

NEWS

THE BLAST SHOP

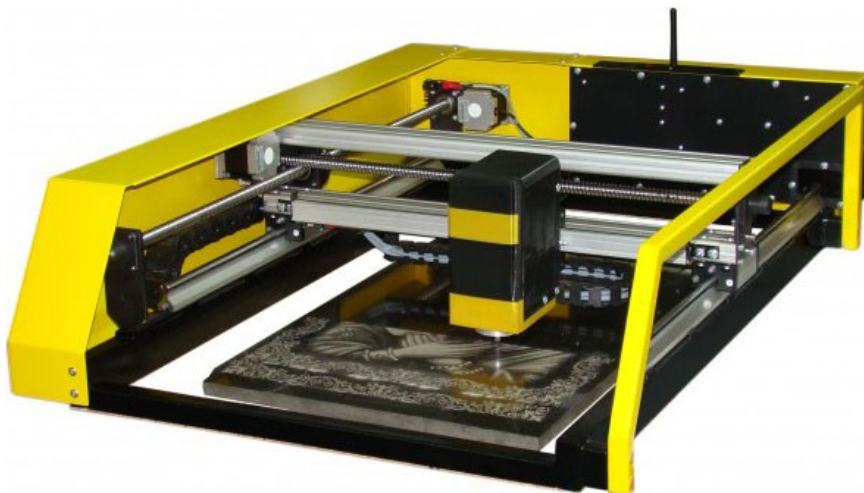


TRADEX 2015 Update

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- Kerbset Fixings
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VOLUME 25 ISSUE 3

NEWS FOR THE MEMORIAL INDUSTRY



ALL RIGHT ON THE NIGHT

It will be all right on the night (or so we thought). On the Wednesday before the TRADEX show opened on Friday everything was ready, the transit was packed (maybe slightly overloaded officer!), the remaining items were all laid out ready for packing on the Thursday morning, the seminar presentations were complete and demonstration software installed and ready for action. Unfortunately on Thursday morning the gremlins started to strike.

A computer that had the seminar presentation, the Signum demonstration and videos to project onto the stand wall died. We tried reinstalling windows but the hard disk had failed. Fortunately we got the information off the computer but were unable to resurrect the Signum demonstration in time for the show

opening on Friday. Unperturbed we soldiered on – there were lots of things on our stand so losing one item wasn't a complete disaster. On the Friday morning we checked everything was working and began etching a sample design onto a granite tile using the new impact etching machine. Unfortunately this was the last action the etching machine saw on Friday as a failed windows update on the computer, whilst it was working, took it out of action for the rest of the day.

Friday was an extremely busy day at the show (as any of you who were present will know!) so our excitement about the show was well founded, unfortunately we weren't in the best position to benefit from it. By Saturday we were back in full swing (if feeling a little deflated) and come the end of the day we were exhausted after a busy couple of days.

We're obviously disappointed we were unable to demonstrate two of our key exhibits on the Friday but for those that were unable to experience the software and etching machine working as they were on the Wednesday night we have put together some videos for you. If you want to see them then please contact us and we will send you the link (the videos are fairly high resolution so we haven't put them directly onto our website at the moment).

STARS OF THE SHOW

Despite our technical difficulties we still had a very productive show getting an lot of interest in particular for the 3 head polisher and the cement free kerbset fixings. As it's name suggests there are 3 polishing pads which rotate around a central point on the machine giving very flat and fast polishing results. People were greatly impressed with the quality of the hand polished panel we had on display, it was extremely difficult to determine which surface had been polished with the planetary polisher and which was done by the manufacturer with a Jenny Lind!



Our second star was the cement free fixings for kerbsets, shown in prototype form at tradex. As you can imagine with the other issues we've faced both before and since the show we are still in prototype mode but we will have stocks on our shelves in the very near future!

WE MADE A MISTAKE

We regularly use our products and are constantly on the look out for ways we can improve them. Most of the time this is very successful and has meant that, for example, we are now selling more of our own StoneMask range of products than Anchor tapes. Occasionally we get it wrong though. Recently we have been running off large runs of designs on the Graphtec plotter and we discovered that the tape ran better when the roll was wound the opposite way round. We had been manually unwinding and rewinding the tape before loading the plotter and getting superb results (we were plotting 3m long parallel lines 1mm and 5mm apart with no distortion!). The next logical process was to get the tapes manufactured this way so everyone could benefit. Unfortunately getting the tape wound in this manner has not had the desired results and we are currently waiting for delivery of our next order which will be wound back the other way. More often than not when we change something people approve but in this case we made a mistake ☹️. To compound the problem, usually we would have a few months worth of stock on the shelves when a new batch of tape arrives, in this case we only had a few weeks so we haven't had our usual buffer which allows us to correct issues before you see them.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

As if to prove that problems always come in threes, just recently we had a problem with a memorial we did for a trade customer. We occasionally get trade requests to do design work on memorials with our etching machine, people are so happy with the results that we are starting to get a reasonable amount of repeat work even when



the first experience wasn't ideal! We recently bought a large 3' wide ogee from a UK wholesaler on behalf of our customer. We then etched a tractor and sandblasted the inscription for him. He loved the sandblasting and the etched design but the headpiece was 1" wider than the base. After a long time spent looking in our yard and that of the original supplier the only option available was to return the headpiece to the supplier for them to reshape but they would only collect it from us rather than the end customer in Wales. I understand the problem but we had charged the memorial out at cost and shipping the memorial around the country meant making a loss through no fault of our own (other than not checking the base before it left us). Using other suppliers we finally found a base that was large enough and got it shipped down to our customer again, at our cost. However, in the end, our customer was happy and has now placed a second order with us (we're getting him to order the material this time though!)

SERVICING

"we have been using the booth and its like a brand new machine again with amazing suction that we have not seen for many years." - a happy customer following our service of their Odlings cabinet.

Now that the show is behind us we are trying to get on top of the service calls we've been requested to do. We're now finding we are called out to service as many Odlings cabinets as we are Goldmann machines. Steve is getting more familiar with the equipment now which means we are able to do more than just replace glass, seals, bags and grit. He carries a welding kit and has been able to replace broken

catches, lamp units as well as providing a safety check that the unit is working satisfactorily. If your cabinet is not capable of inhaling a rubber sandblasting gauntlet tinyurl.com/GauntletEat then it might be worth a call!

SELF STICK PHOTOBLAST

We demonstrated Rayzist's glueless PhotoBlast stencil resist on the stand at Tradex and were surprised by the number of people that were unaware of the product. Most of our customers have now converted to the glueless material because it is far easier to blast and sticks to most surfaces (even those which aren't polished). For those that haven't we supply T-Fix surface mount adhesive, also suitable for use with other PhotoBlast stencils and at a fraction of the cost that other suppliers are charging for their identical cans of T-Fix (at £50 a recent customer was charged more than 3 times our price!)

CONGRATULATIONS

One of the last minute plans for the trade show was a prize draw with a £250 Blast Shop voucher for the lucky person pulled out of the hat. That lucky person was A E Vaughan. So congratulations to them and thanks to all those that attended the show and in particular visited our stand.



THANK YOU

Many thanks to those that posted the letter we included in the last newsletter to their local MP's. We've seen a few of the responses back, hopefully the more MP's that ask about it the more likely they are to do something. For those that haven't sent it in yet, the letter is still available on the NAMM website, we need to do something now before it is too late!