

April 2018

THE HISTORY OF EMBROIDERY

Thinking of getting your customers' logos embroidered? It's a great choice! They will build on centuries of historical positivity at seeing an embroidered piece of art. Plus, the design style is booming right now and on-trend all over the runways. But where did embroidery begin and how has it gotten to the ubiquitous level it's at today?



As long as fabric has existed, it appears that embroidery has as well. Archaeologists have even found fossilized [examples of early embroidery on clothes, a hat and boots dating back to 30,000 BC](#) (around the Cro-Magnon Era). Ancient Siberians, ranging from 5000 to 6000 BC used similar embroidery stitching when fastening shells onto animal hides. And the first example of ancient Chinese embroidery dates to 3500 BC, when silk threads created intricate designs including pearls and gemstones.

[China perfected its embroidery techniques by the Middle Ages](#), at which point the style began to catch on in Japan and across Europe. It was originally reserved for religious relics — like wall hangings and robes — and for the elaborate gowns of royalty.

Then the Vikings caught on. [Embroidered artifacts have been found in Sweden since the 800s](#). It was still reserved for high-class citizens at that point and, with the Viking Era dissolving into the Christian world, it became an even stronger force of religious expression and decoration. The wealthy and pious began to commission tapestries, tablecloths and other items that could display their influence.

From this period emerged the Bayeux Tapestry, which is one of the most famous examples of embroidery in history. It was sewn in 1067 and shows the Normans' 1066 conquest of England.

The more embroidery appeared, the more it became accessible to

QUICK NEWSLETTER SURVEY



INFOGRAPHICS THAT CAN HELP YOUR BUSINESS



Every month, Idea Custom Solutions publishes original infographics that we design to inform and educate industry professionals. Here are a couple of our most popular. Be sure to check out the [Insights section of our website](#), under Resources, for more of these tools.



Under Insights, we also archive [past issues of this newsletter](#).

regular citizens. From royalty, the practice moved into the homes of upper class people, where the women would routinely sit in embroidery circles and create small hooped pieces of art. **Latin American embroidery emerged in the mid-1700s**, inspired by patterns and designs of traditional body paint.

In 1828, embroidery got a bit more mechanical. That year, **Josué Heilmann invented the first hand-embroidery machine**, a piece of equipment designed to do the work of four stitchers at once. As with most technology, it started out as a huge device, which was big enough to take up an entire room. A designer operating the machine would trace a design with a mechanical arm that would then cause a reaction in a series of needles that worked like hand stitching. Each color was embroidered one at a time, to completion.

Heilmann's hand-embroidery machine paved the way for **Singer Sewing Company to compact and improve the mechanics, introducing the first multi-head embroidery machine in 1911**. Home embroidery machines popped up in the 1950s and, in the 1980s, the first computerized versions emerged.

Idea Custom Solutions can **put the history of embroidery behind your customers' logos along with our decades of experience in digitizing**. We know you need the quality to be top-notch for them and we can digitize customers logos for production on apparel, bags and other items so you earn their gratitude and repeat orders.

HOW TO RESOLVE THOSE PESKY CLIENT CONFLICTS



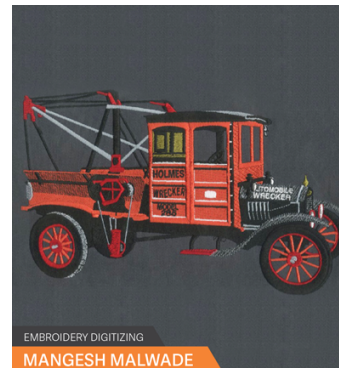
The customer isn't always right. Shocking, right? But it's true. And nothing can make a client angrier than not being right. It's unfortunate how many client conflicts are born. But you don't have to let disagreements with a customer ruin your business relationships. Here's how to manage those customer conflicts and come out on top — without any lost revenue (Special thanks go to Vanilla Ice for the entirely appropriate section names.).

- **Stop.** Take a step back. If your client has sent you a nastygram or a curt text, don't reply right away. You'll probably be annoyed and it's never a good idea to respond immediately when we're

Feel free to contact us to request we cover any subjects that would help your business:
marketing@ideacustom.com.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR TEAM

Every month, we celebrate the designers whose work scores the highest impressions on Instagram. This time, **Mangesh Malwade** won for embroidery digitizing and **Nisha Awhad** won for vector artwork. Keep up the great work, team!



VECTOR ARTWORK
NISHA AWHAD

NOTABLE QUOTES



"I love taking prints, embroidery, appliques - precious things that seem to be from another time - and using them to **create a contemporary, new story.**"

— Alessandro Michele

irritated. Give yourself a chance to cool down. Take a walk around the block, sleep on it and even schedule a response for two days later if you must. The goal is to get calm enough to have an appropriate, professional response — not one fueled by anger. Plus, taking a break and coming back later may even give you a completely different interpretation of the email or text. Maybe what you thought originally was not meant at all but was interpreted without context. Like that time your spouse innocently texted you with only “Pick up milk” because he or she was in a rush and you couldn’t help but respond with “PLEASE would be nice!” because you didn’t have any context to the curtness.

- **Collaborate.** This step is twofold. First, reach out to some business friends. Run the situation by them to see if you’re in the right or your client is. Get their opinion on how they would handle things. And then, when you feel fully informed by your colleagues, get together with your client for some collaboration. You’ll probably be a bit more levelheaded at this point, so calmly ask your client to explain why they’re upset. The key is to listen to their concerns before you say anything. Let them vent their frustrations — hopefully in a nice, polite way. And it may kill you inside but apologize for the conflict occurring. Now you can start the path to a solution. Work together to make your client happy. Ask them what they need for the issue to be resolved and come up with a plan to make that happen. If whatever they want is going to destroy their order, tell them in the nicest way possible. And don’t hesitate to bring in a third party to mediate, either. Sometimes having that extra outside opinion is the most valuable thing.
- **Listen.** You’ve heard what your client has to say and tried to work out a solution. Now you need to listen to yourself. Remember to pick your battles. Something they said may really drive you crazy but do an inner consultation and let your intuition tell you if it’s an issue worth pursuing. It’s also important to know when to walk away. If this is a new customer and the first two orders have been agitated disasters, listen to your keen business sense, which is probably telling you to drop the client. See this issue through to a resolution (as much as you can, at least), thank them for their business and then move on. If the conflict was really that bad, you likely won’t need to officially fire them as a client. Let them think they dumped you.

At least you’ll know your clients won’t take issue with **the vector artwork of their logos when you use Idea Custom Solutions**. Give us a try today and free up your time to strengthen relationships with clients.

THE COOLEST PROMO PRODUCTS CAMPAIGNS IN RECENT HISTORY

We know that to have a good marketing campaign, the products need to be useful, have lasting power and catch customers’ eyes. But “good” and “successful” don’t always mean the same thing — and those products that ooze creativity and have the power of being remembered are often the ones falling into the “successful” category.

With that in mind, we’ve rounded up some of the best, most creative promotional products in recent history. See what you can learn from them. Maybe you can apply some of the strategy to your own clients’ campaigns.



“Your ideal customer should be **attracted to the brand that rests on the fabulous culture you created**, but they don’t have to share your personal interests or have the same lifestyle you do.”

— Amber Hurdle



“**Work? It’s just serious play.**”

— Saul Bass



“**It’s through mistakes that you actually can grow.** You have to get bad in order to get good.”

— Paula Scher



“**It’s quite fun to do the impossible.**”

— Walt Disney

1. **Patrick Eaves Beard; Anaheim Ducks.** Forget stick-on mustaches. The Ducks took it up a (huge) notch with full stick-on beards designed to look like Patrick Eaves' facial hair. The promotion included a social media campaign urging fans to wear their beards to the game as support for the team. It must have worked, too — the Ducks won that game by one point over the Winnipeg Jets.
2. **"House of Cards" Season Premier; Netflix.** Netflix went all-out with the promotion of the "House of Cards" fourth season (though the show has now been cancelled amid abuse allegations). The company didn't just hand out pins, hats and stickers with Frank Underwood's campaign logo. Netflix opened a campaign office in South Carolina and leased billboard space across the country. The campaign was so clever and widespread that it became a social media sensation almost immediately.
3. **Yoga Pose Straws; Y+ Yoga Center.** We still get excited when drinks arrive with bendy straws. It's that much more exciting when that straw has a tiny person printed on it, doing yoga poses along with the bend. Y+ Yoga Center in Shanghai did just that, turning every bend of the straw into downward-facing dog. Local juice bars distributed the straws with their drinks and, although they were throwaway items, it made the topic of yoga look that much more accessible.
4. **Half-Eaten Surfboards; "Shark Week".** Who doesn't love "Shark Week"? The annual summer stretch of shark-themed programming on the Discovery Channel has a huge cult following. To launch the 2009 season, Discovery designed surfboards with shark bites taken out of them and dropped them covertly on beaches across Australia. Beachgoers and surfers picked them up thanks to curiosity (and possibly fear of shark-infested waters) and were rewarded with branded messages reminding them to tune in.
5. **Coffin Beach Towels; Friends of Cancer Patients.** This one may seem a bit morbid, but it is for a good cause. In 2009, Dubai beachgoers were given black towels cut into the shape of coffins. It was an extreme and shocking idea to promote something healthy: taking care of your skin. Each towel was imprinted with a message about the dangers of skin cancer, made even more effective by the fact that people using them were laying on what looked like actual coffins.
6. **Sucker and Ice Cream Sticks; Colgate.** The toothpaste company had a brilliant idea that was both bad and good for your teeth. Its promotional products campaign was hidden inside suckers, ice cream bars and cotton candy. People would eat the sweet treats and inside each would be a toothbrush-shaped stick reminding them to brush their teeth. The targeted message and unique shape made the promotion that much more memorable.

Have a great idea for a unique promotional product campaign? Call Idea Custom! We can help you design all the components you need for a comprehensive marketing campaign, **complete with vector artwork, embroidery digitizing, marketing materials, t-shirt and even custom logos.** We're your full-service graphics partner!

HOW TO HANDLE NATURAL DISASTERS AT YOUR BUSINESS



"Every day **do something that will inch you closer to a better tomorrow.**"

— Doug Firebaugh



"**Make your customer the hero of your stories.**"

— Ann Handley



"The **strongest logos tell simple stories.**"

— Sol Sender



"Don't find customers for your products, **find products for your customers.**"

— Seth Godin



"**Take two ideas and put them together to make one new idea.** After all, what is a Snuggie but a mutation of a blanket and a robe?"

— Jim Kukral



The weather's been crazy, right? Hurricanes, blizzards, flooding, nor'easters . . . all things that can cause major disaster for your business. You'll need to act quickly if you want to be sure the damage isn't irreversible or even more costly. If you're the unfortunate victim of a force of nature, follow these steps to minimize the impact.

Create a Disaster Plan Now

Depending on your business's location, disasters you might experience can range from everything from earthquakes and wildfires to blizzards and even the seasonal flu knocking out half the office. Score.org suggests **identifying what risk is most likely and creating a plan to mitigate the damage if it happens**. Talk to your insurance agent to see what he or she suggests and determine the potential impact of any disaster. From there, figure out the crucial business functions that will need to keep running in case of a disaster and come up with a plan to keep those working.

Assess the Damage

Just like when something unexpected happens at your home, you'll need to follow the same process for assessing and documenting the damage. According to Small Business Trends, **part of the disaster plan should include tracking the damage** — including recording each affected item, taking photos and preparing insurance claims. Make a list of everything and come up with an estimate for how much it will cost to have affected items repaired or replaced. **Get your financial records in order** as well so you have proof that shows why these items are important to your small business income.

Get Some Support

It's time to call your insurance company. Do this as soon as possible to get the best chance of receiving a quick payout. And if it applies to your situation, get on the phone with FEMA or the Small Business Administration's Disaster Assistance team. If your office is completely unusable, see if you can move operations to a temporary space to make sure downtime for the business isn't impacted too badly. Make sure you inform your customers that you're a victim of the disaster. Communication is essential, so they know what to expect and what you can provide.

Let Everyone Recuperate

Keep in mind that, while your office has been affected by a natural

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Nisha Awhad

Production Associate, Artwork Team

Nisha has been with Idea Custom Solutions since May 2015, producing complex vector artwork designs within tight turn times. It might surprise other employees but, as she explains, "I am very quiet, but I work each day with so much joy!"

She is proud that some of her designs have been **featured by the company on Instagram**. She also appreciates that she has received compliments from her manager for good work. Nisha says, "Work hard and you will always get rewarded for that."

About the company, Nisha thinks people should know that Idea Custom Solutions "is an ocean of opportunities." She notes that her professional goal is, "to give the best to Idea Custom Solutions to help grow the company and improve my skills. I would like to be known as a good mentor that enhances the skill of her coworkers."

Outside the office, she enjoys spending quality time with her family and friends. In addition, Nisha likes to stay on top of the latest technology and software, so she is often surfing the internet in her spare time. Hobbies of Nisha's include driving, listening to good music and working on behalf of social causes.

In the future, Nisha would like to visit historical places around the world.

disaster, it's not just your office facing the consequences. Employees are likely in the disaster zone as well. Once everything is back up to at least partial speed, give everyone some much needed time off to recuperate and deal with any problems they're experiencing because of the event. It may also be beneficial to hire some counselors to come in for employee wellness and any PTSD they may be having from the after-effects of the disaster.

Think Taxes

No matter what time of year it is, taxes are an important thing to consider after a natural disaster. File immediately for a tax extension. Businesses in natural disaster areas can sometimes get a delay of up to five years.

No one wants to experience disasters, but they are a reality and you can speed the recovery for your company, employees and clients with a little advanced planning. We hope you find these tips helpful. Idea Custom Solutions does not provide insurance or any related services. However, we care about our customers' businesses. That's why our tagline is "Your success. That's the whole Idea!"



Embroidery Digitizing



Vector Artwork

TWEET THAT!

What do you think of these clever [#PromotionalProduct](#) campaigns? [#ThinkOutsideTheBox](#) [#marketing](#) <https://goo.gl/zAMMav>

Tweet That!

Sad to say, the [@MLB](#) has stopped the coolest [@Yankees](#) [#promo](#) yet: imprinted [#beer](#) foam. <https://goo.gl/kZPZWg>

Tweet That!

Everyone wants [#promotions](#) with staying power. How [@SeeBoundless](#) did just that. [#PromoProducts](#) <https://goo.gl/iL5Ter>

Tweet That!

Up your social media game with [#PromoProduct](#) focused images, ready to share on your channels. <https://goo.gl/uDJHT2>

Tweet That!

Looks like a trade war between the US and China. Will [#tariffs](#) affect the [#PromoProducts](#) industry? <https://goo.gl/E8CMhG>

Tweet That!

Congrats, [@brandblvd07](#), on being the number one [#PromoProducts](#) place to work in 2018! <https://goo.gl/2E9BWE>

Tweet That!

Time to educate yourself! [@PPAI_HQ](#)'s April webinars highlight [#storytelling](#) and [#NicheMarkets](#). <https://goo.gl/VqGbD6>

Tweet That!

The baseball Twitter debate: does the [@Orioles](#) [#logo](#) have its mouth open or closed? <https://goo.gl/EEitQd>

Tweet That!

[.@Netflix](#) finally unveiled a new [#font](#) based on cinematic roots. What do you think? [#typefaces](#) <https://goo.gl/tLz9nC>

Tweet That!

[.@Facebook](#) is feeling the heat lately. Should your [#SmallBusiness](#) pull from the site? <https://goo.gl/qQiRXb>

Tweet That!

Global [#advertising](#)

Tweet That!



spending on the rise, says [@Zenith](#), with the most \$\$ spent on internet ads.

<https://goo.gl/qGB3zk>

[Tweet That!](#)

After an 18-year high in February, consumer confidence started to fall again in March.

<https://goo.gl/kFP1TX>

[Tweet That!](#)

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