



Being Your Own Boss Is Easier When You've Got the EDGE

Product Spotlight:
Gerber EDGE®

Turn Key Communication Services, Inc.
City, State

The sign division of the Chicago printing company Turn Key Communication Services, Inc. has only been operating for two years but has been extremely successful. The three-person vinyl sign and banner division was started by Jessica Walter, who serves as its vice president, and Lisa Lennon, senior graphic artist. Turn Key was a long-term client of Jessica's when she worked for a different company, and two of her former coworkers are employed by her now.



Some Examples of what Turn Key has turned out on the GERBER EDGE digital color printing system

Jessica says, "We left that company because we wanted to be more of our own bosses and be in a partnership in a company. So we came to this company and started our own division."

She had some definite opinions about what kind of equipment she wanted for this new venture. She had recommended the GERBER EDGE® digital color printing system to her former boss when it first came on the market. A trade show demonstration had given her a taste of what the system could do, and after the purchase was made she had a chance to see for herself.

When she started the new division, she purchased one plotter and one software package from Gerber Scientific Products. A few months later, they needed an additional plotter and software package. She says, "We wanted all Gerber equipment and software because we wanted only the best for our company."

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Most of all, Jessica wanted an EDGE. About three months have passed since she got the equipment, and her only regret is that she didn't get it sooner. "For the year-and-a-half that we didn't have the EDGE, a friend did so much EDGE work for us that we could have bought it twice over. Now that we bought the EDGE, it's so much better to have it in-house. We think it's a great piece of equipment, and we didn't want to suffer by not having one."



More Profits in Less Time

The sign division completes an amazing 30-50 jobs per week. Jessica says, "We do a tremendous volume of work with only two production people, Lisa Lennon and Eva Chagdes, but they're the best production people there are. We save a lot of time with the EDGE. Our productivity is up 100%. It's cutting the amount of time down significantly per job because of the weeding time and artwork. A 22" x 28" sign with artwork, logos, and lots of copy might have taken three hours to do; now it takes an hour at the most, not even." As an added bonus, they're starting to do EDGE work for other sign companies who don't have the equipment, the opposite of when they had to contract out their own EDGE work.

Jessica's division used to work around-the-clock because they never turn any job away. They are proud of their reputation for always getting work out, no matter what it is. She says, "If somebody comes to me and asks for 80 banners by tomorrow morning at eight o'clock, we're going to have those banners for them by that time. We may have to work from now to eight o'clock tomorrow, but we'll still get it done. With the EDGE, we can get it done a lot faster with a lot less stress. I don't know how we got some of that work out before."

Satisfied Customers

The sign customers are more enthusiastic than ever about the product they're getting. Before, when the EDGE work was outsourced, Jessica was very selective about what she would send out. Now that they have their own EDGE, they do many jobs on it. "When the customer gets something with a really great piece of artwork on it, they're just so much happier. They can't believe it," she says. "The EDGE opens up a whole new door of capabilities, especially when you don't have a thermal printer. We had inkjets, but nothing compares to the EDGE. The quality is so much better."

While Jessica's customers reap the rewards of the seemingly endless capabilities of the EDGE, so does she. "We don't even know half of everything that you can do, but the half that we do know is wonderful! Complicated logos and artwork, halftones, and photographs can be done very fast. Sometimes the lettering on a sign gets so small, it takes forever to weed it. You can just print it all now, and it looks much better." She also mentions that the signs hold up longer because the letters can't be picked off.

The EDGE has helped Jessica and her group through various projects. For example, MCI needed signs made using color photographs. They were so happy with the signs that they ordered more. Hotels number among her other satisfied customers. For example, the hotels put signs inside for their restaurants to promote special meals for holidays.

Jessica also did some work with the city for a large project. They needed 10,000 each of magnets and static clings. She says, "They were happy to get everything so fast. I know that usually the EDGE is mostly for short runs, but you can use it for bigger runs if the people need it right away and they're willing to pay for it. That's just the thing. Right now I don't think people are as worried about money as they are time."

The customers may be willing to pay more for speed, but only if quality comes with it. "In today's market, you have to be up-to-date in your ability to produce really great graphics because you can walk around anywhere, and everywhere there are great graphics. Graphics right now are the thing, and that's what people want on their signage. They want their signs to

look as great as the ones in somebody else's window or in a hotel or whatever," says Jessica. "We're very happy with the overall quality of the graphics done on the EDGE. If you look at the quality of work produced on other machines compared to Gerber, it's just not there. If you look at two decals side by side, you can tell which one came off of the EDGE."

Hassle-Free Products and Service

Jessica says that her plotters, EDGE, and software from Gerber are quite reliable. "Gerber stands behind their equipment. If you have a problem, they're right there for you," she says.

Keeping up with the newest technology is important to her, but she makes sure her decisions are well thought out. "We're moving forward; we're not standing still. We wanted an EDGE from day one, but you have to be careful when you're starting. Since funds may be somewhat low, you have to be pretty confident in what you're buying. We're so far ahead of everybody because we have the EDGE."

When making a buying decision, it is important to measure the price of something against its real value. Jessica says, "People don't know how affordable the EDGE is. It will pay for itself within the first year, if not sooner. If I can afford to get an EDGE after only two years, anyone can." She buys Gerber magnetic material, static cling material, and all the Gerber foils for the EDGE. "There's another company that sells it, but I think the people who invented the equipment are the experts in the materials that go with it. I tried some other foil once. It wasn't as good as the Gerber foil," she says.

"We're especially proud of all of our EDGE work, every single thing that comes off of it. We're constantly amazing ourselves with the things that we find out we can do," says Jessica. Lisa and Eva have a background in graphic art. She says that even without training on the EDGE, it wasn't difficult to learn, and they picked it up quickly.

When it comes to her faith in Gerber products, Jessica says she has a lot of company. "Other sign makers are very jealous when they find out you have the EDGE because everybody wants one. Gerber has the best reputation on the market."

"We get other people trying to sell us plotters, software, or equipment; but we won't leave Gerber because it's always been good equipment for us. I know that's true of probably 99.9%, if not 100%, of the people who have Gerber products. That's why they stay very loyal. One thing Gerber has going for them most is that their customers are loyal, and they're going to tell other people in the business that this is the best equipment."

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