

Four Fresh Ideas for Memorable Commemorative Print Pieces

By Bob Wagner

What marketer doesn't need fresh ideas for commemorative gifts to give away at the many presentations, trade shows and events in which they participate? Here are four ideas on how you can help your marketing team apply the latest digital color printing technologies to produce memorable giveaways.

1 Stack the deck with custom playing cards.

The economical short runs and high image quality available with today's digital color presses make custom-designed playing cards an affordable and evergreen giveaway option. Use 100-pound cover stock, laminate and die-cut multi-up sheets, and your deck will measure up to those at any Las Vegas gaming table. Company logos can integrate easily into the back-of-the-card design. The joker or a "non-playing" card can include company information and a call to action. Designers also can find imaginative ways to depict the faces of the cards.

For example, organizers of the Illustration Conference (ICON5), held in New York this past July, worked with Xerox and Tucker Printers (www.tuckerprinters.com), a member of the Xerox Graphic Arts Premier Partner global network (www.xerox.com/xpp), to produce a commemorative deck of cards. The deck features illustrations by 52 students from four top art and design schools, showcasing their work to leading professionals, and gave us the opportunity to educate an influential audience about the power of digital color printing. The cards were a huge hit at the conference, they'll have a long shelf life for many recipients, and we're already re-using them in other promotions.

2 Personalize your packaging.

The capability to print on a wide range of thick and thin media enables short-run digital color printing to be applied to many types of packaging. Add personalization, and you can turn most any generic item into a keepsake. Bottled drinks, snacks, and favor bags and boxes all can serve up personalized marketing messages as well as gifts and goodies.

Personalizing the packaging of this deck of cards featuring illustrations by students from four leading art and design schools made it a coveted commemorative gift and an effective marketing tool.



Xerox DocuMagnets like this one produced for a Xerox workshop often have long lives on people's refrigerators — a very cool way to spread your marketing messages.

For example, playing cards, too, have packaging, and we created a new, personalized box for the ICON5 cards as a gift at a recent presentation on emerging digital printing applications. The package read, "John, personalized packaging like this stacks the deck in your favor," and an insert included contact information.

3 Make your messages magnetic.

Looking through a catalog of specialty media often sparks creative ideas, and they are much more affordable to execute now that digital printing makes short-run pieces produced on specialty media economical. One specialty product that generates a strong "attraction" for marketers is the magnet. Incorporate your contact information with some memorable art and messaging, and your magnet may live on your customers' refrigerators for months.

We recently produced and personalized a magnet for attendees of one of our "Open New Opportunities with Digital Printing" workshops. It included a caricature illustration of the speakers, a personalized thank you for attending and information on how to obtain Xerox DocuMagnet™ magnetic media.

4 Capture the event's memories with a photo book.

Digital photography and digital printing have combined to enable some of the most fun and popular new print applications of recent years: photo books, calendars and greeting cards, populated with your own photos. The possibilities for commemorative photo items are endless. For another ICON illustrators conference, we helped collect sketches from attendees in advance and compiled them into a book that was personalized as a gift for attendees. Xerox customer Lorraine Press of Salt Lake City produced a photo flipbook for an open house, showing a magician doing magic tricks that related to the event's theme. More recently, we've photographed the dinner and meetings of our two-day workshops and compiled them into 20-page books that we produced in near real time to hand out during our final session.

By knowing what is possible with the latest technologies, such as digital color printing, you can help your marketing team shape its commemorative giveaways, improving your value to them and boosting the effectiveness of your company's marketing efforts. ■

Bob Wagner is vice president, Xerox Creative Services Business and Premier Partners global print network, robert.wagner@xerox.com