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MARKING INDUSTRY

magazine

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CONTENTS

July 2014 • Volume 109 • Number 10

Features

8 2014 Bronze Manufacturer of the Year: *Bend Rubber Stamp & Printing, Bend, Oregon*

by Anne Shadis

Congratulations to Bend Rubber Stamp & Printing, winner of the Bronze Manufacturer of the Year award!



14 Stamp Yo Face: Custom rubber stamps make a strong impression

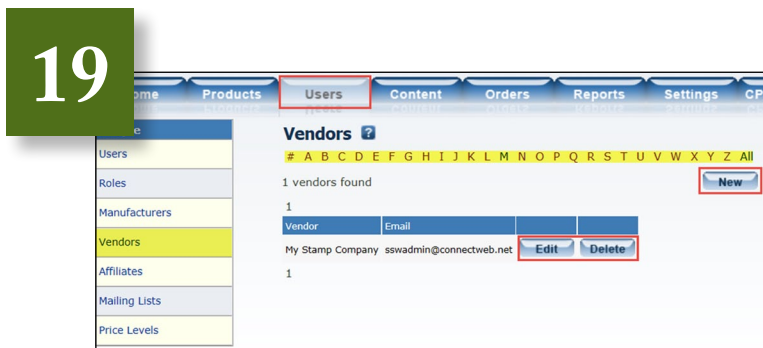
by Joe Stumpe, correspondent, The Wichita Eagle

By combining their artistic talents with an innovative idea, Kevin Wildt and Hannah Scott have created a stamp business beyond their expectations!

19 Stamp Shop Web™: How to work within the Users tab, Part 2

by Amanda Katon

Welcome back to Part 2 of working within the Users tab! This month, we will finish our review of the Users tab by showing you how to set up and maintain your vendors, affiliates and mailing lists. We'll discuss the differences between manufacturers and vendors and explain how the affiliate program/system works.



Departments

24 News

28 Industry Indicator

29 Industry Impressions

30 Advertisers

30 Classified

30 Trade Service Ads

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Bend's downtown area



Photo on right: © 2013 Dustin Mitsch/Alpen Exposure

All other photos by David Hachmeister

2014 Bronze Manufacturer of the Year: *Bend Rubber Stamp & Printing, Bend, Oregon*

by Anne Shadis



*Congratulations to Bend Rubber Stamp & Printing,
winner of the Bronze Manufacturer of the Year award!*

With the Cascade Mountains rising majestically to the west, the town of Bend is a picturesque community of 80,000 in central Oregon. Along Bond Street, you'll find Bend Rubber Stamp & Printing, one of the oldest businesses in the thriving downtown area and *Marking Industry Magazine's* 2014 Bronze Manufacturer of the Year. For 30 years, this local business has manufactured marking devices and provided commercial printing services,

while emphasizing customer service and personal attention to its loyal, longstanding customers.

After 10 years in a family-owned construction company, Butch De Gree was at a crossroads, looking for a new opportunity. Turning to his accountant for advice, he was given the name of a rubber-stamp and printing business on the market. After purchasing it, he set to work learning the ins and outs of his new career and recalled: "The

Owner Butch De Gree in the production area of the shop



Butch manufactures stamps using a photopolymer plate maker and resin.



rubber stamp part was mechanical, so I figured that out. But then when my pressman quit, that made things really interesting. I had a friend in the printing business, and he put me in line with this guy, who had another job in printing. He would come in after 5 o'clock and show me how to run the press. We did that for about a month to where I knew

what I was doing. But it was touch and go for a while. I had to learn on the go. But I hung in, worked hard and did it for about five years by myself." As the business grew in the early years, Butch was able to hire a staff member to handle stamp production and another to operate the press, freeing him up to concentrate on sales.

Today, the business is a two-man operation, with Butch and his employee, Aaron Fields, handling stamp and printing production, as well as fielding questions from customers stopping in during the day. Primarily retail-based, the business serves customers from the Bend area and two other surrounding communities, Redmond and Prineville, within 40 miles. According to Butch, printing comprises 60 percent of the business, and rubber-stamp sales make up the other 40 percent.

They offer computer-design services and print brochures, letterhead, envelopes, restaurant menus, sales forms and business cards. They've also benefited from several health spas opening in the area, which put in orders for a whole range of printed pieces, such



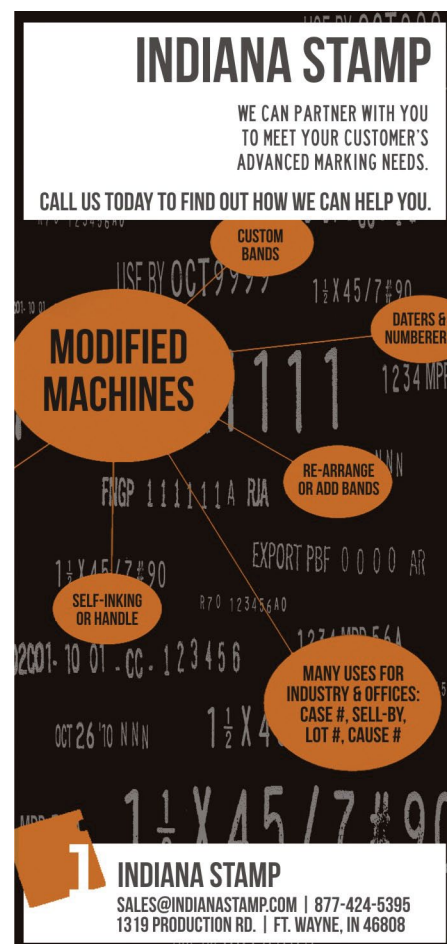
Butch and Aaron Fields (far right) consult with customers about projects in the works.

To set itself apart from the big box office supply stores, the business promotes one-day service for stamps and

quick repair. As Butch explained, “We can make any size custom stamp, and if there’s something wrong with it, we fix it right away. I don’t argue over rubber stamps... if I made a mistake or they made a mistake. If it’s in the computer, I fix it. It makes for a good relationship.” Bend Rubber Stamp also offers free re-inking of its stamps, a selling point



Butch displays some old stamp molds.



A view of the contents of an old type drawer.



that generates repeat business from appreciative customers. Butch added that it's an opportunity to educate customers on the perils of buying stamp ink from large office supply chains, which often sell ink products that are not suited for certain stamps and applications.

Using a photopolymer plate maker and resin, Butch and Aaron manufacture a variety of stamps, including many art stamps for potters to use on their ceramic creations. At a popular upcoming outdoor event, Pole Paddle Pedal, involving skiing, biking, canoeing and running, the winners' handcrafted awards will feature corporate logo stamps made by Bend Rubber Stamp.

The local business community is bustling, thanks to an active downtown association, which recently upgraded the sidewalks to improve the area's overall look. Many small, independent businesses line the streets, and the downtown occupancy is at 94 percent. Butch added that the association regularly arranges special events to increase business traffic, commenting, "Around downtown Bend, you won't see one chain store. And this downtown is a pretty nice one. In a lot of towns this size, the downtown is dead. This town is really going. On Saturdays and Sundays, this town is packed—you can't find a parking place. And on the first Friday



Still in operation on a weekly basis, the 1903 Linotype press is used primarily to print and die cut door hangers and sees a lot of activity during election time.

of the month, there's an Art Hop, where artists pair up with local businesses that display their artwork. The artist and business might serve beer or wine, and then people walk from business to business looking at the art. It's packed for that, too."

Behind the front counter at Bend Rubber Stamp's store, the well-lit work room is filled with manufacturing equipment that spans the decades, from a retired Ludlow type cabinet and a 1903 Linotype press still in use to a Xerox digital printer. Describing himself as a nostalgic guy, Butch noted that he can't get rid of all the old matrix boards and admitted that he misses the days of the Ludlow a bit: "It was a real art, once you knew how to do it. Pick it, set it, put it back and then create curved stamps. I took great pride in that—if I could make a big, curvy stamp."

He credits Aaron with being the "wizard" of the current digital printing technology used in the business and a key component in providing great one-on-one service that incorporates design and printing expertise. Butch stated, "Customers can come in here and talk to Aaron. They'll provide an initial layout, he'll go back and design it, and then print out a proof for them. They don't have to come back and forth, and they're dealing with the same guy. And if it's offset, he knows what they want—the customer doesn't have to go through a designer or the pressman. He's been face to face with them—it's one-stop shopping." The business offers design services for printed pieces and stamps at a much less expensive rate than local graphic designers would charge.

Reflecting on the joy he derives from his 30-year-old business in this lively town, Butch remarked, "What I like the most is that there's something different every day. It's creating something new every day. It's fun when you can take something from scratch and turn it into something nice." *M*

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Kevin Wildt and Hannah Scott started Stamp Yo Face, which makes custom rubber stamps, earlier this year.
Website: stampyoface.com

Photo credit: Joe Stumpe, Eagle correspondent

Stamp Yo Face: Custom rubber stamps make a strong impression

by Joe Stumpe, correspondent, The Wichita Eagle

By combining their artistic talents with an innovative idea, Kevin Wildt and Hannah Scott have created a stamp business beyond their expectations!

Kevin Wildt and Hannah Scott started Stamp Yo Face thinking they might make enough money for a European vacation.

With a backlog of orders and national attention coming their way, their custom hand-drawn rubber stamp business is looking more like a full-time undertaking.

"It's been way above and beyond what we expected," Scott said.

Wildt got the idea for the stamps after seeing some similar stamps that a graphic artist had produced. He immediately thought of Scott's talent for sketching people.

Scott will graduate from Wichita State University with a degree in fine

Continued on page 18

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Continued from page 15

arts next fall, while Wildt's background is in photography and videography.

Scott does the drawing for each stamp from photographs that customers provide. The sketch is sent back to the customer for approval, then a laser etcher is used to cut the image into a rubber stamp, as well as a block of maple that the stamp is attached to.

"The thing we're proud of is we're doing it all ourselves," Wildt said.

The pair do credit a friend with bringing their work to the attention of a blogger from New York who's well known in the design world. From there, other bloggers started writing about Stamp Yo Face. That, in turn, led to a blurb in *O* magazine's June issue.

People use the stamps for a variety of purposes, from letters, business cards and invoices to invitations, save-the-date cards and thank-you notes. Wildt said the stamps appeal to "people who like to extend their brand. They're kind of quirky."

They're also turning out to be popular gifts.

"Some people don't know what to use them for, but they're like, 'I don't care, they're awesome anyway,'" Scott said.

Each stamp comes with an ink pad, the original sketch made by Scott, a digital copy of the sketch and a surprise. The stamps are 1 inch by 1 inch in size for individual portraits, twice that size for couples. The stamps cost \$65 for an individual and \$100 for a couple. Cheaper stamps are also available with quote marks, dog bones and other objects. Quite a few customers have stamps made with their pets on them.

Currently, most of the orders are coming from outside the city and state. The turnaround time has grown from two weeks to 12 as orders have flooded in. The pair are thinking about expanding their product line to include more colors or ink as well as paper products.

Scott said the demand for their product, launched just three months ago, has caused them to get familiar with shipping and other aspects of running an Internet business in a hurry. For instance, they think their stamps may be worth a little more than what they're currently charging.

"We're learning everything we're doing, every step of the way." ■■■

The Wichita Eagle, *Thursday, May 22, 2014* © McClatchy. Used under License.



STAMP SHOP WEB™: Step by Step

How to work within the Users tab, Part 2

by Amanda Katon

Welcome back to Part 2 of working within the Users tab! This month, we will finish our review of the Users tab by showing you how to set up and maintain your vendors, affiliates and mailing lists. We'll discuss the differences between manufacturers and vendors and explain how the affiliate program/system works.

The Mailing lists feature is an excellent way to spread the word about a business or special sales promotion that you might run on your online store. Stamp Shop Web™ offers many options for enhancing your business, and the ones described here round out that list! Let's move right into the *Vendors* section of the *Users* tab to learn how to use this feature.

Vendors

To begin, first sign-in to the admin area of your Stamp Shop Web™ site. Once logged in, click the *Users* tab and then the *Vendors* link. You will see the *Vendors* screen where you can create, edit and delete vendors on your website (see Picture 1).



Picture 1: Vendor link main screen under the Users tab—View, edit and delete

Create New Vendor

Create New Vendor

Vendor Name: My Stamp Company

E-mail Address: sswadmin@connectweb.net

Country: United States

Email Address: sswadmin@connectweb.net

First Name: Connectweb

MI:

Last Name: Stamp Shop Web

Company: Connectweb Technologies

Address: 20 Webster Street

City: Peabody

State: Massachusetts

Zip: 01960

Phone: 800-556-9932

Fax: 978-531-7702

Your Web Site: stampshopweb.com

Address Type: Both

Cancel Save Changes

Picture 2: Create New Vendor information screen

Home Products Users Content Orders Reports Settings CPD Co

People

Users

Roles

Manufacturers

Vendors

Affiliates

Mailing Lists

Price Levels

Affiliates

Found 2 Affiliates

New

Name	Edit	Delete
Affiliate 1	Edit	Delete
Affiliate 2	Edit	Delete

1

Picture 3: Affiliates link main screen—view, edit or delete affiliates

Vendors are similar to manufacturers except that vendors are those businesses that produce certain products for your store. For example, maybe your shop manufactures all of its own stamps, but another shop/company produces your embossing seals or promotional products. On your website, you will need to associate the product that you do not make in-house with the vendor that produces it.

Within the *Vendors* link, you will notice the alphabet across the top of the screen. To view specific vendors, click on the letter that represents the first letter of the vendor's name, and all vendors whose names begin with that letter will appear. Click the word *All* at the end of the alphabet to view the entire list of vendors (see Picture 1, page 19).

Creating New Vendors

To create a new vendor (which is similar to creating new manufacturers), click the *New* button below the alphabet on the *Vendors* main screen (see Picture 1, page 19). This will take you to a screen where you can enter your vendor's contact information (see Picture 2). It's also the same screen that appears when you edit a vendor. When you've finished adding the details, click the *Save Changes* button to save your new vendor for use in association with products.

Editing and Deleting Vendors

To edit or delete a vendor, click the *Edit* or *Delete* button to the right of the vendor's name on the *Vendors* main screen (see Picture 1, page 19).

Affiliates

Affiliates are a great way to attract more business through your online store. In certain cases, some people would also consider an affiliate a dealer. The *Affiliates* function allows you to link up with other stores that would like to sell your product. Within the *Affiliates* link, you can create and manage affiliate (see Picture 3).

In this section, you can establish a commission amount for the affiliate and automatically generate a link unique to that affiliate that can be placed on their website. You can even create a separate style sheet or theme for the affiliate link to make it look like the affiliate's main site, but with your products for sale. To have the theme remain visible through

the entire shopping experience, a private SSL certificate is required. Contact Connectweb Technologies for more information on private SSL certificates.

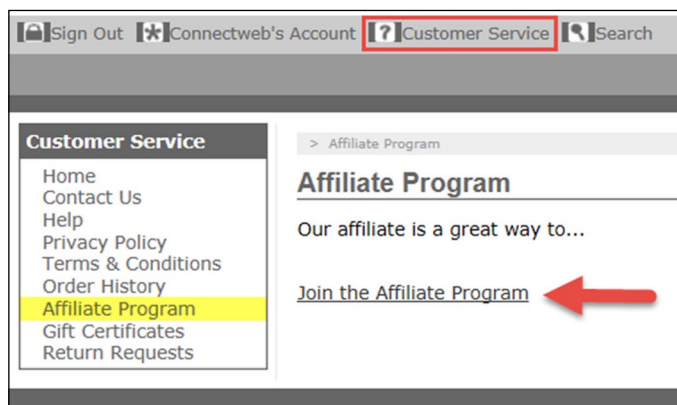
HELPFUL TIP: To allow your customers to sign up as affiliates of your website, you will first need to activate the *Enable Sign Up Form* (see Picture 4). Go to the *Settings* tab and then click on the *Affiliates* link (within the *Settings* menu on the left). Check the box next to *Enable Sign Up Form* and then click the *OK* button at the bottom of the page. Customers can access this sign-up form under the *Customer Service* (Contact Us) link on your website (see Picture 5). On the left hand side is a link called *Affiliates Program*. Please note that this setting does not need to be turned on in order for you to set up affiliates; it is an option to allow your customers to sign up to become an affiliate.

Creating New Affiliates

To create a new affiliate, click the *New* button at the top of the *Affiliates* main screen (see Picture 3). This will take you to a screen where you can then enter your affiliate's



Picture 4: Setting to enable affiliate sign-up form in the admin of your website



Picture 5: Customer view for Affiliate Program sign up

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Edit Affiliate ?

Web Site URL

Affiliate Name

Affiliate E-Mail

Commission Type

Commission Amount

Referral Days

Link For Affiliate

Discount Type

☐ percentage off List Price

☐ amount off List Price

☒ percentage off Site Price currency amount

☐ amount off Site Price

☐ percentage above Site Cost

☐ amount above Site Cost

Country

Email Address *

First Name

MI

Last Name

Company

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone

Fax

Address Type

Tax ID Number

Driver's License Number

Picture 6: Information screen to create a new affiliate

information, including their website URL, name, email, address, commission and other details (see Picture 6). When you've finished, click the *OK* button to save your new affiliate.

Editing and Deleting Affiliates

To edit or delete an affiliate, click the *Edit* or *Delete* button to the right of the affiliate's name on the *Affiliates* main screen (see Picture 3, page 20).

Mailing Lists

Under the *Users* tab, you can also create and utilize *Mailing Lists* (see Picture 7). This feature was not built to handle large email blasts to thousands of email addresses. However, it is an ideal tool for smaller customer group mailings. Within the *Mailing Lists* link, you will be able to view, edit, and send emails to your mailing list members.

Adding a New Mailing List

To add a new mailing list to your site, type in a name for the list in the field next to *List Name*, and click the *New* button (see Picture 7). The list will then be added to the section below. To edit a list, click the *Edit* button directly to the right of the list name.

Now that you're inside the *Edit Mailing List* page, you can manage the mailing list (see Picture 8). First, you can change the name of the mailing list or set it to be private by checking the box. You can also edit which users are members of this particular list. To add user email addresses to the list, find their user account in the right column, select their account by checking the box next to their username and click the *Add* button. This will move their account into the *Members* column on the left. When you are finished editing the mailing list, click the *Save Changes* button in the middle of the page.

Home Products Users Content Orders Reports

People

Users

Roles

Manufacturers

Vendors

Affiliates

Mailing Lists

Price Levels

Mailing Lists ?

Add New Mailing List

List Name

Private ☐

1 Lists Found

List Name	Edit	Delete	E-mail
Store Mailing List	<input type="button" value="Edit"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete"/>	<input type="button" value="E-mail"/>

Picture 7: Mailing Lists link main screen—create, edit and delete lists or send an email

Emailing members of your mailing list

To send an email to members of your mailing list, click the *Email* button located within the row of the mailing list name (see Picture 7). On the screen that appears next, you are given options for creating your email (see Picture 9).

Send Email

Format: Select whether you want your email sent as *Text* or *HTML*.

From: Indicate the sender's email address; this can be changed to display any existing email address.

Subject: Add a subject line here.

Message: Enter the content of your email in this area.

Once you've created your email, send the message to all the members of your mailing list by clicking the *Email* button.

This concludes our review of working within the *Users* tab. Vendors and affiliates contribute to your business, and setting them up to coordinate with your online store will enhance your workflow and increase your sales. Though mailing lists are not intended for large mass mailings, they can be used to send special promotional offers or information to small groups of customers.

If you have any questions regarding your websites, feel free to contact Technical Support at 800-556-9932 or support@cwebtechnologies.com. Stay tuned for next month's Stamp Shop Manager™ installment, as we discuss "Working with customers, Part 2"! Mm

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

Picture 8: Set-up screen to create a new Mailing List for your website

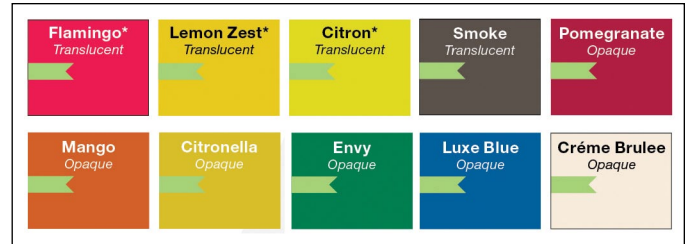
Picture 9: Emailing members of a Mailing List—create/design email screen



JDS introduces Pinnacle Acrylic Awards

JDS Industries, Inc. introduces a new style of acrylic awards. The new Pinnacle Acrylics are self-standing, 1-1/8 inch thick acrylic awards in a triangle shape. The wide beveling on the back of the acrylic reflects the gold or blue color from the bottom throughout the entire piece, creating a dramatic award. The high perceived value of these awards makes them perfect for recognizing achievement in the corporate market. The Pinnacle Acrylics are available in two sizes: 8 inches and 9 inches, as well as three color combinations: black/gold, clear/gold and clear/blue. A sample set is available for each color, and the Pinnacle Acrylics are 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; Web: www.jdsindustries.com.



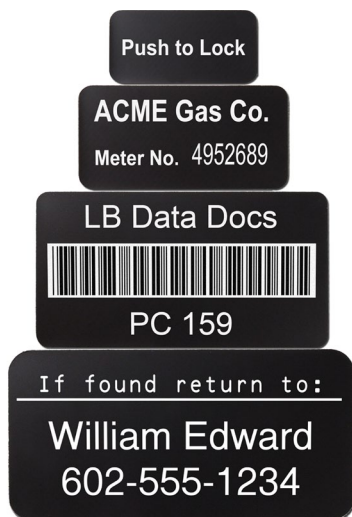
Rowmark launches trendy new ColorHues products

Rowmark announces the launch of 10 brilliant new colors as part of the ColorHues™ product line, in response to its continued popularity and increased use in tactile and ADA compliant sign-making, POP projects, custom gift applications and more.

Rowmark continues to closely monitor the latest color trends to meet the changing needs of the industry and offer the hottest products available to expand customers' design options for a growing range of visually dynamic projects. The company's new trending ColorHues™ products include three translucent colors with gloss on both sides (Flamingo, Lemon Zest, Citron), one translucent color with matte on one side and gloss on one side (Smoke) and six opaque colors with matte on one side and gloss on one side (Creme Brulee, Luxe Blue, Mango, Pomegranate, Citronella, Envy).

In addition to design, illumination is a popular effect used today for enhancing signage projects. The enhanced translucency of select products in Rowmark's ColorHues™ line, including Glass Green, Ice Blue, Flamingo, Lemon Zest and Citron, make them well-suited for edge lighting applications. "Edge-lit" technology or "edge glow" is an effect created when light focused on a sign's edge is evenly diffused across its surface for uniform illumination.

For more information about Rowmark's ColorHues™, visit www.rowmark.com.



DuraBlack plates available from LaserBits

DuraBlack is a black metal sheet stock that engraves a bright silver white color with a laser. DuraBlack is not an ordinary anodized aluminum; in fact, it is many

times more durable and has survived the harshest temperature, UV and corrosion testing. DuraBlack produces high resolution results and is ideal for text, photos, identification codes and many other demanding applications. This material surpasses UID standards for durability and readability in the harshest of environments. It comes in four sizes, as individual plates with 3M adhesive. All plates have rounded corners.

Visit www.laserbits.com for more information.

JP introduces new Advantage DK20S Heat Press

Johnson Plastics has introduced its JP Advantage DK20S heat press. A significant improvement to the Geo Knight Digital Knight DK20S heat press, the Advantage DK20S will make pressing T-shirts much easier.

JP's most popular 16 × 20 machine, the DK20S press is well known in the industry as the top-end workhorse of all swing away heat presses. Now Johnson Plastics has made it even better. The JP Advantage DK20S, which is available only from Johnson Plastics, has an upgraded bottom platen which allows front end T-shirt loading for improved speed during T-shirt production. Production speed with Geo Knight quality. That is the JP Advantage.

Johnson Plastics is a premier distributor of materials and supplies for the engraving and sublimation industries, with eight strategically-located offices throughout the United States.

For more information, visit www.johnsonplastics.com or call 1-800-869-7800.



Rowmark appoints Jordan Drerup as Marketing Coordinator

Rowmark announces the addition of Jordan Drerup 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. "As Rowmark continues to rapidly grow our business and expand into new markets, Jordan will provide critical support to many key marketing and promotional efforts," Vice President of Sales and Business Development Rich Zydonik says. "We are excited to welcome her to the Rowmark team and look forward to her contributions."

For more information, visit www.rowmark.com.

New developer hired by Connectweb Technologies, Inc.



Connectweb Technologies, Inc.

Connectweb announces the addition of a new

developer to the Connectweb Family: Matthew Power. Matt is a programming genius. With nearly 10 years of programming experience, Matt brings a lot of talent to the development team. He is a graduate of University of Massachusetts Boston, where he studied Philosophy and Religion. In 2010, he started his own corporation, Celerus Corporation. He specializes in making large things very small—proprietary compression and encoding algorithms primarily for the compression of e-books. Aside from developing, Matt enjoys donating to good causes, such as the Diaperfund.org, for which he is a monthly sponsor. He also enjoys writing books and essays.

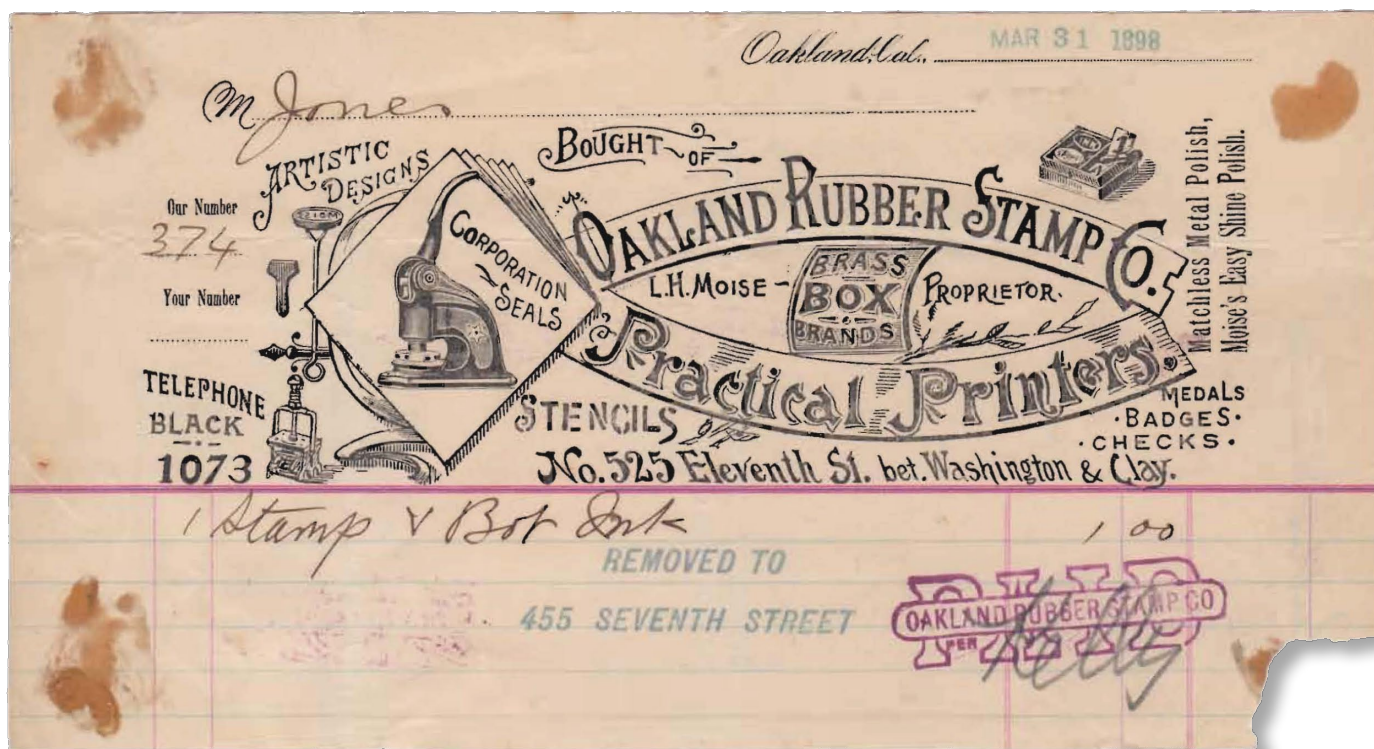
For more information, contact Connectweb, 800-556-9932; Web: www.cwebtechnologies.com.



Clarification

Paul Avakian of Oakland Rubber Stamps contacted *MIM* recently. He wanted to note that Oakland Rubber Stamps has been in continuous operation as a rubber stamp business since 1898. Since 2005, the company has been one of several businesses that make up Bay Stamp & Engraving, while maintaining a separate address and identity. He also shared this beautifully ornate receipt from 1898. Thanks, Paul!

Bay Stamp & Engraving
Oakland Rubber Stamp Co.
Berkeley Marking Products
San Francisco Stamp & Seal
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Alameda, CA 94501
510-523-7292
www.baystamp.com



Blast from the past!

In the process of compiling the list of companies over 100 years old, the staff at Marking Devices dug into the archives and discovered some cool stuff! Here's what stamp manufacturers found within the June 1892 issue of *The Commercial Stamp Trade Journal*, their industry trade publication. *Mlm*

6 The Commercial Stamp Trade Journal



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Orders Promptly Filled.**

Price, \$15, Net.

THE LIGHTNING CHECK PUNCH.

\$100\$

Regardless of Price, the Best Punch on the Market.

In a test of speed 12 checks were punched in one minute. The Edison General Electric Co., purchased 13 of these Punches.

It is used by The American Express Co., and thousands of banks and business houses. ✱ We want first-class salesmen. Write for particulars.

THE LIGHTNING CHECK PUNCH CO.
BRIDGEPORT, = CONN



A NEW HIGH GRADE RUBBER BAND DATING STAMP "THE EXPERT"

PATENTED APRIL 7th, 1891.

IT STANDS PRE-EMINENT IN THE FOLLOWING RESPECTS:

In the convenience and certainty of movement of the Bands
Each Band has an independent Spring Tension
The Band Faces have a Flexible Adjustment to Die
Is complete for 10 years, has 9 words and the 7 days of the week
It will print any hour A. M. or P. M., with Day of Week

The dates if set out of line will work into line
The dates revolve through a smaller mortise than any other
It has Steel Wheels and a Nickled Brass Top
For repairing and assembling, it is simplicity itself
In its great Durability, Quality and Beauty

THE R. H. SMITH M'FG CO., = SPRINGFIELD, MASS.
Patentees and manufacturers. (Prices on Application).

MANUFACTURERS OF
The Famous Metal Bodied Rubber Type, Smith Patent Lever Self Inkers. The Bay State Seal Presses, Etc.
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For the Trade a Speciality.

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The Multiplex Stamping Machine

TO CHANGE FROM ONE STAMP TO EITHER OF THE OTHER TWO.

- 1st. Disengage the guide rod from the stamp carrier or annulus.
- 2d. Raise the handle to a vertical position and hold it. The annulus will now swing freely.
- 3d. Insert the blunt end of the guide rod in the socket opposite the stamp desired and release the handle.

N.B.—This being a power machine only a light pressure is necessary to give a perfect impression.

Patented March 24, 1891. All infringements of this invention will be vigorously prosecuted in this country and Europe.

LUM SMITH PUBLISHING CO.,

Pronounced by Experts to be WITHOUT A PEER with respect to every quality and detail of construction that constitute a perfect machine.

It is adapted to general business purposes and post office use.

The trade is invited to send for Descriptive Circular.

Responsible Agents Wanted all over the United States.

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INDUSTRY INDICATOR

by David Hachmeister

Looking for new recruits!

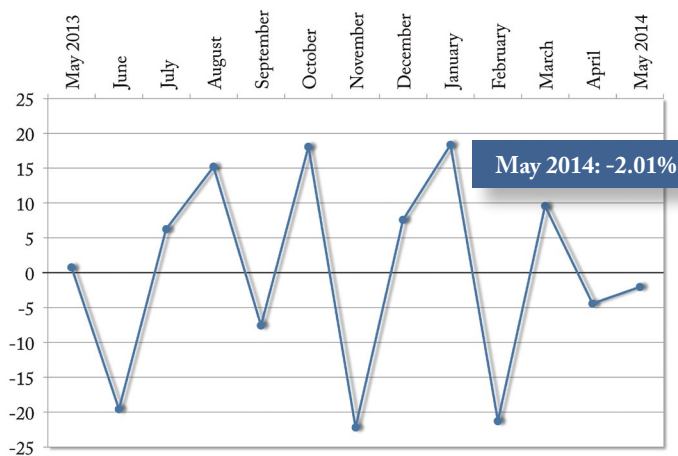
Would you like to participate in our Industry Indicator by supplying your data to us? It's easy and confidential. Please contact us and we'll be happy to bring you on board!

In May, stamps fell at half the rate of April, as they dropped a small 2.01 percent and 13.95 percent when

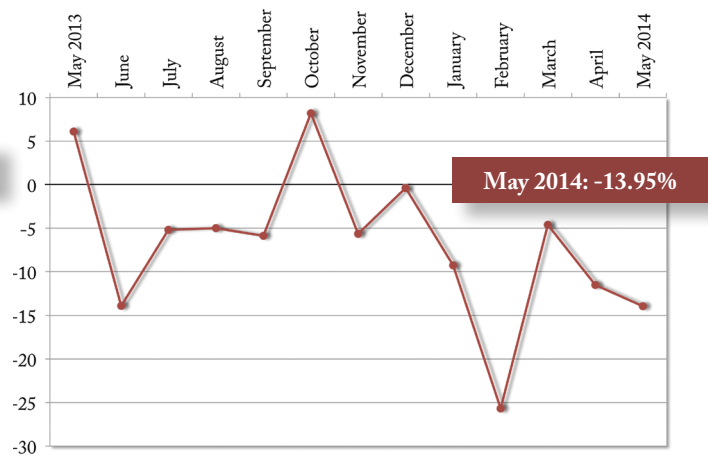
compared with last May. Stamps have now dropped seven consecutive months against like-month sales. Other products saw a steep decline of 19.19 percent from April, but rose 7.44 percent against like-month sales from last year. They have been on a winning streak since last November. *M*

Stamps only

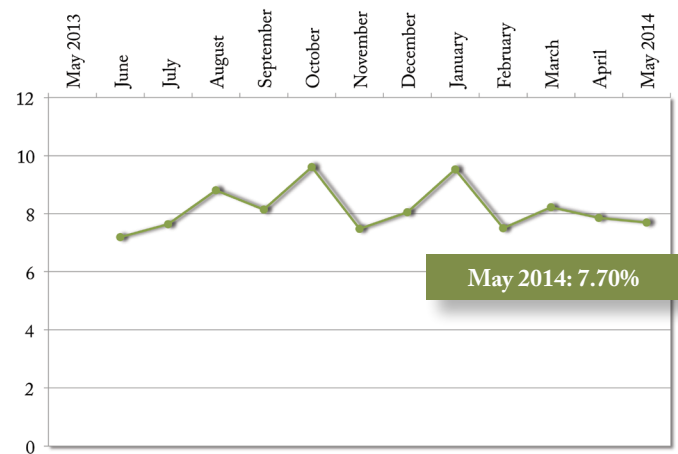
Monthly Sales—Gain/Loss Percentage



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

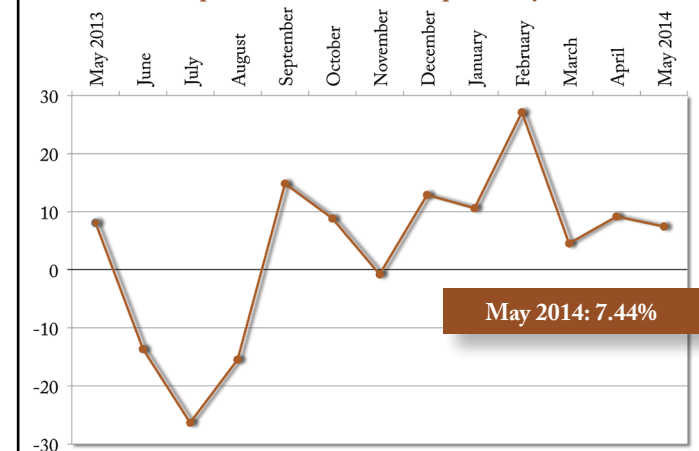


Percent of Annual Sales by Month (illustrating seasonality)



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

Print or perish?

For decades, academics lived by the “publish or perish” model—produce something that some group in the world thinks is at least somewhat valuable or lose academic standing. We are very much in a similar situation; we must be relevant or risk disappearing.

That is why we are so very gratified by your many replies to our article about 100-year-old companies. Print has so much staying power. According to industry expert Samir “Mr. Magazine” Husni, there are five times as many print titles as there were in 1980. Poorly written and edited publications or publications that do not meet the needs of a viable audience have never been able to survive.

Husni adds, “Moreover, overall print magazine circulation is stable to slightly up, and both print and digital magazine readership is increasing—while other traditional media are experiencing overall declines in audience or circulation.” His sense of the industry is that print that goes solely to digital is in big trouble. There are very few, if any, sustainable digital-only models. Another media analyst, Thad McIlroy, notes, “Few magazine publishers could survive the loss of ad revenue if they discontinued their print versions. While they are becoming increasingly adept at generating revenue from their websites, Web-only publishing models cannot supplant a print and Web model.”

So we remain committed to print. Print or perish! In an industry that marks on paper, we think the desire for print will remain strong. The industry is definitely smaller, but we remain viable in our trimmed-down model. We have trimmed our size but have actually begun to produce more pages and content across three different platforms—print, Web and digital. We are not sure how we do it but are very glad you have responded to each format. This multi-platform approach is critical for the world and the way it is now, segmented in every imaginable way. Some will not read print, and we know some won’t look at digital, especially for in-depth reading, while some just buzz to the website for the latest news.

In fact, we see digital editions, usually starting as blogs, going to print as soon as they develop a large enough following. There’s no question that the churning of the marketplace has become more rapid and volatile.

Are we right about all this? We don’t really know. We know we are not as smart as we sometimes think we are, but we also know we are not as dumb as we sometimes fear we are. The genius is found in figuring out which occurs at what time. We are not holding our breath expecting a great epiphany anytime soon. *M*



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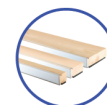
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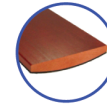
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