



Newton Memorial Art Co., Inc. Gets the Best from Its Gerber Monument Products

Product Spotlight:
GRAPHIX ADVANTAGE® ELITE™
Monument Edition
Gerber GS750™ Plotter

Newton Memorial Art Co.
Newton, MA

About six years ago, Cindy Spittel, president of Newton Memorial Art Co., Inc. decided to change the way she designed monuments. Her retail monument company, located in the upscale Boston suburb of Newton, Mass., had been in business since 1892. As a result of switching to a Gerber automated monument production system, she is now able to produce practically all of her monument designs in-house, thus increasing her profitability.

Her Gerber system consists of GRAPHIX ADVANTAGE® ELITE™ Monument Edition design and output software, and a GS750™ sprocket plotter. She used to give her manufacturer some of the more complex renderings to draft, but now she can do nearly all of the artwork herself on the software and plotter...while the customer waits! A full-scale rendering of a custom design that once took an hour-and-a-half to create, now takes only ten minutes.



The system from Gerber Scientific Products quickly generates the full-size drawing and cuts the sandblast stencil to the exact specifications of the full-size. Cindy can cut the stencil immediately because she instantly gets the client's approval.

She says, "Being able to generate our own art has given me a tremendous advantage. We can make drawings instantaneously, so it saves me a lot of money on postage and phone calls. The wholesale cost of putting the work through has been reduced even more because we get a discount for doing our own full-size drawings. The drawings could otherwise cost approximately \$50 to \$150."

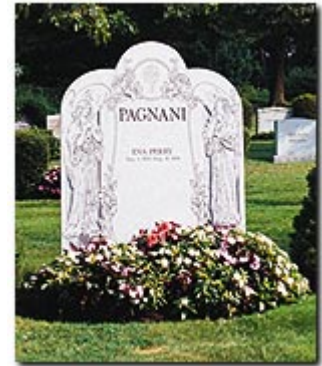


Cindy has also noticed a 100% reduction of day-to-day stress from knowing that when someone walks in the door, they can automatically approve a full-size drawing. She has integrated the Gerber equipment into the customer sale by sitting with the customer in front of the computer and designing the monument together. "My customers never cease to be amazed at the technology," she says. "They have a part in designing something that's very important to them. They're surprised that they have all these options available and can see them on-screen or printed out – on the spot!"

In addition, by incorporating Adobe® Photoshop® into the Gerber system, Cindy can go one step further toward giving the customer a preview of the final product. She shows them exactly what the finished monument will look like on their exact cemetery plot by superimposing the image of the monument on top of a photograph of the plot.

She says that her favorite thing about the system is how easy it is to use and how easily designs can be cut and pasted, sized, rotated, etc. – adding, “There isn't anything you can't do at the click of a button!”

Then, she quickly thinks of more advantages. “My second favorite feature is that I can save all of my jobs in directories that are comfortable for me. Rather than having to refer to the designs by number, I call it Corner Rose, Primrose, Evening Rose, Latin Cross, or whatever it may be. I can take my blank monument and cut and paste flowers on there, which I find very quickly because I don't have to refer to a catalog. So it really personalizes my system with my customers.



“Another real advantage of Gerber is that if I'm duplicating a style of lettering out in the cemetery, I can custom create my own font to match the old-style fonts. I can then modify those fonts to fit into a limited space.”

For example, if Cindy needs a very long name to fit in a very small space, but she wants to exactly duplicate the letter style that was originally used, she scans it and saves it as a new font which will fit using the same height and style. The old-style letters would have required changing to a different font. She simply scans alphabets from the old rubber punchouts that they formerly used and saves them under the key codes to create her own custom fonts. She says, “We can match work that dates back to the 1800's and use our new technology to make it fit within a given space.”

Why Gerber?

Although Cindy first heard of Gerber products from a friend in the monument business, she still researched the market pretty extensively before making her decision.

She remembers that many of the other systems she looked at were very complicated. “It took an act of Congress to figure them out,” she says. “The Gerber system allows me the flexibility of creating my own letter styles and of kerning when I need to. At the flick of a button, everything is perfectly centered, which is a very nice feature. It has allowed me to be more consistent in my designs.”

According to Cindy, Gerber offered the most flexibility for the lowest price. “It was a bargain compared to the other systems that I saw which didn't offer price or flexibility. Gerber offered both,” she says. “I didn't want to be stuck with 500 canned designs. If I wanted them, I could always put them in; but I didn't want to pay for 500 designs I might never use. Instead, I built a library of thousands of designs.”

Years later, she continues to be pleased with her choice. “The equipment is very reliable – my

plotter runs like a champ. I couldn't imagine anyone not being comfortable with the Gerber system. It has been great!"

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