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Customer Spotlight: Oddball Press

August 15, 2011 in Customer Spotlight

At Oddball Press, it's all in the cards... and envelopes!



Founded in 2007, **Oddball Press** serves up creative, contemporary letterpress greetings. The Cleveland-based company strives to create products to "please and delight their customers." Their retro-vibe designs are achieved through a combination of modern technologies and processes of the past. The concepts start on a drawing board, evolve to an iMac, and then take shape on the press. The company embraces all printing methods and printers to achieve their unique cards and matching envelopes, noting on their web site, "although our mini Craftsman Platen Press gets an occasional roll, we rely on other letterpress and offset lithography shops for production.

Oddball Press places emphasis on quality and style and boasts probably one of the best mission statements we've come across in a long time: "Our company's mission is to produce superior printed goods that would satisfy even our mothers' highest standards."

Despite the many hats she wears, **Kati Hanimagi** found some time to respond to our interview questions so that we can share her interesting business with you.

Q: What do you do at Oddball Press? What is your background?

KH: My title is Owner... and Art Director, Copy Writer, Office Manager, Production Specialist, Shipping Department Head, and Jane-of-all-trades. I have a Bachelor's Degree from the Atlanta College of Art and a Master's Degree in Fine Art, with a concentration in printmaking, from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. I draw, design, and print.

Q: You certainly have a full plate! Is there anyone else on the Oddball team?

KH: Officially, I am the only Oddball Team member. However, my husband, Joel Alpern, is on call to take on some duties such as Web Manager and Trade-Show-Booth-Designer/Installer as needed. We met in graduate school, so he too has a printmaking background. He is currently the Director of Exhibits at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. I have also worked with our letterpress printers for many years and consider them to be an extension of "The Team."

Q: Who comes up with all the ideas and artwork?

KH: I do. For the imagery, I look to my vast clip-art library to offer inspiration and fodder. For the content, I've taken cues from interactions with the people in my life—especially my mother, father, and husband. An idea will often strike moments after hanging up the telephone, trapped in a car on a road trip, or eating snack foods with friends. I also am addicted to television. I'm not sure how that fits in, but I know it does. I also love candy—all forms.

Q: What is your most outrageous or oddest card/envelope to date?

KH: Our "Buried Love" card, that shows a Victorian couple in silhouette. The caption above them reads, "Last night, I dreamt you were buried alive." The inside greeting reads, "I love you." It is not for everyone, although it does have a core group of supporters who continue to purchase it.

Q: What is the top seller – and why do you think?

KH: Our anniversary card, "How Long", which shows a Victorian couple sitting at a table. The caption above questions, "How long have we been married?" The response (presumably from the wife) is "I don't know. I thought you knew. This is so embarrassing." I think it's popular because couples strive to be together long enough that no one needs to keep track anymore. But really, people like things that are funny. Our top five sellers are all (what I would consider to be) humorous. Everyone likes to chuckle — at least I do.

Q: What do you like best about having your own company?

KH: I'm able to work for myself and do something I love. It can be stressful, but it is exciting and rewarding.

Q: What are the biggest challenges your business faces?

KH: Keeping costs down and maintaining and retaining clients in a challenging economy.

Q: What are the perks of being based in Cleveland?

KH: It is a small, affordable city with many amenities of a larger city (great art community, delicious eateries, prestigious museums). It is fighting to make a come back, and I'm happy to be a part of it's resurgence.

Q: How did you come to work with Envelopes.com? How long have you been using our services?

KH: I began using Action Envelope (which became Envelopes.com) in 2008. I discovered you in an online search, and because of the variety of colors, sizing, and printing options, I gave you a try. I've continued using your services ever since.

Q: What kinds of projects do you do with Envelopes.com?

KH: Most of my product line's envelopes.

Q: What's the best part about working with us?

KH: Your quick turn-around time and reasonable pricing.

Q: What is your most result-garnering or favorite project with us to date?

KH: There is not one project in particular. However, I feel our customers appreciate the extra special touch of the printed envelopes we pair with our greetings. I'd like to think this extra element surprises and delights our clients, inspiring them to repeat business with Oddball Press.

Learn more about the company and see their fun and quirky designs at www.oddballpress.com.



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