

A Little Extra Business

Tony Whitmore from Your Embroidery Services Ltd talks to us about adding new business

Would you like to do a little extra business? This has to be a question that many business people ask themselves on a regular basis. The problem with coming up with an affirmative answer is that there is always a risk that you may end up 'taking your eye off of the ball'. You know what I mean. There you are putting all of your effort into developing this new line and your current, core business is slowly going down the pan. So, what to do? Well first of all look at the type of new business you are adding. If it is so different from your current one, then life is going to be a lot harder. If, however, it complements your existing business, then you will gain from a number of benefits such as a similar customer base and a similar customer profile. If this can be achieved it is not that the chances of success will increase, it is just that you will probably achieve it with less effort and without losing concentration on your core money earner. After all, when setting up the new part it is imperative that the earning capacity of your current trade does not drop. With all of this in mind, let's look at two possible extensions to your existing business; embroidery and digital printing, but why these?

To answer that question we properly need to look at the type of business you already do and the type of customer base you already have. If you are reading this magazine the chances are that you are involved in the trophy and/or engraving industry, and if that is the case then you will already be doing work for sports clubs for example. Your customer base will reflect this and therefore you will be in touch with a number of sports clubs covering a variety of differing sports. Most sports teams these days, even amateur ones, are sponsored and therefore the sponsor also becomes a legitimate target. One of the common features on any sports garment is decoration and two of the main ways of adding that decoration is, yes you've guessed it, embroidery and printing. It is a fair bet that a number of readers have

already been approached by their customers for one or both of these services and it is also a fair bet that the reply did not include the phrase: "Yes of course we can do that for you". Unfortunately it is more likely to be a negative response than a positive one but at best, some of you may have an arrangement with a local printer or embroiderer and make a little commission out of the deal. For the great majority the answer would have been a resounding NO! But why?



6 needle compact singlehead

Well, one of the reasons is a suspicion about the cost of adding one of these processes to a business. Because of perceived high prices in the past there is a tendency to believe that the 'cost' hurdle still exists, when in reality it doesn't. SWF, for instance, make a single head, industrial quality embroidery machine that is available in the UK market from £4950. This machine will handle all types of embroidery including caps and bags as well as standard garments such as polo shirts etc. Although it is built to industrial standards, the machine is quite mobile, making it ideal for taking to events. The small footprint also means that it will not take up too much valuable space in your shop. Noise and mess are also past problems that are not suffered by today's machines. Naturally there will be a need for some sort of software to enable you to be self sufficient, but with auto digitising pack-

ages such as Corel® DraWing® X3 Pro on the market you can be ready to start in a relatively short time. Companies such as Your Embroidery Services Ltd can supply a self contained stand alone embroidery package including everything needed to start or add to a business.



So that covers embroidery, and most readers will not be too surprised at the points made above, but printing presents greater challenges or, at least, that is the perception. The truth, I am pleased to say, is a long way away from that and this method of decoration is now quite fast and clean thanks to three little letters; DTG - the foremost supplier of direct to garment printing machines on the market. It would be fair to say that when most people think of printing they will think of screen printing. A highly productive but messy form of decoration, screen-printing has a major failing, it cannot produce small quantities of four colour process prints at a reasonable price. Because of the high cost of set up, an order needs to be a reasonable size to cover this initial cost. Direct to garment printing machines like those from DTG do not have this problem as they are ink jet printers and operate in exactly the same way as the printer on your desk that

generates your invoices. Once you have the image on your computer you simply send it to the printer and watch the t-shirt transform from plain white to an elegantly decorated surface. Even if the shirt is black it doesn't matter as all of the machines can print onto any colour textile surface by utilising white ink. With machines starting at £6950 they are viable propositions for those looking to add some extra value to their bottom line.



DTG-HM1 Printing Machine

As you can see, both embroidery and printing can be considered as extra revenue generators within your business. They complement the trophy and engraving industries very well as it means you are able to market the same customer base and profile. Whether you need additional forms of earning is only a question you (or your accountant) can answer, but even if you don't need one, do you want one? If the answer to either is yes, then embroidery and printing are two processes that should be seriously considered. With the cost and the learning curve both reduced, either or both can be a very attractive proposition.

If you would like more information about either of these subjects you can contact the author at Your Embroidery Services Ltd.
