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Laser FOCUS

● 2ND QUARTER 2008

WEB UPDATES

- **Guidebook to Starting Your Own Engraving and Cutting Business**
This 25-page guide details the characteristics of building a successful business owner.
www.epiloglaser.com/news_small_biz_guide.htm
- **Engraving a Faux Leather Journal**
Here we experiment with a synthetic material that engraves beautifully.
www.epiloglaser.com/sc_journal.htm
- **Font Identification in CoreIDRAW X4**
Using the new 'What the Font' feature in X4 to identify bitmap fonts.
www.epiloglaser.com/tl_font_id.htm

“Model” Performance from Epilog’s Mini 18

When creating scale models, the ability to provide highly-detailed work in a very small area is crucial. Read on to find out how Epilog helps Aminek provide top-quality scale models and kits for miniature train structures, architectural models and more!

To achieve the extremely detailed results he wanted, Benoit Jean, owner of Aminek, selected an Epilog 35-watt Mini 18.

A novice to the laser cutting/engraving arena, Benoit began the research process knowing very little about the equipment. In fact, prior to making his final purchase, he had never operated cutting/engraving machinery.

Benoit, who resides in Quebec, said one of the main reasons he went with Epilog was due to the fact his distributor was in close proximity and there was no language barrier.

“I didn’t want to purchase this kind of equipment by mail and I strongly wanted local support. I would also have to say that Epilog was the only name being supplied locally, and in French. Being able to acquire parts locally was very important to me, because I know the equipment is a sophisticated piece of technology.”

Benoit has benefited from the Epilog system in several ways - namely by saving time and money by doing things with the laser that were previously outsourced or done by hand.

“I certainly don’t regret my decision to go with Epilog,” Benoit tells us. “I’ve found Epilog’s tech support very helpful and trustworthy.”

“In fact, I have recently purchased a 1.5-inch lens for my laser to reduce the width of cuts, which in my scale is very critical. So far I have seen significant improvements.”

“Having a laser permitted me to create greater looking models. I’m also able to create them in a kit format so that modelers can assemble the models themselves. I can build things now that I couldn’t have achieved by hand, or in a normal time frame.”



Sample Club: Micro-Fiber Pillow

One of our customers' favorite things about working with our equipment is experimenting with different materials to find new and exciting items to expand their product line and profit potential. Here we engraved a stunning design on two micro-fiber throw pillows. It creates a subtle, yet sophisticated engraving that makes any space warm and inviting.

Pillow surfaces can be challenging because they are not always flat. If you can find throw pillows with zippered covers, it would simplify this process. Additionally, you could unstitch one corner of a pillow, remove the stuffing, engrave accordingly and then reassemble.

Materials:

Micro-fiber throw pillow(s). We purchased ours from Kohl's.

Flower Pattern:

Visit www.epiloglaser.com/sc_pillows.htm to download the graphic for the flower pattern engraving.

1) The Epilog system used for this project was a 45-watt Helix. First, open the file `sc_pillow_graphic.cdr`. You may need to resize the graphic to fit the pillow(s) you're using.

2) Due to the nature of the material and shape of the pillow, we want to ensure our graphic ends up in the correct place. To do this, draw a vector box around the graphic. Make sure the thickness of the line is set to "Hairline." Move the engraving table down and place the pillow inside the machine. Turn on the Red Dot Pointer. Disable your x/y axis and move the home position to the center of the pillow. When the dot is centered, set your new home position. Send the vector job to the engraver. Make sure to run the job with the lid open.

3) When you are satisfied with the placement of the box, it's time to focus the machine. Attach the manual focus gauge. Disable the x/y axis. With your hand, move the focus gauge to the four corners of the area in which your graphic will appear to make sure that all four corners are at an approximately equal height. Because the surface may not be entirely flat, we suggest manually focusing the machine between the highest and lowest points on the square. In other words, if your top-left corner is higher than your bottom left, manually focus the machine between those two points.

4) Once the machine is adequately focused, you are ready to engrave. On a 45-watt Helix, we used the following settings:

RASTER SPEED: 100%

RASTER POWER: 20%

CENTER/CENTER ENGRAVING: On

When you are finished, if you feel you would like your engraving to go deeper, do not move the pillow from the engraving machine. Simply press go to repeat the job.



Tech Library: Photo Engraving Do's and Don'ts

Photographs are one of the most popular items for engraving purposes. Taking a captured memory and engraving it upon a different material such as wood or marble truly takes photographs to the next level. Here we'll cover the do's and don'ts that will make all your photo engraved projects picture perfect!

- DO practice! There's no single correct method of engraving photos. The more you engrave photos, the better you will become, so don't get discouraged if at first your engraved photographs do not display the perfect results you're looking for.
- DO consider the material on which you're engraving. A single photograph will engrave differently from one material to the next. Even if you use the same photograph, each material will produce a different engraved look.
- DO scan your photos at a low resolution such as 200 or 300 DPI. If you are going to engrave your photos at 200 DPI, there really is no reason to scan it in at a higher resolution. Scanning photos in at a lower resolution also will ensure your photos are small enough to work with when manipulating in your chosen graphics software.
- DO go with color when scanning in a photo. If you're scanning a photo you should always scan it in color; even if the photo is black and white (most scanners give you this option.) The color process generates useful data that comes in handy when you go to manipulate the photo.
- DON'T try to engrave photos containing large areas of a single color - they typically do not engrave well
- DON'T engrave photos with expansive backgrounds containing only one or two small subjects.
- DON'T use low-resolution Internet images. Be sure to obtain the highest resolution digital image you can from the Internet. Low resolution photos and graphics copied and pasted from the Internet are almost never suitable for engraving.

Whether you're just beginning to engrave photographs or you're already familiar with the process, these tips and tricks will help ensure you make the right choices to get the high-quality, professional results you're seeking.

Tech Support Receives Excellence Award



Our technical support staff recently received a Reflection of Excellence Award from U.S. Accolades.

"We had a unique problem with our equipment and Epilog tech support went beyond my expectations of how they would find a solution to the problem," said Carol Hadley, vice president of U.S. Accolades, LLC. They never once said 'I don't know, I guess you'll have to live with it', as I have heard some other support teams say. Epilog not only accepted the challenge, but diligently worked on solving the problem."

As customers become more tech-savvy, Epilog technical support specialists strive to stay a few steps ahead of the curve in an effort to remedy any challenge that might present itself to customers.

"All technicians must pass a rigorous technology aptitude exam prior to starting," said Eric Mitchiner, director of technical support for Epilog. "New technicians then shadow the more seasoned ones before they even start interacting with customers. It's difficult for applicants to make the cut because our standards are so high, but assisting our customers is priority one."

"Epilog's team never once had a superior attitude; they were our partners, part of our team. Their actions showed us that they cared as much about our success as they care about their own. As an awards and recognition company it seemed appropriate to present them with a gesture of our appreciation."

Boasting the most knowledgeable, capable and friendly technical support staff in the industry, Epilog is dedicated to providing the highest level of service on each and every piece of equipment sold.

○ ENGRAVING | ○ CUTTING | ○ MARKING

For more technical articles and sample downloads, visit our web site at
www.epiloglaser.com

Laser Bits clinics are ideal for both beginner and advanced learners. They are designed with a project oriented feel that is perfect for any laser user, or anyone interested in lasers.

Laser Bits Clinic Schedule

St. Louis, Missouri	August 15-16
Southern California	September 19-20
Texas/Oklahoma	October 17-18
Oregon/Washington	November 7-8

We'll be adding more information as it becomes available at www.epiloglaser.com/educational_clinics.htm

CONTACT CHANGE

To update your contact information, go to www.epiloglaser.com/contactinfo.htm, or call toll free 888-437-4564.



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