

XENA'S PROMO BATTLE TIPS

A Sales Warrior's Guide to Getting the Most
from your Promotional Product Dollar



Happy Spring everyone!!

Just when we thought we'd never feel the warmth of the sun on our faces again, it's arrived!! I sure love the things you can count on like the seasons, animals making new babies of the world, and a good cup of coffee in the morning.

One thing you can count on, that I know most of you don't *love* are **set up costs** for decorating your products. Let me see if I can bring back that lovin' feeling for you in the article below on **understanding why you have all those set up charges with your orders.**

Read on,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Jenn".

Jenn

Issue 26

March 2009

Forward this newsletter
to a friend

Xena's Loyal Followers

Your newsletter is truly amazing - informative, well written and humorous all at the same time! I've actually mentioned you to my husband on multiple occasions. He's a mortgage broker and I think he could learn a thing or two from you on self-promotion.

~Heather. Long time client~

OK, must admit, that was a damn good read! (you can quote me on that beauty!)

~Ian Roberts. [Marine Harvest Canada](#)

I'm sure I've told you before but just in case, your Newsletters are fantastic. Can't image how much time it takes you to do them.

I look forward to them and always make time to read them.

~RHONDA THIBAUT
DIRECTOR OF PROJECT

Why Do I Have To Pay All Those Set Up Charges? Understanding the Apparent Madness of Set Up Costs.

In one week I had three different clients ask me **why they had to pay a set up charge.** Fair question.

In a perfect world there would be no set up charges. Just as there would be no service tax, no shipping fees, no banking fees and no charge for that extra shot of espresso in your latte. You don't need me to tell you we don't live in Utopia. But I *can* address your concerns around set up charges for decorating your promotional products.

There are so many decorative options when it comes to promo-products but lets look at the main ones - Screen-Print, Embroidery, Silk Screen and Laser Engrave.

1. Why all these charges for screen printing our event t-shirts?

Yes, it must seem quite simple - "just print the art on my shirts, will ya?"

- but screen-printing fabrics is a step-intensive process. You have two costs - film and set up charges. **The film cost is a one-time charge.** It's there to cover the cost of creating the films per color for your screen print. Each color to be printed needs to have it's own film. Once the films are made, they are stored for future reuse. **You pay set up charges the first time with your order and every time you repeat the order, with the same artwork.** There are seven steps covered in the set up:

- a. Coating the screen in a light-sensitive emulsion
- b. "Burning" the screen with the color separation on it, by exposing it to light
- c. Rinsing out the excess emulsion
- d. Aligning all the colors of your artwork on the press so they are registered to print correctly (as in no shifts in the art)
- e. Mixing ink colors (for PMS Color match)
- f. Cleaning the ink off the screen after the printing is complete
- g. "Reclaiming" the screen (cleaning the emulsion off)

See that? A lot of steps, labor and time involved with screen printing so yes, we have to pay those set up charges.

2. Why does it cost more to print my colored T-shirts and less for white T-shirts?

Excellent question grasshopper! When you are printing artwork onto **any fabric that is not white**, there is an underlay print needed, called a Flash Print - a white ink that is first printed onto your product. Flash prints allow your colored logo to "sit on top" of the white ink base to ensure your color doesn't bleed and is printed in it's true color. To print a color ink to a colored fabric *without* a Flash Print will dull the print and compromise your color match. So when you order those blue t-shirts and ask for a Pantone 151 Orange screen print, there will be the orange color *and* the flash print white color - making it a two color print and not the one color print you thought it would be.

With white t-shirts, no flash print is needed because it's a white garment! The white fabric acts as the "underlay" for your art, which will print to its' true color, sharp and bright.

Just remember that printing your art on colored shirts means one extra screen print color than on white shirts. Therefore, they cost more to print. Not much more, but enough for you to ask the question in the first place.

3. What is a "digitizing" set up cost for my embroidery?

Happily, this too is a **one time set up cost**. Digitizing your logo means someone is punching your artwork into a computer generated embroidery file (a .dst), stitch by stitch. It is a cost that can seem high but **it is the determining factor to the quality of your embroidery**, and an investment worth making. A good "digitizer" will punch your artwork in so effectively as to ensure there are no gaps in the final stitching because **embroidery quality starts with the digitized file**. If you've ever had your logo embroidered and it had sloppy edges or gaps of the underlying fabric showing through, you can blame that on the initial digitizing set up.

MANAGEMENT
[MERCERCREATIVE](#)

"I'm sure you get a lot of these emails, but I have to say you've done an amazing job with this newsletter. It is very well written and fun too. I look forward to receiving these and read it right away from top to bottom. Impressive! Way to go Jenn, Great marketing at its best."

~ Susan Beauchamp, Director of Marketing
[Promotional Products Professionals of Canada](#)

"I enjoy receiving Jenn's newsletters. I love the humour and always find something that I can take away from them. I like the way that Jenn tries to educate us, the buyer, so that we are sure to purchase the right product everytime."

~Deb. Long Time Loyal Client.

"I loved your recent newsletter on green products. Your comment that 'Eco is not synonymous with quality' is an important point that other, less sophisticated vendors tend to miss. Good for you for providing true value and for being REALLY green - and not just a pale imitation."

~Daphne Gray-Grant
www.publicationcoach.com

Another accolade comes from Michael Katz's E-Newsletter on E-Newsletters. Click to read: [Put Your Newsletter on "Shuffle"](#).

Great Links

[The Xena Tips Archives](#)

[Image Group Inc.](#)

[Are "Green" Products Really "Green"?](#)

Sign up to receive
Xena's Promo Battle Tips

And if you have a supplier tell you there is no charge for the set up, know there is a real possibility that your logo is being digitized overseas by a very underpaid worker, because **if you aren't paying a set up for this, then who is?**

As for **embroidery costs per garment**, that is not determined by number of colors (as screen printing is) - you could have ten colors in your logo and it won't raise the cost of embroidery. Those costs are based on the number of stitches and quantity of items you are having embroidered.

4. What about silk screening or laser engraving my other promo-hard goods?

These set up charges are a little easier to swallow. Typically you will have an initial set up *and* if you do a repeat order, a repeat set up at a lowered rate. **Silk Screening** involves a graphic artist setting up your artwork to size for the item, based on the imprint area. A film is then burned after which the machine is set up to burn your artwork into the item (a two hour process). Essentially you pay for the labor of calibrating and running the machines, and the ink, which is incurred with the initial and repeat orders.

Laser Engraving your item is similar in that the art is set up based on the laser engrave area of your item. It is then sent to the laser room to be sized and calibrated on the laser machine, after which each item is laser engraved with your artwork. It too is a labor and machinery cost each time you order.

Yes, **sometimes the set up costs can be waived**. A "gift" that either the supplier will offer from time to time or your promo-rep will "cover for you" when they are feeling like they can eat that cost. Even if it does get waived for you (on those rare occasions) as you can see from above there is a lot involved in decorating your products and someone still has to pay for the labor, the materials and the machine wear and tear.

The real bottom line: Expect to pay set up costs.



About Xena Sales Warrior

As your **Promotional Products resource and creative consultant**, my goal is to give you outstanding value, inspired choices and economically sound solutions to your promo-needs.

To go the distance to communicate your message and have you stand out among your peers with warrior-inspired promotional products.

Bottom Line: Making you look great everytime.



Copyright ©2009 Jenn Forgie. A.K.A. Xena Sales Warrior.

Don't even think of copying this e-newsletter unless you are extremely adept in the art of sword fighting in an iron dress or have received the exclusive written permission of Xena herself. However, you may forward, share, rave about this newsletter with everyone you know, even reprint it provided you take an oath to link it back to Xena at jf@imagegroupinc.ca

A Big Note Of Thanks

To my reader and editor extraordinaire, Eve Johnson, I send an ear-popping Xena Battle Cry of THANKS for your time and attention to making this newsletter the leader of the promo-pack.

Eve Johnson is a professional writer and certified yoga instructor and the co-owner of www.yogaon7th.com