

Newsletter: July 2016

Change? The marking process – really?

Well, we've all heard it and hate the saying "but we've always done it that way." Yes, I'm included in saying it, hearing it and resisting the thoughts of change at times but it's inevitable and best if we embrace it and help make it happen.

Some think I made a bold change in quitting a stable, good-paying job to start my own business. Let me tell you the process of making that decision was not simple or without the help of good mentors and the guiding of a much higher power (thus the name Leading Marks came to be.) Deep down it has been a desire for much longer than you might believe, and so far one of the best decisions I have made. *(Continued on page 2.....)*

TRACEABILITY



EBS Handjet 250 and 260: upgrade ink marking requirements with Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and USB communication for applying alpha / numeric text, symbols and bar codes to metal, plastic, wood, cardboard, and concrete products and containers. Simple keyboard entry or onboard keypads allow quick change of messages, serialization and the addition of date and time stamping. Traceability continues through the packaging, structural erection and pipeline installation process by adding bar codes where needed. Available with ink options that include acetone, and MEK and varying colors.

Get more information here:
<http://www.leadingmarks.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/EBS-260-engl.-150dpi-LM.pdf>

PRODUCT OF THE MONTH



Impact presses: the workhorse of traditional marking applications. The Automator bench model impact presses have been in use since 1940 and continue to be used for applications where marking detail is consistent, and fast cycle time are demanded. These machines are available as bench-model and universal mounts for both manual and pneumatic operation. In addition to marking they are reliable machines for bending, crimping, forming, inserting, riveting, staking, and stamping. Similar machines available for hot stamping operations, and roll marking applications.

Get more information here:
<http://www.leadingmarks.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Automator-cat-altre-tec-impact.pdf>

MARKING



Stamp-Grip: improved safety and protection for hand stamping. Long-lasting urethane is molded to include a 4" diameter hand shield and a notch to orient the character. A heat treated shock resistant steel anvil optimizes striking results. The Stamp Grip accommodates hand stamps with 1/4" square to 1" square blanks. Additional options for hand stamp holders include the Adjustable stamp holder, strap-style and plate marking, which can be designed to hold multiple lines and varying numbers of stamps.

See your options here:
<http://www.leadingmarks.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Leading-Marks-Traditional-Product-16v1.pdf>

Identifying Solutions, Improving processes.

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Why is it that we resist change? Some might say that it's a genetic -thing, others that we are just plain stubborn or cowards. Whatever it is, we all know there are better things, circumstances, and relationships if we just stop, evaluate the situation, understand the risks and advantages, along with the costs and rewards.

Selling marking solutions is no different. I hear reasons like "I'm using Brand XYZ and they have always delivered", or "it works for our needs right now." Or even, well, it's interesting but I'm not sure it fits our operation. And of course – we've always done it this way. So I challenge all of you to think about your marking process. What is it you have to mark? Why are you using the equipment you are to mark whatever it is? How long have you been marking it that way? Probably longer than you can remember or maybe you inherited it and haven't had the reason to explore changing. Maybe you don't think you have the budget but have you looked into the savings by making the change?

Consider hand stamps for direct-part marking. Yes, it might be a caveman way of applying the mark and has its place in production. Let me ask a couple simple questions though. When was your last injury from a foul-blow of the hammer striking the stamp? How much did that workman's comp claim cost? What about the legibility of the mark if it was more than one character --- alignment, consistent depth of impression? Well maybe a quick solution is to add a hand stamp holder to make it a safer marking process. Maybe it's time to consider adding a holder/type arrangement or dotpeen marking system that would provide you more consistency not to mention versatility.

Then again, maybe it's using paint markers or stencils & ink rollers to apply text to beams, cartons or preformed concrete components. What a mess and waste of material. Talk about penmanship – what's it going to be like in the future now that they don't teach cursive writing in schools? Some of the newest technologies for applying ink marks are handheld, Bluetooth or computer-driven and are more environmentally friendly – not to mention economical in the long run by eliminating material waste or one-time use of stencils.

Over the past few months I've been working with the foundry industry to look at their pattern identification. Not surprisingly this mature industry has not considered changes for this process for quite some time. However, vendors go out of business, the solutions available work but may not provide the results their customers would prefer (words directly from one of my customers who uses castings in their operation). The cast-in characters aren't well defined or missing completely. Why would they want to change you ask? Well it's cumbersome to rotate wheels around one character at a time – especially when you might have to make 50 to 100 of the same legend. Using proven, traditional components I've been able to take a new solution to an industry that wasn't even looking.

Every mark you make that the customer sees is reflective of your corporate image. Branding is a topic for another day. Yes, you can get inexpensive solutions on the internet, especially for commodity items like labels and rubber stamps. But do you get the service and support that offers alternatives with your company's interest in mind? Oh I forgot, you've always worked with that company and don't want to make the change.

There's that word again – **change**. I might not be the one you have worked with for years on your marking solutions. You might not have even been aware that there are experienced consultants out there to help offer suggestions for you to consider. Well there is, and I'm happy to schedule an appointment to review your marking process to see how it might be improved. Identifying solutions and improving processes are what I do. What is it you have been resisting to change?



Identifying Solutions, Improving processes.