywords, customers have access to an extensive knowledge database that delivers product recommendations.

This is the first website of its kind in the industry and has already been gaining positive feedback. IIMAK Inks Customer Support Specialist Christine Block has been personally introducing many customers to the site: "Everyone I have talked to loves the site; they are excited to have MSDS, product recommendations and easy online ordering all right at their fingertips," states Christine. In addition to this website, IIMAK Inks has a dedicated customer service team available by telephone or email to assist in the order process, answer questions and provide the best service possible. This website portal is just another great service IIMAK Inks is pleased to extend to customers.

For more information, contact IIMAK Inks customer service at 866-535-3439.



Johnson Plastics adds Sublimatable Gallery Wrap

Johnson Plastics announces the addition of Gallery Wrap to its growing line of products for sublimation. This exciting new product makes prized photos look like rich oil paintings when they are sublimated onto Gallery Wrap's special canvas. The canvas is then stretched over a frame to create a stunning work of art similar to professional works of art displayed in galleries.

All necessary supplies are available from Johnson Plastics. The Gallery Wrap Corner Guide Starter kit contains four corner guides, four ounces of glue and 10 pins. Frame stretcher bars are available, depending on the size of your photo (8" x 10" or 11" x 17" bars are sold in kits, or 8", 10", 11" or 14" bars are sold in pairs). Pre-cut sublimatable canvas is available for 8" x 10" or 11" x 14" size portraits. (The actual pre-cut canvas size is 11" x 13" or 14" x 17" to provide the additional material needed to wrap around the frame.)

For more information about Gallery Wrap, visit www.johnsonplastics.com or call Johnson Plastics Customer Service at 1-800-869-7800.

Vision Engraving & Routing Systems presents new oscillating knife

Vision Engraving & Routing Systems announces its all new oscillating knife. By integrating an Oscillating Knife with its tried-and-true CNC routing systems, Vision gives customers the ability to cut semi-rigid materials with the precision, quality and ease of use its software and machines are known for.



Shop owners and businesses challenged by space and budget constraints will want to take a closer look at Vision's line of CNC routers and the many options available with them—options like the new oscillating knife, engraving head, high frequency router, high speed NSK spindle, Raster™ pen braille insertion tool, DACS (Digitally Aligned Cutting System) and UNIST misting system. These options allow Vision owners to do a variety of applications and work with a variety of materials, from stainless steel to single-ply cloth. Vision's ingenuity and robust systems allow its customers to do more with just one machine, saving space, time and money and finding new markets to increase their profitability!

With Vision's new oscillating knife option, you'll be able to work with a variety of non-rigid materials and applications, such as paper, foam, coroplast, foam board, gatorboard, cardboard, fabrics, leather, magnetics, wood veneer, laminates, pre-preg, cork, rubber, gaskets, carpet, felt, vinyl, foil and more.

Oscillating Knife construction:

- CNC machined, rugged full metal housing
- Precision-ground kinematics
- Multiple ball bearing drive motor
- Optoelectronic, non-contact and wear-free detection of the blade position

For more information about the new oscillating knife, or for questions about engraving and routing machines, contact the Vision sales office at 888-637-1737 or visit online at www.visionengravers.com.

Schwaab, Inc. announces new President Jeremiah McNeal

Schwaab, Inc., the largest manufacturer of custom marking and identification products in the country, is pleased to announce the appointment of Jeremiah McNeal as the new President.

McNeal has been promoted to succeed Douglas Lane, who served as President of Schwaab Inc. for the past 17 years. Mr. Lane announced his move to the role of Chief Executive Officer earlier this month, where he will continue to oversee the strategic direction of Schwaab, with less emphasis on day-to-day decision making.

"I am very excited and honored to be named President of Schwaab, a company which possesses such an excellent history and reputation," says McNeal. "Doug Lane has directed Schwaab to be one of the leaders in the custom products industry, and his legacy will be a very tough act to follow. Schwaab has fantastic employees and customers; I intend to grow in both of these areas by ensuring we are regarded as the go-to provider for custom product needs. It is crucial that we present our customers with an exceptional experience at every opportunity. My focus will be on ensuring that Schwaab achieves this by providing outstanding customer service and world class execution."

McNeal has over 14 years of facility management and operational experience in the distribution, printing and marking industries. He has been with Schwaab for six years, serving in a number of progressively diverse roles in the company. Previously, he held various roles with Banta Corporation and RR Donnelley, including management roles at two of its facilities in the Midwest. McNeal has a degree in Industrial Technology with an emphasis in Facilities Management from the University of Wisconsin-Stout.

For more information, contact Jeremiah McNeal, President, Schwaab, Inc., 11415 W. Burleigh St., P.O. Box 26069, Milwaukee, WI 53226; Email: mcneal@schwaab.com.



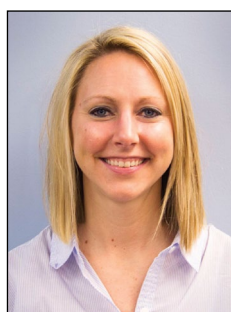
Rowmark appoints Doug Corbin as National Accounts Manager

Rowmark announces the appointment of Doug Corbin as Rowmark's National Accounts Manager. In this newly-created position, Doug will be responsible for building new market and product opportunities to help grow the company's Engravable Sheet and ClearPath Signage Systems divisions. He will be working closely with Rowmark's Authorized Distributors to develop, maintain and expand key customer relationships and ensure customer satisfaction.

Corbin brings a broad range of strategic business development, sales management and customer service experience in a variety of industries, including his past roles with BlueGold Technologies, Tube and Solid Tire Inc. and Cooper Tire Company.

"Doug's strong business development skills are a valuable addition to the Rowmark sales and product development team," Vice President of Sales and Business Development Rich Zydonik says. "He will be a key player in helping to expand Rowmark and its divisions into new markets and applications as we continue to launch the most cutting-edge products and technologies in the industry."

For more information, visit www.rowmark.com.



Rowmark appoints Sarah Metzger as Marketing Coordinator

Rowmark announces the addition of Sarah Metzger as Marketing Coordinator to its growing team. In her new role, she will support the company's aggressive sales and growth initiatives for both Rowmark and the company's PMC (Premier Material Concepts) division through a variety of marketing efforts, including market research, advertising, promotion and website development.

Metzger brings many years of experience in both B2B and B2C product marketing and sales from her past roles as

Assistant Brand Manager for Scotts Miracle-Gro Company and Associate Product Manager for Newell Rubbermaid.

"Sarah's expertise and proven sales and marketing strategies will provide critical support to Rowmark as we continue to experience significant, fast-paced growth through new customers, products and acquisitions," Vice President of Sales and Business Development Rich Zydonik states. "We are excited to welcome her to the Rowmark team and look forward to her contributions."

For more information, visit www.rowmark.com.

Trotec Laser, Inc. adds Tracy Tomes as Carolinas Sales Manager

Trotec announces the addition of Tracy Tomes as the Carolinas Territory Sales Manager. "We are excited about adding a new sales professional to our team," says Warren Knipple, President of Trotec Laser, Inc. "The addition of Tracy to the Trotec team will ensure that the customer base in these areas will have the highest level of customer service and allows Trotec to be more effective and responsive."



Tracy has over 10 years in the material handling and industrial automation industry before joining Trotec. He is a native of North Carolina and lives with his family in the Raleigh area. Tracy enjoys spending time at the beach and cheering on North Carolina sports teams. Please join us in extending him a warm welcome to the Trotec family.

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

JDS offers Rowmark® Hardwood Collection

JDS Industries, Inc. introduces the new Hardwood Collection of laserable wooden sheets from Rowmark®. This line of all natural, quality-constructed laserable wood substrates meets a wide variety of application needs, including architectural signage, craft and artistry projects, custom gifts, awards and more. The sheets are available in four woods: cherry, maple,

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red oak and walnut; all are procured from sustainable sources. Each is available in 12" x 24" sheets that are either 1/8-inch thick or 1/4-inch thick. The sheets are two-sided, free of open knots and natural voids and come without sealant or lacquer, allowing

users to stain the material to achieve the desired finish. The new Hardwood Collection is stocked in all 14 of JDS's nationwide warehouses.

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

New Punch'nPress available from Johnson Plastics

Johnson Plastics is introducing the new Punch'nPress key chain maker for everyone looking to add new revenue stream to their business. The press produces a customized key chain with any type of logo, icon or photo quickly, easily and economically.



The key chain blanks come in several different shapes and styles, both one- and two-sided.

The Punch'nPress is extremely easy to use. Just print the image on any desktop printer using ordinary or photo-quality paper, and then punch it out using the corresponding die cutter. Insert the printed image and lens into the key chain blank and

then into the assembly base on the press. Gently pull the press handle to permanently seat the image and lens into the key chain.

The Punch'nPress and all supplies are currently in stock and available from Johnson Plastics.

For more information, visit www.punchnpress.com.



Acrylic glue and applicator from LaserBits

Gluing an acrylic award is easy and will look professional by using the correct glue and applicator. LaserBits offers a top quality glue which is formulated for the type of acrylic common in awards. A special glue applicator creates a bubble-free bond of the acrylic pieces and features a non-sharp tip to apply the glue.

The acrylic glue forms an initial bond quickly with a full-strength bond in 24 hours.

For complete instructions on how to glue an acrylic award, visit the Tech Tip section of www.laserbits.com. Mm



More members of “The 100+ Years Club”!

Last month, we published a list of U.S. and Canadian stamp companies that have been in operation for over 100 years. Several companies got in touch to let us know that they belong on the list. Thank you for your interest in the magazine, and please accept our apologies for the oversight!

With the following additions in the chart below, there are now 50 stamp companies in business for more than 100 years! *M*

Company	City	State/Province	Website	Year Established
A.D. Perkins Company	New Haven	CT	www.adperkins.com	1876
Flint Rubber Stamp Works <i>A division of Rodzina Industries, Inc.</i>	Flint	MI	rodzinaindustries.com	1913
Hathaway Stamp & Identification	Cincinnati	OH	www.hathawaystamps.com	1901

Joining the club soon!

Company	City	State/Province	Website	Year Established
Grays Harbor Stamp Works	Aberdeen	WA	www.graysharborstamp.com	1916

Letter to the Publisher

Dear David,

In looking over the 100 Year+ list, it brought to mind many people I grew up with, both on and off it. I hope not to seem maudlin, but we grew up as part of a nationwide family. Sometimes those memories are as strong an incentive for going on as a strictly monetary one.

There was a note in the May article about Schwaab about how the industry survivors are either the large national companies or the small specialty companies, with the middle-sized companies suffering more. I would suggest that trend is a microcosm of what is going on in this country with the complicity of governments at all levels rearranging things in favor of their friends large and small—banks being “too big to fail” being one example—but in general, manipulating the available tax system for their friends and votes. It goes on in Texas as well as Illinois.

In trying to understand these realities, which are not new but are now becoming impossible except for the willfully blind or intentionally malicious not to notice, I started reading the classic authors on economics and human behavior, starting with Adam Smith. I would particularly recommend *Reflections on the Revolution in France* by Edmund Burke and *The Road to Serfdom* by Frederick Hayek. *Human Action* by Ludwig Von Mises is also excellent. One of the basic themes in the writings of these men is the inseparability of the free market and the inviolate right to private property and liberty. To them, freedom cannot exist where people are not allowed to make their own daily economic decisions and keep the results. I am getting really nerdy in my older age, but we did not study these ideas in school (and I went to a private prep school and have an M.A. in history). My ignorance has been great and in the general public, it is appalling. We will only get out of this mess if people learn and accept what needs to be done to rescue their freedom. Go forth, learn and spread the word.

Bill Gribble

Gribble Stamp & Stencil Co.

Houston, TX

INDUSTRY INDICATOR

by David Hachmeister

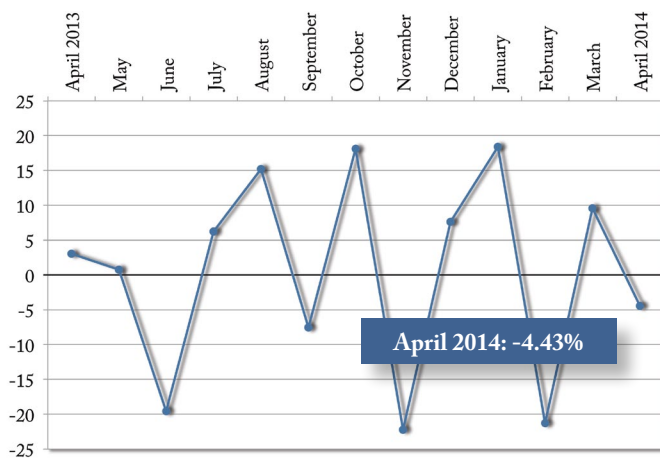
April showers

If there are April showers, shouldn't there be May flowers? We'll find out next month. Stamp sales dropped 4.43 percent from the previous month, reversing the gain from the previous

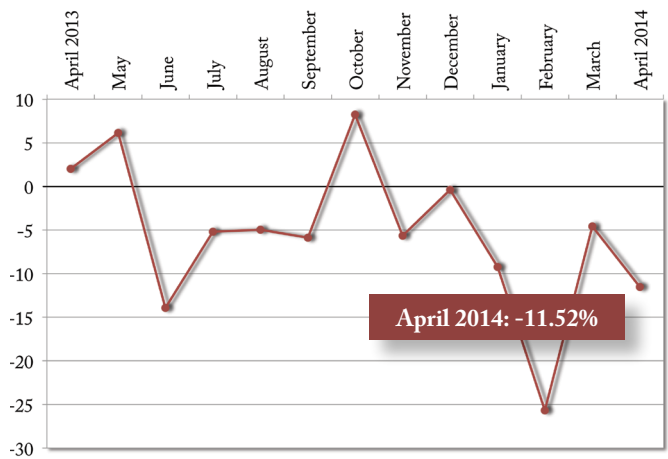
month. They fell 11.52 percent from the prior-like month. Other product sales rose 9.17 percent and are now on a five-month winning streak! **M**

Stamps only

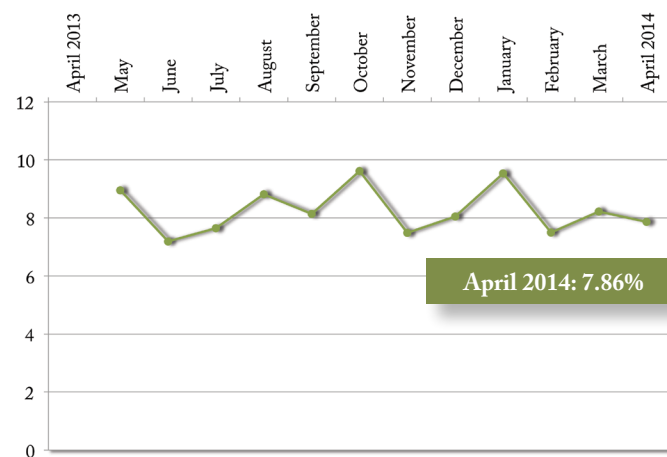
Monthly Sales—Gain/Loss Percentage



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

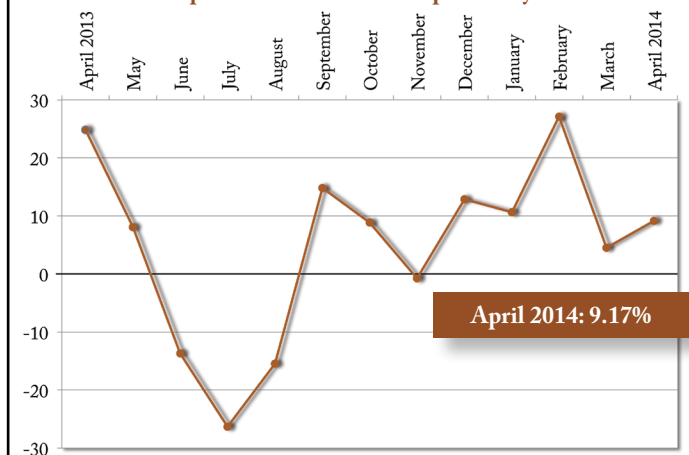


Percent of Annual Sales by Month (illustrating seasonality)



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

Potpourri

We hope you will read the industry survey that begins on page 8. It is very important to get accurate industry data to help quantify trends and plan for the future. This year, we think we have a much more accurate survey than we have had for some time. Clearly, the sharp recession and ongoing malaise have hurt the industry. The industry has been in slow decline for some time anyway; the conditions of the past few years haven't helped. The previous 2010 study appears to have been far too sanguine as to the state of the industry. Your suggestions on questions for the next study would help us quite a bit.

While we are at it, through our other business, we found a great SEO company. Won't mention it by name in print, but you know how to find us to find out. For \$500 a year, we got our other company moved up from four or five pages deep within the search engine results to the first page of virtually all of them in just a few days. In the past,

we had paid another company that much in a month to optimize the business, with little more than a hole in our pocket as the end result.

As the search engines are factoring in local options more strongly, we think whatever hesitancy you have had regarding marketing on the Web needs to be overcome. You really do have a chance against the national big boys in your local market, but you do have to make at least some effort. We will gladly share this with you, if you contact us.

The Internet remains a bit crazy, and reliability is always open to question, but censoring it is still a far worse option. Used properly, it really can help your business. Take it from us—you don't have to be that savvy to make it work on your behalf. We used to rely entirely on our tech consultants for everything, but as the Web has matured (sort of), it has become easier for the average person to use. Even people like us! Mmm



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~George Washington

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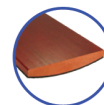
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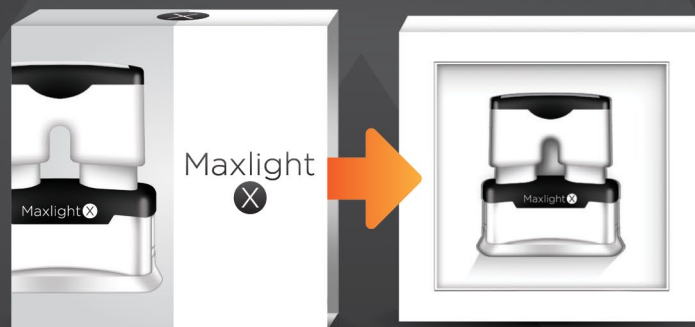
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