

November 2018

MAKE YOUR EMBROIDERED PRODUCTS STAND OUT



As embroidery digitizing experts, we here at Idea Custom Solutions know there's not much more professional than a smartly embroidered garment or accessory for team members or customers. But logos and monograms are far from the extent of what you can do with the art form. Try offering your clients promotional products with more innovative styles. Perhaps you can take inspiration from one of these stunning examples of alternative embroidery.

- **Loose Threads.** Artist Sheena Liam prefers not to keep all her threads tied up neatly. [The Ludlow-based artist stitches black and white images of women](#), but lets their hair fly loose with embroidery floss threads. Some of her pieces show women casually braiding their hair, some just relaxing with their hair flowing down and some going about daily activities with mussed hair.
- **Unique Materials.** Embroidery doesn't have to be relegated to cloth and fabric. Severija Incirauskaite-Kriauneviciene, an artist from Lithuania, shuns conventional materials. [She embroiders things like buckets, cars, dishes and utensils](#). Think about what unique materials in your products might be good candidates for embroidery. How about an embroidered phone case, or even embroidered bag clips? It may take a bit of creativity from the manufacturer to get the right holes for the thread, but the possibilities are endless. You could even add embroidery to printed mailers for an extra special look.
- **Go Out of Bounds.** Sure, each embroidered piece generally has a set area where the stitches can go. But who says you need to

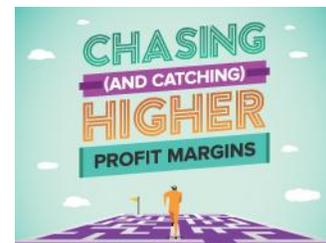
QUICK NEWSLETTER SURVEY



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.



stay in the lines? Take a cue from artist Ana Teresa Barboza. She creates beautiful embroidered pieces inside the confines of her hoop, but then those threads spill out, creating a tumbling effect that quickly draws the eye. How can you turn your clients' logos into longer extensions of themselves?

- **Mix Styles.** One excellent way to create a special promotional product is to mix textile styles. Artist Linda Gass tries to display the changing environment through her work, but she does this by blending embroidery, quilting and other techniques to produce stunning multimedia representations of her subjects. Imagine the depth and interesting textures you could achieve on quilted hats or jackets with embroidery to pump them up.
- **Flip It Over.** You know how some shirts are designed to have the unfinished seams on the outside, like they're almost unfinished? Turn your embroidered items inside out when you go against the flow the way artist Cayce Zavaglia does. She pairs each finished piece with a complementing painting of the reverse side of her embroidery. The result is a fascinating look into the personal expressions of each of her subjects — which are usually people. Give your clients the option of showing their embroidered goods in a different way: backwards.

We hope you enjoyed some of these eye-catching approaches to embroidery. If you need help with your embroidery digitizing to fulfill customer orders, reach out to Idea Custom Solutions. Our award-winning team will make sure you stand out with clients and deliver products that will delight! Check out our work.

#PINGAMESTRONG: THE HISTORY OF ENAMEL PINS AND THE CURRENT CRAZE

One of the biggest trends right now among Millennials and people in their mid-30s hearkens back to ancient Egypt and battling soldiers: enamel pins. It's not unusual these days to find a social media picture of a pin, with the hashtag #pingamestrong. On Instagram alone, there are more than 510,000 posts. Essentially, if you haven't yet tapped the enamel pin market, you're missing out.

But how did the enamel pin itself come to be? It starts about 3,800 years ago, in 1800 BC.

No, they didn't pioneer the invention of lapel and enamel pins. But the ancient Egyptians did develop part of the process that led to the unique way enamel pins look today. The common practice among artisans in 1800 BC Egypt was to create decorative filigree artworks by soldering small pieces of wire together — the separation between colors on modern day pins.

About 600 years later, the Greeks took over the process and began to fill the empty spaces in the filigree with powdered glass. They fired the artwork and, voila, created enamel inlay.

Fast forward to between 1271 and 1368 AD, during the Yuan Dynasty in China. The Chinese furthered the art of enameling and used the process to create decorative items, vases and jewelry; including the first enamel lapel pin. Enamelware really took off in China during the Ming Dynasty,

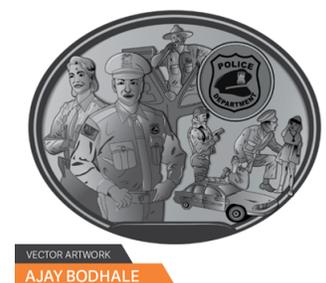
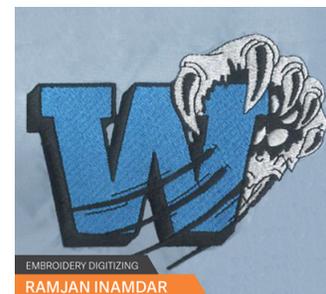


Under Insights, we also archive past issues of this newsletter.

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, **Ramjan Inamdar** won for embroidery digitizing and **Ajay Bodhale** won for vector artwork. Keep up the great work, team!



NOTABLE QUOTES

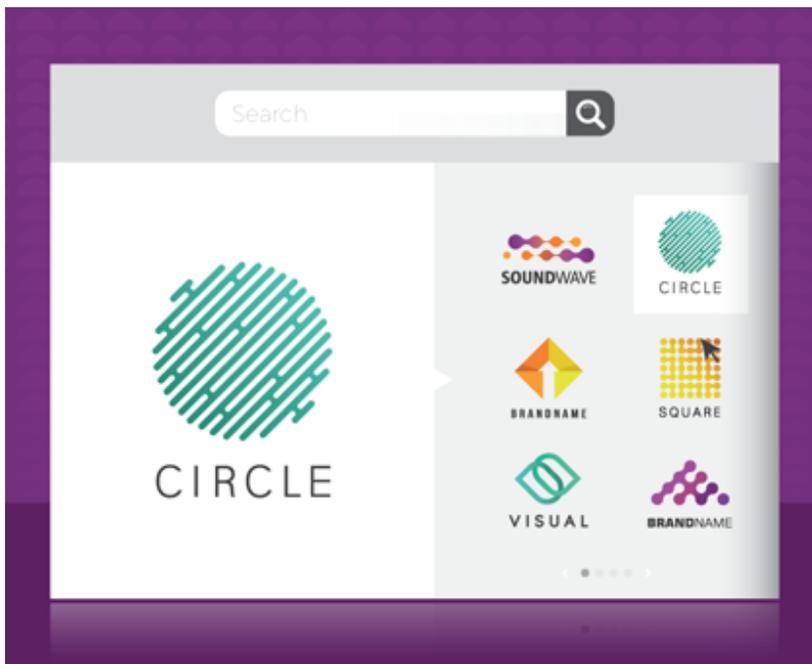
which lasted from 1368 to 1644.

Stateside, lapel and enamel pins took on a life of their own during the Civil War, when soldiers would wear pins emblazoned with their unit numbers so the troops could stay organized and everyone would be recognizable. Veterans continued to wear the pins after the war ended, to show patriotism and togetherness with other veterans. Since then, the tradition of pins had largely stayed in the military and political spheres. Until a few years ago, that is.

In 2014, the pin revival took off. Independent artists began creating their own unique pins, just for fun. The hobby combined with social media (Instagram in particular) brought modern pins to the forefront. People began to snatch them up, including celebrities like Kim Kardashian (and we all know once a Kardashian touches something, it's instantly on fire).

Make sure your customers' pin games are strong. Contact Idea Custom Solutions to help get their logo ready for custom email pins with our vector artwork service.

QUIZ: IS YOUR LOGO WORKING?



A logo is arguably one of the most important parts of your branding strategy. Think about it — when you see the golden arches, what's the first thing you think of? McDonald's. You may even get a bit hungry. That's because the McDonald's logo is doing its job. It's reminding you of the brand and the products you get from it, and potentially triggering an emotional response. Granted, we can't all sell hamburgers, but your business's logo should elicit the same reaction from people.

So, is your logo actually working? Take this quick quiz to find out.

1. What color is it?
 - a. It's just black and white
 - b. One single, bold color
 - c. It has ALL the colors



"The secret of change is to focus all your energy not on fighting the old but on building the new."

— Socrates



"Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts."

— Winston Churchill



"Be undeniably good. No marketing effort or social media buzzword can be a substitute for that."

— Anthony Volodkin



"If people like you, they'll listen to you, but if they trust you, they'll do business with you."

— Zig Ziglar

2. What shape is it?
 - a. A swoosh or two combined circles
 - b. One unique to the company with clean edges
 - c. Multiple shapes combined into one, possibly with text
3. What fonts are you using?
 - a. Comic Sans or Papyrus
 - b. Something simple and smooth
 - c. A filigree script
4. Is it social media friendly?
 - a. Social what?
 - b. Yes, in multiple sizes
 - c. It could work as a banner or Facebook photo
5. How complicated is it?
 - a. It's overly simple
 - b. Not at all
 - c. It looks like a Magic Eye 3D image
6. Does it match your brand purpose?
 - a. Not really, but it looks neat
 - b. Absolutely, and you can tell just by looking at it
 - c. Yes, with some careful thought
7. How many people have reviewed it?
 - a. 0
 - b. 3
 - c. 1

Results

Mostly As: Your logo is not doing its job. Perhaps it's the amateurish design, the generic shape or even the fact that no one has reviewed it. Whatever it is, you need to get a new one and stat!

Mostly Bs: Congratulations! Your logo is clearly working for you. It doesn't conform to cliché logo styles, it's unique to your brand, it sends a clear message, you can use it in multiple outlets and enough people have reviewed it to ensure it isn't garbage. Nice work!

Mostly Cs: You're almost there. It seems like you're sending the right message, but the logo itself is too complicated or overdone to do that quickly and easily. Think of it like accessorizing clothes: put on all the extras you want, then take half of it off.

Regardless of what you scored on this quiz, it's always good to have a trained professional evaluate your logo. Send it over to Idea Custom Solutions today and we'll let you know if it works. If it doesn't, **we'll help you design a new logo at an amazing price.** We have a creative brief for you to complete and you'll discuss your objectives with a design consultant. [Learn more.](#)



"When you **find an idea that you just can't stop thinking about**, that's probably a good one to pursue."

— Josh James



"**Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny, inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement.**"

— Golda Meir



"The fastest way to change yourself is to **hang out with people who are already the way you want to be.**"

— Reid Hoffman



"**Don't worry about failure;** you only have to be right once."

— Drew Houston

5 TIPS FOR REDUCING EMPLOYEE STRESS



It's a sad fact of life: **two-thirds of full-time employees are either completely stressed out at work or already in a state of burnout.** According to The American Institute of Stress, that is the result of a few different factors. **Employees' workloads account for 46 percent of that stress**, interpersonal issues at work add 28 percent, and job security and work-life balance contribute 6 percent.

Excessive stress is bad news for the office. It hampers productivity and creativity, it makes employees (and managers) crabby and it can even seep into people's home life if the work environment is particularly hard for them. With that in mind, here are five ways to increase office fun, reduce employee stress and, in turn, boost productivity and performance.

- 1. Organize Exercise Groups.** Everybody's got a lunch hour, right? **Set up some walking groups** to take a quick stroll during lunch, or even during a 15-minute break at some point in the day. Exercise not only helps to relieve stress, it also helps people's brains function in a more connected way, which is a boon for any workplace.
- 2. Listen to Your Employees.** A large amount of workplace stress occurs when employees feel a disconnect between themselves and management. Make sure you're available and that your open-door policy is more than just lip service. According to Gallup, 62 percent of employees are less likely to be burnt out if they have a boss that actually listens to their concerns.
- 3. Be Flexible.** The modern-day workplace doesn't need to be so rigid. With oodles of options for remote connections, working from home is a viable option for nearly every employee. Be a little flexible. If one of your employees seems particularly stressed, send them off to work from their home for a day. Or, if family life needs to take priority (say the kids need to be picked up early from school), don't be a stickler about it. Give your employee the time off for free, as long as it doesn't become a trend.
- 4. Institute Mandatory Breaks.** So many employees are the type to just power through work without looking up from their computers



"The road to success and the road to failure are almost exactly the same."

— Colin R. Davis



"Get big quietly, so you don't tip off potential competitors."

— Chris Dixon

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Sagar Sakte

Senior Production Associate,
Digitizing Team

After 11 years with Idea Custom Solutions, Sagar certainly lives up to his title of senior production associate. His responsibilities include handling embroidery digitizing projects, as well as using his experience to guide junior members of the team.

During his tenure, his work has been recognized numerous times, including in this publication.

About Idea Custom Solution, Sagar

all day, which is not just terrible for their eyes, but also exhausting and sometimes overwhelming. By law, every employee is required to get breaks — but not all take them. Start setting a timer for an hour or two and, when the timer goes off, [tell everyone to take a five-minute break](#). It's called the [Pomodoro technique](#) and studies have shown it boosts productivity.

5. **Change the Environment.** For more relaxed workers, [create a more relaxed environment](#). Silicon Valley is leading this charge, by introducing less strict dress codes, more flexible desk hours and fun perks like ping pong tables, rooms full of free candy, music rooms and video games. Let your employees have a bit of fun at work and you'll be rewarded.

With Idea Custom Solutions, you reduce stress for yourself and your employees because you can rely on our quality, turn times and competitive pricing. Worry about finding and serving new customers. We've got your back with [embroidery digitizing](#), [vector artwork](#), [image editing](#) and [other graphic design projects](#).

says, "The company has the happiest and most friendly atmosphere, while turning out the best quality work."

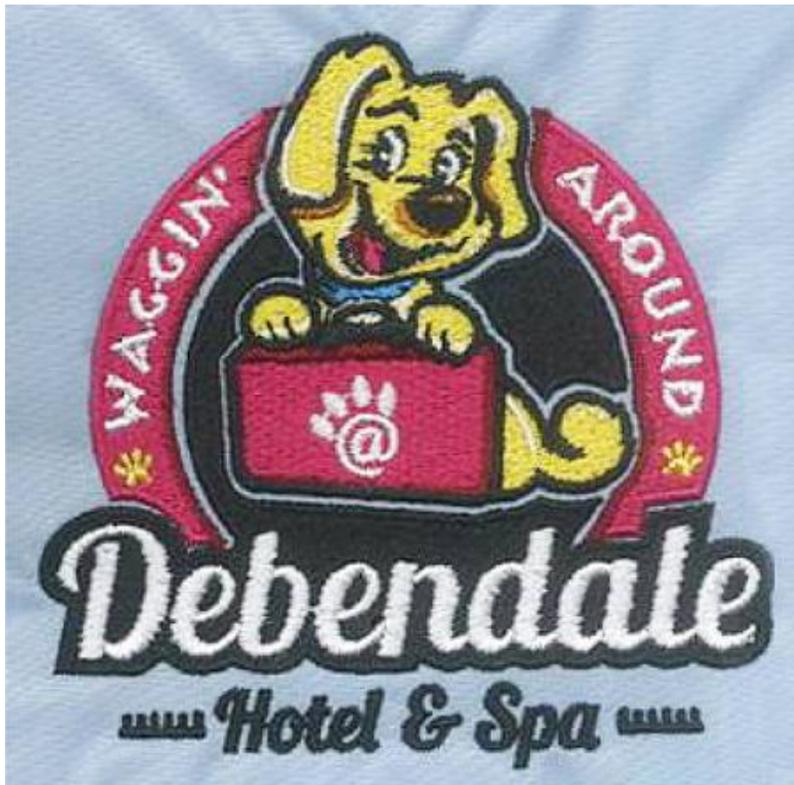
His best advice to other employees is: "Patience and hard work are the keys for success in any field."

Outside the office, Sagar's passion is driving. His dream is to visit all the famous sites in India by car someday. He also enjoys playing football (soccer in the United States) and is a passionate fan of the Manchester United.

To relax in his free time, Sagar takes long walks. Overall, he would like to be known for his creative work.

DESIGN SHOWCASE

Embroidery Digitizing



Vector Artwork

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[#PromoProducts](#)
[#branding](#)

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[Tweet That!](#)

One company tries to preserve an ancient craft from a town in India.

[#embroidery](#), [#design](#)
<https://goo.gl/Vpi8rV>

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[#GraphicDesign](#) students have done some truly great work — like these 16 handmade album covers.

<https://goo.gl/gjvVnK>

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It's time to [#rebrand](#) some TV shows. See designs by

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Stephane Lopes.

[#branding](#)
<https://goo.gl/tfnyds>

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Augmented Reality has made it to [#fonts](#) with this new augmented

[#typeface](#). [#design](#)
<https://goo.gl/C7nEee>

[Tweet That!](#)

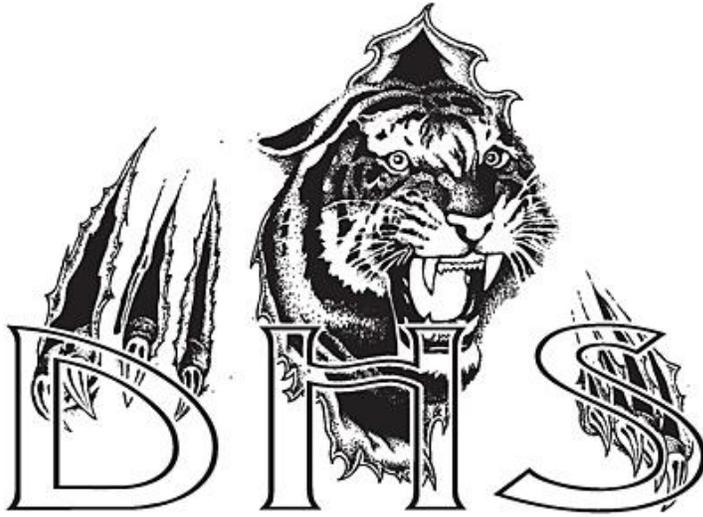
The [@NASA](#) [#logo](#) is everywhere right now. But who's actually making money from its use?

<https://goo.gl/a4F12c>

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It's official: the Rolling

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The [@sixers](#) are sporting a new [#uniform](#) edition, inspired by [#Rocky](#). [#basketball](#)
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