
THE PEDALER'S PAGE

A Quarterly Newsletter for Epilog & Xenetech Owners brought to you by Brewer Sales

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EOY Reminder

Are you having as much trouble as I am believing that we're already nearing the end of Y2K?! Time flies, doesn't it? [*Boy, that sounded just like my mother!*] Anyway, it's the time of year that we remind you to check with your accountant and/or tax expert to see if you need to take advantage of *Section 179* of the IRS Code. As a reminder, *Section 179* states that business can write off up to \$20,000 in 2000 as long as the equipment is delivered by December 31, 2000. Your business can qualify for this tax break whether you are paying with cash or leasing (*with the \$1.00 purchase option*).

The production schedules at both Epilog & Xenetech start backing up around the end of the year. If you want to guarantee delivery by December 31, we'll need to get moving soon. Call us at 817-460-8122 (or <mailto:jeanette@brewersales.com>) if you need any literature or pricing info on equipment.

Brewer Sales is 30!

In January 2001, Brewer Sales will celebrate our 30th anniversary in the awards/recognition industry. I won't review the history for you again (see the February 2000 *Pedaler's Page*, if you're an industry history buff), I'll just thank each of you who had a part of making Brewer Sales a part of your business! We hope you think of us again the next time you need to add engraving equipment.

One of our favorite customers (of course, Guy Barone of Xenetech gently reminds me, "*They're all our favorite customers!*") sent the following note re: the effect Brewer Sales has had on her business: "*As I sit here between my two [Brewer Sales] engraving machines, I can't help but think 'thank you' to all involved in getting me to this place ... Jim & I are so grateful that you exist and that you are our rep and are around every time we need you!*" — Jackie Kindell

News from Baton Rouge

SOFTWARE UPDATE

Xenetech has released a new software update — version 5.48. As is the case with all Xenetech software updates, it can be downloaded at no charge from Xenetech's web site — <http://www.xenetech.com>. Alternatively, customers can have a copy shipped to them for a \$15.00 shipping and handling charge by calling Xenetech at 225-752-0225. Remember, though, that Xenetech sends *all* shipments COD. Brewer Sales keeps a stock of update diskettes on hand that we'll send completely free of charge (via US Mail) to anyone who asks!

This version includes a new "Tip of the Day" feature that provides helpful, user-selectable information on software, hardware/maintenance, engraving business tips, and general business tips. "Tip of the Day" is optional and can be launched when the software is opened.

"With 'Tip of the Day' and several other improvements included, we feel very good about this release," stated Jim Brown, Software Development Manager. "As the next step for 'Tip of the Day', I'd like to have our customers email me suggestions and submissions for future releases. They can be emailed to <mailto:jim@xenetech.com>," continued Brown.

Xenetech also tells us that they are on schedule to release a beta version of the new 32-bit software before the year is out. Once approved for final release, this will be an upgrade version that can be purchased by Xenetech users (see Aug. 2000 *Pedaler's Page* for more details).

USER CLINIC

Last time I checked, there were a few seats left for the upcoming User Clinic in Baton Rouge. The clinic is Monday & Tuesday, November 6-7. Call Xenetech at 225-752-0225 to make your reservation TODAY! The cost is \$200 (includes lunches, snacks & dinner on Tuesday evening).

This clinic will be directed toward intermediate & advanced Xenetech operators. Xenetech prefers that those in attendance have at least six months of experience with the equipment. Xenetech has a detailed list of topics that will be covered. If you're not sure this clinic is for you, call Xenetech and ask them to FAX the "Factory User Clinic" outline to you. This is a great chance to learn more about your equipment AND to experience authentic Cajun hospitality!

ASK ROY (Xenotech Q&A)

Q We frequently cut & paste line drawings from Corel to Xenotech. That works fine. When we export that same drawing from Xenotech as an .XLG, though, Xenotech treats the drawing as a much smaller or larger image than it actually is.

We know we could cut & paste every time but it's an extra step. What can we do?

(The first example shows how the .XLG file *should* look. The second example shows how it *usually* shows up in Xenotech.)

A 1. Be sure you have **textaslines=0** in your xenotech.ini file (**Misc|Edit Ini...**). Brewer Sales recommends that you *always* use this as your standard setting for this .INI entry.

2. Do **not** export an .XLG covering up an existing .XLG with the same filename. Personally, I name **every** file I paste into XGW "junk"; then after exploding, cleaning, combining, &/or hatch filling, I export an .XLG with an appropriate filename.

The above two steps should eliminate the potential for this "registration box" problem on current versions of software (5.42 and above). However, *if you are using an older version of XGW* and this problem still occasionally occurs, check these settings: **Page|Snap Spacing...** be sure **Point of Reference** is **Bottom/Left**. And/or be sure the graphic you are exporting has its **Justification** set to **Center** (in toolkit on left side of layout screen).

More Xenotech "Stuff"

TIP

One of our *Pedaler's Page* readers sent the following tip: "I wanted to make you aware of something I've noticed when using the Tacky Mat on a 912. The Tacky Mat cleaner overspray removes the lubricant from the left guide rail. I've noticed a light rust forming on the rail immediately to the left of the home position (top left corner of table).

"I now lube the rail before & after every use to make sure no additional rusting to the rail occurs."

Thanks for the tip, Rick!

LOGOS

Eddy Maddux has over 3700 logos digitized specifically for the Xenotech engraving systems. For \$260, get all these logos on CD along with a complete catalog. For more information, email Eddy at <mailto:maddux@feist.com>.

Order your logos today at <http://www.feist.com/~maddux> or pick up a sample set of logos (60 FREE logos). No InterNet access? Call Eddy at 316-686-4002.

Please help!

Take a look at the address label on this newsletter. Is your email address on it? If not (or if it is incorrect), please send your current email address to <mailto:jeanette@brewersales.com> OR fill in the information below & FAX it to me at 817-469-8560.

Company Name _____
City, State _____

Email Address _____

Thank you!!!

ASK ROY (Epilog Q&A)

Q When laser engraving on glass or crystal, we have encountered times when the area engraved tends to "flake" off. The depth of the engraving is of course still present but the finish that is created will come off.

A Are you engraving through wet newspaper? If yes, then instead of black artwork, try 80% (or less) shade of gray.

Q We have had a tough time gluing acrylic together. When attaching an award to a base, we are ending up with air pockets or bubbles. Is there a trick to this?

A Yes, most use hypodermic needle and let it "flow" in from the back. Acrylic Idea Factory has a great document on this; and possibly a video. They have written several articles published through the years in various trade journals and they give a seminar on this every few years. They are definitely the experts! If I recall, they have a "kit" which has instructions, needle, and recommended adhesive. I took one of their seminars a few years ago and with their method, I never got a bubble!

Q Is there a standard or widely used product in the industry for color fill? We have had some success with products such as "IPI Acryfill" paints but we are looking for a product or products that offer a greater selection and can be used on a wider variety of surfaces.

A The most *globally* used product for filling is artist's Acrylic paint (like you'll find in 3-5oz tubes in arts/crafts stores). They are expensive, but go a long way. They have vivid colors. They are water "clean up" and seldom "bleed" into wood grain. Don't get too serious about this tip, though; while more commonly used than any other fill of which I'm aware, many (most?) just continue trying different things for different products and wind up with a very non-uniform list of color fill appliques. Pat Holley (*Dynamic Awards, Shreveport, former ARA President*), gives a seminar on color filling where he has a list of special products for different applications and how to clean them off afterwards (sometimes the biggest challenge). He demonstrates color filling plaque boards and cleaning them in less than 60 seconds each. You may want to see if he'll send you a set of his handouts. [*Editor's note: mailto:jeanette@brewersales.com for Pat Holley's contact info*].

Corel Tips from Roy

COOLBAR: THE 3RD "ICON" BAR THAT CHANGES BASED ON SITUATION (SOME MANUALS REFER TO THIS AS "PROPERTY" BAR)

Most CorelDRAW9 users are already aware that they can change the page size in the "Coolbar" if nothing is selected; if something *is* selected, then the Coolbar is showing the xy size of that which is selected and the position of that which is selected.

A fewer number have figured out that all of these input fields will accept fractions as well as decimal. For instance, 5 7/8 will generate the decimal equivalent of 5.875 automatically.

Very few have observed that they can also do "math" in these input fields. A practical example might be in order. Let's say you planned to do four columns of two rows of pre-cut plaque plates which measured 4 7/8" wide by 5 7/8" tall. You need to make a layout that will exactly hold these plates; in the

Coolbar you'd enter the following values width 4*(4 7/8) height 2*(5 7/8) as soon as you press enter the plate size is changed to 14.625" x 11.75".

You can use all the standard operators that you might need, for instance: (2+3+4-2.97)*3.5 would yield 21.105". Similar to what we learned in algebra, the parentheses groups operations so there is no doubt of the outcome.

One last example and then you are on your own to find applications for this. Let's say you need to engrave another line of text exactly 13/16" below where an existing line is. You measure the existing line's location to be 8.5" from the bottom of the plaque (assuming you are using Corel's lower/left corner as 0,0) then the Y position of the new line of text could be keyed in as 8.5-13/16 which would yield 7.687."

This new capability is extremely useful when you are asked to engrave items from a blueprint.

Corel Tip #2 from Roy

Many are not aware that CorelDRAW9 provides great help in setting up "automatic" guidelines. No, it still won't "enforce" guidelines as margins, but really helps visually.

Try this! Create a new layout and set page size to 8" x 10." To quickly add 1" guidelines all around the layout:

View | Guidelines Setup...

If necessary click the + sign beside the Guidelines to expand the Guidelines "tree" on the left pane of the dialog. Then select **Presets**. If the Corel Presets button is selected then click on the 1" margin box and finally **Apply Presets**.

The real power of this comes when you use User Defined Presets. If you use guidelines at all, this will save you a bunch of time! I have set my defaults so that any new plate automatically (regardless of size) has a .5" guidelines on it; change the plate size and it *still* has .5" guidelines on it!

Epilog Tip

If & when you have to re-install your Epilog print driver, you will lose all your speed/power configurations that you have saved in your printer settings/properties (e.g., Wood, Acrylic, etc.) There is no "non-geek" way to save these configurations.

While there are speed & power recommendations in your manual, those are only suggested "starting points" for your laser. Each laser will be different and you'll develop the settings that work best for you. Write those settings down in a safe place. My recommendation? **Do it now!**