
THE PEDALER'S PAGE

BREWER SALES NEWSLETTER/TIP SHEET

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Xenetech to Buy Meistergram?!

THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AT WORK!

Who would have thought, just a few years ago, that the “scrawny” newcomer from Baton Rouge would be in a position to purchase the engraving division from mighty Meistergram Corporation?! I love this free enterprise system! *And*, I love this industry where if you work hard, pay your bills and present what the market wants, you'll do very well! You'll do well faster if you present what the market wants before they know they want it and can “hang on” ‘til the market realizes the need!

How? Why? What does it mean?

The comments and observations are my own and certainly not the “official word” from any of the companies involved. Rumors have had it for years that Meistergram was dissatisfied with (slim?) profits in their engraving division in spite of a great product, great customer base and great people running the company. [I consider Bob Englert one of our industry's experts]! After huge investments in both R&D and in marketing of the Meistergram Lightning Laser, it has sold very poorly. While I'm sure there are more, I'm personally aware of only one machine in the eight states I travel! I believe the addition of a laser by Meistergram was supposed to increase profits and it certainly appears to have done the opposite. Furthermore, Meistergram was recently bought out and it is said that the new parent company prefers to concentrate on one main product instead of diversification.

Meistergram is now able to concentrate on monogramming.

Xenetech's momentum in the engraving industry has steadily grown since the beginning. Many in our industry (both suppliers and retailers) relate to Jay Hoffpauir's low budget, high value approach to marketing in our industry. When people tell me they are having a hard time deciding which engraving machine to purchase, I say, “Don't take my word for it. Ask ten non-affiliated industry suppliers and/or journalists the machine about which they hear the most positive comments.” Xenetech is *always* the clear winner!

Why, then, would Xenetech want to buy Meistergram? **Xenetech eliminates one competitor.** That's one reason. In addition, Xenetech replaces all other engraving systems on a daily basis; but, Meistergram owners are very loyal and seldom switch to any other machine. While the D1.4 software is ancient, the electronics of the system are extremely reliable. With their foot firmly in the door of all Meistergram owners, **Xenetech greatly expands its customer base.** The advantage is probably the most clear cut for existing **Meistergram owners: new software at last!** I'm sure that the legendary Xenetech software will soon be capable of running the Meistergram systems. Since I do not know whether this will necessitate new hardware, I have no idea what the cost will be. **The advantage I see for existing Xenetech owners is the increased revenues** from a broader customer base will allow greater resources for R&D to help Xenetech maintain its technological lead in the engraving industry.

I consider this acquisition to be one of the most significant in computer engraving history; *and*, it certainly appears to be a **win/win** for everyone concerned!

Xenetech Tip of the Month (menu instructions = **BOLD COURIER FONT**)

How many times have you erased a long line of text accidentally (by pressing ESC while in text mode) and had to type it in again? Want to know how to get it back? Before you leave the line, type “x” or any other character (including the spacebar) then press the plus sign on the numeric pad (not the typewriter +) and then **EDIT|UNDO**. Presto. The text is restored! If you understand what is going on here you'll be able to apply this principle to other situations. Following are a few facts of which you should be aware:

- The Xenetech layout program is “object” oriented.
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- Each object has its own Undo database.
- ESC clears the text in a "line" assuming you want to replace it with new copy using existing parameters (font, baseline, etc.).
- If you *leave* that line with nothing in it, it has nothing in it (shore nuff!).
- A "line" that has nothing in it is not an object. Therefore, it cannot be selected. Therefore, it cannot access the Undo database. Therefore, it cannot be "undone"!
- If you put something in it (before pressing ENTER or clicking mouse on anything else), it can be selected.
- If you press the numeric keypad + while in TEXT mode, it will select the current line of text.
- **EDIT | UNDO** (Alt+Backspace is the "hotkey") returns the selected object to its state before last change.

Epilog Does It Again!

RADIUS LINE OF LASER ENGRAVERS CATAPULTS EPILOG WAY OUT IN FRONT OF *WHOEVER* IS IN SECOND PLACE!!

When Epilog Corporation entered the marketplace just a few years ago, laser engravers were selling for:
10 watt -- \$27,000 ... 25 watt -- \$35,000 ... 60 watt -- \$90,000

When Epilog entered the marketplace, the most prominent of laser engravers were not interfaced to a computer at all and the others had proprietary software. Most of their competitors had taken a rather tentative approach to the market and "hung" a laser on existing technologies; it's much safer that way!

Epilog went the other direction. They spent heavily on research and development of both the market and the product. They designed their very first laser engraver from the ground up to be a laser engraver. They invested heavily in tooling; for all manufacturers know that if you properly develop specifications for the market place and engineer the hardware for ease of manufacturing and maintenance, you can market your product profitably for less money. The final ingredient was open architecture. Long before it became a buzzword in our industry, Epilog maintained that their laser engraver owners should be able to run the system with *any* Windows-based software. The Eclipse was the result and the rest is history! Epilog's ability to price the Eclipse only slightly higher than a rotary engraver commenced the laser engraver "boom"!

EPILOG'S UNIQUE ABILITY (IN OUR INDUSTRY) TO KEEP A SECRET!

At our annual sales meeting in late Spring, we heard for the first time what was in the works. Only after being trained on the Radius in late August were we made aware that the Radius project had started before the completion of the Summit development!

EPILOG'S UNIQUE APPROACH TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR 4TH GENERATION LASER ENGRAVER

From their earliest research, Epilog determined that a huge percentage of laser engraving would be raster. Therefore, they developed equipment that most agree is able to produce higher quality raster engraving at faster speeds. While Epilog's vector cutting capability steadily improved, they had to admit their vector capability was at least a bit behind one (or maybe more?) of their competitors. In typical Epilog style, they would not be satisfied with the slightly better capabilities of a competitor. Instead, they hired engineers from an industry which all of us have admired their vectors for many years. Envious indeed of the vector capabilities of the vinyl knife industry, that became their target.

Epilog stuck their financial necks out again and hired engineers who were involved in the design of vinyl lettering systems. Shrouded in secrecy, the assignment was to design the ultimate laser cutting technology from "scratch!"

THE REST OF THE STORY

Early in 1997, I visited Epilog just after they had greatly expanded their facilities. I thought they must have rented out a portion of the new facilities because there were engineering types working on/with equipment I did not recognize ... with only a single door connected to Epilog's office. Now I know *the rest of the story!* That is, the engineers on this project were not allowed to see competitive systems. In true Epilog character, neither were they allowed to see any of Epilog's *current* technology. "**Stinkin' Thinkin'**" (from Zig Ziglar) was eliminated from this project!

THE RESULT

Synrad is, to my understanding, the only significant manufacturer of 25 watt sealed laser tubes. The Epilog 25 watt Radius will use this laser as did the Eclipse and Summit before it. All of our competitors use this same tube. However, Epilog was honored to be the first to use the new technology developed by Coherent Laser for their 50 watt and 100 watt Radius. Coherent Laser Corporation is over ten times the size of Synrad and the acknowledged leader in CO2 lasers. The engineers tell me that the quality and consistency of this laser is outstanding! Head and shoulders above the output of competitive units. Epilog's 100 watt Express (and, to my understanding, all other 50 watt+ laser engravers) required a large, heavy, noisy power supply unit. One of the many technological advantages of the Coherent technology is that the power supply can be integrated into the other electronics. I guarantee that you'll see the Coherent name in competitive units before too long, but by that time, I'm suspicious that Epilog will have "plowed ground" in other fields!

The "wish list" from existing customers and distributors had been included in the original specs and only toward the end of the project was the Epilog expertise in raster engraving merged with the developing system. You'll see what I mean when you study the features/benefits and see this machine for yourself!

FEATURES/BENEFITS

- ▶ FAST: up to 45 inches per second! While not significant on wood or rubber stamps, it is *very* significant when doing metal, plastic, acrylic, glass!
- ▶ 25, 50 and 100 watts! All use the same cabinet and electronics!
- ▶ 25 & 50 watt systems are upgradable to 50 & 100 watts.
- ▶ "Flying Optics" design [stationary table]
- ▶ Automatic Focus
- ▶ BEARINGS: Stainless steel, sealed, ABEC3 ball bearings with a custom molded delrin wheel (please ask!). Bearings are mounted to the carriage assembly so that a constant tension is applied to the bearing. This mounting system is an automatic self-adjusting tension system that insures proper tension on the bearings and eliminates the need for regularly scheduled lubrication or replacement. Maintenance free.
- ▶ BELTS: Precision double wide drive belts made from advanced "b" style Kevlar. Provides for maximum strength and positioning accuracy at high speeds. Maintenance free.
- ▶ ACCESS DOORS: Double door system. Regular door for most items. "Entire" top lifts to allow placement of large bulky items. Large door supported by gas springs similar to that used in vans, etc.
- ▶ TABLE: Honeycomb core with a steel sheet metal outer cover. SIZE: 24" x 18". Motorized table lifts up to 35 lbs, holds up to 50 lbs. I saw Mike Dean (180 lbs?) stand in the middle of the table with no apparent deflection. This table is strong! All major components are designed like the table: parts of a finely engineered system designed for high speeds, low maintenance. As a final example, allow us to show/explain the "I-Beam" gantry.
- ▶ DISPLAY: provides machine status, speed & power settings, resolution, and incremental timer (new). Diagnostics also provided by the display.
- ▶ LENS: Very unique "snap in" design. Optional lenses color coded for different resolutions (focal length/spot size). Must see!
- ▶ PERMANENT MIRROR ALIGNMENT: Mirrors can be removed for cleaning and/or replacement without having to align.
- ▶ 16MB RAM: Rolling buffer design accepts data from computer's spooler. No file too large!
- ▶ WARRANTY: 3 years ... "Bumper to Bumper" ... No Exclusions!
- ▶ RESOLUTION: 150 (draft), 300, 400, 600, 900, 1200 [yes! True 1200 DPI resolution]
- ▶ OPTIONS: Exhaust system, Air Assist, Glass Engraving Attachment, Additional Lenses

There'll be a mini-show in your area soon so you can take a look at these features & benefits yourself. Call my office to let me know you want to take a look at it the next time we have a Brewer Sales mini-show in your area. If you're in more of a hurry to see this incredible system, call today. I have a limited number of "open" days left in September/October.

Brewer Sales Product Line

- **Epilog Laser Engravers** *Web Site: www.epiloglaser.com*
- **Xenotech Rotary Engravers** *Web Site: www.xenotech.com*
- **Direct Color Systems *Badger*** *E-mail: dcscat@aol.com*
- **Machine Automation MultiCam Routers** *Web Site: www.multicam.com*
- **Scanvec CasMate Software** *Web Site: www.scanvec.com*

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