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Educational Opportunities:

NBM Arlington

Thursday, May 14

9:00AM to 10:30AM

Getting the Most from Your Investment: Laser Tips, Tricks & Techniques

Industry experts from Epilog will be providing an in-depth look at lasers, laser processing and how you can bring this technology into your business and create real success. What are the best lasering processes that you can add to your business for the highest profits? How do you go about choosing the right laser for your application? Here you'll view a laser in action and see why this technology has grown in popularity to make Epilog the largest manufacturer of small format lasers in the world. Make sure to bring your questions as this course will include a Q+A session with Epilog staff.

Texas Open House Presented by Engraving Concepts

Visit the offices of Engraving Concepts every second Monday or third Saturday of the month for special open house activities. On Saturday you can visit the showroom to ask questions, visit with staff and find some new ideas. On the second Monday of the month Engraving Concepts also hosts a special Users' Clinic and Corel Basics Seminar.

For more information and to register, contact Engraving Concepts at 817-460-8122.

Web updates

Company News:

Looking Back on 2014
epiloglaser.com/home/pr/2014-review.htm

Sample Club:

Laser Cut Luminaria Bags
epiloglaser.com/resources/sample-club/luminaria-bags-laser-cut.htm

Company News:

Epilog Mini 24 Giveaway Winner
epiloglaser.com/home/pr/alfex-m24-winner.htm

Sample Club:

Laser-Cut Cardstock Candy Boxes
epiloglaser.com/resources/sample-club/cardstock-candy-box.htm

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO:
epiloglaser.com/contact

**Research, Planning and Persistence
Pave the Way for a Successful Laser Business**

In 2006 Jim Puentes, owner of COOLaserCraft, read an article about laser engraving and cutting systems in a woodworking magazine. Little did he know that one article would start him on the path to becoming a successful entrepreneur, specializing in custom laser projects.

"A couple of years before I planned to retire, I'd read an interesting article in one of my woodworking magazines," Jim explained. "It was basically about using a laser, or finding a local laser operator, to make repetitive cuts or layouts for complex mouldings. That was the spark that started me down this road."

At the time, Jim was new to the engraving industry, so he did a significant amount of research and attended an Epilog clinic before deciding a laser business was right for him.

"I began learning CorelDRAW™, went through a small business certification program at a local community college and developed a business plan," Jim said. "Only then did I start looking for a machine. It took me over a year to find what I wanted - enough power to do metal marking with a big enough bed to fit some of the materials I had in mind."

In the end, Jim worked with Epilog Laser distributors, Fairway Laser Systems, to purchase a Legend 36EXT from Epilog.

Jim tells us that his original business plan focused on providing custom materials for the homebuilding and remodeling industry: tile, flooring, mouldings and landscaping material. He decided early on that he would concentrate on this type of service work instead of retail and not compete with the trophy and awards vendors in his area.

"I wanted to work out of my shop and did not want to stock material," Jim explained. "I had a couple of partners lined up and was ready to go...until they pulled out."

So it was on to plan B," he continued. "I beat the streets and got contracts with several framing companies, cutting, rastering and inlaying matboard, as well as rastering glass and wood frames. I was lucky enough to find a couple of local companies that bid on mechanic tool sets for the military; tools that must be marked with a control number. Through those contacts, I secured more work from a local tool manufacturer."



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Research, Planning and Persistence Pave the Way for a Successful Laser Business



After taking the time and making the effort to secure a variety of clients, Jim tells us it was only within the last couple of years that he has seriously considered going into retail and he's enjoying the additional work.

"Fabricating custom acrylic templates is currently my largest retail market," Jim explained. "Very steady work and on par with metal marking with regards to income."

We asked Jim what some of his more popular retail items were and he told us that cookbook stands, business card cases, cornhole board sets and his one-quarter scale Wee Cornhole sets were some of his best sellers.

"There is a tremendous amount of competition for all of these items, however the laser gives me an advantage when it comes to production, design and personalization," Jim said.



As Jim's business has grown, he told us that some of the retail items he makes have required him to come up with new processes, particularly the cornhole boards.

"I do that by rastering paint – it's what makes my product unique in a very large and competitive market and allows me to compete against vinyl wraps. I even came up with an acronym for the process – color enhanced rastered paint on plywood (CERPOP).

One of the most memorable projects I did was a tournament-sized cornhole board set for Leader Dogs for the Blind. I had to design the boards and the bags for both visually-impaired and sighted people," Jim said.

As for projects that weren't so memorable, Jim told us he hasn't run into any projects that he wouldn't try again.



"When I first started out, there were several early projects that I turned down because of lack of expertise, or confidence, or both, that I'd do in a heartbeat now," Jim said.

One of the most knowledgeable and helpful contributors on the Epilog Laser Fans page, we asked Jim what advice he had for those just entering the industry.

"For those just starting out, it's important to find your sweet spot, your niche, and do it better, or at least differently, than anyone else," Jim said. "Set aside time each week to try something new. Have a Plan B."

As for what's on tap for Jim, he sees growth potential in the metal-marking industry.

"There is a fairly large market for metal marking in my area, so I can see an Epilog FiberMark in my future."

Epilog Laser Launches Fusion M2 Engraving & Cutting System

Epilog Laser, the leading designer and manufacturer of CO2 and fiber laser engraving, cutting and marking systems is pleased to announce the addition of the Fusion M2 to the company's laser line up. The Fusion M2 is a dual-source laser system that allows users to perform both metal marking applications and CO2 laser applications from the same system, in the same job.

"The great thing about the M2 is that it will allow our customers to utilize two very different laser technologies from one system," said Mike Dean, vice president of sales and marketing for Epilog Laser. "Now, no matter what material you're working with – whether it's wood, titanium, rubber, fabric, steel or a combination of several substrates – you have a single system that will process all these materials, within the same job."

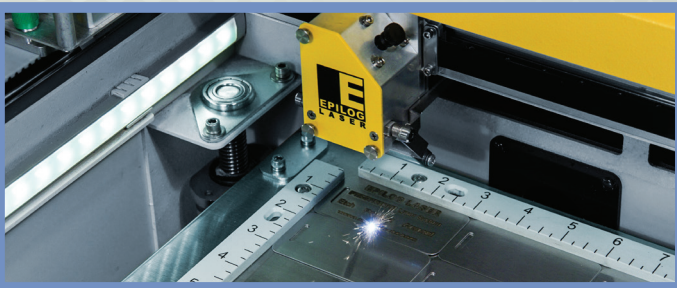
In addition to high-quality components and unparalleled cutting and engraving results Epilog's equipment is known for, the Fusion M2 features dedicated optics and a dedicated beam path for each of the laser sources before combining the paths prior to focusing.

"Some dual-laser systems compromise on optics or force you to switch out the laser source and/or the optics," Dean said, "But with the M2 there is no need to manually swap anything; it all happens automatically."



Knowledge Base: Epilog Webinar - Now On Demand Improve ID Processes with Fiber Marking Solutions

Fiber laser technology is fast becoming the ideal choice for enterprises that need convenient and cost-effective marking solutions. As marking regulations become more stringent across many industries, today's manufacturers, designers, and engineers are taking a closer look at bringing fiber laser marking technology in-house.



This on-demand presentation will demonstrate the newest fiber laser in Epilog's product line, the FiberMark Fusion. Attendees will learn how this fiber laser system can quickly and easily mark materials such as silicon, Inconel, titanium, and more.



You'll also discover Epilog's open-architecture software design that allows operators to utilize a variety of graphic design programs to create their artwork for engraving. In addition, the presentation will address features and benefits of the FiberMark Fusion, including intuitive joy-stick control, on-the-fly marking capabilities, and the Epilog Control Center (ECC) that features job-time estimators and recorders.



Visit this link to watch!
www.epiloglaser.com/how-it-works/video/fibermark-fusion-materials-demo.htm

Sample Club: Create a Cardboard Bowling Set with a Laser

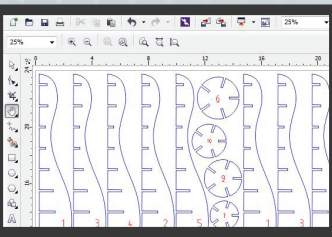
Bring the fun of bowling to nearly any venue with this full-size 3D laser-cut bowling set! Created with 123D Make, this handy, lightweight set is perfect for the office, home or anywhere you want to start a bowling party.



Materials List:

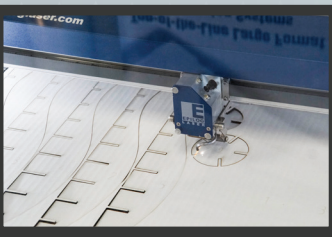
- Corrugated cardboard - We used 30" x 20" sheets from uline.com
- Glue (Optional) - we recommend something fast drying like Insta-Cure
- An Epilog Laser System

1) Visit the link below and download the design file. Print settings will vary based on wattage and artwork may need adjusting based on table size.



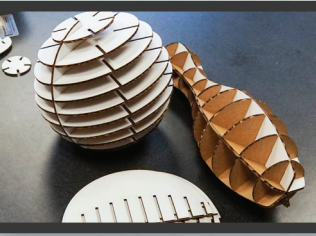
2) Open the file and adjust artwork accordingly. Print the artwork and turn on Color Mapping. Our settings on a 120-watt Fusion 40 were:

Vector Color Mapping Settings:
Blue Lines: SP 30 / PWR 100 / FRQ 100
Red Lines: SP 100 / PWR 10 / FRQ 100



3) Place a sheet of cardboard in the laser and, utilizing the Color Mapping feature and the suggested speed and power settings above, cut 10 pins.

Open the bowling ball file and repeat the process.



4) Start by inserting the numbered horizontal pieces into one vertical piece in numerical order. Finish by assembling the remaining vertical pieces and glue if desired. You can also increase rigidity and value by experimenting with different 1/8 material such as plywood or acrylics!

For more information including material sources and downloads, visit www.epiloglaser.com/resources/sample-club/bowling-set.htm