

June 2016

PUTTING THE SPOTLIGHT ON LOGOS AND LETTING THEM SHINE



Having [a great logo is an essential part of business](#) in the 21st century. This is especially important for small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs), who should not limit their use of logos to business cards and letterhead alone.

As a distributor of promotional products and marketing services, you know that putting logos on everything from mugs to wearables means businesses can make their names highly visible. Logos on a range of specialty advertising products also make them effective trade show and event giveaways. However products are used, you enable customers to share their brands with contacts to drive new revenue.

Although the array of choices for ambitious small businesses can be overwhelming, you can guide them on the right options to ensure their logos are seen and they get a [return on investment for their marketing budgets](#).

T-Shirts: the Ultimate Wearable

The New York Times once reported that t-shirts are virtually a universal possession in America. Specifically, [95 percent of Americans own and wear t-shirts](#) and 89 percent wear them at least once a week. Since the 1950s, t-shirts have been the bearer of [logos, images and brand messages](#). Moreover, both consumers and business experts seem to agree that [one can never have too many t-shirts](#).

This Idea Customs Solutions infographic is a quick guide to helping your SMB customers highlight their brands with [creative t-shirt designs](#).

Tote-ally Awesome Marketing

Almost as popular as the t-shirt is another classic, the tote bag. Not only do [tote bags have a long history](#), but they have made a roaring comeback of late because they are useful for recipients and display brand logos out in public for businesses. ASI thinks it is possible that [totes are the most useful, practical promotional item out there](#).

Totes aren't just for [NPR listeners](#), [tech geeks](#) or [comic book show enthusiasts](#). A variety of companies that serve various business sectors offer them as giveaways. Totes are even being used as an incentive to [entice media sharing among Millennials](#).

Seasonal Specialties

SMBs that choose branded wearables might see them as promotional items that work year round. But the climate where you live might affect your point of view. That's why some businesses opt for outerwear items like jackets, hoodies or winter caps when the brisk winds come and snowflakes fall. Others warm up to items that can be used in the summer

QUICK NEWSLETTER SURVEY

Would you recommend this newsletter?

Nope 1 2 3 4 5 For sure

WIN A FREE LOGO MAKEOVER!

Let us show you the quality of the logos we'll create for your customers by trying our design service for your own business. This month, Idea Custom Solutions is giving away a free logo makeover!

This is not a do-it-yourself, software-driven or templated service. We have a team of dedicated designers for logos, creative briefs to capture your requirements and design consultants that interview you, so we deliver the best work fast.

It's simple to enter:

1. Follow us on Twitter
[@Idea_Custom](#)
2. Tweet with the hashtag
[#LogoMakeover](#)
3. Email
marketing@ideacustom.com
the reason your business should win

SOCIALIZE WITH IDEA CUSTOM SOLUTIONS

If you are interested in the latest industry news, hot sectors to target, decorating techniques and general business advice, connect with us on [Twitter](#) ([@Idea_Custom](#)) and [LinkedIn](#).

We also have a new [Facebook page](#) too, where you can even see our employees at work and our production facility.

Of course, we also have a [company blog](#), where we publish a variety of industry related content and we'd love your feedback and comments.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ASI Show!
Chicago, IL
July 13-14
Exhibiting

Embroidery Mart—Nashville
Nashville, TN
August 5-6
Attending

PPAI North American Leadership Conference
Nashville, TN
August 14-16
Attending

Sun.

The industry has seen a recent upswing in outdoor recreational promo products and summer items. As Idea Custom Solutions has pointed out previously, [grill and barbecue promotional products are extremely popular](#). This could be simply because Americans love to eat and grill out. [Picnic items are also very big this year](#), including reusable drink bottles and outdoor containers, as well as convenience items such as branded napkins and condiments. Find out how your customers plan to take advantage of the return of summer.

Don't Forget Social Media

Just about everyone is on social media. Not only are major brands and small business set up with Twitter and LinkedIn accounts, chances are you are reading this newsletter on your phone and toggling back and forth to your own Facebook page!

But having a personal social media account is just a starting point. Social is an excellent place to reinforce brand messaging. Just ask Kraft Heinz. The maker of the world's favorite ketchup, desserts and mac & cheese might spend millions on TV ads. But [Kraft Heinz still taps its social media](#) to engage consumers by sharing new recipe ideas, product offerings and holiday fun.

For SMBs, social media is a terrific place to promote business. And a great way to ensure current and potential customers are reminded to connect with brands is the use of promotional products emblazoned with both logos and social media handles.

As you consult with SMB customers on products and campaigns, if they need production-ready logos or if it's time for them to update and polish their brand images, Idea Custom Solutions will work with you behind the scenes. You come to the rescue with great products and graphics. See [designs on our website](#) or the growing collection we have on [Instagram](#).

QUALITY MARKETING COLLATERAL MAKES AN IMPACT

When business people think about the hospitality sector, a few familiar images might come to mind. For some it might be a cozy hotel room, fluffy towels and robes, or an amazing ocean view. For others, it might be some of the perks and giveaways, such as shampoos and lotions or even mints on pillows.

But for business people who travel a lot, hotels provide a wide range of branded promotional products as a way to convey comfort, deliver good service and, most importantly, inspire loyalty!

We all have something at home we grabbed from our last hotel stay — whether it's the soaps, pens and pads, or maybe even luxury sleeping masks. One Los Angeles hotel even catered to attendees of a 2014 Hello Kitty convention with [Hello Kitty swag and freebies](#).

Hotel chains and resorts often use promotional products as reminder advertising and to reinforce good memories that encourage future stays. But a major part of the [hospitality industry's promotional efforts](#) on the front end happen through marketing collateral.

Think about it. What better way to catch the eye of the prospective vacationer, event planner or [real estate investor](#) than with stunning photographic images and beautiful design?

These days the best quality brochures and marketing materials can be produced either in print or in digital format to be shared online. As such, even voices from the technology press such as [Washington Technology](#) and [Martech Advisor](#) think marketing collateral and content are essential to business strategy.

But it's not just hotels and beachside destinations that are using marketing collateral to drum up business. Organizations of all sectors and sizes from [car makers](#) to [local trade organizations](#) use marketing collateral to communicate effectively. In some cases, brochures help firms demonstrate what their products and services can offer in [different languages to appeal to different markets](#).

More importantly, marketing collateral has been cited as one ingredient in the marketing mix that can [help build trust in a business](#). It's also [ideal for trade shows](#) and events.

If you work directly with SMBs, help them demonstrate what they do best with quality marketing collateral. By partnering with [Idea Custom Solutions](#), you can provide design support for their materials (or even your own promotional documents). With your help, they can reach customers professionally and creatively.

ISS

Fort Worth, TX
October 6-8
Attending

NOTABLE QUOTES



"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. [Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.](#)"

— Helen Keller



"Good seasons [start with good beginnings.](#)"

— Sparky Anderson



"The universe is [made of stories](#), not of atoms."

— Muriel Rukeyser



"[Action is the antidote](#) to despair."

— Joan Baez



"When in doubt, [sing loud.](#)"

— Robert Merrill



"The more informative your advertising, the [more persuasive](#) it will be."

— David Ogilvy

WHAT'S THE IDEAL WORK WEEK?

If you ask the average entrepreneur or small business owner about their typical work day, chances are the answers are anything but typical. A decade ago, the polling organization Gallup found that **small business owners worked more** than the classic 40-hours, placing their time commitment at around 52 hours a week.

Weighing in on the same topic, *Inc.* magazine reported the following year that 25 percent of **small business owners were clocking 60 hours a week**. Whether or not work habits of the very driven have changed, there is some recent scientific perspective available about work.

Inc. reported on the issue last month. According a recent scientific study, **working longer than 10 hours in a single work day** (or much longer than a 40-hour work week) can create problems rather than productive results. Here are a few specifics:

- Working more than 10 hours a day is associated with a 60 percent jump in cardiovascular risks.
- Injury rates go up as overtime the hours worked increase.
- Little productive work actually occurs after 50 hours a week.

The *Inc.* article advises that, no matter what line of business you are in, don't work more than 50 hours per week consistently, especially "if you value your health, happiness and connections to others".

Some argue, including a recent contributor to *Forbes*, that **the typical 40-hour work week is dying**. Others contend that it is not just how many hours you work; it's what you do with them that really counts. *Fast Company* recently suggested that **the ideal work week consist of 20 hours of core production time** — what you and your company do best. Additional hours should be dedicated to activities that increase visibility, including speaking about your expertise, volunteering and networking, as well as a few hours for planning your success.

But don't rearrange your schedule to match CEOs and celebrity billionaires. As Lifehacker contributor Kristin Wong writes, **chasing habits of rich people won't teach you success**. Every business and entrepreneur is different.

Some experts claim **flexibility may be more vital than clocking hours**. Others agree that **flexibility in your schedule is good for profitability**, but also for your physical and mental well-being.

Whatever you think is best for you and your business, remember who is boss. Rule your work week and don't let your work week rule you.

Whether you spend an hour here and there on straightforward vector artwork files or dozens of hours on **complex embroidery digitizing designs**, reach out to Idea Custom Solutions for help so you have the flexibility and freedom to dedicate your time to building relationships with customers.

CLIENTS ARE RAVING

"The service was fast, the DST file works well, and the price was very competitive."

Sue Sawyer
Jaeco Engraving

"Great Service, Excellent Communication and Fast Turnaround. My files look great! Thank you!"

Emily MacBeth
3 Dandelions Custom Promotions

"Good work and customer service."

Peter Holland
Rheia



TWEET THAT!

Summer is coming! Whether you or your favorite grill master does the cooking, picnic **#PromoProducts** are a hit. <https://goo.gl/A26iYL>

Tweet That!

Piano bars, fancy hotels, **#SMBs** all know matches are a useful **#PromoProduct**. A keepsake too! <http://goo.gl/mi8ne9>

Tweet That!

Hotels, real estate rely big on **#MarketingCollateral** in the digital age. **#Brochures** make SMBs shine too.

Tweet That!



"Success is not built on success. It's built on failure. It's built on frustration. Sometimes it's built on catastrophe."

— Summer Redstone



"I must **govern the clock**, not be governed by it."

— Golda Meir



"Every day I feel is a blessing from God. And I consider it a new beginning. Yeah, **everything is beautiful**."

— Prince



"Nothing except the mint can make **money without advertising**."

— Thomas Babington Macaulay



"In this bright future **you can't forget your past**."

— Bob Marley



"To do **common things perfectly** is far better worth our endeavor than to do uncommon things respectably."

— Harriet Beecher Stowe

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

<http://goo.gl/erpkMK>

What can Prince teach all companies about [#re-branding](#)? Being practical and unique a sign o' the times.

<http://goo.gl/dFZgQl>

Corporate [#ads](#) aim to bring game, revenue to the NBA. How ad agencies can make ads, [#logos](#) on game shirts classy. <http://goo.gl/5l5irm>

Did you know [@CNN](#) has its own font? From [#logo](#) to news content, the media giant crafts its own look.

<http://goo.gl/a2ySUU>

Ever see an iconic [#logo](#) drawn by hand? Honda, Coke and the New York Times drawn by masters. ([#video](#))

<https://goo.gl/1lzeCf>

Fonts turn heads and get [#logos](#) noticed — not just for mega [#brands](#)! Ask this popular sandwich shop.

<http://goo.gl/2QvAOW>

Where did [#Nike](#)'s Air Jordan [#logo](#) come from? The "jumpman" a major sports image and [#brand](#) icon too.

<http://goo.gl/DC0D8H>

A new [#logo](#) or [#rebrand](#) must excite customers, not confuse or lose them. A few success tips.

<http://goo.gl/e4K3qt>

[Tweet That!](#)

[Tweet That!](#)

[Tweet That!](#)

[Tweet That!](#)

[Tweet That!](#)

[Tweet That!](#)

[Tweet That!](#)



Yogesh Kotla

Unit Supervisor, Operations —
Order Entry

Yogesh joined Idea Custom Solutions back in 2011. Today, he is a team leader and is responsible for managing production and quality, as well as continually improving team performance for the order entry function.

His promotion to this supervisory role has been his proudest accomplishment at the company so far. About Idea Custom Solutions, he says: "We have a great opportunity to learn new things and all employees should take advantage to achieve their professional goals."

According to Yogesh, he leads a "simple life" and lives with his family. Aside from work, he is a passionate reader and his favorite author is Jeffrey Archer.

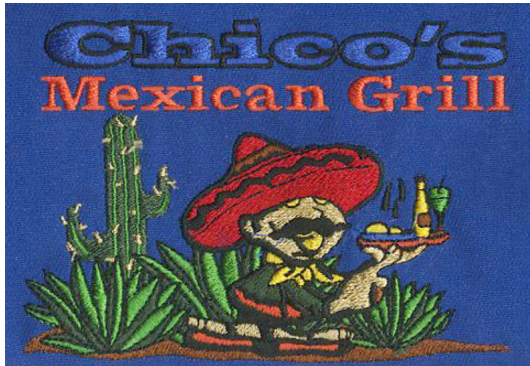
A national-level soccer (football in India) player, on weekends he plays district-level tournaments. When not playing, he watches late-night matches. Previously, he participated in a corporate soccer tournament with his Idea Custom colleagues and his team won the trophy.

As he did not make soccer his profession, his next dream is to take a world tour with his family and visit famous places around the world.

Yogesh would like to be known for his leadership qualities at the office and for his soccer talent on the playground.

DESIGN SHOWCASE

Embroidery Digitizing



Vector Artwork



If you have any designs created by our team that you would like to share in this newsletter, send them to us at marketing@ideacustom.com



© 2016 AffinityX All Rights Reserved. The mark Affinity Express is a registered trademark of Affinity Express, Inc. in the U.S. and other countries, and Idea Custom Solutions is the sole property of Affinity Express.