

February 2015

THE RIGHT LOOK IS THE KEY

This month, *Entrepreneur Magazine* published a handy [piece](#) called “5 Must-Haves for a Successful Logo”. While this isn’t a graphic arts or design publication of any sort, the author of the post focused on ideas about what makes a company’s brand name stand out once fused with the right graphic presentation.



Some of the things that make a logo really work, according to *Entrepreneur*, are its **simplicity**, its **remarkability**, and its **brand consistency**. When you think about some of the great logos that have extended their reach to be recognized globally, ones like the Apple logo and the Breast Cancer Awareness pink ribbon (as well as the use of pink as a color) stand out.

While not every company has the capital to pump its logo to such international heights, small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) can definitely make their mark and their company name shine. And, whether an SMB has a simple, recognizable name like Smith or Ford, or something more unique like Wojchehowski & Sons, a logo put together with simple and crisp design in consistent colors can make a lasting impression.

Still, SMBs need help pushing their brand and company name recognition to the next level. That is where specialty advertising distributors can help.

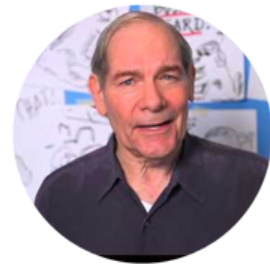
Idea Custom Solutions can partner with you to provide the best in high-quality [embroidery digitizing](#), [vector artwork](#), [image editing](#) and other white-label graphic services to help them advance their brands. We also offer fast [virtual samples](#) and design [marketing materials](#) that will demonstrate what your company can do for SMB

NOTABLE QUOTES



“All lasting business is built on [friendship](#).”

— Alfred A. Montapert



“[Innovation](#) is [creativity](#) with a job to do.”

— John Emmerling



“The [riches](#) of the game are in the thrills, not the money.”

— Ernie Banks

customers and position you for success in the SMB marketplace.

WHAT DRIVES PEOPLE TO BUY FROM SMBs?

Last summer, the farcical news source known as *The Onion* put out a funny article about small business. In a “[study](#)” allegedly put together by researchers at the University of Georgia, the comic newspaper said that nine out of every ten purchases from small businesses are actually driven by a customer’s shame at the idea of leaving a store without buying anything.

“We found that most individuals who walked into a family-owned store with no intention of buying anything were quick to feel an incredible sense of sadness and pity upon seeing the clerk’s smiling face or the handwritten price tags,” one area researcher said.

Jokes aside, this humor piece conjures up an important question: What does cause customers to buy from an SMB they know and trust? Perhaps it’s all in the service, reputation and personal relationships an SMB cultivates a little bit, every day. There are a lot of differing opinions about what makes an SMB really take off.

Be Confident in What You Offer

Last week, *Inc. Magazine* **got all millennial** while [talking](#) up success in “How to Succeed as an Entrepreneur, Taylor Swift style”. While the column’s author cited the unique success of the young singer — a self-styled country/pop music star with a girl-next-door reputation — the post also mentioned the universal principles involved in Swift’s mix.

The specific lesson involved for any SMB is this: “You have a great idea, a great product, an awesome concept, but if you don’t wholeheartedly believe in its quality, no one else will.”

Charge What Your Product or Service is Really Worth

One major [pitfall](#), according to *Money Magazine* is that often SMBs charge too little for the goods and services they provide. While starting a business can be an adventure in and of itself, not capturing adequate revenue — and charging your customers fairly for the value that you provide for them — in the long run doesn’t help you or them.

Leverage Personal Relationships

Entrepreneurs are often noted for their hard work as well as for being fearless in the face of risk and new challenges. Long hours are often part of the deal too. But seldom is anything mentioned in the business press about the value of relationships SMB and their owners build with their clientele.

The best way within your normal course of business to assure solid connections with customers is to be yourself. Be approachable, be helpful, explain the benefits of what you’re offering your clients, and follow up with great service always.

Along these lines, Idea Custom Solutions believes that when you rely on our graphic services — whether to promote your company or to brand products for customers — you get high quality at cost-effective rates that enable you to compete better and focus on the relationships.



“Success or failure in business is caused more by the **mental attitude** even than by mental capacities.”

— Walter Scott



“Just **go out there** and do what you have to do.”

— Martina Navratilova

IDEA CUSTOM SOLUTIONS EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

In the Employee Spotlight, Idea Custom Solutions features one of the people behind the scenes that makes our customer-oriented business work. This month, meet Anand Jakkan, Senior Team Leader in the digitizing division of Idea Custom Solutions.



As a senior team leader, Anand’s main task is to make sure Idea Custom Solutions is handling the incoming digitizing order volumes and deadlines for customers without compromising on quality. He also

GOLF IS ON ITS WAY AND SO IS YOUR NEXT OPPORTUNITY

If you look out the window in most parts of the U.S. right now, you will see overcast skies, snow, ice and your neighbors bundled up to their chins in winter coats. But just as pitchers and catchers are getting ready to report to baseball Spring Training in Florida and the Southwest, we're inching closer to warmer weather again soon.

Whether or not you swing clubs yourself, you probably know that baseball is "the national pastime", but golf is far and away the pastime (if not one of the languages) of business. But golf isn't all just play. It is a sport that provides ample opportunities to promote business and for entrepreneurial SMBs to project their brand names.

This month our friends at ASI talked up golf in [Advantages](#), citing the game as big business. With golfers playing 490 million rounds of golf in 2012 (the first sizable jump in the number of golf outings since 2000) and many more since, according to the National Golf Foundation, the game provides no shortage of opportunities for specialty advertising and promo products distributors.

Every year from mid-spring to the last warm days of late fall, companies nationwide host golf outings and fundraising events that offer gift bags, auction items, contest prizes and more. SMBs and relationship-oriented businesses like financial advisers, real estate agents and staffing firms also capitalize on Americans' love of golf and golf swag such as carry bags, tees and golf balls to get their name out there.

Advantages notes that more companies are integrating golf into their business marketing plans. This presents an enormous opportunity to distributors and suppliers who start prospecting early.

Idea Custom Solutions will help you customize those giveaways, as well as design invitations, signage and materials to promote events that will impress your customers.



Embroidery Digitizing

answers questions from production and customer service employees. About the company, Anand says, "People love when they see our embroidery work and are amazed at the details we create in embroidery."

Whether professional or personal, Anand enjoys new challenges and working hard to achieve them. He is always eager to learn new technologies to enhance his skills and shares them with his team.

His best day at work was when he got a memento and certificate for completing ten years at Idea Custom Solutions, but the best day of his life was when his daughter was born.

It's no surprise that his favorite way to spend time off is with his wife and daughter. He also loves listening to music, photographing his family and watching movies. Long term, Anand has a dream to visit all the famous places in India.

Idea Custom Solutions wishes Anand well on his future journey and thanks him for being part of our team!

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[Tweet That!](#)

[#PromoProducts](#) rule Wing Bowl 2015. <http://goo.gl/6FtxZo>

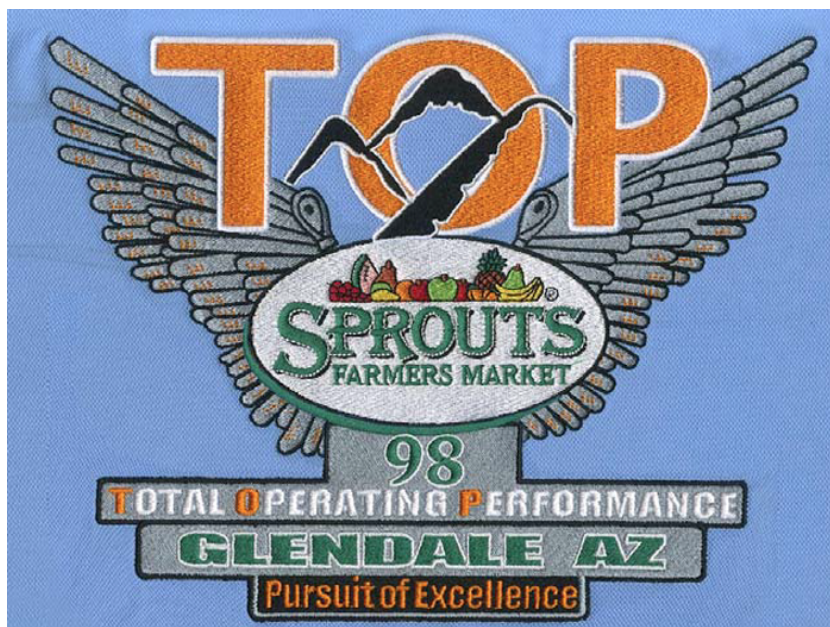
[Tweet That!](#)

Want to build your [#social](#) audience? Respond to customers. 10 tips to growing your audience. <http://goo.gl/L4x6fO>

[Tweet That!](#)

Last year [#advertising](#) specialty distributors saw a 5.1% rise in sales. [@ASlcentral](#) <http://goo.gl/z2FYZN>

[Tweet That!](#)



Vector Artwork



What does the anatomy of a successful [#re-brand](#) look like? [@BigThink](#) <http://goo.gl/qYacCf>

[Tweet That!](#)

The [#SMB](#) is a cornerstone of the economy. Here's Forbes' list of the best small companies. <http://goo.gl/q7MYhk>

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Restaurants are one sector of [#SMBs](#) that is booming. <http://goo.gl/IW0JCX>

[Tweet That!](#)

WHY IDEA CUSTOM SOLUTIONS?

The team at Affinity Express has always been responsive and easy to work with. The web interface is easy to use and serves as a database for our art and embroidery files. Modifications to files are easy to request and are returned in a timely manner. There are many digitizers and we gladly choose Affinity Express.

Paula Frykholm
Logotology

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



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