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**Quickdraw Screen
Printing & Embroidery**

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Diversified Decorator Sees Early Brother Digital Printer Investment Pay Off

Investing in a Brother 541 digital printer back in 2005 has paid off for this full-service Idaho decorated apparel company.

Sometimes as a business owner, you trust your instincts and take a leap of faith. This is what Scott Bartlett, Quickdraw Screen Printing & Embroidery, Kimberly, ID, did back in 2005, when he bought a Brother 541, which could not print on dark shirts at the time.

"I remember talking to a magazine editor who had called to interview me. The editor said, 'I have heard a lot of people are waiting to buy a Brother machine until it has white ink.'

"And I said, 'I have been doing 1,500 prints a month for the past four to five years. They are missing out on the whole market.'"

Bartlett believes "You have to diversify or you're stuck." Offering screen printing, embroidery, vinyl heat-applied graphics, dye sublimation, and digital direct-to-garment printing has enabled Quickdraw to gross \$800,000 in sales last year and to be on track to hit the million dollar mark in 2016.

"We make the decorating process match what they are putting it on," he says. "We help them find the right product and logo to go on whatever they are looking for. We want them to come back with their friends."

Bartlett owned two Brother 541 digital printers, but has since traded one of those in for a 782, which has white ink capabilities. To date, he has printed more than 80,000 shirts on his newest machine averaging 1,600 prints a month.

The decorator has found that his digital printers have provided many benefits over the years.

Small Multicolor Orders. "When I have customers who want a dozen full-color shirts, the only choice is the 782," he says.

"In our area, we are pretty small market. There are no gigantic schools. Typical orders are 48- to 72-piece runs. I would rather get them done and look good then spend my time making screens all day."

Multimedia Designs. The decorator often uses digital printing to do a background design on top of which he adds embroidery or heat-applied vinyl. "The ink isn't that expensive, and it allows you to get creative. You can create a high-end look while keeping your costs down."

Fast Turnaround. "I used to have event customers who would order masses of shirts a month in advance, and then they'd have a whole bunch left over. Now the trend is to order on a Monday and want it by Friday, so I have to be able to produce it fast."

Flexibility With Sizing. "When I was only screen printing if a customer asked for kids' sizes that would throw me for a loop. For example, they might want 40 youth shirts. If it was a last-minute request, I wouldn't have enough time to decrease the artwork and make new screens.

"With the digital printers, not even onesies are a problem, because it's so easy to digitally resize the artwork and send it to the printer. It also cuts my costs to do the job. Now even if I don't get much notice, I can get youth sizes done in time."

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