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Inside



By Mike Neer,
Publisher

Yesterday, I was talking with my 19-year-old nephew. He had been in school to learn computer programming, but said he was now interested in being a graphic designer. Naturally, my ears perked up, and I asked him more about what he wanted to do. His first impulse was to design images for skateboard decks – another of his passions. I suggested that he could take his graphic design skills in many directions.

We talked about designing images for fashion apparel, which his sister likes to create. We talked about doing animation and CGI sets for some of the new movies that are being created these days. But then, I told him about the whole graphic products market, and that the purpose of this magazine is to help graphic artists make more money with their graphic skills. This was eye-opening to realize that graphics could be applied in so many ways.

Making Money Presentation

I sent him a link to the 28-minute Making Money with Graphics presentation on the CoreDRAWHelp website that summarizes many of the possibilities. [Click on this text link](#) or the image link on the next page.

The first thing you should know about this presentation is that it gives a short history of graphic products, and outlines the role CoreDRAW played in its development. This in itself is fascinating. Then, for each of these production processes, it outlines six things: 1) a definition of what the process is; 2) a description of the types of products that can be made with it (with photos); 3) the type of equipment needed; 4) the general cost of such equipment; 5) the skill level you need to operate this process; and 6) the profit potential with this process.

In alphabetical order, here are the 16 main processes in the graphic products marketplace:

- 1) **Artwork Services**—creating flyers, newsletters, etc.
- 2) **Cutout & Heat Transfer Materials**—also called heat printing, it uses special materials that can be cut out with a vinyl cutter and applied to many substrates, though often used for garment decoration.

Making Money with Graphics

- 3) **Digital Printing** – using small or large format printers, one can make stickers, signs, banners, and vehicle wraps among other items.
- 4) **Direct-To-Garment Printing** – requires a special printer but allows one-off production if needed.
- 5) **Embroidery** – offers the highest perceived value of any product, requires special equipment, lots of knowledge of fabric, needles, thread, hooping, etc. Appliques can also be done less expensively.
- 6) **Image Transfers** – done with laser or inkjet printers, usually in small format
- 7) **Laser Engraving** – uses CO2 lasers primarily and can mark on many surfaces from wood to glass
- 8) **Mechanical Engraving** – scratches the surface of materials and is good for nameplates and gift items
- 9) **Pad Printing** – prints on unusual shaped items, often used for promotional products
- 10) **Promotional Products** – usually one starts as a distributor sourcing products for your customers that are created by promo product suppliers
- 11) **Sandblasting** – wearing away the surface of glass or wood or stone is most common
- 12) **Sand Carving** – an advanced sandblasting process that involves stage carving to give more depth
- 13) **Screen Printing** – printing images onto soft goods or hard goods, great for high volume orders
- 14) **Sublimation** – special ink is transferred to polyester-coated products to yield vibrant color
- 15) **Training Services** – share your graphic experience in articles or seminars
- 16) **Vinyl & Other Signmaking Materials** – Signs can be create in many ways and are always in need

Check out this presentation, and expand your graphic products business today!

Making Money with CorelDRAW Graphics

The mission of the Association of CorelDRAW Professionals (ACDRP) is (1) to help you improve your graphics skills -- and (2) to help you make money with those skills.

This page is being provided as an entry point for the second part of that mission. Here you will find a range of ideas and sources for making your graphics more profitable. Check out all the links!

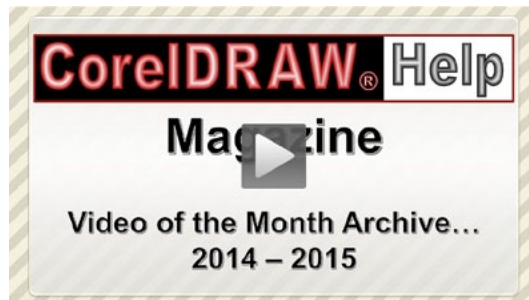
View the Making Money with Graphics PowerPoint Presentation (28 minutes)



This presentation gives a short history of graphic products, and outlines the role CorelDRAW played in its development.

Then, for each of 16 production processes, it outlines six things: 1) a definition of what the process is; 2) a description of the types of products that can be made with it (with photos); 3) the type of equipment needed; 4) the general cost of such equipment; 5) the skill level you need to operate this process; and 6) the profit potential with this process.

View the Video of the Month Archive (available to ACDRP Premium Members)



The Videos of the Month from each issue of **CorelDRAW Help Magazine** are now archived on the website. The current video is available to all readers in each month's issue. The archive of all past Videos of the Month is available to ACDRP Premium Members. Click on the link above to see the contents. If a member, you can click right to the archive; if not a member, you will be directed to information about membership. New ones are posted each month.

Visit the ACDRP Online Expo

These sponsors offer equipment, products, and services that will help you make more money with your graphics. Check out the ideas and possibilities



Visit the Webinars

In 2014, CorelDRAW Help Magazine joined with Unisub to produce three webinars. These webinars have been broken down into short videos for easy learning, and are available free to all CorelDRAW Users. Click on the link to view each group of videos.

Webinar #1

Webinar #1: CorelDRAW X7 Photo Basics

1101-1: Capturing Photos (Digital Camera and Scanning Basics)

1101-2: Resolution Recommendations

1102-1: Simple Photo Retouching (Straighten Image, Crop Tool, Image Adjustment Lab, Touch-Up Brush)

1102-2: Removing the Background (Cutout Lab)

Webinar #2

Webinar #2: Shape a Photo to Fit a Product

1102-3: PowerClip... Place Inside Frame

1102-4: Feather the Edge

1201: Introduction to Templates

1201: Using and Saving Templates

Webinar #3

Webinar #3: Creating a Sublimated Business Card with Unisub Product 5530

S-101: Finding the Unisub Templates

S-102: Modifying Unisub's Template

S-103: Set CorelDRAW Page Size

S-104: Save the Modified Template

S-105: Adding & Arranging Text & Graphics

S-106: Creating a Background; S-107: Using Imposition Layout

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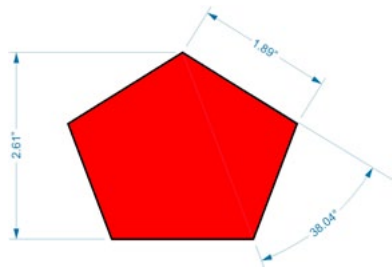
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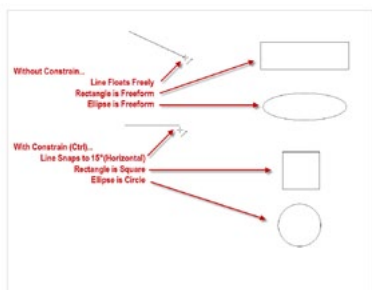
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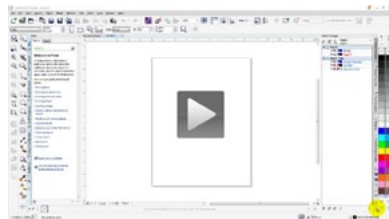


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- Imprintables offers Spectra Perform Glitter Printable Heat Transfer Vinyl



- Hotronix Tech Video shows how to change a heat press control board



- InkSoft adds Pennant Software catalog to Online Designer



- Stahls' TV announces 3rd Quarter Free Live Video Classes Schedule
- Floriani Commercial offers Template Tearaway Stabilizer
- Dalco offers rhinestone Team Mom transfers



- QB Peyton Manning urges ASI audience to stay competitive
- New Roland DGA Product Promotions offer huge savings
- ClipArtBoom offers Back to School MiniPack

**NEWS
DETAILS**
(Click Here)



- Stahls' TV Studios hosts Grand Opening Business Growth Event July 28-29
- Hirsch offers new machine integration features in TAJIMA DG 15



- Stahls' offer free shipping on heat presses in July
- Stahls' Video presents Hot Heat Printing Ideas for summer

- Stahls TV July-Sept 2015 Guide is now available



- Wild Side offers Football Designs for Fall Fanwear
- GSG offers video of Emulsion Choices seminar

Calendar (Web Link)
Check out the upcoming training classes and trade shows of interest to CoreIDRAW users.

Using CorelDRAW®

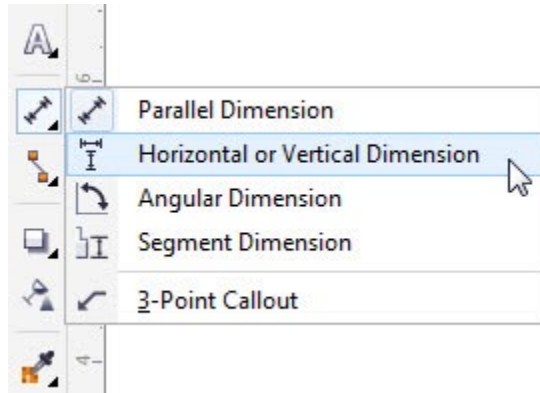
By John W Mise

Using The Dimension Tools

If your drawing or image requires dimension lines with ϕ labels, you can do this by using the various types of Dimension Tools available in CorelDRAW. Dimension lines allows you to indicate the distance between two points in a drawing or the size of your objects.

You can set how dimension lines are displayed by specifying dimension units, style, and precision as well as add a prefix or suffix to the dimension text. You can also set the default values for all new dimension lines that are created.

There are 4 basic types of Dimension Tools: *Parallel*, *Horizontal or Vertical*, *Angular*, and *Segment Dimensions*. These all work in basically the same way. Select which tool you want to use.



If you're using the **Parallel Horizontal or Vertical Dimension** tool, click to start the line, and drag to where you want to place the endpoint. Then, move your mouse to where you want your label, and click to finish. After the last click, your units of measurement will appear.

When using the **Angular Dimension** tool, click where you want the two lines that measure the angle to intersect, and drag to where you want the first line to end. Then, click where you want the second line to end, and click where you want the angle label to appear. After the last click, your units of measurement will appear.

When using the **Segment Dimension** tool, you can measure the distance between 2 nodes on a path whether they are in a straight line or on a curve. Click the segment that you want to measure, move the pointer to where you want to position the dimension line, and click where you want to place the dimension text.

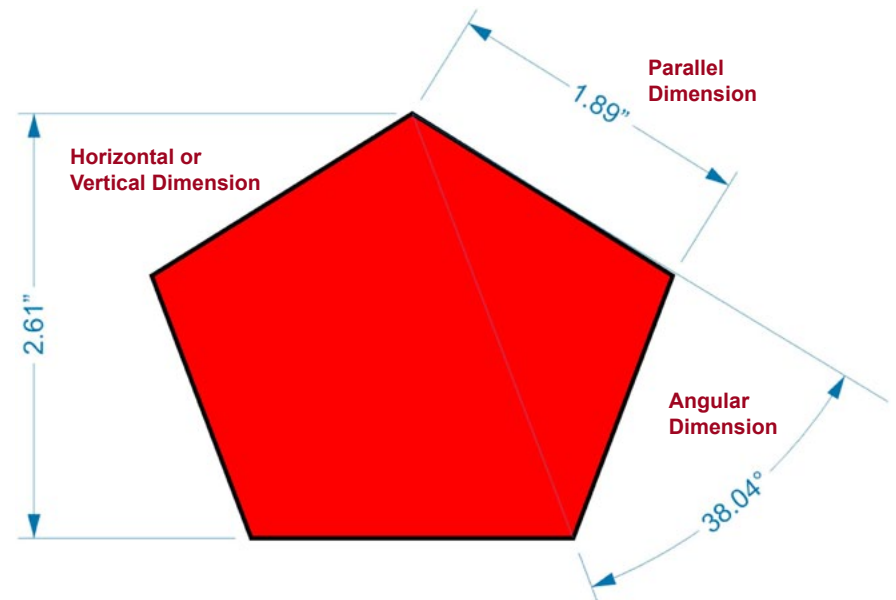
With the *Segment Dimension* tool, you can also measure the distance between the

two most distant nodes in multiple segments. Using the *Segment Dimension* tool, marquee select the segments you want, drag to position the dimension line, and click where you want to place the dimension text.

You can also measure successive segments automatically by clicking the **Automatic Successive Dimensioning** button on the property bar, and marquee select the segments that you want to measure. Drag to the location where you want to place the dimension text and release.

All these measurements will dynamically update when you scale them and you can change the font size of your text by selecting the text and choosing the new font size from the Property Bar.

Callouts can also be used to identify parts of your drawing or to draw attention to specific parts of a design.



Using CoreIDRAW®

If you have selected the **3-Point Callout** tool, click where you want the first callout segment to start, and drag to where you want the first segment to end. Click where

you want the second segment to end. A text cursor will then be displayed at the end of the callout line. This is where you can type a label for the object.

You can also change the callout style and the distance between the leader line and the callout text. This is done from the interactive property bar.

When any of the Dimension tools are selected, the Property Bar will show several options for you to choose from to modify your Dimension lines.

Dimension Style - This option is used to set the Decimal, Fractional, or Standard measuring units. The default setting is Decimal.

Dimension Precision - Use this option to set the level of precision you would like for your measurement.



Display / Hide Units - If you don't need your units appended to a dimension, then leave this option off before you draw your dimension line. If you do need this option, you can set it prior to drawing your dimension line, or by clicking on the dimension line. You can also click on the text that will give you the option to the text.

Dimension Units - This option will specify the measurement unit that you would like to display for your text labels.

Prefix / Suffix For Dimension - With this option, you can enter in your own text which will appear before or after the text label. Prefix and Suffix text may be any character and can be applied before or after a dimension line has been drawn.

Show Leading Zero - If your dimension line has a value of less than 1, you can leave

it has it is, or you can add a zero before the decimal.

Dynamic Dimensioning - This option allows you to choose whether or not you want your measurement values to be updated automatically if the size of the dimension line changes. This option is on by default.

Text Position drop-down - You can use this option to specify your text label position. You can choose from top-centered, middle-centered, or bottom-centered for Auto, Vertical, Horizontal, or Callout dimension lines.

Extension Line Options, Arrowheads, and Width - If you have created any Callouts, you can use this option to edit the callout with options in the Property Bar.

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Drawing Objects with the Constrain Key

The Many Uses of the Constrain Key

Did you know? ...in CorelDRAW you can always draw...

1. A straight line—on the horizontal—on the vertical—on a 45° angle—in fact, on any angle that's a multiple of 15°?—all by using the freehand tool with the constrain key.
2. A perfect square?—using the rectangle tool and the constrain key.
3. A perfect circle?—using the ellipse tool and the constrain key.
4. Any object with an equal aspect ratio (height = width)?—using the constrain key.

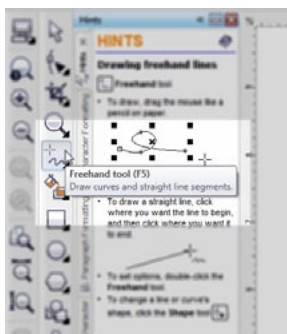
Did you know? ...in CorelDRAW you can freehand rotate objects snapping them to multiples of 15° angles using the rotational handles and the constrain key.

What is the Constrain Key?

It's the control key—Ctrl on the keyboard. It's one of the many built-in keyboard shortcut keys. The constrain key is used like the Shift key—depress and hold it while drawing, and it will affect object creation. Release it, and the effect is released.

Let's give it a try...

1. Open CorelDRAW—it doesn't matter what version you are using. The Constrain Key has been a part of the program from the beginning.
2. Start a new blank page.
3. Select the Freehand Drawing Tool in the ToolBox. See picture 1.
4. Left click and release anywhere on the page—this will set node 1 in the drawing.
5. Move the cursor away from node 1—notice that a straight line (path) connects node 1 with the cursor.
6. Move the cursor around node 1—notice that the straight line follows the cursor around. In essence, node 2 has not been placed in the layout. The line is



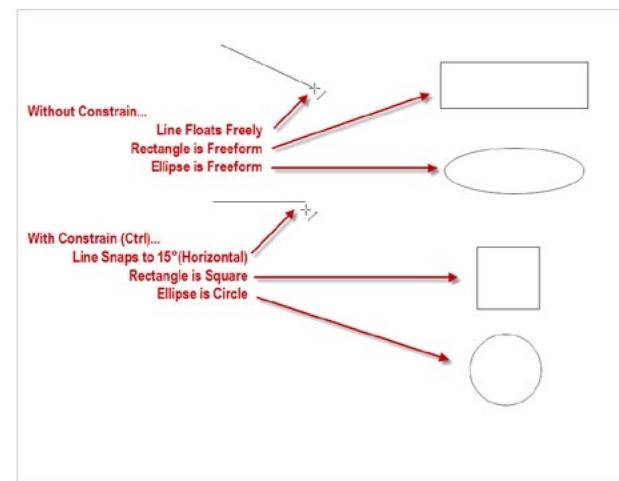
Picture 1: Select the Freehand Tool

still attached to the cursor. Node 2 will be placed in the layout when you left click a second time—don't do that yet.

7. Now hold down the Ctrl key and move the cursor around node 1—notice now the line connecting node 1 and the cursor is snapping to invisible points. In fact, it's snapping to points on 15° angles.
8. With the Ctrl key held down, left click a second time placing node 2 in the layout—then release the Ctrl key.

The Ctrl key (constrain) is active as long as it's held down. Its effect goes away when released. So you need to keep holding it down until the object is created.

Try the same thing while creating a rectangle, ellipse, perfect shape, polygon, star, etc. Holding down the Ctrl key (constrain) during creation insures the object will have an equal aspect ratio, height = width. So a rectangle becomes a square, an ellipse a circle, and so on. See picture 2.



Picture 2: With and Without Constrain

Now let's rotate an object using the constrain key...

1. With the Pick tool, left click on any object in your layout to select it.
2. Left click on it again to reveal the rotational handles (corner handles).

- Then with the Pick tool, left click and drag the object using one of the rotational handles.
- Notice that when you depress and hold the Ctrl key, the object snaps on 15° increments—without the Ctrl key held down, the object rotates free-form.

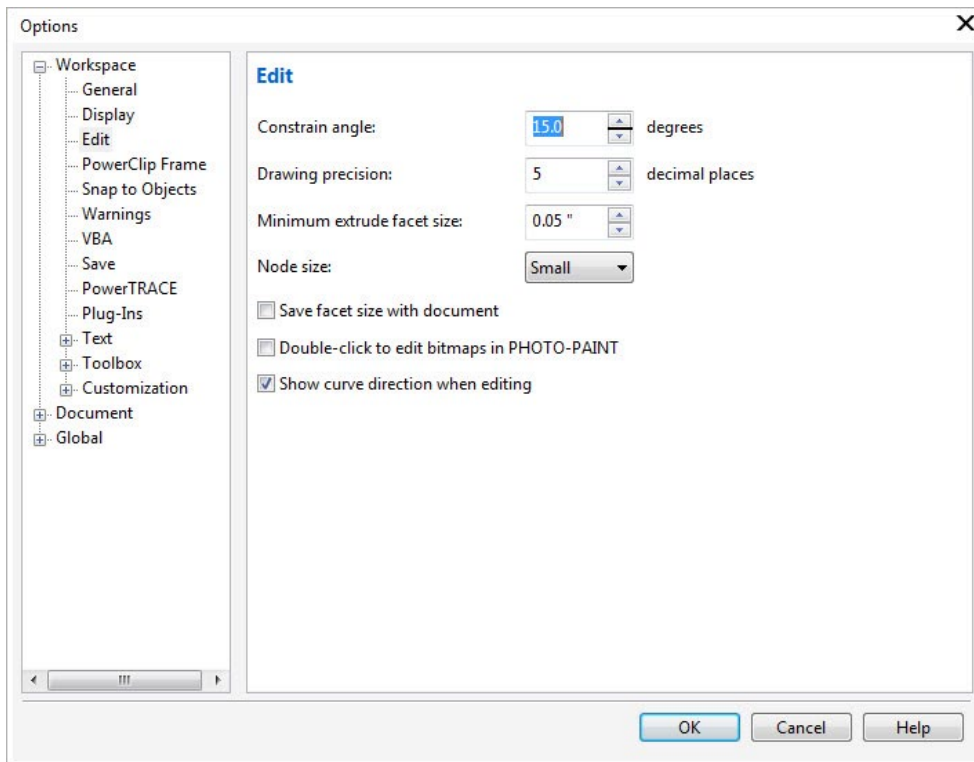
Can you change the snap value to something other than 15°?

Silly question, of course you can. Remember in CoreIDRAW, the defaults are all programmable. To do that...

- Click on Tools/Options.
- In the Options dialog screen, select Workspace/Edit. See picture 3.
- In the Edit screen the first entry is Constrain angle:—by default, it's set to 15°. In that box, you can enter any value you would like, including decimal values—keep in mind that the value you set, will become the new default for the program... that is, until you change it again.

Conclusion

The Constrain tool is one of the many helpful features in CoreIDRAW.



Picture 3: Options

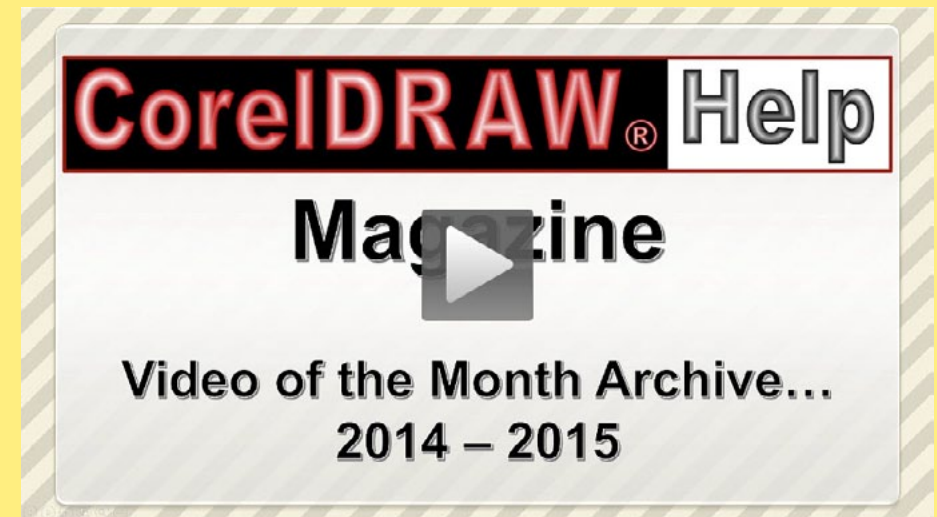
New Video of Month Archive Posted Online

The Association of CoreIDRAW Professionals (ACDRP) is pleased to announce the availability of the Video of the Month Archive online. The archive is available to all Premium ACDRP members.

The new Video of the Month archive includes the complete video that was published each month in the magazine as well as the article and photos that accompanied each Video of the Month. This is like a handout to go with the video for outstanding educational training on CoreIDRAW.

The Video of the Month program was launched in October 2014 to help members and subscribers learn CoreIDRAW features. As always the current Video of the Month is available free to all members and subscribers. A link to that video is in the current CoreIDRAWHelp Magazine.

In addition to the Video Archive, a complete Magazine Archive (dated from October 2006) is also available online to both Basic and Premium ACDRP members.



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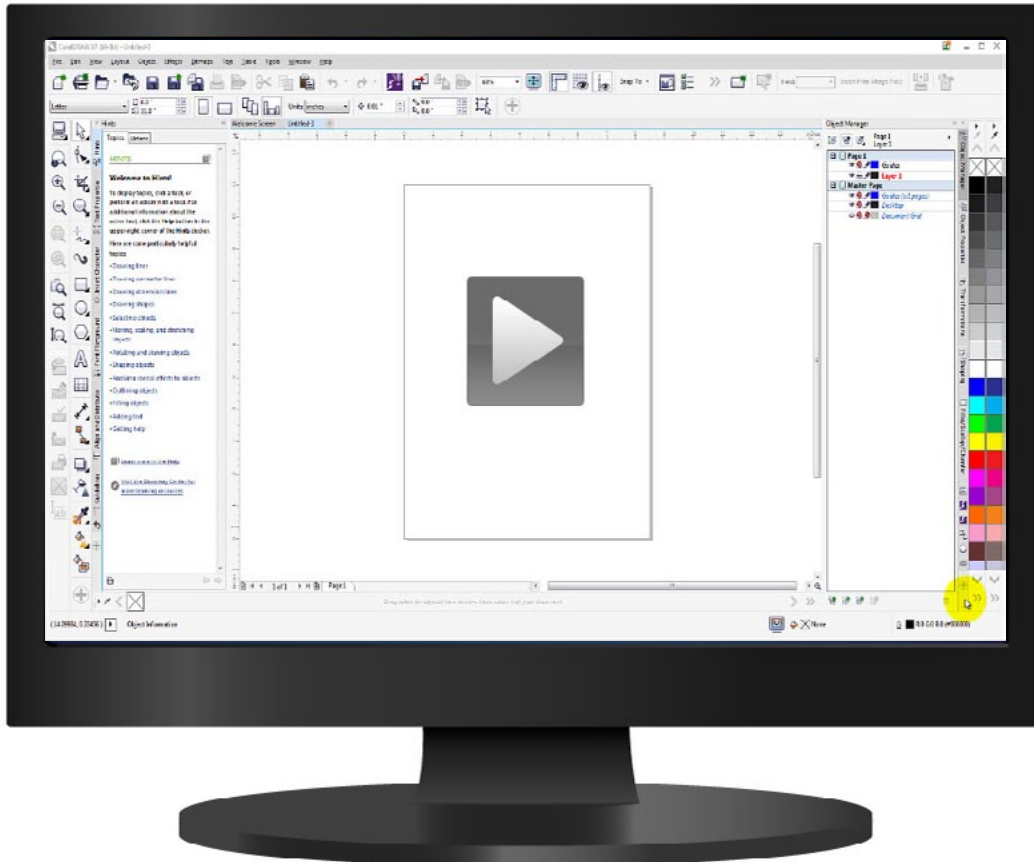
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VIDEO OF THE MONTH

By Judy and John McDaniel, Contributing writers



The CorelDRAW Workspace – Part 2

VIDEO OF THE MONTH

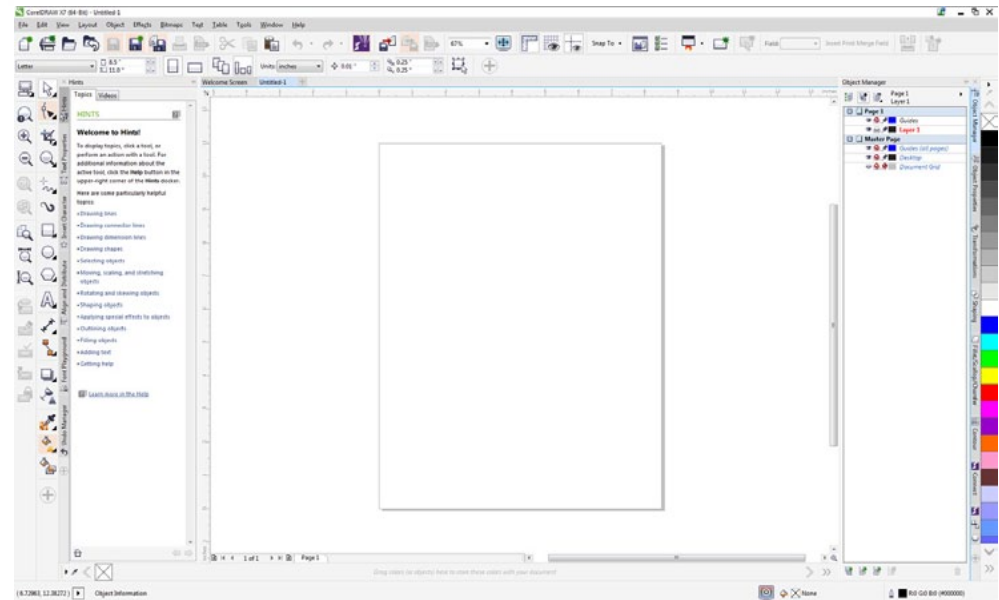
[Link to Video](#) Run time: 7:16

Synopsis: Understand how to customize the CorelDRAW workspace – including creating a new workspace, customizing the command bar icon size, and the color palette.

Note: The link to this video will be active only until the next issue of the magazine comes out. Archived issues and videos will be available after that to all ACDRP Premium Members.

The CorelDRAW workspace is a customizable user interface. It consists of a drawing space, surrounded by tools and reference points to help you quickly create a layout.

Last time, we explored the elements of the workspace, along with the standard workspaces that are included with CorelDRAW X7. This time, we will show some of the ways that you can customize your workspace to suit your workflow.



Picture 01: Custom 1920x1280 Workspace



A Custom Workspace

To review, [picture 1](#) shows a custom workspace. It's designed for a computer display that has a resolution of 1920 x 1280. In this workspace we have...

1. Displayed some toolbars that we find useful.
2. Added commands to existing toolbars.
3. Docked some of the Dockers to the left side of the screen.
4. Created and displayed a new custom toolbar.

Keep in mind, all workspaces are customizable.

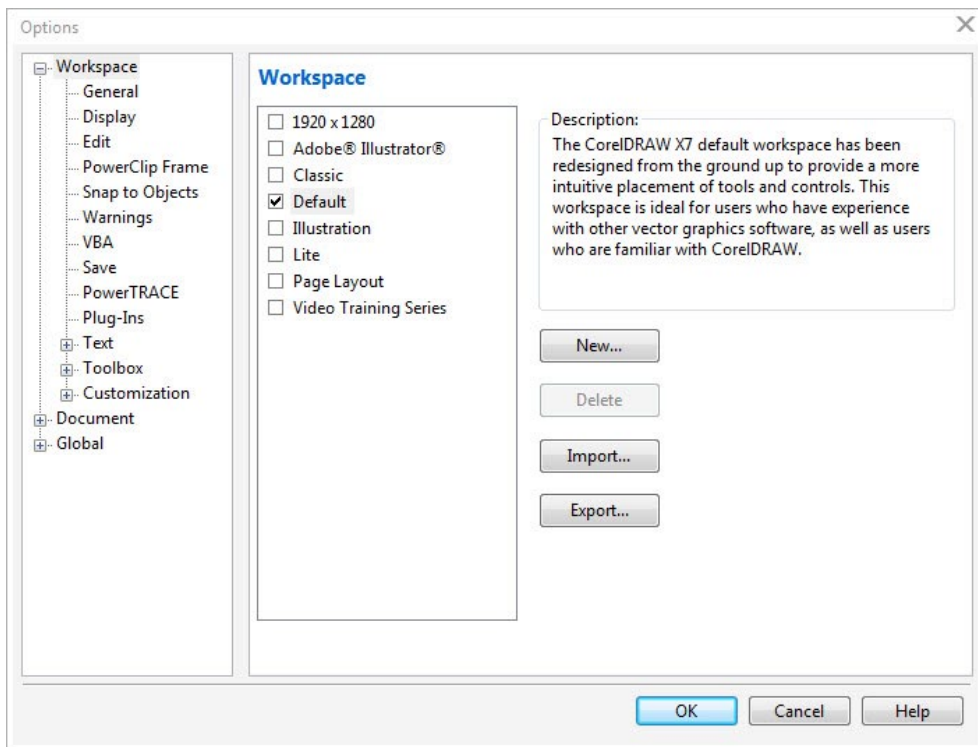
Creating a New Workspace

As the first step in creating a custom workspace, we always recommend that you create a new workspace. This leaves the standard workspaces, which are supplied with the program, unmodified. If you later decide that the workspace you have created isn't meeting your needs, you can simply delete it, and start over using one of the standard workspaces provided.

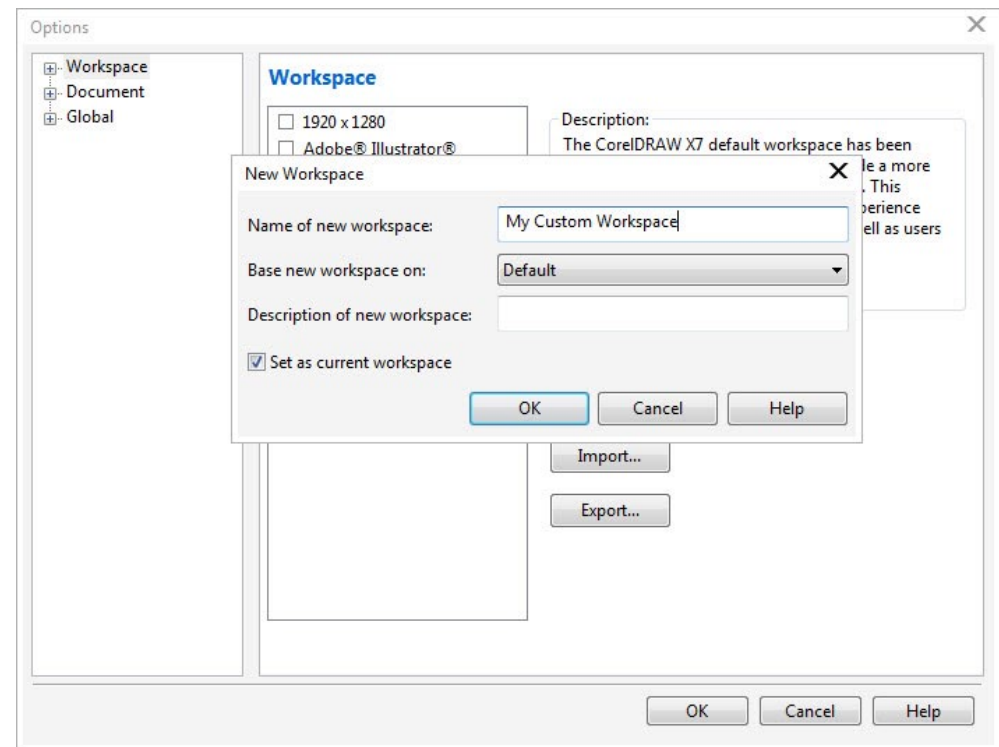
You can create a new workspace using the following steps:

1. Click on **Tools/Options** – this will open the options dialog screen. [See picture 2.](#)
2. In the options dialog screen, click on **Workspace**, if it's not already displayed.
3. In Workspace, click on **NEW** – this will call the New Workspace dialog screen.
4. In the New Workspace dialog screen, **name your new workspace**, and select the workspace you want your new workspace to be based on. Then Click on **OK**. In our example, we've named our new workspace My Custom Workspace. [See picture 3.](#) You can name your new workspace anything you'd like. You might want to create one for each process you have in your shop. For example you might want one for Laser Engraving, one for Sublimation, one for Sandblasting, and so on.
5. The new workspace will be created and selected. It will also appear in the list of workspaces. [See picture 4.](#)

(Note – The pictures above show creating a new workspace in CorelDRAW X7. However, the procedure is the same for all recent versions of CorelDRAW.)



Picture 02: Options Dialog



Picture 03: New Workspace Dialog

Customizing the Workspace

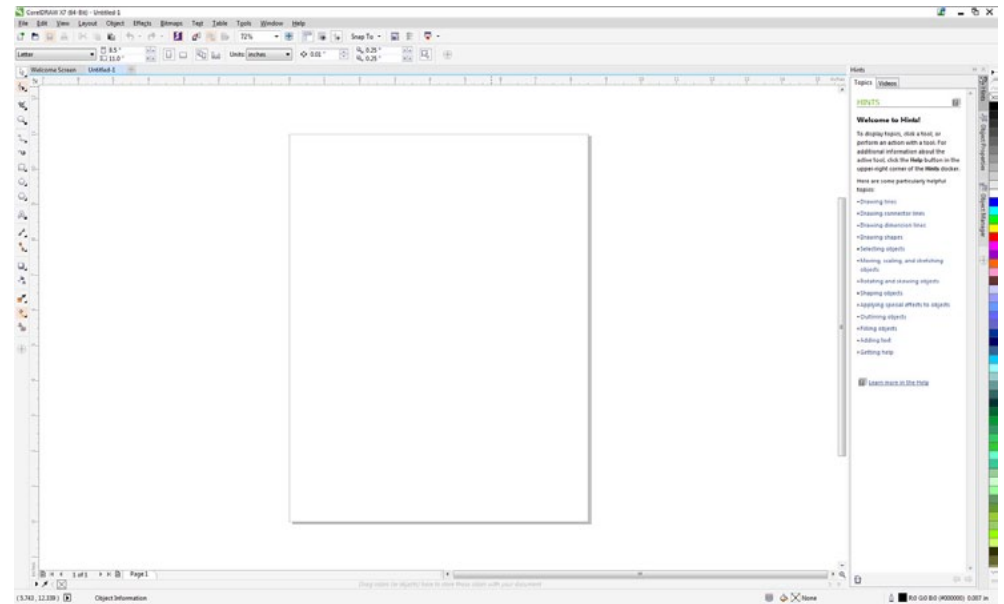
In the above section, we created a new workspace based on the default workspace. At this point our new workspace is identical to the default workspace. See picture 5.

One of the first steps we like to perform in customizing the workspace is to set the size of the icons on the command bars and color palette for the resolution of the monitor we're using.

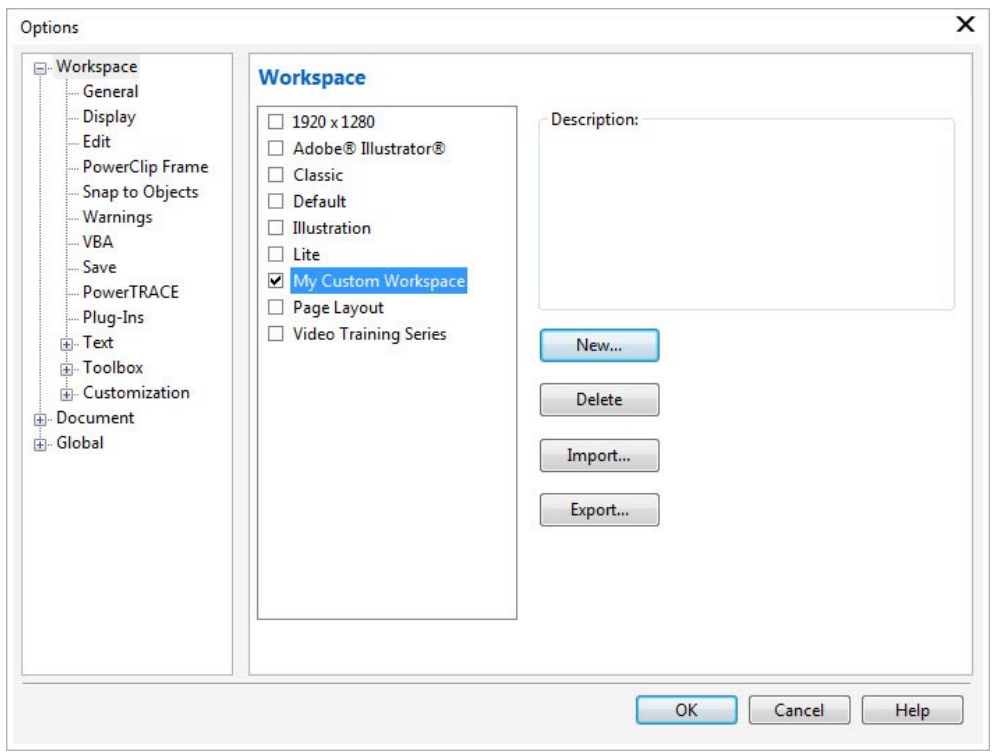
Customizing Command Bar Icon Size

The following steps will allow you to set the icon size on the menu and command bars.

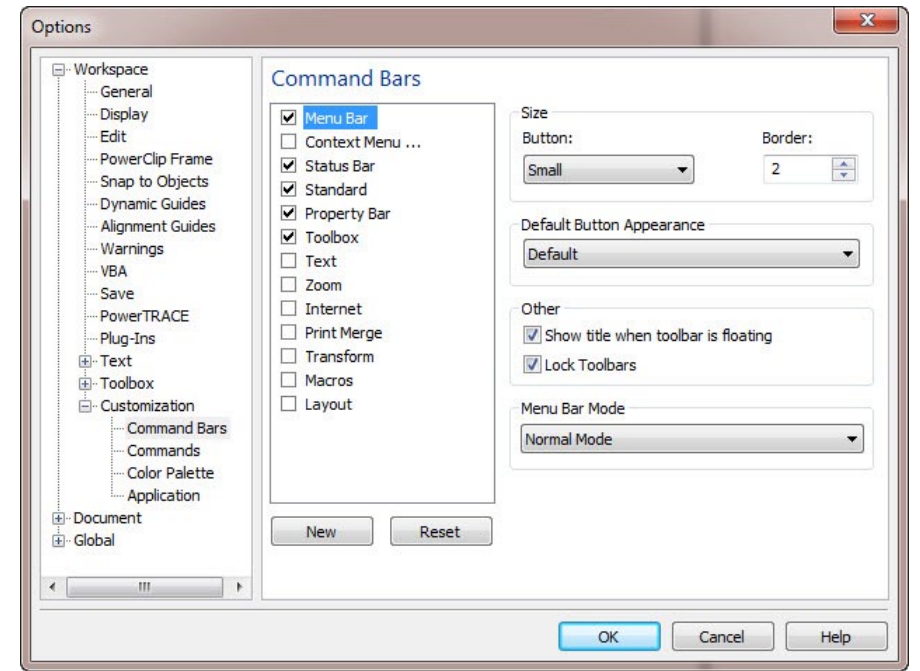
1. Click on **Tools/Customization** – this will call the customization dialog screen.
2. In the customization dialog screen, select **Command Bars**. See picture 6, for CoreIDRAW X6, and picture 7, for CoreIDRAW X7.
3. Notice that in picture 7, for CoreIDRAW X7, there is the addition of a default button size (small, medium, or large) which can be selected. Selecting the default size will immediately alter the button size for all command bars. See picture 8. Setting the default button size will also make that size standard for any new toolbars you create.



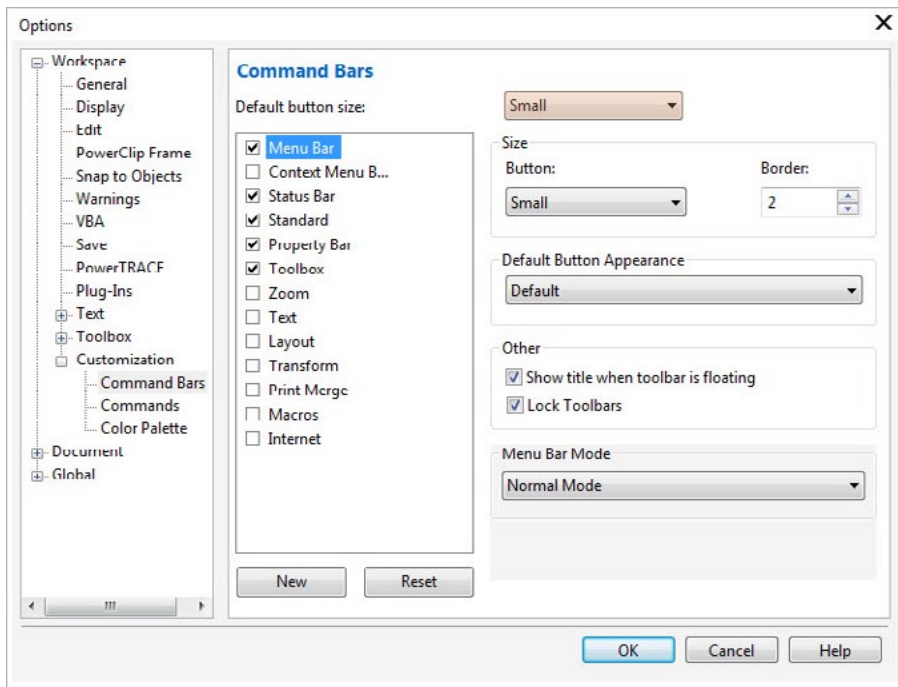
Picture 05: The New Unmodified Workspace



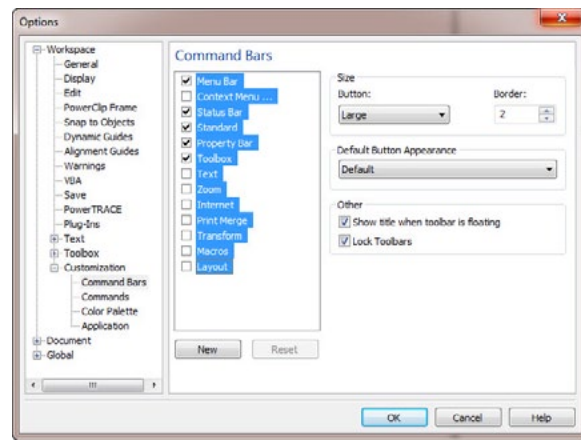
Picture 04: My Custom Workspace



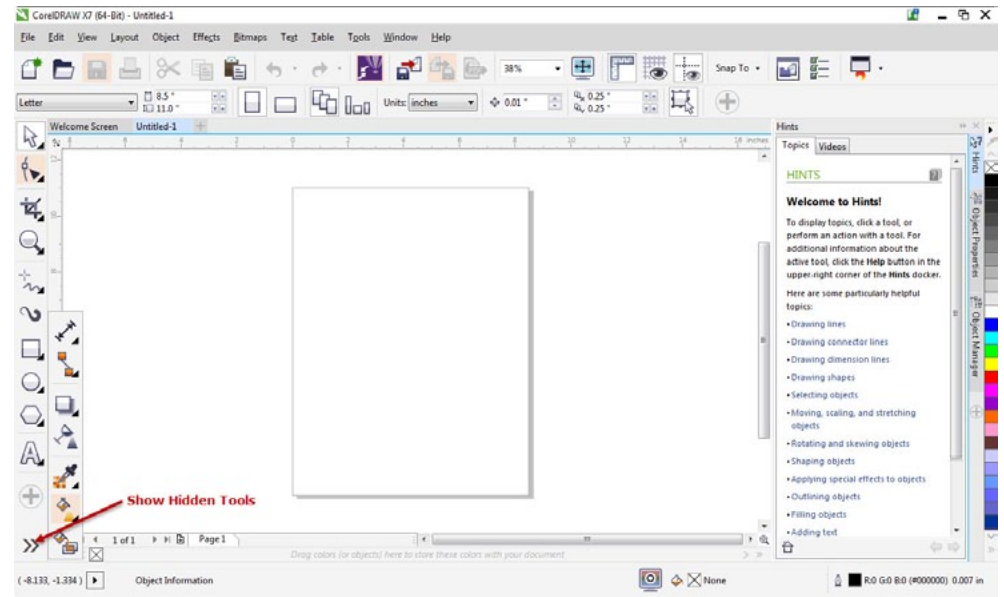
Picture 06: Tools-Options-Custom-Command Bars X6



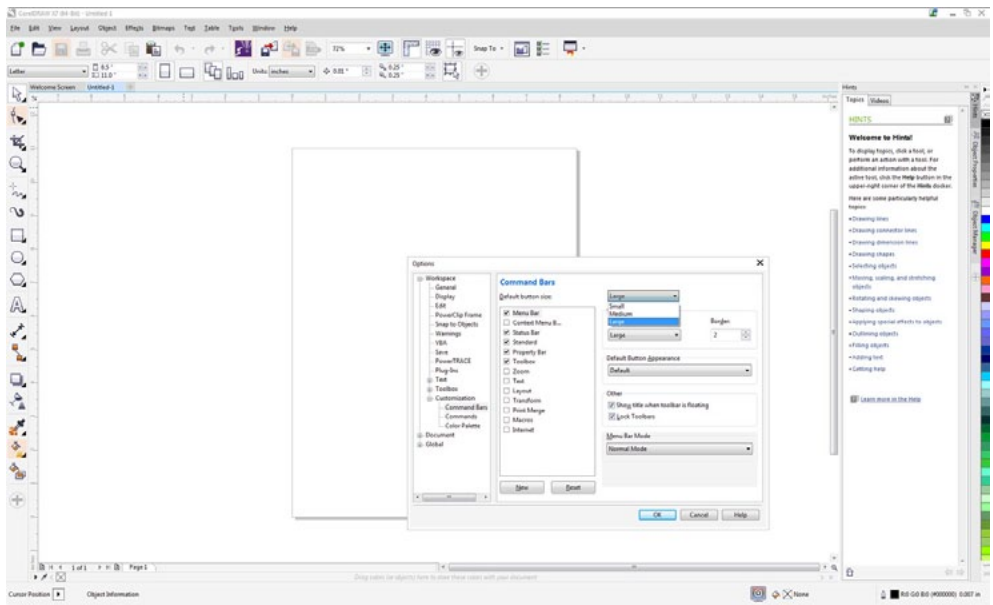
Picture 07: Tools-Options-Custom-Command Bars X7



Picture 09: Multiple Command Bar Selection X6

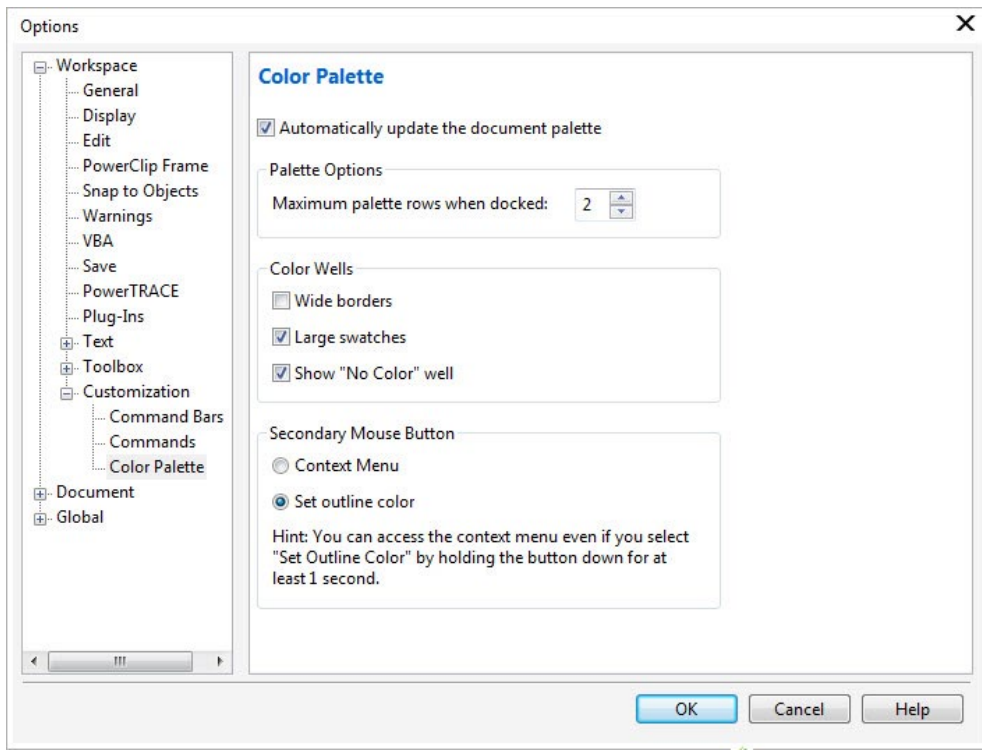


Picture 10: Show Hidden Tools



Picture 08: Default Button Size in X7

- In CoreDRAW version X6, and all prior versions, setting the default button size is not possible. In all prior versions, the default size is small. In order to change the button size for any existing or new command bar, it is necessary to select that bar and then change it using the drop-down for individual command bars. You can select multiple command bars by **left-clicking the top command bar** you wish to select, and then **shift/left-clicking the bottom command bar in the list**, that you wish to select. See picture 9. Of course this technique will also work in CoreDRAW X7.



Picture 11: Tools-Options-Customize-Color Palette

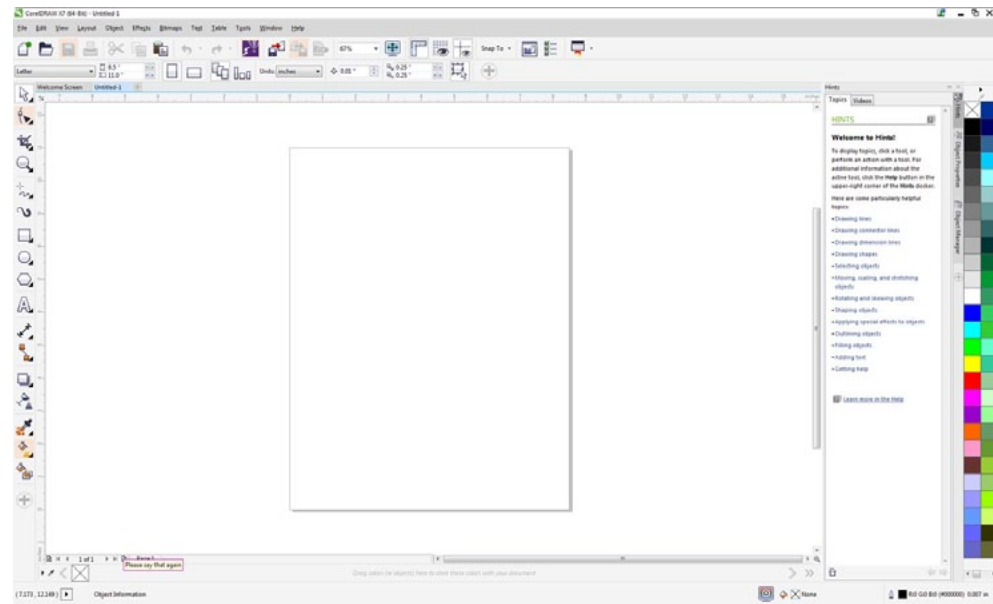
5. Click-on **OK** to exit the options dialog screen. As always, if you exit in any other way your changes will be abandoned.

Caution – when making changes to the icon size for command bars in CorelDRAW versions prior to X7, make sure there is enough screen real estate to display all of the commands. Larger icons require more space to display. In CorelDRAW versions X6 and earlier, it is possible that some icons may be hidden, if the icon size is too large for the screen resolution.

In version X7 this issue was resolved through the use of an expand icon. See picture 10. This picture shows large icons in a 1280 x 800 resolution screen. Notice in the bottom left corner, just below the toolbar there is a fly out arrow. When that arrow is clicked, the hidden toolbox icons are shown. This is a feature of CorelDRAW X7 only. In prior versions of CorelDRAW, these icons would be hidden, and not available for use.

Customizing the Color Palette

The following steps will allow you to set the size of the color palette swatches, as well



Picture 12: Color Palette with 2 rows of large swatches

- as the number of columns or rows, that will be shown when the color palette is docked.
1. Click on **Tools/Customization** – this will call the customization dialog screen.
 2. In the customization dialog screen, select **Color Palette**. See picture 11.
 3. In the **Color Palette** dialog screen you can select large swatches, and the number of rows to be displayed when the palette is docked. In this instance we've chosen 2 rows. See picture 12.
 4. Click-on **OK** to exit the options dialog screen. As always, if you exit in any other way your changes will be abandoned.

The pictures above are for CorelDRAW X7. That said, the above method for customizing the color palette is the same for recent versions of CorelDRAW as well.

In addition, there is no issue with losing swatches in the color palette, no matter what swatch size is selected. In all versions of CorelDRAW, there is a method of scrolling through the swatches.

Conclusion

We have taken the first step in customizing our workspace. In the next video, we will continue customizing the workspace. We will cover turning command bars on and off, and adding frequently used commands to existing command bars. We will also cover the steps necessary to create a new command bar.

Bitmap to Vector

Reasons for Converting Bitmap Art to Vector Art

Some graphic product processes require vector artwork. In some cases, the bitmap art is of such a poor quality that printing it “as is” would not produce a satisfactory end product. See [picture 1](#).

Another example is bitmap art with very fine lines. These lines may not be heavy enough to produce acceptable results when printed. For example, a scanned line art drawing might require conversion. See [picture 2](#).

Or, if you need to increase the size of a bitmap image to fit the intended product, the finished resolution may become jaggy. Having smooth edges might require converting bitmap art to vector art.

For whatever reason that conversion is either required or desired, there are a number of methods you can employ for converting bitmap art to vector art.



Picture 1

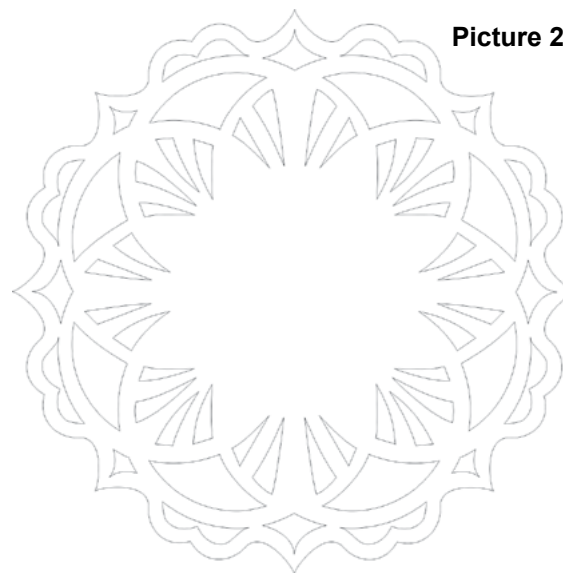
Outsourcing

In recent years, sending a drawing to a service company has become a popular practice. Generally these companies rely on low-cost labor that’s available outside of the United States.

Typically, costs range from \$15 and up, depending on the complexity of the image and what the vector file is to be used for. Digitizing for embroidery or vinyl cutting is generally at the high end of the cost spectrum.

The upside of outsourcing is that you’re not using shop time to accomplish the task. The downside is that you may not get exactly what you need. You may have to spend some time making the artwork suitable to the process.

The other potential downside is the turnaround time. For very simple drawings,



Picture 2

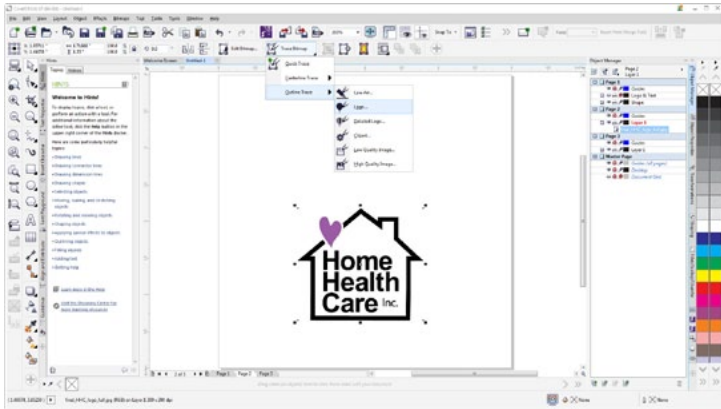
outsourcing may take significantly longer, and cost more, than what can be accomplished in-house. Having the skills to perform the task in-house will also give you the ability to evaluate a project and determine its degree of difficulty.

Tools within CoreDRAW

Learning the tools that are available within CoreDRAW is the first step in knowing which projects you can effectively tackle and which projects you should outsource.

PowerTRACE is a

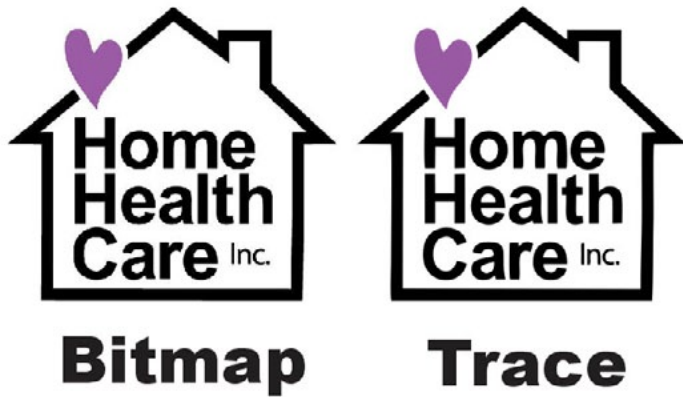




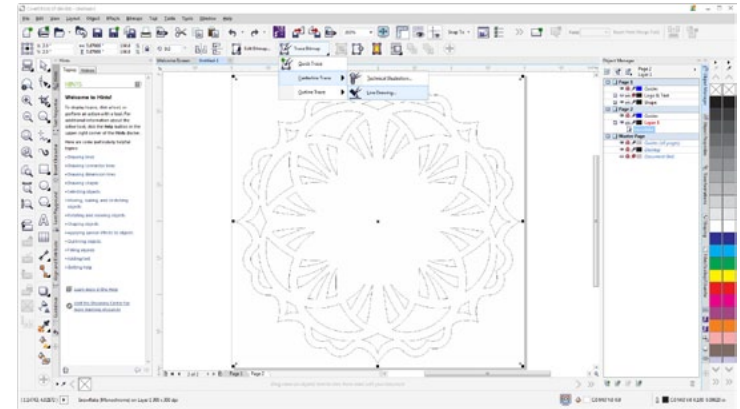
Picture 3



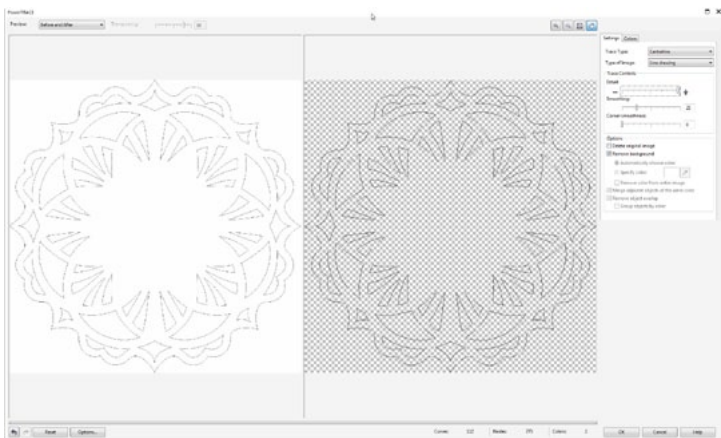
Picture 4



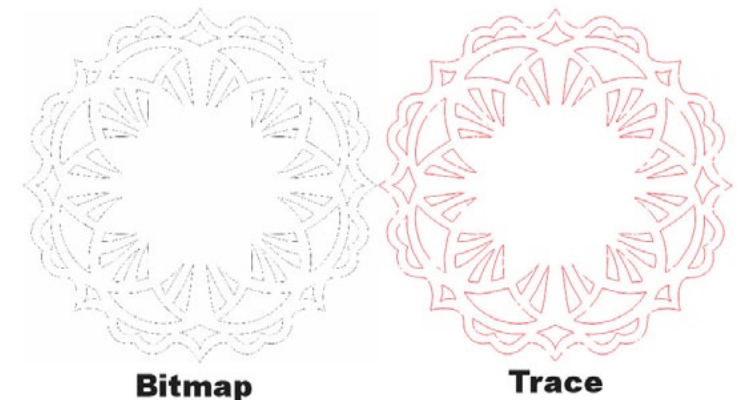
Picture 5



Picture 6



Picture 7



Picture 8



feature within CoreIDRAW that was introduced in CoreIDRAW X3. Trace was a part of earlier versions of Corel, but it was significantly improved in X3.

That said, in X3, outline trace was the only part of PowerTRACE that was introduced. It wasn't until the introduction of CoreIDRAW X4 that centerline tracing was added.

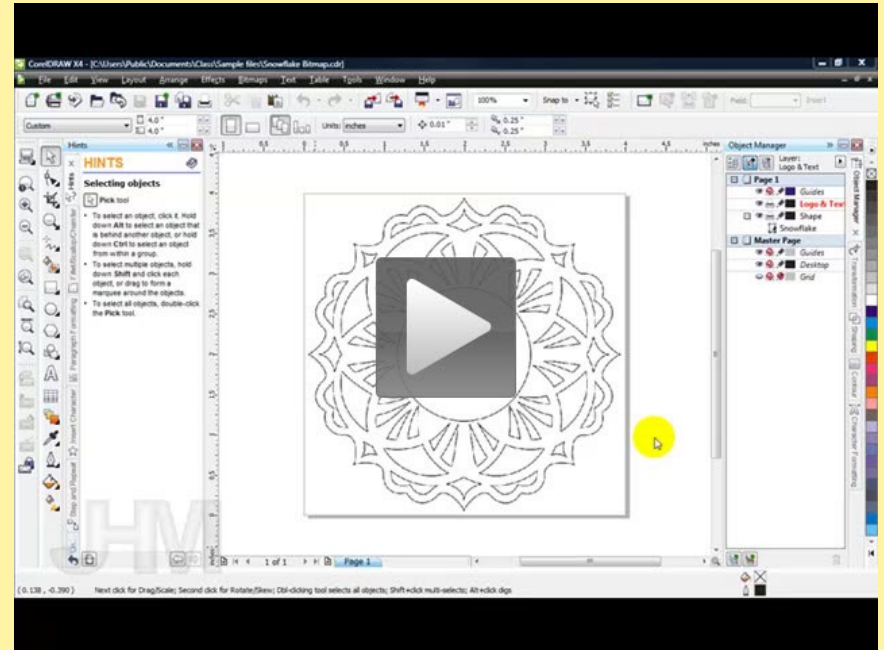
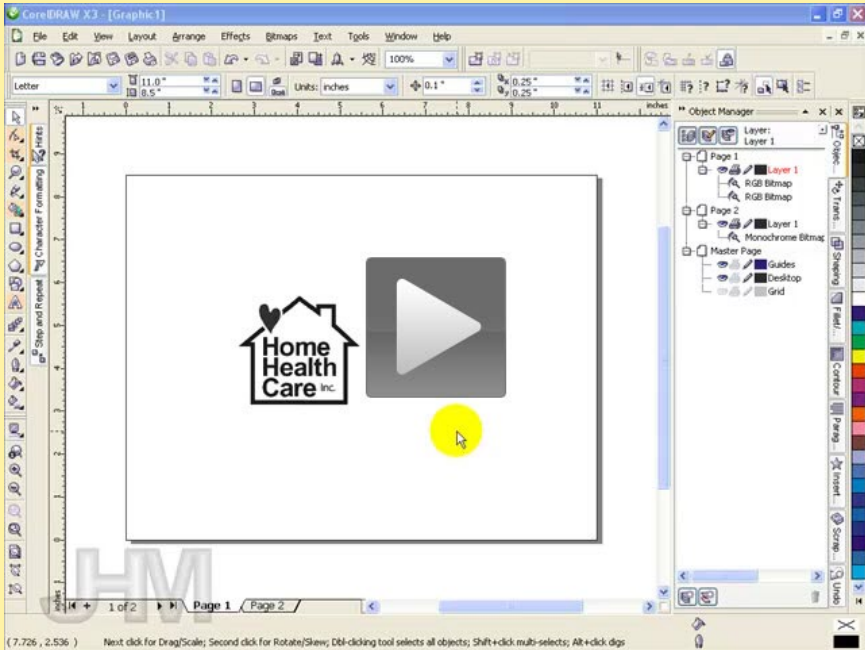
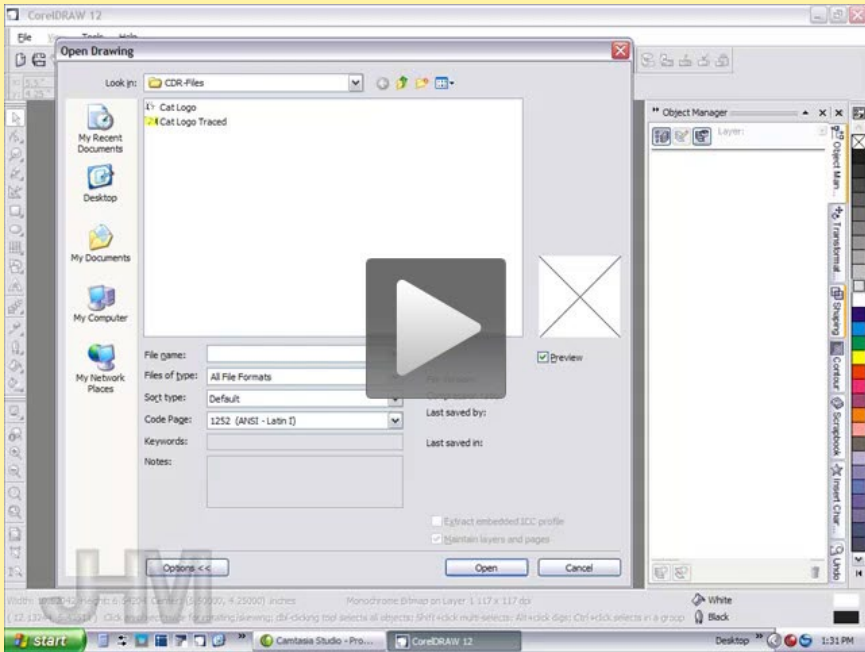
In CoreIDRAW X5, X6 and X7 some enhancements and tweaking were done, but essentially PowerTRACE has remained the same since versions X3 and X4.

Pictures 3, 4, and 5, show the use of the outline trace feature in PowerTrace. Pictures 6, 7, and 8, show the use of centerline tracing.

In either case, the results may or may not be satisfactory for your purposes.

Re-Drawing a Logo

Of course, the drawing tools within CoreIDRAW can be used to redraw a logo. Picture 1 shows a logo that is so ragged PowerTRACE would not possibly provide a usable result. Picture 9 shows what can be accomplished in about 15 minutes using the drawing tools in CoreIDRAW.





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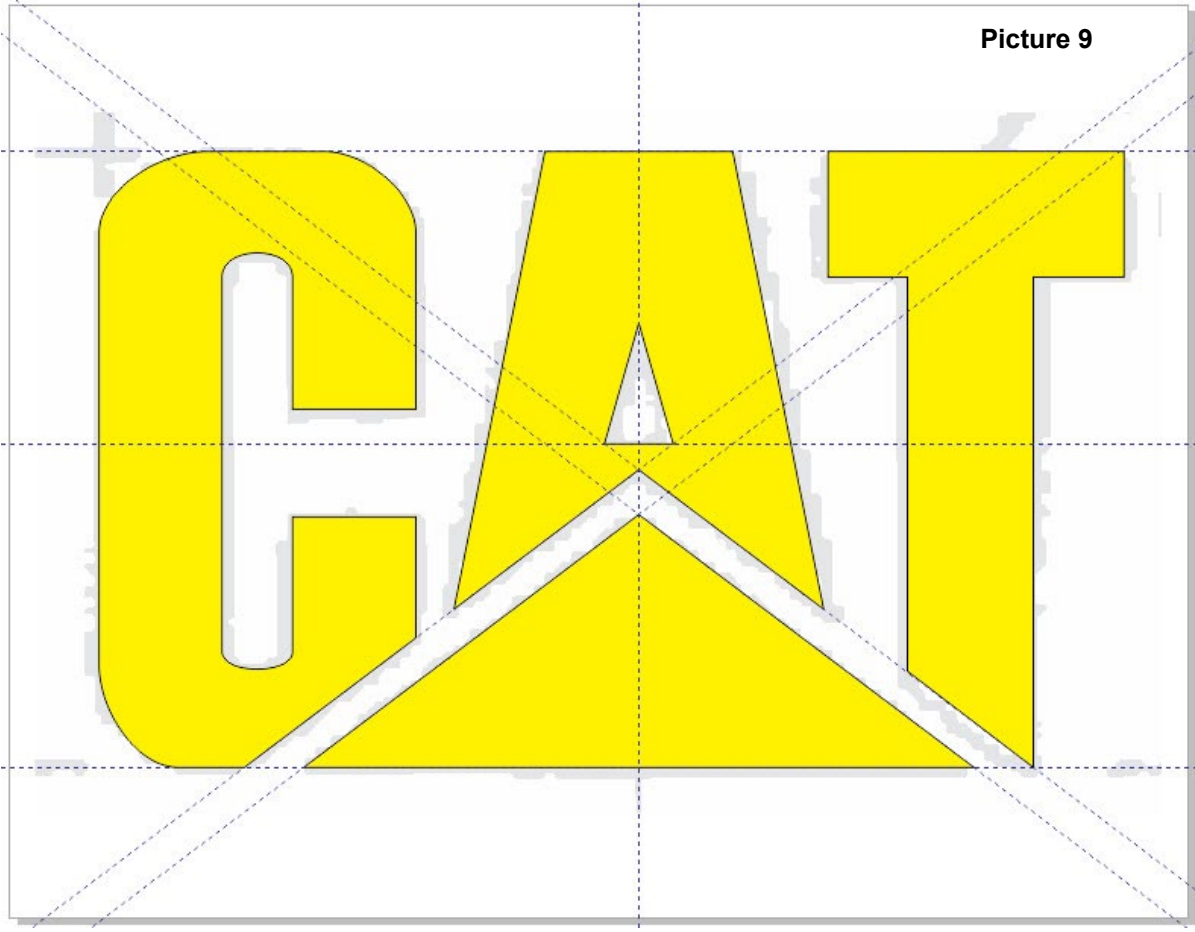
Conclusion...

Converting bitmap art to vector art can be a daunting task. Outsourcing can be a solution. However, being familiar with the tools in CoreIDRAW can make a world of difference.


Note: there are 3 training videos available to ACDRP premium members which go into greater detail in using PowerTRACE and redrawing a logo.

The first is contained in an introduction to PowerTRACE in the "What's new in CoreIDRAW X3". The second is an introduction to Centerline PowerTRACE tools in the "What's new in CoreIDRAW X4 section. The last video actually goes back to CoreIDRAW version 12 and demonstrates how to redraw a logo.

The instruction provided in all of these videos is applicable to current versions of CoreIDRAW. Please see the sidebar accompanying this article for links to the pages that contain those videos.



How To Be A Happy Hooper: *An Interview With Liz Beavers*



Having the right hoop for the job ensures the job runs smoothly, and you get the best results.



**About
Liz Beavers**

Liz Beavers is the embroidery territory manager for Dallas-based GSG, a full line distributor of equipment and supplies for textile and graphic screen printing, embroidery, digital direct-to-garment printing, and electrical signage. She has been in the industry for 31 years as an embroidery shop owner as well as an educator and writer on embroidery topics. She currently teaches regular embroidery classes at all six GSG locations. You can reach her at liz.beavers@gogsg.com.

An understanding of the ins and outs of hooping and the products on the market plays a critical role in embroidery production. Proper hooping is key to straight, smooth, clean sewouts. It is essential for ensuring that the sewing is aligned with the grain of the fabric and is in registration. It also creates a taut surface that's less prone to puckering. In short, it can make the difference between having a job rejected and repeat business.

There are a variety of options available in many price ranges. These include hoops, clamps, and frames for traditional apparel styles, as well as more difficult-to-embroider items such as caps, bags, luggage, shoes, and border sashes for table runners, curtains, and other long, continuous embroidery applications. And the list goes on.

Specialty, as well as standard, hoops may be offered specifically for your machine by the manufacturer. After-market hoops are also sold for most machines, although you have to specify your make and model when ordering.



No matter what the substrate, there is probably a specialty hoop available for doing it. If you will be doing repeated work on a difficult-to-embroider product, consider purchasing the specialty hoop you need to make it go faster and easier.

Photo courtesy of GSG, Dallas



This is an example of a left-chest size hoop. You want to ensure there is a least a finger's width between the design and the edge of the hoop to avoid the needle hitting the hoop.
Photo courtesy of GSG, Dallas

Specialty hoops and clamping systems improve the speed and quality of your output and allow you to expand your range of offerings without major effort or expense. While you may get by using a workaround for a small, one-time specialty job, if you will regularly be doing that type of job, it's worth investing in a hoop made for that purpose. It will make hooping easier and more consistent.

A traditional hoop consists of an inner and an outer ring. The garment is sandwiched between them and secured by tightening screws to stretch the fabric taut. A magnetic hoop works in a similar way except that instead of screws, magnetic force is used to secure the garment between the two rings. So you save the time needed to turn screws. This hoop type, while more expensive, streamlines production and reduces operator fatigue, particularly when working with thicker fabrics and multiple layers.

Hoops come in different sizes, the smallest (for pocket designs) is 7 cm (2.8 inches), and they go up to as large as 510 cm by 450 cm (20 inches by 17.7 inches). Specialty clamps go up to the 25.4 cm by 25.4 cm (10 by 10 inch) range. Magnetic hoops can

be as large as 40.64 cm by 40.64 cm (16 by 16 inches) and all diameters.

The shapes of hoops also vary. General-purpose hoops that come with a machine are square or round, while magnetic hoops are all square. Clamping systems are usually square, although some may be modified to accommodate the shape of a particular substrate, such as the side of a hat.

A border sash is a frame that is extra-long in order to accommodate items such as banners, flags, and curtains. If 12 by 12 inches is the biggest area you can handle with a standard hoop, but you're embroidering a 15-by-15-inch runner, a sash makes it easier to break the job into sections.

Hooping systems also come in different price ranges. For standard embroidery hoops, you can expect to pay \$45 for the smallest sizes up to approximately \$200 for the largest. Magnetic hoops start at \$125 and go up with the size. Clamping systems may



By choosing the right hoop for the substrate, you ensure the job will run smoothly and produce the highest quality result. Photo courtesy of Mind's Eye Graphics, Decatur, Ind.



A hooping station is an ideal way to speed up the process and ensure greater consistency. A board with a grid, coordinates, and holes allows you to line up the hoop in exactly the same place every time, and you can record the coordinates for future repeat jobs. Photo courtesy of Mind's Eye Graphics, Decatur, Ind.

cost \$300 to \$900. You have to buy the base that holds the different sizes, which runs about \$225, and then the windows (frames), which vary in price and are typically \$150 each.

Keep in mind that this is an investment. Magnetic hoops can increase your production from 25 to 30 percent and reduce operator fatigue making them worth every penny. Properly cared for and stored, these hoops will last 10 or more years.

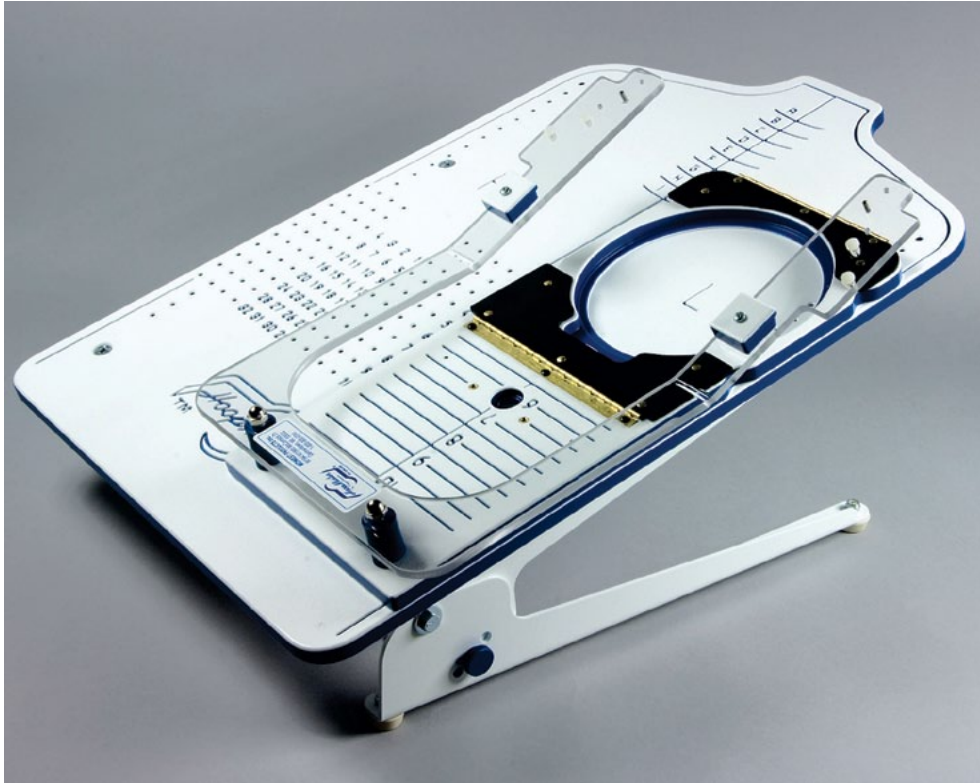
Hooping stations are also available for making the process faster, easier, and more precise. These stations consist of a base that sits on a tabletop with a board that is marked with a grid, coordinates, and holes for various-size design areas to facilitate proper placement of the garment within the hoop. They further ensure consistency within and between orders by allowing for placement documentation.



Once you know your options in terms of tools and equipment, the task becomes determining which type and size hoop to use for a given job. There are some guidelines to be aware of. For example, the industry standard for a left-chest embroidery is no more than 3 inches high and 4 inches wide (otherwise, you run the risk of it going under the arm).

If you want to maximize a left-chest design, you'll typically want to use an 18 cm hoop, which is standard on everyone's machine. But for a design that's smaller than that, 15 cm should do the job.

You have to look at the size of the design and how much space there is between it and the edge of the hoop. Obviously, you don't want the needle to hit the hoop. An easy safeguard against this is to make sure you have a finger's width clearance all around when you trace or lay out the design.



Most hooping stations come with the base, a T-square, a pocket guide, and one hoop. You can add whatever size hoops you use most or add more hoops later depending on your needs. Photo courtesy of GSG, Dallas

Another technique is to do a rendering of the design on paper and lay the hoop over it to see which size is best. There also is software that allows you to see what hoop best accommodates the design size, as well as determining the best size needle.

The substrate is a key consideration in hooping. The thicker the product, the harder it is to hoop. Knowing how to address this challenge has become critical with the rise in popularity of heavy, thick jackets and leather bags. You need to analyze the variables and determine how to rig the substrate so it doesn't pull the arms down and so you can hoop it properly. In these situations, a magnetic hooping system may be worth exploring.

There also has been a recent demand for embroidery on shoes. Before taking on these jobs, it's important to look at your machine's capabilities to determine whether it can penetrate the thickness of the shoe. Some smaller machines cannot.

It's also worth checking out attachments that are available for embroidering shoes. You'll want to take note of the image area, as well as the substrate thickness the attachment can handle. Also, look at other substrates it could work on, such as socks or koozies, to speed up production and expand your offerings.

You also have to know when and how to say "no" to embroidering an item. Don't throw in the towel immediately because, sometimes after you've had time to think about it, you will think of a way. However, recognize that some items can't be hooped and/or simply don't lend themselves to the process. If it can't be hooped, suggest a suitable alternative you can offer.

After hooping, it's important to test that it's been done correctly. The first thing to do is look at the inside of the hoop. Make sure the material doesn't appear ruffled or loose. If you tap it with your finger, it should sound like a drum. If the fabric depresses, it isn't hooped tightly enough and the registration will be off. Another test is to hold the hoop out in front of you and see if it looks level.

If the hooping passes these tests and you still run into problems with the sewout not being straight or out of register, make sure you are using the correct stabilizer or a topping the fabric requires. Embroidery is, after all, a process; and hooping, while a huge variable must be viewed as part of the big picture.

Embroidery Supplies

AMERICAN EMBROIDERY SUPPLY OFFERS LIGHT-DUTY THREAD CLIPPERS



Light-duty, microtip thread clippers make it fast and easy to trim excess threads from embroidery sew outs. This pair offered by American Embroidery Supply of Columbus, GA, are 4.75 inches, which means they are small enough to fit into an apron pocket to keep handy when needed.

The clippers feature stainless steel blades with super sharp points that fit into hard-to-reach places. They feature an auto-return action that automatically reopens the blades after being

used to clip threads. They can be used right or left handed. [MORE INFO](#)

BITO OFFERS PROEL TSI E-LASER 1200

BITO of Deer Park, NY, offers the latest in embroidery laser technology with its new Proel TSI E-Laser 1200 series, a combination singlehead laser and embroidery machine with the power and capabilities of a LaserBridge to integrate the process of cutting and embroidery in one seamless operation.

Ideal for doing distressed or



reverse appliqué lettering, the 1200 harnesses a higher level of power than previously available in the market to do multilayers of appliqué as well as the cutting of natural, dense, and synthetic fabrics. This series, which comes in 30 and 50 watts, offers the highest power levels in its class allowing users to cut materials such as canvas, suede, and synthetic leather. Compared to single-head lasers that offer only 10 watts, there is a significant difference in the machine's capabilities.

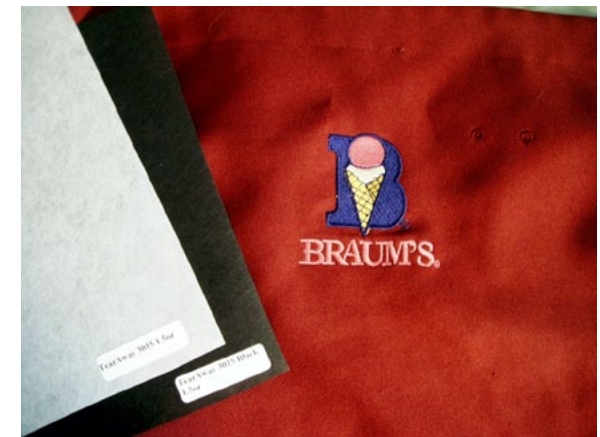
The new E-Laser 1200 also is safer due to a shield that is part of the embroidery head's design. The embroidery machine has 12 needles and can sew up to a speed of 1,200 stitches per minute. The sewing/cutting field is 400 mm high by 520 mm wide. It is controlled by software that using 1mm digitized outlines. [MORE INFO](#)

COTSWOLD OFFERS 1.5-OUNCE TEARAWAY

Cotswold Industries of New York, NY, offers 1.5-ounce tearaway, which is ideal for stable woven fabrics such as towels, denim, nylon and cotton twill sewn with light to medium stitch counts. It also can be used as part of a stabilizer "sandwich" to lend added support.

The premium-grade firm tearaway is made using the wet-laid process that ensures it is multidirectionally stable for the ultimate in embroidery support. It is made of synthetic and cellulose fibers treated with a chemical binder. A needle lubricant also is added to ensure smooth sewing at all times. Premium-grade tearaway can be washed or dry-cleaned and remnants remove cleanly when torn away.

It comes in a 15-inch width in 25- and 50-yard lengths. A 23-inch width comes in 125 yards; and a 46-inch length comes in 125 yards and 250 yards. [MORE INFO](#)



DALCO ATHLETIC OFFERS NEWTEAR AWAY GLITZ APPLIQUÉ



Create dazzling appliqué lettering and shapes that require no precutting with Dalco's new Tear Away Glitz appliqué fabric. The material consists of glitter flakes encased in a high-quality heat seal adhesive that is bonded to the garment after sewing.

An outline stitch is sewn to show placement of the material, which should be slightly larger than the outline. The back of Tear Away Glitz is sprayed with an adhesive and placed inside the hoop. The design is embroidered using a running stitch and a thin satin stitch. Once sewing is completed, the excess is easily pulled away leaving a sewn appliqué. Heat-seal the sewn design and it's finished.

Save the time it takes to pre-cut letters or the cost of buying pre-cut pieces. It comes in 12-inch by 19.5-inch strips, and there is no minimum order. In addition, it also can be purchased on a 5-yard roll that is 19.5-inches wide. It comes in silver, gold, red, black, green, royal blue, and hot pink.

Dalco Athletic of Dallas, TX, offers a full line of official's uniforms and accessories as well as die-cut, water-jet cut, and kiss-cut letters, numbers, shapes, and mascots in a range of materials for decorating team and spiritwear. It also offers roll materials to cut your own. [MORE INFO](#)

FLORIANI COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS OFFERS PERFECT STICK HOOPLESS STABILIZER

Get rid of those messy, smelly adhesive sprays and sticky papers that gum up your needles. With the revolutionary Floriani Perfect Stick, offered by Floriani Commercial Products of Knoxville, TN, there finally is a true stabilizer that is specifically designed for doing hoopless embroidery.

Perfect Stick is a 1.5-ounce, high-fiber tearaway that uses an exclusive, proprietary adhesive that was developed for Floriani Stabilizers. Its lightweight properties prevent it from collecting on the needle and gumming up the machine like many traditional

sticky papers are known to do. Also, because it's a true stabilizer, not paper, stitches have fibers to wrap around resulting in embroidery that is clean, crisp, and true to the original design.

Perfect Stick offers a secure hold while not damaging the fabric. It's ideal for a wide range of items that are hard to hoop such as baby socks, ties, napkin edges, collars, cuffs, towels, etc. It's also ideal for delicate fabrics such as velvet that are prone to hoop burn. [MORE INFO](#)



GSG OFFERS NEW ZSK SPRINT 6 SINGLEHEAD EMBROIDERY MACHINE



GSG of Dallas, TX and other locations, now offers the ZSK Sprint 6, a singlehead embroidery machine designed for the start-up embroiderer. This compact 12-needle machine has a variety of new features intended to make it more efficient and easy to use. The bridge-style head allows for larger sewing areas, precision stitching and faster sewing speeds. All-steel construction, fewer parts and less maintenance are some of the benchmark qualities.

One of the most dramatic improvements is a smaller sewing arm that allows customers to sew inside of pockets, socks, and cuffs. Changing over from flats to caps is now faster due to a new insert for the needle plate that is easily screwed on and off. The new tubular arm eliminates the need for a picker system.

A laser alignment system is included, which makes positioning the hoop and the design more accurate and faster. The thread stand has been reinforced



reducing the tendency to shake at high speeds, and the timing of the rotary hook is easier due to a redesigned main shaft break.

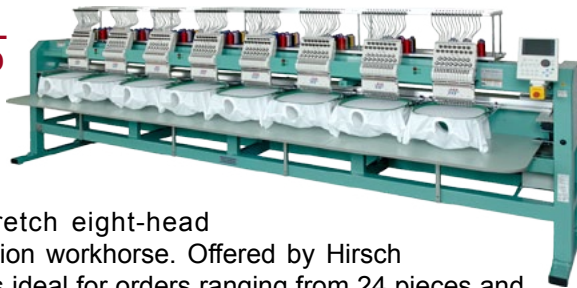
The Sprint 6 now comes in a choice of 10 machine colors. Blue is the standard color, but another color can be chosen at an additional cost. A new optional quick-change system clamp is available that replaces the standard thumb screws to attach the cap and tubular assembly.

For sewing pockets with the smaller arm, ZSK is offering the option of pocket frames in three sizes. A rotary hook cover also is available, which prevents the garment from getting caught inside the hook and bobbin area.

There also is a new zigzag EP3 attachment for doing cording on caps, and there are three devices for doing sequins ranging from 3mm to 19mm. A new all-steel, height-adjustable stand makes the machine ergonomically safer to use. [MORE INFO](#)

HIRSCH INTERNATIONAL OFFERS TAJIMA EIGHT-HEAD STRETCH

Tajima has the perfect machine for companies needing efficient high-volume production. The Tajima TFMX-IIC 1508-450 stretch eight-head embroidery machine is a production workhorse. Offered by Hirsch International Corp, this machine is ideal for orders ranging from 24 pieces and up, and this stretch version has an extra-large sewing field for doing jacket backs, bags, carpet, blankets, and oversize designs.

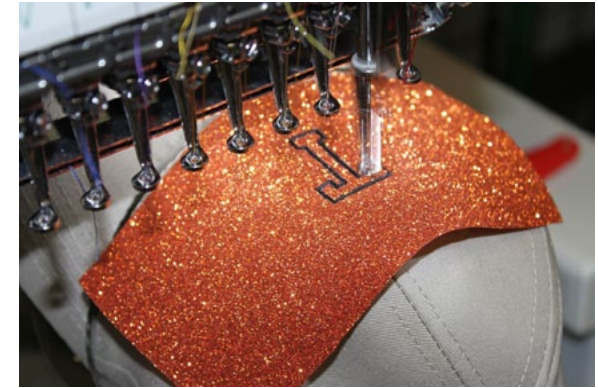


The TFMX-IIC 1508-450 has Tajima's legendary quality, which means many years of reliable production. The most advanced efficient color change and trimming mechanisms, combined with an intuitive drive system and state-of-the-art electronics, saves valuable time and results in the most accurate stitching with less downtime.

A built in LAN connection eliminates the tedious steps of transferring designs back and forth through a USB stick, and color sequence can be automatically sent with the design, thus eliminating the need to manually load colors on each new job. One person can easily change from garments to caps in minutes, with no tools required, with Tajima's exclusive Uni-Sash system. Tajima embroidery machines can also provide detailed reporting, allowing embroiderers to keep track of vital production information and management to measure production efficiency. [MORE INFO](#)

IMPRINTABLES WAREHOUSE OFFERS SPECTRA® BLING FOR EMBROIDERY APPLIQUÉ

Spectra® Bling glitter heat transfer vinyl, offered by Imprintables Warehouse of Masontown, PA, is ideal for creating shimmering appliqué designs for dance, cheer, collegiate, sports, and leisure applications.



Using the rip away technique, this material is placed in the hoop over a placement outline and sewn using a satin stitch.

When finished, excess material is weeded away creating an appliqué without the use of precut pieces or cutting individual pieces that have to be placed. Simply heat seal the design for 15 seconds, and the design will last longer than the life of the garment.



Bling comes on a 20-inch wide roll with variety of lengths including 5-yard, 10-yard, 25-yard, and 50-yard rolls. Recommended fabrics include 100% cotton, 100% polyester, and poly/cotton blends. It comes in 13 sparky colors.

Imprintables Warehouse is your premier online destination for apparel decorating and sign-making supplies. The online selection includes heat-applied graphics and sign materials as well as Stahls' Hotronix heat presses. [MORE INFO](#)



**STAHL'S' OFFERS ANY WORD. ANY WAY.™
STANDARD TEXT TEMPLATES**

Customizing apparel and accessories is easy with Any Word. Any Way™ Standard text templates from Stahl's. With its wide range of options, this product is great for decorating school or team uniforms and spiritwear, including shirts, jackets, and sweatshirts, plus many other items.

Both sew and no-sew options are available. Materials include solid-color Poly-TWILL™ and heat transfer media such as Thermo-FILM® and Thermo-GRIP®, as well as Boxercraft® plaids, prints, and metallic appliqué fabrics. Block and script styles are offered with connected, unconnected, detailed, and cloud backgrounds in a choice of color treatments, fonts, and split fonts.

Decorative tails, overlap split-front, and custom overlap treatments also are available. Items come in individual pieces and/or layers for easy custom layout.

To see all the great options for customizing with Any Word. Any Way.™ Standard text templates, go to the website. Appliqué Sample Kits allow you to try Any Word. Any Way., and are great for creating display samples. [MORE INFO](#)



**USA EMBROIDERY SUPPLY OFFERS ROBISON-ANTON
SUPER BRITE POLYESTER THREAD**

A new online embroidery distributor, USA Embroidery Supply from Columbus, GA, offers Robison Anton Super Strength Rayon® thread. It features a bright lustrous sheen and is smooth and easy running so you do not have to worry about constant thread breaks. It also is easy on equipment, reducing wear and tear that sometimes happens with coarser threads. It retains its sheen wash after wash.



The thread is 120 denier two-ply 40 weight and fits an 11.75 size needle. It comes in solid and variegated colors. There are 450 licensed Pantone® shades available to match any client's color specifications. The king-size spool holds 5,500 yards and the mini-king spool holds 1,000 yards.





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Finding the Motivation Again

Motivation can be defined as the momentum that gets one to action. I call it my Mojo. It drives us to our goals. It's what keeps us going *when the going gets tough*. It's the excitement and the reason we get to work early and stay late during our busy season. Motivation is within us. No one else can make us motivated. It's totally up to us. One of the most challenging aspects of being in business is keeping inspired and motivated.

“Our life is what our thoughts make it.”

Several business peers and I had a long chat about this recently, when each of us, in our own way, was muddling through the mid-summer slow business doldrums. Each one in this group had their own way of coping with the dramatic change from *rush, rush, rush* to *where did all the customers go?*

A couple of these folks use the week of 4th of July as a vacation week, where they close up shop and every employee takes vacation. They say that they come back after the break, refreshed and ready for planning ahead. A couple use this time to redecorate their facilities with fresh paint, complete cleaning, updating, and changing their showroom displays. I mentioned that, besides *cleaning house*, we use the slow time to *clear the clutter*. For us, this is the perfect time to purge the paper files and transfer everything to our Neat Desk program.

The discussion with this group of industry friends led to ideas for several things one can do to get motivated again, and get the Mojo back. These suggestions could help one get important tasks taken care of at the same time.

Marcus Aurelius said, “Our life is what our thoughts make it.” So, beginning with the mindset of thinking positively, here are some suggestions that might help one to get excited about getting re- motivated:

- Make customer check in calls. Talk to people who benefit from your work. The

more you hear how your goods and services are to these folks, the happier you will feel about being able to provide this.

- This is a good time to catch up on all the industry reading that got put off *until there was enough time*.
- Take time to look for new products and services to add to the current mix of offerings.
- Explore better, faster, more cost effective ways of getting things done.
- Look for creative ways to save money or make money for the business.
- Set weekly and monthly goals for the remainder of the calendar year. Plan ahead by laying out the subtasks needed to accomplish the goals.
- Create a coordinated system to keep track of projects. We use NetSoft Studio's industry program, Biz Wizard, at our place. It helps us to stay in charge of, and on top of orders, from front counter (or web, phone, fax or email) through production and back to delivery at front counter.
- Study all the new equipment that has been introduced since the company's last upgrade. This may be the perfect time to purchase / lease new state-of-the-art tools, get them in to the shop, and tackle the learning curve.
- Upgrade current programs with the latest version.
- Organize production areas. Color code tools for different work stations. Rearrange stations for better work flow.
- Organize desk and office so that there will be quick access to what is needed, when it's needed. Put things in places where one doesn't have to hunt for them.
- Sort all paper clutter into files for To do, To file, To read, and toss everything else. Make it a habit to dispose of papers that haven't been looked at in over two weeks.
- Ask all team members for suggestions on how to do the job better, faster, easier. Not only will this make for team *buy-in*, it could produce some really good ideas.
- Get out in the community. Re-activate memberships in community organizations. Get out and get visible.
- Get a life! This is a great time to enjoy all the fun and relaxation that got put off during the busy time. Take time for hobbies. Exercise. Take a course. Start a blog. Get some extra sleep. Read something for enjoyment. Go fishing. Take a real break – get away.



Having a good work-life balance is difficult when we're so busy we can't turn around. Author Leo Babuta, in his book **The Power Of Less**, has a chapter called "Slow Down", where he tells us that *"These days we consume information, food, and media at a breakneck pace that was unimagined even two hundred years ago. We have every minute of our schedules packed with errands and tasks and chores, we rush from one place to another, we rush to get ready in the morning, and then collapse into bed at the end of a long, rushed day."* He goes on to say, *"The problem is that we were not made to function this way. Our bodies and minds were made for a slower-paced life.... We can't handle the stresses of constant overload and a constant hectic pace for every waking moment. As a result, we become stressed out, burned out, and unhappy. Learn to move at a slower pace and you will be happier, and just as importantly, you will become more effective and productive."*

Time management experts suggest that when we are more rested in body, mind, and spirit, it will be easier to become motivated towards our end goals. A life/work coach friend of mine shared the following ideas for getting one's Mojo back:

- Read about your goal. One can get inspired by learning how others have found success in different business situations.
- Find and cultivate like-minded friends who know and understand how it is to ride the roller coaster of business. Look for and join a group of other entrepreneurs...no matter what kind of work they do. It's all relative...small or big businesses all have similar challenges.
- Start and keep a daily journal of thoughts, inspirational quotes, etc.
- Use visualization. Picture, in your mind, how you want things to go, just like winning athletes and other successful people do, who think themselves to success. Do this regularly.
- Get excited again about all the things you were excited about when you began in business. Think about what made you passionate about what you do.
- Ask for and get help. Sometimes we just need a cheerleader. Get a coach. Find and join a support network. Somewhere out there...maybe it's online, is the perfect Business Owners Anonymous.
- Reward yourself...often. When we're in a busy season at work, we may tend to forget the importance of celebrating our successes.

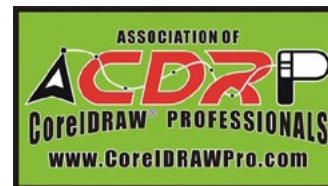
Some folks use the quiet time to study others. I know several industry friends who, during their vacation travels, stop in at other industry shops just to visit and get ideas. These folks are extremely successful because they are always looking for ways to improve...even when they're on a break.

Zig Ziglar, (1926-2012), expert salesman, professional speaker said, "Success is not a destination: It is a journey. The happiest people I know are those who are busy working toward specific objectives. The most bored and miserable people I know are those who are drifting along with no worthwhile objectives in mind."

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Getting motivated...getting our Mojo back will get us back on track with specific objectives!

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John and Judy McDaniel are owners of CoreIDRAW® Help, Inc. They started in the personalization business in 1989 with CoreIDRAW version 1.0. In their businesses they apply CoreIDRAW! 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—sales literature and flyers. In essence, they have over 20 years of experience in applying CoreIDRAW! They have written hundreds of articles and tips; lectured across the country; and have been teaching CoreIDRAW since 1991.. For information on training and more, call 541-967-4271, or write to mail@CoreIDRAWhelp.com.



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High Definition Images & Football Numbering Tips

TIP #1: WHEN EVALUATING COLOR LASER PRINTERS, WHAT IS MEANT BY HIGH DEFINITION?



This image is an example of equipment that prints standard quality. Photo courtesy of Imaging Supplies Warehouse, Maryland Heights, Mo.



This sharper photo shows the quality when printed with high definition equipment. Photo courtesy of Imaging Supplies Warehouse, Maryland Heights, Mo.

A high definition image is sharper than what is considered standard with finer detail. Colors are brighter and more accurate. If you put a high definition image side by side with a standard image, there are distinct differences in clarity and crispness. Equipment that produces high definition transfers is using the latest technology and techniques to produce the highest-quality image possible.

Submitted by Jim Tenholder, dealer sales manager, Imaging Supplies Warehouse, Maryland Heights, MO. [MORE INFO](#)

TIP #2: SIZING UP FOOTBALL NUMBERS

When trying to tackle the football team market, it's crucial to know what you are talking about when it comes to numbering team uniforms. Here's a rundown of the basics.

Football jerseys have distinctive number styles and placements. For example, in

addition to large numbers on the front and back of the jersey, there also are numbers displayed on the shoulders or sleeves termed "TV numbers." These smaller numbers allow viewers watching a game to identify a player's number from far away. Numbers also can be found on players' helmets.

Also unique to football is that certain numbers may be worn only by players playing particular positions. This rule is to assist officials in determining rule infractions by players. Number sequences based on player positions include:

1-9 quarterback, kickers; 10-19 quarterback, kickers, receivers, tight end; 20-49 running back, defensive back; 50-59 linebackers; 60-79 offensive and defensive lineman; 80-89 receivers, tight end; 90-99 defensive lineman, linebackers

Number sizes for decorating football jerseys vary based on garment size. These are the typical size guidelines to reference: Adult- 3" name, 10" front number, 10" or 12" back number, 4" sleeve/shoulder number; Youth - 2" name, 8" front number, 10" back number, 3" sleeve/shoulder number.

Submitted by Paul Sabatini, Marketing Sports Coordinator for Stahls' of St. Clair Shores, MI. [MORE INFO](#)



Football uniforms are distinct from other sports in the use of "TV numbers" that are placed on the shoulders or sleeves of the jersey to make it easier to see a player number from far away.



TIP #3: FUN WITH FOOTBALL NUMBERING

Football in fall offers numerous opportunities for decorators to provide numbered uniforms for teams as well as numbered jerseys for fans supporting specific players. Traditionally, football numbers are a bold or block style such as Varsity and Pro Block with some newer options including Warrior, Colossus, Titan, and Concrete.

One way you can differentiate your shop from others is to offer new options for football teams who may be interested in a fresh look for uniforms. One product that is designed for doing this is interactive numbers.



Here is an example of two-color gap outline number style that when heat pressed to the jersey offers a three-color look. Photo courtesy of Stahls', St. Clair Shores, Mich.



This example of interactive numbers shows how you can create numbers for home and away football uniforms that are similar but offer different looks. Photo courtesy of Stahls', St. Clair Shores, Mich.



Gap outline numbers offers a new twist on classic style. This example shows how it's possible to get a two-color look with a single-color number. Photo courtesy of Stahls', St. Clair Shores, Mich.

Interactive numbers work especially well for creating a unique set of digits for home and away uniforms. They are made up of two variations of the same style; one representing the **left** set of digits and the other representing the **right** set of digits.

When combined, they interact with each other creating a unique double-digit set. A home uniform can be decorated using a **left** and **right** interactive combination, and the away uniform can be decorated using a **right** and **left** interactive combination.

This type of number offers a different look without straying too far from traditional numbering.

Another excellent option for a more unique look is gap outline numbers. These allows for a two-color look with a one-layer application because the garment color peeks through the gap. Or create a three-color look without layering by replacing the primary number with alternating color pre-cut numbers.

Submitted by Paul Sabatini, Marketing Sports Coordinator for Stahls' of St. Clair Shores, MI. [MORE INFO](#)