

Road to Sublimation Success: New Products Update

By David Gross

It's hard to get someone's attention in today's world of constant distractions, let alone keep their attention for any meaningful length of time. Business owners of all types continually struggle to find exciting products that can impress those finicky customers that are tired of the same old, same old.

For sublimation decorators, however, it's easy to stand out from the crowd and get noticed by producing unique, high-value personalized products in minutes. The following article will highlight some of the newest sublimatable products available and a few of my favorites that you may not have heard of.

PINCHBOOKS

These DIY keepsake/photo albums feature a sublimatable hard cover on the front and a spring-clamp spine on the inside that allows the user to easily insert, remove or change photographs, documents, receipts or to-do lists with no special equipment required. Available in 4-by-6-inch and 8 1/2-by-11-inch sizes, Pinchbooks offer a professional look when used as a photo album, scrapbook, recipe book, baby book, sketch book or creativity book.

CHROMALUXE FLOOR PANELING

These exciting new tongue and groove floor planks, made of 3/8-inch moisture-resistant, high-density fiberboard, are coated with an ultra-durable white coating that's suitable for medium-traffic residential and commercial applications including children's play rooms, specialty/boutique stores, business offices, trade shows and more. The flooring panels are available in 16.125-by-24.125-inch and 24.125-by-24.125-inch sizes and feature a low gloss finish with a light stippled texture.



ALL IMAGES COURTESY DAVID GROSS

*Unless you try to do something beyond
what you have already mastered, you will never grow.*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

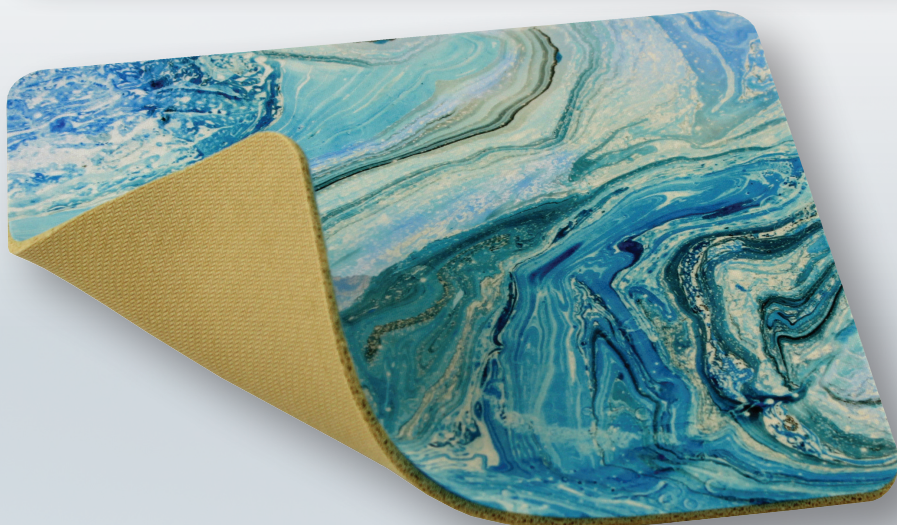
Keep in mind that the paneling's size will require small-format shops to upgrade to mid-format equipment such as the Sawgrass Virtuoso VJ 628 printer (24.8-inch media width) and the Geo Knight DK32 heat press (26-by-32-inch platen)—equipment that also allows for production of floor mats, car mats and other popular mid-size products.

MOUSEPADS WITH TAN RUBBER BACK

Already one of the highest volume products in the sublimation industry, mousepads just got better. A new twist on the classic mousepad with a black rubber back, mousepads with a tan rubber back look fantastic because the light-colored backing dramatically improves the color brightness of the sublimated polyester face of the pad. The new tan-backed pads come in all of the shapes and sizes of the traditional black-backed pads—coasters are also available.

PERSONALIZED PLAYING CARDS

Now you can produce a one-of-a-kind deck of professional-looking playing cards that features a favorite photo, colorful graphic or monogram. Pre-printed for gaming on the front side (face) and imprintable on the white backside, the 2 1/2-by-3 1/2-inch cards come in ganged sheets of nine to make production time quick and easy. In addition, a sublimatable box is included that can be customized to match.





SHOUTBOX

Consisting of a 1 1/2-inch deep Andiroban mahogany frame with a 1/8-inch thick Unisub hardboard panel face, these 8-by-10-inch ShoutBoxes provide depth and dimension when hung on a wall or displayed on a table. The ChromaLuxe panels are available with a gloss white or matte white finish and are attached to the mahogany frame after imaging.

BOTTLE OPENERS

Whether given to a beer or soda enthusiast or used in heavy-duty commercial applications, these new heavy-duty .07-inch stainless steel bottle openers, available in 6.97-by-1.54-inch pub, 1.6-by-5 1/2-inch bottle-shaped, and 1 1/2-by-2.8-inch card styles, quickly uncap bottles and look great imprinted with full-color images and logos.

UNISUB TWO-SIDED PET TAGS

Pet tags are now double sided. A big improvement over the single-sided pet tags, the new double-sided pet tags, the new double-sided heart, circle and bone shapes provide more space for customization. The pet market has long been one of my favorite profit centers for sublimation transfer, and Americans are spending more on personalized pet products than ever before.

Don't miss your opportunity to create great personalized gifts for pet groomers, veterinarians, animal shelters, dog daycares, and pet boarders. Also, don't forget about imprintable gifts for pet lovers including coffee mugs, T-shirts, photo panels and phone covers.





CAMP MUGS

Our new 10-oz. stainless steel camp mug is perfect for sipping coffee or tea in the great outdoors or for desktop storage of pens and pencils. Its retro design makes it a great-looking mug while the white imprintable coating accurately reproduces company logos, artwork, graphics and photographs.

VAPOR SOLAR LONG-SLEEVE TODDLER T-SHIRTS

Built with Vapor's Solar Performance fabrics, these lightweight and comfortable long-sleeve T-shirts for toddlers offer superior sun protection (up to UPF +50) to help keep the sun's rays from penetrating through to the wearer's skin. In addition, these shirts are powered by PURE-tech moisture-wicking technology that lasts throughout the life of the garment. Available in 24 month, 3T and 4T sizes and in white, blue, seagrass and gray colors.

CONCLUSION

One of my original tips in the 100 Sublimation Tips & Tricks article I wrote a few years ago (see the article in the 2010 Sublimation Almanac, page 36) about adding new products is: "Don't let your opinions get in the way of making money." This simply means that your opinion on a product has little or nothing to do with what your clients will purchase. Get samples of new products, decorate them, and show them to your clients. I think you will be surprised at the opportunities that are right in front of you.

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