

DESIGN EXPRESS

The graphic services newsletter for promotional products pros



July 2015

TAPPING TRENDS IN WEARABLES



As a category, wearables are among the most popular and one of the original specialty advertising items. In terms of promoting businesses, wearable promo products are appeal to both everyday consumers and business-to-business prospects.

Long before the days of baseball caps and outerwear, wearable buttons were used to brand and market just about everything from Coca-Cola to labor unions and political candidates of all stripes at the World's Fair. And as we know now, the great giveaways that businesses use to promote their brand can be as attractive as the most colorful ski jacket, as well as something more nostalgically nerdy like the "ugly sweater" currently marketed by professional and amateur sports teams.

But even the classics can evolve with new fashion trends. So it is important for entrepreneurs in the industry to keep abreast of the latest and apply new techniques of embroidery and garment embellishment to meet customers' needs and changing tastes.

This month, *Advantages Magazine* is on top of what's new in wearables. The June issue also covered current apparel decoration techniques.

One on-trend technique for customizing print on wearables is called **direct-to-garment** (DTG) digital printing. DTG uses the convenience of modified inkjet printing, to allow a full range of colors and high-quality photography to be transferred to wearable garments. While cost-effective and straightforward, DTG does work best on natural fibers such as cotton shirts and more standard colors.

Another technique which enables cutting edge graphics to brighten up garments that are blends, with acrylic, polyester or other synthetic and

NOTABLE QUOTES



"I admire the courage and self-reliance it takes to start your own business and make it succeed."

— Martha Stewart



"Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence."

— Vince Lombardi



"You should be accumulating really great relationships throughout your career."

— Anne M. Mulcahy

combination fibers is called **sublimation**. With sublimation, special dyes and transfer papers are part of the process used to bond graphics with the garment fibers to embolden them with vibrant colors and contrasting schemes.

Additionally, there are other trends to tell your clients about. **Distressed designs**, which provide the cozy, broken-in look of an old college sweatshirt or lucky baseball cap, are among the kinds of wearable garments most popular with people who favor the laid back look. For those who might seek more flair, **multimedia embellishment** can enhance wearable garments with more exciting, three-dimensional graphics that might even add a touch of rock n' roll attitude and adventure.

Whichever line or production technique appeals to your usual market, one tip for success, according to ASI, is to know your product and act as a consultant or specialist that can bring new ideas to the forefront for any type of use.

Our advice? While you make the most of new wearable products and decorating approaches for customers, let Idea Custom Solutions handle your [graphic design](#) work so you can spend more time selling and supporting customers.

THE IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY MARKETING MATERIALS

Social media is not only a way to keep in touch, it is increasingly the way we get our news and learn about new products or even pick restaurants. The impact of all this is that businesses — both major conglomerates and SMBs — are pouring in more time and resources into social media and website interaction with customers.

But the rise of social media doesn't negate the need for quality marketing materials. Sure, you can plug your great new product or service with a Facebook post or a tweet. But no matter what industry you are in, offering something visual and tangible is an important part of the marketing mix.

Posts on Twitter or Facebook can be valuable, but your clients and prospects cannot put them in their briefcases for later. Only printed materials such as brochures and marketing collateral can provide in-depth reading for your customers, or serve as an engaging leave-behinds for their colleagues to review later.

One of the more convincing arguments in favor of printed marketing collateral came from author and marketing expert Gal Borenstein. And the message came via social media no less, in his [piece](#) published last spring via LinkedIn, "8 Reasons Why Marketing Collateral Still Matters".

Borenstein, who heads The Borenstein Group and authored the book *Activate!: Power Up Your Brand to Win in the Digital Age* highlighted a few important things.

"For companies of nearly all sizes, marketing materials — even print materials — are a must-have," Borenstein said, also pointing out that printed marketing collateral is not only a sales tool, but also that brochures and printed leave-behinds "carry the brand". He also says that collateral can best tell your company's story with compelling design, written words and visuals in way that other marketing tools can't.



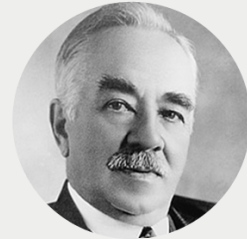
"If you make the customer a promise ... **make sure** you deliver it."

— Merv Griffin



"Do one thing every day that **scares you**."

— Eleanor Roosevelt



"Give them quality. That's the **best kind** of advertising."

— Milton Hershey

IDEA CUSTOM SOLUTIONS EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Raheel Shaikh
Team Leader, Digitizing

Raheel has been with Idea Custom Solutions since May 2006. In his current role, he works to motivate the team to

And while Borenstein may be a niche expert in marketing and branding, he is not the only one to sing the praises of [printed collateral](#). In "Print is Dead? No So Fast.", *Forbes* magazine states that, despite the rapid surge in social media and the Internet, printed materials offer a business tangibility and credibility. They also provide the opportunity to hone a product, service, special offer or specific marketing message to a target market very effectively.

While many businesses have completely migrated their advertising efforts to the web, *Forbes* posted, in its Entrepreneurs blog, "print still maintains its stance as a powerful and necessary component of an ad campaign."

Whether your next marketing move involves an annual trade show or an important visit to a new prospect or client, Idea Custom Solutions assist with [marketing materials](#) that really make companies shine. We offer the best in high-quality white label [design](#) which can make your business and your customers stand out. Idea Custom Solutions can also enable you to provide comprehensive campaigns to customers combining products and print for powerful impact.

A SUCCESSFUL EVENT IN CHICAGO: ASI SHOW!



ASI Chicago is the biggest show of the summer, and Idea Custom Solutions was there! Held downtown at the McCormick Center, more than 4,000 distributors and over 700 suppliers came together to prepare for the last quarter of 2015 and to showcase new production and design techniques. They also shared industry knowledge and tips for success. Another item on the agenda: having a good time!

The keynote speaker was **Peyton Manning**. On Thursday morning, the seven-time NFL Most Valuable Player, Super Bowl champion and well-known quarterback for the Denver Broncos spoke to a bustling crowd, sharing his "lessons from the line of scrimmage", along with a discussion about motivation in life and business.

Elsewhere on ASI Chicago's daytime agenda were panel discussions of important topics like "How to Get the Most out of Your Trade Show

achieve high standards and deliver on service level agreements for quality and turn times. A typical day includes both creative and constructive work. He firmly believes: "The joy of creation is better than all other joys."

On a daily basis, he uses this passion to fuel his performance and motivation of others. As a result, he has established himself as an enthusiastic, detailed and eager contributor.

He thinks people outside of Idea Custom Solutions should know that, in the field of embroidery digitizing and vector artwork, we are at the forefront. In Raheel's words, "We were the leaders, we are the leaders and we will be the leaders".

Outside of the office, Raheel is very much a family man. He likes to spend my quality time with his wife, three-year old son and his father, who is a professor in a senior college. His father is also Raheel's role model.

In his free time, Raheel likes to read the newspaper to improve his language skills. Someday, he would like to learn another language, such as Arabic, French or German.

Raheel is grateful that he has work that engages him. He has a strong determination to excel in life and aims to become a person of caliber, character, commitment, conviction and compassion. He says, "People who feel good about themselves produce good results. And people who produce good results are content."

TWEET THAT!

Let Idea Custom Solutions help you find content for social

Experience”, and “Hot Products to Make More Money”. There was also plenty of time to socialize, along with breakout networking sessions.

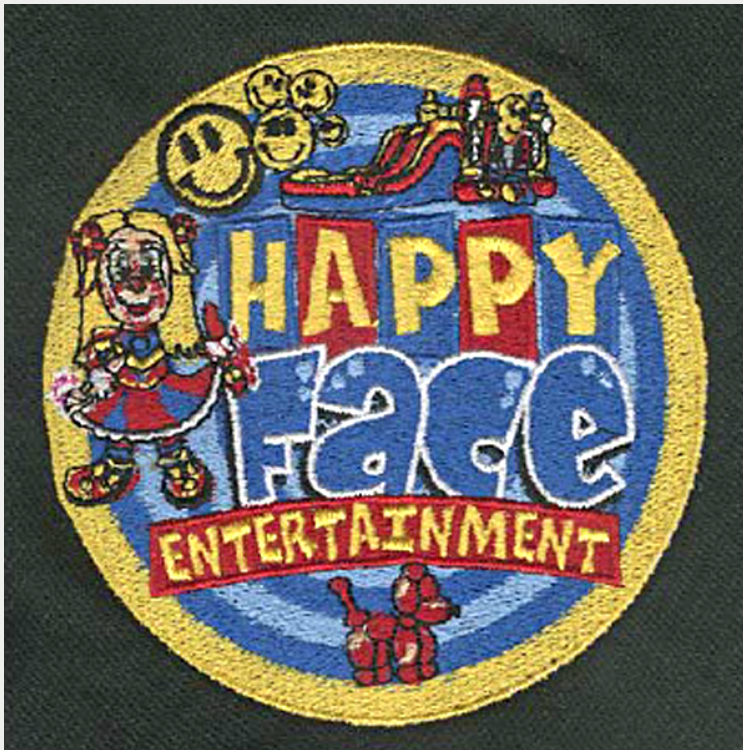
Idea Custom Solutions used the event as an opportunity to launch new custom creative services, which include t-shirt designs, event banner designs, poster designs and logo designs. Customers can now place orders for these services and get completed work in fast turn times at cost-effective rates. Building on our existing order process, there is a straightforward creative brief to complete that helps our team thoroughly understand the goals and requirements for the work.

Hopefully if you were there at the [ASI Show! Chicago](#) as either a guest or as an exhibitor, you got a chance to stop and say hello to us, like ASI Chairman Norman Cohn did.



DESIGN SHOWCASE

Embroidery Digitizing



Vector Artwork

media:

7 quick tips for redesigning your logo? This infographic highlights: color, simplicity and more.
<http://goo.gl/Hy8zUh>

[Tweet That!](#)

Fire up that grill! 80% of Americans own a grill or smoker. BBQ [#PromoProducts](#) put your brand in their hands.
<http://goo.gl/1z2REk>

[Tweet That!](#)

What are the biggest mistakes an [#SMB](#) can make? The self-designed logo might limit your potential.
<http://goo.gl/lnPUr8>

[Tweet That!](#)

Big, big companies change their logo now and then. Even powerhouses like Facebook must keep logos fresh.
<http://goo.gl/NvhEiU>

[Tweet That!](#)

IHOP's new logo looks like a smile because they want customers to feel good while eating good food.
<http://goo.gl/EfyBhB>

[Tweet That!](#)

Dunkin' Donuts made coffee-to-go a morning companion long before Starbucks was born.
<http://goo.gl/hCxH1U>

[Tweet That!](#)



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